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A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1988 $5.00

Aging in America
Thomas Cole

Economic Justice
Samuel Bowles

Solidarity & Polish Jewry
Mark Erlich & Lech Walesa

The Politics of Film
Leonard Quart

Sukkot
Irving Greenberg

The Psychodynamics of the 1988 Elections



ISRAEL UPDATE

- Letty Pogrebin on Peace Possibilities
- Joseph Alpher on the Military Threat Posed by a Palestinian State
- Stan Cohen on Criminology and the Occupation
- Michael Lerner on Jewish Guilt

PLUS

Anne Roiphe on Jewish Sanity and the Pope; Henry Giroux on Education; Josh Henkin on Romance Self-Help; Ben Joravsky on Blacks and Jews in Chicago; Louis Menashe on Commissar; Gabriel Levin on Yehuda Halevi; Fiction by Frederick Busch; Poetry by Ellen Levy and Julia Vinograd.

For My Tree in Israel

There is blood on my tree,
on the tree with my name in Israel.
The tears of tear-gassed crowds
water the roots,
and the tears of rage
and the tears of grief for the dead.
Is this the tree I planted
to bring forth life from the desert?
The broken bones of hands throwing rocks
and the rocks they threw
pile around my tree,
the tree with my name in Israel.

It did not begin like this.
Everyone in my class planted a tree in Israel,
filled out a form and sent a letter
with our names.
I could've had pictures sent me of the tree
growing as I grew
but I didn't want to know what it looked like.
The tree didn't know what I looked like.
We shared a name, it was my name,
it was enough.
And now there is blood on my name
on my tree in Israel.
Do not speak to me of self-defense,
of necessity and nations and history.
There is no water in such words
and I need a glass of water before I sleep.
Do not explain, it may be true
but it doesn't help,
it is not in the same language
in which my tree talks to the wind.
There must always be an Israel
because my tree is there
and they shall never come with axes
and cut down my name.
But there is blood on my tree
and the smell of blood
and I want my name to be good again.
I want my good name to grow in Israel
and put out damp new leaves every spring,
as soft as kisses.

— *Julia Vinograd*

Julia Vinograd lives in Berkeley. Her work The Book of Jerusalem *won the Before Columbus award in 1985. She has written twenty-five chap books of street poems.*

TIKKUN

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Letters

Tikkun reserves the right to select, edit, and shorten all submissions to the Letters section.

SEXUALITY

To the Editor:

When I opened the March/April issue of *Tikkun*, I was surprised to find that, along with my article on Jewish sexual ethics, there was one by Rabbi Daniel Landes commenting on mine quite critically. Yet after his angry first paragraph, there came an interesting and pleasant midrash on the Song of Songs—which I enjoyed, and mostly agreed with. How come, I said to myself.

Instead of flinging hand grenades via the word processor, which is what all modern Jewish intellectuals are supposed to do, I called Rabbi Landes. I told him that I felt misheard.

Specifically, I felt his criticism conveyed the notion that my piece had called for pure hedonism as a Jewish sexual ethic and had used the Song of Songs as a prooftext for a hedonistic ethic. My own sense of what I had said was that both sensual pleasure and loving companionship (the two intertwined ethics of the Song of Songs) ought now to have a greater weight than before in shaping a Jewish sexual ethic, *along with* the traditional elements of family commitment and procreation. So I had suggested that we affirm three different "times" or seasons of sexual practice: one of fluidity and experimentation, one of loving companionship, and one of marriage.

Rabbi Landes explained that he had focused on my suggestion for a season of "fluidity" because he thought this would be dangerously contradictory to what I was saying were my other values. As I hear him now, he is suggesting that the learning that goes with the one could undermine the learning that is necessary for the others.

This, I agree, is an important question. It seems that his and my life experience and observation lead to different conclusions on this point. Mine is that people can grow from each of these three "seasons" and that they do not have to be seen as either/ors, but can be shaped in the direction of both/and. But I might be so much wanting both/and to be true that I am fooling myself about the possibilities. All of us will have to draw on our own life experiences to judge.

Rabbi Landes also pointed out that I had strongly criticized Jewish tradition regarding sexual ethics and that, since he affirms the tradition strongly, this may have influenced his response. I understand and honor his love for the tradition. My own self-understanding is that I criticize not the tradition as it was but the continued application of it in the same form under quite new conditions. But I understand that this distinction—which to me seems an

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important difference—may not seem like a difference at all to someone who affirms the tradition in a different way. And I also want to honor Rabbi Landes' own creative development of the tradition in looking at the Song of Songs as indeed (in at least one aspect) a poem about human sexuality—since, for many who affirm Jewish tradition, it would seem scandalous to view it as anything but an allegory about the love between God and Israel.

In any case, the issues between us now seem much clearer to me, and it seems more possible to pursue them as a "controversy for the sake of Heaven," as the Talmud says. For myself, a next step in doing so would be to ask Rabbi Landes what are reasonable sexual ethics flowing from his understanding of the Song of Songs (as well as other elements of the tradition). Would he strongly recommend early marriage in our generation? If not, does he strongly urge sexual abstinence for all who are not married? If not, what criteria would he apply to ethical sexual relationships? And so on.

Finally, some notes on this old-new method of carrying on a controversy in a Jewishly decent, Godly way. It would have been a lot easier to do without a sense of shock and hurt, at least for me, if *Tikkun* had put Rabbi Landes and me directly in touch with each other from the git-go. The result might have been more still-small-voice and less thunder and lightning; would that have been so bad? Perhaps deeper truth might have emerged between us sooner.

Arthur Waskow
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Wyncote, Pennsylvania

To the Editor:

Daniel Landes' criticism of Arthur Waskow (*Tikkun*, March/April 1988) was off the wall. He totally missed the point. Waskow was not talking about people exploiting people sexually, but people who are struggling to reach a high level of communication and bonding through their sexual and other relationships and to recognize the power of sexuality to form and enhance connections with other people; who are aware of the holiness of their sexuality, and yet (or therefore) find that the traditional rules do not work for them. These people are striving to nurture the possibility of I-Thou relationships, and the last thing they are trying to do is "use" other people for their own animal gratification.

Arthur Waskow's article was a valuable opening of a discussion of what we can learn from the tradition and our experience about how to structure our sexual lives. He is raising the right questions toward applying our tradition to the problems raised in the other pieces in the sexuality section. All the issues deserve greater discussion, but I would like to expand on two areas that I feel need further consideration.

First of all, Waskow mentions the lack of support people feel from the broader community when they either strive to be truly monogamous or are trying to explore the possibility of having more than one serious, loving, sexually expressed relationship in their lives, as opposed to the hypocrisy and cheating that characterizes so many people's attitudes and actions. I have heard that there are people who are struggling with the ethical and psychological issues involved in these situations, whether it is through private support groups or whether in networks like a group called The Family Tree, based in New England. People involved in these groups say that they are a great support. I have not heard of any such groups in a particularly Jewish context, though, by their nature and the nature of the broader society, they do not publicly advertise.

The second issue is the issue of bisexuality. It seems to me that the issue of someone who is only attracted to his/her own sex is easy to resolve Jewishly (in my mind), since Judaism values relationship over celibacy. But what about people who find themselves attracted to members of both sexes? Is this a blessing or a curse? If we consider sexual attraction, even if not acted out, a positive attribute in a sexual relationship, and that even those who are attracted to only one sex have no expectation of sleeping with everyone they find attractive, should we say that bisexuals should limit themselves to members of the opposite sex, or should they be free to explore the potential sexual dimension of their relationships with all people?

Again, Arthur Waskow has just begun the exploration of these serious ethical and neohalakhic questions. I hope that the discussion proceeds on a high and mutually respectful level.

Rabbi Jeffrey M. Marker
Brooklyn, New York

To the Editor:

A short time ago I "came out" to a friend of mine, a student at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Subsequently, we had an argument about the lack of understanding of gay and lesbian concerns by the halakhic authorities of the Conservative movement. "What do you want?" he finally asked me in exasperation. "What I want," I replied, "is that no child should have to grow up with the fear, anxiety, and depression that I knew growing up gay in a straight world not willing to accommodate me." I greatly appreciate the open words of support from Arthur Waskow and Bradley Shavit Artson in their essays from your March/April issue, and I read with interest their suggestions about how to rectify the heretofore inadequate response of the heterosexual Jewish community to the needs of homosexual Jews. But Artson does not mention, and Waskow only hints at, the concern I expressed to my friend, the graduate student.

The difficulty I had in coming to terms with being gay had little to do with a lack of role models in my community (though they certainly would have helped). Nor was I frightened terribly by verbal or physical "fag bashing" in the neighborhood (though occasional episodes certainly hurt). The primary impetus to my self-loathing was the subtle and constant social and linguistic cues in the surrounding environment. And as welcoming, warm, and supportive as Waskow's and Artson's words are, these words and these ideas are not yet sufficient. The Jewish child sitting in a church is not made more comfortable by ecumenical murmurings from the priest at the altar. The discomfort of the black child entering a newly desegregated school is not lessened by words of welcome from the white principal. The confusion of the homosexual child is not erased by the child's parents saying "shabbat shalom" to gay or lesbian couples sitting nearby. It is a terrible thing to feel so different when one is so young.

When rabbis, teachers, and community leaders speak before a congregation they are looking out on a small

sea of homosexual faces in the adult portion of a congregation, although probably not the oft-quoted ten percent repeatedly identified in systematic studies, because many homosexual adults will have already opted for lesbian and gay congregations, non-Jewish organizations, or no congregation at all. But look at the faces of the children, and one in ten will be homosexual, none of them yet being old enough to choose their own sanctuary in which to approach their Creator. The phrases which teach them to mistrust their own emotions, often to despise themselves, are those which implicitly exclude them—the incessant barrage of heterosexual assumptions, family constructs, and history in the language of even our most progressive prayer books and sermons.

An example. Landes, in his response to Waskow's essay, rebuts Waskow's concept of sexual fluidity with a relentless stream of heterosexual symbols. He never addresses the extensive discussion Waskow devotes to homosexuality. He never suggests how his system of sexual ethics might apply to me and my lover. In short, Landes never acknowledges my presence as a reader or, in a modern media sense, as congregant. Then he writes: "All belong to the Jewish family and are to be protected and cherished." Sorry, I don't feel like I belong; I certainly don't feel cherished.

What, then, do I want? I want our community to become sensitive to the power of language so often selfishly and carelessly wielded, both in a sexist and a heterosexist fashion. I want the language of our religious life to change.

ERRATUM

We erroneously suggested in an editorial entitled "American Jewry's Silenced Jewish Majority" (*Tikkun,* May/June 1988) that Noam Chomsky had played a central role in organizing an advertisement calling for a cutoff of funds to Israel. The advertisement, entitled "Time To Dissociate From Israeli Politics," said that economic aid to Israel should be cut back "to much smaller levels" and that "military and intelligence assistance should also be radically reduced." The advertisement did not call for a cutoff of all funds. In addition, although Chomsky signed the advertisement, he was not its principal organizer as we may have implied. We apologize for this confusion.

These processes, begun by the feminists (see "Reclaiming the Hammer," by Sharon Cohen—same issue), must continue and expand in ways suggested by Waskow. If the Jews cannot accept these changes, then they must accept the loss of a substantial, important part of their community and, worse yet, the cortinued deep suffering of many of their own children.

Neil Theise, MD
New York, New York

Daniel Landes responds:

We start from different assumptions. These need to be explicated.

(1) Professor Waskow in his article assumes that sexuality is holy. The Jewish position, however, is that sexuality can lead to holiness (*kedushah*) or to gross desacralizing (the temple prostitute—*kedayshah*,[Deut. 23:15]).Theoretically, it is neutral in some objective state. But sexuality, being the powerful and complex phenomenon of what it is to be alive, is seldom frozen. We as sexual beings are always moved by and with it. The point to be addressed is in which direction do we wish to go.

(2) For Waskow, holiness is an innately human property. This works only if God has an imputed reality, created as it were "in the image of wo(man)." Holiness is then self-defining—whatever the human is, is holy, and traditional categories should justify it as such. But this is not what holiness is. Holiness is a divine property that we are enjoined to participate in. We are able to do so for God, the infinite source of holiness, empowers us: "You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am Holy (Levit. 19:2)." This command and promise is transformational. It calls for change, self-sacrifice, and renunciation. *Kedushah* means literally—separate. And the rabbis connect this to sexual life which demands an array of being set apart—e.g., monogamy—in order to be *kedushin*, that is sacred. Fulfillment and happiness are the prayed and worked for and often achieved results. But they are neither the purpose nor the criteria of the command and promise of holiness.

(3) The three writers assume that "fluidity" of sexual practice—of various relationships and of "seasons"—leads to fulfillment and happiness. In my observation, our contemporary world is littered with the broken bodies of lovers and spouses discarded by their erstwhile "loving companions" who have moved on to a stage of greater "growth." I am also not sanguine concerning the inner being of such people who have affirmed "both/and"—what does it do to one's soul to leave formerly loved others behind so easily or for an "ethic" to recommend this as a public policy for personal growth? Rabbi Marker can sponsor all the support groups that he wants for those who "are trying to explore the possibility of having more than one serious, loving, sexually expressed relationship in their lives" ... but it will not work. At its core this behavior is not "opposed to" but rather identical with "hypocrisy and cheating." For it denies the act of being committed which is at the center of truly human relationships, especially the sexual one. This fact of our existence explains why—to clear up a point with Arthur Waskow—it can serve as a fitting metaphor for the committed relationship between Israel and God.

(4) Paradoxically, Waskow does not affirm how powerful anarchic sexuality is. The tradition does, and it protects and preserves this aspect of sexuality within the cyclical framework of renunciation and pleasure of the family purity laws. Waskow attempts to tame sexuality by allowing its "fluidity" during a "season of sexual practice." That limitation does not work as indicated by the two correspondents who happily understand fluidity to logically and morally mean the affirmation of extra-marital relationships and, hopefully, bisexuality (Marker) and the elimination of the "incessant barrage of heterosexual assumptions, family constructs and history in the language of ... prayerbooks and sermons" for the sake of the children (Theise). Waskow actually hints at these same conclusions. Why doesn't he state them explicitly? Evidently he wishes to preserve a continuum between classic thought and practice and his new ethic. This cannot be done.

In introducing the list of prohibited relations—liturgically read from the Torah on Yom Kippur afternoon—God says:

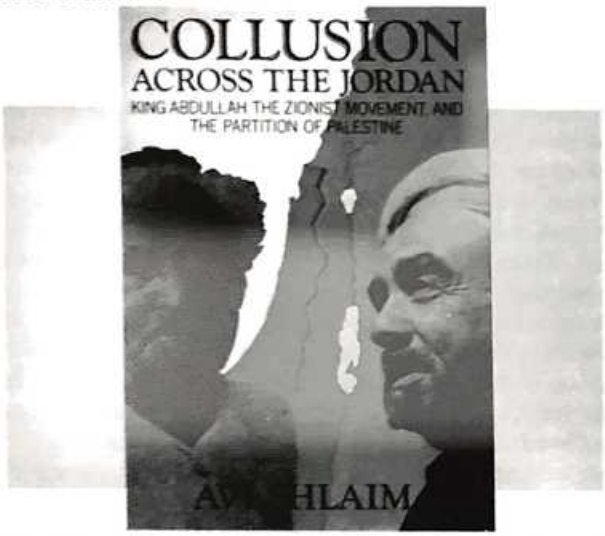
> "You shall not *Do* the *Doings* of Egypt where you dwelt, nor should you *Do* the *Doings* of the land of Canaan to which I am taking you; nor should you follow their *Statutes*. My Laws of Justice you shall *Do* and my *Statutes* you shall guard to

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Avi Shlaim



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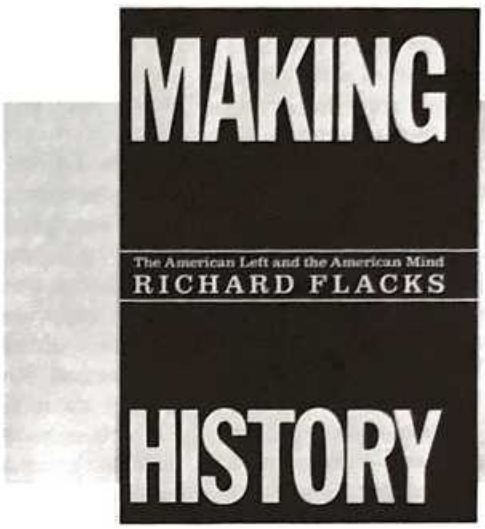
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follow them, I am the Lord your God. You shall guard my *Statutes* and *Laws of Justice* which if a human shall *Do* s/he shall live by them. I am the Lord." (Levit. 18:3-5)

The claim is that only God has Laws of Justice, but that Egypt and Canaan and He share in practices referred to as *Doings* and *Statutes*. The latter two denote seemingly arbitrary conventions and practices. But in one case they define the heathen, in the other the Godly and the promise of life. There are aspects of life, and sexuality is certainly a crucial one, which define, mold, and set apart a community. With the Eternal Thou our choice is either/or; with the human thou with whom we build our lives the choice and promise is no less the same.

To the Editor:

Bradley Shavit Artson, writing in your March/April 1988 issue, quotes from my article, "Homosexuality and Judaism" that appeared in the *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society*, #11, Spring 1986. Since he chose to quote me out of context, without proper citation of source, and—uniquely in my case of all authors cited—without rabbinic title, I feel compelled to respond, in order to correct any impression that I somehow support his position.

The rabbis of the Talmud were well aware of "loving and supportive" homosexual relationships, and did not recognize or accept such arrangements, because homosexuality, in any form, was viewed as wrong. Artson's scholarship in this matter is simply sloppy, and his conclusions incorrect. First, homosexual marriage appears, not only in the source cited by him, but also in Genesis Rabbah 26:5 and other sources. His claim that the citation from Torat Kohanim is unique is, therefore, patently wrong. Further, his understanding of this source represents his "absurd fantasy" and not the rabbis'. The sources that speak of homosexual marriages are not cited later in halakhic literature precisely because the phenomenon of such marriages was known only from non-Jewish societies and was totally alien to Jewish life and to rabbinic Judaism's conception of marriage as Kiddushin (Sanctification). Nothing could be more foreign to developing appreciation of the "other" (see Rabbi Daniel Landes's excellent article in the same issue of *Tikkun*) than the narcissistic pseudo-masturbatory elements that are so much a part of homosexual activities. Finally, there was no need to codify opposition to these specific gentile practices as they were already covered by the more direct statutes prohibiting any form of homosexual relationship among gentiles (Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 58a—Maimonides *Laws of Kings* 9:5). Certainly, Genesis Rabbah and Torat Kohanim were known and frequently cited by all of the major figures in halakhic history. The lack of reference to Artson's "singular" (sic) source was obviously a matter of choice and not, as he claims, of ignorance.

Artson also fails to deal with the most important point of my article, which is that biblical and rabbinic Judaism did not create a term for the homosexual simply because sexual activity cannot and should not define the totality of the individual. We are more than what we are in the bedroom, unless Artson and those who agree with his position would like to return to the days when sexual conquest was a measure of one's status in the community.

There are many other flawed elements in Artson's presentation, most of which I will not enumerate here. Two points should, however, be made:

1. Much of his presentation depends on inner feelings and not on actions. How does one measure committed versus noncommitted relationships? Is someone who is celibate, but whose fantasy life is primarily or totally directed at sexual activities with one's own gender, to be considered a homosexual by Artson? If not, then what happens to his category of "constitutional homosexual"? If yes, then what happens to traditional Judaism's unique and powerful focus on actions as the measure of the human being, as opposed to thoughts and beliefs?

2. Most offensive to me in Artson's article is the arrogant, superior moral tone that he takes vis-à-vis any position but the "liberal one." Both Rabbi Lamm's article on homosexuality, which Artson cites, and mine do not take the "liberal" position. Despite this fact, and despite the fact that Rabbi Lamm and I disagree in many ways in our conceptualization and assessment of the individual who practices homosexuality, neither of us evidences anything but compassion and concern for that individual. Nothing in what we suggest would allow for, or condone, "oppression," "stoning," "burning at the stake," or "denial of community" in a contemporary setting. Liberals do not have a corner on the market when it comes to concerns for fellow human beings.

Traditional Judaism's condemnation of homosexuality focuses, in my view, entirely upon homosexual activity and never on an individual's state of being. Searching Jews are welcome in the community any time that they like to enter. Even more, the community should reach out to any and all Jews and attempt to bring them closer. However, acceptance of the individual does not mean acceptance of all that he does. It also does not allow for coercive attempts to get him to stop his objectionable behavior. Certainly most if not all the members of any traditional congregation are not perfect in their moral, ethical, ritual, and interpersonal behavior. Yet they are accepted and acceptable. Education and loving concern are the ways in which we attempt to modify their behavior. People engaged in homosexual activity are no different.

In fact, Artson's acceptance of "constitutional homosexuals" as a subgroup in society opens, rather than closes, the door to "gay synagogues" and "gay Jewish communities." Such groups would logically want their own institutional structures different from that of the "straight organizations." This would be divisive. In opposition, any authentic traditional approach would see all individuals as belonging to the same community, while each tries to live up to the moral imperatives of our traditional values.

In short, Artson's scholarship is incomplete, his citations are inappropriate, his conclusion is faulty and, though too long to detail here, his scientific facts and his view of the possibilities for change are incorrect. Artson's agenda clearly is the promotion and acceptance of homosexuality within Judaism. That is certainly his right. But his attempt to dress that agenda in traditional garb is simply not authentic.

Rabbi Barry Freundel
New York, New York

Rabbi Bradley Artson responds:

I apologize for neglecting to use Rabbi Freundel's rabbinic title. He is quite right to insist that his title, as with

that of any rabbi—Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, or Orthodox—should be recognized and respected by all Jews.

The sources that Rabbi Freundel raises as challenges, in fact, support my contention that the Torah and the rabbis were unaware of the option of permanent, exclusive, loving relationships between adults of the same gender. Genesis Rabbah 26:5 speaks of how the *b'nei elohim* used to sleep with the wives of other men, with men, and with animals. These one-night stands hardly constituted a committed, permanent, loving relationship. Similarly, the midrash goes on to say that these men would write *gamosiyot*, love songs, addressed to men or to animals. The word is derived from *gamos*, to couple, referring to sexual intercourse. A parallel custom, in the Middle Ages, was the love poem written to the object of one's lust—not to one's spouse. These poems were a form of verbal seduction, not part of a lifelong commitment.

Sanhedrin 58a similarly speaks of sexual intercourse, but not in a committed relationship. On the same page of Talmud, when the intent is to discuss marriage, the term *kiddushin* is explicitly used.

Since it is true that the rabbinic codes are silent on the question of permanent, loving, exclusive gay or lesbian relationships, then the modern *posek* (decider of Jewish law) is authorized to intuit a reason for that silence. The most obvious reason, it seems to me, is that the option never existed. Rabbi Freundel's claim that "such marriages were known only from non-Jewish societies" is not supported by any evidence whatsoever. Those interested in investigating this further are advised to read Paul Veyne, "Homosexuality in Ancient Rome," in *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in Past and Present Times*, ed. Philippe Aries and Andre Bejin (Blackwell, 1985); *Greek Homosexuality*, K. J. Dover (Harvard University Press, 1978); and *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality*, John Boswell (University of Chicago Press, 1980).

Rabbi Freundel appears not to understand what a "constitutional homosexual" is. The notion that a person's primary affective erotic, and sexual needs are best met by someone of the same gender, and that this orientation is not consciously chosen or susceptible to alteration is precisely where most contemporary scientific opinion converges. Viewing homosexuality as "narcissistic" and "pseudo-masturbatory" is a value judgment lacking empirical support.

The claim that "sexual activity cannot and should not define the totality of the individual" is irrelevant. Homosexuality, like heterosexuality, is far more than merely sexual activity—it includes emotional and affectional orientation as well. It appears to me that Rabbi Freundel reiterates the view I quoted from his article—that medieval Judaism did not recognize the possibility of a person's being homosexual, applying the term only to acts. At one time—before the nineteenth century—that viewpoint reflected learned consensus. It no longer does.

Most staggering is Rabbi Freundel's claim that Judaism focuses on actions as "the measure of the human being, as opposed to thoughts and beliefs." Surely Rabbi Freundel will admit that Jewish law often views intention and context as determinative. Two examples must suffice: Fatally striking another human being can be either a mitzvah (in the context of self-defense or in a *milhemet mitzvah*, a commanded war) or it can be a crime deserving capital punishment. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman can be the sanctity of *kiddushin* (marriage) or the capital offense of rape. For a modern assertion of the centrality of intention in Jewish law, I refer Rabbi Freundel to *Iggeret Moshe*, OH2, No. 50.

I must confess that I do not understand Rabbi Freundel's claim that "nothing in what we [Lamm and Freundel] suggest would allow for or condone oppression, stoning, etc." As I understand his position, he argues that the Torah prohibition of *mishkav zakhar* does indeed prohibit modern homosexuality. The Torah's prohibition carries a penalty of execution for a single violation. Applying that penalty to two loving adults isn't oppressive?

A more fundamental dispute is lurking here. Rabbi Freundel claims to have compassion and concern for the homosexual, but he condemns the homosexual part of that person. How is that different from the claim of evangelical Christians who claim to love Jews, while simultaneously asserting that Jews will burn in hell unless they accept Jesus as their savior? Or a white who loves blacks so long as they "mind their place"?

Love is not enough; indeed, love without respecting a person's core is not really love at all. As with a marriage, love implies loving who the person is at present, not whom you hope to transform the person into. In the latter

(Continued on p. 92)

We wish our readers a healthy, happy and peaceful New Year 5749

לשנה טובה
תשמ"ט

Publisher's Page

Nan Fink

We at *Tikkun* are having difficulty finding women to write the kind of nonfiction articles we want to include in the magazine. This problem concerns us greatly because we are committed to bringing more women's voices into the discussion going on within our pages.

In our search for articles, we look for creative, well-written, and in-depth analyses of common concerns. Many times people submit manuscripts to us that are interesting but not within the scope of the magazine—journalistic reportage, highly academic analyses, or personal essays, for example. We cannot be all things to all people, so we regretfully turn these articles down.

We've sent out hundreds of letters to women asking them to consider writing for us, but the response has been poor. When we want an article on a specific subject, we often call many women, hoping to find one who will agree to write it. Sometimes our efforts work, but more frequently nobody will write the article or plans fall through at the last minute.

Skimming the pages of magazines similar to ours, I notice that few women writers appear there also. What is it about this genre of magazine and what is it about women at this historical time that creates this situation?

One of the problems is that men have traditionally been the ones to comment about the state of the world. Most women—even in this sexism-conscious age—learn early in their lives that their opinions are not as important as men's. As a result, they often feel too vulnerable, too unsure, to write about the larger issues of the day. I've talked with many women who write easily enough about their personal experiences, but who can't imagine feeling the inner authority to write an opinion piece.

This sense of intimidation often exists not only for women who are not used to writing, but also for good writers who are extremely competent in their disciplines. Many women are comfortable writing scholarly pieces about their field of research or descriptions about programs they administer. However, when asked to generalize from their experience and comment on its relationship to the larger world, they feel inadequate.

Another dynamic is that women generally look at issues more holistically than men do, being sensitive to the mix of the personal with the political and the emotional with the intellectual. However, *Tikkun*, like other intellectual magazines, tends to be linear and rational in its approach. Many women either don't want to or can't figure out how to relate to this paradigm.

An uncomfortable tension exists for us at *Tikkun* between our desire to participate in the mainstream dialogue about contemporary issues and our awareness of the limitations of the traditional male intellectual approach. On the one hand we want to be taken seriously so that we are an influential part of the important discussions of our day. In order for that to happen, we need to follow the form in which the dialogue takes place. On the other hand, however, we want to help transform the paradigm, so that it includes the richness of women's insight. As is becoming increasingly obvious, the existing paradigm falls far short of being able to deal creatively with the problems of our multidimensional world, and it needs to be changed.

There are many publications in which women writers can express themselves more holistically without having to stay within the constraints of mainstream dialogue. It is understandable that women are excited by these possibilities. Yet, if the paradigm is to be changed, we need more women to enter into the current discourse—bringing with them their sensibilities, yet expressing themselves in ways that are within the parameters of the established form.

There is another reason why we have trouble finding women writers. When we ask women to write for us, they often say they are too busy. Given that many of them are living within families, as well as working hard in their chosen professions, their response is no surprise. Most women are saddled with more responsibility for child and home care than men, and consequently they have less time for writing articles that aren't directly related to their work.

We hope that we will be able to include more women in these pages in the future. Please pass the word along that we are interested.

* * *

We thank David Bromwich for his excellent work as poetry editor this past year, and we look forward very much to working with Marge Piercy, our new poetry editor. We also welcome Francine Prose and Philip Lopate as our new literary editors. □

Editorials

Michael Lerner

Divestment Is Not Enough
Disrupt South African Apartheid

One of the objections currently being raised by the right to the Democratic party's call for further restrictions on investment and trade with South Africa is that these measures will cause great economic suffering for South Africa's black population without succeeding in significantly raising the cost of apartheid to the white regime. Forced divestment gives South Africans bargain-basement prices on American-developed corporations, and, while ownership switches, not much else changes.

Divestment was always only a tactic, a polite way of trying to get the message across to South Africans that the apartheid regime is morally unacceptable. While the politics of the current election campaign make it unlikely that either candidate will move beyond the rather tame suggestions for further pressure on South Africa that have been proposed by Jesse Jackson, we believe that the new administration should move far beyond labeling South Africa a "terrorist" state.

The United States should declare that it is willing to use the full weight of its political and economic strength, in conjunction with other antiapartheid states throughout the world, to bring the white ruling party in South Africa to the bargaining table with those black organizations in South Africa committed to democracy and full civil and human rights for all members of all races. We believe that this end should be accomplished without the introduction of U.S. military forces, but it may require some military aid for democratic forces engaged in the struggle. While military aid would come at a much later stage, it should be openly discussed and included in the publicly stated plan of what the U.S. is eventually prepared to do to end apartheid. One option that should be included as part of the eventual plan is a full naval and air blockade of South Africa, similar to the one imposed on Cuba by the United States in the 1960s. If South Africans understand that such a blockade is currently being considered by the U.S., in conjunction with other states, they will realize more fully the possible costs of perpetuating apartheid.

The U.S. should convene an international conference focusing on apartheid. Such a conference would address the question of how to support the liberation forces in South Africa in ways that would limit the total amount of violence. Participants in the conference would have to consider not only the appropriate fears that the liberation struggle might increase violence, but also the currently existing violence which increases the longer the international community does not take effective action to cripple the apartheid state.

Fear of violence is appropriate, as are fears that the ANC forces that might eventually rise to power may establish a society that is undemocratic and repressive. Those of us who advocated withdrawal from Vietnam did not give adequate attention to the question of "What comes next?" While we still believe that the peace movement was fundamentally correct in its position on Vietnam, we also think that it is reasonable to raise these concerns about South Africa and to develop a strategy that helps ensure the ultimate triumph of those forces in the South African resistance that are most committed to democratic government and to human rights. We do not wish to see a regime come to power that suppresses opposition in the black community or that oppresses the white minority. Moreover, we must not completely ignore the fear of a "bloodbath" despite the fact that defenders of apartheid exaggerate this fear in order to scare others into line.

Such fears not withstanding, the longer the violence against blacks continues, the greater the likelihood that radical, antidemocratic forces will ascend to power in the black community. This likelihood provides the U.S., in conjunction with others, all the more reason to escalate the pressure on South Africa. An international conference should lay out a series of steps, escalating in intensity and severity, that would bring about an end to apartheid.

The participation of the Soviet Union in such a conference would not only help increase the pressure on South Africa, but would be another step toward world peace. A joint naval blockade of South Africa planned by the U.S. and the USSR might lead to other forms of military cooperation made possible by a de-escalation of the cold war.

Needless to say, representatives of the South African resistance forces, including whites who have organized

political opposition to apartheid, should play a central role in the discussion of how to achieve these ends. Nevertheless, it must also be understood that many South African blacks would face jailing, torture, and murder were they to advocate at this conference certain forms of resistance; so it is important that the limits under which they participate be fully recognized.

Similarly, many of the Front Line states should be encouraged to play a central role at this conference. But given the military threat that they face, the U.S., in order to obtain their full participation at the conference, must make it clear that it will provide full military protection for these states against incursions by the superior forces of the South African military. After all, if the U.S. has been willing to deploy military forces in the Persian Gulf to protect oil tankers, it should be at least as willing to deploy its forces along the borders of South Africa in order to prevent the continuation of military aggression by the apartheid state against its neighbors.

While the development of a multilateral plan for disruption of apartheid would certainly provoke some South African militarists to even greater national chauvinism and intransigence, the vast majority of the population would probably recognize the growing economic and military cost of protecting apartheid. As various stages of such a multilateral plan began to be implemented, considerable democratic pressure for a peaceful solution would grow within South Africa. And if the U.S. were to appear resolute in its willingness eventually to arm and support military forces of opposition within South Africa should the earlier stages of pressure fail, many South Africans would realize that it was in their interest to engage in direct negotiations with black South Africans instead of suffering the likely consequences of military struggle with the U.S.-armed black majority. A democratic transition is accomplishable within the next eight years.

It was only four years ago that the movement for divestment began to mobilize mass support in the U.S. No one believed then that support for divestment would grow as quickly as it did. Nevertheless, right-wing criticism of divestment is much to the point. Liberals will sound disingenuous and soft-headed if they are not willing to talk about stronger measures in response to the failure of divestment. It's time to advance a new vision of what could be accomplished to end apartheid in the years ahead. Ironically, a radical vision may actually be the most practical thing we can do because the debate that this proposal might stimulate can lead us in a direction that provides a compelling answer to the conservative critique of divestment.

REFLECTION FOR YOM KIPPUR, 1988

Israel: Our Collective Guilt

Anti-Semites throughout the ages have used the notion of collective guilt to promote anti-Jewish policies, pogroms, and the mass extermination of the Jewish people. For 1,900 years many Christians hated, oppressed, and sometimes killed their Jewish brothers and sisters because a handful of Jews allegedly collaborated with the Romans in bringing Jesus to trial. Thinking in these collective terms made it easy for ruling classes throughout the ages to use anti-Semitism to redirect anger that might otherwise have been focused on them. Eastern European peasants who had been exploited or oppressed by a particular Jewish shopkeeper, merchant, or landlord were encouraged to generalize their anger to include the entire Jewish people. Similarly, much of the anti-Semitism amongst American blacks has come about through the generalization of anger at a few particular Jewish landlords, merchants, or insensitive professionals.

Collective guilt is at the core of racism, and the Jewish people—historically the most frequent victim of claims about collective guilt—have good reason to fight such claims. So, for example, when those outside the Jewish world suggest that Jews are collectively responsible for the actions of a small group of Israeli soldiers, the Jewish people have plenty of reason to react with alarm and with heightened sensitivity to the sound of anti-Semitism.

Yet the notion of collective responsibility and collective guilt *is* appropriate when committed Jews apply it to their own world. Indeed, collective guilt and collective responsibility are central to the theology of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Judaism's approach to the issue of responsibility is rooted in its belief that human beings exist fundamentally in relationship with one another. The community is ontologically prior to the individual. Some other religions seem to fit better into the dominant assumptions of the contemporary capitalist order: that we each are atomized individuals who freely choose, through some form of contract, whether or not to be connected to other individuals. Given this ontological primacy of the individual, religions that fit the bourgeois social order conceive of guilt and responsibility as individual affairs.

Judaism challenges this approach. Since human beings are fundamentally in relationship to others, the people of Israel, as a chain of generations linked from Sinai to the present and into the future, has ontological

precedence. We are not in the world as lone individuals, but as part of a community with a history and a future, and in that community we take collective responsibility for one another's conduct and fate.

This principle of collective responsibility is enunciated in the Torah. If a slain person is found in the countryside, the elders of the nearest town must offer a collective sacrifice as an act of expiation, and must publicly declare that they did not spill this blood. The rabbis of the Talmud asked themselves why the respected elders of a nearby community, the least likely suspects in the crime, should have to atone for this sin. Perhaps, the rabbis speculated, these elders did not provide adequate protection when this person traveled through their community; or perhaps they were responsible for allowing a climate of lawlessness or moral laxity to arise, which in turn might have helped to account for the slaying.

The liturgy of the Jewish High Holy Days develops this theme further. The central prayers are explicit: "WE have transgressed, WE are guilty, WE have betrayed, WE have acted, WE have spoken falsely. . . ." These prayers are followed by an exhaustive list of specific sins that the community publicly proclaims as "OUR" sins. We are responsible for having failed to create a world free of these sins, so we are collectively responsible for them.

During the 1988 High Holy Days the Jewish people have a great deal to repent for in light of the actions of the state of Israel, a state that claims to speak and act on behalf of the entire Jewish people. We have repeatedly argued that the primary responsibility for the current difficulties belongs to the Palestinian rejectionists who rejected the partition plan offered them by the United Nations in 1947 and instead demanded the expulsion of Jews from Palestine. Had they accepted this offer, they would today be living in a Palestinian state considerably larger than the one that some Palestinian moderates now say they would settle for. Moreover, if during the course of the last fifteen years the Palestinians had produced a leadership that unambiguously pursued peace and mutual recognition—a leadership with the courage to reject violence and terrorism and commit itself to pursuing nonviolently its demands for a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza—a majority of Israelis would probably now be willing to erect such a state.

Nevertheless, Palestinian rejectionism does not relieve us of responsibility for our own guilt—for our very large part in perpetuating the conflict today. *Jewish tradition has never held that we are exonerated simply because other nations have committed the same sins or even worse sins.* Such excuses may be offered by some rabbis whose congregants demand that there be a "feel good" flavor to their repentance. These rabbis avoid the controversial issues and reassure the community of its own ultimate righteousness. Too often, they make only small noises about "the anguish" of the current situation. The more courageous rabbis might mention that the beating up of Palestinian civilians doesn't conform to Jewish ethics, but frequently such statements are buried in sermons that reassure the Jewish community that fundamentally everything is OK, that progress is around the corner, and that we can feel proud of how hard Israel is trying and how bad the other side is. This exercise in self-deception has little in common with the serious *cheshbon ha'nefesh* (soul-searching) that is fundamental to the Jewish High Holy Days. (For more on the politics of Israeli self-deception, see Israel criminologist Stanley Cohen's article in this issue of *Tikkun*.)

This is our responsibility, our guilt. Every day that we watched and didn't protest, we were accomplices to the Israeli government's crimes.

So let's remind ourselves of the very troubling reality. The state that claims to be acting as the representative of the Jewish people is today occupying one-and-a-half million Palestinians and preventing several million other Palestinian refugees from returning to their homeland. While many Palestinians wish to destroy the state of Israel, many others have loudly and clearly proclaimed their willingness to live in peace with Israel if only they are given a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. Because these moderate Palestinians join with all other Palestinians in identifying with the PLO, the national liberation organization of the Palestinian people, and because the PLO has a military wing that has perpetrated outrageous acts of brutal terrorism against Israeli civilians (and Jews worldwide), the Israeli government refuses to speak to its members and insists that it is unable to find any moderate Palestinians with whom to negotiate. So, when Abu Sharif, Yassir Arafat's press spokesman, recently circulated a document explicitly acknowledging Israel's right to exist and endorsing *Tikkun*'s proposal to hold a plebiscite on the West Bank and Gaza so that the Palestinians could choose their representatives for peace negotiations, neither the Israeli government nor the institutions of the American Jewish community did anything to acknowledge or build on this potential breakthrough. In fact, the Israeli government used a technical pretext to expel Mubarak Awad, the leading Palestinian advocate of nonviolence, just as it has consistently prevented meetings between Israeli

and Palestinian moderates in the territories.

The occupation is not a temporary expedient. It is now in its twenty-first year, and the current Israeli government has articulated no plans to end it now or in the near future. American Jews like to ignore the fact that the Israeli government has been a major obstacle (though not the only obstacle, to be sure) to a peaceful settlement. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has in recent months repeatedly asserted in public that he would not agree to exchange an inch of West Bank land for a peaceful settlement, no matter what the details. Precisely this clear rejectionist position has made him popular with Israeli chauvinists, whose numbers are increasing and who, according to some experts, might increase the total vote for right-wing parties in Israel's November elections.

The Palestinian uprising will be completing its ninth month when Jews approach the High Holy Days. We do not fault Israeli soldiers for sometimes panicking and using the only weapons they have available to them to respond to assaults that would provoke anyone placed in their situation. But we do fault them for being in the territories in the first place—and there *is* an alternative, as *Tikkun*'s editorial board member Adi Ophir courageously demonstrated in July when he went to jail rather than serve on the West Bank. More important, we *do* fault an Israeli system of justice that has tolerated the imprisonment of thousands of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians without the rudiments of due process. We *do* fault the Israeli army for giving only the slightest slap on the wrist to Israelis who have committed atrocities such as burying alive or chaining and brutally beating Palestinians. The meagerness of these punishments is a covert message that there is really no serious price to be paid for brutality. We *do* fault those Israelis and American Jewish leaders who have given the message to the Israeli right that there will be no political price to be paid for continued Israeli intransigence and brutality. And, finally, we *do* fault those religious leaders in Israel and the United States who have allowed the sacred tradition of Judaism to be used to support the present policies of the right-wing Israeli parties. The damage that they are doing to Judaism and to the Jewish people is incalculable.

This is our community, our responsibility, our guilt. Every day that we watched the beatings of Palestinians on television and didn't write letters of protest to local Jewish newspapers, to Jewish misleaders who claimed to be speaking in our name by supporting the Israeli government, or to our own congressmen, we were accomplices to the Israeli government's crimes. When the "young leadership" of the UJA and the federations allowed itself to be manipulated by staff professionals into appearing to give a sectarian political endorsement of Shamir's policies and a tacit repudiation of Peres and the Israeli peace forces, and when its members welcomed Shamir in March of 1988 with a thunderous standing ovation immediately after Shamir had just rejected Shultz's call for peace negotiations, many American Jews should have taken it upon themselves to contact these self-appointed "young leaders" and to indicate to them that they were not speaking for the majority of American Jews—something made clear a month later when the *Los Angeles Times,* in one of the most extensive polls of American Jewry in recent years, indicated that 60 percent of American Jews supported the Shultz plan and that a higher percentage supported Peres than Shamir.

The polls indicate that there is a silenced majority of American Jews that rejects Israel's policies in the occupied territories, that does not feel represented by or comfortable with the establishment Jewish organizations. Yet these Jews have some repenting to do as well: for staying silent, for letting others take control of "the leadership" of the Jewish world, for not creating alternative organizations, for not supporting those alternative institutions that do exist, for keeping their moral concerns private and not acting in the public arena, for allowing the myth that "Jews are conservative" to be perpetuated, for not recognizing that their moral concerns are rooted in Judaism's prophetic tradition, and for not seeing that they themselves comprise the real Jewish community precisely because they embody the message and vision of Sinai.

There could be no deeper service to the Jewish people than if Jews would raise these issues publicly during the High Holy Day services. Nothing would more deeply rejuvenate the spiritual life of the Jewish community than if we were forced to move beyond ritual incantation and ask ourselves, precisely at the moment when we are together as a community, what part of Israel's conduct we are willing to feel guilty about and take responsibility for, and what we intend to do in the next year to atone for that guilt and change Israeli policies. If our synagogues actually became what they once were—places where the community's solidarity and collective responsibility could be acknowledged and celebrated—they would move beyond their current function as once-a-year spiritual watering holes and take on far greater significance in the lives of many Jews who currently show up on the High Holidays less out of conviction than out of a vague longing for a tradition that they no longer are able to take very seriously.

Finally, a word in defense of guilt. Guilt has gotten a bad name in the twentieth century ever since Freud and his followers began to popularize the notion that people unconsciously punish themselves for desires,

lusts, "inappropriate" emotions, and fantasies that they learned to repress as children.

Freud was right to insist that it is important for our health that we be freed from unconscious guilt. Nevertheless, guilt for acts in which we cause pain to others is both rational and moral. Would that Americans, for example, could see and take responsibility for the worldwide consequences of the economic system that they support.

It might be argued that Jews already shoulder a disproportionate amount of this guilt. But our task is to judge ourselves not according to the practices of others, but according to the commands of our own tradition. Last year at this time we editorialized that many Jews do not realize that there is far more to Judaism than guilt and that if they were to allow themselves to experience the joy of celebrating a traditional Shabbat they would see that the bonds that have held this religion together throughout the ages have been bonds of pleasure, not guilt. Nevertheless, we think it is fitting to remind ourselves this year that there is an appropriate, non-neurotic place for guilt—for the kind of collective guilt that is part of our tradition, to the extent that it is experienced not for its own sake ("beat me again, I love this moral condemnation number"), but as part of the process of transforming ourselves and the world. □

A Problem Picture

Nothing impedes the free
sweep of the eye while it keeps forgetting
what it came here for, before the music
started to remind us,

us viewers, of nothing
to be found among still-warm remembrances
but something bedded next to them, throbbing
automatically

in response. *Whose* response
this house free of telltale disorder
can signify only in dreams, always dreams
of a mirror's one flaw.

She is not you, whose mere
appearance mists the mirror with her past
roles, briefly, but it's easy to forget
who you are, now you're home

for—I almost said, good.
The familiar makes us sick of the real.
Her stomach revolts at a milky taste
as at a memory

of unredeemable
scenes, every stroke a mistake, paradise
for others. She was a perfectionist,
an ideal homemaker

(in the breaks between
flickers of consciousness, the ideal came
into its own) yet the 24-hour
market's familiar goods

had begun to give her
the *unheimlich* sense of a returned gaze.
The garbage behind the market screens her
rehearsal of a flawed

imitation of love-
making that spells the return of romance
on itself, the "murmurous haunt of flies"
that has the eye baffled

and the music confused
long enough for a sigh to escape. Oh
sister, what a mess to find you in.
Whose dream was this again?

The family no longer
sleeps; the answer is deferred and deferred;
then a professional brings out a word
that removes her problem

to a stable constellation
far from our unspeakable domestic lives.

— *Ellen Levy*

Ellen Levy lives in New York City. Her poems have appeared in Raritan *and* The New York Review of Books.

The Specter of Old Age: History, Politics, and Culture in an Aging America

Thomas Cole

A specter is haunting America—the specter of old age. Since the 1970s, our awareness that America is an aging society has blended silently with fears of nuclear holocaust, environmental deterioration, military and economic decline, social conflict, and cultural decadence. The "first new nation," now a declining empire, no longer seems exempt from Old-World destinies. Youthful optimism and belief in limitless progress, qualities this nation ironically tried to recapture by electing our oldest president, appear increasingly incongruous in a society confronting limits on all sides. The current mood of pessimism—the loss of faith in a secure and better future—is particularly strong among many who are now reaching middle age. "Such is youth," as Santayana put it, "'til from that summer's trance we wake to find Despair before us, Vanity behind."

Awakening from a privileged youth spent amidst the unprecedented prosperity that followed World War II, the baby boomers (nearly one-third of the total U.S. population) today find themselves the first generation in American history that cannot count on surpassing its parents' station in life. Prohibitive housing prices, high interest rates, sluggish economic growth, and glutted job markets have turned confident expectations of upward mobility into a gloomy view of the future. Beginning in the late 1970s, these frustrations and a growing disenchantment with welfare state liberalism have supplied a new and surprising political color to images of aging and to intergenerational relations. Critics of Social Security and Medicare blamed the deteriorating condition of children and families on the "graying of the federal budget" (more than half of all federal domestic spending goes to the elderly) and raised the specter of intergenerational warfare between young and old. Since 1985, these views have been widely publicized by an advocacy group known as Americans for Generational Equity, which argues that society is displacing current costs onto future generations and ignoring its obligations to children and the unborn. The group plays on the image of a powerful gerontocratic lobby—ruthless in its pursuit of Americans' hard-earned tax dollars—so that the elderly can buy mink coats, golf carts, and condos.

Until quite recently, support for the elderly enjoyed a privileged status among welfare state programs, built on an image of old people as poor, frail, and dependent. But as the generational equity campaign continues to portray the elderly as selfish, politically powerful, and potentially dangerous, the dynamics of interest-group liberalism have started to turn against them. In February 1988, for example, the cover of *Time* magazine sported a vigorous elderly couple smiling all the way to the tennis court. The caption read: "And now for the fun years! Americans are living longer and enjoying it more—but who will foot the bill?"

Most of today's retired elderly enjoy generous public entitlements, while younger workers generally pay (directly or indirectly) one dollar in seven to the Social Security system. According to recent polls, surprisingly few young people believe that the system will provide adequately for them when they reach retirement. They have heard forecasts of the future "bankruptcy" of Social Security. They know that there will be a smaller ratio of workers to retirees when they leave the labor force. Saddled with a staggering national debt, surprised by the unexpected longevity of their parents, frightened by the rising medical costs of an aging population, many young people feel as if they were *Born to Pay,* the title of Phillip Longman's book on the "new politics of aging in America."

Ours is not the first era to turn its deepest anxieties and disappointments into anger against the elderly. Ezra Pound, for example, spoke for many alienated and bitter young men in the generation of 1914, when he protested the carnage of World War I:

There died a myriad,
And of the best, among them,
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization.

Thomas Cole is an associate professor at the Insititute for the Medical Humanities, University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, and author of the forthcoming The Journey of Life: A Cultural History of Aging *(Johns Hopkins University Press).*

We also are not the first to infuse fear of old age and denial of death with ideological and political meaning. Amidst the late-nineteenth-century crisis of Victorian morality and the decline of classical liberalism, old age in America came to symbolize an intractable barrier to the dream of limitless accumulation of health and wealth. When William Osler jokingly suggested in 1905 that men over age sixty should be chloroformed because they were useless, his remarks stimulated a rash of suicides and angry protests.

In the late twentieth century, critics and commentators have begun to describe the aging of our social institutions with metaphors of decline, exhaustion, and collapse. Our aging society does indeed bring with it unprecedented problems, but the difficulties should not be allowed to overshadow the possibilities.

For one thing, the current pessimism overlooks the enormous triumph represented by the democratization of longevity as well as the success of welfare state policies for older people. For another, it rests on negative stereotypes of old age and ignores the self-fulfilling nature of those aging policies that define the elderly as socially superfluous. Perhaps most important of all, it obscures the vast potential for social productivity and human fulfillment inherent in what Harry R. Moody calls our new "abundance of life."

For the first time in history, most people can expect to live into the "long late afternoon of life." Whereas American life expectancy in 1900 was about forty-nine, today's children will live an average of about seventy-five years (seventy-one for men, seventy-eight for women). This increase represents two-thirds of all the gains in life expectancy achieved since the emergence of the human species! Since 1968, mortality rates among the elderly have fallen substantially, suggesting that we are not yet reaching the limits of the human life span. While individuals are living longer, they also are having fewer children, increasing the ratio of young to old. In 1920, 4.6 percent of the U.S. population was sixty-five years of age or older. In 1984, this figure had reached 11.8 percent. By 2030, when the baby boom cohort is passing through old age, at least one in every five Americans will be elderly.

Not only are more people living longer, but they also are healthier and more financially secure than ever. It is true that the middle-class elderly have received the bulk of federal spending, that poverty and disease among the very old, as well as among women and minorities, remain more recalcitrant than ever. Nevertheless, since the 1960s liberal Social Security benefits have reduced poverty among the elderly from 35 percent to less than 14 percent. Thanks to Medicare and Medicaid, more older people are able to see physicians and to receive long-term care.

While aging policy still does not meet the health or income needs of an important minority of elders, it has been far more successful than programs designed to help children and young families, and it has avoided the deep funding cuts that other social programs have received during the Reagan era. Today, however, aging policy faces a series of problems that neither the liberal perspective (more professional intervention, more entitlements, more taxes) nor the conservative one (marketplace solutions: more self-reliance, more savings) adequately addresses. Generational equity is only the most visible and widely publicized of these problems. As we will see, the question of justice between the old and the young is linked to deeper cultural and existential questions such as the quality of life in old age, the unity and integrity of the life cycle, and the meaning of aging.

Generational Equity and the Burden of an Aging Population

The current fiscal dilemma of aging policy originated in the late 1970s, when high inflation and slow economic growth rapidly drained Social Security trust funds. Social Security quickly lost its status as an untouchable "sacred cow." Emphasizing that the ratio of beneficiaries to workers had dropped from 1:40 in 1940 to 1:3.3 in 1980, neoconservatives raised the specter of an aging society. Forecasts of intergenerational Armageddon and of Social Security's collapse made alarming headlines. The elderly lost their "favored" ideological status as "deserving poor" and increasingly were portrayed as a threat to the future.

In May 1981, the Reagan administration's first attempts to cut Social Security were soundly rebuffed. In 1982, Reagan appointed a bipartisan National Commission on Social Security Reform. In 1983, its recommendations—delayed cost-of-living increases, taxes on upper-income recipients, and a gradually increasing retirement age in the twenty-first century—were adopted. As Andrew Achenbaum shows in *Social Security: Visions and Revisions,* policymakers once again resorted to short-term tinkering with the system rather than face its long-term financial and ideological problems.

The 1983 amendments to the Social Security Act quieted voices of doom, but not for long. Soon after Reagan's reelection came rumblings of the next battle over old age security: the financing of health care. In the last several years, rising health care costs for the elderly have generated a new sense of alarm. Since 1965, the costs of Medicare and Medicaid have grown so rapidly (and are projected to rise even faster) that observers such as Daniel Callahan now fear that the

humane medical care for the elderly that was introduced in the 1960s and 1970s will become a "new social threat in the late 1980s and 1990s." Total health care costs for people aged sixty-five and over are expected to grow (in real dollars) from $50 billion in 1978 to $200 billion in 2000, and, during these years, the proportion supported by public expenditures will grow from $29 billion to $114 billion.

In light of these increasing costs, we must grapple with difficult questions about how we should distribute limited health care resources between the old and the young. Is it fair to spend such a large proportion of our health expenditures on the dying elderly? Do these expenditures actually benefit them? Should we be devoting so much of our biomedical research and technology to the diseases of aging? Questions of distributive justice inevitably lead to questions of social meaning. How do we justify funds spent on a population that is not economically productive? What "good" are old people anyway? What do they contribute to the rest of society? Are there any special virtues that the elderly possess, any particular obligations that we have to them?

Two moral philosophers have recently taken up these questions from different perspectives, yet both of them fail in the end to address the fundamental cultural issues concerning aging. Daniel Callahan, in *Setting Limits: Medical Goals in an Aging Society,* and Norman Daniels, in *Am I My Parents' Keeper? An Essay on Justice Between the Young and Old,* construct arguments attempting to justify the provision of decent minimum health care for the elderly.

Callahan's book is, in part, an attempt to rethink the meaning of old age itself. He deplores the absence of "a coherent, established, and meaningful place" for the elderly in our society, and as a communitarian he thinks we should define the primary purpose of old age as service to the young, rather than as individual pursuit of pleasure. Like the old characters in Willa Cather's fiction, Callahan's ideal elders live primarily to benefit their grandchildren. Death can be understood, in this context, as the completion of a natural life span rather than as a failed quest for immortality. As Thomas Jefferson once wrote to John Adams in their old age: "It is reasonable we should drop off and make room for another growth. When we have lived our generation out, we should not wish to encroach upon another."

Callahan conceives of old age as a biological limit that we should respect rather than an "endless frontier" for biomedical conquest. Nevertheless, he thinks that society is obligated to guarantee a decent minimum of palliative health care, and he decries the impoverished social meaning of aging, calling for public debate about the nature and purposes of late life in the context of a "natural life span."

Daniels also supports minimum palliative health care, but he rejects Callahan's communitarian assumption that we can prescribe what is "good" or "right" for people at different stages of their lives, arguing instead that we should distribute resources to different age-groups according to impartial principles that permit individuals to pursue their own opportunities.

In some ways, Daniels' book is really a philosophical and egalitarian version of the liberal ideology that has, until recently, legitimated Social Security. Individuals are encouraged to think that they are "saving" or insuring themselves against the vicissitudes of old age and disability. Thus, the primary justification for support or care for the elderly is based not on intergenerational obligations, but on a commitment to provide the opportunity for people to pursue their life plans at each stage of their lives. These programs are supported not because people are committed to the common good, but because they have a common stake in the programs.

The Centrality of the Life Course: Existential, Ideological, and Social Dimensions

Despite the differences in their approach, both Callahan and Daniels use the life span (or life cycle or life course) as a fundamental unit for analyzing old age. Like others who have responded to the generational equity movement, Callahan and Daniels turn to this universal category as a way of undercutting the divisiveness implicit in the focus on age-groups or generations. So, for example, Daniels argues that a focus on the life course can encourage a kind of solidarity among different age groups. After all, growing old is both a fate and a privilege that most of us share.

The unifying power of the life-course model lies also in a historical tradition that until recently provided widely shared images of the unity and integrity of the life course. Born amidst the anxiety and upheaval of the Renaissance and Reformation eras, the modern life cycle assumed an almost numinous quality amidst the European urban middle classes struggling for social and religious identity. Its burgeoning iconography (known as the "stages of life") played an important role in the emergence of bourgeois urban individualism. People began to feel that they had more control over their own lives once they were able to conceive of them in long-range terms. This new perspective encouraged them to develop individual virtues such as self-control and thrift. It also defused awareness of social inequalities based on class, wealth, gender, or political power. After all, the life cycle was most significant, and

everyone, irrespective of class and sex, passed through it. French revolutionary moralists envisioned an ideal society where individuals would be divided only according to the natural order of stages: from dependent child to active adult to honored elder.

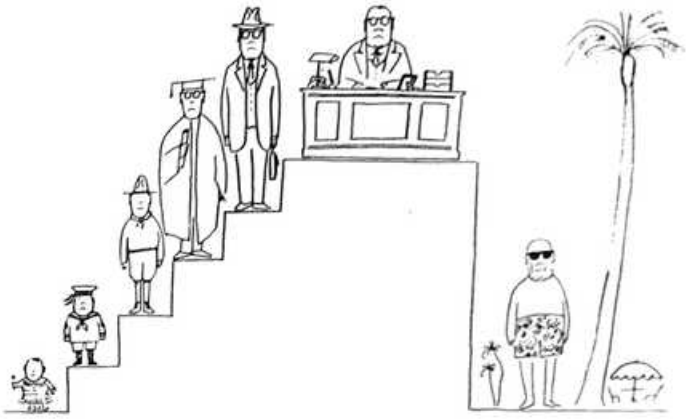
Set free from the older bonds of status, family, and locality, middle-class individuals during the last one hundred and fifty years have increasingly viewed their own lives as careers—as a sequence of expected positions in school, at work, and in retirement. This pattern of expectations constitutes what Martin Kohli aptly calls a "moral economy of the life course." By the third quarter of the twentieth century, Western democracies had institutionalized this "moral economy" by providing age-homogeneous schools for youths; jobs for the middle-aged organized according to skills, experience, and seniority; and publicly funded retirement benefits for the elderly, who were considered too slow, too frail, or too old-fashioned to be productive. Hence, the power of the life-course perspective has been not only ideological or moral, but also institutional. In other words, the life-course perspective has been and continues to be used as an essential instrument for maintaining social order.

Moreover, since the late eighteenth century, the structure of the "normal" life course has been solidified by changes, changes in demography and family life, and the growth of age-stratified systems of public rights and duties. Age-at-death has been transformed from a pattern of relative randomness to one of predictability, and the experience of a "normal" family cycle (including marriage, children, survival of both partners to age fifty-five, "empty nest," and widowhood) has become increasingly common and chronologically standardized.

At the same time, over the last century the spread of universal age-homogeneous public schooling and chronologically triggered public pension systems has divided life into three "boxes": education, work, and retirement. This bureaucratized life course, supported by the state and administered by experts, is now an important means of social regulation. So, for example, psychologists tell us what the appropriate age is for schooling and other childhood experiences, and gerontologists teach us how we should cope as "old people."

The Moral Economy Besieged: A Historical Crisis of Meaning

The moral economy of the life course forms the unspoken historical foundation of both Daniels' and Callahan's views about justice among the young and the old in an aging society. Both are aware



of the need to rethink the moral obligations among age groups and to reformulate the moral economy of the life span in a new demographic context, yet neither fully appreciates how much has been lost by the secularization and modernization of the life course.

Amidst the decline of feudalism, the breakup of the Catholic church, and the emergence of urban commerce, early modern men and women turned to ancient understandings of the life cycle for a sense of stability and order. "Life's course is fixed," wrote Cicero in *De Senectute*. "Nature has only a single path and that path is run but once, and to each stage of existence has been allotted its own appropriate quality." People read Ecclesiastes and were comforted to learn that the natural divisions of a lifetime belong to the divine order of the universe: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Since the late Middle Ages, much Western medical, philosophical, and religious teaching has been predicated on this notion of the "seasonableness" or naturalness of the human life cycle.

This view of the natural order is now under siege, in large part because its vision of old age is neither socially nor spiritually adequate and because the social meanings of life's stages are in great flux. The greatest threat to its legitimacy comes from the demeaning of old age and the marginalization of the elderly that began in the nineteenth century and that became embedded in the bureaucratized life course of the welfare state. Herein lies the key to understanding the contemporary specter of old age.

Our century has seen a loss of cultural meaning and vital social roles for older people. Liberals usually attribute this loss of meaning to "ageism"—systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against older people, analogous to racism and sexism. During the last fifteen years, we have witnessed a formidable effort to combat ageism. Academic gerontologists, humanists, health

professionals, social workers, organized elders, and others have attempted to debunk "myths" of old age and to substitute positive images of aging for negative ones. This movement attempts both to redress the social conditions of old age and to reform cultural sensibilities toward aging.

The campaign against ageism has done a great deal to free older people from outmoded cultural constraints. Nevertheless, this approach has serious limitations that have gone unnoticed. Not the least of these limitations is the fact that the attack on ageism is itself part of a historical pattern of separating the "negative" from the "positive" aspects of old age.

Ageists and their critics share a common social and cultural history and have more in common than is generally realized. In America, this history begins with the consolidation of a middle-class value system in the nineteenth century. Before 1800, when most men and women lived in families and communities regulated by religious and social principles of hierarchy, dependency, and reciprocal obligation, acknowledgment of the intractable sorrows and infirmities of old age remained culturally acceptable. New England Puritans, for example, constructed a dialectical view of old age, emphasizing *both* the inevitable losses and decline that come with aging *and* hope for life and redemption. According to the Calvinist view (which persisted in some areas until the middle of the nineteenth century), old age normally entailed physical, mental, and moral deterioration. Pain and chronic disease were considered part of humanity's punishment for the sin of Adam. Prolongation of life and usefulness into old age constituted a "distinguishing favor"—a rare exemption from deterioration, granted by an inscrutable God. Today this view would be attacked as ageist, negative, and hopeless; but for the orthodox believer it offered an alternative to despair. Physical decay underscored human dependence on God—the real source of hope—and drove home the necessity for piety.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the revolt against patriarchy and communalism struck hard at old age, a convenient symbol of hierarchical authority. But if old age in America had suffered only the usual misfortune of being identified with an old order, the impact might have been short-lived. Instead, old age not only symbolized the old order; it represented a blind spot in the new morality of self-control. The primary virtues of Victorian morality—independence, health, success—required constant control over one's body and physical energies. The decaying body in old age, a constant reminder of the limits of self-control, came to signify precisely what bourgeois culture hoped to avoid: dependence, disease, failure, and sin.

The rise of liberal individualism and a moral code relying heavily on physical self-control marked the end of early American culture's ability to hold opposites in creative tension, to accept the ambiguity, contingency, intractability, and unmanageability of human life. Initiated by antebellum revivalists, Protestantism's overwhelming commitment to Victorian morality deeply compromised its integrity and consequently its approach to aging and death. Buoyed by faith and the vision of life as a spiritual journey, early American believers had sought strength and personal growth by *accepting* frailty and decline in old age. Hope and triumph were linked dialectically to tragedy and death. This integrity was virtually lost in a liberal culture that found it necessary to separate strength from frailty, growth from decay, and hope from death. A society overwhelmingly committed to material progress and the conquest of death abandoned many of the spiritual resources needed to deal with human finitude.

Impelled by their perfectionism in physical and spiritual matters and by their belief in the power of the individual will, Victorian moralists dichotomized and rationalized experience in order to control it. Ideological and psychological pressures to master (rather than accept) old age generated a dualism that retains much of its cultural power today. Rather than acknowledge ambiguity and contingency in aging, Victorians split old age into sin, decay, and dependence on the one hand; virtue, self-reliance, and health on the other. According to the consensus constructed between 1830 and 1870 by revivalists, romantic evangelicals, and popular health reformers, anyone who lived a life of hard work, faith, and self-discipline could have their health and independence preserved until a ripe old age. Only the shiftless, faithless, and promiscuous were doomed to premature death or a miserable old age.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the positive pole of this dualism, the myth of healthy self-reliance, remained culturally dominant. But that century also witnessed both the demise of the old Protestant vision of life as a spiritual voyage and the rise of a scientific worldview. By 1900, scientific assessment of efficiency and productivity had come to dominate public evaluation of old age. While decline in old age had been ideologically repugnant to the self-employed shopkeepers and artisans of the "old" middle class, the reconstructed professional and corporate middle class of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries found ample reason to acknowledge, if not exaggerate, the degenerative qualities of old age.

Often with the best of intentions, academic and helping professionals reinforced and legitimated age

(Continued on p. 93)

The Family, Internationalism, and Economic Justice

Samuel Bowles

The most important economic issues facing the next president are primarily political and moral: they involve choices about what kind of people we want to be and how we want to relate to those whom we do not call "us." Of course, the policies and choices made will be advocated and criticized with respect to their effects on the deficit, on inflation, and on the value of the dollar, as if opponents—monetarists versus Keynesians, for example, or whatever new wrinkle comes along—were arguing simply about the best way to get the same job done. In truth, the policies that emerge from the next presidency—whether a continuation or a rejection of trickle-down economics—will reflect the political force of distinct moral positions and conflicting economic interests more than the competing claims of one brand of economics or another.

Progressive political activists enter this fray with a particular disability: They are challenged to make sense of a commitment to economic justice and social solidarity in a world vastly different from the one that gave birth to these values. The progressive economic program and ideology that emerged from the last great crisis of capitalism—in the 1930s—are now outdated.

Restructuring Families and Rethinking Economic Justice

The economic model associated with the New Deal saw inequality as a problem *among families* of differing economic circumstance *within a nation*. Neither of the primitive units of this analysis—its atoms (families) or its boundaries (the nation)—is defensible.

Many would share the discomfort that I felt when asked recently by a Malaysian economist why Americans seem to think that keeping an autoworker on the job in Detroit is more important than providing a job in Guadalajara. Our commitment to social justice is based on universal values, but sometimes it is advocated in a nationalist voice.

While we are still concerned with inequality among families, we are as likely today to be disturbed by the sharply contrasting economic fortunes of men, women, and children both within families and on their own. What I will call the canonical family—husband breadwinner, wife homemaker—was an extensive system of redistribution of labor and income; but only one in five married couples fits this description today, and married couples constitute less than two-thirds of the adult population.

Why do Americans seem to think that keeping an autoworker on the job in Detroit is more important than providing a job in Guadalajara?

More than an economic model is at stake here, for the rhetoric of populism no less than the economics of Keynes is wedded to families and the nation as basic terms of reference. And when populists oppose the monied interests on behalf of "the people," which people do we have in mind? The people are far more divided—along lines of age, sex, family status, and sexual orientation—than this simple populist vision would allow. And far more inclusive as well, for we no longer accept the moral obviousness of national boundaries, perhaps in part because we recognize that the very same monied interests whom we oppose here exploit "the people" on a larger, worldwide scale.

"The working class" fares no better than "the people" as a moral and political anchor of egalitarian social policy. Are we not equally interested in meeting the needs of those who occupy no recognized place in the class structure: those who do not work for wages? If the economic claims of the rich are to be rejected as unjust rewards for their "unproductive" or "parasitic" economic activities, and if productive work thus is to be the bedrock of one's just claim to share in the social product, how are we to defend the modern welfare state, which

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taxes productive workers and transfers the proceeds to the unemployed? We can defend it nonetheless (many of the "unemployed" are hard at work raising children) but its most compelling claim—that through the welfare state we can indeed be our brothers' and sisters' keepers—is out of sync with the "productivist" ethic implied by making the working class the frame of reference for egalitarian social policy.

If what we believe in is fairness, equality of opportunity, and a decent living standard for all, then we'd better just say so and fight for them rather than try to justify these moral commitments by some more-or-less contrived notion that the needy are deserving because they are productive. To reject the idea that the productivity of the poor is the basis of their claim on a fair share of society's wealth is not, of course, to abandon the correct proposition that providing well-paying jobs and decent education to the poor would enhance the productivity of the economy as a whole.

Changing family patterns dramatize the inadequacy of an egalitarianism based on the productive contribution of the poor. As more single parents raise children alone, we are forced to ask: Is their work productive labor? It is, of course, but is that why it should be supported at an adequate level?

The problem is more general, for much of the work done in families has always been recognized as necessary for the continuity of social life; but, as long as the canonical family persisted, this labor was rewarded in a marital exchange of goods for work at home. The wage earner's cash combined with the housewife's labor to raise children and maintain a livelihood. The wage earner was maintained by the domestic labor of the wife, who was in turn maintained by the goods purchased with the wage. As long as it remained within the family, the terms of this exchange by and large escaped scrutiny by egalitarian critics and social engineers.

The exchange of household labor for goods has now gone public: Women workers still prepare food, care for the sick, raise kids, comfort the old, and educate the young as their major form of work; but much of this work is now done outside the home, for wages. Men feel less obligated to share their paycheck, many choosing to remain single and others opting out of child support responsibilities following the dissolution of marriage. The means by which women and children gain access to material necessities is thus undergoing a profound shift: not so much transacted over the kitchen table as hammered out in segmented labor markets and male-dominated legislatures. No longer veiled by domestic privacy, the terms of exchange of goods for "housework" can no longer be ignored. And it is not: The emergence of the gender gap in party preference may be traced in part to the diverging economic interests of men and women.

Just as the Great Depression brought about the breakdown of a basic system of income distribution as millions went without paying work, the crisis of children plagued by poverty and homelessness today is a symptom of a fundamental distributional crisis: the breakdown of the family as a means of transacting goods for household labor and the failure of our society to devise remotely adequate substitutes.

But there is a difference between today's crisis of the family and the 1930s' crisis of unemployment. The Great Depression was a crisis of nonwork, but the 1970s and 1980s are witnessing a crisis of work: women are not out of work, but a great many are out of money. The process under way is not the collapse of demand for goods and services, but the restructuring of supply in the largest sector of the U.S. economy: the production of our everyday life and the reproduction of our children. The sheer magnitude of the changes underway is staggering. It is almost certainly the case, for example, that more labor is currently devoted to raising children and caring for the old than to all of our agricultural and manufacturing production combined. Who will now produce the goods and services that were once the exclusive task of labor in the home? If husband-wife households are less common, and we are more likely to see both partners working outside the house, who will stay home with a sick child, shop, remember Aunt Margaret's birthday, care for an aged parent, and cook dinner?

This is not a new question for veterans of car-pool wars and other New Age family binds, but it is a novel issue in terms of industrial restructuring and economic policy. I imagine that the McDonald's Corporation has given it more serious study than have our presidential candidates or the Brookings Institution. Because political credibility dictates that all serious candidates profess a belief in "the family," which should be "strengthened," we are still a long way from a general moral and political discussion about how the things that the canonical family used to do will be done and who will pay now that the canonical family is headed toward horse-and-buggydom.

Not having something to say about the restructuring of the family as an economic institution is as sure a prescription for irrelevance today as not having a position on unemployment was in 1932. The right, on the one hand, would have us bring back the horse and buggy, and many liberals, on the other hand, welcome its demise while ignoring the fact that the canonical family, whatever else may be said about it, was a system of production of socially indispensable goods and services.

An adequate replacement will have to recognize two fundamental principles. First, many of the tasks performed by domestic labor simply cannot be organized on a for-profit basis for the simple reason that the products of domestic labor are not commodities, but people. As a result, the restructuring of the family cannot be done along capitalist lines, but must be achieved through an expansion of the nonprofit sector of the economy both within and outside of government. Second, the husband-wife family is no longer a secure system of income redistribution. Relieving the economic dependence of women on men and fostering adequate care for children, the elderly, and others require that the people performing these tasks be assured of an adequate income level independent of their marital status. In short, they must be paid for what they do.

Populism: Global or Jingoistic?

Like the demise of the canonical family, the erosion of the nation as our fundamental moral community is one of those welcome developments that has thrown the progressive political and moral world into disarray. A century ago in Europe and North America there was a transparent connection between nationalism and political ideology: Conservatives were nationalists warning their employees and fellow citizens of foreign agitators, and socialists were internationalists, changing countries, in Brecht's evocative hyperbole, as often as they changed their socks.

Especially since the Second World War, labor, recognizing the gains to be made by redistributing income within a national economy, has increasingly embraced a nationalist position; while business, recognizing the profit opportunities in global capitalism, has tended to adopt more internationalist positions. The emergence of the Keynesian welfare state defined the limits of redistribution at the national boundaries; social security and unemployment insurance became necessary planks in any political platform, and foreign aid was never more than a luxury or a transparent arm of U.S. foreign policy. Within the circumscribed terrain of the national economy, the welfare state delivered economic security and prosperity on an unprecedented scale. Poverty was not thereby abolished, but a commitment to care for those in need was established. Anthropologist Marshal Sahlins tells us that "if friends make gifts, gifts make friends," and the same might be said of the welfare state. It not only expresses solidarity, but it builds it—just as far as the national borders.

The economic effectiveness of the Keynesian welfare state and the power of the labor movement also *required* national boundaries, for in a world of cheap transport and cheap labor the free movement of goods and labor jeopardizes the material gains of unions and social program beneficiaries. A truly global system of economic competition would eventually force wage restraint and even concessions on the more well-to-do segments of the world working class. Less obviously, but no less certainly, the more a nation is integrated into a global system that does not recognize national boundaries, the less effective will the traditional tools of Keynesian economic policy be, tools such as the use of deficit spending to stimulate output and employment. The reason is simple enough: Putting money in the hands of buyers (which is what a deficit does) does not stimulate the economy unless the buyers choose to purchase goods and services made in the nation in question. The more integrated into a world system that the economy is, the more likely will consumers and others be to spend their additional dollars on Toyotas and Chiantis rather than on (U.S.-built) Fords and Millers. The recent record-high U.S. budget deficits, for example, stimulated other countries' economies at least as much as they did the U.S. economy.

Many of the tasks performed by domestic labor simply cannot be organized on a for-profit basis for the simple reason that the products of domestic labor are not commodities, but people.

While the labor movement went national, business went international, finding ready markets, unorganized workers, unprotected natural environments, and the other ingredients of capitalist economic health throughout the rest of the world. The lingering worries of business about foreign agitators were all but replaced by a newfound commercial cosmopolitanism: If U.S. workers would only learn the ways of the Japanese—putting color-coded uniforms on Appalachian-born autoworkers doesn't seem to do the trick, but we're just beginning to experiment. And the steady flood of imports certainly adds to the pressure to conform to the world's low-cost producers.

Many people in the labor movement, and many people concerned about the future of our industrial communities, found the rhetoric of nationalism ready-made to promote the kind of jingoistic populism that had sprung up in resistance. Thanks to this rhetoric, multinational corporations are now portrayed as unpatriotic and their global operations are targeted with uncommon criticism from the House of Labor. Less welcome is the general climate of Asia-bashing pro-

moted by this rhetoric. Richard Gephardt's meteoric rise as a presidential candidate attests to the power of this jingoistic populism even though his equally meteoric burnout suggests some of its limits. The global populism of Jesse Jackson seems to be a more promising course.

From an egalitarian viewpoint, the problems with the populist jingoism are both moral and practical. From a practical political viewpoint, populist jingoism may succeed in promoting tariffs and gaining some short-run job protection, but it is divisive within the U.S. because it pits the interests of (often low-income) consumers of imports against the interests of workers. While these consumers and workers sometimes are one and the same, often they are not. I have more than once heard a mother on welfare lambaste an industrial worker or union representative over the issue of tariffs. "You want me to pay twice as much for my kids' clothing so you can keep your eighteen-dollar-an-hour job!" is what I remember a woman from Maine saying.

Tariff protection—or any of its "get-tough trade policy" variants—is an unlikely foundation for a viable long-term populist coalition. The practical economics of protectionism are no more promising. For as long as wages, working conditions, and environmental protection in other parts of the world fall far short of U.S. standards, workers in the U.S. will always be threatened with losing their jobs when their plant packs up and heads South. Tariff protection can (and should) be used to promote stable and planned long-term economic adjustments, but it cannot protect the living standards of U.S. workers in the long run. Doing so requires two things: the maintenance of a high level of worldwide demand for goods and services and the spread of democratic and union rights and environmental protection throughout the world. Neither objective has a hope of success if workers in the leading capitalist countries of the world (and their allies) adopt a "blame the Hyundai workers" position.

The moral blindness of populist jingoism is evident: In implicitly embracing the position that a dollar earned by a U.S. worker is to be preferred to an equivalent sum earned by some other worker, it arbitrarily delimits the boundaries of just redistribution, often in racist or other repugnant ways. The result does not promote economic justice but undermines the moral legitimacy of the demand for redistribution. Equally damaging, by opposing the interests of workers in the rest of the world to the interests of U.S. workers, populist jingoism fosters an environment favorable to the kind of right-wing interventionist foreign policy that thwarts the spread of democratic and labor rights and creates safe havens for the runaway shop.

Egalitarians and Democrats cannot mount a credible moral critique of U.S. capitalism today, nor can they develop a compelling alternative, until they abandon the nation-state as the boundary of their concerns and the sole instrument of their programs. The key to a viable long-term international economic policy is international solidarity—both cooperation among nation-states in order to maintain aggregate demand via a kind of global Keynesianism, and active opposition to policies of any nations that seek to perpetuate low-wage labor and environmental degradation throughout the world.

But, the skeptic may wonder, can policies be designed that serve the interests of people *here* without sacrificing the interests of people *there?* Many come to mind. If the crushing debt that is now depressing the economies of Latin America were simply written off (in substantial part or totally), those economies could use their export earnings to buy needed goods from the U.S. rather than to pay the banks. The result would be a dramatic improvement in the economic prospects of both regions. Similarly, if the U.S. government were publicly to consider imposing a selective tax on goods imported from nations that deny their workers and citizens standard labor and democratic rights, the ability of workers and others to advance their interests—and narrow the labor cost gap—would be greatly enhanced. The objective would not be to limit imports but to send a clear message to U.S. and other firms operating in the "friendly business climates" offered by autocratic governments: If you want secure access to the U.S. market, you'd better commit yourself to the strategy of producing better goods efficiently rather than gaining your cost advantage through the superexploitation of labor and the degradation of the planet's environment.

Were we to make a commitment to global egalitarianism, there would be no shortage of practical policy steps to be taken. Thus, the main task facing Democrats and egalitarians today is not to devise programs. It is to reevaluate and update our moral and political framework so that it can cope with the present realities, among them the restructuring of the family and the globalization of both production and our moral commitments. □

Honoring the Past to Change the Future: Solidarity and the Warsaw Ghetto

Mark Erlich

At first glance Warsaw looks like a typical European city. In the older sections, elegant buildings—faithfully recreated after the carnage of World War II—line wide avenues and broad boulevards that are punctuated by parks, rotaries, and squares dedicated to national heroes. Statues of Chopin, Copernicus, Mickiewicz, and King Zygmunt I are visual reminders of Polish contributions to world history. Every country has its national heroes, pivotal events, and key dates that are drilled into the heads of unsuspecting schoolchildren. But in Poland, these monuments symbolize more than the rote learning of the young. Today, as has long been true in Poland, history is palpable.

This fact can baffle a visitor from the United States, inured to our culture's historical amnesia and love affair with the present. But the Polish national identity is fiercely and inextricably attached to legendary figures and dramatic incidents. The national pride in *Polish* institutions is a response to a legacy of invasions and occupations by Germany, Austria, and, above all, Russia. Insecure borders beg for a crystal-clear definition of the authentic Poland, untainted by the heavy hand of outsiders. As a result, the struggle over how to interpret the past continually inspires both anger and hope while it guides the present.

I visited Warsaw in April to participate in the addition of a new, if more humble, monument to the city's landscape. On the forty-fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, a committee of forty-six prominent Poles linked to Solidarity dedicated a memorial to two prewar Jewish socialist leaders, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter. The two men were internationally renowned socialist leaders in prewar Poland. Erlich was a member of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International, and both served as Warsaw city councilors. But they were better known as the extraordinarily popular leaders of the General Jewish Workers Union (the "Bund"). Erlich and Alter, though startlingly different in temperament, jointly presided over one of the most impressive of this century's socialist movements.

The Bund, its roots deep in the Jewish, urban working class, was a model of an activist, militant, democratic organization. Within the Jewish community, the Bund argued for an autonomous Jewish existence in the Diaspora and criticized the Zionist call for a Palestinian homeland. Inside the socialist movement, the Bund stood on the left flank of the Second International, prodding moderate Western European comrades but firmly denouncing the Stalinist version of revolution. Above all, the Bund was an extremely effective political and labor organization, able to mobilize thousands of Jewish workers across Poland.

Henryk Erlich was my grandfather. His life's work has been an inspiration for my family. His wife, Sophie Dubnow-Erlich (a noted poet and activist in her own right), and my parents spun tales of the Bund's vibrant internal life and its central role in the remarkable flowering of Jewish culture in Poland between the wars. The legacy of both my grandparents—their commitment to social justice and personal integrity—has always functioned as a demanding yardstick against which to measure my own actions. But while I knew my grandmother well, I never met my grandfather. Both he and Victor Alter were executed in 1941 in the Soviet Union as part of Stalin's plan to eliminate all potential threats to his vision of a Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe.

The April trip was my first to Poland. I had few expectations, other than a wish to learn about the land my family fled in 1939. But what began as a personal homage to my grandfather turned into a crash course in family history, the Warsaw Ghetto, the bitter experience of Jews in Poland, present-day Polish politics and culture in the Soviet sphere, the current state of Solidarity, and, above all, a lesson in the enduring power of history and the question of collective responsibility for the past.

In March, Marek Edelman contacted my family. Plans had been made, he told my parents, to honor Erlich and Alter. Would we like to represent the family at the ceremony? Edelman is a remarkable man. He is a lean, argumentative, chain-smoking, sixty-six-year-old cardiologist who now lives in Lodz. In present-day

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Poland he has become something of a national hero. Edelman is the only survivor of the five-member command group of Warsaw Ghetto resistance fighters who were crushed by the overwhelming might of the Nazi army in the final 1943 uprising. He managed to survive the war and elected to stay in Poland, practicing medicine and, for the past eight years, playing an active role in Solidarity.

I was familiar with Solidarity's efforts to address the issue of the role of Jews in Polish history and was, therefore, not surprised to learn of plans to remember the uprising. Edelman himself had almost single-handedly educated a younger generation of Poles about the Holocaust through the publication of Hanna Krall's best-selling 1977 book-length interview with him, *Shielding the Flame*. Other Solidarity leaders had taken up the banner, challenging government misstatements and/or silence about Polish anti-Semitism and World War II. Solidarity began to fill in this missing chapter of the official version of Polish history.

Still, I vastly underestimated the stakes that were involved. As I half listened to the soft Polish cadences of the flight attendants on the trip to Warsaw, I leafed through press releases from the official Polish Press Agency located in my seat-back compartment. The government was clearly alarmed by the proposed memorial and had mounted a campaign against the organizing committee. *Trybuna Ludu*, newspaper of the Polish Communist party, labeled the organizers "cemetery hyenas." (I later learned that an emissary from General Jaruzelski had visited Edelman and offered him the nation's highest military award in exchange for a lower profile. Edelman refused.)

Clearly, the fight over who should commemorate victims of the Holocaust had become one battle in the complex conflict between Solidarity and the Jaruzelski regime. The government had put extensive resources into a state-sponsored acknowledgement of the Warsaw Ghetto. Dignitaries from around the world were invited to participate in a week of well-publicized activities. The campaign was part of the government's larger search for political and financial support outside the Eastern bloc. With the Polish economy in yet another crisis, government leaders have reached out to the West for hard currency, tourists, and economic aid. The occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary offered an opportunity to strengthen recently established ties with Israel, to develop relations with influential Jews abroad, and to court international public opinion.

Solidarity's initial stance was not openly confrontational. Jacek Kuron, a founder of the Committee for the Defense of Workers (KOR) and a leading Solidarity figure, told *The New York Times*: "The Polish People's Republic also talks about the uprising, and in Poland there exists a not inconsiderable distrust of whatever they say. We came to the conclusion that it would be good to do something, not against the official commission, but parallel to it." His comments were clearly disingenuous. The notion that Polish Party officials, who have never repudiated their own behavior in a viciously anti-Semitic campaign twenty years ago, had a legitimate right to celebrate the memory of Jewish suffering provoked derision and revulsion outside official circles.

Why the Bund?

The anniversary, therefore, offered Solidarity an opportunity both to claim the moral high ground on the issue of the Holocaust and to upstage the government. For an organization that has faced martial law, imprisonment, and continual harassment, a chance to embarrass the authorities provides no small satisfaction. But why choose a memorial to the two leaders of the Bund as a central focus of the commemoration? The answers reveal Solidarity's commitment to righting the historical record, developing a "usable past" for its own purposes, and challenging the moral legitimacy of the Jaruzelski regime.

For Edelman, it was natural to honor Erlich and Alter. Edelman had been a Bundist in his youth, and the two men heavily influenced his political education. Furthermore, the Bundist commitment to an anti-Zionist democratic socialism survives in Edelman's sense of himself as a Jew, a democrat, an activist, and a Polish patriot. (Edelman's strong identification as a Jew *and* as a Pole remains a mystery to many American Jews who can see Poland only as an all-too-willing witness to the Holocaust. But in the context of the Bund's rejection of Zionism and its extensive political activity in the name of Polish Jews, it makes more sense.)

At a dinner the day after the dedication, Solidarity leader Adam Michnik joked that "Edelman's genius is that he managed to infuriate both the Polish government and the state of Israel in one fell swoop." The quip contained a great deal of truth. Official commemoration events drew hundreds of Israelis and European and American Jews, but virtually no Poles. Meanwhile, Solidarity's ability to mobilize thousands of its supporters to remember the Warsaw Ghetto undercut months of delicate negotiations between Polish and Israeli government officials. Furthermore, the focus on two Jewish leaders noted for their anti-Zionism irked some of the official guests. In a bizarre incident in a week filled with ironies, Party spokesmen joined with representatives of the World Jewish Congress to denounce the memorial to Erlich and Alter as a political

distraction.

For Solidarity as a whole, paying homage to the Bund is a similarly authentic act. In the search for historical role models, the Bund and its prewar ally, the Polish Socialist party, represent beliefs that perhaps most closely parallel those of Solidarity. And to the extent that Solidarity chooses to address, in Lech Walesa's words, the end of Poles' and Jews' "common centuries-old history by an act of annihilation which human conscience must never forget," again, the Bund serves as an appropriate vehicle. The desire to build a secular Jewish culture *within* Poland, the emphasis on trade union organization, and the eagerness to work for social justice together with non-Jewish Poles, clearly make the Bundist tradition the most congenial of the wide variety of ideologies that emerged from the Jewish community. Finally, the fact that Erlich and Alter were executed by the Soviet government offered an additional incentive to honor them. Solidarity welcomes any chance to needle the Jaruzelski regime through implicit or explicit criticism of its powerful protectors.

"Half of Warsaw Will Be There"

On April 16, we asked Edelman about the plans for the following day. "Half of Warsaw will be there," he commented wryly. To be sure, less than half the population turned out, but the organizing committee had done its homework. By noon on a cloudless day, over 3,000 people jammed shoulder to shoulder onto the overgrown grounds of the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street. As dozens of arm-banded marshals from the Independent Students Union (NZS) kept order, the crowd listened to speeches and heard messages from François Mitterand, Willy Brandt, Archbishop of Paris Jean-Marie Lustiger, the German Greens, and the AFL-CIO. Standing in front of the new headstone for Erlich and Alter, Zbigniew Bujak, the young and charismatic factory worker who leads Warsaw Solidarity, said that he had only recently learned the story of the two Bund leaders. "We need to find our connection to history," he reminded the audience. "And Erlich and Alter are my past."

Later that afternoon, an even larger crowd (estimated to be as high as 10,000) gathered at the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto for Solidarity's second organized event of the day. Hundreds of onlookers watched from the balconies of the postwar apartment complexes that now dot the landscape of what once was the largest community of Poland's three million Jews. In a moving letter read to the gathering, Lech Walesa wrote:

> As a son of a land, marked by the stigma of extermination camps, I wish to bow my head before the drama of the Jewish people that was played out here.... This land, the Polish land, knows the truth about a struggle against slavery on behalf of freedom, against degradation on behalf of dignity, a struggle on behalf of hope fought without any chance of victory. The struggle of our Jewish brothers, the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, was such a struggle. We honor it today in a special manner. For in this land, the land of so many uprisings, the uprising of the Jewish fighters was the most Polish of all Polish uprisings.

Following speeches, the crowd filed onto a nearby street and slowly headed for the Umschlagplatz on Stawki Street, the site where Germans had rounded up Warsaw's Jews for the one-way trip to the death camps. The scene was, for an American, at once comfortably familiar and strangely surreal. The march had all the ingredients of a peaceful legal demonstration in the United States. Thousands of people walked under colorful Solidarity banners swaying in the gentle breezes of a warm spring afternoon. Dozens of aggressive photographers and videocamera operators from major media outlets across the globe bumped and pushed their way to get better angles. The quiet demeanor of the participants may have differed from the boisterous chanting of some protests, but the relative silence fit the solemnity of the occasion. The almost complete absence of uniformed police assured a calm atmosphere.

That evening at Jacek Kuron's home, the organizers were in a celebratory mood. Solidarity had won a tactical victory in its cat-and-mouse game with the regime. Thousands of people openly parading in the name of Solidarity ordinarily bring automatic and firm repression. But under the watchful eyes of hundreds of foreign observers and the world press, that was out of the question. The remarkable turnout also suggested that winter in Poland was coming to an end and a political spring might be in the air. There is no obvious connection between the Warsaw Ghetto commemoration and the labor unrest that swept across Poland a few weeks later, but the two developments were not completely unrelated either.

The State of Solidarity

The timing of the April 17 observances dovetailed with a larger strategic discussion that has taken place within Solidarity in the past year. During the winter of 1987-88, the organization's leadership conducted a long and heated debate about its future direction. A clear majority rejected continuing the clandestine strategy that had been followed since the beginning of martial law in 1981. The government's

halting steps to liberalize the political climate have created a different playing field for opposition forces. "Under martial law, it was like punching a brick wall," commented Warsaw Solidarity activist Jan Litynski. "Now it's like hitting a mattress."

The new rules of the game remain uncertain and fluid, but Solidarity emerged from the debate in favor of a gradual but complete transition to public activity. "We recognize the legal and political risks involved," Solidarity press spokesman Janusz Onyszkiewicz told me the night of April 17. "But if we don't start acting like real trade unions again we will either stand still or die." Despite these words, Solidarity did not provoke the upsurge of late April and early May. On the contrary, in the months leading up to the strike wave, the union's leadership had argued that the time had not yet arrived for mass workplace militance.

The walkouts and occupations in Bydgoszcz, Stalowa Wola, Nowa Huta, and Gdansk were, in some cases, spawned by Solidarity's clandestine factory cells and, in others, were spontaneously triggered by a new generation of workers who were determined to make their own history. The majority of strikers were in their twenties or thirties. But older Solidarity leaders quickly supported the actions. "It would have been better if the moment could have matured more quietly," Walesa told reporters. "But we promised we would always be with the people."

Though intellectuals outnumbered trade unionists at Kuron's home on April 17, all Solidarity leaders recognize that the future of their organization lies in the direction Polish workers choose to take. Unlike almost any other group of intellectuals in the world, East or West, dissident Polish academics, writers, and artists have linked their fortunes with those of their country's trade union movement. For example, Onyszkiewicz, a professor of mathematical logic, is as conversant with the nuts and bolts of trade union organizing as are many American labor leaders. It is men and women like him, along with trade unionists, supportive members of the clergy, and independent political activists, who have shielded the Polish opposition's flame since Solidarity's five hundred days of legalization came to an end in 1981.

Revisiting the Past

The images that linger the most from my brief visit are the ones that surprised me, that didn't fit into preconceived categories: hearing Bujak, a working-class Catholic born and raised after the war, declare in his second speech of the day that "the loss of Jews to Poland is like the loss of a crucial limb to the whole body"; ending the memorial at the ghetto monument with a priest leading the Lord's Prayer followed by a group of Jews reciting the Kaddish; the sight of hundreds of Poles, young and old, lighting votive candles under the names of the Jewish dead etched into the stone of the Umschlagplatz memorial. (So many Polish Jews were murdered in the camps that the simple but graceful monument contains only first names—there could not possibly be enough room for all the first and last names.)

The most enduring memory is of an event that took place the following evening in a small church in the Solec section of Warsaw. Hundreds of people—the organizers expected a few dozen—packed a small church for a panel discussion led by three academics. The topics included the history of the Bund, poetry of the Warsaw Ghetto, and anti-Semitism in the wartime underground Polish press. The evening was warm, the church was crowded, the air inside was still, and the presentations were lengthy. But the audience's attention rarely wavered. For well over two hours, the speakers painted a detailed picture of Polish Jewish life before and during the war to an audience made up of Solidarity sympathizers, church parishioners, and members of the general public.

The speeches were thoughtful and informed, but it was not until the question-and-answer period that I realized I was watching a highly charged historical drama being played out. The information presented, while not particularly passionate in form, was unremittingly grim in content. How could it not be? The speakers had detailed a world of devastating suffering and oppression. But in Poland, descriptions of the fate of the nation's Jews inevitably raise the question of complicity and/or responsibility of the non-Jewish, Polish population. As soon as the floor was opened for questions, fifty years of unresolved anger and guilt flooded the room. Three members of the audience rose to defend what they saw as their impugned national honor: "People always say the Poles didn't do enough for the Jews; it's not fair! We hear so much about Poles who betrayed Jews; why not talk about the Poles who risked their lives to help Jews? What about Jews who turned in Poles who hid Jews?"

Six million Polish citizens died during World War II, over 15 percent of the entire population. More than half of the war dead were Jewish. The Germans scarred the entire Polish nation but erased one of the major centers of Jewish life from the face of the earth. The war marked, in Walesa's words, the end of "coexistence for both better and worse" between Poles and Jews. That a panel discussion in 1988 can still provoke such fierce defensiveness indicates that subsequent generations of Poles have not yet come to terms with this era in their history.

Those tense moments in a crowded Warsaw church recalled a number of other events in the past few years that have elicited similar accusations and recriminations. The 1985 release of Claude Lanzmann's epic film *Shoah* sparked an outpouring of articles in Polish newspapers. Last year the liberal Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, became the forum for weeks of heated debate on the subject of Polish-Jewish relations. The recent furor over the potential appointment of Norman Davies, a controversial historian of Poland, at Stanford University indicates that these emotional exchanges know no geographical boundaries.

The drama played out the night of April 18 in Solec did, however, have a conclusion—one that was as typically Polish as the problem it resolved. Murmurs of angry disapproval grew louder and louder as the questioners spoke. Then, a priest asked for the floor. He strode to the front of the church and turned to face the audience. "No one," he began, "can expect heroism from anyone else. It was not easy to help Jews during the war. After all, hiding Jews brought the death penalty. But I do," he went on firmly, "expect empathy and sympathy."

In a soft, melodic voice, the priest wove the story of his own wartime experiences. Growing up in a small town outside Warsaw, he attended school with both Catholics and Jews. He was only twelve years old when the Germans came to his community. Hiding behind a tree, he watched as the Nazi soldiers rounded up Jews for deportation to the death camps. He saw an older woman trip and fall. An elderly man reached out to help her, but the soldiers intervened. They brutally beat the man back and laughingly shot the woman on the ground. The priest recalled the shock that he felt when confronted by such unmitigated evil. "This is what happened to Jews in Poland," he concluded, clearly addressing himself to the previous speakers. "This is something I'll never forget and these kinds of memories are what Poles should never forget." The room was completely silent. End of panel discussion, end of lesson in Polish history.

* * *

Letter From Lech Walesa To Marek Edelman, April 17, 1988

—Translated by Victor Erlich

Dear Marek:

We are honoring today the memory of the Warsaw Ghetto fighters, and you were one of the leaders of that uprising. We honor the memory of those who fought the Nazi murderers without any hope of personal victory. In this struggle, your weapons were your dignity and courage. We bow our heads before this courage and dignity, indeed before all those who died of hunger, by a bullet or in flames, before all the victims.

As a son of this land, marked by the stigma of extermination camps, I wish to bow my head before the drama of the Jewish people that was played out here. For centuries this land witnessed a coexistence for both better and worse of two communities—Polish and Jewish. Boleslaw Prus [a Polish nineteenth-century novelist] has said that in the struggle for a free Poland, Poles and Jews would commingle in meeting halls and conspiratorial cells, in churches and prisons, on battlefields, in exile, and under the gallows.

As a son of this land, I urge today that we all remember this difficult coexistence and everything that poisoned it—especially let the painful and shameful manifestations of anti-Semitism be forgiven.

The will of the Nazi invader cut short our common centuries-old history by an act of savagery which human conscience must never forget. The criminal scheme of exterminating the Jewish people reached its finale in the annihilation of the Warsaw Ghetto, and in the gas ovens of Treblinka and Auschwitz. The fate of the Jewish people—the Christian's older brothers—will remain forever an abomination and a warning.

I am a Christian. We Christians believe that those who perished are already part of another reality and are in a better position than we to judge the world in which such a crime could have been committed. We the living are left with a memory and an obligation. Their death announces to us a poignant and simple truth: all the human and divine commandments are broken when hatred is raised to the status of an ideology that eliminates man. Their death confronts us with an imperative to resist all systems and ideologies based on hatred and contempt for man.

This land, the Polish land, knows the truth about a struggle against slavery on behalf of freedom, against degradation on behalf of dignity, a struggle on behalf of hope fought without any chance of victory. The struggle of our Jewish brothers, the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, was such a struggle. We honor it today in a special manner. For in this land, the land of so many uprisings, the uprising of the Jewish fighters was the most Polish of all Polish uprisings.

As a chairman of Solidarity, I declare that we shall always remember: Anti-Semitism is the name of hatred. Let all the names of hatred be shunned forever by this and future generations.

With my brotherly good wishes,

Lech Walesa □

Jewish Sanity and the Pope

Anne Roiphe

Sometimes it seems that all Jews are paranoids. Ah, well, with our particular history what else could you expect—trusting, friendly innocents who turn their backs in dark alleys and are ready to invest in the Brooklyn Bridge? When it comes to survival we are rubes no longer. Anne Frank may have believed in the basic goodness of humankind, but her own fate has convinced Jews that it is as safe to rely on the justice of humanity as it is to trust in the basic kindness of alligators and the true love of boa constrictors. There is hardly a post-Holocaust Jew alive who does not recognize the basic evil of human beings and the world's willingness to do Jews in, through action or indifference.

It is understandable, therefore, that many Jews feel that they can't afford to be bound by conventional morality, that they insist that we ought to know better than to trust Arab mutterings about coexistence. We ought to know better than to accept the guarantees of any world power concerning our borders and our safety, and large numbers of us feel, and with no little justification, that whatever we now do to others has been paid for by our past: the moral balance sheet still allows us centuries of brutality. We feel free from moral constraint because moral principles have not been adhered to in the face of danger by any other political entity on this globe. We are tired of being a light unto the nations, a light that is fueled by the deaths of our people, burning in the ovens or in the plazas of the *auto-da-fé*. Being a normal nation among nations means having the right to do as the Americans did to the Sioux and the Navaho—transfer populations, sending them on long marches to distant unnamed territories. It means having the right to do as the French did in Algeria—set up torture chambers in the basements of police stations. It means having the right to do as the English did in India—establish dual standards of civil rights and keep the native populations in line through searches, seizures, intimidation, and an occasional massacre or two. If Israel is to survive its early years, the argument goes, it must do whatever it needs to extend its borders, to intimidate, to send its enemies and potential enemies to concentration camps. It may deport all those who threaten its authority, be they pacifists or terrorists or even journalists merely expressing thoughts that the army does not want to hear. Muscle and might, Uzi and tank; if we had had them in Germany, the trains would never have run to the East and the six million would be with us today.

The pope, in his refusal to understand the Jewish need for recognition, makes it harder for those of us who would insist that Israel can survive with compromise, with diplomacy, with moral gestures.

This position strikes a chord in almost all of us. Our anger is high and our fear is higher, and the combination lifts us to peaks of aggressiveness—distrust of friend as well as foe. While the emotional validity of this position cannot be questioned, its pragmatism, and its ultimate success can. It may be dangerous for our future to behave like a lone wolf cornered by the hunters, a wolf that snaps in every direction and has no power of speech to negotiate a solution to the problem in which it finds itself. It is dangerous for us to behave as if we were in a jungle, when in fact we are on a city street, with police; with real enemies about, but also with the possibility of living, accommodating, compromising, and retaining our life, our dignity, our religious and ethical purpose. Mad wolves tend not to survive either.

In short, the message that we have learned from the Holocaust—the message that we cannot trust the world—may, in other circumstances and times, place us in new dangers. History is not so simple; the messages of the past cannot be pasted on the present without modification. The Meir Kahanes, the members of Gush Emunim, the neoconservatives in America—they play history as if it were a chess game on a flat board. Unfortunately, however, it is a three-dimensional game,

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and one must win in each dimension. In other words, force and power—so new to Jews, so heady in its infancy—may turn us into something vicious and wild, something that was not planned at Sinai or suffered for in the Diaspora of Babylon or Spain or Italy or Poland. Must history turn us simply into another mad wolf that terrifies others?

This is the question being debated in Israel now, the argument between those who would return land for peace and those who believe that peace is an illusion and that power, occupation, and force are necessary to ensure Israel's survival. Into this argument comes Pope John Paul at Mauthausen. As the chief rabbi of Vienna pointed out, when the pope was there he mentioned the death of only one Jew and that Jew was Jesus. Once again, the pope went to Vienna and gave Waldheim many wonderful photo opportunities to show that the spiritual leader of the Catholics does not condemn him in any way.

The pope's behavior inflames the Jewish soul, and it seems to confirm the accuracy of what Likud and Kahane are saying. The world will not acknowledge our suffering, our existence; it will do it to us again, and only our military, our will to do it to others first, protects us from another disaster. The pope, in his refusal to understand the Jewish need for recognition, makes it harder for those of us who would insist that Israel can survive with compromise, with diplomacy, with moral gestures. Why has the pope behaved so badly?

The simple answer is anti-Semitism. But, while that may play a part, the more important point seems to be the one that Arthur Hertzberg, Daniel Landes, and others have made: The pope and the church cannot accept the Jewish suffering in the Holocaust because suffering is considered the theological right of Catholics alone. Rabbi Hertzberg points out that a third of the Jewish people died between 1939 and 1945 and that, according to Catholic theology, God offered up to the world a third of himself in the form of Jesus Christ. But if the Jews are the ones who are chosen to suffer, then the foundation of Catholic theology is called into question and the Jews remain the chosen people. Jews get angry when Catholics speak of the "gift of suffering" that the Jews made in the Holocaust, because we intended no such gift and see our suffering in a very different light. But for Catholics our suffering is indeed a kind of mass crucifixion. No wonder they rush to make Catholic saints out of Father Kolbe and Edith Stein. They need to appropriate the Holocaust so that suffering remains a Catholic prerogative, a Catholic mystery: Jews should not intrude in the matter.

The pope, in his dealings with Waldheim, in his canonization efforts, and in his plans for a Carmelite convent on the site of Auschwitz, once again says that Jews don't matter. How sad that this pope tries to make his own Catholic theological points over the graves of Jewish children.

Anti-Semitism does not give us license to assume that the principal Jewish goal is to achieve the same degree of brutality as others.

Of course, the problems Jews face today are made more complex by the continued existence of anti-Semitism, by the fact that the world is anti-Semitic, always has been, and perhaps always will be. And if this anti-Semitism takes on the guise of anti-Zionism, then anti-Zionism will be our constant and most dangerous enemy.

Still, anti-Semitism does not give us license to assume that the principal Jewish goal is to achieve the same degree of brutality as others. Anti-Semitism, whether active or passive, will not conquer us physically or morally if we do not allow it to pervert our real sense of historical and religious purpose—a purpose that does not require us to place our hands in front of the TV cameras, a purpose that transcends mere nationalism. The Germans, remember, were the best of nationalists. We need to acknowledge that we will be frightened and angered by this pope and that United Nations declaration, by this anti-Semitic remark and that offensive statement; yet we have to keep our justified paranoia from preventing us from seeing reality. That is what mental illness does: It turns the outside world into a mirror of the inside world, and in its course it destroys the full humanity of the mind. This we cannot let them do to us. □

Education for Democracy and Empowerment

Henry A. Giroux

George Bush's recent announcement that he intends to become the nation's "education president" is a sure indication that the public schools will be a subject of intense debate in the presidential campaign. Moreover, Education Secretary William J. Bennett's often vociferous attacks on the state of American education and on what he perceives to be the shoddy educational legacy of past Democratic administrations, as well as the incredible amount of attention heaped upon books such as Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* and E. D. Hirsch's *Cultural Literacy*, suggest that education may prove to be an even more hotly debated subject than in recent presidential contests.

Dukakis, the Democratic candidate for the presidency, must be able both to convey the bankruptcy of Ronald Reagan's educational philosophy and to articulate an educational vision of his own. Attacking Reagan's philosophy of education is necessary since he will be unable to promote a creative and coherent education program if he fails to demythologize Reagan's ideas about education, if he accepts the Reagan philosophy and promises merely to be more "efficient" or "competent" than his predecessor.

In fact, the language of "efficiency" and "competence" is at the heart of the problem of Reagan's educational philosophy, and it is to this language and its corresponding philosophy that we must turn if we are to understand how the Democratic candidate can overcome the Reagan educational legacy.

In many ways, the Reagan administration's ideas about education are a reaction to the liberalizing educational trends that took place in the sixties and seventies. Those decades brought much-needed changes in American education: Attempts were made to provide greater access to education for blacks and other minorities; some of the culturally biased school curricula were eliminated and alternative programs that recognized cultural diversity were implemented; school tracking programs were challenged; and funding was increased to improve the quality of public school education.

In short, these progressive education reforms attempted, with some success, to democratize America's system of education. Where those who implemented these changes failed, however, was in their blind endorsement of a romantic notion of personal freedom. In other words, education often revolved around a vague conception of making students happy, emphasizing relationships over educational content. This approach was dangerous, particularly for minorities and the disadvantaged, since students were not taught that they lived in a world where power structures limited their ability to control their own destinies, and they were not educated to understand how to alter these power structures.

Part of the reason that educators stayed away from these topics was that they had endorsed a type of moral relativism that seemed to imply that it was wrong to "impose" any particular set of opinions. Instead, they felt that a truly democratic education would emerge simply from the interpretations that students gave to their own experiences. The resulting education neither empowered students politically nor did it provide them with the knowledge and understanding necessary to function in the world of work.

The Reagan administration was able to identify with the disillusionment that had been produced by this emphasis almost exclusively on participatory process. Ignoring the important gains that the reformers had made in improving access to education and in allowing for cultural diversity, the Reaganites attacked the reformers for their failure to produce a school system that taught the necessary content. Reagan attributed what he perceived to be a litany of American social ills to this lack of content in education, and he began to redefine the purpose of the public schools, attempting to shape them into agents of social discipline and economic regulation. America's economic performance was sagging, which, in Reagan's opinion, could be ascribed to the fact that American children were not learning the educational fundamentals, that they were busy doing drugs and getting pregnant instead of being guided by the firm hand of a "competent" teacher.

This attitude led to a wide variety of misguided

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educational reforms, both on the federal and state levels, as well as to a blind endorsement of "the basics" and of discipline without the slightest idea of what constitutes "the basics" or what the purpose of discipline is. The Reagan administration's reforms, as articulated in a number of national reports, such as *A Nation at Risk* and *American Education: Making It Work*, emphasized the crudest sorts of technical improvements. So, for example, the school day and school year were to be lengthened, forms of merit pay implemented, curricula standardized, teachers subject to uniform and "objective" evaluation criteria, standardized testing increased, and test scores raised. Education was quantified and technicalized, much like a test score, in the hope of producing a more "competent," "excellent," and "obedient" student body, a student body equipped with the technical skills necessary to improve this nation's economy.

Often these "objective" educational reforms only thinly disguised a broad-based attempt to impose cultural uniformity upon the schools, evidenced most often in an emphasis on the "Great Books" or "classics" without any discussion of what makes a book, or a course, or a curriculum "great." Furthermore, the emphasis on discipline fit in neatly with the Reagan administration's love affair with rigid uniformity. Just as teachers had to adhere to a wide array of fixed standards, so too were students expected to behave in a certain uniformly appropriate manner.

In this light, it is hardly surprising that New Jersey school principal Joe Clark became the Reagan administration's paragon of "tough love." Clark, who marches through the halls of his school with a bullhorn and baseball bat, publicly berates anybody who flouts his authority, teachers included. When a student misbehaves s/he must learn the school anthem and sing it over the P.A. system. Clark proudly announces that he has restored law and order to the school and that, better yet, his students' test scores have been raised. What he, or anyone else for that matter, fails to mention is that at least nine hundred students, most of them minorities, have been expelled, left to roam the streets without much of a future. Similarly, not enough thought has been given to the impact that these tactics of embarrassment have on the remaining students and on their attitude toward learning.

That Joe Clark has become a hero by raising the test scores of those students who have survived his iron fist illustrates the bankruptcy of the Reagan administration's educational philosophy. In fact, Reagan and Bennett's emphasis on test scores and other "objective" measurements suggests that the Republicans really have no educational philosophy whatsoever. The Reagan administration uses ostensibly objective educational criteria in order to avoid grappling with the tough questions that anyone who formulates educational policies must face: "What is the purpose of education?" "What types of citizens do we hope to produce through education?" To say that test scores have improved is to beg questions such as "What do test scores measure?" and, more important, "Do higher test scores indicate that students are acquiring the educational skills that we want them to acquire, are developing the types of minds that we would like them to have?" Similarly, simply to say that teachers are "competent" or "excellent" is to fail to ask *what* they are competent or excellent at.

Progressive education reforms failed, in their blind endorsement of a romantic notion of personal freedom. Education often revolved around a vague conception of making students happy, emphasizing relationships over educational content.

Therefore, Dukakis must, first and foremost, avoid framing the educational debate simply in terms of competence or excellence. I do not mean to denigrate these terms, only to imply that they are meaningless unless they refer to a clear educational philosophy or vision. And the Democratic candidate's vision must be much broader than the goal of producing skilled workers; it must also aim at developing critical citizens. Moreover, such a vision must be based on a theory of pedagogy, not simply a theory of knowledge. Skilled workers are important, but it would be very sad indeed if we aspired to nothing higher than crude technical skills and basic work-related knowledge from our children's education. In essence, Dukakis must endorse a philosophy of education that sees schools as workplaces for democracy, broadly speaking. In other words, schooling is an education for critical citizenship. More specifically, students must be taught that knowledge means empowerment; that their own social and ethnic histories are important for their development; that history didn't just happen, but that it is related to struggle and to questions about the good life; that what they learn can make a difference; that they can have larger loyalties than to themselves; that the actual and the possible are not the same; that individuals can struggle to change the world.

How such an educational philosophy can be implemented is more complicated, but a few specific programs suggest themselves. First of all, uniform teaching methods should be rejected since such methods fail to acknowledge that not all students or all teachers are alike. Bilingual education should be vigorously pursued since students can achieve the power to change the world only if they understand how their unique histories shape them. Cultural diversity is absolutely essential for democracy, and when we talk about language we talk about culture. By claiming that English is the only legitimate language in which to study, we argue that non-English cultures are inferior, and in so doing we silence the voices of minorities. In short, Dukakis must offer a progressive view of curriculum based on a respect for the languages and traditions that, as June Jordan has remarked, "conform to the truth of our many selves and would ... lead into the equality of power that a democratic state must represent."

Education should be tailored in other ways to accommodate a diverse student body. Recent studies have shown that many black students learn math better when they are taught it in the dialect that they use in their own communities. Similarly, Marilyn Frankenstein has proved extremely successful in teaching math by making the subject relevant to her individual students' daily experiences. One method that she uses involves asking her students to bring in receipts from the purchases they make after school, thereby relating their studies to their individual daily concerns. In this case, a seemingly trivial math operation like finding the total from a grocery bill can be used to teach addition and to raise questions such as whether paying for food is something we should take as being natural or given in all societies. Daily life becomes an occasion for teaching both math skills and math literacy.

Still another way to promote a democratic educational policy is to eliminate tracking. In *Keeping Track*, Jeanne Oaks convincingly shows that tracking is unequivocally detrimental to most students' education. In fact, Oaks argues that for students identified as average or slow, tracking appears to retard academic success. When put in lower tracks, such students were exposed to watered-down knowledge and were taught less demanding intellectual skills. Moreover, these students received less individual attention from teachers and were given a limited range of learning opportunities. Theodore Sizer and Peter McLaren reach similar conclusions in *Horace's Compromise* and *Life in Schools*, respectively. It is a common myth that if students aren't tracked the worse students will hold back the better ones. Oaks, Sizer, and McLaren show that this myth is completely unsubstantiated and that, in fact, when students aren't tracked the more advanced students learn as well and the average or below-average students do better. Tracking serves simply to lower the expectations of the students who are designated "less proficient" as well as the expectations of those who teach them. These lower expectations become self-fulfilling prophecies, and lower-track students are taught not to think critically the way the upper-track students do, not to believe that what they think matters, not to attempt to change the world.

Tailoring education to the needs of individual teachers is as important as tailoring it to the needs of individual students. The Reagan administration has regarded teachers as glorified clerks, treating them as mere automatons that spit out information to their students. Teachers did not have any input in the *A Nation at Risk* report, and their unique role was not acknowledged in the Reagan reforms. A vision of education for democracy and empowerment, by contrast, would not only take into account the unique needs of teachers, but allow teachers a great deal of leeway in formulating their own curricula. Teachers are not mere cogs in the educational wheel, but individuals who perform best when they are given a role in shaping their working conditions and in deciding what they do best.

In this light, more schools might emulate the educational program established by Jerome Winegar, principal of South Boston High School. Winegar not only created three alternative programs within his curriculum in order to cater to the needs of different students, but let the teachers play a large role in curriculum development. This increased teacher involvement has made the teachers at South Boston High School much more enthusiastic about their work and therefore has led to significant improvements in the students' education.

Moreover, Winegar has woven his students' personal experiences into the school curriculum, implementing a program in which the students write narratives about their neighborhoods, lives, and dreams, which are included in the school's curriculum. These narratives have been used as part of a writing course and were published in a magazine called *Mosaic*.

Education for democracy and empowerment would also embody a very different attitude toward discipline from the one endorsed by the Reagan administration. In William Bennett's mind, students who use drugs or get pregnant must be punished since they have violated a moral credo. Sex education is rejected, based on the completely unsubstantiated claim that it promotes promiscuity.

Bennett's ideas must be countered with an attitude that drug abuse and teenage pregnancy are problems,

not moral infractions, and that educators should discuss these problems with students in an open fashion. Public agencies such as drug abuse clinics, as well as sex and health clinics, should be erected in the schools themselves in order to encourage students to use these facilities. One New York City public school has implemented such a program, and the results have been incredible. Not only do students use the clinics, but many teachers have been educated as well.

Finally, education for democracy means a renewed commitment to public schools as genuinely public institutions, as community enterprises. Secretary Bennett has managed to infuse the educational system with the individualistic logic of the marketplace, claiming that if students are diligent and obedient they can raise their scores and achieve success in the corporate world. Dukakis, by contrast, must make clear that schools are not simply vehicles for individual success, that there has been an age-old connection between schools and their local neighborhoods and communities. More specifically, students should participate in neighborhood enrichment programs, programs that make them aware that they are part of a community and that their efforts can have an impact on the world at large.

The liberal and progressive forces have always used a language of critique, but all too often that language has been Orwellian. Reagan has been inordinately popular because he offers a language of hope. Only now have most Americans begun to realize that their optimism was misplaced, that Reagan's hopefulness has no substance. Nevertheless, Reagan's success should not be lost upon Dukakis. A forceful critique is not enough; such a critique must be accompanied not only by a message of hope, but a substantive message as well.

Education for democracy and empowerment is a program that is both hopeful and substantial. It empowers students, enabling them to do their best to change the world. Equally important, it places great faith in the intelligence and creativity of both teachers and students. No better illustration of this attitude exists than the perspective that education for democracy and empowerment has on the "Great Books" controversy. Secretary Bennett and his cronies in the academic world have embraced a canon of "great" literature without bothering to wonder how this canon became "great," without recognizing that these works gained prominence under particular historical circumstances and that this prominence reflects the results of political and social struggle.

Students must be taught that knowledge means empowerment; that the actual and the possible are not the same; that individuals can struggle to change the world.

By contrast, education for democracy and empowerment demands that teachers and students have a role in determining what is great, in debating the question of greatness. Contrary to the claims of many Reaganites, this is not a prescription for moral relativism. To question the legitimacy of the traditional canon is not to reject the notion of greatness. On the contrary, it is to give meaning to greatness. To say that certain books are great simply because they have risen to prominence in particular Western cultures is utterly to devalue greatness, to encourage both students and teachers to be passive receptacles in the educational process. Relying on past theories of greatness enables educators to ignore the important questions about educational philosophy. Like "competence" and "excellence," "greatness" is meaningful only with respect to particular educational goals and a particular pedagogical vision. In short, nothing could prove more helpful in empowering students, in preparing them for citizenship, than allowing them to play a role in the debate about greatness, in the debate about the very purpose of education.

If the education debate is confined to "who can do a better job of producing obedient workers for our economy," many more people will trust the conservatives. But if Dukakis insists on reframing the question, on asking what the values are that we want to inculcate in our students—and if he insists that these values include a deep appreciation for democracy, a commitment to think for oneself, and a sense of obligation to the community at large—Americans will begin to find his message more appealing. In such an atmosphere, he will be able to insist that even in terms of teaching "the basics," education for democracy and empowerment can be most successful. □

Journey to Liberation: Sukkot

Irving Greenberg

In order to gain wisdom from the experiences of their ancient ancestors, Jews must continually reenact the Israelites' journey from slavery to liberation. Thus, the Jewish annual calendar is anchored by two total reenactments of the Exodus experience. The first reenactment, the week-long holiday of Passover, comes in the spring on the fifteenth of the Jewish month of *Nissan*. The second, Sukkot, starts six months later, on the fifteenth of *Tishrei*. On Passover, Jews restage the great *event* of liberation. On Sukkot they celebrate the *way* of liberation—the march across a barren desert to freedom and the Promised Land.

What happens after liberation from slavery? Even though the children of Israel heroically escaped Egypt, the daily strain of collecting manna, pitching tents, and carrying their children through the desert eroded their commitment. Time and again they were frustrated by having to eat the same food and by a lack of meat and water.

The real achievement of freedom does not come in one day: there is no quick cure for slavery. Sukkot commemorates the maturation of the Israelites, achieved not in crossing the Red Sea but in the long walk to freedom. It is relatively easy to rise to one brief moment of courageous commitment. It is more taxing and more heroic to wrestle with life's more mundane daily obstacles. True maturity means learning to appreciate the finite rewards of every day along the way.

Passover, through a festive meal, celebrates a brave departure. Sukkot, on the other hand, marks the hasty lunches and the endless wandering in the desert. It expresses the deeper Exodus—the reflective, gritty days of marching, during which a new generation grew up. Freedom came as the final result of pitching tents (booths) and taking them down over the course of 14,600 days. Sukkot honors the 43,800 meals prepared on the desert trek, as well as the cleaning up and the washing of utensils.

Beyond honoring and reenacting the journey in the desert, the holiday of Sukkot offers living strategies to deal with three universal challenges. The first challenge is to develop a working method to improve the world. The difficulty of conquering the world's many problems leads some of us to surrender to passivity. By contrast, a commitment to perfection generates an activist stance toward nature, a determination to transform the world so that it will support a higher standard of human living. But management and technology too easily slip into abuse and degradation of the environment, and human beings begin to relate improperly to nature. How can one navigate successfully between the Scylla of fatalism and the Charybdis of neglectful manipulation of the natural order?

Second, people tend to become rooted in a specific land and in a particular community and culture. Such rootedness, though in itself a major source of freedom and dignity for the individual, leads to an uncritical acceptance of the local norms of behavior. People who measure themselves simply by the prevailing norms end up absolutizing those norms, thereby betraying the Exodus goal. Yet rootlessness is no answer. Taken to its extreme, rootlessness leads to vulnerability and social pathology. Where is the resolution?

Third, how are people to live with the simple pleasures of life along the Exodus march through history? Poverty must be overcome, yet affluence easily erodes our moral fiber. Like others, Jews have all too often succumbed to ease and acceptance, yielding their roles as fighters for change. Is wealth also an enemy? Must Jews exercise repression in every aspect of life in order to reach their goal of perfecting the world?

Sukkot addresses these dilemmas by offering its own remarkable combination of experiences. Sukkot rituals pay tribute to the Israelite journeys in the desert while also celebrating the produce of the land of Israel. They affirm the holiness of pleasure, even while they infuse pleasure into the holy. The Sukkot liturgy celebrates material wealth even as it warns that it is "vanity of vanities." In the course of communicating these dialectical truths, Sukkot's central ritual—the reenactment of the journey to liberation—foreshadows the Exodus march through human history to a universal Promised Land.

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Sukkot: The Reenactment of the Exodus Journey

The sukkah, the booth, is the central symbol of the ancient Israelites' trust and hope for forty years in the desert. The Hebrews left the protection of human-made thick walls in Egypt to place themselves under the protection of God. Exposed to dangerous natural conditions and hostile roving bands, they placed their confidence in the divine concern, which is the only true source of security. Their act of faith continues to support Jews in their covenantal commitment. By eating, learning, and sleeping in the booth—by making the sukkah our home for a week—we reenact their original act of faith.

In the Talmud, Rabbi Akiva states that the sukkahs commemorate the actual desert booth dwellings. Rabbi Eliezer maintains that they really symbolize the clouds of glory that hovered over the Jews, guiding them through the Sinai. Rabbi Eliezer means that the miracle and celebration are due not only to God who protects but also to the people of Israel who were willing to expose themselves to the fiercest storms of history with only the intangible, and at times partial, shelter of God's presence.

The requirements in halakhah (Jewish law) for the construction of a sukkah attempt to capture the fragility and openness of the booths. The sukkah may not be too impressive a home: its total height may not exceed twenty cubits—about ten yards. Similarly, although the sukkah should be built well enough to withstand normal winds, it should not be constructed so solidly that it withstand winds of unusual force. By deliberately giving up solid construction, Jews admit their vulnerability and testify that the ultimate trust is in the divine shelter.

The most important part of the sukkah, halakhically, is the *s'khakh*, materials of vegetable origin such as evergreen branches or marsh rushes that form the roof. These coverings may be laid across wooden slats or bamboo poles; but heavy boards or beams that offer solid support should not be used, nor should any of the roof materials be nailed down permanently. Though completely covering the top, the materials should be loosely spread so as to be open to the heavens, with the stars visible through them. Thus, the *s'khakh* is the perfect expression of divine protection. God is not a mechanical shield that protects us from all evil. God is the Presence that gives us the strength to persevere, to overcome.

The *s'khakh* is meant to teach something about the true nature of protection. Human beings instinctively strive to build solid walls of security. People shut out life; they heap up treasures and power and status symbols in the hope of staving off the unexpected, disaster, and even death. This search for "solid" security all too often leads to idolatry, to the worship of things that give security. People end up sacrificing values and even loved ones to obtain the tangible sources of security. The sukkah urges people to give up this pseudosafety.

Moving into the sukkah for a week is not a renunciation of self-protection, but a recognition of its limits. The sukkah does not deny the value of a solid home or human effort: Fifty-one weeks a year Jews are allowed to live in homes and are encouraged to build up the world and increase security and well-being. But the sukkah teaches us that builders of homes should be able to give them up or move out if necessary. Renunciation is the secret of mastery. As it is written in Ecclesiastes: "Who[ever] loves money [absolutely] will never have his fill of money." People become masters rather than slaves of their achievements when they develop the capacity to let go of them, even if only for the moment.

The sukkah counteracts the natural tendency to become excessively attached to turf. It instructs Jews not to become overly rooted, particularly not in the exile. For thousands of years Jews built homes in the Diaspora. Civilizations of extraordinary richness—culturally, religiously, and often economically and socially—were created. But, outside of Israel, all such Jewish homes and civilizations have proven, thus far, to be temporary ones, blown away when a turn of the wheel brought new forces to power. Often, self-deception and the desire to claim permanent roots led Jews to deny what was happening until it was too late to escape.

Thus, the move into the sukkah is a movement from the certainty of fixed locations to the liberating insecurity of freedom. Participants open themselves to the world, to the unexpected winds, to the surprise setbacks as well as the planned gains. Sukkot is a celebration of the privilege of starting on the road to freedom, knowing that even if the goal is not reached, we must, at the very least, begin the journey.

In short, the sukkah taught the Israelites that only those who journey know the value as well as the limitations of a homeland; that God is not just the God of Mount Moriah and Jerusalem, but the God whose footstool is the Earth; and that it is possible to establish deep roots in particular cultures despite the fact that the Jewish faith is portable.

Until the world is redeemed, Jews are on an Exodus journey; and, perforce, they are in, yet not totally of, the society and culture they inhabit. Jews can contribute without totally accepting the system. Jews can affirm, yet transform. Participation in each political and moral stage has led to Israelite integration and assimilation in host cultures. Then the sukkah reminds

the Israelites to push on. There are miles to go, further along the Exodus way, and promises to keep—until the whole world becomes a Promised Land.

The Agricultural Dimension

The Torah refers to Sukkot as *Chag Ha'asif* (the Festival of Ingathering). Gratitude for the harvest, prayers for rain, and nature rituals fill the liturgy. Although Sukkot focuses on the paradigm of the journey—which would appear to point away from the settled character of agriculture—the festival concentrates equally on the importance of nature in a way that no other Jewish holiday does. This seeming contradiction underscores the divine genius of the Torah: It expresses its deepest values when it transforms a nature festival into a historical holiday.

In this transformation we find a major characteristic of the Jewish religion, the shift from nature to history. This shift represents the movement from human passivity and acceptance of nature-as-destiny to a drive for liberation, which can be achieved only in history. As long as humans perceived nature as implacable and fate as ineluctable, they accepted death, poverty, and oppression as their inevitable condition. Humans celebrated—one is tempted to say bribed—nature in order to placate the gods who arbitrarily gave and withheld the necessities of life, the rain and the harvest. But Judaism proclaimed that human beings, created in the image of God, are commanded to reshape the world, to conquer nature for the benefit of humanity. Nature is *not* God. The natural order is created by God to be used for human welfare.

Behind this biblical vision is an understanding of the universe that gave rise to Western science, technology, and medicine. By contrast, Eastern religions generally sought to encourage human beings to live in harmony with the inner rhythms of nature and to free themselves from the suffering and illusion of involvement with this world. While Western culture has been a tremendous force in releasing humanity from grinding poverty and sickness, it has often ignored the important Eastern insights about living in harmony with nature and the rhythms of the body and soul. The price of runaway technology has been growing pollution and an increase in diseases of disharmony. Judaism, refusing to accept an either/or choice between passivity and pathology, seeks both to intervene in the natural order and to prevent the negative side effects of that intervention. The Jewish strategy is to combine human activism and restraint, yoking mastery over nature with reverence for the natural order.

This dual approach is reflected in the Sukkot rituals. The liturgy sings of the need for accepting nature's gifts, but there are controls over what can be done to nature. Halakhah underscores this point with its requirement that ritual objects such as *s'khakh* cannot be "manufactured," that is, changed from their natural state.

The water-drawing ceremony also reflects nature in that it is carefully attuned to the coming rainy season. Tefilat Geshem, the prayer for rain, is placed within the blessing for resurrection to make it clear that agriculture is a human calling but that rain is a miracle. The focus on rain is a reminder of the limits of human power, as the Sukkot holiday repeatedly underscores the interaction of human initiative and nature's order.

In ancient times there was a ceremony associated with water needs—a march around the Temple with water willows, concluding with a symbolic beating of the willows on the ground, done perhaps to get the earth to bring forth water. The classic water celebration, however, was the water-drawing ceremony. On the first night of *Khol Hamoed* (the intermediate weekday portion of Sukkot), a torchlight parade, including musicians, jugglers, and dancers, marched to the Temple where the first water of the new season was drawn from Jerusalem's chief spring and poured as a libation. The Celebration of the Water Drawing (Simkhat Bet Ha'shoeva) was ecstatic. It symbolized the overflowing joy when water was found in abundance.

The Talmud describes the event as follows: Jerusalem was lit up by the light of gigantic menorahs. The lyres, cymbals, horns, and drums played and the rabbis entertained and clowned to add to the joy. Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel did various gymnastic feats culminating in an incredible headstand. He also entertained by juggling flaming torches.

Not one day of Sukkot passes without festivities that celebrate the happiness of the harvest and the joy of community and religious inspiration. The daily sojourn in the sukkah, the fragrance of the *s'khakh*, the fruit and vegetable decorations, the meals under the stars—all these rituals deeply connect us to nature. The liturgy reiterates the message of redemption. All in all, the setting, the ceremonies, and the ritual objects celebrate the human as both creator and creature.

Sukkot: The "Materialist" Dimension of Judaism

The dimension of joy is central to the holiday of Sukkot, as can be seen by the fact that the obligation to dwell in the sukkah is suspended in situations of discomfort. This provision is unique among the commandments. The halakhah does not recognize discomfort, inconvenience, or even financial

loss as an excuse not to obey the laws to keep kosher or to observe shabbat. But joy is so central to the sukkah experience that if one carries out the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah in pain or under serious inconvenience one does not fulfill the spirit of the holiday. Therefore, one is exempt from the mitzvah of eating in the sukkah if it is raining hard enough to make the diners wet. Similarly, although the commandment "to dwell" has been interpreted to include sleeping in the sukkah, in climates in which sleeping outdoors constitutes a hardship, exemption from sleeping in the sukkah has become the rule.

Nevertheless, most Jews conceive of Judaism as an ascetic religion, thinking that fasting is more righteous than feasting. In truth, however, the Talmud suggests that in the world to come a person will have to stand judgment for every legitimate pleasure that s/he renounced. The Nazirite—the person who gave up the pleasures of wine and family life to devote himself entirely to God—was called a sinner on the grounds that he gave up the joys of wine when the Torah did not require him to do so.

As a harvest festival, Sukkot incorporates frank recognition and celebration of material goods. Jewish tradition sees material possessions as a necessary, though insufficient, basis for spiritual fulfillment. As Maimonides writes, "The general purpose of the Torah is twofold: the well-being of the soul and the well-being of the body. The well-being of the soul is ranked first but ... the well-being of the body comes first." Thus, appreciation and enjoyment of material goods are legitimate spiritual concerns, as long as they are done properly. Worshiped or absolutized, wealth disrupts personal growth; but when it is kept in perspective, prosperity frees the individual for personal development.

In many ways, Sukkot has become the model for this appropriate form of worldly enjoyment, which is why it is called *the* time of rejoicing. The depth of the joy also grows out of its relationship to Yom Kippur. Sukkot comes just four days after Yom Kippur, the most ascetic, self-denying, guilt-ridden, awesome holy day of the Jewish year. On the Day of Atonement, Jews experience their own deaths, only to be restored to life in the resolution of the day. Only those who know the fragility of life can truly appreciate the full preciousness of every moment. The release from Yom Kippur leads to the extraordinary outburst of life that is Sukkot. On this holiday, Jews are commanded to eat, drink, be merry, dance, and relish life to the fullest in celebrating the harvest and personal wealth.

But making joy holy means being selective in the enjoyment of God's gifts and having insight about the appropriate way to enjoy them. The most important expression of this insight is to *share* the bounty and the joy. Gifts from the harvest were given to the poor. As it is written in Deuteronomy: "You shall rejoice before the Lord. You, your son and daughter, manservant and maid, the Levite ... the stranger, the orphan, the widow in your midst." Thus, a special Sukkot holiday feature is the *ushpizin*, hospitality for honored guests. By tradition, every night a different biblical personality is invited to visit the sukkah and join the company. Families invite stand-ins for these biblical figures—fellow human beings, especially those who are needy or do not have a sukkah in which to eat. This mitzvah is especially important in contemporary society, where bureaucracies and institutions take care of welfare and medical coverage, and people often forget the importance of *g'milut chasadim* (personal acts of loving-kindness).

The Jewish strategy is to combine human activism and restraint, yoking mastery over nature with reverence for the natural order.

Judaism insists that *chessed* (loving-kindness) be the driving force of history and redemption. *Chessed* is a special kind of love, a love that accepts and treasures life *as it is*, even as it sees and embraces its potential for perfection. One fundamental criterion of a life well lived is love of life. Therefore, it is terribly important to enjoy life as it goes along. Joy cannot be postponed. Life *as is* is of infinite value.

Constant renewal of joy makes life on the Exodus road worthwhile in itself. For from joy comes the strength to persist. The suffering self is, at some level, at war with itself and its biological—if not spiritual—need for satisfaction. The joyous self, properly fulfilled, can be unified in body and soul, and can love God and humanity with a whole heart.

In the end, the Sukkot holiday is a lesson in contemporary religious life. Today's great religious calling is to learn to share the wealth and to learn how to consecrate it in enjoyment. When the imposed holiness of asceticism has been removed, there remains the challenge of finding the sacred amidst plenty and pleasure. It may be more difficult to do this religiously than to live properly in poverty. Thus, Sukkot not only teaches us a lesson. It offers us the ultimate challenge: to live an appropriate Jewish life in the contemporary world. □

Blacks and Jews in Chicago

Ben Joravsky

"Jews are very successful and rich, but they're not very powerful. Blacks are not very rich, but they have a lot of political power. What's it worth?"

—Rabbi Arnold Wolf
K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Congregation, Chicago

It began on May Day, with a front-page story in the Sunday edition of the *Chicago Tribune* about an obscure thirty-six-year-old black city hall aide named Steve Cokely who, in speeches delivered over the past few years, had accused Jews of, among other things, maneuvering to control the world and injecting black babies with the AIDS virus.

Most people figured Cokely, a $35,500-a-year community liaison for Eugene Sawyer, the city's acting mayor, would be immediately fired. After all, a city as ethnically diverse as Chicago cannot tolerate open displays of bigotry from its public employees.

But Cokely held his job for five grueling days, stirring the already-present fear and anger that plagues black-Jewish relations, as well as the paranoia that the two groups share with regard to their standing with the rest of the city.

Had Sawyer not been so damn insecure, he would have fired Cokely right away. But he balked, partly out of stubborn pride (the old, don't-tell-me-what-to-do-white-man attitude you can read in the stony silence of mainstream black leaders who refuse to criticize minister Louis Farrakhan despite pleas from their white peers), but mostly out of political fear.

Sawyer has no political base. The voters did not elect him mayor; other politicians did. He was a lowly South Side alderman when the city council made him acting mayor after the late Harold Washington died last November (voters in Chicago will elect a permanent replacement in a special election next year). More precisely, Sawyer was supported by what was left of the coalition of twenty-nine white aldermen who had obstructed Washington during his first few years in office.

Activists—black and white—were outraged by Sawyer's selection as mayor. The night of Sawyer's anointment five thousand or so protestors converged on City Hall to vent their frustration and rally support for Alderman Tim Evans, the late mayor's council floor leader. Sawyer, the protestors jeered, was a dupe, controlled by white party hacks.

So, from the outset, Sawyer seemed helpless, an amiable sad sack. Blacks didn't back him, and whites hardly knew him. And now, with this Cokely mess, his stature would only be diminished. Fire Cokely, Sawyer's aides said, and angry, jeering blacks will march downtown one more time.

Of course, no one knew that this reaction was certain. No one knew if more than a relative handful of black nationalistic fanatics (the equivalent, say, of Meir Kahane's following among Jews) championed Cokely's vision. Few people (black or white) had ever heard of Cokely before the *Tribune*'s article.

Either way, the fear of black backlash could not be Sawyer's stated explanation for keeping Cokely. Principles of racial tolerance supposedly take precedence over politics, even in Chicago. So Sawyer's spokesman made no mention of politics in the hours first following the *Tribune* article. Instead, Sawyer said this: "[The mayor] will talk to Cokely, and tell him to tune [*sic*] down his rhetoric. What Steve Cokely does on his own time, as long as it's not illegal, is his business. The mayor has been very supportive of Jewish causes for the past twenty years, and that is what he should be judged on."

All of which stunned many Jews—and not just "professional" Jews from mainstream Jewish organizations. Rank and file, everyday Jewish men and women (some liberal, some not) could talk about little else during that first week of May. One friend, an aide to a high-ranking city hall adviser (also Jewish) left over from the Washington administration, said to me, "We're screwed no matter what. If we protest too much, they'll call us pushy. There's a bunch of nuts out there already. I heard this one black guy on the radio say that Cokely was right. That Jewish diamond merchants are enslaving black South Africa, just like Jewish financiers were responsible for slavery."

My friend was thinking of resigning, said he'd gotten phone calls from Jews all over City Hall. Some people wanted to have a big protest—maybe a mass of resignations. Someone had to do something, but no one really

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knew what. The city staggered about leaderless, while the papers had a field day. It was the blacks against the Jews, and the press quoted Jew after Jew—politicians, lawyers, rabbis, you name it—each one more hurt and outraged than the other.

There was hardly a sympathetic response to the protests. Here and there an individual minister or priest denounced Cokely (particularly, Father John Egan, a longtime advocate of community empowerment), and a few religious organizations quietly called for his ouster. But there were no organized denunciations or protests from coalitions of churches. The business community was silent. As for the big-name black organizations (Operation PUSH, the NAACP, the Urban League), it was as though they had laryngitis. A few black leaders forthrightly demanded Cokely's ouster, but most of the prominent blacks who did speak either supported him or offered tortured "explanations" that only seemed to make matters worse.

"Cokely should not be fired because there is a 'ring of truth' to his remarks about a worldwide Jewish conspiracy," the *Tribune* quoted the Reverend B. Herbert Martin. "There is a growing opinion among younger blacks, grass-roots black people, that Jews are unfair, unloving."

Now this was trouble. Did Martin mean that he agreed with Cokely's rhetoric on the "worldwide Jewish conspiracy," or only that other blacks felt this way? And if he meant the former, how were Jews to react? Martin was a recognized leader in the South Side black community; he had delivered a moving eulogy at the late mayor's funeral. He was also Sawyer's choice to head the city's commission on human relations. Granted, the position is largely symbolic, and the commission does little more than denounce acts of bigotry. But what were Jews to think of a man who might be anti-Semitic being responsible for the denunciation of bigotry?

All sorts of long-repressed frustration and bitterness began to pour forth. One heard it on the radio talk shows—the blacks phoning the black stations; the whites (presumably Jewish), the white ones.

"Jews say they support us," the black caller would say. "But Bernie Epton, who ran against Mayor Washington, was a Jew."

"Forty percent of the Jews voted for Washington over Epton, the highest percentage the mayor got from any white group in the city," the Jewish caller would say.

"The Jews vote for a black guy, and they expect us to be eternally grateful. Well, why shouldn't they vote for Washington; he was the better candidate?"

"The blacks show no appreciation at all. We stood with them throughout the civil rights struggle. We died for them: do they forget Goodman and Schwerner?"

"I'm tired of hearing about Goodman and Schwerner. Hundreds of blacks were beaten and killed, and all they talk about are two Jews. What about Israeli support for South Africa?"

"What does Israel or South Africa have to do with it? We're talking about a nut in Chicago. If we talked this way about blacks, they'd call us racists. No one stands up for the Jews."

The Jews vote for a black guy and then expect blacks to be eternally grateful to them.

No one, that is, except for Alderman Bernard Stone and Edward Vrdolyak, who had led city council opposition against Washington. They're a couple of turncoat Democrats, the type of Republican convert who finds an almost perverse pleasure in being able, at long last, to rave and rant about rapists, muggers, thugs, cutthroats, teenage mothers, and other you-know-whos without worrying about the black vote. (After all, the new Republicans rationalize, they won't vote for us anyway.) Stone and Vrdolyak demanded that Cokely be ousted. They also condemned black leaders for not denouncing him and said that Martin should not be hired to head the city's commission on human relations. Stone and other aldermen threatened to intervene by eliminating Cokely's position from the budget.

Three days after the *Tribune* story, the city was rife with goofy rumors. One alderman, a backer of Evans, said Sawyer concocted the whole mess to make himself a martyr in the black community. Then I got a phone call from a friend who works for a local Jewish agency. She had been hearing reports that Cokely controls

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about fifty thousand South Side votes, and she wanted me to investigate.

I told her the rumor was nonsense, that no politician in Chicago controls fifty thousand votes. Besides, nine out of ten blacks had never heard of Cokely before the scandal took place. But, in any case, what in the world did my friend expect me to do to prove it? Do I approach commuters at some intersection on the South Side and say, "Excuse me, sir, is your vote controlled by Steve Cokely?" And if they say no, can I believe them? Remember, this supposedly is a conspiracy. Who knows what secret schemes Sawyer has hatched? Maybe every black person in the city of Chicago has been hauled into a room hidden somewhere in the bowels of City Hall and cautioned by Farrakhan to beware of reporters bearing questions about Cokely.

There has never been a strong coalition between the larger black and Jewish communities. Economically and culturally, they're worlds apart.

The next day Sawyer finally fired Cokely. "I hope and pray that all Chicago listening to me today hears my call for healing," he said. "Progress will be born of this struggle." Sawyer also announced the creation of a new interracial group—consisting of a rabbi, a black minister and a cardinal—designed to allow blacks and Jews to meet and begin to heal the wounds. The reporters rolled their eyes at this empty hand-holding gesture.

In a matter of days, the mayor's truce was broken. The unlikely front, this time, was the school of the Art Institute, which, in an exhibition of student works, had hung a painting of the late mayor clad in brassiere and panties. Several black aldermen stormed the Art Institute and confiscated the painting. The artist is a Jew, one black alderman declared (not true, by the way). The ACLU (which is suing the city for confiscating the painting) is a Jewish group that's antiblack, another said. Let's boycott Jewish-owned businesses, another black politician suggested. And, finally, we came full circle. On the eve of his trial on charges of corruption, a black state legislator announced that he had proof that the AIDS virus had been spread through the world's black population by Israeli and South African scientists. "What we have," a TV reporter breathlessly announced, "is a black-Jewish crisis. We must heal the wounds."

I had to smile, because it occurred to me that the larger black population seemed relatively indifferent to the questions of the Jews. What we had were a lot of goofy politicians.

But then I remembered in 1984, right after Jesse Jackson's "Hymie" remarks, when I was invited to participate in a small panel discussion on blacks and Jews. The panelists (three blacks and three Jews) agreed on a few things. True, many Jewish activists had joined the coalition that helped elect Washington mayor. And, true, our mutual histories of persecution mean that individuals from either group (no matter how successful they become) should not abandon the quest for justice. But, let's be honest, there has never been a strong coalition between the larger black and Jewish communities. Economically and culturally, they're worlds apart. More than half of Chicago area Jews live in mostly white suburbs. Most of the new merchants and landlords in the ghetto are Koreans and Arabs. Jews are largely irrelevant to the struggle of blacks in Chicago. The real issue is the responsibility of white-dominated society (that includes Jews) to meet the needs of the downtrodden.

Then one of the black panelists rose to speak. I do not trust liberals, he told us. In fact, I trust rednecks more than liberals because a redneck lets you know where you stand. And don't tell me that Farrakhan's not a great black hero. And Jesse need not apologize to Jews about "Hymie" at all. Oh yes, and one more thing, I am sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust. Remember, whites slaughtered more blacks during slavery than Hitler killed Jews.

If I weren't so flabbergasted, I would have burst out laughing. The speech was painfully absurd and reflected the deep tensions between blacks and Jews in Chicago. The Jews with money, but outnumbered, afraid that one day someone bigger and stronger will take it all away. The blacks with enough votes to elect each other no matter whom they insult, but so isolated in their neighborhoods and in Chicago that their political power has almost no meaning.

I recently walked through the halls of Marshall High School of Chicago's West Side. Many years ago, it was filled with Jews, poor but hopeful about their future in the new country. Now it's black; too many of its students drugged, pregnant, apathetic. I watched an English class of seniors struggle with its assignment. Write a paragraph, the teacher told them, on any topic you want.

A few clutched their pens and pencils. But most looked out the window. Many just stared. I saw their eyes, and their eyes looked hopeless. I no longer felt like laughing. It's not funny anymore. □

Love in the Stacks: The Curious Odyssey of Romance Self-Help

Josh Henkin

Smart Women, Foolish Choices; Women Men Love, Women Men Leave; Women Who Love Too Much; Men Who Hate Women & The Women Who Love Them.... The list goes on. In the kingdom of self-help, books about romance are neatly perched on the throne. They line the shelves of bookstores and supermarkets and break the piggy banks of America's lovelorn. *Smart Women, Foolish Choices* has sold over one million copies, *Women Who Love Too Much* over two million. Many of these books have spent time atop the nation's bestseller lists, and more volumes lie in wait, soon to be consumed by voracious singles nationwide.

All of which perplexes me, I must admit. Try as I might, I can't think of anyone in my circles who has read, much less bought, one of these books. At least no one who'll admit to it. Which is more to the point. Such literature elicits as much derision as devotion, and for every person who swears by these books there's another who breaks out in hives at their mere mention.

But why this great divide? Why all the derision? Why the onslaught of parodies, culminating most recently in bestselling humorist Linda Sunshine's *Women Who Date Too Much (And Those Who Should Be So Lucky)?* Perhaps it's just upper-middle-class, college-educated snobbery, the belief that any bestseller is too unsophisticated to be worthwhile. Or a touch of envy that people like Drs. Connell Cowan and Melvyn Kinder—the self-anointed grand pooh-bahs of romance self-help with two bestsellers under their belts—are rolling in the dough, despite the fact that their books seem to contain psychological insight equivalent to a plea to click your heels and chant "self-esteem." Or, on the other hand, the suspicion of being taken for a ride: the fear that for $4.95 we could have been off our analysts' couches years ago.

Perhaps. But I think not. The amount of venom directed at this literature is much too great to be attributed simply to these sentiments. In truth, there seem to be two principal reasons for the hostility. The first reason is legitimate and deserves to be taken seriously; the second is much more problematic and suggests that many of us who reflexively dismiss these books need to rethink our attitudes.

The most justified criticism of this literature stems from its subtle and not-so-subtle sexism. Just about all these books are geared toward women, and, with only an occasional notable exception, the underlying message is that women have messed up. In many cases the titles tell all: Women may be smart, but they are also foolish; they may want to be in a relationship, but they're guilty of loving too much and loving the men who hate them.

For every person who swears by books like Smart Women, Foolish Choices, there's another who breaks out in hives at their mere mention.

Drs. Cowan and Kinder, authors of *Smart Women, Foolish Choices* and *Women Men Love, Women Men Leave,* are the worst offenders. Pointing out in the introduction to *Smart Women, Foolish Choices* that most self-help romance books have been written by women, they note that, as men, they are in the unique position to tell women what men want. "As men we believe we understand how men think, feel, and react," they write. "We're going to tell you about strategies that work with men." Nary a word about whether the alleged male way of thinking, feeling, and reacting is appropriate. As Cowan and Kinder put it: "This book deals with issues between men and women—not as they should be, but as they are." In other words, we wear the pants, so listen up.

Throughout both books, Cowan and Kinder contend that women must take the package as it's wrapped, insisting that women "have to accept and love a man for what he is right now." But, when this like-it-or-lump-it attitude gets specific, Cowan and Kinder's readers are asked to accept some pretty harsh realities. Women are told, for example, that men both want affection and dread it, that they need their women close by yet not too close by. So what's the answer? "If you are a woman who wants to keep a man behaving in a romantic

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fashion ... [y]our first step is to understand [that] ... [u]ncertainty ... works with men. For example, a woman who breaks dates with a man a couple of times or comes home late and is slightly vague will drive him absolutely nuts.... [W]hen men are uncertain, they find themselves becoming more romantic." In other words, ladies, please be coy.

Cowan and Kinder also keep complaining that women search for mutually exclusive qualities in their mates. They want "a man who is vulnerable but strong, communicative but self-contained, sensitive yet aggressive and protective." In short, women "always end up feeling disappointed by men—but it's not because the men they choose are inadequate. It's because their expectations are distorted."

But, when it comes to men's expectations, Cowan and Kinder start to hum a different tune, and all those mutually exclusive qualities begin to sound a little more compatible. The authors write that what a man is attracted to is "a magical mixture of unadulterated power and tenderness—in equal measure," and that the most mesmerizing women are those who "have the ability to be both tender and giving, as well as strong and powerful." Talk about a double standard.

This literature's attitude toward women does not exist in a vacuum, which helps explain the unbridled hostility many feminists have toward it. Eighties-style popular culture has given us a subtle twist on traditional sexism, accepting the fact that women have entered the workplace but playing on their fears that they'll be left alone as a result. *Fatal Attraction,* America's top-grossing film in 1987, conveys this message in no uncertain terms: Even the most successful single working women are nothing but psychotic spinsters who literally will kill themselves and others in order to nab a man.

Perhaps even more telling is the 1986 Harvard-Yale study, which claimed that the "chances" of marriage are pretty slim for college-educated single white women who have reached the age of thirty. By forty, according to the subsequently falsified words of *Newsweek,* chances are about as good as being shot by a terrorist.

What's most interesting about the Harvard-Yale study is that it plays on the fears of the same women who flock to buy the self-help literature. The case studies offered by the self-help authors almost always feature well-educated women who have reached their early thirties and are in a panic because they haven't settled down, fearing the loss of their sexual desirability and hearing the noisy ticking of their biological clocks.

In perhaps the best of many articles that punch gaping holes in the conclusions of the Harvard-Yale study, Katha Pollitt, writing in the *Nation,* points to the sexism inherent in the very process of conducting such a study—sexism that, she implies, pervades the self-help literature as well. "[N]ot all single women are weeping into their newly purchased copies of *Smart Women, Foolish Choices,*" Pollitt notes. "Many are simply furious." Quoting a friend of hers, she continues: "'The study reinforces the view that women over 30 are desperate and powerless in their relationships with men. Ours not to choose but only—hope, hope—be chosen.'" Like the self-help literature, the study seems to be saying, in Pollitt's friend's words: "'You wanted independence? Well, you got it, and the joke's on you.'"

The sexism that pervades the culture of self-help is reason enough to be critical of much of this literature, yet something far more complex and disturbing seems to impel many of us to dismiss books whose bindings we've never cracked. After all, what we reject is not simply the content of this literature, but the very phenomenon itself. In other words, we find something embarrassing about the mere existence of a literature designed to help people find romantic bliss.

Beneath this discomfort lies the notion that it's OK to want a relationship, but not to *need* one. Relationships are supposed to be things that we can take or leave. They may be fun, rewarding, even life-enhancing; but we also can do without them. We have our careers and our other personal achievements to make us happy. Thus, we watch in bemusement as people search for romance on "The Dating Game" and "Love Connection"; as despairing singles tell their tales to Donahue, Oprah, and Geraldo. And throughout it all we rest content, pleased to know that we are not part of this grand confessional, that the world is divided into a self-sufficient "us" and a pathetic, groveling "them."

This dichotomy between wanting and needing not only strikes at the heart of our attitudes toward relationships; it also captures the fundamental capitalist ontology of individualism. Under capitalism we are all individuals à la Adam Smith: truckers and barterers, people who must sell their labor, or themselves, in order to survive. Self-reliance is all-important because in the competitive work world anyone is a potential enemy, and ultimately we have only ourselves to rely upon. Thus, the very essence of bourgeois psychology, for example, is to teach us how to be self-reliant, how to feel good about ourselves, how to live alone, how to want but not need.

This individualist ontology is embraced in subtle ways by the self-help literature itself. The authors continually remind their readers not to appear "desperate," that the surest way to turn off potential mates is to make them feel that you need them. More important, the literature buys into the marketplace ethos of selling oneself. So, for example, in *If I'm So Wonderful, Why Am I Still Single?* Susan Page suggests ten "strategies"

for nabbing a mate and even uses a money-making analogy to tell singles how they ought to pursue relationships. In what might be construed as the yuppie approach to love, Page suggests that singles keep their standards high, that "[i]f you believe you can earn $50,000 a year, if you desire this and your intention is to bring it about, you are not likely to earn $500,000 dollars a year. What you ask for has a great deal to do with what you are likely to get."

It seems ironic that a literature designed to help people share themselves with others resorts to the individualist ideas and language of capitalist culture, but that's precisely the point: ours is a society plagued by massive contradictions. In the public sphere we are expected to be independent, unemotional, and in control; but in private we need to be nurturing, tender, and vulnerable. In public we are told that we must continually sell our products and our personalities to others, that we must have a polished *appearance,* that we are what we eat, what we wear, and what we drive. But, in private, this attitude proves detrimental, making us regard our peers as manipulable commodities instead of intimate partners. In short, the personal qualities necessary to survive in the world of work are exactly the opposite of the qualities needed for healthy relationships. And though it would be nice if we could doff our public personalities and don our private ones at the end of the day, we simply aren't capable of doing so. Changing personae is not like changing hats: We cannot reasonably expect our private lives to remain unaffected by the logic of the market.

What makes this problem particularly difficult today is that an extremely large number of Americans find their jobs immensely frustrating. Many work in large bureaucracies and have little control over what they do and hardly any input into how the organizations in which they work are run. Some must obey a strict set of rules and report to their superiors. Even those who are self-employed, or who work in small operations where there ostensibly is more freedom, nevertheless end up being constrained by the market's rules of the game.

Moreover, improvements in technology have made the capitalist struggle ever more intense. Many of us find our jobs becoming increasingly technical, and some of us even face the possibility of being replaced by a machine. We feel impotent, but we cannot tell anyone, since, in the words of the Sure deodorant commercial, "Whatever you do, never let 'em see you sweat."

At least as significant as our feeling frustrated at work is the way we interpret our frustration. From the moment we enter grade school we are inundated with so much malarkey about America being the mythical land of unlimited opportunity where anyone can



Look, all I'm asking is that we let market forces bring a greater degree of efficiency to our marriage.

achieve success. We are raised on stories of Abraham Lincoln growing up in a log cabin, of Horatio Alger pulling himself up by the bootstraps, of poor immigrants striking it rich in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Politicians pretend that they grew up in urban slums, rising to political power from the streets of the ghetto. Minorities who don't scamper up the social ladder quickly enough are dismissed as lazy and undeserving. Power structures are ignored, the often insuperable barriers to advancement dismissed, and everything else is drowned out by the unyielding drone of "you can make it if you try."

Raised in this manner, we are incapable of interpreting our unfulfilling work lives as anything but a reflection of personal failure. If only we had tried a little harder, we'd have made it to the top of the class. So we hope that our private lives will make up for our disappointment at work; yet we come home angry and insecure—angry that we have little control at the office, insecure because we remain convinced that somehow we are at fault. We crave intimacy in our relationships, yet we fear it. And this fear is not just paranoia. After all, we live in a society that encourages people to take advantage of the vulnerable. And so, perplexed by this contradictory message, we buy books like *Winning Through Intimidation* and *Looking Out For Number One,* on the one hand, and books about achieving intimacy, on the other; failing to notice contradiction in a social order that requires us to be both intimidating and vulnerable. In fact, we fail to recognize the issue of social structure at all. And why should we recognize it? We are taught to believe that social structure is irrelevant, that if we take matters into our own hands—at work or in our relationships—we can restructure our lives. And if we fail—well, we know who's at fault.

Our inability to recognize the role that the work-world plays in wreaking havoc on our personal lives is particularly striking when we note that this individualist marketplace ontology is often

reflexively accepted not only by the right, but by much of the left as well. Pollitt, for example, uncritically accepts this ontology in her otherwise excellent article. Pointing to *People*'s coverage of the Harvard-Yale study, she notes: "To a steady funereal drumbeat, a parade of contrite professional women has been marched across the national consciousness: 'I think I was 22 until I was 38.' 'Men have become an obsession with me.' 'I feel like my mother's finger is wagging at me, telling me I shouldn't have waited.'" Pollitt complains that "actual women have allowed themselves to be quoted saying those things. Talk about letting down the side."

It's hard to tell whether Pollitt thinks these women have let down the side by having these feelings or simply by admitting them in public, but it doesn't much matter. Pollitt thinks there's something wrong with feeling incomplete without a relationship, and so she deals with these women by insisting that they are a primitive minority, a covey of Phyllis Schlaflys in disguise. She argues that the description of unhappy single women is so much hype—that the media are sexist and that plenty of women are involved in fulfilling relationships, while many others are perfectly content to remain single.

All of which is true, but it still misses the point. Pollitt—and there are many others like her—inadvertently ends up supporting the most dubious marketplace values in order to fight sexism. Instead of arguing that the problem is a society that makes it difficult to achieve satisfying relationships—both because of sexism and because of the destructive psychological consequences of capitalist ideology—Pollitt and many others on the left see the problem in uncritically individualist terms: Women are not sufficiently independent; they have not gotten over their desire to be babied. And so the millions of people who buy self-help books, as well as the millions of others who don't but are equally unhappy with their personal lives—men as well as women—are dismissed as reactionaries. Instead, their pain should be taken seriously and recognized for what it is: a reflection of the monumental problems facing relationships under capitalist culture.

We should not accept an individualist ontology as ordained from on high. Modern individualism is a unique by-product of capitalism. Many noncapitalist societies have held that people fulfill their highest purpose only in harmonious relationship to others. Marx had something like this in mind when he spoke of humans' being alienated from their "species-beings," and he certainly was not alone in believing that self-sufficiency is not humanity's highest ideal.

We needn't wish we had grown up in a Jane Austen novel in order to realize that relationships in late twentieth-century America need some mending.

But the typical response to this call for an alternative ontological vision is quite disturbing. Too many people equate dissatisfaction with the present with a naive glorification of the past. In truth, most critics of capitalism—Marx included—do not hark back to a golden precapitalist age. And, as far as relationships are concerned, we needn't wish we had grown up in a Jane Austen novel in order to realize that relationships in late twentieth-century America need some mending.

At the same time, we do have something to learn from the way earlier communities tried to make sure that their members were not lonely. Today, by contrast, individuals are supposed to fend for themselves, and any attempt to help people find satisfying relationships is ridiculed. Singles weekends are dismissed as conventions for the desperate, and many people take a friend's attempt to "set them up" as a personal affront: Does that friend think they are incapable of finding someone on their own? The self-help literature, with its emphasis on exactly that—"*self*-help"—is thus perfectly tailored for contemporary individualistic culture.

So where does this all leave us? In not very good shape, it seems. Easy solutions don't suggest themselves, not the least because the problems plaguing relationships today are but symptoms of more fundamental contradictions in capitalist culture. We can hope that the left will recognize these contradictions and attempt to restructure society. But the fact that so many people on the left are able to dismiss the popularity of self-help literature, as well as other signs of personal despair, as the cries of the insufficiently independent, suggests that we're in for a long haul. □

Psychodynamics of the Election

We—the publisher and editors of Tikkun*—were present at the Democratic convention in Atlanta in order to experience firsthand the kickoff of the 1988 presidential campaign. Our individual reflections on the psychodynamics of the event contain ideas that are relevant to the ensuing campaign.*

Michael Lerner

My last convention was Chicago, 1968—and I was in the streets, knocked unconscious by police clubs, and later almost felled again by excessive exposure to tear gas. I had grown up in a family that was extraordinarily active in Democratic party politics, but after 1968 I became skeptical about the Democratic party, as did much of the rest of my generation.

It wasn't only the violence in Chicago that turned us off. There was a deeper corruption that bothered us: Many good people supported policies that they knew were fundamentally immoral and humanly destructive (e.g., the Vietnam War in the 60s, and the military buildup and renewed cold war fervor in the later Carter years) so that they could advance other worthwhile programs, such as the war on poverty. But, while they thought they were doing "smart politics" by going along with the rhetoric of people to their right, they often ended up undermining their own legitimacy to govern. Thus, Johnson set the stage for Nixon, and Carter created the ideological climate which called for a Reagan. In the process, domestic programs were often severely slashed, so that the result really wasn't "smart politics" after all.

Since 1968, I've grown disenchanted with the Democratic party and with liberal-left politics in other ways. When it comes to economic entitlements and individual rights, the Democrats are on the right course, perhaps even a bit too timid. But economic and political rights are too narrow a focus for any political force that wants to address the real complexities of human needs. Too often the Democrats work from very narrow assumptions about human needs, endorsing a shallow ethical relativism and ignoring fundamental psychological, spiritual, and moral dimensions to human problems.

So I approached the Atlanta convention with a certain amount of caution. On the one hand, I had been very impressed with Kitty Dukakis, whom I had interviewed for the July issue of *Tikkun*. Here was a person with obvious smarts, real depth and moral passion. On the other hand, I did not expect that Michael Dukakis would do or say anything extraordinary. He had come this far precisely because he is a cautious and measured politician.

I came to the convention hoping to be convinced that the Democrats were presenting America with a presidential candidate who was more like Kennedy than like Carter. For me, Kennedy's strength had been that he raised people's expectations—with the result that they insisted that he follow through on his idealism, or that they be allowed to do so themselves. Carter had done the opposite, preaching a philosophy of lowered expectations, which helped bring about disillusionment with what could be accomplished through collective energy and effort. If there was any hope for transforming America in 1988, it depended on the reemergence of a spirit of optimism, a sense that there is some "we" that could act together to change society, a "we" with common ideals, a "we" whose members were willing to take the risk of trusting one another again.

From this perspective, the convention provided grounds for both hope and despair. Even though skeptics dismissed the Democrats' commitment to "unity" as mere lust for power and victory, I sensed something deeper—a genuine feeling that there is a basis for connectedness among the liberal and progressive forces in America. Many liberals focus only on what divides people, too often dismissing and dehumanizing those who disagree with them. This approach is both morally wrong and politically suicidal. It was a hopeful sign in Atlanta that people acted with some sensitivity to the sensibilities of others—those with whom they had disagreements yet shared common interests.

However, Democratic leaders unfortunately were not sufficiently confident to allow much genuine debate in Atlanta. The differences between Jackson and Dukakis were ironed out largely through compromises in the wording of the platform so that there would be no controversy on the floor. And those few issues that were debated were scheduled before the day's television coverage began.

Also, within the separate camps it appeared that debate was not encouraged. Dukakis forces put a lot of

pressure on their delegates, for example, to support the Dukakis position on "No First Use" (of nuclear weapons) and on "Taxing the Rich." Every issue was transformed into a question of "loyalty" to Dukakis. The same dynamic existed in the Jackson camp. When I asked some Jackson delegates what they would demand of Dukakis in terms of addressing the concerns of the progressive wing of the party, most said that they would do whatever Jesse wanted.

Someone at the convention suggested that Jackson endorse the ticket only if Dukakis met with Jackson's delegates and convinced them that he would deliver something substantial to the progressive wing of the party. But precisely what was most exciting about this fantasy—the fact that Jackson would be empowering his delegates—made it least palatable to Jackson's inner circle. As the convention concluded, some Jackson delegates privately confided that they weren't sure whether their incredible efforts in the past months had been worthwhile. Few doubted that Jackson would have a powerful voice in a new administration—but some questioned if politics by proxy, a politics that rested on having "your man" in some position of influence, would likely sustain those spring 1988 moments in which millions of people had moved beyond private cynicism to join the renewed sense of "possibility" that the Jackson campaign seemed to create.

Dukakis' speech was most powerful when it was most personal—when it was a talk rather than a speech. Precisely to the extent that it manifested warmth and passion it shook people from their detachment and began to generate the kind of excitement that transformed the delegates' abstract belief in the political efficacy of unity into a more genuine and tangible commitment based on real trust. If Dukakis could be as inspiring on the rest of the campaign trail, many thought, he might actually beat Bush.

Nevertheless, there was something missing. I had hoped that Dukakis would avoid laundry lists and focus his campaign on three fundamental themes: a shift from the politics of selfishness to the politics of the common good; a focus on strengthening family life by understanding the complex ways that the competitive marketplace undermines committed, loving relationships; and a commitment to ending the cold war. If people knew that these were the three themes of the campaign, that *this* is what they were endorsing when they voted for Dukakis, then the election would really be about something and they would have a real basis for choosing one candidate over the other. For example, most voters don't want to know about the details of a particular military system. What they want to know is the attitude that the president will have when he approaches the whole issue of weapons. Is the military question going to focus on the "biggest bang for the buck" (and hence the question becomes whether Dukakis or Bush is more efficient at achieving the *same* ends), or is it going to focus on ending the arms race?

Some people argue that Dukakis really shares the same goals as the most liberal or progressive wing of the party, but that it would be foolish to say that in public. The problem with his covering up his true principles is that, if he wins, he will not be able to claim a mandate for his views. On the contrary, people might claim that he won because he had chosen procontra and promilitary Bentsen. By *not* articulating a vision, Dukakis fails to generate the community of hope that could be the most important consequence of his presidency.

The reason that "vision" is smart electioneering is that most human beings desire a very different kind of social order—one that encourages community and mutual support.

At this writing, however, it's too soon to assume that the dynamics of the election itself won't force Dukakis to move beyond his laundry list and begin to articulate his deepest principles. My guess is that doing so would not only be best for the country, but best in terms of electoral strategy as well. The fact is that Dukakis won the nomination *not* because of a detached managerial style, but despite that fact. His strong commitment, for example, to ending contra aid and his opposition to nuclear weapons touched people's idealism.

The reason that "vision" is smart electioneering is that most human beings desire a very different kind of social order—one that encourages community, loving connections among people, and mutual care and support. To the extent that they believe that these alternatives are utopian, they tend to suppress these hopes, either by deflecting them toward other-worldly religious aspirations (heaven or a messianic age, for example), or by dismissing them as remnants of their youthful idealism that their more "mature" selves must discard.

But these hopes are never fully extinguished. One thing that most Democrats still do not fully understand is that Reagan licked them in two consecutive elections for good reason: He appealed to these hopes, to this idealism, while the Democrats seemed to be mere technocrats fussing about the details of the budget and the deficit. Though Reagan's commitment to the aspirations and concerns of the average American was a sham, Democrats ought to learn from him that Americans have hopes and fears that go much deeper than the budget

deficit or the details of a good entitlement program.

So much of American politics is designed to suppress our hopes and our idealism. To the extent that it succeeds, we become more narrowly self-interested, more interest-group oriented, and we lose our concern for the common good. But what is exciting about politics is the never-ending possibility that our deepest hopes will reemerge, and that we will trust one another again and act to change the world.

There were moments at the convention when everyone seemed to share the belief that a new kind of politics and a new kind of community could once again be forged. Holding on to those moments, sustaining them, validating them, nourishing them, is what a *Tikkun*-like politics must do. □

Josh Henkin

Jesse Jackson's speech was the highlight of the convention not simply because he is a more powerful orator than Michael Dukakis, or because he has a flair for metaphor, or because "racial battleground" rhymes nicely with "economic common ground" while "competence" goes best with "somnolence"—though all this is true. For me, Jackson was most moving because in subtle ways he managed to encourage people to transcend their parochial concerns. He did it by making the possessed feel related to the dispossessed, by reminding the members of his convention audience who it was that had made their beds that morning. And he did it by assuring ghetto kids that he hadn't forgotten where he'd come from, that he knew what it was like to have people be mean to you.

In a strange way, that word "mean" was what did it for me. Mean is a word that just isn't used in politics. It's too up front, too uncensored, too vulnerable. It's the language of little boys and girls, tears streaming down their cheeks, complaining that their big brothers have been mean to them. Maybe it's sheer foolishness, but Jackson's use of that word made me feel more comfortable with him, made me think that a man who understands what it's like to have people be mean to you is likely to be sensitive to the concerns of others.

Yet Jackson's speech also had serious faults—faults that, in many ways, reveal the fundamental problems with American interest-group politics. Ironically, Jackson's speech was at once too inclusive and too exclusive. Touting a politics of inclusion, Jackson reiterated that nobody's patch is big enough, that we must be part of a larger blanket. But as Jackson began to enumerate whose patches were welcome, it became apparent that his blanket covered everyone from Mother Teresa to Charlie Manson. Hawks as well as doves, Jackson said, at which point someone sitting near me asked, "Is there room for sexists and racists too?"

At the same time, Jackson's speech had, in the opinion of some, an exclusive ring to it. As the champion of the underdog, the voice of the dispossessed, Jackson ended up appealing most forcefully to a small sector of his audience. Many individuals walking about the convention hall wondered whether the patches of middle-class white males fit on Jackson's blanket. I know that some people consider that question audacious, but it's actually quite reasonable. Jackson, like much of the left, at times falls into the trap of valorizing the economically and socially dispossessed to the point of delegitimizing the possessed. Jackson is right to claim that "whatever the original ships, we are [all] in the same boat now," but recognizing that we all row together involves acknowledging that even those who are not underprivileged suffer from society's misplaced priorities—that anomie knows no boundaries of wealth or power. The politics of inclusion means more than just achieving power for the economically and politically disadvantaged; it means coming to terms with the daily unhappiness that plagues all sectors of society.

Ultimately, however, the Democrats' most fundamental problem has to do with the very notion of pandering to distinct sectors of the population, and it is this mentality that forces Jackson and other Democrats into the catch-22 of being both too inclusive and too exclusive. Despite their official recognition that interest-group politics à la Mondale is the kiss of death, the Democrats continue to conceive of electioneering in such terms. Thus, people are privileged or underprivileged, doves or hawks, blacks or whites, farmers or steelworkers, gays or unwed mothers, and so on.

What Dukakis needs to do in order to inspire political commitment—not to mention to ensure that he wins—is to convey a vision that transcends this interest-group model. The key is not simply to attach a bunch of patches to the same blanket, but to weave their threads together. This is not to claim that, in some fundamental way, all people are alike or that difference isn't valuable. But it is to suggest that the Democrats must create a community that goes well beyond a pastiche of individuated patches. The trick for Dukakis is, on the one hand, not to be so inclusive as to ignore ideological differences—not to insist, in Jackson's words, that both doves and hawks are simply birds; but, on the other hand, not to be so exclusive as to make it impossible for the doves to recognize the hawks' fundamental humanity.

Perhaps Jackson was trying to convey such a vision when he said that ultimately we're all birds anyway. After all, we're going to look pretty indistinguishable in a mushroom cloud. But that has been the case for

fifty years, and, for better or worse, the mutual quest for survival hasn't proven to be a sufficient bond.

There do seem to be other ways, however, to promote a cohesive bond, be it within this country or throughout the international community. During the Democratic primaries, Paul Simon suggested that the state of Soviet-American affairs would be radically different had Ronald Reagan been an exchange student in Moscow, and his statement is to the point—at least rhetorically. To the extent that we come to terms with the limitations of our individual perspectives, that we realize, as Jackson noted, that the cold war rages between only an eighth of the world's population, that most people aren't of European descent, that they're not white, but red and black and brown—to that extent are we able somewhat to transcend our narrow concerns and recognize that we are parts of larger communities, be they geographical, political, social, or spiritual.

Thus, the struggle for human rights, for example, is not just a fight for individual dignity—though that is important; it also is a statement of solidarity among all people of the globe. And when a Jesse Jackson tells millions of Americans that we must not choose "a false sense of independence," but instead utilize "our capacity to . . . unite for the greater good," or a Michael Dukakis speaks of a country in which we ask "not only what's in it for some of us, but what's good and what's right for all of us," we have at least an inkling of a worthwhile presidential vision.

Of course, a speech is a speech is a speech—and it's no great trick to read one. We mustn't get so obsessed with presidential vision that we forget that much of the most worthwhile political change has occurred from the bottom-up, rather than the top-down. Nevertheless, particularly in an age where television is king and the commander in chief visits our living rooms nearly every evening, we should recognize—despite one nominee's frequent protests to the contrary—that the president is not just a glorified field manager, but someone who plays a role in shaping people's consciousness. □

Nan Fink

Being present at a political convention is far more intense an experience than one would expect from watching it on TV. Like a good therapy marathon, the participants go through periods of anger, boredom, depression, optimism, closeness, and reconciliation during the four-day period. Politics is still a passionate matter—despite the pressure to "look good" on TV.

The passion that is expressed, however, is not always easy to take. It's one thing to be part of a crowd cheering, along with others, for a shared dream. But, if the crowd takes an ugly or hostile turn, the idea of a quick escape to a safe television screen has appeal.

One such moment took place for me during the Atlanta convention when the Jackson minority platform plank calling for "mutual recognition, territorial compromise, and self-determination for Israelis and Palestinians" was debated and then, by previous agreement between the Dukakis and Jackson forces, not voted upon. Because the debate took place in non-prime-time hours, it was neither televised nor covered in detail by the press. As a result, the incredible amount of negative feeling expressed toward the pro-Israel position went all but unknown to most Americans.

During the debate, Jackson delegate James Zogbe and Rep. Marvin Dymally, the pro-Palestinian speakers, made an appeal for the human rights of Palestinians. They were loudly applauded. In contrast, the two pro-Israel speakers, Sen. Daniel Inouye and Rep. Charles Schumer, were booed and hissed as they argued against the plank by saying that the current Palestinian situation is entirely the fault of the Arabs and that the U.S. must support Israel in what it is doing because Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East.

The room was electric with hostility. Sitting there, I was appalled by what the pro-Israel speakers were saying, and I was upset and frightened by the depth of anti-Israel feeling amongst these people who have supported Israel in the past. What was going on here? Why wasn't there a more moderate and conciliatory pro-Israel speaker? Was the reaction in the audience caused by the inflammatory and insensitive pro-Israel rhetoric? Or was it a reflection of growing anti-Semitism? Did it come from blacks in the Jackson camp, some of whom appear to be increasingly angry with Jews? Or was it the result of more and more people's disapproving of the way Israel is handling the *intifada*?

Perhaps the reaction would have been different had the pro-Israel speakers not been so wildly insensitive to Palestinian pain and suffering. Apparently Dukakis' advice from conservative American Jewish leaders led him to choose hard-liners—a mistake, in my opinion, because their one-sided arguments led to further alienation rather than greater understanding of the complexities of the situation. Certainly someone could have argued that the plank was inappropriate, while at the same time acknowledging that the rights of Palestinians are being violated and that there must be an equitable settlement. This position would have more accurately represented the majority of American Jews, who, according to recent polls, support the idea of negotiations.

I spoke to several people at the convention who thought that anti-Semitism was the overriding reason

for the hostility toward the pro-Israel position. I disagree. In line with American liberal tradition, Democrats strongly oppose the violation of human rights. Therefore, it was not surprising that there was sympathy toward the Palestinians as the oppressed people and a judgmental tone toward Israel as the oppressor. For those who don't know about or understand the subtleties of the situation, what they see is the "good guy" and the "bad guy."

This is not to say that anti-Semitism wasn't part of the dynamic. The response to the pro-Israel speakers was so charged, the hostility so pointed, that something was going on deeper than censure of a country six thousand miles away that is violating fewer human rights than many other countries.

One possible analysis of the incident is this: Some of the blacks at the convention are anti-Jewish because of bad past experiences (e.g., Jewish landlords and shopkeepers) and recent tensions over lack of Jewish support of the Jackson campaign. Their anger—plus their moral outrage at the way the Palestinians are being treated—leads them to be extremely negative toward Israel, a Jewish state. This negativity, expressed strongly during the debate, was supported by other people who are opposed to Israel's actions strictly on moral grounds. Inflamed by the provocative rhetoric of the pro-Israel speakers, then, these different groups gave voice to their rejection of Israel.

Much as I support open discussion, I was relieved when this painful and worrisome debate came to a close. Yet the issue is not going to go away, and we all have to deal with it. Like a weather vane, this convention showed the direction in which the wind is blowing. □

Peter Gabel

As in Atlanta, the media will play a defining role in the elections this fall. It's a mistake to think of the media as some impersonal entity, because it is really a form of consciousness, a way of looking at reality, embodied in tens of thousands of media practitioners and millions of readers or viewers—"the audience." Atlanta helped me see through some of the media mystery.

The physical setup of the convention was a graphic representation of a deeper reality. There was the Omni, the building in which the convention actually took place. Almost surrounding the Omni was a huge complex, the Georgia World Congress Center (WCC), in which ten to fifteen thousand media people, many times the number who were actual political actors in the Omni, assembled to observe and report on the events in the Omni.

The consciousness in the WCC was one of constant observation. There were no visible discussions amongst the thousands of media people about their own relationship to the outcome of anything happening at the convention. Such discussions would have seemed to be "inappropriate": Members of the media were there as observers.

This observer mentality is the central characteristic of media consciousness. It enables people in the media to experience, in a voyeuristic way, being part of a political community and yet, at the same time, to insulate themselves from the risk that normally comes with being part of such a community.

Underlying media consciousness, then, is a destructive compromise between two conflicting impulses: both the desire to be and the fear of being connected to a community. The compromise is to watch it—with all the excitement that "watching it" implies—in a voyeuristic way.

This inner struggle leads to the negative tone that we hear from many members of the media, as well as the posturing and grandiose speech-making characteristic of politicians. Journalists are profoundly affected by the excitement that they experience safely outside of themselves. They are both attracted to the political actors, seeing in them the locus of meaning that they want, and contemptuous of them because of their own pain and anger at being isolated from a community of meaning. Their "role" as journalists makes this split legitimate because it "officially" tells them that it is appropriate for them to insulate themselves from their own desires, and it legitimates their unwillingness to take the risks that being part of the political community would require.

As a result, journalists inevitably are hostile toward the very things that they adore. For me, this point was clearest in much of the press' reaction to Jesse Jackson's speech. Several commentators distanced themselves from their feelings, suggesting that Jackson's speech would alienate a lot of whites. The degree of passion and emotional pull that Jackson actually communicated threatened and almost contradicted the smooth defensive neutrality of the official commentators, leading them angrily to reject their own longing which was elicited by the speech.

At the same time, the insistence on distance, the denial that something that could have personal meaning is happening, makes members of the press most responsive to the politician who acts as a "public figure" rather than as a human being. This message, subtly but constantly conveyed to political actors, encourages the dominant form of political speech: a bombastic and

silly exercise in words that emphasizes the distance between the speaker and the listener.

The absurdity of such speech-making was vivid in Atlanta. The speakers gave talks to audience members who might have wanted to hear the bombast were they actually listening to the speeches. In reality, however, many of the speeches were not televised and most of the people in the Omni coliseum were not listening anyway—engaging instead in endless conversations and interviews with the media. The content of the speeches was defined by the "public" or media-oriented nature of the reality: No one would have dared say something like, "Look, folks, we are faced with the problem of Bentsen's not really being what most of us wanted or liked, but on the other hand he might bring in Texas, so it's probably worth [or, someone else might have said, not worth] taking this move." Nobody could talk *to* anyone else because everyone was directing their speeches toward a media that required a level of bombast and distance—which, in turn, made almost all the speeches incredibly boring and irrelevant.

The distancing function of the media reflects a type of social consciousness that most of us share—ambivalence about genuine committed action. The way that the media presents reality is relieving to us because it allows us to remain cynically detached, protected from our deeper desires for connectedness as well as from our fears of being disappointed were we to let those desires guide our conduct.

Ironically, though, we resent the media for precisely the same reason that we appreciate it. The media breaks down community and discourages passionate involvement. On some level of consciousness, most of us know that the media helps to create a world that we really don't want. This hostility toward the media is what Spiro Agnew, in the early seventies, and Ronald Reagan, in the eighties, were able to appeal to when they engaged in media-bashing. Yet the American people, though attracted by this attack, would not let it go too far, knowing simultaneously that precisely what angers them about the media also protects them from their own all-too-scary desires.

The split described here helps to account for the schizoid nature of the convention and the election campaign. There exist two versions of reality—the media version, on the one hand; and the real convention or real election with politically significant meetings, exchanges of ideas, even changes in emotions undetectable by polls, on the other. If members of the media hope ever to capture this other reality, they can do so only by overcoming media consciousness and recognizing that they are real people with a great deal at stake in the outcome of political affairs. Journalists must be morally alive and emotionally connected human beings; otherwise their neutrality mirrors and reinforces the isolation of the reader or viewer.

But you, the reader of this article, can help in the process of undermining the media consciousness I describe. You can talk with your friends and coworkers about the issues and about how they are being "framed" by the media. You can invite people over to watch and discuss the debates and news coverage. And you can become actively involved in supporting positions, candidates, and political movements that seem to articulate your own views. Most important, you (we) can overcome the tendency to be observers, resisting the inner voices that push for caution, self-protection, and cynicism.

Part of my goal in writing this essay, and in my political activity in general, is to try to create a climate in which Michael Dukakis (and other political candidates as well) can become more of the real human being he is, freed from the detachment and technocratic mentality that has been created in him and to some extent in all of us. It was precisely to the degree that he *did* move away from this detachment and assumed his reality as a feeling person during his acceptance speech that he engendered enthusiasm and awakened the hope that we, the "viewers," could be with him, and that he could express for us our own desire for transcendence.

That moment happened not, as the media described it, because Dukakis "rose to the occasion," but rather because of the real experiences that he underwent at the convention: He encountered his own constituency and Jackson's constituency in ways that pierced the manipulated media consciousness and his need to pander to it. For a moment, the experts from the Kennedy School of Government and from Georgetown, as well as the media consultants, were no longer able to protect him from the demands of his constituency, and therefore he was able to be more of who he really is—and we too were able to be more of who we really are. If we can support Dukakis and other politicians in making these kinds of breakthroughs, if we can build the kind of confidence among them and among ourselves that makes media consciousness less dominant, there is a chance that this election, or future ones, could help recapture the underlying desire for mutual connection which is the hidden energy behind our commitment to democracy. □

A Palestinian Mini-State: The Security Challenge for Israel

Joseph Alpher

This essay seeks to delineate the broad parameters of Israel's relevant security interests in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and to suggest ways to guarantee them within the framework of an agreement on the establishment of a Palestinian state governed by a responsible authority. It does not examine the question of the identity or credentials of the Arab partner to negotiations, nor does it attempt to assess the likelihood of such contacts taking place. Rather, it assumes that there is sufficient interest in the issue of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza to warrant an attempt to evaluate Israel's security needs. Indeed, such evaluations may themselves point the way toward desirable modes of settlement of the Palestinian issue. In any event, this is an exercise in generalizations aimed at stimulating constructive thought, and *not* an attempt to provide specific policy formulations. Further, the question of border adjustments—annexing West Bank or Gaza territory to Israel—is addressed only within the context of military needs.

We will be discussing ways in which to defend a postsettlement Israel (along the 1967 borders, probably with fairly minor territorial adjustments) the approximate size of New Jersey or Vermont. It has to be defended not only against security dangers from the West Bank, which is one-fourth its size (the size of Delaware) and snuggles up against it along an extensive and irregular border, and from the Gaza Strip, which is one-fifteenth the size of the West Bank; but also against an Arab world immense in size and population. Paradoxically, in this age of nonconventional weaponry, the awesome nature of the geostrategic security threat to Israel posed potentially by the entire Middle East renders somewhat academic our task of assessing Israel's military security needs in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Historical Record

Before defining the dangers to Israel's security that might be posed by a Palestinian state, we ought to recall briefly the record of the recent past. In 1948, the West Bank and Gaza served as launching pads for attack against Israel by neighboring Arab states (although many historians today question whether Emir Abdullah of Transjordan ever really intended to conquer more than the West Bank and East Jerusalem for his emerging kingdom). Between 1949 and 1956, Jordan and Egypt sheltered terrorists, then called *fedayeen*, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. *Fedayeen* attacks deep into the populated heartland of Israel (Nes Ziona, Rehovot, Jerusalem) generated an escalating series of Israeli responses in the form of reprisal attacks, which eventually led to the Sinai Campaign of 1956.

In 1967, Jordanian-Egyptian military preparations inside the West Bank were one of the key catalysts of Israel's preemptive attack: The passage of Jordanian armored units across the Jordan bridges into the West Bank was viewed by Israel as a violation of a pledge, given by King Hussein to the United States when he received the tanks, to maintain the West Bank free of armored units. And the arrival of Egyptian commandos in Samaria a few days before the war began was a source of considerable concern among Israeli military planners. During the Six Day War the Jordanians launched artillery attacks against the Tel Aviv area from bases in nearby Samaria; Egyptian commandos attacked a fuel truck on the Tel Aviv–Jerusalem road; and Iraqi aircraft overflew Samaria to bomb targets in Israel. None of these activities caused great damage.

Since 1967 the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has permitted Israel to maintain an enhanced early-warning and forward-defense capability. Israel has been able to exploit the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea as a natural border as well as the eastern escarpments of the Samarian highland plateau as a natural line of defense and observation. Thus, during the 1973 Yom Kippur War the IDF was able to exploit its terrain and intelligence advantages to deter Jordan from attacking and thereby joining the war directly. Moreover, it could do so using a relatively small contingent of Israeli forces—thereby freeing other forces for vital missions of active defense.

Since the expansion of Israel's air force—its main

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strategic arm—and its land forces after 1973, West Bank airspace and territory have become increasingly important for overflying and training. During the late 1960s, terrain advantages and Israeli technical skills enabled the IDF to seal off the territories from cross-border incursions by terrorists with remarkable success. But without the collaboration of King Hussein in preventing terrorist incursions from Jordan, cross-border terrorism remains a potential problem.

On the other hand, to the extent that the territories captured in 1967 have become the scene of internal Palestinian opposition to Israeli rule—particularly during recent years, and culminating in the current uprising—the territories have become a security burden. Policing duties in the territories tie down Israeli forces to activities that make no genuine contribution to overall security. Deterrence and preparations for warfighting, which are the IDF's two key peacetime activities, are neglected at best, genuinely eroded at worst.

While Israel has a collective memory of the Arabs' use of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a springboard for attack against it during the country's first twenty years of existence, one highly relevant security legacy of the second twenty years of existence is the strong suspicion or conviction held by many Israelis that, no matter what political settlement is reached, at least some Palestinians will continue to seek ways to subvert Israel as a Jewish state, and that toward this end they will exploit whatever elements of sovereignty they achieve in the territories.

Indeed, as we shall see, in view of both history and technology, the dangers of subversion and terrorism pose a far greater challenge to the drafters of the security annex to a peace treaty than does the need to secure Israel against military attack from east of the Jordan River, or against attack by the new Palestinian state itself. Other specific elements that bear separate examination because of their political sensitivity are the dangers to Jerusalem—assuming it is not redivided physically by a settlement—and the security ramifications of leaving Jewish settlements inside the territory of the new Palestinian state.

The Military Aspect

The new Palestinian state should be totally demilitarized. It should have a police force to maintain internal order, but no army capable of engaging in warfare with its neighbors. This provision reflects Israel's legitimate fears, in terms of both history and geography. Israel was attacked or seriously threatened militarily from the West Bank and Gaza Strip twice during its twenty years of existence alongside Arab-ruled territory in these regions. And the position and topography of the West Bank (dominant hills a few dozen kilometers from the Mediterranean, and surrounding Jerusalem) and Gaza (an hour's drive from Tel Aviv) warrant their effective neutralization as springboards for attack and their availability for maneuver by defending Israeli forces in wartime—even in the missile age.

Significantly, recognition of the validity of this Israeli condition by at least some pro-PLO Palestinians is reflected in assurances, voiced repeatedly by Palestinian moderate spokesmen Hanna Siniora and Fayez Abu Rahmeh, that their state would make do "with a military band to greet visiting VIPs, and a police force armed with riotsticks."

The sovereign needs of the new Palestinian state would warrant guarantees against unprovoked Israeli invasion of its territory. These would presumably take the form of some sort of international commitment. The same international force, or indeed Israel itself, would assure the Palestinians' security against attack by Arab—or, if things really deteriorate in the Middle East, Iranian—forces from the direction of Egypt or Jordan. Israel would provide this assurance both for its own security, and to compensate the Palestinian state for its inability to defend itself. There should be no time limitation on the demilitarization of the Palestinian state, although, obviously, Israel could agree to reconsider conditions periodically, as long as it retained veto power.

In addition to demilitarization, provisions must be made for Israel to continue to enjoy the security benefits provided by the territories in terms of early warning and concentration of forces against more distant enemies. Here we may dispense quickly with Gaza. It borders on Egyptian Sinai, which is already demilitarized and patrolled by an international force whose primary mission is to warn Israel or Egypt of preparations for attack by the other party. Moreover, because the Gaza Strip is essentially flat, it offers little advantage for Israel in terms of electronic or optical early warning. Besides, its dimensions—about thirty kilometers long by ten kilometers wide—and great population density render it effectively insignificant, if not an actual burden, as a military staging ground for Israel. Hence, it remains for Israel to insist only upon the right to patrol the Mediterranean coast of the Gaza Strip in order to ensure that that territory not serve to conceal or facilitate preparations for attack against Israel.

Turning to the West Bank, we confront a radically different set of topographical facts. The mountain ridge that runs along Judea and Samaria from north to south effectively blocks Israel's electronic vision from the coastal heartland (except from East Jerusalem) eastward, into Jordan and Iraq beyond. Were an enemy from the east to succeed in crossing the Jordan River

and gaining the heights of the ridge before Israel discovered it or reacted, it would enjoy an immense military advantage. Sinilarly, the fifty kilometers or so of West Bank territory that separate the Jordan River from the pre-1967 border at Israel's narrow waist near Netanya and Hadera could provide crucial additional warning time against enemy aircraft or missile attack if Israeli forces were positioned properly.

Logically, then, Israel must insist on retaining early-warning intelligence forces on the Samarian and Judean mountain ridge. It must retain overflight rights for its air force, both for intelligence purposes and, in the event of hostilities, for the interception of westward-bound enemy aircraft. It must also be allowed to position sufficient forces at the Jordan River crossings and along the passable axes of advance from the Jordan westward, so as to blunt the initial impact of a surprise attack until it can summon its reserve army.

The issue of how many military forces Israel should insist on positioning for these purposes inside the West Bank has been dealt with in a number of studies. The most detailed analysis, Aryeh Shalev's *The West Bank: Line of Defense* (Praeger/Greenwood, 1985), indicates that the

> preferred solution would be to station two brigades east of the highland plateau as far as the Jordan River, in order to obtain defensive depth, and to delay a potential enemy attack so that reserves could be mobilized and the war fought on the West Bank or further east. Early-warning devices in Judea and Samaria would be part of this plan as well. In this case Israel's air defense would begin at the Jordan River, and would consist of a number of surface-to-air missile batteries on the eastern slopes of the highland plateau and patrols by combat aircraft over Judea and Samaria.

Shalev adds the requirement that, for military reasons alone, certain areas in the West Bank, such as Gush Etzion south of Jerusalem, Ma'ale Adummim east of Jerusalem, and an area south of the Bet Shean Valley, would have to be annexed to Israel to provide bases for reserve defense forces.*

Shalev's requirements are minimalist in scope and nonprovocative in terms of deployment sites. The implicit difficulty with studies such as Shalev's is that their shelf life can last only as long as the relevance of the weaponry and combat doctrines they discuss. In this sense, Israeli planners should seek to obtain sufficient military advantages in the West Bank so as to obviate the need to renegotiate the military annex of their treaty with the Palestinian state at some time in the future—when new weaponry has rendered early-warning and defensive arrangements irrelevant. For example, is it sufficient to insist today upon patrolling only the few currently fordable Jordan River crossings and the accesses from them to East-West roads, when in twenty years new bridging equipment and vehicles or aircraft may make it possible for an invading Iraqi and/or Jordanian army to attack at an additional ten points? Similarly, does the presence of medium-range missiles in Iraq and Saudi Arabia not already require that Israel envisage stationing antimissile missiles along the Samarian highland plateau?

Viewed in terms of the vague nature of future conditions, Israel's security requirements in the West Bank against enemy attack from the east ought to be defined in a more general way: Israel should insist on retaining specific military zones along the Jordan River and on the highland plateau, within which it could deploy forces and electronic intelligence installations virtually without restriction. The nature of these forces and installations would vary according to developments in military technology. The zones would have to be located



*See also the extensive treatment of these and related issues in Mark A. Heller, *A Palestinian State: The Implications for Israel* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1983).

unobtrusively; and they need not be large or extensive, taking up no more than one or two percent of the territory on the West Bank. Leasing them indefinitely might partially obviate the need for Israel to insist on annexing territory formally for strictly military security reasons.

Countering the Dangers of Terrorism and Subversion

The increasingly technological nature of modern warfare appears to render it relatively easy to exploit West Bank topography to defend Israel while giving relatively little provocation to the local population. Indeed we may imagine most of Israel's early-warning tasks ultimately being accomplished by satellite. By the same token, medium-range missiles and standoff technologies will probably increasingly depreciate the value of the fifty-kilometers-wide cushion provided Israel by the West Bank.

But technology may affect the terrorist threat in the opposite way. Imagine, for example, the effect of a single successful hit by a hand-held antiaircraft missile fired from a Samarian village against an El Al passenger plane taking off or landing at nearby Ben-Gurion Airport: it could wreck many years of carefully negotiated peace between Israel and Palestine. As distances for firing hand-held missiles become even greater, the concept of fencing off the West Bank and Gaza (the latter is already surrounded by a fence) becomes largely irrelevant.

While terrorist missiles and katyushas decidedly do not pose a military strategic threat to Israel, their psychological—hence political-strategic—impact must not be underestimated. Recall that the mass exodus from Israel's northern border settlements in the summer of 1981 under a barrage of PLO katyushas and artillery from Lebanon led to the 1982 war. Note how even the tough Iranians do not hesitate to beg the Pope to intervene with the Iraqis to cease their missile "war of the cities." Imagine the public outcry in Israel were katyushas, fired from near Ramallah, to hit a school in, say, Petah Tiqva.

Israel's wealth of experience in this field has taught it that the best way to prevent terrorism is intelligence—and even that is never foolproof. In order to provide maximum security against terrorist acts launched from an independent West Bank and Gaza, Israel would have to insist on retaining a security-intelligence presence of its own there. For the sake of the stability of the peace, it could not rely solely on international forces (note UNIFILS's very spotty security record in Lebanon), on local Palestinian intelligence, or even on border alterations or electronic gadgetry. Clearly, however, an Israeli security-intelligence role inside the Palestinian state would be perceived as a gross breach of sovereignty, and therefore it would cause considerable friction. Perhaps it could be integrated with an international peacekeeping force, or even with local Palestinian intelligence.

Further, in order to provide minimal physical protection against terrorism for some of the most sensitive targets in Israel—Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion Airport, the coastal industrial heartland—and to reduce somewhat the need for an abrasive intelligence presence, some territorial thickening of the Jerusalem corridor and the "thin waist" between Petah Tiqva and Hadera would be justified, through annexation.

Palestinian subversion—ie., irredentist incitement of Israeli Arabs—would be even harder to prevent than terrorism. Extremist Palestinians would inevitably interpret the establishment of a Palestinian state as a victory for the first stage in their goal of eliminating Israel. They would seek to encourage the Arabs of Israel, particularly those in the Galilee, where they already constitute over fifty percent of the population, to undermine Israel's security. Unless Israel chose to erect physical barriers to separate itself from the West Bank and Gaza, and to prevent any human contact—work, family visits, commerce, tourism—between the two states, it would be nearly impossible to prevent such subversive attempts.

Unlike terrorism, however, this irredentist threat can hardly be qualified as a strategic threat in any sense. It could be countered by political arrangements within the framework of the peace treaty (e.g., allowing Israeli Arabs to forfeit their Israeli citizenship and adopt Palestinian nationality, thereby perhaps "balancing" the presence of Israeli settlers inside the Palestinian state), and by progress within Israel toward greater practical equality for Arabs.

Two specific security issues of great sensitivity remain to be examined: the settlements and Jerusalem. The fate of the Jewish settlements that would be left by a territorial solution inside Palestine is essentially a political rather than a security issue. Indeed, the very location of existing settlements would undoubtedly exercise some influence on the drawing of new border lines. But assuming that Jewish settlements did remain inside the new Arab state, their security requirements are potentially a source of great friction. The current uprising has unleashed enough mutual hatred and mistrust—despite the restraining presence of the IDF—to persuade anyone that the goal of peaceful Arab-Jewish coexistence in the West Bank is at best a distant dream. Were a Palestinian state to come into being, matters would almost certainly get worse. Jewish villages and towns, and the transportation needs of their population to and from Israel, could be protected only by an Israeli

mobile police or paramilitary presence that would be at least as provocative as that of the Israeli security services.

Turning to Jerusalem, we assume, again, that whatever the political arrangements reached, the city would not be redivided physically by new walls and fences (were this to happen, some security problems would obviously be reduced). An open, mixed-population Jerusalem would continue to constitute a single city, and as such it would require a single, mixed Arab-Jewish police force to maintain order with a minimal level of efficiency. In whatever way political and municipal sovereignty is divided (e.g., an Arab flag over the Temple Mount and parts of the adjacent Arab quarters; a system of semisovereign quarters), any division of police authority between Arabs and Jews would invite misunderstandings and enmity that could be crucial for the security of highly sensitive religious sites. Obviously, Arab police should deal with Arabs and Jewish police with Jews, to whatever extent that is possible, but only close integration could reduce security threats and quiet Arab-Jewish tension.

International Forces

We have already encountered the issue of an international security presence in noting UNIFIL's limitations, as well as the need to guarantee the new state's security against outside (non-Israeli) attack. Here the Israeli-Egyptian experience is relevant insofar as it provides a positive contrast with the mixed performance of UN peacekeeping forces in the Middle East since 1949.

The success, over the past ten years, of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in maintaining the peace in Sinai may be ascribed to two primary factors. First, the MFO is made up of Western or Western-oriented army contingents keeping the peace between two allies of the West, Israel and Egypt. Second, both countries maintain an ongoing interest in honoring MFO directives and thereby keeping the peace. True, a mixed UN force of Eastern bloc and Western contingents has kept the peace for fifteen years between Israel and Syria on the Golan; but there the border is completely closed off, there is no peace agreement, and, as Syria demonstrated in October 1973, it can and will ignore the UN force and break the peace without sanction whenever it decides to go to war.

If the new Palestinian state comes into existence under the aegis of international actors friendly to it and to Israel alike, then those actors might be able to assemble a peacekeeping force that could contribute to maintaining the peace. Israel should insist that the force not be under United Nations authority and that Soviet-bloc forces be included only if and when a genuine rapprochement has been effected between Israel and the USSR.

Moreover, experience has taught Israel that it cannot rely on such a force alone—hence the security arrangements described above. A Palestinian settlement cannot be compared to the Egypt-Israel peace: There is no equivalent to the Sinai as a broad, virtually unpopulated buffer zone. The countries beyond the West Bank—Iraq, Syria—cannot be assumed to want peace with Israel in the Egyptian mold, and the stability and political orientation of the new Palestinian state would be known only after the passage of time. On the other hand, a new Palestinian state, being weak and dependent, would be far less capable than Egypt of withstanding Israel's insistence that the international force be deployed throughout the country and be given far-reaching inspection and policing authority. Indeed, to the extent that this force worked, Israel's own security presence in the new state could be reduced accordingly.

Conclusion

To summarize this brief and highly generalized venture toward defining Israel's security requirements vis-à-vis a new Palestinian state, we can point to a few key "dos" and "don'ts."

- The Palestinian state would have to be completely demilitarized. Israel could guarantee its military security needs with a minimum of friction with the local population.
- Leaving Jewish settlements inside Palestinian territory is an invitation to trouble. From a security standpoint, doing so should be avoided. Obviously, the consequent political choice—whether to annex territories or abandon settlements—is beyond the scope of this essay.
- Terrorism and subversion directed against Israel are, in the long run, functions of the stability and political orientation of the new Palestinian state. Until this level of stability and type of political orientation are determined, and perhaps afterwards too, Israel would require a security-intelligence presence of some sort in the new state. This presence would inevitably be a source of friction and rancor.
- Ideally, the establishment of the new state would be brokered by international forces friendly to Israel's and Palestine's regimes alike. These forces could then help enforce the peace.
- An open Jerusalem must be united—if not politically, then at least in terms of police jurisdiction.

The ultimate outcome would be far from ideal. Moreover, it would require two willing partners. It must be judged against the relative absence of realistic alternatives. □

When Cant Becomes Can't—
Or, How to Argue with Intransigents

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Lately, when advocating peace in the Middle East, it seems necessary to establish one's Zionist credentials. So, first, some background: My grandparents made *aliyah* in the 1930s; my grandfather was killed in Tiberias during an Arab raid; and I was raised to understand that the UJA, ZOA, JNF, Pioneer Women, Hadassah, and State of Israel Bonds were as important to my parents as if these organizations were members of our family.

My own commitments are those of a Jewish feminist. Among other things, this means that I look at Zionism and feminism as parallel movements of group liberation. I am a peace activist because I am a Jew and a woman, and I understand what it means to fear powerlessness and to want to secure one's safety and one's freedom.

Furthermore, I believe *anachnu am echad:* we are one people, and what happens to Israel happens to all Jews everywhere. Therefore, I make no apology for saying "we"—not "they"—when I refer to Israel. "They" I reserve for our enemies. I know Israel has enemies, and I want us to come to terms with them—for our sake, not theirs.

All of this sounds logical and reasonable; so what is the problem? The problem is cant. Two kinds of cant. The first, c-a-n-t, is defined in the dictionary as the expression or repetition of stock phrases, opinions, or sentiments. This kind of cant feeds the second, c-a-n-'-t: intransigent negativism—i.e., we can't do this, we can't do that.

Cant statements, endlessly repeated, sound like this:

"There's no one to talk to."

"They always kill their own moderates."

"We can't trust them."

"We can't forget history."

"We can't deal with people who want to destroy us."

"We can't give up the territories because Israel needs them for its security."

There may be some truth to each assertion—but not the whole truth. The whole truth lies in subtleties and nuances; it must be coaxed out with sensitivity and skill. Instead, these cant statements are becoming doctrine in themselves. They are becoming calcified barriers to movement, the cant that leads to "we can't"—to utter hopelessness and chaos. And, more than the language of intransigence, these cant phrases are becoming code words for loyalty—which explains why I feel the need to present my Zionist credentials before I write or speak, and why so many Jews seem paralyzed, turned into what *Tikkun* calls our "silenced majority."

Nevertheless, I think it is urgent to challenge the naysayers, to answer the cant and get at the whole truth.

"There's No One to Talk to."

As many have said, in these pages and elsewhere, one negotiates with one's adversaries, not one's friends. Therefore, we must be willing to talk to any Palestinian or combined Arab-Palestinian delegation that can deliver a permanent peace. Our business is to police the results, not the delegates. Waiting for another Sadat is like waiting for the Messiah: good for the soul but not very practical. It would be nice to be able to negotiate with the Dutch or the Swedes, but Israel cannot choose its negotiating partners any more than the United States can choose the Soviet representatives at Geneva. At Camp David, Sadat would have preferred to talk to Ezer Weizmann, and Carter wanted to negotiate with Moshe Dayan. Both leaders had to accept that Israel was to be represented by Menachem Begin, and it was Begin who made peace because his people empowered him to do so. A check is meaningless without money in the bank.

At this point, it is clear that the conflict in the Middle East is first and foremost between Israel and the Palestinians, and, where the Palestinians are concerned, the PLO has the money in the bank. We cannot bypass them. They have done hateful things to us, but in the eyes of their own people they symbolize self-determination and national identity. As Drora Kass, of the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, puts it, "To want to negotiate with Palestinians who are not identified

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with the PLO is like wanting to negotiate with Israelis who are not Zionists."

The *Tikkun* plan for a plebiscite through which the Palestinians elect their negotiators is a promising solution so long as we understand in advance that the "winners" will most likely be Palestinians who pay lip service, at the very least, to the PLO and to Yasir Arafat, the symbol of their cause. Some analysts predict that once the Palestinians achieve a measure of self-determination they won't need Arafat. In fact, during a dinner in Jerusalem last January, Hanna Siniora, the editor of *Al Fajr,* told me, "Arafat is our Moses. He will lead us to the promised land but he will not be our leader once we have arrived."

In any case, questions of Palestinian internal politics are their problem—or will be once we get the burden of the PLO off our backs and onto the backs of the Palestinians. But first we have to endure a transitional period during which they are our negotiating partners. Although we may recoil at the idea of sitting down with the authors of so much terrorism and savagery, Abba Eban reminds us that, if we're keeping score, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan have killed far more Jews than has the PLO. In any case, the numbers game is self-incriminating: Eban points out that we suffered more casualties pushing ourselves into Lebanon than the PLO visited upon us in thirty-three years.

The point is that the Jordanians killed more Jews than the PLO, yet we've been insisting that Jordan be a negotiating party. And the Egyptians killed more Jews than the PLO, yet we've made peace with Egypt—a peace that has been maintained through it all: Egypt's ostracism, Sadat's assassination, Israel's Iraqi raid, the Lebanon incursion, and the current uprising. Land for peace can work. Jewish lives can be spared. For that, we can give peace a chance.

Finally, if we could negotiate with the PLO for the release of eleven hundred terrorists in return for two Israeli soldiers, why can't we negotiate with them for a settlement that will save the lives of hundreds or thousands of Israeli soldiers and civilians?

There *are* people to talk to on the other side. We may not like them, but they're there. And nobody dies from talking.

"They Always Kill Their Own Moderates."

Yes, the extremists murdered Hamami and Sartawi and Kawasi. And today Hanna Siniora could be killed for advancing a compromise position. And Fayez Abu Rahme, the head of the Gaza lawyers' association, is probably in danger from his own far right and far left flanks for favoring a demilitarized state and for assuring the world that "Palestinian police will be unarmed and if necessary barefoot and in bathing suits."

One might comment that, given the deaths and intimidation, it is remarkable that there still are Palestinians willing to speak out. Yet again, at the risk of sounding insensitive, that's *their* problem. It only becomes our problem when we encourage Palestinian extremism by punishing their moderates for them. At this writing, we have deported three thousand Palestinians, put seventeen hundred under "administrative arrest" without due process, arrested the lawyers who tried to defend them, and thrown twenty of their journalists in jail.

We cling to the fantasy that we can invalidate the Palestinian cause by eliminating the most viable Palestinian leaders. But punishing moderation doesn't soften one's opponents; it hardens them. In a sense, then, *Israel* has made the PLO the sole representative of the Palestinian people and left us with "no one to talk to."

Self-interest commands us to do just the opposite: to create what David Grossman calls "bulletproof Palestinians," to validate the most reasonable voices and help make their extremists a threat to *their* self-interest. At the moment, the moderates seem to be holding sway. Remarkably, after the assassination of Abu Jihad, not one Palestinian disregarded the *intifada's* rock-throwing strategy and took up guns. We need responsible Palestinian leaders to rise to positions of leadership—not for them, but because *we* need worthy counterparts with whom to negotiate.

In 1985 Siniora and Abu Rahme were accepted by Shimon Peres, Jordan, and the PLO as legitimate Palestinian representatives. Shamir would not agree. But if we don't deal with the moderates, we'll end up dealing with the Islamic Jihad and the street kids—people who want not just a separate state, but Jaffa and Haifa as well. Which leads me to:

"We Can't Trust Them."

That's true. In fact, we can't trust anyone. In 1975 the United States met secretly with the PLO while promising not to negotiate with Palestinians. Ronald Reagan calls himself a friend of Israel but, despite Jewish pleas, he sold AWACs to the Saudis and he went to Bitburg.

Reaching a peace settlement in the Middle East is not a question of trust. It's a question of negotiating a demilitarized Palestinian entity and creating protections and treaties based on vested interests and careful guarantees. Moreover, Israel is the fifth strongest military power in the world. If it can bomb atomic reactors in Iraq and get to Tunis in seconds, its early-warning systems and sophisticated armaments can deal with Palestinian encroachments. As Joseph Alpher details in

this issue (p. 51), if Israel really wants to withdraw from the territories, there is little doubt that it has the means to protect itself against violations of a peace treaty.

In the past, Israel has faced seven Arab armies. For forty years it has had strong Arab countries on all of its borders. Why direct so much fear toward one small demilitarized state?

"We Can't Forget History."

I agree, but we must be informed by history, not captive to it. History is static, but we are in flux. What was, *was*—but we are responsible for what will be.

I am not willing to bequeath to my children a lifetime of insecurity and war. Since we are a state as well as a people, we must not look just at the history of the Jews but at the history of other nations.

We must learn from the mistakes in Vietnam, Lebanon, Algeria, Cyprus, Belfast, and South Africa. We must be aware of the follies of rulers. We must recognize that annexation brings disaster. Binationalism has proved a failure wherever it has been tried, and no nation has oppressed another people for long without poisoning a part of itself. History should teach us what we need from a peace treaty, not how to retreat from peacemaking.

"We Can't Deal with People Who Want to Destroy Us."

Yes, the PLO covenants of 1964 and 1968 contain an outright commitment to destroy Israel, and, yes, it would be a major breakthrough if the PLO leaders disavowed it. But they won't. First, they do not understand how the world's fifth most powerful military force can be afraid of their words. And, second, if we *are* afraid, then they will use words as a bargaining chip.

In any case, the covenant has already been superseded by fourteen years of Palestine National Council meetings in which Palestinian leaders have recognized the need to make a political accommodation with Israel. (The last three PNC meetings have dropped all references to destroying Israel and to erecting a democratic, secular Palestinian state in its place.) Likewise, the Hussein-Arafat agreement of 1985 and the Arab summits at Fez in 1982 and Amman in 1987 recognized the principle of land for peace. And, at the Arab summit meeting in Algiers this summer, Bassam Abu Sharif, PLO spokesperson and Arafat adviser, affirmed the goals of lasting peace with Israel, mutual security, direct talks under international auspices, and political and economic cooperation.

Yehoshafat Harkabi, the former head of Israeli military intelligence who first translated the PLO covenant and brought it to the attention of the world, says it has no meaning. He distinguishes between the Arab "Grand Design" and real policy; that is, between cocky rhetoric and pragmatism. The rhetoric is to destroy Israel; the policy is evolving toward territory for peace.

Sure, they say they want Jaffa and Haifa; some on our side say we want Jericho and Nablus. One person's dream is another's nightmare. Lately, we too have a "Grand Design": the manifest destiny of the Bible and the rhetoric of a Greater Israel. And, as Abraham Brumberg reminds us in a recent issue of *Tikkun*, we too have our inflammatory taunters: Begin, who called Palestinians "animals on two legs"; Shamir, who equated Palestinians with "grasshoppers"; and former general Rafael Eytan, who labeled them "drugged cockroaches." Just as we hear some Palestinians demanding Jaffa and Haifa, the Palestinians hear Yuval Neeman of Tehiya jeering, "Before we talk to them, we will deport 600,000 of them."

Jewish concern for the rhetoric of destruction boils down to one question: Will the Palestinians accept Israel's right to exist? Like others who have contributed to *Tikkun*'s ongoing discussions, I favor negotiations with no preconditions. I don't think we need anyone else to tell us that we exist. Israel has been recognized by the United Nations. The United States is its declared ally. Egypt signed a peace treaty with it. Syria signed a cease-fire agreement. You don't sign documents with a state that doesn't exist.

Any final settlement approved by Israel will of course require a renunciation of terrorism and an acknowledgment of our nationhood. But, in order simply to come to the table to negotiate, Israel doesn't need to be legitimated by the Palestinians. We know we're a nation, and we know we're a people. We must not let ourselves be defined from without; we must define ourselves from within. As Ben-Gurion said, "It's not what the goyim say but what the Jews *do* that will determine our future."

"We Can't Give Up the Territories Because Israel Needs Them for Its Security."

On the contrary, the territories are a liability, and Israel's security would be best served by a negotiated withdrawal. This conclusion has been reached not only by Joseph Alpher of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, but by two of Israel's former directors of military intelligence, Harkabi and Aharon Yaariv. Harkabi says that it is easier to defend against bad borders than a hostile population in one's midst, and he asks us to imagine the U.S. trying to control 120 million angry Russians inside our borders. Yaariv says our failure to negotiate a Palestinian settlement could bring about a

rapprochement among the Arab countries, inspire a military coalition, and lead to war.

Trading territory for security is favored by almost every former general of the Israel Defense Force; by seventeen hundred of the highest ranking reserve officers; by Motti Hod, former commander of the Israeli Air Force; by Benjamin Ben Eliezer ("Fuad"), the former military governor on the West Bank; and by Ze'ev Schiff, the security affairs expert for the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*.

If there is even a small chance for negotiations without bloodshed, how dare we ignore it?

These people are not bleeding hearts or renegade American Jews. They are Israel's top security strategists and military heroes, and they favor the exchange of land for peace.

The right does not have a monopoly on concern about security; our side, too, cares desperately about the survival of the state. But we see the threat differently. We see the status quo as the threat—militarily, demographically, morally, and economically.

The unrest has cost three-quarters of a billion dollars in nonmilitary costs because the occupied territories are Israel's biggest export market besides the U.S. It has cost $300 million in military expenses. It has damaged tourism and hit the construction industry hard. Low-paying service jobs go begging. Arab job attendance is down 30 percent. The economy is suffering. The unrest is radicalizing the Israeli Arabs. The army is demoralized as a result of having to defend fanatic settlers and respond to rock-throwing children.

There are 1.7 million Palestinians in the territories. However complicated the current situation may be, our options are really quite simple:

1. Give them equal rights and imperil the Jewish state;

2. Continue to dominate them, and imperil democracy by denying their rights or by annexing the territories and transferring large portions of their population, thus eroding Israel's moral foundations and prolonging internal hostilities;

3. Withdraw unilaterally without negotiating any treaties;

4. Negotiate our withdrawal from most of the occupied territories and support some form of Palestinian self-determination.

Clearly (1) and (2) are untenable. Although Tzvi Marx makes a seductive case for (3) in the July/August issue of *Tikkun*, I believe a unilateral solution offers no long-term strategy for coexistence, precisely because it satisfies the Jewish conscience without directly acknowledging the humanity and aspirations of the Palestinians. For the sake of a future relationship between our two peoples, process is as important as product. We cannot just disengage. We must sort out our competing interests and build a new reality based on mutual recognition and mutual guarantees.

The fourth option strikes me as the only realistic one. Ideally, Palestinian self-determination would be achieved as part of direct bilateral negotiations among all the parties in the area. These negotiations would take place under international auspices, although no country would have the right to impose solutions or to veto agreements. The great powers, however, would buffer potential humiliation for those who make concessions. Ultimately, like many other people, I envision a Benelux situation with Israel living next to Jordan and a demilitarized Palestinian entity with which it has open borders and diplomatic, cultural, and economic exchanges.

Right now, such a political solution is possible. Soon it may be too late. Arafat is mending fences with Syria. Jordan has left the territories to the Palestinians. Pan-Arabism could underwrite a war against Israel. Syria and Jordan in solidarity with the occupied territories could force a collapse of the peace with Egypt. The cease-fire between Iraq and Iran may free both countries to pay attention to Israeli-Palestinian tensions. Escalation of hostilities could fuel the fundamentalist elements throughout the Arab world and trigger a religious war between Judaism and Islam. And, as MK Shulamit Aloni has warned, "The God of the Muslims has many more soldiers than the God of the Jews."

Harkabi worries that Israel will have to give up the territories in the future anyway, and at that point our failure would be seen not as misguided national strategy but as a failure of Zionism and the Jewish faith. That is too great a risk—too great a price to pay for the settlers' expansionism and the hard-liners' dreams of glory.

To those hard-liners I would pose Moshe Dayan's question about the Sinai: "Would you prefer peace without territories or territories without peace?" For Israel, the answer is clear. Peace without territories is the tough-minded solution, the pragmatic solution, the greatest guarantee of our security.

I am not sure that our way leads to eternal tranquility, but I am sure that the other way leads to national suicide. If there is even a small chance for negotiations without bloodshed, how dare we ignore it? □

Criminology and the Uprising

Stanley Cohen

Israelis today seem either obsessed with the current political situation or untouched by it. Some people want to talk only about the uprising, government and army policy, what the PLO will do, the opinion polls, the latest moves by the superpowers, what horrors lie ahead, what is to be done, the next demonstration. It's almost an act of will to discuss other subjects—movies, the weather, work, family. For others, however, it's the opposite: They somehow manage to talk about everything else except what has been going on around them for the last eight months. How these people respond to the situation by ignoring it perplexes me more than anything else.

* * *

There are the soldiers themselves, those actually carrying out the policy—coming from all sectors of our population except women, children, the elderly, and the ultra-Orthodox. There can be little doubt now about what they (and a parallel army of clerks, police, lawyers, prison guards) are doing. In the last nine months they have killed more than two hundred Palestinians, seriously wounded (by beating, teargassing, and shooting) many thousands more, locked up some seven thousand people with hardly a semblance of judicial procedure (including nearly two thousand under "administrative detention"), deported twenty people from their homeland, blown up houses, and enforced prolonged curfews on hundreds of thousands of people in villages and refugee camps. Behind these numbers are concrete events. Some of these events have become routine: soldiers beating up people in their homes, breaking their limbs, clubbing them unconscious, shooting unarmed demonstrators in the back. Some of these acts have reached the media and become defined as "excesses" that should be punished: two men buried in the sand by an army bulldozer, a young boy strapped on the hood of a moving army jeep, a deliberate sniper killing. These are atrocities—I'm afraid there's no other appropriate word in the English language.

Of course, there is such a thing as reasonable self-defense, and, in any case, it does not take much imagination to "understand" how a frightened, poorly trained nineteen-year-old soldier might respond to a crowd of taunting stone throwers. But such a scenario by no means describes all the violent events. I am thinking more about atrocities that cannot be interpreted as self-defense or as "justifiable force" in the course of breaking up demonstrations and making arrests. And, by most standards of national and international law, these are actual crimes. Israel is not involved in an official state of war—the enemy is made up not of armed soldiers, but of a million and a half people for whom Israel is responsible. Even soldiers brutalized by the many years of harassing Arabs, setting up roadblocks, performing searches and mass arrests, and blowing up houses must sense that random acts of assault ordered by the defense minister go well beyond the accepted boundary of self-defense. The fact that Defense Minister Rabin has now withdrawn his official sanction of beatings, and sternly warns that these "exceptions" will be punished, hardly removes the need to explain this conduct.

Criminologists use the term "techniques of neutralization" to describe the subtle (and not-so-subtle) ways in which offenders explain to themselves and to others why they have violated rules and norms to which—in general and in theory—they still subscribe. Ordinary criminals do not deny that theft, assault, murder, and fraud are criminal or morally wrong. What they do deny, however, is that their particular act belongs to that category of crime. Even the most ideological of criminals—political assassins, for example—do not usually think that killing is justified under all circumstances, but believe that in their particular instance it was permissible.

Those techniques of neutralization that are clearly ideological or political are particularly powerful. Israel—like most societies torn by conflict—has a complex history of ideologically justified crime. The 1987 Landau Report on abuses in the Israeli security services officially accepted the notion that the Shin Bet operatives who tortured detainees and then systematically lied in court were "ideological" criminals. They were motivated, that is, by national rather than personal interest. Such explanations not only condone what was done in the past, but neutralize the psychological and moral binds that

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might inhibit future offenses. One can do anything, including breaking the law, if one's conduct is in the "national interest." Thus, the Palestinian terrorist who places a bomb on the bus, the ultra-Orthodox fanatic who throws stones, and the organized Jewish vigilantes all claim that the end justifies the means and that ideological loyalties (nationalism, Zionism, halakha, the Koran, the "cause") take moral precedence (temporarily or permanently) over the law. In short, the "pure" ideological actor is insulated by a wall of self-righteousness from any sense of guilt or wrongdoing.

Only someone who never watches television, never reads a paper, and has no social contacts can possibly say—in the chilling phrase that every Jew knows so well—"We didn't know."

Many Israeli citizen-soldiers today fall in this category. Informed by variants of the Kach, Techiya, and Likud types of ideologies, they see nothing to feel guilty about. They literally believe in what they are doing. There are others, though—perhaps the majority—who carry out their orders with reluctance and distress, moral ambivalence and some measure of psychological strain. They have reservations about what they are doing and can find no justifications for their conduct beyond a feeling of obligation to obey commands and a vague sense that there is no alternative. Presumably, they are also convinced by the ritualistic incantation that they are helping to "restore law and order until a political settlement is reached."

Like ordinary criminals, these more ambivalent, less ideological soldiers have to find a language of neutralization that is weaker, more apologetic, more confined to the particular circumstances in which they find themselves. Their neutralizations are more *excuses* than *justifications*. A justification acknowledges full responsibility for the action, but denies that it is morally wrong in the circumstances ("He would have killed my children if I didn't shoot"). An excuse, on the other hand, accepts that the action is morally wrong, but denies full responsibility for it. Some people offer an explicit *denial of responsibility*: "I didn't mean to do it"; "you can't help behaving like this under stress"; "they ordered me to do it"; "everyone else is doing it." Others engage in *denial of the victim*: "they had it coming to them"; "look what they are doing to us." Still others offer a *denial of injury*: "they don't really feel it the way we do"; "don't believe what you read in the papers." Sometimes the strong, ideological component is most salient in these "motivational accounts"; other times the accounts sound weaker and more apologetic. In any event the accounts work only when they are honored, when the offender anticipates that important "others"—family, friends, the mass media, even the official criminal justice system itself—will actually give credibility to these accounts. And this is just what is happening in Israel today. Soldiers offer and get away with accounts that they know will be upheld. The military courts, for example, are now handing out token sentences for the tiny proportion of calculated assaults that are even reported. Such responses make sense in a country whose general culture places such a low value on moral accountability.

* * *

What gnaws away at me most, though, is not the uprising itself, not the government policy, not even the soldiers' behavior. It is the reaction of the ordinary Israelis who are observing these events and listening to these stories. These days I find myself staring a little too intensely at my fellow citizens—colleagues on campus, neighbors, friends, strangers on the bus, crowds in a cinema. What can they be thinking about? Why are they not reacting?

Clearly, they know what's going on. Of course, military or self-imposed censorship and the general timidity of Israeli journalists prevent a large amount of information from getting through to the public. But the general contours of what has been happening (the daily killings, the beatings, the deportations, the setting up of mass detention camps) have been well-documented, photographed, televised, and even acknowledged (sometimes proudly) by Israeli officers and politicians. Only someone who never watches television, never reads a paper, and has no social contacts can possibly say—in those chilling phrases that every Jew knows so well—"we didn't know," "we didn't see," "we heard nothing," "they didn't tell us."

Of course there is criticism, revulsion, and protest. The real indictment that one can make of the American and European media is not, as government apologists prefer to believe, that they are exaggerating the army's brutality, but rather that they are downplaying the internal dissent. The small but intense Israeli left is reminding all who choose to listen that the uprising was predictable and that there are certain obvious paths to follow if we want to effect a political solution (ending the occupation, negotiating with the PLO, and recognizing a Palestinian state alongside Israel). Sectors of the Peace Now movement have been nudged out of their six-year silence since the Lebanon War. And even

some Israeli academics—most of whom have never taken collective political action except from self-interest—signed a petition calling for a political settlement. Occupational groups—from mental health workers and criminologists to musicians and potters—have signed petitions about the corrosive effects of the occupation.

But all this protest does not seem "enough"—whatever that means. Even among the ranks of the uneasy, there is a refusal to believe what is happening. Life goes on. With each day's news, the threshold of reaction is lowered. "A fifteen-year-old Palestinian girl shot in the head by troops on Tuesday died yesterday of her wounds...." Just another one. There are no easy explanations here. Words like indifference, apathy, denial, collusion, numbness, insensibility, or passivity may accurately describe the psychological climate, but they don't explain very much.

The most obvious fact is that the vast bulk of the population sees nothing psychologically disturbing or morally wrong with what is happening. They belong to the "national consensus"—extending, it appears, to the official American Jewish leadership, on whom the Israeli army and government can rely to accept any justification or excuse.

Translated into electoral and demographic terms, we have to assume—in the absence, after nine months, of contrary evidence—that this consensus includes (with varying degrees of ideological conviction) the supporters of Kach, Techiya, the religious parties, the Likud, and at least some supporters of the Labor party. It also includes a disproportionate number of young people: those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two. If public opinion polls are to be believed, these overlapping groups—making up a fixed majority of at least 60 percent of the population—not only support the "Iron Fist" policy, but think it should be applied more severely. No poll has indicated at what point these groups might stop lending their support. Would it take death squads led by the settlers? "Disappearances" along Argentinian lines? Full-scale torture? Indefinite detention in something like concentration camps? Mass deportations? As an Israeli, I would like to be reassuring about my fellow citizens, but as a sociological observer I have no absolute way of knowing just where these groups' boundary of tolerance lies.

But what about that part of the population—30 percent to 40 percent, shall we say—that is much more opposed to the government's policies? Its psychological state is far more difficult to explain than the majority's. I am thinking of a very specific group of people: "liberal," predominantly Ashkenazi, secular and well-educated, enlightened, Western, and universal in its values—the representatives of a "sane, decent Zionism with a conscience," but not actively involved with those leftist groups outside the boundaries of acceptable dissent. It is the relative silence of this group of people that cries out for explanation. Beyond the occasional moment—attending a Peace Now rally in Tel Aviv, signing a petition about the destructive effects of the violent occupation on their children—these people's reaction is strangely muted. And most have not even engaged in these token signs of opposition. They might be concerned, a little depressed and demoralized, sensitive to the emerging international image of the ugly Israeli. They might even repeatedly tell one another how awful everything is becoming. But they are not doing or saying much else. The horror stories and the daily erosion of democratic values in their own society hardly seem to have penetrated their consciousness. If, for the majority, denial means a reluctance to acknowledge any responsiblity, shame, or guilt, then for this group denial means an unwillingness to accept the full truth of what is happening.

In his recent book on the psychology of self-deception, Daniel Goleman points to the empirical evidence for "lacunae." Lacunae are like "black holes of the mind": They divert attention from select bits of reality, especially from information that evokes anxiety.

Such self-deception is taking place in Israel today. Many Israelis find it literally impossible to believe that their *own* people—sons, brothers, husbands, friends—could do something like drag a fifteen-year-old boy from his home, blindfold him, line him up against a wall, and break his arms and legs. This information is threatening, so it slips into the black holes. Or else it is repackaged in a more acceptable way, so that we insist that these cases are few and isolated; that they are being stopped now; that the media always emphasize and exaggerate these sorts of occurrences; that the army is being provoked beyond all endurance; that, sure, it's bad—but not as bad as elsewhere (South Africa, Iraq, Paraguay, Chile, Uganda); or that (a repackaging I heard recently) "it's only the Sephardi soldiers who are doing this sort of thing." The point of neutralization or repackaging is not to deny responsibility, but to deny reality. The "vital lie," in Goleman's words, has to be maintained.

Researchers in the field of "victimology" have tried to determine more precisely what makes people ignore, deny, or reject their obligations to protest and intervene. Intervention is less likely to occur, researchers say, when responsibility is diffused (if there are many others who also are responsible, one feels less personal responsibility); when one is unable to conceive of any effective form of intervention; and when one feels incapable of identifying with or being committed to the victim.

(Continued on p. 95)

Yehuda Halevi on the Sea

Gabriel Levin

Yehuda Halevi, or Abu al-Hassan Ibn Hallewi the Castilian, as he was called by his contemporaries, was born some time before 1075 in the Navarese town of Tudela in the northeast of Spain. His childhood and early youth were spent during the last relatively peaceful and prosperous period for the Jews of Spain. After the demise of the Umayyad dynasty in 1030, Spain had been partitioned into smaller principalities, each with its own capital and courts. Cordova, Sevilla, and Granada, all located in the territory then called al-Andalus, became centers of culture and learning. The rulers welcomed Jewish participation in all spheres of life. Serving as advisers, taxfarmers, scholars, poets, and physicians to the various courts, Jews rapidly developed an upper class of their own, and a unique brand of Judeo-Arabic culture flourished alongside its Hispanic-Arabic counterpart.

An aspiring young poet would naturally be drawn to the south of Spain, and Halevi traveled at an early age to the Andalusian city of Cordova, where he rapidly won the admiration of its poets and scholars. It was the custom to improvise verses while sipping wine in the company of dancers and lounging in the gardens of one's wealthy patron. On one such occasion Halevi and his young friends challenged each other to compose stanzas in the rhythmically and metrically elaborate mode of a girdle poem, or *muwashshaha*, by Moshe Ibn Ezra, the reigning Hebrew poet of Spain. Halevi enclosed his version in a letter to Ibn Ezra. "A light has risen from the north to shine over the length and breadth of the land," replied Ibn Ezra in a poem composed in response to Halevi's, and in the accompanying letter he added, "Come to Granada."

Halevi didn't hesitate and, once in Granada, he formed a lasting friendship with Ibn Ezra and his family, recorded in the moving exchange of letters and poems between the two. Here Halevi soon mastered the poetic idiom of the day, with its refined tone, intricate meters (adapted from Arabic quantitative verse), and ingenious imagery. Such poetry was above all a poetry of the leisured class: self-indulgent, sensuous, playful, its favorite subject being the poet's longing for a beloved male or female.

However, the insertion of biblical verses, previously used solely and rather stiffly in liturgical poetry, glittered like precious inlay within the radically new context of secular love poetry: "If we *must* part stay a while and let *my gaze dwell on your face* (Psalms 17:15). I do not know if my heart has come to a stop in its rib cage, or else has *wandered off on your trail* (Genesis 13:3)."

Ibn Ezra's and Halevi's privileged position in Granada, however, was to come to an abrupt end. In 1090 the Almohades rode into the city and massacred a large part of its Jewish population. The rising power of the Berbers in the south and the ongoing *reconquista* in the north by the Christians put the Jewish population in a precarious position. Yehuda Halevi, like many of his contemporaries, spent the following twenty years wandering from one community to another—Lucena, Sevilla, and finally Toledo—now relying on the goodwill of the Moslem courts, now on the beneficence of the Christian populace. He remained in Toledo, the capital of Castile, under Alfonso VI—where he practiced medicine, apparently in the service of the court—until 1108. The murder that year of his friend and benefactor Solomon Ibn Ferrizuel by Christian mercenaries, and the general persecution of Jews in Castile, prompted him, once again, to travel south and to seek refuge in Moslem Spain, in Cordova.

There are some three hundred liturgical poems, or *piyyutim*, composed for all the Jewish holidays, from this period in Halevi's life. His fame had spread throughout Spain and beyond its borders. Yet Halevi remained restless and increasingly dissatisfied with the "vain pursuits" of his times. Poem after poem gives vent to the loneliness of exile and expresses the longing to return to the Holy Land and dwell there under God's protection. Nevertheless, here too, ever the poet of love and grace, Halevi expresses his longing for God and the Jewish people's redemption in the erotic language of the beloved's yearning for her lover ("My love, have you forgotten how you lay between my breasts?").

Sometime in the 1130s—pessimistic over the fate of the Jews in Spain and convinced that traditional Judaism was at an impasse in exile—Yehuda Halevi decided to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

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Friends and admirers opposed the poet's resolve. How could he leave his family—his only daughter and Yehuda, his grandson? And why forsake the relative security of Cordova and the high position of respect he had attained for a hazardous sea voyage which, if survived, would only bring him to a country ravaged by the Crusader wars?

But Halevi for his part had already declared in his influential prose treatise, *The Book of the Kuzari*, that full communion with God could be achieved only by living in the Holy Land. He embarked on the Sultan's New Ship, destined for Alexandria, in the summer of 1140. Sailing from the southeast coast of Spain to Alexandria took an average of two months. The small, wooden vessels, *garib*s in Arabic, plying the Mediterranean, offered little safety or comfort to their passengers. These ships were no more than seagoing barges, shaped like oversized nutshells, and propelled by oars and stiff, square-rigged sails. Passengers, who were expected to bring their own provisions, slept on deck, pressed against bales of merchandise.

The perils of the sea were compounded by the ever-present dangers of starvation, illness, and piracy. Freebooters lay in wait in their light galleys, or *ghurab*s (in Arabic, "edge of sword"), just off the coast of eastern Libya. A person captured by pirates would either be offered for ransom or sold on the slave market after having been tortured and stripped of all his belongings.

Halevi's ship, overdue by at least two weeks, sailed into the port of Alexandria on September 8, 1140. The poet was given a hero's welcome. He remained in Alexandria for over three months, spending long, leisurely hours in the home of Aaron Ibn al-Ammani, the chief justice of the Jewish community. His home, with its luxurious gardens, fountains, and pools, is described in a series of dedicatory poems written by Halevi during his sojourn in Egypt. Published by al-Ammani while the poet was away in Cairo, they caused a bit of a stir in the community at large: How could the esteemed poet, now in his late sixties and ostensibly on a holy pilgrimage, a *talib hajj*, how could the "sweet singer of Zion" compose what appeared to be mere improvisations on such themes as having been given a chicken or, on another occasion, a razor blade? Be that as it may, Halevi's poems written in Egypt recall the poetry of his youth.

Perhaps beguiled by Alexandrian hospitality, Halevi tarried in Egypt. Or perhaps the Mediterranean was simply too dangerous to navigate during the winter. Captains of merchant vessels, even those sailing from Alexandria to Jaffa or Acre on the Palestinian coast (an estimated ten-day voyage), dared not undertake such a journey until "the time of the opening of the seas" in late spring.

Yehuda Halevi boarded ship for Palestine on Thursday, May 8th. The ship, however, was still in port on Sunday the 11th. Abu Nasr, to whom we owe our report of Halevi's sojourn in Egypt, writes: "All the ships going to Spain, al-Mahdiyya, Tripoli (Libya), Sicily, and Byzantium have departed and have encountered a propitious wind. However, the ship of the ruler of al-Mahdiyya (which was on its way eastward to Palestine) has not yet moved. Our master Judah ha-Levi boarded it four days ago, but the wind is not favorable for them. May God grant them safety."

Of the nine poems written at sea, two are addressed to the west wind. "Your Breeze, Western Shores, Fragrant," entreats the west wind to subdue the east wind which was preventing the ship from sailing to the Holy Land. And in "Break Not The Breakers Of The Sea," the poet expresses his gratitude to the west wind for filling the sails of his ship. It is probable, and so modern scholarship assumes, that these two poems were written not on the high seas, but rather aboard the ship in the port of Alexandria, waiting for the weather to turn in their favor. If so, they are the last extant poems to come from Halevi's pen. The short poem of thanksgiving would have been composed in the sudden surge of excitement as the west wind finally filled the ship's sails.

That would have been on May 19th. On that night Halevi's friend Ibn Nasr, wrote in haste that he had just returned from bidding farewell to Halevi: the west wind had risen, the ship had sailed.

It isn't known whether or not Halevi ever reached the coast of Palestine, or whether his ship floundered or was plundered by pirates. Did he indeed arrive in the Holy Land only to meet a violent death there, as legend recounts? Or perhaps he died of old age in the sanctum of Jerusalem, as he had desired: "I will raise my tombstone in your land, a witness to my passing." □

On the Sea

Yehuda Halevi

Break not the breakers of the sea,
nor say to the fathomless gulfs, "Be Dry,"
until I repay your kindness, and offer
thanks to the west wind and its whitecaps.

Unfettered of Arabia's bond, buffeted
to the shores and thrall of your love,
might not my every wish come to its end,
seeing I trust in you, my surety?

* * *

Trusting, or flustered, my soul
confesses its love to you, rejoices
in you the day we weigh anchor,
and gives thanks to every broadside
groan and sigh—as our vessel
plies the sea, sails outbellying
like wings of the white stork;
as the abyss, as though on cue
from my innards, rumbles beneath me,
and brings the sea to a boil;
as swift galleys from Kittim cruise
off the Barbary reefs, and plundering
Hittites seize the ship's hold;
as sea-monsters eye us at snack-time,
and tunny-fish lance the ship's hull.

Though in dire straits—like a woman
in labor, whose strength is spent,
and cannot push her firstborn out—
lacking food and drink, the sweetness
of your name, grazing my lips,
is my nourishment. I've left my home
and property, have no use
for a coffer of coins,
for what is quick to perish;
I've even abandoned my daughter,
my kindred spirit and only
child, and it pains me to think
I could forget her son,
(how his memory haunts my mind).
Grandson, playmate of my delight,
can Yehuda ever forget Yehuda?
But these are trifles set against
your love. Soon I shall enter
your gates with praise, lodge there
and place my heart, a burnt-
offering, on your altar.
I will raise my tombstone in your land,
a witness to my passing.

* * *

Hard pressed for the living God, driven
to search out the seat of my anointed;
denying myself a parting kiss for my child,
family, companions; not even shedding
a tear over my orchard planted, watered
and pruned to blossom in abundance,
nor letting myself dwell on the memory
of Yehuda and Azariel, two lovely
flowers, the pick of the lot, or Isaac—
sun-ripened fruit, sublunary yield—
fancied as my own son. I have all but

forgotten the house of prayer and its study
room, my retreat; have ceased
caring for the pleasures of Sabbath, the charm
of my festivals and glory of Passover.
Let others—mere stick figures, if you like—
bandy about my high station
and good name. I've swapped my home
for the shadow of a shrub; the bolted security
of my gates, for a low-lying thicket.
Choicest spices sated my palate—now
I reek of thornbush. I'm through
with scraping and bowing, for I've cut

a path in the heart of the sea. My sights
are set on the Lord's sanctum; there,
on the verge of his holy mountain, I will
pour out the contents of my soul,
beneath the doors of heaven, open the flood-
gates of my heart. My spikenard
will flower by the Jordan, my shoots
spread by Siloah. Adonai is mine. Why should
I fear, since the angel of his mercy
bears my arms? I shall praise his name
lifelong, and thank him for ever.

* * *

Greetings ladies, kith and kin,
brothers and sisters, from a captive
of hope. Ransomed by the high seas,
he's placed himself in the hands
of rival winds: the west wind
steers the ship forward, the levant
whips it back. Between him and death—
a step, a mere plank. He is boxed in
alive in a wooden casket without bottom,
without four cubits of soil, or less.
He squats, for want of standing room,
lies, but cannot stretch his legs,
is sickly, suspicious of strangers,
of freebooters and the spookish winds.
Helmsman and deckhands—all hooligans—
are the Pashas and deputies here.
The wise and dextrous—unless they swim—
have neither honor nor success.
Though my face is marked by grief
my heart skips a beat, for soon,
at the site of Ark and Altar, I shall
bare my heart to you, Lord,
and render to you who redeem the undeserving,
the pick of my songs and praise.

FICTION

One More Wave of Fear

Frederick Busch

I did not grow up despising nature on Argyle Road, at the far southern edge of Prospect Park, in Brooklyn in the 1950s. But I did come to hate the uppercase initial with which my parents said the word. Our house was set back from a street on which few children but a lot of lean, straight men and women lived. As I remember them, most were white and Protestant and wealthy, and apparently convinced that their long black cars should frequently be washed but rarely driven. My parents also called it Natural History, or The-Out-of-Doors. My father taught science in a junior high school on Nostrand Avenue, and he loved his work. It didn't seem ever to stop. Lanky, almost thin, with great swollen knuckle joints and knees, with elbows that were sharp and a chin nearly pointed, a nose that led him as he was leading us, my father, with his Ed.D., was considered a master teacher by his colleagues and his principal and many of his students and himself. While my mother cooked, he lectured on asparagus. When I rode with him in our DeSoto, he talked about the flowers that grew in vacant lots and through the sidewalk cracks. And on weekends we took wearying walks with the Audubon Society or the Brooklyn Bird Club and, when I grew older, we hiked with the Appalachian Mountain Club on trails in upstate New York. I remember those trips as a blur of similarities: the same swarms of insects at the nose and eyes; the same wet heat that was pooled about us by the same clinging brush; the same unnatural, galloping pace that suggested flight from the birds and plants and marshes we had come to pursue.

I sulked, at eleven and twelve and thirteen, when they forced me to stroll through Prospect Park while searching, say, for the pileated woodpecker: eighteen adults, in various stages (to me) of decomposition, and one slouching kid, who hunted through touch football games and horizontal lovers and the droppings of unleashed dogs, for a bird. My mother hit me after the woodpecker trip. She swung her fists against my back, chasing me up the stairs and into my room, shouting that I'd ruined Nature for her. That night we made up. She explained, my small and never-placid mother, that her difficult childhood in the slums of East Manhattan had led her to marry my father, and to read many books, and to seek the consolations of The-Out-of-Doors. In the darkness of my unkempt room, my mother sat on the chair at my desk, and I lay on my bed, and she told me how little fresh air she had breathed as a girl, and how she had longed even then for Brooklyn, and such a neighborhood as ours—"You know, the suburbs," she said—and how she felt at peace when she was with my father on what she called A Field Trip. Those words were another signal for me, like the phrase The-Out-of-Doors, to long to get as far inside and close to walls as I could.

We forgave each other, sometimes almost daily, and my father lectured, my mother wrote her books about the children of the slums—aimed at children, and written in medicinal sentences (they were good for you, but unpleasant), and published at last by a vanity press, and finally piled in our basement, under heavy pack frames and canvas rucksacks and three sets of snowshoes that we'd never used. My father, the heir of wealthy parents, was a socialist who used to be a communist. The more his colleagues turned each other in to education vigilantes—those were the days of naming names to such as the House Un-American Activities Committee—the less communist, the more socialist, and the more secret about each, he became. I think he feared to lose his job because, like many compulsive teachers, he was a voice in search of ears on which his voice might fall. He forgave America, I forgave my mother, and she forgave the need to have to make me understand her. And we walked the hundreds of acres of Prospect Park, and my father pointed at leaves, and told me which were diseased and which could be brewed as tea, and which would make me itch. I played at "Captain Video," my favorite television show—"Hand me the atomic hammer!" he would cry to the Video Ranger, as they waged their war against the evil Doctor Pauli—in the farthest place from Nature I could find: my mind. And they *all* made me itch.

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One Sunday morning, when I should have been playing stickball with other thirteen-year-old boys, or—better—looking at Don Winslow of the navy on TV, I was entering Prospect Park with the rest of the bird club, walking from the assembly point in Grand Army Plaza, under the great arched monument. My mother wore her 9×30 binoculars, and my father his, on thin leather neck-straps. I had been loaned a pair, which I kept in its case and carried, like a book, in my hand: I didn't want to be mistaken for someone who cared about birds. My expression, I am certain, was that of a recent lobotomy patient; it was crucial to me that no reflection of feeling or thought be visible on my flesh. Demonstrating nothing, and looking at nothing, I followed the Leader, as he was called, a man named Ted who pointed at birds and named them.

Ted, fat and round-faced and sweaty, as he looked through his binoculars suggested to me the attentiveness of U-boat captains in war. "Nothing," he said, lowering his glasses. "Garbage stuff."

"Well, a towhee," my mother said, noting its existence in a little spiral book she carried.

"No," my father said. "No. Sparrow. A tree sparrow."

"You mean eastern sparrow," Ted said.

"Well, they're one and the same," my father said entering the bird in his own spiral book.

My mother said, patting my father's arm in a friendly way, while breezes blew her hair, "I think it's a towhee." She chanted it.

My father shook his head. He smiled at her, but I knew that smile. Its ferocity kept me in check on trips such as these. I stood with my hands in my pockets, and waited. He said "Sparrow."

My mother smiled and shrugged. I guess my father knew what the shrug said. He blushed, and his voice deepened. He said, "Your towhee is too small by an inch, lacks a round black spot on its breast, and is making the strange mistake of *calling* wrong. Listen."

Ted moved closer to my parents, while the others in the group moved on, making do without Leadership. Ted and my father cocked their heads; my mother didn't, but she stared at my father, as if he were another curious bird.

"There!" my father said. "You hear? *Teelwit*! he's calling. *Teelwit*! *Teelwit*! Am I right?"

My mother nodded.

He asked, "And your towhee?"

"All right," my mother said.

"Your towhee?"

"*Fine*," she said. "You're right."

"What does your towhee sing?"

My mother looked at him, and then she turned and walked to the rest of the group. Ted looked away from my father and followed her; the group moved along.

My father, his face still red, turned to me and looked, with no sign of seeing *me* in his eyes that I could find. He lifted his binoculars, then lowered them gently on their strap until they hung. They seemed to be heavy on his neck. He said, "As your mother well knows, your towhee calls *Chewink*! *Chewink*! You can't mistake *Chewink*! for *Teelwit*! Can you?"

In those days, there were waves of fear in Brooklyn neighborhoods—anyway, in ours. There had been a wave of fear about Germans possibly landing at night at Plum Beach, near Sheepshead Bay. There had been a wave of fear about the shabby men spotted chalking arrows in the street and on the curbs of certain blocks, one of them ours; the fear had been that Gypsies or tramps would be flooding the streets of Brooklyn, begging for food and clothing, hiring out for work they'd never perform. The men, we had finally learned, were marking routes for the delivery of new telephone directories. And of course there had been waves of fear over polio epidemics and the arrival on the block of Negro families. The wave of fear when I was six was squirrels. Brooklyn was filled with pigeons and squirrels, and the squirrels, with their thick gray pelts, their long graceful tails, their clever paws and large dark eyes, had been part of my childhood, like curled cats and wandering dogs. But to householders they were like the rats to which they were cousins. They scrabbled in attics and ate the insulation of electrical wires, it was said. They stored nuts uninvited. They were invaders. They were part of all the movies of my childhood. James Arness and James Whitmore in *Them*. Giant ants, atomic mutation, man's meddling with nature. It invaded a small western town. Just like the squirrels in Brooklyn. Or *The Invasion of the Body-Snatchers*. Or *Plan Nine from Outer Space*. Or how about all those Japanese things with one American actor and a huge *moth* running amok, everybody milling around, talking Japanese a mile a minute, which gets dubbed as "Remain calm. Tranquility is better than dying of fear and disorder. Get your guns." It was as if the *squirrels* were pillaging and looting. In *Brooklyn*.

At breakfast, my parents discussed the attic noises they had heard at night. My mother's lips curled with loathing. My father frowned with distress, and his voice deepened. "We can deal with this," he said. "I know how to control a situation like this. I'll be home from school late, and then we'll see."

That day, he drove off to P.S. 240 with a certain harried look that I later came to associate with serious thought; he was showing my mother that he was working. And he did come home late that night, long after we had eaten dinner without him. He carried under each arm a long rectangular machine made of what I

think was tin. There were tilted doors inside each contraption, and wires that banged as he walked from the back door through to the kitchen.

"Traps," he announced, slamming them onto the kitchen counter. "*Humane* traps. We catch 'em, but we don't kill 'em."

Above us, as my father in the attic labored to bait and arm the traps, the small gray squirrels ran beneath the eaves and in the walls. They had grown confident, and at night I heard their claws unhesitatingly march on our wood. At first I had been frightened that a squirrel would chew through my walls and enter my room and bite me. And then I remembered my barefoot days in the backyard during the summer—I was never allowed to go barefoot on the sidewalks because, as my mother summed matters up, "Where I haven't looked before you walk on it is dirty. That's the rule." The squirrels had never bothered me out back, and the house, I figured, was still more ours than theirs. So I grew too confident, myself, and I listened to them racing in the woodwork at night, and I smiled for my parents' despair. Cataclysm was really all a kid had going for him until he was taller than his parents.

The wave of fear when I was six was squirrels. To householders they were like the rats to which they were cousins. They scrabbled in attics and ate the insulation of electrical wires, it was said. They stored nuts uninvited. They were invaders.

When I woke, and heard my father going to the attic to check on the traps, I fancied that I had heard them going off at night, and that I'd heard the shrill cries and frantic searching of trapped gentle Disney-creatures, prisoners in my house. Then my father would descend and say, "Nope. Nothing."

More and more, my mother greeted his report with a low and guttural wordless statement of woe—as if my father had struck her. He took to coming down in silence. I would listen to their soundlessness as he dressed for breakfast while she, always in her robe at breakfast time, sat with him in their unstated failure. And at night, they would work again on the bait. They went through cheese, Ritz crackers, soda biscuits, Arnold bread, then cups of Planters peanuts, then cups of nuts that my mother cracked in the afternoon while we waited for my father to come home. Finally, because peanut butter was my father's favorite food, I suggested that he use it in his traps. I was watching him eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and I was thinking that, with his thin fingers at his mouth, he seemed to nibble like a squirrel. My mother shrugged, and my father raised his brows; that night, they baited with Skippy. Smooth. I recall thinking how gummy the mouths of the squirrels would be.

It worked. There had been no strangled squirrel-cry, no slam of gates into place, but in the morning, as my mother waited in her gathering tension, my father went up to the attic, scrambled about a bit, and then came down slowly, clanking, and bearing trapped beasts. "*Yes!*" he called, carrying Natural History. "*Yes!*"

When I came to breakfast, I expected to find them happy. But they were—if not outright huddled—concentrated at the far end of our kitchen table, as far away from the traps on the kitchen floor as they could be. Inside each trap was a squirrel, shivering. The slanted doors had dropped to perpendicular, and the squirrels were walled inside them. Now, my father told us, sounding as if he were trying to sound buoyant, but talking in a way that made me look at him as sharply as I looked at the squirrels, *now*, all that had to happen was that someone take the squirrels to the Park—far away from the house, as far as someone might feel like walking—and then set them free.

"Someone," my mother said.

"You," he told her. "I have to teach."

"I don't *know* anything about squirrels—you're the scientist."

"Yes," he said. "And I told you everything you need to know. You carry the cages by the handles on top. The squirrel can't reach you, no matter how he tries. Then you trip the door in each cage when you're a good long distance from the house. The squirrels run away. Then *you* run away."

"That part I know about," my mother said.

So I did not wait for the school bus that morning. I dressed for autumn weather in my brown corduroy jacket and peaked brown corduroy hat. My mother, who chose to wear gloves that morning, hefted each cage by its handle—her face suggested that she carried each squirrel by its tail—and we slowly made our way up Argyle, across Church Avenue into the Parade Grounds, where kids skipping school played ball, and across which we were going to walk to reach the lowest tip of Prospect Park, near the Lake.

Brooklyn in those days, and especially in parts around our neighborhood, was filled with trees and rich bushes, thick hedge, undeveloped fields that weren't even vacant lots yet—they were more like scraps of leftover

forest—and everyplace in the giant trees, it seemed to me that morning in fall, squirrels swarmed, their tails floating behind them, softly flicked pennants of my mother's dismay.

We had to pause a lot, because my mother carried the traps away from her body, and her arms grew weary. I offered to carry one and was refused in the way parents decline the assistance of children—a signal that sacrifice of some considerable quantity is going on. We made our slow unhappy progress over the Parade Grounds, walking across baseball diamonds, and having nothing to do with play; when I ran down the first-base line and waited for my mother to catch up, her face informed me that second base was not in my immediate future. We were on business, her frown made clear, and as far as I was concerned, from that moment on, the day was one more Field Trip.

We had a long distance to go, were still rather far from the Park itself, but the trees grew thicker, and the squirrels on them seemed to multiply. I noticed them, and I noticed that my mother noticed them. How could she not? They crawled, they scurried, they sat up and nibbled, they ran; sometimes, scrambling up a tree, one would stop, then turn, then hold there upside down, like a salamander on a stone wall in *National Geographic*. The squirrels made chattering sounds, and long loud squeaks, and some of them silently ran, in bursts, along the tree limbs. I remembered my parents talking of how squirrels hunted down birds, and I did cheer them on, though silently.

My mother said, "Enough."

"Daddy said—"

"If Daddy wants to say, then he can come and carry the squirrels and tell *them*. Mommy says enough. Get back where it's safe. Go back."

I retreated obediently, so that no vengeance-seeking, human-devouring squirrel, mutated by nuclear testing, or inhabited by invisible beings from another world who sought our blood or souls or air supply—or which were simply part of the enormous danger my parents always discovered—could attack. My mother, in her gloves and long, tent-shaped tan tweed coat, bent above the cages. I saw the squirrels shrink from her. I watched her shrink from them.

I heard a sharp snapping sound, and then something clicked, and a squirrel was paused at the end of a trap. It moved back inside.

"Shoo," my mother said. "Go on." She waited, then kicked at the side of the trap. "Shoo!" The squirrel remained. My mother said, "Go *on*!" With the tips of her fingers, she picked up the closed end of the trap and shook it. She shook it harder, then banged on its side with a fist. "*Go!*"

The squirrel scampered down the incline of the trap and ran away, pausing to inspect; it ran again, paused, then ran farther. It went to a nearby tree and disappeared. The second squirrel went at once, and then my mother sat heavily down on an empty trap.

I watched the tree to which both squirrels had run. It was extremely broad at the base of the trunk, and its heavy thick branches were alive with squirrels. They ran, they paused, they hung upside down and right side up, they chattered and made their high-pitched sounds. As I watched them, they became the central object of vision; the tree they ran on was secondary to what inhabited it, and the tree receded, the squirrels advanced, and that was true of neighboring trees as well. The ground, too, seemed to ripple with their motion at the base of every tree.

My mother sat on her trap on the endless green-going-ochre of the Parade Grounds, looking up at the trees, the ceaseless motion of the squirrels as they worked and as the winter came upon them. "They'll come back," she said. "You can't keep that—that"—she swung her arm in its heavy coat, she pointed with her finger in its glove, indicating trees and what swarmed in them—"there's no *way* of keeping them under control, believe you me." She diminished, staring up at them, like the pretty girl in the horror film who at last understands what has come for her. □

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FILM REVIEW

Tinker on the Roof: Jews and Russians in the Russian Civil War

Louis Menashe

Commissar, directed by Alexander Askoldov. Gorky Film Studio, USSR, 1967 (released 1987). Distributed in the U.S. by International Film Exchange.

Is *glasnost* good for Soviet Jews? The answer is *da*, if only because Jewish themes are at last beginning to appear on those "blank pages" of the Soviet historical record that Mr. Gorbachev says need filling. Recovering the Jewish chapters of the national memory is good not only for the Jews; it is good for the nation's moral balance, for the general process of renewal, for the tattered banner of Soviet socialism. It also is good for Soviet-American relations, since the U.S. government's attitude toward the Soviet Union is influenced by the way Soviet Jews are being treated.

There are a lot of Jewish chapters to recover—many tales to be told. As usual in the USSR, artists have led the way. In the past, there was the occasional *cri de coeur* by some righteous gentile, as in the celebrated "Babi Yar," in which Yevtushenko did what official history and official monuments failed to do—highlight the brute fact of Jews as special victims of Nazi terror on Soviet soil. Or the occasional novel, as in Anatoly Rybakov's *Heavy Sand*, which offered a rich tableau of Jewish life in the Ukraine from before the revolution through World War II. (The same Rybakov's evocation of the purge period, *Children of the Arbat*, written twenty years ago, finally appeared in the USSR and has just been published here.)

Since *glasnost*, the appearance of works with Jewish subjects has become a more regular feature of the Soviet cultural scene. Two years ago, another frequently iconoclastic poet, Andrei Voznesensky, wrote a harrowing article in the youth magazine *Yunost* about a German massacre in the Crimea. As at Babi Yar, the existing monument fails to mention that Jews were the primary victims. Voznesensky's anger is directed especially at a contemporary atrocity—the continuing plunder of the mass graves by local citizens without interference by the authorities. Earlier this year the monthly *Oktyabr* began serializing *Life and Fate*, Vasily Grossman's long-suppressed epic novel set at the time of the Stalingrad battle. Among other Jewish themes in the work, its scenes of victims heading for the gas chambers are as powerful as anything ever written on the Holocaust. Most recently, the magazine *Druzhba Narodov* ("Friendship of the Peoples") published the "Doctors' Plot," the memoirs of Yakov Rapoport, a survivor of one of Stalin's most notorious frame-ups, in which the accused, mostly Jews, were charged with seeking to take the lives of the high-level officials they were treating.

Making all of this information public in the Soviet Union is a striking development. A certain low-level anti-Semitism, together with the official Soviet ambivalence about ethnic particularism, has traditionally kept specifically Jewish themes and Jewish grievances from being aired in the media. Cinema has been no exception, although this wasn't always the case. Old-timers may remember several Soviet anti-Fascist films focusing on Jewish subjects. Among them were *Professor Mamlock* (1938), the story of a renowned German Jewish doctor hounded by the Nazis, and *The Unvanquished* (1945), the tale of the awful fate of the Jewish population in the Ukraine under the swastika. After World War II, but especially after the emergence of the state of Israel in 1948, the situation for Soviet Jews became more complicated, and Jewish themes all but disappeared in Soviet cinema, even after Stalin. Here and there, especially in films about the war, one learned from cinema that Jews exist in the USSR. *Theme*, a fine film by Gleb Panfilov, made in 1979, but released only recently thanks to *glasnost*, contains a powerful sequence involving a contemporary Jewish writer who has decided to emigrate in order to preserve his artistic integrity. This positive portrait of the writer, along with the sensitive subject of emigration itself, may have accounted for the film's shelving when it was first completed.

A similar fate was prescribed for Alexander Askoldov's riveting and unique *Commissar*, completed in 1967. Imagine making a film about Jews, Jewish suffering, Jewish humanism, and a Jewish plea for tolerance and amity among nations; and imagine making this film just as the Israelis gained victory in the Six Day War, when the USSR was about to break off relations with Israel, when Zionism was being associated more and more with imperialism (and worse) in official Soviet doctrine and policy, and when Soviet anti-Zionism was merging increasingly with anti-Semitism. Making such a film in those days is what is known as bad timing. That the film was made at all, and that it amounted to a major production no less, is something of a small miracle. The head of the state film agency responsible for budgeting, approving, and supervising production was called on the carpet about the film and explained that Askoldov—who is not Jewish—somehow tricked everyone about the real character of his work. It was Askoldov's first film, and it was to be his last. Cinema bosses accused him of promoting Zionism

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and other evils, and they threw him out of filmmaking. He was also ousted from the Soviet Communist party. For the next twenty years Askoldov made a living by directing variety shows and doing occasional television work. Now in his late fifties (he was at Moscow University with Gorbachev), he bears all the traces of one of those rock-hard, principled, antiestablishment, "difficult" types who, though isolated, stick to their guns in Soviet society—figures as ideologically diverse as Andrei Sakharov, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Roy Medvedev. (All but Solzhenitsyn are currently enjoying rehabilitation.)

Through another small miracle, Askoldov's film was preserved. In other times it might have been destroyed. ("Wipe it out!" Stalin sometimes would order.) Askoldov's wife preserved a copy by hiding it in her closet until another miracle—*glasnost*—brought it to the screen at the Moscow Film Festival in 1987. It is currently appearing in U.S. theaters and is scheduled for national release in the USSR in October 1988.

Askoldov uses "In the City of Berdichev," a simple, Isaac Babel-like short story by Vasily Grossman set in the Ukraine during the Russian Civil War, as the basis for a cinema meditation on human warmth or, as the director likes to say in interviews, on the true meaning of "internationalism." It is 1920 and a tough, no-nonsense commissar, built like a sturdy Mother Russia from some revolutionary poster, arrives with her cavalry unit in a silent, bullet-marked town. We know she is tough because without flinching she orders the execution of a deserter. He had "traded the revolution for a woman's bed," she bellows at him. The irony of this order becomes immediately apparent, for the tough, committed commissar has to reveal to her unit commander that she herself is with child and is too far along in her pregnancy to do anything about it but go through with the birth. She is lodged during her confinement with a poor Jewish tinker named Yefim, his six children, his wife, and his mother-in-law. The shtetl meets the Red Army: Tevye confronts the commissar. After initial suspicion, the Jewish family and the Russian woman get along together. The family members are tender with her and help her through a difficult delivery. She loves them and doffs her military garb in favor of maternal dress. But these are terrible times. Revolutionary passion and duty compel the commissar to rejoin her unit, and, in an act of love and trust, she leaves her beloved infant behind with the Jewish family.

The film often has the clean, earnest, black-and-white look of early Soviet cinema during the revolution and civil war. But, from the beginning, we know we are in for something else. A statue of the Virgin gazes at a bone-weary cavalry group slowly riding into town. It is misty, and we hear a woman singing a soft, haunting Russian lullaby. (Later, the same lullaby will blend with a Yiddish one.) Flashcuts of a church and a synagogue complete the setting. There will be a flashback death in slow motion, dream-like sequences of the battlefield, a terrifying flash-forward vision of the tinker and his family marching to a death camp, a hyper-realistic children's reenactment of a pogrom, and a macabre dance of hope under artillery bombardment—all intercut into the simple story. This is 1960s cinema; it is Chagall spliced into Tarkovsky.

But *Commissar* displays more than just the stylistic cinematic mannerisms of the 1960s. The USSR was also then undergoing a breakup of Stalinism as an ideological system, a process muffled but hardly arrested by the complacent Brezhnev decades, as recent developments attest. All sorts of challenges to cliché, dogma, and official history began to surface. Askoldov's film belongs to that process. First, it refreshes the Soviet memory about Jewish life in western Russia, where patience, faith, and the gentle/comic sense of the absurd made poverty and pain endurable. Granted, Askoldov's portrait of Jewish virtue—honest toil and earthy, life-affirming joy amidst the squalor and the peril—skirts close to patronizing caricature: The solid natives teach the sophisticated commissar a thing or two about life. Nevertheless, such elements make for good cinema. When we meet Yefim's wife, a stunning dark-haired beauty, she is lustily scrubbing clothes at her washboard. When Yefim leaves for work in the morning, he greets the day merrily by peeing outside his door and dancing and humming down the lane.

Second, and perhaps what makes this less of a "Jewish film" than a general political statement (for which Askoldov might have gotten himself into as much trouble as he did with the Jewish dimension), is the film's support for soft humanism over the hard revolutionary mentality. Askoldov has said that his film honors internationalism and berates chauvinism—unimpeachable Leninist qualifications. But it also honors motherhood, family, and mutual caring over the imperatives of class struggle. In one exchange, Yefim tells the commissar of the need for "an International of kindness." She reproaches him for his naiveté and asserts that a true International must bear the blood of workers and peasants in hard struggle. A very solitary, very mournful trumpet intoning "The Internationale" at the end of the film is a good clue as to which side of the dialogue between Yefim and the commissar Askoldov is on.

Soviet authorities, cultural and otherwise, probably still have many reservations about the film. Isn't the civil war presented in an insufficiently triumphant mode? Aren't Jews presented excessively favorably in comparison with other nationalities? But *glasnost* is *glasnost*, comrades, and the film is out of the can. What will be fascinating to watch is the *public* reaction to *Commissar* in the USSR. *Glasnost* has also meant opening up public debate to reactionary voices, such as those in the Pamyat group with their primitive conspiracy theories and good old-fashioned Russian anti-Semitism. In the recent critique of *glasnost* by a Leningrad chemist, published, with probable support from above, in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, current liberalizing trends were assailed as "cosmopolitan" tendencies, the traditional coded attack on Jews and Jewishness. This sort of attack leads many Jews to worry about a film like *Commissar*: better not to rock the boat, they say. Fortunately, Pamyat is still ridiculed in the Soviet press, and *Pravda* sternly rebuked *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. But one can bet on a lot of hostility to *Commissar* among the Soviet public, and much of it will be tinged with ugly overtones. Yet that is what candid debate is all about in the Gorbachev era. The cure for *glasnost* is more *glasnost*. And Askoldov's *Commissar*, like Abuladze's anti-Stalinist film *Repentance*, will generally be received, one hopes, as an important stimulus to the Soviet public's continuing capacity for honest self-exploration. □

BOOK REVIEW

How Films Talk Politics

Leonard Quart

Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film by Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner. Indiana University Press, 1987, 384 pp.

Ribbons in Time: Movies and Society Since 1945 by Paul Monaco. Indiana University Press, 1987, 192 pp.

All films carry a variety of implicit and explicit social ideologies. That is as true for products of the Hollywood mainstream—films concerned more with entertaining an audience and achieving a profit than making a social statement—as it is for documentaries.

These two books use quite different analytic approaches to explore the relation of Hollywood film to society. *Ribbons in Time,* by Paul Monaco, is the less ambitious and more accessible of the two. Monaco focuses on four postwar national cinemas—French, German, Italian, and American films (from *Bonnie and Clyde* to *The Big Chill*). His book is free of critical jargon and antipathetic to what he views as "pretentious," all-encompassing, theoretical models of explanation—Freudian, Marxist, semiological, or Lacanian. In their place he substitutes a concrete, pluralistic style—for example, looking at images and scenes in Fellini's films to arrive at particular insights about how they exhibit the intricate interrelation between "the real and the imagined." Monaco is quite conscious of the importance of such factors as "national cultural history" for interpreting a film but refuses to limit his analysis to a "single determinant."

In contrast, *Camera Politica,* by Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner, is a more comprehensive, dense, and theoretical work, written in opaque, jargon-ridden prose. (For example, "We conceive of the relationship between film and social history as a process of discursive transcoding.") Examining how control over cultural forms is crucial for maintaining "social power," the authors fuse a deconstructive analysis with a Marxist critique of the inherent ideology of American films from 1967 to 1987. To their credit, they avoid the sort of vulgar left analysis which views Hollywood as an ideological monolith that merely instills racist, capitalist, and sexist values. Instead, they make clear that films carry contradictory and "contested" meanings, that by depicting some of the prime fears inherent in our culture, even the most conservative films (*The Exorcist*) convey "potentially progressive undercurrents." They also are aware that films are a visual medium and that camera placement, color, visual texture, and editing are as significant for understanding the social meaning of a film as is its subject matter.

Both books are serious attempts to understand a subject which can too easily become a quagmire of facile generalizing, simplistic analysis, and overly abstract, arid theory—traps which neither book entirely avoids. The relation of Hollywood film to American society and to the popular mind is a problematic one. Obviously, political and social meaning can be discovered in explicitly political films, ranging from Elia Kazan's ambiguous *Viva Zapata* and Stanley Kubrick's sardonic *Dr. Strangelove* to Stallone's action-cartoon *Rambo* series. But it can also be found in ostensibly nonpolitical films like Michael Curtiz's *Mildred Pierce* and Steven Spielberg's *E.T.* Few of these films try to evoke everyday American life. Social realism has never been at the center of Hollywood's aesthetic, and the physical texture of the quotidian has usually been subordinated to the formal and thematic conventions of genre (e.g., *film noir*'s stylized lighting and sets instead of the less dramatic realities of life in the 1940s). What these films do, instead, in their stylized, escapist, sometimes trivializing fashion, is to reveal something of the dreams and desires of the American people. The relationship is not mechanistic. Hollywood is no evil empire that conspiratorially conditions the values of a supine public. Its genius lies in the ability to create mythic landscapes and urbanscapes like the American West and Broadway, and archetypal figures like the gangster, private eye, and Western hero—all of which reflect and help shape the audience's consciousness. The connection is a reciprocal one. Frank Capra's sweet, harmonious small towns and the magical New York of *On the Town* were distinctive Hollywood creations that reinforced powerful strains which exist in popular consciousness.

The nature of these archetypes and landscapes has shifted through the years, but there are a set of values that underlie them and remain relatively constant. Hollywood filmmakers have usually been firm believers in capitalism and, more important, in the ethic of success. They have promoted the notion that most white males have the capacity and opportunity to make it in America (in recent years, some blacks and women have also been included). In Hollywood, class, economic, and ethnic obstacles are easily transcended; success beckons for anyone willing to struggle for it.

Consider two films, produced thirty years apart, that are as different in politics and style as William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), a sophisticated evocation of the problems of readjustment for WWII veterans, and Sylvester Stallone's *Rocky* (1976), a simple, sentimental fable about the

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triumph of a broken-down pug. Both share a belief that, in America, any man can reinvent himself. In *Best Years*, each returning vet is able to exorcise the pain of the war and discover that America holds out all sorts of fresh possibilities. *Rocky* revives the Horatio Alger myth—rejecting the social cynicism of the late sixties—and commits itself to such values as honesty, perseverance, and hard work. This time the American Dream is renewed with an ethnic, working-class hero who not only nostalgically embodies the virtues of a simpler past, but augments them with some ethnic warmth and spontaneity.

It is not difficult to discover the general set of values which most American films share. Problems arise when one tries to explain the relationship of a film's particular vision to the popular consciousness of a given period. For example, can one accurately link *E.T.*'s affirmation of innocence and distrust of adult authority with the political pieties of the early Reagan years? There is always a danger of overinterpretation—of mining the traditional Hollywood genres for complex and portentous levels of political and cultural meaning that are more a critical construction than an integral part of the work itself. The text and experience of the film can often be sacrificed to the intellectual inventiveness or the ideological imperatives of the analysis.

The problem is that directors, writers, and producers of films—be they assembly-line teen comedies (*Pretty in Pink*) or the works of one of the few contemporary American auteurs like Martin Scorsese (*Raging Bull*) or Robert Altman (*Nashville*)—have no guaranteed access to the zeitgeist. There are no direct lines between films and the popular mind. The popular consciousness is divided by age, class, ethnicity, region, and race, and can change quickly—shifting, in its attitudes to law and order, for example, in a matter of four or five years (from *Bonnie and Clyde* to *Dirty Harry* and *Death Wish*). All one can say is that directors like Altman and Scorsese share some of the same tensions and dreams other Americans do and that their films powerfully express some of those feelings. Hollywood spends a great deal of time and money trying to discover current trends and values and sometimes succeeds in reaching an audience by knowing just how to package those concerns.

However, we never know for certain what aspect of a film connects with the public. Was *Rambo*'s great commercial success due to its voicing of the patriotic populism and anticommunism of the early Reagan years? Or was it the skillful editing of action sequences? Or Stallone's dim, muscular "charisma?" Probably all these elements and other, more peripheral ones contributed to the film's reaching a large audience.

Films carry contradictory and "contested" meanings by depicting some of the prime fears inherent in our culture. Even the most conservative films convey "potentially progressive undercurrents."

Both the Monaco and Ryan-Kellner books implicitly struggle with these problems. Monaco spends a whole chapter discussing how *Bonnie and Clyde*, *American Graffiti*, and other American films of the last twenty years contain a nostalgia for simpler, more innocent times. He argues that *Bonnie and Clyde*'s stylized evocation of the thirties—its farmhouses, migrant camps, and small towns—speaks to the rebellions of the sixties by turning "back to the last great domestic crisis in the United States prior to the protests" of that decade. While a suggestive insight, this grants greater significance to the film's setting than it deserves. (There was no cycle of films set in the thirties during the late sixties.) Monaco forces the text to fit too neatly into the category of films he has devised—a trap common to this form of cultural analysis.

Ryan and Kellner have written a much more ideological book, one that tends to be schematic and reductive. For example, they view the flawed, gratuitously violent *Taxi Driver* as a muted "antiliberal statement" that "might have used the vehicle of the taxi driver to depict the tremendous inequalities of wealth that are on display in large cities like New York." They want a politically conscious film that conveys the "systemic evil" of urban life. *Taxi Driver* may be devoid of social analysis, but it is a film whose personal vision of urban alienation has striking emotional and visual power and thus conveys a measure of social truth.

Their reading of *The Deer Hunter*—a film open to a wide range of interpretations—is similarly flawed. While respecting other perspectives, Ryan and Kellner see it, in the main, as a "reactionary" film that features a steelworker, "seer-leader," Michael Vronsky (Robert DeNiro), who channels working-class resentment (against an "oppressive" factory world and squalid neighborhood life) into patriarchal leadership. It's true that *The Deer Hunter* is a work of political amnesia and consummate ethnocentrism which makes the Americans guiltless victims and the Vietnamese satanic aggressors. However, whatever working-class resentment exists in the film develops after the characters leave Vietnam. The brutal anomie of the war contrasts sharply with the steelworkers' warm hometown and work life, all bound to a set of communal male rituals. Even the "reactionary" (more unconscious than conscious) quality of its politics is often undermined for the audience by the film's depiction of the psychic and physical horror of the war.

Vietnam remains a powerful presence in the collective memory of Americans—an open wound which has never quite healed or been understood. And the history of Vietnam films demonstrates how Hollywood treats politically charged subjects. All through the war years, filmmakers avoided direct references to the conflict. The only exception was John Wayne's *The Green Berets* which turned Vietnam into an anticommunist version of cowboys and Indians. The common assumption was that making a film about so divisive a war meant courting financial disaster. In the last decade, however, Hollywood has brought the war directly to the screen and created a number of metaphoric figures—"wounded vets" and "supermen" among them—although it was only in the low-budget *Go Tell the Spartans* (1976) and the Oscar-winning *Platoon* (1986) that the sights and sounds of actual conflict were the central focus.

Symbolic figures like "the superman"

(e.g., Col. Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*) were men psychically and morally different than other soldiers—living on a more murderous and inscrutable plane of reality. The presence of this "superman" suggested to audiences that the war's death and destruction had more to do with the nature of the human condition than with any political decisions made by the U.S. government. But almost none of the Vietnam films, from the expressionist and epic *Apocalypse Now* to the relatively realistic *Platoon*, were interested in the politics and history of the war or in the nature of the enemy.

In most American films (as often in our political life), a phenomenon like a war is rarely seen in its ideological or institutional context. Instead, it becomes a moral conflict between the good Rambo or Michael Vronsky and the evil Vietnamese, or it becomes an existential drama—men flung into a mad charnel house, struggling in a variety of ways to survive. The emphasis is usually on the fate of individuals rather than on the policies that created the situation they confront. Rarely does an American political film do what the great Polish director Andrzej Wajda does in his *Man of Marble*—create a dialectical relationship between the values and consciousness of his characters and the richly rendered historical pressures they face. In Wajda's film, individuals live inside of the world of postwar Poland and must learn how to cope with the manipulations and ideological changes of an unpopular state apparatus. But they remain even more individuated than does *Platoon*'s Chris Taylor—whose struggle is essentially existential and ahistorical.

That's not to say that Vietnam films are all of a piece. *Go Tell the Spartans* and *Platoon* (which treat the war as a self-destructive and futile nightmare) are more critical than *The Deer Hunter* or *Hamburger Hill*. And the metaphoric figures which inhabit the films vary in form and substance from work to work. There was also a cycle, in the early eighties, of revisionist films that attempted to sell the war as a "noble cause" (e.g., *Uncommon Valor* and *Missing in Action*). But it sputtered out after a short, albeit successful, run.

What all the films have in common, despite a variety of political perspectives, is the vision of a dark, inchoate war without front lines—an abattoir which subverts all happy endings. That vision is not a mirror of the public's attitudes toward the war, or its reality, but a strong signpost of both. The danger of writing about the cultural significance of Vietnam films (or any other type) is that one forgets to be true to the particular form and substance of each work. Many of these films are pedestrian, but we should still be wary of subsuming them under rigid sociological typologies which deny the variety of contradictory meanings they convey. Neither should we opt for a more sophisticated theoretical model (like the deconstructionist one) that mystifies and abstracts more than it explains. I may be anachronistic, but I believe passion for and personal engagement with a work of art is an integral part of the critical process. There are no absolutes—no ways of seeing that don't miss or, at times, even distort elements of a film. The best we can do is to look with an imaginative eye at what passes before us on the screen and then illuminate just how pervasive and at times pernicious a role Hollywood plays in shaping our notions of social and political reality. □

France's Holocaust

Michael R. Marrus

The Jews of Paris and the Final Solution: Communal Responses and Internal Conflicts, 1940–1944 by Jacques Adler. Oxford University Press, 1987, 320 pp.

The Burden of Conscience: French Jewry's Response to the Holocaust by Richard I. Cohen. Indiana University Press, 1987, 237 pp.

In retrospect, the much-heralded trial of Klaus Barbie, the wartime Gestapo chief of Lyons, appears as a great letdown. The trial failed to engage the imagination as a historic confrontation with inhumanity, as was the case with the Eichmann trial more than twenty-five years ago, and it lacked the absorbing drama posed by the identity question in the Demjanjuk case, recently completed in Jerusalem. A French café owner, quoted after the sentencing of Barbie, summed up the feelings of most people when he said glumly that, with the trial over, he did not feel any better.

What did people expect from this trial? The international consensus was that France had to learn its lesson. For months, let us remember, press reports suggested that the French still had much to hide about their wartime past. French society, said Barbie's theatrical attorney Jacques Vergès, would be torn apart by ugly revelations of collaboration; the defense would broadcast truths the country was eager to forget. My own sense is that the accounts of French anguish and division were persistently overstated. Unwittingly, such assessments played into the hands of the aged and apparently unrepentant Nazi, already twice convicted, *in absentia*, of murderous crimes committed during the German Occupation. Certainly the pedagogic exercise, at least as some envisioned it, failed. Spectacular revelations did not appear. The defense was unimpressive. After a while even Vergès seemed to tire of his effort. Barbie was sentenced to life imprisonment, and the media moved on to other interests.

To those of us concerned with how the Nazi Holocaust is perceived, there may be a lesson in all of this. It seems increasingly evident that the courts are ill-suited, particularly now, to commu-

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nicate what we should know about the destruction of European Jewry. Trials serve at best to render justice to the accused; they appear increasingly ill-suited to transmit an understanding of the crimes committed during the Nazi era. Unlike the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials, therefore, future trials are not likely to serve the cause of historical truth. In a few cases, justice may indeed be done. But for society to come to terms with the Nazi Holocaust, we must rely on the printed word and our patience to pursue it. In the long run, thoughtful books such as these by Richard Cohen and Jacques Adler will contribute far more to our appreciation of the terrible wartime years than dramatic courtroom encounters with aged Nazis.

With France, any understanding of the period involves "collaboration"—a theme consistently misunderstood by foreign observers of the Barbie "affair." To most French men and women who experienced the terrible collapse of their armies before the *Wehrmacht* in 1940, collaboration was not a plot to nazify France, but a policy of accepting a terrible reality. For them, reality meant that the shattering defeat of their country in the summer of 1940 was *irrevocable*. Just as in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, it seemed the French had been overwhelmed by superior organization and better tactics, and a new chapter in the nation's history seemed about to begin. The French collapse was a devastating, demoralizing experience, prompting brooding reflections on the insufficiencies of French society that had led to the disaster. Such sentiments were not limited to the extreme right. The famous Jewish medievalist Marc Bloch said that he wrote his book *Strange Defeat*, in "a white heat of rage" between July and September 1940. Whatever their judgments, most people in France saw no practical choice but to cooperate with the conqueror. Once French leaders signed an armistice with the German authorities at Rethondes on June 25 (a move from which only a handful dissented), only the British remained at war with the Nazis and few believed they could hold out for long. In the East, Joseph Stalin remained firmly allied to the Third Reich. The United States seemed remote, and would not enter the war for a year and a half. For nearly all the French, whether of the left or right, the war was over.

At the same time, however, a fresh prospect inspired the political leadership that jostled for power in the provincial resort town of Vichy, where the French government was quartered. An energetic group of politicians, mostly critics of the liberal, parliamentary democracy of the Third Republic, saw in the national disaster an opportunity to remake France in a new image—healthier, stronger, and in various ways attracted by the magnetic field of European fascism. This was the group that created what Vichy propagandists called the National Revolution, outfitted in what appears to us as fascist trappings. An essential component of this program, launched without any German direction, was a militant campaign against the Jews.

The Nazis, it is now clear, had very little to do with the National Revolution or its anti-Semitism at the beginning. They let the French spin their elaborate projects for a French renaissance, insisting only that Vichy pay heavily for the costs of the war and the subsequent occupation, and that Frenchmen submit to a humiliating division of their country, with the northern two-thirds remaining under the control of the *Wehrmacht*. To alleviate these hardships, Vichy politicians not only relied upon the National Revolution; they also sought to improve their relations with the occupier. Collaboration, in the minds of some, thus took on a positive connotation, as these people, sometimes out of necessity, tried by favor or flattery to ameliorate the harsh conditions of defeat. Collaboration, therefore, could mean a variety of things, and it did not necessarily signify an eager embrace of Nazi goals. For some, it meant a grudging obligation to cooperate with the victorious power; for others it involved a grander project, reflecting a community of interest between the Hitler Reich and the new order to be built at Vichy.

The Jewish response to these catastrophic events must be seen against this background. While no Jewish voices favored an emulation of the Third Reich, there were plenty of established Jews who accepted the need to work with the new masters of France—whether German or French. Among the foremost of these Jews was Jacques Helbronner,

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head of the prewar communal organization of French Jews—a close associate since the First World War of the new head of state, Marshal Philippe Pétain, and a former classmate of Cardinal Gerlier of Lyons, one of the leading Catholics in France. Some years ago Maurice Rajsfus, a French Jewish journalist whose parents had been murdered in the Holocaust, published a sensational account of the French Jewish leadership with the provocative title "Jews in Collaboration." Rajsfus' idea was that a significant portion of the French Jewish establishment, by agreeing to serve in a Vichy-sponsored General Union of French Jews (Union générale des Israélites de France, or UGIF), became willing collaborators in the process of discrimination and persecution; and, eventually, they assisted in the process of deportation that led directly to Auschwitz. Barbie's lawyer, eager to show that even the victims assisted the perpetration of mass murder, repeated this indictment as part of his contention that all of France, not just his client, was responsible for what happened.

There were plenty of established Jews who accepted the need to work with the new masters of France—whether German or French.

Richard Cohen's book puts the matter in a much more balanced perspective, partly by steeping us in the details of Jewish communal politics in these harrowing times. As his evidence indicates abundantly, the Jewish leaders agonized over the proper course of action after the Nazis arrived, and they worried greatly about the dangers of either German or French supervision of a new Jewish organization. No one took the step of collaboration lightly. A highly assimilated patriciate, these leaders were stunned by the French defeat and deeply wounded by the first manifestations of official anti-Semitism from the new French government. French Jews suffered greatly under the hammer blows of Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation—laws that defined Jews in racial terms, stripped North African Jewry of its citizenship rights, and cleared the way for isolating Jews in French society and robbing them of their possessions. For established French Jews, the fact that these laws emanated from a French government was particularly difficult to accept. Many refused to believe that Vichy was acting on its own, assuming there had been a Nazi *Diktat*. The anti-Semitic program undercut their most fundamental beliefs about their own society—ideas nurtured by several generations of republican education and absorbed by Jews as a kind of civic religion that had replaced the religious faith of their ancestors. "This cannot last, this is not possible," wrote the Jewish communal newspaper editor Raymond-Raoul Lambert when the first anti-Jewish law was promulgated at Vichy. "I cried yesterday evening like a man who, suddenly, was abandoned by the woman who was his only love, the sole guide of his thoughts and director of his actions."

Along with demoralization went serious material hardship. Of some 350,000 Jews in France when the Germans struck, tens of thousands were refugees—some had fled the Low Countries and the Reich, and many were uprooted in France from the path of the *Wehrmacht* and were unable to return to their homes. Some were without jobs, separated from their incomes, or languishing in internment camps and unable to feed their families. Foreign Jews suffered most of all. Close to half of the entire Jewish community, they were subject to immediate internment by the French or Germans, and were most likely to fall afoul of Vichy regulations or be victimized by popular anti-Jewish feeling. Within a short time, there were close to 65,000 Jewish families in Paris alone that could not provide basic necessities for themselves.

In short, the Jews who agreed to serve in the UGIF felt they had little choice. Their material needs were critical, and the French government proposals offered at least some hope to put Jewish affairs in order. In the autumn of 1941, therefore, when Vichy's anti-Semitic commissioner for Jewish affairs, Xavier Vallat, moved to establish a Jewish council to preside over Jewish affairs under the authority of the government, some Jews felt desperate enough to go along. Raymond-Raoul Lambert, soon to head the council in the unoccupied zone, reasoned correctly that the Germans were ultimately behind the scheme, although he did not make a connection between Vichy's plan and the Jewish councils that the Nazis imposed practically everywhere in Europe. Supporters of the UGIF perceived their choice, the records of the internal Jewish debate make clear, as between a council established under French auspices and one under those of the SS. They also saw the UGIF as a government-approved channel for administering relief, one that might intercede more forcefully with the French administration than could individual Jewish agencies. Moreover, Lambert and other Jewish dignitaries were moved by a sense of *noblesse oblige*—a paternalistic approach to communal affairs that had long traditions among assimilated Jews, especially in dealing with their unacculturated brethren from Eastern Europe.

Finally, there was a more personal element—evident for example in Lambert's remarkable wartime diary that Cohen edited several years ago. Like other Jewish leaders in Nazi Europe whose beliefs and expectations were so cruelly shattered, Lambert reacted by reinforcing a sense of his own rectitude, drawing strength from his belief in his own saving mission. Lambert became certain that he and he alone could save the Jews, and no Jewish opinion to the contrary could convince him otherwise. He judged harshly those Jews who refused to participate—arguing that they were "Jewish princes," unwilling to make sacrifices to assist the poor. He thought of himself like Léon Blum, the beleaguered Jewish socialist prime minister of 1936, and saw himself as a much-abused guardian of collective interests. Lambert determined to salvage what he could from a desperate situation, to continue to provide communal aid, to seek small victories in battles with the authorities in the hope that in the long run the Jews would survive. "I compare myself to an Alsatian [under German occupation]," he confided to his diary in a tone of effusive patriotism. "I must neither emigrate nor give up, but hold on and hold out." "Hold on and hold out"—hardly a collaborationist slogan in any conventional sense—became Lambert's motto during exhausting wranglings with Vichy officials, repeated appeals to the French bureaucracy to relieve the plight of Jews hounded by persecution, and somewhat later, des-

perate efforts to pry Jews loose from deportation convoys.

Lambert and other established French Jews worked closely with Vichy in 1941 and 1942, the high point of collaboration throughout France. But the circumstances that prompted many to accept Vichy or German rule as inevitable in the first two and a half years of occupation changed significantly during 1943 and 1944. One of the reasons Klaus Barbie was not likely to reveal to us the names of highly placed collaborators hitherto unsuspected by historians and the general public has to do directly with timing. Barbie came to Lyons in November 1942 when German troops swept across the demarcation line dividing the formerly occupied zone in the North from the so-called "free zone" in the South. In that city, soon to become a center of the French Resistance, Barbie's Gestapo unit began functioning in early 1943.

Nineteen forty-three was probably the most important turning point for wartime opinion in France before the D-Day invasion. Just then, following Rommel's decisive defeat at El Alamein and the dramatic American landings in North Africa, news spread throughout France of the spectacular German losses at Stalingrad and the impressive Allied air offensive against the Reich. Soon thereafter came Vichy's conscription of French workers for labor in the Reich, likely the single most unpopular measure the Vichy government ever imposed. Here were the first portents of an eventual German defeat. Following these events, many erstwhile collaborators began to see that they were on the wrong side.

To be sure, many continued to collaborate, led by the Vichy head of government Pierre Laval, who nailed his banner to the mast of the Third Reich. Barbie certainly had his French helpers and informers, and he drew upon the strong-armed fascist auxiliary police, known as the *Milice*. Collaboration, nevertheless, was on the wane in 1943 and its motivation was far more ideological than in 1940. Some Frenchmen who had worked with the Germans up to that point—including even the Vichy police commissioner Jean Bousquet and his assistant Jean Leguay, both of whom participated extensively in the roundups of Jews—now began to desert the Vichy ship. The regime was hardly sinking at this point, but it was certainly in difficulty. Some of the deserters, notably Bousquet himself, went to work for the Resistance at this point, performing services that were much more remembered after the war than their previous ruthless repression of Communists and Jews. Bousquet was treated lightly in postwar trials and later went on to become director of the Paris-based Bank of Indochina. Collaborators of 1943 and 1944 were most easily identified after the liberation, and a good many of them were punished or disgraced. But many who escaped justice, who got off lightly after a brush with postwar courts, or whose collaborationist activities were simply hidden, owed their good fortune to their subsequent participation in the Resistance—activity often sincerely undertaken, one should add, once prompted by the changing fortunes of war.

Another example is a high government official under former French president Valérie Giscard d'Estaing, named Maurice Papon, who in 1942 signed documents ordering the deportation of Jewish children from the Bordeaux region, but who became involved in Resistance activity the following year. After a distinguished civil service career following the war, with several key posts in the French administration including head of the French police, Papon's case surfaced in the satirical French newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné* in 1981, on the eve of the French presidential elections in which Giscard d'Estaing was defeated by the socialist leader François Mitterand.

For many Jews, however, the turning point of 1943 came too late. The Nazis ordered regular deportations from France to Auschwitz in the summer of 1942, and before the year was over some 42,500 Jews had been taken away. The French police took an active part in the roundups, and convoys left from the unoccupied zone as well as from the North, where the Germans were in charge. To make the deportations more acceptable to the French, the Nazis concentrated on foreigners, who made up all but a few of those taken away. The convoys were assembled with great brutality—families were torn apart, masses of people were jammed into cattle cars, including men and women, the old, the young, and the infirm. Having given signs of indifference to the persecution of Jews up to this point, ordinary French people now began to show some sympathy for the Jews. In both zones, prominent churchpeople publicly protested against the deportations. Occasionally, as with the roundups of nearly 13,000 Jews in Paris in mid-July, French policemen warned their victims in advance of the arrests. Indifference remained widespread, however.

Caught unprepared by this crisis, Jewish leaders were unable to be of much help to their coreligionists. In both the occupied and the unoccupied zones, the Jewish councils doggedly continued their welfare operations, protested fitfully to the French authorities, and obeyed the orders handed to them. Unlike the Jewish councils in Eastern Europe, they were not required to provide lists of deportees. But they did assist deportations indirectly by helping to provision the transit camp of Drancy with food and clothing and by maintaining a semblance of orderly Jewish life amidst the turmoil. For the most part, their response seems to have been one of fear and confusion. Scores of Jews sought the exemption accorded those associated with the Jewish councils. In the South, where native French Jews felt less threatened, UGIF leader Lambert scurried about attempting to reduce the number of deportees.

Did the Jewish leaders know the fate of the Jews in Poland? By mid-1942 rumors of mass killings circulated, but they generally were not believed. Postwar accounts are contradictory, although it is clear that even the most pessimistic had no sense of the gruesome reality of Auschwitz. Lambert's diary remains silent on the question. Jewish leaders certainly did not realize that the Germans worked with fixed quotas: for every Jew saved from deportation, another had to fill his or her place. Hence the leaders believed their few successes were worth the effort. More than once Lambert congratulated himself in his diary for having rescued this or that Jew from deportation, usually on the strength of some distinguished service to the nation by the victim.

For many Jews, including Lambert, the deportations were nevertheless the revelation, performing much the same function in the Jewish world as did the

transformation of the course of the war for the rest of French society somewhat later, in 1943. As the convoys left the unoccupied zone under French direction, Lambert seems finally to have grasped the folly of trusting the Vichy government. According to Cohen, Lambert assumed a "dual existence" at this time—outwardly maintaining the legal structure of the UGIF, but at the same time assisting the underground in various ways, such as smuggling Jewish children to safety, providing aid to secret organizations, and giving cover to some in the Resistance. Both Lambert and his counterpart André Baur in the northern zone were now considered obstacles to the anti-Jewish campaign. Denounced by Vichy, both were carried off by the Germans to be murdered in Auschwitz. So was Jacques Helbronner, the friend of Pétain and the archbishop of Lyons.

In his book on Parisian Jewry and the Final Solution, Jacques Adler gives us an eloquent assessment of these events from the standpoint of immigrant Jews, who made up about half of the Jewish population of 100,000 in the French capital in October 1940. Breaking with the customary mode of academic detachment (his book was originally prepared as a doctoral dissertation for the University of Melbourne), Adler contests the position of "official Judaism"—well-established, French-born Jews—and its leadership. These leaders "proceeded from wishful thinking," believing at first that French natives would be spared, or at least spared the worst. They kept silent about the most sinister implications of Nazi policies, clinging desperately to the legalistic structures permitted them by the Vichy authorities. The Jewish immigrants, on the other hand, were "psychologically and politically better prepared than French Judaism" to face the ordeal, Adler argues. They were "more conscious of the need to achieve communal unity" and had a better capacity to generate strategies for survival. Less used to legalistic procedures, they adapted more quickly to an underground existence, developed mechanisms for self-help, and remained more suspicious of both the Germans and the French. A former participant himself in the Communist underground, Adler suggests that the strategy of his fellow fighters was the only one capable of "frustrating the murderous Nazi plan."

To me, this is the weak point in many of the postwar denunciations of Jewish leadership during the Nazi Holocaust. It is difficult to imagine an alternative strategy, given the limited vision of 1940 and 1941. No one should deny the bold foresight and selflessness of the Jewish Communists. Many of them showed a remarkable independence from the Moscow-imposed strategy—either in its pro-German guise, before the Nazis' attack on the Soviet Union, or in its unwillingness to address the Jews' own predicament. As Adler himself points out, however, "the Jewish Communists' armed units in Paris never undertook objectives that mattered directly to the Jewish population." They did not attack the trains that carried Jews to the East, assassinated no Vichy or Nazi Jewish specialists, and left it to others to liberate the dreaded transit camp of Drancy, from which convoys departed regularly for Auschwitz. Their strategy centered on their allegiance to the Soviet Union, with the goal of achieving the speediest defeat of nazism—the same objective Allied spokesmen repeated to Jews who demanded the bombing of Auschwitz or the pursuit of various rescue schemes.

In retrospect, we can see how useful were the services provided by the established community agencies like the UGIF. The UGIF provided a conduit for the dispatch of substantial funds from American sources to Jewish groups in the North and the South, keeping some Jews alive until the end of the war. The UGIF provided cover for other Jewish organizations, such as the Jewish boy scout movement, which became involved in serious resistance activities. And the UGIF was instrumental in the rescue of hundreds of Jewish children, boarding them with sympathetic non-Jews to save them from deportation. Of course, there were blunders—some of them tragic errors and some resulting from a willful disregard of the evidence available then.

But the best parts of both of these books suggest to me the elements of a different interpretation from the critique of established Jewish pusillanimity. With the Nazi Holocaust, no one seems to have got it quite right: To one degree or another, Jews everywhere were overcome by the Nazis' unprecedented brutalities, by their own utter powerlessness, by their understandable frailties, and by the willingness of most societies to provide assistance or to stand aside while the murderous machine did its work.

One final observation about the Barbie trial and the "revelations" that are supposed to flow from it: France's part in the Nazi Holocaust is sometimes said to be forgotten by the French who are held to have been suffering from collective amnesia. This amnesia was undoubtedly pervasive for more than two decades following the war, and it may continue to pervade some circles within French society. But French bookstores now have shelves of books on the Jews, anti-Semitism, collaboration, and the wartime years. An earlier version of Adler's book first appeared in French in 1985, about the same time as Cohen's edition of Lambert's diary. Both works have been deservedly well received. Excellent films on the wartime years have appeared in recent decades, the earliest and most famous of which is Marcel Ophul's 1969 "Le Chagrin et la Pitié"—originally intended for French television, but relegated to private cinemas until after the Socialist electoral victory of 1981. The latest film is Louis Malle's brilliant "Au Revoir les Enfants," the object of much critical acclaim. Accounts of collaboration, including the French role in the deportation of the Jews, have now been incorporated into French school textbooks. Prompted by the Barbie trial, presidential-hopeful Jacques Chirac ordered that schools give special attention to the subject.

Of course, the support given by some 15 percent of French voters to the xenophobic and anti-Semitic rabble-rouser Jean-Marie Le Pen is a worrying indication that racist opinions still play a part in French society today. But, confronted with the Le Pen phenomenon, the French have not lacked spokesmen for racial tolerance and decency. In short, the once-pertinent charges about historical memory seem now to have much less basis in fact. It may be time to rethink some of the aspects of this history with a less accusatory edge, to attempt to render a more dispassionate, evenhanded evaluation. In this light, the books discussed here point in the right direction. □

Book Review

Goodnight, World

Seth L. Wolitz

Selected Poems of Yankev Glatshteyn, translated, edited, and with an introduction by Richard Fein. The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1987, 215 pp.

The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse, edited by Irving Howe, Ruth Wisse, and Khone Shmeruk. Viking, New York, 1987, 719 pp.

American Yiddish Poetry, A Bilingual Anthology, edited by Benjamin and Barbara Harshav, translations with the participation of Kathryn Hellerstein, Brian McHale, and Anita Norich. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986, 813 pp.

כאָטש אַלץ איז פאַרוויסט,
שטויב איך זיך אין דײַן שטויב,
טרויעריק ייִדיש לעבן.

Though all is ravaged,
I am dust of your dust,
sad Jewish life.

Three important anthologies of Yiddish poetry in translation appeared in 1987. The translators of these anthologies were still able, luckily, to consult native speakers about nuances of Yiddish speech. Future translators will not have this help. These large anthologies should have been undertaken thirty years ago when the handwriting was already on the wall that Yiddish was doomed by history. The editors of the Penguin edition sum up the sentiments of all these anthologies when they state: "Our book—not by intention but rather by historical misfortune—may serve to mark not only the end of a rich literary tradition but of an entire phase of modern Jewish history."

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Each of the anthologies is physically massive. The volumes serve as tombs for the Yiddish verse set out in splendid font and printed more accurately and on better stock than most Yiddish poets could ever have dreamed of. The open book functions like a translated Rosetta stone: one side of the page is Yiddish; on the facing page the English translation unlocks the lost words and renews the verse. Like modern Jewish gravestones sculpted in Hebrew and English letters, the *en face* pages reflect two cultures in contact with fewer and fewer readers able to decipher the Hebrew script.

It would have been more practical perhaps to have offered transliterated texts so that readers with even residual memories of Yiddish or some knowledge of a Germanic tongue might at least be able to sound out the lines and catch glints of meaning. But none of these anthologies provide transliterations because that would prejudice the hieratic gesture of the Hebrew glyph. The Hebrew alphabet in which Yiddish was traditionally written emits a sacral-historical aura of intense emotional power which suits the sepulchral intentions of the anthologies: to commemorate and to celebrate a murdered poetic tradition. (Even the Soviet Yiddish poets resist to this day the use of the Roman or Cyrillic alphabet.) Soon the Yiddish words that blossomed through the Hebrew alphabet will be legible only to readers of Hebrew, who will not understand their meaning. Those who do understand the words, the Hassidim, refuse to read this secular literature of Yiddish, which they consider *treyf* (impure).

All three books seek to canonize the best of Yiddish poetry, although each approaches the problem from its own distinctive vantage point. *The Penguin Book of Yiddish Verse* is surely the most comprehensive in scope. It follows Irving Howe's original *Treasury of Yiddish Poetry* (1969), which he edited with the late poet Eliezer Greenberg, in seeking out Jewish-American poets to render the poems or give them literal translations. Howe's aim remains the same in the current anthology. "Our intention has been to present translations that are both faithful to the original Yiddish and constitute English poems in their own right." This method of artistic translation, used constantly in Eastern Europe and Russia, permits the poet-translator to bring a new poetic experience into the host culture. It can offer a brilliant re-creation but it can also misconstrue and exoticize distinct foreign features.

The Penguin anthology includes thirty-three poets in short selections and six poets in "generous samplings": Moyshe-Leyb Halpern, Perets Markish, Moyshe Kulbak, Jacob Glatstein, Itzik Manger, and Abraham Sutzkever. Certainly the latter poets are unquestionably stellar figures in the Yiddish firmament. Nevertheless, it is not at all clear what system of selection was really at work in choosing the minor Yiddish poets. The Penguin anthology drops twenty poets who appeared in the old Howe-Greenberg anthology, and adds only seven previously unrepresented ones. Is it possible that in the space of twenty years, the twenty rejected poets had such an aesthetic fall? Is a cubist modernist like Dvore Fogel really inferior to a Preil or a Teller? And what of Yehoash, the early Yiddish poet who translated the entire Bible into Yiddish and thus proved the enormous resources of the language? At least ten American Yiddish poets disappeared, including Eliezer Greenberg, who collaborated with Irving Howe on three Yiddish anthologies. That I. L. Peretz, a father of Yiddish poetry, was excluded earlier was surely a mistake, and so too was the omission of U. T. Grinberg, and perhaps Y. Rabon, but why excise the still lifes by R. Iceland, a master of finely wrought modern miniatures? And where is Moyshe Broderzon, Miriam Ulinover, and Bialik? And must that quasi-dadaist Moyshe Nadir be for-

gotten? And what of the painful, unendurable, singularly pure Yiddish stanzas of that last Yiddish threnodist, Yitskhok Katsenelson?

Many of the poet-translators who appeared in the Howe-Greenberg anthology of 1969 reappear in the new Penguin anthology: John Hollander, Nathan Halper, Leonard Wolf, Robert Friend, Cynthia Ozick, Chana F. Bloch, and others. Once again they bring their poetic talents to the impossible: creating living English poems from the Yiddish. Chana Bloch works wonders with an intimate stanza from *Shpiltsayg* ("Toys") by Sutzkever, the last great living Yiddish poet.

Dayne shpiltsayg, mayn kind halt zey tayer,
Dayne shpiltsayg, nokh klener vi du.
Un bay nakht, ven s'geyt shlofn dos fayer,
Mit di shtern fun boym dek zey tsu.

My daughter, you must care for your toys,
Poor things, they are even smaller than you.
Every night, when the fire goes to sleep,
Cover them with the stars of the tree.

Leonard Wolf, who has the lion's share of the translations, must be commended for his virtuosity in shifting from one poet's tone and style to another's. He catches Soviet poet Dovid Hofshteyn's city siren call splendidly in the 1919 poem, *Shtot* ("City"):

Shtot!
Du host mikh fun vaytn gerufn
Mit huden fun drot!
Kh'hob shtendik oyf barg dikh gezen!
Du host mikh fun vaytn getsoygn
Mit tsvangen
fun shayn un fun shimer—
Du host mikh farnart
un du host mikh gefangen!

City!
You called me from afar
With your droning wire.
I saw you always on a height!
You drew me with glittering, gleaming tongs.
You deceived me
And you ensnared me.

Wolf reproduces successfully the sound plays and the rhythmic beat of each line. His 1923 translation of U. T. Grinberg's long, prophetic, almost alexandrine lines captures their expressionist style memorably:

In Malkhes Fun Tseylem

Ikh bin di sove, kloger-foygl, funem veyvald in eyrope.
In di toln vey un eyme blinde halbnekht unter tslomim.
Ikh volt bruderklog gehoybn tsum araber-folk keyn azie:
—Kumt unz firn tsu der midbar, azoy orem vi mir zenen!

In the Kingdom of the Cross

I am the owl of that sad wood, the accusing-bird of Europe,
In the valleys of grief and fear, in blind midnights under crosses.
I want to raise a brother's plea to the Arab folk of Asia:
Poor though we may be, come lead us to the desert.

Wolf's translation of the 1921 version of P. Markish's *Di Kupe* ("The Mound") offers another test of translating Yiddish. This poem is the finest modernist dirge in Yiddish for the Pogrom victims of the Soviet Civil War, 1919–1920. His is not the definitive translation, but it is an honest, straightforward reading. The difficulty in translating Markish has to do with his extended lines and the tortured Yiddish syntax which imitates the Russian. Here is a word-for-word translation:

Pamelekh! Vintn-piligrimen, fun lender feldzishe fun vilde,

Slowly! Winds-pilgrims, from lands rocky from wild (ones),

Batretn gayt ir do fun kupes kop di meshene di royte shneyen?

to tread are going you here from mound's head the brass the red snows?

Wolf untangles the very aesthetically contorted Yiddish (the twisted syntax is the semiotic marker of the contorted corpses in the mass grave) into a normative English syntax which brings clarity and focus but loses the elegiac tone, pace, and pain:

Go slow. Pilgrim winds, from rocky lands and wild,
Will you now tread the brass and scarlet snows
Of the mound's head?

John Hollander reveals his wizardry in rhyming accurately and maintaining Moyshe-Leyb Halpern's jostling rhythms.

Likht—mayn vort

Ver bin ikh? Ver bin ikh? Ver volt zikh gerikht
Az alts, vos ikh trakht, zol vern likht?
Vi a malpe fun kop biz di fis in hor,
Loyft arum der novi toyznter yor,
Un bet men zol nemen zayn likht, far umzist,
Vi a hering vos men gefint oyfn mist.

Light—My Word

Who am I? Who am I? Who could have guessed right.
That all I imagine would turn into light?
Like a monkey, from head to foot all hairs,
The prophet's around for thousands of years
Urging all to acquire his light-free-no cash—
Like a luminous herring you'd find in the trash.

In any huge anthology there are bound to be some misses and mistranslations here and there (*Moyshe-Leyb der takhshet* is not, in the translator's introduction to the Penguin, a "jewel" as in Hebrew but a "brat" in Yiddish), but in general the performance in the Penguin anthology is very high and justifies Irving Howe's principles of encouraging the creation of successful "English poems in their own right."

The Harshavs, in their anthology *American Yiddish Poetry*, take the opposite tack: "It is not a matter of creating alternative English poems of similar stature but of conveying as much of the meaning of the original text as it is possible in a readable English poetic form." Let us test this with a stanza from Moyshe-Leyb Halpern's poem "Momento Mori" (1919) which appears in both anthologies.

Un az Moyshe-Leyb vet dem toyt far zey moln
Nit groy un nit finster, nor farbn-raykh sheyn,
Azoi vi er hot arum tsen zikh bavizn
Dort vayt tsvishn himl un khvalies aleyn—
Tsi vet men does gleybn Moyshe-Leybn?

And if Moyshe-Leyb were to paint them Death
Not gray, dark, but color-drenched, as it shone
At around 10 a.m. there, distantly,

Between the sky and the breakers,
alone,
Who would be able to believe
Moyshe-Leybl?
—John Hollander *(Penguin)*

And if Moyshe-Leyb paints Death for
them
Not gray and not dark but dazzling
and colorful,
As he appeared, around ten in the
morning,
Far away, between sky and waves—
Will they believe Moyshe-Leyb?
—Harshav translation

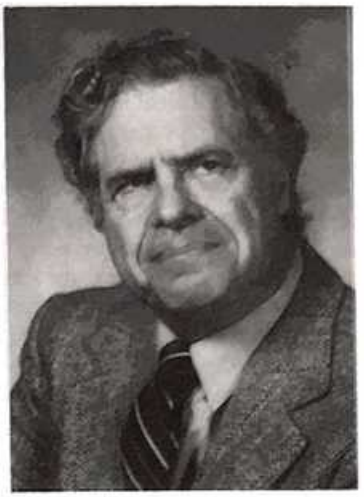
Hollander's translation of *farbnraykh* (color-rich, v. 2) as "color-drenched" is more inventive than "dazzling and colorful" but the Harshavs' translation of *er* (v. 3) as "he" and not "it" is correct and more effectively personifies Death. Hollander shows his craft in the last line by repeating the inner rhyme of the last line *gleybn, Leybn* by "able" and "Leybl!" Clearly the Harshav translation is not more accurate than the Hollander translation and the latter brings across more of the poetic dynamics. The Hollander text reveals that an English poem created from the original is possible, challenging, and sometimes quite rewarding. The Harshavs take a safer route: an accurate reading, a translation of meaning, if often flat, nevertheless opens a window into the original culture.

The Harshavs offer a detailed, invaluable essay on the Yiddish language and the history of modern Yiddish poetry and poetics in America, emphasizing particularly the introspectivists (the *Inzikhistn*). "We chose what seemed the best and most interesting (and translatable poems) and we chose a few poets to represent this literature." Their subjective selection brings together some very major poets such as A. Leyeles, J. Glatshteyn, and Moyshe-Leyb Halpern; a minor modernist, J. Teller; a contemporary poet, Malke Tussman; a minor narrative poet, B. Vaynshteyn (Weinstein); and a Yiddish-reading public favorite, H. Leyvik. Unfortunately the poets are not presented chronologically, nor does this anthology do justice to the broad sweep of American Yiddish poetry. The easy dismissal of the sweatshop poets of 1900, the *Yunge* group of World War I, and the leftist poets of the thirties, casts off most of the history of American Yiddish poetry and some very fine verse.

An anthology in such professional hands should have been published as a truly bilingual *critical* edition. Professor Benjamin Harshav, as one of the last scholars who lived the Yiddish experience of Eastern Europe, could have provided superb footnotes to the Yiddish text regarding the variance of tone and diction, the sound plays, the uniqueness of the syntax, the reworking of Yiddish clichés, the play of proverbs, the intra- and intercultural allusions and intertextual realities. He should have pointed out the Americanisms and Americanization of Yiddish in the language of each poem. Who in fifty years will be able to say, interpreting a poem, "Ah, the poet is playing with thieves' slang here, meaning ... " or "... this is the refrain of a popular Yiddish theater song associated with X which the poet has reworked for ironic purposes"?

The Harshavs wish to save the poetry by arguing that this anthology is a "body of American verse in Yiddish ... Leyeles's *Rondeaux*, Glatshteyn's *Free Verse*, J. L. Teller's *Miniatures*, Berysh Vaynshteyn's *Broken Pieces* are as American as anything written in English in that period." But they contradict themselves when they also argue that Jewish and non-Jewish culture of Europe influenced "the autonomous development of an American Yiddish poetry [that] made their writing different from the English poetry next door." The Yiddish poets, like the introspectivists, did absorb American literary concerns, such as imagism, but they were more affected by international modernist themes, images, forms, and poetics. The Penguin editors oppose the Harshav thesis: "the distance these Yiddish poets felt from American culture was all but inescapable: they could never be at home with the English language or American literature."

The Harshavs would be on safer ground if they pursued their own insight that the immigrant poets developed "an independent American Yiddish literary center." The wonderful achievement of the American Jewish immigrants is that they created in harsh conditions a body of viable, sophisticated Yiddish verse that was as fresh and modern as their American Yankee counterparts and equal, if not superior, to Yiddish efforts in Warsaw, Vilna, and Kiev.



The Monological Jew
A Literary Study
L.S. Dembo

The author analyzes the image of the Jew in fiction and poetry from the perspective of Martin Buber's ideas on human relationships and modes of communication. The underlying motif of the book is the distinction between "monologue"—self-oriented speech associated with life in an amoral, competitive society, such as that encountered by Jews in the Diaspora—and "dialogue," the speech of true communication in which the individual person becomes fully aware of himself through the presence of another. Whereas dialogue is thus associated with the ideal human relationship ("I–Thou"), monologue is a part of that relationship ("I–It") in which the Other is always the enemy.
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To pass this distinctive Yiddish poetry off as a "neglected branch of American literature" is a slap in the public face of American Jewry and its particular accomplishment. By placing quotation marks around "Jewish" experience in the New World, they deny the validity of the American Jewish immigrant experience, and the way it directly affected the optic of American Yiddish verse and gave it its uniqueness. The Harshavs' desperate desire to attach Yiddish poetry to a foreign living canon and culture leads them to this piece of dismissive *khutspah*: "This volume is not intended merely [*sic*] for a Jewish audience [but] should be part of general culture."

Irving Howe correctly understands that Yiddish poetry was more than aesthetic; it had as one of its basic functions to help "a people re-create itself as it enters the modern world." The Harshavs are not interested in the Jewish-American sociological significance of the poetry but only in its formal and aesthetic achievement. "Nostalgia entails a distancing gesture vis à vis the primitive 'world of our fathers' which, thank God, we have left behind forever." But the poetry the Harshavs esteem derives its power from that very "primitive" Jewish-American "world of our fathers"!

They seem to confirm this when they state that their anthology offers not simply translations, but "an exploration of a lost continent." Borrowing Foucault's term they "invite the reader to engage in an 'archeology of a culture.'" But do the Harshavs really believe they are the first pathfinders and archaeologists of the "lost continent" of American Yiddish poetry?

Zol dos undzer gortn zayn
ot aza in morgnshayn?—
Avade undzer gortn. vos den, nit
undzer gortn?

Is this garden here our own,
As it is, in light of dawn?
Sure, it's our garden. What, not our
garden?

—Moyshe Leyb Halpern,
In New York (1919)

The Penguin edition and the Harshavs both insist that they have presented the most estimable Yiddish poems and that these choices set the canon of Yiddish poetry. Richard Fein, in his *Selected Poems of Yankev Glatshteyn*, also believes he has gleaned the finest verse. Fein translated sixty-five poems across Glatshteyn's career. The Harshavs translated sixty-four Glatshteyn poems and the Penguin edition presented only fourteen. Incredibly, only five poems were included in all three collections. Such a slight overlap implies a vast gulf of aesthetic differences and surely proves that no agreed upon canon exists of the central texts of Glatshteyn. Nor does a canon exist for the other Yiddish poets, as evidenced by the same slight overlap for the other poets in both the Penguin and Harshav editions.

This reviewer prefers Richard Fein's translations of Glatshteyn because Fein conveys a more convincing mood and texture, inner rhythm and sonority. Fein plays with registers and timbres of English and yet preserves a seamless stylistic unity. Exploiting the richness and elasticity of the English language, he makes English seem like Yiddish without falling into dialect, bizarre syntax, or exotic images. Fein, a scholar and poet, makes full use of all the Anglo-American modernist poetic techniques, including the visual and typographical layout of a page, in order to bring across and intensify the phonetic and semantic densities of a Glatshteyn poem. He carries over successfully the lyric intensity of Glatshteyn's Yiddish no better than in his translation of the following stanza, throbbing with the theme of emotional stress.

Ooventbroyt

Oyfn tish a frish broyt, shvanger mit
zetikeyt.
Arum tish shvaygndike gest—
Ikh un zi un nokh a zi.
Di mayler shvaygn, nor di hertser
klapn.
Vi di kleyne goldene zeygerlekh, klapn
di hertser bay di gest.
Un lebn broyt, a meser a sharfs,
shvaygt nokh shverere fun di gest.
Un klapt mit a hertsl nokh umruyiker,
Vi bay mir, bay ir un bay der anderer ir.

Evening Bread

Pregnant, plump, abundant, warm
bread is on the table.
Silently,
guests gather at the table:
I and she
and still another she.

The mouths are silent, but hearts beat.
Like little golden watches,
the hearts of the guests beat.
Nearby the bread, a knife-edge
sharpens the silence of the guests.
And in the heart, unrest
ticks on—
in her, in me,
and in the other-she.

Fein certainly takes liberties in this translation: the breaking of lines, the spacing, Yiddish words twisted and bent into the English to increase their semantic reverberations; Yiddish words are even abandoned. But the gain: a rich pungent atmosphere which justifies the liberties and conveys the poetry of the original.

Fein is a master translator. Indeed, one feels the wonderful harmony of poet and translator in verbal embrace as both walk away from Wagner in Glatshteyn's 1938 *A Gute Night Velt* ("Goodnight, World").

Fun Wagners gets-musik, tsu nign,
brumen.
Kh'kush dikh, farkoltnt yidish lebn.
S'veynt in mir di freyd fun kumen.

From Wagner's pagan-music to chants
of sacred humming.
I kiss you, tangled strands of Jewish
life.
Within me weeps the joy of coming
home.

* * *

All three anthologies, like the clay tablets of Ugarit, or the vellum manuscripts of Provençal, are the last spiritual echoes of a national catastrophe. Each anthology tries, against impossible historical odds, and in its own way, to preserve the achievement of an unjustly slaughtered Yiddish culture.

Doyres fun der tsukunft Kunft

Doyres fun der tsukunft,
Kumendike brider,
Ir zolt nit devegn
Oyslakhn di lider—
lider fun di shvakhe,
lider fun di mide,
in a dor an or'men,
far der velt yeride.

Future Generations

Future generations,
Brothers still to come,

Don't you dare
Be scornful of our songs.
Songs about the weak,
Songs of the exhausted
In a poor generation,
Before the world's decline.

—Abraham Reyzen
translated by Leonard Wolf
(*Penguin*) □

The Old Right Fizzles

Michael Kazin

William F. Buckley: Patron Saint of the Conservatives by John B. Judis. Simon and Schuster, 1988, 528 pp.

The Conservative Movement by Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming. Twayne, 1988, 140 pp.

A certain type of right-wing periodical has always fascinated me: one that is well-written, witty, dripping with contempt for Marxists, liberals, feminists, and the undeserving poor, and elitist to the core. Since its first issue in 1955, William F. Buckley's *National Review* has been the model of such a publication. In the 1980s, it was joined and, in snobbish panache, often surpassed by the *American Spectator*, the *New Criterion*, and a covey of student publications attempting to imitate their elders. As a veteran of the New Left who still clings to its egalitarian vision, I despise the ideas and prejudices that flow from the word processors of the intellectual right. But, in the anonymity of library stacks and the occasional dark newsstand, I behave like a Victorian bluenose with a secret passion for sadomasochistic novellas: I am drawn to what otherwise repels me.

William F. Buckley seems to affect a number of liberals and leftists in that way. As John Judis shows in his intelligent and impeccably researched biography, Buckley has long prided himself on being able to separate the personal from the political, cultural tastes from doctrinal convictions. His friends have included such paragons of liberalism as John Kenneth Galbraith and Murray Kempton, and, in the 1960s and early 1970s, he wrote favorably about both rock music and Charles Reich's "new age" panegyric, *The Greening of America*. In recent years, Buckley has spent more time writing spy novels and accounts of his own sailing trips (all of which sell better than his political essays) than attempting to shape the policies of the most conservative president since the 1930s. If Buckley is the right's "patron saint," as Judis dubs him, he is one who seems increasingly excited more by the cultivation of amusement than by the chance to promote his creed.

Perhaps there is a good historical reason for Buckley's turn, other than his addiction to a state of celebrity in which he jokes and preens with presidents, movie stars, and popular novelists, only a few of whom share his politics. Buckley first rose to prominence in 1951 when he wrote *God and Man at Yale*, an articulate attack on liberal education which upheld the Old Right view that the brilliant, pietistic, and already prosperous should rule. Individualism was prized; equality and mass democracy held in perpetual suspicion. In college his favorite book was Albert Jay Nock's *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*, which, according to Judis, "argued that the mass-man held the state in thrall and that only by abolishing state power would the civilized, enlightened few be able to exert their influence over the many." While he learned from ex-Communist Whittaker Chambers to seek partial victories instead of serenely waiting for history to prove him right, Buckley's studied arrogance continues to betray his adherence to the Nockian vision. In fact, his species of conservatism has been more successful as highbrow entertainment than as a set of beliefs with the power to change American society.

This assertion may seem nonsensical. What about the words and deeds of Ronald Reagan and his busy (and often independently targeted) assistants? Weren't they all faithful readers of *National Review*? After 1980, didn't they attempt to put into practice its arguments for limited government, unbridled capitalism, and a holy war against communism?

Well, yes and no. Most Reaganites certainly viewed Buckley and his magazine with affection: The wealthy editor had, after all, spent decades holding the flame of truth at a suitably jaunty angle where it managed to singe the unexamined assumptions of New Deal liberalism, without, however, setting them ablaze. Yet, once in power, right-wing politicians knew better than to imitate the rhetoric or adhere to the ideal prescriptions of a man who, after finishing third in the 1965 race for the New York mayoralty, joked with a *Time* reporter that he would run for public office again if "voting was by invitation only."

In the 1980s, governing conservatives tried to please the people instead of challenging them to adopt the traditionalist mission that the right had fashioned in its long years out of power. Reagan doubled the federal budget deficit to boost aggregate demand (a peacetime version of what liberal Democrats did during World War II and the wars in Korea and Vietnam), refused to trim Social Security, signed the King holiday into law (while attacking affirmative action in the name of "equal opportunity"), and, in his waning days, actually supported an expansion of Medicare and a limited role for the government as a provider

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of child care. Even the battle to defeat Marxist revolutionaries in Central America was ideologically compromised by the president's zeal for making a grand arms deal with Gorbachev. Richard Nixon, another Buckley favorite, had also chosen détente with the USSR and China over the possibility of rallying Americans to endorse his murderous policies in another corner of the third world.

Moreover, Reagan and his entourage rose to power on the strength of a conservative impulse quite different from the elitist one Buckley has long championed. They drew votes from white Democrats by denouncing welfare, crime, and sexual heterodoxy in the name of an idealized "community" that the liberal "establishment" had supposedly defamed and deserted. They learned from the presidential campaign language of George Wallace (whose crudity Buckley detested) and from antibusing activists how to appeal to voters' racist fears without ever directly criticizing people of color. And they justified their military adventures in the Third World more in Wilsonian phrases about "spreading freedom and democracy" than with a traditionally conservative defense of order, stability, and Western virtues.

This outcome was not due to a paucity of ideas on the academic right. Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming's useful little book, *The Conservative Movement*, makes abundantly clear that conservative philosophers and social scientists since World War II have indeed built an intellectual structure of impressive breadth and stylistic elegance. Figures like Leo Strauss, Milton Friedman, and Konrad Lorenz spawned regiments of acolytes and imitators; and their works, together with those of neoconservatives like Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, and Thomas Sowell, provided liberal thinkers with a worthy if distasteful set of theories to refute.

But the despairing tone of much conservative writing betrayed the political weakness of its worldview. Since at least the 1930s, a principled emphasis on social biology (once known as social Darwinism), the classics, hostility to mass culture, and opposition to entitlement programs and corporate regulation—to name just a few cherished conservative notions—have attracted little support outside a small intellectual circle (albeit one well-endowed by firms like Olin and Coors). Most Americans expect that the state will play a major role in their lives—for good and ill. And the cultural life produced by and reflected through marvels from the radio and the Model T to the VCR and cut-rate air travel has been nothing if not egalitarian. The continuing popularity of our "everyman" president—even now that his managerial incompetence has been exposed—attests to a mass hunger for geniality and self-assurance. It is not an environment that vibrates to right-wing jeremiads.

The result is that conservatives, in order to have a serious public presence, must speak in a populist vernacular. Only with a discourse full of moral outrage at libertines and class resentment against the lazy and the cowardly can the right build the kind of mass movements that alter national politics. In other eras the prohibitionist Anti-Saloon League, Father Coughlin, Joseph McCarthy, and George Wallace showed the way. But their success was short-lived, in large part because it was fueled by hostility to modernity and cultural diversity, and therefore these forces could not long compete with the appeal of their optimistic, self-consciously progressive opponents. Richard Viguerie and Pat Robertson are now suffering the same fate, as they hurl their resentment at fervent but dwindling audiences.

The American right thus can win short-term political victories when liberals or centrists founder, but it is doomed, in the long run, to a future of frustration and defeat. The conservative nostrums of pure capitalism and Victorian morality provide no solutions to our most vexing end-of-century problems: environmental degradation, recurrent famines and epidemics, the global arms race, and the competing claims of racial and ethnic groups within the same nation-states. After his first term, Ronald Reagan essentially gave up trying to convert the public to his philosophy. It is difficult to imagine a less cheerful president having any more success. So there is no longer much reason to cringe at William Buckley's crazily darting, multisyllabic tongue. Behind the words, no serious political force remains. □

What the Courts Can't Do

Edward Greer

Fighting Faiths: The Abrams Case, the Supreme Court, and Free Speech by Richard Polenberg. Viking, 1987, 370 pp.

Edward Greer maintains a civil litigation practice in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is the author of Big Steel: Black Politics in Gary, Indiana *(Monthly Review Press, 1979).*

Leaving behind the religious traditions of Europe, many American Jews have created a new civic religion, based on a belief that the very democratic and libertarian traditions that make it possible for them to assimilate into American society are the basis for a universal secular salvation. In their civil religion, the decisions of the Supreme Court replaced the Talmud, and the ACLU became the embodiment of a new synagogue. This secular faith largely derives from a nineteenth-century Western notion of progress which predicts, as Eric Hobsbawm writes, "the inevitable forward march of history towards a better future, whose precise content might be unclear, but which would certainly see the continued and acceler-

ated triumph of reason and education." (*Age of Empire*, p. 138.) However, in a world power facing relative decline, such a civic religion may well be counterproductive as a working ideology for American Jews.

Richard Polenberg's *Fighting Faiths* describes the political trial of an affinity group of young Jewish anarchists in 1919. Coming as youths to the U.S. from the Czarist Empire, the members became part of the radical milieu of the time. When, in 1918, President Woodrow Wilson sent a small military force to fight the newly created Bolshevik regime in Russia, the group printed and distributed leaflets opposing the act. Five of them were arrested, four of whom survived to be tried and convicted; the fifth died after receiving a savage beating by the police while in custody. The Supreme Court upheld the convictions in a famous First Amendment decision. After serving several years in prison, the anarchists accepted deportation to the Soviet Union.

As social and political history, *Fighting Faiths* is insightful. Polenberg intelligently discusses such matters as the conditions of American jails in the period, the racism of southern Federal District Court Judge Henry DeLamar Clayton (former congressman and author of the Clayton Antitrust Act), and the ideas of sundry Harvard Law School professors. Judge Clayton asserted that Robert E. Lee was the "incomparable Southern gentleman" and blacks "a docile race—the most docile race in the world. They will do almost anything a white person tells them to do." Of Edward White, the chief justice of the Supreme Court—which reviewed and upheld the convictions—the author observes that he "had a practical acquaintance with treason, having himself once taken up arms against the government" during the Civil War. Another member of the Court majority was James McReynolds, "a consummate anti-Semite [who] loathed Jews for the fact that they were Jews, and ... made his feelings known." For a period of time after his appointment, Justice Louis McReynolds "would ostentatiously leave the conference room when Brandeis began to speak; he stood outside the door and did not reenter until Brandeis was done." For contemporary Jewish readers who enjoy substantial social assimilation, such details recreate the quite different conditions present two generations ago.

Similarly, Polenberg's account of the courtroom confrontation of ideas between defendant Mollie Steimer and Judge Clayton is dramatic and engaging. Asked if she was an anarchist, Steimer replied that she favored "a new social order, where no group of people shall be in power, or no group of people shall be governed by another group of people.... No one shall live on the product of others.... Instead of striving to get money, we shall strive towards education, towards knowledge." Judge Clayton was appalled and interjected from the bench a series of questions designed to obtain her consent that the laws of public morality and marriage were essential (and hence that organized government was necessary). Ms. Steimer demurred. A few minutes later, he again asked:

> ... whether [Steimer] believed in polygamy ... or in free love. Thereupon, Steimer turned the tables on Clayton, and began asking the questions. Noting that the laws against infidelity were notorious failures, she continued, "May I ask you ... do not thousands and thousands of such cases prevail anyhow? You have the law." "People may violate vows," the judge conceded. "They do sometimes, and society is trying to protect itself." "It does not succeed," Steimer commented. "I believe that two people should combine, only when they love each other, honestly and truly, and not because of any other circumstances."

Steimer's courage and idealism emerge clearly, and Polenberg has made a good case for including her in the American pantheon.

By showing the closely interwoven texture of racist, anti-Semitic, and anti-radical ideas during the trial, Polenberg debunks the idea of the law and the courts as impartial or above prejudice. However, in more subtle fashion, he recreates the illusion that the judicial system actually creates justice.

Reading the detailed account of the trial as a litigating attorney (and as a former antiwar activist), I found one curious gap in historical detail. The prosecution of the young Jewish anarchists was for the act of tossing off the roof of a Lower East Side tenement leaflets that called on munitions workers to strike against supplying the American expeditionary force in Russia. Conviction was predicated upon an "intent" to interfere with the war effort against Germany—this was inferred from the guilty knowledge of the anarchists, which was in turn inferred from their surreptitious manner of leaflet distribution.

The inflation of the role of the intellectual (legal or otherwise) in American history, especially of the Jewish intellectual, leads to narcissistic self-praise.

Polenberg is silent on the method of leaflet distribution. But no one seeking an audience drops leaflets off a roof unless one of two conditions prevails: your opponents beat you up or you are arrested. On the Lower East Side in August 1918, the former fear was unlikely. Antiwar and socialist sentiment were widespread among New York Jews.

The closest Polenberg comes to dealing with the second explanation is in a brief aside quoting a government informant's report that "the conviction of the IWWs [Industrial Workers of the World] ... and the indictments of ... several others, put a fright in more of the radicals, as to the course of their future actions."

Polenberg, a professor of U.S. history, certainly knows about the systematic political repression of the period. But few of his readers may share his knowledge. How many know that while President Woodrow Wilson was publicly urging American men to die to make the world safe for democracy, he was privately writing to his Attorney General that "the I.W.W.s certainly are worthy of being repressed"?

The IWW was pulverized during the war by mass arrests and other forms of repression as, to a lesser extent, was the Socialist party. After the war, as social revolt grew in advanced capitalist nations, the same fate was dealt to the newly emergent Communists. Attorney General Palmer's arrests of 10,000 foreign-born radicals, of whom 1,000 were actually deported, contributed to the Communists' mem-

bership's plummeting from an initial 70,000 to fewer than 10,000 within two years.

Omitting this context shifts the analytical emphasis from political structures and events to the role of ideas held by elites. Thus, Polenberg tends to blame the indictment and trial of the anarchists on the thinking of government officials—in particular their racism, anti-Semitism, and sexism. If the American legal system is stripped of these erroneous ideas, he implies, it will then tend to produce objectively just results.

For Polenberg, the repression occurred because America had not yet adopted our contemporary reading of First Amendment rights. Consequently, he places political repression firmly in the past, before progress had reached our world. And how has this progress unfolded according to Polenberg?

To exponents of the Jewish civil religion in America, it is assimilated upper-stratum Jewish intellectuals (and their enlightened ideas) who advance civilization through legal reinterpretation. To be more precise, it is such Jews—in alliance with old-line Protestant elites—who protect and further the modern American ideal.

Essentially, this approach views the law as the basis of American democracy, and liberal ideas (such as the rights of man) as the basis of the law. This is another expression of Jewish civic religion. Of course, only a fool would denigrate the virtues of liberal democracy and the rule of law. Indeed, it is hard to imagine any social advance—short of the anarchists' utopia—not propelled or accompanied by an expansion of popular legal rights.

In times of social crisis powerful modern state apparatuses can and do turn on minorities, regardless of existing forms of democracy.

According to Polenberg, such Jewish professors of the social sciences as Harold Laski initially developed enlarged ideas about the First Amendment. These ideas were then accepted by such jurists as Federal Judge Learned Hand and Supreme Court Justices Holmes and Brandeis—the dissenters against the *Abrams* convictions—and ultimately became constitutional consensus. Thus, Anthony Lewis writes in praise of Polenberg's book, "*Fighting Faiths* teaches us again, dramatically, that our Constitution lives because judges apply its eternal principles in the light of accumulated experience and wisdom."

But the inflation of the role of the intellectual (legal or otherwise) in American history, especially of the Jewish intellectual, leads to narcissistic self-praise. The American Jewish presence comes to be seen as validated by assimilation into the cultural and political elite. That assimilation is then put forth as proof of the progress of American society.

But this is balderdash. After World War II, the government again feared a radical movement sympathetic to a foreign nation-state, and judges again approved the legal destruction of the left. This time the target was the Communist party because of its close relations with the Soviet Union and its pivotal role in the industrial unions of the CIO. The statutory tools of the Party's demise were the Taft-Hartley Act, which barred Communists from union leadership (even if they were popularly elected by the members!), and the Smith Act, a variant of the sedition laws used against Mollie Steimer and her comrades a generation earlier.

It was none other than Learned Hand himself, sitting on the second circuit, who developed the judicial argument that the 1949 Smith Act convictions for "conspiracy to advocate" overthrow of the government of the top Communist leaders were consistent with the Holmes-Brandeis dissent in *Abrams*.

Justice Felix Frankfurter agreed, asserting in *Dennis v. United States* (1951) that there was a decisive difference between abstract speech about revolution and an organized political group which "entertains and promotes this view, not as a prophetic insight or as a piece of unworldly speculation, but as a program for winning adherents and as a policy to be translated into action."

It is wonderful that free speech was restored after the crisis had passed, but leaving out the interim of repression is false both as history and as social causation. In fact, judicial reason and justice do not march inexorably forward. A period of political reaction and right-wing judicial appointments and decisions always remains a possibility. In times of social crisis, powerful modern state apparatuses can and do turn on minorities, regardless of existing forms of democracy.

Progress is possible; but so is stagnation, regression, or worse. And whichever occurs will do so for reasons quite different from the enlightened ideas of some assimilated Jewish intellectuals. Courts are not synagogues; the ACLU is not the elect; and reformist professors are not prophets. □

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Current Debate/Critical Legal Studies

A Critique by Brian Leiter

I suspect that one needn't be well-versed in the literature of Critical Legal Studies to marvel nonetheless at the arrogant defensiveness of Professor Robert Gordon's piece on C. L. S. (*Tikkun,* Jan./Feb. 1988). Early on, Professor Gordon pronounces that few outsider discussions of C. L. S. are "aimed at understanding ... the substance of [C. L. S.] ideas" while most criticisms of C. L. S. are simply "sputtering rages, generally incoherent ones." Critics who resist work outside the "mainstream" on the shabby pretext of poor scholarship are simply "legion" and are no better than those professors "who will vote against leftists because they are ... 'disruptive' or 'bad colleagues.'" Only some older law professors are "sophisticated opponents" because they are "no fools" and recognize what a grave threat C. L. S. presents—of course they too "despise" the Crits. In Professor Gordon's world, the Crits march forward with their ground-breaking and powerful critique of complacent liberal jurists, opposed only by sputtering, incoherent, and bigoted critics and tenure committees bent on political persecution.

But in the real world matters stand somewhat differently for those of us who are familiar with the C. L. S. literature and the response to it. While some critics of C. L. S. have, indeed, relied heavily on caricature and misreading, others have simply followed the C. L. S. lead—which, as Professor Gordon reports rapturously, involves "satire" and "savage mockery": for example, Professor David Shapiro's savage and wholly accurate mockery of the pretentious cliquishness of C. L. S. writers ("The Death of the Up-Down Distinction," *Stanford Law Review,* 1984). Perhaps never in the history of scholarship has there been a group of writers that devotes so many footnotes to tooting each other's horns, and whose critical instincts capitulate so readily before each other's articles—as though they were engaged in theological exegesis of the C. L. S. corpus (and its patron saints), and not scholarly, skeptical inquiries.

More important, there have been some serious, thorough, and devastating evaluations of C. L. S. work. The best so far—though decidedly too gentle in numerous respects—is Professor Donald Brosnan's "Serious But Not Critical" (*Southern California Law Review,* 1987). In some 150 pages, Professor Brosnan evaluates four major C. L. S. pieces (including Professor Clare Dalton's tenure piece from the *Yale Law Journal*) in light of their purported philosophical sources in various Continental thinkers (e.g., Marx, the Frankfurt School, Gramsci, Derrida). He reports that in studying the C. L. S. literature his "initial feeling of eager fascination turned to dissatisfaction and impatience. Many C. L. S. articles seemed to combine a rather obscure and high-flying style with a dearth of novel insight into the law or legal theory." His article develops this claim convincingly, as well as offering a constructive agenda for left-wing legal scholars.

In Professor Gordon's world, no hint is given of this rather grim possibility: that much of C. L. S. scholarship is mediocre as well as embarrassing to anyone interested in the development of a radical legal theory. There are, indeed, some first-rate C. L. S. scholars—one thinks, for example, of Professors Morton Horwitz, Robert Gordon himself, and David Trubek (who was clearly the victim of a political veto at Harvard, as he was at Yale some fourteen years ago as well)—but there are simply too many frivolous and careless ones.

But since Professor Gordon bemoans the absence of "engagement" with C. L. S. ideas, it is only fair to illustrate more precisely some of the scholarly deficiencies in the literature.

1. C. L. S. purports to be drawing on the Continental tradition of philosophy since Hegel in its critique of liberal law. Having read some Hegel and Lukacs, Crits play heavily on the notion that liberal thought (legal and otherwise) is "contradictory." But Professor Brosnan and others have raised serious questions about whether C. L. S. has demonstrated that law is "contradictory."

For one thing, to portray the law as contradictory, Crits caricature the law at a high degree of abstraction, detecting substantive and incompatible moral, political, and psychological theories behind rather mundane legal principles whose practical application is even more mundane. In a rather bizarre Hegelian twist, the Crits then write as though contradictions at this level of caricatured theory constitute an apocalyptic fact for existing society. (Remember Marx? Contradictions at the level of ideas don't change society; it's contradictions in the material conditions of society that matter.) This may account for why—notwithstanding Professor Gordon's lame apologetics—"left-liberal lawyers probably found [C. L. S. work] too arcane, abstract, and not obviously enough connected to the goals of practice to be of immediate use."

More important, the Crits have not explained why what they call "contradictions" are not simply heavily qualified legal principles. For example, many Crits contend that contract doctrine is contradictory by virtue of its pretense of being "private" law (law committed to realizing the intentions of private parties), rather than public law (law reflecting public norms and agendas, political and otherwise). Crits see this contradiction evidenced in the fact that courts can void a contract that private parties make when the court finds (presumably by reference to public norms) the terms of that contract "unconscionable." This, say the Crits, reflects a contradictory tension in contract law between the private and the public, a blurring of that very distinction on which the law purportedly rests.

But is that really a contradiction? Why isn't that simply a qualification of the principle that contracts are private

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with the principle that they remain private only to the extent they don't violate public norms. Surely, a "rule-and-its-exception" characterizes this aspect of contract law better than the apocalyptic proclamation of "contradiction."

Much of C. L. S. scholarship is mediocre as well as embarrassing to anyone interested in the development of a radical legal theory.

This interpretation is still compatible with two important—and, I believe, correct—Legal Realist points: (1) that the *boundaries* of the so-called "private" law reflect through-and-through political and public choices and preferences; and, more important, (2) that there are, in fact, so many legally cognizable exceptions to any given legal rule or principle available to a judge, that we cannot say that a Rule-and-its-Exceptions compels the judge to reach particular outcomes in any given case. In other words, we can skip the C. L. S. "contradiction" mumbo-jumbo and still agree with the more important Realist point that to understand why courts do what they do one needs to consider a universe of causes far broader (and far different) than that defined by formal legal doctrine and legal reasons. That is a direction in legal theory that still needs exploration.

2. Unlike the Legal Realists of a half century ago, the Crits turn away from the concrete realities of "what courts do in fact" (and what causes them to do it) to belabored dissections of legal doctrine and high theory. But as Professor Brosnan notes, by focusing exclusively on doctrine and theory, the Crits, in their positive agenda, start to echo the Young Hegelians—so vilified by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* for propagating "innocent and childlike fancies"—in their call to realize human liberation by simply "bursting free of the constraints imposed by the reified structure of social life" as though liberation is to be achieved through a little enlightened thinking, throwing off mystifying and reified ideas for those that correspond more closely to some ill-specified human essence. Marx dismissed this strategy as bourgeois nonsense well over a century ago; is he, too, a "sputtering" and "incoherent" opponent of the C. L. S. agenda?

3. Crits give the appearance of being interested in a serious interdisciplinary encounter between law and Continental philosophy, but most C. L. S. writers evince no interesting familiarity with Continental philosophy or any critical capacity to sort out the wheat from the chaff in Hegel, Habermas, Derrida, or any other thinker.

Consider, as an example of C. L. S. writing on philosophy, this little gem of pretentious obscurity from Drucilla Cornell: "To speak of Derrida's deconstruction of phallogocentrism and Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* in one breath is itself problematic, precisely because Adorno consciously sought his refuge in a deconstructive Hegelianism, while Derrida's own post-Heideggarian positioning leads him to a slightly different stance vis-à-vis Heidegger's critique of Hegel's ultimate subjectivism." (*Cardozo Law Review,* 1987). Having read and taught these authors myself, I could only guess at what this passage—even in its equally obscure context—means. Is it any wonder then that legal academics with more mundane concerns are more than a little put off by such empty fireworks and name-dropping?

Where the problem isn't absurd obliqueness—in total disproportion to the depth of the underlying ideas—then it is stupefying basic misunderstandings of what a particular philosophical view entails. Many Crits, for example, throw around putatively "deconstructionist" themes, blissfully oblivious to the dominant sentiment on the Continent that deconstruction is a philosophical position with remotely conservative political implications, and certainly a bad position for political radicals committed to investigating hidden forces in social life.

This oblivion soon turns into hapless incoherence. Clare Dalton (in her tenure piece on the "Deconstruction of Contract Doctrine," *Yale Law Journal,* 1985) pronounces the commanding influence of Derrida on her work, yet is plainly ignorant of the fact that no deconstructionist would ever say that "my thesis [is] that contract doctrine is organized around the problem of power and knowledge" because, according to the deconstructing faithful, contract doctrine is organized around "nothing"—because the texts that comprise it have no single meaning, no one referent, no corresponding "transcendental signified." (Gordon repeats the same mistake when he describes the method of "deconstruction" as "uncover[ing]" patterns and "laying bare" structures that "underlie fields of law.")

The Crit position is really what Paul Ricoeur calls the "hemeneutics of suspicion," the view of thinkers like Marx and Freud that the "surface"—social life, consciousness, or even contract doctrine—hides something else underneath (class struggle and material forces, unconscious wishes, or "problems of power and knowledge"). This position is quintessentially anti-Derridean. Texts for Derrida simply do not hide essential referents. What is one to make of putative scholars who proceed at this level of elementary confusion?

4. It is a central assumption of much C. L. S. writing that law legitimates: that the legal images and categories of judicial decisions influence how we understand the world, making us view the social order as "natural" and "necessary." One would have hoped that such a central contention—after all, if law and the images that pervade legal doctrine don't legitimate, why bother with endless dissections of pure doctrine?—would have been held up before a skeptical lens. But in fact it has not.

Alan Hyde, another first-rate C. L. S. scholar, has taken his fellow Crits to task on this point. ("The Concept of Legitimation in the Sociology of Law," *Wisconsin Law Review,* 1983.) Hyde points out that "the public has little awareness of courts" and even "thinks poorly of the few judicial decisions of which it has knowledge"; moreover, the public is more interested in the "substantive value" of a given court decision, and its assent to such decisions is primarily a function of their compatibility with already held views (but if the law legitimated, then it would be the *legalness* of the decision alone that drew people's assent, regardless of what they previously thought). Hyde makes a powerful case for disposing the whole notion of "legal legitimation" as being without sense or foundation. I think Hyde is right; but what is more appalling is that critical scholars could gloss over this issue while relying so heavily on the legitimation concept.

5. Many Crits *are* very rude and resort to infantile vulgarity and antics in their articles. (For a simply remarkable example of this sort of irrelevant mutual masturbation, see Duncan Kennedy and Peter Gabel, "Roll Over Beethoven," *Stanford Law Review,* 1984.) Professor Gordon seems to think this is delightful and goes to great lengths to offer apologetics for this nonsense. Thus the Crits capture the dubious distinction of being the first radical "intellectuals" in history to think that they advance the cause of social justice through the use of adolescent language and manners. But surely some of the Crits have noted that their intellectual heroes—Hegel, Marx, Mannheim, Habermas—managed quite well without vulgarity and endless snideness; and for good reason, because all these writers are thinkers of philosophical substance, methodological sophistication, and intellectual vision. Perhaps there is a connection between the lack of these qualities in much C. L. S. work and the disproportionate presence of smart-ass flouting of the norms of scholarly discourse?

When Louis Menand, writing in the *New Republic,* accused C. L. S. of being "Radicalism for Yuppies," he hit on the right label, though he didn't get the reasons quite right. Like Yuppies, the Crits thrive on show and style, but are thin on content or purpose. Like Yuppies, the Crits like easy satisfactions and quick thrills—a snide remark, a dismissive insult, instant philosophical insights. And like Yuppies, the Crits also want instant gratification for their meager efforts: intellectual glory and secure places throughout legal academia. But whereas Yuppie-ism may capture the essence of the "real" world, the Yuppie Crits are now running up against a more intractable attribute of the intellectual world: that show and play and vulgarity won't do, that flagrant intellectual voyeurism is not enough, that hard work counts, that serious mastery of the material matters.

Professor Gordon is smart enough to know that too much C. L. S. work is sloppy and amateurish; he ought to be honest enough to say so. By doing that, he might help usher in a more intelligent and fruitful left-wing legal theory and scholarship. □

A Response from Robert Gordon

Though I'm grateful to Brian Leiter for exempting me from his broadside condemnation of Critical Legal Studies (C. L. S.), I think his polemic is seriously misleading or mistaken in almost every one of its particular points.

1. *The Public-Private Distinction.* Mr. Leiter's one concrete reference to the core body of C. L. S. work (its critiques of legal-doctrinal and policy analysis and its histories of legal fields) is to the C. L. S. critique of the public-private distinction in contract law. This is the distinction that lawyers, ordinary people, and evidently Mr. Leiter himself commonly draw between legal rules that merely *enforce* contracts according to the intentions of the parties, and rules that *regulate* contracts, overriding "private" choices for reasons of "public" policy. Mr. Leiter parodies the C. L. S. critique of this distinction by saying C. L. S. calls contract law "contradictory" just because courts enforce some contracts and not others, and because contract law rules are subject to exceptions. That would indeed be a silly claim, but Crits do not make it. Their claim is rather that by means of the public-private distinction the legal system helps to produce a fantasy realm of voluntary choices in the "free market," i.e., contractual choices that are not subject to coercive legal regulation. Both "liberals" and "conservatives" believe in the existence of this realm of private choice, though they disagree about how much the state should "intervene" in it and regulate it, and they both assume it to be the natural and normal condition of society, to which all kinds of regulatory laws represent exceptions.

The Crits, following Legal Realist writers such as R.L. Hale and Morris Cohen, argue that the "private" realm of uncoerced choice is an ideological fantasy because *all* contract law is "regulatory." Even rules seemingly designed merely to facilitate private bargains (rules of contract formation, interpretation, damages, etc.) and to define voluntary conduct and its limits (fraud, duress, incapacity) necessarily carry out controversial choices along the line of public policy. This is true because any regime of such rules distributes power—property rights and bargaining advantages—among private parties to use the legal system to coerce one another. Different rules distribute power to different people to impose deals upon one another or to threaten refusal to deal, and there can be no neutral distribution. To understand this point, imagine first a legal system that allows a seller, though she knows her house has termites and the buyer doesn't, to conceal that knowledge; then imagine a system that says concealment is fraud and she must disclose the information. Imagine a law that says promises by employers to hire only union members are "involuntary" and unenforceable if extracted by strikes or boycotts; then imagine one that says that strikes and boycotts are normal and acceptable bargaining tactics. Imagine a law that says I can enforce my standard-form contract against you if you sign without reading or understanding it; then imagine one that says I can enforce it only if the terms are "effectively disclosed" or are ones to which "an ordinary person would have been likely to consent." Each of these rules plainly both facilitates *and* regulates; each promotes some kinds of bargains and discourages others. The Realist and C. L. S. analysis is intended to collapse the distinction between private-facilitative and public-regulatory contract law, to show how through talk of the "private" realm the law subtly privileges one possible regulatory regime (whatever rules currently define "normal" bargaining) at the expense of alternative regimes, and finally to suggest alternative regimes of rules that would still realize the basic premises of a "free market" while redistributing the power of people to coerce one another in the marketplace. Nothing Mr. Leiter says

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indicates that he has even grasped what this rather basic C. L. S. critique is about, much less refuted it.

2. *Contradictions.* Mr. Leiter wants to argue that all the "contradictions" C. L. S. finds in legal doctrine can be better interpreted as patterns of rules with exceptions. Again the argument is unresponsive. The Crits portray contract law rules, for example, as simultaneously invoking polar alternative visions of social and economic relations: on the one hand an "individualist" vision in which people are bound only by strict obligations they have formally assumed, and rarely excused once bound; on the other hand, a "communitarian" vision in which obligations arise informally out of continuing relations, trust, or reliance (couples living together, traders dealing over a long period, experts dealing with amateurs) regardless of formal assumption, but which are relatively easily excused in the face of hardship or changed circumstances. Mr. Leiter thinks there is something comic in trying to draw large social visions out of "mundane" technical problems, but that's the usual mission of legal theory, Critical or otherwise; and it's a valuable mission, for it's in such mundane instances that we give practical expressions to our ideals. These rule-clusters are "contradictory" because obviously you cannot, in any given case, draw upon both visions, both sets of rules, at once; and because nobody has devised any coherent set of meta-rules that would tell us how to choose between the visions in different contexts. Both visions, and the rules that express them, are thus fully available in all cases.

3. *The Purposes of Doctrinal Critique.* For the Crits, as for the Realists, the purpose of revealing contradictions (apart from the sheer fun of the exercise) is thus not, as Mr. Leiter thinks, to evoke "apocalyptic" horror. It is rather to point out that the legal system, though it always has alternative visions of social life to draw upon, tends systematically to prefer some of the visions to others—to *call* some "rules" and others "exceptions." The point of the critique is to loosen the hold that conventional categories and modes of seeing have on our minds in order to help rescue, and then flesh out, the suppressed alternatives, and to ask what social life would look like if the exceptions were to become the rules.

Mr. Leiter seems to think this is a trivial enterprise, though it's not easy to gather why from his letter. His invocation of Marx seems peculiarly inapposite given Marx's own intense attention to the critique of ideology, especially "bourgeois" political economy. His reasons seem to boil down to three (his points #2 and #4): (a) legal doctrine—as compared to the "'concrete realities of what courts do in fact' (and what causes them to do it)"—is an "abstract" and socially unimportant subject; (b) the Crits' claim that law does matter because it "legitimates" the social order has been shown (by Alan Hyde) to be invalid; and (c) the Crits foolishly imagine they can change the "material" conditions of society through intellectual critique.

As to the first point, one of the "concrete things that courts do in fact" is to produce legal doctrine, which in the professional cultures inhabited by judges, practicing lawyers, and law teachers (including the Crits) and their students happens to be one of the basic currencies of daily discourse. No one with a client to advise, case to brief, law course to teach, or piece of legal scholarship to write or criticize can afford not to take doctrine seriously on its own terms. To ignore doctrine, as the legal sociologists have discovered to their detriment, is to marginalize oneself in the legal culture. So even if legal doctrine mattered only to lawyers, and to nobody outside the professional culture—a *very* unlikely supposition!—it would be crazy for the Crits, who hope to empower future lawyers to spot the artifices of legal rhetoric and to turn legal argument to the service of an alternative politics, to neglect it. Anyway, some of the legal arguments that Crits have extensively criticized, such as the policy arguments of law-and-economics (and its stepchildren, cost-benefit analysis and public-choice theory), are notoriously widely influential, indeed among the main intellectual props of the Reagan regime. Can Mr. Leiter really believe that exposing the flaws in such arguments is a pointless exercise?

Apparently he can, for Hyde seems to have converted him to the remarkable position that law has no part to play in securing the consent of people to political obedience or the social order. Mr. Leiter ought to realize that this position takes on much more than C. L. S.; it challenges virtually every political or social theory of law there ever was, every notion, in Rousseau's phrase, that "the strong is never strong enough to be always the strongest, unless he transforms strength into right, and obedience into duty." Of course it's true—and no Crit would dispute—that the connections between *élite* legal ideas (in appellate cases, treatises, and law reviews) and *popular* legal consciousness are never immediate and top-down, but instead complex and indirect, so that nobody can hope to change workplace or race or gender relations overnight by writing an article or winning a case—even a big case like *Brown* v. *Board of Education*. But that insight hardly disposes of the argument that the images expressed in legal discourse, which are retailed constantly to ordinary folks by officials, lawyers, the mass media, parents, teachers, and neighbors, shape the ways in which those people construct and understand their social world. Ask anyone you know what gives an employer the "right" to tell an employee what to do, and I'll bet you anything you'll get back answers invoking the core concepts of liberal property and contract law: The employer "owns" the business and so s/he can dictate the terms of access to her or his resources; the employee (impliedly) "agreed" to submit to the employer's direction. Mr. Leiter's own internalizing of the "public-private" distinction is a wonderful example of the power of legal ideology to structure consciousness and to normalize the existing social order.

Hyde's thesis is simply that nobody can prove that, when people obey a rule that they feel cuts against their interests, they do so because of some extra magic that the rule gains from having been embodied in law, rather than because they fear coercion (getting caught, a lawsuit) or because of "custom." Ignoring for now some of the problems with this position (Why do the "coercing" officials, the ones with the guns, *enforce* the law if not because of belief in its legitimacy? Isn't law an influence in the *creation* of customs?), these problems are really beside the point of "legitimation" theories such as Gramsci's or the Crits', which focus on the role of ideology in *constructing* the interests and values that people have in the first place. (See

Mark Kelman, *A Guide to Critical Legal Studies*, pp. 262-8, one of several places in the C. L. S. literature where "legitimation" and Hyde's thesis are—contrary to Mr. Leiter's contentions—extensively and self-critically discussed.)

Mr. Leiter's last charge under this heading—that C. L. S. is naive in hoping to change society through the act of doctrinal criticism—seems (rather) overboard. If the divide between mental and material practices is as unbridgeable as he believes, what on earth is the social purpose of his own labors—surely far more "abstract" and theoretical than the Crits' writing on doctrine—in Continental theory and philosophy? To be sure, one does not change the world simply by examining and criticizing one's preconceptions, for by so doing one may get depressed and become totally immobile or cynical, or else end up, as far too much left-wing social theory has, sealed in a hermetic tomb of self-referential academic disputation. As left-intellectual movements go, the Crits have struggled mightily to keep their work connected to practice, and have done highly practically-oriented work, which Mr. Leiter seems not to know about, on low-income housing, welfare and social security, immigration, labor law, taxation, legal services, corporate law practice, legal education reform, and rape and sexual harassment. In their teaching, the Crits have helped to equip liberal students to rebut the "efficiency" claims of neoconservative legal economists. If the Crits are right that legal discourse is loaded with lots of seemingly convincing fancy arguments that trying to change anything will just make things worse for the people you're trying to help, it's surely of some practical value just in itself to shoot down these arguments.

4. *Solidity and Style.* Mr. Leiter's assertions that the Crits are sloppy scholars with bad academic manners are hard to evaluate because he gives so few examples. He can hardly hope to prove, for instance, that Crits persistently misunderstand Continental philosophy by showing that Drucilla Cornell wrote an awkward sentence. Most Crits in fact rely very little on Continental theory—as again Mr. Leiter would know if he knew their work—and those who do (Unger, Cornell, Gabel) are well-schooled in it. The conflict between a "hermeneutics of suspicion" and a "deconstructionist" view of law—between the view that legal discourse when unpacked will reveal some secret subtext such as class power or class conflict and the view that it is simply a reservoir of infinitely variable argumentative moves, empty at the core ("organized around nothing")—so far from being unsuspected by the Crits, is the principal controversy (known to insiders as the fight between "north" and "south" C. L. S. positions) in its open, notorious, and vigorous internal divisions.

Mr. Leiter ought to realize that his position takes on much more than C. L. S. It challenges virtually every political or social theory of law there ever was.

Mr. Leiter accuses C. L. S. scholars of seeking cheap thrills and recognition without working hard and mastering their materials. Again I do not know what he has been reading, but the C. L. S. work in my own field of legal history—e.g., Alexander on trust law, Bone and Dalton on nuisance, Chase on legal education, Horwitz on corporations, Kainen on vested rights, Kennedy on Blackstone and classical legal thought, Mensch on colonial property rights, Nockleby on tortious interference with contracts, Simon on the New Deal workers and social security, Singer on analytical jurisprudence, Tushnet on slavery and the NAACP—is detailed, careful, and substantial work, and in its intellectual rigor it is beyond the possibility of honest dispute. It is also impeccable in its scholarly manners; and indeed there are few things anywhere in the entire C. L. S. canon as recklessly abusive as Mr. Leiter's polemic.

I will gladly concede if it makes Mr. Leiter any happier that not everything in C. L. S. lives up to this standard, that it has produced its share of naive, sloppy, and amateurish scholarship, that it is mawkishly grandiose in some of its claims, and that second thoughts on the first wave of experimental and enthusiastic work are revealing lots of problems with it. Of what intellectual movement could this not be said? But it would be most unfortunate if readers took from Mr. Leiter the impression that the troubles C. L. S. members have had getting jobs and tenure are connected to the vices he deplores. Clare Dalton was denied tenure at Harvard *despite* the fact that her book on tort law was praised by outside review panels of the most eminent specialists in her field (some of them quite conservative politically). Drucilla Cornell was denied tenure at the University of Pennsylvania, though her work on Hegel is much admired by illustrious Hegelians. I'm afraid that many law school hiring and tenure committees don't much care if a candidate misreads Hegel or Derrida, confuses deconstruction with hermeneutics, or holds a disputable theory of legitimation. They would prefer that law teachers not be mixed up with such suspicious thinkers and topics in the first place. They don't like leftists, and they demonize Crits as potential "Duncan Kennedys" (the most visibly controversial Crit at Harvard Law School) and as harbingers of civil war. I am glad to see that a growing number of critiques show some willingness to engage with actual C. L. S. ideas (see John Stick's review of Mark Kelman's book on C. L. S. in the March *Columbia Law Review*), but the overwhelming reaction to C. L. S. to date from the bar and the legal academy has been an ignorant and irrational response, strangely drenched, like Mr. Leiter's letter, with an undiscriminating venom. □

LETTERS

(Continued from p. 7)

case, what you really love is the opportunity to replicate yourself in someone else—really a form of egotism more than of love.

Love must be defined in terms that the receiver finds loving, not just in terms comfortable to the giver. Rabbi Freundel's "love" is highly idiosyncratic, in that it is conditional upon others accepting his own particular sexuality, religiosity, and, perhaps, political agenda, as *the* ideal.

I am not "promoting" homosexuality. As a rabbi, I actively advocate all straight Jews' celebrating their orientation through the mitzvah of *kiddushin*. Rabbi Freundel is correct, however, when he says that my agenda includes the acceptance of homosexuality.

That agenda is grounded in the two core assertions of traditional Judaism, assertions which I cannot prove but upon which I stake my life. The first axiom is that God is loving, compassionate, wise, and passionate about justice. The second is that the Torah and rabbinic traditions are the preeminent vehicle for Jews to articulate a sense of God's will and to concretize that will in our daily lives and our social structure. I refuse to read Jewish law or the Torah in such a way that it makes God seem cruel, nor will I sever the intimate connection between God's will and God's Torah.

God is just, and *halakhah* embodies God's love and justice. From those two points, an agenda of ritual profundity and social justice—one which most certainly includes gay men and lesbians—emerges organically and traditionally.

AIDS

To the Editor:

Frank Browning's review of *And the Band Played On* by Randy Shilts (Mar./April 1988) is a fine review, one that should motivate more people to read this important book.

I am concerned, however, about Mr. Browning's lead-in to his review, in which he deals with female-to-male and male-to-female infectivity of HIV, the AIDS virus. At this point in time in the United States, heterosexual women are at higher risk for heterosexual infection with HIV than heterosexual men. This is only because there are many more infected bisexual men and infected heterosexual IV drug abusing men than there are infected female IV drug abusers and infected female sex partners of infected men. Given an infected sexual partner, there is no definitive evidence that AIDS is more transmissible from male to female than from female to male.

It is true that most bacterial sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that have been studied show a greater infectivity from male to female than from female to male. But this has not been shown for viral STDs such as herpes or human papilloma (wart) virus.

The largest U.S. study of heterosexual sex partners of HIV positive contacts looked at spouses of contacts originally infected by blood transfusion. Twelve out of eighty such spouses had become infected by the time they were serologically tested. Eighteen percent of fifty wives had seroconverted (become infected) and eight percent of twenty-five husbands had seroconverted from sexual contact with infected spouses. I must emphasize that the apparent difference between husbands and wives was not statistically significant.

Data from Africa, where the sex ratio of AIDS cases is 1:1, suggests that infectivity is not substantially different from male to female than from female to male.

It is true that there is a much higher prevalence of other STDs in Africa than in the U.S. However, there is a high and growing prevalence of STDs in the U.S. such as herpes, human papilloma virus, and chlamydia, all of which may increase both the infectivity and susceptibility to infection of both sexes. Ten to twenty percent of young, sexually active American women are infected with Chlamydia, most of whom have no symptoms.

Many men who are bisexual or who have shared needles do not share this information with their female partners. Women who have had such partners may not know it, or may not share this information with other male sex partners if they do know it.

Because the distribution of infected heterosexuals is concentrated in many areas that are Jewish population centers (New York, Florida, Los Angeles, etc.) it is imperative that heterosexual Jews understand the current state of scientific knowledge and its limits. We must not disseminate theory or wishful thinking as fact. We must understand that all penile/vaginal intercourse outside of a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship with a seronegative partner has some element of risk (in both directions), although proper use of a condom and nonoxynol-9 may diminish risk by a factor of 10-to-100 fold. We must educate ourselves and our children; and those of us who came of age during the sexual revolution must be prepared to change significantly our behaviors to safeguard our health and the health of those we love.

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ISRAEL

To the Editor:

My attention has been called to a letter from Leslie Kermath in the July/August 1988 issue of *Tikkun* in which he announces his plan to cash his Israel Bonds, which are due for renewal, as a protest against Israeli policy toward Palestinians. I consider his letter a highly irresponsible and somewhat hysterical reaction to recent events in the West Bank in Gaza.

I have not hesitated in the past and, most recently, to express my views about the necessity for engaging in a dialogue with the Palestinians toward an exchange of territories for peace. I may be in disagreement with some positions of the Likud Party but it would never occur to me to express this protest by diminishing my support for the economic viability of the State of Israel. An economic boycott hurts all citizens, Likud and Labor, Jew and Arab.

If anything, at a time of crisis we should intensify our support for Israel while preserving our right to express our disagreement or agreement with any given policy. An economically weakened Israel is less likely to respond to the challenge of peace and cooperation for which we all so fervently hope and pray.

Wolfe Kelman
The Rabbinical Assembly
New York, New York

THE SPECTER OF OLD AGE

(Continued from p. 18)

discrimination and the separation of older workers from the increasingly rationalized workplace of advanced capitalism. In order to win support for new programs of social insurance, reformers had to break the power of the old Victorian consensus by showing that many old people were truly needy and sick through no fault of their own. Between 1909 and 1935, social reformers, academics, and helping professionals often stereotyped old people as sick, poor, and unable to support themselves. The myth of healthy self-reliance was replaced by its opposite.

Until the late 1960s, most gerontological research and practice reinforced this negative pole in the dualism of old age. Unlike the nineteenth-century version, the scientific view did not hold old people responsible for their failings. Modern science amply documented the inevitable decline in physiological capacity, mental ability, and overall health that accompanied aging. While Victorian morality had insisted that all properly disciplined individuals could attain health and self-reliance in old age, professional science offered a secularized version of Calvinism's view of aging as unrelieved deterioration. In place of piety and divine grace, gerontology and geriatrics offered scientific knowledge and professional expertise as the path to salvation.

Since the late nineteenth century, the reconstruction of old age has been based on the assumption that most old people cannot contribute significantly to the "real world" (i.e., the labor market). Social policy has often defined the elderly as clients or patients in need of professional expertise and intervention. As psychologist George Lawton put it in 1943, "Best for old people would be real jobs, real family relationships, real functioning in society, but if they cannot be given real lives, they must have proxy ones."

This vision of old people as dependent, in need of services, and incapable of leading "real" lives was enshrined in national policy by the Older Americans Act in 1965. Rather than provide direct income maintenance that would allow older people to make independent choices, federal policy followed the strategy of subsidizing service providers. Although this legislation formally articulated the elderly's need for dignity, social integration, and independence, its implementation fostered an image of old people as helpless burdens.

In the atmosphere of the Vietnam War and the movements for social justice, a new consciousness began crystallizing among organized elders, who were gaining considerable political clout. The movement to reform popular views of old age began among these older people and among their allies in gerontology, advertising, the media, labor, and business. Due in large part to the efforts of these people, the campaign against ageism has enjoyed considerable success, particularly in expanding the range of choices for the middle-class elderly.

Unfortunately, however, today's champions of the "new" old remain bound to the same false dichotomies and coercive standards of health that have plagued middle-class views of aging for a century and a half. The same drive for accumulation of individual health and wealth, the same preoccupation with control of the body which gave rise to ageism in the nineteenth century, now informs the attack on ageism. In repudiating the myths of dependence, decay, and disease, contemporary critics have not transcended the dualism of old age, but instead have essentially rehabilitated its positive pole.

Ultimately, the currently fashionable positive mythology of old age shows no more tolerance or respect for the intractable vicissitudes of aging than the old negative mythology did. While health and self-control were seen previously as virtues reserved for the young and middle-aged, they are now demanded of the old as well. Unable to infuse decay, dependency, and death with moral and spiritual significance, our culture dreams of abolishing biological aging.

While the middle-class elderly have become healthier, more financially secure, and politically potent, they nevertheless suffer from the cultural disenfranchisement imposed on old people in general. "Growing old," says a character in Anthony Powell's *Temporary Kings*, "is like being penalized for a crime you haven't committed." Having satisfied the social requirements of middle age and avoided many previously fatal diseases, older people are often able to live ten or twenty years beyond gainful employment. But then what? Is there something special one is supposed to do? Is old age really the culmination of life? Or is it simply a final stage to be endured until medical science can abolish it?

We must acknowledge that our great progress in improving the material and physical conditions of life has been achieved at a high spiritual and ethical price. Social Security has not increased ontological security or dignity in old age. The elderly continue to occupy an inferior status in the moral community, marginalized by an economy and culture committed to the scientific management of growth without limit. For the last sixty years, Western observers have sensed this impoverishment of meaning in old age. But only recently have economic and political conditions turned this apparently academic question into an urgent public issue. In rebuilding the moral economy of an extended life course, we must not only attend to questions of justice within and among different stages of life, but we must also forge a new sense of the meanings and purposes of the last half of life.

Revising Late Life: Toward a New Moral Economy

We require a new appreciation of aging that transcends our historical tendency to split old age into positive and negative poles. As we have seen, since the early nineteenth century American culture has characteristically oscillated between attraction to a "good" old age (the healthy culmination of proper middle-class living) and repulsion from a "bad" old age (repudiation of the dream of limitless accumulation of health and wealth). We can no longer afford this dualism, which feeds both the false pessimism and the superficial optimism in contemporary discussions of our aging society.

We must also break with our habit of using old age as a metaphor for the success or failure of various political and ideological agendas. This does not mean that our search for more adequate ideals of aging should be "value free"—as if continued scientific research and technology could eliminate all conflict, mystery, and suffering in late life. Rather, we need more social criticism and public dialogue aimed at creating socially just, economically sound, and spiritually satisfying meanings for aging.

We need, for example, to criticize liberal capitalist culture's relentless hostility toward physical decline and its tendency to regard health as a form of secular salvation. We need to revive existentially nourishing views of aging that address its paradoxical nature. Aging, like illness and death, reveals the most fundamental conflict of the human condition: the tension between infinite ambitions, dreams, and desires on the one hand, and vulnerable, limited, decaying physical existence on the other—the tragic and ineradicable conflict between spirit and body. This paradox cannot be eliminated by the wonders of modern medicine or by positive attitudes toward growing old—hence the wisdom of traditions that consider old age both a blessing and a curse. As Ronald Blythe writes in *The View in Winter:* "Old age is full of death and full of life. It is a tolerable achievement and it is a disaster. It transcends desire and it taunts it. It is long enough and far from long enough."

In the past, the courage and understanding needed to face this ambiguous reality were often nourished in religious and philosophical traditions that counseled resignation or spiritual transcendence. In the modern world, spirituality, contemplation, and concern for the virtues have paled beside the pleasures of consumption, the pressures of the marketplace, and the promises of science and medicine. These forces undermine the possibilities for a spiritually mature approach to aging.

Much of the pathos that surrounds old age today derives from the instrumental perspective that pervades the scientific management of aging. The one-sided drive to alter, reverse, or somehow control the biological process of aging intensifies the impoverishment of meaning instead of confronting it. So-called "positive" aspects of aging often turn out to be disguised efforts to restore youth rather than attempts to appreciate growing or being old as a fundamental part of human existence.

Until quite recently, Western culture emphasized the proper boundaries and inevitable limits of the life cycle. It counseled individuals to transform their fate into a journey toward self-knowledge and reconciliation with finitude. Today, however, men and women think of themselves not as fated creatures, but as active beings who can solve life's problems with science and technology. This belief is clearly an illusion, since now our fate is in the hands of medicine. Our challenge in the future is to find a new synthesis in which the ancient submission to natural limits is balanced with the modern drive to find a scientific solution to every problem.

The limits of the contemporary approach are slowly becoming apparent. There are encouraging signs that the traumatic fear of aging today is increasingly being offset by a renewed awareness of its opportunities for inner growth. The assumption that full intellectual and emotional growth occurs in middle age has been challenged by the view that human development is not chronologically bounded and that later life can be a time of transformation rather than mere adaptation. In literature and in humanistic gerontology, we are seeing a resurgence of the view that old age is a period of unique capacity for wisdom, for understanding the experiences of a lifetime, and for giving assistance and advice to the young.

Nevertheless, in order to welcome the elderly back into the moral community, we need more than a renewed appreciation for the gifts of age. We need to understand the obligations and responsibilities as well as the rights and opportunities of old age. We need policies that eliminate the surplus dependency imposed on older people, policies that strengthen their ability to solve their own problems and contribute to their communities. Such policies will require, as Harry R. Moody argues, a life-span approach to human development. Just as public investment in the health and education of children is essential to their future productivity, so too are policies for older people that stimulate self-help, lifelong learning, and social participation essential for maintaining their independence.

Many experienced workers between the ages of fifty

and seventy-five leave the work force either because their skills are no longer needed or because they respond to employers' inducements to retire. While these people are generally vigorous, healthy, and capable of making important contributions to the nation's economy and quality of life, their lives are channeled primarily into leisure and the consumption of professional services. By 2010, people between the ages of fifty and seventy-five will comprise almost one-third of our total population. We clearly cannot afford to continue excluding them from productive life.

Alan Pifer suggests several ways of enhancing the productivity of older Americans. Both industry and government can establish retraining programs for workers over fifty. Public and private pension programs can be changed to allow partial retirement. The federal government can permit older people to borrow against their Social Security benefits in order to finance retraining or enroll in new educational programs. As some have already done, colleges and universities can devise special programs to meet the needs of older students. Public service employment programs for older workers can be expanded, providing modestly paid work to unemployed older workers who want to defer retirement or supplement retirement benefits.

In addition to Pifer's suggestions, the federal government should create a National Elder Corps to mobilize a pool of experienced volunteer workers. Just as the Peace Corps provides an avenue for experience, education, and social usefulness for young people, an Elder Corps would encourage a highly visible form of service and social integration for older people. The Elder Corps could be jointly funded by the federal government and the states, and a local administration could permit community organizations (e.g., schools, hospitals, universities, nursing homes, hospices, and various other nonprofit groups) to match their needs with the available skills of older volunteer workers. A National Elder Corps would allow groups such as the National Council on the Aging and the American Association of Retired People to channel some of their advocacy and expertise toward projects benefiting all age groups.

To accommodate an aging society (*and* to continue expanding protection for the poor of all ages), Americans will have to make substantial changes in the welfare state—but not of the sort that either liberals or neoconservatives envision. A half century of Social Security history suggests that progressive reform (not abolition or privatization) is both desirable and politically feasible. Despite its limitations, Social Security remains, as Senator Bill Bradley has noted, "the best expression of community that we have in this country today." It rests not only on the principle of social insurance over the course of the individual's life, but also on an intergenerational compact that must be renegotiated as historical circumstances require.

The "specter of old age" that seems to cloud America's future reflects our impoverished ideas about aging and our reluctance to face the real but not insuperable challenges of generational equity. "It can only weaken the vital fiber of the younger generation if the evidence of daily living verifies man's prolonged last phase as a sanctioned period of childishness," Erik Erikson wrote in 1964. "Any span of the cycle lived without vigorous meaning ... endangers the sense of life and the meaning of death in all whose life stages are intertwined."

In spite of (or perhaps because of) our individualism, Americans can recognize that growing old today is perhaps the most basic human experience that we all share. If we are willing to face the challenges of reconstructing old age, our "abundance of life" can yet be channeled toward genuine human development and social well-being. □

CRIMINOLOGY AND THE UPRISING

(Continued from p. 62)

The political and historical context of the events in the occupied territories only increases the tendency toward denial. After all, even the most liberal Israeli finds it very difficult really to identify with Palestinians or see them as victims. The appalling history of terrorism, the Palestinian rhetoric of destruction, the immediate threats of stone throwing and petrol bombs, the Jewish sense of vulnerability, all are legitimate reasons why most Israelis feel unable to conceive of the Palestinians as victims. Add to that the racist stereotypes and demonization, as well as the Israelis' sheer inability to grasp the reality of the Palestinians' existence (let alone their national aspirations), and we have denial run amok.

In any case, it has become banal to note how the peculiar history of Judaism and Zionism makes it difficult to believe that we can play the role of aggressor rather than victim. The ideology of the "elect" or the "chosen" remains—even for the most secular—a potent if unacknowledged force: the idea that the Jewish state embodies a destined moral superiority. This ideology is secularized in the form of myths about the exemplary democratic, liberal, and peace-loving character of the Israeli state.

These myths have an obvious base in reality—compared, say, to other states in the Middle East or to other "unfinished societies" throughout the world. But as the philosopher Gilbert Ryle reminds us, a myth is

less a fairy tale than a restructuring of facts. The groups that I am talking about here—liberals, intellectuals, democrats—have betrayed their commitment to universal values by restructuring the history and the current political reality of Israeli society. They have become producers and consumers of a closed (and self-congratulatory) intellectual culture that insulates people from reality. They conceive of "the rule of law" and "civil liberties" as principles that have always had a strong imprint on Israeli society instead of what they really are—fragile goals alien to most of the Israeli population. This is the "vital lie" at the heart of Israeli liberal culture: the pretense that what is genuinely believed actually exists.

This lie must be traced back to the peculiar status of intellectuals in Israel's history. Their identification with the Labor party (and the fact that for thirty years the Labor party was the state), their immersion in the task of nation building, their emphasis on security against internal and external enemies, and their personal involvement in the military and security apparatus—all these facts have prevented the emergence of an independent intelligentsia. Most of my academic colleagues have no sense of being on the edge of their society, of seeing it from the outside. As a result, they are reluctant to take a stand that might be interpreted as "disloyal" or "unpatriotic" or (worst of all) "anti-Zionist." So, even today, they defend an idealized version of Israeli history and culture as if it were reality.

* * *

I've just read Amos Elon's words in the April 14 issue of the *New York Review of Books*: "One result of the uprising is a deep crisis within Israeli politics and society, which will never be the same again." Objectively, of course, he's right: things will never be the same again. Nevertheless, most Israelis don't seem to feel a deep sense of crisis. Many liberals who are genuinely upset by what is happening have not taken the next step: activism and protest. Even those who do not deny reality do feel that things are just too complicated, that the wheels of history are running out of control. What can we do that will have any effect on the ominous triangle of the Palestinian street kids, the soldiers, and the messianic settlers? And, beyond that, what about the Arab world and the unpredictable machinations of the superpowers?

We are tempted to retreat into our private lives—not to go to the next demonstration or meeting, not to waste time arguing with our colleagues, not to watch the TV news. One friend told me she was opting for "internal exile": She feels too attached to Israel to leave, but too depressed and powerless to get involved in any public or political life.

This reaction is understandable, but such passivity is unjustified. Unlike other societies with which we compare ourselves in our bleaker moments—variants of police states, military dictatorships, racist regimes—we live under much more enlightened conditions. However much the boundaries of tolerance are being eroded and the discourse of legality and civil liberties is being threatened, the formal structures of democracy remain in position.

And—despite my overall apprehension that liberals have been too slow to react—there are some encouraging signs. High school kids refusing to do their military service in the occupied territories, new protest groups like "The Twenty-First Year" (see the recent May/June issue of *Tikkun* for their covenant), the emergence of a radical women's movement against the occupation—these are all heartening examples of dissent. And even among those who remain within the national consensus, there are some signs of weariness with the struggle (the recent Likud taxi driver quote: "Let's first beat the shit out of them, then let them have the territories").

Nevertheless, opposition isn't mounting quickly or steadily enough, perhaps because so far Israelis have not had to pay a tangible price for the uprising and its attempted suppression. True, the labor supply from the territories is erratic, army reserve duty has increased, and it's a nuisance to stop shopping in the West Bank markets. But the objective effects on daily life have been marginal. Only something like the "Lebanon factor" will produce a real crisis—massive military or civilian casualties, further economic disruption, and effective international pressure (following, perhaps, a settler pogrom or an army attack on Palestinians if something like the Beita village incident happens again).

There is no guarantee, of course, that such a crisis will strengthen the impulse to give up the territories in return for peace. After all, the right is just as interested in and capable of exploiting a sense of crisis as is the liberal-left. It might claim, for example, that the current wave of arson attacks on this side of the Green Line confirms the fact that the Palestinians want all of Israel.

So we wait for the November elections, poised among all these differing responses. But uniting them all is a vision of permanent conflict and violence—the knowledge that the *intifada* is war by another name, simply a continuation of 1948. Like Northern Ireland, Lebanon, South Africa, and the Iran-Iraq war, the *intifada* is something just to get used to.

At the end of June, Mayor Teddy Kollek opened the Jerusalem Film Festival on a happy note. Despite the *intifada*, he said, despite the stones and petrol bombs, the fact that so many people could still come and watch a week of movies shows that normal life can continue. He was right. □

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