THE PERIODICAL OBSERVER

Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad

A Summons to National Greatness?

A Survey of Recent Articles

President Bill Clinton has put commerce at the center of U.S. foreign policy, hoping, as Douglas Brinkley, a professor of history at the University of New Orleans, points out in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1997), to be remembered as "the free trade president and the leading architect of a new world economic order." Critics such as Lawrence F. Kaplan, a Fellow at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, find this return of the "dollar diplomacy" of the 1920s deeply disquieting. "The defects of commercial diplomacy—its lack of strategic underpinnings, its tenuous moral legitimacy, its disjunction from anything resembling a truly national interest—have been apparent for decades," he writes in *Commentary* (Feb. 1998).

But what sort of foreign policy do the critics want? In a much-noted op-ed essay in the *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 15, 1997), William Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard*, and David Brooks, a senior editor—harkening back to the nationalism of Theodore Roosevelt and Alexander Hamilton—urge a conservatism of "national greatness" as a tonic for both domestic and foreign affairs. At home, this would mean using federal power "to preserve and enhance our national patrimony—the parks, buildings, and monuments that are the physical manifestations of our common heritage." It would also mean, as they explain in an Ethics and Public Policy Center *Unum Conversation* (1997, No. 5), using government in "a limited but effective way" to address crime and other social problems, as Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has done in New York City. Abroad, say Kristol and Brooks, national greatness conservatism means following "a neo-Reaganite foreign policy of national strength and moral assertiveness." Kristol and Robert Kagan, a contributing editor of the *Weekly Standard*, spelled this out in more detail in *Foreign Affairs* (July–Aug. 1996). America's international role, they said, should be one of "benevolent global hegemony. Having defeated the 'evil empire,' the United States enjoys strategic and ideological predominance. The first objective of U.S. foreign policy should be to preserve and enhance that predominance by strengthening America's security, supporting its friends, advancing its interests, and standing up for its principles around the world." That would require, among other things, a $60–$80 billion increase in defense spending.

Historian Walter A. McDougall, editor of *Orbis* (Winter 1998), is appalled by this proposed worldwide crusade. "Benevolent hegemony" is an oxymoron, he says. "Such a self-conscious, self-righteous bid for global hegemony is bound to drive foreign rivals into open hostility to the U.S. and make our allies resentful and nervous." Kristol and his colleagues, McDougall says, ignore the historical record: "U.S. diplomacy has been most successful when it weighs in *against* would-be hegemons such as Germany and the Soviet Union [in order], as John F. Kennedy said, 'to make the world safe for *diversity*.' But Kristol and Kagan would have us arrogate to ourselves a hegemony for the purpose of making the world over in our image." Promoting democracy to thwart the designs of an aggressive dictatorship is very different, McDougall points out, from "turning some authoritarian country *into* an enemy because it is laggard in embracing American values." While agreeing that the United States "must play a leading role in the world, affirm its values without apology, and recommend them to all mankind," he objects to "premature, imprudent crusades."

Moreover, argues Robert D. Kaplan, the author of *The Ends of the Earth* (1996), democracy is not necessarily a good thing for a society. "Hitler and Mussolini each came to power through democracy," he observes in the *Atlantic Monthly* (Dec. 1997). "Democracies do not always make societies more civil—but they do always mercilessly expose the health of the societies in which they operate." In 1994, some 22,000 American soldiers were dispatched to Haiti with the avowed purpose of "restoring democracy." But, notes Kaplan, only five percent of eligible Haitian voters participated in the election in April 1997, "chronic instability continues, and famine threatens." The lesson, he says, is "that democracy emerges successfully only as a capstone to other social and economic achievements," including the development of a middle class and stable civil institutions.

"Without doubt, people around the world thirst for freedom and authentic self-government," observes Andrew J. Bacevich, executive director of the Nitze School's Foreign Policy Institute, writing in *First Things* (Mar. 1998). "Equally without doubt, the obstacles to satisfying that thirst loom large. When it comes to nurturing the spread of democratic institutions, none of the three areas in which the United States today is especially dominant—military might, mastery of the so-called information revolution, and the 'soft power' of pop culture and lifestyle—are likely to be decisive. In the end, values will count most."

And there is the rub, Bacevich adds. "Americans are no longer quite sure what they ought to believe or what their nation stands for. As the sludge of multiculturalism seeps from the academy into everyday life, national identity becomes a cause for remorse or self-flagellation rather than a source of inspiration, collective self-confidence lapses, and moral certitude gives way to doubt and bewilderment." Conservatives, he says, "would do well to defer any crusades abroad until they have turned the tide in the culture war at home."

The "epic" of America, as understood by Americans, has shifted focus in recent decades, observes Nathan Glazer, a professor of education and sociology emeritus at Harvard University and coeditor of the *Public Interest* (Winter 1998). The story once emphasized "the newness, the vastness, the openness of America—the freedom thereby granted Americans." The newer narrative, whether told from an optimistic or a pessimistic point of view, stresses racial and ethnic diversity. Indeed, "the one grand epic has been succeeded" by many smaller stories—and Americans wonder if their nation is being shattered into a multitude of fragments, Glazer says. "We face no great tyranny, and our will in facing even small tyrannies is not strong. We are now doubtful about our capacity to improve the lives of other people.... Of course, we can live without an American epic. But that does diminish us."

Virginia I. Postrel, editor of *Reason*, and James K. Glassman, a Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 25, 1997), will have none of this "gloom and doom" about cultural disarray or decadence. They see the cry for "national greatness" as "a kind of wistful nationalism in search of a big project" in the wake of the Cold War. Likening it to William James's famous call for a "moral equivalent of war," Postrel and Glassman contend that "it's one thing to pursue genuine national interests through foreign policy, quite another to cook up grand schemes just to give government something to do and citizens something to rally around." National greatness may be something like happiness—most often found when not pursued for its own sake.

What idea should inform U.S. foreign policy? Neither "national greatness" nor "neoliberalism," argues Bacevich, but realism, in the tradition of Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Lippmann, and Hans Morganthau. "For the realist," says Bacevich, "the obligation of a great power is not to embark upon crusades but to pursue its interests. If defined with sufficient breadth and imagination, those interests will likewise respond to the minimal requirements of others, permitting the creation of an equilibrium that, however precarious, may approximate peace. Indeed, only then can the expenditure of power be said to satisfy the truest interests of the United States itself."

Who Stunted the Welfare State?

"Bargaining for Social Rights: Unions and the Reemergence of Welfare Capitalism, 1945–1952" by Michael K. Brown, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter 1997–98), Academy of Political Science, 475 Riverside Dr., Ste. 1274, New York, N.Y. 10115–1274.

America's distinctive system of job-related social benefits has more than once tied reformers in knots—most recently as they struggled to help the 31 million working-age Americans lacking health insurance. Strangely, argues Brown, a political scientist at the University of California, Santa Cruz, it was labor unions and liberals favoring comprehensive government welfare who brought the private job-based system into being.

After World War II, labor unions, actively aided by President Harry Truman and liberal Democrats, pushed for the creation of a universal, cradle-to-grave public welfare state. Yet, Brown points out, the labor movement also proceeded to undermine this campaign by pushing hard for health insurance, pensions, and paid vacations in negotiations with private employers. Why did they do this? Some historians say it was because conservative opposition to an expanded welfare state was too strong, especially after the Republicans gained control of Congress in the 1946 elections. Brown, however, contends that the unions mainly feared for their own survival in the face of a strong antiunion drive by business.

"Organized labor emerged from the war as a formidable social force in American society," he notes. With their ranks increased by six million since 1939, unionized workers in 1945 made up 30 percent of the nonfarm labor force. Business, however, had not yet accepted this new reality. Though some top executives urged that corporations provide social benefits to employees, most were either openly antiunion or dedicated to confining collective bargaining to wages, hours, and conditions of employment, Brown says. As a result, "the very terms of collective bargaining," not just the size of paychecks, were often at issue in labor negotiations and strikes between 1945 and 1950.

The fiery John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers led the way for labor, with a successful demand in 1945–46 for a company-funded union health and welfare fund, and company pensions for miners. Confronted with the prospect of mechanization and job reductions, the union needed such benefits to hold its members. In 1947, both Philip Murray's United Steel Workers and Walter Reuther's United Auto Workers then put fringe benefits on the bargaining table.

In 1947, the Republicans' Taft-Hartley Act banned the closed shop, posing a powerful threat to organized labor. No longer could union membership be made a condition of employment. But unions could cement the loyalty of the rank and file with a health and welfare fund, whose benefits "were typically tied to the firm and hence the union." Such fringe benefits "provided the virtual equivalent of a closed shop," Brown notes.

At congressional hearings in 1948, Brown says, businessmen such as Charles Wilson of General Motors "lobbied furiously" to have collective bargaining over health and welfare funds outlawed. But before Republicans could oblige, the National Labor Relations Board ruled in the 1948 *Inland Steel* case that private pensions were equivalent to wages and thus within the scope of collective bargaining. In 1949, when a Truman-appointed fact-finding board charged with settling a crippling national steel strike rejected the union's wage demands, but accepted its pension and health insurance demands, the last corporate resistance shattered. But labor's victory came at a price: loss of union locals' enthusiasm for national reform.

Country Club Democrats

"Party Hoppers" by Paul Starobin, in *National Journal* (Feb. 7, 1998), 1501 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Sighting "limousine liberals" in places such as Manhattan and Los Angeles has long been easy, but now, it seems, their numbers have multiplied in wealthy enclaves throughout the land. A *National Journal*-commissioned analysis shows that over the last five presidential elections, increasing numbers of voters in 100 of America's richest communities have been leaving their "natural" Republican home behind and voting Democratic.

From 25 percent of the vote in these mostly suburban communities in 1980, writes Starobin, a staff correspondent for *National Journal*, the Democratic share steadily climbed, reaching 41 percent in 1996. Nationwide, in contrast, the Democratic vote over the same period went up by only eight points (to 49 percent). The new Democratic rich are a diverse lot, he says, taking in not only aging yuppies who work in "creative" fields such as advertising but also corporate executives, wealthy "pro-choicers," affluent Asian Americans, and others.

"The towns where Democrats have improved their performance range from Los Altos Hills in northern California, a new-money haven for the tycoons of Silicon Valley, to Fox Chapel on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, an old-money enclave for the titans of the steel industry and their progeny," Starobin writes. Many of these towns are filled with doctors, lawyers, and other professionals.

The voting analysis was done by the National Committee for an Effective Congress, a 50-year-old Democratic consulting firm founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and other liberals. The 100 communities were randomly chosen from a list of the 261 in the 1990 census that had a per capita income above $30,000 (which is more than twice the national average).

In some towns, such as Amberly, Ohio, an exclusive suburb of Cincinnati, Starobin notes, "recent Democratic inroads undoubtedly reflect the return to the party's fold of Jews who in 1980 deserted Jimmy Carter for Ronald Reagan. . . . But Democrats also made strides in towns long known as preserves of polo-shirt Protestantism—such as Darien and New Canaan in southern Connecticut." In Darien, which has a large Episcopalian population, the Democratic vote increased from 18 percent in 1980 to 31 percent in 1996.

"These days, the most reliable GOP voter is a Southern white male" whose drink of choice is beer, not Bordeaux, Starobin points out. Indeed, the party's cultural shift in its "center of gravity . . . from the country club to the stock-car track" has driven some of the rich away. Many wealthy Protestants, especially in the North, "just don't identify with the new, lower-middle-class, culturally conservative Republicans and the kind of leadership that they want to provide," observes James Davison Hunter, a professor of sociology and religious studies at the University of Virginia. The same may also increasingly be true for wealthy Catholics, adds Starobin. In Wilton, Connecticut, with a large Catholic population, the Democratic presidential vote went from only 22 percent in 1980 to 39 percent 16 years later.

Not all Democrats are heartened by their party's inroads among the wealthy. Jeff Faux, president of the liberal Economic Policy Institute in Washington, views it as a reflection of Democrats' neglect of their "natural base": the working class.

Maybe so. But Starobin concludes that the "historic bond" between the GOP and America's upper crust has been severed. "The rich," he says, "are up for grabs."

A Man's Game?

"Knowing and Caring about Politics: Gender and Political Engagement" by Sidney Verba, Nancy Burns, and Kay Lehman Schlozman, in *The Journal of Politics* (Nov. 1997), Journals Dept., Univ. of Texas Press, 2100 Comal, Austin, Texas 78722.

Is national politics more or less a "guy thing"? Could be. Political scientists Verba, Burns, and Schlozman, of Harvard University, the University of Michigan, and Boston College, respectively, report—with some obvious discomfort—that their research shows that women tend to be less interested than men in national politics, and to know less about it.

In personal interviews conducted in 1990 with 2,517 people, 38 percent of the men, but only 29 percent of the women, said they were "very interested" in national politics. Some 36 percent of the males said they enjoyed political discussion, but only 26 percent of the women did. Of the 59 percent of men and the 55 percent of women who read a daily newspaper, 40 percent of the men, but only 24 percent of the women, said they paid "a great deal of attention" to national politics.

Not surprisingly, given that disparity in interest, the men were better informed about politics—though they hardly qualified as political savants. Out of 10 political questions asked, they got an average of only 5.1 correct, but the women got only 4.2. More than two-thirds of the men could name one of their U.S. senators, while only slightly more than half of the women could. Asked whether the federal government spends more on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration or on Social Security, two in five men knew the correct answer (Social Security), but fewer than one in five women did. In all, men did better on nine of the 10 questions. The lone exception: naming the head of the local school system, which 30 percent of the women could do, compared with 27 percent of the men.

When candidates like these U.S. senators are on the ballot, does women's interest in politics grow? The authors' data say: maybe.

Indeed, when it came to *local* politics, the sexes seemed about equally engrossed: 22 percent of the men and 21 percent of the women were "very interested." Of those who read a daily newspaper, 36 percent of each sex reported paying "a great deal of attention" to local politics.

Does it matter that women take less of an interest than men in national politics? The authors say that aside from voting, it makes women slightly less inclined than men to work in political campaigns or get actively involved in politics in other ways—and that, they fear, may mean that public officials pay less heed to "their concerns, preferences, and needs."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Too Proud to Listen

"An Inner Circle of One: Woodrow Wilson and His Advisers" by Robert W. Tucker, in *The National Interest* (Spring 1998), 1112 16th St. N.W., Ste. 540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

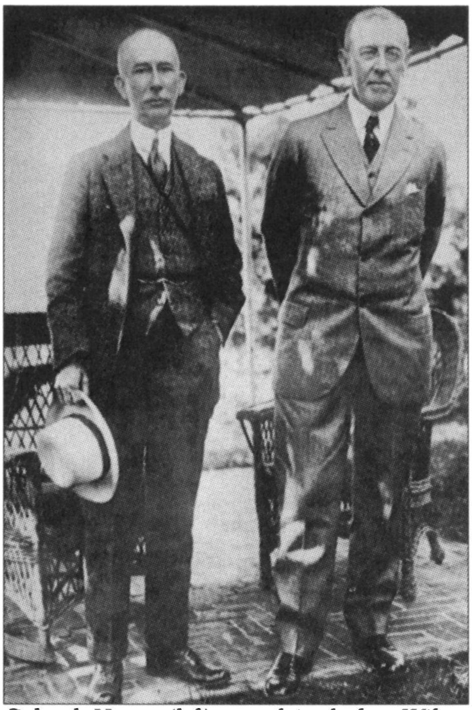
The presidency's lonely burden of decision has been portrayed so often that it's almost a cliché. "The buck stops here," as Harry Truman said. But never was a president more isolated than Woodrow Wilson was during the fateful years of U.S. neutrality in World War I, writes Tucker, a professor of political science emeritus at Johns Hopkins University.

"Wilson's neutrality policy enjoyed widespread support," Tucker writes, "because his own waverings and uncertainties reflected those of the American people." But had he made greater use of his advisers to clarify his own thinking, he might have led the country sooner to decisive action, whether to stay out of the war or to intervene. "Wilson's unwillingness to seek advice, his disinclination to hear what was unwelcome to him, and, even more, his penchant for taking an immediate dislike of those who told him what he did not wish to hear, were traits recognized by all who served him," Tucker observes. He did not allow much "give and take" over policy.

Wilson's inner circle of foreign policy advisers was small, seldom more than three or four people. They included Colonel Edward House, who held no official position, William Jennings Bryan, the secretary of state, and Robert Lansing, the counselor to the State Department.

Wilson considered Bryan, the great populist orator and former presidential candidate, whom he had appointed for political reasons, an unsatisfactory secretary of state. Tucker agrees that Bryan was inept, but points out that he advocated positions—U.S. mediation of the conflict, and the idea of a peace without victory—that Wilson himself would later take. Moreover, Bryan, alone among Wilson's advisers, "saw almost from the start" that the administration's continued insistence on neutral rights would likely lead to war with Germany.

Like the pacifist Bryan, Wilson "wanted above all else to remain out of the war," Tucker says. Had he listened to his secretary of state, he probably "would have been far more hesitant to take positions from which retreat would later prove so difficult." But in February 1915, when Germany declared a war zone in the waters around Britain and Ireland, Wilson demanded that Germany respect the rights of neutrals. In May, after a German submarine sank the British ocean liner *Lusitania*, killing 128 Americans, the United States demanded that Germany abandon its U-boat attacks. Bryan resigned on principle, believing that Wilson's course would lead to war. (Wilson privately denounced Bryan's position on neutrality as "moral blindness.")



Colonel House (left) complained that Wilson would not devote "sufficient time" to foreign affairs.

By late spring of 1915, Lansing, now the secretary of state, had privately concluded that the United States would have to enter the war if Germany gained the upper hand. By the summer, House had concluded that U.S. involvement was all but inevitable, and fumed at Wilson's wavering policy and failure to improve military readiness. "If we were fully prepared, I am sure Germany would not continue to provoke us," House confided to his diary.

But "never once did Lansing reveal his true position to the President. . . . House was only slightly more direct," Tucker writes. Dissimulation remained necessary even after Germany's January 1917 declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare. "Only Wilson's decision for war in March," the author notes, "would bring that necessity to an end."

The Sex Bomb

"The Sexual Behavior of American GIs during the Early Years of the Occupation of Germany" by John Willoughby, in *The Journal of Military History* (Jan. 1998), Society for Military History, George C. Marshall Library, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Va. 24450–1600.

Now that the Soviet Union is a thing of the past, sex often seems to be the U.S. military's chief foe. But it's not the first time top commanders have had to face this enemy. During the first few years of the occupation of Germany after V-E Day, writes Willoughby, an economist at American University, "the apparently unrestrained sexual activity of the American GI" spawned anti-Americanism and threatened U.S. efforts to build a new democratic German nation.

At first, the high command tried to prohibit all fraternization between Americans and Germans. But that proved impractical. On June 8, 1945, General Dwight Eisenhower declared that the ban did not apply to German children. Before long, the GIs had a new greeting for their girlfriends: "Good day, child." The army gave up and permitted relatively unregulated fraternization. In October the Allied Control Council, representing the United States and the three other occupying powers, lifted all but a few restrictions on soldiers' relations with Germans.

Fresh from foxholes and front-line combat, thousands of miles from home (and exercising less self-control than their British counterparts), the American GIs found willing Fräulein without difficulty. "The women of Berlin are hungry, cold, and lonesome," a writer named Walter Slatoff reported in the *Nation* in May 1946. "The GIs have cigarettes, which will buy food and coal. The GIs have food—chocolate, doughnuts (taken in large quantities from the Red Cross Clubs). . . . And the GIs provide a kind of security and meaning in an otherwise meaningless city." But these relationships bred resentment among the Germans, exacerbated by the sometimes crude, drunken, or criminal acts of the occupiers.

The generals took steps to bring their troops under control. They let it be known that crude public behavior would not be tolerated. On the sex front, the army in 1946 let soldiers bring their wives to Germany to live as dependents. Also, the relatively few GIs in serious relationships with German women were allowed to marry. The strong dose of domestic bliss helped to settle things down. Still, many young, unmarried soldiers remained, with no shortage of impoverished Fräulein willing to accommodate them. But the German economy noticeably improved in 1948, and the next year, the relatively independent Federal Republic of Germany emerged. The sex threat to German democracy was over.

A High-Tech Boomerang

"The 'Velvet' Revolution in Military Affairs" by John Arquilla, in *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1997–98), World Policy Institute, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Ave., Ste. 413, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Among defense specialists there is much talk of an information age "revolution in military affairs," and many of them urge the United States to rush to accelerate it. Arquilla, a professor of defense analysis at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, argues that a little caution is in order.

The revolution is marrying long-range precision weapons to advanced targeting and information management technology. Detailed information from satellites, ground sensors, and other devices will guide "smart" weapons such as ballistic missiles that drop dozens of guided submunitions, or "bomblets," on the soldiers and tanks below. Sounds easy, but Arquilla warns that the new reality might well prove *less* advantageous to the United States.

Other governments, as well as terrorists, he points out, are likely to be able to replicate whatever innovations the United States devises. Many of the new advanced-information technologies can be purchased off the shelf. If each side has equal information about the other, the edge goes to "the side that can stay put and hide," Arquilla says, rather than the one that "must try to seize territory or insert forces upon some distant shore." Adversaries who can't match U.S. war-fighting technologies can simply avoid conventional warfare and instead opt for guerrilla fighting or tactical nuclear weapons.

The U.S. military today is in much the same position as the British Royal Navy was during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Arquilla contends. "It was clear that naval affairs were being revolutionized by the shift from sail to steam, from shot to shell, and from wood to steel. Yet the faster Britain moved ahead in naval technology, the faster its maritime mastery was eroded." The new fleets of the industrial age required large, complex logistical support facilities, which hindered far-flung operations. Regional powers, such as Japan, were correspondingly strengthened. But by carefully timing "the introduction of innovations," Arquilla says, the British were able to extend the useful life of their existing ships and weapons, and thus slow the inexorable decline of British sea power.

The United States today, with no obvious challengers, and with unmatched military power, should not be "so hell-bent on the immediate pursuit of revolutionary change," Arquilla concludes. While technological advances seem inevitable, the British example shows that "there is often benefit in timing their introduction strategically."

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

Regulation, More or Less?

A Survey of Recent Articles

It was a landmark event of sorts last year when specialists from think tanks on three distinct points on the ideological spectrum found themselves in agreement on the urgent need for regulatory reform, and issued a joint pamphlet making their case.

"The problem is not simply that current expenditures mandated by regulation are large—on the order of $200 billion annually for environmental, health, and safety rules alone," said the specialists from the Brookings Institution, Resources for the Future, and the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), in excerpts published by *American Enterprise* (Nov.–Dec. 1997). It is, rather, that much of that spending is ineffective. "More intelligent policies could achieve the same social goals at much less cost, or more ambitious goals at the same cost." For instance, a gas tax might have been a much more efficient way to reduce fuel consumption than imposing fuel-economy standards on Detroit.

Robert E. Litan, director of economic studies at Brookings, Robert W. Hahn, a resident scholar at AEI, and their colleagues said they were not for or against regulation per se, but believe that specific regulations should be judged by their individual costs and benefits. They also complained that Congress frequently does not let regulatory agencies consider costs when promulgating new rules. It also frequently "specifies the technical means for achieving regulatory goals instead of letting consumers and firms decide" how best to meet them efficiently.

In a special issue of *Brookings Review* (Winter 1998) on regulatory reform, guest editor Pietro S. Nivola notes that estimated regulatory costs declined in constant dollars between 1977 and 1988, "as the economy realized tens of billions in savings from deregulation of the transportation and energy industries and from the Reagan administration's concerted efforts to curb costly new regulations." Since then, however, costs have been on the rise. "A profusion of new rules and legal liabilities increasingly bore down on business decisions about products, payrolls, and personnel practices," writes Nivola, a Senior Fellow in the Brookings Governmental Studies Program. "By the mid-1990s these costs were approaching $700 billion annually—a sum greater than the entire national output of Canada."

Much of this regulatory activity, Nivola says, is political "pork" in a new guise, an "off-budget spoils system" devised by Washington politicians to serve favored interests in an era of fiscal constraints. "For instance," he writes, "rules that have encouraged the use of ethanol (a fuel made from corn) are a kind of pork for corn farmers." At costs of up to "billions of dollars per cancer prevented," the Superfund toxic waste cleanup program has produced one clear winner: lawyers.

In their joint statement, Hahn, Litan, and their colleagues urged, among other things, that Congress give back to the states responsibility for overseeing local matters such as waste disposal and safe drinking water. But wouldn't the states "race to the bottom" as they competed to attract businesses? Mary Graham, a Fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, says in *Brookings Review* that "overwhelming" evidence shows that business decisions on location or expansion are seldom influenced by state environmental programs. Some states, she points out, "lead in economic growth *and* environmental protection," while other, often relatively poor states "lag behind in both." Since the 1970s, state politics and public attitudes have become much more sensitive to ecological concerns. The federal government, she suggests, should set clear national goals, give states flexibility in meeting them, and concentrate its oversight "wherever states are weakest."

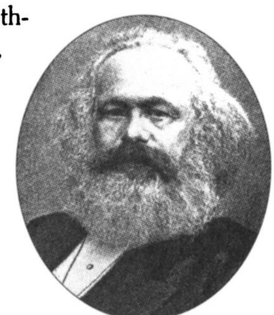
The nation's rapidly changing financial markets are also ripe for a "more flexible approach," argues another *Brookings Review* contributor, Steven M. H. Wallman, a Senior Fellow at the think tank and a former commissioner at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Regulation needs to become "more 'goal-oriented,' with regulators articulating broad goals and allowing market participants to determine how best to satisfy them." To general satisfaction, the SEC, for example, has done just that in allowing firms to make obligatory communications with investors electronically. But more far-reaching reform is needed, Wallman says. Traditionally, financial institutions have been regulated by agencies tailored to their particular kinds of business: the SEC oversees securities firms, banking regulators deal with banks. But these institutions are diversifying, and banks, for example, are taking on some functions of brokerage houses, and vice versa. Eventually, Wallman believes, the government will need to reinvent its regulatory institutions.

Not all the *Brookings Review* scholars champion drastic regulation overhauls. Thomas E. Mann, director of the

Was Marx Right?

One hundred and fifty years after *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), it is obvious that Marx and Engels got a lot wrong. But they also got some important things right, says Shlomo Avineri, a political scientist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, writing in *Dissent* (Winter 1998).

While they were among the first to appreciate capitalism's immanent radicalism, they were obviously wrong when they asserted that as capitalism developed, its social tensions would grow more extreme and its classes more polarized. Almost the precise opposite came to pass. . . .



Still, although polarization did not, as a rule, take place within *advanced industrial societies as Marx and Engels predicted, something quite like it did occur on the global level: the widening gap between industrialized and less-industrialized lands is a consequence of the very integration of the latter into the globalized economy. Third world populations have become integral parts of a world market, as both (low-paid) producers and consumers. Instead of an internal polarization between capitalists and proletarians there is an external one between "capitalist" and "proletarian" nations.*

So polarization has been exported from and universalized by the industrialized nations. If Marx and Engels's analyses are mostly invalid for the advanced nations today, they have been vindicated by the facts of globalization—the sweatshops of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with their child labor, their horrendously unsanitary working and living conditions, and their lack of minimum-wage laws and basic social welfare networks. Here, then, are the successors of the sweatshops of London's East End or New York's Lower East Side.

Brookings governmental studies program, comes out against a congressional proposal to deregulate campaign finance while mandating disclosure of contributions to candidates for federal office. The proposal, he says, "is less a solution to the clear shortcomings of the existing regulatory model than a fanciful exercise in wishing those problems out of existence." He favors "muddling through the complexity of the present system."

And there still are some problems that cry out for *more* government regulation, contends Nurith C. Aizenman, formerly an editor at the *Washington Monthly* (Oct. 1997) and now with the *New Republic*. She warns, in particular, of "the recent massive increase in the volume of hazardous materials streaming across our nation's highways and railroads." Rail transport of "hazmats" jumped 27 percent between 1990 and 1995. In 1995 alone, there were 12,712 incidents involving hazardous materials released from trucks and 1,330 such incidents involving railcars.

Overwork is a major cause of accidents. In 1994, a propane truck crashed into the column of an overpass near White Plains, New York, igniting the propane and propelling the gas's container through the air onto a nearby house, which was quickly engulfed in flames. The driver died and 23 others were injured. What caused the accident? The driver dozed off at the wheel. He had been driving continuously for 35 hours.

Though truckers can be legally required to work only 10 hours, they are paid by the mile, not by the hour, Aizenman says, and "trucking companies routinely—and knowingly—put them on schedules that make a mockery of the law." When the Federal Highway Administration "bothers to conduct [safety] inspections," she writes, "it tends to favor the velvet-fist-in-the-velvet glove approach." The Federal Railroad Administration, which oversees rail safety, is hardly more rigorous. Much more regulation is needed, Aizenman unfashionably concludes.

Show Me the Productivity!

"The Computer and the Economy" by Alan S. Blinder and Richard E. Quandt, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Dec. 1997), 77 N. Washington St., Boston, Mass. 02114; "Where's the Productivity Growth (from the Information Technology Revolution)?" by Donald S. Allen, in *Review* (Mar.–Apr. 1997), Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis, Public Affairs Dept., P.O. Box 442, St. Louis, Mo. 63166–0442.

The supposedly oh-so-efficient information age is here, with all its many marvels, from desktop and laptop computers to cell phones and pagers. Oh yes, the Internet, too. Between 1970 and 1995, investment in information-processing equipment increased 12.5 percent a year—but business's output per hour rose only 1.5 percent annually. Where's the payoff? Economists Blinder and Quandt, of Princeton University, and Allen, of the Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis, serve up some answers.

Yes, the official figures understate the growth in productivity, especially in the service sector, they say. But that is not the whole problem. While investment in computing and related equipment is rapidly growing, it still accounted for less than 10 percent of gross business fixed investment in 1996—not enough, say Blinder and Quandt, to "revolutionize economy-wide productivity—although it could well have dramatic effects in some sectors."

In some industries that have invested heavily in information technology, productivity *has* mushroomed in recent decades, rising an average of between 4.2 percent (steel) and 6.3 percent (railroads) a year. But, notes Allen, automotive repair shops increased investment in information technology by a whopping 24.4 percent a year between 1972 and 1994—but reaped annual productivity growth of only 0.1 percent!

Some factors cited by Blinder and Quandt may help to explain such disappointing results. New, more powerful computing machines keep appearing, as do new and updated versions of software programs. Just keeping up demands vast amounts of money and training time—which diminishes productivity. Moreover, they note, some activities made possible by computers—such as playing electronic solitaire, surfing the Web, and endless e-mailing—themselves reduce productivity.

It may well be decades, the authors say, before all the economic benefits of information technology are realized. "The presence of a computer on a desk," Allen observes, "does not mean that it is used to its full potential."

NAFTA-Action Report

"Has NAFTA Changed North American Trade?" by David M. Gould, in *Economic Review* (First Quarter, 1998), Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, P.O. Box 655906, Dallas, Texas 75265–5906.

Debate about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) usually focuses on how many jobs it has sent speeding down to Mexico, where the average wage is one-fifth that in the United States. But the more basic question, argues Gould, an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, concerns the agreement's effect on the total volume of trade. That is what ultimately determines the impact on American employment and living standards.

In 1994, the year the accord took effect, U.S. trade with Mexico grew nearly 10 percent. But with the 1995 peso crisis, U.S. imports from Mexico increased nearly 25 percent and exports dropped 11 percent. U.S. exports have since resumed their rapid growth.

But this sort of superficial look at the ups and downs of U.S.-Mexico trade is misleading, Gould says. Factors other than NAFTA—such as changes in national income, exchange rates, and trade with other countries—also influence commerce. Trying to control for those other factors, he calculates that NAFTA hiked U.S. exports an average of about 16 percentage points a year between 1994 and 1996, for a cumulative benefit of about $21 billion. The agreement also appears to have increased U.S. imports, he says, though this is far from certain.

Shouldn't Americans hope that trade agreements boost exports and cut imports, thus presumably expanding jobs at home?

No, says Gould. Increases in exports and imports both shift resources to industries that reflect a nation's "comparative advantage" (i.e., the ones it is better at) and away from industries that do not. That increases national prosperity. "By this criterion," the economist concludes, "NAFTA has been a success for the United States and Mexico."

SOCIETY

The Tumult over Tenure

A Survey of Recent Articles

Long a sacred cow in academia, tenure lately has come under challenge as never before. Some conservatives, appalled by the stifling orthodoxy of "political correctness" they say "tenured radicals" have spread over so many campuses, think that abolishing tenure might help to remove the blight. Some college administrators, eager to make their institutions more "entrepreneurial" and "competitive," dream of being able to get rid of unproductive professors more easily. And many junior scholars, noting the dubious demands of some of their tenured elders and struggling for scarce jobs in an increasingly grim academic job market, question the worth of the tenure system.


"The barbarians are at the gates, Frambley, and you talk of tenure!"

The traditional justification for granting lifetime job security to professors (after a probationary period of up to seven years) has been to protect those with unpopular opinions. Tenure protects academic freedom, said the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Association of Colleges in their classic 1940 statement on the subject. "Tenure and the academic freedom it assures—as distinct from general First Amendment liberties—impose a collective standard of responsibility that AAUP has historically championed, making the faculty as a whole 'guardian of academic values,'" writes John D. Lyons, editor of *Academe* (May–June 1997), the AAUP's magazine.

Some critics doubt that academic freedom is still in danger of assault from outside the academy. "When the socialist movement was developing and the general public tended to be more conservative than the professoriate, university teachers were definitely in danger of being ideologically suspect and losing their jobs," says John Higham, an emeritus professor of history at Johns Hopkins University, in an interview with *Johns Hopkins Magazine* (Sept. 1997). "Tenure arose to cope with that situation, and it did. After the failure of McCarthyism, the threat to college teachers' independence gradually faded. We don't have that kind of ideological warfare today."

Today, the threat to academic freedom comes from *within* the academy, according to critics of "political correctness" such as Jerry L. Martin and Anne D. Neal, president and vice president, respectively, of the National Alumni Forum. Participants in a symposium in *Academic Questions* (Fall 1997) on the state of academic freedom, they note that more than 384 colleges and universities "have speech codes or sensitivity requirements that threaten academic freedom," and that political harassment of individual professors at odds with the prevailing orthodoxy is common.

To those individual professors, however, the guarantee of tenure often seems very valuable. "The price we pay for the privilege of tenure has always been high, because tenure inevitably provides a shelter for political and religious agitators who insist on teaching what is manifestly untrue and unscholarly," Mary R. Lefkowitz, a professor in the humanities at Wellesley College and author of *"Black Athena" Revisited* (1996), comments in the symposium. "But the premium must be paid, because tenure also protects those of us who are prepared to challenge the latest trends of academic orthodoxy, within disciplines and in the university curriculum."

Tenure may protect established scholars, John Silber, chancellor of Boston University, observes in *Academic Questions*, but the nontenured faculty are left exposed. They are at the mercy of "doctrinal orthodoxy as defined by the senior professors of a department," who tend to decide who does and does not get tenure. The infringement by the tenured on the intellectual rights of the nontenured, in Silber's view, "represents by far the most serious and most frequent violation of academic freedom in our colleges and universities."

Jon Wiener, a historian at the University of California at Irvine and a contributing editor of the *Nation*, worries about a different danger. "The greatest threat to the teaching of unpopular ideas today," he maintains in *Dissent* (Winter 1998), comes from administrators who have embraced "the logic of the market" and "the inexorable trend toward staffing colleges and universities with part-timers, adjuncts, and instructors." These untenured teachers are now "almost half the faculty at four-year colleges." In Wiener's view, collective bargaining is "the best way to defend college teachers—at least at public colleges—against politically motivated firing" by administrators aiming to satisfy the market.

Paul A. Cantor, a professor of English at the University of Virginia, also worries about administrators, though for a different reason. Without tenure, administrators would inevitably have a bigger say in hiring and firing. "[As] wrongheaded as my [academic] colleagues may at times have seemed to me," Cantor writes in *Academic Questions* (Winter 1997–98), "they came across as positively Solomonic in comparison with the university administrators I have known over the years. . . . Some critics of tenure think that abolishing it will provide a means of bringing to bear the less radical views of society as a whole on the academy," he observes. "But the more likely outcome would be to give new power to a subset within the academy, namely the educational establishment—perhaps even the education school establishment—which is generally more radical than the academy as a whole."

Are All Cultures Equal?

"Cultural Relativism as Ideology" by Dennis H. Wrong, in *Critical Review* (Spring 1997), Yale Stn. Box 205416, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

Scratch a modern "multiculturalist," and you get (among other things) what has long been known as a "cultural relativist," that is, one who regards all cultures as morally equal. Yet the anthropological doctrine of cultural relativism originally had a quite different meaning, maintains Wrong, an emeritus professor of sociology at New York University.

"The term *culture*, in something approximating the modern sense," he writes, "was originally an expression of German nationalism and was deployed against the universalism of the French Enlightenment." Denying there was any single story of human progress, Germans insisted "that different peoples developed their own unique ways of life that could only arbitrarily be measured against a common standard. Therefore, despite the economic and political 'backwardness' of German society, German culture was not necessarily inferior to that of France."

It was only "a short step from acceptance of the irreducible variety of cultures" and the rejection of a common human nature, Wrong says, to the theory of races that later became the basis of Nazi ideology. But in the ivory tower, he observes, culture became the ruling idea among German historians. When the pioneering German-born anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942) emigrated to America in 1886, he brought this German tradition with him. The rise of the Nazis later discredited racial theories, and shifted intellectual opinion decisively in favor of the view of Boas and others that culture, not race, shapes human customs and institutions. This view was popularized by Boas's student Ruth Benedict (1887–1948), in her 1934 book *Patterns of Culture*—a paperback bestseller in 1946. She attempted to illustrate what came to be known as "cultural relativism" (though she called it "cultural relativity").

Against the backdrop of the crimes of Hitler and Stalin, Benedict's book (and especially a sentence in it about "equally valid patterns of life") stirred intense debate about cultural relativism's implications for moral judgment. Wrong believes that Benedict did not mean to imply that any and all patterns of life are equally valid morally. "The original cultural relativism of Boas and his students did not entail the eschewal of any and all moral judgment," he says. Their cultural relativism meant that the culture in which individuals had been reared since infancy invariably shaped or determined their actions. But just because the actions of cannibals, headhunters, and other *individuals* should be viewed in the context of their cultures, that did not preclude "a comparative evaluation of different *cultures* and the conclusion that some were more desirable than others." Making such evaluations was not the work of scientists qua scientists, however, since moral judgments were then regarded as outside the fact-oriented realm of science.

Today's multiculturalists, in contrast, go so far as to call into question even factual knowledge, Wrong points out. They "are usually epistemological as well as cultural or moral relativists." But he does not believe that the current multiculturalist vogue will last long. "The very stress on supposedly irreducible cultural differences may express an uneasy awareness that they are not very great and that . . . they are likely to diminish," thanks to intermarriage and integration into the larger American society.

Reinventing Cities

"Shrinking Cities" by Witold Rybczynski and Peter Linneman, in *Wharton Real Estate Review* (Fall 1997), Wharton Real Estate Center, Univ. of Pennsylvania, 313 Lauder-Fischer Hall, Third Floor, 256 S. 37th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104–6330.

America's aging big cities need to accept the fact that they are shrinking, and set about planning to make smaller better. So contend Rybczynski and Linneman, professors of real estate and urbanism, and of real estate, finance and public policy, respectively, at the University of Pennsylvania.

The usual response of urban areas faced with a declining (and increasingly poor) population, the authors say, has been to raise taxes, thus making the city even less attractive. Another oft-proposed solution—regional government—is politically impractical, even leaving aside probable constitutional difficulties.

Mayors and urban planners should emulate Venice, Vienna, and Glasgow, Rybczynski and Linneman maintain. Though their populations peaked long ago (in the 17th century, in the case of Venice), they are still good places to live. "A city that has irretrievably lost large amounts of its population," say the authors, "needs to examine ways to redesign itself to become more compact, and perhaps even smaller in area."

Many cities have strong outlying parts, and some have strong centers, they note. "Between these areas lies a complex web of decrepit housing stock, abandoned industry, and strong neighborhoods." What can be done? In some cases, they suggest, empty tracts could be turned into parks and recreation areas. New York City, owner of 20,000 vacant lots, is considering asking private corporations to pay for converting empty land into parks and playgrounds, in return for the right to use the space for advertising. Some vacant land may have commercial possibilities. In downtown Chicago, a developer recently built a golf course on 30 vacant acres near the convention center. Or perhaps large tracts could be consolidated and sold to the U.S. Department of the Interior for the creation of urban greenbelts. Another, more drastic idea: selling large tracts (of, say, 100-plus acres) to private developers to create independent "suburban" municipalities, with their own schools and governments.

Rybczynski and Linneman concede that significant reforms will provoke massive resistance. But for New York and other "shrinking cities," they believe, there is no realistic alternative.

Bowling with Government

"The Tocqueville Problem" by Theda Skocpol, in *Social Science History* (Winter 1997), 905 W. Main St., Ste. 18-B, Box 90660, Durham, N.C. 27708–0660.

"Nothing strikes a European traveler in the United States more," Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in *Democracy in America* (1835–40), "than the absence of what we would call government or administration." Conservative champions of civil society often cite the French visitor's famous work to show that local voluntary associations only flourish with a minimal national government. But, argues Skocpol, a professor of government and sociology at Harvard University, today's conservatives miss, as Tocqueville himself did, how closely the civic vitality of the early United States was connected with the national government.

"The remarkable size and reach of the U.S. post office gives the lie to any notion that 'government' and 'administration' were 'absent' in early America," Skocpol writes. Whereas France had only four post offices for every 100,000 inhabitants, and Great Britain 17, the United States had 74. "The postal system," she points out, drawing on historian Richard John's *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (1995), "was the biggest enterprise of any kind in the pre-industrial United States," and for most Americans, it *was* the federal government. The 8,764 postal workers in 1831, and the 14,290 a decade later, constituted more than three-fourths of all federal employees, and most were part-time postmasters in towns scattered throughout the countryside.

Tocqueville, traveling by stagecoach through remote areas of Kentucky and Tennessee, was astonished by the "circulation of letters and newspapers among these savage woods." Indeed, Skocpol adds, his travels "might not have been possible had not many U.S. stagecoach companies been subsidized through Congress so that mail could be carried to small communities and representatives could travel home to remote districts."

The relative safety, speed, and reach of the federal mail greatly facilitated commerce in the early United States, of course, but the postal system "was even more important for U.S. civil society and democratic politics," Skocpol says. Congressmen and senators could communicate freely by mail with their constituents, and "citizens, even those in the remotest hamlets, could readily communicate with one another, monitoring the doings of Congress and state legislatures as well as those of local governments. Voluntary associations soon learned to put out their message in 'newspaper' format to take advantage of the mails." By encouraging communications among citizens, she observes, the antebellum postal system helped to draw them into "passionate involvements" in regional and national political campaigns and in moral crusades, such as the temperance and abolitionist movements.

For the folks lined up to get their mail in Thomas Waterman Wood's The Village Post Office, *and for most citizens in antebellum America, the post office* was *the federal government.*

The government's encouraging role did not end then, Skocpol says. Her preliminary studies suggest that large grassroots voluntary associations, such as the American Legion and the United Auto Workers (UAW), are especially likely to be formed during times of intense national political activity—World War I in the American Legion's case, the New Deal in the UAW's. During the 19th century and, to a lesser extent, the 20th, it seems, national politics and government, far from smothering civil society, encouraged it.

Precious Things Considered . . .

Garrison Keillor, the wry man from Lake Wobegon who hosts public radio's *Prairie Home Companion*, takes an unusual swipe at another pillar of public radio in the *Nation* (Jan. 5, 1998). Keillor's popular show is distributed by Public Radio International, while *All Things Considered* is distributed by a competitor, National Public Radio (NPR).

All Things Considered *made its reputation on news reporting during the Watergate episodes. They produced a generation of excellent reporters. . . . They've mostly been overshadowed by what I consider to be rather precious commentators, people reminiscing about their childhoods and interviews with artists and writers who one sort of gathers are friends of the reporters. . . .*

Radio has a real obligation here, and I think that All Things Considered *has seriously failed this obligation in recent years. I think the program has for one thing utterly failed to report on the Republican revolution for control of Congress that has absolutely turned politics upside down in this country. This is not a minor phenomenon. I don't know if the reporters at NPR simply don't know Republicans, or they don't know how to talk to them, or what. But this is a crucial story. It goes on under their noses. To ignore that and to do little audio documentaries about old ballplayers and celebrate Paul Robeson's birthday and do a documentary on maple syruping in Vermont is just perverse.*

. . . And Defended

In the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Nov. 14, 1997), Richard Ohmann, a professor of English emeritus at Wesleyan University, explains the appeal of public radio.

Public radio has become central to the culture of a particular socio-economic group—the professional-managerial class, or "P.M.C." Public radio not only reflects key interests of this group, but also serves as part of the cultural tissue that holds its members together, helping—along with other ties, such as higher education, suburban living, marriage within the group, and a well-knit set of stylistic preferences in language, dress, exercise, and so on—to define the P.M.C. as a class. . . .

Above all, this "we" attracted by NPR's chosen mode of address—cultivated, fastidious, cool—is a group tolerant of complexity, eager for explanation, curious, intellectually versatile. Presumably, NPR, by crediting us with those qualities, flatters our sense of worth and identity. Needless to say, those qualities have practical value as well, having been part of our education and having come into play in the work that more explicitly defines the P.M.C.: investigating, planning, managing, negotiating, designing, creating.

NPR staff members . . . think of themselves as sharing the same qualities and values as their listeners, whom they describe less as an audience than as part of their "community." And why not? Staff members hold mainly non-technical, often Ivy League, degrees. They earn incomes comparable to those of their listeners, live in similar neighborhoods, read the Times. *They work with words and ideas. Hence, this circuit of cultural production and reception is an exchange chiefly within the P.M.C.*

Clicking on Profits

"Profits in Site?" by Scott Kirsner, in *American Journalism Review* (Dec. 1997), 8701 Adelphi Rd., Adelphi, Md. 20783–1716.

Newspaper and magazine publishers "are beginning to see evidence that the Web isn't a complete charity case," reports Kirsner, a Boston-based freelance writer. Some, such as Gannett's *Florida Today*, which runs the *Space Online* Web site, have even broken into the black. While the 12,500-circulation *Griffin* (Georgia) *Daily News* and some 120 other papers have shut down their Web sites, larger publishers, with the financial resources to be patient, are optimistic.

Forrester Research, a Cambridge, Massachusetts, consulting firm, expects publishing on the Web to be "a tough slog" until 2000. But then it should become profitable, with on-line advertisers (up to 75 percent of them, *national* advertisers) spending a projected $4.5 billion a year. By 2002, estimates another firm, Jupiter Communications, annual online advertising should reach $7.7 billion.

Today, Kirsner says, the bulk of most Web publishers' income comes from three types of advertising: display, classified, and sponsorships. To have their ad graphic displayed 500,000 times on the *New York Times on the Web* site, for instance, advertisers pay $20,000, or $40 per 1,000 "impressions." But that way of charging advertisers may be becoming obsolete, Kirsner says. In 1996, Procter & Gamble arranged to pay for its display ads on the Yahoo! search service according to how many times users clicked on the ads *and were delivered to a P&G site*—not just how many times the ad was shown. An even more frightening development, from an on-line publisher's point of view, is that some Web sites have begun selling ads on a"pay-per-transaction" basis: advertisers only pay if visitors to the site actually buy something.

To forge stronger long-term relationships with advertisers, "and perhaps to distract them from the new payment models," observes Kirsner, some online publishers "are offering both sponsorship packages and 'co-branded' areas—essentially 'advertorial' custom publishing products." The *New York Times*-owned *Boston Globe Online* has an "Emerging Business" area sponsored by Fleet Bank. *Florida Today*'s *Space Online* made sure it had the Kennedy Space Center and other sponsors aboard before its launch.

Web publishers are also running classified ads, long a big moneymaker for newspapers. *Boston Globe Online* expects classifieds to bring in as much as 35 percent of its revenue this year, up from less than five percent in 1996.

Though Web surfers are accustomed to free access, subscriptions are another potential source of revenue. The *Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition*, for example, derives more than 20 percent of its revenue from subscriptions. Other on-line publishers are also experimenting with subscriptions. Indeed, while there are some signs that the World Wide Web may become a paying proposition, "experimentation" is still the byword.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

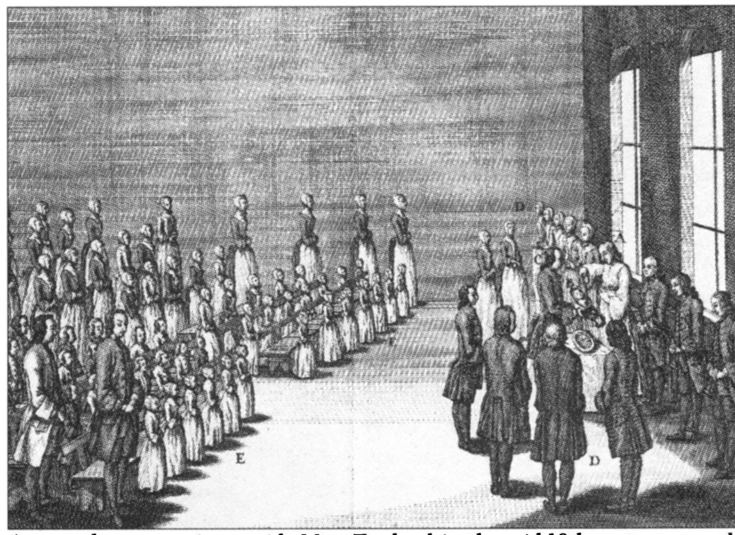
Putting Down the Puritans

"The Post-Puritan Paradigm of Early American Religious History" by Charles L. Cohen, in *The William and Mary Quarterly* (Oct. 1997), Box 8781, Williamsburg, Va. 23187–8781.

Starting in 1933 with the publication of *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630–1650*, and continuing with such classics as the two-volume *The New England Mind* (1939–53), historian Perry Miller put the Puritans of 17th-century New England on the scholarly map. Without quite intending to do so, Miller turned them into the archetypal Americans, the elect of God with a special mission to create a New Jerusalem. In recent years, however, historians stressing the varieties of colonial religious experience have challenged the idea that the Puritans were all that important.

"In Miller's tale," notes Cohen, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, "the New England saints designed an impressive intellectual edifice grounded on the covenanted relationship between themselves and God only to lament its buckling as succeeding generations failed to reproduce the founders' piety. [Jonathan] Edwards [1703–58] salvaged the scheme by modernizing an outmoded metaphysics with the enlightened harmonies of Isaac Newton and John Locke, and revivalists spread the Puritan dynamic of sin and redemption to south and west. By the Revolution, the New England mind had become America's."

The Puritans claimed a pre-eminent place in historians' thinking in part because colonial New England left an unmatched abundance of literary materials. But revisionist historians—proponents of the new social history, written from the "bottom up"—are not content with such "elitist" testimony. Borrowing techniques from the behavioral sciences, they have used data from sources such as court depositions and inventories to paint a picture of the unlettered multitudes.



Among the sects active outside New England in the mid-18th century were the Moravians (here, at a baptism), concentrated in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Challenging Puritanism's significance, the revisionists portray the middle or southern colonies "as somehow more typical of subsequent American social and institutional evolution," Cohen writes. They even question the Puritans' influence in New England, suggesting that the region's "social arrangements derived more from inherited patterns of English agriculture, law, or custom than from religious or ecclesiastical practice." And they point out that there were other religious forces at work in colonial America: Anglicans, Lutheran pietists, Jesuit missionaries, and a variety of sectarians.

Summarizing what he calls the "post-Puritan paradigm," Cohen says there is agreement that a turning point in American life came around 1680, after a period of declining piety. But then "the most enduring American religious patterns coalesced, not in the pious sobriety of Puritan New England . . . but in the earnest if stolid fabrication of ecclesiastical institutions throughout Anglo-America" between 1680 and 1820. The two leading revisionist historians—Jon Butler, author of *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (1990), and Patricia U. Bonomi, author of *Under the Cope of Heaven* (1986)—differ on the pace of America's "Christianization." Bonomi contends that churches and churchgoing grew steadily during the 18th century, Cohen says. Butler sees 18th- and 19th-century Americans as less pious—and more open to occult practices.

Though the revisionists have shown that the Puritans of New England were far from being the whole story, Cohen concludes, they go too far in minimizing their importance. A coherent, comprehensive portrayal of early American religious life has yet to emerge.

The Lord's Judgment

"Lord Acton's Ordeal: The Historian and Moral Judgment" by Perez Zagorin, in *The Virginia Quarterly Review* (Winter 1998), One West Range, Charlottesville, Va. 22903.

The English historian Lord Acton (1834–1902) is today best remembered for his dictum, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Behind those famous words, though, argues Zagorin, an emeritus professor of history at the University of Rochester, was a conception of the historian's duty so stern, and a moral code so absolute, that few historians have been able to go along with him.

John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton was both a lifelong Roman Catholic and a lifelong liberal (in the 19th-century sense of the term), who feared the state as the chief threat to liberty. Though his projected magnum opus on the history of liberty never saw the light of day, the ideas he expressed in his many essays, reviews, and lectures, as well as his notes and letters, continue to fascinate students of politics and history.

Acton's archival research and enormous historical reading forced him to conclude "that Catholics had committed many great evils for the sake of what they considered the higher interests of the church," notes Zagorin—evils that included the religious murders of the Inquisition and other authorized agencies of persecution. "Catholic historians and controversialists, moreover, had repeatedly distorted, concealed, and falsified the truth for pious reasons."

History persuaded Acton to strongly oppose the doctrine of papal infallibility entertained by the Vatican in the mid-19th century. "A man is not honest who accepts all Papal decisions in questions of morality, for they have often been distinctly immoral," he stated. The Vatican Council of 1870 nevertheless adopted the dogma. To avoid excommunication, Acton made some equivocal statements about the doctrine. But he came away convinced that Catholic churchmen and apologists of his day "were all too often willing to disregard morality and to falsify or ignore the truth," Zagorin says, and this only fortified Acton's conviction that a historian must render moral judgments.

In the past, historians had to be sympathetic and impartial, Acton believed. Each age, he wrote, was "worthy of study [and] to be understood for its own sake, for the way in which it has met its problems, and its share in the suffering of mankind—not as a stepping stone to the present." At the same time, however, Zagorin says, Acton held that moral principles, based on the permanent, generally acknowledged standard of the sanctity of life, were everywhere and always the same. Murder, as the worst crime, provided what Acton called "our basis for measurement." Thus, after subjecting historical evidence and testimony to rigorous cross-examination, Zagorin says, "the conscientious historian" had the duty to make a moral judgment, one that "belongs to the domain of objective facts and becomes a part of historical science."

Most historians, in contrast, have not deemed it "proper as a rule" to make moral judgments, Zagorin says. Unlike Lord Acton, they believe "that they possess neither the power nor authority to speak as the voice of History and pronounce its verdict for all time."

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

30,000 Tons beneath the Sea

"Burial of Radioactive Waste under the Seabed" by Charles D. Hollister and Steven Nadis, in *Scientific American* (Jan. 1998), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017–1111.

To gather data on conditions deep below the sea floor, European researchers have used devices such as these torpedo-shaped "free fall penetrators," laden with instruments.

When it comes to the disposal of nuclear waste, many Americans seem to prefer to bury their heads in the sand. A repository has been under development at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for more than a decade, at least in theory, but no construction has begun and state officials and residents remain adamantly opposed to the facility. It may never open for use. Yet more than 30,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste now lie in temporary storage at U.S. nuclear power plants, and every year brings another 2,000 metric tons. Add to that at least 50 metric tons of excess plutonium, and hundreds of tons of highly enriched uranium taken from dismantled nuclear weapons.

Hollister, a vice president of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, in Massachusetts, and Nadis, a science writer, have a different solution to the problem of radioactive waste: bury it beneath the ocean floor.

Marine scientists have identified broad zones of suboceanic terrain in the Atlantic and Pacific that have remained geologically inert for tens of millions of years in the dark and frigid depths. Three or so miles below the surface, note the authors, lie vast mudflats, with a clay-rich blanket, hundreds of meters thick, above the underlying rocky crust. Present evidence, they say, "suggests that mobile, multicellular lifeforms inhabit only the top meter or so of the abyssal clays," and that below that there are no organisms capable of transporting radioactive substances up to the sea floor. Employing technology that has been in use in the petroleum industry for decades, canisters of radioactive waste could be lowered into cylindrical shafts drilled hundreds of meters deep in the thick sediment, well below the ocean floor.

The cannisters themselves would last only a few thousand years at most, but "the muddy clays, which cling tenaciously to plutonium and many other radioactive elements, would prevent these substances from seeping into the waters above," the authors say. Scientists have concluded from experiments that plutonium would not migrate from a breached cannister more than a few meters, even after 100,000 years. Burial of the radioactive waste in the sediments "would most likely buy enough time for the radioactivity of all the waste either to decay or to dissipate to levels below those found naturally in seawater."

Yes, more research is needed, but there has never been a serious challenge to subseabed disposal on technical or scientific grounds, Hollister and Nadis say. Persuading the public is another matter, of course, but subseabed burial, the authors observe, has at least this advantage: it won't produce "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) opposition.

Wet Planets

"Surfing the Solar System" by Michael Milstein, in *Air & Space* (Dec. 1997–Jan. 1998), 370 L'Enfant Promenade S.W., 10th Fl., Washington, D.C. 20024.

Plain old water has long been regarded as one of Planet Earth's distinctive possessions. But as astronomers in recent years have taken a closer look at the rest of the solar system and beyond, free-lance writer Milstein reports, "they are arriving at the conclusion that Earth is really not that special after all. Water . . . turns up almost everywhere." [Including the moon, scientists announced in March.] Most of the extraterrestrial H_2O is in the form of ice, but—it increasingly seems—not all of it.

The sun long ago burned off most of the water and ice from the inner planets nearest to it, and most of the solar system's water now "resides in the frigid outposts beyond the asteroid belt" that separates Mars and Jupiter, Milstein writes. "The gas giants of the outer solar system—Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune—are still loaded with the stuff, although under such astounding pressures and mixed with such a noxious stew of other compounds that it's a stretch to think of it as water."

However, Europa, one of Jupiter's moons, may be a different story. Photographs taken by the Galileo spacecraft "show cracked ice plates that almost surely have slid apart," indicating, Milstein says, that the visible surface "is probably no more than a frozen shell floating atop a massive global sea." Tidal heating—generated by Jupiter's gravitational pull, first strong as the moon nears the planet, then loosened as it moves away—could explain why the water doesn't freeze. "Other moons, too, show external signs of liquid interiors," Milstein adds.

Although Mars, which may once have had oceans as huge as Earth's, probably "still has pockets of groundwater beneath its arid surface," notes Milstein, Europa may offer what planetary geologist Jeffrey Kargel of the U.S. Geological Survey calls "the best chance that we have" to find an ocean resembling those on Earth. For that reason, the author says, more and more researchers are coming to believe that "Europa is more likely than Mars to hold signs of primitive life."

Cash and Carry Science

"Scientists Who Fund Themselves" by Jon Cohen, in *Science* (Jan. 9, 1998), 1200 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

With research grants harder to get these days, some scientists have discovered a different way to pay for their laboratory work: they dig into their own pockets.

Such self-funding researchers are still a small minority, reports *Science* writer Cohen, but their number is growing—and not all of them are wealthy. Take biologist Robert Summers, of the State University of New York at Buffalo, who studies the developmental biology of sea urchins. He is not a rich man, but about 10 years ago he saw the handwriting on the wall. "I just realized that if I wanted to continue," he told Cohen, "I'd have to beg, borrow, steal, and scrape—and spend my own money." Last year alone, he estimates, he kicked in some $10,000.

Scientists underwriting their own work is nothing new. When modern science began in the 17th century, it was largely a pursuit of rich amateurs. Self-funding remained common in the United States until World War II, when levels of government support for scientific research soared. In recent years, however, with the Cold War over, Washington's enthusiasm for funding research projects has diminished. To keep their research going in the absence of sufficient support from the National Science Foundation or other grant givers, self-funding scientists draw on their own salaries or pensions or other sources of income; some channel their outside consulting income into their labs. And a fortunate few are able to rely on family wealth.

Self-funding has definite advantages for scientists. It saves them months of work on grant applications, and frees them to depart from the more fashionable lines of research favored by conservative peer reviewers. But these advantages, Cohen notes, can also be drawbacks. Writing a grant application can help a researcher to clarify his thinking about his project, and peer review can provide useful feedback. For universities, there is a further disadvantage, since they claim a portion of all faculty grants as "overhead." In fact, some self-funders have seen their labs shut down because they failed to satisfy their parent institution's hunger for that kind of cash.

Power from Outer Space

"Beam It Down" by Martin I. Hoffert and Seth D. Potter, in *Technology Review* (Oct. 1997), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Bldg. W59, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

In the 1970s, Czech-American engineer Peter Glaser proposed a novel solution to the oil crises: "geosynchronous" satellites (rotating with the Earth, some 22,000 miles above the equator) could use photovoltaic cells to convert sunlight into electrical current, then transmit it via a microwave beam down to Earth. Glaser's proposal was imaginative, but it had a few problems, not least that, with the satellites at that altitude, the receiving antennas on the ground would have to be about six miles in diameter. Not surprisingly, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Energy soon lost interest.

Today's revolution in telecommunications, write Hoffert and Potter, physicists at New York University, could give Glaser's idea an unexpected lift. By early in the next century, swarms of low-altitude communications satellites will be orbiting the globe. Teledesic Corporation, a joint venture of Microsoft chairman Bill Gates and cell phone tycoon Craig McCaw, alone plans to spend $9 billion to launch 288 communications satellites. They will use microwave beams to relay voices, video images, and data to locations around the world.

Why not equip the satellites with solar collectors and use the same microwave beams to carry electrical power? say the authors. "By piggybacking onto these fleets of communications satellites—and taking advantage of their microwave transmitters and receivers, ground stations, and control systems—solar power technology can become economically viable." The new satellites have other advantages. They will orbit only a few hundred miles above the Earth's surface, so the receiving antennas can be much smaller (and less expensive) than in Glaser's scheme. The solar collectors also can be much smaller—only a few hundred meters across instead of more than six miles.

A network of solar power satellites, the authors contend, could supply enough electrical power "to satisfy the needs of the human race through the next century." They admit, however, that they have a lot of convincing to do in the United States. Although Japan's Ministry of Technology and Industry has already sponsored the design of a prototype orbiter, solar power satellites were not even mentioned in a recent U.S. National Academy of Sciences study of energy alternatives.

ARTS & LETTERS

The Coward's Art

"Echo and Narcissus: The Fearful Logic of Postmodern Thought" by David Bosworth, in *The Georgia Review* (Fall 1997), Univ. of Georgia, Athens, Ga. 30602–9009.

What are the forces that drive the postmodern sensibility? asks novelist Bosworth, author of *From My Father, Singing* (1989). "Why in our time (to cite just some of the signal shifts in value enacted by postmodern thought) has parody replaced parable, sign replaced symbol, repetition replaced originality, monologue replaced dialogue, and the celebrity replaced the hero?"

Much of the art and thought since World War II exhibits, to one degree or another, "either mechanical mimicry or obsessive self-absorption," Bosworth contends—and these "recall, with eerie exactitude, the fates prescribed for Echo and Narcissus." The nymph Echo, in punishment for deceiving a god, is condemned never to speak an original word again, while the handsome youth Narcissus, as a curse for coldly rejecting the love of others, is made to fall in love with his own reflection. "The one unable to express herself, the other unable to see beyond himself, each is estranged not only from reciprocal love but from any form of intimate exchange," writes Bosworth. "Each is destined to pine away in a perpetually punishing loneliness."

What is now called the "postmodern" sensibility, he notes, emerged during the 1960s with the arrival of pop art. Andy Warhol, the pop art eminence and "most influential visual artist of the last 50 years," chose Echo's imposed fate, Bosworth points out. "The very model of Echo's form of 'servomechanism,' Warhol copies the world and then copies his copy again and again. An exact replica of a soup can becomes a hundred replicas ('100 Campbell's Soup Cans') which then become '200 Campbell's Soup Cans.' A photographic copy of the Mona Lisa is then multiplied into four copies ('Four Mona Lisas') which then become a frame arrayed with 30 copies, six by five."

Warhol provides the most extreme example, but milder versions of postmodern Echo abound and can be found in virtually every area of contemporary culture, Bosworth says. In music, for instance, there is "the rise of minimalism and New Age soporifics with their mechanical repetition of simple melodies and rhythms."

Postmodern Narcissus also has become ubiquitous, Bosworth says. In literature, autobiography and memoir have become more popular than fictional narrative; in philosophy, "an extreme relativity verging on solipsism, the denial that there is a knowable truth beyond one's own thoughts," has become fashionable. In the visual arts, "various forms of exhibitionist self-portraiture" have come into vogue. The internationally acclaimed photographer Yasumasa Morimura, for instance, photographs the figurative paintings of such past masters as Rembrandt and van Gogh; then, through computer imaging, he substitutes his own face for each of the characters' faces within the frame. "I express Rembrandt's theme better than he did," Morimura has boasted.

"The need to make the outside world disappear by masking its existence with reflections of one's Self . . . when considered along with the opposite yet complementary need to make one's Self disappear by reducing one's own expressions to mere reflections of that world (the total self-effacement of Warhol's tape recorder, his *choosing* to become Echo in her cave), would seem to suggest a deep fear of reality," writes Bosworth. "Or rather, a deep fear of *knowing* reality."

"Most of postmodern art's favorite strategies—repetition, collage, opacity, parody—are strategies of concealment rather than conveyance," he observes. "Most of the claims of the criticism implicitly allied with that art—that language can only refer to itself, that there is no objective reality—are trying to insist that the mind *is* its own place and so, in some sense, safe. . . .

"Yet like echolalia and narcissism, the pathologies it mimics, postmodern logic," Bosworth warns, "can supply only the opposite of what it would advertise: instead of immunity, ignorance; instead of real mastery, the fantasy of triumph that only ignorance allows."

The Eurocentric Error

Michael Lind, a contributing editor of *Harper's Magazine* (Feb. 1998), on the sources of post–World War II America's misguided infatuation with European culture:

For a generation of American literary academics, the most influential postwar literary critic was not Edmund Wilson or F. O. Matthiessen, both of whom wrote brilliantly about American literature, but Lionel Trilling. To my mind, it is odd enough that T. S. Eliot, a St. Louis native who had converted himself into a cartoon of an Englishman, and Ezra Pound, an Idaho-born professor who had transformed himself into a Mediterranean fascist, were held up to my classmates and me [at the University of Texas at Austin in the late 1970s]*—in lieu, I suppose, of real Europeans, whose native tongues made them less accessible to American audiences—as the fonts from which all literary wisdom flowed. But Trilling taught a generation to prefer E. M. Forster to Nelson Algren and Matthew Arnold to H. L. Mencken. He offered the children and grandchildren of immigrants to American slums from Dublin, Warsaw, and Salerno the cheap illusion of belonging to the Victorian or Edwardian gentry. He was the Ralph Lauren of American letters.*

O Pioneer?

"The Prosaic Willa Cather" by James Seaton, in *The American Scholar* (Winter 1998), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Once put down by modernists as an outdated expression of Victorian genteel culture, the fiction of Willa Cather (1873–1947) is now enjoying a revival. Her chief champions are feminist literary critics, who have been busily reinterpreting her work in terms of her identity as a woman and (putatively) a lesbian.

Though the feminist approach at least has people reading Cather again, it is unlikely, argues Seaton, an English professor at Michigan State University, to long sustain her reputation as the major writer and cultural critic that she is. For Cather's status to be secure, he maintains, "the search for the origins of her opinions must give way to a renewed attempt to understand the significance of the view of the world achieved when those opinions become transmuted into novels, short stories, and essays." Whereas feminists look, for instance, to Cather's supposed lesbianism to explain why romantic love between men and women in her fiction leads to disillusion and death, while friendship nourishes and protects, Seaton sees something else at work, something linked to "her affirmation of organized religion and ordinary family life."

O Pioneers! (1913), a Cather novel set in the Nebraska prairie of the late 19th century, may seem to lend itself to a political reading. Emil Bergson and Marie Tovesky Shabata become lovers, only to be shot a few hours later by her husband, when he finds them asleep together under a white mulberry tree. Yet Seaton says that it is not simply heterosexual attraction that led the lovers astray but an unbridled "spirituality that defies human nature." She, according to the novel, was in search of "perfect love," and he, of "rapture . . . without sin."

"In contrast to such romantic spirituality," writes Seaton, stands organized religion, which, throughout Cather's fiction, figures "as a rock anchoring the changing aspirations and hopes of individuals to a larger order."

Whether in the 19th-century Southwest of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) or in the 17th-century Quebec of *Shadows on the Rock* (1931), Seaton says, Cather is not trying to satisfy an appetite for the exotic. Instead, the glimpses the novels offer of the religion or the art of a past culture bring home "the continuing importance of everyday life, of the meaningfulness of the constant daily efforts to concentrate upon and order an otherwise chaotic existence." Art and religion in Cather's fiction emerge from daily life "as continuations and deepenings of everyday routine."

In Cather's art, Seaton concludes, one can make out "the hidden connections between grand moral principles and seemingly trivial choices, between everyday life and high art." And, in the end, the high art includes Cather's own.

Farewell, Miss Fremstad

"An American Singer" by Peter G. Davis, in *The Yale Review* (Oct. 1997), Yale Univ., P.O. Box 208243, New Haven, Conn. 06520-8243.

Her career was cut short when she was in her prime, and the 15 recordings she made were disappointing artistically as well as technically, but Olive Fremstad (1871–1951) has never been entirely forgotten by opera aficionados. The first homegrown American opera singer of "true incandescence," she had "a vocal and physical presence of such charismatic witchery as to drive audiences wild," writes Davis, author of *The American Opera Singer* (forthcoming).

The daughter of a Norwegian physician and preacher and his Swedish wife, the singer was born in Stockholm and emigrated with her family to Minnesota about a decade later. A proficient pianist by the age of 12, she served as her father's musical assistant as he traveled up and down the state in a horse-drawn wagon with a portable organ to conduct prairie revival meetings. Decades later, notes Davis, some of the Scandinavian settlers who had attended those services still "recalled the vivid effect of Fremstad's voice" when she sang hymns. Venturing to New York when she was 19, Fremstad studied and saved enough money for the essential trip to study in Europe. She made her debut at the Cologne Opera in 1895, and at New York's Metropolitan Opera in 1903.

Fremstad was the Met's first Salome (in Richard Strauss's opera of that name), and "her graphic portrayal of the biblical teenager's sensual lust scandalized more than one Met patron," writes Davis. The opera was withdrawn after the first performance. Fremstad's commitment to realistic detail was so great that she visited a morgue to use an actual human

Olive Fremstad gave "color and passion and personality" to Wagnerian heroines such as Brünnhilde, wrote Willa Cather.

head to rehearse the scene in which Salome holds aloft the head of John the Baptist. Novelist Willa Cather called her "a great tragic actress."

Alas, the highly paid singer was every bit the prima donna, refusing, for example, to rehearse the day before or after a performance. In 1914, Met director Giulio Gatti-Casazza finally ousted her. She was 43 and "at the height of her powers," notes Davis, but nothing was the same after that. In 1920, she begged to return to the Met, but Gatti refused. Olive Fremstad never sang in public again.

OTHER NATIONS

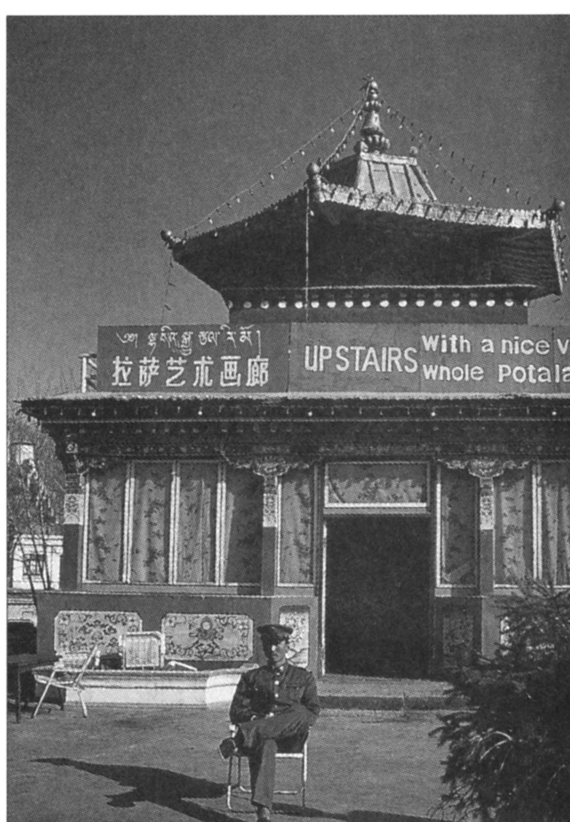
Tibet at a Turning Point

"The Dalai Lama's Dilemma" by Melvyn C. Goldstein, in *Foreign Affairs* (Jan.–Feb. 1998), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

With the recent appearance of the film *Kundun*, dramatizing his early life, the Dalai Lama appears to have won over Hollywood. But that may be of scant help to the 63-year-old spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists as he deals with a growing dilemma. Committed to nonviolence, he is being forced to choose between making concessions to China and giving at least tacit sanction to a campaign of organized violence against Chinese rule in Tibet. Some militant Tibetans already favor such a campaign; in 1996, there were three bombings in the capital, Lhasa. The Dalai Lama's only other choice, contends Goldstein, director of the Center for Research on Tibet, at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, is to sit back as his Himalayan homeland is changed beyond recognition.

Beijing, which has rebuffed the Dalai Lama's recent efforts to arrange talks, is pouring economic development funds into Tibet and flooding it with thousands of Chinese entrepreneurs and laborers. Of the "several hundred thousand" residents of Lhasa, at least half, Goldstein says, now are non-Tibetan. Although the newcomers are expected eventually to return home, Tibetans fear that the character of their sparsely populated land is being altered forever.

The roots of the conflict run deep. Formally part of the Manchu-ruled Chinese Empire during the 18th and 19th centuries, Tibet functioned as a quasi-independent theocracy under a Dalai Lama after the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1912. But that changed once the Communists came to power in China in 1949. China invaded Tibet in 1950, forcing the current Dalai Lama to recognize Chinese sovereignty. After an independence uprising was crushed in 1959, he fled to India, followed by 80,000 Tibetans. Secret talks with Beijing in 1982 and 1984 proved fruitless. The exiles



This Chinese guard is not the only outsider in Tibet today, as thousands of Chinese entrepreneurs and laborers have flooded in.

demanded a Western-style democracy for Tibet, while the Chinese insisted that the Communist Party remain in control. "Complicating matters," notes Goldstein, "was the exiles' demand for the creation of a Greater Tibet that would include . . . ethnic Tibetan areas in western China, most of which Tibet had lost in the 18th century."

After the Dalai Lama launched his campaign for international support in 1987, Beijing was put on the defensive, Goldstein notes. There were protests in Lhasa, and some led to riots. In the belief that events were going his way, the Tibetan leader rejected an overture from Beijing in 1989; then, after another riot broke out in Lhasa, Beijing imposed martial law, adopted a new hard-line policy, and accelerated a program of rapid economic development.

Now it is the Dalai Lama who is on the defensive. His past successes at attracting support in the West "look more and more like Pyrrhic victories," Goldstein says. The temptation will be strong for him to give a tacit nod to organized violence by Tibetan militants. But, in Goldstein's view, the exiled leader should opt instead for concessions and compromise.

Why France Ended Its Draft

"Towards the Army of the Future: Domestic Politics and the End of Conscription in France" by J. Justin McKenna, in *West European Politics* (Oct. 1997), Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., Newbury House, 900 Eastern Ave., London IG2 7HH, England.

France is the country that invented the idea of a "people's army" (during the French Revolution), and military conscription has been in use there since 1905. Yet now, France is phasing out the draft and shifting to an all-volunteer force, writes McKenna, a political scientist at George Washington University.

For decades, the so-called "Gaullist consensus" on French defense policy has been in effect, he notes. In 1964, in the belief that Americans—their assurances to the contrary notwithstanding—might well prefer to fight a conventional war in Europe rather than respond with nuclear weapons to a Soviet attack, President Charles de Gaulle opted for an independent nuclear force (*force de frappe*). As a result, McKenna notes, the French army came to be viewed as, in effect, merely "a 'trip wire' for the use of tactical nuclear weapons."

During the Cold War, the French derived "tremendous political power" on the international scene from their limited nuclear force, McKenna writes. At home, conscription and national military service became "an easy way to involve the citizen in national defense, without really investing conventional forces with strategic or political importance."

But the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany sharply reduced the military role of nuclear weapons, shifting the emphasis to conventional arms, McKenna observes. The 1991 Persian Gulf War made that point clear to Jacques Chirac and other French leaders. Out of a supposedly "combat-ready" army of 280,000, as well as the 47,000 troops of the Force d'Action Rapide, the French were able to muster only 12,000 troops for service in the gulf. Britain, by contrast, was able to raise three times that number from its professional force of only 160,000. The problem: French law prevented the government from sending conscripts overseas unless they volunteered, and then-president François Mitterrand refused to ask Parliament to lift the restriction.

Chirac's plan for the professionalization of the armed forces, unveiled after his election to the presidency in 1995, aroused no strong opposition. Although service in the military was traditionally a French rite of passage, many now saw it as "a waste of time"—and avoided actual military service. Highly educated conscripts, often from the upper crust, increasingly were sent on nonmilitary duty (*service civil*), serving overseas as *coopérants* (junior executives) for French corporations, and getting paid far more than the average draftee.

The transition to a leaner, all-volunteer military force is due to be completed in 2002. But the French tradition of mandatory service to the nation will not be entirely dead. Starting that year, McKenna says, young men and women will be obliged to attend an annual "citizen's rendezvous," lasting no more than a week, to imbibe "basic republican values."

Dreaming of Europe

After four years of war in the former Yugoslavia, the United States had to come, once again, to Europe's rescue. French thinker André Glucksman, writing in *New Perspectives Quarterly* (Fall 1997), explains why united action still eludes the continent.

The return of the Americans is very paradoxical, especially in light of the fact that in 1999 the Europeans are preparing to launch a common currency, the euro. Both economically and militarily, France and Germany certainly possess the wherewithal to rise to challenges such as Bosnia. But they lack the mentality—the shared cultural ground—required for a common political agenda. . . .

The strategy of integrating through the euro, a good thing in itself, was conceived as a project for "this side" *of Europe when the Wall came down in 1989. It didn't then, and doesn't now, take into account either the eastern or southern frontiers of that part of Europe tied together by a common currency. For 10 years we have spoken of the euro without elaborating some strategy that takes into account the changed historical circumstances and the new challenge.*

This challenge must be met on the cultural level. So far, the requisite cultural dialogue has happened only between Germany on the one hand and the former [German Democratic Republic], the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary on the other. . . .

In contrast, the French live happily on in their cafés, oblivious to the dangers that exist on the other side of the fallen wall. Worried about economic competition and immigrants, they instead seek to put up new walls, not just around France but around Western Europe as a whole. Rather than remembering catastrophe, the French only remember the dream of victory over fascism. And it is a dream because—despite the fact that Charles de Gaulle gave them the right to dream—the victory was not theirs, but that of the U.S., England, and the Soviet Union.

Russia's Collapsing Military

"Disarmed and Dangerous" by Anatol Lieven, in *The New Republic* (Dec. 22, 1997), 1220 19th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Though the war in Chechnya is over, the casualties in the demoralized and ill-equipped Russian military continue to mount—inflicted by the enemy within. In 1996, 1,071 soldiers were murdered, mostly by other soldiers, and 543 committed suicide. The Russian navy admitted there were at least 32 suicide attempts that same year, many successful, among the officers of the Northern Fleet, which includes most of Russia's nuclear-armed submarines.

While the weakened state of its military may seem like good news to Russia's neighbors and to the West, Lieven, a correspondent for the London *Times* in the former Soviet Union from 1990 to 1996, warns that "the more anarchic the Russian military becomes, the more of a destabilizing factor it may be, both inside Russia and in the Eurasian land mass that Russia dominates." Though politically quiescent so far, the officer corps could be tempted to take a decisive hand in the event of an extraconstitutional power struggle, and a force too weak to defend Russia could contribute to a dangerous power vacuum in the neighborhood. Even worse, officers who are not paid regularly are more likely to peddle nuclear weapons to rogue states and terrorists.

The infamous practice of *dyedovshchina*—a form of exploitation far surpassing hazing in its cruelty—is largely to blame, Lieven says, for the wave of murders, suicides, and nervous and physical breakdowns in recent years. Lacking enough effective noncommissioned officers, even those officers with a will to do so have been unable to control the abuses. "The weakest element in our army," one general says, "is the sergeants."

There has been some talk in Russia of reform—of downsizing and professionalization. But the transition to a professional force of 1.2 million would require the equivalent of almost a 40 percent increase in the 1997 military budget. President Boris Yeltsin's advisers, Lieven says, reportedly greeted the reform idea with mockery, deeming it "an absolutely preposterous notion given Russia's present fiscal circumstances."