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REVIEWS

From the Editors

EXACTLY 40 YEARS AGO we received an article from Poland with views of the Soviet system close to ours: We saw it as a new form of exploitation, and we opposed it with the same vigor we opposed capitalism. We published the article, by Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, in our spring and summer '66 issues as "An Open Letter to the Party." When both men were released from prison, they founded KOR, an organization that succeeded in uniting workers and intellectuals. From that came Solidarity.

This is our legacy bequeathed to us from the former editors, Julie and Phyllis Jacobson. The kind of social change we have envisioned is bottom up — democratic — and that is exactly the kind of change that millions of people have struggled for — in Poland, later in Czechoslovakia, finally throughout all Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union. (We also support struggles for political and economic democracy in the societies distorted by post-Communist adaptation of "shock therapy" and "free market" nostrums.) More recently, the struggle has been fought in China, Georgia, Ukraine, throughout Latin America, in France, and, yes, with the recent activism for fair immigration laws, in the United States itself, where the past 40 years have seen bottom-up struggles by Blacks, feminists, gays, and antiwar protestors as well.

Our lead article, by Jesse Lemisch, exemplifies this kind of commitment in exposing the Weather Underground's attempt to substitute a tiny minority for a mass movement. And in his review of Samuel Farber's *The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered*, Larry Beeferman writes, "Castro had a commitment to a left-wing, anti-imperialist agenda, but that commitment was married to another critical one, top-down organization." In his "Soul of Socialism," Ron Aronson writes, "Both Communists and Social Democrats paid homage to the workers, but they also spoke for them and kept them from power." Finally, reviewing Moishe Postone's *Time, Labor, and Social Domination:A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory*, Loren Goldner concludes, "Marx's focus was always on the self-emancipation of the proletariat."

For this issue we have a special section devoted to something affecting sooner or later almost all people: caregiving. We should say not almost but *all* people since all of us were children; most of us will grow older; many of us must care for elders and/or children; and many of us are disabled. The left has paid more attention to people in the waged economy than to unwaged care workers. Deanne Bonner says in her article, "Wages of Care," that care workers should be paid, and she argues with the reasons given against this idea. At one time the government did give parents a form of wages for care work through Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) grants, but the Clinton-era welfare "reform" act of 1996 changed that. Gwendolyn Mink, in our interview with her, talks about the consequences of that "reform" and the strategies activists have used in the struggle to get a more humane welfare system. Lorraine Cohen, in her article "Winning a Welfare Battle and Building Bridges," describes a notable victory in that struggle.

The emotional and physical stress of caring for an aged parent is eloquently described by Janice Regolsky Babcock in her article "Stress on the Long Term Care Giver: Get Me an Excedrin, fast!" Ravi Malhotra writes about giving power to the disabled to control the conditions of their own care in his article, "Empowering People with Disabilities." In her article, "Foster Care," Betty Reid Mandell discusses how poor parents and their children are treated in the foster care system. Looking toward a more humane system of caregiving, Helen Lachs Ginsburg and Marguerite G. Rosenthal, in their article "The Ups and Downs of the Swedish Welfare State," analyze the effects of neoliberalism on Sweden, one of the most progressive welfare systems in the world.

The rest of our articles and reviews cover a large spectrum, ranging from a teenager running from the Nazis in World War II to a poem about Sudan, to causes and implications of the recent Hamas victory.

We would be delighted to receive your comments.

MARVIN AND BETTY

Weather Underground Rises from the Ashes: They're Baack!

JESSE LEMISCH

I ATTENDED part of a January 20, 2006, "day workshop of interventions" — aka "a day of dialogic interventions" — at Columbia University on "Radical Politics and the Ethics of Life."[1] The event aimed "to stage a series of encounters . . . to bring to light . . . the political aporias [sic] erected by the praxis of urban guerrilla groups" in Europe and the United States from the 1960s to the 80s.[2] Hosted by Columbia's Anthropology Department, workshop speakers included veterans and leaders of the Weather Underground Bernardine Dohrn and Bill Ayers, historian Jeremy Varon, poststructuralist theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and a dozen others. The panel I sat through was just awful.[3]

Veterans of Weather (as well as some fans) seem to be on a drive to rehabilitate, cleanse, and perhaps revive it — not necessarily as a new organization, but rather as an ideological component of present and future movements. There have been signs of such a sanitization and romanticization for some time. A landmark in this rehabilitation is Bill Ayers, *Fugitive Days: A Memoir* (Beacon Press 2001; Penguin Books 2003). This is a dubious account, full of anachronisms, inaccuracies, unacknowledged borrowings from unnamed sources (such as the documentary, *Atomic Cafe*, 17-19), adding up to an attempt to cover over the fact that Ayers was there only for a part of the things he describes in a volume that nonetheless presents itself as a memoir. It's also faux literary and soft core ("warm and wet and welcoming"(68)), "ruby mouth"(38), "she felt warm and moist"(81)), full of archaic sexism, littered with boasts of Ayers's sexual achievements, utterly untouched by feminism. (Among Ayers's many errors are some that betray ignorance of the Women's Liberation Movement: he repeats the media-generated myth that 1968 Miss America protesters burned their bras (117).)

Ayers is the perfect Weatherman: "Hostility to feminism," writes Dan Berger in a new history of Weather, "characterized the organization from the beginning"[4] — and this at a time when radical feminism was growing. Weather kept its distance from one of the most vibrant movements of its time, taking such archaic positions as "The Women's Question is a Class Question," just a part of capitalism rather than patriarchy.[5]

There are too many inaccuracies in *Fugitive Days* to list here. Some are petty: Howdy Doody fans will wonder whether Ayers's "Uncle Bob" (24) is the same as "Buffalo Bob." But some of the errors reflect political blind spots. One such error concerns Marion Delgado, who was a kind of a Weather saint, but Ayers can't even keep his hagiography straight. A photo of Marion, a five-year-old Chicano boy, smiling and holding up a piece of concrete, appeared in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) weekly paper, *New Left Notes*, with a caption indicating that he had caused a train wreck with his concrete. Weatherpeople began, in *hommage* to this act, to sign and present themselves as "Marion Delgado." But Ayers (144) places this event in Italy — with all of Weather's third worldism, he can't tell the difference between Italians and Mexicans (or Californians) — and says that the train that Delgado derailed was a

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freight train, and that nobody was hurt. Inaccuracies aside, it's bizarre for a political group to admire this child's act. In a learned disquisition on Marion, Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York 1973), 605n explains that Marion had derailed a passenger train in California in 1947. Ayers's changing a passenger train to a freight train, and his stress on the claim that there were thus no injuries, is one of many sanitizations in his book.

> "You don't need a fisherman to know when something's fishy."

All in all, Ayers romanticizes and reaffirms Weather: "I regret nothing." In ways totally compatible with postmodernism, he boasts of faulty memory and subjectivity as the only truth. "Memory is a motherfucker," he begins; "I myself remember almost nothing"[7]:

> There is . . . a necessary incompleteness here, a covering over of facts and a blurring of details, which is in part an artifact of those fugitive days and those exquisite and terrible times . . . Is this, then, the truth? Not exactly. Although it feels entirely honest to me (preface).

Fugitive Days was published in September 2001. In a striking coincidence, an interview with Ayers (and Dohrn) appeared in the *New York Times* on September 11, 2001, under the stunning headline, "No Regrets for a Love of Explosives; In a Memoir of Sorts, a War Protester Talks of Life with the Weathermen." After 9/11, nobody wants to talk about this classic and deeply embarrassing article. "I don't regret setting bombs," Ayers begins; "I feel we didn't do enough." Here, too, he boasts of his tenuous connection to truth. In his response to the *Times*' quoting some of his above remarks about "truth," he says, "Obviously, the point is it's a reflection on memory . . . It's true as I remember it." Thus, the postmodernism in the contemporary air provides him with cover for the rehabilitation of Weather.

The 2002 film *The Weather Underground* was made by younger people and seems well intended.[6] But it offers the viewer a Hobson's Choice between Weather and Todd Gitlin: I didn't know whether to shit, or go blind! There is in actuality much space for an effective left between these two bizarre poles. Despite the substandard product that Weather veterans are peddling, a sympathetic response to a bowdlerized Weather may not be so hard to achieve in the present frustrated and disoriented mood of the left. Bernardine Dohrn says elsewhere: "I have not met with such intense curiosity from the young about our experience since I came overground at the end of the seventies. If we were to take an anti-imperialist show on the road, we would sell out."[7]

Many students and faculty have been infected by postmodernism in this, its terminal phase, and therefore have little concern for concrete reality. So Weather can be discussed in appealing-sounding abstractions, without reference to the destructive inanities of their role at the June 1969 Chicago convention of SDS, the October 1969 Days of Rage,[8] the bombings, the bombing fuck-ups, etc.

Weather's craziness was seen at the time: Maurice Isserman notes contemporary parodies of "You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows": "You don't need a fisherman to know when something's fishy," and "You don't need a rectal thermometer to know who the assholes are" (H-Amstdy 1/30/06). And today, some former WUers have offered intelligent critiques. Mark Rudd sees WU as "a total disaster," and regrets having

> chosen the stupid, losing strategy of 'revolutionary' violence . . . [T]he Weather Underground was a huge fuck-up! We did the work of the FBI by destroying SDS. We accidentally killed three of our own people. We split and undermined the larger anti-war movement.. the importance of the Weather Under-

> ground was that it was a total disaster. "Don't try this at home."[9]

Rudd's fellow Weatherperson Cathy Wilkerson's critical *ZNet* review calls Ayers "inaccurate," and sees the book as "a cynical, superficial romp . . . making these struggles seem like a glorious carnival."[10] Speaking of Ayers's descriptions of his relations with women, she notes his

> absolute lack of reflection since then . . . Ayers relates his relentless sexual encounters without the slightest trace of awareness that some of these encounters might not have been so positive for the woman . . . He indicates no awareness that he might have used his privileges to provoke women to give him access to a vulnerability that he was unable to honor.

It is worth recalling that abuse of explosives was only one of many Weather errors. The chamber of horrors would have to include Dohrn's remark at the 1969 Flint Michigan SDS "War Council" concerning the murders committed by the Charles Manson gang in Los Angeles: "Dig it: first they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into the victim's stomach. Wild!?"[11] This bring us to Weather's "white skin privilege" line.

While recognizing the role of racism in America, the white skin privilege analysis placed Weather in opposition to whites in general and to the white working class in particular, towards whom Weather was dismissive and contemptuous. It saw whites as complicit and corrupted beneficiaries of racism and imperialism who had sold out and were therefore to be opposed, perhaps killed, rather than addressed, educated, and recruited, with a program relevant to their situation. "Fight the People," said Ayers and early Weather.[12] Ayers recalls his thoughts concerning white skin privilege at the time of the climactic 1969 SDS convention (139). The Revolutionary Youth Movement (i.e., Weather), he says, saw racism as

> providing privileges and material benefits . . . to white people, mystifying many and winning their allegiance . . . white skin privilege was . . . a real and effective bribe against consciousness and struggle . . . white people are mostly brainwashed. We lucky few will wake them up . . .

Other than the slight wryness of tone, there is no evidence that Ayers either had, or has, any criticism of the substance of this notion of administering a wake-up call to whites, rather than trying to convince them politically. (Recall that he says that he regrets nothing. One measure of the pervasiveness of this Piafian theme appears in the blurbs at the front of Ayers's book, praising him: "Writes . . . without . . . apology"; "no . . . remorse" [Thomas Frank]; ". . . without a trace of . . . 'second thinking' "[Edward Said].) This is a position that would lead to justification for killing whites — including their babies: "All white babies are pigs."[13] *The oft-repeated claim that Weather killed nobody but themselves ignores the fact that the bombs being prepared when the townhouse blew up in 1970 were laden with roofing nails as shrapnel, and intended for detonation at a dance at Fort Dix.* Only Weather incompetence saved these prospective victims from the grotesque deaths visited on three Weatherpeople.[14] (Today, those who didn't live through all this may nonetheless get the feel of Weather's positions by considering Ward Churchill's condemnation of the "technocratic corps" who died as victims in the 9/11 World Trade Center attack as "little Eichmanns."[15])

At the workshop at Columbia, Bernardine Dohrn served up all the hoary platitudes about the everyday violence of the standing order — all true — leading inevitably to a justification of violent response by a tiny minority substituting itself for a mass movement; at the same time, she offered a rhetorical parenthesis rejecting armed struggle. Neither the efficacy nor morality of Weather tactics and theories were scrutinized, nor any inquiry made into how you construct a majority radical democratic movement by denouncing and writing off the majority. Dohrn's defense of Weather included the remark that in the face of terrible oppressions and injustices, it is necessary "to do something about it, it almost doesn't matter what." But it does matter, if we are interested in building rather than tearing apart a new left. Clearly, almost forty years after the Weather disaster, she hasn't gotten it. Indeed, she says that the actions of WU "made people smile." (For one fan's confirmation of this contention, see Roz Payne (posting on H-Amstdy [1/30/06]): "We smiled when we read of their actions, which NEVER harmed people except themselves.")

A tiny minority substituting itself for a mass movement.

Weather killed and buried SDS — a catastrophe for the left. (This is a complex matter, which I originally addressed here in too breezy and unqualified a manner. Clearly, it was not Weather alone that killed SDS. On the other hand, note Mark Rudd's view above that the Weather Underground destroyed SDS.) Dohrn passes lightly over this, saying that SDS wasn't worth saving by the time Weather came on the scene. An anarchist in the audience made the important point that how you make the revolution will affect the kind of revolution that you get. Partly agreeing, Dohrn insisted that, while underground, Weatherpeople not only practiced participatory democracy, but also got closer to the working class and to various minorities. Just picture it: Weather, while underground, super-closeted and of necessity concealing their politics, makes friends with the working class (whom they have already disdainfully written off) — "nobody here but us regular American folks." Former WUer David Gilbert's reminiscence comes closer to the reality: "When you're underground, you can't go around saying, 'I'm your local representative from the Weather Underground. Let's discuss politics.'"[16]

As I mentioned above, the discussion of the Weather Underground at the Columbia workshop lacked concrete specifics. If we look beyond the abstraction to those specifics, Weather is a tragic laughingstock. It's the postmodern mood that allows such weird and empty discussion. How wonderful: we have lived to see Weather's posthumous rehabilitation in pomo hands. But we need a new left today, and the evasion of realities of past, present and future won't help to build this left.

* * *

There was much to laugh about, and much to weep about in the event at Columbia. But the funniest moment came when Columbia anthropologist Beth Povinelli recalled that when she was invited to speak on urban guerrilla groups, her first thought was that her brother is a primatologist.

Afterword

IS ALL THIS JUST BEATING A DEAD HORSE? Although I would hope so, in the present mood on the left there is some receptivity to a rehabilitation of Weather and Weather-like strategies, especially among the young who didn't live through the original reality. (One straw in the wind has been the confused and uncritical response to Ward Churchill in many parts of the left.) We have seen testimony from Dohrn and others about receptive audiences. As this is written, there is a promising attempt to found a new organization called SDS, and I wish it well. But for a sample of the uncritical, indeed adoring attitude towards Dohrn and her legacy by one of its main organizers, see Thomas Good, "From SDS to N[ational] C[onference on] O[rganized] R[esistance]: Socialism, Anarchism and Bernardine Dohrn": www.nextleftnotes.net. This is an enthusiastically positive report of a talk by Dohrn, which notes that "Her revolutionary passion [is] still intact after all these years of struggle" and describes her as pointing out "that one glaring failure of the Sixties was the ostracizing of [Vietnam] veterans" — not a word is said about the glaring failure of Weather. Good calls himself "an old admirer" and describes meeting Dohrn as "a very special moment for this New Leftist."

Another sign of the rising interest in Weather and the Weather legacy on the left is a flowering of literature, with varying degrees of admiration and criticism. In addition to Ayers, *Fugitive Days*, see, for instance, Ron Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew: A History of the Weather Underground* (Verso 1997; reissued 2005); Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (AK Press 2006)[17]; David Gilbert, *SDS/WUO: Students for a Democratic Society and the Weather Underground Organization* (Abraham Guillen Press 2002); Dan Berger, Chesa Boudin, Kenyon Farrow, eds. (preface by Bernardine Dohrn), *Letters from Young Activists: Today's Rebels Speak Out* (Nation Books 2005). For a valuable scholarly contribution, see Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (University of California Press 2004). For FBI materials on Weather Underground, see www.foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/weather.htm. Some former WUers have memoirs in progress which will give a very different picture from that offered by Ayers.

* * *

JUST AS THIS GOES TO PRESS in May, there are two interesting developments relevant to the rehabilitation of the Weather Underground.

1) *Weather Rehabilitation and the New SDS.* Together with others, Thomas Good — mentioned above in connection with his admiring views of Bernardine Dohrn — organized the first Northeast Regional Conference of the refounded Students for a Democratic Society at Brown University, April 23, 2006. (The following account is based on material on the SDS website www.nextleftnotes.net and postings on the SDS discussion list, "New Left Cafe.")

By a top-down process that led to some disagreement within SDS, Dorhn was invited as one of a small number of keynote speakers. (Ironically, Good is a self-described Wobbly and anarchosyndicalist.) Dohrn was billed as a "founding member of the Weather Underground." This is not a neutral self-identification. Allowing herself to be described this way, or perhaps asking that she be so presented, singles out a specific part of her background and suggests pride rather than understanding of her destructive role in those years. (As we will see, her speech offered not a word in response to criticisms of Weather.) Suppose I asked to have myself introduced at a speaking gig as "Jesse Lemisch, who joined the Communist Party in 1939 and rejoined in 1956." This would be kind of in-your-face, and would seem to oblige me to offer some explanation.

Pictures and a video of Dorhn appear on the SDS website, and she was treated with reverence at the conference. But there was an exception to this — a dispute that illuminates the new SDS and Weather, and raises questions about whether SDS is open to debate about its politics and willing to think critically about the legacy of Weather.

One of the keynote speakers was Bob Ross, an old SDSer and a founding member, now Professor of Sociology at Clark University and an activist in the anti-sweatshop movement. He made points critical of Weather, violence, and bombing. Dohrn, speaking next, addressed none of this. What is of particular interest to us is how others viewed Ross's raising the point, and Dohrn's silence. Paul Buhle, perhaps neutrally, reports that Dohrn "avoided the old controversies about Weather." But Thomas Good reports himself as "dismayed by the shots [Ross] took at Weather," and he brands those remarks as "sectarian" and possibly leading to "factional backbiting." He goes on to describe Dohrn as "eloquent as ever," a "class act [who] did not respond to Bob Ross's comments and focused on the future of the new SDS." Another speaker, named "m(A)tt," a "social anarchist" from the CLASH Collective of Hartford, tore into Ross, dismissing in the harshest terms Ross's criticism of Weather: Ross had made a "poor choice of a venue to grind his axe . . . Bernardine Dohrn, show[ed] her inherent female supremacy [wow, unpack that phrase!] by taking the high road and declining to use a captive audience to settle scores from thirty-seven years ago . . ."

Thomas Good says that the new SDS is approaching 100 chapters. The rebirth of such an organization is in many ways good news. But from the above it would seem clear that SDS isn't open to debate about the politics that Weather represented. I'll resist the urge to speak of those who condemn themselves to relive the past. But it is vital that SDS face up to this part of its past if it is to help in building the kind of daring, democratic radicalism that we need. A left organization that dismisses internal political debate as mere sectarian backbiting doesn't have a very bright future. Too bad.

(Meantime, at the conference as elsewhere, attention to Bernardine Dohrn once again generally violated the old rule, "Say anything you want about me; just spell my name right." Try it yourself.)

2) Imminent publication of Bill Ayers, Bernardine Dohrn, Jeff Jones, eds., *Sing a Battle Song: The Revolutionary Poetry, Statements and Communiques of the Weather Underground 1970-1974* (Seven Stories Press, scheduled for June 1, 2006). Thanks to David Barber for calling this to my attention. I have only an "early version" of the manuscript, which may not be complete. There is neither time nor space here to give it its due, and I have only been able to give it quick scrutiny. The material in this volume, consisting of documents from the time, is of historical value and will help readers part way to a better understanding of Weather.

This book consists of three components, all originally published in 1974 and 1975, put together in one volume now in order to catch and extend the wave of Weather rehabilitation. Jonah Raskin's 1974 introduction to Weather's Communiques (many of which were signed by Dorhn) offers a useful short history of the organization from a partisan although not uncritical perspective, and presents a chronology. Raskin justifies Weather's bombings. The communiques themselves are meaty and certainly remind us of the times. People should read them to know just what it is that they are romanticizing. But Weather must be understood both for what it said and for what it did, and this volume is not adequate for those seeking fully to understand the horrors that they carried out and the damage they did to the left.

The volume's poems by Weather Underground women are an attempt to shore up Weather's reputation in an area where Weather itself has acknowledged great weakness — the organization's alienation from the Women's Liberation Movement. But it's hard to see how these poems will help Weather's reputation for feminism. This section includes poems celebrating a bombing at MIT, the Symbionese Liberation Army (this poem appears twice in the book), and the hijacking of a Pan Am jet; another condemns American POW's in Vietnam, and an especially peculiar one celebrates "Our Men" as "sinewy warriors" with "long hair curling and straggling down your backs . . . " This is feminism?

NOTES

This is a revised and expanded version of an article originally posted on *History News Network* 1/23/06 (http://hnn.us/roundup/entries/20876.html); H-1960s 1/23/06; Portside 1/27/06; ZNET 1/28/06; H-Amstdy 1/31/06. I have benefited from the discussions that followed these postings.

1. For the announcement and program, see www.columbia.edu/cu/anthropology/printable/rce/main/calendar/day_workshop.html.

2. The "Postmodern Therapies" listserv's "Postmodern Terms from A to D" offers a definition of "aporia": "Wonder and

amazement before the confusing puzzles and paradoxes of our lives and of the universe. Socrates and the other ancient philosophers tried to evoke the philosophic spirit in young men by awakening their aporia, not by simply providing answers to these puzzles." www.california.com/~rathbone/local2.htm. Does that clear it up?

3. I assume that inclusion as a speaker in the conference did not necessarily imply approval of the Weather Underground (WU), nor of Weather — although I know of at least two former WUers who have taken critical positions on Weather, and who decided that it was fruitless to attempt to attend as critical voices and so did not participate. I have commented only on the session I attended, where the speakers were Bernardine Dohrn and Columbia Anthropology Professor Elizabeth Povinelli.

4. Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (AK Press 2006), 292.

5. Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 219.

6. For my critique of an earlier film that touches on Weather but fails to explain the collapse of SDS, "Rebels with a Cause" (2000), see Lemisch, "Students for a Democratic Society, Heroically Portrayed, Before the Inexplicable Fall: Consensus History in a Left Film," *Film & History,* 31.1 (Spring 2001).

7. Bernardine Dohrn, "Letter to Young Activists: Beware Sixties Nostalgia," MRZine, July 7, 2005: www.mrzine.monthlyreview.org/dohrn270705.html. This is adapted from Dohrn's preface to Dan Berger, Chesa Boudin, Kenyon Farrow, eds., *Letters from Young Activists: Today's Rebels Speak Out* (2005). See also Newsreel co-founder Roz Payne (H-1960s 1/25/06): "My students were taken by the . . . Weather Underground film. Most of them thought the people were brave and understood why they did what they did because they did not kill anyone (except for themselves in the town house)."

8. At the time, Weather's adversary, Progressive Labor, characterized the Days of Rage as the work of "hate-the-people lunatics." Nigel Young, *An Infantile Disorder? The Crisis and Decline of the New Left* (London 1977), p. 276.

9. Mark Rudd, "How a Movie Changed My Life," "Heartland Journal," Summer 2005: www.heartlandcafe.com/hj_index.htm.

10. www.znet.org/ZMag/Articles.dec01wilkerson.htm.

11. Sale, *SDS,* p. 628. Dan Berger's generosity to Dohrn, who is one of his major sources, appears here in his failure to offer more than a brief paraphrase of Dohrn's awful words, while giving equal space for her defense: *Outlaws of America*, 123. Dohrn's words are just the tip of the iceberg: the fork motif was widespread in Weather, in greetings, farewells, names of groups, etc.

12. Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 96. Always apologetic, Berger says: "[*Fight the People*] was, to be sure, part of the group's early hyperbole, but a closer reading reveals it to be a more complex view of confronting white supremacy."

13. Sale, *SDS*, 628: "The Weatheranalysis held that whites were virtually useless in the world-wide confrontation going on, and except for a few brave streetfighters like the Weathermen, they were all corrupted, bought-off tyrants. Logically, then, the death of a white baby is a positive revolutionary action, and indeed the Weathermen actually held abstract debates at the [1969 Flint] "war council" about whether killing white babies is 'correct', a Weatherman at one point shouting out to the audience, 'All white babies are pigs.' From there it was only a step to Dohrn's ecstatic speech about the Charles Manson gang . . . "

14. I have seen no mention of the significance of the fact that the bombs would also have killed female dancing partners. WU could not have failed to foresee this, so there would have had to have been some extremely obnoxious theoretical rationale, e.g. "class enemies," "soldiers' girlfriends," or "collateral damage."

15. "If there was a better, more effective, or in fact any other way of visiting some penalty befitting their participation upon the little Eichmanns inhabiting the sterile sanctuary of the twin towers, I'd really be interested in hearing about it." See "Ward Churchill's Banality of Evil" and "Ward Churchill Statement," www.commondreams.org. For Churchill's fuller justification of the WTC attack and his support of "the gallant sacrifices of the combat teams," see his "Some People Push Back: On the Justice of Roosting Chickens": www.darknightpress.org. There may be more direct connections between Churchill and Weather. A Google search finds claims that he was an active participant in the 1969 Days of Rage, plus a boast, later rescinded, that he taught bomb-making to WU.

16. Berger, *Outlaws of America*, 153.

17. This is a serious and voluminous work, based on research in written sources and interviews ("the backbone of the book"(x)) with more than twenty former WUers. *Outlaws of America* is a useful compendium by a hard-working young scholar. But it is a deeply apologetic work. It is unintentionally an almost laughable record of endless "error," "failure" and "unraveling." Each such failure is explained away: see for instance, the above defense of the white skin privilege line; or, "The townhouse blast was a grievous error, but Weather's broader analysis of the political context still held true" (131). Berger holds back uncomfortable data, such as Dohrn's Charles Manson speech. Again and again, Berger's interviewees express second thoughts, but he presents such thoughts only ad hoc, rarely finding fundamental flaws in WU. Berger's effort at rehabilitation prevents him from acknowledging that, even within the limits of his partisan argument, Weather's legacy might be presented as at best a dual one. I hope for better work from this energetic young scholar.

Wars and Circuses

Bill Littlefield

If we go to war somewhere else, where will Major League Baseball put the next patriotic song?

The national anthem was first sung at a Major League Baseball game in 1918, and since 9/11 and the bombing of Iraq, part two, we've had "God Bless America" during the seventh inning stretch. It fits comfortably, since fans have always been accustomed to a pause in the action there.

If the United States invades Iran or North Korea or Venezuela, where do we put the next martial selection? Three and a half innings in?

The trappings of jingoism have been part of the Super Bowl for all forty of its years: military bands, color guards, multigun salutes, earsplitting flyovers by the Blue Angels, the "bombs bursting in air" — it's hard to imagine the big game without that explosive soundtrack.

If you're uncomfortable with the songs imploring God to bless America in its latest military misadventure, you might remain seated during the anthem(s). And then you might get punched in the head by the patriot in the row behind you.

For some, the overt coupling of sports with politics has been no joke. When the first President Bush took the country to war against Iraq, college sports teams added an American flag patch to their uniforms. One of the players expected to wear the flag was Marco Locar, an Italian playing basketball for Seton Hall University. Locar told his coach that as a Christian and a pacifist, he opposed the bombing and the war, and preferred not to wear the flag, since as far as he could tell, it had come to represent support for the war.

That stand was fine with Locar's coach and his teammates; the kid wasn't even an American. But it was not fine with the Americans who filed into Madison Square Garden on the night Seton Hall played St. John's. Many of them jeered Locar every time he touched the ball. Shortly thereafter, he began receiving hate mail, which upset his pregnant wife enough to convince Marco Locar that he should quit school and return to Italy.

That triumph of fatheads was shameful, but at least nobody got killed. Such is not always the case when our games are dragged to war. In an attempt to cover the most recent invasions with glory, the administration of Bush II attempted to celebrate the enlistment of Pat Tillman, late of the National Football League's Arizona Cardinals, as proof that going to battle in Afghanistan and Iraq was a heroic enterprise, since a man the American public regarded as a hero — a pro football player — was doing it. When Tillman, who had turned his back on a multimillion-dollar National Football League contract to serve in the military, was killed in Afghanistan, "millions of stunned Americans mourned his death and embraced his sacrifice as a rare example of courage and national service."[1]

This response turned out to be grotesquely ironic on a couple of levels.

First, Tillman appeared to have no interest in promoting the administration, the war, or himself. He felt serving his country as a soldier was his duty under the circumstances, and his

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intention was to go to war as unobtrusively as it is possible for a pro-football player to go to war, a preference for which those attempting to use him had no respect.

Then there was the muddle surrounding his death and the lies it spawned. In April of 2004, Tillman's platoon left its base near the Pakistan border to look for Tailiban fighters. A little over a week into that mission, Tillman was reported dead, the victim of enemy fire. On April 30, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command released a statement that said Tillman had encountered the enemy, "directed his team into firing positions and personally provided suppressive fire."[2] Tillman was awarded a silver star for valor.

At the time that version of the events leading to Pat Tillman's death became public, the Army knew that it was a self-serving lie. Over the next few months, thanks in part to the determination of Tillman's parents to learn the truth about their son's death, it became apparent that he had been killed by so-called "friendly fire" in the sort of gruesome accident that teaches us over and over again that for the people doing the fighting, war is chaotic and indiscriminately deadly. Eventually the army acknowledged that Pat Tillman died because U.S. troops "failed to positively identify their respective targets and exercise good fire discipline,"[3] which sounds like military-speak for "it was dark and noisy, and everybody was scared and confused as hell, so they started blowing up everything they could see, as well as some things they couldn't see."

Pat Tillman's choice to enlist was no less remarkable for the way his life ended. Very few athletes walk away from lucrative contracts to risk their lives in combat. But it's comforting to imagine that his ghost nightly haunts the opportunists who tried to turn his terrifyingly random and accidental death into propaganda that would portray fighting in Iraq in terms of "that old lie," *dolce et decorum est pro patria mori*,[4] thereby encouraging other young men, particularly those inclined to choose a pro-football player for a role model, to sign up.

SPORTSWRITERS HAVE LONG WRITTEN about our games in military terms. A season is a campaign, a long pass is a bomb, a game that drags on and beats up players on both sides is a war. Likewise, those in the military have often resorted to the language of sports to describe what they've been doing. One of the first pilots interviewed after the bombing of Baghdad directed by Bush the First said of the surprisingly easy mission, "It was like being a pro athlete heading into his first game, but then the other

In fact, it's silly at best and often obscene to describe even the most violent and destructive games in terms of war.

team didn't show up."

In fact, it's silly at best and often obscene to describe even the most violent and destructive games in terms of war. Pro football, for example, tears its players apart, drives them to gobble dangerous and unpredictable drugs, and renders the heaviest of them susceptible to early death, all so fans can enjoy a spectacular circus. But a death during a pro-football game is a shock.

Death during a war, whether at the hands of the enemy or as a result of "friendly fire," is simply what happens. Civilians upon whom bombs are dropped know that. So do veterans. A lot of soldiers in a lot of wars have reported being astonished that they weren't killed.

Our games are defined in part by rules prohibiting gratuitous violence. A linebacker who slams into a running back and drives him to the ground with enough enthusiasm so that the running back gets up slowly and wobbles in circles as he tries to find his way back to the huddle is celebrated. But if the same linebacker grabs the face mask on the running back's helmet and twists his head like a cowboy trying to bring down a steer, the tackler's team is penalized fifteen yards.

Some of the soldiers who operate outside the rules of war established by the Geneva Convention and other agreements are penalized, but most aren't, and those violations and penalties occur in an insane context for which sports offers no correlative. The U.S. government prosecutes a half-bright soldier photographed with a naked detainee on a leash, and congratulates itself for holding the U.S. soldier to a higher standard of behavior than that to which soldiers abusing prisoners and civilians under another banner are held. But who's disciplined for the bombing raid that kills a dozen Pakistani citizens guilty of nothing but living in a village where a suspected terrorist might have been spent the previous night?

Rules define games like football, basketball, and hockey. Without them, the games would be mayhem. War is mayhem, with or without rules. It is chaos. No army has ever been free of commanders who shrug off the slaughter of innocents as unfortunate but necessary, and soldiers who become frightened or frustrated enough to shoot at whatever their adrenaline, fear, and frustration lead them to imagine.

But at home, many of us root for U.S. soldiers the same way we root for our favorite college football teams. "We Support The Troops" ribbons in various colors decorate bumpers alongside the "Go Huskers" and "Fighting Irish" stickers.[5] There may seem to be a parallel here. Maybe the same people who support Nebraska football, even when the players are being arrested for assault, support the troops in general as well, no matter how dishonest and destructive their particular mission, no matter what specific acts of sadism in the prisons presided over by those troops have recently come to light. But again the comparison is silly. College athletes represent their schools, or at least the boosters who pay for the programs whose colors they wear. When one of the players is caught stealing a car or using illegal drugs or dragging a woman down a flight of stairs by her hair, the athlete may be disciplined and the college's athletic program may be temporarily inconvenienced by the loss of a few scholarships, but everybody who follows the college game recognizes these felonies and misdemeanors and consequent slaps on the wrist from the National Collegiate Athletic Association as the cost of doing business for a team that wishes to be competitive at the highest level. Soldiers, on the other hand, represent their country, and in the case of the United States, it's a country in which most citizens are apparently convinced that their military is more righteous, better behaved, and less inclined toward irrational or vicious conduct than are the soldiers of other countries. Perhaps Americans have to believe that in order to think that they are entitled to whatever they can afford to buy in general, and to cheap oil in particular, and that any action taken in the service of that credo, especially if it's advertised as the democratization of the oil-rich invadee for its own good, is worthy of their support.

When they are rooting for football, baseball, or basketball teams, most fans are unencumbered by that sort of baggage. When Larry Lucchino, the President and C.E.O. of the Boston Red Sox, referred to the New York Yankees as "the evil empire," only idiots took him seriously, and even Lucchino eventually laughed — and then indicated he was sorry if he'd offended anyone. It was the goofy remark of a guy who, gee whiz, just wished the team with which he'd recently become associated could win an occasional championship. But after George Bush singled out several nations as "the axis of evil," the majority of people who vote took him seriously, and Bush accumulated what he called "the political capital" that enabled him to benefit the people and corporations that had installed him in the presidency, to further impoverish the least fortunate citizens in his own country, and to set in motion the bombings and invasions that have killed God knows how many people elsewhere as well as Pat Tillman and a couple thousand other Americans.

No game that, and, judging by precedent, no apology anticipated. No time outs, either, and no more games for those who lose, and, heaven help us, apparently no clock.

NOTES

1. The most complete account of the story of Pat Tillman's death is in Steve Coll, "Barrage of Bullets Drowned Out Cries of Comrades," *Washington Post*, Dec. 5, 2004,reprinted in Mike Lupica, ed., *Best American Sports Writing, 2005* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005) 181.

2. *Ibid.*, 191.

3. *Ibid.*, 196.

4. Wilfred Owen, poem, *Dulce et Decorum Est*.

5. I agree with the many people who've suggested that the best way to support the troops is to support policy that won't require them to go to war, and to work to bring home those who have gone to war. It is easier to support soldiers who make the decision to refuse to participate in invasions like the war in Iraq, and my own dream is of a day when so many young men in so many different countries refuse to fight each other for the purposes old men have contrived that the enterprise of war collapses — but that's a topic for another day.

CAREGIVING: A SPECIAL SECTION

Foster Care

Betty Reid Mandell

VICTORIAN PHILANTHROPISTS didn't mince words when they talked about poor kids — those kids were dangerous or perishing — that is, in danger of becoming criminals or already sunk in crime. The philanthropists formed charity schools, "Ragged Schools," and Sunday Schools to teach these children some morals and a little reading — not enough to give them big ideas about their station in life, but enough to get them to work a little more efficiently and obediently. Boys got a little math; girls didn't because they were headed for domestic work. The Sunday Schools, held on the only day when the children did not work, had a further purpose — to keep the "city Arabs" off the streets so that the respectable citizens could have a quiet Sabbath.

In the streets of New York City, poor children were as much of a threat to the bourgeoisie as the London kids were. Charles Loring Brace, a Yale-educated Protestant minister who hated Catholics, founded the New York City Children's Aid Society. He preached that immigrants were genetically inferior and that the only hope for their children was immediate removal from their parents' "evil influence." He conceived the idea of shipping "the children of the dangerous classes" — mostly children of poor immigrants — to farms in the West, Midwest, and South. The farmers needed farm hands and their wives needed domestic help. Thus foster care began in the United States (called "placing out" in those days), and between 1854 and 1929 the Children's Aid Society shipped about 100,000 children out of New York City. Society members combed the streets looking for children. Poor parents were often terrified that they would snatch their children. "To many of the poor, the child savers were actually child stealers." Most of the children were not orphans, but had parents who were too poor to care for them. Most of the parents were single mothers.

Some people called the program "the wolf of indentured labor in the sheep's clothing of Christian charity." Most of the children were Catholic, and most of the foster homes were Protestant. "Expressing a quintessentially new-world romance about rural life," Brace believed that the poorest rural home was better than the best institution. In fact, many of the children were overworked and some were sexually assaulted.

Westward expansion ended; the Catholic church protested placements of Catholic children in Protestant homes; child labor was no longer as profitable; and the "free" foster home changed into the agency-supervised foster home. Since its beginning, state- and agency-sponsored foster care has been mainly a program for the children of the poor.

Conservatives have always been worried about the poor and their children. Edward Banfield argued in 1974 that none of the programs of the 1960s War on Poverty had done

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any good. He believed that only authoritarian policies such as institutional care, separation of children from parents, or preventive detention based on the statistical probability of criminal behavior would even begin to eradicate it. Shortly before Christmas of 1994, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich championed a bill that would let states use federal money for orphanages. Critics invoked Charles Dickens and Scrooge; Gingrich countered with nostalgic images of *Boys Town* and Spencer Tracy. By the time President Clinton denounced the plan as "dead wrong," Mr. Gingrich was protesting that he had been misunderstood.

The root meaning of "proletariat" is "people who have no other wealth but their children." Since the beginnings of foster care, most poor parents have been afraid of the power of the state to take away their children, their last remaining wealth. The 19th century Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was called "the Cruelty" by its clients. "Poor children said to their immigrant parents, mothers-in-law said to mothers, feuding neighbors said to each other, 'Don't cross me or I'll report you to the Cruelty." Malcolm X, describing in his autobiography how the state put his mother in a mental hospital and placed him in a foster home, called foster care legalized slavery:

> We were "state children," court wards: (The judge) had the full say over us. A white man in charge of a black man's children! Nothing but legal, modern slavery — however kindly intentioned . . . I truly believe that if ever a state social agency destroyed a family, it destroyed ours. We wanted and tried to stay together. Our home didn't have to be destroyed. But the Welfare, the courts, and their doctor, gave us the one-to-three punch.

In a 1966 survey of 624 children in foster care in New York City, some Puerto Rican and Black parents expressed the same feeling that Malcolm X had; they felt that their children had been "taken by the Whites." About 15 percent of the parents studied — those on the lowest socioeconomic level — thought agencies were usurpers and believed that "agencies act like parents have no rights at all — they think they own the children."

Defining the Problem

THE GOAL OF CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES is to protect children from abuse and neglect. But how do they define abuse and neglect? Definitions are shaped by economic and political conditions and by attitudes toward race, religion, gender, the family, and children. Legal definitions of neglect and abuse are ambiguous, giving rise to many lawsuits against child protection agencies.

The white Protestants of the 19th century viewed immigrants as the dangerous Other who needed to be brought under control and disciplined. They didn't like the smell of garlic in Italian homes and thought it was an aphrodisiac. They didn't like the smell of cabbage in Irish homes. They didn't like Catholics, and most of the immigrants were Catholic. They didn't like children on the street. In the countries they came from, the immigrants expected their children to help make a living. If they had a job in the United States, their wages were low and there was no safety net. They sent their children into the streets to beg, collect junk to sell, or sing or play instruments. The child savers suspected that entertaining on the streets led to sexual delinquency, particularly for girls.

In tracing the history of child protection, Linda Gordon said, "More conservative times bring psychological explanations to the foreground, while social explanations dominate when progressive attitudes and social reform movements are stronger." In the 1950s, a period of social conservatism, women-blaming escalated. Social workers tended to support marriage, even at great cost, but also looked suspiciously on active extended-family networks. Child protection workers coined a new diagnostic category of "emotional neglect," which became primarily a description of an inadequate mother-child relationship. "Child neglect discussion has particularly vividly revealed anxieties about women's 'desertion' of domesticity." Mother-blaming has continued to the present. A child welfare worker in Massachusetts says that in her office all case records are under the name of the mother, even when the abuser was the father or boy friend. The majority of the parents who have been charged with neglect or abuse are single mothers.

"Alarms about the 'decline of the family' have been periodic in U.S. history since the 1840s, and they have been mainly backlashes against the increasing autonomy of women and children."

Neglect

ACCUSATIONS OF NEGLECT are usually connected in some way to poverty — lack of adequate nutrition, homelessness, dirty homes, poor supervision. A study of how 214 mothers on welfare provided for their families showed that most of them supplemented their meager welfare grants with help from families, boyfriends, agencies or under-the-table work. The only mother who was able to meet her expenses with her welfare grant (by doing without entertainment, school supplies, transportation, laundry, clothing, Christmas or birthday gifts) had been reported by several neighbors to child protective services for neglect. Her child frequently went hungry, had only one change of clothes and often missed school because he lacked adequate winter clothing.

The welfare reform bill (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996) is putting more parents at risk for being charged with neglect and having their children taken away. If a mother is unable to find or to do a job, she is at risk of becoming homeless and of being unable to buy food and clothing for her child. If she gets a job and can't find day care or can't afford it, she may leave her child unsupervised. Those families who have reached their 5 year lifetime time limit for assistance are at the greatest risk. A study of mothers of young children who receive welfare found that relatively less generous AFDC benefits were associated with higher rates of children living apart from their mothers. Welfare reform ended the guarantee of basic economic support for families, but mandated efforts to protect children from maltreatment. Some states use TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) money to pay for foster care. This is well spent when it goes to kinship care programs to help extended family members care for their children, but much of the money is being spent on foster care with strangers rather than for services that would prevent placement.

The White House Conference on Children of 1909 proclaimed that children should not be removed from their homes for poverty alone, but, as Linda Gordon says, "Poverty is never alone; rather it comes packaged with depression and anger, poor nutrition and housekeeping, lack of education and medical care, leaving children alone, exposing children to improper influences."

Abuse

THERE HAS BEEN a steady enlarging of the definition of abuse in the past thirty years. It has expanded beyond physical harm to emotional harm, even to "educational harm." There has been increasing concern for "failure to thrive" infants. Physicians explore "sudden infant death syndrome" to detect cases in which the child was suffocated. Physicians are also detecting more cases in which violent shaking has resulted in injury or death.

Definitions become hotly contested arenas. The following is a discussion of some differing definitions of child abuse.

Cultural Practices

DIFFERENT CULTURAL PRACTICES pose a problem for child welfare workers, and for the general public. At the extreme, there is general agreement in the United States that clitorectomy of girls constitutes child abuse, but there are many gray areas. Randy Cohen responded to one of these in "The Ethicist" column of the *New York Times* magazine. The questioner asked about a co-worker who is taking a week off to be with her 6-year-old daughter while the little girl fasts for 6 days — not a total fast, but a diet of fruit, nuts and water, part of a tradition observed in her native India. The questioner asks if this should be reported as child abuse. Cohen responded: "You keep quiet not because you defer to tradition but because you've no knowledge of actual abuse. A few days on a vegetarian diet, even an austere diet like this one, does not meet that standard." Cohen goes on to say that while some professions have a legal duty to report suspected child abuse, we all have a duty to thwart imminent serious harm to a particular person, whether the harm arises from religious conviction, local custom, or ordinary boneheadedness. He concludes, "I'd feel no better about your burning me at the stake out of deep spiritual yearning than I would because you were just having a bad day."

Spanking

THERE IS NO GENERAL AGREEMENT in the United States about whether spanking constitutes abuse. This country is not yet ready to pass a law prohibiting spanking, as Sweden, Finland, and Norway have done. Yet there was a tentative step in that direction by the City Council of Oakland, California, which introduced a resolution in 1999 to make Oakland the nation's first official No Spanking Zone. They planned to place stop signs with that message in libraries and other public buildings. "We want people to know it's not a good idea to hit kids. And when the government takes a stand against it, it helps them realize they're not supposed to do it," said Dr. Irwin Hyman, a psychologist who runs the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives at Philadelphia's Temple University. Opponents of the purely symbolic resolution argued that local government has no business telling parents how to discipline their children, and that laws already exist to protect youngsters from child abuse. (The resolution did not pass.)

This country is not yet ready to pass a law prohibiting spanking, as Sweden, Finland, and Norway have done.

In one episode of his animated cartoon "Boondocks," Aaron McGruder shows a little boy having a destructive temper tantrum in a supermarket while his mother looks on, feeling powerless to stop it. The grandfather loans his belt to her. She whips the child while several onlookers look on in approval, and she herself finds that she enjoys it. The grandfather tells the mother, "I believe no child should go unwhipped."

In Massachusetts all homeless families who apply for shelter are required to be interviewed by a child welfare worker whose job it is to assess the risk to the children. Most clients are worried about this interview, fearing the possibility of having their children taken away. In a Boston welfare office where I do outreach, a Haitian colleague warned a Haitian client not to tell the social worker that she spanks her children because the child welfare department is against spanking.

In May 1992, about two hundred aggrieved people held a rally in the parking lot of the Division for Children and Youth Services (DCYS) in Concord, New Hampshire. They were supporting Stephen and Joan DeCosta, both born-again Christians whose four children were placed in foster care during a highly publicized dispute with the division in 1989. The DeCostas were accused of child abuse when the children's grandmother reported that one of the DeCosta children had been spanked until he bled. The DeCostas are one of a group of parents who claim they have a right to decide how to discipline their children, while DCYS maintains it has an obligation to draw the line. A district court judge found the DeCostas guilty of abuse, but the case was resolved by a consent decree between the family and the division. The family was reunited, which the division insists is always its ultimate goal.

Sexual Abuse

THE DEFINITION OF SEXUAL ABUSE changed through history. In the years between 1880 and 1910, the Massachusetts Society for the Protection of Children recognized incest but thought it was exclusively a vice of the poor, whom they considered to be animalistic and lacking in standards of family life. "Its agents did not see themselves in incestuous fathers, or their own daughters in the incest victims they met." Although they saw incest as a brutal male crime, they did not view its victims as innocent. They drew a connection between the incest and a girl's subsequent sexual misbehavior.

In the years between 1910 and 1960, child protection agencies were alarmed about sexual attacks on young girls, but assumed these attacks were perpetrated by strangers. They paid less attention to incest and more attention to the sexual delinquency of girls. There was heightened concern about the girls' sexual delinquency during the war, as there was panic about venereal disease. "With VD as the emphasis, soldiers and sailors became the victims, and their female sexual partners the disease-spreading sources."

"Incest was brought out into the open only when a women's rights movement challenged assumptions that conventional family life was inherently superior." Before that, social workers and psychiatrists had been skeptical toward claims of young girls who said they had been seduced by their fathers. A Boston psychiatrist said in 1954, "We must ask ourselves whether our tendency to disbelief is not in part at least based on denial. The incest barrier is perhaps the strongest support of our cultural family structure, and we may well shrink from the thought of its being threatened."

The women's movement created widespread public consciousness about sexual abuse. That consciousness sometimes turned into hysteria, as in the accusations about sexual abuse in day care centers such as Fells Acre in Massachusetts in 1984 where the staff were accused of highly unlikely acts of sexual molestation of children. The staff were jailed, but this triggered a study of false memories of children, showing that children could be coached by social workers and psychologists to "remember" things that never actually happened. This happened in a period when more woman were entering the paid labor market and there was much anxiety and guilt about working mothers who placed their children in day care, which buttressed the resistance of conservatives toward expanding day care for working mothers.

Hysteria about sexual abuse sometimes leads to a kind of Puritanism. A male day care teacher in the 1980s told me that he was not allowed to hug little girls because of the fear of accusations of sexual abuse.

A single mother on welfare was caught in this hysteria. In September 1986 a social worker with the Massachusetts Department of Social Services informed Brenda Frank that an anonymous complaint of sexual abuse and neglect of her two young daughters had been filed against her. Frank said, "I was frozen. Shocked. It was beyond my comprehension. . . The allegations included the fact that my 4-year-old, Emily, was still being breast-fed occasionally and that both girls (Emily and Rebecca, then 6) slept in my bed with me." Frank belonged to the La Leche League, a group advocating breast-feeding until a child naturally weans herself. Frank had read dozens of books on nutrition, childbirth and parenting during her two pregnancies and said, "I felt sure that all I had to do was explain the La Leche philosophy of child-led weaning and give her some of their literature. I thought I would show her their literature and the stuff I've been reading about the concept of mother and child sharing a bed. I had a book by Tine Thevenin called *The Family Bed: An Age-Old concept in Child Rearing.* I told the worker that I didn't agree with the fact that in our country children are expected to sleep alone at night in their own rooms behind closed doors. I told her my girls slept with me because I wanted them to feel safe at night."

The social worker was not impressed by Frank's progressive ideas. She sent a letter to Frank telling her that the allegations against her had been substantiated. Frank got a lawyer who appealed to the commissioner of DSS for a review of her case. The allegations were dropped, but it would be two years before her name was finally taken off DSS's central list as an alleged perpetrator. Frank became an advocate for other parents. She helped to start Families United, a support group for families having problems with DSS. At the time of the Frank case, there was no mechanism by which a person could appeal a complaint of abuse or neglect. Frank helped to change that. Now there is an automatic review process in place in Massachusetts.

Frank believed that the person who anonymously reported her to DSS worked at her complex and might have been angered by Frank's advocacy against the use of pesticides on the grounds and for the ability of elderly residents to have pets.

Sexual hysteria is not confined to the United States. A highly publicized case involving sexual abuse in France has led to a re-examination of the entire French penal system. In February 2000, the social services office of Boulogne-sur-Mer reported suspicions of sexual abuse of children by their parents in the working-class neighborhood of Tour-du-Renard, in Outreau, and placed the children of the couple in foster care. The examining magistrate in charge of the Outreau case seemed to have been convinced he was confronted with a vast pedophilic network. The accused couple implicated other people, and the magistrate imprisoned them. Some were imprisoned for 3 years. One committed suicide after a year of detention. The media described the accused as modern-day "monsters." Eventually 17 people were indicted. All of the 24 children of the accused were placed in foster homes.

In May 2003, after 3 years of denial, the man of the original couple confessed that he raped his daughters and exculpated all the other defendants except his wife and two neighbors. Four years after the Outreau affair ended, an official commission of inquiry was appointed to "examine the malfunction of justice" and make proposals for reforming the French penal system. The affair provoked outrage among all French citizens. The commission's meetings were broadcast in their entirety by several TV stations. The meetings of the parliamentary commission broke all records for viewership.

Some of the innocent defendants were still not able to recover custody of their children.

Homosexuality

LIVING WITH HOMOSEXUAL PARENTS is thought by some people to be a form of child abuse. This issue became a political football in Massachusetts in the 1980s. The state child welfare department, Department of Social Services (DSS) placed two brothers, age 22 months and two and a half years, with two gay men, Donald Babets and David Jean, in May 1985. When some neighbors complained, the *Boston Globe* published an article about the placement. Two weeks after the placement, DSS removed the children and placed them in another foster home and later returned them to their mother, who had originally requested the placement and had approved of their being placed with the gay men.

After the article appeared, a firestorm of controversy ensued and the case gained national publicity. The men had been highly recommended to DSS by a Unitarian pastor and a Catholic priest. The pastor said, "We're dealing with a very stable family in the community," but a neighbor who complained said, "I see it ultimately as a breakdown of the society and its values and morals."

On May 24 the state secretary of human services Philip W. Johnston (now the chair of the Democratic party in Massachusetts), serving with Michael Dukakis as Governor, announced that "this administration believes that foster children are served best when placed in traditional family settings — that is, with relatives, or in families with married couples," except in exceptional circumstances. Columnist Ellen Goodman supported the right of Babets and Jean to be foster parents, but saw it as a second-best choice, saying, "In the best of all possible worlds, each child would have its own caring mother and father."

As a result of the publicity, New Hampshire banned placing children with gays. The director of the Bureau of Children sent a directive to workers "to make it 'crystal clear' that New Hampshire does not want gays as foster parents."

Babets and Jean challenged the DSS decision and threatened to organize to defeat Dukakis in the 1986 gubernatorial campaign, saying, "The man does not have one fiber of intellectual or moral integrity in his bones." Gay rights activists picketed the governor, testified at hearings, and sat in at the governor's office. They were supported by the Massachusetts chapter of National Association of Social Workers, the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society, the Massachusetts Psychological Association, and Simmons College School of Social Work. The Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union sued the state along with Gay and Lesbian Advocates, asking the state to nullify the rule that requires the foster parent application to ask about sexual preference.

In November 1989, the Massachusetts legislature passed a bill adding "sexual orientation" to a state law that bans discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, ancestry and religion. In April 1990, the Dukakis administration changed its policy on gay foster parenting. The new state policy made parenting experience — not sexual orientation or marital status — the key factor in assigning children for foster care in Massachusetts.

In 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court declared same-sex marriage to be legal, making Massachusetts the first and only state to allow same-sex marriage. Opponents of the law have collected signatures to conduct a referendum on the law, which they hope will lead to a constitutional amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage.

Dukakis lost the support of Boston's Gay/Lesbian Political Alliance in his bid for the president. They unanimously endorsed the candidacy of Rev. Jesse Jackson in the Democratic primary. Most of the homosexual vote in California's primary was expected to go to Jackson, who was the only candidate to address gay and lesbian issues during the presidential campaign.

In 2006 the gay issue surfaced again. The four Roman Catholic bishops of Massachusetts planned to seek permission from the state to exclude gay couples as adoptive parents. Catholic Charities had placed 13 children with same-sex couples in the past two decades, "a tiny fraction of 720 adoptions completed by them during that time." All of the 13 children placed by Catholic Charities had been in DSS foster homes. They had been abused or neglected and were considered hard to place because they were older or had special needs.

The 42-member board of Catholic Charities, which is made of some of Boston's most prominent lay Catholics, voted unanimously in support of continuing to allow gay couples to adopt children. Seven board members resigned over the bishops' edict. State authorities say adoption agencies cannot discriminate. Catholic Charities ended its adoption services, saying that this was the only way they could comply with both state law and Catholic policy. Governor Mitt Romney talks of trying to get a law passed that would allow religious agencies to get an exemption from state law. The Massachusetts legislature is not sympathetic to his proposal.

Witnessing Domestic Violence

CHILDREN OF BATTERED MOTHERS have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care solely because the children saw their mothers being beaten by husbands or boyfriends. Judge Jack Weinstein of the U.S. District court, Eastern District of New York, ruled this practice to be unconstitutional and ordered it stopped. An expert witness in the case, Jeffrey L. Edelson, who surveyed the existing research on how children respond to witnessing domestic violence, observed that

> some child protection agencies in the United States appear to be defining exposure to domestic violence as a form of child maltreatment. . . Defining witnessing as maltreatment is a mistake. Doing so ignores the fact that large numbers of children in these studies showed no negative development problems and some showed evidence of strong coping abilities. Automatically defining witnessing as maltreatment may also ignore battered mothers' efforts to develop safe environments for their children and themselves.

Substance Abuse

THE "WAR ON DRUGS" not only resulted in a dramatic increase in the prison population: it also led to a dramatic increase in the foster care population. A woman in Illinois was put on trial in 1988 before a grand jury for manslaughter in the death of her addicted newborn. A Florida woman was convicted in 1989 of delivering drugs to the recipient (the fetus) in her womb. A judge sent a woman in Washington to jail for the last few months of her pregnancy after a drug test revealed cocaine use.

Some people believe that jailing drug-addicted mothers serves as a warning to other woman, but Dr. Ira Chasnoff, a pediatrician who heads a Chicago perinatal association, says, "If you jail one woman, the only lesson you teach women is to stay out of the prenatal health care system." The lesson he wants to deliver to these mothers is: "Come in for health care. *Now*. If we jail women until delivery in a mythical drug-free prison, do we then send them and their babies back to the same streets? Or do we take the children away from their mothers and put them into the beleagured foster care system? And will we jail those children again when they are 16, pregnant and strung out?" The columnist Ellen Goodman comments, " How ironic to spend money jailing mothers while others who seek help are being turned away, because there is no room at the treatment center."

In a University of Florida study of children born with cocaine in their systems, one group was placed in foster care and another group with birth mothers able to care for them. After one year, the babies were tested using all the usual measures of infant development: rolling over, sitting up, reaching out. Consistently, the children placed with their birth mothers did better. For the foster children, the separation from their mothers was more toxic than the cocaine.

Several years ago I helped to found a house for drug-addicted mothers who were in treatment and trying to get their children back from foster care. The city, which owned the lot in the Roxbury district of Boston, sold it to the organization for $1. We had a house built on the lot which had facilities for children to sleep over on visits with their mothers. The mothers eventually got their own apartments and were reunited with their children after successfully completing treatment.

A System in Crisis

A DIRECTOR of the Child Welfare League of America in 1969 said that foster care is "a mess."

It is still a mess.

Many of the children have been bounced from home to home, and sometimes to residential institutions, and become more emotionally damaged than they were when they went into the system. Most children who remain in foster care for more than a few weeks experience multiple placements. As of September 30, 1998, nearly two thirds of the children then in foster care had experienced between one and two placements, 21 percent had experienced 3 or 4 placements, and 16 percent had experienced five or more. Lamont Wilder, a child described by Nina Bernstein in *The Lost Children of Wilder*, had experienced 4 different placements and said that "the only emotion he really knew how to feel was anger. This was the way the system had damaged him, he thought. It had made him really good at feeling angry, and confused by any other emotion."

Most children who remain in foster care for more than a few weeks experience multiple placements.

There are never enough foster parents because they aren't paid enough to attract more people, and they are often given little training. Because of the shortage of foster homes, children are often placed with unqualified people or foster homes that are overloaded. Workers are generally overloaded and often inexperienced. It is a difficult and often dangerous job, and there is high turnover. While most have college degrees, the degrees are not necessarily related to their work. They spend a large portion of their time investigating false allegations of abuse or neglect and don't have enough time to get deeply involved with their clients.

Foster care doesn't necessarily protect children from abuse. According to data compiled by the Department of Health and Human Services in 1999, the rate of child maltreatment was more than 75 percent higher — and the rate of fatal maltreatment almost 350 percent higher — in foster care than in the general population.

Children who "age out" of foster care, at the age of 18 (or in some states 21), are at greater risk of mental illness, poverty, and homelessness, than are adults who had not been in foster care. A 2005 study, based on a random sample of 659 case records and interviews with 479 foster-care survivors, showed that when compared to adults of the same age and ethnic background who had not been in foster care:

• Only 20 percent could be said to be "doing well."
• They had double the rate of mental illness. Their rate of posttraumatic stress disorder was double the rate for Iraq war veterans.
• They were three times more likely to be living in poverty — and fifteen times less likely to have finished college.

Nationwide, about 60 percent of reports of child abuse and neglect received by child welfare agencies are found upon investigation to be "unfounded." Disgruntled spouses make complaints about their spouses; boyfriends and girlfriends make complaints about each other; relatives report each other; neighbors report neighbors; workers report their co-workers. People are allowed to remain anonymous when they complain, without fear of reprisal. A Canadian study found that intentionally false reports of neglect or abuse were relatively infrequent (4 percent of all reported cases), but in cases where a custody or access dispute occurred, the rate of intentionally fabricated allegations was higher (12 percent). Anonymous reporters and noncustodial parents (usually fathers) most often make intentionally false reports, while custodial parents (usually mothers) and children were least likely to fabricate reports of abuse or neglect. Neglect is the most common form of intentionally fabricated maltreatment.

There are few due process rights for parents who have been accused. Workers have the power to remove a child on the spot in 20 states. (There is no equivalent of a "Miranda warning.") In all but four of the rest, they need merely to call the police to do it for them. Often these removals occur at night. Parents must then go to court to try to get their children back. In most states, there is supposed to be a hearing in a matter of days, but often it takes longer to get their day in court. Such hearings tend to be five-minute assembly line procedures with a Child Protection Services lawyer who does this for a living on one side, and a bewildered, impoverished parent who just met her lawyer five minutes before — if she has a lawyer at all — on the other. Children are almost never returned at these hearings. If the children are lucky, they get to go home after the next hearing in 30 or 90 days. Or maybe they will never go home at all.

Children are often removed from their homes or schools without warning, subjected to intrusive interrogations, medical examinations, and/or strip searches, and placed in foster homes or group residences while the legal system sorts out their future. This can be a terrifying experience for children and families. The number of emergency removals has increased in the past two decades. This has led to a dramatic increase in the foster care population, which grew from 262,000 in 1982 to nearly 550,000 in 2001. More than one in three were later found not to have been maltreated at all.

History of Child Protection

CHILD PROTECTION grew out of eighteenth century child-saving activities, devoted to placing poor and abandoned children in asylums and apprenticeships. Child-saving drew heavily on women's reform and philanthropic work, springing not only from condescension toward the "lower classes" but also from their search for an arena in which to feel powerful. They were motivated by religious convictions.

The 19th century child-savers were influenced by the women's movement and by the temperance movement. Their critique of the patriarchy led them to define cruelty to children as primarily a male problem, "usually presumed to be an ignorant, 'depraved immigrant man.'" They blamed drinking for virtually all family irregularities.

During the Progressive era, middle-class "experts" replaced the upper-class charity ladies in child-saving. They emphasized child neglect more than abuse and regarded poverty, unemployment, and illness as contributing causes, in addition to alcohol. They were alarmed by the number of single mothers involved in neglect cases, which they believed indicated a weakening of the family. This attitude toward single mothers has persisted to the present time. The Progressives assumed the ideal family norm to be a father working and earning "family wages" and a wife staying home to care for the children. Poor mothers could never live up to this norm because they had to work to support their family. As more middle-class mothers entered the wage labor market, the norm was increasingly outdated for all families.

The Progressive era child protection work helped build the new profession of social work, which dominated the child protection field until the 1960s, when doctors medicalized child abuse by defining "the battered child syndrome." Since then pediatricians have been the final arbiters of child abuse, although social workers are still primarily the arbiters of child neglect.

The development of social work contained two divergent streams — casework on the one hand, and group work and community organizing on the other. Casework focuses on individuals and their problems, while group work focuses on people giving each other support in solving problems, and community organization mobilizes people to solve problems through social action.

Casework was begun by Charity Organization Society (COS) workers in the 1880s, who were politically conservative. They believed that charitable giving eroded personal responsibility and their main goal was to prevent the undeserving from receiving relief. Social work schools were begun by COS workers, which emphasized casework and drew on psychological theory. Settlement house workers were contemptuous of the COS approach. They lived and worked *with* the people in their neighborhoods, building on their strengths and valuing their heritage. Jane Addams helped immigrants develop their native crafts and helped their children to be proud of their parents' achievements.

Some caseworkers have always worked for progressive reforms, but their reliance on casework meant that few social workers formed support groups of parents, foster parents, and children, and fewer still mobilized their clients to change the system. When I worked in a child welfare department in Greeley, Colorado, in the late 1950s, I organized a foster parent support group, and the foster parents in turn organized a support group of the adolescents in their care. At the time there was a policy that prohibited foster children from getting a driver's license. These adolescents protested that policy, and persuaded the director of child welfare to rescind it.

In the late 1960s at a child welfare agency in Hartford, Connecticut, I helped to organize a foster parents' group. The agency encouraged them to be partners with the social workers in decision making. The foster parents worked closely with the parents of the children in their care to strengthen the ties between the children and their parents. One foster parent even invited the child's mother to live at the foster parent's house for a week to help the parent gain a better understanding of the child, in preparation for the child's return to his mother. After the child returned, the mother and child continued contact with the foster parent.

Like all caring professions dominated by women, foster care is both undervalued and underpaid. Most social work staff are female, except for the executives, who are mostly male. Many foster parents are married couples, but most of the day-to-day care of the children is done by the foster mother. Social workers are often unionized, especially in public agencies, but as far as I know there has been no attempt to unionize foster parents, although there is a national organization of foster parents, with state chapters. The money that foster parents receive from agencies is usually called "board payments" rather than "wages." This carries the message that foster parents are not considered to be professionals, but are doing the work out of their love of children. Foster parents often complain that they spend more on the children than they receive.

Paying foster parents a living wage would prevent many of the moves that children undergo in the system. For example, Lamont Wilder had to leave a loving foster home where he was thriving because the foster mother separated from her husband and had no marketable skills because she had stayed home to care for her own child and the foster child. She had to get training and find a job, and could not afford to keep the foster child. The child was then placed in several foster homes and treatment institutions and suffered serious emotional damage as a result. If the foster mother had been paid a living wage, she would probably have kept the child. "Lamont's 21 years in foster care had cost the public $531,021." That amount of money could have been used to pay the first foster mother a salary of $25,286 for 21 years. When Lamont "aged out" of foster at the age of 21, he couldn't afford the price of a bed.

Race and Religion

Charles Loring Brace viewed the children who he put on the "orphan trains" as racially inferior. While the Irish, Italians, and Poles weren't black, they were seen as something other than white. Catholics believed that the purpose of the orphan trains was to destroy the Catholic faith by stealing and converting its children.

In response, the Catholic charity establishment expanded its own child saving operation and organized their own "orphan trains." The children they sent west were predominantly Irish.

When one of Brace's orphan trains arrived at a town, townspeople would flock to the station to look them over and selected the child they preferred. However, the Catholics, through the New York Foundling Hospital run by the Sisters of Charity, arranged foster home placements in advance through the local priest. One of these placements involved 41 children age 2 – 6 who were shipped with seven staff members to two Arizona copper towns, Clifton and Morenci in 1904. Almost all the practicing Catholics in the towns were Mexicans, whose men worked in the copper mines. The priest had arranged to place the children in these Mexican homes. While the Irish children had been seen as something other than white in New York City, the train ride "transformed them from Irish to white" in the eyes of the white Anglos who met the children at the station. They were shocked that white children should be given to Mexicans. They wanted the children for themselves. The women persuaded their husbands and the sheriff to form a posse, which went into the homes of the Mexicans with guns and forcibly removed the children. The nuns took 21 children back to New York and 19 remained with Anglo parents. At the court trial in Phoenix, no Mexicans were present or heard from. "It was an Anglo courtroom in its personnel and equally in its definition of non-Anglo people." The court ruled that it was "in the best interests of the children" to leave them in the Anglo homes. The country's leading progressive social work periodical, *Charities*, approved of the Arizona court decision and declared the Mexican homes "degraded and unfit."

Linda Gordon cites other instances of child stealing in the name of the best interests of the child:

> Between 1910 and 1975, white Australians stole 100,000 children from aboriginal women, giving the light-skinned children to white couples to adopt and the dark-skinned to orphanages. Inuit and Native American children were forcibly removed from their families in both U.S. and Canadian government action. The Swiss government took Romany children. In Israel, Ashkenazi (European) Jewish women, with the help of doctors, stole babies born to Sephardic Yemeni Jewish mothers from the hospitals; the mothers were told that the babies had died.

The clash between religion and race surfaced again in New York City in the 1970s. A liberal children's court judge, Justine Wise Polier, a founder of the Children's Defense Fund, teamed up with a New York Civil Liberties Union lawyer Marcia Lowry to challenge New York City's private Jewish and Catholic agencies for their practice of denying services to black Protestant children, and for their violation of the First Amendment's separation of church and state. The plaintiff in the case, Shirley Wilder, was 13 when the case was filed and had been committed to the state training school at Hudson, New York, a harsh reformatory for delinquents. In the foster care system that had evolved for over a century in New York City, 90 percent of all foster beds were controlled by private agencies. "State law let the leading Catholic and Jewish charities select their own kind, leaving behind a growing pool of black, Protestant children like Shirley."

While 85 – 95 percent of their funding came from the government, the private agencies resisted government oversight of their practices. In fact, there had been very little government oversight of their practices. "The stunted public sector, long forbidden by statute to compete with the institutional offerings of the religious agencies, provided only temporary shelters — the 'black holes' of the system, Polier called them — and reformatories for delinquents."

The administrators of the private agencies and their elite board members dug in their heels and fought fiercely. The case dragged on for years. Some people compared it to Jarndyce v. Jarndyce, the legal battle described in Charles Dickens' *Bleak House.* A settlement stipulated that children should be placed on a first come, first served basis in the best available placement consistent with the wish for an in-religion preference. An Orthodox Jewish agency was exempted from the religious requirement.

By the time of the final decree in 1987, city officials argued that the decree was obsolete because the city's demographics of poverty, drugs and AIDS had nearly tripled the total number of children in the system, even as they had reduced the percentage of white children to the vanishing point. "Agencies that wanted to stay in business had little choice but to fill their foster homes and beds with black Protestant children."

In 1990 Robert L. Little, the youngest brother to Malcolm X, became the director of the Child Welfare Administration. He saw the entire foster care system as dominated by whites. He favored kinship care for children, i.e., placement in homes where relatives were paid as foster parents. He saw this as similar to the foster home in which he and his sister Yvonne had grown up. They had been the only ones of the Little children placed by their mother's arrangement with friends of hers from the West Indies, in a foster home that would continue to be a gathering place for the Little siblings even after Robert aged out of foster care at nineteen.

Little created new black-run social service agencies. He redirected money toward a program of family preservation, and he championed sibling reunification at all costs for children already divided among different foster homes. By March 1993, 43 percent of all children placed by the city went to kinship homes. The basic foster care rate was more than triple the AFDC grant. As new minority-run agencies sprang up, Little transferred kinship-care cases to those that he found deserving of support. Critics complained that foster care was now being used as a form of economic development for the black community, "a back-door method of income redistribution."

In 1993 the ACLU's Marcia Lowry filed a new motion, asking the judge to appoint a receiver to take over the city's Child Welfare Administration. Little told a reporter from *New York Newsday* that Lowry's contempt motion was a calculated effort to discredit Dinkins on the eve of the mayoral election, a racial power play to put a white judge in authority over 3 black officials and over the overwhelmingly black and Hispanic children in their charge.

Robert Little returned to Michigan in 1993. He died in 1999.

In 1995 the highly publicized death of Elisa Izquierdo brought a surge in removals that swept many children into an already chaotic and overwhelmed system. Whenever this happens, an overwhelmed system typically sees a rise, rather than a reduction, in the number of children known to the child protection agency who die of abuse. A former child abuse investigator for the New York City Administration for Children's Services describes the agency climate after a highly publicized case of child abuse:

> At moments of uncertainty, the mantra was "Cover your ass" — a phrase heard often around the office . . . The obsessive concern with liability at the field offices quickly overshadows the reasonable criteria (workers) have been taught for identifying abuse and neglect. Most quickly learn to abandon their training and to do what it takes to survive . . . Caseworkers are also quiet about unnecessary removals because *doing a removal and then transferring a case to foster care takes them a lot less time than keeping it and trying to work with a family.*

The turmoil in the system prompted Mayor Giuliani to pull the entire Child Welfare Administration, then run by Kathryn Croft, out of the larger city social services agency, create a new free-standing Administration for Children's Service and name Nick Scoppetta to run it. While he made neighborhood-based foster care central to reform and stressed the need for more drug-treatment options for parents and more preventive programs to make the removal of children unnecessary, he also emphasized the necessity of removing children from their homes in order to protect them. Preventive programs were severely hurt by Giuliani budget cuts. In an era of welfare reform, poverty became criminalized and parents who could not provide for their children were suspect.

> Poor mothers were led away in handcuffs because they had left a child unattended while trying to buy milk at the grocery store, or because a child had wandered away during a family eviction. One severely depressed mother in Brooklyn was actually criminally charged with endangering the welfare of a child after she notified the authorities that she had taken an overdose of sleeping pills in a suicide attempt; had she died, prosecutors said, her three-year-old would have been left alone in the apartment.

Marcia Lowry said she could not fix poverty, but surely she could fix foster care. Both she and Nick Scoppetta believed in the fiction that the two realms could be separated.

The mother of Lamont Wilder's child, Lakisha Reynolds, was in and out of low-wage jobs, college, welfare, and a homeless shelter. When she applied for food stamps for herself and her child in 1999, she was turned down. The Legal Aid Society recruited her for a class action suit, *Lakisha Reynolds v. Guiliani* which charged that the city's Human Resources Administration had endangered needy children because city workers turned away people who had a right to food stamps and Medicaid.

Shirley Wilder became a crack addict and died of AIDS in 1998 at the age of 38 in a hospice. When he aged out of foster care at the age of 21, Lamont Wilder was homeless.

From Exclusion to Over Inclusion

BLACK CHILDREN were originally virtually excluded from the child protection system and even when they were included, as in almshouses in the 1700s, they were treated more harshly. When the women of the Society of Friends established the Philadelphia Association for the Care of Colored Children in 1822 for 12 children, "the shelter so angered whites that a mob destroyed it in 1837." During Reconstruction, the Freedmen's Bureau helped to develop orphanages for black children, but blacks were treated separately from white children and in an inferior manner. White-run charity organizations, mutual aid societies and the settlement house movement of the mid 1800s and early 1900s excluded blacks. Black children continued to be excluded from the formal child welfare system through the Progressive Era reform movement.

> In an era of welfare reform poverty became criminalized and parents who could not provide for their children were suspect.

But from the 1950s to the present, black children have been disproportionately represented in out-of-home care nationally. Although blacks comprise 12.3 percent of the U.S. population, 38 percent of all foster children are black while only 35 percent are white. As laws requiring uniform reporting in child welfare were passed, black children were at greater risk for being reported as abused or neglected. Black children were less likely to be placed in adoptive homes and were likely to remain two-and-one-half times longer than white children who also waited for permanent homes.

A study done at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia found that when doctors examined children, "toddlers with accidental injuries were over five times more likely to be evaluated for child abuse, and over three times more likely to be reported to child protection services if they were African American or Latino." A study of decisions to "substantiate" allegations of maltreatment after they are reported found that caseworkers were more likely to substantiate allegations of neglect by Black and Latino families — and the only variable that could explain the discrepancy is race. A study of women whose newborns tested positive for cocaine found that the child was more than 72 percent more likely to be taken away if the mother was black. In one study, caseworkers were given hypothetical situations and asked to evaluate the risk to the child. The scenarios were identical — except for the race of the family. Consistently, if the family was black, the workers said the child was at greater risk.

A blatant example of racism occurred in 1992 when a 10-year-old black girl was living with warm stable, black foster parents who wanted to adopt her. The girl's relatives lived close by and frequently visited her. Even though the girl wanted to stay, the child welfare agency tried to place her for adoption with strangers, a white couple from an affluent suburb. The relatives feared they would lose contact with her because none owned a car. They felt this move was motivated by the social agency's elitism — "money equals a more loving family." The aunt said, "A child belongs to people who love it, even if they are not rich."

Latino children may be taken from Spanish-speaking parents and thrown into foster homes where only English is spoken. In a notorious case in Texas, a judge threatened to take a young Latino child from her mother and place the girl with her father unless the mother agreed to speak only English in her own home.

The stereotype of the "drug-addicted welfare mother" often propagated by the "family values" Christian right has contributed to a dramatic increase in incarcerated mothers, who are disproportionately women of color. The female state and federal female prisons populations increased 275 percent between 1980 and 1992, while violent offenses increased only 1.3 percent. Many of them are mothers whose children are placed in foster care, and all of them are poor.

Permanency Planning and Family Preservation

UNTIL THE 1970S, the focus of the child welfare field was child saving and adoption. There were few resources and minimal federal oversight, public attention, or press. It was hard for families to gain access to services and hard for children to be discharged from out-of-home care.

Although child welfare ideology has changed since then, much of the practice remains the same. The three principles governing child welfare today are: (1) reasonable efforts to prevent placement; (2) permanency planning for children in out-of-home care, and (3) placement in the least detrimental alternative. The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 required "reasonable efforts" to be made to reunify families and children. However, "reasonable" is an ambiguous term, and compliance was often perfunctory. Judges were likely simply to rubber stamp the recommendations of social workers to remove the child rather than investigating whether reasonable efforts had been made to find an alternative.

A reasonable effort to prevent placement should include providing needed services such as day care or housing, but that was seldom done. A study of "lack of supervision" cases in New York City by the Child Welfare League of America found that in 52 percent of the cases studied, the service needed most was day care or babysitting. But the "service" offered most often was foster care. Courts in New York City and Illinois have found that families are repeatedly kept apart solely because they lacked decent housing. In Washington DC, where the foster care system has been taken over by the federal courts, the first receiver named by the court to run the agency found that between one-third and one-half of DC's foster children could be returned to their parents right now — if they just had a decent place to live.

Part of the reason for not providing those services is that those services simply don't exist. There is not enough housing or day care, and there is not enough financial assistance for impoverished families. There is not enough treatment for substance abuse. But there are other reasons as well. One is the financial aid received by states from the federal government. The National Commission on Children found that children often are removed from their families "prematurely or unnecessarily" because federal aid formulas give states "a strong financial incentive" to do so rather than provide services to keep families together. There is also a bureaucratic incentive to keep children in foster care. "No worker or administrator will ever be penalized for wrongly placing a child in foster care — even if the child is abused there. But if a child is left at home and something goes wrong, workers may be fired, judges transferred, and all face the wrath of the media." Finally, there is the attitude of the social worker whose first instinct is to "rescue" a child whom she sees living in poverty on the assumption that the child will be "better off" in care. She fails to assess the dangers of foster care, both physical and emotional, and the emotional damage done to the child when separated from his parents.

Child welfare ideology has established a hierarchy of alternatives for children. The preferred alternative is the birth parents' home, followed by adoption, foster care in the home of a relative, long-term foster care in the home of a stranger, and care in an institution. These principles are vague and have given rise to numerous lawsuits that charge states with noncompliance with "reasonable alternative" requirements.

Kinship Care

The expansion of kinship care has been a major component of the explosion in foster care. It has been used extensively with black families, who have a long tradition of kinship care. Twenty-five percent of children in foster care in 2000 were placed with relatives, two-thirds of them with grandparents. About two-thirds of relative placements were wards of the state; the rest were in private arrangements. A U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1979 ruled that children living in relatives' homes were entitled to the same level of foster care payments as children living with non-kin. However, many states, in order to save money, place children with relatives in private arrangement and don't pay them or give them services. Many relatives get welfare assistance rather than foster care payments. In most jurisdictions, foster home payments greatly exceed assistance payments (sometimes three times as much). Kinship homes often receive inferior services to other foster homes. In the face of high caseloads, workers may ignore kinship placements.

Kinship care is more stable for children than foster care provided by unrelated families. They generally have higher levels of parental involvement, and often result in children returning to their parents. However, children are more likely to remain in kinship care longer than in other kinds of out-of-home care. There has been some public resentment about kinship foster care payments, assuming that "bad" parents are boarding their children simply to obtain extra money from the state.

Family Preservation

All states have implemented some form of *family preservation*, intended to prevent placement in out-of-home care. The most commonly used model was called Homebuilders. This derived from crisis intervention theory which held that intensive therapeutic intervention in a family crisis could resolve their problems. Caseworkers carried from 2 to 4 cases and were available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for 4 – 6 weeks. They used psychodynamic and behavioral approaches and used behavioral check lists. They sometimes gave concrete services.

A large-scale study of the Homebuilders model in Illinois, conducted by two University of Chicago professors and a Bryn Mawr professor, found that Homebuilders was ineffective in preventing out-of-home placement. They concluded that crisis intervention was an inappropriate methodology as it was originally developed as a way to respond to disasters. Poverty is not that kind of crisis but is a chronic condition. Furthermore, it was coercive. While some parents received services they would not have received otherwise and some parents benefited from the counseling, coercive therapy is often resisted. Most of the treatment relied on casework, and several studies have shown that casework is ineffective in solving large scale social problems.

The families in the Illinois program that the researchers studied were most often poor, female-headed, single-parent households. Between one-half and three-fourths said they had emotional, financial, and housing problems. Clients wanted concrete services. Workers found it frustrating when clients did not want to work on other problems that workers viewed as important. The researchers' conclusion about family preservation programs is that *the approaches that have been tried tend to focus on the parent or the family and often ignore conditions in the community or larger social environment that may contribute to child maltreatment*.

Backlash

In 1993 there was a substantial backlash against family preservation in Illinois. The deaths of several children precipitated outrage among state legislators, the media, a congressman, and the Cook County public guardian. Critics claimed that family preservation has been allowed to supersede the best interests of the child, and that family preservation programs *reward* parents for the abuse of their children. Laws were passed to include *the best interests of the minor*.

The backlash against family preservation also occurred in other states, and in 1997 Congress passed The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), which requires states to file a termination petition in cases in which children have been in care for 15 of the past 22 months, regardless of the child's age or special needs. This means that parents who cannot resolve the problems that led to placement within 15 months are at risk of having their parental rights terminated. This will be especially hard on parents who are substance abusers and require at least 18 months treatment, as well as on women who are imprisoned.

Adoption was viewed by Congress as the new panacea for the problems of foster care. States receive additional federal funds if they exceed their prior number of completed adoptions and federal technical support to help them reach their adoption targets, *not* their targets for discharging children home. States that do not comply with the law's provisions will be denied a portion of their funds that finance foster care and other child welfare services. The law includes bounties to states of up to $8,000 or more per child for every adoption they finalize over a baseline number. The bounty is paid when the adoption is finalized, so there is an incentive to place a child with little concern about whether the placement will really last. In fact, if the adoption fails and the child is placed again, the state can collect another bounty. The law no longer requires reasonable efforts to prevent placement, but it doesn't prohibit them. It is up to the states to decide.

Adoption is not the panacea that Congress had hoped for. Small increases in adoptions occurred until 2000, but then the increases stopped. The increase in adoptions was cancelled out by the number of children taken from their parents, which increased every year but one since ASFA was passed. Many adoptions took place before ASFA was passed, 80 percent of them by foster parents and relatives. But ASFA put more pressure on states to complete adoptions. In their eagerness to get children adopted, caseworkers sometimes don't tell adoptive parents about problems the child has had, which leaves adoptive parents unprepared for the problems they will have to deal with. A disproportionate number of children from broken adoptions end up in group homes and residential treatment centers. Lamont Wilder, a black child, was sent to a white adoptive home in Minnesota. They were unable to handle his behavior problems, and he was sent back to a foster home in New York City, and eventually to a treatment institution.

There is an increasing number of adoptions that are disrupted, especially adoptions of older children who often have severe behavior problems and are likely to have retained emotional ties to their biological parents. (many adolescent run-aways from foster homes return to their parents.)

Reform

After two decades as head of the ACLU's Children's Rights Project, Marcia Lowry struck out on her own in 1995 and set up Children's Rights, Inc., an independent, national nonprofit advocacy organization. The organization has filed numerous class-action suits around the country. One of these suits is against the state of Mississippi, where child welfare caseloads are as high as 130 per worker. (National standards call for a maximum of 12 to 17 cases per worker.) An official in the Mississippi Department of Human Services said the state would "not necessarily investigate" whether sexual abuse had occurred if a "little girl" contracted a sexually transmitted disease. Governor Haley Barbour acknowledged that the state's Department of Human Services had "collapsed for lack of management and a lack of leadership."

Marcia Lowry withdrew her suit against New York City, with the proviso that the city would bring in independent national experts to reform the city child welfare practices. The Annie E. Casey Foundation agreed to take on that role. As part of the agreement, the city demanded a moratorium on new class-action lawsuits through December 2000. This drew fire from other children's advocates who had their own lawsuits in the works.

The National Center for Child Protection Reform was set up with funds from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Open Society Institute, a part of the Soros Foundation Network. They seek to influence public opinion and provide assistance to lawyers bringing suit to try to change the system. They have helped New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) introduce a system of accountability for the private agencies that the city contracts with to place children. They report that "child welfare reform in New York City is succeeding. The dramatic reduction in foster care placements since 1988 has been accomplished *without compromising safety* and children who come to the attention of ACS are far better off now than they were a decade ago."

New York City's ACS has instituted a neighborhood-based system of foster care, the "Community Partnership to Strengthen Families" project. The goal is to place children in their own neighborhoods where they can "stay in their schools, maintain contact with their friends, and keep appropriate contact with family members and community supports. Visits with parents and siblings can occur with greater ease and frequency in neighborhood settings." This plan draws upon community agencies to give supports to families. They report that "for the first time, more children are receiving preventive services (more than 33,000 children) than foster care services in New York City.

One of the proposals made by the National Center for Child Protection Reform is to reverse financial incentives that encourage foster care and discourage programs to keep children out of foster care. Richard Wexler, director of the NCCPR, explains this:

> Right now the federal government pays part

> of the cost of foster care for every eligible foster child. If the child's birth parents are poor enough, the federal government will pay anywhere from 50 cents to 83 cents on the dollar for foster care. There is no comparable funding for programs to keep children out of foster care. So even though alternatives cost less in total dollars, sometimes foster care actually can cost less for a state or local child welfare agency. It's the ultimate perverse incentive, promoting foster care and discouraging alternatives.

In Fiscal Year 2002, for every dollar spent to prevent foster care or speed reunification the federal government spent at least nine dollars on foster care and three more dollars on adoption. Wexler believes that a large part of the problem is what he calls the "Foster Care-Industrial Complex," the network of providers that lives off a steady supply of foster children, and their trade association, the Child Welfare League of America. He says that they resist any effort to reduce funding for foster care.

Other recommendations of NCCPR are:

• Require daily visits, in most cases, between children and parents, when children are removed on a worker's own authority, until a full-scale trial is held. This will force workers to use more care when exercising their authority to remove children, and will help ease the trauma of removal for children.

• Prohibit searches of homes and strip-searches of children without either the informed consent of the parents or a warrant based on "probable cause" to believe maltreatment has occurred.

• Establish a rational system for screening calls to child protective hotlines.

I would add the following recommendations:

• Pay foster parents a living wage and give them good training. Hire foster parents who are able to work closely with the child's parents, whenever possible to work for reunification with the family.

• Work with parents and children as partners in making decisions about their lives.

• Work with foster parents as co-professionals in decision making.

David Gil, a professor at Brandeis University and a socialist, believes that there will always be child abuse in a competitive society and that the only way to eliminate child abuse is to have an egalitarian society. He says that there was no child abuse in the cooperative participatory democracy of Israeli kibbutzim.

The novelist Kurt Vonnegut believes that the extended family would prevent child abuse. He says:

> I have just read about a teenage father who shook his baby to death because it couldn't control its anal sphincter yet and wouldn't stop crying. In an extended family, there would have been other people around, who would have rescued and comforted the baby, and the father, too.
>
> If the father had been raised in an extended family, he might not have been such an awful father, or maybe not a father at all yet, because he was still too young to be a good one, or because he was too crazy to *ever* be a good one.

Leroy Pelton, a professor at the University of Nevada School of Social Work, is aware that child abuse and neglect are strongly related to poverty but he does not believe that poverty is the driving force behind the rise in out-of-home placements. Rather, he believes that it is driven by stereotyping of poor parents. Even when the rate of poverty declined, as in the 1960s, the foster care population expanded. The coercive system of child "rescue" has a life of its own, coated with a helping façade. Funding for investigation, child removal, and foster care has increased while funding for preventive services has declined. Pelton says that "child removal is a way to serve 'innocent' children without 'rewarding' their 'undeserving parents.'"

> As a result, we now have a well-entrenched child abuse industry whose power resides in its ability to manufacture, by sleight of definition and encouragement, of overzealous accu-

> sation, a continuous stream of statistics designed to horrify the public.

As a solution to this system, Pelton proposes to restructure the public child welfare system. He would limit definitions of child abuse and neglect to "severe harm or endangerment resulting from clearly deliberate acts of gross abdication (deliberate or not) of parental responsibility. Reports would be received directly by law-enforcement agencies, to be investigated by the police." The public child-welfare agency, "stripped of its investigative and foster care functions, would then be transformed into a family-preservation agency, devoted solely to the provision of preventive supports and services, largely to impoverished families, on a voluntary-acceptance basis."

Pelton's proposal has theoretical appeal, but it risks the danger of further criminalizing child abuse and neglect, particularly in the present "lock-em-up-and-throw-away-the-key" climate. On the other hand, police may do a better job of investigating abuse than social workers do. In a highly publicized case in Massachusetts, a child by the name of Haleigh Poutre was beaten into a coma by her adoptive parents. The investigating social worker believed the parents when they said that the child was abusing herself. Further investigation proved that the parents were lying. The case was further complicated when the Department of Social Services, the agency responsible for the child, sought to remove life support, winning a ruling by the state's highest court, only to back off a day later after she started showing signs of improvement. The legislature appointed a commission to study DSS, which recommended that police and prosecutors replace social workers in investigating violence against foster children. The proposal would also limit DSS powers in making end-of-life decisions for grievously injured and comatose children. And the proposal would place the social service agency's 500-plus private contractors under greater scrutiny.

There is no doubt that parents should be offered voluntary community-based services to prevent placement in foster care. Finland has such a program. They do not believe that families should live in shelters, and provide homes for homeless families. They guarantee child care to all families, and they have generous family leave provisions. Taking the child into care is seen as a last resort intervention. Care in the family as well as social, financial and psychological support are priorities. Public day care has been much used for child protection/welfare purposes.

Some parents are incapable of caring for their children for whatever reason. Their children need to be put in a stable home, either long-term foster care, adoption, or guardianship. Most parents, however, love their children and want to take good care of them. While they may seem to be poor parents at first glance, they could be helped to be good parents with adequate support. Some need day care. Some need a home. Some need treatment for emotional problems or substance abuse. Some need respite care to give them a rest from the stress of parenting. All need money, whether from a job that pays a living wage or from adequate financial assistance. Given these supports, the risk of child maltreatment would be dramatically reduced. There is no other way.

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The Wages of Care

Change and Resistance in Support of Caregiving Work

DEANNE BONNAR

INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETIES have done some things well. They increased the standard of living for large numbers of people, they opened up opportunities for knowledge not found in most agrarian cultures and they have advanced technology to the point where we can explore the solar system and transplant a human heart. This is not to argue that there are not major problems with the systems of distribution and the exploitation of the planet's environment, but by in large they have succeeded in increasing the production of the material basis of life. Where industrial and post-industrial societies have fallen woefully short is in the tending to social reproduction and personal care of human beings.

Until fairly recently many people assumed that the problems with the production, distribution and service of material goods were the legitimate interest of economics and government, and that the care of humans for each other was largely a personal matter. The problems in care, if they were addressed at all, were to be absorbed into the market (Marx), were the consequence of intrapsychic conflicts (Freud) or resulted from personal failing (family values moralists). The reality of the intensity of the work, its multifaceted nature, and the skills and supports needed to do even adequate care work have not been understood. There are many reasons for this, some of which we shall examine shortly, but the consequences of the lack of understanding have been seriously problematic.

The world over the availability of day care is rarely adequate, elders and their children resist the institutional arrangements for care of people with frailty and people with disabilities and chronic illnesses are without adequate supports. The people who do the care work, usually women, are struggling to meet the demands of both work and caregiving,* yet they remain the least supported workers in the economy. This is as true for care workers like day care workers, private care attendants (PCAs) and nursing home staff as it is for unwaged caregivers in the informal sector. Across post industrial economies there is great variety as to how care work is supported, but none have successfully brought human care work to a par with manufacturing and trade.

The United States is among the worst. While some parts of the population suffer from unemployment other parts suffer from too much work and many of them are caregivers. Overwork, with the occasional exception of analysts like Julie Schor merits precious little attention and the poverty and income losses for care

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*I use the word "caregiving" rather than "caretaking," a term that is often used for work involved with the care of property such as the caretaker of an estate. Caregiving is the most commonly used term to describe the activities involved in human care, but the term itself colludes with the problem of marginalization. It describes a gift of feeling and not the work. Care work as a term seems preferable, as it describes both an attitude of attentiveness and feeling that is requisite and the work itself. The term moves us closer to the goal of accurate representation and recognition, which is fundamental to enabling change.

workers receive even less. In their old age "millions of today's working women will become destitute. They have done everything that our families and our society have asked of them only to discover that the nation's retirement system . . . actually penalizes them for serving as the nations caregivers. Overwork and underpay have serious implications for a reduced quality of life for both the cared for as well as the care workers.

All of us need intensive care work for a prolonged period when we enter life and most of us need it at a number of other points before we leave it. It is paradoxical that this work is treated as marginal to the "real" work of society. Why are unwaged care givers so poorly protected relative to other workers in the U.S.? Why are women receiving Transitional Assistance to Need Families (TANF) being forced into the formal labor market with no attention to the work they are already performing? Why do so many women work in the market sector and then provide unpaid care work at home?

The Current Dilemma

As large numbers of women have become more engaged in market labor in the latter half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st many of them have learned what most women of color and women who were poor learned long ago — market work does not cause the work at home to disappear. The belief of some feminists that household labor would shrink to proportions of minor consequence were founded on the erroneous assumption that housework was the essential labor done in the domestic sector. Ann Oakley broke new ground in 1974 with her important book *The Sociology of Housework*. As useful as it was, it failed to clarify the critical fact that the care of human beings was what drove household labor, not housework. We could easily afford to transfer housework to the market, but transferring human care was another matter. Economics of scale that work well to mass produce shoes are disastrous when it comes to human care. Small numbers of caregivers, low turnover and time for interpersonal engagement are qualities that are essential for decent care. They are mostly irrelevant when making shoes. Yet, when day care centers for children, or nursing homes and assisted living centers have developed in the wage sector economies of scale have been among their chief attributes. The workers who staff the center are among the most poorly paid, with few if any benefits, no career ladders and minimal training opportunities. Not surprisingly, this has led to high staff turnover, and frequently, poor quality care work. The public with the resources to do so has resisted that model of care. When possible people have chosen to utilize family care providers or home health care workers. These workers are even more poorly paid with even fewer benefits than those in the public sector. Still others leave waged jobs to care for their children or parents with no wages or benefits at all. The women and men who choose to provide personal care in our society do so at high economic and social costs to themselves, but market options are often too expensive, of too poor quality, or too poor a fit for the human spirit.

Is There A Revolution Coming?

When I wrote about caregiving in the mid 1980s there was almost no discussion in academic or advocacy circles to draw from. Selma James was organizing "Wages for Housework" which captured little of the public imagination. (Today in organizing care workers in Bolivia she calls care work "emotional housekeeping.") Twenty years later there is a quiet revolution taking place, that is quickly getting louder. Books and articles on the work of unpaid care are receiving popular and academic attention. Caregiving organizations such as The Family Caregiver Alliance, Citizens for Long Term Care and the National Alliance for Caregiving are publishing policy briefs and critical national studies. Advocacy groups like Mothers and

More are growing. Mothers and More have 7,500 members nation wide and have "launched a campaign to get mothers, policy makers, employers and society at large to review unpaid care-giving as comparable to paid work." The National Organization for Women (NOW) passed a resolution in 2005 for Mothers and Caregiver Rights.

Perhaps the most momentous development is that major unions have been successfully organizing care work in public places and in individual homes. AFSCME, (The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), has organized tens of thousands of day care workers across the country while its rival SEIU, Service Employees International Union, has had unprecedented victories in organizing home care workers in Illinois, California and Oregon. In 1999, 75,000 Los Angeles home care workers voted to join SEIU which was called the "biggest organizing victory since 1932." In December 2005 SEIU negotiated a contract with the State of Illinois that will give in-home child care providers a 35 percent raise over a three year period and health care benefits. "Home care workers went from being an invisible work force to one of the most vibrant sectors in the labor movement, defending public benefits for the poor elderly and disabled. In California AFSCME and SEIU have recently started a joint affiliation to unite homecare workers in a partnership called California United Homecare Workers or LCUHW which will represent 30,000 homecare workers in 25 countries.

> As one home care worker states: Twenty years of being unrecognized, underpaid, with no benefits, essentially an invisible workforce has made many of us frustrated and searching for solutions. I honestly feel the union is the only way homecare workers and our clients have the ability to be visible, to have a voice decision makers will hear and to press for improvements in the quality of care and working conditions.

The workers who are being organized were traditionally ignored by unions, in part because of the invisibility of their work, and, in part, because of the logistical challenges individual workers in individual households posed. Homecare and family day care workers must be approached on a door to door basis. The workers themselves have been considered self employed even though most of the funds have come from a complex combination of state and federal funding. The process of establishing an employer of record, which was necessary for the legal authority to unionize, has been long and difficult, but the detailed union work and pressure of the workers themselves have led to victories in the face of long odds.

> Major unions have been successfully organizing care work in public places and in individual homes.

These organizational victories combined with increasing calls for national public policies to address care work may be the early rumbles of a seismic shift in the way we perceive and provide for caregiving work — or they may not. "Homecare workers are predominantly women of color and recent immigrants who have long been among the lowest paid in the United States," but Crittendon's book *The Price of Motherhood* made best seller lists by appealing to middle class and professional women. On the one hand, this is good news as women are raising their voices about the value of carework across class lines. It remains to be seen, however, if class divisions will be used to split growing demands into different camps. The resistance to recognizing care work as central human work has many intertwining roots. They go deep in our culture. It is worth looking at the resistance as we work on building change.

Invisibility

THE INVISIBILITY of women's work in the home has been described by numerous analysts. Ann Oakley broke new ground in this area in 1974 and many others have followed her. Historians have linked the invisibility of care work to the rise of industrialization and waged labor when the production of material goods moved from the home to the factory. Work became associated with what received a wage, and nonwaged activities gradually became non work. In the 1800s as the combined churnings of capitalism and industrialization subjected numbers of men to harsh and inhumane working conditions, home became idealized as a refuge, a place that could cushion the harshness of the market. For many men it became a place of relaxation and restoration. It also became a place for them where meals just happened, where clothing reappeared clean, where child simply grew from one day to the next, because the labor that went into producing those results was no longer done in their presence. Thus, by the 1930s when Social Security enacted protections for primarily white male wage earners, the only previous protection for caregivers, Mother Pensions, would be dropped as a "misconstruction." They are not primarily aids to mothers but defense for children. Aid to Dependent Children did not provide a dime for the mother or caregiver. Under Old Age Assistance an elder could receive up to maximum of $30 a month, while a woman raising a child could receive a maximum of $18 a month. From that time to this there have been various expectations that mothers getting public aid work for wages as the care work they were providing at home was not seen as "real" work. This view of care work was also held by many of feminists who advocated for women to achieve equality with men through paid labor in the market, only to find once there, that many women were now doing a double shift. It has prompted some of the backlash against feminism currently being promoted in some circles.

Care Work as Love, Duty, or Nature

INVISIBILITY HAS NOT ONLY contributed to ignoring the labor involved but also demeaned its complexity. (See Suzanne Gordon, for a thoughtful discussion of this.) As the labor involved in care work became less visible, women, whether raising children or tending frail elders or the dying were understood to be doing it as expressions of love, natural bonds or filial duty. A particularly ripe example will illustrate the point:

> A mother's love is part of the mechanism of the soul, and it receives no abridgement from that condition . . . We know it to be imperishable because it bears the impress of underlying perfection and it is cherished as life's chiefest beatitude wielding empire over the domain of human tendencies.

While care work does not require love, it does involve attentiveness and responsiveness to the spirit and sensibilities of the other. Consider the effect the attentiveness and skill makes in the following account of a day care teacher:

> One morning Maria's mother said that Maria was going to another child's house that afternoon . . . I could tell she (Maria) was really upset about it . . . I had some rice and was serving it out for the kids, and she tipped the bowl and the rice spilled all over the floor. Instead of yelling at her I asked if she was worried about going to Jane's house. She burst out crying! She said, " I don't know what Sara's house looks like."
>
> So we sat down . . . and we talked about it. I said if she were feeling worried during the day that tipping the rice over made it harder because then it made me angry, and she didn't get to talk about being worried. And she did a couple of times that day and it made me feel fantastic . . . That's what makes me feel good about being a teacher.

When caregiving is described as a natural outgrowth of love it is frequently a dismissal of the complexity involved in care work, but it can also be a recognition of the importance of feeling. It recognizes that when we are ill we want more than clean sheets and medicines for our fever. We want human empathy for what we are enduring, and tenderness for our pain. One of the unspoken worries about acknowledging care work as labor rather than a natural outpouring of affection is the understanding that money can be traded for labor, but not for feeling. Thus, we worry that care work, like other aspects of human life under capitalism, will become commodified and we will be robbed of an essential aspect of our well being. "One of the main reasons that caring has been traditionally excluded from the market is that it is considered a moral responsibility rather than a calculated exchange." Consider what is happening to care as cost containment measures are increasingly applied to care work that has moved into the public arena.

Deborah Stone writes:

> Paradoxically, public accountability has brought moral confusion to the world of care. When people care in a public context as employees of any agency and, in effect, as agents of insurance companies or Medicare or Medicaid, they are made to feel that their personal relationships with clients are illegitimate — somethingto be hidden, kept in check, restrained, best left unspoken. Not only their professional judgment but their compassion comes under suspicion. They talk about caring and their caregiving work almost as if they were engaged in civil disobedience. They frequently justify themselves by using the terms "human," "friend," or "citizen" and insisting that the insurance or agency rules shouldn't prevent them from doing what *any* human being or *any* citizen would do.

While care work cannot be reduced to expressions of love or duty, it is also diminished by the refusal to recognize the importance of relationship. There is an enormous literature in psychology on the importance to well being in humans of attachment. Good care work takes a complex shifting interaction between physical and emotional labor. The need to be able to pay attention to both is what makes the work so demanding.

Gender Bias

One cannot pick up an article on care work in any form without substantive discussion about role of gender in the selection of the work. Care workers in all areas of human care, from birth to death, are overwhelmingly female the world over. In the U.S. about 70 percent of caregivers are women. Clearly there are many dedicated and excellent male care workers, but they are underrepresented in the arena of care work. Why this is so and what should be done about it is a matter of debate. For some, female care work is a natural outgrowth of the early mother infant care relationship. For others (usually feminists) there is nothing inevitable in the biology. It is a role that has been historically and socially reproduced and is consistently reinforced by a social construction of gender that shunts women in one direction and men in another.

Among feminists themselves, however, there are splits about the complexity of the work and its value. This is expressed in differences over whether or not women should push for care as central in human work, or leave it behind as low-skilled non-competitive work that distracts from women's abilities to compete in the market place. None, however, deny that care workers are overwhelmingly female and that the workers are either unpaid or the lowest paid people in the developed countries. (An exception to this is child care in some counties where unionization and teaching standards have helped to produce better rates of pay for workers.) There is also substantial awareness that the work, both paid and unpaid, is a major factor in the poverty of women relative to men. Some maintain that discrimination against women in the marketplace contributes to women crowding into female dominated jobs and that the crowding lowers the wages. Recently a body of literature is emerging that shows that the complexity and social value of the work itself has been consistently underestimated and belittled in both the family and market sectors.

As people actually examine the nature of the work it is consistently found to be more absorptive, more skilled, more complex and more demanding than had traditionally been thought to be the case. Still, some maintain that the work itself is essentially unskilled or at best low skilled, and thus in the logic of capitalism inherently low paid work. Still, others argue that not only are women discriminated against in the market, but the work they do is devalued. Studies are cited that show as women come to dominate a field the wages fall. (One earlier U.S. study ranked child care work beneath parking lot attendant and "well below dog trainer.") Putting care work under a careful lens, however, reveals the attentiveness, anticipation, knowledge, timing, judgment, skills and social interrelationships involved in doing care work whether parent, PCA or care worker with elders. (For a particularly revealing examination see Danby 's "Lupita's Dress." It examines the work and executive skills entailed in the purchase of a dress for Lupita's daughter to attend her aunt's wedding.)

As the complex set of factors that go into basic care work become better articulated and more visible, it highlights the gender bias that has systematically robbed both the work and the workers of their critical role in society. But discrimination is not easily undone even when the injustices are clearly visible to the majority. The U.S. history of racism and its structural embededness are clear testimony to that. There is bias both against women and against care work. There is a serious wage gap between men and women. However, recent studies also show there is a wage gap between mothers and childless women. This is true even when education, experience, and length of employment are held constant. These biases are interacting. Neither the gender bias nor the bias against recognizing the complexity of the work will be reduced without attention to both elements.

Care Work and Money

Free Riders

MOST WRITERS about care work repeatedly point to the disastrously low wages that market care work can command. The talented day care teacher cited earlier was thinking about leaving day care because of the low pay. She was considering becoming a bank teller. In 1998 the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that day care teachers earned less than $15,000 a year and preschool teachers less than $17,000. In 1999 according to the General Accounting Office elder caregivers (certified nursing assistants and home health aides) made between $15,000 and $16,000 a year. There are a variety of economic explanations for the extremely low wages found in market care work (See England for an overview), but the most obvious is the large number of women in the informal sector doing this work with no wages at all. As Paula England observes "We are used to getting it for free, so the attitude is why pay for it?" Women who do this labor for their families without pay lose a lot more than a paycheck for the work. As Nancy Folbre and Ann Crittendon have pointed out in two compelling books on women and care work, for family care workers there is no unemployment insurance, no Workmen's Compensation and no retirement benefits to provide a safety net for their labor. But, these women who have typically been seen by economic analysts as "unproductive" are actually

> Major unions have been successfully organizing care work in public places and in individual homes.

producing human capital.

> In 1995, when the World Bank started to include estimates of human capital in measuring countries wealth the bank's first rough draft turned up the surprising finding that 59 percent of the wealth in developed countries is embodied in human and social capital . . . In the wealthiest countries human capital accounts for three quarters of the productive forms of wealth.

Ann Crittendon goes on to point out that "If most of our national prosperity reflects the productivity of our human capital then the people who provide primary care to our children are the single most important source of our most important assets. When seen in this light, it immediately becomes apparent that the costs of human and social reproduction are borne not by society as a whole, but by the women and men who do unremunerated or low waged care work. "In economics a 'free rider' is someone who benefits from a good without contributing to its provision, in other words someone who gets something for nothing." Because someone gets something for nothing does not mean that it is free. Someone pays the cost and in this case it is women as a class and care workers in general. Within the class of women, mothers earn less than non-mothers even when education, experience and skills are held constant.

Recognition of the free rider effect of non-waged and low wage of care work has the potential for revolutionary impact, for if that work is compensated at anywhere near its value to society it will involve massive transfers of wealth from men to women, and from what is now deemed market profits to low waged workers. Such transfers will not happen without a fight.

The Root of All Evil

If the transfer of wealth involved were not enough of a barrier to adequately compensating care work there are also two other aspects of money and care that need to be considered. Many people fear that mixing money with care work will taint the essential qualities of care. It may seem strange to say in our money mad economy, but there is still a belief among people that "the love of money is the root of all evil." Consider the term filthy lucre. It implies that money is dirty and debasing. There is a puritanical strain that runs through many that mixing money and care will corrupt care. This generates an ambivalence on the part of many who, on the one hand, want to see care workers well paid and supported with an economic safety net, and on the other, fear the consequences. This ambivalence is reinforced by the legitimate fear of people with low and moderate incomes that if care work becomes well paid they will simply be priced out of the market when they need care. They are already witnessing the maldistribution of health care in the U.S. Of course, keeping the care unwaged in the informal sector or low waged in the market sector does nothing to insure quality, nor does it distribute it to those who may need it most, but it does insure that women who do the work will be vastly overrepresented among American poor.

Commodification

Regulation and commodification in health care is another source of reluctance to wage all care care work. In a capitalist society what is waged becomes a product to be weighed, measured, timed and regulated. But as I have argued elsewhere the product assembly line model of industrial and post-industrial societies is antithetical to human care. Much of what makes for good care requires time, attentiveness and an understanding of the uniqueness of the other. Those qualities lead to trust and attachment which we call relationship. Who the caregivers are matters. As one analyst put it what the day care industry calls turnover, children experience as loss. People who can get it want ongoing relationships with their care providers. Daughters and spouses care for ill or failing loved ones at great expense to themselves, not because they are unable to understand the price they will pay, but because they resist nursing homes where the staff turns over constantly (estimates range from 45 percent to 105 percent) and relationships are considered a luxury not a necessity.

Where Does This Leave Care Work?

MOVING CARE WORK into the mainstream of what we value as a culture will not be a simple or short challenge. As I have begun to outline, there are a number of powerfully entrenched interests arranged against it. But that does not mean there are not many policies and strategies that can push the current system and change its shape. There are many signs of change. One of the most hopeful pieces is that homecare workers and child care workers are coming together in unions. The disability community is uniting with PCA's to push for better pay and benefits. The constituencies for children, elders and people with disabilities, who have too often been competitors for money, are becoming allies and are pulling in the same direction. Ideas such as the Universal Caregiver Act which unites services from the Older American Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act also seek to span disparate groups. There are a range of proposals for universal public supports for caregiving ranging from paid family leave to providing Social Security credits and Workman's Compensation for unwaged caregivers. There are dozens of other proposals and at least one clarion call for a national caregivers movement.

To be valued for its real worth care work must be visible. When visible it must be correctly named as work and the importance of relationship must be included in the definition of the work. We must develop models of paid care that do not commodify it. The injustices of the poverty of care workers must be articulated and the free rider effect of our system of profits must be exposed. We must insist on the same protections for care workers as other workers in our society. We must reach across generations and identity populations to see how care work both shapes our lives and is shaped by them.

These are tall orders. To a large extent our goals will shape our strategies. If we want both men and women to do care work we will need shorter work days as well as strong wages. If we want to support work in the informal sector then unpaid care workers need care worker wages, Social Security benefits, respite care and connections with care workers. If we want choice for people at different points in their lives then we need all of the above and more too. At the very least, we need an aggressive campaign to unite workers, to wage the struggle for better wages and to bring the work dignity and respect it so richly deserves. We all have an interest in this struggle because it is work all of us need to survive.

Editors' note: A fully footnoted version will be found on our website, www.newpol.org

Stress on the Long-Term Caregiver

"Get Me an Excedrin, Fast!"

JANICE REGOLSKY BABCOCK

FLASHBACK, 1946: I'm about seven years old and waiting with my mother for a trolley car on Beacon Street in Brookline. Suddenly she giggles hysterically, and her tattered underpants fall to the ground. She scoops them up, still laughing, points to the broken elastic at the waistband, and shoves them into her pocketbook. I hope no one has seen.

FLASHFORWARD, 1987: Quote from a letter sent to me in Boston by my 77-year-old mother, Bea, from Miami Beach where she now lives in an apartment in the Bay Road area. Dad died the previous year: "I found my slip. I've had that slip for 25 years. It's a real good one. It was on the sidewalk in the backyard."

When Does Long Term Care Begin?

MY MOTHER IS BIPOLAR and probably has been so her entire life. She's a colorful writer and has written many letters to me and my three sisters during her long life plus an autobiographical sketch completed in 1989. It starts with her life in Poland, where she was born in 1910, and named Basha — Basha Gurnofelski. Her mother died of medical complications a few days after her birth, and her father blamed the new baby, so she was raised by her maternal grandparents. Grandmother Esther Padworisky brought my twelve year old mother to America, after World War I, and that is how she survived. Almost all of the rest of her extensive family died in Poland during World War II, and my oldest sister says that she grew quieter and quieter as the family letters stopped coming.

Mom, though not highly educated, is very bright and extremely observant — even at 96 and with a lot of short term memory loss, there's not much she doesn't notice. Her first language was Yiddish, but she also spoke Polish, Russian, Hebrew, and understood a little German. When she came to America she had no problem picking up English and soon spoke it without an accent. Here's a paragraph from her autobiography that describes a trauma possibly connected to the mental breakdowns that lay in her future:

> I was a lonely child. I think I mentioned that we had a variety store. The shelves were filled with different things. Many a night some robbers would knock on the window, and I would hide under the covers. Grandma didn't hear but I would. Somehow they would go away. When I hid under the feather comforter I felt safe. Another night I wasn't so lucky. Bandits surrounded the house and started shooting. Bullets were flying all over the place. Grandpa said "it doesn't look so good." Grandma had an ax in her hands trying to fight them back. She had a cut on her nose. Whether she cut it herself or was shot, half of her nose was hanging down. The bandits killed my grandfather. I was running from one room to another, and I almost stepped on my grandfather. I ran to my grandma and said, "no more grandpa — he is dead." It was in March. The weather was still cold, and I pleaded with them (the bandits) to take me to a warm place. They took whatever they wanted, and what they didn't want they crushed under their feet. They asked me if I knew where a groshin is (a penny). I said no. My little mind told me if I showed them where a groshin is, then they'd know where the rest of the money was. It was lonely without grandpa. I loved him so much."

JANICE REGOLSKY BABCOCK *has earned her living as a professional puppeteer for over 30 years. She is also a painter, and her studio is in her home in Boston.*

Marriage and Madness

MY MOTHER Bea's bipolar illness noticeably manifested itself when she started having children. There are four daughters, my oldest sister being the offspring of my father's first wife who died of an infected appendix way back before antibiotics existed. So mom married a man ten years her senior with a precocious four year old.

Bea looks vivacious and attractive as a young wife, but photographs in the family albums gradually change so that, by the time she is in her early 30's, there is a fixed and sometimes enraged look. Sort of scary. And I remember coming into our gas-filled kitchen in Dorchester when I was barely four, and telling mom to please turn off the oven. And my oldest sister recalls her waving around a pill bottle and threatening suicide. There were sudden rages and deep, almost catatonic depressions — one that, according to mom, lasted nine years when we were young children. Bea was having classic manic-depressive episodes, but we didn't know that's what they were, and no treatments were available anyhow. Moving many times due to dad's financial reverses didn't help our already chaotic family situation.

Well, I loathe Mommy Dearest diatribes, and I do, after all, care deeply for my mother and she for us. I still occasionally dream about dad who had a salesman's bluff and hearty charm, but was thwarted in so many ways. He somehow managed to enjoy his life and children and wife most of the time, despite the considerable roadblocks. In all the years I knew him I heard him say only once, "It hasn't been easy all these years with your mother." I won't describe much more of the early years except to say they were harrowing, often miserable, and compounded by an angry dad frequently shouting at one or another or all of us about something trivial, probably in a futile effort to control our maniacal household. Morris and Bea, husband and wife, father and mother, two sides of a rather peculiar coin.

They both did their best and worked very hard. In spite of the worries and ongoing emotional turmoil, we had a childhood rich in books, museum visits, radio shows, movies, going to plays, friends, and games indoor and out. Mom had a fifteen-year remission after ECT ("shock") treatments in the 1950s and eventually got a job, which she loved, as a floor secretary at Beth Israel Hospital. However, anxiety and fear lingered in our family. Some of us are already exhausted by the burdens of parental problems and role reversals that have taken place for as long as we can remember, when physical and mental problems surface in our aging parents. The time to provide long term care is upon us, and we say, "Oh no, not again . . ." What then happens to the family, before the tasks are divied up, is, more often than not, bruising.

Bea was having classic manic-depressive episodes, but we didn't know that's what they were, and no treatments were available anyhow.

Things

AFTER DAD DIED at nearly 86, my sisters and I started visiting mom every three months. My sister Estelle and I would generally go together, and alternately, my two older sisters. Mom initially seemed happier after Dad had died. As she put it, "Oh yes, he tried to protect me and turned me into a vegetable." We hoped the good times would last.

Estelle and I tried to supervise 77-year-old Bea's life with letters and phone calls from afar (we'd call her nearly every night and had the phone numbers of some of her neighbors so they could check on her if she didn't answer), but when we visited from Boston it was hard to get all the things done that Dad had taken care of.

It was harder still for my less involved older sisters who were coming from California and Illinois. Here are some of the things mother had trouble with in no particular order: untwisting phone cords, making sure her phone wasn't off the hook and ringing busy for hours on end, changing light bulbs or getting the maintenance man to do it, ditto for plumbing, air conditioner, and electrical repairs (she seemed to be cold in the Florida winter, and hot in the summer, due to appliance breakdown), locating and using her hearing aids (when lost they were generally under the bed or behind the couch), locks of any kind (she'd frequently leave her door unlocked so as to avoid the problem), opening and closing her grocery cart (not her fault — it was badly designed and stuck), figuring out how to deal with incontinence ("Depends" were still in the future and a pessary did little for her prolapsed bladder, but had to be taken out and cleaned by a gynecologist periodically or infections would ensue), letting in the monthly exterminator (she'd tell him to go away when she didn't feel well, so cockroaches would make themselves at home in various unexpected places — Estelle would let out a scream when she bravely smashed them, and that did make mom laugh no matter how depressed she was), changing calendars and watches and clocks, keeping day and night straight (sometimes she'd be out in the middle of the night thinking it was early morning — her sleeping patterns had always been erratic), finding proper shoes for her terrible feet, etc., etc. She didn't drive and never had, but that was just as well.

On the plus side, Bea attended a terrific senior center where she could get a meal and take interesting courses, like current events and psychology, and visit with her peers. She'd always been a great cook, and she continued to bake and cook, or get "take out," or eat in restaurants. Food wasn't a problem. She got haircuts, went to doctors, had her facial hair waxed, kept her medicines pretty straight, and her apartment clean enough with various part time helpers. She walked a great deal and as yet had no cane. Still, as she wrote in a letter to me, "Teeth that don't bite, ears that don't hear, feet that don't walk too good, and my fallen bladder that doesn't act too well; that too is stress." Maybe we were the crazy ones to let a 77-year-old bipolar woman live on her own in Miami Beach, but that was what she wanted, and we respected her decision.

Financial Matters

DURING THE FIRST YEAR after Dad's death from pancreatic cancer, Estelle took on the managing of Bea's finances and legal matters, and I did the medical end of things. It took about seven months for me to straighten out the bills connected to Dad's death. I formed a nice relationship with the straightforward and no-nonsense people at Medicare who reassured me, with every new bill that came in, that "this is not a bill" meant that. The Miami Beach Hospital my father kept returning to apparently had a policy of creative billing. There were collection agencies hot on my deceased dad's trail, trying to get Mom to pay bills that weren't owed. I instructed mom to send me everything. Nothing was paid out despite all the attempts at double billing, except for one legitimately owed ambulance bill. Morris would have been proud of me.

The horror abruptly ceased when Estelle, an attorney, wrote to the legal department at Dad's hospital stating that "we are so appalled by your deceptive billing practices, unresponsiveness and harassment of the elderly that we plan to communicate our concerns to the *Miami Herald* in order to protect others from this kind of exploitation." We meant it. It produced a phone call from the General Counsel at the hospital, an "investigation," and a contrite apology ascribing it all to "a computer error which was not properly followed up." I wondered how many sick and confused elderly, without family members to intervene and advocate, pay enormous medical and other kinds of bills on which they don't really owe a penny.

Estelle explained to Bea how to pay bills, and carefully monitored various matters related to Mom's finite amount of money. It had to last. Fortunately, her Depression era frugality overrode her mania, and she dealt efficiently enough with her money so that it did indeed last. The following excerpt from a January 28, 1988, letter will show you why:

> Today I went out. First I fed the birds. Mighty cold today, too. And I met my Chinese friend, and we hugged . . . Then I went to Publix. I wanted to make sure to have soda in the house for Mary, Saturday. Then I came home. Had a bowl of grits, and started my way to Washington Avenue. B&B had a sale on orange juice, Mott's applesauce, and Wheatena. When did I ever eat cooked cereal? Dad didn't like it. So I never bothered . . . From there I went to Espinola Way and got my chicken. Two men behind the counter. I told them their chickens are better than Epicure's . . . Then I took the shortcut home. It didn't seem so short lugging one half gallon of orange juice with the applesauce and Wheatena and, in the other hand, the chicken, and praying I didn't have to go to the B.R. I got in the house. I huffed and I puffed. I didn't realize it was 1:00. I heated my Chinese food, had a nice hot cup of tea. I must confess that later I made myself an ice cream soda with *diet* coke.

Estelle and I enjoy our small pleasures, too, just like mom.

A Love Affair Gone Bad, Florida, June 1987

ABOUT TEN MONTHS after Dad died, Mom was in a cycle of high mania and had developed a romantic obsession on the current events and history teacher at her senior center. Howard, as I will rename him, was twenty years her junior and had inadvertently strung Mother along by flirting with her and giving her his home phone number. Bea left many messages on his answering machine, and Howard considered her a pest. Maybe he thought it was an amusing situation; I don't know. My old friend Richard, who was starting his soon-to-be successful career as a furniture maker and painter in the Miami area, had been tidying Mom's apartment and doing some necessary fixups for a small fee. Mother adored Richard, and frequently baked him mandel bread. He was quite kind to her, but being a proponent of tough love, didn't attempt to dissuade her when she called him saying she was feeling suicidal. He said it was her decision. She interpreted that as the same as his saying that he didn't care. Then Bea called Howard and left messages threatening to do herself in. He called the police and reported this. They responded to his call by rushing to her apartment and bashing the door in, much to her surprise (she wasn't wearing her hearing aids, per usual, so she hadn't heard them knocking). In fact, according to Annette, a neighbor, in a letter I received, "The day the police broke your mother's door in none of us who were at home heard any warning sounds . . ."

The police took my mother to a place called Douglas Garden (closed for the day by the time I knew enough to call them), and she was sent from there to Cedars Hospital, a mental facility, where she spent four days under observation. It was the Miami Beach telephone operators who helped me track down where Mother was, through a very long night, after Annette informed me that Mother had been taken away by the police. One of the neighbors got a carpenter who lived in another flat to at least minimally secure the place. Later, Richard negotiated with the carpenter to permanently fix the door at a decent price.

When I called Howard, whom I had never met, in October, because I knew mother would be returning to her senior center, he was shocked about what had happened after his phone call to the police. That didn't stop him from trying to make a date with me for when I next visited Florida. Needless to say, I didn't take him up on the offer. As Estelle joked, "First it was Howard and Mom. Now it's Howard and Janice…" A few years later this former teacher was led away by the police, shackled, for drug dealing. Mom sent me a newspaper article describing the incident. Well, she *had* told us many times that her judgment was never too good.

Dr. S., Mom's psychiatrist in Florida, a small, pleasant, fastidious man, fancily dressed in a suit and boots that reminded me of ones worn by Elvis Presley, and possessed of an exceedingly obtuse personality (he didn't know Mother was bipolar because she visited him only when she was depressed), had insisted that Mom go off on her planned summer hiatus in the Catskills or he wouldn't discharge her from Cedars Hospital — it was kind of like the sea voyages people were sent on in the old days to cure depression. I guess he thought mountain air would be a mental restorative. It wasn't.

Mom simply opted out and just sat, deeply depressed, so frightened that she was almost in a stuporous state. Dad wasn't around to take care of her, and it was her first "vacation" alone. The other old people there tried to help her out, but it was an impossible situation. Stephen, my husband, and Estelle and I visited a few times and felt very sad to see her mashed down and humiliated, like a child whom everyone has chastised for doing a naughty deed. And we all *had* berated her. We had indicated to Dr. S. and Richard (the latter thought the vacation made sense, too) before Mother left for the Catskills, that we had grave doubts about her going off to the mountains alone. We brought pathetic, defeated Mother back to stay with us in our house in Boston hoping her depression would lift. That did not happen.

Three weeks later, due to the help of a doctor acquaintance of ours, Bea was admitted to McLean's Hospital in Belmont where she stayed for nine weeks. Richard wrote her a cheery, news-filled letter in August opening with, "Well, my dear, I hear you're enjoying the Ritz Carlton of hospitals . . . the last time I saw you, you were off for a frolic in the woods! I guess things didn't go well — depression got the upper hand — depression is such a demanding thing."

Frolicking at McLean's Hospital and Stress on the Family

DRUG THERAPY, including the use of lithium, was tried, but nothing worked. Mother thought McLean's was a "dump" and missed the fancy psychiatric unit at Cedars in Miami Beach, but she ultimately gave her written consent for ECT treatments. We felt sick about her going through ECT again, as she had in the 1950s, but were assured by the hospital staff that the treatments were much gentler than in the past. That proved true, not that it was a picnic, and the ECT did seem to alleviate her depression. But here are some nagging questions: Wouldn't Bea's depression have lifted anyway since such a long time had gone by? And could she therefore have improved just by visiting her four daughters one after another during the summer and fall, as she had wished, but been too intimidated to ask? When I found out what she wanted, before we took her from the mountains and brought her home with us, and broached that idea to my two older sisters, they became a united front, saying how cruel it would be to treat Mom like a "hot potato" tossing her from one to another of us. They didn't visit Bea at the hospital or telephone her more than a few times during the lengthy stay at McLean's. A rift grew between us. We were incapable, at that point, of not only doing all the work, but doing it graciously. We felt distraught and let them know.

Here is an excerpt from a letter I sent the two older sisters in October, 1987, written during an airplane flight while Estelle and I accompanied mother back to her flat in Miami Beach: "We saw the seasons change at McLean's from hottest summer to cool, rainy days . . . The day came when Estelle and mother and I screamed at each other in frustration, and finally, in her cracked old lady's voice, she shouted, 'I don't get any justice.'" That fierce conversation happened on the beautiful grounds of genteel, old McLean's Hospital, a place that resembled a country club for the terminally sad.

The good news was that all the "professionals" we talked to thought mother was capable of living on her own in Florida with the help of a case manager and lots of family visits. Bea was pretty fearful, but extremely eager to return.

Real Help and Phony Help

ESTELLE AND I gradually set up a phone "bank" of neighbors, rabbi, senior center staff, agency help, home help, meals on wheels — anyone we could think of to contact when we were worried about something, and to support Mother in living alone.

Visiting doctors seemed to be an important part of Mother's social life. Bea saw at least seventeen different doctors on a fairly consistent basis (we got it down to four when she moved back here), plus audiologists, optometrists, podiatrists, and an acupuncturist during her remaining seven years in Florida. She has been on at least twenty-six prescription drugs since Dad died (she takes approximately six now), a surprising number of which eventually have been found to be dangerous for some people in some situations. She's made it through with the help of what Stephen refers to as "her indestructible torso." I continued to review all the medical bills.

Most of Mother's doctors were helpful, but not all. Some were quite odd. Psychiatrists in general (who consistently over drugged Mother, with scary consequences, like falling asleep head first into a plate of food), Florida case managers, and social workers everywhere, with all the best intentions, were painfully inept. We formed an inverse relationship equation — the more anguished phone calls we got from a so-called professional, the worse the job he or she was doing. For instance, in mother's present nursing home, she has periods when she shouts out, "I'm sick" and "They're killing me" and "You should choke." Kind of humorous phrases, actually, given the circumstances. As one of the few astute psychiatrists we've met said to me when I told him how Mother was going to be demoted to a less high functioning floor in her nursing home because of these annoying, loud, and constant eruptions (I got many phone calls from the unit social worker asking me to use my influence on Mother to control the shouting and other unpleasant habits), "Why are they bothering you? You can't possibly control any of that, and those behaviors are very common with the elderly population in nursing homes anyway." Amen. We got to dread every phone call. Okay, in the interest of complete honesty, Bea was also occasionally shoving her 100 year old crotchety roommate around. But the staff intimating to us that mother was soiling her diapers on purpose was a bit much — finding incontinence repugnant and difficult to deal with is not confined just to family caregivers.

In 1989 we had to cancel the relationship we had with the agency in Florida that provided case managers for Mother. They charged $50 for one half hour and by the minute for phone calls. They basically fed our own words back to us as if some profound analysis was being made (mother already had Dr. S. for talk therapy); yet changing a clock or calendar was not in their job descriptions. Bea was way too wily for them. Even the homemakers they recommended had a very proscribed list of duties they were willing to perform. Mother did better hunting up home help herself, but always eventually thought her few and unappealing possessions were being stolen — things like dish towels and unattractive pieces of Judaica. Paradoxically, she was willing to give away almost anything she owned except for money, fortunately.

Starting with mother's widowhood in 1986 up to the present, only three social workers have been useful to Bea and to us. The first was at McLean's, and she comforted Estelle and me by reminding us that it was the norm in families for caregiving tasks to fall on just a few members. Many years later the psychiatric social worker at a day program in Brighton Mom attended displayed humor and tolerance about Mother having appeared naked at her apartment door to collect a food order, an incident Mom said was "possible, but not probable." The overwrought Congregate Housing administrator who made our lives miserable was appeased, at least for the time-being. The third outstanding social worker was young and athletic and walked up and down the Brighton complex hallways with Mom so she'd get her exercise. She loved and respected Bea and advocated for her. These three helped to stave off our "time to get the pillow" days.

End of the Florida Years

ESTELLE AND I and Mom cobbled together a network of support in Florida after the official agencies were found wanting. On my visits I'd find the objects Mother said were being stolen from her by the various helpers, tucked away in a pocket or bag, but she hung on to her beliefs anyway. She continued to cycle. Some of the phrases she repeated over and over, familiar even in our childhoods, were, "I have no confidence, it is not a natural sleep, I have no feelings, and this depression is worse than ever before."

During the remaining seven years, mother lived in Florida, after the McLean's period, we were back to dividing visits with our two older sisters. Since one was coming from California and had some difficult family responsibilities, and the oldest (living in the Chicago area) was the stepdaughter Mom had been particularly mean to during her youth, I can see why they were so frightened of taking Mother on. She was "a piece of work" as the cliché goes. Saying "thank you" to us for the extraordinary number of arrangements we had to continue making to keep Mother going would have meant an acknowledgment of the huge impact all this extra "stuff" was having on our lives and careers. Much later the younger of the two told me she felt guilty about it, and many years after that, the oldest said, concerning some phase of our caregiving, "Thank you. You did a good job."

Families Aren't Perfect

WHY VAGUE FEELINGS of sisterly guilt didn't translate into any respite relief for us, I don't know. The sisters' few short visits in the twelve years mother has been back in Boston have generally meant more, not less, work for us (though one of the sisters came with her son two years ago and had a poignant group of meetings with Mom at the nursing home; it was all we could have wished for, and I think those were the last times she will see Mom, but they were good times).

My sisters' sympathies have been with the emotional difficulties we have gone through rather than the fact Mother has needed a family caregiving "staff" of three people (Estelle, Stephen, and myself) just to manage the details of her complex needs. You can't imagine what it's like to hoist an inert, overweight, urine-soaked, elderly, and fragile person onto a gynecological examining table to get her pessary cleaned unless you've done it — and, take my word for it, you, the family member, *will* be the one expected to ready her for the doctor. And the hospitals, doctors' offices, and even, unbelievably enough, the subsidized housing where mom lived in Brighton, frequently don't have spaces to pick up or deliver your disabled person in front of the destination — yours is not an official vehicle, and you've somehow got to get your person out of the car, into a wheelchair, and pushed up a ramp with people yelling at you to move your car. Cab drivers do not want to deal with the disabled, and "The Ride" has schedules that probably will not match yours. Mother had to be accompanied by at least one of us plus Stephen, the driver and the "muscle" to get mom and the wheelchair out of the vehicle, and then to re-park it, to the 135 doctors' visits she had during the six pre-nursing home years in Boston. It can be physically quite grueling to care for the elderly, and our "staff" of three was getting older by the minute.

My sisters are kind and decent people (we four do love each other and are close again) and surely much more helpful than a friend's brother, who made just one visit to the nursing home of his old father who had advanced Alzheimer's disease, went berserk at what he saw, and ran around shouting, "It would be better to get Kevorkian!" Didn't make my friend too popular with the staff there. I'll give my husband Stephen, who is very fond of my sisters and my mother, the last word, "Don't get all psychological on me. It's an enormous, stress filled job to take care of a disabled old person, very hard work, and no one wants to do it. We three took it on, did the best we could, and that's that."

Tough Decisions Have to be Made

Mom continued to bother people in her apartment complex in Florida. She obsessed on a male neighbor and left him obnoxious notes when he didn't respond. Bea had another crush on a food service guy at the meal center where she volunteered. She was going around with pee soaked trousers and not aware of that rather noticeable hygiene gaffe. Everyone, including the staff at her senior center and Dr. S., plus kind neighbors as well as "dragons" (that's what my old friend Richard who cleaned Mom's apartment called the meaner ones) thought she needed to be with her family. When Estelle and I visited we saw how poor her walking was. Bea used a cane now, and she had to rest on various low walls and benches on her shopping routes. We asked her if she felt it was time to move north, and she said "yes." She was 84.

Brookline and Brighton, 1994

We put Mom on a waiting list for subsidized housing in Brighton. Meanwhile, she lived in a small apartment we had found and furnished for her in Coolidge Corner in Brookline. She had shopped in that area for years before going to Florida, but she didn't seem to remember it. The two older sisters had packed Mom up in Miami Beach and sent her by plane to Boston, urine-soaked, confused, and depressed. A few pieces of furniture, linens, and crockery would arrive eventually. When they did, we completed furnishing her apartment; it looked good and seemed fairly comfortable.

It was obvious that Mother was pretty disoriented as well as deteriorated, and we didn't know where to start on her "case." Our beloved, kind Dr. Blotner (the gynecologist who would soon be dealing with mom's pessary) gave us guidance and also the name of an excellent internist who sometimes quoted a line or two of poetry to Mom.

> The more anguished phone calls we got from a so-called professional, the worse the job he or she was doing.

Bea couldn't manage the unfamiliar setting. The locks to her new apartment were beyond her as was nearly every other mechanical thing though she did think it was a "cute place." We did her shopping and laundry, and encouraged her to go to the near-by senior center. It was a downhill trek that was nearly impossible for her, as it turned out, plus she was shy with new people. It was an unbelievably hot summer, and we were exhausted. My friend David said, "Janice, you're acting like your life is over." I felt as if it was.

Once more Bea sank into a deeper and deeper depression. I no longer remember by what route she was admitted to the psychiatric unit at Beth Israel Hospital, but she was. It was there they trained her to use "Depends." She never really understood how to put them on properly or maybe her fingers were no longer facile enough (diapers for adults are actually rather complicated), but it was better than nothing. Meanwhile, an apartment opened up at the Brighton complex. I scrubbed the urine smell out of the carpet in the Brookline apartment, and we proceeded to break the lease. The land-lord was very understanding about mother, and the apartment soon rented because it really did look quite attractive and I'd managed to eradicate most of the odor. I love fixing places up, fortunately, because now, after only three months, everything had to go off to Brighton, including mother, who went directly from Beth Israel, once she was discharged.

Long-term care is a maze to figure out. Here are the local agencies we dealt with during the six nightmarish years mother was under our care living in elderly housing in Brighton: Central Boston, Visiting Nurses Association, Jewish Family Services, HRI, Congregate Housing including Escort Services — and some private agencies I can't remember. Mother qualified for quite a bit of help, but it all had to be justified and applied for — we were extremely grateful for the assistance available, but felt it was a fragmented and complicated system mother couldn't possibly have negotiated on her own. Not in a million years. And I couldn't either if I were 84.

As I've indicated, Bea didn't fit in well in Brighton, either, though she had seemed to at first. By the time a few months had gone by, her physical therapist noted that Mother was "borderline" and probably belonged in a nursing home; another agency said she was only capable of feeding herself, and she'd had "the appearing at the door naked" incident. The Congregate Housing people insisted she go to the HRI day psychiatric program if she was to stay in her apartment, and they became sterner by the minute. The Congregate Housing programs ultimately didn't work for mother, and the staff seemed to blame us as well as her. HRI was "real" help (but it was a short term program) as were all the physical therapists, nurses, home health aides and homemakers (the aides and homemakers were generally gentle and competent people of color who actually liked mother and had perspective about her frailties, both mental and physical), and the four doctors and one psychiatrist we'd carefully selected.

The Nursing Home, 2000-2006

THIS IS THE END of our story of long-term care, but not the end of Mother, who was 96 in March. We gave her a truly glorious 90th birthday celebration in our home, with all the sisters, husbands, their children, great grand children, assorted friends, etc. Despite all the dire assessments, Bea could still recite, from memory, Sir Walter Scott's *Breathes There the Man*, a Russian poem, and a Yiddish one. She was gracious and charming and adorable. A few weeks later she was, as she said, "shipped off to the nursing home." Once more, she had said she was ready, and made the decision herself. Life in Brighton had become scary and unpleasant. We were able to reclaim our lives, but she became diminished. I'm sorry about that and hope American nursing homes consider following the theories of The Eden Alternative, as demonstrated in Saskatoon's Sherbrooke Community Center, with its emphasis on children, plants, animals, and doing useful things, since, as they point out, we all need a reason for getting up in the morning. As Stephen says about mom's present unit, "How can people be so isolated in such a crowd?" Bea had an awful fall on her "high functioning floor" so she is now wheelchair bound with a functionless right hand. There is much more kindness and care in her new setting, but less stimulation. She sits quietly, her mania and depression controlled with Tegretol and Zoloft, and only the occasional shout of "you should choke." Mostly she says "I love you" to passersby, as well as "good night Grandma" to the picture of her and her grandmother on the wall of her room. Did I mention I love my magical mother? I do.

Empowering People with Disabilities

Ravi Malhotra

When most on the left think about the politics of caregiving, they think about finding a caregiver for their elderly parent or daycare for their preschool child. Or they think about the (frequently romanticized and flawed) feminist debates that interrogate whether there is a feminist ethic of caring and the implications of this for feminist politics. One issue that has largely been ignored is the provision of what has come to be known as attendant care or personal assistance services for primarily, but not exclusively, working age people with physical disabilities. This is rather unfortunate because attendant care services actually raise many complex and unique issues that require a close analysis of the politics of attendant care apart from broader issues in caregiving.

Attendant care or personal assistance services refer to assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, and toileting. While the exact model of service delivery varies, attendants are trained and directed by the disabled person, generally referred to as a consumer of attendant care services, to allow the disabled person to live independently in the community. No special medical skills are required. And they are fundamental for many people with disabilities, a historically oppressed group that tends to be on the margins of society with respect to employment status, educational levels and income levels, to achieve full citizenship. This encompasses participation in the labor market or the ability to pursue post-secondary studies, the freedom and opportunity to enjoy recreational opportunities and generally flourish as respected equals.

Moreover, adequate attendant care is crucial in maintaining health and a high quality of life for many people with disabilities. A failure to provide attendant care services would be particularly disastrous for parents with disabilities and may even result in a judicial determination that parents with disabilities ought not to have custody of the child. Unfortunately, funding for such programs is often very limited and the work force, one that is disproportionately made up of women of color and recent immigrants, is often transient and poorly paid. An alliance between union activists who organize personal assistance services and consumers would dramatically transform the politics and legal regulation of the sector from below and potentially enrich two distinct social movements in a mutually beneficial way. Nevertheless, while highly desirable, such an agenda can only proceed to fruition if both constituencies truly respect the other and overcome a number of barriers that impede greater solidarity.

A Brief History of the Disability Rights Movement

Historically, people with disabilities who required assistance with activities of daily living either (a) lived with family members or other relatives until their death and received informal assistance, or (b) were placed in some kind of institutional setting such as a nursing home. The horrors of institutional care for people with disabilities have been well documented, particularly in the case of people with intellectual and mental health disabilities. For example, sexual abuse, neglect, and even deaths have been common problems in many institutional settings including the very recent past.

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Lack of freedom and significant dangers to the institutionalized disabled person's safety have been all too commonplace features of institutional settings. At the notorious Partlow School in Alabama that has been at the heart of lengthy litigation, a litany of extreme abuses in the 1970s, including a resident who was scalded to death during a bath, have been documented. This is one reason why one must be very careful not to conflate the experiences of people with disabilities with other relatively non-stigmatized populations who might require caregiving, such as elderly people or children. While abuse may occur in all segments of the population, the widespread stigmatization of disability as something that is not normal and is deviant makes people with disabilities particularly vulnerable to abuse. Many people with disabilities have expressed a desire to commit suicide rather than live in the highly restrictive environment of a nursing home.

Higher wages and benefits among home care workers reduced turnover.

In the case of those people with disabilities who have avoided institutionalization, family members or friends perform the attendant care on an unpaid basis, and most disabled people live in extreme poverty. This of course leads, in many cases, to considerable friction, unhappiness and abuse within families. The autonomy of many adults with disabilities is compromised as they are forced to adjust their schedules to meet the needs of their unpaid and increasingly elderly caregivers. In the most tragic cases, children with disabilities have been murdered by their parents, at least in part because of a lack of appropriate support services. Unfortunately, this pattern largely continues even today because of the lack of adequate funding for personal assistance care services. The lack of alternatives means that working age people with disabilities either end up in nursing homes or often become regarded as burdens as family members give up employment or leisure opportunities to assist relatives with disabilities. In some cases, caregivers may even endanger their own health.

The emergence of the independent living movement in the early 1970s in California, and soon thereafter nationally and internationally, marked a dramatic shift in attitudes on personal assistance services specifically and disability rights generally. The independent living movement is based on the idea that people with disabilities ought to have the same civil rights, choices and control over their lives as those without disabilities. It entails allowing disabled people to be empowered so that they may undertake the same risks as others and resist a paternalism that fosters oppression. The politics of the independent living movement are complex and even somewhat contradictory. While its origins are rooted in multiple social movements including largely untheorized campaigns such as the self-help social movements associated with Alcoholics Anonymous and other such support groups as well as conceptualizing disabled people as consumers with rights associated with their status as customers, it is apparent that the African American quest for civil rights that emerged in the 1960s has had a major impact in the development of the independent living movement. It is therefore closely associated with the social model of disablement which posits that it is structural barriers in society, from a lack of wheelchair ramps to a lack of attendant services and stereotypical attitudes, which are the fundamental problems faced by people with disabilities. At the same time, it has a very market-oriented and conservative individualist strain to resolving social issues which has implications for all issues that it seeks to analyze including the politics of attendant care.

One of its earliest manifestations was the incorporation of the first Independent Living Center (ILC) in Berkeley in 1972, growing out of the activism of the Rolling Quads, an activist organization at the University of California. There seems little doubt that the Rolling Quads were to a large degree influenced by the vibrant social movements that were so dominant in Berkeley at the time. Indeed, many who provided attendant care services to this generation of disabled student activists were conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War performing alternative services instead of being drafted. Within a few years, hundreds of ILCs flourished across the United States and eventually internationally. Embodying the principles behind the slogan "Nothing About Us Without Us," ILCs sought to empower people with disabilities through advocacy and peer support. Some of these ILCs have offered personal assistance services. Nevertheless, the majority of personal assistance services for even people living in the community is delivered through home health agencies.

The Independent Living Movement and MiCASSA

In order to understand contemporary debates around attendant care, it is crucial that advocates of social justice appreciate how both the social model of disablement and the independent living movement have each fundamentally shaped the demands for attendant care services. At the very core, the social model is reflected by the demand that people with disabilities who receive the service control the nature of the services provided by the attendant. It consequently severs what one might call executional autonomy from decisional autonomy. To provide an illustration, a disabled woman might choose to wear a green blouse and a red skirt on Monday. The fact that her attendant actually puts the clothes on her body because she is unable to execute the task of dressing herself does not detract from the fact that she has elected to make the choice of what clothes to wear. In many institutional settings, such choices have been frequently made by others. While it is true that not every single disabled person may be able to direct his or her own attendant, it is also clear that the vast majority of disabled people, if empowered, are perfectly capable of doing so.

Consequently, the independent living movement has generally advocated placing the disabled person in charge of the funding to pay for attendant care so that he or she may hire, fire, and manage the attendants as needed. For instance, the National Council on Independent Living has played a key role in lobbying, to date unsuccessfully, for the enactment of the important Medicaid Community-Based Attendant Services and Supports Act (MiCASSA). This proposed bill, which has been introduced several times in Congress over the last several years with no success despite support from such unlikely sources as former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, would mandate that states provide the option of community-based attendant services for Medicaid-eligible people with disabilities, rather than solely in nursing homes which have continued to receive the lion's share of Medicaid dollars. The choice would then rest with the person with the disability to select the option that best suits her or his needs. It should be stressed, however, that this refers only to people with disabilities who are eligible for Medicaid. Activists who are committed to social justice from below must not forget to maintain the broader horizons of ultimately facilitating, as with the very attainable dream of single payer health care, a universal attendant services program for middle-class Americans with disabilities who should not have to sacrifice precious income to pay for badly needed services. A universal and portable attendant services program would also enable users to have the freedom to move from state to state without having to worry that suitable services will not be available in another state.

This issue has also been adopted by perhaps the most radical disability rights organization in the United States, American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today or ADAPT. Originally founded to campaign for wheelchair accessible intercity buses, it shifted priorities (and correspondingly changed the meaning of its acronym) once it successfully won that goal to focus on attendant services. Although it manifests no explicit ideological line, it has demonstrated a flair for innovative forms of direct action and protest including pickets, guerrilla theater, and civil disobedience that, to a degree, represent the best of committed activist struggles from below. This can be illustrated in the Free Our People March that ADAPT organized in September 2003 that attracted hundreds of people with disabilities in a march from the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia to Capitol Hill in Washington. Such marches also help to foster a more cohesive consciousness around disability politics and disability identity that facilitates further struggles and avoids the dysfunctional fragmentation whereby disabled people organize on the basis of a single medical condition and irrationally compete against each other for resources.

While the powerfully influential American Health Care Association has, not surprisingly, strongly opposed MiCASSA, there have also been significant tensions between unions and disability rights activists on the issue, given the facts that many nursing homes are unionized and that the argument of disability rights activists has sometimes taken on a neoliberal tone of highlighting the advantage of cost reductions, at least partly due to lower non-union salaries. When one recalls the individualist strain of the independent living movement, this is hardly surprising. ADAPT has not hesitated to criticize unions that it feels have threatened its interests. For instance, in 2002, it blocked the headquarters of the AFL-CIO, as well as two unions representing nursing home workers, AFSCME and SEIU, to demand a meeting with union leaders on the issue. There has also been tension between disability rights activists and unions over the closure of institutions such as the Laguna Honda nursing home in San Francisco. Nevertheless, dialogue between the two constituencies has led to some progress as the SEIU has endorsed MiCASSA and is increasingly focused on organizing community based attendants.

The Contradictory Politics of Coalition Building

In practice, however, there are many difficulties that highlight the possibilities for both coalition building between disability rights activists and advocates for the rights of attendants, as well as potential perils and pitfalls that have to be creatively mediated. First, the low wage and low benefits nature of the attendant services labor market means that it is not always easy for even disabled people with direct funding or personal wealth to find attendants to hire. The transient nature of the market is extremely frustrating for many people with disabilities who have invested significant time in training attendants, only to find that they very soon move on to other opportunities. Regrettably, people with disabilities are often victims of thefts or even physical, sexual, or mental abuse by some attendants. One study found that nearly forty percent of people with disabilities in a random sample had been robbed at least once by an attendant.

Moreover, the low wages and lack of essential benefits surely plays a role in both the high turnover rate and many of the complaints that people with disabilities often express about some attendants who are insensitive or rude. Indeed, a study of San Francisco County found that higher wages and benefits among home care workers reduced turnover. This suggests some common ground between disability rights advocates and union activists. To its credit, one of the main twelve planks of the proposed MiCASSA initiative is a living wage and quality benefits for attendant workers. This is a promising first step and a crucial gesture of solidarity on the part of disability rights activists.

However, the libertarian strain within the independent living movement often leads some disability rights activists to be unduly suspicious and dismissive of trade union activists who are trying to improve their lives and earn a living wage. At the same time, unions need to be sure to appreciate the systemic discrimination faced by people with disabilities, educate themselves about the social model of disablement and acknowledge why control by the disabled consumer is so important. It would be a serious mistake if union activists were to use the tools of collective bargaining to try to impose unreasonable restrictions on the kind of work they will perform that infringe on the rights of the disabled consumers to live their lives as equal citizens. Particular sensitivity has to be accorded to respecting the disabled consumer's right to select an attendant of his or her choice of gender for what is, after all, in many cases very intimate care. I would also suggest that unions align with disabled people in rejecting the unwarranted restriction of certain simple procedures to performance by medically trained specialists only and simply focus on unionizing workers regardless of skill or training. This sort of craft protectionism arbitrarily and negatively limits the rights of people with disabilities and simultaneously divides the union movement into weak, discordant units.

Enabling collective bargaining while honoring the principle of consumer control is a tricky matter but creative solutions ought to permit both the labor rights of workers and the rights of people with disabilities to be respected. As organizing attendant care workers already entails surmounting restrictions under the National Labor Relations Act because of the legal ambiguity over the identity of the employer and management efforts to define workers as independent contractors, it should not be impossible to integrate the needs of disabled consumers within a union-friendly paradigm. Advocating for the adoption of the legal doctrine of "dependent contractors" that is operative in many Canadian provinces and allows such workers to collectively bargain despite some affinities with independent contractors may provide one avenue of admittedly uphill resistance. Smart, politically savvy unions will forge grassroots alliances with progressive disability rights activists to secure both creative legal reforms that re-regulate the market to empower the marginalized as well as better funding that benefits both parties. In a labor market where many employees in all sectors work at home or in non-traditional post-Fordist employment arrangements, this kind of flexibility should simply be seen as part of a larger project that grapples with the legacy of globalization. Reformulating current highly bureaucratic labor law structures from below to allow the organization of dispersed workers while respecting the rights of disabled clients are entirely attainable objectives. Only rank-and-file movements of disability rights activists and union activists working in tandem can bring about effective attendant services that are empowering for disabled people, while providing quality jobs for workers.

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Winning a Welfare Battle and Building Bridges

LORRAINE COHEN

THE CATE Coalition and Mayor Giuliani's Policies

THE POLITICS OF RACE, CLASS, and gender played an important role in this struggle for access to higher education in New York City. Soon after Rudolph Giuliani became mayor, he announced that one of his most important goals was to remove thousands of New Yorkers from the welfare rolls that had been estimated to number about a million people when he took office. Most of these people on public assistance were women of color, single parents, and heads of households. Running against David Dinkins, the only African American mayor in the city's history, Giuliani came to power with the help of constituencies who identified themselves with Giuliani's tough image as a crime fighter. In his campaign in 1993, he sent signals to the city's whiter, more middle class, and conservative communities that he understood their concerns about a city that they saw as out of control and in decline. He was strongly supported by New York's business community who equated economic development with lower taxes and privatization of government services. The rhetoric that Giuliani used to talk about people on welfare drew upon the classic stereotypes of people on public assistance as lazy, dependent, weak, and lacking personal discipline. These images with their racist and sexist undertones played well to the increasingly conservative national Republican leadership whose favor he sought.

Under Giuliani's administration thousands of people had been pushed into the Work Employment Program (WEP). Opponents perceived this program as a new form of indentured servitude, consistent with a long history of relegating people of color to dead-end jobs. Participants were not entitled to receive the wages customarily paid in these jobs. They were not provided with proper health and safety equipment. They were not allowed to join the unions whose members were being laid off while their jobs were being done by people on public assistance.[1]

Giuliani's "work first" interpretation of the Clinton 1996 welfare reform bill had a devastating impact on students on public assistance who were enrolled in degree programs in the City University of New York (CUNY). Before Giuliani's policies were implemented, CUNY had opened its doors creating programs that offered academic and social supports so that these students could achieve their goal of getting a college degree. Under WEP these students were now being pushed out of CUNY at much accelerated rates. They were being told that they had to do workfare and could no longer stay and complete their education.[2] *Within five years CUNY went from having approximately 26,000 students on public assistance to 5,000 students.*[3]

In 1996 faculty members at Hunter's School of Social Work helped organize a group of CUNY students on public assistance to fight the forced removal of CUNY of students on public assistance. They formed a student organization called the Welfare Rights Initiative.[4] With the help of several legal advocacy organi-

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zations, the Welfare Rights Initiative became a party to a class action lawsuit, Davila vs. Eggleston that was filed during this period. (Evelyn Davila was a student in a senior college.) Verna Eggleston was Giuliani's appointed head of the city's central policy making welfare agency, the Human Resources Administration (HRA). This law suit was aimed at stopping welfare administrators from removing college students from school in order to do workfare without doing a careful academic and personal evaluation of each individual. The lawsuit made headlines, but it did not slow down the removal of CUNY students from school.

In the fall of 2001, two groups came together to continue the fight around gaining access to education and training: a community based group of mainly single parent welfare recipients based in Brooklyn, called Families United for Racial and Economic Equality, and the Welfare Rights Initiative. They began to brainstorm about what would be the most effective strategy to challenge the Giuliani administration. The result of these meetings was the founding of the Coalition for Access to Education and Training, (CATE). The two founding groups pulled in several of the other community based and legal advocacy groups who had fought for unionization for WEP workers and were involved in the Davila law suit. Among these organizations were Community Voices Heard, Association for Community Reform Now (ACORN), the Protestant Federation Welfare Reform Network, the Urban Justice Center, New York Legal Aid, the CUNY Law School Economic Justice Project, and the Welfare Law Center. [5]

These organizations had a history of fighting for the rights of the poor for jobs, housing, and against WEP. Together the coalition decided that their best hope for fighting Giuliani's welfare policies was to bring before New York City Council a comprehensive piece of legislation. City Council, elected by neighborhoods, was a very racially and ethnically diverse body with many progressive legislators. The New York City Council had demonstrated that it would challenge the draconian policies of Giuliani and his agency heads regarding the treatment of low income New Yorkers.[6]

> Giuliani's Work Employment Program is a new form of indentured servitude.

The bill that the CATE Coalition wrote became City Council bill Intro 93-A. It contained language that grew directly out of the experiences of people on public assistance. It recognized that the federal welfare law could be interpreted in ways that allowed for education and training to be the equivalent of required work or community service hours. Other states had interpreted this provision to permit much greater flexibility. The bill would strongly enhance the right of people receiving public assistance to count education and training hours toward their work assignment. The bill mandated that the city welfare offices inform people of their right to search for approved educational and training programs at every level, from GED and ESL programs, to degree programs within community and senior colleges. It mandated that the caseworkers give recipients a specified time period to find the educational program fitting their needs. The bill prevented caseworkers from assigning people to a work activity while they were finishing their course of study within an approved educational program without doing an evaluation of the progress that individuals were making towards getting a degree or completing the program.[7]

The PSC and Social Unionism

In 2000 an insurgent rank and file organization called the New Caucus won the university wide union election to become the new leadership of the Professional Staff Congress, the Union of Faculty and Staff at the City University. The New Caucus victory was in part due to the leading role that it played in opposing Giuliani's attacks on open admissions, and especially the attack on the right of students to receive remediation at CUNY's senior colleges. Open admissions policies had given an opportunity for thousands of African-American, Latino, and immigrant populations to attend one of CUNY's community or senior colleges. Both Mayor Giuliani's and Governor George Pataki's new appointments to the CUNY Board of Trustees led to an intense political struggle that once again revealed the fault lines of race, class, and gender within the social and political landscape of the city.[8]

The leadership that came out of the New Caucus had a very different orientation than its predecessors towards working with students and community organizations. It supported rank and file activism, and the importance of playing a broader role in the labor movement. It believed that unions should be part of building movements for progressive social change that included a broad array of organizations. This type of "social unionism" was very different from the mainstream "bread and butter" unionism that characterized most unions in the city and the region and policies of the previous PSC leadership, a leadership that had been in power for approximately twenty-five years.

Soon after taking office, the PSC leadership supported the development of rank and file committees such as the Women's Committee. To help create this committee it drew upon a network of activists from Women's Studies, the open admissions struggle, and long time CUNY New Caucus political activists with a feminist perspective, such as myself, who had become part of the New Caucus. Norah Chase was the first elected chair. Her background was in women's studies. Norah had a long history of trade union activism and a commitment to empowering women.

Our goals as a committee were not fully spelled out, but we knew that similarly to most women involved in labor unions, we were primarily concerned about the status and power of women faculty and staff in the union and the workplace. While there were important differences in our own political histories, priorities, rank, job description and status in the University, Norah conducted meetings in a way that allowed for wide-ranging expression of our own concerns about a broad range of issues. We valued participation, supported each other's work, and listened carefully to one another. This climate created a context for me to discuss my concerns about the impending reauthorization of Clinton's landmark welfare bill. The right wing and their representatives in Congress were proposing an even more draconian piece of legislation, reducing block grants, increasing workfare hours, and further limiting options for education and training.

My involvement with the issue of welfare reform came about mainly because of my work with students on public assistance. For four years before the 1996 welfare bill was implemented at the City University, I had taught sociology courses for a program, The College Opportunity to Prepare for Employment Program (COPE) at my home college of LaGuardia Community College. This program was designed to support students on public assistance who were trying to graduate with an associates degree. The vast majority of these students were women of color and single parents. Their heroic struggles to finish their schooling, in the face of innumerable impediments, deeply affected me. As a sociologist, many of the topics that I taught created an opportunity for me to listen to just how difficult their lives were, and how much they had to struggle to stay in school. Despite these incredible hurdles, most of the students graduated.

With the implementation of the 1996 welfare law the COPE program dramatically changed. CUNY was forced to restructure the program. Students were given one year of what was called "vocational training." The emphasis was no longer on supporting students to get associates or bachelors degrees, but on placing students into paying jobs. Due to the heroic efforts of the local college professional staff who ran these programs, many of these students found ways of continuing their education and receiving degrees, but the numbers of students on public assistance who were in college kept on declining, and those who were in school were still under intense pressure.

It had been several years since I had been active around this issue, but as a result of sharing my concerns about this student population with members of the PSC Women's Committee, I was encouraged by Norah to do research on the situation of welfare recipients in CUNY. I spoke with and interviewed CUNY staff and faculty from the Women's Centers, who had intimate knowledge of these students. I touched based with a variety of community organizations that advocated for or organized people on public assistance; through this network I learned about the existence of the CATE Coalition.

In the fall of 2001, I reported on my findings to the Women's Committee.

Those who attended the meeting had a very strong reaction to my report. As feminist scholars, teachers, counselors, and activists most of us felt a real connection to these women, their lives and struggles. As scholars and teachers, perhaps more than most other union members, we had read and taught about the complex interconnections between race, class, and gender. In our own lives and political work, we understood that we needed to be aware of these issues if we were to be successful in organizing CUNY faculty and staff who, more than most institutions of higher learning, were very diverse.

Barbara Omolade, a Women's Committee member and a well know scholar on the history and struggles of low income African-American women, made a strong case at the meeting in which I made my presentation that the PSC leadership should commit itself to what she defined as a "campaign." By campaign she meant an ongoing set of activities that would support the goal of bringing these students back to school. The PSC had waged a successful campaign to stop the university from raising the tuition of students whose parents were undocumented, a plan that was hatched by CUNY administrators after the events of September 11, 2001. We saw this campaign as a possible model for working in coalition with student and community based organizations.

Women's Committee members who were present at this meeting voiced strong support for her suggestions. A campaign, they argued, meant a commitment by the union to put the breadth of its resources behind this effort. To gain support for this campaign it was suggested that I write a proposal with a rationale and bring it before the PSC Executive Committee. I agreed to write this proposal. A retired CUNY counselor, Fran Geteles, who also had a long history of activism on behalf of CUNY's poor and working-class students, including those on public assistance, agreed to work with me on this project.[9]

Building Bridges to the PSC Executive Committee

THE PSC EXECUTIVE responded quickly to our proposal. We made a presentation to the executive committee. In principal everyone on the executive committee supported this campaign. Each member of the PSC's leadership had a strong history of supporting CUNY's policy of open admissions. However, the leadership faced extraordinary demands on its limited resources. As a progressive union it was constantly called upon to support solidarity projects of other unions and community groups. The leadership worried about whether it really had the time and energy to take on another one of these projects. With the understanding that we on the Women's Committee would take a leading role in working directly with the Coalition for

Access and Training, the PSC unanimously agreed to support this campaign. Cecelia McCall, the Secretary of the PSC, an African-American professor of English, with a long history of progressive activism on behalf of students of color in CUNY, pledged that the Legislative Committee of which she was the Chair would work with us. As events unfolded, it became clear that her participation and that of the Legislative Committee made an enormous difference in the Women's Committee's ability to carry out the work required to achieve the goals of this struggle. Despite our desire to help the CATE Coalition, we as a small group of women activists did not have the resources necessary to achieve the goals of this struggle. Without the support of the union leadership we could not have marshaled the power of the union, its political and electoral clout, to bring to bear the pressure that was needed to get a bill passed.

The Struggle to Pass the Bill

From the beginning, sustaining the energy that it took to be involved in the work of the Coalition was not easy. The Women's Committee had relatively few members who were core activists. All of us were juggling multiple commitments as union and community activists, teachers, scholars, and as women with families or other important relationships in our lives. The CATE Coalition activists seemed open to accepting what we had to offer. They welcomed our participation. CATE activists listened carefully to our suggestions and perspective, but they knew that they were in charge of their own struggle. We respected these boundaries and were careful not to exaggerate our contribution to the struggle. We came to recognize that our role was one of creating a climate of support, of injecting new energy, and offering whatever resources we could mobilize as it became clear what their needs were.[10]

Social unionism was very different from the mainstream bread and butter unionism.

Our presence gave CATE members an important boost, especially in the early phases of our involvement in the struggle. When we first began to work with Coalition members, the Coalition was going through a difficult period. In the aftermath of 9/11 in 2001, the City Council shifted its agenda and stopped work on the CATE bill. City Council term limits came into effect, and this meant that the Coalition had to get the support of the new chair of the General Welfare Committee, William DiBlasio, and the new speaker of the City Council, Gifford Miller. DiBlasio agreed to become the bill's new sponsor. Miller had given assurances to CATE. Yet, these key legislators, however, were not moving the bill forward, and it did not appear to be high on their legislative agenda.

Moreover, Mayor Bloomberg a billionaire businessman, had run as Giuliani's successor as a Republican, though his politics appeared to be more moderate and less committed to right wing ideas or policies. He was being asked to prove his Republican credentials to the more conservative base and leadership of the party. Giuliani's welfare policies had garnered a lot of support among conservative think tanks such as the Manhattan Institute and the editorial pages of New York's two tabloids, the *Daily News* and the *New York Post*.

When Bloomberg publicly announced to the City Council that he was going to veto the CATE bill, the City Council leadership, Democrats, feared the public criticism that they would receive from the editorial pages of these papers if they openly supported the CATE legislation. This meant these leaders constantly delayed announcing when they were holding hearings on the bill.[11] The PSC used its leverage at this critical moment in an effort to finally get the bill reported out of the General Welfare Committee. The Legislative Committee invited Bill DiBlasio to the PSC offices to discuss matters of "common concern." At the meeting Cecelia McCall, speaking for the PSC, made our strong support for the CATE bill known. The fact that the PSC made endorsements of candidates in local elections, and that we were voting members of the state wide affiliate labor organization, the New York State United Teachers, did not go unnoticed.

Still more pressure was needed to be exerted to bring the bill to the floor. The CATE Coalition urged people to call the members of the City Council Black and Latino Caucus who they believed could effectively put pressure on Miller and DiBlasio to bring the bill to a vote. The Legislative Committee under Cecelia's direction had built a relationship with the leaders of the Black and Latino Caucus. They called Caucus members. The pressure from the Caucus worked; the Council leadership moved to bring the bill up for a vote. In the winter of 2003, hearings on the bill were finally called by DiBlasio's Committee. Along with other CATE participants, The PSC participated in these hearings. Fran Geteles and I testified; we brought other PSC faculty and staff to testify. Cecelia McCall testified on behalf of the PSC.

The PSC kept up the pressure with the other CATE organizations as the bill was heading for a vote. We launched on our website a campaign of faxes and letters to City Council. We appeared at rallies called by CATE organizations. Finally on February 12, Intro 93-A was brought for a vote, the bill passed by a huge margin.[12] This wonderful moment of victory was short lived. The mayor gave strong signs that he would veto the bill. CATE called a rally to head off the mayor's veto, but to no avail, the mayor did in fact veto the bill. [13] After several more weeks of pressure including another demonstration in front of the City Hall, the Council in April, by another large margin, voted to override the mayor's veto. The mayor was not backing down; he announced that he was suing the City Council, arguing that it had overstepped its powers by passing such a bill.[14]

During all the ups and downs of this struggle we on the Women's Committee gave what we could. We showed up for demonstrations, made phone calls, came to meetings, and offered words of support. We communicated with the PSC leadership, the organizing staff, and other committees such as the Solidarity Committee. One of the most important factors that kept those of us who were engaged committed to this struggle was the determination and the words of the grassroots members of the CATE groups. In their speeches, news releases, and posters, the grassroots activists who spoke recognized that their fight for education was just one aspect of a broader struggle to achieve the rights and respect they deserved as Black and Latino women, as mothers, as low wage workers in and out of the paid labor force, and as human beings. Their words gave meaning to a vision for change that addressed the deeply structured inequalities that were responsible for the refusal by those in power to relent on this issue. While there were some differences in ideology, strategy, and tactics among the member groups, what kept us united was a belief that education and training, including access to higher education was a fundamental civil and human right, a right that continued to be denied and a right that was necessary and essential to the survival of these women and their families and communities.

The passage of the bill in February was a wonderful moment of victory, but we learned that passing a bill and getting legislation implemented are not the same. Each step requires pressure, vigilance, and struggle. After Bloomberg announced he was going to court to stop the implementation of the bill, It took time for CATE to regroup. Most of the organizations decided to try to talk to the Bloomberg people hoping that they could begin to get pieces of the bill implemented, despite the mayor's lawsuit against the City Council.

In the spring of 2003, the city settled the Davila lawsuit.[15] This was an important victory that gave CATE members hope and a way of showing that struggle matters. They used the settlement to educate their own members and to reach out to other people on public assistance. They explained in memos and leaflets what the settlement meant and the steps people should take if they wanted to gain access to training and education. However, the Bloomberg administration had not begun to implement these changes in their own policies or practices. To mark the one year date after the bill was passed, Families United for Racial and Economic Equality held a spirited rally at City Hall and proceeded with an unauthorized march on the Human Resources Administration (HRA) offices, calling on Verna Eggleston, the head of HRA, to meet the demonstrators. CATE organizations, including the PSC; we attended and I spoke on behalf of the PSC at this rally.[16]

After the mayor's veto, our role and that of the PSC leadership changed, in part because the needs of the CATE groups changed, and in part because of the reality of the limits on our energies and resources. Fran and I stayed in touch with CATE through telephone and emails. We, along with other Women's Committee and PSC members, kept the connection alive to CATE groups by attending fundraisers, and news conferences called by some of the individual groups. We also organized a highly successful event that featured them as speakers to an audience of CUNY students, faculty, staff and administrators.[17] For much of 2004, CATE organization leaders and members were forced to turn their attention to the budget of Governor Pataki, another conservative leader, whose budget severely slashed welfare benefits and imposed harsh penalties for "infractions" by welfare recipients. The PSC signed on to letters and alerted lobbyists of our state affiliate, New York State United Teachers, opposing these cuts, but the PSC leadership felt it resources should be used to fight more specifically for education and training.

Cecelia McCall and the Legislative Committee, with our active participation, believed that we should take this struggle to education unions with which we were affiliated. We pushed for a variety of measures that would gain the rights for which CATE was fighting by targeting the lobbying and public policy arms of our affiliate organizations, the New York State United Teachers, and the American Federation of Teachers. Eileen Moran, a Women's Committee member with a strong background in social policy, wrote a series of resolutions that were passed at the regional and national conventions of these two organizations. These resolutions supported job training and education, including access to higher education, attacked and called for investigation into state government's misuse of welfare block grants to balance their budgets, opposed marriage incentives as part of the reauthorization of the 1996 welfare bill, and supported publicly funded, high quality childcare. [18]

These resolutions represented our ongoing effort to move the more mainstream labor movement towards recognizing the necessity of supporting a broader social justice agenda. The positive support given to these resolutions by NYSUT and AFT delegates have enabled us to ask these organizations to monitor the state and federal policies around welfare and related issues of childcare, education, and training. Given the domination of conservatives at every level of government, and the more centrist politics of most of the labor movement, these PSC initiatives are not likely to achieve significant change in the politics or outlook of these organizations, but we believe that our actions lay the foundation for future organizing and ideological and political struggles within the labor movement itself about its future direction.

Several events have begun to turn the tide.

In January of 2005, Mayor Bloomberg made a surprising decision. Despite the fact that the state court sided with the mayor's counsel on the lawsuit that challenged the right of City Council to pass the CATE bill, his Human Resources Administration put out a public memo that included virtually all of the provisions of the CATE bill.[19] No one can know for sure why he reversed himself, but 2005 was an election year. We remain convinced that without the ongoing pressure brought by the CATE Coalition and its City Council supporters, Bloomberg would not have thrown his support behind this major shift in the policy of his Human Resources Administration.

The struggle is far from over; the reality is that welfare recipients are still not being given the information they need to access education and training. New steps are being taken by CATE member organizations to get information out to people on public assistance that they now do have a right to education and training. We in the Women's Committee with the support of the PSC leadership are planning the next steps that we need to take to apply pressure to the chancellor and his offices to once again actively recruit people on welfare to enter CUNY.

Conclusions

ONE OF THE LESSONS of working with the CATE Coalition is that these coalitions involve making long-term commitments. Given the multiple demands on people who are grassroots activists and not paid staff, this is not easy for either community organization members or rank and file union activists. There is an ebb and flow to these struggles. Many of the intangibles that feminists know from their own experience and practices — providing support, holding out hope, valuing and validating the work of activists whose lives are much more difficult and stretched than our own — become important sources of energy and help sustain activism over time. These coalitions that involve organizations and individuals from different social backgrounds create opportunities to gain trust, learn about issues and each other's lives and struggles. These activities, even when only partially successful, have the potential to build long term relationships and networks that will be necessary if progressive change is to become a genuine possibility.

> The Council voted to override the mayor's veto.

The Women's Committee's work with the CATE coalition shows the potential for labor and community groups to come together to work on a broader social justice agenda. This experience demonstrates that the activity of small group of feminist union activists can have an impact far beyond its numbers. Given the many pressing issues that a union had to address, the willingness of Women's Committee members to assume the responsibility for maintaining a strong connection to the Coalition was essential if the PSC was to be able to play a role in this struggle. Without, however, a progressive leadership that is willing to use its resources for supporting the struggles of the most disadvantaged groups in our city, we could not have achieved whatever modest successes we have had. Being part of a Coalition means "being there," working to produce the results with other members. The PSC demonstrated through its actions that it wanted "to be there" to offer solidarity and to share resources.

If the labor movement in the United States is to become relevant to the thousands of low income people who are not organized, it needs to challenge the domination by the political forces in the United States that continue to see women, and particularly women of color, as low wage labor and second-class citizens. To do this we as a labor movement need to be part of building long term relationships that create links between all kinds of groups and issues that have been historically and ideologically been viewed as separate and distinct. We in the Women's Committee continue to believe that social justice unionism is the only way that the labor movement will regain its strength and become again a powerful cultural and political force in American society.

PERSONAL NOTE. I would like to thank the women of the PSC Women's Committee who provided the support, critical feedback, and continued solidarity that made the work of the Subcommittee on Education, Welfare, and Low Income Women possible. I would also like to thank the Legislative Committee, the leadership of the PSC for their ongoing support of the CATE, and the PSC organizers and staff. Thanks also to Sherry Gorelick for her helpful comments and Berenice Fisher for her support for this project.

NOTES

1. Annette Fuentes, "Giuliani's Workfare: Slaves of New York," *Baltimore Chronicle and Sentinel*. February 6, 1997. http://baltimorechronicle.com/workfare/html Also see documentary on the struggle to gain labor rights for WEP workers by Kathy L. Leichter and Jonathan P. Skurnik, *A Day's Work, A Day's Pay*. New Day Film, n.d. www.newday.com

2. For analysis of the college options available to welfare recipients before implementation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PWROA) passed in 1996 see Erika Kates, "Colleges Can Help Women in Poverty" in, Diane Dujon and Ann Withorn, eds. *For Crying Out Loud: Women's Poverty in the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

3. Diana M. Pearce, "Welfare Reform Now That We Know It: Enforcing Women's Poverty and preventing Self-Sufficiency, in Josefina Figueira-McDonough and Rosemary C. Sarri, eds in *Women at the Margins: Neglect, Punishment, and Resistance*; 133-135; Kim Phillips-Fein, "The Education of Jessica Rivera", *The Nation,* November 25, 2002; Luchina Fisher, "NYC Agrees to Education for Welfare Recipients." *Women's E News,* August 21, 2003, www.womensenews.org/article.cfm.dyn/aid/1495/context/archive

4. For discussion of the history of the formation of the Welfare Rights Initiative www.lincproject.org/organizing/profiles/welfare_.shtml

5. In July of 2005, I learned about the early history of CATE from a telephone interview with Ilana Berger, the Director of Families United for Racial and Economic Equality. The following groups became part of the CATE Coalition: Association for Community Organizations Reform Now (ACORN*) www.acorn.org/ Community Voices Heard (CVH), www.cvhaction.org/;* CUNY Law School Economic Justice Project *Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE) www.furee.org/; Legal Aid Society of New York, www.legal-aid.org/;* Professional Staff Congress (PSC) *www.psc-cuny.org/*;Welfare Rights Initiative (WRI) *www.lincproject.org/organizing/profiles/welfare_.shtml*; Welfare Law Center *www.welfarelaw.org/;* Welfare Reform Network *www.fpwa.org/advocacy/pop_wrn.html; Urban Justice Center www.urbanjustice.org/* www.law.cuny.edu/app/justice_initiatives/ejp.jsp

6. Stephen DiBrienza, the former Chair of the City Council's General Welfare Committee through the Giuliani administration, had been one of the most outspoken critics of Giuliani's policies towards low income populations. He sponsored legislation such as the Transitional Employment Program, as an alternative to workfare. This bill was supported by many City Council representatives and grassroots community organizations, some of which became part of the CATE Coalition. He was also the original sponsor of Intro 93-A, but was forced out of office by term limits. See Barrett, Fuentes, and Leichter and Skurnick for text and video representations of opposition to Giuliani's welfare policies that predated the CATE struggle. See the websites of CATE Coalition members for their representations of the struggles referred to in this article.

7. Maureen Lane and Wendy Bach, "The New York City Access to Training and Education Bill Intro.93-A: A Proposal by the Coalition for Access to Training and Education (CATE), 2002. CATE informational leaflet distributed to the press, City Council members, members of CATE groups and other supporters. See papers of Women's Committee of the Professional Staff Congress.

8. Nancy Romer, "The CUNY Struggle: Class and Race in Public Higher Education" in *New Politics.* 7(2) (1999): whole no. 26: *www.wpunj.edu/~newpol/issue26/romer26.htm* See also for a broader discussion of the conservative movements' use of Boards of Trustees appointments to further their agenda, Annette Fuentes, "Trustees of the Right's Agenda," *The Nation*, October 5, 1998.

9. After the project was under way the Women's Committee formally created a subcommittee called the Women's Committee Subcommittee for Education, Welfare, and Low Income women. Fran and I became co-chairs. These events are recorded in the minutes of the PSC Women's Committee and the PSC Executive Committee.

10. For a nuanced discussion of the complex moral and political issues that arise in the process of building co-

alitions among women with different class and racial backgrounds See Janet L. Finn, "Borders and Bridges: Building New Directions for the Women's Movement." in Josefina Figueira-McDonough and R.C. Seirra, eds, *Women at the Margins: Neglect Punishment, and Resistance* (New York: Haworth Pres, 2002).

11. Another powerful group looking over the shoulder of City Council and the Mayor was the conservative think tank, the Manhattan Institute. For years it had been at the forefront of criticizing CUNY and its open admissions policies. Over the course of the CATE struggle, *City Journal columnist* and Manhattan Institute point person on CUNY, Heather Mac Donald wrote several pieces highly critical of City Council and community and labor advocates for supporting Into-93A, the CATE bill. She decried any approach that weakened the workfare requirements as dangerous backsliding, and a betrayal of the Giuliani legacy. See Heather Mac Donald "Backsliding on Workfare," *City Journal*, 15, no.2.(2002) *www.city-journal.org/html/eon_5_13_02hm.html*

12. Tomio *Geron, T. 2003, "Education bill for welfare recipients: City council expands access to college," PSC Clarion, March 2003. http://psc-cuny.org/PDF/Clarion_March_03.pdf*

13. Chisun *Lee, "Struggling to Study: Mayor Blocks Education Law for the Poor," Village Voice, July 9, 2003.*

14. *Neil deMause, "School's Out: New welfare rules could put education out of reach," In These Times*, October 6, *2003. www.inthesetimes.com/site/main/print/628/*

15. Luchina Fisher, "NYC Agrees to Education for Welfare Recipients, *Women's e News*, October 31, 2003. *www.womensenews.org/article.cfm.dyn/aid/1495/context/archive*.

16. Families United for Racial and Economic Equality, "Education and Training Committee Report," FUREE website, 2004, *www.furee.org/educ.html.* See also report that shows little change in the information given to welfare recipients when they see their caseworkers regarding right to access education and training, "System Failure: New York City's Denial of Access to Education for Welfare Recipients." October 6, 2004 *www.urbanjustice.org/publications/PDFs/FUREEReportNov2004.pdf*

17. On April 22, 2004 the Women's Committee co-sponsored a very successful event called "Welfare, Workfare, and Access to Training and Education," with the Women's Center of Borough of Manhattan Community College. Debby Parker, the key organizer of this event was the Director of the Center and an active Women's Committee member.

18. Resolutions for NYSUT and AFT conventions of 2004, Papers of PSC Women's Committee

19. The Davila settlement laid the foundation for some of the new policies, but the memo went further incorporating changes that went beyond the limits of Davila which addressed the educational rights of welfare recipients who attended community colleges and were single parents. The websites of The Welfare Law Center and the Urban Justice Center have put out information regarding the new rights and procedures implied. www.informationforfamilies.org/htm/welfare/single.htm

The Ups and Downs of the Swedish Welfare State

General Trends, Benefits, and Caregiving

HELEN LACHS GINSBURG and MARGUERITE G. ROSENTHAL

ONCE ONE OF EUROPE'S poorest countries, in the post-World War II decades Sweden evolved into a slum-free, affluent, egalitarian full employment welfare state, with a strong commitment to work for all and women's equality — the poster child of advanced welfare states. Income differences narrowed dramatically and poverty was nearly eliminated. Labor-management cooperation, high union density, high taxes and (except for a few years) Social Democratic political dominance, were the norms. A strong commitment to the welfare state and jobs for all eventually cut across political party lines.

Full employment was a national ethos and the top priority of economic policy. Swedes considered jobs the key to a normal life and the economic foundation of the welfare state. Sweden's benefit programs were developed to meet virtually all contingencies and include, among others: pensions; support for the unemployed that includes benefits, job training, retraining and job creation; disability and sickness benefits; health care, parental leave; child allowances; financial assistance for families with disabled children; and decent housing for all. Social provision of high quality services for the elderly, children, the ill and disabled greatly expanded the public sector and paid jobs for women. Swedish women have among the highest labor force participation rates in all the OECD countries.

Going against the trend on a continent plagued by high unemployment, until the 1990s, unemployment averaged barely 2 percent; 3 percent, an extreme rarity, was political suicide and could and did help topple a government.

The Unraveling

THAT'S THE SWEDEN that was. But in the early 1990s, Sweden was hit by the worst economic slump since the 1930s, with 3 years of falling output, the rebirth of mass unemployment, a ballooning budget deficit, and draconian cuts and rule changes in income benefits and services. These started under a conservative-led coalition and continued under the Social Democrats.

What went wrong? Critics claim that the welfare state had simply become unsustainable and its cost had sent the budget deficit soaring. Yet shortly before the slump, Sweden still had full employment, a strong welfare state and a hefty budget surplus. To understand what happened, consider the background: the growing power of Swedish business, pressures from globalization and the race to join the European Union, with its requirements for low budget deficits and inflation but none for low unemployment. Neoliberalism had penetrated even

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We dedicate this article to the memory of Rudolf Meidner (1914-2005), economist and an architect of the Swedish welfare state who never lost his vision of full employment, equality, and a better life for all.

the Social Democratic Party. The emphasis was on free markets, deregulation, and privatization. Perhaps as a consequence, the national government has increasingly thrust responsibility for health and social services onto local government. Also, a sweeping tax reform favored the rich and cut deeply into government revenues. Financial deregulation had sparked a wildly speculative real estate boom and a related near collapse of the banking system. These policies required an expensive government bailout, a stubborn, futile and costly defense of an overvalued krona that pushed interest rates briefly to 500 percent and helped to turn a recession into a depression that coincided with an international slump. Above all was the abandonment of the full employment priority.

Unemployment

AFTER A HALF CENTURY of full employment, the most striking change in Sweden's welfare state was the resurgence of mass unemployment in the 1990s . It was worsened and prolonged by an austerity program that depressed demand and cut deeply into public sector jobs and thus directly affected the availability and quality of social services. In 1994, after a three-year rule by a conservative-led coalition, the Social Democrats returned and were strongly driven to meet strict criteria for admission to the EU's monetary union. In the 1990s, official unemployment hovered around 8 percent for five straight years. Participation in the labor force as well as the proportion and number of people employed and the number of public sectors jobs fell. Even now, in 2006, and despite a booming economy, these figures are below what they were in the pre-crisis era, and currently (February, 2006), the unemployment rate is 5.6 percent.*

Recent budgets signal a somewhat more expansionary fiscal policy. With an eye toward the upcoming September 2006 election, there have been modest increases with an emphasis on more jobs and increased social welfare spending.

The Social Democrats have a parliamentary minority and must rely on support from the Left and Green parties. The government still operates under neoliberal norms. It has a self-imposed 2 percent of GDP budget surplus over a business cycle,** even more restrictive than the EU budget requirement! And it has had self-imposed expenditure caps on the whole budget since 1997. These hold down spending, even when there are surpluses. Expenditure caps have been declining as a proportion of GDP. In addition, countries in the EU must not only adhere to budget deficit limits set by Brussels, but they must also include expenditures by local governments in their national calculations. An important consequence is that since 2000, Stockholm has imposed balanced budget requirements on local governments, and expenditures for health, social services and education have been held down.

Income Distribution

SWEDEN HAS A VERY EGALITARIAN distribution of income, though less so than in the past. Looking at disposable income, inequality dropped sharply in the 1970s, but has been rising since the beginning of the 1980s. The long run trend towards more inequality has continued, with some slight ups and downs. The highest gini-coefficient — a measure of inequality — of disposable income was in 2000, mainly the result of capital gains that occurred as a result of the peaking of the stock market. It has narrowed since then, but it is still markedly higher than it was in the 1990s. That Sweden had the least income inequality of any industrialized country in 1980 and still does is because other countries have also increased their income

*Sweden has recently changed the way it measures unemployment to conform to EU calculations, and this raises the unemployment rate by 0.3–0.5 percentage points.

**More precisely, 2 percent over a business cycle that includes recession and expansion years.

inequality.

Poverty and Social Exclusion

EMPLOYMENT IS the surest guarantee in Sweden to avoid poverty, but tax and transfer policies continue to play a big role in lifting many out of poverty. Nonetheless, there is poverty in Sweden, especially among the persistently unemployed and underemployed.

> Poverty in Sweden is low by international standards, especially among children.

Poverty in Sweden is low by international standards, especially among children. A recent UNICEF report (2005) found that poverty among children — using the common European measure that defines poverty as those living in households with less than half of the national median income — had risen from 3 to 4.2 percent in the 1990s. But Sweden still ranked fourth lowest among 26 OECD nations with a rate just under one-fifth of the comparable U.S. rate of 21.9 percent.

However, within Sweden, poverty is now commonly measured by a relatively generous social assistance standard that overstates the extent of poverty compared to both the UNICEF measure and the official U.S. measure that grossly underestimates poverty. Using the Swedish social assistance poverty measure, poverty peaked in 1996 at 11 percent. Poverty disproportionately affects young unemployed adults, single mothers and their children, families with many children where the parents are unemployed, and immigrant households. Rates have declined for young adults, many of whom have gotten jobs, but those who are foreign born — especially recent arrivals — have significantly lower incomes, 17 percent lower on average, than those born in Sweden. On average, those who have been in Sweden longer or are from other Nordic or EU countries have higher incomes. Sweden now considers itself a multi-ethnic society, with 13 percent of its population over the age of 15 now foreign born and another 2 percent having two foreign-born parents. (Sweden has a longstanding policy of offering asylum to displaced persons and political refugees, and most non-Nordic new immigrants fall into these categories or are reuniting with their families. Unlike in some other countries, immigrants are encouraged to become citizens.)

Between 1997 and 2001, children's poverty dropped from nearly 15 percent to just over 8 percent, but nearly two out of five children of foreign born parents were poor in 2000, and their poverty appears to be persistent — that is, lasting at least 10 years for half of them. Poor children, especially from immigrant families, are concentrated in poor neighborhoods in the country's three largest cities. The national government has begun to pay more attention to the persisting problems of integrating the foreign born into Swedish society, but segregation in housing and employment discrimination remain troubling patterns.

Many of immigrant families rely on relatively generous but rigidly means-tested social assistance. In 2003, 6 percent of all Swedish households but 22 percent of all single women with children received social assistance at some point during the year, and most received benefits in at least two consecutive years.

Mass unemployment and cutbacks in social benefits in the 1990s led to a dramatic expansion in social assistance, and the government's goal was to halve the rolls between 1999 and 2004. There has been a reduction in the utilization of social assistance, partly because of some improvements in the labor market for immigrants, but in recent years the reduction has slowed because of continuing relatively high unemployment. The current government believes the most important way to reduce social assistance dependence is through employment expansion and has proposed measures, among others, to upgrade and employ care workers in health and elder care at the municipal level.

Welfare State Programs

IN THE 1990S, significant changes were made to various programs to maintain income and provide services. These include, but are not limited to, more stringent qualifications, reductions in benefit levels, regulatory changes, and higher user fees. After the economic upturn in the late 1990s, benefit levels for many income security programs were adjusted upward, but seldom to the levels prevailing at the beginning of the 1990s, and rule changes tended to remain. While the general trend has been to restore some cuts made in the 1990s, restorations have been uneven; some programs (such as for children) are gaining, while others (services for the elderly) have lost ground. Below we focus on just a handful of income support and service programs.

Pensions

SWEDEN HAS BEEN a world leader in providing economic security for its elderly, in no small part because of its former pension system. This core income security program has been fundamentally changed, not just tweaked. The previous extremely popular system is being replaced by an entirely new, and far more complicated and market oriented one, that strips people of economic security. Here, we can point to only a few crucial changes to illustrate what is happening in this new and very complex system.

To start with, the old system was based on predictable, defined benefits where the future retiree knew what she or he would be receiving. In the new system, predictability is gone. Only the contribution is known, and there is no guarantee of benefits relative to pre-retirement income. Risk has been shifted to the individual. What is more, a portion is required to be invested in private accounts, again with no guarantee of income. There is a small guaranteed government pension available only to persons 65 and older, the vast majority of whom are women, who have little or no pension income. Because this guaranteed pension is tested against other pension income, it contrasts with certain benefits for families with children that will be further discussed below, and it serves to thwart previous concepts of social solidarity in Swedish society. We believe the full impact of these changes will become more apparent in the future, when it is fully implemented, particularly if the economy goes into a slump. According to the Swedish government's own assessment, the new system will increase income inequality among pensioners, and many believe it will be worse for most Swedes.

It is ironic that in the conservative United States, recent efforts by the Bush administration to introduce private accounts into the Social Security system have thus far been defeated, but in Social Democratic Sweden, this plan was adopted. How did this happen? The explanation is political. In the United States, the Democrats united to resist privatization. And some Republicans also feared facing the voters as the proposal became more and more unpopular, the more the public learned about the it. But in Sweden, the leadership of the Social Democrats agreed with all four non-Socialist parties. Changes were presented as necessary on the grounds that the old system would not be sustainable for baby boomers. Social Democratic leaders have been accused of stifling debate within their party. Some of Sweden's leading actuaries, including the President of the Swedish Society of Actuaries, said that the old system was in fact in good shape. According to these critics, the issues were political and ideological and should have demanded a full-fledged debate; instead the plan was agreed to behind closed doors and was presented as a technical problem. It was passed with little public discussion.

Health and Health Care

BASED ON COMPARATIVE life expectancy rates, Swedes are doing very well. Life expectancy at birth in 2003 is 82.4 years for women and 77.9 for men; the comparable figures for the United States are 79.9 for women and 74.5 for men. So, too, for infant mortality; between 1992 and 2002, Sweden nearly halved its infant mortality rate and in 2002 had the second lowest rate among 30 OECD nations. Second only to Iceland, its rate was about two-fifths of that of the United States.

The Swedish universal health care system has been changing. Fewer resources in fixed prices were spent on health care during the late 1990s, a consequence of policies implemented during the economic downturn, but they have been rising and now exceed what was spent in 1993. Health care is provided at the county level, with variations in its delivery. As in the United States, hospital stays have been considerably shortened, and consequently, the number of hospital beds has declined by about a half. This has had a significant impact on the need for ongoing care at home for many, especially the elderly. Physicians in private practice are now a noticeable proportion of health care providers. Nearly all are paid with public funds, however. User fees have risen. And total expenditures on dental care insurance, in constant prices, decreased dramatically in the 1990s. The latest budget includes a promise, with no details given, to introduce a program to insure dental health and to protect individuals from high dental costs. Dental care remains free for children under 20.

Family Benefits

FAMILY BENEFITS have been and remain the hallmark of the Swedish welfare state. The complex of benefits, provided at the national level, are aimed at assuring mothers and fathers financial security at childbirth or adoption and, importantly, allowing parents to combine work, education, and family life. Unlike in some other countries, in this arena, there is a strong emphasis on creating the conditions for and explicitly encouraging gender equality.

Parental leave epitomizes Swedish family policy. It currently compensates new parents for time away from work for a total of 13 months at 80 percent of their previous earnings, up to a ceiling that covers most people. Designed to encourage fathers to participate in the care of their infants, each parent must take at least one month (the so-called "daddy month") of the total or lose it. An additional three months can be taken at a lower flat daily rate that has just been tripled to a low 180 SEK (about $23). While parental leave is structured to encourage fathers to spend time with their newborns, 84 percent of the time off is taken by women, but the proportion used by men has risen since the early 1990s. A recent controversial proposal of a government-appointed commission, designed to encourage greater participation of fathers in the care of their newborns, would extend parental leave to 15 months with the requirement that each parent take at least five months of leave. There are also various benefits for working pregnant women, including paid leave prior to giving birth, and compensated paternity leave that enables fathers (or, in certain circumstances, someone other than the father) to remain at home for 10 days at the birth or adoption of the child. This benefit is widely used. Another benefit provides income at the relatively low fixed rate to new parents who were unemployed at the time of birth or adoption. Either parent can also take up to 60 days per child per year to care for a sick child at 80 percent of earnings. These expanded parental and sick leave benefits are to some extent designed to encourage a higher fertility rate that declined rather steeply since peaking in 1992, in part because of insecure employment. Although now among the highest in Europe, the fertility rate is still below its previous high.

The universally provided *child allowance*, which had been reduced in the 1990s, and a supplement that had been eliminated for large families, have been restored and made more generous. Families now receive 1050 SEK/ month (or about $135 U.S.) for their first child and progressively more for each additional child (providing a supplement for the second child has just been implemented). The child allowance is an important anti-poverty measure, and a new addition is a child allowance to support parents who are full-time students.

Families with an absent parent also receive the *advanced maintenance payment*, a public grant to the custodial parent that is even more generous than the child allowance that these families also receive. Compensation for the grants are collected from the absent parents by the authorities whenever possible. The amount per child per month is 1,173 SEK (about $170). Fifteen percent of children from newborn to age 20 receive this grant. One welfare benefit that has been greatly reduced by tightened rule changes is the *means-tested housing allowance*. Housing costs have become increasingly burdensome, especially for renters. The 2006 budget includes modest increases in funds for the housing allowance.

The combination of various family income supports — including transfers and tax policies — is largely responsible for reducing disparities in disposable income among different family types. For instance, more than half of the average disposable income for single parent families comes from government transfers. Clearly, the generous public benefit structure is largely responsible for preventing mass poverty among this vulnerable part of the Swedish population. However, although average income has increased over the last decade, single parent families lag behind, largely because of poor labor market conditions.

Child Care and Care of the Elderly

TWO SERVICE SECTORS that in the past freed women to work and provided them work are child care and elder care, both of which are organized and subsidized at the municipal level.* In the past decade, these programs have gone in opposite directions, child care becoming more comprehensive and available and elder care becoming more restricted.

> Family benefits have been and remain the hallmark of the Swedish welfare state.

Universally available child care became a social goal in Sweden in the 1970s to stimulate child development as well as to free mothers to enter either the paid labor force or to pursue education, observes Szebehely. Shortages developed and, to save spaces and money, children of the unemployed were excluded and there were reductions in the staffing ratios. Staffing ratios have improved, and shortages have abated. All localities are required to provide child care — now termed "preschool"— for all children ages 1-5 for at least 3 hours a day in either congregate or family childcare settings. Seventy-five percent of pre-school children are in congregate settings. There has been a small increase in the use of publicly funded, but privately run facilities now accommodate about 17 percent of children. About half of these are in parent cooperatives, mostly run by affluent and better-educated parents. Very few are commercially run. Most young school-aged children attend public after-school programs. Fees had been rising in the 1900s but now cannot be more than 1 to 3 percent of the families' income, depending on the number of their children enrolled. Thus, universal child care has essentially been

*While the term the "Swedish (or Scandinavian) welfare state" is generally used to indicate the broad range of publicly provided income supports, health and social services, the social service components are the responsibility of local governments and most of the income taxes are paid at the municipal level.

achieved, but the development of publicly funded private alternatives may erode the common experience of young children and heighten the differences among classes.

Elder care, however, is very different. A relative is entitled to up 60 days paid leave to care for a seriously ill family member. But publicly provided long-term home-help for the elderly has been rationed for some time. Trydegård reports that while 16 percent of those 65 and over and 38 percent of those over 80 were receiving home care at the beginning of the 1980s, by 2000, those percentages had been halved. Since the early 1990s, Swedish municipalities have been responsible for providing these services, assuming the care of the very sick who were once cared for in county-run nursing homes. In addition, hospital stays have been shortened, so that the elderly with considerable care needs are returned home much sooner than previously. Although elder care is rationed, it is a large share of municipal costs — 20 percent of their total expenditures in 2003 compared to 12 percent for preschool and after school child care.

There is enormous variation in the proportion of the elderly who are covered by individual municipalities. According to a study, at the extremes, municipalities provided home health services to 5 to 52 percent of their over-80 populations, but half the municipalities provided services to 17 to 23 percent of their elderly populations. Those with low rates did not necessarily compensate with care in congregate facilities. Trydegård and Thorslund conclude that the amount of the municipal provision of care for the elderly is not related to consumer demand, the availability of home health workers or to the municipalities' financial status; they suggest that the explanation lies in historical patterns of care provision.

Municipal home health services are more than previously concentrated on very ill persons, while housekeeping tasks, formerly performed by municipal elder services, are now expected to be done by family members or, if the family can afford it, are paid for privately. Unlike in child care, there has been considerable contracting out of elder care to large private companies, some of them foreign. Women bear the brunt of elder care work. Ninety percent of municipal care workers are women, and while they earn average wages and are unionized, they generally work somewhat less than full time, leaving them disadvantaged when it comes to pensions and other wage replacement benefits. The situation of those employed by private companies is not well documented.

Brodin critiques these developments as follows:

> Since the 1980s, senior citizens' need for care has increasingly been re-interpreted from a public to a private issue with the consequence that today, their need for certain services, in particular those related to housework, are no longer regarded to be a public responsibility but a private matter that the elderly will have to solve, either by buying the services on the market, or, by asking relatives for help and assistance. The main problem connected with this reprivatization of senior citizens' need for care is, however, that as the state has withdrawn its resposibility, women, in their role of being wives, daughters, or daughters-in-laws (sic.), have been forced to step in as informal and unpaid providers of care.

Clearly, public commitment to the care of the elderly — even the oldest of the old — has diminished, while the care burden for relatives and especially women, many of them already working or elderly spouses, has increased. If this core component of the welfare state continues to diminish, support for the welfare state — which currently remains high — is likely to erode.

On the other hand, with the aging of the Swedish population, it is possible that there will be a counterbalance to this trend because cutbacks in elder care may have political consequences. According to a researcher who follows these issues closely, the Social Democrats, who face a tough election in the fall of 2006, are proposing increases in support for elder care, partly to secure the votes of the elderly, who have traditionally supported that party, out of fear they may be pulling away.

Care for the Disabled

FOR DECADES, Sweden has been a leader in policies for the disabled that aim to enable them to live like others. Most with serious disabilities, including the mentally and developmentally disabled, have returned to community settings, both in small supervised group homes and in independent living situations. Tremendous efforts have been made to provide employment, even for severely disabled people. Strong and active disabilities rights and advocacy organizations have contributed to these developments.

For decades, Sweden has been a leader in policies for the disabled that aim to enable them to live like others.

Despite the financial crisis of the early 1990s, there was a new right established to provide full-time care in the community (but not in institutional or group care) for those under 65 with profound physical or mental disabilities not caused by normal aging, and budget allocations at the national level to support it. A unique feature is that the disabled person may choose whom s/he wants as the care provider, and this may include family members. Caregivers who perform this assistance are paid at wages comparable to those of municipal employees.

According to a government report, however, it appears that the proportion of those with less than severe functional impairments are receiving less help than they formerly did, some of it provided at the municipal level. In other words, like elder care, caregiving is targeted for those with very great needs, while others are receiving less and must rely on family members or pay for help privately. Further, those who are most able to advocate for themselves get more help.

Summary and Conclusions

TO US AS AMERICANS, Sweden still looks like a welfare state leader, with an impressive array of social programs and benefits, though less so than in the past. In our eyes, its high position is partly because of the weakening of many other welfare states, including the erosion in our own nation's semi-welfare state. But partly it is because, despite extensive cutbacks and restructuring in the l990s, Sweden's welfare state has not been dismantled, though it has been and continues to be changed — sometimes in perilous ways, for instance pension reform, elder care, and the lack of full employment.

How does Sweden's welfare state compare with the past? Much depends on your reference point. When compared to the crisis era of the 1990s, the present looks rosier than if the reference point is the pre-crisis era, because unemployment is lower and some benefit cuts have been partly (though rarely fully) restored. For example, while mass unemployment has abated and is lower than in the mid-l990s, it is substantial and remains considerably higher than in the pre-l990s post-war decades, when full employment was the overriding national goal and the bedrock on which the welfare state was built. Income inequality, while growing, is still modest by international standards, but not when compared to Sweden's own post-war record, and inequalities of other kinds are growing.

It is ironic that after decades when unemployment averaged 2 percent, 4 percent now seems to be the goal — and 3 percent no longer topples governments. A real test of economic policy will come if there is another fairly deep recession. With the goals of adhering to spending caps and budget surpluses, there could be a return to the policies of the 1990s, with extensive austerity measures and deep program cuts.

We note that these various trends are uneven. For example, the commitment to public child care is rising while the commitment to dignified public care for the elderly has contracted. The latter change is especially worrisome since it is threatening the goal of women's equality, so central to Sweden's ethos, and it is imposing new burdens on women.

We have no crystal ball with which to predict the future. Obviously, domestic politics are central to the outcome. As we write, the September 2006 elections are in the offing, and the odds are that the non-Socialist bloc will return to power, although its public stance is very different from what was in the 1990s. Indeed, the Swedish Conservatives have even started calling themselves the "New Workers' Party" and they are not attacking the welfare state. Right now, we don't see a genuine social movement to advance the welfare state. One positive sign that the Swedish people can act independently is their rejection by a wide margin in 2003 of the referendum to join the EU's Economic and Monetary Union. The Social Democrats and all of the non-Socialist parties had strongly advocated its passage.

Also essential to what happens in the future are the strength of capital, the actions of labor, and the forces of globalization and Europeanization, all of which will play major roles, as will ideology. The Swedish people still have strong support for their welfare state and may, we hope, restrain future attempts to erode it and even succeed in making it fairer.

This is an extensively revised and expanded version of a paper given at the conference, Social Policy As If People Mattered: A Cross-National Dialogue, Adelphi University, Garden City, November 11-12, 2004. A fully footnoted version will be found onour website, www.newpol.org.

Interview with Gwendolyn Mink

BETTY REID MANDELL AND MARGUERITE ROSENTHAL

WELFARE IN THE PAST gave low-income parents some support for their caregiving work, but it is now a time-limited program that forces them into the low-wage labor market. Gwendolyn Mink has been in the forefront of the struggle to win a more humane welfare system. Betty Reid Mandell and Marguerite Rosenthal interviewed her for *New Politics* to get her views on welfare-related issues.

NP: *Have you been working on welfare issues recently? What is your take on the current circumstances?*

GM: Yes, I worked on TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) reauthorization, both with the Women's Committee of 100 and the Welfare Made A Difference Campaign. We pushed a legislative alternative to the existing TANF program early on, and then fought Republican efforts to ratchet up the disciplinary mechanisms of the welfare program. Much of this work was part of collaborative effort loosely coordinated by Legal Momentum through the BOB coalition.

NP: *What is the BOB coalition?*

GM: BOB stands for Better Opportunities Beyond Welfare. It was called into being circa 1998 by what was then the NOW Legal Defense Fund, which became Legal Momentum. It's an advocacy network composed of women's rights and allied groups which tried to keep questions about TANF's impact on women and impact on mothers at the foreground of legislative debates over reauthorization. Feminists are the center of gravity in the coalition, but allies from many fronts in the social justice struggle participated — from the American Friends Service Committee, for example, and occasionally from labor unions, etc. The collaboration was sustained through regular conference calls — almost weekly during the most intense phases of the TANF reauthorization debate — and through listservs.

NP: *What is your philosophy about the tension between those who advocate for women's rights as defined by their caretaking roles and public support for them, versus women who advocate for work? I think within the advocacy community there's a split about this. Some feminists believe that it is impossible for a woman to develop her full creative potential if she devotes her life entirely to domestic activities. What do you think of this?*

GM: The question is whether a social justice that includes women can be won through the labor market alone? Or does it require attention to and support for the caregiving that takes place within families and is disproportionately performed by women? This has been a tension among feminists, and it's a tension that spans the progressive community. Unfortunately, the caregiving issue does not figure prominently in most progressive analyses of poverty and prescriptions for ending it. Allies in anti-TANF struggles tend to emphasize labor market solutions — more money for child care, wage supplements for low wage workers, etc., rather than talking about social support for care. These prescriptions are important, to be sure. But a singular emphasis on labor market solutions to poverty obscures the economic inequalities that arise from the circumstances of caregiving.

GWENDOLYN MINK *is the author of numerous books, including* Welfare's End *(1998; rev. ed. 2002). From 1995 to the present she has co-coordinated the Women's Committee of 100, a feminist mobilization against punitive welfare reform. In 2001, she was named one of Twenty-One Women Leaders for the 21st Century by Women's Enews. She is on the faculty of Smith College.*

***NP:** John Wagner, the Massachusetts Commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance (welfare) has said that "if we engage an adult in just 20 hours of employment per week, even at the minimum wage, the wages and earned income tax credits can lift the family out of poverty." What are your thoughts about that?*

We really need to be talking about what it takes to sustain families — income assurance, living wages, and social supports.

GM: Well, I have several different reactions. One is — I'm not sure if he can add. I don't think that it is mathematically possible for his scenario to lift a family out of poverty. But even if we were to grant him accuracy on that score, a family that crosses the poverty line in Wagner's scenario would be a family that is still very, very poor. That's in part because what counts as poverty in the United States is so meager that a family that is lifted above the poverty line (approximately $16,000 for a family of 3 in 2005) still won't be able to make ends meet. We really need to be talking about what it takes to sustain families — income assurance, living wages, and social supports.

***NP:** What do you think of union organizing of people who care for their relatives, using welfare money, as SEIU is doing now? Do you think this is a promising route for creating a more humane welfare system?*

GM: I think it's kind of mixing apples and oranges. I think that union organizing for caregiving workers is a great thing for home care workers and for all of the health workers and others who provide care through a labor market exchange . But I wouldn't want to conflate caregiving workers who are in the labor market with caregiving workers who are providing care inside their own families. I think it's a little precarious, philosophically and politically, to try to conform all kinds of valuable work to the labor market model, which is kind of where we're headed if we talk about unionizing everyone who is caring for family members. And it circumnavigates the core question, which is how to get the society to agree that family caregivers are due an assured income — not an employment relationship, but an assured income that supports the socially valuable reproductive labor that family caregivers perform.

***NP:** The leadership of NOW has always been actively involved in fighting welfare reform, but they have been unable to bring their membership along. Recently, however, they have proposed organizing strategies to "build a feminist mothers and caregivers constituency within NOW to promote active resistance to political forces currently in opposition to the women's movement." They are encouraging state chapters to form Mothers' and Caregivers' Economic Rights Task Forces and to recruit women who might not otherwise become members. They seem to be reaching out to women who might not call themselves feminists but who are caregivers, or are concerned about caregiving. Do you think this strategy has promise of broadening feminist support for progressive caregiving policies?*

GM: It's both responsive and responsible of NOW to pay heed to the equality claims of family caregivers, who usually are women. But I don't think that recruiting caregivers will automatically broaden feminist support for progressive caregiving policies. NOW may be adding caregiver voices to the mix, but that won't necessarily transform the minds of the established NOW constituency. We definitely need to open up the women's movement and so to strengthen its ranks. But we shouldn't substitute the incorporation of new people for difficult ideological work with people who already consider themselves to be believers in women's equality, but who haven't yet embraced the equality claims of caregivers.

NP: *Theresa Funiciello, author of* Tyranny of Kindness, *has started a campaign to replace TANF with refundable caretaking tax credit (building on the present child and dependent care tax credit.) Do you think this is a good approach to building a more progressive system for caregiving?*

GM: The caregiver's tax credit is a useful interim goal. But I don't think it's an alternative for an assured income for caregivers. A tax credit isn't going to provide a family sustaining income. Tax credits are not, generally speaking, the way to provide an assured income to people. They are a mechanism for providing income supplements. An income supplement works only if you have a livable income to start with.

NP*: Could you comment on the reauthorization of the TANF bill? What Senators and Representatives are the strongest supporters of more progressive welfare reform?*

GM: Well, the TANF reauthorization battle is over for now. The program was reauthorized through the budget reconciliation process; President Bush signed the budget bill into law in early February, 2006. The good news is that TANF will have to be reauthorized again in 2010— we'll have another opportunity to try to replace "welfare reform" with welfare justice. The bad news is that low income families will have to contend with a harsh system of welfare provision for four more years. I suppose it could be worse — some awful Republican proposals didn't survive the reconciliation process. But the work participation rate for states was made more stringent, which will intensify work discipline for recipients. Not only does the new TANF law require larger proportions of state caseloads to be "engaged in work," it does so without providing adequate funding for child care. So caregivers who receive TANF will be forced to work outside the home without assurance that their children will receive nurturing, surrogate care.

The reauthorized TANF program doesn't provide funds to meet child care needs, but it does provide funds to promote marriage. Again, what became law is less extreme than the marriage initiative initially sought by the Republicans: still bad public policy, but not as bad as had been hoped by Republican sponsors. In the original Republican legislative proposal for marriage promotion, states would receive a TANF block grant only if they could say how they intended to increase marriage rates and how they were making progress in that direction in their annual reports to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. This would have obliged states to engage in marriage promotion. The reauthorized TANF program doesn't make marriage promotion compulsory for states, but it does lure states to promote marriage with the promise of extra funds and relaxed maintenance-of-effort funding rules.

Despite the fact that the Republicans controlled the TANF reauthorization outcome, it mattered that groups advocated with and for low-income families during the past six years of TANF debate. It mattered to public discourse, and it mattered in slowing the Republican campaign to choke off income assistance to single mother families.

Although the Democrats run scared on almost every issue, social justice advocates do have some friends among Democrats. These friends gave voice to some of the issues raised by welfare rights groups and allies in the feminist social justice community. During the reauthorization debate, a handful of Democrats did fight valiantly on the side of the advocacy community in ways that advanced the progressive side of the discussion. But the numbers of Democrats who are going to do that are not great and even friendly Democrats travel only so far along a welfare rights agenda. Most won't challenge the idea that poor single mothers should be required to work fulltime in the labor market.

NP: *Has Olympia Snowe been helpful?*

GM: She has been involved in trying to figure out a way to reform the child support enforcement system in order to get more money to families, and also has championed a child care funding increase. I suppose some advocates would say that Snowe's attempts to codify Maine's Parents as Scholars program has also been a third way in which she has been helpful.

But I can't say that Snowe is in the vanguard of a more just social policy. Her policy priorities contain assumptions and implications that are not helpful to all caregivers. Child support policy affecting TANF recipients includes mandatory paternity establishment and child support cooperation rules which invade TANF participants' privacy and dignity and right to form families on their own terms. The Snowe proposal for better delivery of child support money did not repeal, or even undermine, these rules.

Improved funding for child care is an important policy goal, but pursued as an alternative to at-home care of children by family members, the child care solution weighs against a TANF mother's right to make parenting decisions, including the decision to be available to her children as their caregiver.

The Parents as Scholars program, for which Snowe secured a place in one of the Senate versions of TANF reauthorization — would be available only to a limited percentage of the TANF adult population. Only 10 percent of the caseload would be able count education as work — by enrolling in post-secondary education to fulfill the TANF work requirement. The ten percent cap is very restrictive, and is an invitation to discrimination. Who decides who among TANF recipients gets to go to college? How do they decide?

***NP:** Do you think reproductive rights organizations such as NARAL and Planned Parenthood would get more support if they broadened their approach to include women who want to have children and the resources to support those children? (At the 2004 March for Women's Lives, Betty Reid Mandell wore a sign that said, "Welfare Reform Kills Babies," and there was a lot of support for it.)*

GM: I definitely think that the reproductive rights groups should not be narrowly focused on abortion rights. They should embrace a reproductive justice agenda, which not only emphasizes access to reproductive health services (including contraception and abortion) but also insists that the right to bear children and sustain families is every bit as important as the right to fertility control. The reproductive rights groups took a baby step in this direction when they broadened the framework for the March for Women's Lives in '04. They need to do more. They would attract more supporters in doing so, but winning more support for established groups is not the main point. What's important is to align reproductive politics with social justice — with the fight to end the subordination of all women, especially women who are simultaneously subordinated by class, nation, race, and sexuality, as well as by gender.

I don't know if a social justice approach to reproductive rights will make reproductive rights more popular overall. But it will expand solidarities among women — which can powerfully alter politics. But the re-visioning of reproductive politics as reproductive justice will not be easy or automatic. A lot of Americans, including some feminists, don't think that *all* women — including teenage women, poor women, single women, women of color — should be supported in their choice to bear children or should be supported in their choice to raise children that they bear. There's got to be a lot of educational work before reproductive rights advocates, along with other feminists, will genuinely take up reproductive justice as their own.

***NP:** Some states are adding preschool programs to their education system. Is working for this on a state level a good beginning toward universal child care?*

GM: Child care programs certainly should be educational, but I don't think we should confuse child care and pre-K. To the extent that pre-K programs bring public education systems into early childhood education that's a good thing. But pre-K is no substitute for affordable, accessible, quality child care. Like all public education, pre-K serves the interests of the state, not necessarily those of children or families. Pre-K isn't offered to parents as a service that supports their labor market participation. It works only for certain hours of day. It works as a child care alternative only for parents whose schedules coincide with the pre-K schedules, and the like. It's not the way to solve the child care crisis, which is a crisis of not having enough slots for people who need them and not having child care available at the times of day for people who want them, and not having it accessible for people at an affordable cost and quality standards.

Besides, I don't think we should aspire to turn the public education system into a labor market support — it's already underfunded, not to mention manacled by the No Child Left Behind Act.

NP: *President Clinton developed Individual Development Accounts and the Department of Health and Human Services increased annual funding for IDAs from $10 million to $25 million for each of the last five years. Bush touts IDAs as part of the "ownership society." What do you think of IDAs as a strategy to end poverty?*

GM: Part of me thinks that helping people grow resources in the form of assets is a good thing. If you don't have resources, it's much harder to make your way in the material world. But I don't think that asset-building through IDAs is an alternative to many other things that need to be done to end poverty. People shouldn't have to sacrifice asset growth in order to receive social benefits, and they shouldn't be cajoled to rely on their own assets when because of low wages they can't make ends meet. Beyond the limitations of the IDA concept, there's also the risk that IDAs are yet another way of regulating people, another way of discriminating among people — to get them to either live their lives in certain ways or to save their money in certain kinds of ways. The government chooses what it will support through personal development accounts — what goals, as expressed through savings, it wants to reward. For example, in the District of Columbia appropriations bill passed late last year, Congress decided to use personal development accounts to promote marriage. Through the new "marriage development accounts" for DC, the federal government is offering a 3 to 1 savings match (up to $4500 per person) for individuals who either are engaged to be married or who actually are married. The government will match individual savings toward employment training and education, as well as other goals supported by traditional IDAs — but only for people who meet the heteromarital terms of program participation. Single persons — including single mothers — are defined out of this entire universe of savings.

NP: *Could I add something to that? In her book* All Our Kin, *Carol Stack talks about the necessity for very poor people to share assets, not to pull away from their relatives and their fictive kin when a little money comes in. To me, this approach also is a dividing tactic because it tends to divide people. It's a perfect kind of symbolism for privatizing.*

GM: Exactly. The point of the IDAs is to build individual resources — which privatizes economic need away from government while also privatizing individual resources away from the community. When you add the DC marriage development accounts to the mix, it becomes clear that privatization is not intended to empower individuals but to restore the patriarchal, marital family.

NP: *Do you want to say more about President Bush's marriage promotion program?*

GM: While it *is* President Bush's proposal — what he offered as "the next step" in welfare reform — the idea that government should pressure mothers to marry the biological fathers of their children has traction in both parties. What is called "marriage promotion" really is a two-part initiative that touts both marriage and fatherhood as solutions to poverty and enhancements to child well-being. Actually, looked at as a comprehensive package, it's really a *married fatherhood* initiative that insists on bringing DNA fathers into mothers' families. Grassroots groups and federal policy advocates worked hard to blunt the most extreme version of the initiative, but couldn't keep married fatherhood promotion out of TANF reauthorization altogether. So, beginning this year, states will have an official invitation to spend TANF funds on marriage counseling, divorce reduction, covenant marriage programs — and more — instead of on cash grants for families.

Married fatherhood promotion strikes a real blow to many of the gains women made in the second half of the 20th century, and it repudiates calls to end poverty by ending women's continuing inequality — in the labor market and in families. Married fatherhood promotion says that we can cure poverty by privatizing mothers' economic vulnerability in heteromarital families, where mothers should depend on a male income. This is retrograde. Yet even though the Democratic party claims to support women's equality, a lot of Democrats actively support the idea of promoting fatherhood and encouraging marriage, and a lot are afraid to "seem as if" they don't value fathers or married life.

Married fatherhood promotion strikes a real blow to many of the gains women made in the second half of the 20th century.

***NP:** What strategies for building a progressive welfare system do you think are likely to be the most effective for welfare rights activists today?*

GM: That's a very hard question to answer. I would think we need to move along at least two paths, one of which is to figure out a way to enable solidarity conversations around care. This shouldn't be a burden that falls on the welfare rights community. It really should fall on the rest of the progressive community to respect the care claims that have been brought to the foreground by welfare rights groups and social justice feminist allies. Respect for these claims — not dismissal as a "women's issue" — is the first step toward having a real conversation among progressives about how support for care is a necessary part of the struggle for economic security. Bringing care into progressive discourse is really sort of a necessary precondition for moving forward towards a progressive welfare system — toward a system that provides family supports for labor market workers while also assuring an income for caregivers who are not in the labor market.

Another arena for solidarity-building is among caregivers themselves. Here the charge is not to change minds or broaden perspectives, but to discover common ground. We need to continue the caregiving discussions that welfare rights activists have been involved in for years and stretch those conversations across the many constituencies that every day confront the inequalities and insecurities that flow from the low economic and political status of family caregiving. A powerful coalition can arise that illuminates caregiving issues throughout the life cycle, especially the consequences of not valuing caregiving — for caregivers, throughout their own life cycle, as well as for the sick, disabled, and elderly, who, along with children, need care. Caregivers and the cared-for have a lot to fight for together because both will benefit from assured incomes for care.

***NP:** Do you think that mainstream feminism is getting better at explicitly including considerations of race in its analyses and strategies? What about class?*

GM: I think some are, some aren't. The national policy folks in mainstream feminism are doing a much better job these days in thinking intersectionally about the consequences of policy for different groups of women, even if it means reconsidering their own longstanding feminist claims. This is testimony to three decades of struggle by women of color and low income women — struggle to widen the feminist lens of gender to bring into view the multiple subordinations that interact with gender in the regime of inequality. This is an important accomplishment by women of color and low income women. But the struggle to make mainstream feminism accountable to all women is hardly over. In the welfare debate (around such issues such teen pregnancy, mandatory paternity establishment and child support cooperation, and welfare-to-work, for example) many feminists still have not forged solidarity with multiply subordinated women.

NP: *I have a question about the contemporary political situation, particularly the congressional election next year and the presidential election. Everything seems to be so preoccupied with terror and foreign policy and so forth. That seems to have derailed a lot of domestic policy except for the court nominations. Do you see any one of these issues being taken up and in particular, do you think Hilary Clinton will amount to anything about her village when she starts running seriously? I suspect she is going to run, and the question is she's so far moved to the center that I really wonder whether she'll remember the phrases that she was saying five years ago.*

GM: I'm not someone who really ever thought she was on the left.

NP: *No, neither did I. But she did try to stake out her territory with health care, with "it takes a village," etc.*

GM: What did she mean by "it takes a village"? Who rules her village? I'm pretty sure the village Hillary Clinton has in mind is one defined by Hillary Clinton. Based on her policy positions and politics, both in the 90s and since she's been in the Senate, Clinton's village sounds like a place where well-heeled, highly educated people compensate for what they consider to be insufficiencies of low income parents. It's a very upper middle class politics, an assimilationist view of things. I don't want her village.

NP: *Neither do we. We don't want her. Do you see any politician taking up what we would consider to be a progressive domestic policy issue to run on?*

GM: Not so far. John Edwards has his poverty institute and I guess has been developing an anti-poverty agenda. It's good that *someone* on the national electoral scene is talking about poverty. But Edwards' poverty-talk repeats many of the same problems that characterize mainstream approaches to poverty policy, including TANF legislation. Caregiving is absent from his discussion, as is reproductive justice. So, for example, when Edwards is asked how to end poverty, he often points to the need to prevent teen pregnancy (rather than support teen mothers) or to find everyone living wage jobs (even though some parents can't work fulltime in the labor market and still attend to the needs of their children). Still, it's probably worth paying some attention to what Edwards is saying and doing — toward the end of improving his analysis and prescriptions.

But I think it's a little soon to be gauging likely Democratic contenders in the 2008 presidential race. And anyway, it's hard to put much store in individual candidates when even the best of them is at risk of getting lost in the party's mushy center. Too many focus groups, too little courage — whatever — has the party convinced that a risk averse, middle of the road strategy is the way to recapture the majority. Instead of confronting contradictions — between new dems and blue dogs, on the one side and liberals and the party base, on the other — the Democrats keep splitting the difference whenever there are conflicts in the party coalition. Democrats are writing their own obituary that way, of course. But while this is analytically true, it's not exactly politically satisfactory. Like it or not, the Democrats are the only real electoral alternative, if stopping the Republican war on peace and democracy is the goal.

The Hamas Victory and the New Politics that May Come

EMAD EL-DIN AYSHA

THE TITLE TO THIS ARTICLE may sound terribly pretentious since, for all we know, in the coming months the Hamas government may very well end up under siege like Arafat and his entourage. And that's assuming their main moral and material backer — Iran — doesn't get nuked in the meantime.[1] Still, the probability that the Palestinian cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict will be managed according to different principles with different rhetorical strategies and political alignments, local and international, is worth looking into, if only because a goodly number of these implications flow out of the reasons behind the Hamas victory itself. Something very interesting has taken place in the occupied territories thanks to a not unrelated combination of America's apparent assault on Islam through its global war on terror and continued Israeli belligerence over the peace process.

Better the Devil You Don't Know

A CONCLUSION WAS REACHED by the rank and file of Palestinians, registered voters included, that there is little point in worrying about electing leaders that can push the peace process forward. One way or another the Israelis will block progress and assault Palestinians — just look what happened to Arafat and what little progress Abbas, who came by U.S./Israeli request, has made. Therefore, the collective decision taken by Palestinians was to vote for a party that would ensure an end to corruption and an improvement in the economic situation. A change in management was long overdue and people had lost hope in change from the top. The common sentiment over Fatah on the Palestinian street is, "They had their chance and they blew it."

No one expected a Hamas majority, not even Hamas, and the polls didn't indicate such a sweeping majority, so it is safe to say that the Palestinians weren't really thinking in terms of the consequences of the vote for the "peace process." Domestic issues were paramount. There is, however, a distinct angle even here. Having spoken to Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza I was startled to discover that a great many people that voted for Hamas were employees of the Palestinian Authority (PA) itself. Far from being loyalists to the regime which created their jobs they have grown sick and tired of seeing their superiors and colleagues grow fat — literally — off corruption, whether in the form of bribes extorted from citizens or from aid money they have pilfered away from the Palestinian cause.

Most of the corrupt employees are Palestinians from outside of the territories who, when they first arrived, couldn't afford their children's school bills. Yet, after only a few years, they came to live in villas with swimming pools. This is a frequent and consistent observation, with the added problem that, thanks to the Israeli policy of economic strangulation, the honest civil servants who aren't politically connected have to put up with their equivalents in the private sector making more money, and they are people — mostly migrant labor — who can barely scratch together a living since Israel closed the borders. Increasingly in Gaza you are either corrupt or you have no effective income. The

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disparity between the rich and the poor, and the causes of wealth and poverty, within the ranks of the PA itself are a major factor behind the victory.

Hamas has acquired a good reputation over the years in local government and charity work and the Palestinians wanted this experience to be transferred over to the national arena with either a Hamas government or a Palestinian Legislative Council with a powerful Hamas presence. I would suspect that the Arab governments are thinking on the same lines, given that concerns over corruption — aid making its way into Swiss bank accounts — ground to a halt the process of delivering on the emergency funds promised in Arab summits. So far the Arab League and Egypt and Saudi Arabia have been making good on compensating the PA against any shortfall in its budgetary requirements with American and European threats to cut off aid.

There is also an important generational factor at play, and one with a twist. The young, particularly in Gaza, the homeland of Hamas, are very pro-Hamas indeed, seeing them as the embodiment of the Palestinian cause as the PLO and Fatah became co-opted into the American dominated system of power in the region. Hamas has long taken the place of Fatah in the hearts and minds of the energetic youth. There is Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. While respected, effective militarily and in some ways more steadfast than Hamas, neither has the grassroots reach of Hamas as both are essentially organizations of the Diaspora. But there is more to the story than just that.

RELIGION IS, or was, a generational issue as well. The older generation in Gaza were initially secular in their political leanings and ideological outlook and cautioned their children against being swept up by religious sentiment pointing in Hamas' direction. There were widespread rumors of fanatics within the ranks of Hamas who overzealously "encouraged" young girls to wear the *hijab*, anything from impolitely insisting that they dress a certain way to violently forcing them.[2] When the secularists took over with the coming of the PA, things began to change. Even the older generation was disgusted with the boozing and gambling and female immodesty and became increasingly conservative in outlook, allowing their children to do likewise and even finally agreeing with them when it came to voting.

> Increasingly in Gaza you are either corrupt or you have no effective income.

Rumors have been leaking out of the Gaza strip for quite some time of "officials" either altruistically creating jobs through nightclubs or covertly making money off of prostitution. The closest I have come to confirming any of these accounts are the more common experiences women and girls have had to suffer whenever trying to finalize paperwork involving the PA. Apart from bribes and cronyism — *wasta*, or recommendation — certain "favors" are frequently requested of Palestinian females. There is nothing overtly sinister requested but in a conservative Arab society, more so in a place like Gaza, the acts implied are unacceptable.

The exact nature of the "religious" factor in the Hamas victory cannot be overemphasized. In conservative Arab cultures, and this transcends Muslims, protecting *i'rd* — purity of blood through female chastity, and the related notion of *sharaf*, honor — is not something to be trifled with. People are often willing to give up their political rights provided that the sanctity of their households remains intact. One reaction to widespread moral laxity is piety, nostalgia and outward religiosity, such as the *hijab*.

When this attitude takes on an explicitly political character, government policy and participation, the reaction often takes on a political character. Fortunately in the Palestinian case democracy transformed this groundswell of conservative disgust into votes, a sentiment that could easily have turned violent if no other avenue for change existed.

Soft Power Ripples[3]

THE HAMAS VICTORY is following in the tracks of a trend of Islamist electoral successes — Bahrain, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq — and the Americans have no one to blame for this but themselves. Islamist rhetoric has gained ascendance as Muslims increasingly perceive what is happening in the world not as a war on terror but as a war against Islam. Needless to say, the Danish newspaper cartoons and the rallying of European governments and newspapers to the Danish side has further solidified this misperception.[4] Everyone in the region, Islamists most particularly, will have their eyes on the performance of the Hamas government to bolster their own rhetorical war. If the Palestinians can have a "fundamentalist" group in charge, why can't we? Where are all your prophecies of doom and gloom? Look how uncorrupt they are, how efficient, how tolerant, democratic, etc.

Hamas could very well become the rallying point for Mideast Islamist activity. The Arab regimes by and large have reacted positively to the election results and seem adamant to hold Washington to task on its commitment to democracy in the region — you made your bed, now you have to sleep in it. Much has been made of the U.S. and European decision, taken rather hastily, to punish the Palestinian people for exercising their democratic right. The message coming out of the (state-owned or supervised) mosques certainly has taken this latest development onboard as part of their anti-American, anti-Western propaganda campaign — where are the human rights of the Iraqis, Afghanis and Palestinians for you to call on us to respect human rights in our countries?

More than just this the very animating concepts underlying the Arab-Israeli conflict may change, resulting in an Islamicization of the confrontation between Israel and the Arabs. Helen Rizzo, a sociologist who specializes in political and social movements in the Middle East, is of this opinion, believing that what could also come about is a pragmatic awareness that religion is a factor that can be utilized in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, much as the secularist Zionist movement itself employed religion. Ideological and sectarian concerns — many of the Marxists who set up the Palestinian factions were Christians — always got in the way in the past, gaining sustenance from the secularism of Nasserism, Baathism, and the whole Communist bloc. They forcefully de-Islamicized the original pan-Islamic nature of the confrontation at the time of the Palestinian Hajj Amin Al-Husayni, Egyptian Hassan Al-Banna and Syrian Sheikh Abd Al-Karim Qassam.[5]

The nationalist rhetoric that this is a war for national independence between the colonial West, embodied in Israel, and the Third Worlders known as Arabs will increasingly succumb to the notion that there is a religious war with a Zionist-Crusader West, to quote a bin Laden characterization verbatim. I mean, haven't the nationalists tried and failed because they were co-opted by the very Western imperialist enemy they claimed to fight against? Isn't the Al-Aqsa mosque, the third most holy mosque in Islam, under threat from Jewish extremists? Wasn't Palestine the focal point of the Vatican-launched Crusades? Arab nationalism has been in a nosedive since the 1967 war and in many ways Arafat himself was the last of that secularist, Palestine is above-any-particular-religion generation. Not to forget that we all have Samuel Huntington to thank for convincing a goodly portion of "the Rest" of the world that "the West" is in a civilizational confrontation with it.

From this point onward the trials and tribulations of Hamas and the Palestinian people will be seen and presented to the Arab and Muslim worlds in religious terms, with Islam triumphing for divinely ordained reasons whenever Hamas has a victory, while failures will be understood as the result of an anti-Islamic conspiracy. This will also have a democratizing effect since the argument that democracy cannot be attained without achieving national sovereignty and autonomy first will no longer hold. Opposition parties and the attentive public will be on the move, transforming large sectors of the Arab population into readymade audiences. A propaganda war, then, is in the offing and the first rounds have already been fired and from the most unlikely corner.

The Americans have no one to blame (for the Hamas victory) but themselves.

Low Intensity Conflict

I SPEAK, OF COURSE, of Russian President Vladimir Putin's happy endorsement of the Hamas victory, something that does not quite fit the resume of a former KGB man who has pulverized thousands of Islamic fundamentalists into dust in Chechnya. Then again, looked at in a broader perspective, one begins to see the logic behind this move given Putin's persistence over Russian membership in the Islamic Conference Organization and his more recent pro-Islamic comments on the Danish cartoon affair.[6] There is also the matter of Akram Khuzam, an Arab journalist who shot to fame as Al-Jazeera's Moscow correspondent, now heading the Arab service for *Russia Today* television. Prior to all this, of course, there is Putin's position on Iran and its nuclear program, trying to compensate for the strides made by the United States in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia through a strategic realignment centering round China and Muslim states in the Eurasian arena.

According to Linda S. Heard, the "Hamas invite was an indication that Russia wants to show goodwill toward Arabs and Muslims as is its stance over Iran's nuclear enrichment program." She agreed with me that a "new low-level cold war" was "in the offing" and that propaganda tools may very well be utilized. She couldn't comment on Khuzam — it's too early to say — but Russia does definitely seem to be "wooing parts of the Arab world," with a "new detente between Egypt and Russia" developing recently.[7] Russia has many professional Arabists left over from the Cold War and a large domestic Muslim population it can deploy in any propaganda war for the hearts and minds of Arabs and Muslims. If a country as tiny as Qatar can give the United States hell and foil its information war strategies in Afghanistan and Iraq through Al-Jazeera, one can imagine the soft power weight of a more assertive Russia on the Arab and Islamic fronts.[8] Putin, moreover, in his efforts to solidify power round the presidency has consolidated his control over Russia's televised media among other key sectors.[9]

Jerusalem Syndrome

IT IS POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, that the Hamas regime — Netanyahu christened it Hamastan*— may implode internally, saving the Israelis and Americans the trouble of economic strangulation or military cornering. There are many fault lines and ticking time bombs in the Palestinian arena, such as a confrontation with Fatah and other factions and the more recalcitrant members of the security forces. One that is paramount given Hamas' fundamentalist credentials is the position of non-Muslims, a worry high-

*Gerarld Kaufman, "A Triumph for Sharon," *Guardian*, January 28, 2006.

lighted early on by Hanan Ashrawi, a Christian Palestinian herself. There is the general worry about the fissures that could result from the implementation of Islamic law among a secularized society. Events following the election seem to have belied these fears, though, with Christians and women included in the ranks of the new Hamas cabinet.

I wasn't surprised in the slightest because Hamas, as a Palestinian movement, doesn't suffer from the standard problems afflicting fundamentalist movements. Hamas, as Palestinianas, see themselves not just as representatives of the Palestinians but as representing *Palestine*, embodying everything that it means in terms of religion — holiness to three monotheistic faiths. When former Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami once described Yasser Arafat as someone who thinks he is both Richard the Lionheart and Saladin, he wasn't exaggerating. This is an occupational hazard for Palestinians, the internalization of the religious traditions of the land to the point of mania. Saladin suffered from it himself, a man known for his respect of his Christian foes and his excellent relations with the Jews who called him their savior and the new Cyrus.[10] His personal physician was Moses Maimonides and he was the first person in Muslim history to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem.

In fact, the only people he didn't get along with were fellow Muslims, whether the Shiite Fatimids in Egypt he ousted or the Shiite Hassassins in Syria he besieged or Sufi dervishes of Sahravardi's variety he executed.[11] This religious factor, then, will guard Hamas against tensions with the other non-Muslim groups but could, paradoxically, create problems with fellow Islamist groups, such as Jihad which has refused to join the government and is being punished by the Israelis, no doubt in an effort to drive a wedge between the Palestinian factions in the new post-election context.

That is my only worry, on the domestic front, but any burgeoning relationship between a Hamas-run PA and Iran may help alleviate this. Tehran, as a major financer of all the factions, could play the role of mediator on the local front, much like Egypt but in a radicalizing direction. Jihad is ideologically closer to Shiite Iran. In fact, Hamas itself could play a mediator of a certain kind in the Iranian sphere of influence, namely, Iraq, mending bridges between Sunnis and Shiites. The threat of a sectarian civil war á la Lebanon is quite eminent in Iraq and the example of a region-wide popular Sunni organization — Hamas — supported by a the focus of Shiite power in the region — Iran — could quell Iraqi paranoia in the Sunni triangle of the "Iranian-Shiites-are-out-to-get-us," variety. I made this suggestion to Harvard's Professor Roy P. Mottahedeh, an Iranian Shiite himself, during a seminar lecture of his** and he endorsed it as a viable possibility. In the end, the only remaining danger facing the Hamas victory would be a too close relationship between Iran and the PA, something the Israelis and Americans could exploit to force a confrontation, let alone a relationship that also involves U.S.-occupied Iraq. And we all know what the consequences of that would be. An end to the new politics I want to write about!

Special thanks to Leena, among other Palestinians, for eyewitness accounts and Helen Rizzo, Linda S. Heard, Nancy Snow, Glada Lahn, Mark Sedgwick, and Roy P. Mottahedeh for academic contributions.

NOTES

1. According to Michel Chossudovsky, modifications taking place in America's nuclear doctrine are giving increasing leeway for the usage of tactical nuclear weapons in conventional conflicts, with plans in this regard already drawn up for Iran. (Please see "Is the Bush Administration Planning a Nuclear Holocaust?" Global Research, 22 February 2006, www.globalresearch.ca/PrintArticle.php?articleId=2032).

** The lecture was entitled "The Shi'a of Iraq" and took place on March 21,2006, at the American University in Cairo.

2. There is talk of acid being thrown in the faces of girls. But to be evenhanded, the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin said on Al-Jazeera that such acts were carried out, in the early days that the movement was establishing itself, by other competing Islamic groups. Hamas exerted its influence to put a stop to this with only individual figures who advocate such methods remaining. Please see the "History Witness" website of Ahmed Mansour (on www.aljazeera.net) the journalist who conducted the interview in a documentary series about Sheikh Yassin.

3. Soft power, in contrast to hard power which is measured in terms of economic and military might, does not refer to tangible assets but the ideological and cultural appeal of a country. (Please see Joseph S. Nye Jr., "The Changing Nature of World Power," *Political Science Quarterly*, 105 (2), Summer 1990, 177-192, for an introduction to the concept). Soft power can be implicit, the collective weight of a nation's informational output, or deployed explicitly through the instruments of public diplomacy.

4. I say this as a Muslim and Palestinian Arab who has been busy chronicling and deconstructing 'Orientalism' for quite some time now. There is a war against Muslims and their beliefs, but not for any particularly religious reason. It just so happens that Islam has the irritating tendency of getting in the way of post-Cold War imperial projects, so friction is interpreted in religious terms, by both sides.

5. The Al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, is named after this Syrian Islamist freedom fighter who came to Palestine. Hassan Al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, originally set up the secret military branch of his movement on request of Al-Husayni, for military operations in Palestine against Zionist colonists.

6. Putin said that he condemned "the caricatures, which widen the gulf between faiths, which provoke and offend the feelings of the faithful." He added that "you should reflect 100 times before publishing or drawing something" and that "if a state cannot prevent the publication of things like this, it should at least apologize for them . . . When we condemn child pornography, we don't hide behind freedom of expression" (Dmitry Babich, "Russia's Spectrum of Response," *Russia Profile*, February 8, 2006).

7. Personal email to the author from Linda S. Heard, "Re: Hamas victory and Russian response," March 6, 2006.

8. For an account of the wide-ranging problems facing American soft power appeal in the post-September 11th world, please see Emad El-Din Aysha, "The Limits and Contradictions of 'Americanization,' " *Socialist Register*, Vol. 40, 2004, 247-262, and "September 11 and the Middle East Failure of US 'Soft Power,' " *International Relations*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 193–210.

9. If Putin's activities in the oil sector are any indicator, the point of such growing state control is to plug the holes in the power structure of what's left of the Soviet Union while giving Putin direct access to the day-to-day operations of such crucial sectors. According to Chatham House researchers Glada Lahn and Keun-Wook Paik, there are early indicators that the Russian government plans to create one huge state-controlled oil conglomerate by 2008, just before the next Russian presidential election, with Mr. Putin as its CEO. (Please see "Russia's Oil and Gas Exports to North-East Asia," REPORT for Sustainable Development Programme, Chatham House, April 2005, www.chathamhouse.org.uk/pdf/research/sdp/Roilgas.pdf). Such moves shed light on the standoff with OAO Yukos's CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky, reportedly the wealthiest man in Russia. Khodorkovsky was both an oil tycoon and, prior to his incarceration, a serious presidential candidate. He's currently serving an eight-year sentence on corruption charges and, to add insult to injury, had his assets frozen and has been put in solitary confinement for egregious tea drinking.

10. John Rose, *The Myths of Zionism* (London, Pluto Books, 2004), 69.

11. Please see David Pinault, *The Shiites: Ritual and Popular Piety in a Muslim Community* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1992).

Throttled Phoenix
The Great Betrayal In Afghanistan

VANNI CAPPELLI

IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 2002, the distinguished British photojournalist and filmmaker Steve Connors journeyed to Tora Bora in southeastern Afghanistan, the scene of Osama bin Laden's escape the previous winter, to see the shrines erected by some local people to the al-Qaeda fighters killed in that battle. As he photographed the rudimentary tombs adorned with green cloth, a Pashtun tribesman, one of the many natives around the world whose allegiance was up for grabs amidst this great upheaval in history, came up and spoke to him with stark directness.

"I listened to Tony Blair's Brighton speech on the BBC World Service in Pashto," he said, referring to the October 2001 address in which the British prime minister vowed, "This time, we will not walk away from you "to the long-traumatized Afghan people. "If we're betrayed in this," the tribesman concluded, "We will fight, and we'll drive you people from Afghanistan."

In the light of subsequent events, it is brutally clear that Connors' experience at Tora Bora was a crossroads of our present historical moment. Standing astride the Afghanistan-Pakistan frontier whose devastation by totalitarian communism had incubated the totalitarian fundamentalism that struck in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, the man presented Connors with the choice before the self-proclaimed progressive nations of the West, who had done so much to empower Islamic radicalism during the Soviet-Afghan War, and even before. Would their promises of security guarantees, physical reconstruction, and economic development be fulfilled, thus breaking the escalating spiral of violence? Or would an exclusive, misdirected reliance on force give a new and expansive lease on life to the Islamic terrorists who had vowed to carry on the fight despite their recent reversals, perhaps with the help of this Afghan tribesman? The challenge as to whether Bush and Blair would walk away, posed at the very place where bin Laden had done just that by a kinsman of the people who were sheltering him, had tremendous ramifications that reached far beyond this alienated frontier.

Four years on, the walking away has not only occurred; it has intensified into a march of folly of colossal proportions. Throwing away the historic opportunity presented by their rapid defeat of the Taliban to make Afghanistan a showcase of Western beneficence and cement Central Asian security while entering into a new, constructive relationship with the Muslim world on all frontiers, the United States and Britain plunged into the nightmare of Iraq. The original and central *locus classicus* of Islamic radicalism was relegated to the status of "the forgotten war," as the socioeconomic realities that led to 9-11 went without amelioration. Afghanistan remains an unreconstructed country with a weak government whose authority barely reaches beyond the capital city, its people prey to predatory warlords, aggressive narcotraffickers, and revitalized terrorists who compound the profound physical degradation in which they live with increasing violence. Its long-hostile neighbor Pakistan, while ostensibly a strong U.S. ally in the "war on terror," continues to play a deceptive role in its affairs in which self-delusion is a salient feature. Far from addressing an

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already dangerous international situation by a responsible engagement with its underlying causes, the malignant tandem of the abandonment of Afghanistan and the brutalization of Iraq has coagulated a *Leyenda Negra* (dark legend) of Western malevolence in the Muslim mind whose consequences are unpredictable.

It was not supposed to go this way. In the aftermath of the collapse of the towers and the fall of the Taliban, amidst widespread world sympathy for the United States on account of the trauma it had suffered and its leading role in overthrowing a hateful regime, there was much talk of a phoenix rising from the ashes, ashes which it was acknowledged were not limited to Ground Zero in Manhattan. The detritus of the towering inferno of the World Trade Center was mixed in an inextricable global security nexus with that of the far-reaching hell of Afghanistan. It was evident that preventing a repetition of these events was contingent on addressing their tangible causes — the pervasive poverty, humiliation, and despair not only of Afghanistan but of the Muslim world as a whole, and above all the violent alienation that proceeds from the belief that these evils are a result of hegemonic behavior by America and its allies. Although further military action was not discounted, the speed of the victory over the fundamentalist militia relegated it to a secondary role in sober minds. President Bush spoke quite specifically of a Marshall Plan for the devastated country, and, like Blair, was taken at his word in Afghanistan and elsewhere. This endeavor would ideally have served as an example for aid initiatives in other countries, economic assistance being a prerequisite for entering the all-important "war of ideas" with and within Islam, a contest whose loss would render all military actions futile. If the much-desired phoenix of a safer world was to rise from the ashes, it could only be on wings of development and dialogue.

Yet the course of action decided on by Washington has throttled this phoenix at birth, in Afghanistan and the world at large. The distraction of attention from the categorical imperative of rebuilding Afghanistan by the sisyphean task of attempting to conquer the heart of the historic caliphate has made Central Asia a much more dangerous region of the world than it was before September 11th. Though such imperial myopia is nothing new in human affairs, it has had a particularly long and catastrophic history in these remote frontier mountains, one that has finally culminated in global conflict.

The Legacy of Force and Folly

Speaking last summer on one of the generally unenlightening "Hunt For bin Laden" segments that appear on the major networks from time to time, and are nowadays about the only occasion for speaking of South-Central Asian developments on American television, a former CIA official referred dismissively to "extremist tribes" as being a major impediment to finding the al-Qaeda chieftain. The fact that his previous employer had played a major role in fostering this extremism was not raised during the reportage, though to be fair they were but the most recent of a long line of historical actors whose combination of force and folly have created the bitter alienation that pervades the region.

"Alienation" is usually defined as some form of separation, and in legal terms refers to the transfer of property, or title, from one entity to another. The complex historical and psychological alienation which is at issue here began with just such a transfer, the formal partitioning of the Pashtun tribes by conquest in the early 19th century, which set the framework in which this area's tortured drama has been played out ever since.

The Pashtun lands that are today evenly divided between Afghanistan and Pakistan comprised the nucleus of the Afghan state founded in 1747, an entity that also included Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras to the north. As the founding and eponymous people of the country ("Afghan" is a poetic variant of "Pashtun"), they have long dominated a strategically vital land the security and well being of which is key to the peace of Central Asia. Yet this geopolitical truth has never been appreciated by the successive imperial forces who time and again have turned the fir-clad mountains, stark ravines, arid wastes, and lush irrigated fields of the Pashtun frontier into a bloody arena of conflict, profoundly stunting the tribes' development and ultimately rendering them an easy target for extremist influences.

Factionalism within the Afghan kingdom allowed Punjabi Sikhs to conquer the southeastern half of the Pashtun homeland in the early 19th century, an acquisition passed on to British India when the Raj destroyed the Sikh state a quarter century later. Although the experience of British rule allowed many Pashtun to benefit from modern civilization for the first time, for the people as a whole the seeds of a dark legend were sown. The endless, ineffective skirmishing of British troops with the wilder tribes who inhabited what are today known as the Tribal Areas of Pakistan on the periphery of the Raj, together with the three pointless Anglo-Afghan Wars launched against Afghanistan itself, created a belief in the white man's essential injustice and brutality which has only deepened with each successive imperial foray onto their lands.

From the inception of Western dealings with the Afghans, voices of reason argued that the people were too hardy and their land too intractable to be subdued by force alone. The most knowledgeable British frontier experts repeatedly urged that a combination of alliance, restoration of lost territories, security guarantees, and assistance with economic development was the only way to insure the Central Asian security that the Afghans held the key to by virtue of their position astride the crossroads of the continent. W.K. Fraser-Tytler, a soldier, diplomat, and historian who served Britain for forty years on the Pashtun frontier, summed up this view at the middle of the last century when he wrote in his seminal work *Afghanistan – A Study of Political Developments In Central Asia* that the tribal question was "hardly a military problem at all," and prophesied that unless the region's underlying problems were resolved in the manner advocated by the enlightened frontiersmen, "the situation is by no means hopeful."

Yet by that time British policies had locked in fundamental negative factors that resisted reversal.

Turning a deaf ear to those experts who advised a territorial accommodation with Afghanistan, the British imposed the Durand Line on the Afghan king in 1893, which became the current international border with Pakistan upon the independence and partition of India in 1947. This callous sundering of a people not only perpetuated and intensified violent nationalist sentiments among the Pashtun; it ironically prepared the way for the supplanting of modernizing nationalist influences by Islamic fundamentalism in the region as a whole. By denying the Afghans full self-determination, along with the enhanced security and ability to modernize on their own terms that would have gone with it, the British and their imperial successors guaranteed that the frustrations and despair that proceeded from a blighted national development would eventually assume a politically pathological form.

Writing in *The New York Times Book Review* in October 2005, Robert F. Worth, one of the paper's Baghdad correspondents, uncritically affirmed that "Islam's refusal to separate mosque and state has complicated its relations with the West." Given the Western powers' century-long history of either sabotaging or giving tepid support to progressive, secularizing forces in the Muslim world, always out of the perceived self-interest of the moment, it is a complication that is mainly of the West's doing.

The attempt to forge a syncretic fusion of tradition and modernity among Afghans of all ethnicities, within a context of secular nationalism that was nevertheless deeply respectful of Islam, was the work of two dynamic mid-20th century figures working on different sides of the Durand Line, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mohammad Da'ud. Both were champions of the "Pashtunistan" issue that sought some form of self-determination for the tribes living in Pakistan, and both met defeat at the hands of foreign powers that destroyed them in order to advance their hegemony in the region.

> The picture is one of a major failure of the American Cold War policy of containment.

Ghaffar Khan was a social democratic disciple of Mahatma Gandhi who advocated inter-religious brotherhood, modern education, land reform, women's rights, and a liberal interpretation of Islam among the Pashtun as a member of Jawaharal Nehru's Congress Party during the battle for Indian independence. A mythogenic figure known as "The Frontier Gandhi," who was miraculously able to inspire a mass protest movement based on the principle of nonviolence among a people whose entire psychology proceeds from their warrior ethos, he was in every sense the anti-bin Laden. It was precisely on account of the progressive nature of his vision that successive British and Pakistani governments, which sought to maintain their hold on power by allying themselves with the native conservative landowning elite, did all that they could to suppress him and his Khudai Kidmatgar ("Servants of God") followers.

Denounced as a Bolshevik by the British and an enemy of Islam by Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the other founders of Pakistan, Ghaffar Khan was outmaneuvered by both during the Partition Crisis of 1947, which ended with his people subjected to the reactionary rule of the new Muslim nationalist state, which violently suppressed his movement. One has only to look at the baleful influence of the radical madrassas that replaced the progressive Khudai Kidmatgar schools in the country's North-West Frontier Province or witness the fact that an Islamist coalition is now in power in a region that was once a Congress stronghold to see the results of this throttling of a noble force for human progress. The conditions that make bin Laden's elusiveness and appeal possible have been well prepared by a systematic repression of democratic alternatives, usually in the name of democracy.

"We may assert that Ghaffar Khan's story, which is that of a Muslim and a universal voice, speaks usefully to the 21st century," Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Rajmohan writes in his recent biography of the great humanitarian nationalist in the *Penguin Lives* series. "Its claim to a Muslim platform is certainly not weaker than that of Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar." Yet nothing in the Bush administration's force-centered approach to its "war on terror" indicates that it is doing anything more to empower such voices than previous American administrations.

When the United States succeeded Britain as the main Western player of the old imperial "Great Game" in Central Asia in the early 1950s, it demonstrated even less of an ability to incorporate long-term considerations into its strategic tactics of the moment.

By offering woefully inadequate support to the progressive modernizing efforts of Mohammad Da'ud in Afghanistan and then enabling radical Islamist proxies in order to counter the Soviets who engineered his overthrow and assassination in 1978, America has brought upon itself the great historical crisis that faces it today.

A cousin of King Zahir Shah who was called "The Red Prince" for his policies aimed at breaking the monopoly of the country's old feudal class by empowering both the national bourgeoisie and the peasantry, Da'ud in his two periods of rule gave Afghanistan the only true social progress it has ever known. As an actual holder of power (first as prime minister and then as president of the republic he proclaimed after he had overthrown the king in 1973), Da'ud was able to implement the reforms that Ghaffar Khan had only dreamed of, and, with foreign aid, back them with the power of technological transformation. Yet his hopes for the sustainable development that is the only force that can bring harmony to this part of the world were dashed by the intersection of the Cold War and the perennially divisive Pashtunistan question.

A strident nationalist, Da'ud repeatedly confronted Pakistan over the issue, affirming that the now more than century-old conquest was not a legitimate reason for continuing to deny self-determination to the Pashtun now within its borders. Pakistani refusal to even discuss the matter was supported by Washington, which viewed Western-allied, conservative Islamic Pakistan as the true bulwark against communism in the region and limited assistance to Afghanistan as a punishment for Da'ud's irredentism. When he was forced to turn to the Soviet Union to fill the aid gap, the seeds of the country's tragedy were sown.

It cannot be denied that Da'ud's serious personal and political failings — he was by nature an autocrat who was unwilling to share or delegate power and fatally underestimated the effect that reliance on Soviet military aid was having on the loyalty of sections of his army — helped bring about his overthrow. Yet on the whole the picture is one of a major failure of the American Cold War policy of containment whose salient features — an inability to grasp the importance of a strong Afghanistan; a lack of commitment to development as a solution to the frontier problem; and a misguided use of force — have been the hallmarks of great power engagement in the region for upwards of two centuries now, right down to the present hour.

In a deeper sense, however, the British and American mistreatment of progressive forces that they should have striven to get on their side was pervasive in their Cold War dealings with the Islamic world, and is of a piece with their opposition to Mossadegh of Iran and Nasser of Egypt. The consequences of this imperial myopia are summed up by the distinguished historian of modern war Gabriel Kolko in his eloquent polemic, *Another Century of War?*:

> What was crucial in the long run was that secular movements of political, social and ideological change either were repressed — and here the American role was crucial in buttressing traditionalist regimes — or discredited themselves. Thus rebellion and discontent throughout the Middle East increasingly took fundamentalist Islamic forms and its ideologies.

It is one thing to prepare the historical ground that is conducive to the emergence of profoundly negative political elements, and yet another to actually enable their triumph with financial and material support. The time-honored tradition of force and folly on the frontier reached its apogee in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, as the shock of apocalyptic Russian violence was compounded by the wildly irresponsible manner in which America countered it. By pouring the overwhelming majority of its anti-Soviet aid into the coffers and warehouses of the most radical mujahideen, and then recklessly retreating from this new alienation it had helped to create, the triumphant surviving superpower merely yielded the field to a new and more dangerous totalitarianism.

There were many rationalizations behind these disastrous policies. Despite all of the grief that the United States had suffered at the hands of Khomeini's Iran, Islamic fundamentalism was viewed as a "stone age" ideology that could not have a serious future in an ever more technological and secular world. Lacking regional expertise themselves, the Americans thought it best to cede all judgment calls on which resistance groups to support to the dictator of the frontline state where the anti-Soviet war was staged, Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan. That he was a fundamentalist himself who used his sudden boon of billions of American dollars passing through his hands not only to empower the most extremist Afghan factions, but to turn his country into a refuge and training ground for radical fundamentalists from around the Muslim world, was of no concern to his CIA benefactors. In fact they agreed with Zia that these terrorists' violent anti-communism rendered them the most effective instruments for fighting the Soviets.

The further fact that Zia's motives were just as geostrategic as they were ideological also did not trouble the Americans. By weakening or eliminating all progressive nationalist and religious traditionalist groups among the Pashtun on both sides of the Durand Line, as well as those belonging to other Afghan ethnicities, he hoped to have a free hand in Afghanistan once the Soviets withdrew. The vexing Pashtunistan Question would be buried forever under a wave of radical Islamist enthusiasm, and Pakistan would pursue its hegemonic dreams of obtaining "strategic depth" against India with forays into Afghanistan, Kashmir, and even Central Asia. Although the dictator's assassination in 1988 prevented him from personally realizing these megalomaniacal schemes, his successors gleefully turned loose the various Afghan and other jihadis that they had inherited from him during their power plays in the Afghan civil war and Kashmiri fighting that raged throughout the 1990s, culminating with their successful backing of the Taliban's bid for power.

Scant thought was given by any of these players throughout these cynical machinations to the welfare of the Afghan people, who over the course of the Soviet war and the subsequent warlord struggles experienced a decades-long nightmare involving millions of dead and wounded, the annihilation of the physical infrastructure of the country, and unfathomable psychological traumas. Indeed it is the intersection of individual psychic wounds with the disruption of ancient cultural traditions that best explains why so many Afghans tolerated the arbitrary ruthlessness of the Taliban, and why some would continue to adorn the graves of their al-Qaeda allies with the color of Islam even after the fundamentalist militia's fall. To country folk subjected to the murders, rapes, robberies, and extortions of first the Soviets and then the rival warlord militias, the repressive order imposed by the Taliban came as a welcome relief, and the militants' Arab helpers loomed as the only outsiders willing to succor them.

"Now the Afghans could resume fighting among themselves — and hardly anyone cared," a former CIA director wrote with evident satisfaction after the Soviet withdrawal. There was, however, a mythogenic foreigner who cared very much about this situation, and was determined to commit the considerable financial resources at his disposal and the prestige he had acquired on the frontier as an anti-Soviet jihadi to helping the Afghans achieve the peace and stability long denied them by an indifferent world — but on his own terms, and as a means to his own ends. With such a vast reservoir of pain to tap into, the separations of physical distance and states of mind proved an easy enough space to transgress when bin Laden launched his attacks in New York and Washington from the safety of a base that had been well prepared for him by two centuries of alienation.

Walking Away Again

"DA'UD NEVER SAW the communist coup coming, it was like the attack on the World Trade Center, something that it was impossible to imagine," says Shah Mohammad Rais, Kabul's preeminent bookseller, evoking the tragic historical trajectory that has inextricably bound his country's fate to that of global security. No such excuses as to the limits of human imagination were possible after 9-11, yet those in power in Washington whose duty it was to imaginatively and constructively respond to the disaster have shown no ability or inclination to deal with the Islamist threat other than to blindly throw force at a problem created by the blind use of force. Indeed, by invading Iraq they have brought Islamism and chaos to a place where neither was present before, while walking away from the crucial Central Asian arena where the prevalence of both required concentrated, continuing, and creative engagement by the United States and its allies.

The Bush administration justified its war to unseat the Taliban by saying that it was acting to defend the United States, punish the perpetrators of the atrocities, and make the world a safer place. Yet it was evident from the start that achieving these goals required much more than driving the fundamentalist militia back into the frontier mountains from which it had come. If the situation in Afghanistan was indeed to blame for what had happened in the United States on 9-11, then a permanent resolution of the Afghan question was required, and to do this it was necessary to place it in its regional context. The political process that was initiated at the Bonn Conference in December 2001 with the installation of the government of President Hamid Karzai correctly adopted "security" and "reconstruction" as its mantras, and it was acknowledged that these elements would have to be involved in a reciprocal interaction in order for either to be achieved. Unfortunately it soon became clear that not only were the problems of Afghan security and reconstruction inadequately conceived, there was real international commitment to neither.

It is a pregnant irony, given the fact that the most serious threats to Afghanistan's security over the last two centuries have come from the violent intervention in its affairs of neighboring states, that the United States and its Coalition partners continue to discuss threats to the country's stability solely in terms of non-state actors: terrorists, warlords, and drug traffickers. That its southern neighbor Pakistan has suddenly and completely abandoned the hostile policies of six decades, which not so long ago culminated in Islamabad actively assisting in the leveling of half of Kabul by rockets hurled by its proxy the fundamentalist warlord Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, is taken as a given. This state of denial has led to an ineptly bifurcated approach to the interlinked tripartite problem of Afghan security.

By accepting President Pervez Musharraf's word that he and his entire security establishment have signed on for the "war on terror," and are denying all aid and comfort to the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters that have taken refuge in and continue to launch vigorous and escalating attacks from what are internationally recognized as Pakistani territories, the United States is hamstrung in its ability to deal militarily with these groups. The illegitimacy of the Durand Line has come back to haunt the Western powers who raised and maintained it, preventing them not only from adequately defending the Karzai government, but also from pursuing the main objective, in their narrow vision, that brought them here — tracking down the perpetrators of 9-11.

"Pakistan is playing a double game here," affirms Commander Palwon Ya-Ya, a mujahideen famed for his mediating skills who fought against both the Soviets and the Taliban. "They are waiting for American involvement in the region to wind down, so they can fully return to their old behavior. There are many jihadis who circle back and forth between Afghanistan and Kashmir, and are rewarded with money and positions in Pakistan. The Americans put pressure on the Pakistanis to attack the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and they make a show of doing so, but their heart is not in it."

Yet the continuing fostering of radical fundamentalist elements by Pakistan for geostrategic goals is fraught with self-delusion on the part of Islamabad. The idea that it can continue to use some of them ("good jihadis") for its ends while containing others ("bad jihadis") in remote regions like the Tribal Areas represents a dangerous playing with fire in such a charged international situation. Pakistan's rigidly stratified, desperately impoverished, and increasingly radicalized society is teeming with social tensions that could be set off by a catalyst at any moment. The proliferation of conflicts in the country, with a major revolt by Baluch tribesmen angered at the plundering of their natural gas resources by the central authorities compounding the already volatile situation in the Pashtun lands and sectarian violence in the cities, could well prove to be too much for the military government to control. In the event of such a development, Islamabad will have followed the same historical trajectory that Washington did in backing the radical fundamentalists against the Soviets, to the exclusion of more responsible political elements.

In the light of these realities the current American strategy of sending out endless patrols to go after insurgents while relying on the Pakistanis to run down their comrades on the other side of the Durand Line simply cannot be regarded as a serious attempt at securing Afghanistan. Indeed it is all too reminiscent of the Soviets chasing after the mujahideen who were succored by Zia and could always retreat if needed into Pakistan, or the British running around in circles after the *ghazi* who enjoyed a similar relationship with the Afghan king.

ANY COMPREHENSIVE security strategy for Afghanistan must address three overlapping elements: the political situation within the country's internationally recognized borders; the unresolved Pashtunistan question, and the necessity of containing Pakistan's hegemonic ambitions. The latter two are not even on Washington's radar screen; the American's handling of the first betrays at every point their disinterest in a military theater that long ago became a neglected sideshow to Iraq.

"There is a substantial risk to having a military-dominated strategy in Afghanistan," says Vikram Parekh, an analyst for the Brussels-based International Crisis Group. "You can hear it in the simplistic language, the talk of 'good guys' and 'bad guys.' There has not been enough of an investment made in creating an environment in which you can have democratic political development. This is a short term results-driven approach with no signs of a long-term investment. In the end it comes down to a lack of knowledge of the cultural and political landscape."

While many people accepted the fact that America had a compelling national security interest in attacking Afghanistan in the fall of 2001, the effects of this military action on the country's own security were dramatic: it was utterly shattered. Where the Taliban had provided a suffocating but secure environment for the people in the areas under their control, there now emerged a patchwork of fiefdoms run by the old warlords that America had used as its proxy ground troops to effect the victory. At the time this was justified as a necessary evil that was an unavoidable expedient in an emergency, and the rapid waning of warlord power as the country's political reconstruction progressed was promised. Four years on, with a lack of adequate military support and economic assistance to the Karzai government an overwhelming reality, the warlords have made good in their own way on the vow once made by the reactionary French king Charles X, that he would restore the *ancien regime* "with all the abuses."

The re-entrenchment of warlord power is one of many elements that indicate that the Bush administration was never serious about nation building in Afghanistan, and that it is actually operating under the delusion that if it continues military operations there long enough it will be able to kill enough "terrorists" to be able to come home to a safer America. This is the same "manhunt" approach that views the battle against bin Laden as a simple police action, with intelligence gathering and military action as the answer to the problem he poses, instead of an effort to win friends in the part of the world he is hiding in by doing something to help its people. It is in essence the same paradigm that the Reagan administration applied to expelling the communists from the country, with what results the world has seen.

The proliferation of conflicts could well prove to be too much for the military government to control.

Several predictable developments have already undermined this quixotic effort. The security and power vacuum has resulted in an explosion in the cultivation of opium poppies that has poured enormous sums into the coffers of terrorist groups, who have been able not only to finance their operations on a global scale, but increase recruitment among a desperate population on a strictly cash basis. Also, a solely military approach to what is in essence a socioeconomic problem has had predictable results among people to whom so many promises were made, especially when it has taken a well-documented heavy-handed form. The cumulative effect of civilian casualties, rough treatment of people during search and seizure operations, and reports of human rights abuses is taking its toll.

"The Americans have lost the trust of the people in the south," affirms Col. Akbar Sherzai, a former mujahideen under the legendary commander Abdul Haq who is now involved in the reconstruction effort. "They have not been open with them, and have made big mistakes in the way they treat them. And they have not asked the elders for advice. That is what you have to do if you want to win — consult the elders, not the warlords."

It is an open question how willing the elders would be to offer advice at this point to representatives of an international presence that is rapidly losing legitimacy in Afghan eyes. After almost thirty years of war, legitimacy in Afghanistan is a function of a center of power's ability to provide security, not of moral posturing or the elections which in the circumstances prevailing there were little better than abstract exercises. The Karzai government and its lukewarm American backers have not provided security, and there is an increasing momentum, at least in the Pashtun south, to look again to those who have provided it in the past. "Nostalgia for the security of the Taliban time is nearly ubiquitous," reports Alex Strick van Linschoten, an intrepid Dutch scholar-journalist who made an extensive tour of the Herat-Kandahar-Khost salient in December 2005. "Everywhere I traveled in the south I heard this." This dynamic is strengthened by the Afghans' stark lack of the basic material benefits that the West has likewise failed to provide.

If there is a single thing that America and its allies should have done amidst the international tension and confusion following the events of late 2001 to win the Muslim "hearts and minds" they are forever claiming they want to capture, it was to rapidly and spectacularly engage in Afghan reconstruction. With the Taliban in shocked disarray and all eyes momentarily focused on Central Asian developments, the spring of 2002 was America's hour to show that a phoenix of hope rising from the ashes was what it wanted to offer the world, not more violence. Yet almost from the first, the parsimony and lethargy of the Afghan aid effort demonstrated that the superpower had "other priorities."

Several international studies taken at the time placed the cost of rebuilding Afghanistan at about $30 billion, of which an initial $5 billion was pledged at the Tokyo donors conference in January 2002 by a variety of countries. Four years later, the United States' grand total of monies disbursed to rebuild Afghanistan stands at $1.3 billion, a fraction of the tens of billions it is spending on its military operations in Central Asia and the hundreds of billions it is burning up in Iraq. These bald figures merely open the window on a tepid endeavor that has failed to significantly affect the lives of the vast majority of Afghans.

The inefficiency, waste, corruption, and poor quality of work attendant on many of the projects undertaken by the international community in Afghanistan have been amply documented in numerous news accounts and research studies, as have the ample salaries and comparatively lavish lifestyles of those implementing them. Frequently noted also is the Kabul-centric nature of these efforts, with a low percentage undertaken in the countryside and almost none in the Pashtun south, where their political impact would be greatest. To be fair, there are many examples of well-directed projects executed by competent NGO's, but these represent small jewels in a sea of mud. The results have been exasperating when great scale is involved, such as the Louis Berger Company's contract to build 1,000 schools and clinics by the end of 2004, but completing only 138 of them to date, or the firm's shoddy repaving of the crucial artery that is the Kabul-Kandahar highway.

Chris Johnson and Jolyon Leslie, two of the most experienced aid workers in the country, sum up the realities of the anemic reconstruction effort in their book *Afghanistan — The Mirage Of Peace*:

> Meanwhile, for the majority of the country's citizens, the ordinary people who do not have access to well-paid jobs, there is simply a deep yearning for life to be better, to live in safety, to have healthcare and education, and the means of making a reasonable living. As yet, little has been offered in the way of meeting these aspirations. For all the fine words about economic growth relieving poverty, there is little indication that this might happen; nor are the models of services being put forward likely to produce much for the poor. The danger for America, with its all too visible presence in the country, is that it will be held responsible for these failures.

Already there are ample indications that the United States and its allies are being held accountable for promises broken in the manner promised by the Pashtun tribesman to Steve Connors. The year 2005 was by far the most violent in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, with 1,600 people killed during the course of an escalating insurgency, among them 92 U.S. soldiers. Quite troubling was the increasingly Iraq-style nature of the strife, involving suicide bombings and deliberate targeting of civilians, which have never been hallmarks of the Afghan way of guerilla warfare. This may be indicative of the internationalization of the Afghan conflict in ways that go beyond Pakistani subterfuge or the importation of brutal techniques of warfare; the Afghan psyche is tapping in to the quasi-nihilistic surge of rage that has greeted America's actions in the Muslim world since the invasion of Iraq. It need not be emphasized that the American intervention in the country was supposed to produce the opposite result.

Against the backdrop of a basic failure to provide security or construct a substantial physical-economic infrastructure that can underpin political development, the fact that the parliamentary elections held in September 2005 formally completed the political framework mapped out at Bonn can mean little. In marked contrast to the enthusiastic turnout for the October 2004 presidential election that technically legitimized the Karzai government, only about half of the electorate voted, and there was great disappointment at the numbers of conservative mujahideen candidates returned, an indication of the influence of both warlord power and drug money over the electoral process. There is little anticipation that an ethnically fractious legislature in a government with little territorial control can be much of a force for anything in a country where the bullet still holds sway over the ballot.

It goes without saying that if there was any possibility that the progressive thread in Afghan life so drastically cut off by the events of 1978 and after had any chance of being taken up again, it is rapidly slipping away. The United States had a historic opportunity after the fall of the Taliban not only to make Afghanistan a developmental showcase for the Muslim world and cement Central Asian security while enhancing its own, but to undo much of the psychic harm it inflicted by fostering the radical jihadis in the 1980s. The sheer weight of a massive reconstruction program, accompanied by close attention paid to educational development, could have done much to foster liberal values by appealing to the basically tolerant Afghan character. That this is what the "war on terror" should essentially be about does not appear to inform the American endeavor in Afghanistan; neither does a sense that there is any need to undo what *they* did here in the 1980s.

By the spring of 2006 the "backward" culture of the Pashtun tribes — which still holds sacred the quaint idea that promises made about matters of life and death are promises that must be kept — was generating an increasingly robust response to this new betrayal of them by the West. Suicide bomb attacks, roadside explosions, and even the novelty of direct assaults against foreign military bases were becoming an almost daily occurrence, as the ever-elusive, "defeated" Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar vowed against the Americans and their allies that "We will make the land beneath their feet like a flaming oven." Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March, Lt. Gen. Michael Maples stated that 'the Taliban-dominated insurgency remains a capable and resilient threat" that is presenting a greater challenge to the Karzai government "than at any point since late 2001." Blind, cyclopic outbursts on the part of the Americans such as the predator drone missile strikes in the tribal areas in January that failed to kill Al-Qaeda's number 2 leader, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri but leveled Pashtun houses with a significant loss of innocent civilian life continue to add fresh impetus to a dynamic where "anger over things said and things done," as Homer once put it, translates into violent, coordinated action.

And is it any wonder, with so much to be angry about? The failure to implement the security-reconstruction tandem promised at Bonn has developed into a threat to Afghan life far worse than the prospect of Taliban attacks. Also in January veteran Afghan correspondent Christina Lamb reported in the London *Sunday Times* the case of an entire large family that was massacred in the western province of Helmand for refusing to hand over a daughter to be a warlord's concubine. Alex Strick van Linschoten states that in the absence of any serious rural reconstruction or expansion of elemental police power "the death-grip that drugs have on the south and east of the country seems to allude to far worse to come." The withdrawal of several thousand U.S. troops in May so that they could be sent to Iraq, and their replacement at this critical juncture by a NATO force with strong reservations about rules of engagement, is emblematic of the radical distortion of American priorities that has occurred since George Bush and his neoconservative ideologues foisted their Iraq obsession upon the world.

For over four years after the fall of the Taliban, the reciprocal interaction at work on the frontier is not security advancing reconstruction and vice versa; It is the dark legend of Iraq destabilizing Afghanistan through the anger it provokes, the inspiration for fundamentalist resistance it provides, the resources it drains away, and the technical know how of death it passes on. With bin Laden still free in the Pashtun lands and receiving the public homage of al-Zarqawi as the Iraqi insurgents can take heart at a resurgent Taliban, the vicious circle is complete.

A Restless Frontier

"THERE IS A FATE about this restless frontier," W.K. Fraser-Tytler wrote in 1950, "which has been too strong for mankind ever since the days when the Greek rulers of Bactria died fighting in face of the invading nomads till now, when we have handed over the problem still unsolved." As troubled as he was by the Central Asian region's historical drift, he can hardly have foreseen how extreme it would become in terms of human suffering and radical ideology, or how far-reaching the pull of its strong destiny would prove for all mankind. Still less can he have imagined the continued refusal of the leaders of the most civilized and powerful nations on earth to deal with this problem even after it had yielded apocalyptic results in the heart of their grandest cities a world away.

The Pashtun lands where Osama bin Laden and his numerous global allies are hiding, exert influence, or draw inspiration are a hotbed of religious extremism today because of the destructive, stunting force that has been directed against its people for two centuries now. All through this time the dominant themes in the life of the frontier have been force and folly, hegemony and neglect; when brutal imperial violence is not being directed at the tribes, they are left to their own devices to pick up the pieces in greatly straightened circumstances. Yet naked force has always failed to subdue the Pashtun; all it has ever accomplished is the breeding of ever more dangerous alienation, which only increases the risk when shifting historical tides again bring this matter before the world. This endless, cynical playing of the "Great Game" in its various protean manifestations may have seemed but one of many global concerns to its changing imperial and ideological players, to be taken up and dropped as their perceived interests required, but the bitter harvest of so much callousness is now in.

For in the absence of any amelioration of the tribes' desperate conditions, bin Laden's position astride the Pashtun frontier is a geostrategic danger of the highest degree of magnitude. Having made his appearance in these hills as a champion against the Soviets, bin Laden has been able to extend that role on a vastly grander stage in his global confrontation with the Americans, the Europeans, and Arab regimes. Quite apart from the refuge it affords him to plot further attacks, his exploitation of the historical anachronism that is the Durand Line allows him to bid for power on both sides of it, subverting the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the rest of Central Asia by playing to the legitimate grievances of their peoples. Since all previous attempts on the part of visionary native leaders to transform their harsh reality have been brutally crushed by outside powers, they have turned to this foreign millenarian extremist for succor. Ghaffar Khan's warning on the eve of India's partition that "a dangerous situation is fast developing in the tribal lands" has immeasurably worsened over sixty years of force and folly. The dispossessed of the earth must have a standard to rally around, and so the Frontier Gandhi has been replaced by a pseudo-frontier Saladin.

Osama bin Laden is the most formidable Muslim leader to have assumed that mantle since Gamal Abdel Nasser half a century ago. Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal; bin Laden destroyed the World Trade Center. The vast existential chasm between the two actions, between the progressive Egyptian and the pathological Saudi, is the trajectory of the United States' foreign policy in the Muslim world in the intervening years. That the shock of September 11th has led to no serious reexamination of that trajectory and what may be done to reverse it in American public life is the central tragedy of our times. Neither the jingoism of the right nor the pacifism of the left are serious responses to the great historical crisis facing us today. Only a comprehensive analysis of the nature of this conflict based on an examination of its roots can produce an efficacious response that can secure peace with justice. And such a peace would entail a self-critical political and economic engagement that is beyond the comprehension of the violently self-aggrandizing cabals now in power in Washington and London.

Writing of the political situation in the Caucasus in *The New York Times* in November, 2005, Steven Lee Meyers discussed how "Islam has become a rallying force against corruption, brutality, and poverty" among the area's wretched peoples. That a glorious and venerable religion, which many times in the past has been a vehicle for profound social progress and has even been cited as an inspiration by secularizing reformers, should assume this role is natural. That the primary form that this resistance has taken in the Muslim world is one of radical intolerance and unfathomable violence is a measure of how deeply the perpetuation of these social ills by native autocratic governments and their international enablers has deformed the spiritual life of the region.

Everything that the Bush administration has done after its initial response to the attacks that opened this crisis has only served to deepen this deformation. The throttling of the phoenix has left only a spreading fire.

The situation is by no means hopeful.

From the Belgian Congo to the "War on Terror"

James Graham

In 2005, Amnesty International issued a detailed report* on the issue of U.S. rendition of the "war on terror" detainees to numerous countries around the world. The precision of much of the detail does an activist's heart good. For example, Amnesty knows almost certainly that on February 17-18, 2003, a Gulfstream IV jet, registration number N227SV, was used to fly Osama Nasr Mostafa Hassan from the U.S. air base at Aviano, Italy, first to the U.S. base at Ramstein in Germany and then on to Cairo. Hassan had been abducted by the CIA and is now detained at an unknown location in Egypt.

If this case — at least the essentials of it if not necessarily the plane's registration number — is public knowledge, then those who put in the research work to make it so are doing all of us a service. If the public is also aware of the case of Maher Arar, the Canadian citizen who was detained without charge (and without having committed any crime) in the United States, flown to Jordan (in Gulfstream III jet # N829MG) thence taken by road to Syria, to be kept in solitary and tortured for ten months: if this case too is public knowledge, we are well served.

What varying proportion of the public — often just the activist left and a few more — is raised to full awareness, and for how long, is another matter. Nevertheless the work of AI, Human Rights Watch and numerous other "watches" is a splendid contemporary flourishing of what may, especially in our time, be the most vital principle in politics: the necessity of disclosure.

Disclosure has a long and honorable history. One of its primary virtues is that, unlike freedom, loyalty, and patriotism, it has none of the Orwellian corruptions; it is not a Newspeak word. It means, no more and no less, that it is necessary to disclose to the public what politicians try to conceal or spin, and that individuals and groups who do this are to be admired and approved. Individuals, whistle-blowers such as the British intelligence officer Katharine Gun, deserve our greater admiration in that what they do is an individual act of courage, usually without the backing of any organization.

Both individuals and watches are following in the tradition of one of the greatest whistle-blowers of all time: Edmond Dene Morel, the English investigative journalist who in the early 20th century told the world about the bloody regime of King Leopold II of the Belgians in the Congo Free State — a regime of slavery and genocide that still shocks us today, even after the surfeit of horrors that have darkened the hundred years between Morel's time and ours.

He was an insider, to begin with: a representative in Belgium of the shipping line Elder Dempster, which had a monopoly of the Congo trade. In later life he was to become a friend of Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes; but as the historian Adam

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*USA/Jordan/Yemen — torture and secret detention: testimony of the "disappeared" in the "war on terror" (*Amnesty International* 2005).

Hochschild puts it, in the course of his work at Antwerp Docks "the young Morel made a deduction more far-reaching than anything accomplished by Holmes." Simply from observing the loading and unloading of ships that plied between Antwerp and the Congo, noting that rubber and ivory were arriving in huge quantities and little or nothing other than weapons was going the other way, he deduced that the Congo regime must be based on oppression and forced labor.

The torture pictures from Abu Ghraib are much less strange to us.

A thorough trawl through Liverpool shipping records confirmed his intuition: the gross imbalance between the value of imports from the Congo, and that of exports to the Congo (which in any case included arms), was such that it was impossible that anyone in the Congo (except white colonialists and entrepreneurs) was being paid, either for the goods or for the labor of producing them. From the time of that discovery, Morel single-mindedly and tirelessly pursued the realities of this brutal oppression, until the world knew the truth.

Unable to get adequate coverage in what we would now call the mainstream media, he started his own newspaper, the *West African Mail*. He obtained — from other whistle-blowers, of whom there was no shortage — and published secret documents of the colonial regime and the concession companies working for it. He published official records of women and children kidnapped and held hostage to force their husbands to work without pay as rubber-harvesters. He published casualty lists of the names of Congolese people, with the means of death detailed beside each name: "shot," "killed with the butt of a rifle." (A hundred years later, Iraqi dead are still not officially counted, far less listed by name.) Every claim made by the colonial authority, every denial of atrocities, Morel countered with facts and eyewitness accounts.

Largely owing to Morel's campaign, in June, 1903, the British Parliament carried a resolution committing the government to act together with other European powers "in order that measures be adopted to abate the evils prevalent in the Congo Free State." Roger Casement, British consul in the Congo, was sent on a fact-finding expedition. His report was a powerful indictment of the Belgian regime, sparing no details of castrations, the severing of hands and feet, the suspension of "renegade" workers by their hands for days in the baking sun without food or water, and the burning of villages.

For all Morel's dedication, it has to be said, his success did not go much beyond an undoubted raising of public consciousness. The power-holders and money men are not that easy to crack. The fact that Morel and Casement and others have brought so much wickedness into the light of day doesn't necessarily mean that power-practitioners mend their ways. In fact, the effect of the Casement report on Leopold's royal Murder Incorporated was relatively slight. Up to and after his death in 1909, reform came very slowly. The death toll reached 10 million — half the Congo's population. There were later episodes in which Congolese people again suffered. During World War I, thousands were dragooned into forced labor again, this time for timber and mining corporations. World War II brought more wretchedness: most of the uranium in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs was mined in the Congo by slave, or near-slave, labor. The first democratic prime minister of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba, was murdered with the connivance and support of the CIA, and a contemptible kleptocrat, Mobutu Sese Seko, was bunked up to power in his place. Most recently we have had a plethora of gangs, militias, and liberation armies killing one another over tin, diamonds, and the very coltan in our mobile phones.

Certainly, disclosure is a hard road and an uphill struggle. But it often seems to me the best of the political virtues — significantly, one not usually practiced by politicians — and one of the few worth breaking sweat over.

If public distrust and antipathy towards politicians is deeper now than ever before, at the same time acts of disclosure are more effective than ever. At the level of communications we have now, far more people can be in the know than was possible in Morel's time. In our world, too, the Congo or Iraq seem far less remote or exotic places. The torture pictures from Abu Ghraib are much less strange to us than early photographs of mutilated Congolese villagers or militiamen holding up severed hands must have appeared at the time. And if public awareness and protest are more easily heightened, the effect of disclosure on power-groups is also more immediate, even if their immediate response is no less rhetorical and superficial. Morel had to keep up his war of words for ten years before he could feel he was making inroads. Neither Leopold nor his British allies could easily be made to run around like headless chickens. Now, within days, ministers are busy being appalled, apologizing, and even — if there's a real panic — actually making policy changes. (Or perhaps we should say making different promises.)

But what matters most is this. Even if the response of power-holders to disclosure is more cosmetic than substantive, disclosure at least succeeds in raising public consciousness. More often, awareness does broaden out, well beyond the activist left. In the "us versus them" political world we find ourselves in, disclosure ensures that we are better informed and better armed as governments more and more serve interests other than ours: mainly those of the corporate lobby.

At the very least, to know what the power-holders are doing is in a real sense a matter of our individual and collective self-respect. Acceptance of not knowing is a kind of deference. Asked why America is at war on so many fronts, a young man says, "I guess, because we have to be. But the government knows a lot more than I do." This is not so far removed from the 17th century peasant who truly believed the King was chosen by God to rule over him. I will never know as much as the government knows, but I want to know enough — enough if possible to make the government afraid of me and others like me, afraid enough to desist from serving the corporate lobby and begin working to get people, in Ted Honderich's phrase, "out of bad lives." Failing that, I want to know enough for my own self-respect. Even if there is nothing I can do to get justice for Osama Hassan, it is important to know those plane registration numbers. Otherwise, the power-holders are making a fool of me with their discourse of lies and manipulative rhetoric.

Morel and Casement and others like them should be celebrated. They should upstage heads of state, military men, and entrepreneurs as the protagonists of history. There should be public holidays in their honor, and TV documentaries to remind us of their achievements. Children in school should be told Morel's story — it's one that young children are well able to understand — and taught that he was a good man and that Leopold was a criminal, by no means the only criminal to have borne the title of King, or President, or Prime Minister.

For information on Congolese history and Edmond Morel, I am indebted to Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost* (Macmillan 1998).

Pentagon Strategy, Hollywood, and Technowar

CARL BOGGS

WITH THE GROWTH of U.S. imperial power and its military reach, warfare today extends across the cultural as well as the institutional and battlefield terrains, the result of great technological changes now altering the very character of modern combat. Expanded military influence within the corporate media and popular culture is an inevitable outgrowth of the largest war machine the world has ever seen. The aftermath of 9/11, with its open-ended "war on terror," reinforces this trend as the power structure turns increasingly to Orwellian methods of rule: media propaganda, technologies of surveillance and control, draconian law-enforcement methods, a warfare system that extends and deepens authoritarian politics. Renovated Pentagon strategy based on the high-tech "Revolution in Military Affairs" (RMA), a defense establishment article of faith since the early 1990s, underpins a more brazen, aggressive imperialism geared to heightened resource wars, geopolitical maneuvering, and efforts to crush political opposition. The likelihood of stepped-up armed interventions mounts, whatever party controls the White House, as U.S. global power increasingly depends on an ensemble of quasi-fascist ideologies — superpatriotism, worship of technology, militarism, national exceptionalism — for domestic legitimation. Yet, as we shall see, this embellishment of technowar turns out to have its own limits and contradictions.

Empire the Movie

THE U.S. PURSUIT of world domination gains crucial ideological support through the media, where images of superpower virtue can be seen daily, across the sprawling entertainment industry and elsewhere. According to standard texts and discourses, the United States is and always has been a peaceful, democratic nation forced to rely on military action only when threatened by demonic enemies. While there is little truth to such notions, they remain a staple of media and academic culture and are believed by enough Americans to ensure popular acceptance of a huge warmaking machinery and security state. The U.S. media is today saturated with representations of violence, routinely celebrating the exploits of gangsters, terrorists, and warriors of all types, a pattern accelerated by the rightward shift in American politics that came with the end of the Cold War and the events of 9/11. The neoconservatives, whose extreme hawkish views were only a decade ago confined to the political margins, had by 2002 gained control of U.S. foreign policy while moving to strengthen the media role as propaganda arm of corporations, the government, and the military — their success nowhere more visible than in foreign policy. The major TV networks, talkradio, even most print outlets have degenerated into a cheerleading chorus behind whatever military venture Washington decides to launch.

In the case of Hollywood, its recent film output mirrors this trajectory, even as producers and directors often fiercely defend their cre-

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ative autonomy and liberal credentials. In 2003 and 2004 the studios spent lavishly on dozens of movies pervaded with combat motifs, including *The Last Samurai*, *Lord of the Rings, The Matrix Reloaded, Terminator 3, The Alamo,* and *Master and Commander,* all viewed by large audiences and praised by respected film critics. Also released were Quentin Tarantino's two martial *Kill Bill* sequences and the blockbuster epic *Troy,* with its many computer-generated scenes of war and bloodshed. In *The Matrix Reloaded* (2003), a marriage of Kung-fu movies, comic books, action/adventure films, and combat genre, directors Andy and Larry Warshowski employ such high-tech devices as robotics, arriving at a new breed of cyber-thriller filled with ultraviolent imagery, lethal weaponry, and spectacular battlefield exploits interwoven with a fusion of humans and machines comparable to scenes from *Terminator 3*. Part of a planned trilogy, this *Matrix* episode won instantaneous cult status among young viewers, earning over $450 million the year after its release.

In Steven Spielberg's *War of the Worlds* (2005), based on the 1898 H.G. Wells novel that envisions aliens from Mars invading planet Earth, a new wave of killers from outer space threatens innocent, peace-loving earthlings — the perfect tale for an updated Cold-War-style paranoia in the post-9/11 era. Apparently referring to modern-day jihadic violence, writer David Koepp comments: "We don't know where they're from. They're from somewhere far away and they don't seem to want to tell us where they're from. They don't seem to want to talk at all. They just want to kill."[1] Like Commies of an earlier time, these recycled demons symbolize an omnipresent threat that is supposed to bring to mind the grave menace of dispersed, elusive Al Qaeda operations. *War of the Worlds* continues Spielberg's longstanding obsession with war as spectacle going back to *1941*(1979) and extending to *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), where high-tech special effects heighten graphic images of warfare. As with *1941* and *Empire of the Sun* (1987), Spielberg relishes scenes of panic, of displaced people running from barbarian hordes, one young girl asking "Is it the terrorists?" Here we have, for the first time, a cinematic spectacle bringing all the drama of 9/11, the "new Pearl Harbor," to the big screen. A sci-fi thriller that is also a combat picture, *War of the Worlds* conveys a shadowy, fearsome world of nearly invisible enemies, ideal for a cinematic war on terrorism. Unspeakable evil pulsates through every frame of the movie, in which villains have no identity, no motive, no rationality, absolutely no redeeming features — cartoonish figures resembling demons of old Western and combat pictures. Aliens materialize as war machines with 200-foot tripods, so powerful they can instantly vaporize human beings. In the end, of course, the marauding invaders succumb, this time to voracious microbes symbolizing potent agents in the epic struggle against terrorist evil.

The new cycle of martial films features high-tech innovations, special-effects wizardry, and nonstop violence combined with blasting sound, with combat furnishing the key dramatic vehicle — a stratagem that has worked splendidly at the box office. Filmmakers have traditionally sought Pentagon assistance for technical and stylistic enhancements, but as digital technology becomes cheaper and more sophisticated the need for such collaboration diminishes. In any case, the glorified militarism favored by producers like Jerry Bruckheimer (*Top Gun, Armageddon, Black Hawk Down, Pearl Harbor*) has surely been driven more by ideological than by technical priorities.

The "war on terror" reinvigorates an aggressive U.S. military strategy, the extension of an imperial agenda that long predates the Bush presidency but which now has fewer limits of time and space — the best possible regimen for endless global struggle of good against evil, democracy against tyranny, civilization against barbarism. In a world of Hobbeisan chaos where fanatical madmen and terrorists run wild, people are more easily mobilized to fight Good Wars for noble and patriotic ideals. Those same militaristic values that buttress the empire and its war machine intersect with the commercial and aesthetic priorities of a film industry long attached to battlefield epics featuring patriotic heroes pitted against despicable villains. Today this narrative defines not only the combat genre but movie conventions like sci-fi, action/adventure, historical dramas, and horror films. Hollywood can even transform romantic comedies into combat spectacles, as with *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* (2005), the story of a husband and wife, each working as hired assassins and equipped with the latest automatic weapons, setting out to kill each other on assignment. Television has yet to match this cinematic wave, but Showtime's fall 2005 series, "Sleeper Cell," follows the pattern laid down by the entertainment industry: a group of Islamic extremists plots to destroy an American city, inspired by nothing more than pure mayhem and destruction. The characters include an Arab thug posing as member of a Jewish temple, showing again that terrorists can lead ordinary lives as they hatch barbaric schemes in the most unexpected places. Steven Bochco's "Over There," an FX channel series inspired by the events of 9/11 and the Iraq war, dramatizes the travails of U.S. frontline troops and is advertised as a program that "supports the troops by humanizing them." As the motif of foreign terrorism feeds into rightwing agendas — aggressive foreign policy, technowar, expanded surveillance, lavish Pentagon spending, a harsher law-and-order regimen — the weight of such agendas is felt across the culture industry.

> Spielberg relishes scenes of panic, of displaced people running from barbarian hordes.

The familiar Hollywood obsession with monstrous enemies takes a predictable new turn in post-Cold War media culture, with the casting of movie demons shifting from conventional Nazis, Japs, Gooks, and Redskins to a new lineup of modern-day evildoers: Arabs, Muslims, assorted terrorists, rogue tyrants, standard drug traffickers. Framed against the backdrop of U.S. global ambitions, such demons often represent racial stereotypes of the sort crudely recycled in hundreds of Hollywood westerns.[2] Although white-male heroes played by Sylvester Stallone, George Clooney, Arnold Schwartzenegger, Harrison Ford, and Steven Seagal have dominated the modern action/adventure genre, warrior-saviors now include minorities and women as in *XXX* with Vin Diesel, *Under Siege* with Denzel Washington, *G.I. Jane* with Demi Moore, *Kill Bill* with Uma Thurmann, *The Matrix Reloaded* with Carrie-Anne Moss, and *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* with Angelina Jolie. Of course such heroes (and heroines) equally rely on the marvels of technowar. Some within the new cycle of villains, moreover, might be expected to get hold of weapons of mass destruction — a motif exploited in such films as *True Lies, Under Siege, The Peacemaker,* and *Terminator 3,* where last-minute heroics barely stave off nuclear catastrophe. Demons in popular culture, especially those with access to doomsday weapons, serve reactionary ends insofar as they provoke the wrathful vengeance of a power structure under siege. At the same time, dehumanized Others furnish easy psychological targets at moments of public fear and paranoia that since 9/11 (and similar events in Europe) can be linked to public anxiety over possible new (Arab, Muslim) terrorist attacks.

As U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq grow more destructive and costly — as the general contradictions of Empire sharpen — the ideological functions of the military-entertainment complex media take on new significance. The deadly effects of armed intervention include widespread human casualties, population displacements, a drain on material resources, and environmental ruin — not to mention the subversion of international law along with heightened attacks on domestic rights and freedoms. Among other things, propaganda distorts or conceals flows of information regarding these and other costs. As the media becomes more structurally and ideologically concentrated to better fit elite agendas, propaganda aims are more readily achieved — one indication being the vanishing political differences between Republicans and Democrats, especially around foreign and military policy. The culture industry has for decades been a vital conduit of imperial agendas, and Hollywood studios (despite their reputed liberalism) have rarely departed from this norm. Motion pictures have the visual power to sway mass audiences interested mostly in simple diversion. While propaganda is usually viewed as a distinctly *state* function associated with dictatorial regimes, modern capitalism is more sophisticated in its hegemonic operations, relying on a labyrinthine network of corporate, media, government, and military structures making even the most powerful ideological methods nearly invisible.

As high-tech information and control systems reshape U.S. military strategy, these same features of RMA also dominate media culture. Put differently: just as the Pentagon fixates on information technology and media power, the culture industry itself becomes increasingly fascinated with military imagery. There is a strong convergence, as during moments of buildup to armed intervention (Yugoslavia, Iraq) the media dutifully serves the Pentagon with its continuous ideological-framing operations — embedded reporting, hawkish "expert" commentary, right-wing talkshows, patriotic battlefield features. Since films take longer to produce and distribute than current-events TV and radio programs, Hollywood's impact on public opinion is inevitably more refracted, less direct and immediate. Yet, surveying dozens of mainstream films dealing with terrorism and war in the 1980s and 1990s, it is easy to see how the big screen has turned into a propaganda vehicle for every U.S. imperial gambit, usually without need for drawn-out narratives or other verbal messages. In the theater, moreover, designated enemies can be graphically depicted in their full regalia, bigger-than-life, exaggerated in their diabolical features and stereotyped, sooner or later to be destroyed by fearsome weaponry. Jack Shaheen documents how Arabs and Muslims have been targeted across many decades of American filmmaking, more flagrantly in the 20 years or so since Hollywood began dwelling on terrorism.[3] As portrayed in films like *Under Siege*, *The Sum of All Fears*, and even the otherwise enlightened *The Three Kings* (1999), Arab and Muslim villains (typically thugs and terrorists) seem to fill an ideological void left by departing Cold War enemies. Here the triumph of superior technology, namely *military* technology, carries great narrative and political weight, endowing (usually patriotic, masculine) heroes with righteous virtues in their pursuit of a exalted goals. In the instance of film especially, media culture works more powerfully than cruder, more obvious forms of government indoctrination — the ideal propaganda for empire.

Hollywood and the Pentagon

The Pentagon has been increasingly sensitive about how the U.S. military presence around the world is depicted to mass publics. The film industry has a long partnership with the armed forces: military public relations offices typically review movie scripts in exchange for access to bases, equipment, stock footage, and expert consultation, all needed for "authenticity." The deep patriotic and militaristic content of most combat pictures, however, is rarely determined by stringent Pentagon controls over how producers, writers, and directors do their work, but flows from the larger political and media culture that is the repository of imperialist ideology. So attached are many Hollywood filmmakers to the combat spectacle with its enduring assumptions of superpower benevolence that they rarely wander far from the "bipartisan" foreign-policy consensus.

Of course, the Pentagon would prefer to transform Hollywood movies into simple infomercials for the military, but no filmmakers nowadays would be ready to follow such a dictat. Phil Strub, longtime chief of the Pentagon's liaison office, has said that "any film that portrays the military as negative is not realistic to us," adding that combat-themed movies ought to satisfy three criteria: depict military life as "realistically" as possible, inform the public about U.S. military prowess, and assist in recruitment.[4] Historically, this agenda has met with considerable success. As David Robb writes in *Operation Hollywood*: "Allowing the world's most powerful military to place propaganda into the world's most powerful medium — unchecked and unregulated — for over 50 years has certainly helped the Pentagon get more recruits for the armed forces and ever-increasing appropriations from Congress . . ."[5] While there is a legacy of frequent, sometimes intense conflict over armed-forces guidelines, in fact Strub has been uniformly admired in Hollywood and few pictures have deviated much from the ideological consensus he fostered — patriotism, a virtuous U.S. military, glorification of battlefield exploits, masculine heroism.[6] Although the Pentagon has refused assistance to works like *Memphis Belle*, *Courage Under Fire*, *A Few Good Men*, and Oliver Stone's Vietnam trilogy — all savaged for their "negative" images of the military — the overall historical record is one of intimate collaboration serving both partners.

From its earliest days, Hollywood promoted a culture of militarism, with mass audiences offered a regular diet of combat and action movies replete with graphic scenes of death and destruction. At first this contribution was muted owing to the relatively small scale of U.S. military power. But the studios quickly became fascinated with the combat genre (the dominant form if combat Westerns are included) since it guaranteed huge box-office returns given the nonstop action, graphic violence, appealing heroes, exotic settings, the contrived glamour of military life, and happy endings. The armed-forces brass naturally relished this kind of cinema too and worked diligently with filmmakers to glorify battlefield action and everything that surrounded it.

During and immediately after World War II, combat movies dwelled on noble American military triumphs over evil monsters in the form of Hitler and Mussolini — propaganda for the ultimate Good War, no reservations or apologies. The famous *Why We Fight* series, organized by Howard Hawks and other studio luminaries including John Ford and Frank Capra, exemplified this close alignment of Hollywood and the War Department. With great war dramas fresh in mind, the public was drawn to battlefield stories made more authentic owing by extensive use of stock footage and technical advances over earlier renditions of combat. Films released over the next two decades fit this pattern, assisted by swollen Pentagon public relations apparatus. To win such assistance, studios had to follow strict guidelines: no "negative images" of military officers, no excessive foul language, no "sexual improprieties" like adultery, only moderate drinking, and so forth. Yet if filmmakers often argued with Pentagon censors over these strictures, the larger motifs of patriotism, male heroism, and essential goodness of U.S. military action were taken for granted. Even those films that ran afoul of Pentagon censors, like *From Here to Eternity* and *The Caine Mutiny*, scarcely violated this ideological formula. The Good-War narrative, *de rigeur* for sci-fi and horror as well as combat genres, shaped the Cold-War era during which Hollywood gladly served as a cultural arm of U.S. global interests. The mixture of warfare and cinema was so explosive that it is easy to see how, across the decades, an actor like John Wayne could be so widely viewed as the ultimate icon of military courage and patriotism, the essence of a combat hero, dwarfing any real-life battlefield figure.[7]

In the Vietnam aftermath, however, military portraits grew more complex and jaundiced at the hands of directors like Francis Ford Coppola, Oliver Stone, Stanley Kubrick, and Barry Levinson even as the Cold-War consensus remained intact. The Pentagon sought to counter film assaults on the military during the late 1970s and 1980s, but most "assaults," even where harsh in tone, rarely challenged the main premises of U.S. foreign and military policy. Any criticism would have meshed with what former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara later conceded in his memoirs and in *The Fog of War*, namely, that certain "mistakes" and "miscalculations" were made in carrying out the Vietnam War: the problems were tactical, matters of implementation. Good-War pictures about humiliating U.S. defeat by a poor third-world country surely would have been difficult to make, even in Hollywood, but heralded antiwar messages of the "New Hollywood" directors turned out to be limited and inward, consumed mostly with *homefront* costs and traumas. At the same time, films of the period typically conveyed elements of the "Vietnam Syndrome" tied to national failure and impotence, suggesting that Pentagon leverage over the film industry had at least temporarily waned. Where the military did assist in Vietnam War films (for example the *Rambo* series), the idea was to convert painful defeat into miraculous victory, predictably with little success. Other reputedly antiwar films like *The Deer Hunter, Coming Home,* and *Casualties of War* portrayed the military debacle from a distinctly American standpoint.

Post-Vietnam erosion of the U.S. military image would soon be reversed by a new cycle of ultrapatriotic, militaristic films starting in the late 1980s, with Tony Scott's *Top Gun* (1986) a seminal turning-point. More crucial yet was the Gulf War, the first high-tech TV combat spectacle leading to a post-Cold War revival of patriotism and militarism, with Desert Storm exposing viewers to all the flourishes of an action/adventurer blockbuster.[8] Not coincidentally, it was the Gulf War that first enabled the U.S. military to unveil a truly integrated, networked communications system.[9] Throughout the 1990s the film industry rekindled its alliance with the Pentagon, while dazzling images of military prowess and battlefield heroism began to transcend the combat genre as such. Meanwhile, the refinement of digital technology meant that Hollywood no longer required military help to establish cinematic "authenticity", which in any event mattered little to targeted youth audiences scarcely interested in the actual history of warfare. As high-tech spectacles reshaped both filmmaking and military action, themes of patriotism, technological wizardry, and combat heroism were more effectively conveyed to theater audiences. Profitable box-office returns of 1990s movies like *True Lies*, *Armageddon*, *Independence Day*, and *Black Hawk Down*, not to mention World War II epics like *Saving Private Ryan* and *Pearl Harbor,* reflected this pattern. Those few pictures outside the dominant trend — for example, Ed Zwick's *Courage Under Fire* (1998) and Terrence Malick's *The Thin Red Line* (2001) — would receive no Pentagon support and limited marketing resources.

As cinematic technology reshapes media culture, the appeal of martial narratives and images to males under 30 already steeped in video-games inevitably spreads. Modern warfare builds on that same technology, visible not only in film but TV, the Internet, and popular magazines. The most successful recent Hollywood-Pentagon collaboration was the 2001 Bruckheimer/Michael Bay war epic *Pearl Harbor,* with its sentimental love story, old-fashioned male heroism, glorification of aviation, drama of national revenge — and creative use of computer graphics, especially for the attack on battleship row. A $140 million film, *Pearl Harbor* was marketed heavily for its powerful historical symbolism, and the strategy worked despite the picture's lack of historical veracity. The military gave filmmakers full access to Pearl Harbor and Hickam Field, providing all the needed equipment, supports, and human resources. As before, public relations officers were little concerned with factual authenticity, opting instead for a fairy-tale rendition of historical events, such as wildly overstating the efficacy of the U.S. aerial counterattack and devoting fully one-third of the movie to the ill-fated Doolittle Raid on Tokyo in April 1942, falsely shown as a moment of triumphal revenge.

> The appeal of martial narratives and images to males under 30 already steeped in video games inevitably spreads.

The much later "Pearl Harbor" turned out to be the terrorist attacks of 9/11 — yet another case of an innocent nation under attack from sneaky evildoers, followed by an outpouring of vengeful patriotism. After 9/11, Bush emissary Karl Rove went to Hollywood seeking media help in the "war on terror," but the response of industry leaders was decidedly cool; no studio or producer would commit to an ideological campaign along lines of the *Why We Fight* series. Ironically, however, these same studios had been churning out films about the terrorist menace like the *Delta Force* and *Navy Seals* episodes, *Executive Decision*, *The Peacemaker*, and *Under Siege* for nearly two decades — films that would safely have met the demands of Rove and the neocons.

Technowar and Media Culture

By the 1990s, the merging of technowar and media spectacle had become vital to the flexing of imperial power. Meanwhile, stepped-up U.S. efforts to colonize the Middle East, with Iraq as centerpiece, contributed further to the expanded military influence over public life. By mid-2002 the Bush/neocon drive toward war, in reality a bipartisan venture from the outset, was being expertly marketed by an ensemble of government, military, and corporate-media interests designed to forge popular consensus and marginalize dissent. Propaganda deftly tapped into public fears of a jihadic attack, of foreign madmen and terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. The phony rationale for war was dutifully repeated and sugarcoated by a craven media, its jingoism fed by embedded journalism and ensuring high ratings and profits.

The film industry was less directly engaged in the Iraq war, although dozens of movies glorifying high-tech combat against primitive foes of Western democracy had long ago made their imprint on the political culture. War and action/adventure movies of the 1990s seemed likely to bolster public readiness for U.S. military action against designated foreign threats. The warrior ethos was by no means limited to TV and cinema, having spread into a new wave of high-tech magazines and above all the lucrative video-game business that by the late 1990s was offering a "full spectrum" of machines for both military training and entertainment geared to simulations of realistic battlefield action. In mid-2005 seven of the top ten best-selling games had combat motifs increasingly in demand after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, popular among a young generation attuned to the ultra-violent virtual world of war. (Roughly 70 percent of all buyers are under 20, despite legislative bans on sales to minors in several states.) War games are not only extremely bloody but contain frequent racist and sexist targeting of enemies. Based on interactive battlefield scenes, the videos teach a simple lesson: violence is the preferred, usually the *only*, answer to human conflict — the more lethal the better. In the post-9/11 ambience many games, produced by corporate giants like Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft, feature scenarios of payback through high-tech armed onslaught.

War games originated in the Vietnam era, but the main catalyst was the Pentagon embrace of RMA (Revolution in Military Affairs), stressing high-tech weapons and communications systems, new surveillance devices, remote warfare, robotics, and weaponization of space. The military is now the main designer of war games developed through a working partnership with the entertainment industry, computer firms, and academia. At the University of Southern California, for example, the Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT) links these partners through a series of lucrative grants (including $100 million from the Army in 2004) to manufacture sophisticated cycles of war games. The games replicate military field operations and present creative strategic and tactical options for players, focusing on unconventional or "asymmetric" warfare in mostly urban settings to fit counterinsurgency programs.

Simulated on large high-resolution screens, the drama of war engulfs the total visual field, imbuing combat with elements of aesthetic beauty and playful excitement, what one game producer calls the "dopamine rush." Thanks to the wonders of digital imaging, moreover, techniques of video-game and film production have gradually merged since the mid-1990s, inspired by shared battlefield and action/adventure formats. Viewers see elements of technowar in such movies as the later *Star Wars* episodes, *Pearl Harbor, XXX, Windtalkers,* and *The Matrix* series. Related innovations have entered paid video programs linked to computers and portable devices, giving rise to a convergence of electronic products around film, video games, and the Internet, driven by tech firms like Microsoft, Intel, and IBM collaborating with media giants like Disney, Time-Warner, Sony, and NewsCorp.

With visual backdrops set in World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq, war games account for more than $28 billion in sales annually, a figure expected to rise dramatically. Their specialty is violent revenge fantasies like those in the *Rambo* series, many drawn from movies like *Delta Force, Black Hawk Down,* and *Batman Begins* — the games and movies driven by the same digital technology, each influencing the other just as each embraces the military experience. In "Full-Spectrum Warrior" (2004), made by Microsoft and ICT and produced at the Army Infantry School in Fort Benning, Georgia, a realistic simulator allows participation in urban combat against guerrilla fighters. Atari's "Act of War" (2005), written by former Army Captain Dale Brown, features a group of military vets tracking down international terrorists who plan to destabilize the world economy. Produced at the same time, THQ's "Destroy All Humans" is marketed to players asked to take "One Giant Step *on* Mankind." At the 2005 Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles, the industry unveiled a new generation of video games and consoles, with giant screens marketing hundreds of commando adventures and warfare scenarios built around the latest "interactive" battlefield scenarios. Writing in a popular gaming magazine, Jack Thompson argues that when young players become absorbed in combat videos for hundreds or thousands of hours, they often wind up addicted to battlefield violence: "These games don't just teach skills — they break down the inhibition to kill. We've supposedly been trained by society and our parents not to kill another person, so the way to break that down is to put a soldier in a Virtual Reality (VR) setting, which will be far more effective in the long run."[10]

Pentagon strategists nowadays paradoxically mimic Hollywood in borrowing advanced technics of warfare created at the studios. One example is robotics, long a staple of the U.S. space program, which has come to play a vital role in both filmmaking and military planning. In 2004 the Army created the SWORDS program featuring three-foot robotic fighters outfitted with tank tracks, night-vision devices, and mounted automatic weapons that can fire more than 300 rounds per burst. In early 2005 the Army deployed 18 SWORDS units to Iraq for the first-ever sustained use of remote-control ground warfare, with more units ordered. The system embellishes images of killer droids in earlier sci-fi movies, renegade cyborgs in *Blade Runner,* and robotic armies facing off in different *Star Wars* episodes (although some contain distinct anti-imperialist narratives). The Pentagon also built an unmanned "trauma pod" that deploys robots for surgeries and other medical procedures in combat situations, part of its move to automate diverse sectors of the battlefield, both ground and air, with at least one-third of all military vehicles expected to be unmanned by 2015. In spring 2006 the unmanned ground vehicle R-Gator, built by John Deer and iRobot, is scheduled to be deployed, one of a new cycle of "smart" vehicles built to perform a series of combat missions. Added to these inventions will be refined microwave beam weapons deployable for "crowd control" in urban warfare.

In 2003 producers of the Schwartzenegger vehicle *Terminator 3* created a spectrum of high-tech weapons and vehicles specifically for that picture, a film tribute to robotic combat. Marketed through its own "official" magazine, the movie introduces a "new universe of machines" powerful enough to vanquish any imaginable foe. The magazine describes Schwartzenegger as an "unstoppable cyborg" fresh off the assembly line, equipped with an arsenal of devastating "T3" products. For the movie, Honda built the most advanced humanoid robot ever, said to profoundly influence the conduct of battlefield action in both cinema and warfare, using remote systems driven by molecular and cellular devices made possible by nanotechnology. According to one writer, stressing the connection between film and combat videos, "one of the most important things to note with remote warfare is that it distances soldiers from death . . . and [they] find it easier to kill. A generation of children raised on violent video games could therefore be excellent future soldiers." [11] Technowar allows for a safe psychological distancing from combat horrors, something always intrinsic to aerial warfare but now extended to ground action. The killing process has grown more technically ritualized: targets on a screen are identified and then blown away by pressing buttons or deploying robots to unleash deadly missile and bombing attacks.

The Pentagon's own Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) closely follows these cinematic innovations — a staple of recent combat, action/adventure, and sci-fi movies — as it sharpens new battlefield technology along lines of SWORDS. Robotics, information technology, militarization of space, combat video games, high-tech and unmanned planes, and precision-guided weapons all combined reconfigure modern warfare as embraced by both Hollywood and the Pentagon. The military openly solicits technological assistance from the film industry, video-game business, and academic centers like ICT. A vast extension of George Lucas' *Star Wars* empire, recently installed at the old Army Presidio in San Francisco, is equally rich in cinematic and military potential. The Letterman Digital Arts Center cost $350 million and employs 1500 people who toil in a universe of epic clashes between good and evil, where warrior cultures and superweaponry take center stage in the drama of superhero myths drawn from the work of Joseph Campbell and others.[12] And like other studios always looking to create more spectacular warfare imagery, the sprawling Lucas facilities hire scores of retired military officers as technical consultants.

As a linchpin of U.S. global power, technowar strengthens the military component of imperialism at a time when Washington understandably prefers to downplay its unsurpassed arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. The 2005 round of new Pentagon reductions, including dozens of base closings across the country and in Europe, is best seen within Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's modernization scheme to make combat forces lighter, more flexible, more high-tech, and more lethal — a project encoded in the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review. (The calculated savings are paltry — probably no more than five billion dollars yearly.) A redesigned armed forces is supposed to augment U.S. capacity to control the planet at a time when explosive turbulence (social, environmental, military) is expected to increase throughout the 21st century.

The neocons have always viewed space militarization as basic to solidifying U.S. command and control systems over the planet, as it permits for a more efficient worldwide attack capacity. The Bush administration, working to revamp the National Space Policy, has pushed hard for a more aggressive space program. General Lance Lord, head of the Air Force Space Command, has said the U.S. must seek absolute military domination of space — a goal seen as both easily reachable and non-negotiable, and one that means eventual deployment of sophisticated weapons in space (including nuclear devices). The U.S. now has roughly 70 satellites in orbit, vital to such military purposes as navigation, communications, and intelligence without which the launch of unmanned Predator drone planes and other high-tech devices used in Afghanistan and Iraq would be impossible. Surveillance mechanisms are crucial: the Pentagon is now developing a new generation of spy satellites as part of the classified Future Imagery Architecture program. Based on the Hubble Space Telescope, except that they face the earth, these satellites will be equipped with optical lenses that can take detailed photos of even the smallest human earthly movements. Assisted by space technology, the Pentagon already possesses a hypersonic glider with global strike capability, prepared to strike any target in the world within 90 minutes. The misnamed Strategic Defense Initiative, primarily an *offensive* weapons scheme, is central to a full-spectrum strategy that would enable the United States to counter Russian and Chinese military power.[13] The militarization of space aggravates the threat of a new arms race likely to pose the question of planetary survival but, as Noam Chomsky points out, "the basic [U.S.] principle is that hegemony is more important than survival."[14] Now costing roughly $20 billion a year, the space budget is expected to skyrocket to $50 billion by 2007.

Technowar further emboldens a reckless militarism and messianic exceptionalism that concedes few limits to American power. Moreover, technological superiority has come to signify, and justify, a moral and political supremacy often invoked to rationalize any U.S. imperial aggression, helping legitimate "preemptive" military action and justify outright contempt for troublesome international rules and agreements. High-tech warfare ultimately *reduces* curbs on United States militarism and helps fuel the crude turn toward *Machtpolitik* by elites of both parties. The U.S. has violated or refused to endorse several international treaties and laws, spurned the U.N. Charter prohibiting military aggression, flouted the Geneva Accords in its systematic mistreatment of prisoners, and carried out deliberate assaults on civilian populations (as during 2004 in Fallouja, where an entire city was destroyed to suit counterinsurgency goals). While such criminal behavior has deep roots in American history, new refinements of technowar give U.S. leaders yet another powerful weapon — both materially and ideologically — in their pursuit of a new Manifest Destiny.

The Limits of Technowar

SINCE HIGH-TECH MILITARISM does so much to revitalize the warfare system, its capacity to strengthen U.S. imperial power ought to be substantial. The evidence so far, however, suggests what logic might reveal: technowar is riddled with its own illusions and contradictions. What saturates movies and video games is not always so easily translated into real life. While the purely *informational* element of military operations has been augmented, not to mention the sheer firepower and accuracy of modern weaponry, the U.S. drive toward world supremacy — aligned with its push for neoliberal globalization — gives rise to problems that technowar itself cannot possibly solve. Some of these problems are visible in escalating blowback, notably in militant forms of resistance produced by the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

While technowar broadly understood promises all the spectacular combat achievements of a blockbuster film or video game, replete with fascinating "shock and awe" battlefield scenarios, its success has fallen well short of what Pentagon strategists clearly expected. The Iraq calamity reveals both strengths and weaknesses of a high-tech military — rapid battlefield victories followed by a protracted, bloody occupation that American planners surely never anticipated and probably cannot defeat short of nuclear war. Since mid-2003, moreover, public support for this failed venture has steadily waned as costs mount and resistance intensifies, sinking to Vietnam War-levels of under 35 percent (summer 2005) and producing the first signs of Congressional opposition. Meanwhile, recruitment quotas for all service branches were well off target, a predicament deepening with each (almost daily) horror story out of Afghanistan and Iraq. The Army was lagging 25 percent behind its 2005 quota with no turnaround in sight, even as recruiters aggressively solicit teenagers with offers of bonuses up to $35,000 and promises of exciting jobs. The Iraq disaster alone has taxed Pentagon *human* resources well beyond capacity: of some 140,000 troops in the field more than 60,000 were drawn from National Guard units, with additional tens of thousands returning for a second tour of duty. The nightmare of fending off a tenacious, skilled, dispersed insurgency fighting on its own turf, in often brutal weather conditions, has taken a severe toll on U.S. morale and combat efficiency. Young field-grade officers, many recently graduated from West Point, are reportedly leaving the Army in record numbers. After long months in the field, moreover, troops can look forward to possible homefront ordeals including bleak job prospects and various post-traumatic stress disorders leading to high incidence of mental breakdowns, substance abuse, and suicide.

As recruitment and retention problems worsen — as experienced, well-trained troops needed for field operations become harder to find — the Pentagon brass turns more desperate. The capacity to sustain imperial hegemony, which Rumsfeld and the neocons naively believed could be solidified by means of technowar, now seems well beyond the resources of an all-volunteer force. The Army spends $1.5 billion yearly on recruitment, with 6000 operatives sent around the nation to cajole mostly poor youth with inducements of jobs training, good pay, and exotic assignments, although what the armed forces really want is a steady influx of frontline warriors for long tours of duty in life-threatening battle zones. High-school students encounter zealous recruiters in hallways, at home, in shopping malls, and on their computers. Bush's 2002 No Child Left Behind Act grants recruiters access to students' private information and allows unsolicited visits to homes. So anxious is the Army for recruits that criminal records, drug problems, and lack of diplomas are increasingly overlooked. Junior ROTC programs have been established nationwide, as the Pentagon moves to build a corps of "teen cadets" in high schools and even middle schools.[15] The U.S. military has grown so desperate that it has poured considerable resources into a media campaign *within Iraq* to smooth over the inevitable horrific images of occupation.

But recruiting campaigns have mostly stalled, torpedoed mostly by the Iraq disaster

— a point conceded by General John P. Abizaid, chief of the U.S. Central Command, who in spring, 2005 said the military reports from Iraq create new obstacles for recruiters, suggesting that a youth regimen of action/adventure blockbusters and combat video games has failed to produce the expected ideological results. Nor has a majority of Americans bought ridiculous Bush/neocon attempts to frame Iraq as a World War II-style "Good War," or even as a heroic front in the anti-terror crusade. In fact, the psychological outcome of such cultural products as films and games cannot be assumed: violent combat on screen might well end up as little more than fantasy, only rarely translated into real-life situations. Aside from PlayStation2 and Xbox, it is true that young people have always played games, some rather violent — and indeed there is no evidence proving that kids have become more violent over the past two decades. In the case of movies, the blockbuster phenomenon apparently matters less to a young generation concerned less with movie *content* than with the high-tech thrills, celebrity tales, and incessant tabloid gossip that surrounds it.

In early 2005, the Pentagon hired an outside marketing firm, BeNow, Inc., to carry out direct advertising, hoping to reach a targeted youth population where a militarized popular culture had so far failed. Set up by the Joint Advertising, Marketing, Research, and Studies Office of the Pentagon, the program is designed to compile databases on teenagers and college students, including academic, banking, and motor-vehicle records. Non-citizens are targeted as part of the Development, Relief, and Education for Minors Act, directed at children of undocumented workers residing in the United States for at least five years entitled to citizenship after serving a full military term. Still, the Army Recruiting Command head, General Michael D. Rochelle, predicted that the recruiting morass would continue and likely worsen through at least 2006, with the Army needing yet another 80,000 *combat* soldiers just to maintain its 2005 Iraq occupation strength. (The Army can be expected to focus recruiting efforts on the tens of thousands of evacuees produced by Hurricane Katrina, many of whom could be homeless and/or jobless well into the future.)

A youth regimen of action/adventure blockbusters and combat video games has failed to produce the expected ideological results.

The crisis of an all-volunteer military illustrates a flawed premise of technowar and RMA — that a smaller, flexible, more high-tech armed forces can serve U.S. imperialism better at a time when conventional ground warfare has largely exhausted its potential. The present volunteer model goes back to 1973, when 40 years of conscription was finally scrapped — an inevitable outcome of the Vietnam War. The difficulty facing war planners today is that global domination requires far more than superior technology and firepower, especially when ground troops are needed in large numbers for counterinsurgency, a lesson U.S. elites seemingly never absorbed from Vietnam. The United States presently has 1.4 million troops in uniform, but less than one-third are available for field operations and fewer yet serve as front-line troops. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the military presence includes not only large infantry, armor, and airborne deployments but forces required for intelligence, security, logistics and ongoing infrastructural tasks. Despite privatization of certain support activities, such undertakings cannot be sustained for long without reimposing some version of the draft, an option fraught with new and likely unacceptable political costs.

Technowar is laden with other problems: refined data-gathering methods can heighten combat efficiency, but their value ultimately depends on how that data is filtered, interpreted, and acted upon, that, is, on *human* intelligence with its peculiar frailties and biases. Machines at the disposal of the Pentagon and agencies like the CIA, FBI, and NSA do not function autonomously but rather work through a series of institutional and ideological mediations. There is nothing shocking about the fact that repeated warnings of impending major terrorist attacks, furnished by U.S. intelligence in the months leading up to 9/11, were ignored or downplayed because the Bush administration had fixed its gaze on entirely different horizons, mainly regime-change in Iraq. In the case of the Iraq war, it has become clear that "intelligence" was wildly distorted and even manufactured to suit White House plans for "remapping" the Middle East. As James Bamford shows in *A Pretext for War*, moreover, U.S. intelligence operations have often morphed into sheer propaganda thinly-disguised as data-gathering, then used indiscriminately by journalists like Judith Miller of the *New York Times* to support Pentagon military objectives.[16] As for high-tech surveillance, NSA eavesdropping devices that rely on spy satellites orbiting some 22,000 miles above earth can transmit only so much useful intelligence — and virtually nothing when it comes to elusive insurgent or terrorist operations. (Whether the touted new Future Imagery Architecture system will transcend such limits is doubtful.) Reports from the field in Afghanistan and Iraq indicate that patrols rarely have adequate knowledge of imminent attacks despite access to the most advanced electronic communications. Two murky "battlefields" confronting the U.S. military today — jihadic violence and insurgency — have no identifiable "fronts" or fixed targets that fit conventional models. Pentagon strategy is confounded by a world of dispersed, ever-shifting networks extremely difficult to locate, much less destroy, by means of standard or high-tech military action. Moreover, new global communications systems (not only encryption but fiber-optics and the Internet) process literally billions of electronic transmissions daily, further complicating the task of processing and interpreting what is received.

U.S. military strategy persists in the illusion that challenges to American global power can be isolated and "zapped" by overwhelming force — an arrogant, militaristic outlook that technowar with its fixation on supposedly fail-proof information systems only reinforces. The Iraq venture magnifies this illusion, at the cost of tens of thousands of lives and yet another devastated country, as the Pentagon faces growing insurgencies and jihadic forces it has no viable military doctrine to fight. One intractable problem is that the very power and scope of U.S. armed might, a surface advantage, dictates that many anti-system forces will adopt "asymmetric warfare" designed to neutralize that very advantage. It might be that technowar, despite its capacity to destroy the planet many times over, rests upon crumbling strategic foundations, exacerbated by the chauvinistic belief that American "values" (i.e., imperial domination) are so righteous, so inseparable from universal goals of peace, democracy, and human rights that they will be eagerly welcomed by everyone outside a few small enclaves of evildoers. The idea that resistance to U.S. global hegemony is confined to tiny pockets of anti-Western fanatics bereft of motive, logic, or political aims, a plague to be eradicated by maximum force — something technowar should easily achieve given enough time — turns on itself. Such an illusion ensures new cycles of blowback along with a strengthening of the warfare and security-state systems at the heart of a barbaric — but increasingly vulnerable — imperial order.

NOTES

1. *Creative Screenwriting*, vol. 12, no. 3 (2005), 52.
2. Ward Churchill, *Fantasies of the Master Race* (San

Francisco: City Lights, 1998), 167-224. Churchill refers to this as the "cinematic colonization of American Indians."

3. Jack G. Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (New York: Olive Branch Press, 2001).

4. David L. Robb, *Operation Hollywood* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2004), 143.

5. Robb, 365.

6. The Pentagon is hardly alone in this practice: taxpayers help fund the propaganda efforts of other government interests, including the FBI, CIA, Secret Service, State Department, and even the White House.

7. Lawrence H. Suid, *Guts and Glory: the Making of the American Military Image in Film* (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 2002), 135.

8. Douglas Kellner, *The Persian Gult TV War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), ch. 10.

9. See Bruce Berkowitz, *The New Face of War* (New York: The Free Press, 2003), 71.

10. *Electronic Gaming Monthly* (June 2005), 32.

11. *Terminator* Magazine (2003), 52-53.

12. "Life After Death", *Wired* (May 2005).

13. Karl Grossman, *Weapons in Space* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001), 9-18.

14. Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival* (New York: Holt, 2003), 231.

15. See Karen Houppert, "Military Recruiters are Now Targeting Sixth Graders. Who's Next?" *The Nation* (September 12, 2005).

16. James Bamford, *A Pretext for War* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), 294.

The Soul of Socialism

Ronald Aronson

If one of the great socialist leaders of a century ago could see us now — Debs, say, or Luxemburg — he or she would certainly be puzzled by the state of the world. In every direction they would be able to see struggles for liberation or the fruits of such struggles: of those with whom they would immediately be in solidarity, such as women, former slaves, indigenous people, former colonial people, and racial, religious, and ethnic minorities. Their hearts would be gladdened by the ways in which our world has been changed by such movements, but they would be shocked by the fate of socialism. By the end of the 20th century, the bureaucratic socialism erected by Communist revolutions in underdeveloped countries such as Russia and China, carried elsewhere on bayonets, and emulated by the least developed countries, had largely given up the ghost. And the welfare-state socialism of the advanced societies, having long since laid claim to being no more than an efficient and humane way of managing capitalism, was giving in to its harsher neoliberal cousin, or being pushed aside.[1] Socialism? A world dominated by globalization and obsessed by terrorism and the "war" against it seems to have moved on to other concerns, other struggles. Rather than participants in a vast movement proclaiming history's next stage, socialists seem fated to be lone individuals making our loudest noises in universities, journals, bookstores, and conferences

How is it that other causes have been advanced but not socialism? In the late 19th and early 20th century, socialists, moved by the sense that history was going their way, acted from a deep confidence that the proletariat's struggles would lead to a society of equals based on collective ownership of the means of production. The world's first true democracy, socialism would abolish classes, domination, and exploitation. Rooted in the industrial revolution, the new society of plenty would eliminate the division of labor and permit the fullest possible individual development.

According to Marxism, this possibility was rigorously historical. First, it would build on capitalism's achievements as well as on all of prior human social and economic development. And second, capitalism's contradictions, and the inner logic of class conflict, were generating this revolutionary alternative to the capitalist system. United in struggle, the workers would grasp the system's inability to meet their most vital need as well as their own ability to take power and create a new social order. Their class-consciousness anticipated the end of history as we know it — humanity's blind submission to forces beyond control — and the beginning of a new kind of history, where social reality would be subject to conscious and democratic control. And so Ernst Bloch spoke of "militant optimism" — human action based on scientific analysis of social reality, animated by hope that utopia itself was around the corner. These themes were not simply ideas or theories, but animating principles. Various individuals might be more inspired by certain of them — perhaps Debs by the workers' suffering and struggle to end wage slavery, Luxemburg by the historical process leading to a classless society. But all socialists sensed the connection between the working class, the historical process, socialization of the means of production, the end of class soci-

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ety, and the advent of a free and democratic society of equals. The commitment to become part of this process, and to act to make it happen, was the soul of classical socialism.

Much of the 20th century centered on these hopes, with militants seeking to fulfill them, opponents struggling ferociously against them, successful revolutionaries working to realize them under near-impossible conditions, moderate parliamentarians seeking to advance them inch by inch. Both revolutionaries and reformers actually did arrive in power, and both called what they did "socialism." Yet in the process something strange happened: under the immense strains of war and civil war, postwar desolation, depression, and the ebbs and flows of class-consciousness — and in response to the unexpected staying power and productive force of capitalism — revolutionary socialists abandoned workers' democracy and democratic socialists gave up on abolishing capitalism. Committed and brilliant leaders lost their bearings.

For example, Isaac Deutscher's recently republished *Trotsky*, one of the great 20th-century histories and biographies, reminds us of the towering revolutionary's unacknowledged redefinition of Marxism in the face of unanticipated trends and events. Trotsky abandoned Marxism's insistence on realism and adopted wishful thinking about the possibility of revolution outside of Russia in order to make the Bolshevik Revolution, and then he subsequently abandoned his commitment to workers' democracy in order that the Revolution might survive.[2] Ambivalent about both steps, Deutscher argued that the Revolution's fatal illusions and its embrace of the one-party state were necessary, indeed, were themselves produced by history. He insisted that without the fantasy of a European proletarian uprising, the Bolsheviks would never have dared to seize power in 1917 in peasant Russia. If the situation in which they found themselves eventually came to be dominated by Stalin, this was by a tragic necessity: modernizing a backward and brutal society could only take place through a brutal process. And yet for Deutscher the essence of socialism was achieved through Stalin's creation of Russia's nationalized industrial economy and its modern industrial working class. Once these had been brought into being an increasingly democratic and egalitarian Soviet Union could follow.

As Daniel Singer said, this kind of thinking "missed the connection between ends and means."[3] This simple criticism contains our whole problem in a nutshell: to develop a viable 21st century alternative we must insist that a socialism that loses its soul will not regain it later. Both Communists and Social Democrats paid homage to the workers in official pronouncements and honored them in song and story — but they also spoke for them and kept them from power. In the end, many of the people living under Communism, and their leaders, summarily liquidated it. Others drifted away from social democracy in small, barely noticeable steps. The new century began with what remained of socialist hopes in tatters.

The unraveling was hailed by Francis Fukuyama's declaration that although the "end of history" had indeed occurred, it meant not the attainment of socialism but the opposite, that we could no longer imagine a "future that is not essentially democratic and capitalist." Many of our grandparents may have grown up expecting a "radiant socialist future" but "we cannot picture to ourselves a world that is *essentially* different from the present one, and at the same time better."[4]

Perhaps this triumphant conclusion helps answer some of the questions socialists ask about why Ossama bin Laden has emerged as the most visible torchbearer against American-led globalization. Why do masses of people seem to be cheering suicide bombers rather than collectively analyzing and acting to change their situation? Fukuyama's conservative Hegelian smugness suggests a possible explanation for al Qaeda's fundamentalist barbarism: in a world without a visible, feasible alternative, might not some of those who feel overwhelmed by this world be tempted to explode against it?

If so, we ask with growing urgency: after Communism, after social democracy, how do we regenerate the sense of an alternative? Given that socialism's hopes were recast, compromised, betrayed, and defeated again and again in the 20th century, what is the soul of socialism today?

We talk about it by using awkward metaphors, not only 'soul" but also "spirit" and "spring," and terms like "vital essence" and "animating principle." As we have seen in discussing classical socialism, the subjectivity of such language conveys the shared commitments of specific individuals at a specific point in history. Today, what moves *us*, we who are socialists, we who would act together to transform structures characterized by "iron laws" and "bottom lines" into a transparently human society? We know that to become a real historical force again, our spirit must resonate with others, and it must fit today's social, economic, and political possibilities. Only then can it become a touchstone against which to judge the capitalist order, to make sense of daily life and to put forth an alternative.

And where do we look for it? We continue to use the name "socialism," accept many of its analyses and some of its history, and honor its great proponents. So why not simply return to classical socialism's original vital principles? If socialist movements and leaders abandoned the spirit of socialism, perhaps we need only recover its uncorrupted "essence" and become its 21st century champions?

The problem is that vital principles live in history and change with it — even the most beautiful ones, those of socialists no less than others. There is no returning to the old socialist movement's hegemonic claims to be *the* movement of human liberation. As Communism and Social Democracy have faded, as the industrial working class has shrunk in size, it has become clear that movements for fundamental social change will have to reach far beyond workers to be successful. Virtually all social movements of the second half of the 20th century have flourished *outside of* socialist movements and organizations. The movements have opposed forms of oppression which, because they are for example racial, national, or sexual in nature, cut across class lines and do not turn on the capital-labor nexus. These are indeed movements for equality — but not the same kinds of equality that socialists demanded.

Accustomed to hegemony over all movements against oppression, socialists struggled mightily to convince themselves and others that socialism would overcome each particular form of domination, for example, racism or sexism. Yet the soul of socialism inclined away from women *as* women, former slaves *as* former slaves. No matter how deeply moved socialists were by a belief in equality, their call to arms was addressed to, and their vision stemmed from, the working class. Women's liberation was not socialism's priority. And women understood: unless their own oppression was specifically targeted, and by themselves, it would never be overcome. Once they posed such issues, it was inevitable that autonomous movements would emerge, and that socialism would lose its theoretical and organizational priority.

Yet no group can achieve its own liberation by itself — each one's success requires a much larger movement. Today we can only imagine socialists functioning successfully as part of a radical coalition which will incorporate all of the movements of the dominated, oppressed, and exploited, as well as environmentalists, into a complex, pluralistic force. There is no returning to the "militant optimism" of a hundred years ago. Socialism's spirit of that era cannot subsist unchanged like a Platonic form outside the concrete historical world and independently of its specific historical actors. Indeed, our use of "soul" today would not have gone down well a hundred years ago. Objectivist materialism dominated socialist thinking then, and it mistakenly placed faith in a historical process said to be bringing about human emancipation.

As environmentalism has taught us, we must also jettison the 19th and early 20th century's optimism about science and industrialization, and socialism's indifference to the natural world. And, as all of the new social movements have made clear, we can never again hope to focus narrowly on economics and institutional change. Above all, 21st century socialists will have to reverse 20th century socialism's whittling down of equality and democracy, expanding and deepening their commitment to struggling against not only economic exploitation, but against all forms of domination, including racial, gender, national, sexual, or religious. Such changes in the soul of socialism are responses both to the Old Left's failures and to the force of feminism and the other new social movements. They have also placed on the agenda *how* movements function, how we think about and act towards each other. They have already taught us a great deal about ourselves, the societies we seek to change, and the society we seek to create.

But what of our bedrock commitment to workers' struggles leading to their increasing class-consciousness and attaining power with the goals of socializing the means of production and achieving a classless society? The 20th century did not treat these hopes kindly. Are they still among our vital principles?

Capitalism remains one of humanity's central problems, and its driving force and underlying structures remain unchanged from a century ago. It cannot be abolished without a workers' movement consciously posing workers' issues. Certainly workers continue to struggle against the capitalist system in piecemeal and specific ways, but does it still make sense to talk about them becoming class-conscious? Paradoxically, late 20th century workers were often sharply class-conscious, but narrowly so. Too often a class consciousness that was local or focused on a single trade or industry prevailed at the expense of a wider, more inclusive, less racialized, and more universal class membership.[5] Equally important, workers' often-embattled status and dwindling numerical strength has diminished their belief in the possibility of creating a different society, heightening their attachment to narrow goals at the expense of broader social concerns. And certainly the pull at any moment of any of an individual's multiple affinities and identities — ethnicity, religion, race, gender — has limited the power of class as a theme of struggle, without causing it to disappear completely.

Both Communists and Social Democrats paid homage to the workers, but they also spoke for them and kept them from power.

These 20th-century inhibitions on class-consciousness may change in the context of the growing multiculturalism of most working classes and their increasing international interdependency. Even in the United States, trade union activists without a global consciousness are becoming few and far between. Contact with South African workers today reveals both a strong class-consciousness and considerable receptivity to socialism; international exchanges may teach these workers some of the collective-bargaining skills mastered by their foreign brothers and sisters, but it may also remind workers elsewhere of their common problems and common enemies. The anti-globalization struggles of workers alongside other social movements may have a similar effect. The slogan, "Workers of the world, unite" is still a meaningful one in the face of a capitalism which, if anything, has grown more rapacious with victory, and which tends more and more to place all workers in the same boat.

And there are others in the boat as well. Every one of the new social movements sooner or later runs up against the institutional constraints imposed by capitalism, and faces the dilemma of being unable to achieve its goals without becoming anti-capitalist. In the case of environmentalism this is for obvious structural reasons — the economy must be both controlled and redirected in radically new ways if the natural world is to be protected. In the case of women it is also structural, although perhaps less obviously so: women will become equal only if thousands of years of patriarchy are overcome, and this will happen only to the extent that social priorities change and, among other things, work and child-rearing are drastically reconfigured. Other historically oppressed groups, such as African-Americans or South African blacks, require a radical redistribution of resources if they are ever to achieve full equality.

The point is not to bring all of these struggles under socialist hegemony — it is too late for that — but to stress that future movements of social transformation will not be of, by, and for workers alone. For their own purposes, every one of the new social movements has reason to listen to a socialist movement, and for its own purposes, a socialist movement has reason to listen to the new social movements. In our heart of hearts socialists still believe that our project announces a new phase of human development by seeking to end economic exploitation and social classes. But this is conceivable only alongside other movements, which will call into question other forms of oppression. Socialists envisage a genuinely ethical world in which universal rather than class justice will reign, but this is unthinkable without also attacking injustice on racial, gender, religious, ethnic, and national grounds.

And this will mean that socialists, and everyone else, will have to consider equality differently, and more fully than before, both as the movement's goal and its internal operating principle. Not quite the old socialist equality and not quite the various equalities of the new socialist movements, it will be a new-old one, enriched and deepened by the interaction of all of the movements in coalition, celebrating not only workers but specific human beings and the human community as such, not postponed to the future but lived as a daily practice.

As we and our allies look around at our global capitalist society, socialists may be the ones to stress that in every direction we see dazzling material achievements, with new ones springing up by the day. In anti-globalization struggles, we may be the ones to emphasize how much thwarted human possibility is contained in the labor that created them. But we are certainly not the only ones to know that we stand on the shoulders of previous generations, or to insist on picking up where their struggles for social justice left off. Or to believe fervently that our goal is "a society in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

In the radical Hegelian sense taught by Herbert Marcuse, Marx's vision of equality will be preserved, canceled, and liberated in 21st century socialism. It will retain its old meanings but be part of a new spirit, in its solidarity combining deep self-interest with universal morality. It should stimulate respect for, indeed, a delight in, difference, a deeper respect for each person's fundamental humanity, and a new and far more concrete sense than ever before of "all of us" — meaning, for the first time, *on their own terms,* everyone in the world

BEDROCK SOCIALIST VALUES, absorbing a fuller and more urgent sense of equality and embracing diverse social movements across the globe — in this we can begin to discern the soul of 21st century socialism. Yet something more is needed — a specific response to 21st century capitalism's drive to render people passive, to pass them through the sieve of the market, to wrap them in a cocoon of corporate-controlled consumerism and media. Today's global capitalism quite deliberately attacks social being itself and renders democracy meaningless. As Margaret Thatcher famously said, "There is no society, only individuals." Her "individuals," of course, were devoted to their own self-interest, and, in the neoliberal order she helped initiate, private profit. With the market becoming the central social institution and much of the rest of the social world privatized, social life was removed from social control.

Today the social world is veiled, mystified, and under increasing attack even as our universal interconnectedness is intensifying. In reality we live in an interdependent global society — just turn on the computer and "visit" the Internet — but our complex interactions do not foster social awareness. Capitalism's victory has brought the privatization of hope, the mutation of public themes into private ones. In the advanced societies, the social safety net has been coming under constant attack, while the less developed societies are pressured to turn away from traditional communities and their public realm: the dominant practices of the global economy emphasize individual responsibility, personal initiative, and the centrality of the private. A "political class" handles collective business, is increasingly limited to setting rules and providing essential infrastructures for private, especially economic activity.

This is ideology, but it is much more. That people believe it is a great paradox of our time. The more interdependent each person in the world becomes, and the more large corporations rule not only economic but social life, the less social awareness there seems to be and the more individuals seek to flee into the areas they control personally. The shrinking of collective hope has also been powerfully accentuated by global corporations, agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the Internet, and the ceaseless commercial creativity of consumer capitalism, all of which conspire to generate a field of dazzling possibilities for individual initiative and choice. The word "lifestyle" permeates our conversation for good reason. Middle-class individuals are now free as never before to live their individual lives as they wish, to adopt or design precisely the religions, modes of behavior, and identifications they wish. In shopping, one individual's social contribution, expressed in financial compensation, finds a connection with other individuals' social contribution, congealed in products, with one's control reduced to purchasing and consuming and the entire operation performed in private spaces ruled over by large corporations. And in watching television, one individual's membership in the society becomes lived passively and in isolation from others as a viewer of endless news and commentary, entertainment and advertising, with one's control reduced to changing channels and the entire operation ruled over by large corporations.

We socialists reject the lie of a privatized universe in the name of living as members of a society. It is vital, then, to underscore "the social" in the soul of socialism today, and to say that we should be about defending it, reclaiming it, rethinking it, and experiencing it anew. But what kind of social? Who controls it? Who benefits from it? Ours are class societies, many of whose deepest human dimensions are also structured from top to bottom according to hierarchy, privilege, domination, and exploitation — in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality. Other social institutions, the more universal and benevolent ones, are under attack today — in the interests of hierarchy, privilege, domination, and exploitation. More or less democratic social acquisitions should obviously be defended, such as health care, social security, public schools and universities, retirement and labor legislation, and even extended, especially where they can be managed by communities, municipalities, and regions.

But much of life is dominated by the "bad social." Capitalism's anti-social social, the market, is everywhere, everyone, everything, every hour of every day. The fetishism of commodities infects every space, every person. Social forces, such as the market and the media, hide their human face and are experienced as almost irresistible natural forces. These can be effectively opposed only by active, collective participation in democratic communities. But who can conceive of rebelling in the name of democratic social control? In the name of a "we" that is not passive and dominated? In much of the North and much of the South, this prospect is becoming almost incomprehensible. As a result people want to get away, or they want to explode.

Yes, a socialist movement must aggressively invoke, protect, and reassert the social today, but animated not only by key traditional socialist goals and the spirit of the new social movements, but also in a militant, democratic spirit. We will be moved by our need to counter abstract and overwhelming forces with concrete face-to-face human interactions. We will speak for the social in active and egalitarian ways that redefine the meaning of citizenship and celebrate and extend solidarity.

Its spirit must be one of active participation. Francis Jeanson's difficult-to-translate term for this is *citoyennisation*. "Citoyen" has a richer charge than the English "citizen" due to its associations with the French Revolution, during which it became an accepted form of address. Jeanson further means breaking with the passivity and feeling of social helplessness encouraged by capitalist globalization, and acting alongside others to shape decisive areas of our collective existence. This means "becoming citizens," or — because in doing so we must sharply reject what passes for "choice" and for "democracy" today — "militantly becoming citizens."[6]

When a small group of people decides to go door to door in their community to oppose the American war against Iraq, for example, they may seek to talk with their neighbors about how the war affects their community. In the very act of doing so something new is created. First, in reaching out to one's neighbors about "our" common problems, the person doing so shifts from being a private person to a public person. This is why one can feel oneself speaking differently than usual, because in the process one doesn't simply lose his or her bashfulness, but acts as a citizen, a social person. Second, any group of people doing this together becomes an active *we*, challenging one public policy in the name of another and better one. In the process, they do not simply think about what they should or might do, they do it, and live their social morality actively. And thirdly, in conversation, whether in agreeing or debating, all those involved, for a brief moment, can become citizens listening to each other and concerned collectively for their common fate. What motivated the process, of course, was building a force to change government policy, but that is far off. There is a more immediate purpose: the goal of the process lies in doing it.[7]

Active, militant citizens living democratically will naturally find themselves in solidarity with each other, with those to whom they appeal face to face, and eventually with anti-globalization movements and struggles of others who are oppressed in different ways. But this is more than a "motherhood and apple pie" requirement of social activists today. It involves recognizing our own profound interdependency with the rest of the world. The anti-sweatshop movement, for example, begins with consciousness of the labels on the clothing people wear.

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They act in solidarity with those who have made those clothes, foreign workers. In the best of cases they link up with actual groups of workers in specific factories seeking to form unions and improve their conditions. Local legislation, here, has a direct effect on people's lives, there. Goals and action are concrete.

Of course such a sense of solidarity is not new to socialists — the experience of young people volunteering for the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War is etched on many of our hearts and minds. But today the sense that "we are the world" has spread far more widely than ever. In the world of global terrorism right-wing Americans may be self-obsessed and nationalistic as never before, but much of the rest of humanity comfortably accepts living in the wider world. Effective global solidarity is still a long way off, but television and the Internet have created stunning new possibilities for people to experience themselves internationally and act in concert. Twenty years ago many of us participated in separate national anti-apartheid movements, sharing an international awareness, and we have since grown accustomed to belonging to a single worldwide anti-globalization movement, and then to a single worldwide anti-war movement. Over time we have built such movements, and a new sense of international solidarity and citizenship, into our very consciousness and functioning.

SINCE SEPTEMBER 11 the world has been offered a choice between competing Manicheanisms, each side defending Good and making war against Evil. Can we reject the either/or on behalf of an alternative that has a chance of liberating human possibilities rather than crushing them? It would take us back to the goals of socialism and forward to the 21st century spirit of expanding solidarity and militant citizenship. Moved by these vital principles, we hope to participate in a broad and diverse worldwide movement which will live and struggle towards a richer and deeper sense of equality, democracy, and human community than people have ever experienced. The commitment to join this process and make it happen — this is the soul of socialism today.

NOTES

1. Daniel Singer describes this *Whose Millennium? Theirs or Ours*?, New York, 1999, part one.
2. See my review of Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky 1879-1921; The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky 1921-1929; The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky 1929-1940*, in *The Nation*, March 14, 2005.
3. Singer, 25.
4. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York, 1992, 46.
5. In the 1971 Newark teachers' strike, militant teachers found themselves ranged against militant advocates of community control. This is a particularly powerful example of a conflict between class-conscious workers and the movement for African American liberation. See Steve Golin, *The Newark Teacher Strikes: Hopes on the Line*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2002.
6. Interview with the author, July, 2001 and June, 2003. The term is scattered throughout Jeanson's recent writings and interviews. See, for example, Francis Jeanson and Christiane Philip, *Entre-deux*, Bordeaux, 2000; and Francis Jeanson, "Pour une dialectisation du local et du mondial," *Le Passant ordinaire*, Septembre 2001 - Octobre 2001, (www.passant-ordinaire.com/revue/36-275.asp).
7. Phyllis Aronson, in her role as founding chair of the Huntington Woods Peace, Citizenship and Education Project, in discussion with the author, July, 2004.

On the Run from Nazis and Gendarmes

MATHIS SZYKOWSKI

The following is part of an autobiography that takes place in 1942 in France in the wake of mass arrests of Jews by the French Police. The author is 16 years old at the time. His parents have been separated for six years. His father has been interned in Compiegne since the end of June 1941, a camp guarded by the SS. For almost a year since, the author has been living with his father's companion, Anna, with whom he has a hostile relationship. He has recently decided to make up with his mother and move in with her.

BEFORE MOVING IN WITH MY MOTHER, I managed to find another apprentice's position at an old friend of my father in the furrier trade. His shop was located at a stone's throw from my mother's place, which made it most convenient for me to come back at lunch time. David, my new boss, was sub-contracting from another furrier providing fur vests for the German army who had not been prepared to spend the winter on the Russian front. By sub-contracting, David could delude himself that he was not really working for the Germans and against the best interest of his family. He made good money and he was supporting a large family. I was paid very little, in keeping with my skills, but it allowed me to keep some dignity vis-a-vis my mother. It was mid-May of 1942 when she had received me in a friendly, simple manner. We agreed on the sum of money that I would contribute to my board, and on how much of my pay I could keep for my personal needs; we slept in the same room.

The money that I contributed hardly covered the cost of my food, but my mother treated me as if I were all grown up. She offered to sew me a work smock and discussed its style with me. She proposed to have a suit made for me at the Leizers when cloth could hardly be found. I understood and accepted that she was trying, not only to live in peace with me, but to make amends for the years in which, to say the least, she had neglected me. I returned her respect, and for the two months or so that we shared together, not a word of recrimination or criticism passed our lips. We did not become affectionate, but then, neither of us knew how to express our feelings of love very well. Except for the fact that I could not write to my father why I had left Anna, despite his entreaties that I furnish an explanation, I was reasonably happy in my mother's home. The emotional storm that had reigned between us had passed. All was not forgiven and forgotten, but there was a significant truce between us.

On or about June 1st, a new series of restrictive decrees were promulgated against the Jews in occupied France. We had a curfew imposed at 8 P.M. In June, it is light in Paris until almost 11 P.M.; that restriction was not an idle one. Jews, as I recall, had to obey the following:

1) Jews had to wear a yellow star with the word Jew sown visibly on their outer garments, in the region of the heart. These patches were picked up at the police station in exchange for a textile coupon from our ration cards;

2) Jews would have to ride in the last car of the metro and in the rear of busses;

3) Jews were forbidden to use the following facilities: movie houses, theaters, libraries, public latrines, public telephones, swimming pools, public parks and public benches. The use of bicycles was also forbidden;

MATHIS SZYKOWSKI *lost most of his family at Auschwitz. He emigrated to the United States in 1946, and is now a professor emeritus of Romance Languages at Oberlin College.*

4) Jews could shop only at certain hours of the day; they would no longer queue up with the Gentiles. These new hours coincided most often when the shops were closed or when all goods available that day had been legally sold out. Jews were reduced to buying their food on the black market, if they could afford it, or depending on the kindness and courage of the local merchants. Kindness and courage in 1942 seemed to be in short supply . Lack of food in a society does not foster solidarity. My mother bought her food on the black market.

You may feel either humiliated or proud by wearing a yellow star. It may bring you shame or defiance. One thing that is certain is that it will make you feel different forever. You become the perpetual Other, for that yellow star is imprinted in you for as long as you live. It is the sign of the world's rejection, the symbol of your alienation. That month of June 1942, the glances of my compatriots informed me that I was no longer in their group. I was one of THEM, I was THEY. I had become a boy whose country no longer wished to embrace him, who denied him his very right to live like other people, assuming that it wished for him to live at all. Yet, the more I was denied, the more vigorously I believed and asserted I was French; I was no different from anyone else, and did not understand — and in truth, did not understand — what I or the Jews had done to be singled out in such a manner. My world was being turned upside down and inside out; I now lived in a world in which any notion of justice was inexistent. The France of my school books and of my school years had ceased to be a reality.

July 15th, 1942 in the evening, there was a knock on the door; it was past 8pm; nobody Jewish that we knew could be calling; no one had been expected. It had been a hot, muggy day, and when that knock came, I was leaning out of the window to catch some cooler air. My mother and I looked at each other anxiously and then she opened the door. A man entered the flat, excused himself, and did not say what his name was, just said he had been sent by the Leizers. He was probably a member of the Police, a policeman wearing civilian clothes. He warned us that there was going to be a police raid in the early hours of the morning and we should hide out. My mother, foolishly, desperately, trusted the concierge — she turned out to be a police informant, as many concierges were at that time — and asked her advice and help about a place to hide. She showed us a place in the cellar. We packed a few clothes, some fruits, and went down to the cellar, entered a closet in which we could only stand. We had waited until 11 P.M. before venturing downstairs. We stood in that closet, afraid to speak, to breathe. Our legs began to hurt in a short while; we were constantly shifting position from one leg to another. At about 3 A.M. we could not stand it any more. We went back upstairs, and with stupid fatalism, we went to sleep, not caring very much about what might happen to us in a few hours. Our legs had given out; fear could not overcome our need to sleep. At 5am we were awakened by shouts and heavy steps up and down the stairs. We did not dare to make a sound; we did not get out of bed, we held on to one another. We waited for the fateful knock on the door. It never came. Our neighbors, an elderly couple, had been arrested, taken away — we did not know where — and for some reason we were, for the moment, safe. Apparently, we had not been on the list of Jews to be arrested that day. Those who had been taken from their homes were mostly of Polish origin.

> You may feel either humiliated or proud by wearing a yellow star.

During the day of the 16th of July, the horror of the wee hours began to unfold as we surveyed the damages. Some of our relatives had been arrested, and with one exception none would survive. It was quite evident this time that we were all liable to be arrested and interned. This time, the arrests had not been limited to the men. Women, children, old people, sick people had been summarily and brutally carted away by the French police to the Vélodrome d'Hiver, an arena where six day bike races used to be held. Rumors spread like wild fire that as many as 80,000 Jews had been arrested, that there had been many suicides — people jumping out of windows — even policemen were said to have committed suicide rather than obey their orders. Historians have related that the arrests that day in Paris accounted for about 13,000 people, and suicides are not even mentioned. The scope of that massive raid on Jewish families created an atmosphere of panic and despair. It was high time to organize hiding places and flights to the unoccupied zone. Fleeing to the Free zone was not the easiest decision to make. Jews caught on a train, away from their residences, or at the border risked immediate deportation or even death. There were stories of Jews having been shot at the border, of some having crossed successfully the border with the help of a local guide and considerable sums of money, of some having paid their guides and being delivered to the Germans from whom they collected rewards. The air was indeed fraught with many a peril.

On the 16th of July, in the afternoon, I could no longer stay still at home, I went out and checked on our nearest relatives: my grandmother was safe, as were a few others. I went to check out my boss's house, and he and his family had escaped arrest. A few months earlier, his father-in-law and his brother-in law had been able to cross into the Free zone and were now living in Toulouse. For now, it seemed safe, but my boss, David, invited me to spend a few days with his family in a house that he had rented in Villepinte. That house was located almost directly behind my father's. I avoided going to see Anna or anyone I knew in Villepinte. The spirit of living incognito had taken me over. With David, his wife and three children, lived his wife's two younger sisters and his mother-in-law. His mother-in-law and her two daughters had slept away from their home on the night of July 15, had escaped arrest, but their apartment, had been sealed by the Police. They were disconsolate because they had no belongings and — worst of all — were without their favorite dresses and shoes.

Because I was French born, spoke without a foreign accent, looked younger than my sixteen years, I was persuaded by the mother and especially her two daughters to go back to Paris, break the police seal of the apartment, and stuff as many suitcases as I could carry with the precious cargo. I was entitled to take anything for myself that fit me or that I liked. I was to arrive before 8 P.M., to avoid arrest in the streets, sneak into the building through the courtyard, avoid being seen by the concierge. I was still wearing the yellow star that could identify me to anyone, the Police or the Germans. Avoiding the concierge was most essential, for she surely would have stopped me and/or called the Police. Fools must have guardian angels, whether they believe in them or not: I managed to get from Villepinte into somewhere in the third arrondissement. I got into the building, climbed the four flights of stairs, broke the Police seal, and slipped keys in the two locks as noiselessly as possible. When I entered the apartment I was either all body or I had none left — I can't say which. I did not turn any lights on, found two suitcases and packed them with the items that I thought had been requested. I did not look for anything that might fit me. I tried to fall asleep so that I might be fresh early in the morning, and leave the building before anyone was awake or aware that the seals had been broken. Of course, these are not circumstances in which one can sleep restfully. I left at around 7 A.M., took the metro to the Gare du Nord and dragged myself and the suitcases the three kilometers from Sevran to Villepinte. I got a hero's welcome that lasted the rest of that day. The next day, the young women began to cry and whine about not having some of their favorite pieces of clothing, and it seemed to me that they were looking at me as the one responsible for their losses. The raids in Paris having stopped, we returned to our homes, except the two young women and their mother who now lived with David. Upon my return to my mother's, we both began a discussion of what was to be done in the future. The arrests of women and children had left no doubts in my mind that sooner or later we would all be arrested and interned. I had no wish to be arrested and had even less taste for a life in an internment camp, even though I did not know that Jews were marked for annihilation. Sure, the propaganda against us was virulent; the new society would rid itself of us; the repressive measures very humiliating, and the mass arrests frightening, but in July 1942, we were not aware that mass murders were occurring. I believe that it was not until late 1942 that I began to hear stories about Jews being asphyxiated in the wagons of freight trains. Even then, it seemed unbelievable, but the fear of death became more real. All I knew, as I spoke with my mother, is that I did not want to fall into the hands of the French police or the Germans. It seemed logical and necessary that we leave Paris and head towards the Free zone, away and safe from the Germans. But where would we go, even if we could leave Paris safely and somehow get across the border? How would we survive there ? I never had had to earn a living, to sustain myself, so these questions did not worry me; somehow, we would survive. My mother was very doubtful about her ability to reestablish herself in an unknown place, with her poor French and no connections, no friends. I certainly did not have the capacities needed to support her. She was loath to abandon her friends, the few possessions she had accumulated over the years, especially her old sewing machine, that necessary tool for her living. Ultimately, she would trust in God, He would watch over her, take care of her and keep her safe. She had nothing to fear. These discussions repeated themselves many times in the days that followed. My assertions that there was no God, or that God helps those who help themselves, did not have any impact upon her decision to stay where she was. I should have learned then that words are helpless in the face of faith. Unfortunately, I am still wedded to the power of language.

I WAS NOT WORKING ANY MORE and out of idleness I stopped at my boss's house. I was pressured into returning once more to his mother-in-law's house to fetch the clothing I had not brought back the first time. At his house, there was a woman with two young children who had miraculously gotten away from the Vélodrome d'Hiver, and who lived in the same building as David's mother-in -law. The plan devised was very simple: I was to go to that woman's house, and when it was dark, I would cross the courtyard, climb up the four flights of stairs, enter the apartment, when the Police had not had yet the time to come back and check to see if anyone had tampered with the seals, and no one had reported that they had been broken; then I was to fill two more suitcases with the precious items I had left behind the first time around. Once my task was done, I would return to that woman's house and stay the night. I managed to follow that plan to the letter. It was well past 11 P.M. when I returned with the two suitcases. My host greeted me, breathless, in the entry way. She wore only a full slip as she hugged me and took my hand to her breast to show me how fast her heart was beating. I was a hero, once more. I was not then half as frightened as she appeared to be, but I was but sixteen and did not know much about the ways of the world. I delivered the suitcases in the morning and in exchange I was given an address in Toulouse where David's father-in-law was living, safe from the Germans, at least temporarily.

I do not know or remember how my mother tolerated my absences. Our emotions were in such a chaotic state that when I told her that I was going to see my boss or spend time with his family, she just accepted it. If she had worries, she did not share them with me. She responded as if I were all grown up and free to act as I pleased. Of course, I never told her what I had done either. Our conversations about leaving Paris continued without much success. One day she said that if I wanted to take chances and go somewhere in the Free zone, then I should go. I resisted for a couple of days the idea of going without her. In the end I gave in, and she provided me with the 5,000 francs with which I might be able to cross the border by paying a smuggler. I had never seen that much money in my life. I was now responsible for a small fortune and how to spend it.

Choosing to speak to lovers was not the most stupid thing that I could have done . . . . Throughout that whole period of my wanderings, I was well served whenever I called on younger people or couples.

The date of my departure was set for August 1st. That was a good date to leave Paris. Since 1937 when paid vacations were inaugurated, Parisians left on August 1st. That France was occupied by foreign troops did not deter anyone from leaving for the countryside. It would be a propitious time to go unnoticed in the crowds of the metro and the train stations. Vacation time might also mean that the Police would be more relaxed in its vigilance. We spent July 31st preparing for my departure. My suitcase was quickly packed with my clothing - I had a very small amount — and a few photographs. The yellow stars were removed very carefully — there was not to be the slightest trace of a thread anywhere on my belongings. I was lectured on the necessity of being extremely cautious; I was not to speak to strangers; and if I had absolutely to do so, to be wary about to whom I spoke and about what I said. Anti-Semites were everywhere and would not hesitate to denounce me to the authorities. The moment I stepped out of the house without my yellow star, I was breaking the law and subject to the direst consequences. I made a major error that day: in order to allay my mother's fears, I confessed to her that I had an identification card on which the word Jew was not stamped. Instead of being reassured she became quite alarmed and ran to consult the concierge about the advisability of owning such a card. The concierge's opinion was that my identification card was illegal. It was fortunate that my mother did not consult the concierge about my immediate plans of departure — that was illegal as well. My mother made me surrender my card to her. I left the house with my birth certificate, the decree certifying that I was a French citizen, and my ration card. Our parting was not dramatic, I kissed her, she kissed me back and shortly after 8 P.M., I left her house to take the metro to the Gare d'Austerlitz where I was to buy a one-way ticket to Dax. Once there, I would look around for someone to smuggle me across the border into the Free zone. I never saw my mother again.

As we had foreseen, the trains leaving Paris were full. No seats were available; even the hallways were crowded with people seated on their suitcases or on the floor, or smoking at the windows. I sat on the floor, next to my suitcase, somewhat in a stupor. I was hot, sweaty; my shirt was sticking to my back; I was worn out from the kind of artificial fatigue that fear may bring but does not let one sleep. I tried in vain to imagine what could possibly happen in the days ahead of me. I had left Paris on my own before, two years ago, to find my father. This time, there was no one to go to, save to an address in Toulouse and to someone I did not know, and there was no certainty that I would ever arrive there. I thought about my father in Compiègne, my mother in Paris, Anna in Villepinte. What would happen to all of us ?

Next to me, seated on the floor, I noticed two young people necking, apparently totally impervious to the world around them, to its tragedies, its cruelties and its absurdities. I don't know where I found the nerve to speak to them, but at one point in the evening, before we all fell asleep, I asked where they were going on vacation. Mont-de-Marsan, they said. Was it far from the Free zone? Just a few kilometers. Did they know of anyone who could help me across the border? Yes, said the young man, my brother does it often; he has a truck and a permanent permit to go back and forth between the zones. I was not asked why I wanted to cross the border; that was not necessary; in those days they knew. They were not as oblivious of the state of the world as I had first thought. It could not have escaped anyone in or around Paris that Jews were being arrested and detained. July 16th had left its mark.

In the course of our conversation, it turned out that this young couple was living in an illicit situation. The young man had fallen in love with his sister-in-law; both of them were fleeing Paris. Though we were strangers, and I was only a kid, I heard part of the story of their love. I was so engrossed in my own thoughts and feelings that it did not occur to me to judge them or their actions. Instinctively, I had turned to them without much thought as to the wisdom of my own actions and with disregard of my mother's recommendation that I be wary of strangers. On that train, where I was going, everyone was a stranger, and I a stranger among all. Choosing to speak to lovers was not the most stupid thing that I could have done. In fact, throughout that whole period of my wanderings, I was well served whenever I called on younger people or couples.

I GOT OFF THE TRAIN at Mont-de-Marsan, instead of Dax. My biggest fear had been that there would be a control on the train or on the train station by the French police or the German gendarmerie. My identification was in Paris; I did not care to explain to a policeman why it was missing, nor did I know what I would say, if questioned. I went to a hotel near the station that the young couple had indicated, where I was to wait until I was contacted. Contrary to established customs and laws, I was not asked for my papers, did not fill out a registration form; the police would not be informed of my presence. I was contacted by phone and told of an address in town where I was to meet the young man's brother. It smacked of cloak and dagger, of spy movies I had seen at one time or other. I was full of apprehensions, doubts: was I walking into a trap ? would this man really smuggle me across or would he conform to the stories that I heard about and turn me over to the Germans ? I really had no choice but to meet him. Returning to Paris meant certain arrest, internment or worse. I did not give it a second thought. I met the man in the evening, at his house. He was a trucker, an ordinary Frenchman, with a wife and kids, who did not like the Germans and did not mind making some extra money out of his permanent permit. He ran serious risks to himself if he were caught. He explained that his fee for taking me across was 3,000 francs, half in advance, the other half when he would leave me off in the Free zone. Most of my fortune would be gone, but I felt reassured by the fact that only half the fee had been demanded in advance. I reported to his house the next day at 6 A.M. My suitcase was stashed in the back of the truck, one of the biggest for the period. We proceeded with my disguise — the way I was dressed would not do at the border. I put on dirty, blue, oil-stained overalls; my hands and part of my face were smeared with dirty, black motor oil. We were going to drive to the check-point where I was ordered to stay calm and show no emotion. I did not feel very calm.

We drove a few kilometers to the border and stopped, as I had been told, at the gate of the check-point. A German non-commissioned officer, came out . My driver jumped out of the cab in order to put as much distance as possible between the German and me, and presented his permit. The German pointed at me, and as we had discussed before leaving Mont-de-Marsan, the driver told him that I was a new worker, that I had been hired that morning, that there had not been enough time for papers to be prepared; there would be in a few days. Meanwhile, I was needed to fill up the truck with important materials. The German gave the signal to go on and the gate was lifted. He started to go back inside his post, changed his mind, called back the driver. At that moment, I thought that I was undone and began to tremble. Luckily, the German never looked at me. All he wanted from my driver was a light for his cigar. We went through the no man's zone and at the other end, the French gendarmes did not stop us at their check-point; the Germans had let us through; there was no need for them to be zealous.

I was let out in a small village. I paid the driver, gave him back his overalls, and I was told where to catch a bus that would take me to a train station and from there to Toulouse.

I THOUGHT I WAS HOME FREE. At the very least, I was free from the German occupation forces, though not yet free from the French police. I was still a Jew on the run, a boy without an address or visible means of support. At the bus station, two gendarmes were waiting and asking for identity papers before allowing passengers on the bus. I saw that some were not permitted to board — they were foreign looking and mostly Jews. Up to then, I had not realized that Mont-de-Marsan was a town from which many people chose or hoped to cross the border into the Unoccupied zone. What the foreign Jews did not know is that the gendarmes would stop them on the other side. I hope that many of them were let go, were able to bribe their ways out of that village, were not turned over to the Germans. I fear the worst for them. I did not know what I ought to do: take a chance on presenting myself to the gendarmes or start walking the long road to the train station. I decided to gamble, showed the gendarmes my birth certificate and the decree of my naturalization. I was allowed to board the bus. I did not return to Paris until November, 1944. For 27 months I survived as a non-person.

LETTERS

Letter in Response to Roma article

Templer is dreaming. The Roma have never been active in politics or social movements of any kind and they certainly do not represent the wave of some future post-national Europe. The chances that non-Roma suffering from oppressive conditions will make common cause with the Roma are nil, mostly due to racism but also due to the lack of interest among the Roma. For better or for worse, they do not want to integrate into society for fear of losing their distinct culture.

And, the truth be told, their attitude toward women is quite atrocious.

BENNETT MURASKIN
Morris Plains, NJ

IN RESPONSE to Bennett's brief critique, four points: (1) the situation of the Roma is in big flux across Europe's East, so past however constructed is no guide to future. Attitudes toward participation in politics among Romanies are changing, new political formations emerging, dissolving, reemerging, a dynamic vortex in many communities. Of course, as a Bulgarian Romani woman activist commented to me in March 2006, "we don't have enough rich Rom capitalists to finance our own politics to compete in the capitalist election games anyhow." They have to find other ways forward. Like direct action. And forging cross-ethnic solidarity. The Roma activists I'm in contact with are shocked by the upsurge in xenophobic nationalism across Bulgaria, intensifying since I wrote the *New Politics* article, in part stoked by the new ultra-right party Ataka (Attack). The latest Gallup survey released on March 12, 2006, reckons Ataka to be the second-largest party in Bulgaria in electoral support. That turn too is honing Roma consciousness, the will to organize and fight back against the worst racist agitation in the country since 1944. (2) Lots of the activists I've worked with are Romani, women who by dint of gendered oppression are particularly angry, aware, and demanding change. Sure there's patriarchy, many Romani girls pushed early out of school, powerful traditions of defining a woman's role. But that's a struggle only Romani women can wage. And they are. (3) Whatever attitudes toward cultural isolation among Roma to maintain their identity were in the past, the future is open terrain where bridges to other social strata moored on mutual respect and aid and militant struggle for a self-managed society are a feasible scenario. A possible "dream." The collective Drugaciji Svet je Moguc! (DSM, Another World is Possible!) also shares that dream of building horizontalism and a new radically "participatory society" in Serbia and the Balkans (see www.globalproject.info/art-936.html), within the context of Peoples Global Action. (4) And we should always be careful of "culturism" in how we see anybody, reducing real people to the definitions and stereotypes we construct for them, like: "the Roma have never been active in politics" or "their attitude toward women …" In fact, all Roma I know, bar none, would probably find Bennett's brief comment more than a bit "racist" for what it seems to say. But it's hard to avoid "culturist" talk. Adrian Holliday (*Doing and Writing Qualitative Research*, 2002) recommends applying a "complexity of checks and balances on one's own preoccupations . . . striving to find the reality of the people in the setting, which is not confined to easy extensions or ethnic or national cultural explanation." Good advice for us all.

BILL TEMPLER

South Sudan, Border of Chad

Robert Kelly

Old man wiping away a tear from under inner

corner of each eye. And he said: These tears

you see me shedding now as I remember

the happiness and comfort of my life before

are not my tears. They belong to the situation,

not to me, I am the same man I was before,

these tears are just something I found

on the road, it is the desert weeping

using my eyes to tell the world about the grief

all men must experience, in one way

or some other, and here I am, with nothing

but my pain, but I know how to carry that, the way

I used to carry water from a well I used to have.

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The Struggle for Black Rights in the United States

IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN

GILBERT JONAS OFFERS US a detailed, documented, insider's view of the history of the NAACP in its first sixty years. While this is not an *official* history, Jonas worked in one capacity or another for the NAACP for a very long time, since his student days when he founded the NAACP chapter at Stanford in 1949, through his role on the national staff from 1965 to 1995. And the book has an introduction and an imprimatur from Julian Bond, who currently chairs the NAACP's board of directors. It has 400 pages of text and 70 pages of smallfont commentary in the footnotes. It is a solid work and, as the blurb by Henry Louis Gates says, "scholars of 20th-century America will be in Jonas's debt. . . ."

Freedom's Sword: The NAACP and the Struggle Against Racism in America, 1909-1969
GILBERT JONAS
New York: Routledge, 2006

The book makes four main points, each of which is worthy of debate. The first is that the NAACP was the first non-party, non-trade union social movement of the 20th century and became "the role model for almost every citizens organization determined to reform the American system. . . ." (396) The second is that, despite the high profile from the 1960s to the 1980s of other, more "militant" or "radical" Black organizations, it was the NAACP's grassroots action and Washington maneuvering that really sustained the thrust for integration and a more equal society. The third is that the struggle of the Blacks for their rights encountered considerable resistance from the major trade unions in the United States. And the last is that the NAACP's struggle, against great odds, was by any reasonable measure relatively successful.

As any reader can see, these are all controversial assertions. And Jonas is not shy about defending each and every one.

Was the NAACP the first social movement and, above all, was it the role model for the others? I myself don't like to get into priority struggles. The feminists might claim that their suffrage movement predates the NAACP. But then there were movements for Black rights in the 19th century as well.

But, more importantly, was the NAACP a role model for other movements? If one restricts oneself to the period after 1945, a case could certainly be made for this. The NAACP was the principal organization fighting for Black rights in everyone's eyes, at least at first. And

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the struggle for the rights of Negroes, as Blacks were then called, certainly dominated the social movement issues from the 1940s to the 1960s. This was the period of the desegregation of the armed forces, Brown v. Board of Education, and the March on Washington, a series of events that culminated in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. When the university uprisings occurred in 1968-1970, the two main issues were the Vietnam War and the rights of Blacks. At Columbia in 1968, where I was at the time, the Black students insisted on occupying a separate building from the other students, to emphasize their own agenda.

> My research revealed the ILGWU's disgraceful behavior towards minorities, virtually all of them poor.

So when the renewed women's movement, the Latino/Asian-American/Native American movements, the ecology movements, and the gay/lesbian movements emerged as strong autonomous forces in the 1970s, they certainly seemed to be taking a leaf from the book of the struggle for Black rights. Did they regard the NAACP as their role model? I would guess the answer is that some did, but others did not. And that brings us to Jonas's second main point.

Jonas contends that the other Black movements — the SCLC under Martin Luther King, SNCC, the refashioned CORE, the Black Panthers, Malcolm X — were spectacular, but he suggests overrated, overrated especially by the press and by guilt-ridden white middle-class intellectuals and activists. His case is essentially two things. Only the NAACP had the grassroots organization throughout the United States to fight the fight on a local level. And only the NAACP had the clout to have a real impact on the top structures of the three branches of the U.S. government — the Presidency, the Congress, and the Supreme Court.

I have no doubt that Jonas is right that the key role of the NAACP was underestimated at the time, and since then. Both the grassroots work (which, as he points out, was dangerous work) and the sophisticated, thorough, and informed Washington work of the NAACP were crucial to the outcome. On the other hand, he makes it sound as if Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and SNCC were merely sound and fury. But they certainly forced the press and the public to pay attention to this movement, and may have played a major role in scaring the U.S. elites into accepting the kinds of reforms for which the NAACP was pushing. Throughout modern history, the roles of the more reformist and more radical wings of every social movement have been symbiotic — a sort of elaborate bad cop, good cop routine — even if no one ever has ever been ready to acknowledge this publicly.

Jonas devotes two whole chapters to the long and unhappy story of the relationship of the NAACP and Blacks in general to the AFL, the CIO, and the AFL-CIO. It is not a pretty story. Since Jonas was also an active supporter of at least the more liberal trade union leaders, he inserts a very poignant footnote in his discussion:

> I cannot begin to express the disappointment I experienced as my research revealed the ILGWU's disgraceful behavior towards minorities, virtually all of them poor. . . . Of the many "gods that failed" in my political life, one of the most bitter was that of the ILGWU and of the social democratic movement it spawned (450, fn. 8).

Here, Jonas is absolutely right. And it is one of the real contributions of this book that this is spelled out in great detail. The only thing I can add is that it was neither a new phenomenon of the late 20th century nor one restricted to the United States. The whole history of the trade-union movement, from its beginnings in the 1830s in western Europe up to today, has been one of conflict with the demands of whoever were the ethnically lower strata in their countries.

The trade unions tended to regard these other workers as low-pay competitors and potential scabs. Instead of trying to pull them into their organizations as fellow workers, the unions tended to try to exclude them, using racist themes. There were exceptions of course, and this is less true in the last twenty years, partly because of the work of movements like the NAACP. But the bulk of the history is there. Jonas adds on one more case study that is very telling.

FINALLY, WE COME to his claim that the NAACP's strategy has been basically a winning one. Here it all depends on what one means by a winning strategy. The difference between say 1945 and 2006 is in some ways striking. Jonas's book reminds of how tenuous were the legal and social rights of Blacks as late as 1945.

Today, it is quite true we have had two successive Black Secretaries of State, Black Supreme Court justices, a Black as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a Black woman as the president of an Ivy League university. The percentage of Blacks in elite institutions — political offices, large corporations, university students and faculties, etc. — has evolved from a supertiny group to one nearer to their proportion in the population. And this is of course a positive thing — a sort of vindication of W.E.B. Dubois's emphasis on the "talented tenth."

On the other hand, it is quite clear that the situation of the large majority of Blacks in the United States has not significantly changed. To be sure, they are no longer lynched. But they are still mired in poverty, unemployed in vast percentages, living in ghettos for the most part, and victims of a drug culture in much too large numbers. If we had any doubts about their real situation, we need only look at Katrina and what can only be called the disgraceful national response to that catastrophe.

Of course, this isn't a peculiarity of the United States. If one looks at what has happened about "minorities" in other countries, we see a basically similar situation — a serious attempt to "integrate" a small, "talented" segment of the minority and a leaving behind (no minority left behind?) of the vast majority. The October 2005 riots in the Arab/Black ghettos of the Paris suburbs remind us of this.

So, what does this tell us of the strategy of the NAACP, and similar organizations? That it works, up to a point. I am never one to sneer at something working only up to a point. The world is better because some good is done, because some advance is made in the right direction. But I also feel that, quite obviously, this strategy is not enough to end in any definitive way the injustices that are wreaked on the majority of the so-called minorities. We cannot be sanguine about this, and feel that continuing to press the issues will surely resolve them.

Of course, the question is what will? The virtue of Jonas's book is that it brings us to this point, and to this question.

On Affirmative Action

REGINALD WILSON

When Affirmative Action Was White
IRA KATZNELSON
New York: W.W. Norton & Company
2005

THE FIRST THING THAT STRIKES ME about this book is the irony of the title: *When was affirmative action not white?* As Mark Nathan Cohen states in his book, *Culture of Intolerence* (Yale University Press, 1998), "Affluent white males themselves have always received the most affirmative action, some by law, some by custom and practice, and some by factors so subtle and so deeply ingrained in our cultural training that we generally don't consciously recognize them." He goes on to say, "Critics tend to find affirmative action reprehensible only if the government mandates it and even then only if it benefits women and minority groups." This is not a small matter. Katznelson begins his book with Lyndon Johnson's 1965 Howard University speech, with some digressions into the 30s and 40s. He could just as easily have begun in 1641 when three indentured servants, two white and one black, ran away and were later captured (according to the late Judge Leon Higginbotham in *In The Matter of Color*, 1978). The whites were sentenced to an additional year of servitude but the black was sentenced "to serve for the time of his natural life." The point needs to be made emphatically that differential treatment for blacks began in 1619 when "there came to Virginia a Dutchman of Warre that sold us twenty Negers." Reinhold Niebuhr said in 1932: "What appears to be progress toward racial justice is, in fact, a cyclical process. Barriers are lowered in one era only to reveal a new set of often more sophisticated but no less effective policies that maintain blacks in a subordinate status" (quoted by Derrick Bell in his *Race, Racism and American Law*, 1980). We will return to this point later.

Nevertheless, Katznelson takes as his starting point, Lyndon Johnson's historic 1965 speech at Howard University: "To Fulfill These Rights" (the speech is reprinted in full in an appendix). Johnson spoke forcefully that " . . . freedom is not enough . . . it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity . . . we seek . . . equality as a fact and equality as a result." Katznelson then asks: "How shall we understand the missed chance to fashion black mobility and create a robust African-American middle class in the two decades after the Second World War?" Katznelson answers by describing at length a litany of deliberately constraining policies and laws.

The Selective Service Readjustment Act (GI Bill of Rights) was passed in 1944 with great fanfare. It was intended to provide training, education, and housing for returning veterans. Katznelson describes how Southern Democrats, whose seniority controlled committees, insisted that local control rather than Federal be required in implementing the benefits, assuring that blacks would be denied rights to education (except at already crowded and inadequate black colleges); and would be denied training opportunities except for the lowest skilled jobs. Access to housing would also be blocked by not approving loans to blacks. Here, I would disagree slightly with Katznelson. As a

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black WW II GI from Detroit, I have previously written that I, and many others in the North, took advantage of the GI educational benefits and obtained housing loans as well. Katznelson's tendency is to lump all black experience together, North and South, and proclaim it all bad; however, his writing is a major corrective to mine and tends to prove that experience with the GI Bill was nearly a disaster for most blacks.

Similarly with Social Security, Katznelson demonstrates that it too was at the mercy of Southern Congressmen who insisted that it not cover domestics and farm laborers, occupations of most blacks in the South. Thus, most blacks were not covered until the 1960s, leaving them without benefits at a vulnerable time of their existence.

Although Katznelson makes much of the fact that "no black college had a doctoral program," it was the custom of Southern states to pay the tuition of blacks to attend Northern universities for their doctoral study. This is not to let white Southern universities off the hook for their reprehensible practices, but to note that the scene was not totally bleak.

KATZNELSON CONCLUDES by saying, "By the time of Johnson's Howard University address, the problems of black America, not only in the South but also in the growing urban settlements in the North, were growing worse after more than two decades of fiercely discriminatory public policy." Well, not quite. By the decade ending in 1970, covering the most effective period of affirmative action, and coupled with a robust economy, overall jobless rates for blacks declined from 10.9 percent to 6.4 percent. Black married males unemployment rate dropped from 7.9 percent to 2.3 percent. The percentage of the black labor force classified as white-collar workers, nearly doubled from 13 percent to 24 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 1970). I mention this to say that when affirmative action was sincerely implemented, after the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and the Executive Order 11246 of 1965, it was successful, it worked. But with fierce opposition of mostly white males, increasing attacks of conservative legal organizations, and state petition drives that restricted minority access to higher education and other positions, its success was ultimately greatly diminished.

Katznelson tends to prove that experience with the GI Bill was nearly a disaster for most blacks.

Katznelson concludes with a curious chapter in which he evokes Justice Powell's dicta in the *Bakke* case (1978) as offering the best possibility for present day affirmative action to "guide a more extensive program closer to President Johnson's original intentions." Allan Bakke, a white applicant, was challenging a University of California-Davis regulation that set aside ten spaces in its medical school for minority applicants. The Court was split 4 to 4 on whether to allow this. Justice Powell's ruling was the controlling and deciding vote. He ruled that quotas were forbidden but that minority status must be taken into consideration in admission decisions. Katznelson considers the strict scrutiny and non-class-based remedy of Powell to be a more persuasive argument to get affirmative action back on track in today's climate. And he admits that: "In truth, the brutal harms inflicted by slavery and Jim Crow are far too substantial ever to be properly remedied." Thus, he promotes Justice Powell's ruling as the most pragmatic solution to the continuing dilemma.

Analyzing Katznelson's conclusion requires a return to my original ruminations. Affirmative action is a short hand response to the condition of blacks in American society. But the problem has gotten considerably more complicated since its original and official pronouncement in 1965. Hispanics are now the largest minority group and quite rightly clamor for rights and recognition. White women have been the greatest beneficiaries of affirmative action, but they have attributed it simply to superior qualifications and by and large see no need to join with others in demanding rights. White liberals are experiencing "civil rights fatigue" and feel minorities should just get on with it. The left does not place affirmative action on its agenda for struggle; they are preoccupied with Iraq. The Congressional Black Caucus cannot help: they are occupied with fantasies such as reparations. The black poor and working class, in all their disarray, are left to address their condition alone. In that sense, Katznelson is right, but not that rephrasing Justice Powell will save minorities.

Powell's narrow reasoning could no more appeal to the current power elites than Justice Thurgood Marshall's thundering denunciation in the same case: "that after several hundred years of class-based discrimination against Negroes, the Court is unwilling to hold that a class-based remedy for that discrimination is permissible."

Neither argument is persuasive to America's ruling class. Their interest is power, empire, and the subjugation of non-white people. We must return to Reinhold Neibhur's statement in 1932: "The white race in America will not admit the Negro to equal rights if they are not forced to do so. Upon that point one may speak with a dogmatism which all history justifies."

THAT DOES NOT MEAN that blacks should give up the fight. That means they must fight with even more ferocity for affirmative action. There are 37 million people in poverty in the United States. That is 12.7 percent of the population. That is the highest percentage of poor in the developed world. Twenty-five percent of blacks are in poverty and 22 percent of Hispanics. The poorest place in the United States is the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The only place poorer in the Western hemisphere is Haiti. These people are all Americans. They are all part of a gathering storm. They are the silent brothers and sisters whom no one talks about but who will not go away. They are the ultimate focus of affirmative action. They pose the question that was proposed in 1776: "What are we prepared to do to achieve democracy?"

A Hero of Reason

ROBIN GANEV

AS LATE AS THE 20th century Thomas Paine has remained a controversial figure. Theodore Roosevelt called him a "filthy little atheist" and Irving Kristol dismissed him for being an Englishman who never understood America. On the other hand, being one of the Founders, he has been quoted not only by Democratic but also Republican presidents such as Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. These contrasting responses to Paine illustrate the revolutionary's complex and controversial legacy, and Harvey J. Kaye has done well to bring us a book that examines how Paine has been read and understood in America in the 230 years since his activities on behalf of American independence.

Thomas Paine and the Promise of America
HARVEY J. KAYE
New York: Hill and Wang, 2005

Kaye argues that there is a new consensus about Paine's greatness and importance in American history. The other Founders have come under criticism, but not Paine. He was not a slave owner, and he was more truly committed to democracy than any of them. Kaye believes Americans are interested in Paine at this particular time because they have always turned to the Founders in times of crisis. This is such a time, a time when "America's purpose and promise are in jeopardy."

Noting how Republicans have tried to appropriate Paine, Kaye wants to reclaim Paine for the left, while at the same time arguing that Americans are radicals at heart and as "the greatest radical of his age" Paine was and should remain their natural leader. This is an interesting perspective, certainly worth writing a book from. Still, the book is at its best in discussing Paine's life and contribution to American independence rather than his later legacy and its political implications. Living through two revolutions, and contributing to political radicalism in three countries, Paine had a very interesting life, and Kaye does a good job of narrating it and giving us a sense of its historical context.

Naturally the focus is on Paine's work on behalf of the American Revolution. It was his American experience that made Paine revolutionary, but without Paine the Revolution may not have happened. Americans were angry about taxes but most of them wanted to remain British. It was Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* that made them want their own nation. In it Paine outlined his hopes for America and how it would bring freedom and democracy to the rest of the world. It is understandable that the newly emerging nation would have seemed to hold so much promise to men like Paine. Unlike Britain, America had few aristocrats, a better standard of living for most of its citizens, and was more democratic. Half of all white men had enough property to vote. Also, it had the freest press in the 18th century. It was ethnically diverse unlike any European country.

Of course there were also downsides: there was inequality between rich and poor, women remained second-class citizens (as everywhere else), many immigrants had to become indentured servants to gain passage to America, and much of the economy was dependent on slave labor. Still, for its time, it was a pretty good place. *Common Sense* (1776) sold 150,000 copies within

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the first few months and as many as half a million over the course of the Revolution. Paine gave the newly emerging nation a sense of purpose.

Paine's second and no less important contribution was the help he gave the American army during the War of Independence. In 1776 he enlisted as secretary to General Roberdeau. When it looked as if America was losing the war — with soldiers beginning to desert the battlefield in large numbers — he wrote *American Crisis*, the first of a series of pamphlets designed to lift the spirits of Americans, particularly the troops. This had a huge impact on the soldiers who read it and they began re-enlisting. Many of the inspirational words that have often been quoted by presidents and politicians ever since such as "These are the times that try men's souls" come from the *Crisis* pamphlets.

Equally fascinating is Kaye's discussion of Paine's relationship with Christianity. Initially Paine's works appealed to Protestant evangelicals who believed in democracy. Paine believed in religious toleration and the separation of church and state. This is why he was strongly against the dechristianization campaign launched by the French Revolution. However, he was a deist. Unlike other Founding Fathers, such as Thomas Jefferson, who held their beliefs privately, judging them too dangerous to spread among commoners, Paine publicly criticized organized religion and the Bible in the *Age of Reason.* He argued that all religious institutions were created by men, not God, for the purpose of enslaving the population. He denied all the miraculous aspects of Christianity and called the Old Testament "a collection of the most paltry and contemptible tales." Nevertheless, he believed in a creator: "I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life . . . I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy. I do not believe…in the creed of any church I know of. My own mind is my own church." *The Age of Reason* became a national bestseller, but it immediately enraged authorities and religious conservatives in both Britain and the United States. Though dedicated to America, the pamphlet gave a serious blow to Paine's reputation among Americans. It gave a boost to a powerful coalition of Federalists and conservative clergy, allowing Federalists to defeat the more democratic Republican party in 1796 and 1798. It made Paine many enemies and has plagued his memory to this day.

THE FIRST FOUR CHAPTERS of the book are well-written and maintain a powerful hold on the reader's interest. The discussion of Paine's legacy in the 19th and 20th centuries is weaker. Because Paine was more democratic than any of the Founders, in his own time the wealthy elite feared him and this continued to be the case in the centuries to come. Kaye charts how Paine's enemies, usually members of the elite, tried to erase his memory from American politics. At the same time, every generation had its radical movements, people who fought for freedom, equality, and democracy, and these continued to draw on Paine. Some of the more interesting Paine-inspired movements in the 19th century were utopian socialists like the Owenites and their followers and the freethinker societies in the 1820s and 30s. The latter included deists, agnostics, and atheists, the majority of them working men. Paine was also admired by the workingmen's parties, which were active during these decades, though they declined after the 1830s due to factionalism and the rise of the Democratic Party. The Young America movement took up Paine's ideals, though as early as the 1840s they began to use the rhetoric of spreading democracy to the rest of the world to justify dubious ends such as jingoism and territorial expansion. Paine's ideals were rejuvenated with the founding of the Socialist Party in 1901. In the 20th century, socially progressive presidents like Franklin Delano Roosevelt quoted Paine and his spirit was present among a variety of radicals from communists, to feminists and civil rights activists in the 1960s and 70s.

The chapters on the 19th and 20th centuries suffer from too many examples. They tend to be organized around individuals rather than movements. One man after another reads Paine and is inspired, but sometimes it is not clear why Kaye chooses to focus on certain individuals rather than others. This also leaves the reader unconvinced that Paine was so important to radical movements. It seems that many radicals did not, in fact, read Paine. Certainly none of the black anti-slavery activists seem to have been allied with Paine in the 18th century. This is how Kaye tries to connect Paine to slaves who were fighting for freedom: "It is not very hard to imagine the courageous and liberty-loving Gabriel, a literate slave and skilled artisan who in 1800 would organize a slave rebellion in Richmond (where white artisans were staunch Republicans), deriving encouragement from the words of *Rights of Man*." This is a very indirect connection. There were other sources for abolitionism, such as the Christian abolitionist tradition. The problem persists in Kaye's discussion of the 1960s and 70s. Kaye believes the spirit of Paine was there in the civil rights and feminist movements but he admits that they didn't explicitly call on him. The New Left in general tended to seek inspiration from foreign revolutionary leaders.

This raises the question of whether it is a good idea to reduce the American radical tradition to Thomas Paine, as much as one might admire this great revolutionary. Most of the individuals who read and invoked him in Kaye's long lists were white men. American radicalism also included women, blacks, and racial minorities, and their voice is not heard as strongly throughout this book.

Another problem is the issue of how central radical politics is to America's national identity. Often one is left with the impression that the radical tradition belongs to a minority, always under siege, rather than being the truest expression of Americans' hearts and minds, as Kaye wants to claim. It seems, in Kaye's own words, conservatism is always dealing blows to radicalism. The Federalists dealt blows to the Republicans in the 1790s. Wealthy plutocrats monopolized public discourse and dealt blows to the labor movement in the late 1800s. McCarthyism triumphed after World War II. If radicalism is so central to American identity why are these conservative elements so powerful? It is not simply a matter of a conservative elite oppressing a more liberal majority. After all, they must have enjoyed some popular support to get into office. It seems to me the conservative worldview is an equally important part of American history, and no less part of the national consciousness than radicalism.

Much of the book reads like a hagiography. Some of the claims made for Paine are a little extravagant — for instance in the introduction Kaye quotes media critic John Katz who called Paine the "moral father of the Internet." There is also something of the Whig theory of history: every generation comes to love Paine more and more and get closer and closer to the democratic ideal. The book would have benefited from a more critical stance toward Paine and his ideas. Most central to this should have been the issue of slavery. Though more democratic than anyone in his time, Paine saw the franchise as belonging to white males. He was against slavery and he founded the first American Anti-Slavery Society. But he abandoned the issue in his political pamphlets early on. Kaye points out that there is nothing on slavery in *Common Sense*: "Sadly, he failed to incorporate his abolitionist views into the pamphlet (presumably worrying that doing so might split the colonial alliance, and possibly believing an independent America would liberate the slaves sooner than a colonial one)." The issue of Native Americans' rights to their lands, which Paine believed in, was also lost sight of. These may have been understandable compromises given the times, but one would expect Paine to be disturbed when he saw there was little chance of slaves being freed any time soon. Instead, he continued to think of America as the land of freedom and was incapable of criticizing it. As Kaye is a little naïve about the greatness of Paine, so Paine was a little naïve about the imperfections of America.

Kaye points out at the very beginning of the book that Republicans have come to claim Paine as their own. This in itself demands a more complex understanding of Paine and his legacy than Kaye is ultimately able to provide. If Republicans find him acceptable, Paine is a figure with more dimensions than Kaye has shown us, or Kaye's distinction between "radical" and "conservative" needs further refinement. What was radical and conservative in the 1770s is not necessarily the same as what is radical and conservative today.

Paine and Kaye both believe in American exceptionalism. Paine saw America as having a universal role. But this kind of messianic hope is not unique to America. Many nations experiencing a revolution perceive their world role in such terms. The most obvious examples are France and Russia. But even smaller countries with a strong national consciousness can aspire to such ideals and use similar rhetoric, particularly at the point at which they begin to become nations. Both Paine and Kaye might have benefited from paying more attention to America's similarity to other nations. There have been people who fought for freedom in other countries. There have also been conservative and oppressive elites who have tried to stifle such movements.

Another one of Paine's ideas which can be criticized is the idea of limited government. First of all, this principle was not endorsed by the American state, which was very powerful and could be very intrusive and repressive when the occasion demanded. The brutal dealing with anarchism and the treatment of the Haymarket martyrs in the 1880s are examples. Secondly, the idea of limited government can often be used to justify abandoning the poor and disadvantaged to their own devices and letting "the market" take care of things. Paine was unable to see that dependence on the whims of the market could have detrimental effects.

Because Kaye has this one-dimensional view of Paine, his criticism of the Left seems inadequate. He says the radical movements of the 1970s failed because they did not "collectively promote [Paine's] memory." If they had, he thinks the movement would have been more successful. The same problem plagues the left today. They should take from Paine the ideas of American exceptionalism and America's messianic purpose. It is the Republicans' articulation of these ideals that has made them so powerful. The left should understand that patriotism could be used to good ends. Kaye must have a very narrow definition of the left to contend that it has failed to articulate patriotism. Every political leader of any significance in the United States pays lip service to patriotism and American exceptionalism. Indeed, there seems to be a broad consensus on these issues. More real problems for the left are that it is divided and that many of its leaders are unwilling to strongly differentiate themselves from Republicans for fear of losing votes. If America were to see itself as one of the world's nations, having both virtues and vices, there would be more room for diverse political opinions and real political debate.

Kaye is hopeful for the future, believing that if we go back to the ideas and writings of Tom Paine life will get better. This again is an unreasonable expectation. Perhaps the reason the New Left has not used Paine as fully as Kaye would like is that he had no answers for many of the problems we face today. The founders were great men, but they belong to the 18th century and they cannot be expected to provide solutions for our problems. Paine himself believed that every generation has to find its own path, instead of blindly relying on its ancestors. Drawing on Paine's democratic vision might be inspiring, but radicals need to do more in order to win the hearts and minds of Americans.

Herman Melville and C.L.R. James

RICHARD CLARK STERNE

Herman Melville:
Between Charlemagne and the Antemosaic Cosmic Man
LOREN GOLDNER
Queequeg Publications, 2006

ONE MERIT of Loren Goldner's erudite but prolix Melville study is his discussion of *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways*, by the iconoclastic Trinidadian Marxist, C.L.R. James. First published in 1953, that book offered a perspective on *Moby-Dick* markedly different from any in print.[1] Although Goldner's interpretation of *Moby-Dick* diverges from James's, he acknowledges that James both "underscored many of the themes developed here," and preceded him in seeing "affinities between Melville and Marx."[2]

James's originality (virtually ignored by Melville scholars) was to underline the role of the "meanest mariners, renegades and castaways," who constitute the *Pequod*'s miserably paid crew in *Moby-Dick*. Reflecting on his former shipmates, Melville's narrator Ishmael says (Chapter XXVI):

> If . . . I shall hereafter ascribe [to them] high qualities, though dark . . . if I shall touch that workman's arm with some ethereal light; . . . then against all mortal critics bear me out in it, thou just Spirit of Equality, which hast spread one royal mantle of humanity over all my kind . . .

James asserts, but doesn't try to prove, that Melville's fear of "criticism" kept him from implementing this expansive intention in depicting the crew. Nevertheless, with concise clarity James points to what he sees at the heart of *Moby-Dick*: a sharp contrast between the seamen, especially the three harpooneers — Queequeg, Tashtego, and Daggoo, far from perfect, but skillful, industrious, brave, exhibiting an "almost frantic democracy" — and the grim dictator Ahab; the three mates — all cowed by Ahab's powerful personality; and the narrator, whom James calls a "disoriented intellectual."

Ishmael had, before the sea-voyage began, met and symbolically "married" in "A Bosom Friend" (Chapter X) the Polynesian cannibal, Queequeg, whose simple goodness had "redeemed" the impoverished orphan's "splintered heart and maddened hand." Despite this bond, and although Ishmael's "shouts" go "up with" the other crew members' in response to Ahab's passionate quarter-deck exhortation (Chapter XXXVI) to swear "death to Moby Dick!" he ultimately draws apart, James asserts (questionably, I believe) from the other seamen after his nightmare-like perception of them as they burn a whale in the try-works (Chapter XCVI) to extract oil:

> the harpooners wildly gesticulated with their huge pronged forks and dippers; . . . as the wind howled on and the sea leaped, . . . then the rushing Pequod, freighted with savages, and laden with fire, and burning a corpse, and plunging into that blackness of darkness, seemed the material counterpart of her monomaniac commander's soul.

Goldner agrees with James's contrasting of the crew to Ishmael as well as to Ahab and the mates. Goldner also shares James's view of Ahab

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as a prototypical "totalitarian": a "Hitler" contemptuous of the *Pequod*'s chief owners' "Nantucket market" utilitarianism; obsessed with his own pursuit of the legendary white whale that has sheared off his leg and in whom he sees "all evil personified"; yet pragmatic enough to offer, to the man who shall first "raise" him the white whale, a "Spanish ounce of gold" — the doubloon that Ahab himself nails to the Pequod's mast.

Goldner also shares James's view of Ahab as a prototypical "totalitarian": a Hitler.

Because both Goldner and James see political significance in Melville's calling the whaling-ship's international crew an "Anacharsis Clootz delegation" (Chapter XXVII) — foreigners in Paris, led by a German nobleman to the French National Assembly in 1790 to dramatize mankind's solidarity with the French Revolution — they face the problem of the crew's falure to rebel against Ahab. The *Pequod* is endangered not only by his obsession with hunting the legendary Moby Dick, but by Ahab's monstrous pride. He scorns the " 'Science' " — symbolized by the quadrant — that seamen normally depend upon; he refuses to heed the warnings of the captains of ships met with on the sea, captains who'd either lost crew members or been injured themselves in encounters with Moby Dick. And, seeing himself as the brain and spirit of the chase after Moby Dick, he's contemptuous of the "mechanical" seamen, whom he regards as mere arms and legs.

James's explanation of the crew's subservience to Ahab is twofold: Melville describes them as (Chapter XLI) "morally enfeebled . . . by the incompetence of mere unaided virtue or right-mindedness in Starbuck," the first mate, who understands the danger Ahab presents, but lacks the will to lead a revolt against him. Even more significant, however, is James's second explanation, because it indicates what he obviously believes is a key to *Moby-Dick*: Melville's awareness, he claims, that a single mutiny on a whaling ship, in the middle of the nineteeth century, could not bring about a general workers' revolution.

Goldner also blames Starbuck, but finds in *Moby-Dick* at least a small hope, symbolically expressed, for an eventual workers' revolution led, not by Marxist intellectuals, but by "Queequegs." Goldner leads up to this thesis by making a major amendment to Louis Hartz's argument (in *The Liberal Tradition in America: an Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution*, 1955) that the United States, never having had a feudal system, was "born bourgeois"; that because it lacked "either a conservative theory of class structure, or a countervailing radical tradition of class conflict, the United States has lived by a Lockean liberal ideology, combined with a Puritan sense of the individual's sinfulness."[3]

Goldner's view is that America differs from Europe not only in the way Hartz describes, but in having had large numbers of inhabitants whom Melville calls "ante-mosaic": "Indians," represented in *Moby-Dick* by Tashtego; Negroes, represented by Daggoo; and South Sea Islanders, represented by the Polynesian Queequeg.[4] Although feudalism was not part of American history, Goldner claims America acquired its own "pre-capitalist frame of reference . . . in the imagery of Old Testament prophecy, in the fundamental myth of the New Covenant in the wilderness." He finds in the "severe Calvinistic heritage" of the "early white settlers" the basis of their attribution of " 'Adamic' " qualites — but "largely to condemn them" — to "the peoples encountered in the New World." It's pertinent to recall here that Negroes were enslaved in colonial New England,[5] and that Melville named the *Pequod* for an Indian tribe (the Pequot) decimated by white New Englanders to avenge a white settler's murder. Melville's predominantly sympathetic portrayal of the three "Adamic" harpooneers, particularly Queequeg (a noble cannibal who, on several occasions — including his posthumous symbolic rescue of Ishmael — saves the lives of shipmates, and before boarding the *Pequod*, saved from drowning a "bumpkin" who'd insulted him on the New Bedford-Nantucket schooner) justifies Goldner's claim that in Melville's view "the Queequegs of the world were free from entombment in the bourgeois ego."

What I don't find justified is Goldner's thesis, stated in his book's first paragraph, that the final scene of *Moby-Dick* — Ishmael's descent "into the vortex" of the destroyed *Pequod*'s downward plunge, and his re-emergence, saved, on his friend Queequeg's coffin — "is Melville's 'little yes,' an affirmation of hope through a 'higher primitive', after the 'big no' of Ahab's demonic self-destructive quest, the crackup of a whole civilization built on the isolated bourgeois ego."

For Goldner, the "vortex" in that scene, along with other vortices in the book, link Melville to Marx. Although Melville evidently didn't know the writings of his European contemporary, he understood, as did Marx, "primitive society, . . . feudalism and capitalism . . . (not) in a linear-progessive fashion (as did bourgeois-liberal views of progress) but rather in a 'helical-vorticist' fashion, wherein elements of earlier mytho-historical modes 'return' in higher modes." Thus he sees Melville symbolically envisioning "collective rebellion," eventually led by Queequegs "at a higher level" — a Marxist phrase he finds applicable to Melville's own "helical-vorticist" reading of history.

My disagreement with Goldner on what he calls Melville's " 'little yes,' " over against the " 'big no' " of Ahab's destructive, "isolated bourgeois" quest, is based partly on Melville's language in an April, 1851 letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, to whom he would dedicate *Moby-Dick*. Still a few months away from finishing it, he says after commenting on Hawthorne's recently published *House of the Seven Gables*, ". . . [Nathaniel Hawthorne] says NO! in thunder, but the Devil himself cannot make him say yes. For all men who say yes, lie . . ."[6] This isn't an endorsement of Ahab's "big no," but it is consistent with Melville's recognition that

> Ahab's obsessive hatred of Moby Dick derives from experience of inexplicable suffering.

Ahab's obsessive hatred of Moby Dick derives from experience of the inexplicable suffering, the evil that evoked Job's desperate questions to God. The fundamental reason, however, for my dissent from Goldner's interpretation is that, despite an occasional superb comment on a scene in *Moby-Dick*, he is so concerned to attribute some revolutionary hope to its author that he doesn't come to grips with the complexities of either Melville's characterizations or the tones of his multi-leveled language.

On the subject of race, for example, Goldner — who has an excellent footnote (p. 52, fn. 137) on the "humanization of the two major white protagonists of the book by a fusion with non-white characters" (Ahab with Pip, Ishmael with Queequeg) — says nothing about an incipient race riot (Chapter XL), that both refracts vividly the pre-Civil war racial rift in the United States, and, unhappily, symbolizes relations between many black and white laborers since that time.[7] In "Midnight, Forecastle," one of the book's "theatrical" scenes, with stage directions, the African-born Daggoo retorts angrily to Old Manx Sailor's reference to a stormy sea as " 'pitch black' ": " 'What of that? Who's afraid of black's afraid of me! I'm quarried out of it!' " Whereupon Spanish Sailor says (*Aside*), " '. . . Ah! the old grudge makes me touchy,' " then directly to

Daggoo: " 'Aye, harpooneer, thy race is the undeniable dark side of mankind — devilish dark at that. No offence.' " Grimly, Daggoo replies, " 'None,' " but a moment later he springs at the Spaniard, who reacts with a threat to knife him. All hell seems about to break loose among the crew as they cry, " 'A row! A row! A row!' " (Only Tashtego, the Indian from Cape Cod, remains calm, quietly smoking.) Suddenly, however, the seamen scatter when a mate's voice from the quarter deck orders them to stand by " 'to reef topsails!' " in the squall.

Goldner is almost as hard on Ishmael as he is laudatory of Melville, but since Melville's voice is not readily distinguishable from his narrator's, Goldner (and James as well) might at least address this problem. Instead, he treats Ishmael as a "transcendental" pantheist — failing to hear the tragi-comic irony in the narrator's observation (Chapter XXXV) on his own dangerously dreamy state when he'd kept "guard" in the ship's crow's nest: " . . . while this sleep, this dream is on ye, move your foot or hand an inch; slip your hold at all; and your identity comes back in horror. Over Descartian vortices you hover! And perhaps, . . . in the fairest weather, with one half-throttled shriek you drop through that transparent air into the summer sea, no more to rise forever. Heed it well, ye Pantheists!"

Goldner distorts the meaning of another part of the same "Masthead" chapter by neglecting to quote it completely. In developing one of his themes — the long decline of "cosmic" kings (symbolized by Charlemagne, among other "sacred" ancient monarchs of whom working-class "Queequegs" at a "higher," and secular, level will be the heirs) into modern "pseudo-sacred" rulers, he cites what he thinks is Melville's mocking treatment of such "standers-of-mastheads" as the statues of dead Washington, Napoleon, and Nelson. They will not, says Melville, "answer a single hail from below . . ." But he then adds, referring not to the statues, but to the men themselves, ". . . however it may be surmised, that their spirits penetrate through the thick haze of the future, and descry what shoals and what rocks must be shunned."

Although better attuned to Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* than to *Moby-Dick*, Goldner focusses carefully and convincingly on what happens in such post-*Moby-Dick* works as *Pierre*, *Bartleby*, and *Benito Cereno.* He finds in these fictions, as well as in the long poem *Clarel* and, except to a degree, *Billy Budd*, a disillusioned Melville who could no longer imagine anything "beyond bourgeois society."

Self-published (but much-translated), what Goldner sorely needs can't easily be found: a good editor who would not only spot obvious mistakes (*e.g.*, Melville was born not in 1818 but 1819, and the definition of a "Loose-Fish" in Chapter LXXXIX of *Moby-Dick* is inaccurately quoted), but urge him to abbreviate and transfer to his main text all the dauntingly extensive footnote material that's immediately relevant to Melville, and to provide readers with an index.

NOTES

1. The most recent republication is, *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In* (Hanover: University of New England, 2001). F. O. Matthiessen's *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman*, London: Oxford U., 1941, has a good short chapter on "The Economic Factor" in Melville's works, especially *Redburn* (1849), but the one paragraph on *Moby-Dick* doesn't mention the crew.

2. Goldner uses the spelling, *Moby Dick*, for the title.

3. Richard Clark Sterne, "Hawthorne's Politics in *The House of the Seven Gables," Canadian Review of American Studies,"* Vol. VI, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), 78.

4. Charles Olson observed (*Call Me Ishmael*, San Francisco: City Lights, 1947, 22) that a section of Nantucket was called "New Guinea" because of the many men from the Pacific there.

5. Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776*, New York: Columbia U., 1942, 162.

6. *The Portable Melville,* ed. Jay Leyda, New York: Viking, 1952, 428.

7. James's *Mariners* also says nothing about this scene, despite his strong interest in the blacks' struggles against colonialism in the West Indies and Africa. See *The C.L.R. James Reader,* ed. Anna Grimshaw, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

The "War on Terror" and the Class War at Home

JASON SCHULMAN

Blood in the Sand: Imperial Fantasies, Right-Wing Ambitions, and the Erosion of American Democracy

STEPHEN ERIC BRONNER

Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005

THERE HAVE BEEN A PLETHORA OF books on U.S. foreign policy since 9/11, but Stephen Eric Bronner — no stranger to readers of *New Politics* — has written what may be the best. Few *NP* readers will argue with most of Bronner's judgments regarding the hollow nature of the Bush administration's rhetoric about "democracy" and "freedom" and the entirely predictable results of its imperialist adventure in Iraq. No socialist is likely to dispute Bronner's understanding of the neoconservative agenda, both its theory and its practice. What makes *Blood in the Sand* a particularly worthwhile read, however, is its insights regarding the dominant American political culture, its description of life in Baghdad shortly before the U.S. bombs began to drop, its traversing of the Israel/Palestine conflict, and its outlining of a "democratic understanding of foreign policy."

One wonders how many Americans still believe that "9/11 changed everything." Bronner makes clear that it didn't change anything geopolitically significant, save that it congealed and legitimated "the most reactionary and militaristic tendencies of American history." Without in any way justifying Al Queda's assault on the World Trade Center, or political Islam generally, Bronner decries how the moment for critical reflection on "why there are some who do not view the United States as the land of liberty" so quickly passed. The Bush administration was quick to manipulate public fears — remember how the colors of the terror alerts kept shifting?—in order to whip up support for an interminable "war on terror" and to both justify and obscure a domestic war on civil liberties and social welfare. As Bronner rightly notes, not enough people—Frances Fox Piven and her book *The War at Home* aside — have explained the intertwining of Bush's agendas at home and abroad.

Most of the chapters of this book originally appeared in the online journal *Logos*. In one online article, reprinted here, Bronner gave "provisional support" to the U.S. military attack on Afghanistan, which he argues was a legitimate response to the World Trade Center attack, given that the link between the Taliban and Osama bin Laden was "crystal clear" and "negotiations were not being carried on in good faith." Perhaps not. But I believe that Bronner offered too much faith in the likelihood that this particular "police action," as he calls it, would do much to curtail terrorism. (Ironically, he did this in an essay that discusses Gandhi.) Terrorist operatives are extremely decentralized and their cells, if American intelligence is correct, are extremely autonomous. (As Joseph Schwartz once put it, "sleeper cells" do not wait for orders from Al Qaeda central.) Hence, it was never likely that military force in Afghanistan was going to contribute to American safety. Bronner himself notes the revival of the Taliban "amid the armed conflicts between tribal chieftains and drug lords" and the lack of a deep American commitment to reconstruction. And

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a repeat of the USSR's experience — where the Soviets and their allies rapidly conquered the cities in 1980 only to lose control via guerrilla war in the countryside — is hardly out of the question.

Of course, Bronner — like most of the left — opposed the "liberation" of Iraq, and was correct to do so. His "Baghdad Memories" essay, written after a weeklong trip to Iraq with U.S. Academicians Against War, is both moving in its account of a country ravaged by war, sanctions and dictatorship, and sagacious in its expectation that U.S. invasion would lead to "a maelstrom in the region." As Bill Gallagher of the *Niagara Falls Reporter* recently put it, there is no "good news" in Iraq. The Iraq war becomes a greater tragedy, and a greater crime, with each passing day. The much-vaunted recent Iraqi elections—which resulted in the pro-Iranian-mullah Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq assuming office — can provide no retroactive justification for the war and occupation. Over 2,000 U.S. soldiers have been killed and, according to Andrew Cockburn of the British *Independent*, the "conservative" estimate is that 180,000 Iraqis have died as a result of this war. And as Bronner notes, as all of the Bush administration's assertions and expectations regarding Iraq have been proven wrong, the CIA has acted as a "foreign ministry of spin" protecting Bush from domestic criticism, while Congressional Democrats have largely refused to act like anything resembling an opposition. Bronner is right to point out that the Democrats' pathological fear of appearing "soft" or "weak" will not help them to win a single national election — all it can do is undermine the loyalty of their base. And as the United States appears more and more like what Bronner calls "a one-party state ruled by shifting administrative factions," the Democrats — certainly those in DC — are largely complicit.

> Bronner believes that there is no way to make the dream of a binational state real.

Of course, the Democrats are traditionally the "pro-Israel" party, even as much has been made of neoconservatives as supposedly representing a wing of Likud in the Republican Party. Bronner is no Zionist, but his belief that any negotiated solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict "will undoubtedly use the Geneva Initiative as its framework" will not sit well with certain quarters of the Left and the Palestine solidarity movement. But Bronner, taking into account left-wing criticism of the Geneva Initiative, believes that there is no way to make the dream of a binational state real. He is, sadly, almost certainly right, even as Israel's status as a "Jewish state" becomes increasingly untenable as its Arab population continues to rise (which Bronner acknowledges) and Israel's refusal to discuss the Palestinian right of return — like its refusal to retreat to its pre-1967 borders — prevents the possibility of a just peace.

THE MOST ENJOYABLE CHAPTER of *Blood In The Sand* is co-written by longtime *NP* writer Kurt Jacobsen, and it deservedly rips the liberals and social democrats who supported the Iraq War to shreds. Given how obvious it was to most leftists that the war was going to be a humanitarian disaster, one wonders where these ostensibly critical-minded intellectuals—a number of whom, it must be said, make up the editorial board of *Dissent* (dissent from what, one wonders) — lost their intellectual faculties. For most of these "liberal hawks," Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein — regardless of the presence or absence of a connection between the two — represented the barbarians at the gates: it was 1939 all over again. Never mind that any sane leftist understood that the idea of *the Bush administration* liberating *anyone* was a cruel joke. Never mind that Islamists will never, ever come to power in liberal-democratic societies (least of all the United States!). And never mind that all the fuss about the "new" anti-Semitism is really so much blather. Bronner, who knows a little something about anti-Semitism — he wrote *A Rumor About the Jews: Reflections on Antisemitism and "The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion"* — makes it plain: "there is no anti-Semitic movement in any of the democracies with any serious possibility of attaining power." To argue otherwise is to end up in bed with reactionaries in both the United States and Israel.

Admittedly, Bronner has no grand strategy for beating back hard-right governments in the United States or Israel. Here in the United States the immediate task is to hammer the Democratic Party from the left to prevent it from selling out its base and to demand transparency in the making of foreign policy, and in our political institutions generally. But Bronner's explication of this need for transparency — for the subordination of foreign policy to democratic norms, as he puts it — is alone enough to justify the writing of *Blood In The Sand*. If nothing else, in a world filled with both "cruise missile liberals" and "socialists" making alliances with political Islamists, it represents an anti-imperialist worldview which is both genuinely democratic and leftist.

Torture, Empire, and the Fourth Estate

LISA LYNCH

> The Language of Empire: Abu Ghraib and the American Media
> LILA RAJIVA
> New York: Monthly Review Press, 2005

On April 28, 2004, CBS News broadcast a series of photographs showing soldiers in the 800th Military Police Brigade abusing men detained at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Within days, these photos — of naked men, hooded men attached to electrodes, men under siege by dogs, severely beaten, or forced to engaged in sex acts while smiling American soldiers looked approvingly into the camera lens — became perhaps the most recognizable, circulated, and iconic images thus far in the 21st century. In the United States, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, the photographs were broadcast on television, downloaded on the Internet, and reprinted in newspapers and magazines. The initial reaction to them was almost universal: outrage, shock, and a call for justice.

Two years have passed since the Abu Ghraib photographs were made public, and though the prison has been finally been closed, it is debatable whether that call for justice has been answered. By the end of 2005, seven soldiers were charged with abuse of prisoners; six were given jail time ranging from a few months to ten years. During the investigation and court martial process, several of these soldiers — as well as the only superior officer reprimanded, Colonel (and former Brigadier General) Janet Karpinski — claimed that the abuse was widely known and practiced at the prison, but the Pentagon disagreed, concluding that the photos documented the acts of a group of "bad apples" now disbanded and disciplined. By the end of 2005 — after Private Lynndie England was sentenced to three years in prison — most major media outlets in the United States had stopped giving much coverage to the story, and American interest consequently faded.

In *The Language Of Empire: Abu Ghraib and the American Media*, Lila Rajiva suggests that the drift of the national attention away from Abu Ghraib is hardly accidental. Rajiva, a freelance journalist who writes for publications such as *Dissident Voice* and *Counterpunch* (where portions of this book first appeared), is deeply skeptical of the American media's outrage about Abu Ghraib. Far from "exposing" what happened at the prison, she argues, American news outlets shied away from the actual story. First, they were slow to piece together what in hindsight seems to be an obvious and pervasive pattern of abuse; second, they failed to follow through on the connections between the soldiers "caught" at what they were doing and the various superiors officers who may have encouraged abuse, and finally (and most importantly, Rajiva suggests), they did not even try to consider what it means that the United States military might be deploying torture as a part of the process of the military occupation of Iraq.

It is Rajiva's exploration of this failure to address the larger story that sets her book apart from other notable works about Abu Ghraib such as Seymour Hersh's *Chain of Command* and

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Mark Danner's *Torture and Truth*. Like Rajiva, both Hersh and Danner argue that the torture at Abu Ghraib was widespread and policy-mandated, but neither suggests it is a necessary and inevitable extension of American military and governmental practice. Rajiva is far more pessimistic: she reads Abu Ghraib as a natural extension of American political strategy from the Cold War onward. Looking at the Abu Ghraib photographs, she tells us, is thus an act of looking at the structure that undergirds American empire: "correcting" the situation by punishing select soldiers was simply an act of political theatre meant to distract us from seeing what the photos actually tell us. "Abu Ghraib cannot be regarded as tangential or aberrant," she insists; "instead, it appears completely symptomatic of both ideology and organization at the highest levels. Abu Ghraib reveals that behind the rhetoric of the liberation of people lies the reality of the disciplining of populations — mass detentions, evacuations of cities, torture, and terror bombing." (130)

These are harsh accusations. In order to make her case, Rajiva inverts the "bad apples" theory, suggesting a staggering number of connections between what happened at Abu Ghraib and events and persons far displaced from the prison. She thus begins the book with an overview of the Abu Ghraib scandal, then turns to a discussion of the Senate investigations of abuse, the videotape of the Nicholas Berg assassination, the bloody "liberation" of Fallujah, Zionism, and post-Cold War American defense policies. The end result is a book that is rich and suggestive but also frustrating. The ambitiousness of Rajiva's project, and the haste in which it was written, results in more breadth than depth, particularly when Rajiva discusses the role of "the liberal media" in making Americans forget about Abu Ghraib.

The ambitiousness of Rajiva's project, and the haste in which it was written, results in more breadth than depth.

TAKING AIM at the media in *The Language of Empire*, Rajiva begins with obvious targets, describing the response to the photographs in conservative American media outlets such as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *National Review*. Quoting from a series of articles, she documents a series of attempts to downplay the horror of the images. For example, although the acts shown in the photographs were almost universally condemned by conservative news pundits (with the notable exception of Rush Limbaugh's insistence that the incidents seemed to resemble "fraternity pranks"), the idea that the torture is at all connected to military practice was denied with equal vehemence. In addition, the conservative press tended to "contextualize" the photographs — emphasizing Abu Ghraib's history as a place where far worse abuses presumably took place during the Hussein regime — and to condemn liberals who were using the photographs to impugn the integrity of the military. Rajiva also notes that in an effort to "explain" the abuse in a manner that left the military blameless, conservative media pundits came up with explanations that seem, as time passes, more and more bizarre, such as the restriction placed on military recruiters at Ivy League Schools and the presence of "lady soldiers" in the prison.

To her credit, Rajiva does not expend much energy tracking down offensive or ridiculous reactions to Abu Ghraib among conservatives: her interest, instead, is to analyze the more subtle strategies of damage control to be found in "liberal" media outlets. (In her discussion of the "liberal" media, Rajiva includes *The Christian Science Monitor*, a debatable categorization.) In these media outlets, the story was minimized not so much by denial as by displacement, for example by shifting the focus from the abused Iraqi men to the damage the photographs had done to the reputation of the United States.

According to Rajiva, one of the most pervasive displacement strategies that emerged during Abu Ghraib was the use of two types of narrative genres to describe what had happened at the prison: the "forensic drama" and the "pulp drama" In the first genre, the forensic drama, "procedural and institutional analysis is foregrounded and the individual personalities are ignored." (33) Thus, American media discussions of Abu Ghraib used forensic narratives to focus national attention on the legalities of Abu Ghraib rather than on the suffering men depicted in the images. In the second genre, the pulp drama, "personal character and motivations, racial and religious identity, cultural and sexual elements are emphasized and institutional factors are pushed into the background." Accordingly, when the soldiers accused of the abuse finally came to trial, their claims that the actions they performed were condoned and systemic were drowned out by media "pulp dramas" which focused on their class status and their personal histories.

Rajiva's discussion of pulp and forensic dramas provides both materials and methods for further consideration of the rhetoric of the war on terror. In particular, Rajiva's insights about the rhetorical reassignment of blame and the elision of the abused body of the prisoner shed light on the way that detainees in Guantanamo Bay have been described in the American media. Somewhat surprisingly — perhaps reflecting the moment when Rajiva was writing the articles that eventually became this book — Rajiva writes very little about Guantanamo in *The Language of Empire*, focusing mainly on the role played by Major General Geoffrey Miller, at that time base commander of Guantanamo, in establishing interrogation procedures at Abu Ghraib. Instead, Rajiva draws comparisons between the siege of Fallujah and the abuse at Abu Ghraib. Much like Abu Ghraib, she writes, Fallujah became "a gray zone where people become diminished, less than human, where they fade into oblivion."(125) The plight of such less-than-human individuals is in turn ignored by the American media, who ignore that American military force is a necessary component in the struggle for a democratic Iraq; assuming "the virtue behind state violence,"(73) American reporters are troubled only by the acts of the insurgents. To illustrate her point, Rajiva compares the reporting of *Los Angeles Times* writer Alissa Rubin — whose tone is objective and neutral but who seems not to see what is happening to the citizens of Fallujah — with reports of civilian deaths in the British papers *The Guardian* and the *New Standard*.

Perhaps the most evocative section of *The Language of Empire* focuses on the videotape that purports to show the beheading of Nicholas Berg. The videotape of Berg, an American contract worker supposedly in Iraq to help rebuild the telecommunications infrastructure, was released to the American media just over a week after the Abu Ghraib photographs became public. Like the Abu Ghraib images, this tape became a media sensation, and subsequently it served to destabilize the rhetoric of outrage that surrounded the Abu Ghraib images by allowing politicians and media pundits to imply — perversely — that the torture victims at Abu Ghraib were somehow complicit in the savagery of the assassination. The end result of the media discussion of Berg, Rajiva writes, was that "[while] the Abu Ghraib photographs were deemed unrepresentative [of America], the Berg beheading was said to represent the essence of the enemy." (83)

Due to its poor quality, improbably opportune timing, and editing inconsistencies, the Berg video is the most fertile ground for conspiracy theorists since the Kennedy assassination: a quick glance at the Wikipedia entry for "Nicholas Berg" shows how fiercely the debate is still raging. Relying heavily on bloggers for her sources, Rajiva lists the various peculiarities of the video, as well as the dense and weird web of connections that link Berg to practically every aspect of the war on terror. (Just a few: Berg's grandfather helped build the Twin Towers; Berg was interviewed by Michael Moore for Fahrenheit 9/11; Berg was detained by the FBI because Zacarias Moussaoui had used one of Berg's email accounts to communicate about the 9/11 hijackings).

Wisely, Rajiva does not make any claims about the veracity or falsehood of the Berg tape: rather, she focuses on the way the tape was taken up by the media as a sort of counterbalance to the Abu Ghraib story. The story of Berg, described by many media sources as an idealistic, innocent young man eager to rebuild Iraq, is given the classic outlines of the pulp drama. The effect is to shift attention away from the hundreds of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib and towards Berg and his grieving family. Though ultimately, the Abu Ghraib scandal did receive more attention than the Berg beheading, Rajiva suggests that the media's construction of the Berg assassination allowed the public to draw a sort of moral equivalent between the horrible death of Berg and the horrors of the Abu Ghraib images.

Rajiva is rightly emphatic about refusing this equivalence. But here she treads again on fragile ground; she correctly points out that the two events were "not on the same scale," but she drives her point home by noting more than once that Berg was "not an innocent" (69) and by speculating about exactly what he might have been doing in Iraq. I take Rajiva's point that telling the Berg story as a pulp drama "removed it from politics," (84) but at the same time, it is irrelevant whether or not Berg might have been up to shady doings, just as it is irrelevant whether the prisoners at Abu Ghraib had been brought to it for shoplifting or plotting insurrection. Beheading, like torture, is not an area for equivocation; even if Berg was somehow trapped in a web of his own making, his death was tragic and unconscionable.

Rajiva's analysis of the Berg media coverage runs into another, more methodological problem, one common to media scholars but especially vexing in this instance: in her discussion of media outlets and audiences, she has a hard time here separating out cause and effect. For example, is it the media analysis of Berg that distracts attention from Abu Ghraib, or is it the desire of the American public to find some way to avoid confronting the horrors of the Abu Ghraib images that provokes such intense interest in Berg? Rajiva cites a CBS poll taken at the time of the Berg beheading which concluded that 49 percent of Americans felt that the media had spent too much time on the Abu Ghraib story, as compared to 6 percent who felt it to be undercovered. Given her suspicions of the media, it's unclear how we are to read this information: is the poll an accurate reflection of the "American public"? Or is it a reflection of what CBS might *desire* the American public to feel?

> Britain's *Guardian* has consistently featured the most aggressive reporting on these issues of any major media outlet save Al Jazeera.

This question is not an insignificant one for Rajiva's analysis. Throughout *The Language of Empire*, I found myself thinking about the thorny triangulation of "media," "public," and "government." As Rajiva herself notes, the "militarization" of civilian life has been a tenet of the Bush administration; as she implies but does not state explicitly, new communications technologies have also recently accelerated the interpenetration of "the media" and "the public." Given this, how do we finally allocate responsibility for the way in which the American public has come to understand the events at Abu Ghraib? Certainly the Bush administration, with its strategies of obfuscation, information dumping and orchestrating distractions (whether or not we feel that the Berg video numbers among those distractions) bears a large share of the blame. But when we blame the "media," whom are we blaming? *The New York Times* and *The Nation* equally? Seymour Hersh alongside Rush Limbaugh? Is there a difference between "the liberal media" and "the alternative media?" Sometimes troublingly, Rajiva does not go much farther than "the media" herself in her attempts to contextualize Abu Ghraib within the American political milieu: her discussion of subjects such as Zionism and the Cold War relies heavily on *Salon* magazine and *Time*, cited as objective sources instead of biased examples of American media.

There is also an odd disparity between the sources Rajiva uses when she is discussing Abu Ghraib and when she is discussing Berg: though she relies substantially on the blogosphere to provide a counternarrative to official accounts of Berg's death, she does not concern herself with the blogger's response to Abu Ghraib. Overall, weblogs play an important but liminal role in *The Language Of Empire*, as Rajiva (like many contemporary media critics) is unsure of their position in the media landscape. If bloggers have publicized the oddities in the Berg case ad infinitum yet *The Wall Street Journal* has not, is that truly a failure of "the media," or does Rajiva need to acknowledge that some bloggers have a wider audience than some of the media outlets that Rajiva is talking about? (For example, Juan Cole's weblog, *Informed Consent*, is probably read by more activists and policymakers than The *Christian Science Monitor*.) And does the existence of a vital and engaged audience for these weblogs — which, presumably, includes Rajiva — complicate her monolithic sense of what the American media is or could become?

Finally, there is the problem of the international press, which — as Rajiva repeatedly notes — has reported on Abu Ghraib (and on Guantanamo) far more comprehensively than the American press. On one hand, the discrepancy supports Rajiva's argument that the American media is heavily invested in protecting American interests. But then, is this really as much about "empire" as Rajiva suggests? Britain's *Guardian* (as Rajiva herself suggests) has consistently featured the most aggressive reporting on these issues of any major media outlet save Al Jazeera, and yet one is loath to exempt Britain from imperial design, anti-Arab sentiment, or for than matter, a tolerance for torture: indeed, according to video evidence, British soldiers themselves have been abusing Iraqis during the present conflict. Part of the explanation for *The Guardian's* aggressiveness is its singular corporate structure: since 1936, it has been owned by a British trust established explicitly to preserve its "financial and editorial independence." But structural considerations such as these are not part of Rajiva's discussion: she limits herself to reading newspaper articles and drawing conclusions about their rhetorical strategies.

Reading *The Language of Empire* brought to mind other books, such as Susan Moeller's *Compassion Fatigue*, that have tried to parse why the media often falls short in covering what has come to be known as "humanitarian crises," events such as famine, epidemic, and war. Moeller, a journalism professor fiercely critical of Americans' lack of interest in global suffering, tries to analyze the problem from an insider's perspective, questioning news editors and journalists about their own culpability in the coverage gap. Her approach has its own limitations, of course — accepting the claims of media producers at face value can lead to severe analytic shortfalls — but her book feels closer to its subject than Raijva's, and her understanding of "the media" is far more nuanced.

Ultimately, *The Language of Empire* is less about "the media" than it is about — perhaps unsurprisingly — language and empire. Specifically, it is about the ways in which American military domination of the Arab world and elsewhere has colored the way we articulate and apprehend events around us, whether the site of articulation is the media, the political arena, or that arena of citizen debate and reflection labeled the "public sphere." Rajiva is certainly right to note that Americans have turned a blind eye to the pervasive abuse of the ill-defined "enemy" in the American war on terror, and she is a keen reader of the moments when our blindness is produced and reflected by the stories we tell. But pinning the rap on "the liberal media" cuts her analysis short in the end; even more troublingly, it leaves little room to imagine the possibility that some of "the media" — Rajiva herself included — might cut through the fog of rhetoric and serve as a force for change.

Looking Back on the Cuban Revolution to Better Assess Its Future

LARRY BEEFERMAN

The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered
SAMUEL FARBER
Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2006

SAMUEL FARBER'S *The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered* is a well-written, engaging, and fascinating inquiry into the economic, social, political, and other factors — domestic and international — that set the stage for the Cuban revolution, and shaped the manner in which the revolution evolved. Farber is spurred to make this assessment because of the anticipated (and inevitable) end of the current phase of the Revolution, if only because it will be occasioned by the death of the very person who has dominated it for so long, Fidel Castro, but perhaps as well as a result of the working of forces within and upon Cuba. He aims to challenge conventional views, both from the right and from the left, of the origins of the Cuban revolution, views that, he believes, will serve as means to justify or support action in any contest over the future of post-Castro Cuba.

In only 171 pages, Farber covers a great deal of ground in pursuit of that endeavor. He first seeks to establish the extent to which the economic conditions in pre-war Cuba created a political climate that was favorable to radical social change. Having, in his eyes, established the influence of those economic conditions, he then turns to identify both how the Cuban political organization and experience, culture, and imagination generally and Fidel Castor's politic affiliations, commitments, attitude, and pre-Revolution practice, in particular, helped define the terms on which Cubans understood and seized the opportunity for revolutionary change.

As Farber makes clear in his first chapter, Cubans' fate to that point had not been theirs to determine alone; it was entangled in and by the understandings, aspirations, and interests of its large and powerful neighbor to its north. And it is that continued, tangled relationship that Farber addresses next. More particularly, Farber traces how, within their respective and not infrequently conflicting calculi of understandings, governmental, business, and other players in America sought to comprehend and respond to events as they unfolded in Cuba. In so doing, Farber offers insights into how American responses over time both provoked (or occasioned) and reacted to Cuban actions, identifying a suggestive chain of events running from the struggle to overthrow Batista to the consolidation of power by Castro's regime, the early years of that regime's transformation of Cuban society, and its entry into the Soviet camp. Having delineated in some measure the nature, force, and impact of the United States on events in Cuba and with it in mind, Farber returns to the internal situation there. More precisely, his intent is to identify why the Cuban project after the overthrow of Batista came to be one of radical social change and why such a change occurred when it did. While Farber acknowledges the impact of American actions, he argues that much more important was the role and significance of di-

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verse political forces within Cuba and how, by means of his skills, leadership, and methods, Castro prevailed over them and in doing so drove revolutionary change from above. At various points in earlier chapters Farber portrays aspects of the history and place of the Cuban Communist party in the political calculus leading up to the overthrow of Batista. But in the last chapter he focuses in detail on the roles of and relationship between the Soviet Union and the Cuban Communist party in influencing the course of the Cuban revolution.

Castro had a commitment to a left-wing, anti-imperialist agenda but that commitment was married to another critical one, top-down organization

In a brief prologue, Farber sums up his views about the chain of causes (and consequences) to the revolution and its aftermath in Cuba. They are roughly are follows:

First, worker resistance and state regulation in response to U.S. economic domination, corollary uneven economic development, and world depression had been sufficient only to achieve a stasis of forces with resulting economic stagnation. Meanwhile, the political sphere was characterized by a dominant but weak capitalist class unable to exercise political power directly; political parties and class-related organizations were weak; and there had emerged a Bonapartist regime buttressed by a basically mercenary army (rather than one disciplined and ideologically driven typical of other Latin American countries.).

Second, there had emerged from this configuration (and the larger and longer history of Cuba) in general and recent failures and corruption of revolutionaries in particular, a form of populism — one that appealed to nationalist notions of a beloved fatherland, and images of heroic and glorious action, selflessness, dedication, and sacrifice — that coexisted with a sense of frustration and fatalism.

Third, the Cuban Communists, by contrast to the Cuban brand of populists, offered a comprehensive and analytical (though crude and Stalinist) way of understanding the Cuban situation and disciplined means for acting in accordance with that understanding. But it was hobbled, among other things, by its history of sectarian practice, compromising political deals that it had made with Batista, misjudgment of events leading to the Partido Socialista Popular's (PSP) playing catch-up to the guerilla movement, and, more generally, its dogmatic schematism. While its strengths — in conjunction with its relation to the Soviet leadership — were sufficient to assure it a not insubstantial role in events after the overthrow of Batista, its weakness, in conjunction with the other factors noted above, created or allowed an opening for Castro's dominant role in those events.

Fourth, while Castro had few institutional or organizational links to class-based organizations, he succeeded in allying himself with a broad range of social and class groups yet in a way that enabled him not to be too tied by them, either programmatically or organizationally. At the same time, he applied his superior tactical skills to navigate among the shifting groups of diverse players, the ebb and flow of external pressures, and exploit (if necessary, in a brutal or ruthless way) the weaknesses or failures of or divisions among his opponents. However, these skills, while well employed to effect, were not applied in the service of realizing a highly specific and/or programmatically defined plan that Castro had for a new Cuba. Rather, Castro had a more diffuse commitment to a left-wing, anti-imperialist agenda, in some measure rooted in the populist political tradition realized in a largely *ad hoc* and pragmatic way. But that commitment was married to another critical one, top-down organization. While Castro avoided subordinating himself to other organizations, he correspondingly sought, by a variety of means, to establish control over political, economic, and economic life. According to Farber, Castro was able to do this both because and in spite of popular mobilization. Broadly speaking, such mobilization reflected support for diffusely articulated goals and measures to achieve them. But, in Farber's view, Fidel sought and closely guarded the power to determine the timing and nature of the specific means by which those goals would be achieved.

Finally, while success in these terms was clearly attributable in considerable measure to Castro's skills, it was also occasioned by the actions of others external to Cuba, actions that were in some cases, intentional, and in others unwitting. By dissimulation, delay, changes graduated or calibrated in a way to not stir external threats, and other means, Castro was able to ward off the cohering of and the focused exercise of economic, political, and military power by the United States; and he skillfully leveraged the exercise of that power to stir up domestic opposition to it and generate support for himself. At the same time, there was an evolution and convergence of interests of Castro and the Soviet Union.

In certain respects the Soviet response was the mirror image of the American response: neither anticipated the dramatic and rapid flow of events leading up to Batista's overthrow or its immediate aftermath; nor understood Castro's background, motives, or goals very well; nor were immediately able to secure a consensus among relevant decision makers about what needed to be done and how to do it. And while both responded in a largely *ad hoc* way to events in Cuba, Castro's actions and those of the opposing super power, they were guided or informed in their judgments about how high the stakes were both in terms of material interests (for example, in economic and military and/or geopolitical terms) and ideology (for example, fundamental challenges to property rights seen as a dire threat or expropriation a critical and desired outcome.) As noted, Castro, with his diffuse left-wing sympathies and anti-imperialist leanings could hardly have been viewed as a member of the Soviet camp prior to the overthrow of the Batista regime. But in the course of events, he (and the Soviets) identified and came to act on a mutuality of interest, material and ideological, in the timing and extent of Soviet support for Cuba; in Castro's acceptance of that support; and in Castro's desire and actions to effect a revolution "top-down" in process and outcome and Soviet comfort with or even delight in both.

The foregoing sketch of causal elements and outcomes does not, of course, do justice to the texture and detail of Farber's argument and the extent of research and scholarship that the reader might reasonably infer was necessary to formulate and justify it. For that reason alone, a reviewer such as this one should be reticent to pronounce judgment on that argument.

However, at first blush, the argument "makes sense." Farber provides the readers with a sufficiently detailed and convincing description of elements that would appear to be key to understanding the events with which he is concerned. Among them, are the evolution and state of the Cuban economy (and the role of United States in it); the nature of the social/class structure and the ways in which those within in it understood their place and interest; the organizational and ideological means by which they expressed and acted on both; a sense of who Fidel Castro was/is as both a child of the Cuban experience and as a particular individual with a specific personal history; the knowledge, skills, and capacities he could bring to bear when posed with choices about how to act in light of that understanding; and the aspirations, understandings (and misunderstandings), interests, conflicts, and actions of the diverse players that constituted the American and Soviet camps.

The phrase "at first blush" was used above, because one surmises that there are levels of such narrative "making sense." That is, Farber's essay sifts through the relevant history, both collective and individual, leading up to the point where his narrative begins. He thereby creates both a sense of how that history may have thrown up the kinds of "problems" that had to be confronted, and, how, simultaneously, the understandings, capacities, and relationships of relevant actors both spurred or inspired them to contemplate certain courses of action and imposed the limits or constraints on what courses of action were chosen and how they were pursued. The power of Farber's relatively short yet intense study is that it is sufficient to create that sense. It is not clear, though, whether another, more a detailed look at events — a more textured inquiry into the calculus of choices posed and choices that could be contemplated, were considered, chosen, and pursued, and how — that would loosen or tighten the connections that he identifies.

So, for example, and as noted above, Faber several times variously restates one of his ostensibly key conclusions that the problematic state of the Cuban economy and prior efforts to reform it had created a "contradiction" that opened up the possibility for revolutionary change. More particularly, according to Farber, the contradiction arose from the fact that on one hand, the interplay of foreign intervention, significant reliance on a single crop, and a failed effort at state regulation (or perhaps, at least, one not fully up to the task) had led to a stagnant and unstable economy. On the other hand, again according to Farber, that outcome had, at the same time, created the very resistance to making those changes whereby the Cuban could produce greater wealth and, arguably, have that wealth shared much more broadly or fairly.

Interestingly, Farber summarizes a similar critique offered by a 1951 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) report on Cuba, but faults it for primarily two reasons. First, the "fairly radical break" from the status quo that it proposed as a solution embodied a laissez-faire model that might require an extreme, ruthless right-wing dictatorship to implement it. Second, the IBDF failed to recognize that Cuba's problems were traceable to the semideveloped capitalist, distorted nature of its economy which in turn, was the product of foreign domination and worker resistance to the economic order that domination had helped to create and sustain. (For some, the irony of the first point might be that instead, the historical-in-fact solution was in many respects the very opposite of a laissez-faire model implemented by an extreme, ruthless, ostensibly left-wing dictatorship; and of the second point, that on a similar reading, the solution entailing crushing of worker resistance and in some measure, ultimately, relying on the resources, protection, and authority of a foreign power!)

Foreign intervention, significant reliance on a single crop, and a failed effort at state regulation led to a stagnant and unstable economy.

All this is to say, that if, in this context, by the word "contradiction," Farber appears to mean that the then unstable and unsatisfactory economic status quo was the outcome of a particular, perversely balanced configuration of economic (and perhaps other) forces, and that some qualitative or profound shift in those forces was plausibly necessary to break out of that status quo, then he certainly seems right (and in its own way, the IBDF was as well.) In that respect one might say that the "contradiction" offered the occasion or opportunity for or was one of the precipitants of dramatic change in Cuba. And perhaps that is all one needs to say, though one senses that by his choice of the word, Farber freights it with considerably more significance, but it is not clear precisely why or what that significance is.

Most certainly the word contradiction used in context suggests the importance (though perhaps not necessarily the preeminence) of the configuration and stasis of contending economic forces in the loose, but suggestive and evocative of chain of causality that Farber traces out in his book. But if, to press on the word a bit, overcoming (or obviating) the contradiction requires a dramatic shift in the paradigm which gives rise to the contradiction, there seems (relatively speaking) puzzlingly little that Farber has to say about their role in the historical and interpretive narrative as it proceeds from the time when that contradiction characterized the Cuban economy. To be sure, Farber sketches and critiques the failed efforts at economic reform/change by the Batista regime. And he certainly refers to a host of economic or quasi-economic measures taken by Castro and his colleagues, during the first couple of years after the overthrow of Batista, as they slowly consolidated their power and in certain respects in a measured and calculated way began to exercise that power to effect dramatic economic change. Those measures included the drastic reduction of rents; the income redistributive effects of its measures; the establishment of a state sector in the economy; the seizure of land pursuant to a radical agrarian reform law; the order to U.S. oil companies to refine imported Soviet oil and the ultimate seizure of U.S. and British-owned refineries; the nationalization of all U.S. firms; the shift away from economic reliance on the United States through trade. And at scattered points Farber refers to the nature of popular support — apparently broad and enthusiastic support at times — for many such measures. (This apparent fact is one that sits somewhat uncomfortably in juxtaposition with not infrequent and emphatic references by Farber to the degree to which the people/masses allowed themselves to be manipulated by Castro.)

But one would imagine that if the Cuban revolution was occasioned by a(n economic?) contradiction that was ripe to be resolved (or overcome) that we might have a clearer sense from the narrative of the process of resolving the contradiction. (Farber appears not to offer an explicit judgment as to whether it was resolved.) We might have a better sense of how the relevant players understood the choices in those terms, what the calculus for making and acting on those choices was, and, if resolved, in which of the perhaps diverse ways in which they might have been resolved were they resolved. Was the historical choice limited to what might be intimated from the right-wing IBRD scenario or the historical-in-fact choice made by Castro and his colleagues? I think not, and imagines that Farber does not; I think there was much more room of personal agency and believe that Farber does as well. But if there was a failure of agency, then the most important lessons from Farber's book relate to why there was such a failure.

To give Farber the credit that is his due, he is in not inconsiderable measure attentive to failures of agency both prior to and during the revolution, among them opportunism and corruption; commitments to what might be viewed as a naïve or romantic idealism and a corresponding failure to develop a realistic, analytic understanding of relevant events and forces; and seemingly excessive credulous Cubans individually and collectively in the face of would-be leaders (or at least willingness to subordinate their judgment to those leaders). And these failures were not inconsequential factors in shaping the course of the particular period in Cuban history detailed by Farber. But if those failures were especially ones in grasping the contradiction which he suggests is so important to the very fact of there having been a Cuban revolution, or faultily acting on the comprehension so achieved, then Farber's essay would be that much convincing and powerful if we learn what those failures were. It would be that much more powerful if only because it would enable us to better understand how Cubans confronted that contradiction (or might have), the extent to which they resolved it (or might have), and the outcome that was attained (or could have been attained). But more importantly it would offer us both a base and a vantage point by which to assess the choices and prospects for change in post-Castro Cuba and, in turn, contribute (in the face of certain opposition) to the struggle for a more democratic, just, prosperous, and self-governing Cuba. Certainly, Farber's book (and other writing) suggests that he is well up to that further task.

The Nazis and Racial Purity

HORST BRAND

The Nazi Conscience
CLAUDIA KOONZ
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003

THE CORE OF NAZI IDEOLOGY resided in the belief that the ethnicity of the German people was based on, and could be safeguarded only by maintaining racial purity. This belief necessarily spelled the exclusion of Jews and others of "non-Aryan" parentage from the ethnic community. It provided a pseudo-intellectual rationale for anti-Semitism, which the political, non-religious anti-Semitism of earlier decades had not possessed, nor had it advocated that the Jews be deprived of their civil rights. The notion of racial purity also entailed emphasis on physical and mental health as the (unspoken) means to create a "master" race; and a disdain for the weak, ultimately murderous in its effects.

Claudia Koonz writes that prior to Hitler's ascent to power in 1933, "Germans . . . .were among the least anti-Semitic people" when anti-semitic acts and attitudes reflected in the popular press of France, Great Britain, Italy, and Rumania from 1899 and 1939 are compared. Hence, to reduce and finally to take away the civil rights of German Jews, to bar them from all public employment, and gradually prohibit their engaging in nearly all economic activity — in short, to transform "ordinary citizens who happened to have Jewish ancestors into alien beings, was no small task." Koonz undertakes to describe and analyze how this task was performed by the Nazis between 1933 and 1939, i.e., how the sort of "loose consensus" or "shared comprehension" emerged which, according to Raul Hilberg, sustained the intent of the leading Nazi official to exterminate the Jews of Europe and other undesirables.

Possibly, Koonz overstates the problem of inducing broad agreement among Germans to the Nazis' anti-Semitic programs and actions — not because the Germans were inherently anti-Semitic but because the Hitler regime did not hesitate to institute actions designed from the very beginning of its rule to seek to exclude the Jews from the civic and social life of the nation. True, the steps they took to do this were at first gradual but they were initiated decisively and unerringly, and in a climate that brooked no opposition, repressing any such opposition by the threat or reality of dire consequences.

It wasn't two months after Hitler had been appointed chancellor when he decreed the boycott of Jewish-owned stores and service businesses, enforced to the extent possible, by brown-shirted storm troopers and a few days later the dismissal of Jewish and politically suspect members of the civil service (exceptions were made, but reversed subsequently, of men who had served during World War I or whose sons or fathers had so served).

The boycott gave rise to some anger among the population at large, as well as bad publicity abroad. It may have led the Nazi leadership to seek more "respectable" paths of anti-Semitism. But a statement had been starkly made, both about the position of the Jews in the "new" German society as well as about the direction their future would likely take. "Erase the Jews from the community of the German people"

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was one of the calls addressed to the Nazi League of German Women, and it was certain that this goal of the boycott had been attained.[1] The burning of books by Jewish and other authors unacceptable to the Nazis, organized all over the country in May 1933, also showed that a "respectable" anti-Semitism was not of great interest to the Nazis.

It was surely no coincidence that the book burning, encouraged by the Propaganda Ministry of Joseph Goebbels, was carried out by university students. National socialism and anti-Semitism had gained wide acceptance in the academies. Outstanding intellectuals, such as Martin Heidegger, the philosopher, and Carl Schmitt, the political scientist, joined the Nazi party, and rationalized its anti-Semitic policies (or did not object to them). Germany's intellectual elite, moreover, was well represented in the S.S. (the Schutzstaffel or Guard): 40 percent of its members had a university education, compared with 2 percent of Germans generally. The S.S. had originally been formed as Hitler's personal guard but came to be stringently selected with a view to the Nazis' conception of eugenics — a corps of racially "pure" men, carefully distinguished from the storm troopers (whose leadership they murdered in 1934 on Hitler's orders).

The task of influencing opinion regarding the marginalization and exclusion of the Jews was not left merely to the obscenities and falsehoods of such publications as the *Stuermer*. It had to be articulated as part of a policy designed to heighten ethnic consciousness and to ensure mental and physical health based on racial heritage. The policy entailed an extensive program of sterilization of presumably feeble-minded persons. It was carried out by an Office of Racial Politics with the aid of 3,000 racial educators. The program was run by a relatively young physician, Walter Gross, whose biography and career Koonz details. An ardent Nazi, Gross thought that "undesirables," such as Jews, homosexuals, mentally feeble persons, gypsies, and others, should be "expunged from moral considerations." Catholics in particular objected to sterilizations, and relevant statistics, meant to propagate the practice, were eventually made secret. It is notable that some social workers also objected to the practice, which however did not hinder its continued execution.

The notion of eugenics was not confined to the Germans or its Nazi proponents. But the scale on which it was planned was astonishing. According to Koonz, 45,127 persons were sterilized between 1907 and 1945 in the United States. For Germany, an "internationally respected eugenicist, Friedrich Lenz, calculated that one million feeble-minded Germans (in a population of 65 million) should be sterilized." High officials of the regime presented far higher figures. An apparatus of panels and health experts would have had to be set up locally or regionally, that would also have the right to prevent marriages whose offspring might not meet eugenic norms. All this would have implied a transformation of deeply embedded values, which the Nazis were not at the time quite ready to tackle. But Gross and associates sought (by lectures, publications and comparisons of expenditures by government for healthy as against mentally less than normal children) to propagate the presumed need for eugenic selection. As might be expected, the program had an anti-Semitic edge: the Jews were denounced as having caused, and were causing, racial degeneracy.

MID-LEVEL FUNCTIONARIES like Walter Gross were essential to advancing the Nazi racial agenda in shaping and imposing the "conscience" that in time gave rise to the "genocidal consensus" allowing the murder of European Jews. Koonz' work is anything but a persuasive argument for the notion of a "Nazi conscience," and that notion fails all the more when we consider the failure of the German churches in matters of conscience relevant to Nazi racism. She virtually omits analysis of this problem.

It includes, however, a detailed presentation of the anti-Semitic views of Gerhard Kittel, at the time a well-known theologian and member of the Saxon branch of the German Christians who identified closely with the Nazi state (although the perceived extremism of their leadership caused some of their branches to disintegrate). Kittel evidently had a thorough knowledge of Judaism, which he placed at the service of the Nazis. He emphasized that even converted Jews must be kept separate from the German people, and all must be dismissed from public pursuits lest they expand their influence. He recognized that this would cause pain but the "pollution" of German blood was so great a danger that "moral hardness was the order of the day." Prior to the advent of the Nazis in 1933, men like Kittel had collaborated with Jewish teachers and students and had not expressed racist ideas. That may be the case. But it ignores the broader impact on Protestantism in Germany prior to Hitler's ascent of tendencies toward "political theology."

Political theology is the term applied by Klaus Scholder, in his authoritative work, *Die Kirchen und das Dritte Reich* (*The Churches and the Third Reich*, available in English from Fortress Press) to the tendency, especially during the post-World War I period, to integrate Protestantism and the ethnocentric notion of the "Volk." It is (or was) in particular associated with outstanding theologians, such as Emanuel Hirsch and Paul Althaus. Scholder writes, "one will not understand how Christians were prepared to accept the flood of hatred and meanness which the ethnocentric ("voelkisch") anti-Semites brought forth if one does not realize how political theology began to turn the right of the Volk into the essence of the divine will of creation."[2] One of the leading Protestant theologians thought that from the point of view of German ethnicity ("Volkstum"), "Anti-semitism was morally justified and conforms with obedience with the God-given law of nature."[3] yet, during the 1920's, the ethnocentrism of Protestant theology was opposed by such institutions as the Association for the Rejection of Anti-Semitism, which had been sponsored by Jewish groups during the late 19th century — but whose effectiveness and very existence depended on the democratic environment of Weimar and the toleration of the earlier imperial regime. Ethnocentrism, however, contributed to the anti-democratic forces that emerged during the Weimar republic's later years.

The April 1 boycott did give rise to widespread questioning among both Protestants and Catholics. One of the churches' outstanding lay leader, W. V. Pechman, a Munich banker and conservative Lutheran, demanded that the church speak up, that the church must not remain silent in the face of violation of Christian justice against Jewish fellow citizens. But the Protestants' top spokesman dared not speak out on the "Jewish Question," for fear that the churches would be "integrated" into the Nazi state — a fear unfounded. Yet, Scholder writes, none of the political threats to which the churches were exposed at the time were sufficient reasons for their own silence. That silence — the "great guilt of the Church at that time" — would surely have been breached, had the Church "not opened itself to the ethnic ('voelkisch') anti-Semitism during the 1920s." "The basic anti-Semitic mood, which was spread by the ethnocentric ideology in Germany, had . . . been absorbed and carried along by German Protestantism."[4]

Koonz has nothing to say about aspects of conformism of the Catholic Church with Nazi views. It may well be true that the leading Nazis "placed no value . . . on the part of German Catholicism to ingratiate itself with them," as Guenter Lewy writes in *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*. But the conformism just alluded to helped strengthen or legitimate the moral basis of Nazi racism and ethnocentrism. "Race, soil, blood, and people are precious natural values which God the Lord has created and the care of which he has entrusted to us Germans," said guidelines for religious instruction issued by the German episcopate in 1936.[5] "Blood and race . . . .have participated in the shaping of German history," declared Cardinal Faulhaber in a sermon in 1936.[6]

> "The old notions of the Jews as killers of Christ . . . continued to fester" —LEWY

It is true that over the long span of millennial history, the Church never impeded conversion by raising religious or racial or other objections nor did it advocate or practice the murder of the Jews, whom, in fact, it often tried to protect, at least verbally, against murderous attacks. Neither did it leave any doubt about its essential anti-Judaism. In his advent sermons in1933 (which attained considerable notoriety), Cardinal Faulhaber (head of the Munich diocese) preached that the Old Testament led to the emergence of Jesus as the Messiah, whom the Jews, however, refused to recognize as the anointed of the Lord—leading him out of the city and nailing him to the cross. That tore apart the covenant and his people, and since then they wander the earth, the eternal Ahasver (Wandering Jew). Thus, Guenter Lewy writes, " . . . the old notions of the Jews as killers of Christ . . . .continued to fester in the popular mind and provided nourishment for the more recent brand of anti-Jewish sentiment."[7]

The vast apologetic literature written by theologians, clergy and representatives of the Holy See after World War II bears witness to the widespread belief that a link existed, however tenuous at times, between the contempt of the Jews inherent in the Church's teachings and the lethal anti-Semitism of the Nazis. Koonz does not take account of this historical reality.

With all its thoroughness in probing the "Nazi Conscience," Koonz's study neglects the relationship of the creation of this conscience to the vast effort by the Nazis to rearm and otherwise militarize Germany during the 1930's, and ultimately to launch an imperialist war — imperialist because countries such as Poland and Russia had no significant German population, unlike Austria and the Sudetenland which had earlier been annexed on the pretext of "rounding out" presumably German lands. What then was the purpose of developing this "Nazi conscience" if non-German lands were to be invaded and occupied by masters from Germany?

The answer cannot be detailed here, and is summarized from Karl D. Bracher's writings.[8] Hitler's foreign policy during the 1930's aimed ostensibly at obtaining revisions of the Versailles Treaty — an aim to which the signatories of the treaty more or less agreed. However, writes Bracher, "we know today from the plenitude of unofficial documents that Hitler's goals remained undeviatingly subordinated to the ultimate conquest of "Lebensraum" (living space) in the East, and its ruthless Germanization." Hitler had made his intentions in this respect quite clear in various of his speeches to military and industrial leaders, as well as written about them in his political autobiography, *Mein Kampf*. Peace, he had written, would be brought by the "victorious sword of an ethnos of highly cultivated masters to whom the world would owe service."

In this vision, the persecution of the German Jews was but the beginning of the destruction of European Jewry at large, and eventually the creation of a "racial core," defined by the German masters, and to be guarded against "contamination."

The creation of the "Nazi conscience," itself possible only by the brutal repression of rival ideas and of the democratic spirit that can foster them, thus was part of the preparation of war.

For an economy as advanced as was Germany's even during the 1920s and 1930s, and as embedded in the world economy as a whole, the notion of "Lebensraum" was as reactionary or even fantastic as that of race. Koonz's work, which despite its flaws I consider indispensable for the study of the Nazis, gives ample testimony to this latter fact. She might have summoned the utter contempt expressed by Leon Trotsky as part of his explanation of National Socialism: "Bowing down before capitalism . . . the petty bourgeois declares war against the evil spirit of gain in the guise of the Polish Jew in a long-skirted caftan and usually without a cent in his pocket. The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority."(9)

NOTES

1. Klaus Scholder, *Die Kirchen and das Dritte Reich. Band 1, 1918-34*. Propylaeen Taschenbuch, 2000, 381.

2. Scholder, 159

3. *Ibid*.

4. Scholder, 387.

5. Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964, 163.

6. Lewy, 271-272.

7. *Ibid.*, 269-270.

8. "Voraussetzungen des Nationalsozialismus," in Karl Dieter Bracher, *Deutschland zwischen Demokratie and Diktatur*, Bern/Muenchen/Wien: 1964, 181 ff.

9. Leon Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971, 405. Be it noted that although the German Jews were indistinguishable in appearance or dress from other Germans, the Nazis attempted to convey how alien they were by portraying them in the garb of the "Polish Jew," as he had appeared as a poor immigrant, in earlier decades.

Iconoclastic Utopianism

MICHAEL LÖWY

THIS BOOK is both a brilliant essay in the history of ideas, and an intelligent intervention in the present political debate. Writing against the grain of the conventional wisdom that utopias are harbingers of totalitarianism, Russell Jacoby convincingly argues for the utopian dream of universal brotherhood, mainly represented in modern times by a dissident group of Jewish-German intellectuals, from Gustav Landauer to Max Horkheimer.

Picture Imperfect:
Utopian Thought for
an Anti-Utopian Age
RUSSELL JACOBY
New York, Columbia University Press
2005

We have become, regrets RJ, narrow utilitarians dedicated to fixing, not reinventing the world. The reasons for this decline of the utopian ethos are several: the collapse of the communist states, wrongly identified as "utopian"; the belief that utopia is inevitably "totalitarian"; and the impoverishment of Western imagination.

However, modern anti-utopianism has a longer history, starting after World War II, with the rise of a group of liberal critics whose writings helped to shape the dominant anti-utopian bias of our times: Karl Popper, Norman Cohn, J.L.Talmon, Hannah Arendt, Isaiah Berlin. All of them were Jewish, and most of them of German culture.

The first, and most influential, was probably Popper: his books, *Poverty of Historicism* (1944) and *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945) denounced utopianism — implicitly meaning "Marxism" — as inspired by the totalitarian aim of reconstructing society as a whole, instead of the liberal and democratic "piecemal engineering." In a similar vein, Jakob Talmon contrasted the trial and error pragmaticism of liberal democracy to the "totalitarian democracy" of political Messianism, while Isaiah Berlin celebrated negative freedom — *freedom from*, non-interference in individual action — as against "positive freedom," i.e., *freedom to*, which leads to totalitarianism. Though her starting point is very different, Hannah Arendt ends up, in her *Origins of Totalitarianism*, very close to Popper, contrasting a deadly "ideology," which claims total explanations of history, to the utilitarian thinking of "common sense." However, in her book on the Eichmann process, she seems to have changed her mind, arguing that the "banality of evil" represented by the Nazi bureaucrat, had little ideological content.

Today, regrets Jacoby, the anti-utopian ethos has swept all intellectual quarters. Conventional and scholarly wisdom associate utopia with violence and dictatorship, although the historical validity of such linkage is rather dubious: has not violence in the 20th century, begining with the two world wars, been the work of bureaucrats, nationalists and religious sectarians, rather than utopian dreamers ?

Jacoby distinguishes two main utopian currents: 1) the "blueprint" tradition, often authoritarian; it begins with Thomas More's *Utopia*,

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and it describes, with richness of details, the future life of emancipated humanity: what sort of dress people should wear, the number of rooms in the buildings, etc.; 2) the *iconoclastic tradition*, inspired by the biblical taboo on images, which refuses descriptions of the future, in order to celebrate general utopian values: harmony, leisure, peace, solidarity.

Not all Jewish thinkers acknowledged the biblical taboo on images.

It is the second current which interests Jacoby: being a sort of "anarchic breeze in the house of utopia," it does not fit at all with the dogmatic image of utopianism presented by its liberal oponents. It begins with Karl Marx himself, whose utopian temper shunned depicting the future and refused all "recipes for the cookshops of the future." But its main representatives are Jewish-German thinkers, whose writings are full of romantic, mystical, and poetical longing for the future. For instance, Martin Buber and Gustav Landauer, two anarchist thinkers who dreamt of communal settlements and molecular human interrelations, but rejected blueprint utopias. Or the Weimar iconoclastic utopians: Ernst Bloch, Gershom Scholem, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer. The biblical ban on graven images is one of the main sources of their attitude: as Max Horkheimer once wrote, "Critical Theory originates from the thought: you should make no image of God."

KAFKA'S LITERARY WORK is also an exemple, according to Scholem and Benjamin, of a "negative utopia." Utopia is inseparable from the critique of existing conditions: according to Adorno, "we are not allowed to cast the picture of utopia, but we know exactly what the false thing is," and therefore, "the true determines itself via the false." This Hegelian logic of negativity is present in many iconoclastic utopias.

Of course, not all Jewish thinkers aknowledged the biblical taboo on images and abstained from describing the ideal society: for instance, in his book *Altneuland*, Theodor Herzl tries his hand at a typical blueprint utopia, and was harshly criticized by the iconoclastic utopian Zionist Ahad Ha'am.

A world without utopian longings, concludes Jacoby, would be a forlorn world, a journey without a compass; and politics without the utopian impulse would turn mechanical and colorless.

Jacoby's argument is very persuasive, but I would raise two objections:

1) Not all visions, descriptions or images of the future are rigid and authoritarian "blueprints." Many are free-spirited products of imagination, propositions to be discussed, without any constraining character. A good example is William Morris' literary and libertarian utopia, *News from Nowhere*, hardly mentioned in the book.

2) Ernst Bloch, one of the main examples of iconoclastic utopianism for Jacoby, did not describe the future, but his main works — such as *The Principle of Hope* — are an inexhaustible search for utopian images and visions in the past, including various kinds of Socialist "blueprints" and wish-landscapes. The same applies, to some extent, to Martin Buber.

In any case, Russell Jacoby's book is a most welcome and insightful contribution to a renewal on the debate about utopias, beyond and against the conventional pieties of the liberal *doxa*.

Moishe Postone's Dialectic of the Abstract
The Critique of Pure Theory

LOREN GOLDNER

Karl Marx was first of all a revolutionary.

—FREDERICK ENGELS, Highgate Cemetery graveside speech, 1883

The total movement in this form of appearance. Finally, those three (wage, ground rent, profit/interest) sources of revenue of the three classes of landlords, capitalists, and wage laborers — the class struggle as conclusion, into which the movement and the dissolution of all this shit resolves itself.

—Marx to Engels, 1868

> Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory
> MOISHE POSTONE
> Cambridge University Press, 1993 (2003 reprint)

IN THIS IMPORTANT but slightly maddening book, Moishe Postone spends a lot of time demarcating his outlook from what he calls "traditional Marxism." This traditional Marxism, in Postone's rendition, seems to encompass virtually every self-designated Marxist from the death of Marx onward. In fact, Postone mentions almost no one who has escaped from "traditional Marxism." Rudolf Hilferding, Georg Lukács, I.I. Rubin, Paul Sweezy, Maurice Dobb, Ronald Meek, Joan Robinson, Ernest Mandel, Henryk Grossmann, Oskar Lange, G. A. Cohen, Lucio Coletti, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Friedrich Pollock, Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Herbert Marcuse, and Jürgen Habermas all come in for their licks. Others, less ensconced in the academic universe to which Postone addresses himself, from Lenin, Trotsky, and Rosa Luxemburg by way of C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya (who published the first English translations of the *1844 Manuscripts* in their mimeographed militant newsletter in 1947), to Amadeo Bordiga, Jacques Camatte, or Guy Debord, barely merit a nod, or none at all.

What is this "traditional Marxism"? It focused excessively on "private ownership," the "market," and "distribution." It had a "transhistorical" view of labor, seeing labor both before and after capitalism in terms that are appropriate only for capitalism, thereby repeating classical political economy's "eternalization" of capitalist social relations. It saw Marx as a completion of the labor theory of value of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, rather than a radical break with that theory; it talked of "political economy" rather than the critique of political economy (Marx's subtitle for *Capital*). Traditional Marxism criticized capitalist society "from the standpoint of labor," as if labor were something "extrinsic" to capitalism, rather than critiquing the "constituting" role of labor as something unique to capitalism, and something to be abolished. "Traditional Marxism," for Postone, imagined its task to be that of freeing industrial production from capitalist social relations rather than seeing indus-

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trial production itself as a capitalist social relationship. It overemphasized, for Postone, "class struggle" and exploitation as the core of Marx's critique. It advocated the emancipation of the proletariat rather than the dissolution of the proletariat. In some instances, it had a Feuerbachian understanding of man in capitalism as alienated from an essence to be realized in socialism. It saw capitalism strictly as 19th-century liberal capitalism, based on the market and private property, and was thus unable to adequately critique "real existing socialism" (what some of us called Stalinism). It over-emphasized the anarchic (for Postone, market-driven) side of capitalism, and argued that atomized individuals would finally be "socially mediated" in socialism, in contrast to capitalism. Traditional Marxism saw its goal as a new form of "distribution" in a society still ruled by wage labor, value, and commodity production. It understood the proletariat as the "universal class" which "comes to itself" in socialism. It imagined socialism as something whereby the working class would "reappropriate" something of which it had been "expropriated." Traditional Marxism was unable to deal with the growing importance of scientific knowledge in the capitalist production process. It saw history as linear. It focused on "crisis" but did not "address qualitative historical changes in the identity and nature of the social groupings expressing discontent and opposition" (13). The "socialism" articulated by traditional Marxism is today "unconvincing," as "central planning" and "state (or public) ownership."

Everyone, today, can recognize a large swath of truth in some, perhaps most of the above characterizations. Not too many people miss Stalin's Russia, Mao's China or the "Third World socialist" regimes that emerged from the period of decolonization, in which, along with the largely defunct mass socialist and communist parties of Europe, different variants of "traditional Marxism" had their heyday. Fewer still look to surviving relics such as North Korea or Cuba. The most radical elements of the 1960s and 1970s upsurge, from *Socialism or Barbarism* in France, Eastern European "Marxist humanism" (Leszek Kolakowski, the Yugoslav Praxis group), the Situationists, or the Italian workerists mainly rejected these regimes as viscerally as they rejected the (Keynesian) Labour and Social Democratic welfare states of the 1945-1975 period.

But Postone's critique goes much farther. For him, "traditional Marxism" encompasses not merely the nearly forgotten ideologues of the "planning state," east, west or south, but many of the currents which emerged from the 1950s to 1970s as a self-styled break with the statist currents: Marx's *1844 Manuscripts*, Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*, the Frankfurt School's critique of "instrumental rationality," and much of the Hegel renaissance. While these latter developments undermined the old bone-hard "materialism" of Stalinism and Social Democracy, they argued for a view of the working class as an historical "subject" that was supposed to achieve the "subject-object identical" with the existing productive apparatus. Not good enough, in Postone's view. These currents, strengthened by the popularization of the 1840s Marx and the recovery of the centrality of the Hegel-Marx relationship, still agreed in important ways with the less Hegelianized traditional Marxists about socialism as control of the existing industrial apparatus, whether by nationalization and planners or by workers' councils (the latter being an apolitical utopia, in Postone's view). They still believed in the working class as the revolutionary class. Postone's perspective, on the contrary, is a "critique of labor in capitalism," and "suggests that the working class is integral to capitalism rather than the embodiment of its negation" (17). (Didn't Marcuse in *One-Dimensional Man*, say the same thing 40 years ago, with less theoretical heavy-lifting than Postone?) Postone's interpretation of "Marx's material critical theory" argues that "what the Marxist tradition has generally treated affirmatively is precisely the object of critique in Marx's later works" (17). Marx's analysis is not about any instrumental explanation of class "interests." Postone sets out to focus rather on "value, abstract labor, the commodity and capital." These latter are

> …categories of a critical ethnography of capitalist society taken from within—categories that purportedly express the basic forms of social objectivity and subjectivity that structure the social, economic, historical and cultural dimensions of life in that society, and are themselves constituted by determinate forms of social practice. (18)

Traditional Marxism, says Postone, has too often understood these categories as purely "economic." Postone's rendition of Marx's "categorical analysis" asserts, rather, that value, abstract labor, the commodity and capital are "determinative of social being within capitalism." Postone means to "dispense with evolutionary conceptions of history and with the notion that human life is based upon an ontological principle that 'comes into its own'" (20).

Much as I find Postone's book vexing, I cannot deny that it is provocative and important, above all important to critique. It forced me to go back and verify what I thought I remembered from many "canonical" texts. Far from falling into a predictable track, it develops its argument with new turns almost up to the end of its 400 pages. It might be easy to summarize, as I have initially and briefly attempted, but it is extremely difficult to summarize meaningfully. Postone says he has grounded "this dialectic's fundamental features on . . . an abstract logical level" (302) and he is certainly right about that. But unlike the Grundrisse or Capital, wherein Marx employed a dialectic of the abstract *and* the concrete, moving from what Postone calls Marx's "categorical" unfolding of capital to historical material and back, Postone mentions the "real existing world" only in the briefest of passing nods. Grubbing in factory inspectors' reports or the immanent critique of contemporary "economics" is not what he is about. One might be tolerant of this approach in light of the high level of abstraction required by Postone's argument; such a level has its place. But Marx, unlike Postone, regarded communism as the "real movement that abolishes existing conditions" (*The German Ideology*), the "real movement unfolding before our eyes" (*The Communist Manifesto*), and was constantly taking pains to show the "real movement — the working-class movement, pace Postone — in its immanent relationship to the "inverted world" of capital as he unfolded his categories. Postone, by contrast, makes the most sweeping judgments about the shortcomings of "traditional Marxism" and the working class, but has next to nothing to say about where or even who his "old mole" might be.

One rather quick way, albeit by a side entrance, into Postone's abstract universe is his discussion of "really existing socialism," the former Soviet Union and its progeny. Though not front and center in his book, it is one constant presence underpinning the "traditional Marxism" Postone wants to undo. After all, the question of "what went wrong in Russia" still hovers over any discussion today of the "crisis of Marxism." Many of the "traditional Marxists" mentioned earlier busted their chops on the question of the nature of the Soviet Union. But while Postone's ability to make use of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* is far superior to that of the typical Frankfurt Schooler, in his discussion of "really existing socialism" (90-104) he relies exclusively on the writings of Frankfurt School economist Friedrich Pollock from the late 1930s. Pollock called the Soviet system "state capitalism" but was unable to discern the operation of the law of value in its dynamic. Like virtually everyone in the apocalyptic late 1930s who attempted to critically understand the Soviet Union using Marxist categories, Pollock found the newly emergent system difficult to grasp. He was hardly alone. Like many others, Pollock's main frame of reference on what constituted capitalism was 19th century liberal capitalism, and not finding it in the Soviet Union, but not finding "emancipation" either, Pollock concluded that the Soviet system had abolished value in the Marxist sense, but had replaced it with regimented bureaucratic planning, and not the triumph of the working class. From this (Stalinist) experience and from fascism, Pollock embraced a "pessimism" about any possible positive supersession of capitalism, a pessimism that was taken over by the Frankfurt School generally, Horkheimer and Adorno first of all.

Grubbing in factory inspectors' reports or the immanent critique of contemporary "economics" is not what he is about.

They are, of course, welcome to their pessimism, and they had plenty of company in embracing it at "midnight in the century," as Victor Serge called those years. But why, more than fifty years later, is Postone attempting to overcome his own Frankfurt School lacunae with an exclusive focus on what *these* people concluded about Stalinist Russia? In the same years as Pollock, Lucien Laurat, Leon Trotsky, Max Shachtman, and C.L.R. James were attempting, within a Marxist framework, to understand whether "really existing socialism" was a class or a caste society, and of what type ("degenerated workers' state," state capitalist, "bureaucratic collectivist"). A few years later, Raya Dunayevskaya wrote her first article demonstrating the operation of the law of value (a term, revealingly, that Postone never uses) in the Soviet Union. After the Second World War, important further Marxist (or, perhaps, "traditional Marxist") contributions on the question of "state capitalism" were written by James, Dunayevskaya, Paul Mattick, Sr., Cornelius Castoriadis, Tony Cliff, Rita di Leo, Pierre Naville, David Rousset, and Amadeo Bordiga. (Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski opted for the bureaucratic collectivist analysis, and Hillel Ticktin developed a critique *sui generis*.) These people and this work do not exist for Postone and his academic interlocutors, so the reader is left with Pollock's (and Horkheimer's, and Adorno's) pessimism over some major impasse of the seemingly main thread of "traditional Marxism." East Berlin, 1953? Hungary and Poland, 1956? Poland, 1970 and 1980-81, arguably setting the stage for the final demise of "really existing socialism"? Since Postone believes that the working class is not and was never Marx's historical "subject," none of these theoreticians or messy historical episodes intrude into the "abstract logical level" of his dialectic.

Following his demonstration of how the Frankfurt School founders got sidetracked by Pollock's pessimism, grounded in "traditional Marxism," the sole post-World War II theoretician Postone considers (and rejects) as representing a worthy attempt to overcome this pessimism is Jürgen Habermas, who gets thirty-five pages of critique. (He, too, is unable to fully free himself from traditional Marxism's belief in the working class.) And the post-1945 work of Castoriadis, James, Dunayevskaya, Raniero Panzieri, Mario Tronti and Antonio Negri, theorizing the postwar revolt against the assembly line in France, Italy, Britain and the United States? And the consequences of that revolt (from the 1955-1973 period) which (among other things) is the historical moment that produced Postone, and against which the last 30 years of history must be understood as an extended counter-offensive by capital? Habermas gets thirty-five pages, but such empirical, "positivist" considerations don't make it onto Postone's "abstract logical level" and don't merit even a mention. "Many interpreters," he writes, "have proceeded too quickly to the analytic level of immediate concrete social reality" (20); this is decidedly not Postone's problem. His corrective is instead to virtually ignore such reality.

Such criticism should not distract attention from Postone's serious merits. The core of his analysis is drawn from the first part of Vol. I of *Capital*, and Marx's discussion of concrete labor and abstract labor, the latter being the basis of value in Marx's sense. Postone thinks that "traditional Marxism" has misconstrued this analysis, understanding "concrete labor" in a "physiological," "transhistorical" sense that sees labor's role as something that existed prior to, and will exist after capitalism. What this "traditional Marxist" confusion misses, according to Postone, is the unique peculiarity of labor in capitalism, its "peculiarity" (*Eigentuemlichkeit*) in constituting the totality of society (to use his language), unlike labor's role in any previous mode of production, and something to be overcome, rather than glorified. Postone sees capital as a set of "abstract social structures" which are "quasi-independent" and which condition *both* abstract and concrete labor.

In some sense it can be said that Postone's book comes down to a critique of most previous Marxists for not having read, or integrated, the so-called "Unpublished Chapter Six" of Vol. I of *Capital*, which first became available only in the 1950s, and only made it as an appendix of Vol. I in the Ben Fowkes English translation of 1976. In this (in fact remarkable) chapter, Marx analyzes a "formal subsumption of labor by capital" in which commodity exchange and then the entire capitalist valorization process invades and takes over previous production processes; this characterizes the (17th and 18th century) phases of cooperation and manufacture. This is followed, for Marx, by a "real subsumption of labor by capital", the phase of heavy industry, in which capital forges a technology appropriate to itself, and reduces most labor to its completely interchangeable form of "abstract labor." In the unpublished sixth chapter, Marx is in effect saying that labor and technology in the phase of real subsumption (sometimes called real domination) are not something to which capitalist social relations are "extrinsic," but rather that they are themselves capitalist social relations. This being the case, a "traditional Marxist" project of freeing this specifically capitalist technology and the labor conditioned by it is in effect a capitalist utopia, whereas true emancipation implies the critique and supersession of both such technology and such labor. About the latter, Postone is dead right. He lays the foundation for a radical critique of existing technology as well as of existing science as the "materialization of a social relationship."

If Postone had said only this, not to mention elaborating it with some empirical material, his book would be impeccable, though he might have mentioned authors such as (the early) Jacques Camatte who were saying the same thing 35 years ago. Unfortunately, Postone gets to the unpublished sixth chapter only halfway through the book (182), and he seems unaware that a whole literature, particularly in France, was going over much of the same ground from the early 1970s onward. This perceptive core, however, is written over with a number of other claims that are highly dubious. The most important is his attack on the idea of the working class as "subject," the latter articulated by Lukács first of all in the 20th-century process of "recovery" of the Hegel-influenced Marx. Postone at times sounds almost like Louis Althusser with his talk of "quasi-independent," "abstract social structures" which become a quasi-autonomous Subject. Postone makes far too much of one passage in vol. I of *Capital* (1976) in which Marx does call value the "Subject," but he rides roughshod over a whole different side of the book, including passages of the selfsame Unpublished Chapter Six.*

That side is Marx's analysis of the "inverted world" (*verkehrte Welt*), which he takes over and transforms from Hegel and Feuerbach, and which is a thread in his work from the 1844 Manuscripts to the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* to *Theories of Surplus Value*. It is characteristic of Postone's presentation that when (137) he quotes the famous "Trinity" passage from the concluding part of vol. III, he quotes only:

> Capital-profit (or better still capital-interest) land-ground rent, labor-wages, this economic trinity as the connection between the components of value and wealth in general and its sources, completes the mystification of the capitalist mode of production, the reification of social relations, and the immediate coalescence of the material relations of production with their historical and social specificity. (968-969 of the 1981 Fernbach translation)

. . . not indicating that the final part quoted ends in a colon, not a period, and that it continues:

> the bewitched, distorted and upside-down world haunted by Monsieur le Capital and Madame la Terre, who are at the same time social characters and mere things.

The original German says:

> *die verzauberte, verkehrte und auf den Kopf gestellte Welt wo Monsieur le Capital und Madame la Terre als soziale Charakter und zugleich unmittelbar als blosse Dingen ihren Spuk treiben.* (Berlin 1975, 838)

…where we see that Fernbach in turn has mistranslated the crucial philosophical term "verkehrte" as "distorted" and not "inverted," thereby (inadvertently or not) burying the Hegel-Feuerbach allusion, and even more remarkably, totally omits the phrase "ihren Spuk treiben," which the old English translation at least bothered to render, not implausibly, as "do their ghost-walking."

The absence, in Postone's book, of attention to the centrality of "inversion" (*Verkehrung*) in *Capital* and in *Theories of Surplus Value* is another expression of the flawed character of his book. Marx's work is a phenomenology of the self-abolition of the proletariat, the latter being the commodity form of labor power. Postone is certainly right that "traditional Marxism" by and large did not see this, and glorified the working class and the industry produced by capitalism as a healthy substratum to be "freed" in "socialism." But that said, Marx's focus was always on the self-emancipation of the proletariat. What else were he and Engels doing in the First International? What else shines through Marx's writings on the Paris Commune?

Remaining in his lofty (but admittedly indispensable) realm of abstraction, seemingly oblivious to the concrete history of the "real movement that abolishes existing conditions" as the force which drives the evolution of its inverted form, capital, Postone only gets it half right. He makes capital the subject of history, and fails to come up with a subject that will go beyond it.

*Postone further seems unaware that Marx removed that very passage from the French edition of Vol. I of Capital under the impact of the Commune, and the last edition of Capital that Marx himself oversaw personally. Most 20th-century readers outside the French-speaking world knew Capital from the fourth German edition (1890) which was still the basis of the new (1976) English translation.

Artificial Minds, Virtual Bodies

MEL BIENENFELD

The Singularity is Near
RAY KURZWEIL
New York: Viking, 2005

FORGET THE END OF HISTORY. Forget the Proletarian Revolution; forget the Second Coming. This is *big*.

According to technology entrepreneur Ray Kurzweil, human beings are in the process of transforming themselves into practically immortal beings, part biological and part manufactured, each with an intelligence far exceeding that of the entire present human race. This stage in our evolution is the Singularity. (In mathematics and physics, when a point called a singularity is approached, change occurs with increasing and unbounded rapidity) Beyond this point, which Kurzweil confidently dates around 2049, our main preoccupation will be to colonize the entire universe with our intelligence.

One might hesitate before reading a book that sounds like it was written by an overenthusiastic reader of technology magazines and science fiction novels. But Ray Kurzweil is a successful and well-respected developer of artificial intelligence devices with medical, military, and other applications, listed by *Inc*. magazine in 2005 as eighth on a list of "Most Fascinating Entrepreneurs." He is one of five members of the Army Science Advisory Group, and inventor of a popular line of music synthesizers, originally co-designed with Stevie Wonder. Recently he has established himself as a futurist author with a series of books (*The Age of Intelligent Machines* [1990]; *The Age of Spiritual Machines* [1998]; *Fantastic Voyage: Live Long Enough to Live Forever* [with Terry Grossman, M.D., 2004]) in which he has made increasingly broad projections from contemporary technological developments to the spectacular future of a human-machine civilization.

The Singularity is Near is worth reading for a take on some possibilities of the vanguard of high-tech research and on the imagination of one of its leading practitioners. It fails, however, as a prediction of the most far-reaching social change in human history, not primarily for its extreme technological projections, but for its almost total failure to consider the concrete social processes by which technological possibilities might become practical realities and the institutions that might then adapt to the new technology.

Kurzweil argues that technological evolution is part of physical and biological evolution. The same accelerating pace of the organization of matter that underlay the development of galaxies, stars, cells, complex animals, and the human brain will lead inexorably towards the development of the superintelligence he is predicting. A sudden rapidity of technical change is natural because, as with compound interest, an increase from a base which has itself already grown may suddenly seem much more significant than earlier, smaller increments of growth. (Biologists do not generally share this view of evolution as an accelerating drive toward greater complexity, a point Kurzweil does not mention.)

Using this logic of acceleration, Kurzweil extrapolates from past trends in computing speed and price-efficiency to predict the computing power available in the near future. He

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then estimates the power necessary to achieve the Holy Grail of artificial intelligence: the achievement of human-level thinking in a machine. By his account, this power will be available and cost-effective by 2025.

To convince readers that his technological predictions are on target, Kurzweil takes us on a tour of cutting-edge research, some practical and some more speculative, in three high-tech fields: genetics, nanotechnology, and robotics. Each of these fields is undergoing a revolution. In genetics, molecules that could perform a given function in the body can now be simulated theoretically, hastening the development of real body-altering molecules (drugs). Kurzweil quotes Cambridge University geneticist Aubrey Grey, whose research goal is stopping the aging process (213): "All the core knowledge needed to develop *engineered negligible senescence* is already in our possession" (italics in original).

We can have sexual experiences in which the body we choose and experience for ourselves will not be the same as the one our partner chooses for us.

Nanotechnology consists of the creation of tools and machines several nanometers — billionths of a meter — in length. A core vision of its practitioners is the creation of a "molecular assembler," made of trillions of tiny robots, which would be able to make almost anything out of the basic building blocks of atoms and molecules. The cost of all manufactured products would thereby become almost negligible. Kurzweil adds his own prediction that these "nanobots" could be made to manufacture real meat in a factory, eliminating both animal suffering and world hunger.

The theoretical predictions of nanoscience have been furthered by such research as a General Dynamics study for NASA showing that molecularly precise robots are able to reproduce themselves and a New York University project involving the construction of a tiny robot that literally walks on two legs, ten nanometers long, made entirely of DNA. And the concept has also been extended beyond manufacturing to medical uses. Nanoparticles can be guided to specific sites in the body; a nanopill developed at McGill University is able to pass through the cell wall in order to medicate targeted structures inside. Nanobots might someday travel inside the bloodstream to perform scans, treat diseases, and help reverse the aging process. As evidence for the realism of the medical nanobot project, Kurzweil cites "at least four major conferences" dealing with the subject (254).

By far the most important technological revolution from Kurzweil's point of view is in robotics, or artificial intelligence (AI). AI technology has already become quite sophisticated in using non-sequential forms of computer instructions in which a system "self-organizes" by (for example) refining initially random attempts at success by "learning" improvements, according to certain feedback rules. Kurzweil mentions specific products like a General Electric jet engine designed by a "genetic algorithm" which was programmed to "evolve" according to an increasing "fitness" rule. (A simulated engine which performs its functions better than other designs "survives" to be refined still further in the next "generation.")

He also gives us an enlightening rundown of the current uses for what he calls "narrow AI." Highly prominent are military applications like cruise missiles and the Predator drone, introduced in Afghanistan in 2002; other examples include unmanned spacecrafts that can "make decisions" on how best to repair themselves when damaged; medical devices that diagnose electrocardiograms or detect cancer via pattern recognition; business software to optimize the logistics of a work environment (the logistics involved in Desert Storm were managed by an AI company expert in business logistics); and speech recognition devices.

All of this, however, is not at the level of "strong AI" (humanlike intelligence), the advent of which Kurzweil calls "the most important transformation of this century" (296). He has an apparently unshakeable faith that this transformation will be achieved, and that its consequences will be essentially limitless. "[I]ntelligence is the most powerful 'force' in the universe," he says. "Intelligence, if sufficiently advanced, is, well, smart enough to anticipate and overcome any obstacles that stand in its path" (206). And elsewhere: "there are no limits to our ability to understand ourselves — or anything else, for that matter" (198).

In his description of the post-Singularity future, he posits that the human-machine civilization we will have created will have to expand its computing power forever. (He explains neither how human societies will come to work towards a common goal nor why our need for computing power will become limitless.) We will already know how to use any matter we find anywhere the way we now use silicon chips to store and process information; nothing will stop us from harnessing all the matter in the solar system for this purpose. Then we will have "no choice but to expand outward" (351), colonizing the entire universe with intelligence at speeds perhaps faster than light, thus rendering it "alive."

THIS FAUST-LIKE THIRST for indefinitely increasing intellectual power is perhaps matched by Kurzweil's interest in longevity and immortality. "I view disease and death at any age as a calamity, as problems to be overcome" he wrote in *Fantastic Voyage*. In the late 1980s he successfully reversed his own diabetes with a self-created health program that since evolved into a longevity regimen (developed with his M.D. collaborator) involving 250 oral supplements per day and six intravenous ones per week. The results (biological age sixteen years below chronological age) are reported to the readers of *The Singularity is Near*. Kurzweil continues to encourage his fellow aging baby boomers — both in *Fantastic Voyage* and on the web (Fantastic-Voyage.net and RayandTerry.com) — to join him in ensuring that they are in good health at the time when technology will finally allow them to "live forever."

Kurzweil outlines a scenario by which the vision combining the dreams of limitless intelligence and immortality will gradually become a reality in the next several decades. By 2009 the computer as a large physical object will disappear, to be replaced by devices in walls, furniture, clothing, and, eventually, our bodies and brains. Computer miniaturization will continue, replacing silicon chips first by individual specialized molecules and eventually by changes in the state of forces within the atoms of ordinary matter. In the 2010s a "website" will be a full-immersion visual-auditory (but not fully sensory) virtual reality environment. Late in that decade people will be able to share virtual work environments without the need to be physically present in a particular location.

Progress toward strong AI will accelerate with an increased understanding of how the human brain works. The brain will be "reverse engineered" (that is, its functioning will become entirely understood) with the aid of non-invasive scanners, at first similar to functional magnetic resonance imaging, but by the 2020s achieving much finer resolution by having harmless blood-cell-sized nanobots actually enter the brain. (Kurzweil quotes nanotechnology theorist Rob Freitas, whose studies indicate this is feasible.)

Software mimicking brain function will be developed shortly thereafter. The brain, it is true, does not "work like a computer," which follows a sequential set of instructions. Its functioning is highly distributed (not controlled by a central coordinating unit), self-organizing (train-able), non-deterministic (including random elements), and deeply connected. But AI has already learned how to model mathematically, and then simulate computationally, such processes. Kurzweil argues that this can be done with sufficient accuracy to achieve a machine that works like a mind.

Simultaneously, nanotechnology will be reshaping our lives. According to war plans promising "more precise missions with fewer casualties," pilotless airplanes delivering weapons will be replaced by "missiles" the size of bees, and armies by swarms of small robots. (He comments neither on the recent track record of "smart" and lean armies, nor on why people will still fight wars in an era when the world's resource problems will have been solved and we can share our personalities the way computers share files.)

Medical nanotechnology will produce a superior human body. Nanobots will efficiently extract only the nutrients we need and reject excess calories. Eventually nutrients will be introduced directly into our blood, so that eating real food will only be for pleasure (the food will be cleanly eliminated by nanobots). Shortly thereafter we will eliminate the heart (blood will be self-mobile) and lungs (nanobots will take care of respiration).

This process will accelerate with the achievement of strong AI. At that point we will begin serious interfacing between machines, on the one hand, and brains and bodies, on the other. (There are already FDA-approved brain implants to manage Parkinson's disease, and the Pentagon is spending $24 million dollars per year on brain-machine interface.) By the 2030s and 2040s, we will be able to change our bodies at will using nanoscale manufacturing. We will also create virtual bodies — which we will experience as fully real — by modifying both the external world and our nervous systems. Fully convincing virtual reality will allow us to experience many environments and have emotional and sexual connections with others who may be people we know or may be only "virtually" real. We can have sexual experiences in which the body we choose and experience for ourselves will not be the same as the one our partner chooses for us.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, around 2030 non-biological intelligence, functioning at electronic rather than merely chemical speeds, will be merged into our brains. Machine intelligence will quickly be able to learn all of the mental skills of the entire human race, including its emotional, artistic, and other creative capabilities. A few years later we will begin to "upload" the contents of our brains — our entire personalities — to a non-biological computational substrate.

Gradually throughout the 2030s and 2040s our "selves" will be transferred to this non-biological part of our intelligence, which will by then overwhelmingly dominate because of its superior power. This superiority will be ensured by "runaway" AI, as increasing intelligence continually figures out how to create still more powerful intelligence. The distinction between human and artificial intelligence will disappear. Our intelligence will need a physical embodiment, but by now a virtual body, experienced as real and changeable at will, will be entirely sufficient. Our indefinite survival will only depend on periodic maintenance of our "mind files."

Will any of these developments pose dangers we should be wary of? There is one, says Kurzweil, and the nanotechnology community is discussing means of dealing with it. If nanobots are self-replicating, they can potentially get out of hand, intentionally or accidentally infecting people or the environment like any biological pathogen. But he rejects solutions based on relinquishing self-replication, or on heavy government regulation, on the grounds that technological advance ought not to be slowed. He favors instead the open free market, which will create a "technological immune system" protecting us from the non-biological germs the way computer security systems now protect us from software viruses.

For me, Kurzweil's pre-Singularity scenario leaves many questions unanswered, including how else our future bionic selves will spend their time besides pigging out with impunity, exploring video-game worlds, and having kinky virtual sex; how people will retain individual identities if the contents of their personalities can be shared like computer files; and what our super-brains will possibly be thinking that requires all the matter in the universe to carry out the computation. But most unsatisfying is the absence of a sense of how each technological marvel will actually be introduced into our ordinary lives.

Kurzweil does not go much further than to suggest that, just as with the internet or mobile phones, the use of new devices will gradually spread from "early adopters" (who use them while they remain expensive) to eventually include everybody. He does include a section on the impact of the march towards the Singularity on various aspects of life, but most of this just further describes how the new technologies might be used rather than suggest a social process by which all of us might come to derive their benefits.

The discussion of the impact on work is perhaps the most concrete in this sense. Kurzweil predicts that "the underclass" will disappear in two or three decades, as cheap, abundant food sources are introduced; that automation will accelerate as information processing increasingly dominates most work processes; and that work will become decentralized as virtual environments are introduced. But there are no predictions regarding what people might actually do at work, whether the most rapid reorganization of work in history might be implemented by companies without extreme disruption to the lives of workers, or how new living arrangements in this virtual era would change the landscape of our social geography.

And there is no suggestion of any other social difficulties to be overcome on the road to the Singularity. What will happen to human reproduction and the family when nobody dies and people create their own bodies? What conflicts will be created by the inevitable unevenness in the availability of health-improving technology? Apparently this type of question, in Kurzweil's mind, comes under the objections of the "Luddites and environmentalists" who are his foils throughout the book. These misguided people stir up trouble and stand in the way of progress, but will create only an inconvenient bump in the road as the obvious benefits of new technology become apparent to all. The "Criticism From the Rich-poor Divide" is nothing but a problem of reducing the lag time between early and late adopters.

What will happen to human reproduction and the family when nobody dies and people create their own bodies?

But technologies like the public provision of clean drinking water and prevention and treatment methods for many common diseases are already cheaply available, while a shocking percentage of the world's people nonetheless die because these necessities are unavailable to them. It is hard to imagine masses of people lining up twenty-five or thirty years from now in Bolivia, Botswana or Bangladesh for their nanobot injections.

I ALSO DID NOT FIND CONVINCING many of Kurzweil's responses to those skeptical of the possibility of a computer functioning like the human brain. Neuroscientist Anthony Bell has argued that a computer is inherently dualistic, its physical structure merely a means for implementing its programs, while the mind and the brain/body are not in principle separable. Kurzweil says that this argument is "easily dispensed with" because the computer's ability to separate the program from its physical instantiation is an advantage rather than a limitation, but I think he misses the point. Bell's comment regarding dualism is, I believe, related to what Kurzweil calls the Criticism from Holism. In this view, intelligence, like other biological survival mechanisms, is not a separate module that can exist standing free from the bodily systems that allow an organism to exist in a physical-chemical (and, in the case of humans, cultural) environment. Kurzweil's faith in an abstract intelligence that is nonetheless humanlike and possesses consciousness does seem to me to be based on a dualistic view of humanity — physical brain and body "housing" a separate spiritual or intellectual consciousness — which is now discredited among many neuroscientists.

It is difficult for a non-expert to assess how realistic any part of Kurzweil's vision — radical increases in longevity, machines that can think like humans, even brain enhancement with machines — may be. The gaps in his thinking, however — specifically his lack of consideration of the social reality with which a culture-revolutionizing technology must engage, and his assumption of an eventual solution to all technical problems — lead me to want him to back up a few stages. Before indulging in grand predictions, I would first like to have seen an analysis of how the current state of genetics, nanotechnology, and robotics is impacting our lives. For this a much more detailed and focused look at contemporary developments would have been necessary, and, in fact, a different book would have been written.

Interview with Nick Thorkelson

KENT WORCESTER

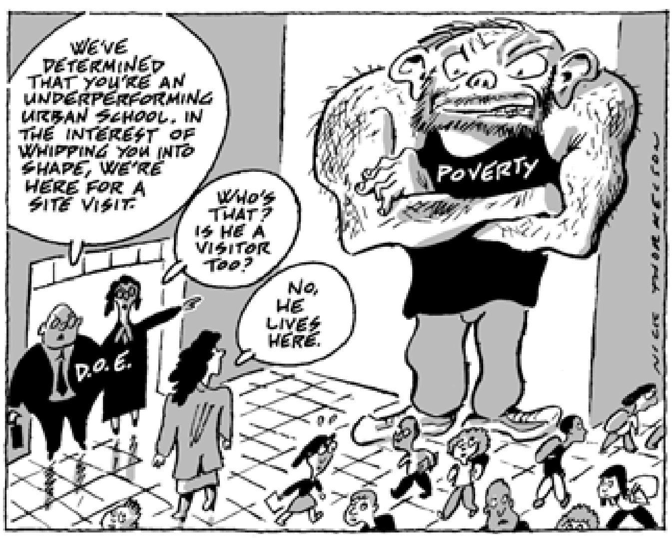
HOW DID YOU DECIDE to become a cartoonist? Who are some of the cartoonists who have inspired you over the years?

I don't know if I ever decided to become a cartoonist. I was called! Being thrilled by the best of the cartoons I saw was certainly a big factor. For me it was Walt Kelly's *Pogo* and *Mad Comics* first and foremost. Harvey Kurtzman, the original editor of *Mad*, was an okay cartoonist but a great editor/writer who elicited spectacular results from several amazing cartoonists, my favorite being Wally Wood. I loved George Herriman's illustrations for *archy and mehitabel*, George Price's early *New Yorker* cartoons, Ronald Searle's drawings for "How to be Topp" and its sequels (the conceit being that the drawings were by the misanthropic schoolboy narrator, Nigel Molesworth), and Carl Barks's Uncle Scrooge stories. As I got interested in politics I became a devotee of Art Young and George Grosz, and an admirer of Thomas Nast and Homer Davenport. Cartoonists of my generation or younger who have inspired me include Robert Crumb, Bill Griffiths, Spain Rodriguez, Lynda Barry, Joe Sacco, Marjane Satrapi, Gilbert Hernandez, and Ben Katchor.

> I can be a cartoonist without foregoing coarseness or humor or attitude.

As someone who paints, draws, and works in the field of graphic design, why do you continue to produce cartoons? What is it about the cartoon medium that you find appealing from a political and/or artistic point of view?

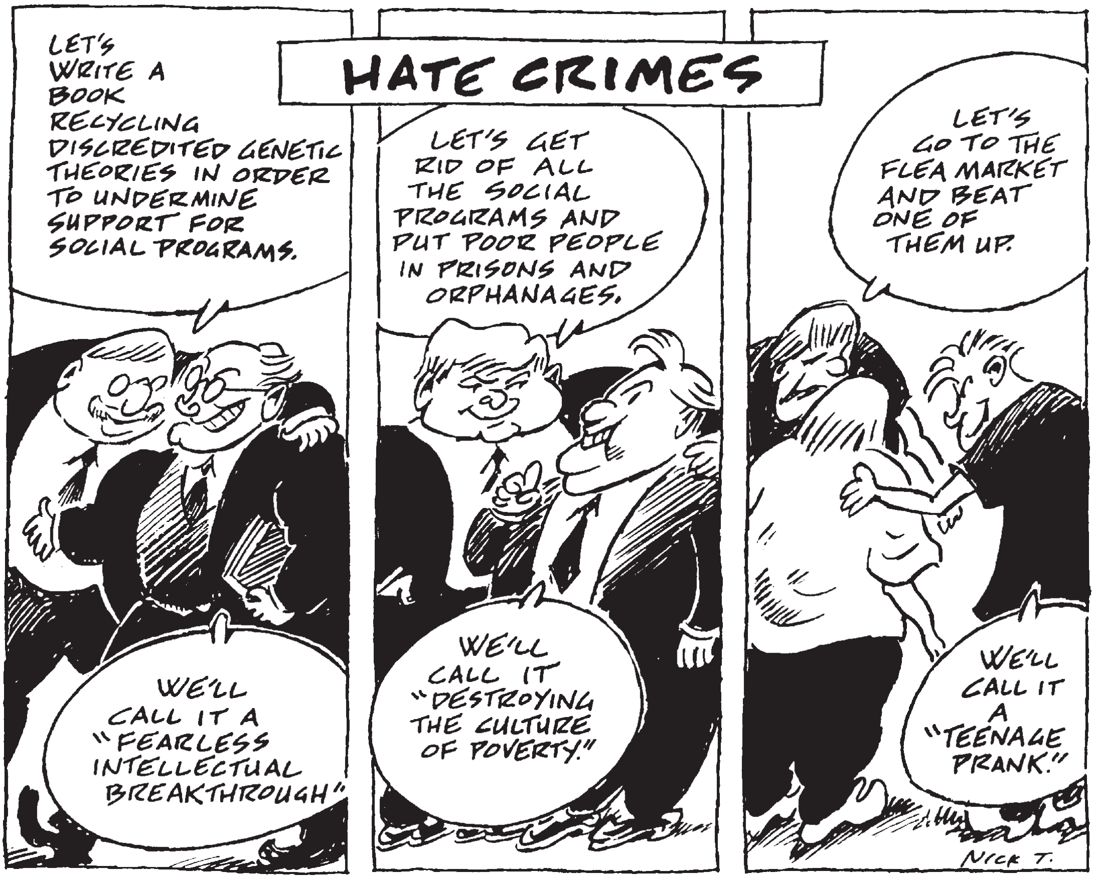
When the modernists decoupled art from narrative, cartooning took up the slack, the need to tell stories and make arguments through imagery. But a cartoon, unlike a 19th century academic painting, can succeed without being charming or spatially convincing or beautiful. For me this means I can be a cartoonist with-



First appeared in The Boston Globe

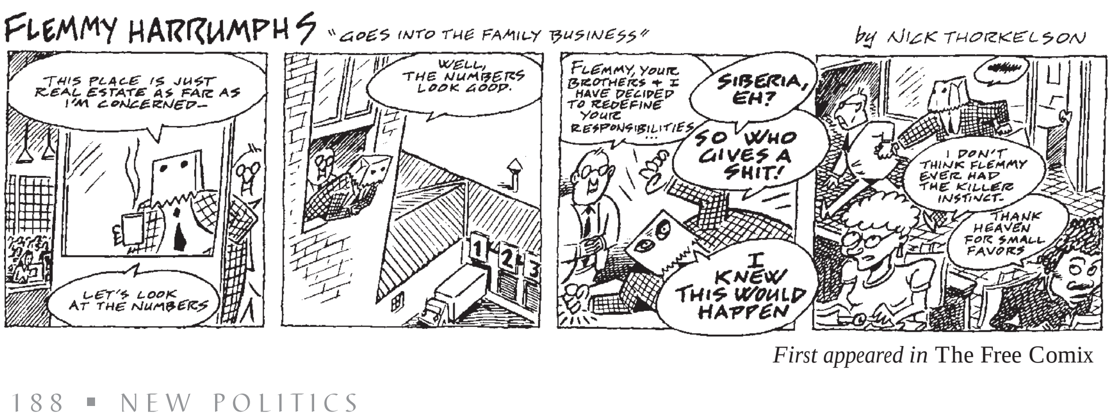
KENT WORCESTER *is the coeditor (with Jeet Heer) of* Arguing Comics: Literary Masters on a Popular Medium *(University Press of Mississippi, 2004).*

NICK THORKELSON*'s comics include* The Underhanded History of the USA *(with Jim O'Brien) and* The Comic Strip of Neoliberalism. *He is currently working with Sue Rice, Leonard Rifas, and Jen Flores on a comic book about journeys taken with the expectation of being transformed, to be called* Fortune Cookies. *His website is nickthorkelson.com.*



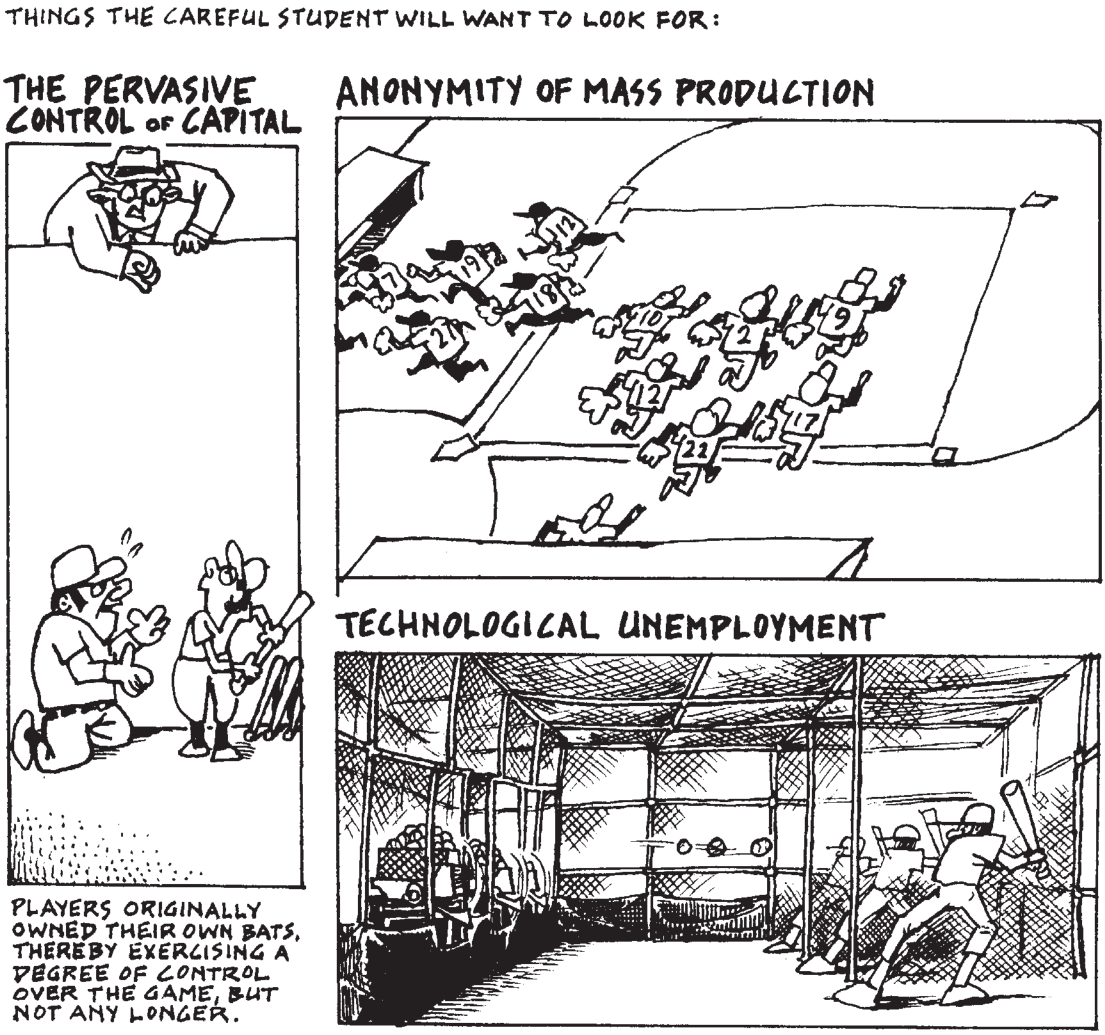
First appeared in The Somerville Community News

out foregoing coarseness or humor or attitude, plus I don't need to know anatomy. Technically, I suppose you could say cartooning is not really a medium. Most cartoons appear in print — newspapers, leaflets, books, brochures, comic books, magazines — some on film, TV, the internet, etc. These are all media, each having its own particular tone, and cartoons behave differently in each. I have been happiest doing cartoons in black ink on newsprint, an intrinsically provocative medium which, at its best, focuses our minds on the disparity between what we need and what we get, and even makes us willing to do something about it. The best po-



First appeared in The Free Comix

BASEBALL
A Marxist Analysis



Text by Jim O'Brien. First appeared in Radical America

litical cartoons are diagrams of criticism, yearning, indignation, etc. — all the folderol of politics — that telegraph their demands directly to our spirit.

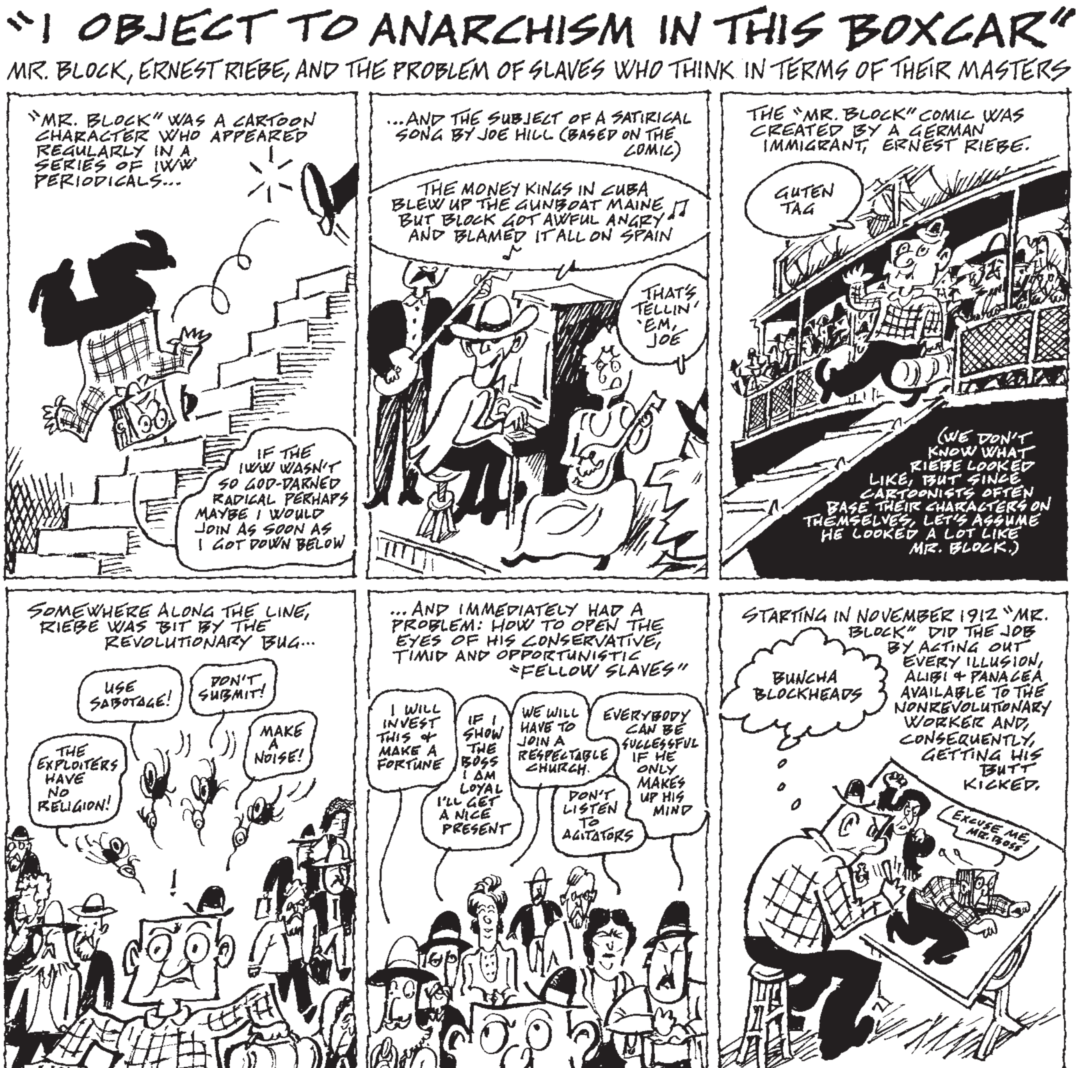
So, to answer your question, when I compare cartoons to the other things I do, I guess I feel like they allow me to be more politically direct, more effective.

What sort of response do you get from readers? Have you produced any cartoons that were especially controversial? Is it difficult to be a left-wing cartoon-

ist in the current political climate?

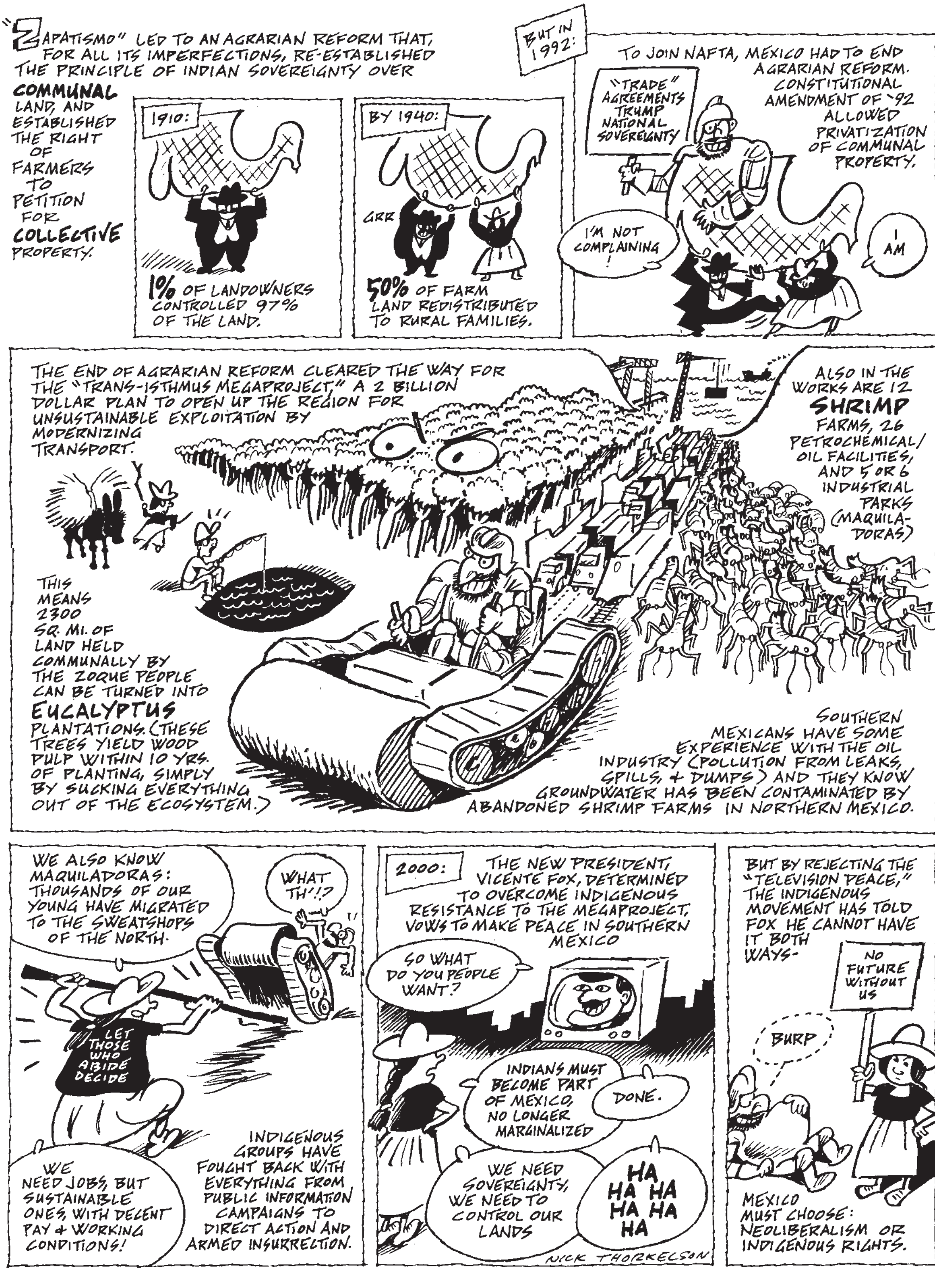
I'll give you the best and the worst. "Megadreams of Hyperdevelopment," a comic on land use and development struggles in southern Mexico, was very warmly received by indigenous organizers in that region, even though most of them didn't know enough English to understand the words. This led to our doing a Spanish version for organizers of the anti-PPP (Plan Pueblo Panama) movement, who printed and circulated it widely. On the down side, when I was doing cartoons for the *Boston Globe* I got an angry letter from an African-American man who told me his community did not share my complaints about charter schools and vouchers. Your question reminds me of what I like least about cartooning, which is that you really don't know what response you're getting — e.g., my *Glob*e toons were presumably seen by hundreds of thousands of people, and I have no idea what most of them thought.

I would say it's relatively easy to be a left-wing cartoonist in this climate (there are so many of us compared to when I was young).



First appeared in Wobblies: A Graphic History of the Industrial Workers of the World

Dan Wasserman, my mentor at the *Globe*, told me he stopped getting hate mail a long time ago. It's certainly easier to put out a cartoon calling the president a liar on the first day of a



First appeared in Dollars and Sense

war than to stand up in the cafeteria where you work and say the same thing. I don't mean to denigrate the great work that's out there — on the contrary, I think that with radical/alternative comics we are living through one of those thrilling cultural convergences like cubism or rock n roll, where the stars are all lined up to allow many people to do fantastic work in the same vein. But I wish we were more of a threat to the powers that be.

As a working artist and cartoonist, how would you assess the Danish cartoon controversy? Should cartoonists strive to avoid offending people of faith?

I had mixed feelings about this. I think iconoclasm is a perfect fit with cartooning. I remember during the 60s how much I loved Frank Cieciorka's blasphemous and obscene cartoons in *The Realist* (e.g., "One Nation Under God"). It's not that I think nothing is sacred, I just don't count monotheism among the sacred things. On the other hand, the Danish cartoons were clearly meant to provoke a beleaguered and humiliated sector of European society. I wasn't surprised to discover that it was a right-wing newspaper that originally published them. When I saw them they struck me as sadly consistent with the vast majority of political cartoons that you always see: shabby allegories of self-righteousness and profiling. So on the one hand you have self-righteous Danish publishers who commissioned the toons to distract people from the truly vicious dogmatism of neoliberal Christendom, and on the other hand the self-righteous Muslim leaders and clerics who stirred up the mob to distract them from the corruption and failure of their governments, and in the process they reminded us that cartoons can be really upsetting, which is a good thing. Go figure.

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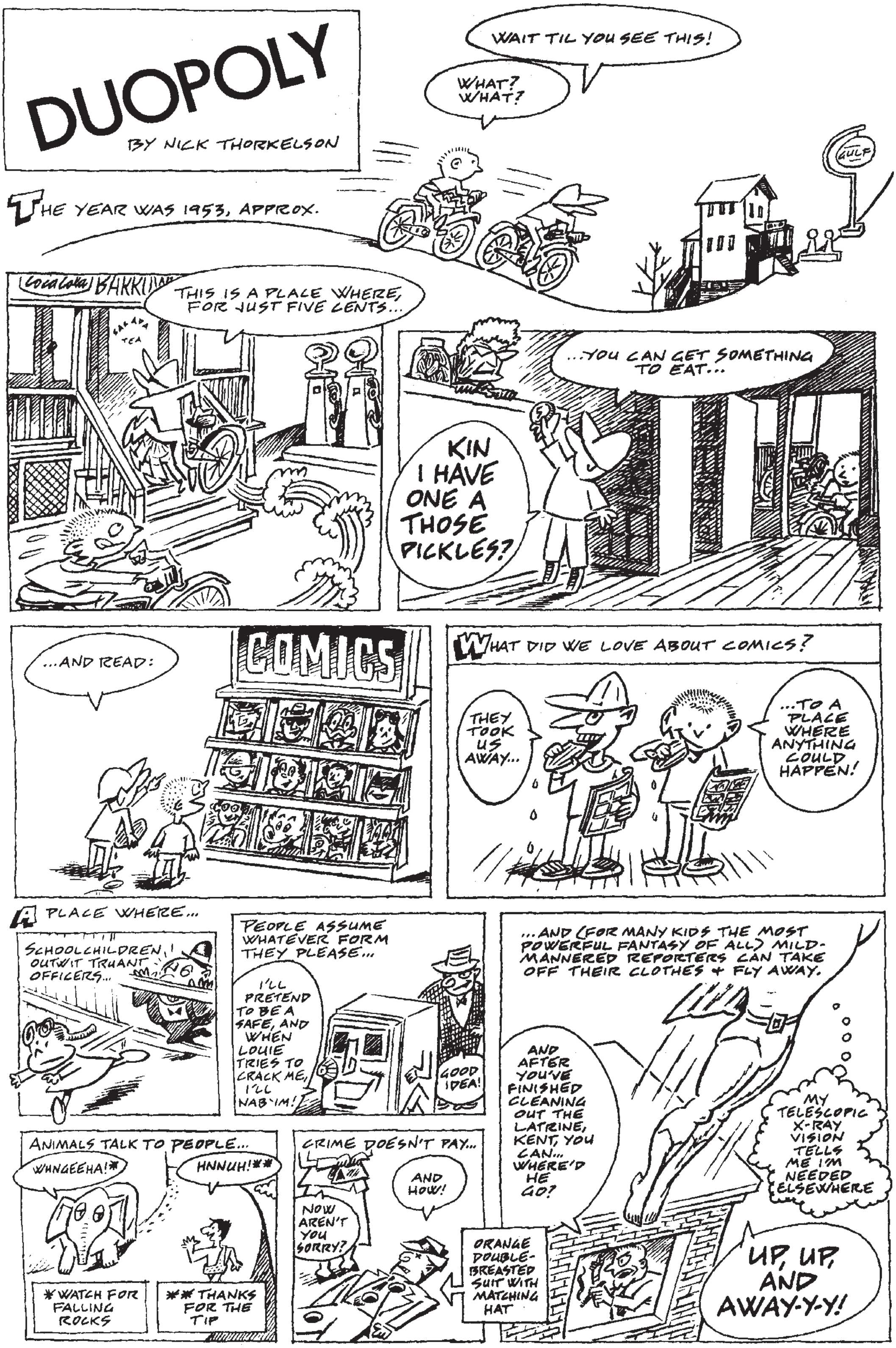

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