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EDITORIAL

What democratic radicals decide they should do over the next few years could have real importance. The Reagan administration is foundering and along with it the ideal of a free economy undistorted by governmental intervention, powerful trade union pressures, or subversive ideologies. If it should go down, as a result either of electoral defeat or of embarrassing compromises with the Keynesian devil, it would mean more than another typical chapter of American political history in which the bright promise of a new beginning soon crumbles in the face of political realities. It would signify that there are no longer any meaningful alternatives; that between liberal solutions of centralized state planning, regulation, and welfare programs on the one hand, and Friedman-Kemp-Laffer solutions of the free market, deregulation, tight monetary controls, and the drastic reduction of all social programs on the other, the major possibilities of the system have been exhausted. All that remains are variations on a theme, either by Keynes or Adam Smith.

This bleak prospect is beginning to be glimpsed and to produce desperation on both sides. Liberals have not forgotten that during the last half of the Carter presidency it was evident that liberalism was a spent force, that the stagnation Keynesian analysis could not explain, Keynesian policies could not cure. Liberals also know that whatever else the Reagan election might have meant, it was unequivocally a repudiation of the nostrums of liberal political economy that had guided the destinies of the nation for nearly a half-century.

The Democrats in Congress promptly acknowledged bankruptcy, and during the first eighteen months of Reagan's tenure they stumbled over each other in a frantic effort to imitate, sometimes even to outdo, the Reaganites in inventing tax breaks, giving away pipelines, reducing social services, and raising defense spending. That the Democrats had not the suspicion of a program became painfully clear after the November 1982 elections when they were forced to produce a jobs bill that turned out to be a caricature of past liberal policies: spending millions and creating very few new jobs.

Edward Kennedy's decision not to contest the presidential primaries snapped the last link between the present party and its liberal past. Coming in the aftermath of the midterm elections, the decision was an epitaph for a missed opportunity. The evidence suggests that the voters were in a more rebellious mood than the party, that they were prepared to follow a bolder lead, and that the Democratic gains were a modest token of what might have been had the party managed to muster a convincing alternative. Democrats are now in the undignified position of having more to fear from Reagan's failure than from his successes.
The situation is not much better for the ideology that crystallized behind Reagan and inspired the reactionary program whose early success in Congress brought admiring comparisons with the Roosevelt Hundred Days when many of the fundamental New Deal reforms were enacted. The Reagan counterrevolution has ground to a halt because it could not deliver on its economic promises without further destroying the living standards and future expectations of millions of Americans. The nature of that failure cannot be overemphasized because it is the measure of the harsh, authoritarian, and inegalitarian future we have, for the moment, avoided. This was primarily because of rising discontent over proposed increases in defense expenditures and the spread of unemployment, not because of deep anger about the rest of the agenda of the counterrevolution. What failed was a set of policies that had been inspired, handwritten, and hand-delivered by the most powerful representatives of corporate capitalism. Big business has never had a more pliant administration, a more sympathetic president, more of its hirelings in high office, or more academic intellectuals and media experts ready to advise, justify, and, above all, excuse. Not since the turn of the century has there been an administration so opposed to the economic and educational aspirations of ordinary men and women or to the promise of social, racial, and sexual equality.

Disenchantment with Ronald Reagan can be expected to intensify but only to the point where liberals and conservatives come to realize that the failure of their rival is not a matter for rejoicing because the shared assumptions between both sides have always been greater than the differences. Which is why the system has run out of alternatives.

The temptation that faces the democratic radical in this situation is to labor to produce new policies for everything from defense to social security. This would be a mistake. The main lesson from the failure, first of the liberals and now of the conservatives, is that there can be no solutions to the problems of the economic system. The reason for this is simple. If by a problem we mean some state of affairs, such as unemployment, the flight of capital, or widening disparities in income, that is unprecedented in capitalist history, or inconsistent with it, then the harsh fact is that these problems are not problems within that system. However regrettable they may seem, they are not obstacles that have to be overcome if the system is to continue. They are inherent, or "structural," that is, part of the continuing and necessary price of the unprecedented wealth that the system is said to create.

The problems, then, are consistent with the system, even inevitable. Unemployment is a recurrent condition produced by the need of capitalists to adjust the labor force to market conditions and changing technology. Already there is widespread talk in the higher circles that 7 percent unemployment will have to be
accepted as the average likely under conditions of economic recovery. Capitalism likewise never promises a wise use of natural resources, a concern for natural environments or human communities, a solicitude for the health, safety, or old age of its work force, or the likelihood of meaningful work except for the executive class. Only the possibility of social unrest brings these problems to the attention of business leaders; otherwise they are nonproblems.

These considerations define the social tasks of government in the political economy of corporate capitalism. Government is deeply into the business of damage control. It devises and administers programs to tend the casualties of business cycles, assembly line conditions, industrial pollution, and urban decay or city blights. By definition, welfare and health programs do not reform the basic structure of power, production, or ownership: they treat its victims.

The system cannot be challenged or changed so long as citizens accept the terms of understanding inculcated by politicians, the media, and all of the foundations, think tanks, and independent experts subsidized by corporate money. The ideology that now blankets public discourse asserts that there is some reified, free floating, independent entity—"the economy"—whose needs and whims decree that every citizen below a certain income bracket shall passively submit to whatever elected officials, bureaucrats, corporate executives, and experts determine is necessary to enable the economy to "recover." The result is a crazy upside-down world: human lives and aspirations are adjusted, even subordinated, to the system, while no one in public life ventures to suggest that maybe the first question is what our needs and aspirations are as a people and where should we try and formulate them. That question turns things right side up: it is the system that should be adjusted and subordinated.

The reason why the world remains inverted is because the dominant ideology teaches that the economy is a special world that must not be treated in a political way. Of course at this moment politics is an enormous and shaping factor in the economic decisions actually being taken. But it is a politics that is largely hidden, conducted in private, and shaped by managerial and corporate values. it is politics played out primarily on the terrain of the interests of the major corporate institutions. It is essentially a politics of intramural negotiation.

A political approach to the economy would insist that what is at stake is the well-being of the collectivity, of a society that seeks to order its common life by certain defining values of justice, democratic citizenship, and a commitment to reducing disparities of power, wealth, education, and life-prospects.

A political approach would reject the claim that the economy is autonomous. What it is and what it should be have to be considered in the light of consequences for a wide variety of common purposes. We need to ask how we as a people want to be in the world with other peoples—as economic rivals? as an imperial power frozen into hostility with communism? as making a new beginning in a long process toward developing democratic relationships among different
peoples instead of relying almost entirely on communications between a handful of leaders and their deputies? We need to think of an economy as something more than decisions about alternative allocations of scarce resources, their production and distribution within the context of an international system of economy—as economies rather than *the* economy so that productive activity will no longer be directed or conceived as though it did not have profound implications for the possibilities of civic activity. Citizens cannot be expected to measure up to the demands of democratic political life if their formative experience in the workplace teaches hierarchy, subordination, discipline, and a fragmented experience. We need, above all, to consider the economy as a legitimate object of citizen action, legitimate because in shaping the economy to common needs we are, in effect, reclaiming our own powers—our skills, our bodies—shaping them to our purposes rather than allowing them to be extracted from us like raw materials, then processed and transformed into money and commodities that become the means of tying us to a system of necessity and desire.

This would mean going beyond a simple demand for worker participation in the workplace or representation of workers and consumers on the boards of corporations, or any other proposal that infuses a bit of democracy into economic relationships. A truly democratic approach would judge these by the criteria of a society that is historically committed to the proposition that members own their powers, that collectively they have a right to decide how those powers shall be organized so as to be consistent with the terms of democratic association—terms that include equality, justice, and freedom but require the widest participation in and diffusion of power.

—Sheldon S. Wolin
January 21, 1983
Along with West Europeans and the Japanese, Americans are constantly reminded that they live in "modernized" or "advanced" societies. Although these terms have come to mean many things, it is generally agreed that, minimally, they are meant to identify a type of society in which economic growth is the main goal and the practical application of science is the means. An advanced society can be distinguished from all previous social formations by the self-conscious decision it makes to base itself on scientific knowledge and the continuous technological innovation that that knowledge promises.

Technology is, of course, as old as civilization. Today its novel feature is its planned, systematic development. Technology is no longer the spontaneous creation of an obscure genius, "the Wizard of Menlo Park," but a product of economic and industrial strategies. Technology has always played some role in warfare, just as it has in the history of medicine. Yet technology is now so firmly embedded in military planning and health services that it is no exaggeration to say that technology is military power, and that if the odyssey of Dr. Clark's artificial heart is any harbinger of the future, it is rapidly becoming the quintessence of a new form of social power directed not so much at the care of the body as at its reconstruction.

These examples of the penetration of science and technology could easily be multiplied until in the end it would be clear that we have become a society constituted primarily by these two forms. As our ideal of genuine knowledge science is our theory, while technology, as our ideal of useful knowledge, is our practice. The combination has left its mark on how we live, as individuals and as a collectivity. It has made many necessities mere matters of convenience. Many areas of life are now safer, healthier, and more productive. Above all, our powers have been magnified beyond those available to any previous society. "The impossible takes a little longer" used to be a piece of common folklore of technological society. The achievements of science and technology seem to have provided objective proof for the existence of progress, certainly more objective than Anselm was able to give for the existence of God.

During the last fifteen years, however, the gloss has somewhat faded as the unwanted consequences of technology and science have crowded in, giving us our first technological total war in Vietnam; our first serious nuclear accident at Three Mile Island; the first destruction of communities, such as Love Canal and Times Beach, as a result of the disposal of toxic wastes; and the first realization that the health of thousands of workers has been seriously, even fatally, damaged as a result of continuous exposure to pesticides, asbestos, and petro-chemical processes.

Once we lived expectantly, waiting for the latest scientific breakthrough
and technological marvel; now we live somewhat nervously in the shadow of any number of potential, even imminent disasters. Our new society should remind us that technology and science are neither neutral nor independent nor unambiguous. Above all they are not conceived immaculately, and scientists and technologists cannot claim innocence or pass the buck to politicians with the excuse that scientists do not determine how or for what purposes their discoveries will be used. Science and technology have been profoundly shaped and influenced by public choices. Unfortunately those choices have rarely been publicly arrived at—that is, by the public. Unfortunately science policy and technological assessments have been developed in exactly the same political context dominated by corporate money and influence and bureaucratic power as all other policies. Most science is Big Science, subsidized by public funds, occupying elaborate installations, voluntarily at work on evermore destructive, pain-producing weapons, and snugly integrated into the operations of business corporations. Technology, too, bears the mark of capitalism’s way of doing things: heedless of consequences, often destructive of settled ways of life, careless of the obsolescence it wreaks upon human virtues and skills, and indifferent toward all forms of action save those that promise further changes in how we shall live.

During the 1960s there appeared an important body of critical literature on technology and its social implications, notably by Lewis Mumford, Jacques Ellul, and Arnold Gehlen. For reasons that are not altogether clear, that tradition of critical, informed inquiry was interrupted. In the hope of rekindling interest in some of the problems spawned by science and technology this issue of democracy was prepared. David Noble’s article, the first of a two-part piece, draws on the experience of Luddism to open a debate about how technology has been made to serve a cult of the “future” such that the urgencies of the present are conveniently ignored. One response that has been made is the “Technology Bill of Rights” proposed by the International Association of Machinists, which addresses the impact of new technology on the skills, health, and economic and political well-being of working people. Christopher Lasch explores the influential writings of Doris Lessing and shows a strain that is symptomatic of a certain technological utopianism, which Lessing elsewhere seems to deplore. Max Pfeffer shows the effects of technology upon the structure of the agricultural work force and the future of the family farm. Evelyn Fox Keller investigates the deep structure of scientific hypotheses and finds attitudes and ideology suggestive of themes of domination. And Jean-Christophe Agnew looks at various theories that have elevated scientists and their intellectual brethren into the ranks of a “new class.”

democracy hopes that these discussions will be the first step toward making science and technology a permanent part of our dialogue.

—S.S.W.
There is a war on, but only one side is armed: this is the essence of the technology question today. On the one side is private capital, scientized and subsidized, mobile and global, and now heavily armed with military-spawned command, control, and communication technologies. Empowered by the second Industrial Revolution, capital is moving decisively now to enlarge and to consolidate the social dominance it secured in the first. In the face of a steadily declining rate of profit, escalating conflict, and intensifying competition, those who already hold the world hostage to their narrow interests are undertaking once again to restructure the international economy and the patterns of production to their advantage. Thus, with the new technology as a weapon, they steadily advance upon all remaining vestiges of worker autonomy, skill, organization, and power in the quest for more potent vehicles of investment and exploitation. And, with the new technology as their symbol, they launch a multimedia cultural offensive designed to rekindle confidence in “progress.” As their extortionist tactics daily diminish the wealth of nations, they announce anew the optimistic promises of technological deliverance and salvation through science.

On the other side, those under assault hastily abandon the field for lack of an agenda, an arsenal, or an army. Their own comprehension and critical abilities confounded by the cultural barrage, they take refuge in alternating strategies of appeasement and accommodation, denial and delusion, and reel in desperate disarray before this seemingly inexorable onslaught—which is known in polite circles as “technological change.” What is it that accounts for this apparent helplessness on the part of those whose very survival, it would seem, depends upon
resisting this systematic degradation of humanity into mere disposable factors of production and accumulation? To be sure, there is a serious imbalance of power between the opposing forces, and perhaps an immobilizing fear on the weaker side in the face of so awesome an assault. But history is replete with examples of how such weaker forces have valiantly defied, and even triumphed over, the stronger. Why then this striking lack of resolve against the new technological offensive?

In search of an explanation for this apparent paralysis, and a cure for it, this essay explores beyond the constraints of the current crisis to focus upon older and more fundamental handicaps. Rather than examining the well-known enemies without—the tactics and threats of multinational corporations that are daily reported in the press and chronicled by a spectrum of specialists—this analysis examines the enemies within—the opposition's own established patterns of power and inherited habits of thought that now render it so supine and susceptible. These internal foes, at once political and ideological, can only successfully be overcome by means of direct and frank confrontation, which is the task begun here.

In outline, the opposition suffers from a fatalistic and futuristic confusion about the nature of technological development, and this intellectual problem is rooted in, and reinforced by, the political and ideological subordination of people at the point of production, the locus of technological development. This twofold subordination of workers, not alone by capital but also by the friends of labor (union officials, left politicians, and intellectuals), has hardly been accidental. Rather, it has served the interests of those who wield control over labor's sources and ideas. For the political subordination of workers has disqualified them from acting as subjects on their own behalf, through their own devices and organizations, and thus has minimized their challenge to the labor leadership. And the ideological subordination of the workers has invalidated their perceptions, knowledge, and insights about what is to be done, and has rendered them dependent upon others for guidance, deferential to the abstract and often ignorant formulations of their absentee agents.

Such subordination has handicapped the opposition to the current technological assault in several ways. First, and perhaps most obvious, it has eliminated from the battle those actually on the battlefield of technological innovation, those best situated to comprehend what is happening and to fight effectively. Second, in denying the possibility of people at the point of production participating on their own behalf in the struggle, the opposition has lost as well its understanding of what is actually happening—an appreciation that arises only from daily confrontation, extended experience, and intimate shopfloor knowledge. Finally, the political and ideological subordination of people at the point of production has entailed a removal of the technology question from its actual site and social context, with serious consequences.
While this removal of the technology question has perhaps strengthened the position of the friends of labor, vis-à-vis the workers themselves, it has weakened them vis-à-vis capital. For without any power rooted in the self-activity of the workers at the point of production, the friends of labor have become more susceptible to the power of others. And without a firm grasp of reality based upon experience, they have become abstract in their thinking, and more vulnerable to the ideas of others. (It must be emphasized that this is not a matter of individual integrity or weakness but rather a powerful cultural phenomenon that has influenced everyone.) The impotence and ignorance resulting from the double disqualification of people at the point of production, moreover, have manifested themselves in profound intellectual confusion about the nature and promise of technological development itself. Abstracted from the point of production, and therefore from the possibility of a genuinely independent point of view, the opposition's own notion of technological development has come to resemble and ratify the hegemonic capitalist ideology of technological necessity and progress. For it too has become a mere ideological device, an enchantment, and an opiate. The idea of technology has lost its essential concreteness, and thus all reference to particulars of place and purpose, tactics and terrain. And without moorings in space the disembodied idea has wandered adrift in time as well. Technological development has come to be viewed as an autonomous thing, beyond politics and society, with a destiny of its own which must become our destiny too. From the perspective of here and now, technological development has become simply the blind weight of the past on the one hand, and the perpetual promise of the future on the other. Technological determinism—the domination of the present by the past—and technological progress—the domination of the present by the future—have combined in our minds to annihilate the technological present. The loss of the concrete, the inevitable consequence of the subordination of people at the point of production, thus has resulted also in the loss of the present as the realm for assessments, decisions, and actions. And this intellectual blindspot, the inability even to comprehend technology in the present tense, much less act upon it, has inhibited the opposition and lent legitimacy to its inaction.

This essay examines the origin of this paralysis and the ideas that sanction it, looking in turn at the first and second Industrial Revolutions. The aim is to regain the concrete by affirming the perceptions of those at the point of production, thereby to reclaim the present as a locus of action—while there is still time to act. For people at the point of production were the first to comprehend the full significance of the first Industrial Revolution and to respond accordingly. And, they have been the first to see the second Industrial Revolution for the devastating assault that it is—not because of their superior sophistication at dialectics but because of what it is already doing to their lives—and to respond accordingly. The purpose here is to acknowledge, endorse, and encourage their response to
technology in the present tense, not in order to abandon the future but to make it possible. In politics it is always essential to construct a compelling vision of the future and to work toward it, and this is especially true with regard to technology. But it is equally essential to be able to act effectively in the present, to defend existing forces against assault and to try to extend their reach. In the absence of a strategy for the present, these forces will be destroyed and without them all talk about the future becomes merely academic.

No one alive today remembers firsthand the trauma that we call the first Industrial Revolution, which is why people are now able so casually to contemplate (and misunderstand) the second. What little we actually know about those earlier times—perhaps the only adequate antecedent to our own—has filtered down to us through distorting lenses devised to minimize this calamity and justify the human suffering it caused in the name of progress. The inherited accounts of this period were formulated by and large in response to the dramatic actions of those who fought for their survival against this progress. They constituted a post hoc effort to deny the legitimacy and rationality of such opposition in order to guarantee the triumph of capitalism. The Luddites were not themselves confused by this ideological invention. They did not believe in technological progress, nor could they have since the alien idea was invented after them, to try to prevent their recurrence. In light of this invention, the Luddites were cast as irrational, provincial, futile, and primitive. In reality, the Luddites were perhaps the last people in the West to perceive technology in the present tense, and to act upon that perception. They smashed machines.

The effort to reconstruct this earlier period of the first Industrial Revolution might help us to deconstruct our inherited perceptions of technology, because they date in large part from this historical watershed. Fortunately, during the last several decades social historians have made great strides toward just such a reconstruction in an effort to understand the opposition to progress in its own terms. In particular, they have sought to redeem those who belatedly have seemed so irrational and wrongheaded, and have discovered that their resistance was in fact quite rational, widely supported, and indeed successful—in both buying time for reflection and strategizing (something today’s labor movement would surely welcome) and in awakening a far-reaching political consciousness among workers. According to these revisionist interpretations, the Luddites who resisted the introduction of new technologies were not against technology per se but rather against the social changes that the new technology reflected and reinforced. Thus, the workers of Nottingham, Yorkshire, and Lancashire were not opposed to hosiery and lace frames, the gig mill and shearing frames, larger spinning jennies or even power looms. Rather, in a post-war period of economic crisis, depression, and unemployment much like our own, they were struggling against the efforts of capital to restructure social relations and the patterns of
production at their expense, using technology as a vehicle. During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the workers in manufacturing trades united in opposition to unemployment, the lowering of wages, changes in the system of wage payments, the elimination of skilled work, the lowering of the quality of products, and the factory system itself, which entailed an intensification of work discipline and a loss of autonomy and control over their own labor. Similarly, the agricultural workers who participated in the Swing riots of the 1830s were not opposed to threshing machines per se but rather to the elimination of winter work, the threat of unemployment, and the overall proletarianization of agricultural labor. In short, during the first half of the nineteenth century workers were reacting against the encroachment of capitalist social relations, marked by domination and wage slavery, and were well aware that the introduction of new technologies by their enemies was part of the effort to undo them. Unencumbered by any alien and paralyzing notion of technological progress, they simply tried to arrest this assault upon their lives in any way they could. They had nothing against machinery, but they had no undue respect for it either. When choosing between machines and people, or, more precisely, between the capitalist’s machines and their own lives, they had little problem deciding which came first. As historian Eric Hobsbawm reminds us, unlike their twentieth-century descendants, the nineteenth-century “machine breakers were not concerned with technical progress in the abstract.” Thus, they were able to perceive the changes in the present tense for what they were, not some inevitable unfolding of destiny but rather the political creation of a system of domination that entailed their undoing. They were also able to act decisively—and not without success when measured in terms of a human lifetime—to defend their livelihood, freedom, and dignity.

“The machine was not an impersonal achievement to those living through the Industrial Revolution,” historian Maxine Berg has noted, “it was an issue.” In her valuable study of the machinery question in the first half of the nineteenth century, Berg emphasizes that “in the uncertainty of the times, it still seemed possible to halt the process of rapid technological change.” Such rapid change, which is in itself destabilizing and thus has been used again and again to force labor on the defensive, was not at this time viewed as inevitable. Thus, as Berg notes, “the working class challenged the beneficence of the machine, first by its own distress then by its relentless protest.” They “criticized the rapid and unplanned introduction of new techniques in situations where the immediate result would be technological unemployment.” Moreover, “technological innovation was challenged in everyday struggle in the workplaces of most industries throughout the period. Workers and their trade unions were not ashamed to denounce the type of progress which brought redundancy,” speed-up, and loss of freedom. They exposed the reality of the technology, challenged its uses, demanded equitable distribution of gains if there were to be any, and sought
greater control over the direction of technological development itself.

"The chief advantage of power looms," the Bolton weavers declared in 1834, "is the facility of executing a quantity of work under more immediate control and management and the prevention of embezzlement and not in the reduced cost of production." The weavers recognized, as Berg points out, that the power loom "was profitable only for certain fabrics and required a very large investment in fixed capital." "It was quite clear to many that the productivity of the power loom was not its greatest asset," she maintains. The weavers recognized that so-called economic viability, the presumed reason for introducing a new technology, was not in reality an economic category but a political and cultural one. Capital invested in machines that would reinforce the system of domination, and this decision to invest, which might in the long run render the chosen technique economical, was not itself an economic decision but a political one, with cultural sanction. Other technologies, equally uneconomic but preferable for other reasons, might have been chosen for further investment and perhaps in the long run have been rendered economic. (J.H. Sadler, for example, proposed such an alternative, the pendulum handloom, on behalf of the weavers. It was designed to preserve the skills and jobs of the weavers and enable them to avoid the degrading conditions of factory life.)

In short, the weavers raised "a powerful and impressive critique of machinery, a critique that carried a genuine belief that technical change was not a 'given' but could be tempered and directed to match the requirements of social ideals." They "consistently drew attention to piece rates, home competition, and the specific technical and market conditions for the introduction of power looms." Above all, and again consistently, they demanded a social policy on technology. (They proposed, for example, a tax on power looms and a host of other legislative measures to protect the lives of the weavers.)

But the weavers did not rely solely upon such formal tactics to achieve their ends. Central to their effort was a strategy of highly organized direct action, the machine breaking for which they are still remembered today. Between 1811 and 1812, for example, manufacturing workers marching under the banner of the mythical Ned Ludd destroyed over one thousand mills in the Nottingham area. A decade later, the machine breaking spread across the midlands and, as Pierre Dubois, a historian of industrial sabotage, has described the experience, "in some cases, it had a definitely revolutionary character, involving a confrontation between two armed forces." Workers smashed machines selectively, but deliberately, and this act more than any other characterized the workers' movement of the period.

The precise significance of machine breaking in the context of the workers' movement is open to interpretation. The paucity of historical evidence makes a fair measure of extrapolation and conjecture inevitable. Most of the revisionist social historians who undertook to reconstruct the movement in the workers'
own terms have argued convincingly that the workers were not opposed to the machines per se, as has already been mentioned. They knew who their real (human) enemies were. These historians suggest, therefore, that selective machine breaking was simply one tactic among others used to cripple and intimidate their foes and win concessions. Rooted in such traditional forms of protest as food riots and incendiarism, machine breaking also constituted a form of early trade unionism (during a period when such organizations were outlawed)—a form of collective bargaining by riot, as Hobsbawm described it.

A more recent interpretation, by Geoffrey Bernstein, rejects this minimization of machine breaking to the status of mere tactic. His analysis suggests that perhaps the social historians are themselves still too bound up in the ideological reverence for technological progress and that in order to redeem the Luddites as rational historians they somehow had to minimize the centrality of machine breaking. Bernstein suggests instead that machine breaking was indeed central, that it constituted a strategy of mobilization for the workers. Such an interpretation appears to be more consistent with the available evidence. All contemporaries, Luddites and those opposed to machine breaking alike, consistently emphasized that machine breaking was the hallmark of the movement, its distinguishing characteristic. George Beaumont, a man sympathetic to the workers’ plight but opposed to the destruction of machinery, observed that the phrase “I have a good mind to Ned Ludd it” required little explanation at the time. The Luddites themselves, of course, made no secret of the centrality of machine breaking and, as Bernstein suggests, “expressed aims tend to be determined by strategic considerations.” According to this interpretation, machine breaking served well to mobilize people with disparate immediate concerns, in different geographical regions, in different trades. It lent a coherence to the movement, encouraged loyalty to a unifying strategy, identification with a few mythical figures (General Ludd and Captain Swing), and it gave the workers a sense of solidarity that magnified their power in their own eyes as well as in those of their contemporaries, including their enemies. Machine breaking was never the whole of the movement but it was certainly central, and the success of the strategy is apparent. Rather than isolated acts of resistance soon forgotten, there emerged a movement of great proportions with lasting consequences that is remembered still today.

But the way we evaluate Luddism today has not been shaped by the Luddites themselves. Instead we have inherited the views of those who opposed machine breaking and who succeeded in removing the technology question from the point of production, from the workers themselves, from the present that was the first Industrial Revolution. In the place of that traumatic reality, they constructed technological myths about the power of the past and the promise of the future. And in the light of these myths the courageous Luddites were made to seem mistaken, pathetic, dangerous, and insane.
The plight of the workers, made all the more visible by their dramatic protest, shattered the illusion of the beneficence of the emerging capitalist order and discredited once and for all the notion that this society was a realm of shared values and human ends. It is thus not mere coincidence that at this same time society was “discovered” to be a thing apart from the people who comprised it, and that it had a logic of its own that was distinct from and dominated the purposes and aspirations of people. Society as a human artifact, a human endeavor, composed of people, was lost in the wake of capitalism, only to be reinvented as an automatic, self-regulating mechanism in which people were simply “caught up.” The hard logic of the market and the machine surfaced supreme, replacing human inspiration, as Lewis Mumford observed, with “the abstractions of constant technological progress and endless pecuniary gain.” Henceforth would “the belief in technological progress, as a good in itself, replace all other conceptions of desirable human destiny.” Political notions of justice, fairness, freedom, equality, reason—the hallmarks of enlightened statecraft and the bourgeois revolutions themselves, now gave way to mechanical notions of social betterment. As capitalism revealed its inhuman core, its champions vanished, to be replaced by invisible hands. And social progress became identified with impersonal intermediaries: manufactures, industry, goods, machinery. As human society and people became variables (i.e., commodities, factors of production) capital became the constant, not alone the tangible sign of progress but also the imagined engine or cause of progress. And capitalism, opposed by the workers as a system of domination, exploitation, and alienation, now emerged as simply a system of production that was identified with progress itself. Such progress, moreover, was viewed as natural and necessary; social prosperity and human happiness would inevitably flow from this automatic process, so long as people allowed it to follow its own natural course, so long as they yielded to the requirements of free competition and untrammeled technological development. If laissez-faire became one manifesto of capitalism, laissez-innover became the other. “In my opinion, machinery ought to be encouraged to any extent whatsoever,” wrote George Beaumont. Ultimately, he believed, such development would fulfill the dreams of the workers because the inventors of machinery were after all the “true benefactors of mankind.”

This emergent ideology of technological progress served capitalist development well in the name of material prosperity, and diverted attention away from the exploitation entailed. At the same time, it shaped all subsequent critiques of capitalism. Even socialists, sworn enemies of capitalist aggrandizement and the profit system, were hereafter compelled to accommodate this new cultural contrivance, to adopt the faith in technological deliverance that had become hegemonic. Indeed, these critics eventually challenged capitalists on the grounds that they alone were the true champions of technological progress and that capital-
ism merely retarded the development that was possible only under socialism. Thus, a half century later, Jack London could sum up the socialist creed in a paean to machinery: “Let us not destroy these wonderful machines that produce efficiently and cheaply. Let us control them. Let us profit by their efficiency and cheapness. Let us run them by ourselves. That, gentlemen, is socialism.” Where capitalists maintained that unilinear technological progress, spurred by the competitive spirit and guided by the invisible hand, would usher in a new day of prosperity for all, socialists insisted that such progress would have a double life: moving behind the backs of capitalists, without their knowledge and in defiance of their intentions, the automatic process of technological development would create the conditions for the eclipse of capitalism and the material basis for prosperity under socialism. Both capitalists and their critics, however, had come to worship at the same shrine and, as a result, to reject any opposition to technology in the present tense. How did this happen?

As has already been suggested, such fantasies about technological development arose inescapably as a consequence of the flight from the concrete and the present, which itself reflected the removal of the technology question from the point of production, out of the reach of the unmovable workers. The apologists of capitalism were intent upon fabricating an abstracted world view that would justify further capitalist development. For them, it was necessary to explain that whatever the all-too-apparent social and human costs of such development in the here and now, social progress was nevertheless being made, with capitalists serving as mere agents of this larger, inevitable, and beneficent process. Political economy emerged to meet this need, largely in response to the workers’ actions. As Berg recounts, “the disruptions caused by mechanization brought in train a legacy of fear” and this led to “the expression of doubts,” on the one hand, and “a polemical optimism,” on the other— an optimism “based on ignorance.” During the first half of the nineteenth century, in the wake of the machine-breaking movement, middle class-apologists and optimistic economists “were missionaries come to spread the gospel of the machine in a land of heretical anti-machinery attitudes.”

Middle class economic and political perspectives actively eulogized the progress of science and technology. But, challenged on both sides, by Tory and radical working class opinion, the middle class had to find an explanation for the economic and social impact of the machine. Expressions of wonder at the technical perfection of the machine were not adequate. It was thus that the middle class took to itself a “scientific” theory, political economy. . . . It was not mere coincidence that industrialization and the emergence of political economy occurred at the same time.

The political economists “above all others,” Berg insists, were “either optimistic or blind, and possibly both, to the conditions of the working classes.”
They issued “long and turgid justifications of the introduction of machinery,” and insisted upon the ultimate beneficence of technological progress. “Their defense of existing patterns of economic development became in the political setting of the 1830s a strident polemic in favor of capital and machinery,” almost a secular religion.

Not all political economists, of course, were so easily swept up in such praise of the technological panacea; some, like David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill, recognized full well the legitimacy of the workers’ opposition. Thus, Ricardo, in the 1821 edition of his *Principles* insisted “that the opinion entertained by the labouring class, that the employment of machinery is frequently detrimental to their interests, is not founded on prejudice and error, but is conformable to the correct principles of political economy.” Ricardo was attacked by his colleagues for lending encouragement to the workers’ opposition to machinery, but he held his ground. He did, however, support unrestricted innovation out of the fear that, if such innovation proved more profitable, foreign competitors would innovate and lure capital out of England, leaving even less employment. (For the workers who were displaced in either case, of course, it was in effect a choice of being shot or being hanged, and they remained opposed to the cold logic of competition and the inevitability of technological progress, to both the machines proper and the machinery of the market, and to political economy.)

In his own *Principles* of 1848, Mill too dismissed as spurious the claims of the apologists of the machine, that machine building itself would offset the loss of employment caused by machinery or that the introduction of “labor saving” devices would make work less onerous. “Hitherto it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day’s toil of any human being,” Mill surmised. Rather, he suggested, “they have enabled a greater population to live the same life of drudgery and imprisonment and an increased number of manufacturers and others to make fortunes” and perhaps they have also “increased the comforts of the middle classes.” Nevertheless, Mill insisted upon the ultimate benefit of technological development, not as any panacea but as a means of enlarging the overall wealth of nations.

Thus, even when they recognized the reality of the workers’ situation, the economists, as Berg notes, “welded their perception of the advance of technology to their concept of economic development,” which proceeded inexorably if not always so benignly through the mechanisms of market, competition, and profit accumulation. But the doctrine of technological progress was not promoted solely in the name of economics. Technological development was also defended in the name of science. The apologetics of capitalism, as Berg suggests, “reached beyond political economy to a far-reaching cultural sphere which took up the machinery question in political economy’s terms and made a doctrine of technological progress. This cultural sphere was the scientific movement.” The connection between economically-spurred technological development and sci-
ence, Berg explains, "was promoted both by scientists seeking wider markets for their research and by industrialists seeking some higher rationale for their technological choices and expanding enterprises." In reality, Berg points out, the connection between science and industrial technology hardly existed; "the relationship which was claimed between science and technology was rhetorical only" and, essentially, "the scientific movement of the early nineteenth century acted as a social context for political economy's efforts to demonstrate the benefits of the contemporary industrial transformation." But the cultural connection with science was crucial for the apologists of capitalism. It allowed them to argue that capitalism was a system not only of economic progress but of science as well, and that workers who opposed machinery showed not only their selfish contempt for the larger social good but their also ignorance.

And what political economy and the scientific movement failed to do, the true believers in the machine itself, the technical enthusiasts and mystics accomplished, attributing to machines the force of necessity itself. Thus Charles Babbage, inventor of one of the earliest computers, noted in the 1832 preface to his *Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*, that his book was but an application of the principles of his calculating engine to the factory system as a whole, to demonstrate the mathematical precision and predictability machine-based industry made possible. In the midst of the machine-breaking movement, Babbage contemplated the computer-run factory. At the same time, Andrew Ure, whose description of textile manufacturing served as Karl Marx's point of departure for a critique of modern industry, extolled the virtues of machinery for extending and ensuring total management-control over production (as the Luddites well understood). In Ure's mind, the factory took on "mystical qualities," as Berg puts it; he described the mill as a vast automaton, with all parts in concert, subordinated to the discipline of the self-regulating prime mover, the steam engine. And Ure's fantastic vision of the ultimate end of this new discipline, the fully automated factory, like Babbage's computer-run factory, pictured capitalist industry as the very embodiment of reason, against which worker opposition could not but appear to be futile and irrational. It was thus not the fantasists who were deemed lunatics but the quite realistic and all too level-headed workers who dared to stand in their way.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the intellectual dominance of political economy was irrevocably established and with it the hegemony of apologetics for unrestrained technological progress. A Darwinist view of technological and economic development had evolved that informed state policy and proved relatively immune to the criticisms of both the workers and their supporters. The Tory conservatives who decried the mechanization not only of industry but of society itself, and who insisted that the social and psychological costs of this progress far outweighed any gains from cheaper commodities, were more easily dismissed as romantic reactionaries. And the machine breakers themselves were
assailed with repression and ridicule. The hegemonic ideology of technological progress, moreover, left its mark on the developing workers' movement as its leaders struggled to be taken seriously in this new intellectual climate. For although they gained strength as a consequence of the workers' actions against machinery, the political champions of labor's cause were no more disposed to follow the workers' lead than were the apologists and agents of capital. They abandoned the workers' strategy not because it proved ineffective but because they believed they knew what was in the workers' best interest, and were becoming certain that opposition to technological progress was no part of it. Thus the social reformers of the day, whose power in political arenas derived directly from the controversy kindled by the workers' opposition to machinery, acknowledged anyway the inevitability and benefits of technological progress and viewed the workers' plight as the moral problem of poverty, to be solved outside the realm of the economy itself by means of enlightened philanthropy. And the political radicals viewed the problem in terms of the distribution of property and political power. They viewed machines simply as tools to be used for good or evil, depending upon who had the power to use them. They decried opposition to machinery as wrongheaded and worked to divert workers' attention and antagonism away from the machine and toward the political system. (The workers' critical perspective, as we know, embraced both.) According to Berg, these efforts to dispel the machinery issue were ultimately successful, and discussion of the machinery question and the nature and organization of production gave way eventually to discussions of political power and property distribution. "The real grievance," insisted one political radical in 1835, "is neither more nor less than the subjection of the labouring to the monied classes, in consequence of the latter having usurped the exclusive making of the laws. Rents, tithes, taxes, tolls, but above all profits. Here is our distress explained in five words, or to comprise all in one, it lies in the word Robbery.... Machines indeed."

The removal of the struggle from the point of production rendered matters of machinery and production secondary to the political issues that lay beyond the realm of actual production. One result of the political and ideological subordination of the workers by their leaders, then, was a minimization of the matters the workers themselves initially considered central, and the elimination of the types of direct action that the workers themselves had found to be most effective in their fight against capital. And this diminished debate over and opposition to the introduction of machinery had the effect of ensuring the continued and strengthened hegemony of the doctrine of technological progress, as well as the capitalist system. But not all of the champions of labor abandoned the industrial and technological arena. The socialists made it their central battleground. However, they too subordinated the workers to their own peculiar conception of labor's destiny and, in so doing, lost touch with both the concrete and the present. Thus, even though they retained technology as their focus, their percep-
tions of what technology was and meant became confused and mythological, and tended not only to reflect but actually to reinforce the ideology of technological progress. If the capitalists apologized for and rallied behind technological progress, the socialists revered it. For them, technological progress was not simply a means to economic ends and a convenient justification of domination, it was a historical vehicle of emancipation.

The early Owenite socialists viewed the machine in a positive light, as the means of liberation from capitalism and of future prosperity under socialism. They displayed what Berg calls “a wondrous excitement over the machine.” Although they saw all too well that, under capitalism and a competitive system, technological innovation led to intensification of work and exploitation, they believed that the same technologies held “something in promise and prospect” in that they could be used to bring about cooperation “in the far time of the Millennium.” The Owenites assumed that technological development under capitalism would lead inevitably to the calamities of overproduction, bankruptcies, and massive unemployment, and that these would so destabilize and weaken capitalist institutions that it would be necessary to abandon competition and private property in favor of a cooperative system and common ownership. At the same time, they believed that the technology would make possible the elimination of the division of labor and along with it classes, inequality, and domination, and that it would create the material conditions for leisure, education, and collective production in a cooperative socialist society. Thus, on both counts, because technology would undermine capitalism and because it would make cooperative socialism possible, the Owenites condemned antimachinery sentiment as essentially counterrevolutionary. The Owenite paean to the steam engine, published in the New Moral World in 1837, would no doubt have embarrassed even the most strident capitalist apologists: “At length, casting away his guise of terror, this much cursed power revealed itself in its true form and looks to men. What graciousness was in its aspect, what benevolence, what music flowed from its lips: science was heard and the savage hearts of men were melted, the scabs fell from their eyes, a new life thrilled through their veins, their apprehensions were ennobled, and as science spoke, the multitude knelt in love and obedience.”

The early socialist’s enthusiasm for technological progress was echoed by the so-called scientific socialism of Engels and Marx. In The Condition of the Working Class in England, Engels brought together the Tory, Owenite, and political-radical critiques of capitalism. In addition, he introduced the concept of a unified working class, the product of the new machine-based mode of production of industrial capitalism. According to Engels, the new industrial technology, which arose out of the system of competition and exploitation, led inevitably at first to unemployment and the intensification of labor. Thus, in his
view, the antimachinery sentiment of the workers was understandable and justified. However, the new industrial system had also given rise to a coherent industrial working class, with its own organizations and political program of socialism, so that now such proto-unionist and prepolitical sentiments were no longer either necessary or desirable. According to Dubois, the historian of industrial sabotage, Engels believed that “sabotage was the youthful sin of the workers’ movement.” Now that the movement had become more mature—a direct consequence of technological and industrial progress—such primitive action was counterrevolutionary and had to be opposed. Engels’s colleague Marx took this line of reasoning further, drawing upon the work not only of the Tories, the political radicals, the early socialists, the social reformers and Engels, but also the political economists and the philosophers and visionaries of modern manufacturing, Ure and Babbage. For Marx, technological progress was not only the means of capitalist competition, accumulation, and exploitation, but was also essential to the advance of modern industry itself—capitalism’s contribution to human progress. Modern industry signalled the transition not only from hand to machine-based labor but also liberation from the drudgery of labor altogether. Technological progress under capitalism was at the same time progress toward socialism, creating the conditions for the demise of capitalism, the living vehicle of revolution (the proletariat) and the material basis for the classless society. Here too technological progress was seen as having a life of its own, with liberatory consequences for humanity. To oppose it in the present, therefore, was counterrevolutionary; all those who suffered in the present, in the wake of such progress, were encouraged to accept present technology and look for future deliverance.

By the close of the nineteenth century, then, the ideology of technological progress that had become hegemonic in society as a whole had come to dominate the criticism of that society as well. “Scientific” socialists were quick to disparage and abuse all those who refused to accept technological necessity and acclaim the onward rush of industrial progress. They were dismissed as romantic reactionaries or utopian dreamers. Those who continued to uphold the ideas of direct action at the point of production and who opposed the authoritarianism of scientific socialists—those who comprised the left socialists and anarcho-syndicalist tradition—were dismissed as infantile and irresponsible. The Marxists’ ridicule of all who opposed capitalist-sponsored technological development thus simply seconded the hegemonic social taboo, and further marginalized those who tried to insist upon viewing such development in the present tense. “The worker will only respect machinery on the day when it becomes his friend, shortening his work, rather than as today, his enemy, taking away jobs, killing workers.” Thus Pouget, the French anarcho-syndicalist, echoed the Luddites in 1900, in defiance of destiny and in the name not of some fabled future but a pressing present: “Workers have no systematic will to destroy apart from the aim of such destruct-
tion. If workers attack machinery, it is not for fear or because they have nothing better to do, but because they are driven by imperious necessity.”

But such calls to reason, which surfaced in the syndicalist upsurge in turn-of-the-century Europe and among the followers of the Industrial Workers of the World in the United States, were difficult to sustain in a society now dominated by the romance of technological progress and technological deliverance. Already by the middle of the nineteenth century “progressive workers,” such as the one portrayed by Elizabeth Gaskell in her novel Mary Barton, had abandoned such critical reason to become reasonable: “It's true it was a sore time for handloom weavers when power looms came in. These new fangled things make a man's life a lottery. Yet, I'll never misdoubt that power looms and railways and all such inventions, are the gifts of God. I have lived long enough, too, to see that it is part of his plan to send suffering to bring out a higher good.” And a half century later a “disconsolate radical” could lament the fact that “one rarely finds anyone who ventures to deal frankly with the problem of machinery... It appears to infuse a certain fear. Everybody sees that machinery is producing the greatest of all revolutions between classes, but somehow nobody dares to interfere.”

Thus had the abstract doctrine of technological progress come to dominate industrial capitalist society. Removed from the concrete and the present, the abstract idea of technological development became simply a given from the past, saturated with the future: autonomous, unilinear, inevitable, and sacrosanct. For both apologist and critic, fatalism and futurism substituted for the present tense; they differed only in their expectations. The present, meanwhile—where people actually live—was reduced to a mere point in time through which the determining weight of the past and projected flight of the future had momentarily to pass—at best unchallenged and uninterrupted. And this became their legacy, and our inheritance: you can't stand in the way of progress, nor should you—even if it kills you.

Within this profoundly irrational framework, not only the act of opposition to technology in the present but even the mere mention of such opposition became taboo. Indeed, the idea of machine breaking became more threatening to the ideological edifice than the fact of machine breaking, which continued without acknowledgement. And this taboo was reinforced in the wake of scientific management, which amounted to a new testament of the old gospel, and the rise of science-based industry, which offered progress as its most important product. It was strengthened as well with further maturation and institutionalization of the labor movement—liberal, social democratic, and communist alike. Not that there was no longer any opposition to technology-based changes in working conditions. Such opposition continued and was at times quite dramatic. Yet it remained constrained within the larger ideological reverence for technological progress. And this belief, fueled by obvious economic expansion and
growing abundance, served above all to strengthen the capitalist relations of social domination against which the Luddites struggled. The material prosperity diverted the opposition’s attention from the central problem of power—the Luddites’ focus—and the fact that capital still had the prerogative to destroy jobs, communities, and lives in the pursuit of profit and in the name of technological progress.

It must be emphasized that this hegemonic ideological inheritance did not rule out opposition to technology in the present on the grounds that it was tactically misguided or strategically shortsighted. Rather, mention of such tactical or strategic possibilities was dismissed without a hearing, and their proponents dismissed as insane. Opposition to technology in the present tense called attention to technology in the present tense, but only for a moment, because the ideology of progress did not admit of such immediacy and fled from it at once, relying not upon evidence or argument but rather upon its power to define the bounds of sanity, of respectable discourse, of reasonable behavior. The Luddite strategy in the nineteenth century was not debated and found lacking. Rather it was condemned as dangerous and demented, as were all those who identified themselves with it. So too with all latter-day Luddites. To be taken seriously, to be listened to (or even to be heard), one had now to demonstrate allegiance to technological progress, wherever it led. Discussion of present tactics was begged by ideological insistence on this critical point. To violate the taboo was instantly to lose intellectual credibility.

Little wonder, then, that the leaders of labor, who strove so hard to be taken seriously in capitalist society, deferred so readily and totally to this ideology. With regard to technological change, they adopted an official posture of encouragement, accommodation, and acceptance. They were, after all, progressive, and no progressive is against progress. And besides, “you can’t stop progress.” So, boasting of their maturity and responsibility, they embraced this progress as their own and, in boom times, bellowed of its abundant beneficence. This is not to say that everyone now actually believed in progress. People still continued to have their doubts about this peculiar and alien notion, and subtly expressed it whenever they talked about such progress: “That’s progress, I suppose (isn’t it?)” “Well, I guess that’s progress (isn’t it?)” “You can’t stand in the way of progress, anyhow (can you?)” The elliptical questions could still be heard, addressed to some absent authority who presumably knows about such things. Yet, even with their barely audible doubts, and even when progress looked pretty grim in the present tense, people were encouraged by social pressure to be respectable, to try to be taken seriously, to look progressive. Those who were not disciplined by their superiors in the ways of progress learned to discipline themselves. For even displaced workers want to be taken seriously and want to make a contribution to society. Thus they must believe that their own sacrifices are suffered for a larger good—how else suffer them with dignity?
Technology's Politics

And so the Luddites were forgotten, their distant distress recalled only in order to affirm the primitiveness of their struggle and the insanity of those who dare to repeat it. The term “luddite” became an epithet, a convenient device for disparaging and isolating the occasional opponent to progress and a charge to be avoided at all costs by thoughtful people. For to be called a luddite meant that you were not really serious. It meant that you believed that you could stop progress. It meant that you thought progress could be stopped. It meant that you were crazy. It was not that people now knew something the Luddites did not know, nor merely (though this is part of it) that the Luddites knew something that they had forgotten. Rather, this ideological instinct continued to reflect, and be revitalized by, the sustained political and ideological subordination of people at the point of production by their own friends and leaders. At the same time it reflected the latter's own subordination to those who still command the rewards and control the ideas of society as a whole. And it reflected as well their distance from both the concrete and the present. Just how far they had traveled in space and time became abundantly clear once the people at the point of production again began to challenge capital on their own turf, in their own terms, and in the present tense—in the wake of the second Industrial Revolution.

Author's Note: In formulating the ideas for this essay I benefited very much from discussions with, above all, Stan Weir, and also Carol Beebe, Ulrich Briefs, Mike Cooley, David Dickson, Dieter Ernst, Finn Kensing, Antonio Lettieri, Danielle Mazzonis, Frieder Naschold, Tor Norretranders, Maja-Lisa Perby, Lauge Rasmussen, Ezio Tarantelli, and Joseph Werzenbaum. For the historical account of the first Industrial Revolution I have borrowed heavily from the works of Eric Hobsbawm, George Rude, E.P. Thompson, and especially from Maxine Berg's The Machinery Question and the Making of Political Economy, 1815-1848 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), and Geoffrey Bernstein's provocative unpublished paper, “General Ludd and Captain Swing: Machine Breaking as Tactic and Strategy” (1981). In addition, I have used material from Pierre Dubois's Sabotage in Industry (Baltimore: Penguin, 1979), and quoted as well from George Beaumont, “The Beggars' Complaint,” in British Labor Struggles (New York: Arno Press, 1972), and Lewis Mumford, “Technology and Man” (1971).
Workers' Technology Bill of Rights

In the face of record unemployment, plant closings, and capital flight abroad, America's business and political elite repeat a by now familiar refrain. To get American economic growth going again, they say, we need to invest in new technology and to develop programs to train the unemployed in the new skills needed by that technology. Critics have pointed to the paper entrepreneurialism of fast-profit-crazed U.S. managers as one sign of the bad faith embodied in these proposals, but it is not the only one.

In testimony before the Subcommittee on Economic Stabilization of the House Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs in July 1981, William W. Winpisinger, President of the International Association of Machinists, pointed elsewhere: to the effects of the new technology on skilled labor. The search for short-term profits has dovetailed with labor-saving technology, but where machinists once operated and serviced their machines, the new technology has encouraged job fragmentation. Machinists have been replaced by low-skilled machine operators backed up by a relatively small number of specialized service people. Unemployment has been one result of the new technology, but another has been a lowering of the skill level of the average worker.

The government, in the view of the Machinists, has aided and abetted this process in two related ways. First, it has supported vocational and technical school training, which most often takes the form of specialized training, rather than the more general training obtained through collective bargaining-based apprenticeship programs. Secondly, through efforts like the Department of Defense's "Partners in Preparedness" program, the government has promoted reindustrialization programs without the benefit of public involvement and without labor representation. The result has been reductions in health and safety regulations, increased corporate tax incentives, relaxed environmental restraints, and the encouragement of more labor-saving technology. A circle is thus created that excludes the interests of skilled labor.

The Machinists have responded with a proposed Bill of Rights that would address the issues that are now shunted aside or ignored. The text of that document follows.

—Eds.
Congress hereby amends the National Labor Relations Act, Railway Labor Act, and other appropriate Acts to declare a national labor policy through a New Technology Bill of Rights:

I
New Technology shall be used in a way that creates jobs and promotes community-wide and national full employment

II
Unit labor cost savings and labor productivity gains resulting from the use of new technology shall be shared with workers at the local enterprise level and shall not be permitted to accrue excessively or exclusively for the gain of capital, management, and shareholders.

Reduced work hours and increased leisure time made possible by new technology shall result in no loss of real income or decline in living standards for workers affected at the local enterprise level.

III
Local communities, the states, and the nation have a right to require employers to pay a replacement tax on all machinery, equipment, robots, and production systems that displace workers, cause unemployment and thereby decrease local, state, and federal revenues.

IV
New technology shall improve the conditions of work and shall enhance and expand the opportunities for knowledge, skills and compensation of workers. Displaced workers shall be entitled to training, retraining, and subsequent job placement or reemployment.

V
New Technology shall be used to develop and strengthen the U.S. industrial base, consistent with the Full Employment goal and national security requirements, before it is licensed or otherwise exported abroad.

VI
New technology shall be evaluated in terms of worker safety and health and shall not be destructive of the workplace environment, nor shall it be used at the expense of the community’s natural environment.
Bill of Rights

VII
Workers, through their trade unions and bargaining units, shall have an absolute right to participate in all phases of management deliberations and decisions that lead or could lead to the introduction of new technology or the changing of the workplace system design, work processes, and procedures for doing work, including the shutdown or transfer of work, capital, plant, and equipment.

VIII
Workers shall have the right to monitor control room centers and control stations and the new technology shall not be used to monitor, measure or otherwise control the work practices and work standards of individual workers, at the point of work.

IX
Storage of an individual worker's personal data and information file by the employer shall be tightly controlled and the collection and/or release and dissemination of information with respect to race, religious, or political activities and beliefs, records of physical and mental health disorders and treatments, records of arrests and felony charges or convictions, information concerning sexual preferences and conduct, information concerning internal and private family matters, and information regarding an individual's financial condition or credit worthiness shall not be permitted, except in rare circumstances related to health, and then only after consultation with a family- or union-appointed physician, psychiatrist, or member of the clergy. The right of an individual worker to inspect his or her personal data file shall at all times be absolute and open.

X
When the New Technology is employed in the production of military goods and services, workers, through their trade union and bargaining agent, have a right to bargain with management over the establishment of Alternative Production Committees, which shall design ways to adopt that technology to socially useful production and products in the civilian sector of the economy.
Doris Lessing
and the Technology
of Survival

CHRISTOPHER LASCH

I've been reading a lot of science fiction," Doris Lessing told an interviewer in 1969, "and I think that science fiction writers have captured our culture's sense of the future." Ten years later, Lessing began to publish "space fiction" of her own; but her recent experiments with this kind of writing—Shikasta; The Sirian Experiments; The Marriages between Zones Three, Four, and Five; The Making of the Representative for Planet 8—merely elaborate a dream of planetary doom and regeneration that has dominated almost everything she has written over the last two decades. The cosmic perspective adopted in these novels—the "long view of planetary maintenance and development"—merely confirms what was already apparent to the victims of personal and political disasters in The Four-Gated City, Briefing for a Descent into Hell, and The Memoirs of a Survivor: that European civilization is finished; that its passing can be regarded, on the whole, without regret; and that in any case the hope of revitalizing it through political action is a delusion, "one of the strongest of the false ideas of that epoch"—our epoch, the Century of Destruction, seen now from an extra-terrestrial perspective that enables us to look "from outside at this planet... as if at a totally crazed species."

As the hope of political change recedes, attention turns to the "business of survival, its resources and tricks and little contrivances." Lessing's experience is representative in this respect, and the best of her work continues to command attention because it speaks to the prevailing sense of living in a world in which the
demands of daily survival absorb energies that might once have gone into politics. Like other anti-utopian fantasies, which a society capable of destroying itself has generated in ever-increasing abundance, hers owes its power not so much to its horrifying and ambiguous vision of the future (ambiguous because it can be taken both as a warning and a welcome) as to its ability to capture the feel of daily life as already experienced by inhabitants of decaying northern empires, people fallen on hard times. "Yes, it was all impossible," says the narrator of The Memoirs of a Survivor. "But, after all, I had accepted the impossible." Like Herman Kahn, Doris Lessing has learned to think about the unthinkable. Once an advocate of disarmament, she now believes that a proper program of civil defense would "protect people against everything but a direct hit." "The expertise is there," she maintains in a recent interview. She rejects "peace-movement thinking," propagated by those who "are equipped with a death wish because they don't want to look at the evidence." She demands "cool consideration of the facts." She insists that "we can survive anything you care to mention. We are supremely equipped to survive, to adapt, and even in the long run to start thinking."

Like other writers of science fiction, Lessing has an ambivalent attitude toward technology. On the one hand, she condemns not merely technology but rational intelligence—"our intellectual apparatus, our rationalisms and our logics and our reductions," which alienate human beings from nature and from the deeper intuitive knowledge founded on a sense of oneness with the natural order. Her critique of technology—and here again Lessing articulates an attitude that has become almost commonplace—confuses technique with any kind of practical activity. For this reason, it can easily coexist with an uncritical enthusiasm for technology, as in her advocacy of civil defense. Both her recent public statements and her recent fiction take the position that technological devastation can be countered not through political action but only through a more advanced technology of survival.

Lessing has arrived at this position over what looks like an improbable route—environmentalism, Laingian antipsychiatry, Sufi mysticism. But it is precisely the merger of mysticism with an exaggerated estimate of the achievements (and dangers) of advanced technology that defines the antitechnological imagination today. A widespread revolt against technical rationality, which took shape in the sixties under slogans like "all power to the imagination," and which continues to inform a variety of movements ranging from crusades against pollution to a revival of Christian fundamentalism, has absorbed many of the features of the very mentality it seeks to overthrow. The convergence of irrationalism and superrationalism, enlightenment and antienlightenment, provides another example of the way in which recent counter cultures, even though they contain the seeds of a new politics, nevertheless reaffirm the culture from which they hope to escape. The contemporary critique of technology shares with the
culture of technology a common body of assumptions and attitudes: a contempt for the practical arts, including politics; a prejudice against interpretive modes of inquiry, which often lead to contradictory conclusions and thus appear hopelessly subjective and relativistic; and a demand for the type of intellectual certainty associated either with scientific proof or with mystical illumination.

It is characteristic of this mentality that conflicting diagnoses of mental pathology, for example, appear to condemn a discipline such as psychoanalysis to the status of a pseudoscience. The inherent imprecision of a science based not on experiment but on observation and interpretation generates a demand for positivistic psychologies resting on quantifiable data and, at the other extreme—the antitechnological extreme of contemporary opinion—a celebration of madness as a higher form of sanity. In an afterword to her novel, Briefing for a Descent into Hell, Lessing reports that she once submitted the story for this book (originally a story for a film) to a pair of experts, a psychiatrist and a neurologist, and asked them for a diagnosis of the mental condition of her protagonist—only to find that “their skilled and compassionate diagnoses, while authoritative, . . . agreed about nothing at all.” Madness, according to Lessing, bears witness to higher forms of intelligence; but the psychiatric profession, unwilling to confront this challenge to technical rationality, seeks only “to use labels, to choose words, to define.” In opposition to “a society organised as ours is, to favour the conforming, the average, the obedient,” Lessing revives the romantic and mystical vision according to which insight into the nature of things comes only to those who break out of the “cage of ordinary life” into the heightened state of “extra sensitivity and perception” we call madness.

The impulse to counter a technological society with an older tradition of mysticism is unremarkable. What is remarkable in Lessing’s restatement of this tradition is that it conforms quite closely to the view of personality offered by modern behaviorism. Her quarrel lies not so much with modern science and technology as with interpretive, practical sciences such as psychoanalysis. The higher perspectives of madness or extrasensory, extraterrestrial intelligence—and these come to the same thing, according to Lessing, since madmen can best be understood as visitors from another planet, struggling to remember the world from which they came—merely reaffirm the central dogmas of behaviorism: that people are “manipulated from above (or below) by physical forces that they [do] not even suspect”; that emotions interfere with clear thinking; and that individuality is an illusion held by creatures that “have not yet evolved into an understanding of their individual selves as merely parts of a whole, . . . parts of Nature.”

On a number of occasions, Lessing has insisted that mystical experience, madness, and visionary art lead to the same view of the world attainable through modern scientific instruments. “Earth’s new and her soon-to-be invented or re-
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invented instruments,” through which science observes the structure of atoms, disclose miniature solar systems and thus indicate that the human body, like the universe that appears in our telescopes, consists largely of space—a “faint mist,” a “smear or haze of particles on which light strikes,” a “conglomerate of vast spaces defined by a dance . . . of atoms.” Science reinforces the “new kind of self-consciousness” already attained by mystics and madmen. It dispels the illusion of individuality and selfhood. It teaches us that the “individual does not matter, the species does not matter.” It brings us closer to the perspective of the higher beings who guide our destinies from another planet, another sun, and who see us, with their “keener finer sight,” not as “individuals thinking themselves unique” but as part of a cosmic design, an “overall plan,” a “general Necessity.” “It is a strange thing,” says the narrator of *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*, “to feel oneself part of a whole much larger than oneself, to feel oneself vanishing as one thinks, or talks, dissolving into some core, or essence.”

Until recently, Lessing would have us understand, this kind of illumination came only to a few people who plunged for a time into some adventure or extreme situation in which a group has to act with one mind, or again to those who took leave of their senses and in this way attained extrasensory understanding. Episodes involving either madness or physical hardship and danger—partisan warfare in the mountains of Yugoslavia (*Briefing for a Descent into Hell*), Antarctic exploration (*The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*)—recur regularly in Lessing’s fiction. Such experiences annihilate individuality and lead to an understanding of the point she has made so often in interviews: “I don’t think we are as extraordinary as we like to think we are. We are more like other people than we would wish to believe.” The hero of *Briefing* imagines himself at one point in his inner travels as a partisan guerrilla, awakened briefly to the “high, vibrating current,” the “extra wakefulness” of danger and to the “fine high comradeship of the group.” In another psychotic episode, he thinks he is a space traveler sent to earth as part of a mission to awaken the inhabitants to an understanding of their extraterrestrial origin and destiny. He comes to see that “saying I, I, I, I, is their madness”—the principal consequence of their “terrible falling-away” from the knowledge with which they came into the world. The illusion of individuality so common on “Earth, a casualty,” makes the “celestial watchers roll with laughter or weep with pity” as they contemplate the suicidal folly of beings who absurdly imagine that the intensity of their emotions—which lead them into deadly competition and wars—somehow distinguishes them from their fellows. Lessing’s view from outer (inner) space appears to confirm the chief finding of behavioral science—the vision of human life “beyond freedom and dignity.”

We live in “dreadful and marvelous times,” according to Lessing; “a great deal of what is going on is not told to ordinary citizens.” The certainty that modern governments lie to their peoples and withhold information about
their scientific and military experiments gives free rein to popular fantasies of
destruction and technological transcendence, registered not only in Lessing's
work but in the whole genre of science fiction. Indeed our entire culture is
shaped by the feeling that everyday experience no longer provides a reliable
guide to the nature of things. It is this condition of habitual disbelief, this radical
loss of confidence in the reality of the world of appearances, that underlies the
growing conviction that we are controlled—programmed—by forces outside our
knowledge or control, in the first instance by governments armed with sophisti­
cated technologies of surveillance and thought control. In Briefing, Lessing
notes in passing that "human beings cannot stand up to torture and psychologi­
cal methods" and that a "peasant" morality premised on the "power of heroism"
under adversity serves people poorly in a "technological society," where the "psy­
chological double-twisting of modern torture" breaks down resistance that can
appeal only to obsolete conceptions of selfhood and personal honor. In his fan­
tasy of guerrilla warfare, the hero of this book fears torture by the Nazis, while
in real life—in the ordinary circumstances we confuse with real life, according to
Lessing—he falls into the hands of well-meaning psychiatrists who use electric
shock therapy to eradicate all memory of his deeper self, thereby turning him
back into an ordinary unperceptive professor of classics and model citizen. Less­
ing's point—one that turns up over and over again, in her own works and in re­
cent fiction as a whole, in the folklore of the postmodern age—is that imperial
states now enforce conformity by putting people to sleep. Drugs, psychiatry,
psychological torture, television, electronic surveillance, and genetic engineer­
ing together make up an elaborate apparatus of technological manipulation
designed to tranquilize people into submission.

By carrying the logic of domination one step further, Lessing tries at the last
minute to rescue hope from despair, without, however, surrendering the concep­
tion of technologically controlled behavior that underlies it. If rival empires
have divided our world between them, arming themselves with technologies
capable of keeping their own populations under control (and of blowing each
other to bits), it does not seem altogether implausible, in Lessing's cosmology, to
imagine imperial rivalries at a much higher level, conducted with technologies
that make our own look primitive by comparison. In Lessing's evolutionary hi­
erarchy, even the Sirians, who have outgrown death, scarcity, and toil, and who
look down with pity and horror on "lowly evolved planets" such as our own, find
it impossible to grasp the "subtle, infinitely varied, hard-to-see technology" of
their rivals and superiors, the Canopeans, or to fathom the cosmic plan—"calcu­
lated, foreseen, measured, and this down to the last detail"—according to which
the Canopean Empire governs the universe in conformity with higher laws known
only to itself. When a Sirian bureaucrat—Ambien II, narrator of The Sirian Ex­
periments—begins to appreciate the superiority of the Canopean way of life, her
colleagues condemn her as an enemy of the state and send her into "corrective
exile" for psychiatric treatment—the usual fate of visionary nonconformists in Lessing's world. But the primitive technologies of psychiatric brainwashing, indoctrination, and genetic engineering—themselves incomparably more dangerous and efficient than the old methods of torture and coercion—pale in turn beside the "great plan that kept Canopus and her planets and colonies in an always harmoniously interacting whole." Lessing assures us that even the Puttioran Empire—with its criminal colony, Shammat, the source of evil on earth—will eventually give way to a new order emanating from Canopus. At the end of Shi-kasta, a new golden age rises from the ruins of Earth—"and this will go on for us, as if we were being slowly lifted and washed by a soft singing wind that clears our sad muddled minds and holds us safe and heals us and feeds us with lessons we never imagined."

Empires founded on exploitation—the empires that have dominated the earth ever since the end of the prehistoric golden age, according to Lessing, when a stellar realignment, a "cosmic accident," caused our planet to wobble and tilt on its axis—have "never been able to comprehend that other empires may be based on higher motives." Higher motives—higher, that is, on the scale of evolution—will win out in the end, since evolution obeys laws of its own and suffers only setbacks, never a complete reversal. By appealing to the higher court of evolutionary law, Lessing achieves an effortless antidote to the "morbid thoughts" that often threaten to overwhelm her later writings. Her vision of transcendence, however, offers no alternative or corrective to current ways of thinking; it merely carries them to a more agreeable outcome. If our present technology is self-destructive, a higher technology will save us. If we live under the sway of despotic, decadent empires, we can find peace under a higher imperial order. If we are "conditioned" by external forces, a superior form of conditioning will set us free—to obey a higher necessity. Since imminent disaster is inevitable, in the short run we can hope (a few of us) only to survive, with the assurance, however, that although our Canopean overlords "have in fact destroyed cultures that have become corrupt," they have unaccountably reserved a better fate for us.

The one possibility that seems to lie beyond Lessing's imagination—the technological or antitechnological imagination of our time, so fertile in envisioning planetary disaster and deliverance—is that autonomous human activity may yet find a way to dismantle the machinery of destruction (itself created by human activity) and work out a better way to live. Lessing assumes that autonomous action, like individuality, is an illusion. She can see no alternative to control by the dark powers that control us except a higher mode of control by the "Providers," in "realms administered generally from above." She proposes, in effect, to undo the effects of patriarchal conditioning by reviving an earlier form of conditioning based on the mother, who "holds us safe and heals us and feeds us with lessons we never imagined."

Of course there is much to be said for the proposition that humanity needs
to return to the “feminine” arts of nurture. There is much to be said for the view that people need to rediscover ways of leading “simple lives in balance with the environment, not taking more than they need, not despoiling, not overrunning their geographical areas, or laying waste.” Mysticism, however, has always held out the false hope of an easy, painless reunion with the mother, an effortless inner peace achieved by surrendering the self to the care of higher powers—as opposed to the hard-won peace of mind that comes with a struggle against destructive and self-destructive impulses. When those impulses are confused with external forces, and when insight, accordingly, comes to be identified not with mental effort but with a passive state of receptivity to signals transmitted by higher powers, the possibility of real understanding evaporates.

A view of the mind as something programmed, conditioned, brainwashed by external forces can imagine relief only in the form of reconditioning—a mental discipline, however arduous in the ritualistic observances it imposes on itself, that seeks to “tune in” to some higher wavelength, to “pick up” messages from invisible Providers, to “listen in” to their conversations, to “plug into this band” on the celestial shortwave. Both mysticism and modern technology promise a shortcut to enlightenment and spiritual harmony. Lessing has rightly dismissed the cruder forms of occultism—astrology, spiritualism, the drug cult—as a “mirror of the official culture”; but the same objection applies to her own version, which envisions a reconciliation between science and mysticism in the form of a higher technology of the self. Men and women will free themselves from dependence on their machines, according to Lessing, by learning to function as machines in their own right. “A body,” after all, is best viewed as “a machine for the conversion of one kind of energy into another.”

Doris Lessing’s recent fiction helps us to understand, among other things, why the belief that external forces control and manipulate us without our knowledge—a common perception today, captured in the standard joke that paranoia is well founded in fact—so often coexists with a passion for self-improvement according to which new selves can be created through sheer force of will. What has been interpreted as a new ethic or self-indulgence of self-fulfillment is better understood as an ethic of personal survival, shaped—as we can see so clearly in Lessing’s later work—by the advanced technology and the technological mentality that appear simultaneously as destructive and liberating. When society is conceived of as a “big impersonal machine,” in Lessing’s words, the only hope of survival—human or merely personal—seems to lie in the replacement of external controls by inner controls designed to remodel the self into a smoothly functioning piece of machinery and, in particular, to make it invulnerable to ordinary human emotions. Thus Martha Quest, the heroine of *The Four-Gated City*, begins the “creation” of a new self by getting up earlier in the morning, giving up brandy in the evening, and disengaging herself from her lover. “When it’s a question of survival, sex the uncontrollable can be controlled.” Her new regimen—the “machin-
Lasch / Doris Lessing

evry" of personal survival at the "lowest level"—protects her against the "rebirth of the woman in love," that "hungry, never-to-be-fed, never-at-peace woman who needs and wants and must have," and leads her on to higher feats of self-
"programming." She goes without sleep, starves herself, strips and sharpens herself, and in this way gets ready to follow her lover's estranged wife into a controlled descent into madness. This "business of charting the new territory" gives her the knowledge to "use her body as an engine to get out of the small dim prison of every day." It provides her with the higher technology with which survivors of the coming "catastrophe"—as we learn in the appendix to this novel, the first of Lessing's apocalyptic glimpses into the near future—begin life over again and breed a higher race of supernaturally gifted children, "guardians" who "include [all of recent] history in themselves and who have transcended it."

Doris Lessing's turn to mysticism and science fiction has alienated many of her followers, especially feminists, but it has brought her work closer to some of the dominant preoccupations of the time. In spite of the uneven quality of her later novels, her adherence to the pseudosophy of Idries Shah, and her belief in flying saucers, her books probably reach a wider readership than ever, and with good reason. They speak to the widespread feeling that "it's going to be a bad time," as she has been arguing for years. They reflect the prevailing uneasiness, the growing concern with survival, and the retreat from politics. In some respects this retreat represents an advance over the conventional pieties of the left—a recognition that the "left-wing idea is not left-wing at all," as Lessing told an interviewer in 1966. The doctrines of the French Revolution, doctrines associated with the "rights of the individual," are "no longer revolutionary"; and Lessing has had the courage to face up to the dead end reached by contemporary politics. She has also had the courage to look into the future without resorting to the "commonplace way of thinking that we are the great high pinnacle of all kinds of science." She insists, "on the contrary, that we have lost a great deal of knowledge from the past."

Unfortunately the "need for a new civilization threatens to evoke atavistic feelings against any kind of civilization," as Murray Bookchin observes in The Ecology of Freedom. These feelings have become unmistakable in much of contemporary art—even in art, like Lessing's, that claims to originate in a contrary impulse, in the urge to contest the view of "humanity's slide into chaos as beyond our prevention," as Lessing once put it. In an interview conducted in 1973, she praised a fellow voyager in space, Kurt Vonnegut, for "his refusal to succumb to this new and general feeling of helplessness." In the same interview, she expressed reservations about the kind of science fiction that "can see whole galaxies crumble with less emotion than we feel pouring boiling water into an ant's nest."

Yet her own recent work—and much of Vonnegut's for that matter—con-
tributes to this very sense of cosmic detachment and to the sense of futility that underlies it. "The individual does not matter; the species does not matter." In *The Sirian Experiments*, Lessing describes her narrator as "contemplating the destruction of planets, cities, cultures, realms—and flying over large tracts of earthquake-devastated landscape in a frame of mind not far off that used for contemplating the overthrow of termite-queendom, or the extinction of a type of animal for some reason or other." Even if we take this passage as another commentary on the dangers and limitations of such a sensibility, its effect contradicts the intention behind it. Perhaps this effect, this antlike view of humanity, is unavoidable in science fiction, although it might be expected, on the other hand, that an extraterrestrial perspective on human life might lead to a renewed appreciation of its unique value and vulnerability. In Lessing's case, it seems to foster an "objective" state of mind in which the end of the world can be contemplated with detachment, resignation, even with hope, since it will enable a surviving remnant to make a fresh start in a world uncontaminated by the dregs of a doomed civilization.

In *The Sirian Experiments*, Lessing raises the curious objection to science fiction that it unwittingly offers false hope and reassurance, "because the mere fact that sometimes appalling developments had been displayed in print at all seemed to reassure the citizens that they could not happen." If her own work is any indication, this kind of fiction has the effect, on the contrary, of assuring her readers that catastrophe will come, no matter what, and that instead of fretting about the fate of our civilization (overvalued in any case), they had better concern themselves with the exigencies of bare survival. This is a comforting thought in its way, because it absolves them of any responsibility for failing to prevent "appalling developments" while there is still time.
Industrial Farming

MAX J. PFEFFER

The United States has experienced (particularly since World War II) the gradual concentration of farm production into fewer and sometimes very large farms. For example, by 1974 the United States as a whole 2.1 percent of the largest farms accounted for 37 percent of all farm sales. In contrast the smallest 50 percent of all farms claimed only 5 percent of all sales. This trend is likely to become even more pronounced in the midst of the economic crisis we face. Depressed prices for major farm commodities, rapidly rising production costs, and mounting debt have all contributed to the skyrocketing farm liquidations in recent months.

Congressional debates over farm policy identify two alternatives: continuation of current price support programs or recourse to the "free" market as advocated by the Farm Bureau Federation. Either option will lead to the demise of many farms: the point of contention, in effect, is the rate at which the farm sector should be transformed.

Price support programs have been shown to benefit disproportionately the largest producers. For example, in 1978 about half of all farm program payments went to ten percent of those farmers participating. These were the largest farmers. On the other hand, 50 percent of the farmers, mostly smaller farmers, received only 10 percent of all farm payments.

At the same time, reference to "free" markets for farm commodities is dubious. Despite increasing concentration the farm sector continues to be atomistic. Farmers must face markets for the purchase of farm inputs and the sale of farm commodities that are subject to oligopolistic pricing. Consequently, farmers are subject to a classic cost-price squeeze and, of course, smaller farmers are less able to take advantage of economies of scale and other price breaks than larger farmers.

In all likelihood the increasing concentration of farm production will continue. Determination of the optimal scale of production has been an ongoing concern on the part of agricultural economists and rural sociologists. While this consideration has been related to such sociological questions as community participation, the foremost concern has been the relationship between scale of operation and economic efficiency. In either case determination of optimal scale of operation is problematic. The principle problem is standardization of relevant criteria across commodities. Different commodities lend themselves to different scales of operation without any fundamental change in the organization of labor.
on the farm production unit. Therefore, scale of operation is a limited criterion for assessing the social and political implications of the transformation of the farm sector.

The concentration of farm production is most important when it results in a transformation of the social relations in production. In assessing the consequences of the transformation of farm production in the United States it is useful to distinguish between two ideal types.

Industrial farming is carried out under qualitatively different relations in production than in family farming. Of course, if current trends toward concentration of farm production continue unabated, family farming faces dissolution. Historically, the family farm has been an important form of organization of production in the United States. Within the family farm unit, work is organized and primarily carried out by family members. Family labor is often supplemented by the sharing of labor with neighbors and friends.

Farming within the industrial farm is carried out primarily by wage laborers. The essential characteristic of the industrial farm that distinguishes it from the family farm is the need to recruit a wage work force from outside the farm unit. Labor management in crop production is very difficult. Therefore, the availability of a suitable farm work force is of utmost importance on the industrial farm and the creation of such a work force is likely to have undesirable consequences.

A central concern of the industrial farm is the management of the work force. Due to several characteristics of crop production, industrial farmer-managers face considerable uncertainty in recruiting and retaining a suitable work force.

Unlike those industrial commodities that can be produced continuously throughout the year, crop production presents the problem of recruiting a wage work force from year to year on a seasonal basis. Because rural employment opportunities are quite limited, workers may migrate in the off-season to search for additional work. Some are unlikely to return for the next season, and others may return to the farm at the wrong time. Because of the high degree of risk associated with farming, workers must be available at the onset of crucial farm operations. Furthermore if local labor supplies are insufficient, workers from outside the community must be recruited, but success at such efforts is by no means assured.

Retention of an adequate work force throughout the season is complicated by the discontinuity of farm operations in the course of the production cycle. Two related characteristics of crop production contribute to this discontinuity. First, there is a disjuncture between production time and labor time. Production time from seed to harvest takes place over a certain time span but labor
time, the time when labor is actually applied to the production of commodities, is less than production time. For example, once corn is planted, cultivation does not follow immediately. Obviously, cultivation is carried out only after the seedling has reached a certain degree of development. Similarly, performance of subsequent operations (for example, chemical applications or harvesting) are separated by periods of time as the crop matures. Furthermore, weather conditions contribute considerable variability to the duration of these gaps.

Secondly, farm operations take place sequentially, not simultaneously. The possibility of simultaneously conducting different stages in the process of producing a single commodity allows for the organization of production on an assembly line basis. However, in crop production only one operation can be performed at a time. Each of the operations of plowing, harrowing, planting, cultivating, and harvesting, cannot be performed until the preceding operation has been completed and the natural processes of crop growth have taken place.

Because of these characteristics of crop production there are periods of inactivity within each production cycle. If workers are not paid during periods of inactivity (as in the off-season), it is likely that they will seek alternative employment. Undoubtedly the discontinuity of crop production contributes to the high turnover of seasonal farm workers.

The difficulties are intensified by specialized crop production that is often associated with industrial farming. In areas where specialized crop production is most pronounced, the disparity between periods of inactivity and peak activity is most pronounced. This situation differs from areas of diversified production often associated with family farming. This farm work is spread more evenly, due to the varying growth patterns of different crops. Furthermore, a variety of farm maintenance chores can be performed between production stages. A more complete division of labor on corporate farms makes the latter option unavailable during periods of inactivity.

Difficulties in managing a wage work force are exacerbated by the high level of risk associated with crop production. For example, uncontrollable natural forces such as inclement weather may delay, reduce, or completely destroy the possibility of completing farm operations at critical points in time. To avoid or reduce the risk of calamity a work force with particular characteristics is required.

Because of the high degree of risk associated with crop production, workers have to remain employed for the duration of the operation and must be readily replaced at the beginning of various farm operations. Accordingly, farmer-managers seek a high degree of control over workers while farm operations are underway. These constraints lead to the creation of a work force that might be described as “semicaptive.” On the other hand, industrial farms often have no need for workers during off-periods or off-seasons and are unlikely to make an effort to support workers during these times. Thus, the work force experiences extremes of intense labor followed by periods of enforced idleness.
The options of farmer-managers in securing a disciplined work force are quite limited. For example, because land is a basic factor of production, farm operations are for the most part geographically fixed. Relocating in an area with a work force of adequate size and with desired characteristics is not an option. Thus, when rural labor supplies are inadequate to operate large-scale specialized farms, labor recruitment (and ultimately labor control) is generally beyond the capacity of individual farms. Consequently, industrialized farms tend to turn to the state to secure and retain the required work force. A historical example is useful in illustrating the development of a suitable work force and the consequences of that development.

Industrial farming in California is well established with a relatively long history and it provides examples of efforts to secure a work force suited to industrial farm production. Commercial fruit and vegetable production became important to California beginning in the 1880s. Several developments contributed to this, the most important of which is the availability of a large work force suited to production requirements.

Generalizations based on the example of California agriculture must be used with care. The peculiarities of the history of farm labor in California are due to the labor intensive nature of fruit and vegetable production. Because most fruits and vegetables are highly perishable the availability of a suitable harvest work force is essential. Failure to promptly harvest the ripe crop would allow both the crop and any profits to spoil in the fields. A further feature of specialized crop production is that it is often spread over entire areas (for example the Salinas Valley "salad bowl" or the "tomato belt" of northern California's central valleys). With this specialization, labor intensive harvest operations call for the employment of an extremely large work force for very short periods of time.

This pattern of employment is similar for the performance of operations other than the harvest, only on a smaller scale (i.e., fewer workers are employed). The ideal farm worker appears at planting, cultivation, and harvest times and disappears for the remainder of the year.

The history of farm labor in California is one of the exploitation of various groups of laborers one after another. The list is long, but the most important groups employed as farm workers were Mexicans, Filipinos, Japanese, and Chinese. Each group was exploited as long as they could be retained and as long as the management of that labor pool remained unproblematic.

Two factors were most important to farm interests in the development of a suitable farm work force. Institutional barriers, whether in the form of bureaucratic administration or institutional racism, served to create a suitable work force for corporate farms. The state played an important part in erecting institutional barriers, primarily through immigration policies.
The effect of these barriers was to create a work force marginal to the overall labor market. Because of their marginal status vis-à-vis the labor market, these farm workers, in various forms, came to resemble a semicaptive work force. The fact that farm workers were often members of a foreign group lacking close social relationships with their employers or the local community made it much easier to leave them unemployed when they were no longer needed on the farm. At the same time their alien status effectively prevented them from seeking employment in urban centers where racial antagonisms ran high. Galarza effectively describes the plight of the alien farm worker.

The world of labor was for them a pool into which they were dumped in large numbers; within which they were impounded by effective barriers of language, custom, and alienation; and from which they escaped only when racial antagonism dried up their jobs or competing industries offered them a way out.¹

Through the fifties and into the early sixties the work force employed by industrial farms in California was primarily made up of Mexican workers, commonly referred to as braceros, and brought to the United States under contract. The institution of the bracero program was undoubtedly a response to industrial farm interests. Under the terms of Public Law 78 braceros were to be employed exclusively in agriculture.

Public Law 78 also provided the administrative framework within which Mexican workers were employed. This program was administered by the federal government through the Department of Labor, which acted as a coordinating agency through which the various agencies of state government participated in the administration of the program.

The bracero program established an administrative framework that was the underpinning of a system of “managed migration,” through which workers could be supplied to farms on location at a specified time. Surveys conducted by the California State Department of Employment prior to various farm operations provided for the adjustment of the supply of workers to the needs of the farms. Furthermore, the delivery of workers from Mexico was relatively prompt, and with careful planning farmer/managers could be sure of the availability of the necessary number of workers at the crucial time.

Because braceros worked under contract, they were essentially bound to remain in the fields for the duration of ongoing farm operations. Should a bracero decide to leave his employer prior to the expiration of the contract, he would lose his legal status and face the possibility of being “blacklisted” and denied the opportunity of being contracted as a bracero in the future. Contracts could be broken

only by mutual agreement between the *bracero* and his employer or by either party unilaterally upon complaint and subsequent joint determination by the Mexical Consul and the Secretary of Labor’s representative.

The desirability of *bracero* workers from the point of view of farmer/managers is best summed up by the following statement from a U.S. Department of Labor report, “The main advantages of Mexican (*bracero*) labor, from the point of view of employers, is that it is easier to recruit, simpler to control, and noticeably less subject to labor turnover.”

In 1964 Congress failed to renew authorization for the contracting of *braceros* and the program came to an end. However, Mexican workers continued to work in California fields and have remained the predominant element in the farm work force since that time. *Braceros* were quickly replaced by undocumented Mexican workers. Many workers merely changed their status.

The flow of undocumented Mexican workers to the United States is the result of state policy oriented to satisfying labor requirements. Industrial farms in California are among the main beneficiaries of this policy. Simply in terms of logistics, the U.S. border could be closed to such migration. However, since 1964 the policies of the U.S. government have done little to discourage undocumented Mexican migration. Efforts to enforce migration laws and halt the flow of undocumented workers have been perfunctory, and insufficient resources have been made available to secure the border.

In addition, the employment of undocumented workers has not involved significant risk to employers. For example, under the terms of the “Texas Proviso” (Public Law 283, 1952) it is a felony to import and harbor undocumented workers, but it is not a felony to employ them. Furthermore, efforts to apprehend undocumented workers have been centered along the border and not at the place of employment. Like the *bracero* program, which secured workers specifically for employment in agriculture, current border enforcement policies have been instrumental in satisfying the elements of control over the work force required by industrial farms.

Control over the work force in the production process is bolstered by the coercive function of an over-supply of workers. Estimates of the number of undocumented Mexican workers in the United States range from one to five million.

Given the magnitude of the undocumented workers entering the United States and the limited employment opportunities open to them, it is not surprising that they readily accept short-term employment. An over-supply of workers, even in the face of high employee turnover, assures farmer-managers that workers will be available for employment for the duration of ongoing farm operations.

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Should unskilled workers leave their jobs prior to the conclusion of farm operations, replacements are easily found among the ranks of the unemployed. Moreover, workers are willing to remain on the job until the completion of farm operations when faced with the lack of alternative employment.

The reliance upon undocumented Mexican workers for employment on California's corporate farms resembles the less formalized employment of farm workers prior to the establishment of the bracero program. Asian immigrants were a major part of California's farm work force in earlier times. Initial development of industrial farming in California was possible because of the availability of these workers for employment in the fields. Asians were marginal to the labor market and available for farm work largely because of the intense racism they experienced in the United States.

Because racism against Asians was prevalent throughout society, direct state intervention in creating a disciplined Asian farm work force was unnecessary. Thus, it is difficult to demonstrate a conscious link between state policies toward Asians and the development of a marginalized work force in the interests of industrial farms. However, Asian immigration to the United States did provide industrial farms with a work force for many years.

While it is difficult to show a clear-cut involvement of the state directly in the creation of a farm work force, there is little doubt that agents of the state were aware of the importance of Asian labor to California's industrial farms. In a report issued in 1910 (and suppressed shortly after its release), the Labor Commission of California stated:

Japanese or some form of labor of similar character, capable of independent subsistence, quick mobilization, submissive of instant dismissal, and entailing no responsibility upon the employer for continuous employment is absolutely necessary in the California orchard, vineyard, and field, if these vast industries are to be perpetuated and developed. 4

Asians were available for employment in farming to a large extent because of racial barriers barring them from alternative employment or self-employment in agriculture. Racism was often tied to fears that Asians would displace white American workers from their jobs. This fear aroused the wrath of organized labor. Organized labor became one of the most (if not the most) vociferous opponents of equal participation of Asians in the labor market.

Most Asian immigrants had agricultural backgrounds and some, the Japanese in particular, were highly skilled farmers. Some Asians were able to secure land and enter into farming for themselves. The growth of such a movement presented the possibility of a drain on the available wage work force of industrial farms.

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Efforts to prevent Asians from holding land were made in the California legislature as early as 1907. In 1913 the Alien Land Act was passed, providing that aliens ineligible for citizenship could not hold land. Under the provisions of the Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924 both the Japanese and the Chinese became ineligible for citizenship. At most, noncitizen Asians could lease land for a period of no more than three years.

The Japanese were successful farmers and the primary target of the Alien Land Act. Once they became independent farmers, Japanese were no longer available as wage laborers and they often hired fellow Japanese away from other farms. Preservation of the industrial farm work force may have been among the motivations for passage of the Alien Land Act.

Whether on the basis of institutionalized racism or a bureaucratically administered farm work force, industrial farming in California has prevailed by riding on the backs of successive groups of workers who enjoyed only marginal access to the labor market.

Farm workers have been marginal not only to the labor market but to participation in rural communities as well. Farm workers often migrate in search of work to maximize their earnings. Obviously migration is related to the nature of farm production. The duration of employment on one farm or in one geographical area is extremely limited given both the seasonality and the discontinuity of farm operations. Furthermore, very low wages have historically been associated with farm labor. Walter Goldschmidt's classic study of community class structure in rural California indicated that farm laborers, regardless of ethnic or racial background, were the predominant element of a "dependent class" within the rural community. This class was largely alienated from active participation in the social and political institutions of the community. Consequently, decision making in the rural community with a polarized class structure was left to elites. 5

The examples of labor relations in California must be viewed with care. As was pointed out above, industrial farming in California is primarily engaged in labor-intensive fruit and vegetable production. This type of production may exaggerate the discontinuity of employment characteristic of crop production more generally. Labor intensive fruit and vegetable production calls for the employment of an extremely large work force for very short periods of time, particularly in harvest operations. Therefore, the examples provided above should not be taken as blueprints of probable labor-recruitment practices subsequent to a transformation from family farms to industrial farms in other areas. Rather the examples point to critical issues demanding closer examination.

First, involvement of the state in the recruitment of a suitable farm work

force was pervasive and, secondly, the development of such a work force was predicated on the marginal status of that work force relative to the overall labor market. Examination of the possible consequences of the development of industrial farms in areas now populated with family farms will focus on these considerations.

Predicting the type of intervention demanded of and provided by the state is not a straightforward and simple matter. The social and political climate at the time as well as specific labor requirements in the production of different commodities will determine the actual form of such actions. However, the fact remains that the successful development of industrial farming will depend on the success of such farms in recruiting a suitable work force. Is the state likely to be responsive to demands for labor policies favorable to the farm sector?

Declining farm numbers have diminished the political significance of the farm vote. The farm population constitutes only 2.7 percent of the populace. However, the farm sector has regained political significance in light of the importance of food exports in United States foreign and trade policy since the early seventies. For example, dependency on foreign oil provoked a crisis when, in 1971, the United States faced its first trade deficit since 1871. Agricultural exports became the primary means of offsetting these trade deficits. Production from one out of every three acres of crop land goes to export.

However, effective development and retention of export markets depends on stable production of farm commodities and their steady flow to market. Appeasement of the farm sector as a whole or critical commodity groups in particular may have become, of necessity, the domestic policy accompaniment to a trade policy that emphasizes agricultural exports.

If agricultural commodities continue to be of central importance after a transformation to industrial farming in the production of critical export crops, the state would be hard pressed to placate farmer-managers demanding state intervention in the recruitment of a suitable farm work force. The mere threat of a disruption of the flow of farm commodities to market would have numerous and varied repercussions.

First of all, such threats could disrupt foreign markets for agricultural commodities, creating domestic economic and political instability. Furthermore, powerful corporations with considerable political influence would have a direct stake in the undisturbed flow of sufficient supplies of critical farm commodities to market. For example, just five corporations control about 85 percent of U.S. grain exports and are also the major grain traders in the world market. The fact that just one grain company, Cargill, Inc., "is the largest single contributor to the United States balance of payments" puts the influence of such corporations

Grain exports have been of central importance to the trade policies of the seventies. For instance, grain exports of wheat, corn, and soybeans in 1980 made up 51 percent of all agricultural exports. (Agricultural exports made up 19 percent of total exports.) Family farms are presently the predominant form of organization of grain production in the United States. However, if the concentration of farm production continues such farms will be of diminishing relative importance in the overall production of grain, and industrial farms will become the main source of grain supplies. Assuming the emergence of industrial grain farms, there are a number of possible labor recruitment problems they could face. My assessment of the probable labor needs of industrial grain farms will assume the continuation of present trends. What are those trends and what are the likely labor requirements of emergent industrial grain farms?

Grain production in the United States is highly capital intensive. Technology developments have created the possibility for a relatively small number of farmers to produce tremendous quantities of food. Such developments have included chemicals such as herbicides and sophisticated machinery (large tractors and harvesters in particular) that substantially reduce farm labor requirements. Undoubtedly industrial farms would continue to carry out farm production on this capital-intensive basis, and the demand for wage labor on industrial grain farms would not be extensive. Only a relatively small wage work force would be required to supplement year-round workers at critical points in the production cycle. Because of the limited labor requirements, farm workers would not necessarily be recruited from the ranks of immigrant groups.

The development of industrial grain production presents the possibility of meeting labor requirements through the employment of local labor. In this case there would be no need to call for state intervention in the recruitment of an extra-local work force, avoiding the creation of new forms of social inequal-

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7 Another possibility is for large corporations to gain a stranglehold on the economy by entering directly into farm production. However, this scenario is unlikely. There has been no sustained and substantial penetration of nonfarm capital into farm production as yet. In 1974 only 2 percent of all farms were corporations, and of that 2 percent only 23 percent were publicly held or nonfamily enterprises. Lyle P. Schertz, "Farming in the United States," Structure Issues of American Agriculture (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, November 1978).

8 Paradoxically, new developments of a highly capital intensive nature may have the effect of preserving some family farms while contributing to the ruin of others. A report issued by the Department of Agriculture provides an example: "the recent introduction of the four-wheel-drive tractor disturbed the long-standing mix of farm sizes and numbers in several regions by greatly increasing the acreage one person could efficiently farm. Once purchased the tractor becomes a fixed cost to be spread over as many acres as possible." National Economics Division; Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service, Status of the Family Farm (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1979), p. 5.
ity. Furthermore, the absence of social integration into local communities associated with migrant labor could be avoided.

In the Midwest, the South, and the southern Plain states (all areas of grain production) mid-sized family farms are disappearing, while the number of very large farms and small farms relying on substantial off-farm income are increasing. The emergent class structure has been described as follows:

Today the whole rural class structure is undergoing dramatic changes. Those who are likely to survive the crisis are... a new breed of farmers, a prosperous agrarian bourgeoisie with roots in the traditional family farm. The new capitalist class will become more and more dependent upon wage labor and their farms will increasingly resemble factories in the fields. A different kind of survivor is the growing part-time farmer class which combines wage work... with farm work on its own land in an effort to hold off bankruptcy.\footnote{Burbach and Flynn, \textit{Agribusiness}, p. 22.}

Given the nature of grain production these two groups may form a symbiotic relationship in which industrial farms provide limited employment opportunities and small part-time farms provide a source of readily employable workers at critical points in the production cycle.

Part-time farms are becoming an increasingly important element of the farm sector. The most rapid rise in off-farm earnings has occurred since 1970. Sixty percent of all farms derive at least half their incomes from off-farm sources. Of course many of these part-time farmers are "urban refugees" and hobby farmers, but farm families who value farming as a way of life may seek off-farm employment as an alternative to an exodus from farming altogether. Off-farm employment provides the additional cash flow required to offset rising production costs and protect the family's farm assets.

However, for part-time farmers to provide industrial farms with a suitable work force two conditions must be met: first, part-time farms must be increasingly marginal in relation to farm commodity markets; and second, a sufficient number of family members from these farms must be marginal with respect to the overall labor market so as to prevent them from securing non-farm employment.

Smaller farmers are likely to become increasingly marginal within the farm economy because of their "negative privilege with respect to markets."\footnote{Thanks to Patrick Mooney for this terminology.} Markets for farm commodities have been transformed with the growth of large regional and national food marketing organizations, especially since World War II. This change has resulted in the disappearance of many smaller firms serving localized markets. A Department of Agriculture report notes this change and its consequences:
Markets for farm commodities were formerly organized to serve the needs of small independent farmers who produced the bulk of output. . . . Country buying stations and assembly point markets have dwindled as both large farmers and buyers have chosen to bypass these traditional markets in favor of more direct-marketing methods.\footnote{National Economics Division, \textit{Status of the Family Farm}, pp. 9–10.}

Of course towns and cities provide a potential locus of employment. However, there are a number of inhibiting factors and drawbacks. Employment opportunities are often located long distances from the farmstead. Family members seeking employment in the city could be faced with (depending on the location of their home) high travel costs and/or the costs of maintaining two households not to mention the inconveniences and emotional strains of being away from home. Lack of specialized training is a potential barrier to securing employment in both urban and rural industries. Furthermore, the commitment to working on the family farm could conflict with certain off-farm jobs (for example, seasonal availability).

None of these barriers is absolute, and for many farm family members they may not be considered barriers at all. However, given the expected limited labor demand on industrial grain farms, only a relatively small number of part-time farm family members would have to be deterred from accepting non-farm employment to assure industrial farms an adequate supply of labor. With nearby farm employment not significantly in conflict with their own farm responsibilities, many farm family members might choose to accept such employment. Industrial farms certainly could not hope to secure a more qualified work force.

The evolving farm structure in grain producing regions may lead to the development of a work force made up of family members from marginal farms. Whether because of the unavailability of non-farm employment or because they need only limited employment, family members from small farms would be available for seasonal employment. Secondly, because of the geographical proximity of the small farms to the industrial farms, workers could be readily recruited at the onset of various farm operations. Workers with personal ties to their employers would probably remain at work until the completion of farm operations out of a sense of responsibility. Finally, because of their familiarity with farming, these workers would possess the skills needed to operate sophisticated machinery.

This scenario is the least undesirable outcome of a possible shift to industrial grain farming. The consequences of this arrangement for community participation would not be as oppressive for part-time farmer-workers as it has been for farm workers in California whose social marginality has been based on race and/or citizenship.

Still, the perpetuation and widening of economic inequality accompanies the development of any system of industrial farming. Restricted access to farm commodity and labor markets by part-time farmer-workers is the likely form of
this inequality in industrial grain farming.

The unfolding of this scenario would depend on the development of a very delicate balance. The marginal status of small farms in relation to farm commodity markets would have to be maintained. At the same time marginalization would have to be contained to prevent the dissappearance of both small farms and the part-time work force altogether. With the maintenance of such a balance and the absence of abundant alternative non-farm employment for small farm family members there would be no need for a political solution to the recruitment of a farm work force. The creation of a farm work force marginal to the overall labor market would be economic in character.

However, even in the absence of labor recruitment problems, the need to control labor contains the potential for political conflict. Farmer-managers are likely to be against organized labor in their orientation, because the presence of labor unions on the industrial farm would contest management perogatives in dealing with the uncertainties inherent in crop production.

There is little doubt that industrial farmer-managers would make efforts to discourage any attempt on the part of unions to organize farm workers. Furthermore, it is likely that farmer-managers would in general be opposed to organized labor for fear that labor's influence might spread to the farm sector. Effective opposition to legislation and/or administrative rulings favoring organized labor could be mounted by mobilizing the potential political influence of the agribusiness complex.

Perhaps the most adverse effects of the development of industrial grain farming would occur in the event of the lack of a suitable local work force. In that case industrial grain farms might seek state involvement in the recruitment of an extra-local work force. This involvement would lead to extremely undesirable consequences. If the state acts to support the interests of the agribusiness complex, the state itself would be directly involved in the creation of inequality. Even worse, if the state were actively engaged in mobilizing a farm work force, something close to labor conscription could result, setting a dangerous precedent. Even if labor recruitment were accomplished less coercively, there is still the social inequality engendered by a system of migratory labor and the lack of social integration suffered by farm workers.

Agricultural policy alternatives commonly promoted by Congress foster the concentration of farm production, and this trend, when taken to its logical conclusion, will result in industrial farming. The development of industrial farming will depend on the perpetuation of existing social inequality and perhaps even the creation of more pronounced forms of inequality. This much should be clear: the development of industrial farming should be resisted if there is to be movement toward a more egalitarian and democratic society.
Feminism, Science, and Democracy

EVELYN FOX KELLER

Over the last two decades, leftist thought has challenged the traditional view that the natural sciences provide an a priori and irreplaceable safeguard to the fundamental principles of freedom and democracy. In that view, the value neutrality of science was believed to provide the best available defense against ideological coercion: the conjunction of scientific rationality and liberation was taken for granted. Now we have come to recognize those beliefs as themselves constituting a form of ideology. In the growing body of literature of the social studies of science, historians and sociologists of science have begun to demonstrate the many ways that the work of scientists—far from being value neutral—has served, and continues to serve, the economic and political interests of special groups. The identity of scientific rationality and liberation can no longer be taken for granted. Indeed, to many, scientists themselves have come to be seen as a special-interest group, and science as a special interest—even as a means of social control. Seemingly forgotten is the radical potential of science embraced by so many leftist and liberal thinkers of the past.

From a feminist perspective, the criticism that has emerged over the last twenty years is not radical enough, and from a scientific perspective, it is too sweeping. Taken together, however, these two claims can point the way to an important and fruitful new perspective on the sociology of scientific knowledge, and even suggest the ways in which the radical potential of science might be restored.

Both feminists and scientists remind us of the distinctiveness of the commitments and claims that define the scientific enterprise. Science, they agree, is distinguished from other activities by its particular claims to objective knowledge and power. But what for scientists has always been a source of pride is now becoming for feminist theory the principle point of departure of a new critique.1

It is not, some feminists argue, simply that the commitment and claim to objectivity obscures, and indeed protects, the practice of interests, but more seriously, that the very claim to disinterest and detachment expresses a kind of interest: it reflects the values embedded in our cultural ideal of masculinity.

Support for this observation is abundantly provided by scientists themselves. Modern science is an institution that has not only been produced by men, but it has been defined and shaped by frequent reference—explicitly and implicitly—to masculine ideals. "Let us establish," Francis Bacon wrote in the seventeenth century, "a chaste and lawful marriage between Mind and Nature." The new science was to be, again in Bacon's words, a "Masculine Birth in Time"—distinguished from earlier conceptions of knowledge by its uniquely virile strength. In the debates that took place later in that century over the form the new science was to take, the language of gender remained prominent; when the Royal Society was established in 1662, its founding fathers committed themselves to the promise of a truly "masculine philosophy." Henceforth, the equation between scientific and masculine was promoted not simply by the exclusion of women from science, but more generally by a growing division between objective and subjective, male and female. In all this, science was an active force. If George Simmel was right over fifty years ago when he wrote "the requirements of . . . correctness in practical judgments and objectivity in theoretical knowledge . . . belong as it were in their form and their claims to humanity in general, but in their actual historical configuration they are masculine throughout," then we must acknowledge the important role that the success of science has played in the growing idealization of (male) objectivity and the correlative devaluation of (female) subjectivity. It is not hard to see that in the sexual and emotional division of labor that has resulted, the winners have been men and the losers women.

But feminists are inclined to worry about these developments for other reasons as well. They worry about the conjunction of the commitments of science to objectivity and to power. The function of the "chaste and lawful marriage" that Bacon advocated was, he explained, to "[lead] you to Nature with all her children to bind her to your service and make her your slave." The masculinity of the new philosophy would be affirmed by the exercise of power. The promise of science—"the restitution and reinvesting of man to the sovereignty and power . . . which he had in his first state of creation"—was to be fulfilled through the domination of nature. History has shown Bacon to have been more than prescient. Indeed, it is precisely the power that science, and scientists, have come to wield that causes such alarm among the critics of science. No one living in the nuclear age can regard the potential for power that Bacon foresaw in science with the equanimity and optimism of an earlier age. And short of ultimate destruction, critics of science have also sensitized us to the ways that knowledge of phys-

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ical nature, together with the authority of science, can be invoked as an instrument for the domination of human nature. But where others might see these excesses as an abuse of power, (at least some) feminists see them as deriving from the equation between science and power. Once again, we are invited—not only by the pervasive cultural definition of power as masculine, but yet more explicitly by the language of the Baconian vision—to ask whether the centrality of power and domination to the goals of science does not reflect a male perspective. And finally, the further question arises: how does a commitment to objectivity serve the interests of power and domination? In promoting a critical psychological distance between subject and object, perhaps objectivity itself constitutes an invitation to domination.

Such a line of inquiry can lead in any of three directions. First it can lead to the rejection of science, in favor of a more purely “female” culture. This avenue, I suggest, serves neither the interests of women, science, nor of democracy. Instead it promotes the very separation of spheres that modern culture prescribes. It is what most women have traditionally done. By accepting the intellectual and emotional division of labor on which that separation is premised, it leaves science—and power—to men, and simultaneously forfeits the possibility of a more universal and hence more democratic science.

The second tack, in which we are led to imagine what a different science, a feminist (or feminine) science might be, encounters similar problems. Such an approach takes to heart the lessons learned from an appreciation of science as a social phenomenon—produced by human beings acting in a particular social, economic, and political context. In fact, without the revolution that has occurred in our understanding of scientific thought, the extension of a feminist critique of any kind to the natural sciences could only have a reactionary effect. As long as the course of scientific thought was regarded as exclusively determined by its own logical and empirical necessities, then the contention that the different experiences and ambitions of women might give rise to a different mode of thought could only reinforce the traditional view that women are unfit for science. It is important to recognize that an understanding of the social influences on the development of scientific thought is a necessary prerequisite to the political possibility of a feminist theoretic in science. But the notion that one might envision a different kind of science altogether is a consequence of what Hilary and Steven Rose, in their critiques of leftist relativism, have called “an overly socialized conception of science.”

An overly socialized conception of science poses the same risks for leftists and feminists. Insofar as science comes to be understood as expressing nothing more than the interests of special groups, the obvious next step would seem to be to pursue the development of a science expressing the interests of different (perhaps larger) groups with different (perhaps more benign) interests: a “science for the people,” or a “feminist science.” The problem with this line of thought is that
science, so understood, ceases to be recognizable as the activity that the people we call scientists engage in. This is a problem far more serious than scientists' failure of imagination; it reflects a semantic default. What is it after all that we mean by the term "science" if even its claims to epistemological distinction are subject to referendum, when the demarcation of science dissolves into nothing but a social distinction?

I want to suggest that the proper route of a feminist analysis, as of a leftist analysis, is neither the rejection of science nor the search for a "different" science, but a third alternative—attempting to identify the ways that science has been shaped by social forces while at the same time remaining cognizant of what is distinctive about science. The recognition that science is not and has never been—indeed cannot be—free of ideology does not oblige us to regard it as pure ideology. Belief in a simple parsing of facts and values, reason and feeling, cultural and scientific may itself be an expression of ideology and serve manifold functions; it does not follow, therefore, that facts are values, reason is feeling, or that science is the sum total of the social forces which shape it. Sociobiology, or I.Q. studies—two favorite whipping posts of feminists and leftists—are suspect not only because they serve to support existing inequalities of wealth and power; they can also be criticized as bad science. In this spirit, then, objectivity may be acknowledged as an a priori goal of science that, however heavily invested it has historically been in masculine values, nonetheless has meaning and value that transcends gender: as the search for maximally reliable knowledge of the world around us, it is a quintessentially human goal. It is the presumption that any particular stance, or practice, can achieve total objectivity that effectively serves to obscure vested interests. In the same spirit, one can also acknowledge the universal value of the power of science to expand human competence, and simultaneously argue that the preoccupation with control and domination—either of nature or of other humans—represents a deformation of that goal. What a feminist analysis needs to address is the ways that conceptions of objectivity and power, which I take to be the natural goals of science, have been skewed by masculine values.

For this, a critique of science is required which mistakes neither its rhetoric for its practice, nor any particular set of practices for the venture as a whole. Science, as we know it, is not uniform either as theory or as practice. Individual scientists are drawn into the profession out of a variety of motivations, trained, and integrated into different subcultures that employ different methodologies to solve different kinds of problems, and—both as individuals and as members of communities—invoke a wide range of values and preferences in their selection of "best" theories. Shared commitments to the knowability of nature, to the dependence of truth on both experimental replication and logical coherence, allow us to identify them as members of a common group. But the differences among them provide the means by which we can begin to sort out the complex relations
between science and ideology.

In attending to such differences, a feminist and a scientific perspective can be mutually reinforcing: both require respect for the range of actual practices that have constituted the scientific enterprise. I suggest that the pluralism revealed by close attention to lived scientific history permits us to envision a science less bound by the ideology of dominant groups without having to invent a “different kind of science.” By attending to the evolutionary pressures that operate on the diversity of values, goals, and interests coexisting in science, we can begin to discern the ways that ideology contributes to the determination of the uses to which science is put, the choice of problems scientists study, the methodological styles they judge to be most “legitimate,” and the explanations they find most “satisfying.”

Feminist analyses have begun to identify the effects of a masculine bias operating on all four levels. Not surprisingly, it is the last—the influence of ideology on explanatory preferences—that is the most difficult to identify. I will devote the remainder of this essay, therefore, to an attempt to illustrate how ideology in general, and a-masculine ideology in particular, can help to shape the very descriptions of nature that emerge from scientists’ desks and laboratories. My examples are drawn from the recent history of biology. I suggest a reading of that history which indicates a systematic preference for those theories and explanations that internally reflect the same preoccupation with power and domination that is expressed in so much scientific discourse.

Throughout this century, biologists have debated the relative value of two kinds of explanations of cellular organization—explanations that might be described as organismic as opposed to particulate theories, hierarchical as opposed to nonhierarchical, or interactionist as opposed to “master molecule” theories. The history of biology shows that, whether the debate has been over the primacy of the nucleus or the cell as a whole, the proponents of hierarchy have consistently tended to prevail. I offer two instances of this debate to illustrate. The first, a particularly important example for contemporary biology, comes from the history of Barbara McClintock’s career.

Barbara McClintock is a distinguished cytogeneticist who is presently being widely acclaimed for her discovery, over thirty years ago, of the phenomenon of genetic transposition: the movement of genetic elements from one chromosomal site to another. She began the particular body of research for which she is now so celebrated when she was already at the peak of her career, after she had earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues around the world. Yet not only was this research not accorded the kind of attention a scientist of her stature might have expected; it hardly evoked any interest at all. Indeed, her work on transposition and controlling elements, first presented in 1951, earned her the reputation of eccentricity; some called it “mad.” Today, she is deluged with awards and prizes for this same work, which is now seen as having anticipated
one of the most important recent developments in molecular biology—"jumping genes."

The fact remains, however, that for all her recent acclaim, McClintock's vision of cellular organization, like her vision of science, remains a difficult one for most of her colleagues to understand, much less embrace. Both speak to traditions representing persistent but distinctly minor themes in the history of science—traditions of which we sorely need to be reminded.

McClintock's vision of cellular organization begins, and ends, with a concern for the interaction of its parts; her vision of science with what she calls "a feeling for the organism." Although she has always focussed her immediate attention on the most minute details of chromosomal variation, her sense of the living quality of the material she studied remained a constant and critical aspect of her relation to that material. It informed her interests, her expectations, and her form of attention. A plant, she explains, is not just a piece of plastic, but rather something that grows, somethat that is constantly affected by its environment. In order to properly interpret what you see, it is necessary to "know" every individual plant. That requires watching the plant from the very beginning, for no two are exactly alike.

For McClintock, "a feeling for the organism" is not just a way of talking; it is a necessary prerequisite for scientific knowledge. Over and over again, she reminds us of the need to "let the material speak to you," the need to let it "tell you what to do next." And the best way to do this is to recognize yourself as part of the system. She shares with all other scientists a commitment to the pursuit of objective knowledge, but in her understanding of the term objectivity does not preclude an interaction between subject and object. She also shares with other scientists a belief in the power of science to enhance human competence. But power, in this vision, is a power born more out of love than an interest in domi­ nation. And just as her vision of science is constituted of attention to the individual and an interest in the organic relatedness of all its parts, so her vision of cellular organization reflects the same ingredients.

In lieu of the linear hierarchy described by the Central Dogma of molecular biology, in which the DNA encodes and transmits all instructions for the unfolding of a living cell, her research yielded a view of the DNA in delicate interaction with the cellular environment. As she sees it, the genome functions "only in respect to the environment in which it is found." From her work comes the conclusion that the program encoded by the DNA is itself subject to change; transposition, to McClintock, is a mechanism of genetic regulation that permits the cells to meet the needs of the organism. It implies that the concept of a master control residing in a single component of the cell is inappropriate: control resides instead in the complex interactions of the entire system.

The rediscovery and acceptance of transposition requires a better explanation of thirty years' resistance on the part of McClintock's colleagues than that
she was “wrong.” It requires that we look into the kinds of presuppositions, and ideological commitments, that made her formulations seem—as they continue to seem to many—so unacceptable. Even now, the acceptance of transposition does not imply an embrace of McClintock’s vision. To most of her colleagues, her language remains alien and unfamiliar; it jars with the predominant rhetoric of modern biology.

Many issues were involved in the discord between McClintock and her community, but in part her story is a story of conflict between a community that became increasingly committed to the view of genes, and later DNA, as the central actor in the cell—that which governs all other cellular processes—and an individual whose view was that genes, or DNA, constitute only one part of the cell. As such, it is a model of the conflict between “master molecule” and interactionist theories that pervades biological history.

One other example may help to illustrate this conflict more concretely. It comes from my own work as a mathematical biologist. In the late 1960s, in an attempt to understand the origin of difference in an initially undifferentiated system, my colleague Lee Segel and I set to work on the problem of aggregation in the cellular slime mold *Dictyostelium discoideum*. *Dictyostelium* has the remarkable property of existing alternatively as single cells or as a multicellular organism. As long as food is available, the single cells are self-sufficient, growing and dividing by binary fission. But when starved, these cells undergo internal changes that lead to their aggregation into clumps that, as they grow bigger, topple over and crawl off as slugs. Under appropriate environmental conditions, the slug stops, erects a stalk, and differentiates into stalk and spore cells; the spores subsequently germinate into single-celled amoebae.

The onset of aggregation is the first visible step in the process that eventually leads to the cellular differentiation observed in the multi-cellular organism. Prior to aggregation, no difference among cells is apparent. But once it occurs, a differential environment is created that could presumably be the basis of subsequent differentiation. The question is, what triggers the aggregation?

Following in the spirit of Alan Turing (who had demonstrated that a hypothetical system of interacting chemicals, reacting and diffusing through space, could generate a regular spatial structure that, he speculated, could provide a basis for subsequent morphogenetic development), Segel and I examined the stability of a homogeneous field of interacting but undifferentiated cells. We showed that the conditions for instability, i.e., for the onset of aggregation, would be met by certain developmental changes in individual cells, *without prior differentiation*. That these changes actually take place was independently corroborated by experiment.

Our aim in this effort was explicit: to offer an alternative to the widespread view that special cells were needed to initiate aggregation. There were at least two reasons for seeking an alternative to this view: first, no evidence for such “spe-
cial" cells existed; and second, it was known that when the centers of aggregation patterns are removed, new centers form—i.e., aggregation is undisturbed.

Nonetheless, shortly after Segel and I published our model, it was supplanted by a model that revived the earlier view. In this model, aggregation occurs not as a field effect of interacting cells, but as a result of signals emitted by certain "pacemaker" cells. Although attractive in many ways, to us it had one serious flaw: it failed to address the problem of the origin of the difference that gave rise to these "pacemakers." It soon became obvious that the question that we had considered the central issue was not the question of interest to most biologists or mathematical biologists working on the subject. In fact, the pacemaker view was embraced with a degree of enthusiasm that suggested that this question was in some sense foreclosed. The assumption of pacemaker cells was felt to be so natural and it so readily explained the phenomena, that the question we had begun with simply disappeared.

In the years that followed, the word "pacemaker" became a basic and common term of the literature. Despite the continuing lack of evidence for or against their existence, researchers came to take their reality for granted. In fact, the force of the pacemaker concept has been so great that it soon began to be applied to other phenomena—chemical reactions—occurring in patently uniform media.

From my original point of view, the enthusiasm for pacemakers was simply perplexing. But my recent study of Barbara McClintock's career has suggested to me that this story provides another, and an especially simple, instance of the predisposition for the kinds of explanation that posit a single central governor. It illustrates that such explanations appear both more natural and conceptually simpler than global, interactive accounts. But simplicity too is a relative term. In mathematical sciences in general, it is true that "hierarchical" models do lend themselves more readily to the kinds of mathematics that have been developed; they are mathematically more tractable. But we need to ask: What accounts for mathematical tractability? Might it not be that prior commitments—ideological pressures—influence not only the kinds of explanations that are felt to be satisfying, but also the very analytic tools that are developed to deal with such explanations? The original model that Segel and I proposed was (as were all the models of that time) highly over-simplified. It failed to incorporate the more complex internal dynamics of the individual cell that we now know to be important to aggregation. But ten years ago we lacked the mathematical techniques for such an analysis. In the intervening period, however, we have witnessed a tremendous growth in the study of nonlinear equations. As a result of this effort, it is now possible to develop the analysis of cellular interactions, without the positing of "pacemakers," far further than we were able to do then. Indeed, some of that analysis has now been carried out, and the question of the existence of "pacemakers" can once again be raised.

The moral of both stories should be apparent. I am suggesting that both
might be read as illustrative of a widespread commitment to kinds of explana-
tions that satisfy an interest in or predisposition toward hierarchy, control, and
even domination. I suggest further that the prevalence of this interest within the
scientific community is a result not of an intrinsic commitment of science to con-
trol and domination but of a relatively straightforward selection process. Individu-
als are attracted to science by the ways that science advertises itself; those
drawn by an ideology of power and domination will tend to select themes consis-
tent with that ideology. In this way, the community's definition of "good" science
reflects not only experimental replicability, logical coherence, and explanatory
power, but also ideological "fit." But at the same time both stories serve to
remind us that ideology is not binding. Diverse values, goals, and interests con-
tinue to coexist in the practice of science despite pressures to conform. And the
commitment that scientists share to the pursuit of objective knowledge—despite
differing conceptions of objectivity—allows for the possibility that, sometimes,
ideologically "unfit" themes will prevail. But for this liberatory, even radical po-
tential of science to flourish, we must learn to credit and support those values,
goals, and interests that have survived the dominant ideological pressures. The
result might indeed be a different science: certainly it would be a more demo-
cratic one.
A Touch of Class

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE AGNEW

In a recent talk before a group of attentive students at the Dalian Institute of Technology in China, an American professor of management summed up his remarks in this way: “We are all members of a universal management,” he declared. “We all face the same allocation decisions. We all need to motivate workers. And we need to insure that our organizations contribute to the achievement of national and social goals.” For the reporter who took down this statement, the text and its context were sharply and gratifyingly incongruous. Here was a dedicated cadre of Chinese administrators, steeped in the proletarian homilies of Marx, Lenin, and Mao, avidly recording the gospel according to the Harvard Business School. This was indeed an image of ideological capitulation suitable for framing—a row of puzzled Chinese brows knitted over the intricacies of market pricing and case method. The reporter had managed to discover an experiment in Sino-American cooperation even more inspirational than the import figures on fast foods and soft drinks. What could be more welcome, after all, than the prospect of China feeling its way toward the water’s edge of market production?

Yet there was more to the professor’s message than the suggestion of a wildcat capitalism surging up in the communes and factories of the People’s Republic. Its deepest irony resided in its direct appeal to a managerial class defined by common tasks of administration, allocation, and mobilization. His remarks left little doubt that modern management had assumed the mantle of universality and internationalism first proffered to the industrial proletariat by Marx and Engels. If the fit seemed at first a bit awkward, the point was nevertheless clear. By reason of their relation to production, polity, and culture, managers had become a class: a class defined by the nature of its decisions in these three spheres and, no less importantly, by its very capacity for decisiveness. A cunning History, it appeared, had thrust the responsibilities of modernity upon those most competent to meet them—management.

We do not know for certain the responses of the Chinese technocrats to this line of thought, though the Dalian experiment itself suggests some sort of ac-

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commodation. Nor, for that matter, do we always know our own responses to the managerial argument; not, in this case, because the argument is so new but because it is so old. The possibility of a managerial revolution has been raised, refuted, and revived so many times as to leave most of us bewildered by the statistics and sociological categories adduced on either side.

Not that it is exactly the same intelligentsia that is discovered every time. Over the past century, American observers have repeatedly retouched the portrait of this "New Class" by successively highlighting its technical (1910–1930), managerial (1930–1950), administrative (1950–1970), professional (1970–1980), and intellectual (1980– ) features. Of course, these distinctions are not as sharp as the dates would indicate; theorists have rarely hesitated to mix and match characteristics in various ways, with the result that the New Class can appear at times to be the product of some bizarre sociological Identikit.

As one might expect, the results are not always flattering. Neoconservatives, for example, have appropriated and revised the theory of a managerial and technocratic revolution to explain the rise of a pampered and petulant "adversary culture" in the United States. In their view, a New (salaried) Class, coddled by a New (permissive) Childhood, has produced a New (anticapitalist) Politics, informed by a New (barbarian) Sensibility: all of which, they argue, makes itself most deeply felt in the media and educational sector, where the left-leaning intelligentsia are presumed to reign. The left, for its part, has used the notion of a college-educated, nonpropertied salariat to explain the collapse of the New Politics, linking the creature comforts and scheduled mobility of New Class life to the guilt-edged quality of its political consciousness and the innocuousness of its countercultural alternatives. Caught in the middle, the New Class can look forward to rebuffs regardless of whether it bites or licks the hand that feeds it.

This curious doublebind may have less to do with some imagined duplicity in the New Class than with a profound ambivalence among its chroniclers. For some time now, writers have used the idea of the New Class as a mirror in which to behold the reflection of their deepest misgivings and their highest ambitions as intellectuals. As a result, they have produced theories about the New Class that invariably display the protean character of the mixed emotions invested in them. The New Class is a class for all reasons. It is here to stay, in theory if not in fact, despite sporadic efforts by orthodox Marxists (and others) to purge the notion from the repertoire of modern social theory.

Yet the survival of this idea of a class "between labor and capital" owes a debt to both the long tradition of political skepticism and critique on the left and some more fashionable preoccupation with the self. Reflection can be rigorous as well as narcissistic. In either case, however, the history of the New Class (now called the professional-managerial class) becomes in important respects a history of ideas. To put it more precisely, the New Class may be the one social
stratum for whom the consciousness of class expresses itself—at least in part—as a history of ideas. To examine the way that the left has thought about the New Class is to chart the contradictory course and prospects of the class itself.

The spectre of a third class “between” or “above” labor and capital has haunted the two-class model of industrial capitalism since the moment of its birth in the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx himself was the first to remark on the separation of management from ownership as a tendency of advanced capitalism. At the same time he foresaw “the constant increase of the middle classes, those who stand between the workman on the one hand and the capitalist and landlord on the other.” Marx neither linked nor developed these observations, but, taken together, they foreshadow the contradictory career that the concept of a separate technical or service class has enjoyed in the years since Marx’s initial musings on the subject.

In speaking of a separation of managerial from proprietary functions within the capitalist firm, Marx had meant to dramatize the indispensable productive operations of the capitalist division of labor that would be carried over into socialism, and whose survival was already visible in hundreds of producers’ cooperatives in England and America. In speaking of the growth of so-called “middle strata,” however, Marx had meant to dramatize just the opposite: the simultaneous development of a nonproductive class that lived off the surplus-value produced by the proletariat. Merchants, servants, accountants, lawyers were “a burden weighing heavily on the working base and increas[ing] the social security and power of the upper ten thousand.” These two views, formulated quite separately in Marx’s own mind, have been persistently conflated by twentieth-century theorists. The result is a double-edged vision of a new middle class, distinguished alternately by its proficiency and its parasitism.

The American figure who most clearly and consistently stressed the dimension of proficiency in the New Class was the maverick economist Thorstein Veblen. Veblen appropriated the productivist legacy of artisan republicanism and socialist aesthetics and reinvested them in his image of the modern technician. His distinction between workmanship and wastemanship—between valued productive skills on the one hand and predatory commercial wiles on the other—animated all of his early writings, but it was not until after World War I that Veblen made his most earnest case for the imminent victory of the technician over the profiteer. The exigencies of the war, he argued in *The Engineers and the Price System*, had quickened the infiltration of experts into America’s industrial

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2 Karl Marx, *Capital* (New York: International Publishers, 1967) 3:387. *Theories of Surplus Value* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968), Part II, p. 573. Marxists such as Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein, Emil Lederer, and Jacob Marschak were the first to take up the white collar question, but their influence on American writers was minimal.
apparatus. This process would continue, he predicted, until the nation awoke to
the presence of a new, technical General Staff. Veblen fastened upon the prewar
and wartime preoccupation with efficiency and waste as signs of a growing class­
consciousness among American engineers, and in those signs he dimly discerned
the outlines of an embryonic “Soviet of Technicians.”

There was some substance to Veblen’s hopes, though not much. Radical
disciplines of Frederick Winslow Taylor, the pioneer of “scientific management,”
did ally with various Veblenites, and both parties in turn made overtures to the
labor movement during the 1920s. But the notion of a technical soviet made little
headway until 1932—at the bottom of the Depression—when Veblen’s little po­
lemic on the engineers suddenly became a bestseller. One economist, Howard
Scott, went so far as to propose the replacement of the price system by a compli­
cated arrangement of energy measurements and transfers administered by cen­
tral planning boards. Scott’s technocracy movement rode a brief but powerful
swell of popularity during 1932, buoyed perhaps by the favorable response to
Adolph A. Berle, Jr., and Gardner C. Means’s *The Modern Corporation and
Private Property*. In this work, which has seen more than twenty reprintings
since its first publication, Berle and Means marshalled masses of statistics to
show the gradual separation of ownership from actual control over the corpora­
tion’s means of production. *The Wealth of Nations* had, by their lights, become
a dead letter, since managers were now more interested in efficiency and order
than in profit and risk; and it was the managers who would staff the “neutral
technocracy” that Berle and Means envisioned as the solution to the contempo­
rary crisis of capitalism.

As events would show, the particular proposals put forward by the techno­
crats and their allies fared badly with the New Deal, but the managerial ethos
that they confidently embodied seemed at least publicly redeemed by the promi­
nence given within the Roosevelt administration to the influence of his Brains
Trust. “In a broad sense,” George Soule wrote in *The Coming American Revolu­
tion*, “the New Deal gives us a foretaste of the rise to power of a new class, and
this foretaste does have a distinct revolutionary tinge, just because it indicates a
shift in class power”—a shift to the intelligentsia, as he called them. “The fore­
front of the white-collar workers, the productive professions, are just beginning
to assume some of the political prerogatives which their actual place in a highly
organized industrial society warrants, and to which their superior competence in
matters of social theory entitles them.”

3 Thorstein Veblen, *The Engineers and the Price System* (New York: Harcourt, Brace &
4 Adolph A. Berle, Jr., and Gardner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private
delivered his prophecy captured the general optimism that "technocratic progressives" held out for a third or middle way between the Red and Black Revolutions at work in Europe; it also expressed a specific intuition about the intelligentsia's own decisive role as minutemen of the managerial revolution.

No one had actually used the words "managerial revolution," however, until 1941, when a best-selling book by that title appeared under James Burnham's name and left the phrase on everyone's lips. Burnham published his tract as he embarked on an intellectual journey that would eventually take him (and not a few of his former comrades) from the Partisan Review to the National Review, and the work bore the imprint of his embittered apostasy. It dismissed capitalist and Marxist theory as metaphysic and then proceeded to collapse the ideological polarities between which managerial theorists had been at pains to locate their revolution. Stalinism, Nazism, and New Dealism were, for Burnham, alternative sides of a die that would yield the "managerial society" whichever way it was thrown. The political ascent of the managerial class was not the result of a conspiracy of intellectuals, as the anarchists from whom Burnham was accused of plagiarizing his ideas insisted; rather, it was the upshot of the long-term historical movements and struggles that produced all new modes of production.

The cost in human life imposed by such struggles, Burnham reminded his readers, had yet to be calculated for the United States, where the managerial revolution still lay in embryo. But he doubted whether the nation could avoid the "more strenuous features" of the Russian and German paths to managerialism. Burnham's hesitation was out of keeping with an approach to history that otherwise radiated a broad, albeit bleak, confidence in "what was happening in the world." But if Burnham offered American liberals the promise of a global managerial triumph, he did so only on principles that neither his Trotskyist nor his technocratic readers could bring themselves to accept. For them, Burnham's "managerial revolution" was at best a Pyrrhic victory.

Cold War politics merely thickened the Orwellian atmosphere in which Burnham had saturated the notion of managerialism. No longer did Veblenites such as Stuart Chase ask why Russia had all the fun of remaking a world. Managerialism bureaucratized spelled totalitarianism. Technocrats were but commissars in lab coats. They were an elite battening upon the populace through political prerogatives and the mystifications of expertise. Jacques Ellul and Milovan Djilas heralded the changes in this theme, but the message remained the same: pure technique, detached from any moral and popular context, threatened to enslave the humanity it had pledged to emancipate. Thriving, or so it seemed, on


the meager rations of irony and despair, emigré critics such as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer kept this indictment of instrumental rationality alive through the 1950s and 1960s, long enough for their disciples to see it revived by the antinuclear movement. According to one of the movement’s more eloquent leaders, Edward Thompson, the only “ism” produced by an unrestrained technocracy is “exterminism.” From his perspective, engineers threaten to extinguish a good deal more of capitalist society than its price system.

In the face of growing Cold War hostility toward social and economic engineering, postwar liberals resigned themselves, according to Robert Westbrook, to an indirect managerialism that operated through such oblique and compensatory methods as fiscal policy and personnel management. During the fifties and sixties the hard-boiled notion of “technocracy” gradually gave way to the softer-boiled notion of “technostructure.” All those who brought “specialized knowledge, talent, or experience to group decisionmaking” were said to belong to the technostructure; they were, in John Kenneth Galbraith’s words, “the brain” of the modern enterprise, restraining the vestigial profit-reflexes of the firm’s more entrepreneurial executives. 8

“Mixed economy” became the operative term for the liberal ideal of a capitalism thus domesticated from within. As such, the phrase matched the conceptual ambiguity of Galbraith’s technostructure: a stratum so broad in its fancied dimensions as to encompass most white-collar occupations. The imprecision, one suspects, was strategic; it suggested nothing less than the retreat of the technical and managerial elites of Veblen and Burnham to the white-collar jungle of their birth, a terrain where they could mingle—guerrilla fashion—with the massed ranks of office workers. Driven underground, as it were, by the combined animosity of left and right, technocratic and managerial theorists found themselves joined to a separate tradition of thinking about a broader, new, middle class—a tradition from which they had formerly been anxious to distinguish themselves. Much of our current debate over the presence of a third class amounts to a quarrel over the fruits of this subterranean affair between the narrow and broad constructionist views of the managerial revolution.

For every writer who has attempted to distinguish an autonomous managerial or technocratic elite from the complex class and status formations of twentieth-century America, there has always been another who preferred to sink the managerial strata into the growing numbers of white-collar employees. Indeed, terms such as “white collar” and “employee”—with all their vagueness—

came into popular usage at precisely the point where Burnham had marked the beginning of the managerial ascent in America: the first World War. The feverish activities of the various wartime administrative agencies had made visible a broad stratum of so-called "brainworkers" whose occupations and self-consciousness appeared to place them between the conventional categories of capital and labor. But rather than see these office and service workers in Marxist terms as unwanted parasites—surplus labor living off the surplus product of the industrial worker—American observers chose to see them as the balance wheel of contemporary society and the microcosm of the future society. "Between the brute power of unskilled labor and the brute power of capital," the journalist John Corbin wrote in his Return of the Middle Class, "a buffer arises which is composed of the most manly and intelligent elements in both." A new middle class intervenes "between capitalist and laborer, sympathizing with both, knowing the needs of both as neither alone can do." These hybrid figures, according to the political scientist Arthur Holcombe, belonged to an "intermediate class of professional men and public employees, who are neither capitalist nor proletarians but rather the servants of all classes." Their "special interests," he concluded in The New Party Politics, came "nearer to coinciding with the general interest than those of any class."

The stress on subjective capacities—on detachment and empathy in particular—was characteristic of the early writing on the New Class. Political scientists and polemists alike tended to psychologize the white-collar sector by treating it as a state of mind to be reckoned with in any calculation of future political struggles. The urban, technical, managerial, professional, and clerical force was, by the 1930s, a sufficiently sanitized sociological category—cleansed by the quality of its production and consumption—to warrant the title of a "public." One could gain entry into it by works or by faith; one could even join, in Holcombe's phrase, by "due process of thought." Or as one radical editor put it in 1935, "the fact that there is such a wide currency to the idea of a 'public,' between and more important than 'capital' and 'labor,' is significant, for we are governed by ideas." "We are," he added in a Pirandelloesque flourish, "what we think we are."

To read such pronouncements is to realize that the white-collar class was less of a presence than an absence in the minds of its heralds—an absence into which they (and their subjects) could project infinite possibilities. The boundaries of the New Class were sufficiently vague and subjective as to produce a kind


ning to move again." Two years later, a convention of the Students for a Demo­
cratic Society issued the Port Huron Statement, affirming the values of individu­
alism, community, and participatory democracy, and designating the university
as the appropriate “potential base and agency in a movement of social change.”14

The New Left was born committed to a strategy of self-radicalization, a
strategy supported by the shared perception of the failures of the Old Left and
the embourgeoisement of the American working class. The capacity of the sys­
tem to regenerate and reproduce itself suggested the presence of a new, one­
dimensional social and cultural totality, one that called for new analytic ap­
proaches and new revolutionary vehicles. “Any new left in America,” the Port
Huron Statement read, “must be, in large measure, a left with real intellectual
skills, committed to deliberativeness, honesty, reflection as working tools.”15

The early movement drew sustenance from pacifist and populist traditions, but
its sense of embattlement against decades of deception and hypocrisy at all
points of the political spectrum lent strength to its conviction that in the radical­
ized university lay the path of reason, revelation, and revolution. Events, partic­
ularly the Vietnam War and the draft, appeared to bear this conviction out. The
very marginality of intellectuals, it seemed, made for a critical angle of vision.

As the New Left gained in numbers and visibility during the late sixties,
marginality began to lose some of its political cachet as an organizing idea. In its
stead, SDS endorsed the idea that students formed part of a “new working
class,” a technical, professional, and clerical force operating “at the very hub of
production.”16 The “Port Authority Statement”—the document in which these
arguments were first announced—drew heavily on contemporary European
writers such as Pierre Belleville, Serge Mallet, and André Gorz. In doing so, it
brought together two previously opposing lines of thought: the gradual proleta­
rianization and degradation of white-collar work on the one hand and its grow­
ing indispensability and priority to advanced societies on the other. Knowledge
had become the most important force of production in the modern world, and
the knowledge-workers the most important potential agent of change, not
because they were materially immiserated but because they experienced most
acutely the contradiction between the ideal of professional/technical autonomy
and the subaltern status of their actual work. Here, it appeared, was the elusive
reconciliation of Marx, Veblen, Burnham et al., a rapprochement dramatically
enacted in the French worker-student alliance of May 1968 and reenacted in the
widespread entry of white radicals into American factories in the years follow­
ing. For the New Left, the New Working Class theory promised a homecoming

15 Sale, SDS, pp. 52–53.
16 Ibid., pp. 337–340.
and a barnburning all at the same time.

Given such hopes, the fragmentation and collapse of the New Left in the mid-seventies produced their share of soul-searching post-mortems. Among the most interesting and provocative of these reappraisals was one written in 1977 by two veterans of the movement, Barbara and John Ehrenreich. It was entitled, quite simply, "The Professional-Managerial Class." Resisting the return to Leninist models of organization on the one hand and to the fetishism of marginality on the other, the Ehrenreichs credited the rise and fall of the New Left to the initiatives of a third class between labor and capital. The career of the New Left, they argued, was directly related to the anger and anxieties of a class alternately mobilized and immobilized by the contradictions of its position in the new division of labor—a position that required professional-managerial class (PMC) members to service, supervise, and manipulate a working class with whom they otherwise shared a common nonpropertied status. The Ehrenreichs defined the PMC "as consisting of salaried mental workers who do not own the means of production and whose major function in the social division of labor may be described broadly as the social reproduction of capitalist culture and capitalist class relations." 17 In their view, the PMC had a distinctive history (beginning around 1890), a distinctive organization (the professional association), a distinctive function (capitalist reproduction), and a distinctive culture (scientism, professionalism, consumerism), and conflicting interests—interests that could make the PMC the handmaiden or gadfly of monopoly capitalism. Only a clear understanding of these conflicting interests, they concluded, could sort out the crosspurposes that had both made and unmade the New Left, and that could contribute to its remaking.

The response to the Ehrenreichs was predictably mixed: a combination of immediate, almost visceral outrage and gradual, tacit acceptance. For some, the Ehrenreichs had discovered the sociological equivalent of phlogiston, an imaginary class set free by the combustion of other classes. For others, the Ehrenreichs had merely renamed an old problem. And for others, the article came as timely inspiration. In fact, Alvin Gouldner took the Ehrenreichs' thesis several steps further in his *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*. There he treated the PMC (redivided between intellectuals and intelligentsia) as a "flawed universal class," quietly parlaying its technical and cultural capital into the power it would assume once its mandarinate under the decaying bourgeois and bureaucratic classes had ended. Revolution would be unnecessary, Gouldner assured his readers. The New Class was in effect a new bourgeoisie; it could afford to wait. 18

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Such futurology is by now all too familiar. What was most refreshing about the Ehrenreichs' article was its reluctance to adopt the prophetic mode, its insistence on self-scrutiny, and, correspondingly, its appreciation of class as an historical category. Though their range of historical examples was necessarily slim, the Ehrenreichs had clearly drawn their inspiration from the radicalization of professionals during the late 1960s and from the related investigations of American corporate liberalism first undertaken by the circle of radical historians associated with Studies on the Left (1959–1967). In the decade since the dissolution of that journal, those investigations have broadened and deepened, leaving us a rough, composite history of the making of a professional-managerial class in America. Whether we are speaking of middle-level management, engineering, advertising, public relations, journalism, law, social sciences, medicine, or the helping professions, the stories are all strikingly similar—indeed, almost formulaic: a narrative of academic entrepreneurship and institution building; a story of journals, associations, and foundations, of examinations and degrees; in short, a story of technical and cultural gatekeeping and awarding credentials.

Even today, the American professors at the Dalian Institute look to the creation of alumni associations and “old-boy” networks to secure their managerial experiment in China.

This may not be the stuff out of which epic sagas are made, but it is nonetheless a cultural history. If anything, it is a conspicuously cultural history: a story of a class whose work and play are almost entirely taken up with the manipulation and improvisation of social and technical symbols; a “speech community” whose culture can be described, in Gouldner's words, as one of “critical and careful discourse.”

The categories of analysis are visibly Weberian; they are even more noticeably anthropological in that they define the PMC by its capacity to produce and reproduce the web of meanings and institutions within which capitalist exploitation operates. The PMC oversees the cultural and social arrangements that permit such exploitation to continue behind the backs, as it were, of its principals. Its success in this venture may be felt within the theory of the class itself—a theory that is far more at ease with problems of authority, legitimacy, entitlements, and enfranchisement than with issues of economic coercion, industrial discipline, and surplus extraction. Indeed, the hyphenated formulation—“professional-managerial”—obsures the fact that it is the “professional” that invariably is emphasized in recent theoretical practice. The “managerial” side of the PMC refers less to some specific position in the social structure than to a generally manipulative orientation or attitude toward social relations inside and outside the workplace. The PMC excludes Burnham's managers and Veblen's technicians.

And here the legacy of the New Left on our understanding of the New Class is mostly felt. It was the student movement, after all, that sought to mobilize its

19 Ibid., pp. 28–44.
inherited ethos of professional autonomy against the technocratic and managerial leadership of the “multiversity.” It was the New Left that was most concerned, obsessed even, with the cultural and technical languages within which the oppressive and emancipatory possibilities of modern societies were embedded. And it was the New Left that, above all, worked to create a “prefigurative politics,” that is, a politics that would embody a microcosm of the society its revolution sought to bring into being. The same localist, culturalist, and democratic features that mark off the New from the Old Left distinguish as well between our new and old ideas of the “managerial revolution.”

The gap between the vision and practice of the New Left was undoubtedly considerable, as is the gulf between the behavior of the New Class and its imagined destiny. The naiveté, shortsightedness, elitism, and hypocrisy of both the movement and the class have been anatomized often enough. The blind faith that PATCO workers placed in their indispensability is only a recent example of the isolation and miscalculations of the New Class when it is driven into struggle. It fails to recognize its allies (and its enemies) because it does not know itself. As long as its membership remains mobile and fragmented, its solidarity, not to mention its solidarity, as a class will be open to question. For many, the New Class will continue to resemble the new Nixon: neither new nor trustworthy.

The New Class, then, is something less than the “flawed universal class” described by Alvin Gouldner, but it is also something more than the “contradictory class location” mapped out by Eric Olin Wright. If the class is not, as Gouldner suggested, the “best card that history has presently given us to play,” it is still a card we are likely to find in any winning hand. Its ideological and institutional skills are too deeply imbricated in the structure of advanced societies, its ambitions and aspirations too widely diffused, for the class to remain entirely passive in the face of systemic crisis or blockage. Admittedly, there is much in the long tradition of theorizing about the New Class to support the view of it as an exercise in wishful thinking—a case of the imagination doing the work of the will. But the case is hardly so simple as that. The opposing formulations long present in (and between) the various theories of a New Class are not gratuitous confusions; they are evidence of what they purport to explain: the protracted, public rumination of a class becoming, in its peculiarly contradictory way, a class for itself.

At present, the right wing of the PMC is predominant, visible in the rampant careerism, consumerism, scientism, and narcissism of the upscale markets. But its left wing survives: in the persistent concern with consciousness and language in the women’s movement, in the community activism and technical critiques of the antinuclear movements, in the recovery of older cultures of resistance by radical feminist, black, and labor historians, and in the commitment to deliberative, participatory politics of journals such as this one. Contemporary radicals seem bent on creating a left culture: a structure of left institutions, associations, publications, and memory that can serve as a foundation for
alternative and oppositional politics. In their own way, the managerial types at the Dalian Institute would understand: it is networking writ large, and red.

According to Christopher Lasch, American radicals first drew the connection between culture and politics at the turn of the century, that is, at the moment when intellectuals were themselves emerging as a distinctive "social type." The New Radicalism, like the New Class, is thus nearly a century old, if not a century wise. Considering its relative inattention to issues of production, equity, and exploitation, cultural politics may seem a singularly inappropriate politics for a time marked by the blatant transfer of wealth between classes and the wholesale rearrangement of classes into a new mode of production. But such politics are relevant to the way in which such massive disruptions can take place without substantial challenge or coercion. In the new global division of labor of advanced capitalism, the reproductive tasks entrusted to the PMC are critical ones.

At the very least, the PMC has become the labor aristocracy of a work force whose production has lost most of the tangible, material properties that Marx once identified with the commodity. Like it or not, we have entered an economic situation where, for the first time, workers in the consumer, financial, and service industries outnumber those in the so-called "goods-producing sector." "Soon," says yet another professor of management, "there will only be work for those who have the skills of speaking, listening, observing and measuring, and the confidence to use their minds to analyze and solve problems." The handwriting is on the wall, we are being told, but it will take an advanced degree to read it.

Still, we need not embrace the notion of some third wave to appreciate the value (and limitations) of the notion of a third class. It is not science, to be sure, but it is not science fiction either. Neither the culturalist categories in which the New Class is understood nor the materialist categories in which older classes have been understood can be wished away. It may indeed be the case that the professional managerial class is nothing more than an unwanted and unwitting fiduciary for capital and labor, holding the assets of one and the skills of another in a not-so-blind trust. If so, the century-long train of thought in New Class theory may be nothing less than the PMC's slow and uneven ascent toward a recognition of these multiple, if borrowed, resources. Where this awareness may lead, no one can say. But the irony is there for any sharp-eyed reporter to conjure with: a class condemned merely to solve the world, gradually empowered to change it.


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EXPLORATIONS

Remembering Vietnam

WILLIAM ADAMS

The war in Vietnam ended for Americans nearly a decade ago, but the public memory of Vietnam is just beginning. This is a war that has become strangely disjointed from both personal and public life, even for those who were forever changed by it. Like other veterans, I think, my own vivid memories of the war and Vietnam sometimes feel curiously detached from me, almost as if they belong to someone else. I recently saw a film on veterans that used a good deal of television footage from the war years, and I thought how odd everything looked, how distant and unreal, the way old movies sometimes look, like relics or messages from a different time and culture. It is hard to believe that Americans were being killed in Vietnam eight years ago; that a little over ten years ago we invaded Cambodia, bombed Hanoi, mined Haiphong harbor; that a little over fifteen years ago the Congress of the United States voted by overwhelming majority to enact legislation punishing those who burned or destroyed their draft cards. Somehow, miraculously, we are different people now, and this is a different time.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated last November in Washington brings a part of Vietnam back to us. It is a somber, relentless reminder of what the war finally cost. Set in open ground at the end of Constitution Gardens, midway between Constitution Avenue and the Lincoln Memorial, it is, as both admirers and critics have pointed out, stunningly simple in design and effect. Within a wide and gentle excavation are two walls, roughly 250 feet in length, composed of slabs of polished black granite. At their vertex, the walls are ten feet high; from the vertex, they climb the slope of the excavation, diminishing to nothing at their extreme ends. Etched on the walls are the names of the 57,939 men and women who died, or remain missing, in Vietnam.

There is something unsettling in this simplicity, in part because it sets the new memorial so clearly apart from the world that surrounds it. The political center of Washington is colossal and monumental. Its landmarks and buildings radiate power and authority, the massive illusions of reverence and awe. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, by contrast, is purposely subdued, buried in the grounds that surround it, like a sunken crypt or tomb. There is nothing colossal or monumental here. While it is hard to really see the Lincoln Memorial, or the Capitol building, or any of the monuments of official Washington close up, the
Vietnam memorial has to be seen close up, has to be looked at in detail and touched. From a distance, one can see only crowds standing along a dark, half-hidden wall.

Yet the memorial is also unsettling because this very understatement captures perfectly the ambiguity and peculiar pain of the war it memorializes. Legitimate wars are easier to mythologize. They live clean in memory, just as their reasons appear clear to those who suffered their emotional and physical anguish. All war is frighteningly painful. Vietnam did not cause more pain or leave more wreckage of the sort all wars bring on. Its peculiar disaster was and is that its purposes were obscure and finally inadequate. It inspires no traditional sense of heroism or monuments to heroism because it lacked the collective conviction of necessity and shared sacrifice that makes such public sentiments possible. The cool abstraction of the new memorial evokes the confusion and even absence of purposes that clouded the Vietnam War from its outset.

There is an impressiveness of scale embodied in this new memorial, but it is not of the traditional kind. Weeks after its dedication, a part of the constant stream of visitors, I overheard a conversation between two children, both boys, about eight years old. At one point one of them asked the other, "How many people are buried here?" The second, gesturing in an expansive way, as if the number were too great to really grasp, answered, "A million, at least." And so it seems, name after name, month after deadly month in the chronological order of death or disappearance, more than 500 feet of names in letters less than an inch high, stacked on the dark granite slabs. Something meager and stupid like "how could it have been this many?" passed through my mind, surprise at the sheer size of the inscription—a testimony, perhaps, to the fact that it has been too easy to forget how murderous this war really was.

These names might belong to any war in American history were it not for the visitors that line the walls and the poignant fact that many of them are there to find names of friends or family who died in Vietnam. Among the knots of people gathered by noon, there is a constant ritual of pointing and touching, attempts to photograph a name or leave something near the stone that carries it, sometimes a flower, or a small flag, or a picture. Since the dead are listed chronologically, those looking for names sometimes have to refer to a printed alphabetical listing that notes the exact location of each inscription. I saw one couple approach a volunteer carrying the master list and ask for the location of a name. The volunteer opened the listing and scanned the pages, exactly the way one might scan a large metropolitan telephone book. When he finally stopped and repeated the name, the woman grabbed her husband's hand and turned to walk away, her face suddenly struck with dread and pain, as if she were hearing of this death for the first time, or as if its public inscription were the final assurance of its reality. In slightly different ways, I saw this scene repeated many times in the two afternoons I spent at the memorial. I could not help thinking that in this rit-
ual of search and recognition some kind of balance was being restored. Here, finally, the grief of loss might be declared openly and unambiguously, clear of the political tensions that dominated the war at home and sometimes forced its personal dimensions into the background.

For veterans themselves, the memorial no doubt has a wider symbolic meaning, as diverse and complex as their experience during the war and their experience since. For many, it is the kind of public recognition denied them upon their return, a traditional gesture that partially or wholly resolves the bitterness and confusion rooted in the war's unpopularity. This is the honor we were taught since childhood to understand military service in war would bring, and perhaps a little childishly expected it to bring, though in the memorial's moody design there remains, undeniably, something else: the suggestion that this conflict was anything but traditional, that the sacrifice and loss set here in public view is unique, a question for which there is no simple or satisfying answer. For still other veterans, I suspect, the memorial is and will be an important point in a long, slow process of coming to terms with painful memories and losses. I saw one man, wearing a First Infantry Division fatigue jacket, standing in front of a single stone for nearly an hour, talking quietly to himself and crying. Another I saw step up to the vertex of the two walls and leave a Bronze Star near the first stone.

It is hard not to believe that in these and similar moments something buried and painful is being purged, that these public expressions of sorrow and solidarity might help close the book, or at least a chapter in the book, of hard, unresolved memory.

There is something timeless in these scenes of mourning for the dead, mourning that, I realized as I watched, would be recognized instantly across the world. This is the inescapable and universal legacy of war, the grief and memory of death. But what is so unique about the Vietnam War, at least for those who lived with it and must now remember it, is that there is a real struggle for memory going on, a struggle over what the public memory of Vietnam will in fact be. Two days before the official dedication of the memorial, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger delivered a Veterans Day address at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in which he clearly defined one set of terms in this struggle. For Weinberger, the memory of Vietnam will not be shaded by the conflict and doubt that surrounded the war from its very inception. "It is instead a memory clothed in the traditional imagery of unambiguous heroic sacrifice. "Like the rows of white markers surrounding us at Arlington National Cemetery," Weinberger remarks in a description of the new memorial, "these lists of names will form a silent litany of America's heroes that will reverberate throughout the ages." This is the traditional image of war and remembrance, the belated acceptance of the veteran into the pantheon of American heroes. The Vietnam conflict was indeed different than previous wars, but for Weinberger that difference consists chiefly in our attitude toward the past. "A nation which forgets its heroes," he notes somberly, "risks its very existence." What we owe to Vietnam veterans is the same
sort of recognition and memory owed to the veterans of World War II, and for the same reasons. Stretching the classical imagery of heroism to its absurd limit, Weinberger even quotes from Shakespeare: "Upon such sacrifices, the Gods themselves throw incense."

This effort to equate our experience in Vietnam with past wars would not be so insidious if it were not linked to a more fundamental criticism and claim. For Weinberger, both the crisis of veterans and national memory point to a more significant and elemental crisis of political commitment. "The terrible lesson" to be drawn from Vietnam, a lesson "we must never forget," is that "we should never again ask our men and women to serve in a war we do not intend to win." The horrendous outcome of the Vietnam War was therefore not the result of military or political miscalculation, nor did it have anything essential to do with the complex history and reality of Vietnam. This "national trauma" was a failure of political nerve and will, the fatal consequence of self-doubt, hesitation, and political weakness. What Vietnam finally teaches us is not that the conception of the war and our understanding of Vietnam were hugely and fatally flawed, but that we lacked the moral strength and discipline to achieve a military conclusion. The mistake must not be repeated. Weinberger pushes the lesson of Vietnam to its extreme and disturbing conclusion. "Now it is our duty," he writes, "to see the freedom those heroes defended and the peace they sought were not pursued in vain. We must continue to rebuild the national defenses necessary to protect the peace and encourage all to join us in seeking genuine arms reductions."

These remarks indicate something about what is at stake in the memory of Vietnam. One wonders how those whose names are inscribed on the walls of the memorial might respond to the claim that the fundamental problem in Vietnam was a failure of will. For those who fought there know better than anyone just how frightfully inadequate and misleading all our preconceptions about this war and this country really were. There was no "victory" in Vietnam because there was nothing to win; no ground to take and occupy, no territory to liberate, nothing obvious to defend except, of course, one's life and the lives of friends. Worst of all, it was never even clear who "they" were and who "we" were, who was friend and who the enemy, for this was above all else a struggle among the Vietnamese in which Americans were finally the "others," the outsiders. In its own oddly expressive way, the military measures of success captured perfectly the uniqueness of this situation, the grim significance of "body counts" and the nearly metaphysical jargon about capturing the "hearts and minds" of Vietnam, scenarios in which the standard meanings of "victory" make little or no sense. The real problem with the Vietnam War was the reality of Vietnam, a reality that Weinberger, like Kennedy, like Johnson, like McNamara, prefers to push aside. Once again, it seems, American leaders and policy makers are finding it difficult to live in a world which is not coincidental with their ideology and will.

There are honest and corrupt forms of memory, memories that approach
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the truth and others that disguise and pervert it. The disconcerting ambiguity inscribed in the new memorial is far closer to what happened in Vietnam and to those who fought there than Weinberger's bellicose revision. Nothing in that strange time in our history and the history since—the political turmoil and radicalism of the sixties, the particular anguish of veterans, the dark conclusion to the war in all of Southeast Asia—makes any sense at all if the essential error in the history of the Vietnam War rests on a failure of nerve. Standing in front of the memorial and staring at the seemingly endless list of names, it struck me over and over again that the real tragedy here was not just death but the fact that these mostly young men died without knowing what their deaths meant, without the certain conviction that their sacrifice mattered in terms of some larger and clearly evident purpose. That is why the memory of the war is choked with so much rage and bitterness, and why we want sometimes to simply forget it, or to exchange our anger for a simple hero's welcome. The “error” in our policy in Vietnam was surely not that we did not go far enough or hard enough, but that we started in the first place. “The lesson we must never forget” is that the war in Vietnam was an enormous political miscalculation and failure, rooted in a mindless and Manichean ideology of anticommunism, and fueled by an infatuation with technical prowess and physical power.

This is a hard memory to honor because it is so difficult to admit that these deaths have so little meaning. But the veterans of this war, both living and dead, are not served better by the revised history now being written by Weinberger and others. We do not do them justice by insisting that, after all, the war was well conceived but badly finished. The austere and spare presentation of the new memorial, so ambiguous and unresolved, is a far more honest image, disturbing as it is. This is a memory that, like the war itself, should continue to haunt us.
It is a measure of the peculiarity of Greece's socialist experiment that when military transport trucks appeared in the streets of Athens last November, no one paid any special attention. The trucks were there on behalf of the government, not as a threat to it. They were filling in as public transportation during the six hours a day that streetcar drivers were on strike. This is not unusual in Athens—the trucks had appeared for the same purpose under the previous government and no one in the year-old government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) considered it odd that they were engaged in what elsewhere might count as strikebreaking. The drivers are already well paid, they explain, they strike every year for even better wages, no one is sympathetic to them, and the instigators are communist trade unionists out to pester the socialists. Eventually the drivers returned to work, the trucks to their bases, and the same scenario is expected next year.

The continuity of Greek ways of doing things is one explanation for the appeal of PASOK's slogan in the 1981 legislative elections that brought them to power—Allaghi (“Change”). The socialist cadres believed in their slogan then, and still do. Sometimes they have gotten carried away with it. On the eve of the elections, at a massive rally in Syntagma Square, the main square in Athens in front of the parliament building, party leader Andreas Papandreou got so caught up with the idea that he reportedly promised every Athenian his or her own home. The Athenians in the crowd, who already live in a hopelessly congested city, went wild. Antonis Tritsis, the imaginative city planner who, as Minister of Physical Planning, is stuck with trying to do something about Athens's problems, fell victim to Allaghi too. At one point, he declared that the noxious cloud of pollution that hangs over the city was “political” and would disappear with socialism. The cloud is still there.

Critics claim that a new cloud is the one that has settled on the “third road,” as PASOK calls its route to socialism. The socialists are committed to what they see as a specifically Greek form of socialism, but they are not always sure what that means. They are painfully aware of the weaknesses of the Greek economy, a constellation that they often summarize with the term “dependency.” They point to the low yield of Greece's small farms, to the bloated rolls of the civil service, and to the fact that some 98.8 percent of Greek manufacturing units employ fifty people or less (85 percent of Greek manufacturing takes place in firms employing fewer than nine employees). They also point to the hundreds of ships lying empty at anchor off the port city of Piraeus, idled by a worldwide shipping slowdown, by the increasing tendency for countries to mandate that their
products be shipped in their own bottoms, and by the high insurance costs that Greek shippers run. (Greece's merchant fleet, the world's largest, is old, and that, together with the Greeks' willingness to sail outside the normal shipping routes, has landed the fleet an unenviable safety record.) The outlook for world shipping is so bad that some government officials seriously suggest that the country should go into the scrap metal business.

These economic conditions have not yet dampened the enthusiasm of PASOK activists. One official in the Ministry of Education, when asked how the government proposed to finance its elaborate plans for expanding and improving the country's dismal university system, replied: "To do this one needs a high level of fantasy." Fantasy it may be to think that the Greeks can find a path between the market commands of capitalism and the state dikta of communism, but there is a coherence to the government's actions so far that shows an attempt being made to turn the country's economic disadvantages into political capital. Contrary to what observers have come to expect of socialist or radical governments, the Greek experiment is one that avoids a frontal attack on the economy, relying instead on restructuring the existing economic institutions in order to meet the political goals of the movement for change.

It is probably true," Jane Kramer has written, "that only in conservative churchbound Greece would anyone call a program like Papandreou's revolutionary, or even Socialist. Certainly there is not much talk of nationalizing anything." Indeed, when one considers that PASOK's first year in office was marked by legislation legalizing abortion, decriminalizing adultery, legalizing civil marriage (hitherto, only church marriages were legally recognized), and abolishing the dowry as a legal right, there is a great temptation to classify the Greek socialists as liberal, social democratic reformers dragging Greece into a secularized twentieth century. But while facts like these help to put the Greek situation into perspective, to emphasize some aspects of the country's archaic, Mediterranean culture, they also can obscure the originality of the PASOK experiment.

The key elements in PASOK's definition of socialism are decentralization and participation. Nationalization of the economy, traditionally the barometer of European socialism, is not an important factor in PASOK's plans. The historical experience of economic nationalization has been the increased power of the state, and in Greece, where some 60 percent of the economy is already under state control, the concentration of power in Athens is a problem, not a goal. Consequently, the government plans to take over, through conversion of debts owed the state-owned banks into shareholding, only those troubled companies that show prospects for future survival. Control over these companies will be shared

by representatives of workers, government, and management in a schema called "socialization." But socialization is just one part of a program that aims at democratizing Greek institutions, and given the relatively small number of large firms, it is not going to be the decisive factor.

Nor will the enthusiasm of Giorgios Lianis, the new Minister of Research and Technology, for the development of a Greek high technology sector be of much help in economic revival. Lianis would like to encourage Greeks living abroad who have scientific and technical skills to return to Greece as the brainpower behind a government plan to leap into a postindustrial world of silicon chips. But even if he was not ignoring the fact of unemployed scientific personnel already in the country and the lack of domestic markets for such products (airline reservation offices are among the few places computer terminals are in everyday use in Athens), the far greater resources available to competitors—including socialist France, which has similar grandiose designs—would seal the fate of Lianis's proposal. The Greek socialists will have to give up this avenue soon, sparing themselves the technological mania that has gripped their French counterparts as they struggle to save their more orthodox socialist project. The new technology has its appeal for PASOK because its production is small-scale, consistent with the goal of decentralization, and not tied to an industrial base; but belief in technology as a cure-all will only deflect attention from more pressing and fundamental concerns.

Much more central than industrial or technological policies will be the success or failure in the areas of governmental reform, agriculture, and small business. Of these, the reform of governmental institutions has seen the greatest progress so far, in part because it is a relatively simple matter to change laws—the transformation of a centralist, passive mentality is another matter. The office of 

no-march, mini-despots who ruled over Greece's fifty-four prefects by virtue of appointment from Athens, has been abolished and replaced by a prefectural council. These councils are also appointed by the government, from applications submitted by the public at large, but the councils will become elective in the next stage of legislation. The prefectural councils are particularly important because they play a central role in the development of the government's Five-Year Plan, which sets goals and establishes priorities for the national economy, a role the appointed councils have already played in the government's first plan.

Any mandated involvement by localities in the formation of national economic policy would be a major improvement over the situation as it has existed. Only now will government ministries even have offices at the regional level. Members of the nation's parliament, the Vouli, have served as brokers between their constituents and the ministries in Athens, though the fact that they have had no government-provided staffs (as of January 1, 1983, each member has one staff person), or offices, has meant that their role has been limited. Corrup-
—a national disease called *rousfei*—has been a much more popular method of dealing with the ministries, and a much more effective one. There are no guarantees against the continuation of corruption beyond the effort to create good and workable laws buttressed by a new public mentality.

An important part of the *rousfei* system has been the procurement of cushy civil service jobs for friends and family, accounting in large part for the size of government employment. With a freeze on civil service hiring, PASOK is stuck with the civil service it has got, one that hides from responsibility (most decisions are avoided by pushing them upwards, so that even trivial matters wind up on the minister's desk), and one in which pockets of bureaucratic power have built up, even if only with the power to delay. The government has had a law passed that allows for the transfer of people within the civil service in order to break up the cabals and to spread out the jobs better between ministries, but Greece is a long way from the typical, over-rationalized government bureaucracies of northern Europe. Thus the bureaucracy presents a formidable, if passive, obstacle to popular initiative.

The emphasis that the government put, in its first year, on making legislative changes is part of its gradualist approach to change, an approach made necessary by the ideological and attitudinal barriers to *Allaghi*. Decentralization cannot work without increased local participation, but since the National Resistance during the German occupation of 1941–44 and the civil war in Greece of 1946–49, there has been a very low level of popular political participation. The Communist party was outlawed, and the other Greek political parties operated as traditionalist parties do, by clustering around a few main personalities without establishing institutional party structures. National politics went on in Athens among a closed circle of politicians, and while there were plenty of arguments in the village coffee houses, and plenty of people in the streets for rallies and demonstrations, the population mostly played the part of spectators or cannon fodder. The period of military rule during the junta years (1967–74) did nothing to change this picture. The junta was not based on active popular support, but neither was there much active resistance. (This may be why the one massive act of resistance, the rebellion and subsequent slaughter of students at Athens's Polytechnic University in 1973, has such an emotional hold on the Greek left. On the anniversary of the uprising last November, hundreds of thousands of people turned out for a commemorative march through Athens from the Polytechnic to the American Embassy.) When the junta finally fell, it keeled over from its own inadequacy, with an assist from its bungled complicity in an anti-Makarios coup in Cyprus, rather than from an upsurge of popular opposition. So the government and party have been faced with the need to mobilize where there has been no ongoing mobilization, to create a participatory political system where there has been no thought of participation.

PASOK itself began as a resistance movement during the junta years, based
abroad but able to make the difficult transition from exile movement to repatriated party. In line with Greek tradition, it was almost solely the creation of Andreas Papandreou, who, as founder, is leader of the party and now head of government without ever being elected party leader. (A party congress that will meet sometime this year will establish the procedures for electing party leaders in the future.) But while the party's origins are typical, its growth and development are not. With more than 1500 party branches throughout the country—made up of "local committees" constituted by place and "branch committees" by occupation—PASOK is the first Greek political party to be so widely based in Greece's villages and towns, a testimonial to its ability to recast socialism in a Greek idiom. In large measure, the mobilization of the population will depend upon the mobilization of the party, since it is the only organizational structure in the country that is already positioned to support the government's long-term goals.

It is thus not surprising that PASOK has done well in elections to new representative bodies. It was the acknowledged leader in elections last year to neighborhood committees established in Athens, and has dominated elections to newly restructured agricultural cooperatives. Typically, its main competition in these contests is not the badly organized rightist parties but its unofficial ally, the Moscow-oriented Communist Party of the Exterior (KKE), so called to distinguish it from the eurocommunist Communist Party of the Interior, a small group dominated by intellectuals that is formally allied with PASOK and that has mostly disappeared into it. In an effort aimed at stabilizing Greece's politics the Communists were legalized in 1974 by post-junta Premier Constantine Carmanlis. Papandreou's government has completed the KKE's rehabilitation by formally recognizing the party's important role in the Resistance and by acting to repatriate the Greeks who fled to the Soviet Union and Western Europe after the civil war. By reabsorbing the Communists into the mainstream of political life, the party's aura as an outsider has been dimmed, an aura that it has exploited well. Representative of an orthodox approach to socialism and a pro-Soviet foreign policy, the party is strong in Athens and other cities with significant industrial working-class populations, but deprived of its romance, it is not likely to grow much beyond that base. So far, it has prodded PASOK to move it away from its decentralist path and toward nationalization and industrial development. On the whole, however, the KKE has adopted a policy of irritation rather than opposition. Publicly, PASOK includes the KKE in its list of "progressive forces," but privately socialists complain of Communist nuisances and admit that the KKE is not a contributor to change.

Though the Communists may castigate PASOK for forgetting the industrial workers, the future of Greece's decentralist experiment will be decided in the countryside. With a quarter of the population engaged in agriculture, the
demographics of decentralization depend on keeping farmers and their families on the land. The rate of demographic shift from rural areas into Athens and Salonica has slowed considerably, but there is still movement toward regional towns, a movement in search of employment and higher income.

The basic problem of Greek agriculture is its low productivity resulting primarily from its peculiar pattern of landholding. Typically, farmers own several small plots separated from each other by some distance. This fragmented pattern makes the use of farm machinery almost impossible. Past efforts at land reform aimed at redistributing the holdings within a given area so that each farmer would have as much land as before, but now have it consolidated. Farmers would not accept that kind of reform, however, since they squabbled over the relative fertility of the land they had versus the land they would get. PASOK sees only one possible long-term solution to this basic problem: the establishment of agricultural-industrial cooperatives.

Agricultural cooperatives were already in existence before the 1981 elections, and almost 80 percent of Greek farmers belonged to them. But these cooperatives functioned merely as extensions of the country's agricultural banks, collecting data on their members for the purpose of credit applications to the banks. With 7,000 local cooperatives in the country, however, averaging around 100 members per co-op, their existence gives the government a system of popular, local institutions upon which to build. The cooperatives were already organized into a pyramidal structure called the Pan-Hellenic Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives, but a system of weighted voting gave larger landholders a disproportionate voice in the cooperatives, preventing them from becoming important organs of change, and allowing joint-stock companies, uncontrolled by the co-ops, to take over marketing functions previously under the direction of the cooperatives.

New legislation has been passed governing the election of representatives to cooperative councils. Elections held in November 1982 to local co-ops were followed in December with election to regional councils. Elections to the Confederation completed the process in January 1983. These elections were based on proportional representation employing candidate lists, ensuring the representation of opposition slates. PASOK, the KKE, and other parties backed different slates, with PASOK-supported candidates receiving the largest share. These newly reconstituted cooperatives now give farmers the opportunity to participate in the formation of the national plan—the old co-ops were passed over in favor of the regional councils in preparation of the first plan—and to take local economic initiatives. With disguised unemployment a chronic problem in agricultural areas as a result of seasonal farm labor, it is hoped that cooperatives will be able to establish their own processing and marketing businesses to provide jobs and boost income. Ultimately, though no one thinks it will happen soon, the goal is to have
cooperative production with land ownership remaining in private hands and accompanied by weighted shares of the produce based on the amount of land owned and its fertility. That, in the view of PASOK activists, is the only long-range solution for Greek agriculture. It is a vision that includes higher productivity, but only in a framework that does not violate traditional agricultural patterns.

The government has also moved to make credit available to the co-ops and, as part of its new investment law, to aid in drawing outside capital into rural areas to establish processing industries. More immediately, it has opted for income subsidies to farmers to redress the imbalance between farm incomes and incomes in other sectors, as against price supports, which disproportionately aid larger farms. These programs, too, are intended to keep Greek farming small-scale and populous. PASOK has the advantage of strong local party organizations and control of the vast majority of local governments to help support its programs, but the major threat to the success of this project is not domestic. It comes instead from the force of the international economy.

When tourists sit down to a Greek salad in Athens, there is now a good chance that the cheese they find in it is not Greek feta, made from goat's milk, but a tasteless Danish import made from cow's milk. The explanation for what some Greeks see as a national disgrace is that with the free trade rules that accompanied Greek accession to the European Economic Community (EEC) came a variety of agricultural and manufactured goods that are able to undersell domestically-produced commodities. Because of Greece's small-scale production and inefficient marketing system, Greek producers cannot compete. The EEC's technical experts are willing to help Greek producers, but only within the Community's rules and the ideology of development they codify. For example, income supports violate EEC rules, so no Common Market funds can go there, though some price supports are sanctioned. On the most general level, the EEC solution to Greece's agricultural problems is to build up an industrial sector to draw off the excess rural population, a policy that would completely destroy PASOK's program. Unable to protect its markets within EEC rules, Greece is expected to open itself to bombardment by cheaper goods from the EEC and countries that have special "third country" agreements with it. (The greatest humiliation so far was the discovery that oranges, believed to be from the Turkish-occupied area of Cyprus, were making their way into Greece via Germany, a result of Turkey's special relationship with the Common Market.) After suffering a $2.5 billion deficit in its trade with Community nations—$295 million of it in food trade—the Greek government was forced to devalue the drachma 15 percent last January and to take other emergency measures.

Greece is currently negotiating for new membership terms with its Common Market partners, but with Portugal and especially Spain looking forward to eventual entry, and keeping an eye on any concessions granted Greece, the EEC is not in a bargaining mood. Optimism is not high in Athens, though some accommo-
Greek change will probably be found. The critical point is that the Greek socialists may be in control of the state, but the state is not fully in control of the economy during this important period of political and economic transformation.

Greece’s situation in the EEC has highlighted another area where government policy and economic conditions have not meshed. Greek small businesses have been caught in a serious bind. Last year, the government raised workers’ wages, with the biggest increases going to the poorest paid. That sector of the workforce is concentrated in small businesses. The higher wages in that sector raised costs while the products were being squeezed out of domestic markets by cheap imports, such as clothing from east Asia, some of it coming through European-based multinationals. This combination of forces has created great anxiety in the small business sector, a highly volatile segment of the population.

Although 40 percent of Greece’s small businesses—defined as any business employing fewer than fifty people—are located in the areas of Salonica and Athens, they are both more dispersed and more adaptable to changing market conditions than Greek industry. PASOK is therefore determined to support small businesses, and it is perhaps indicative of the political importance of this sector that the government agency assigned to it, known by the acronym EOMMEX, is now headed by a member of PASOK’s executive committee, the economist Vasso Papandreou (who is not related to the prime minister). She emphasizes that small businesses suffer from a lack of technical, organizational, and management skill that has been compounded by the lending policies of Greek bankers. Fixated on real property as the sign of wealth, they have resisted loaning money for promising enterprises starting from scratch, preferring to loan only when property is put up for collateral. The government has set up a new program of loans that it will guarantee in an effort to promote new ventures, and EOMMEX is trying to supply technical assistance and to promote export cooperatives, but the combined force of established business methods and cost-price squeezes will not be easy to overcome.

One of the difficulties involved is that the government, short of cash after it abandoned an attempt to establish a property tax for the first time, has not had much success in convincing workers to accept health and education benefits in lieu of another wage hike this year. Unable or unwilling to see such benefits as income substitutes, workers demonstrated against the government’s austerity measures in January of this year. With Greece’s tradition of poor health and education systems, PASOK finds it difficult trying to foster a new welfare-state mentality, one more measure of the peculiarity of the Greek situation.

At the same time, the government is trying to direct new investment away from the urban centers and toward the undeveloped areas. Only investments that promise new employment or reduced pollution will receive government support in such areas as Athens and Salonica, while investments aimed at devel-
oping mineral resources, agricultural processing, and even handicraft produc-
tion will be encouraged by up to 50 percent government subsidy in designated
regions. Whether or not there will be any takers is another question. If this de-
centralist participatory fantasy is to come true, though, the money will have to
come from somewhere, and PASOK has ruled out any approach to the Interna-
tional Monetary Fund, whose record for destroying political fantasies is depres-
singly good.

There is no quick-fix for Greece's fragile economic condition. The lingering
recession in the western economies and a fear of Turkish aggression that is
institutionalized in large defense outlays (6.7 percent of Greek GNP goes to de-
fense, the highest in Europe) constrict any Greek government's maneuverability.
In this regard, PASOK could not have come to power at a less advantageous
time. The socialists have done well just to slow down the decline of the Greek
economy. But the acknowledged difficulty of short-term economic recovery has
helped to keep PASOK's focus on longer-range goals. The deliberate and subtle
changes brought about through legislation enacted thus far open the way to-
ward a transformation of Greek social institutions from within. Committed to
the well-being of what it calls the "nonprivileged," PASOK's program nevertheless
defines economic development in terms of political development, and the
latter in terms of decentralization and popular participation. This is not social
democracy, it is a new definition of socialism.

The essence of PASOK's decentralist project is the effort to shift the process
of public decision-making to the level appropriate for the decisions taken, there-
by shifting the responsibility for decisions to the people affected by them. The
fact that Greece is a society riddled with corruption helps to magnify the impor-
tance of the cleansing and revitalization process that has begun: PASOK's so-
cialism is a movement for civic virtue in practice. The reality of economic under-
development, which would be a burden to traditional social democracy, has some
advantages of scale and demography for PASOK's brand of socialism. Greece's
existing political and economic institutions are not being scuttled wholesale, but
turned around to serve the interests of dispersed power and responsibility.

Some of the changes that have already occurred—the reform of agricultural
cooperatives, the establishment of prefectoral councils, educational reform, etc.
—will outlive PASOK's parliamentary term, so even if the party is turned out of
government in 1985 (an unlikely prospect at this juncture), the program of change
has been born. No one in Athens thinks a military move against PASOK is likely,
either. In the end, it will be Greece's ability to fend off the external power of the
world economy coupled with PASOK's success in nurturing a participatory zeal
that will determine the outcome of the change that has begun. But the change in
political perception goes beyond this small Mediterranean country—democrats
everywhere should heed the call of Allaghi.
The economic plight of America's colleges and universities is by now disturbingly familiar. Long before the ascendency of "Reaganomics"—in fact, throughout the decade of the 1970s—rising costs and shrinking revenues and a levelling of enrollments in both the public and private sectors brought on what economist Earl F. Cheit called "a new depression in higher education," signifying "the greatest overall and long-run rate of decline in its history." In phase with the fluctuations of the business cycle, the downswing followed the boom years of the 1960s—a period of steady and unprecedented expansion marked by multi-billion-dollar building construction programs, burgeoning enrollments, and academic employment.

In some institutions and in some sectors of the academic system the battle of the budget has been especially acute and protracted. Two of the world's largest public university systems, the City University and State University of New York (CUNY and SUNY), have since 1973 suffered massive cut-backs in their operating budgets. Many of the smaller private colleges have been forced to close their doors or merge with more financially viable institutions.

Austerity has, above all, been felt by lower-level personnel within the academic system. Every faculty and staff are being laid off in large numbers, and full-time faculty positions reallocated to cost-saving part-timers.

Contested Terrain

For those that remain, administrators are imposing longer hours, larger classes, and heavier workloads, while at the same time resisting salary increases and promotions. Affirmative action is being attacked, tenure quotas established, and retrenchment begun.

Steep increases in tuition, reductions in financial aid, the curtailment of open admissions and affirmative admissions programs, enrollment freezes (especially at the graduate level), and a shrinking job market have compelled many students to forego higher education altogether. Others have been persuaded to curtail their aspirations for self-fulfillment or social mobility, lower their expectations regarding the value of a liberal arts degree, and settle instead for a vocational track at a public community college or technical institute.

Meanwhile, college administrators are attempting to streamline cost-efficient scientific management, consolidate central staffs, and tighten control over campus governance.

The crisis in American higher education, then, did not originate with the new administration nor did efforts at crisis management. Nonetheless, Reaganomics threatens to hasten the down-turn and compound the pain. A harbinger of increasingly harsh times ahead for academe is the sheer magnitude of the cutbacks for the first two years of applied Reaganomics. The fiscal 1982 higher education budget of approximately $6.5 billion represented a 25 percent slash from the budget during the final year of the Carter administration. For fiscal 1983, the Reagan administration planned to trim higher education's share to a mere $4.8 billion— the budgetary ax falling hardest on the various categories of student financial aid. At a press conference, Vice President George Bush vigorously defended the cutbacks on the grounds that education has, over the years, "been the recipient of an excessive amount of federal money." 1 Echoing these sentiments, Education Secretary Tyrrel H. Bell insisted that the government could no longer afford "posh student aid" and had, besides, a "moral obligation to sacrifice." 4

This deepening crisis of higher education is especially ironic in view of President Reagan's presumptive commitment to "crisis management" and his designation of Vice President Bush as his chief "crisis manager." Crisis manage-
ment, however, is nothing very new. It was a central feature of the technocratic administration of American institutions under advanced capitalism long before the Reagan administration made it virtually a household word. History has shown, moreover, that attempts at “managing crises” have often, instead, provoked or intensified them. While such an outcome may, on occasion, be unintended, in the case of the Reaganites it is clearly intended. Liberal social policies that were the legacy of the political struggles of the sixties are being specifically repudiated and systematically dismantled. Millions of students from low- and middle-income families who had secured access to higher education only by means of government loans and grants have had their academic chances severely jeopardized. Colleges and universities still reeling from the protracted budgetary crisis of the 1970s now face an even more severe cost-revenue squeeze, despite a recent (and, apparently, temporary) upturn in enrollments. And faculty, always the chief cost in a labor-intensive industry, are threatened anew with layoffs and retrenchment.

The crisis in higher education has been notoriously uneven in its impact; while slashes in government spending are destined to have a devastating impact on all of higher education, little attention has been paid to how selective are the cutbacks and discriminatory in their social outcomes. Implicit in the thinking of the fiscal conservatives in the new administration is that the public sector, in particular, has for too long been the recipient of unwarranted government largess. In keeping with the general thrust of Reaganomics, which is to wage budgetary war on any so-called entitlements to public welfare, a major effort is now underway to reverse spending priorities. As a result, public colleges and their constituencies are, to an unprecedented degree, being forced to bear the brunt of the crisis.

In short, the hidden agenda for academic crisis management is to implement a policy tilt to the private sector and, in so doing, to undermine public higher education. The slogan of the campus revolts of the 1960s, “Education is a right, not a privilege,” is being reversed at the hands of an administration bent on shoring up privilege and the rights of property. Policy favoritism to the private sector is not, however, very new, nor is it confined to the ideology and practice of conservative administrations. On the contrary, it has been a mainstay of the liberalism of many private policy research organizations, such as the Carnegie and Sloan Commissions, and of liberal lawmakers, such as U.S. Senator Daniel P. Moynihan. This can be shown by examining some aspects of the politics of higher education finance.

In 1975 at a nationwide convocation devoted to a reconsideration of American higher education’s “uncertain future,” one of the more prominent participants, Senator Moynihan, complained that the high-quality education provided
by elite private colleges and universities had been deteriorating—a situation he attributed largely to government “favoritism” to the public sector. “Higher education seems headed for a condition of public affluence and private squalor,” Moynihan observed.

Even if “quality” education should once more become an object of federal interest, private institutions are so outnumbered by public institutions of higher education that no matter how politically effective the American Council on Education might become, the preponderance of internal influence and interest has to be on the public side. The prospect is that one by one the great private universities will be incorporated into state systems. . . . [If so,] it will be another melancholy chapter in what Schumpeter years ago foresaw as the conquest of the private sector in the later stages of a declining capitalism. 5

A few months later, the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education lent its considerable prestige to the effort to reorder philanthropic priorities. At a press conference called to announce publication of the Council’s first policy report, Chairman Clark Kerr urged federal and state governments to take “decisive steps” to ameliorate the financial plight of the nation’s private colleges and universities. Summarizing the collective mood of the Council’s twelve trustees, Kerr emphasized that “something has to be done if we are to preserve a strong private sector.” 6

While the Carnegie policy planners’ support for the private sector was neither new nor particularly newsworthy—in fact, it had been a constant theme of the scores of policy reports the Council’s precursor, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, had published during its six-year life span—what was new at this mid-1975 press conference was the sense of urgency and the price tag attached to the recommended hike in government philanthropy.

The centerpiece of the new strategy was to be a multi-billion-dollar federal program of tuition equalization or offset grants channeled directly to students (amounting to an average annual subsidy of $1,500 per student) together with matching grants from the states, in an effort to narrow the tuition gap between the private and public sectors and thus boost enrollments in private colleges and universities. The second main item in the Council’s recommended aid package to the private sector was a sharply accelerated program of federal subsidies for research and development (R & D) to ensure “maintenance of the research capacity of our universities.” The chief beneficiaries, however, of accelerated R & D

funding were, by design, and have been, in fact, those enjoying unequivocal elite status—that is, the largest, most prestigious doctoral-granting universities in the private sector.

At the mid-point, then, of this "depression decade" of the 1970s, the leading voice in policy planning for American higher education, the Carnegie Council, took an aggressive lead in redefining crisis-management priorities and in legitimating the policy tilt to the private sector. As striking as the media blitz and mood of urgency that underscored the Council's appeals (although by no means as conspicuous) was the unanimity of their endorsement by the trustees of both the Carnegie Council and its sponsor, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT). Almost three-quarters of the thirty trustees in that year were corporate executives or academics affiliated with private institutions, with ideological and professional commitments that would, understandably, predispose them to favor private higher education. Far less understandable, however, was the seemingly unproblematic concurrence of the eight trustees representing public colleges and universities in policy proposals that posed a distinct threat to the viability of their own institutions and the public sector at large. Two of the participants in this remarkable and curious consensus were: Ernest L. Boyer, then chancellor of SUNY, recently U.S. Commissioner of Education, and now president of the CFAT; and Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., Boyer's successor at SUNY, and then president of Michigan State University and vice-chairman of the CFAT.

A front page story in the Boston Globe as early as 1972 was prescient in its understanding of how the "zero-sum game" politics of education finance would increasingly hurt the public sector, and held the Carnegie Commission, as the leading architect of academic policy planning, largely accountable. In a single, sardonic metaphor, the Globe's inch-high headline summarized the impact of the Massachusetts governor's planned budget cutbacks. "CARNEGIE HONES AX, SARGENT SWINGS IT: PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION ON BLOCK." Quite unambiguously, the ideology underscoring Carnegie-sponsored policy research was summed up in the Commission's final report:

"Elite" institutions of all types . . . should be protected and encouraged as a source of scholarship and leadership training at the highest levels. They should not be homogenized in the name of egalitarianism.  

Almost all of the leading national policy planning commissions—especially those supported by private philanthropy—were in full agreement with the tone and content of the Carnegie Council's plan to salvage the private colleges and


universities. The list included the Committee for Economic Development, the Council for Financial Aid to Education, the Academy for Educational Development, the Brookings Institution, the Center for Applied Research in Education, the Ford Foundation, the International Council for Educational Development, the Society for College and University Planning, Educational Change, Inc., the National Commission on the Financing of Post-Secondary Education, and the International Council on the Future of the University. Some of these planning bodies had, in preceding years, made similar policy pronouncements; some merely jumped on the Carnegie-led bandwagon.

A relative newcomer to the roster of policy research organizations favorably disposed toward private higher education has been the Sloan Commission on Government and Higher Education, established in 1977 by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The Commission's brief three-year history (to mid-1980) included a prodigious output of policy studies (some fifty-five in all) and a final report, *A Program for Renewed Partnership*, that created considerable furor especially among the public colleges and their constituents.

The report's recommendations called for undercutting, in effect, the opportunities for access to public institutions, mostly by means of altered financial aid formulas and a shift in emphasis from grants to loans and self-help measures, on the principle that "no one should go to college simply because there is public money to do so."10 Recommending also new modes of government regulation, the Commission called upon each state to "see that the burden of contraction is shared fairly by the public and private sectors,"11 and hinted that some public colleges might have to suffer the same fate as the many private colleges that have had to merge or close in recent years. In order to facilitate such an outcome, the Commission further proposed that states require periodic quality reviews of the academic programs of public institutions conducted by outside academicians (presumably from the private sector):

Public disclosure of the results of the program reviews, if widely known to prospective students and their families, could contribute to the further decline of a college .... perhaps even causing its early demise.12

Fred M. Hechinger, columnist and former education editor of the *New York Times*, quite accurately assessed the consequences of this facet of academic crisis management, by declaring:

any proposal to mandate tough qualitative reviews—and an implied form of mercy-killing—for public colleges while making such reviews merely optional for the independents, can only have the effect of further aggravating existing antagonisms between the two camps.\textsuperscript{13}

Such a calculated effort to undermine public higher education, however, is understandable, perhaps, in view of the backgrounds of the Sloan Commission's trustees. Of the forty-four institutions with which the twenty-three trustees have some affiliation, only five are public colleges or universities. Both the chairman and the vice-chairman of the Commission have long-standing ties to the private sector: Louis W. Cabot, the Commission's chairman, chairman of the board of the Cabot Corporation and member of the governing boards of Northeastern, Harvard, and M.I.T.; and Carl Kaysen, its vice-chairman and director of research, former director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and now associated with M.I.T.

Private higher education has been the beneficiary of public philanthropy directly and indirectly in a number of ways: through tax credits and exemptions, both to individuals and institutions; through student aid in the form of scholarships, fellowships, grants, and loans; and through direct institutional subsidies.

Certain features of the federal tax code especially benefit private higher education, and in so doing they cost the Treasury “between $3 and $4 billion a year in lost revenues.” Most important are the tax credits allowed individuals and corporations for charitable donations to colleges and universities, amounting to a federal revenue loss of $780 million per year. According to a Brookings Institution study:

This tax benefit holds special importance for the private sector since private institutions presently receive three-fourths of all philanthropy directed to higher education and since for some of them such gifts account for a large portion of overall income.\textsuperscript{14}

Other important kinds of tax benefits to the private sector include the tax exemptions on construction bonds for academic facilities granted by many state governments; institutional exemptions from property, sales, and excise taxes, and exemptions from personal income taxes for student financial aid (scholarships, fellowships, grants and veterans’ or Social Security subsidies).

Recently, momentum has been gathering in both houses of Congress for passage of a program of tuition tax credits, largely because of encouragement

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 40.
given by the Reagan administration. A cozy alliance, in fact, has been struck between the Reaganites and liberal Democratic Senator Daniel Moynihan who is the cosponsor and architect of the Senate's bill. The tuition tax credit bills, of course, are an example of unabashed policy favoritism to the private sector in higher education as well as to more affluent taxpayers. Sixty percent of the benefits would accrue to families earning more than $25,000 a year. Poor families (who pay no income tax) would be left out entirely, as would self-supporting students. By making private education more attractive and accessible, the scheme would place the entire system of public education, from kindergarten to college, in grave peril.

Private policy-research organizations have consistently recommended that the principal vehicle for channeling public monies to the private sector should be student aid, whether in the form of grants, loans, or tax credits. Both the federal government and many state governments have sought to act on this advice. In 1976, for example, thirty-nine states had need-based student aid programs for the private sector, totaling $645 million; and with just three states (New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois) accounting for more than 52 percent of the total.

In New York, the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for full-time undergraduates has, since its inception in 1974, expanded its income eligibility and award schedule. Most of the benefits, however, accrue to students at the private colleges, because the tuition levels at the state's two public university systems (SUNY and CUNY) are only half the maximum TAP stipend of $2,200, and at the community colleges even less. According to data from the New York State Education Department, 61 percent of the beneficiaries of TAP stipends in 1976-77 were students in private colleges (compared to 36 percent in 1975-76) and receiving twice the aggregate aid (about $73 million) that they received in 1973-74. Although 60 percent of the students currently seeking degrees are enrolled in the public colleges and universities, they received only $116.7 million in aggregate aid under the TAP program in 1980-81, whereas students in private colleges and proprietary schools received a total of $145.9 million. In addition to the TAP program, New York State maintains a financial assistance program specifically for educationally and economically disadvantaged students at private institutions—the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). Appropriations to HEOP have more than doubled since the program's inception in 1970. During 1976-77, for example, the state gave $7.6 million to HEOP at sixty-two private colleges and universities, serving 5,300 students, for a per capita stipend of $1,400.

More than 50 percent of all college students have been, until these first years of applied Reaganomics, receiving some form of financial aid from the federal government. Many of these long-standing federal programs are, of course, being substantially cut or phased out altogether, and the cuts most adversely affect public colleges and their students. Among the programs have been those that
funnel aid directly to students, such as the Basic Educational Opportunity (or "Pell") Grants, veterans' subsidies under the G.I. Bill, and stipends paid through the social security program. Another series of programs has channeled funds through the colleges rather than directly to individual students—for example, the College Work Study and the Direct Student Loan Programs and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. The federal government also provides matching grants to states under the State Student Incentive Grants and Guaranteed Student Loan Programs.

Although the Carnegie Council's urgent recommendations for tuition equalization grants have yet to be enacted, their purposes, nonetheless, have been largely realized by the growing number and dollar value of federal assistance programs to students in the private colleges and universities. The discriminatory effects of such public philanthropy, moreover, were apparent well before the ascendency of the Reagan administration. Just as with state government assistance programs, the steady expansion of eligibility and award ceilings in the federal programs facilitated access to and disproportionately rewarded students in private institutions. When passage of the Middle Income Student Assistance Program in 1978, for example, made newly eligible 1.7 million students with incomes between $15,000 and $25,000, most, it was estimated, used their aid money in the private sector. Furthermore, while in the 1974–75 academic year the overall ratio of students receiving federal aid at private colleges compared to public colleges was approximately one to three, the aid gap has been steadily closing in the ensuing years.

Recent evidence, too, indicates that states have responded well to the stimulus provided by federal assistance programs. A report by the National Institute of Independent Colleges (NIICU) shows that legislatures in at least twenty states boosted aid to private college students for 1981–82. New Jersey, for example, increased by 20 percent the portion of its scholarship program earmarked for students at the state's independent colleges. Although Ohio has been beset by a fiscal crisis that forced the public institutions in the state onto austerity budgets, the legislature was considering a bill that would provide $40 million in subsidies to students in the private sector. Even more difficult to understand is the state of Michigan's generosity to the private sector at a time when its public universities are forced to bear multiple million-dollar budget cuts and its students are forced to pay sharply rising tuition rates to help close the budget gap. Nonetheless, the NIICU report notes, Michigan "stands out as having remarkably healthy programs for assistance to independent colleges." For 1981–82 the legislature approved $16 million for grants to private college students—a 75 percent increase over the previous year.

Direct institutional support by the federal government has, in recent years, amounted to slightly more than half of the federal outlay for post-secondary education. Institutional support includes subsidies for construction of instruc-
tional facilities; contributions to "developing institutions" and to land-grant colleges and universities; support for agricultural extension services and for special instructional programs (such as the recent promotion of "cooperative education"); and R & D grants. Although both public and private colleges are eligible to compete for these federal funds, according to the Brookings Institution, "recent history indicates that the private sector fares at least as well as its 'share' of the industry would warrant."15

By far the largest single share of direct institutional aid from the federal government comes in the form of R & D grants, and an increasing percentage—now close to 50 percent—has gone to private institutions. Perhaps even more important, however, is the highly selective and discriminatory awarding of these grants. According to the Brookings Institution, about 85 percent of all federal R & D dollars is concentrated in the top hundred universities. About 25 percent goes to the top ten alone—six of which are in the private sector.

Although nineteen states provide some form of institutional aid to private institutions, conspicuous and unequivocal leadership in this regard has come from New York State. The principal vehicle for New York State's largess to the private sector is so-called "Bundy Aid," a program of direct grants to private institutions based upon the number and type of degrees conferred—presently ranging from $450 for each associate or bachelor's degree to $4,500 for each doctorate. The grant program was named for McGeorge Bundy, chairman of the Select Committee on the Future of Private and Independent Higher Education in New York State, which first proposed the formula grants in a 1968 policy report. During 1977-78 alone, New York appropriated almost $67 million in Bundy Aid to its private colleges and universities, whereas all the other states combined gave only $53 million. In that same year, New York's total annual appropriations to the private sector (including student assistance) amounted to $173 million, or 14 percent of the higher education budget. While New York lawmakers' enthusiasm for support of the state's two public university systems was conspicuously cooling, it was steadily warming toward the private sector. This is strikingly evident in data showing that over the past five years, state funding for SUNY and CUNY declined 7.3 percent—forcing both systems to adopt annual austerity budgets—while it increased by 50 percent for private higher education. In the 1981-82 fiscal year Bundy Aid alone topped $93.3 million—a 39 percent increase over 1977-78.

Besides a conspicuous acceleration of the drain on tax revenues, there is the even more interesting fact that Bundy Aid has been disproportionately dispensed to the ten biggest private universities of the ninety-three institutions eligible and receiving state aid. By the State Education Department's own calculations, in the

period from 1973 to 1977, the five “multi-versities” (Columbia, Cornell, Syracuse, New York University, and the University of Rochester) and five universities (Adelphi, Fordham, Hofstra, Yeshiva, and Long Island University) “have received about 55 percent of the total aid payments” (or, $129.3 million). State favoritism is even more conspicuous in the funding of the top five, which received between 34 percent and 39 percent of the total. In the years since its inception, Bundy money has amounted to more than $700 million—clearly, a major weapon in the state’s efforts at “management” of the financial crisis of the private sector. Yet, at the same time, a consequence of this policy tilt has been to deepen the crisis for public higher education. This is especially ironic for a state that took pride in having created in the State University of New York—not only the largest university system in the world, but one that provided high quality education for its students.

The increasing flight of public tax revenues to the private sector, however, is hardly confined to New York State. In the same year that the first in a series of severe cutbacks in the University of Massachusetts’s budget occurred, $300 million in federal, state, and local government monies went to private institutions in the state, while only $180 million went to public higher education. Two of the largest private universities, Harvard and M.I.T., each year receive approximately 55 percent of their total operating costs from combined levels of government. At the public University of Massachusetts an almost equivalent percentage (56 percent) of operating costs is funded by government (primarily the State of Massachusetts), while student tuition revenue supplies the remainder.

Against this backdrop of sustained and systematic policy favoritism to private higher education, we can begin to put into perspective the budget agenda of the Reagan administration. Although an assessment of the full magnitude and effects of the cutbacks at this time is necessarily somewhat tentative, the following seems clear.

In the coming years, shockwaves from the budgetary assault on academe will be felt throughout the system. No sector will be untouched. To be sure, some of the smaller private colleges, with limited endowments and largely dependent upon tuition revenues, may be forced to close because of declining enrollment brought about by reduced financial aid to students. Nonetheless, hard times will be hardest, in the final analysis, for public higher education. This is so because the public colleges, lacking the cushion of endowments or private philanthropy to fall back upon, are wholly at the mercy of state and federal officials who control the public pursestrings. At the same time, lower-income and minority students who primarily attend public institutions will be the most adversely affected. In addition, faculty and professional staffs at those colleges will be the most subject to wage freezes, budgetary layoffs, and retrenchment. Consider, first of all, the
implications of the planned reductions in student financial assistance.

A bold and grim newspaper headline summed up the impact of the fiscal 1982 budget on the opportunities for students: "REAGAN CUTS MAY FORCE 750,000 STUDENTS OUT"—20,000 in the state of Massachusetts alone.\(^\text{16}\) The Reagan administration's multi-billion dollar reductions in federal grant and loan programs threaten, in short, to generate a population of forced drop-outs. The Department of Education has conceded that, under its proposed revisions in eligibility formulas, 800,000 of the 2.6 million students who received Pell (BEOG) Grants in 1982–83 would be dropped by 1983–84—a 30 percent reduction. Of these students, two-thirds (600,000) attend public colleges. Hundreds of thousands more with family incomes below $18,500 would have their Pell Grants cut, possibly by $500 or more. Once again, these students are disproportionately in the public sector. The planned phase-out of education subsidies under the Social Security system will, similarly, hit hardest lower-income and minority students at the public colleges. Eighty-four percent of the 800,000 students who have been recipients of Social Security subsidies are from families with annual earnings below $20,000 (i.e., below the national median income level). Twenty percent (of 140,000) are black and 48 percent are from working-class households. Moreover, although 250,000 of these students will presumably be eligible for increased Pell Grants, they will not be fully compensated for by loss of the Social Security subsidies.

Massive cutbacks in funding levels, higher interest rates, stiffer eligibility requirements, and the proposed elimination of three important federal assistance programs (SEOG, SSIG, and NDSL) are, similarly, creating financial havoc for millions of students—most of them at public colleges. The cost of borrowing will rise sharply if the Reaganites have their way. All loan recipients must satisfy a needs test, pay a flat 10 percent origination fee (double the previous rate), and face interest charges at market rates within two years of graduation. A quarter of a million students who have depended upon work-study stipends will, presumably, have to find other jobs. Overall, the cutbacks in financial aid (for both loan and grant programs), according to the American Council on Education, "could eliminate 2.3 million awards for low and middle income students" in the coming academic year.\(^\text{17}\)

The direct correlation between the rising costs of college attendance and enrollment decisions was dramatically revealed when CUNY in 1976 decided to revoke its long-standing no tuition policy and impose instead a tuition schedule identical to that of SUNY. During the following academic year, the "equivalent of 58,000 full-time students had vanished from the City University classrooms, a


\(^{17}\) Cited in *On Campus*, American Federation of Teachers, November 1981.
27 percent reduction in enrollments." That rising costs were the major reason for attrition of such proportions at CUNY (as well as at other campuses) becomes even more plausible when one takes into account the fact that over one-half of CUNY's student body in that year (1977–78) came from families with incomes under $9,000. In 1981–82, 60 percent of CUNY students and 50 percent of SUNY's came from families earning less than $12,000—each figure representing little more than half the national and statewide median income levels in those years.

Black leaders in higher education have expressed alarm at the prospect of a drastic decline in black student enrollment in the coming years. At present, nearly 90 percent of all blacks pursuing post-secondary education receive some form of government assistance "and have few options without it." According to the president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education:

"Without financial aid, black students are going to be caught in an economic squeeze so serious that if the cuts are affected, we could be talking about a loss ranging from 25 percent to 50 percent in enrollment of black students in institutions of higher learning . . . by the fall of 1983."

Another spokesman concurred: "Literally thousands of black youngsters who are college bound won't be."⑨

Reaganomics, in short, is generating a new enrollment crisis for America's colleges and universities and a new population of forced drop-outs—forced, by having their financial lifelines cut.

Increasingly, state governments across the country are putting their public colleges and universities on austerity budgets. Many had been forced to declare "states of financial emergency" even before the federal outlays for fiscal 1982 and 1983 were announced. As a result, these colleges can only expect an emergency to escalate into a veritable panic when the full impact of the Reagan cuts is felt. Consider the following examples:

- In Washington, a 10 percent cutback in state appropriations has created a crisis for the public higher education system. Thirty-three million dollars was expected to be slashed from the operating budget of the University of Washington—meaning the loss of 260 faculty and possible cuts in admissions of 40 percent.
- Washington State University was slated to suffer a $10 million cut in its budget, while at the state's twenty-seven community colleges, between 400 and 600 faculty and staff faced layoffs and 17,000 students were denied admissions.

Reductions of $44 million were in store for Kentucky's public higher education system for the current academic year.

Ohio's public institutions face the prospect of a 16.3 percent budget cut for fiscal 1983. Faculty at Ohio State have been subject to a mandatory salary freeze.

Idaho's State Board of Education declared a state of "financial emergency" for all four of its four-year colleges. More than one hundred faculty and staff have been laid off as part of a nine percent budget reduction.

Many public colleges and universities, in short, will now be facing the double jeopardy of a budget squeeze forced upon them by reductions in both state and federal appropriations. The Reagan budgets have called for massive cutbacks in a variety of programs of direct institutional aid: to developing institutions, libraries, and museums; for building construction and research and development programs; to programs for the humanities, the arts, science and mathematics. A disproportionate share of the cutbacks will most likely fall upon the public sector, judging from the regressive patterns of public philanthropy in the recent past. A headline in The Chronicle of Higher Education trenchantly summed it up: "Worse than the Great Depression: Falling State Revenues, Cuts in Payrolls Bring Hard Time to Public Institutions."^20

The main thrust of crisis management, Reagan-style, is, therefore, to aggravate even further the policy tilt to the private sector and deepen the crisis for public colleges and universities. All the while, the ideologies of the free market and the virtues of private enterprise disguise the government's flight from social responsibility.

As antisemitism destroyed European Jewry, it gave a life-and-death edge to internal controversies among Jews about Jewish self-betrayal. Among the accusations made by some Jews against others, three are repeated again and again: the charge of parvenu behavior, of rising socially and economically while leaving one's suffering people behind; the charge of political passivity, of abandoning the defense of Jewish interests; and the charge of lack of self-restraint, of giving credence to the antisemitic association of Jews with dangerous sexual desire. These three issues are at the center of the controversies over both Jewish neoconservatism and the Jewish origins of psychoanalysis, and these controversies will therefore illuminate one another. We begin with the neo-conservatives.

When Earl Shorris was a boy, he tells us in the opening pages of Jews Without Mercy, he greatly admired the ritual slaughterer, who was the assistant to the kosher butcher in his neighborhood. He expected the assistant, the most pious and learned Jew in the congregation, to make the first aliyah on Yom Kippur night. Instead that honor went to Big Eddie, the flashy liquor-store owner who consorted with criminals and sold whiskey in the slums. Big Eddie had neither learning nor piety; he had money instead. The assistant submitted silently to his humiliation; for young Earl it desecrated the temple. The rise of
Jewish neoconservatism, Earl Shorris now writes, repeats that betrayal of Judaism from within. It signifies the triumph of the Jewish gangster over the Jewish law.

Although two of the most prominent neoconservatives, Jeane Kirkpatrick and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, are not Jewish, Shorris is right to see neoconservatism as a development within Judaism. It centers around *Commentary*, the magazine of the American Jewish Committee, and many of its most prominent supporters are ex-radical Jews. Neoconservatives claim to speak in defense of Jewish interests. They support what they identify as Jewish positions at home and in Israel (against affirmative action, say, on the one hand, and Palestinian claims on the other). They defend the American system of private advancement in which Jews have prospered against statist regulation at home and Soviet militarism abroad. Neoconservatives have, as Shorris sees it, abandoned Jewish ethics in favor of Jewish material success.

Neoconservatism marks a departure from traditional American Jewish positions. Nonetheless, *Jews Without Mercy* suffers from a double idealization of the Jews. Shorris in the first place strips Jewish history of its internal conflict, and in the second place identifies Jewishness with higher values against worldly interests. Shorris appeals to a single Jewish tradition that, he claims, originated in Egyptian slavery, extended through Moses, the prophets, and the diaspora, and culminated in humanitarian liberalism. Shorris's Jews are a communitarian, ethical people, bound together under the law. His neoconservatives have, for the first time in Jewish history, chosen power, appetite, and the self above mercy toward others and adherence to the law.

As an account of a monolithic Jewish tradition, *Jews Without Mercy* presents wishes rather than history. It omits the biblical militance of warriors such as Joshua; the inward-turning, heavily ritualized, traditional diaspora communities; and such conflicts as the eighteenth-century struggle between legalism and hassidism. Yet Shorris's wishes for his kind of Judaism are a part of history. They are resources in the struggle to define Judaism against enemies without and adversaries within the community. *Jews Without Mercy* may deny the importance of such internal struggles when it ventures into Jewish history. But Shorris's personal reminiscences (beginning with Big Eddie) show the ways in which controversies among Jews have formed his own identity.

Shorris lays claim to a Jewish identity through his personal and group memories, and counterposes that identity to Jewish neoconservatism. He does not address neoconservative arguments on their merits any more than he writes actual history. But these two failings have their compensations: *Jews Without Mercy* rightly brings to our attention not just another in a series of continuing arguments among Jews, but a sharp departure in the political and intellectual history of American Judaism. The rise of Jewish neoconservatism signals an unprecedented movement to the punitive right within the Jewish community, a re-
pudiation of the traditions of labor socialism and middle-class humanitarianism. Neoconservatism by no means represents the mentality of a majority of American Jews, but Edward Koch's New York popularity and the sizable Jewish vote for Reagan indicate the most serious mass erosion of Jewish liberalism since the New Deal. How is Jewish neoconservatism to be explained?

Jews Without Mercy suggests that neoconservatism derives from the conjunction of two developments: American Jewish upward mobility, and the position of the state of Israel. In their admiration for the system that rewarded them and allowed them to rise, the neoconservatives are, as I will argue, Hannah Arendt's parvenus. They inherit the mantle of the Jews who sought to rise socially and economically as individuals, while leaving their community behind. Jewish parvenus, according to Arendt, gave up the struggle for equal rights for all peoples in favor of personal privilege. Yet the neoconservative, unlike the classic parvenu, defends Jewish interests. The earlier parvenu (Disraeli was Arendt's example) sometimes held onto his Jewishness as a mystical, private, interior identity. It compensated for the loss of the Jewish community, which had been abandoned for assimilation. That notion of a mystical Jewish internal essence reemerged to make claims on the world in the form of Jewish nationalism, particularly when that nationalism repudiated diaspora Yiddishkeit in favor of a new, heroic Hebraism. The holocaust, combined with threats to the survival of Israel, strengthened the case for Jewish nationalism. At the same time, for most Jews in Israel and the diaspora, Zionism remained attached to a humanitarian Judaism.

Menachem Begin's right-wing terrorism was all along the exception. It is now in danger of becoming the rule. Neoconservatives insist that Jews not be held to higher standards than other peoples while they also justify Israeli and American militarism in the name of preventing another slaughter of the Jews. This merger of self-aggrandizement with Jewish exceptionalism takes the parvenu mentality to its collective conclusion. It claims parvenu status not just for individuals but for the Jews as a people.

It is essential to recognize that such claims spoken in the name of the Jewish people actually results in the abandonment of persecuted Jews. That is what we learn, as Shorris says, from the notorious attacks on Jacobo Timerman by Irving Kristol and Commentary magazine. Jeane Kirkpatrick's distinction of authoritarian from totalitarian regimes first appeared in Commentary. But Kristol and Commentary were not content to make use of her distinction in defending Argentina against Timerman's attack. They also falsely claimed that Timerman was arrested because of his connections to (totalitarian) guerrilla terrorism, not because he was exposing the (merely authoritarian) government variety.

Timerman was tortured as a Jew. But Irving Kristol has boasted of “the distinct reserve shown Mr. Timerman ... by the more reputable American Jewish organizations.” By reputable (as opposed to disreputable?) Kristol seems to mean the ability to tolerate authoritarian antisemitism. Kristol and the Wall Street Journal labelled Timerman’s ordeal “The Timerman Affair.” They meant to imply that Timerman was guilty of immorality. But their political unconscious betrayed them, for the title invokes the classic case of authoritarian antisemitism (the crucible in which both modern antisemitism and Zionism were forged), the Dreyfus affair. Neoconservative loyalty either to the Reagan administration or to Israel’s Argentine ally may have provided the immediate occasion for the attacks on Timerman. But their larger implication is that those identified with the Jew as parvenu will turn their backs on the Jewish pariah.

Bernard Lazare was a French Jew who derived his political consciousness from the Dreyfus affair. He gave Hannah Arendt her exemplar of an alternative Jewish identity to the Jew as parvenu. She called Lazare the Jew as pariah. Social outcasts in Europe, the Jews were a pariah people. Parvenus tried to escape that pariah identity through individual mobility, but in the face of political antisemitism, their aloneness called attention to Jewish vulnerability. The Jewish pariah understood his or her status not as a personal misfortune but as a social fate. He or she was led to identify with Jewish (and other) pariah peoples. Timerman, in his fate and his protest against it, is the Jew as pariah. He and the butcher’s assistant are the heroes of Jews Without Mercy.

Timerman and the assistant, however, stand for different responses to the persecution of the Jews. Timerman, by publicizing and analyzing his torture, turned victimhood into radical politics. His protest contrasts with the assistant’s silence, yet it leads him to a similar fate: both he and the assistant end up as victims of other Jews. The neoconservatives attack Timerman (as they attacked Arendt before him) for making trouble for the Jews. But they also reject Jews like the assistant. In the face of the holocaust, that shochet is too close to the slaughtered sheep. The holocaust has not simply discredited Jewish passivity, however; it has allowed it to be employed as a mask for violence.

Think of the assistant in relation to Israel. The destruction of European Jewry (as if somehow Jewish acquiescence was to blame) is now used to justify Israeli aggression. Begin, echoing the language of the murderers of the Jews, has announced that the Israeli invasion will bring a “new order” to Lebanon. Few American neoconservatives have carried assimilation to their enemies so far. Daniel Bell (who has probably lost his neoconservative standing), S. M. Lipset, and Nathan Glazer have all condemned the invasion of Lebanon and raised questions about the West Bank settlement policy that led to the Lebanese war.

3 San Francisco Chronicle, August 26, 1982, p. 15.
But Shorris, by making the assistant's submission the alternative to Begin's gang­nerism, gives credence to the self-justifications of Begin and Sharon.

The assistant is not merely Begin's negative identity, moreover, but a role that he plays himself. In his hideous evasion of responsibility for the Palestinian massacre—"Goyim killed goyim and already the world wants to hang the Jews"—Begin invoked Jewish victimhood to escape Israeli guilt. In so doing he was making the victims of the holocaust responsible for his own crimes. By taking on the identity of the victim, Begin both obscures and justifies his violence.

There are problems, then, with glorifications of the assistant. One problem is the endorsement of political passivity, whether that submissiveness is actually practiced or used as a disguise. A second problem, which Philip Roth exposed a decade ago, is the choice of ethical restraint over instinctual life. These two subjects, one political and the other erotic, one the stuff of historical tragedy, the other of personal comedy, may seem worlds apart. In fact they are inextricably intertwined.

The diaspora Jew was not supposed to go wild in public and make a spectacle of himself, wrote Roth. To do so was to put himself at psychological risk, and the Jewish community at physical and social risk. Jewish misbehavior fed anti­semitic stereotypes of the unrestrained, libidinous Jew. Postholocaust American Jewish fiction carried to its extreme the demand that Jews be good boys. The Jew was identified with righteousness and restraint. To be Jewish was to be accessible to claims made in the name of the conscience, wrote Roth, to "play ball with the superego." "The voice of the id," he argued, appeared in the novels of Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud, but not among Jews. "Raw, untrammelled, uncompromising, insatiable and unsocialized desire" belonged to the goyim. To locate desire in a Jewish protagonist was to fall victim to antisemitic stereotypes, as Portnoy's Complaint was accused of having done.

Roth responded that Bellow and Malamud had not escaped the stereotypes but inverted them. He claimed that for Bellow and Malamud gratification was goyish, renunciation was Jewish. Their Jew was aggressed against; he was the victim. Mr. Sammler, wrote Roth, was "the superego's man in Manhattan." Sammler counterposed "sexual niggerhood" to "ethical Jewishhood." In Malamud's novel, The Assistant, the gentile grocer's helper is the figure of sex and violence. When he gets circumcised, at the end of the book, Malamud's assistant has become Shorris's.

Shorris has inherited the ethical Jewishhood of Bellow and Malamud. Marx in "On the Jewish Question" made use of the opposite image of the Jew. He made him the embodiment of the striving, egotistic, material desire hidden within each holy Christian. By exposing the Jewish bourgeois inside the Chris-

tian citizen, Marx was using antisemitic stereotypes against those who refused to acknowledge their participation in the "Jewish" world. If Marx employed those stereotypes too willingly, Shorris inverts them. Had Marx been a real Jew, he writes, "he might . . . have found in Jewish ethics the political relation of man to man that he thought would be realized in the paradise at the end of history."

Shorris denies not only Jewish materiality but also Jewish wit. "I lack the tradition of playfulness," he says, speaking against Big Eddie and for the assistant and the Jews. Evidently Jews with mercy are Jews without humor. This mournful, disembodied, ethical Jew floats above actual Jewish history and culture. He becomes himself a parvenu of purity, substituting spiritual upward mobility for its grosser, material form, but equally leaving behind the struggling, particular members of his community. Shorris's rescue operation has saved the Jews from antisemitic stereotypes and worldly contamination, but only by sundering them from human appetite. When the assistant speaks for the Jewish conscience, Podhoretz and Portnoy are left to speak for Jewish desire.

But do they? There are surely Jews who believe in pleasure, but, on closer examination, Podhoretz and Portnoy are not among them. Podhoretz complains, in article after article, about the liberal willingness to sacrifice Jewish interests. His complaint, like Portnoy's, comes from his self-involvement. But Podhoretz, unlike Portnoy, uses not only the language of self-interest but of morality and law and order as well. Such language is not really a screen for the gratification of personal appetite; it is nothing that innocent. Rather, in its grandiose and punitive idiom, it bespeaks a self that could never be gratified. Once self-expression moves away from economic interest and state military power, the neoconservative is no more comfortable with it than is the assistant. He endorses will, not appetite, and claims that the life of immediate gratification has softened America. The distinction between ethical Jews such as Shorris and neoconservatives such as Podhoretz, then, cannot be thought of as a counterposition between the law and desire. By so conceiving the alternatives, Shorris not only deprives good Jews of their bodies, he also gives appetite a bad name.

Our aim must be to avoid this false dichotomy, and connect libido to the political defense of the Jews. That intention takes us back to the origins of psychoanalysis, but not in a way that simplifies our task. For Freud has been accused of employing libido in the service of personal advancement, to escape his obligations to the Jews. The problem, I will suggest, goes beyond the ways Freud escaped his Jewishness to the terms by which he returned to it.

Roth brings the saintly Jew down to earth by employing the vocabulary of Freud. He is reminding us that the man who placed the unconscious, repression, and sexuality at the center of human life was a Jew. Embarrassment over that fact is one of the subtexts of *Psychoanalysis and Judaism*. The other is the issue of Freud's parvenu longings, his trouble with his Jewish identity. The
two embarrassments are related because Carl Schorske (who appears in this book) and John Murray Cuddihy (who does not) have argued that the invention of the unconscious grew out of Freud's flight from his Jewishness.

The volume edited by Dr. Mortimer Ostow contains a series of papers written over the past thirty years; about half are by Dr. Ostow himself. The book as a whole is loyal both to psychoanalytic orthodoxy and to rabbinical Judaism. It thus seeks to heal the rift opened up at the origins of psychoanalysis.

Freud announced at the beginning of *The Interpretation of Dreams* that the only dreams he felt free to interpret were his own. Carl Schorske, in a brilliant imitation of Freud, reads the dream book as Freud's autobiography.6 Invoking Freud's archeological metaphor for the unconscious, Schorske finds three layers in the dream book. Earliest and closest to the surface are Freud's professional dreams; they speak to Freud's ambition for a state-appointed professorship, an ambition blocked by antisemitism. Political dreams succeed the professional dreams, and they reach a deeper layer of Freud's psyche. They reveal Freud's boyhood ambition to defeat the antisemites and be a political leader of the Jews. These dreams lead Freud to his discovery of infantile sexuality, and of the oedipal wish to slay the father. But whereas for Freud the childhood wishes are the deepest, and give rise to the professional and political ambitions, Schorske follows Freud's method to a different conclusion. He reads the dream book as itself a wish, the wish to dissolve regicide into parricide. Schorske's Freud wants to be free both of his political obligations to the Jews and of the Jewishness that held back his advancement.

The Viennese liberal state of Freud's childhood was hospitable to Jewish advancement in business, the professions, and the state bureaucracy. But the rise of nationalism and antisemitism as Freud grew up undercut the synthesis of reason, political liberalism, and Jewish assimilation. Young Sigmund had wanted to be a Hapsburg minister, but the path of liberal politics was now closed. Freud faced the choices, Schorske implies, between, on the one hand, socialist or zionist politics, and on the other, the flight from politics and Jewishness into the interior. “If I can not bend the higher powers, I will stir up the floods of hell”: Schorske takes Freud's epigraph for the dream book as a statement about the choice he himself had made. Schorske's Freud, like Shorris's assistant, avoided taking a political stance in defense of the Jews. Unlike the assistant, however, he escaped away from Jewish piety, not toward it, and he fled politics not to renunciation but to libido.

Freud recounts in the dream book a story his father told him when he was a boy: Jacob Freud was out walking, wearing a new fur cap (of the sort Jews wore), when an antisemite ordered him off the sidewalk. The antisemite knocked off his hat; Freud's father meekly went out in the street, picked up the hat, and

walked on. Young Sigmund contrasted his father’s “unheroic conduct” with the scene in which Hannibal’s father made his son swear vengeance on the Romans. The incident made Sigmund want to be the semitic leader, Hannibal, and avenge the insult to his father. But Hannibal was deprived of his final triumph. He never reached the promised land of Rome, and the mature Freud was in danger of imitating him. Freud describes a series of dreams about his longing to visit Rome. Before he published the dream book, his personal anxieties prevented him from entering the city. Freud went to Rome only after he received his professorship. He arrived not as the conqueror, Hannibal, but as the other figure important to Freud, who got to Rome as its devotee, the classicist and Catholic convert, Winckelmann.

Freud’s wish to be Hannibal came from loyalty to his father the Jew; at the same time it expressed a desire to surpass his father, since Freud imagined the heroic resistance his father was unable to make. Freud reported his wish to be the son of Hannibal’s father in the dream book, but he gave Hannibal’s father the name of Hannibal’s brother by mistake. In The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, Freud interpreted that paraphraxis as the wish to be the son of his own half-brother rather than of his father. But by assimilating this wish to the oedipus complex in general, Freud avoided his particular shame at his father’s passivity. That shame would have trapped Freud in his Jewishness, whether he chose to avenge his father or to share in his submission. Freud’s psychological reductionism, Schorske suggests, protected (by keeping unconscious) Freud’s wish to be free of his father the Jew. And that unconscious wish becomes the origin of the psychological theory.

John Murray Cuddihy also finds that wish at the origins of psychoanalysis and, like Schorske, he places the meeting between Jacob Freud and the antisemite at the center of his story. But, whereas Schorske’s Freud embraces and then escapes a heroic political identity, Cuddihy’s develops directly from a denial of shame. Cuddihy finds an Oedipus in the encounter with the antisemite; that Oedipus is not Freud but his father. Jacob Freud, like Oedipus, met a man on the road who ordered him out of the way. But Jacob Freud, unlike Oedipus, meekly accepted the insult. Freud’s father was a traveling Galician merchant, an immigrant to cosmopolitan Vienna. Cuddihy imagines Freud’s shame at his father’s outlandish looks, his emotionality, his exposure. Shorris also describes how provincial Jews embarrass their assimilated brothers; Cuddihy connects that shame to the embarrassment felt by immigrant children (Jews and others) over their old-world parents. Freud, Cuddihy proposes, defended against shame by replacing it with guilt. He placed inside all men, including the goyim, that which he did not want to acknowledge as peculiarly Jewish: the uncivilized, insistent, physical, helpless-making urges. By universalizing the id, Cuddihy sug-

gests, Freud freed Jews from the stigma that inhibited their entry into cosmo­
politan, urban society. But Freud's method of assimilation undercut civility. Instead
of learning and submitting to the rules of civilized society, Freud unmasked the id
within each civilized self. Like Marx, he located the Jew inside the Christian.

Cuddihy comes close to making the unconscious a Jewish invention. The
antisemitic overtones in _The Ordeal of Civility_ have made it possible to ignore
Cuddihy's book. It is not mentioned in _Judaism and Psychoanalysis_. Schorske,
however, is altogether reputable, and cannot be ignored. Instead his analysis is
silently drained of its troublesome suggestions about Freud's problem with his
Jewishness. Martin Bergmann's analysis is illuminating about Freud's early strug­
gle with religious Judaism. (For example, Freud made his fiancee, the daughter
of a Rabbi, write to him on the sabbath.) But, though Bergmann cites Schorske
on Freud's Rome neurosis, he still allows Freud to go to Rome as Hannibal. The
Jewish Freud conquered Rome, according to Bergmann, by exposing religion as
a collective delusion.

Ostow agrees. He emphasizes the roots of psychoanalysis in Jewishness,
not in the escape from it. Marginal like Judaism, psychoanalysis subverted the
categories that defined the Jew as marginal by attacking the religious basis of
European culture. When Ostow cites Schorske it is to support his own view that
Freud rejected Jewish particularism in favor of Jewish universalism: its rational­
ism, its ethics, its prophetic ideals. Once (quoting Lionel Trilling), Ostow does
acknowledge Freud's insistence on a "biological urgency . . . which culture can­
not reach," but he attributes that insight to Freud's Jewish universalism. He wants
to free Freud from Christian particularism without crediting his alliance with the
unconscious.

Leonard Sillman, in the most extreme version of this perspective, reads
Freud's atheism back into biblical Judaism itself. Jewish monotheism eliminated
magical explanations for natural events, writes Sillman; its "hidden atheism"
prepared the way for science. Freud fulfilled the rationalist triumph over the un­
conscious implicit in biblical Judaism. Moreover, the Jew was, as Roth would
put it, the superego's man in Palestine. His self-scrutinizing, consistent superego
deprived him of the infantile pleasures of wish-fulfillment.

Ostow, unlike Sillman, acknowledges the nonrational elements that Juda­
ism and psychoanalysis share—the connections between transference and Jewish
mysticism, the religious component contained in the idealization of the analyst.
Ostow recognizes the ways in which early psychoanalysis resembled a heretical
Jewish sect. But in its investigation of the relationship between Judaism and psy­
choanalysis, this book contains hardly a word about the content of Freud's claim
that—as Stan Draenos puts it in his splendid new book, _Freud's Odyssey_
—the body is the ground of the mind.

Freud insisted, against western rationalism, that the core of our being consists of unconscious wishes. But the unconscious is an embarrassment for these Jewish defenders of Freud. Schorske and Cuddihy explain why, by attributing the discovery of the unconscious to Freud's evasion of his Jewishness. Schorske associates Freud's discovery with the flight from a political defense of the Jews; Cuddihy associates it with the shame of the Jewish son. Hence Cuddihy and Schorske both suggest that Freud was a parvenu. Those who wish to see Freud as a Jewish hero can hardly attribute his accomplishment to a reaction against his Jewishness. But then they cannot explain the centrality of sexuality to psychoanalysis. They seem to be left with the forbidden (antisemitic) association of Jewishness and sexuality. No wonder *Judaism and Psychoanalysis* engages in its massive displacement upward. It would be better to see, with Schorske and Cuddihy, that the repressive disabilities facing Jews directed Freud's attention inward—and then to see, against them, that that led him to make a powerful, liberating set of discoveries.

Those discoveries did not altogether liberate Freud, however, for he had his own trouble with the unconscious. That trouble is found in his fear of women, whom he made the embodiment of dangerous, primitive instincts. (Women are Freud's Jews.) So Richard Rubinstein is faithful to Freud when he defends the Old Testament patriarch as a protection against archaic, devouring, female Canaanite deities. The only women in *Judaism and Psychoanalysis* are Rubenstein's representatives of the preoedipal mother; there are no women at all in *Jews Without Mercy*. These omissions are striking, for Jewish women have played prominent roles both in radical politics and in the psychoanalytic movement. Actual women might help heal the split in these books between feared primitive appetites and the disembodied idea. That split, finally, lies within Freud himself, and it helps explain his return to Judaism. Renunciation turns out to be Jewish not just for Shorris and Malamud, but for Freud himself.

In *From Moses to Oedipus: Freud's Jewish Identity*, Marthe Robert integrates the ideas of Schorske and Cuddihy from a perspective sympathetic to Freud. Loyalty to the Galician Jewish father, she agrees, held back the ambitious son. Freud wanted to slay his father because Jacob Freud made him different from the Viennese gentiles. Psychoanalysis transformed that difference into an underlying identity, that of sexual desire, which held everyone back from civilization. The shift from ethnic difference to erotic identity allowed Freud to preserve by universalizing his Jewishness.

But when Freud shifted from ethnicity to sex, as Robert does not point out, he shifted from fathers to daughters. The buried identification of Jews with sexuality came to rest on Jewish women. As Freud grew nervous about the unconscious, he grew nervous about the female threat to culture as well. Having re-
placed Jews with women, Freud then made women subversive of civilization; he
counterposed them to the Jewish fathers who stood for ethical restraint.

Freud discovered the unconscious by concluding that the seduction stories
of his hysterical, Jewish, female patients were fantasies, not facts. “Of course I
would not tell it to Dan and talk about it in Ashkelon,” he wrote Fleiss. Freud
was referring to David’s lamentation over the death of Saul, “Tell it not to Gath,
publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines re-
joice.” Freud alluded to the daughters rejoicing because he had discovered their
cure. But his unconscious replacement of the Gentile tribe of Gath by the Jewish
tribe of Dan suggests that (not yet ready to bring his death wishes against his
father into his consciousness) he did not want the Jewish fathers to know he was
letting them off the hook. Locating sexuality not in the fathers' acts but in the
daughters' desires, Freud exculpated the fathers; he did so by placing sexuality
inside women. This identification of women with the unconscious, at the origins
of psychoanalysis, helped prepare for the split in Freud's later thought between
dangerously sexual women on the one hand and ethically restraining patriarchs
on the other.

Freud once celebrated Jewish dreams as a source of Jewish survival, and
located his own imaginative power within the Jewish past. He wrote Arnold
Zweig, “Palestine has never produced anything but religious, sacred frenzies,
presumptuous attempts to overcome the outer world of appearance by means of
the inner world of wishful thinking. And we hail from there.” For the most part,
however, Freud returned to his Jewish identity in the context of growing anxiety
over the power of the unconscious. That anxiety responded first to Carl Jung’s
apostasy, then to the destruction of the first World War, and finally to National
Socialism. Freud’s ambivalence about his Jewishness had led him to the uncon­
scious; now he saw primitive, emotional forces directed against Jewishness
itself. Judaism appealed to the elder Freud as an ethical, nay-saying religion of
the law.

Freud turned back to Judaism, Bergmann and Ostow show, by way of his
identification with Moses. (On the inspired cover of Judaism and Psychoanaly­
sis, Freud's hand holding a cigar uncannily repeats Michelangelo’s Moses holding
his beard.) Carl Jung was Freud’s opening to the gentile world, evidence that
psychoanalysis was more than a Jewish sect. In a letter to Jung, Freud had com­
pared Jung to Joshua, destined to enter the promised land, and himself to Moses
who only viewed it from afar. When his life was dominated by the conflict with
Jung, in 1912-13, Freud daily visited Michelangelo’s statue of Moses in Rome.
He was beginning to see himself as Moses; the Jewish lawgiver was taking Han­
nibal's place.

Freud viewed Michelangelo’s Moses, Bergmann shows, through the prism
of his estrangement from Jung. In anger at the reversion of the Jews to orgiastic
rituals and pagan idol worship (a reversion that Jung was imitating), Moses
broke the first set of tablets he had received from God. Did Michelangelo sculpt Moses holding the tablets before he broke the first set, or after he received the second? Freud saw the statue as he saw himself in the struggle with Jung: Moses had not yet broken the tablets, and was restraining his wrath.

A quarter-century earlier Jacob Freud had made his son a gift of the Bible that Freud had studied and discarded in his youth. Jacob Freud wrote Sigmund, "for long since the Book has been lying about like the broken tablets, in a closet of mine." Freud may well have taken the present as a reproach, associating (as Ostow says) the breaking of the tablets with his own rejection of the Bible. As Michelangelo's Moses, Freud was no longer a son l سبيلingly rebelling against Judaism; he was a self-controlled Jewish patriarch. But Freud's interpretation of the statue violated the evidence of his eyes. Because of the prominent horns on Moses's head, as Freud noted, the statue had been called "Moses with the head of Pan." Having called attention to the horns, Freud ignored them. But in the biblical text, Moses is not horned until after he breaks the first tablets and God gives him the second set. (The Hebrew described an aura emanating from Moses; the Vulgate translated these rays into horns.) Freud's Moses is no horned God; giving way neither to festiveness nor to wrath, he has triumphed over his instincts.

Civilization and its Discontents attributed that same instinctual renunciation to the Jews as a whole. Savage gods were projections of human wishes, wrote Freud. Savages blamed their misfortunes on scapegoats; even the Christian devil acquitted God of responsibility for evil. Judaism marked an advance over animism and Christianity, since the Jews worshipped a God who set them high standards, and they took responsibility for transgressions inside. Freud celebrated Jewish guilt as an advance in civilization. He also argued that their sense of guilt held the Jewish people together. They were unified in loving a God who punished them for their forbidden wishes.

Guilt came from forbidden wishes, not deeds, in the dream book, and Freud "acquit[ted] dreams." But in Moses and Monotheism, written at the end of his life, Freud made the Jews guilty of an actual crime. He imagined that, rebelling against the ethical restraints Moses had imposed upon them, the Jews rose up and slew him. Guilt over this crime bound the Jews to one another, and led them to deify their founder.

Moses and Monotheism (as Bergmann points out) gave the Jews world-historic significance. They were the single people to enact Freud's crime of the primal horde. Totem and Taboo, written in the context of the break with Jung, imagined a primal crime at the origin of human history. In the beginning, Freud wrote, the father monopolized the women and enslaved the sons. The sons rose up, slew the father, and shared out the women among themselves. But the sons loved the father as well as hating him, and without his authority they could not resolve their conflicts over desire. To deal with parricidal guilt and unrestrained
instincts, the sons formed a covenant. They placed themselves under law. By locating the primal horde in Jewish history Freud had shifted the imaginative significance of the Jew (if Cuddihy is right) from a humiliated, subject people of central Europe, associated with instinctual life, to the heroic bearers of renunciation. He had placed them at the origin of civilization and its discontents.

Shorris agrees. He writes, “In awe they accepted the Covenant, ethics. They were no longer a horde; civil society was possible. Not in Athens but in the desert, in these poor primitive creatures was the beginning of political man. The Law implies an order for men; ethics precedes politics. The alternative is the horde.” Shorris excises the primal crime from his account of the origins of the covenant; nonetheless, he accuses the neoconservatives of wanting to slay the father and return to the horde. Freud’s account is mythical, of course, but it thereby performs a mythic function. It exposes the psychological and political costs of the restoration of paternal authority: submission, instinctual renunciation, and (since renunciation intensifies forbidden wishes) ever-deepening guilt.

It was not a cost that Freud’s Moses had fully to bear. The primal father gratified his instincts, in Freud’s first formulation. Freud replaced him with the culture-bearer, Moses. (Moses’ power, like Freud’s within the psychoanalytic movement, came from renunciation of sexuality, not its monopolization.) Nonetheless, the earlier liberation of the father from the constraints imposed on the guilty sons carried over into Moses and Monotheism. The giver of the law is above the people to whom he gives the law. Freud’s Moses was not a Jew but an Egyptian.

Otto Rank had shown how most peoples gave their founder a noble birth. The inner source of that myth was the family romance, in which the child imagines he is the son not of his father but of a king. But the Jews, who were slaves, had a dilemma. If they made Moses noble, he could not be one of them. Jewish captivity forced them to describe Moses as a Jew adopted by the pharaoh’s family. Having shown the Jewish need to invert the family romance, Freud then succumbed to a wish of his own. In an astounding leap from collective fantasy to actual history, he concluded that Moses really came from the pharaoh’s royal house.

Freud’s reversal gave him his own family romance. It fulfilled his boyhood wish (by way of Moses rather than Hannibal) not to be the son of Jacob Freud. That wish seems to have had two sources: first, following Cuddihy, that the leader of the Jews (and the founder of psychoanalysis) not come from a humble diaspora people; and second, following Freud himself, that the founder be exempt from the inhibitions to which he had sentenced his people. Who can blame Freud for freeing the founder both from the history of the Jews and from the inner suffering he had imposed upon them? But to make his founder powerful, Freud deprived him of sexuality, that overpowering source of internal disorder. The Moses of Freud’s Michelangelo was God’s assistant, and he has the self-restraint of Malamud’s and Shorris’s. But we know that Moses will break the tablets. By emphasizing Moses’ self-restraint, Freud anticipates and justifies his
Americans—Southerners included—are no longer accustomed to thinking of the Civil War and Reconstruction as a revolution. After all, postwar Southern society hardly seemed revolutionized: staple agriculture became even more pervasive, black people continued to work as rural laborers, racial oppression and inequality persisted. It would take another century and another violent struggle for Southern blacks to achieve the rights and privileges of citizenship guaranteed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. But if a revolution is defined as the transformation of social relations and property rights and as a sudden and decisive shift in the constellation of class power, then revolution is surely what we are talking about. The Southern planters not only lost, through force of arms, traditional legal prerogatives over their laborers and, by extension, their most valuable form of property; they also lost much of their power nationally and, for quite some time, had to battle in a regional political arena that included their ex-slaves. Indeed, the conferral of civil and political rights upon the freedpeople, however equivocal in motivation and commitment, was unprecedented in the history of postemancipation societies and made for a moment when even more radical change loomed as a real possibility. If the moment passed unfulfilled and if the unprecedented advances were soon rolled back, it was a testimony to the limits of the revolution that emancipation brought about.

The Federal government did not wage war against the Southern Confederacy for revolutionary purposes. The intention was to restore the Union; the fate of the slaves was held in abeyance. That the war became a social revolution owed much to the determined efforts of a relatively small group of Northern abolitionists in the Union army and in positions of political influence. And it owed much to the military and diplomatic exigencies of restoring the Union itself. But, as the editors of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project, whose marvelous volume is under review, make plain, it owed most to the courage, endeavors, and sensibilities of black people, slave and free. Despite the burdens of more than two centuries of bondage and a racism that knew no sectional boundaries, they pressed the case for emancipation, undermined the slave system in many areas of the South, shored up a flagging Union war effort, and fanned the flickering flames of equality and democracy to their highest intensity in the nineteenth century—and perhaps in our entire history.

The unfolding of emancipation and the role that Afro-Americans played in it have attracted considerable and talented scholarly attention. The literature on this subject ranks, in fact, with the best of American historiography. But never before has the story been told with the breadth, the diversity, and the power of *Freedom*. Six years ago, with a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and with the support of the History Department at the University of Maryland, chief editor Ira Berlin, associate editors Joseph P. Reidy and Leslie S. Rowland, and a staff of research assistants began to prepare a documentary history of emancipation. Drawing upon the vast, and largely un-
tapped, holdings of the National Archives, they selected forty thousand documents from over two million examined and from these will publish five series of one or more volumes each. Ira Berlin, the author of an outstanding study of free blacks in the antebellum South, among other works, is one of the finest historians writing in America today.² Joseph Reidy and Leslie Rowland are fast earning reputations as two of the most promising new historians of the South for their own work on the transition from slavery.³ When completed, the multivolume Freedom will cover, along with emancipation, the emergence of new labor and race relations, the struggle for social justice, racial violence, and the development of the black community between 1861 and 1867. This, the second series and the first to be published, explores the black military experience.

Black participation in the Union army and navy is not one of the better known aspects of the Civil War.⁴ The producers of the recent television extravaganza, “The Blue and the Gray,” did not even see fit to take note of it. Yet, by the war’s end almost 200,000 Afro-Americans had served in some capacity, more than 80 percent of whom had been recruited in the slave states. Together they comprised about 10 percent of all those who served in the Northern armed forces. This alone makes the story worthy of attention, for black enlistments came at a time of deepening crisis in Union manpower. But, as Freedom demonstrates with care and sensitivity, the black military experience also embodied the revolutionary dynamic that the war unleashed: it challenged and began to redefine the boundaries of white racial attitudes and black social status; it pushed the Federal government toward accepting and advancing emancipation; it raised new hopes, expectations, opportunities, and awareness among black people, while revealing the tensions and legacies of dependency within the black community; it politicized thousands of black soldiers and created a proud and determined black political leadership, thus accelerating the quest for equality both during and after the war; and it revealed the promises and limits of liberation.

For the historian, there is no more urgent or more difficult task than to mediate the diversity and the meaning of events, to weave a variety of scenes, choices,


³ Reidy’s work has focused on Georgia and Louisiana; Rowland’s on Kentucky and South Carolina.

⁴ Still, there are numerous accounts. The best include Dudley Taylor Cornish, The Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865 (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966); Benjamin Quarles, The Negro in the Civil War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953); James M. McPherson, The Negro’s Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted During the War for the Union (New York: Random House, 1965).
and encounters into a larger portrait, to see pattern and process amid complexity and contradiction. It is difficult enough to accomplish in our own words, even with judicious use of example and quotation, statistics and accounts. It is all the more difficult and perilous to accomplish largely in the words of the direct participants. But this is what Freedom seeks to do—and with remarkable success. There are, of course, the customary and necessary mediations: a valuable overview and interpretation to begin the volume; a series of concise and informative introductions to subtopics. The vast bulk of pages, however, is taken up with over 350 documents, most of which are letters and communiqués. With them we are presented with the immense range of actors, settings, and experiences that went into the making of black soldiering and emancipation. We are escorted from the seats of power in Washington, D.C., to rough barracks in Missouri; from the offices of state governors to the tents of field commanders; from the cities of Baltimore, New Orleans, and Louisville to the towns, villages, and crossroads of Upper Marlboro (Maryland), Milliken's Bend (Louisiana), and Henderson (Kentucky); from a black regimental camp in Hilton Head, South Carolina, to a court-martial proceeding in Vicksburg, Mississippi. We are met with the stiff and rather dry language of government officials and bureaucrats, with the morally charged and eloquent prose of abolitionists, with the sneers and diatribes of Northern racists, with the spirited reports of army recruiters, with the angry complaints of Unionist slaveholders, and, most striking of all, with the awkward but heartfelt and moving expressions of black men and women traversing the threshold of modern literacy. Still, out of the many episodes, inquiries, and confrontations, the drama and story emerge. Ideas are tested, policy is formulated, consciousness is born.

Revolutions may be inspired by new visions and aspirations, but they happen in the rush of events, in the cascade of unforeseen developments, stark necessities, and vulgar opportunism. Few Northerners anticipated or desired revolution in 1861; fewer yet imagined a role for blacks—slave or free—in the struggle for the Union. For most, it was a white man's war to determine the fate of the nation. Although black people had participated in previous American wars and some 225,000 resided in the free states, their status was always precarious. They usually faced limited economic prospects, restricted political rights, legal discrimination, and, if they had escaped from bondage, the ever-present fear of reenslavement. And despite the efforts of free black leaders and white sympathizers, calls for black enlistment and slave emancipation were, at the earliest stages of the Civil War, resisted by Federal authorities. To be sure, the Lincoln administration had politically sensitive issues to contend with. Abolishing slavery meant abrogating property rights, a radical step in all of nineteenth-century America and one that could push slaveholders in the strategic loyal and
neutral states of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri to cast their fortunes with the Confederacy. Enrolling blacks in the Union army meant challenging racial orthodoxy, a move that could stir disaffection among white troops. So the matters stood unaddressed until the actions of the slaves and the exigencies of war tipped the balance.

The first part of this volume of *Freedom* is devoted to the onset of black enlistment and its relation to the collapse of slavery. Here the editors show how the unexpected course of events helped to join the forces of idealism and expediency in the drive for social change. For as the Union army established footholds in the slave states in 1861 and 1862, it was greeted by growing numbers of slaves who had fled their plantation and farms to seek refuge—and, they hoped, freedom—behind Union lines. With no set policy to deal with the situation, field commanders had to take the initiative. They began by declaring such fugitive slaves “contrabands of war” and putting them to work on fortifications. But soon, Union officers such as David Hunter in South Carolina and John W. Phelps in Louisiana seized the chance to advance the cause of emancipation and arm the slaves against their former masters. Although this unauthorized action met with rebuke higher up, it paved the way for a shift in policy once manpower demands became pressing and white inductions ebbed. By the fall of 1862, a slave regiment had been organized in South Carolina, and by early 1863 black recruitment started spreading North and South. Northern opposition quickly eroded as political officials came to see black enlistment as a convenient means of filling conscription quotas without imposing greater burdens on whites. High-mindedness certainly did not prompt Governor Samuel Kirkwood of Iowa to write, “When this war is over & we have summed up the entire loss of life it has imposed on the country I shall not have any regrets if it is found that a part of the dead are niggers and that all are not white men.”

The progress of black involvement in the war effort and of emancipation went hand-in-glove. The Second Confiscation Act and the Militia Act, both passed in the summer of 1862, freed all captured and fugitive slaves owned by rebels and provided for their mobilization in military service. Lincoln’s final Emancipation Proclamation prescribed the acceptance of liberated slaves for garrison duty. And in those slave states unaffected by the Proclamation, enlistment acted as the wedge that undermined the chattel institution between 1863 and 1865. At the same time, the enthusiastic response of free and enslaved blacks alike to the prospect of military participation shook racist stereotypes in the North and bolstered black claims to equality. The sentiments of a Governor Kirkwood notwithstanding, *Freedom* highlights the dawning of new possibilities in racial attitudes. A white Philadelphian could marvel in July of 1863 at “the great change which the events of the past two years have wrought in the public mind.” “In every respect,” he observed, “there is not only no repugnance on the part of white soldiers to colored soldiers but a positive disposition to fraternize
with them.” A Northern official believed that “in organization, drill, discipline, and morale,” a black regiment from South Carolina was “not surpassed by any white regiment.” A black regiment formed in Tennessee “received” three hearty cheers from a regiment of white men” after displaying bravery in battle. “One year ago the regiment was unknown, and it was considered . . . very doubtful whether Negroes would make good soldiers,” the white commander noted. “Today the regiment is known throughout the army and the North and is honored.”

The dialectic of possibilities and limits, of opportunities and hardships, is woven skillfully through the next three parts of the volume, which focus more directly on the black experience in the army. Indeed, in these sections Freedom offers an unmatched view of military life through the eyes of black soldiers and their families, tapping as it does “the richest known record of any subordinate class at its moment of liberation.” On the one hand, military service opened new avenues for self-improvement and responsibility, while boosting pride, morale, and sense of purpose. Scattered regimental schools enabled hundreds of black recruits to learn the rudiments of reading and writing. The elevation of many to the status of noncommissioned officers added to discipline and self-respect in the ranks and to the rise of a black political leadership. Fighting against the Confederates helped to dispel white myths of black cowardice and confirm black notions that they had rescued the Union in its darkest hour. And, perhaps most important, marching through the South in Yankee blue cast black soldiers in the role of their own people’s liberators.

Yet, it came at a heavy and painful price—a price that makes the determination and achievements even more impressive. In some respects, the trials and tribulations faced by blacks were common to soldiering at that time: poor conditions of army life, high mortality from disease, trying separations from family. However, the black ordeal was inordinately harsh. Often in relatively weak physical condition to begin with, black troops died from sickness at more than twice the rate of their white counterparts. Their wives and children, moreover, not only had few resources with which to fend, but frequently remained in bondage and subject to special abuse from masters enraged by slave enlistments in the Union army. “You do not know how bad I am treated. . . . Send me some money as soon as you can for me and my child are almost naked,” a slave woman from Missouri wrote her soldier husband. “Do the best you can and do not fret . . . for it won’t be long before I will be free and then all we make will be ours.” Freedom contains many such letters written by soldiers’ kin, wrenching testimony to the suffering and strain that were part of emancipation.

Other problems stemmed more explicitly from racial discrimination and from the nature of the war being waged. If Northern whites came to accept the necessity—and perhaps the desirability—of black enlistment and if some came to admire the contributions and courage of black troops, the burdens of race and enslavement nonetheless haunted black soldiers virtually every step of the way.
Segregated within camps, assigned the most degrading and menial of duties, and often scorned by fellow whites, blacks were distinctively second-class citizens in an army whose fortunes they had so brightened. For every group of whites willing to offer blacks “three hearty cheers,” many more tendered their contempt. There was deep and widespread opposition to black engagement in the heat of battle, as many Northern military officials thought that fighting was “the white man’s business.” “[W]e are treated in a different manner to what others Regiments is,” a black recruit told Abraham Lincoln. “Instead of the musket It is the spad and the Wheelbarrow and the Axe.” Even the battlefield proved no equalizer, for when finally sent into the fray, black soldiers confronted special dangers. Deeming them little more than cannonfodder, some Union commanders ordered blacks into difficult, if not hopeless, encounters. On occasion, black troops were used primarily to humiliate Confederate soldiers. And if captured, blacks risked summary retribution at the hands of Confederates who normally considered them slaves in rebellion rather than prisoners of war.

Such conditions heightened the awareness and sensitivity of black troops to discriminatory practices, but, as the editors of Freedom show, none provoked more protest or served a more politicizing function than the inequalities of pay and the exclusion of blacks from the ranks of commissioned officers. In these, the limitations of the Union commitment to emancipation and racial justice became starkly apparent. Although at the outset of hostilities it seemed that black soldiers would have the same privileges and protections of white ones, a backlash soon commenced. Those blacks—for the most part freemen from the Louisiana Native Guards—who had been received into the army at the commissioned level were generally purged from the service, and, save for surgeons and chaplains who had little authority, no more won elevation from the enlisted ranks until the very end of the war. With a profound bitterness and sense of betrayal, black officers submitted their resignations. “This treatment has sunk deep into our hearts,” sixteen of them from a Louisiana regiment protested, “we did not expect It and therefore It is intolerable. we cannot serve a country In which we have no more rights and Privileges given us.” A storm of controversy brewed throughout the war, culminating in a handful of promotions that failed to salve the wounds of dismissed officers or to create a black officer corps. Black outfits fell under the command of white superiors.

Of greater consequence for the mass of black soldiers was the Union policy of paying them less than half of what was paid to whites. Not only did the policy give added institutional expression to racial inequality, it also rendered most blacks incapable of providing for their families. So strong was the outcry that mutiny bubbled in the ranks, for if the issue of pay set black troops apart from white, it encouraged blacks “to make common cause among themselves.” Protest centered in the regiments organized earliest and under promise of equal treatment. Freeborn and more literate blacks penned stinging complaints to Union
authorities and often refused to accept any compensation until amends were made. Others took direct action. In one instance, a black company in South Carolina, led by black Sergeant William Walker, stacked arms in front of the white commander's tent and balked at further duty until the question of pay was settled. Despite the commander's warnings, the soldiers held their ground and were charged with mutiny. Shortly thereafter, the company had to witness Walker's execution by firing squad. In one stirring document after another, *Freedom* brilliantly captures the black soldiers' emerging realization that theirs was a struggle on two fronts: against Southern slavery and against Northern discrimination. Thus the proud, angry, and moving words of a black corporal to President Lincoln:

The patient Trusting Decendants of Africs Clime, have dyed the ground with blood, in defense of the Union, and Democracy. Men too your Excellency who know . . . the cruelties of the Iron heel of oppression. . . . But When the war trumpet sounded o'er the land, when men knew not the Friend from the Traitor, the Black man laid his life at the Altar of the Nation,—and he was refused. . . . And now, he is in the War: and how has he conducted himself? Let their dusky forms, rise up, out of the mires of James Island, and give the answer. Let the rich mould around Wagners parapets be upturned, and there will be found an Eloquent answer. Obedient and patient, and Solid as a wall are they. all we lack is a paler hue, and a better acquaintance with the Alphabet. Now Your Excellency, We have done a Soldiers Duty. Why cant we have a Soldiers pay?

A wellspring of support from Union army officials, Northern abolitionists, and free black communities helped stave off the prosecution of many black protesters and, by June of 1864, helped bring about the equalization of pay. Black troops could only feel a new sense of strength and moral virtue. And they could only recognize how long and arduous the fight for freedom would be.

The experience, the resolve, the pride, and the political awareness that blacks had gained in military service were, in very significant ways, brought to bear on the postwar South. And it is with this subject that the present volume of *Freedom* concludes. Over 80,000 blacks remained in the army of occupation, and although the majority were stationed in Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Kentucky, black soldiers could be found throughout the Southern states. Their impact, for thousands of ex-slaves and thousands of ex-slaveholders, far outweighed their numbers. In countless settings, the editors write, black troops "communicated to freedmen and freedwomen the meaning of the war, the role black people played in defeating the Confederacy and destroying slavery, the new rights liberty allowed, and the new responsibilities it demanded."
documents demonstrate, they took a hand in organizing schools, churches, and other institutions, encouraged freedpeople to expand the spheres of their freedom, and stood ready to ward off retaliation from Southern whites. "[T]he freedpeople," a Northern officer observed in Georgetown, South Carolina, "were looking forward to the arrival of Colored Troops with the expectation that their advent would enlarge their privileges." The sight of black soldiers who eagerly "fraternize[d] . . . with the laboring population" struck terror into the hearts of the old masters, suggesting as it did that emancipation began rather than completed a revolution in Southern society. Growing white pressure hastened the Federal government's decision to demobilize black regiments and remove black soldiers from trouble spots. By the fall of 1867, black volunteers no longer served in the South.

Yet, the discharge of black soldiers did not terminate their role in protecting and advancing the gains of newly liberated slaves. Prominent among the participants in black conventions that pressed, in 1865 and 1866, for the extension of full citizenship rights were Union army veterans. And most prominent among the arguments in support of such rights was the black contribution to winning the war and saving the nation. "[W]hat higher order of citizen is there than the soldier?" a group of Nashville blacks queried rhetorically in early 1865. "The Government has asked the colored man to fight for its preservation and gladly has he done it. It can afford to trust him with a vote as safely as it trusted him with a bayonet." With the advent of radical Reconstruction, former black soldiers often emerged as state and local political leaders, mobilizing the freedpeople and moving "to the front ranks in the struggle for land, economic autonomy, and racial justice"—a struggle they continued to wage even as the federal government increasingly abandoned them.

Indeed, as Freedom suggests, black troops may have understood best of all the significance of the war and emancipation for the nation as a whole. They knew the "Iron heel of oppression" that was slavery and the tendencies and temperaments of the master class. They knew that the country could not survive half slave and half free, that the treatment of "a numerous, law-abiding, industrious, and useful class of citizens . . . as aliens and enemies, as an inferior degraded class, who must have no voice in the Government which they support, protect and defend" was not the mark of "a Democratic Government." They knew the perils of compromise or military failure. They knew that so long as basic rights and privileges were denied to a minority those rights and privileges could be denied to the majority, that prejudice and discrimination gnawed ceaselessly at the fabric of freedom. On so many occasions, in war and in peace, they exposed the deepest contradictions of American society and demanded that the nation live up to its highest ideals. They glimpsed, quite profoundly, their dual roles as liberators of their people and conscience of American democracy.

There is much more here than I have been able to mention, including a
short chapter on the Confederate debate and deadlock over slave recruitment. It is, in fact, difficult not to feel a bit overwhelmed by this large, ambitious, and sweeping book. But the size and scope are virtues as well. Historians and students will find an astonishing and unrivaled account of the black military experience, an indispensable guide to the immense collections of the National Archives, and an essential archival source in its own right. The general public can read with enormous pleasure and discovery of the triumphs and tragedies, the fortitude and frailty, the spirit and suffering that went into the making of a watershed in the nation's history. If this volume is any indication of what lies ahead, Freedom should assume a place as one of the great scholarly and literary achievements of our time.
Simone Weil wrote that the left has consistently espoused two contradictory conceptions of political change: “One consists in transforming society in such a way that the working class may be given roots in it; while the other consists in spreading to the whole of society the disease of uprootedness, which has been inflicted on the working class.” The tension between a search for a self-governing community and a radicalism that celebrates uprootedness and mass mobilization underlies the entire history of the modern left and partly explains its failures. Far from seeking to halt the “disease of uprootedness” that has attended capitalist industrialization, leftists have proved among its greatest enthusiasts.

In the 1910s, Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Paul Rosenfeld attempted to resolve the conflict between the two strands of radicalism that Weil described by making the transcendence of the industrial division of labor the goal of their social and cultural criticism. Drawing on John Ruskin and William Morris for their critique of industrialism, these writers for *The Seven Arts* condemned the degradation of work to thoughtless “lowlbrow” drudgery and the trivialization of culture as “highbrow” aestheticism as complementary consequences of the factory system. Yet their plans for a reconciliation of work and culture remained confused and contradictory. At times these critics argued, as did John Dewey and other Progressives, that only a scientific politics of centralized planning and the substitution of the new culture of modernism for both bourgeois gentility and folk culture of the masses could realize Ruskin’s and Morris’s hopes in an urban-industrial age. At other times, and especially in

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Bourne’s wartime essays, these writers called for the repudiation of all ideologies that called for the ascendancy of the centralized state over individual citizens, of the assembly line over self-directed labor, of professional expertise over traditional competence, and of a narrow scientistic world view over ethical, religious, and humanistic traditions.

Of all these critics, Bourne most fully realized that their work had to move beyond the modernist satire of bourgeois manners to an analysis of the role of modern technology, total war, and the corporate state in the destruction of all cultural bonds—highbrow and lowbrow—that had previously allowed for personal autonomy and collective resistance to industrial hierarchies. A cult of power has replaced such bonds, according to Bourne, wedding individuals to the “progressive” forces of the industrial dynamo and the militarized state. Bourne’s final essays point toward a project of political and cultural renewal, a search for new values that would supplement popular traditions of community and mutual aid, that was cut short by his death in 1918.

Lewis Mumford, a decade younger than the Seven Arts writers, remained closer to Bourne’s goals than did Brooks, Frank, or Rosenfeld. “It looks to me,” Brooks wrote Mumford in 1934, “as if you are going to do for this generation—which God knows needs it—what Ruskin and Morris left undone for theirs.” But Mumford in fact had taken up the reconstruction of a radical critique of radical industrialism that Brooks and the other surviving Seven Arts critics had largely abandoned for literary history, modernist criticism, or mysticism. Mumford’s commitment to the early project of The Seven Arts is too often forgotten by those who characterize him as primarily a specialist in the history of cities and technology. Mumford centered his analysis of modern technology and urbanism in a concern for the “social core” of values, myths, and practices that had given birth to inventions and cities only to fall victim to its own creations. As he worked through the contradictory legacy of modern radicalism, Mumford discarded the left’s long-held enthusiasm for urban-industrial concentration, centralized planning, artistic and political vanguardism, and other banalities of progress. Instead, Mumford chose to cultivate communal values and traditions that opposed the industrial “disease of uprootedness” and presaged a democratic revival of local community. Mumford’s life work has particular significance for the American left, as it reconsiders its own positions on industrial technology, modernization, and political organizations.

The optimistic belief in social betterment and historical progress that had been the hallmark of nineteenth-century liberalism and socialism collapsed for Mumford with the coming of the first World War. The war even separated Mumford from his early mentor, the regionalist planner and philosopher Patrick Geddes, prompting Mumford to write Geddes in the 1920s that “there is a real
blake / lewis mumford

barrier to understanding between us in the fact that you grew to manhood in a period of hope," while Mumford had only known "war and disappointment, growing up with a generation which, in large part, had no future."

Unlike most of his contemporaries on the left, Mumford attributed the demise of international socialism amidst the outbreak of war to the inadequacies of socialist theory, which, as he wrote in an unpublished essay of 1915, held that capitalist collapse was "inevitable" and therefore "independent of human guidance." Socialists' faith in a progressive future made them "even more fervent than their bourgeois contemporaries in embracing the capitalist regime." However, recent events had demolished "the idea of waiting patiently for the divine far off event which was to usher in the Socialist state," since "the event ushered in was the Great War." A new radicalism, skeptical of "the pretentious catchwords of science," would have to begin with the premise that "the resultant society is dependent upon the deliberate choices of the human beings within it" and not upon assumptions of mechanistic progress toward a socialist utopia.

Mumford's insistence on human agency as the motive force in historical change could (and did) lead him in two different directions: both to a radicalism embedded in ideals and traditions opposed to the new culture of industrialism; and to a radicalism of technical planning, so as to insure that "the future development of society" not be "left to fate." Mumford's critique of evolutionary socialism implied a rejection of elite efforts at the rationalization of society. Yet Mumford believed that the war, by refuting the socialist faith in automatic progress, had cleared the way for active intervention in history through the application of the methods of science to politics.

A similar ambiguity marked Mumford's first book, The Story of Utopias, where he reviewed utopian literature from Plato to Wells. Mumford criticized the technocratic implications of utopias like Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, which overemphasized "the part that wholesale mechanical organization, directed by a handful of people, would play in such a reconstruction." Though he blamed utopians for spending more time describing new inventions than examining the needs of the "mechanical puppets" fated to populate their paradises, Mumford did not reject utopianism as inherently technocratic and sterile. Instead, his book ended with praise for the use of regional surveys, which, by allowing "every activity and condition" to be "described, measured, and grasped in scientific terms," permitted radical planners to bring their utopias down to earth.

Fortunately, Mumford's reflections on the wartime crisis of the left led him to a more fruitful line of speculation than did his infatuation with scientific planning, though he did not develop the full implications of that speculation until the 1940s. While most intellectuals responded to the onslaught of postwar reaction by choosing to "go with the current" or by embracing the day-to-day activism of leftist party politics, Mumford shared Frank's conviction in Our America that the left needed "a period of static suffering, of inner cultivation," so as not to
repeat its "impotent habit of constant issuance into pretty deed."\(^2\) Looking back on the postwar period in 1930, Mumford wrote that "the situation demanded, not specific attacks on specific evils and specific points of danger, but a wholesale rethinking of the basis of modern life and thought, for the purpose of eventually giving a new orientation to all our institutions."

That "rethinking" first led Mumford to join Brooks in his rediscovery of an American "usable past," but *The Golden Day* indicated that Mumford would quickly transcend the limitations of Brooks's narrow cultural nationalism. Mumford treated the division between American highbrows and lowbrows as the result of the disintegrating tendencies of capitalist expansion and industrialization, which had undone the "medieval synthesis" and cast the pioneer, Puritan, and artisan adrift in the New World. Torn from their families, cities, churches, and guilds, Americans lived on "shadows that linger in the memory," shadows that left them "uneasy and restless." Without the steady accretion of civilizing traditions, the American "settles down, moves on, comes home again, lives on hopeless to-morrows, or sinks back into mournful yesterdays." Was it any wonder, then, that American cultural life had ended in the Gilded Age's "pragmatic acquiescence," in a mere "apotheosis of actualities" that was "all dressed up, with no place to go"?\(^2\)

*The Golden Day* differed from Bourne's and Brooks's previous indictments of pragmatic culture in Mumford's treatment of antebellum transcendentalism as a wellspring of native critical thought for a new post-capitalist synthesis. If Emerson's doctrine of self-reliance too often resembled a watery appeal to moral uplift, his "virtue of getting beyond the institution, the habit, the ritual, and finding out what it means afresh in one's consciousness" impressed Mumford as a proper methodology for his own social criticism. So too did Whitman's poetic endeavor to "crystallize our most precious experience and in turn to modify, by that act of crystallization, the daily routine."

By the end of the 1920s, Mumford had laid the basis for two parallel but contradictory intellectual programs. Mumford eventually overcame the "progressive" assumptions of his early work in the course of writing his "Renewal of Life" series: *Technics and Civilization, The Culture of Cities, The Condition of Man*, and *The Conduct of Life*. In the process, he built on his rehabilitation of transcendentalism in *The Golden Day* by exploring early Christianity, Ebenezer Howard's and Geddes's regionalism, and English romantic radicalism as organic values that would create a new synthesis of cultural and practical life. Mumford's search for synthesis took a circuitous route, suggesting organic solutions to the industrial division of culture and production that often proved no better than the problem they were meant to address. Still, Mumford's willingness to formulate alternatives to the values of industrialism made his work far more valuable

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than the “post-Marxism” of such Bellamy-epigoni as Alfred Bingham, Stuart Chase, and George Soule, whose devotion to industrial progress and scientific planning only deepened the most regressive currents of nineteenth-century socialist thought.

Technics and Civilization illustrates all the ambiguities inherent in Mumford’s early project for organic synthesis. Reversing the technological determinism that guided most discussions of the “Machine Age” in the twenties, Mumford’s historical chapters describe how “men had become mechanical before they perfected complicated machines to express their new bent and interest.” Long before the invention of the most primitive factory, the ascetic discipline of the monastery, “the regimentation of time” by clocks, and the militarization of men in the armies of Europe’s absolute monarchies had instructed Westerners in the values and conduct necessary to industrial labor. Capitalist accumulation, with its emphasis on self-denial, saving, and quantification, intensified this way of life, adding to it the destructive disregard for nature and creative work that had previously been manifest only in mining. As a result, the subjective dimensions of human experience—particularly art and religion, which had been integral elements of medieval craftsmanship—withered amidst the rise of a cult of mechanical processes and mechanical men. “Mechanics became the new religion, and it gave the world a new Messiah: the machine.”

Borrowing his periodization from Geddes and his sociology from Veblen, Mumford traces the history of technology through its “eotechnic,” “paleotechnic,” and “neotechnic” phases. Like Geddes, Mumford admired the small-scale wind and water-powered “eotechnics” that had flourished in Northern Europe and the United States before the advent of “paleotechnic” industry. Mumford predicted that, if only technology were freed from the grasp of an atavistic capitalist class, then a “neotechnic” era of “basic communism” would become a reality, decentralizing industry by means of electricity and the automobile.

Such predictions contradicted the main implications of the book’s historical analysis, which showed the fallacy of any interpretation of technical development as either autonomous or neutral. To suggest that the same technology, invented for profit and to further military conquest, would itself spawn a neotechnic order free of those same social forces flew in the face of Mumford’s description of the symbiotic growth of a militaristic capitalism and industrial habits and technology. Repeating Veblen’s theory of the incompatibility of “leisure class” values and man’s efficient “instinct of workmanship,” Mumford argued that the “financial acquisitiveness which had originally speeded invention now furthers technical inertia.” “The machine is a communist,” Mumford declared, thereby repeating the naive technological determinism that fueled so much technocratic prophecy during the Depression and undermined the most promising aspects of his own historical investigation.
Mumford's enthusiasm for the twentieth-century neotechnic synthesis extended to the new systems of work discipline pioneered by Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo and to the reconciliation of art and technology promised by industrial designers, whose streamlined tools, utensils, and trains illustrate the latter half of the book. Mumford believed that Taylor's scientific management shared his interest in "the worker himself as an element of production," a concern marred only by Taylor's acceptance of the capitalist profit-motive—as if these two elements of Taylorism could be neatly severed in the neotechnic future. Similarly, Mayo's Hawthorne experiments foreshadowed "socialized industry, in which the worker himself is fully respected" and "rational organization, social control, physiological and psychological understanding" are the new standards of society.

If these predictions are startling to those who know only the Mumford of *The Myth of the Machine*, they are not attributable merely to a passing optimism about technology that gave way to a later pessimism. Mumford's neotechnic utopia, with its culture of "mathematical accuracy, physical economy, chemical purity, surgical cleanliness," pervaded all his writings in the thirties, as did his faith in economic planning by skilled engineers, architectural and artistic functionalism, and the extension of technical rationality to the organization of social relations. *The Culture of Cities* ended on a note similar to the neotechnic musings of *Technics and Civilization*, giving a qualified endorsement to International Style architecture as an "organic synthesis" of art and industrial production.

The ambiguities of Mumford's "organicism," and his continued debt to the pragmatic liberalism he had attacked in *The Golden Day*, help to explain his contradictory thesis that a technics shaped by war and capitalist calculation heralded a new, democratic era of decentralized industry and cities. Rejecting the Romantics' wholesale attack on industrialism, Mumford argued that any modern organic community would have to be built "within the innermost purlieus of technics itself." Mumford failed to notice, however, that the emerging organicism of advanced capitalism bridged the gap between culture and practical activity by reinforcing the industrial religion of mechanical life. Elton Mayo's specious "science of human relations" addressed the issue of the industrial separation of work and culture, but it redefined this crucial question as the "human complication of the mechanical and economic," concluding that managers had to extend their authority to the control of "human problems" as well as technical ones. While mass culture, advertising, and industrial design had begun to fill the aesthetic vacuum created by the industrial assault on skill and popular culture, aerodynamic toasters were hardly a solution to the regimentation of consciousness that Mumford had traced to the monastic order. Mumford's neotechnic program confused organicism with organization and the basic communism of the future with a more

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sophisticated system of managerial control that absorbed individuals in the new collectivism of advanced capitalism.

Mumford's revision of this early neotechnic utopianism came in response to the threat of European fascism, the indifference of most American liberals and leftists to that threat, and the Allies' adoption of genocidal military tactics to defeat fascism, all of which haunted his work in the 1940s and 1950s. Mumford's polemical and philosophical writings from this period—Faith for Living, The Condition of Man, Values for Survival, The Conduct of Life, In the Name of Sanity, and The Transformations of Man—are undoubtedly his least popular books, probably because they deal so explicitly (and sympathetically) with religious and ethical questions that have become anathema to liberals and academics. Though all these books suffer from what Rosenfeld termed Mumford's "stultifying moralism," they represent Mumford's initial revaluation of the role of cultural traditions and technics in social organization, which led him from neotechnic prophecy to the profound radicalism of The Myth of the Machine.

In "The Corruption of Liberalism" and other writings during the early forties, Mumford developed the broad critique of liberal-progressive culture that would occupy him for the rest of his career, drawing in part on the analysis of the "pragmatic acquiescence" in The Golden Day for his attack on liberal isolationism. Mumford bitterly criticized those "pragmatic liberals" who refused to admit that "nations which use the electric motor and the radio" could lapse into mass barbarism under fascism. "Vastly preoccupied with the machinery of life," modern liberalism had made "power over other men, power over nature" the primary goals of civilization. Thus, when faced with Hitler's destruction of democratic government in Germany, liberals remained entranced by the Nazis' "superiority in material organization." The pragmatic liberal's fetish of rational administration, abstract technique, and efficient order had eroded the classical liberal values of individual freedom and self-government, leaving only a "color blindness in moral values" incapable of distinguishing between dictatorship and democracy.

Like Vico, Mumford believed that the "barbarism of civilization" had proved far worse than that of so-called primitive peoples. At least such primitive barbarism "displayed a generous savagery," as Vico put it, "against which one could defend oneself or take flight or be on one's guard; but the former, with a base savagery, under soft words and embraces, plots against the life and fortune of friends and intimates." Capitalism no longer acted as a reactionary drag on technical development, Mumford realized by the forties. Instead, it spoke the
of mechanical drudgery and pointless leisure. Moreover, the notion of combining man's power over nature in automated technology with the abandonment of any checks on his own inner nature resembled nothing more than the nuclear powers' irrational project of world suicide by rockets and computers. Mumford was too familiar with Melville's fiction to follow the course chosen by Ahab and Pierre in their self-destructive flaunting of limits and restraints.

Mumford not only refuted the subjectivist clichés current within the youth culture, he also demolished the left's long-held hope of destroying the capitalist megamachine by adopting its methods of action. Today, the loudest calls for new ideas on the left end up with predictable proposals for "progressive" PACs, direct mail lists, and slick media campaigns as the tools of political mobilization in the technological age. Such proposals show how few new ideas their advocates really have; by Mumford's criteria, they only "support the very system they attack" by compounding the mechanization of politics and social relations.

By 1970, Mumford had concluded that only a new radicalism of localism and community authority could counter the centralized power of the industrial megamachine. Like Simone Weil, Mumford turned his back on the idea of uprootedness as a source of radicalization, writing:

The changes that have so far been effective, and that give promise of further success, are those that have been initiated by animated individual minds, small groups, and local communities nibbling at the edges of the power structure by breaking routines and defying regulations. Such an attack seeks, not to capture the citadel of power, but to withdraw from it and quietly paralyze it. Once such initiatives become widespread, as they at last show signs of becoming, it will restore power and confident authority to its proper source: the human personality and the small face-to-face community.

Those truly interested in new ideas on the left will take Mumford's remarks as the starting-point for a democratic reconstruction of our politics.

Mumford's critics over the years have constantly accused him of wanting to turn back the clock to an earlier age—a comment that actually confirms Mumford's claim that the clock is the central innovation of industrial civilization. In a liberal culture in which everything is possible, turning back the hands of a clock remains the final taboo. Yet the progressive time-keepers of the right and left have come up with no comparable theory of the industrial organization of society; perhaps they have been too busy winding their watches. By contrast, Mumford has summoned up the past as a standard by which to demystify the present and its claims to progress, thereby allowing him to imagine a democratic alternative to contemporary life. What Mumford wrote of Morris should be said
of Mumford himself, that he "did more than any other single worker to repair the damage to our whole technical tradition inflicted by those who, in the pride and insolence born of their control of power-driven automata, sought to destroy every rival art, particularly any art that was still supported by ancient traditions and held a warmer human appeal." Mumford's work is our own "Golden Day," a fund of "rival arts" and values worthy of cultivation and renewal.


The unpublished essay by Mumford from 1915 on the crisis of the socialist left is quoted with permission from the Lewis Mumford Collection, Van Pelt Library (University of Pennsylvania).
To the editors:

The latest fad in the marketplace of ideas is the "culturally conservative radical," as Jackson Lears styles himself in his review of Marshall Berman's book on modernism, All That Is Solid Melts Into Air. Lears claims that "ordinary folk have been the most tenaciously traditional element" in society and that this is a great blessing to radicals because "looking backward" enables "ordinary folk" to "look forward to a more just society." Lears argues that resistance to capitalist modernization and consumer culture only occurs because of attachment to the traditional aspects of household, family, community, craft, and religious or ethnic ties. Thus, he justifies cultural conservatism as a "reservoir" from which "political egalitarianism" can draw strength. Lears admonishes us: "Instead of fretting about apple pie authoritarianism would-be democrats might address the concerns of those who . . . stand in the way of modernization." One can only be a true democrat if one is a cultural conservative, allied with the traditions to which ordinary people "tenaciously" adhere. In contrast, Berman's commitment to "modernism" makes him undemocratic because it disregards the wishes of ordinary folk, and makes him the unwitting accomplice of the corporate state because modernism undermines the traditions that enable people to fight back.

Lears presents a comicbook rendition of the relation between culture and politics in the Reagan era. At stake in this passion play of allegorical creatures, however, is the shape and direction of radical politics after both the New Left and New Right. These stakes can be demonstrated by examining briefly Lears's complaints about Berman and modernism.

First, Lears condemns Berman, "progressives," and "modernism" for having "no interest in the past except as a foil for the exciting present and future." He means they avoid the destruction caused by "progress" and miss the political opportunities presented by tradition. But Lears himself engages in avoidance and misses opportunities. For example, he refers to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to prove that the tradition of religion and community made the civil rights movement possible, but then says nothing about the fact that the SCLC failed because those traditions did not exist in the Northern ghettos and that another kind of politics had to be created. What do cultural conservatives do when nothing is left to conserve or draw on? Earlier political movements among blacks, women, and workers were not only promoted by, but were—at best—limited and flawed by the traditions of church, domesticity, and craft. At worst, unchallenged "traditions" have become the source of political reaction or assimilation: racism turns populism into an elite tool, craft traditions justify the
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disenfranchisement of other workers, ethnic loyalties enabled urban machines to turn immigrants away from political protest.

Finally, Lears ignores the fact that the traditions that he celebrates in such vaporous terms were themselves inherently problematic. Must we be reminded in this time of revivalism that modernism arose as an attempt to get past the unconscious nihilism and resentment of religion and other traditional values and institutions? Must we be reminded that traditions were, are, and will be undermined from below by those they victimize and trap? Women, minorities, unskilled workers, and youth were oppressed by and therefore opposed to the traditions of household patriarchy and gender division, community cohesion along ethnic lines, craft solidarity, and puritanical ethics. Traditions benefit some at the expense of others: egalitarianism has only arisen because men and women did not conserve, but struggled against the traditions that buttressed established power.

This is to say, secondly, that Lears is not speaking for vast numbers of "ordinary people." By extension, he radically misconstrues their experience of modernization by insisting that they are simply innocent and traditionalist victims of a coercive process. Berman and others have shown the ways and senses in which immigrants and their children have participated in, are complicit in, their own modernization and in the destruction and transformation it entails. The American experience is perceived by others and described by our finest authors as a quintessentially "modernist" project of opposing traditions in order to create a new community based on personal autonomy, social equality, and open-ended experimentalism. People without power do suffer and resist capitalism, not in the name of tradition, however, but because "we want to make something better of ourselves and for our children," that is, in the name of willful change. Berman locates the ambivalence of restlessness and loss that is at the heart of America. He does face the destructiveness of capitalism and modernism, but does not therefore insist that we are a nation of traditions warranting a Burkean conservatism. Rather, he would have us look into our loss to find self-recognition and examine our desolation to disclose the opportunities it conceals.

Here we reach the third issue of contention, modernism. Lears treats modernism as a lifestyle of "growth," self-development, and therapy, which hypertrophies the self to the exclusion of all else so that it easily fits into consumer culture and is incapable of political action. For Lears, modernists commit the sin of pride when they attack tradition in the name of what he calls the "illusory and destructive" fantasy of autonomy. This sin of the spirit becomes the merely selfish revolt of the flesh which makes political life impossible by overwhelming the traditional restraints on autonomy and desire. If one wants politics one must choose tradition because only tradition provides the renunciations that, in Lears's mind, make possible the "larger loyalties" of politics. He would have us believe that if one rejects tradition, then one rejects politics and can only affirm merely
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hedonistic desire. Lears would force us to choose between modernism, autonomy, and the gratification of desire, and tradition, politics (social justice), and renunciation.

Lears's need to justify his own asceticism leads him to miss Berman's argument that modernism at its best is about rejecting such choices. Autonomy is not equivalent to hedonism, politics need not be based on renunciation, and tradition is not the only basis of political action. Berman shows that the modernist rejection of traditional institutions, values, and art forms is both the necessity of the victim and the choice of would-be creators; that "modernist" autonomy is both a choice to (learn to) speak in one's own voice (personally, politically, and artistically), and a choice to join with other rebels and outcasts. Modernism is about the transformation of the given self and its understanding of gratification and loyalty.

In *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx describes what he calls "farce," which occurs when men anxiously conjure up spirits from the past in order to avoid facing the present. Reagan and the New Right hoped to capture "ordinary people" by resurrecting dying traditions and moribund myths. Lears, ostensibly the sober and disenchanted adult who is rectifying progressives' adolescent illusions, claims that by capturing the ghosts of tradition he can defeat the right and instead promote "radical" politics (whatever he means by that). But this fantastical claim is "illusory and destructive." Lears is captured by these ghosts: his alleged disenchantment about the present is really a condition of being possessed by the past. Thus possessed, he urges the left to betray its deepest values, commitments, and constituencies.

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The next issue of *democracy* will consider left political alternatives, with contributions from Robert B. Reich, Tony Mazzioci, and Staughton Lynd on reindustrialization strategies, Jerry J. Berman on mainstream politics, James Livingston on the presidency, and Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward on American democratic socialism.

Also in the summer issue: Part Two of David F. Noble's article, "Present Tense Technology"; David P. Levine on economists and public policy; Ann Lane on Hannah Arendt; William G. Rosenberg on Soviet dissidents; and Prudence Crowther on Jeffrey Hart's paean to the fifties.

Future issues will feature Richard Stith on the abortion rights controversy; Morton Halperin on the antinuclear movement; Todd Gitlin on C. Wright Mills; Joyce Appleby on Thomas Jefferson; and Maximilien Rubel on Marx and democracy.

The editors of *democracy* welcome proposals for articles. Upcoming themes will include progress and progressivism, and education.