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IN STRESS



DECEMBER 1968

Editorial

The year 1968 is drawing to a close. It has been a year flagged with violence. The Negro cause was rifled by the assassination of Martin Luther King. The constitutional right to run for office was mortally wounded when the sniper's first bullet struck down Robert F. Kennedy. Minority groups flocked to Washington to resurrect their trampled liberties. Chicago concretized Arlo Guthrie's classic complaint: "Why do police people beat on peace people?" The trial of the Catonsville Nine exemplified the inherent flaw in the great American freedom to follow one's convictions. Nine million Americans voted for George Wallace. All of America watched 1968 in their living room.

In September, 1968, College Misericordia initiated another fall semester. The campus echoed the national temper. The culotte cause was rifled by the assassination of pant-dresses. The constitutional right to run on the grass was mortally wounded with the first issuance from authority. Minority groups flocked to Kennedy Lounge to resurrect their trampled liturgy. Merrick Hall witnessed a boycott as reaction to resident students, classic complaint: "No more sit-down dinners!" The continuation of Faculty - Student Seminars exemplified the inherent flaw in the Administration's concept of co-operation and communication. In a recent student poll 85% of the student body disgraced themselves by not voting. Hundreds of Misericordians blanked 1968 in the Snack Bar.

America views Misericordia as Misericordia views America—neither sees the other. We elaborate on subjects with as much relevance as culottes, expecting to gain student power. Our work should be guided by the sense that we may be, perhaps are, the last generation in the experiment with living.

What are the thinking forces that exist; or must exist, to jolt us into an awareness of our surroundings both inside and outside the gate?

What has to happen to Misericordia to make students realize that issues are not merely in newspapers and magazines, and that they have a duty to themselves to make informed decisions, and take intelligent stands?

What role have we ourselves to play in the making and molding of our existence?

INSTRESS

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Table of Contents

FICTION

SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME 15
Theresa Kosloski

POETRY

DEDICATED TO THE 4-5 O'CLOCK JOGGERS 6
Sr. Mary Louise Templeton

WHO ARE THE DEAD MEN? 9
Sr. Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

HERE TONIGHT 11
Theresa Kosloski

NO. 4 12
Sr. Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

ONE THIRTY-FIVE A.M. 14
Agnes Toloczko

AMACIDE 14
Donna Einhorn

IN MEMORIAM R.F.K. 22
Sr. Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

UNWOMBED 24
Sr. Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

FEATURES

THOMAS WOLFE: 4
WANDERER IN SEARCH OF SELF
Elizabeth Bahl

MARSHALL PLAN RECONSIDERED 7
Mary Ungvarsky

POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL CLASS 13
Elaine Fitzpatrick

AMERICANA 1968, PHOTO ESSAY 18
Mary Bedrin

SPECIALISM AND/OR THE SPECIAL 20
Kathleen McGeehin

A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE 31
IN THE FUTURE OF BELIEF
Mary Jane Mesharer

ILLUSTRATIONS

PHOTOGRAPH cover
Karen Anthony

ILLUSTRATION 4
Marilyn Reiff

ILLUSTRATION 5
Marilyn Reiff

PEN AND INK SKETCH 7
Barbara Kapish

PHOTOGRAPH 9
Mary Bedrin

PHOTOGRAPH 10
Mary Bedrin

PHOTOGRAPH 14
Karen Anthony

PHOTOGRAPH 16
Karen Anthony

PHOTOGRAPH 17
Karen Anthony

PHOTOGRAPH 20
Karen Anthony

PHOTOGRAPH 22
Mary Bedrin

IN EVERY ISSUE

BOOK REVIEWS

TELL ME HOW LONG
THE TRAIN'S BEEN GONE 26
Mary Grace Duffy

THE CHOSEN and TO BROOKLYN WITH LOVE 27
Agnes Toloczko

REVIEW FEATURE

THE NEGRO NOVELIST: 25
HIS SEARCH FOR FREEDOM
Mary Bedrin

GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPH 32
Mary Bedrin

PHOTOGRAPH 33
Mary Bedrin

PHOTOGRAPH 34
Regina Harcharik

WOODCUT 35
Barbara Kapish

SCRATCHBOARD 36
Regina Harcharik

Thomas Wolfe:

Wanderer in Search of Self

Elizabeth Bahl

Thomas Wolfe, twentieth century American novelist, spent his young tumultuous life as a man seeking reality in a complex "new world." This searching and occasional finding comprises his life's story and is effected in his autobiographical-fiction, the only type of fiction which, for him, existed.

Wolfe was a wanderer, a wanderer looking for himself. His religion was separate from that of tradition and convention. His was an experience. And what he chose to experience was the life that surrounded him. He lived in the midst of mankind with whom he shared life and death.

Wolfe's divergence from the stream was his role as creator. There was instilled in him, a creative genius, an intuition. Instilled it was; stilled it did not remain.

His genius poured forth in a period of twelve years, 1927 to 1939. Literally millions of words appeared within the covers of massive, power-packed, and thought-provoking novels. His narrations, the individuals he chose to write about, his lyrical tone, and the prolific nature of his works evidence a pouring forth, but, unlike so many contemporaries, never a spreading thin.

Wolfe was a center. About, revolved his father's house, his hometown, Asheville, N.C., the East, and the complex "new world," America.

Receded in his mind was a symbol of this genius, a symbol which he may have, unconsciously and therefore unthinkingly, experienced throughout his youth. Weathered with age and the elements, the Angel stood on the porch of his father's shop. The father burned with the desire to carve a similar piece, but could not. Thus, creativity was suppressed.

Wolfe learned from this and throughout his life allowed neither citizens of Asheville, nor friends, nor publishers to suppress his inborn genius.

Hints of Wolfe's genius have been compiled and put into an easily readable and revealing form.

Andrew Turnbull has transferred Wolfe's story into a present best seller biography, *Thomas Wolfe*. What Turnbull has found in his research of documents and in interviews with hundreds of people, has been hints of the human and literary genius to which Wolfe devoted his life.

There is a uniqueness to Wolfe that can best be expressed in his own words and the words of those, including Maxwell Perkins, with whom he was most intimate.

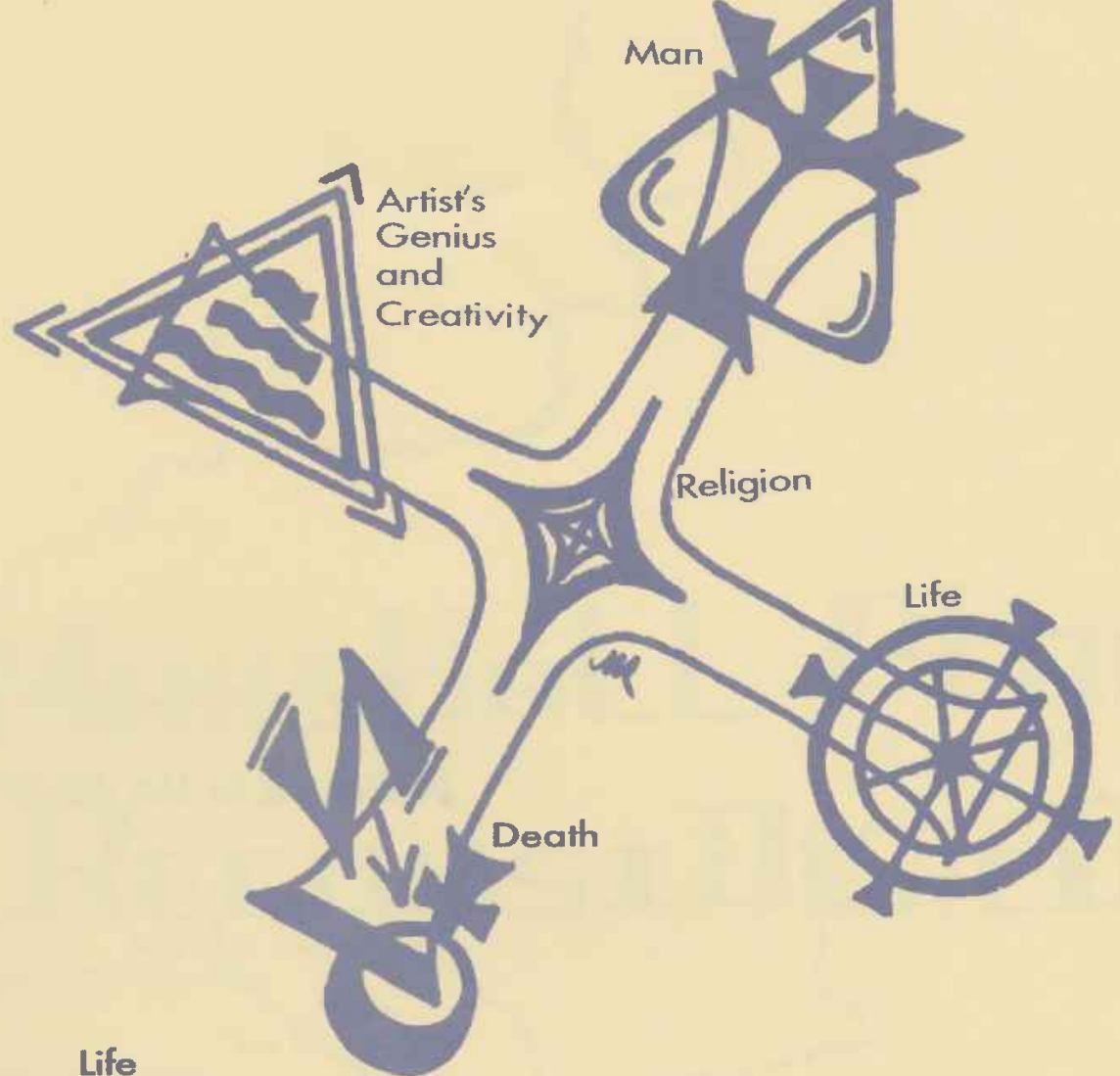
Mr. Turnbull has crystallized many of these masterpieces in his biography. During his life time, Wolfe formulated his own definitions or negated the possibility of definition to man, religion, life, death, and the artist's genius.

Although Wolfe's life was short, 39 years short, it was an intensive attempt, an urgent grasping to clutch its essence. However successful, this attempt is enlightening for us as readers and as partners in the unfulfillable search for reality and truth.

Miss Bahl is a senior English major.

Editor's note:

Excerpts taken from Andrew Turnbull.
Thomas Wolfe; a biography. New York,
Scribner's, 1967.



Religion

"He had once described himself to Perkins as 'a religious and believing person' — not, of course, in the orthodox sense. Like many romantics, he belonged to a race of lost believers wandering the earth, the yearning and mysticism in their work being to some extent a religious residue. Wolfe lived in what could be called the area of the absence of God, acutely feeling the lack."

Man

"The summer in Asheville had crystallized his view that, in a phrase he specially liked, you can't go home again: can't go back to your childhood, the town of your birth, the father you have lost, romantic life, dreams of fame and glory, or any of the other 'solacements of time and memory.'"

"His home from now on would be the future and the work he had carved out for himself, which he hoped would reflect an ever-widening objectivity and a shrinking self-concern. A man may wander the earth in search of a father when actually he is seeking his own manhood, waiting for the moment when he becomes self-starting, self-reliant, self-conquering, self-governing, becomes a man himself and no longer needs a father."

Life

"Since Ben's death the conviction had grown on him (Wolfe) that men do not escape life because life is dull, but that life escapes from men because men are little. He felt that the passions of the play were greater than the actors. It seemed to him that he had never had a great moment of living in which he had measured up to its fullness."

Death

"I have a thing to tell you: Something has spoken to me in the night, burning the tapers of the waning year; something has spoken in the night; and told me I shall die, I know not where. Losing the earth we know for greater knowing the life we have for greater life, and leaving the friends we loved for greater loving, men find a land more kind than home, more large than earth."

"Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded, toward which the spirits of the nations draw, toward which the conscience of the world is tending — a wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

Artist's Genius and Creativity

"Being a great artist depends no more on such callousness than does his ability to swallow castor-oil, or blue-point oysters, or fried pork chops . . . You, or no man else, can make me a great artist, or a second-rate artist, or any kind of artist. That is a matter which was settled in my mother's womb — she, whose blood fed me, whose heart and whose brain lighted me and gave me being. That part of our destiny, believe me, is fixed, and nothing save death or madness can check or change it. And worldly wisdom on life, from an experienced traveller, is of no avail. If there is genius, the thing is a marvellous intuition, little dependent on observation. If there is no genius, I'd as soon draw wages from one form of hackery as another."

Dedicated to the 4-5 O'clock Joggers

*i came jogging up to God
nothing formal or high class
just
"hi, pal"
with the rhythm of my shoes
and an invitation
in my swing
to come along with me
I'm on my way
to pick up a few more squares
and we'll form a gang
of joggers —*

*i came jogging up
and
then
(chang!)
ping, flowers-forth a jazz
all jogging stops
wonder-struck
i fall
a dropped-rag
cause
(NURK!)
God said
Yes!!!*

Sister Mary Louise Templeton, RSM



Mary Ungvarsky

The European Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan, today has taken on the form of a nostalgic memory for many American diplomats and foreign policy experts. Without a second thought, history texts cover the Plan in less than a page while devoting more space to less significant items.

The fact remains that the Marshall Plan, as formulated and utilized by the Truman administration, was a stroke of genius. In a few short years, it managed to stabilize the chaotic events of post-war Europe and thereby inflict upon the Communists a major defeat. Such accomplishments alone justify a renewed study of the Marshall Plan. More importantly, in light of present day events, the United States may have to resort to a facsimile of the Marshall Plan in rebuilding Southeast Asia once the conflict in Vietnam is terminated. A knowledge of the formation, operation, and accomplishments of the Marshall Plan is needed in this respect. In a limited way, this article hopes to impart some insight in these areas.

As a crusade against the terrors of Nazism and Fascism, World War II left Europe at the brink of economic collapse and political chaos. Poverty and hunger ravaged both the victorious and the defeated. World-wide inflation aggravated the tenuous economic position of Europe, making it difficult for all European countries to buy badly needed supplies. Low European production helped to disrupt the European balance of trade as imports greatly exceeded exports. Because of this unstable economic situation, Europe faced political upheaval. In 1947, Greece experienced internal Communist guerilla warfare. The discontinuance of British aid to Turkey threatened to make the nation vulnerable to Soviet aggression. All of Europe desperately needed aid to recover its economic stability and preserve its political integrity.

The Truman administration was very much aware of the economic and political problems facing Europe and the threats posed for the United States and all free governments. American aid

and supplies had been pouring into Europe and produced no visible signs of stabilizing the European situation. Returning from a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 28 April 1947, Secretary of State Marshall realized that Russia was determined to stand in the way of permanent European recovery. Marshall was convinced that a new direction would have to be forged in American foreign policy. Piece-meal aid and sheer military strength would not be sufficient to deter Communist expansion.

In accordance with this new insight, Secretary Marshall instructed George Kennan, a high ranking State Department diplomat, well-versed in Soviet affairs, to head the Policy Planning Staff and develop a foreign policy with long range objectives. As a major facet of this new foreign policy the Policy Planning Staff planted the seeds for the Marshall Plan. The Staff urged the United States to combat Communism by restoring and maintaining European economic stability. The role of the United States was to be that of a mentor, guide, and financial backer. Success depended on European initiative and willingness to cooperate.

With the issuance of the Policy Planning Staff's report, Secretary Marshall made his first public move. On 5 June, 1947, in a speech at Harvard University, Marshall provided an additional catalyst for the formulation of an organized effort to promote and actually carry out permanent European recovery. He reiterated the important points of the Policy Planning Staff's report upon the stabilization of the economy of Europe. Significantly, Secretary Marshall invited any country willing to cooperate, regardless of political ideology, to participate in an organized European recovery program.

This set the stage for permanent European recovery from the ravages of war. The Truman administration embarked also in a new direction of foreign policy. The United States would not dictate; it would listen. The United States would not destroy or attack; it would restore and rebuild. All that remained was for Europe to take the cue.

Europe responded with lightning speed. On 12 July 1947, sixteen European nations met at Paris and formed the Committee of European Economic Cooperation (CEEC). Unfortunately, Russia along with its satellites did not attend the conference and branded the Marshall Plan as an extension of American imperialism and a bold affront to the national integrity of foreign nations. In spite of these Communist propaganda attacks, the CEEC issued a joint report of goals to help bring about recovery, and submitted them to the United States for evaluation. Among the major aims mentioned were increased production for member nations, stabilization of internal financial situations, restoration of a more favorable balance of trade by increasing European exports, and greater intra-European cooperation.

With Europe committed to a definite set of goals, the Truman administration managed to pass the European Recovery Program with the aid of Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg, set up the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) headed by Paul Hoffman former President of the Studebaker Company. ECA acted as the administrative agency for the Marshall Plan. America had committed herself to European recovery to the point of no return.

Paralleling the formation of the ECA in the United States, a cooperating European agency, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), was formed by the countries of the CEEC. The ECA sent special missions to the cooperating OEEC nations and in addition reviewed any programs proposed by the OEEC. ECA possessed the ability to modify programs involving production, investment, trade, and consumption. In all these cases, the OEEC's advice was always sought by the ECA before any modification of proposed programs was undertaken.

With its administrative machinery formed, European Recovery Program funds and supplies steadily flowed into Europe in accordance with OEEC recommendations. According to the ECA Report on Recovery Progress, program funds for the period extending from April 1948 to March 1949 amounted to \$4,953,000,000. By December 1948 food, feed, and fertilizer procurements amounted to \$1,384,300,000. In order to stimulate production, \$1,038,800,000 worth of raw material and semi-finished products were sent to Europe by December 1948. As ERP funds poured into Europe, the OEEC managed to join the individual programs of member countries into a joint recovery program.

Results of the efforts of the ERP became evident in a relatively short period. Production increased considerably. ECA reported a 100% increase in steel production in Europe over a three year period from 1946-1949. Overall agricultural production increased 25% in the one year period of 1948-1949. The results of the Marshall Plan proved so favorable that Communist attempts to sabotage the ERP failed.

Progress was made also in the area of European trade and cooperation with the formulation of the Schuman Plan. This plan called for France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Italy to pool the benefits of their major coal and steel industries. This laid the basis for the European Common Market.

The Marshall Plan continued to pump aid into Europe until 1950 to the tune of approximately \$9,000,000,000, with great results. Unfortunately, the Korean War brought the ERP to a premature end. The Truman administration, fearing the possibility of a Russian attack on Western Europe, shifted the emphasis of its foreign policy to aid Western Europe's defensive re-armament. The ECA was gradually assimilated into the Mutual Security Agency and the Marshall Plan became a thing of the past.

In the space of three short years, the European Recovery Program performed miracles. Besides rebuilding European economic stability, it confined Communism to Eastern Europe, where by 1948 it already had a firm stronghold. Communists could no longer count on chaos to promote their ideology. A basis was laid also for further intra-European cooperation. European countries working together in the ERP became less suspicious of each other and the United States.

After the end of the Vietnam Conflict, the United States may face a similar situation consisting of economic chaos and the threat of further Communist infiltration. As in the post World War II era in Western Europe, piece-meal aid and sheer military strength will not relieve the situation. An organized program of recovery, similar to the Marshall Plan, will be needed in order to prevent the under-developed nations of Asia from falling into the Communist sphere. Once again, the United States will have to be willing to provide a considerable amount of funds for any such program. Along with this aid, the United States will have to activate Asian initiative and cooperation. The role of guide and mentor, not dictator, will have to be reassumed by United States foreign policy.

It is not too early for American diplomats and the American public and leaders to consider whether they wish to make the sacrifices they once made in the name of world security in 1948. If not, then the United States must reappraise its involvement in Southeast Asia.

Miss Ungvasky is a senior history major.

who are the dead men?

Sion sinks
the mob chistles her down
for stones
sharp violent thrust bleed
to death
those words.

"Prophet, you may have visions
but
keep them
to yourself
or
we will kill you!"

the death rattle shakes the ground
lo
the temple
falls
with
each
flung
stone

Little man you stand there
negated colors drape
a starved stripped branch
(do you symbolize our night?)
honey dripped you stand
beneath
a stone woman
whose flaming torch
(strange noone heads)
grows dim.

The Holy Ones
in long silken robes
draw near —

"Hey you, have you
forgotten Caesar?
you place laurel wreathes upon your head —

We condemn you
traitor
Judas
(YES) heretic

in Justice We cast you out into
the darkness
gnash your teeth
We turn
We disown you
in God's name

Holy Holy Holy



Yes Prophet

keep your visions to yourself
you may have them

you may cloak them
in taming images

(words are beautiful

how lovely we sound . .

i stand for Justice

i stand for Honesty –

My brothers, love one another)

but keep them – don't action them forth

you must be as us
597975

wear it proudly

(even 4th in July

we wave our little flag

each Thanksgiving

we donate

little shoes)

be as We be as

and We will make

you our leader if

you but adore

tradition

. . . silence is golden . . .

or we will

crucifyo –

U–crucify

crucify all radicals!

(the eyes of the seeing are shut

the ears of the hearing are closed

and the rich buy the gospel

while the

poor

die with each

burst of flame . . .)

Sister Mary Louise Templeton, RSM



here tonight

I don't know
if he — often does this sort of thing
or what he hopes to gain by it.
What can he hope to win with honorable abstractions?
But how we take him
is another thing, and meaning more
to us since he advises
a "hopeless hope" and, having chosen for himself,
is done with it.
But not with us.

A restless group settled in waves;
outside, a makeshift banner flapped,
puffed up with wind and pride: HERE, TONIGHT! FR. DAN BERRIGAN
And he was
Hypnotic, a smallish stick figure
with hollowed face and manner of
studied humility. How awkward we seemed that night,
cautious and reckless.
On regular school days, occupants of
a genial niche in the now
generation breathed sophistry into the air,
Because of our age,
unexpected,

I thought we'd have eagerly haloed him.
But some spent the evening neither
taking him in, nor letting him out, but keeping him
cornered in
some back street of the mind, with the poor
where he belongs. Then I suspect,
there were those who cared most for the man.
He might not have
minded that, being back from the wars,
standing cross-straight, speaking his peace.

Theresa Kosloski



No. 4

Come late
or
 . come lovely
 cross trembling-leafed valleys,

I will be
 waiting
 much like a lonesome cock
peeping out of wings
 a little hope
 in my chirp
 for you
 coming late
 or
 trembling lovely

a little flower
 in your hair
blossoming
 or
 withered
a little smile on your
 face
 in youth's joy
or
 graced-age.

I envision it all as
 I
 cringe in wet-winds

who would have known
for all this
 you
 had passed
 me by?

Political Attitudes and Social Class

Elaine Fitzpatrick

Krech in *Individual in Society*, has defined an attitude as a:

. . . system composed of cognitions, feelings and action tendencies. Attitudes are formed in the process of want satisfaction, information to which the individual is exposed, group affiliations and attitudes are a reflection of personality.

Values, sources of information, and group affiliations are principally determined by the social position held by the individual. Professor Richard Centers, University of California states:

. . . a person's status and role with respect to economic processes of society imposes upon him certain attitudes, values and interests relating to his role and status in the political and economic sphere.

Cottell and Eberhart, social psychologists, attempted to find something about the sources of information regarding the atomic bomb. The findings showed that the number of sources of information a person had was closely related to his education and income, which are two variables used to establish class. Further study by other social psychologists have shown that a lack of relevant facts and conflicting facts provided for the individual, creates an opportunity to invent, and distort the issues to the extent that they are congruent with attitudes already established.

Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, members of the staff of Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, "sought to determine extent of homogeneity of political attitudes in three significant primary groups." In post election interviews, participants were asked how their friends, spouses or families and work associates voted. The results showed the homogeneity of political behavior within these groups was high.

The secondary needs of man are psychological and include need for recognition, response, and security. These needs plus the other-directedness of modern man makes him susceptible to the group influence, which create and limit the experiences for the individual out of which his information, feelings, and action tendencies begin to organize into attitudes. The individual in judging an issue will act in total and view the object as an aid or a threat, and take the course of action necessary to preserve his identity, and insure his security.

Miss Fitzpatrick received her B.A. in Sociology from Misericordia in 1968.

At birth each individual possesses a basic personality, and it is through the socialization process that this personality is developed. All man's behavior is learned; the behavior of the individual is not determined but merely influenced and conditioned. Man has an intellect and will and operates as an individual, but he is not distinct from his social setting. The social setting includes the roles the individual plays, which grant him a "place" in society.

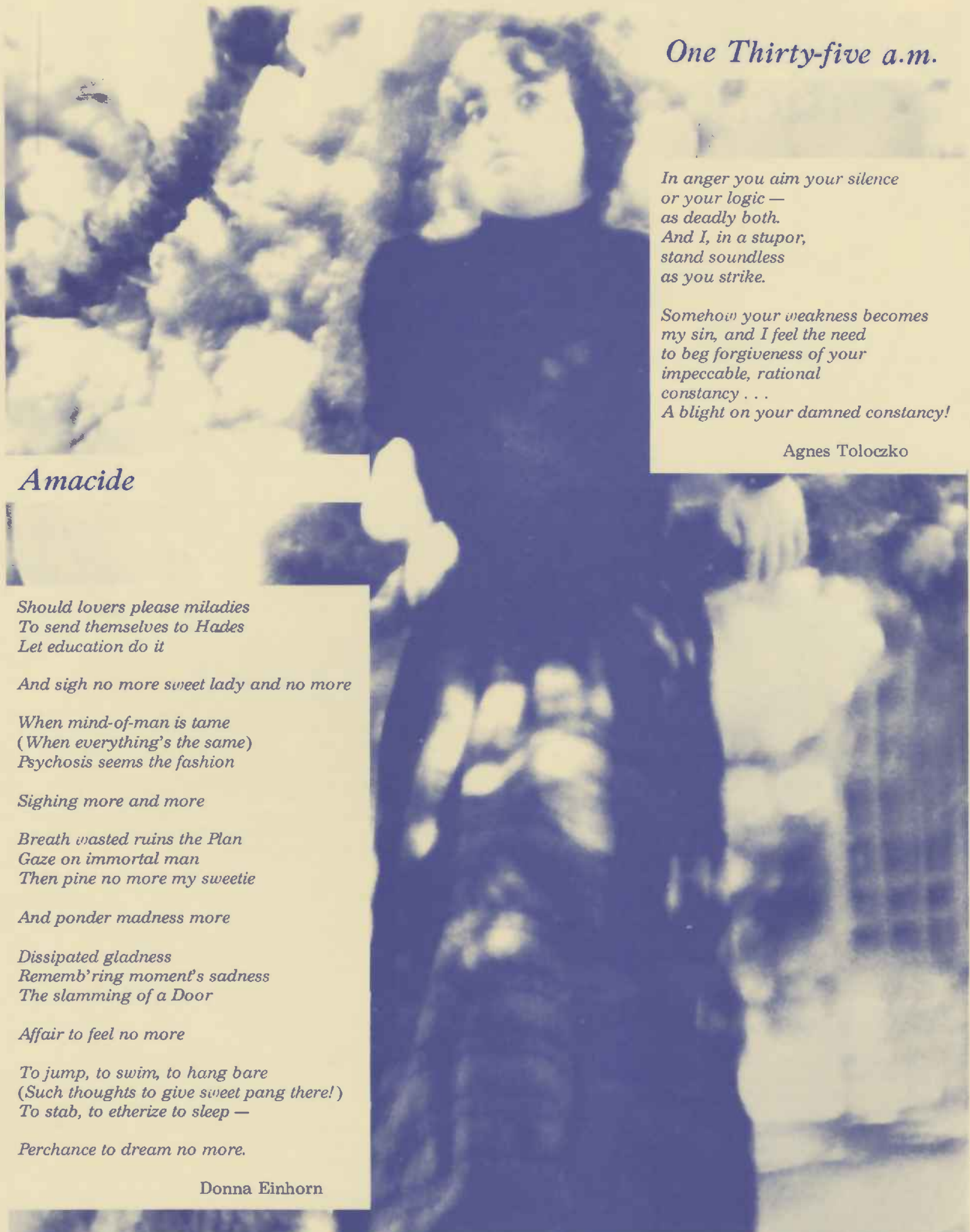
The stratifying of a society establishes categories or classes with which the individual identifies. Franklin H. Giddings has advanced a theory regarding "consciousness of kind." Giddings defines this term as:

. . . a state of consciousness in which, any being whether low or high in the scale of life, recognizes another being as of like mind with itself.

The socialization process which is the means of developing value orientations and class consciousness is the result of acting in awareness of others and adjusting responses to the way others respond. This process creates a self-image, an ideal self, and an ego. Ego satisfaction is attained through prestige, success, and self respect. Today the creation of an ego and the satisfaction of its needs, according to Reisman in *The Lonely Crowd*, revolves around the peer group. Hollingshead in his study *Elmstown Youth*, found most primary associations of parents and youth were with people of the same social class. People today look to their contemporaries for guidance and directions, modern man values most the judgment of others. Reisman states:

The other-directed man is socialized by the peer group, his behavior is guided by cues taking in particular situations, the psychological mechanism of conformity is anxiety, the ultimate evil is being unloved and unapproved, the life style of the other-directed man is politically manipulative, and consumption oriented.

Kahl, a sociologist at Washington University, in *The American Class Structure* states that class consciousness and value orientations are of great importance for understanding political attitudes.



One Thirty-five a.m.

*In anger you aim your silence
or your logic —
as deadly both.
And I, in a stupor,
stand soundless
as you strike.*

*Somehow your weakness becomes
my sin, and I feel the need
to beg forgiveness of your
impeccable, rational
constancy . . .
A blight on your damned constancy!*

Agnes Toloczko

Amacide

*Should lovers please miladies
To send themselves to Hades
Let education do it*

And sigh no more sweet lady and no more

*When mind-of-man is tame
(When everything's the same)
Psychosis seems the fashion*

Sighing more and more

*Breath wasted ruins the Plan
Gaze on immortal man
Then pine no more my sweetie*

And ponder madness more

*Dissipated gladness
Rememb'ring moment's sadness
The slamming of a Door*

Affair to feel no more

*To jump, to swim, to hang bare
(Such thoughts to give sweet pang there!)
To stab, to etherize to sleep —*

Perchance to dream no more.

Donna Einhorn

Someone to Watch Over Me

Theresa Kosloski

It was so easy to leave Cincinnati, two stops before my tour was finished, that I cried many of the miles to Newark. I was nineteen, a giacometti figure bundled in thick things against the Midwestern wind, and running scared. You know how nineteen is — shy, but not shy, because it's so easy to be sure and it's one or the other every minute.

During that ride East there were marvels and demons all around me; it was easy to be properly melodramatic. I left early. The day was tones of gray; it was perfect. To warm myself, I tried to remember good things about the trip, but all that plumed up in my mind's eye was a fusion of pale faces — my audiences, never more than fifty or so, wintered white faces on see-through shadow bodies, whose eyes I could never understand in the dark — and Frank's phone calls, early in the tour.

"Look, doll," he phoned me in Pittsburgh to say, "The trouble is, you don't look the way you sound. Your songs — listen, doll. Your songs have an image you gave them when you wrote them, but you don't have the same image on stage. They're strong stuff, solid. You sit there up to your chin in wool and mohair, shrinking into it, you just don't look — well, you should look outraged, doll. Dynamic."

"Frank, it's hard to feel dynamic on a drafty stage facing an audience of thirty or less."

"But, doll, you're not even getting across to *them*."

So when I left Cincinnati — no one could possibly care that I was skipping two dates; no one, I realized, except Frank, and to hell with him and his bank account. Nineteen is bravado. — I went first to Newark, an icy river away from Frank, a comfortable gap.

One of my personal marvels on the ride East was that I was leaving, or more precisely, not even going back. I was skipping out — a luxurious thing people in art films might do. Looking around at the other passengers to see if any of them looked as melodramatic as I expected I did, I faced one of my demons —

across the aisle, a gray-eyed girl in green who looked like Ellen. And then she didn't look like Ellen. Curved around my guitar like a lover or one in pain, I tried to ignore her while hot tears seemed suddenly to be running down the inside of my face.

Later she came over and touched my shoulder, asking, "Are you all right? Could I get something for you?" She didn't say my name . . . I looked up into the rainwater eyes — how perfect — and said, "It is you." She sat down. The tears had evaporated; my eyes scratched in their sockets as they watched her weariness. It would be absurd to have the usual conversation, the round of lies and quasi-cares: *How are you? Fine, and you? Pretty well — can't complain.* Instead I said, "Have you been working?"

"I've been writing. Not too brilliantly, I might add."

What I remembered as a charming ruefulness in Ellen was replaced by a touch of bitterness. It didn't seem cruel to ask, "Selling anything?"

There was a peculiar pause after which Ellen said, "Buying anything?" And that to me seemed cruel. *How could she know?* In retaliation I asked her if Ben was going to meet her at the station.

"No, he's meeting you, isn't he?"

How had she known? I faltered. "I — I'm not sure." The tears seemed to be starting up again and someone inside me was screaming, *Where is she coming from? Where is she going?* like a nursery rhyme refrain. When Ellen covered her eyes with aching hands, her voice vibrated through the chamber of them: "Was it very bad? Ben will help you get over it. He knows how bad a first tour can be." Her shoulders lifted and the hands came away from the face like doors opening wide. The breath in her throat struck a rhythm, "They're the only ones he's ever been on."

Another pause. Pennsylvania, a metallic blue streak, grated past the train. "What do you mean?" I whispered. I imagined Pittsburgh somewhere at the other end of the blue streak, a billowing, blowing break in the trail, and thought of Frank. Frank was definitely not understanding about first tours. Not listening to Ellen's answer, I began to be eager for Ben's consolation and shivered, not knowing whether it was from cold or fear or eagerness.

"You'll see," Ellen was saying, "when you meet Ben. Get to know him again. How long has it been since you've seen him?"



"I saw Ben — just before I left for Chicago. Six weeks . . ."

"It'll be good for you to see him again."

"I saw him six weeks ago." My voice was rising, "I left the same day you did."

For a long time then there was silence, the silence of a train rushing through a night. Blue sounds caught at the windows, at my shoulders, my hands. The blues and the lights were reflected in Ellen's eyes. She hummed heavily. In a movie I might have picked up my guitar and played the appropriate chords. Instead I sat still and white and tried to sort things out: I supposed I was crying, but stopped when I realized that Ellen should be crying. Nineteen is so dogmatic.

After a while, the blue cleared, the lights faded, and I was beginning to feel real again. It was an odd feeling; it hadn't happened for six weeks. I knew from the feverish roughness of my cheeks that it wouldn't last. Until it passed, I thought of Frank in New York. By now he would have gotten several phone calls. He might be hunched over the phone at that moment, breathing back at an irate caller who left him no room for words, or sitting back in his chair that way he did when he slid his hand up over the arch of eyebrows and the dome of forehead, closing his eyes in slow motion, as if somehow his fingers moved the lids.

I never said another word to Ellen, but she talked. She told me how it would be in Newark. "Ben will be there, a little bent over the way he is, leaning over his cigarette. His hair will look gray in the light — you'll be startled at that — and there'll be shadows around his eyes and mouth. He'll take you — he'll take you to the American Hotel and get you a room on the fourth floor. That's for folksingers. The third is for jazz musicians, the second is for — God, I don't know, but Ben will be on the fifth where he has a room with a skylight — the only one in the house, I think — with a table set up under the light and his typewriter set up on the table . . . He'll write songs for you and come down evenings with his guitar. It won't be long, Meg. It might be years, but it won't be long."

I didn't understand, I wanted to ask a thousand questions, but I couldn't speak. The train lunged into the cavern of Penn Station. Getting off, I thought for a minute of how I looked to Ellen, if she was watching, as I dissolved into the amber

shadows. I wondered if now she was crying, if she had ever cried. "*Ben will help you get over it.*"

He was there, a long gray figure with pale hair whose cheek and hands were cool on mine. "You don't look well, Meg." There was blinding lights, no crowds, but groups of people getting in our way, in the lobby an assembly of Puerto Ricans around a small loose woman whose mouth moved, though I heard nothing; it was so difficult to tell if she was speaking. Outside it was beginning to rain and West Market Street was a cottony blur in the mist. When we were in the car I tried to clear a space in my head for Ben's voice, or even mine — we were both so silent among the muffled city noises. I thought of asking him to stop so I could call Frank to tell him I was all right, but it hardly mattered. Frank would only ask if I had money to make up for the stops I canceled.

"Ben, I broke two dates," I said when Frank's voice had stolen into the place I'd saved for Ben's.

"Was it very bad?"

Was it very bad? Did they have to talk alike?

"It was ghastly, but the worst part, Ben . . . The worst part was just now, on the train."

"What do you mean? Somebody get nasty?"

"No, nothing like that. I — I think I saw Ellen. I talked to her." He said nothing. I watched his profile alternately glow and gray as we passed bars and storefronts on Ferry Street. "Have you heard from her since — since we left?"

He shook his head briefly, as if he were giving me only half an answer and saving the rest for later. I asked where he was taking me and, when he said the American, if he was still staying there. "The fifth floor?" He turned one dark eye to me: "You did see Ellen." I wanted to say something that would make the smooth planes of his face shatter. "Why did she leave you?" I asked, and he answered too quickly, "She got tired of her life here."

"Got tired of it? That's all? She just ran out on it when things got dull?"

"It wasn't just that. There must have been a thousand reasons. We can't ever really tell, can we, why we do things."

"Do you miss her?"

The curving gray shape of his cheek heaved a little. "You just

did the same thing to Frank. Does he miss you?"

The car throbbed then with silence. I slumped miserably in my seat, not understanding any of it, wondering why crucial conversations were always punctuated with silences that did nothing for them either way, and crucial questions always answered with questions. The Ironbound district, packed on either side of us with dim brick buildings, dripped with more silence. In the vacuum the rain and the sounds of the car and our breathing crescendoed, and then came my weary child's question, the necessary one: "Then why do you want to take care of me?"

"Because," I thought I heard Ben say, "you need someone to help you." Then we were at the American and I felt myself letting go into another rush of lights and voices.

I realized later that I was quite sick. Much of my arrival in Newark was a blur of rainy images, I tried to remember important things — if I had seen Ellen, what I'd told Ben about it, what I had planned to say to Frank. None of my memories fit together . . . Ellen had said some things that were important, I was sure, but their substance was a blur, a cozy blur. My eyes were so tired of gray, I closed them and watched black for many days.

I stayed at the American until I was well again, weighted down at the bottom of a dark, steep room by quilts and, later, the *New York Times*. All the shadows of Penn Station, of countless clubs and college auditoriums were regathered in my room. Someone cut through them every afternoon to feed me tea and oranges, and in the evenings, soup with bread — sickroom food that kept me light-headed and hollow-hearted. After I guessed it was Ben's shadowy comings and goings that pulled me along there was less of a hollow, in spite of whatever Ellen had said. What did she know?

Ben and I never talked, but I rescued something from every day to tell him later on. One day I noticed liquid sunlight spilling into the room and took it for a good sign. Doubting I had ever talked with Ellen, I began to prepare for the vision of Ben

when we would meet consciously face to face over the tea some afternoon.

He never came, but I did have one caller, the manager of the American. A tall man with black eyes and black fingernails, he came late one morning to ask if I would be checking out the next day.

"Checking out? Well, no — we had planned to stay a while."

He stood morbidly still in a dusty shadow and said, "The maximum is seven days, miss, unless you have a long engagement and check in as a boarder."

"Well, yes. I — didn't Ben — didn't anyone arrange that for me?"

"No, miss." We both moved a little in surprise and sunlight flooded my eyes and faceted his. "Fellow just checked you in and left. Same day, I think. Asked specially for a room on this floor. You are a folksinger?"

"Yes. He left? He moved out?"

"Paid no bills for the nine days you been here, miss. This is a good room. A good one." He gestured at the pale light among the shadows, moving again into the darkness. In another kind of letting go I fell back below the sun line.

"I've been here nine days."

"Yes, miss. Checking out tomorrow?" He moved to the door, a graying figure among phantoms, and I heard myself say, "Yes, tomorrow. Early."


The next morning I simply got up and dressed in the silver sunlight, clouding the light with the dust of my moving, and left the American. As I crossed Avenue C, someone from a second floor window waved and called, "Come back soon — I bring you more oranges," but by then it was easy to walk away coolly without tears. At least someone at the American had watched over me; some eyes had understood mine in the darkness — that was good to know. Nineteen is grateful, but I never went back there, not even when Frank booked me into a long engagement and I could have checked in as a boarder. The halls there are too easily haunted.



AMERICANA

Mary Bedrin




NO MORE
WAR
!!!



" . . . Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans — born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage. . . "

John F. Kennedy,
Inaugural Address
January 20, 1961


MORE
WAR
!!





Specialism

Kathleen McGeekin

Five Smooth Stones is the title of a novel condemned firmly but courteously by the majority of professional critics. *Five Smooth Stones* is a novel which was, for me, one of the most exciting and rewarding reading experiences I have yet encountered. What the critics deplored, I applauded. What they labeled as "ambitious, achingly overwritten", I would describe as unpretentious, achingly true to life. Wherein lies the difference of judgments? Is it simply the difference of a more or less trained response? Or is it perhaps the difference in the degree to which training has replaced response?

Certainly Ann Fairbairn's *Five Smooth Stones* heralds no new era in literature, as it neither gives birth to nor sounds the death knell of any symbol, approach, system or attitude. In fact, the author appears somewhat ignorant of the atmosphere of today's literature when she presents her main characters as bona-fide, flesh and blood heroes who symbolize nothing beyond themselves. And, although she addresses herself to an extremely crucial and contemporary issue — racial injustice — she exhibits no acquaintance with contemporary psychological and sociological theory-tools that the issue has spawned. Ann Fairbairn portrays what she feels and knows, not what she has learned. As a result, the people she creates (for they are people rather than characters) are recognizable in their unique and united selves and, as such self-possessing people, demand of the reader the response of recognition.

The critics, however, deny Ann Fairbairn and her people that response, substituting comparison, evaluation and judgment of her skill for identification with her people's reality. The substitution is lamentable, for it indicates a situation which is lamentable — the all-too-common situation in which literature's critical theory-tools have come to replace rather than to qualify the trained reader's response. Proposed by their 'originators' as guides rather than guards, critical theories and techniques have been gratefully seized by less original 'authorities' who have transformed what was an insight into a 'view', what was a suggested approach into a structured procedure, what was an indication of worth into a graduated scale of merit. What represented a heightened artistic awareness they translated into steady critical blindness. As heirs and successors to innovation,

they seem to have elected to preserve instance and application rather than insight and attitude. Oblivious to the instinctive human awareness of their predecessors, they cannot help but remain impassive to a kindred awareness in a work of literature and, by their inability to recognize and respond to it, the critics summarily reject that awareness and refuse it a place in their value system. The specific rejection of the awareness in *Five Smooth Stones* is probably of little literary significance but the underlying cause of the rejection — the substitution of rules for reaction — is of tremendous import to the supposed beneficiary of all critical activity, the trained reader.

By reader I refer to that member of the Average American strata who regards a book not as a fount of enlightenment, nor as a means to better social standing, nor as an unavoidable educational ill, but as a source of stimulating and enjoyable satisfaction that is usually, for him, inexplicable. Such a reader brings to a literary work only his desire to be satisfied, to be 'gripped' or 'enchanted' or 'awed' by the author's offering. This reader's willingness to identify and appreciate sets him apart from the trained reader, who cannot remain satisfied with simple enjoyment but must have a more factual understanding of why he enjoys.

In pursuit of this understanding, the trained reader travels farther and farther from the actual reading experience until he enters a state in which Literature exists without reference to or need of books and authors. Literature becomes an abstracted entity sufficient unto itself and unto the critic. Citizen-critics of the state of Literature contemplate their extracted subject and postulate its nature, function, form, value and use.

Such removed and withdrawn intellectual activity is, of course, of tremendous value to the critic who returns from the state to the experience, for it cannot but help to deepen his personal and public response. It seems, however, that few are willing to return as the majority see the attainment of the abstracted state as final fulfillment rather than as temporary detour, opting for the abstract in place of the experience. These who choose to remain in the realm of the unreal and unattached perform their duty as critics in a manner that smacks of prophetic revelation. Mediators between the god of their state and the mortals writing and read-

and/or the Special?

ing below, they issue periodic proclamations on the worth of the literary offerings and the degree to which these offerings appease the demands of the god, Literature. Certainly, a handful of *Stones* could not please a god.

Of what value is such critical activity to the untrained reader for whom, initially, literature exists? Where are the benefits he is supposed to reap from his acquaintance with the critics if the critics inform him that his ability to merely respond to his reading experience is not enough, is, in fact, deceptive? How can a system that dismisses the sincerity of the reader response be justified without admitting that true Literature lies beyond the grasp of the majority of the public for whom it came into existence and without whom it has no reason for existence?

The paradox could be dismissed as a problem of semantics did it not reflect and even reproduce the situation encountered by the untrained in other realms of experience.

This situation I would describe as the forced fragmentation of man and its result, I would say, is man's inability to respond to the experience of self.

The discomfort of the untrained reader in the presence of the trained critic is an outgrowth of the discomfort of the 'unknowing' man who must live in a world shaped by 'he who knows', the 'he' being variously the philosopher, the psychologist, the historian, the economist, the sociologist, the scientist. As the critics dismember the literary experience in search of understanding, these varied experts systematically dismember man in an effort to grasp the facts of his being, to understand the why of him. And, just as the critic's dogmatic proclamation leaves the reader with a confused, apologetic feeling of having "missed the meaning" of his reading experience, the expert's confident findings leave the day-to-day man in the same posture of humble apology, assuming that somehow he has "missed the meaning" of his own living experience. Unfamiliar with the method and value of the ever-increasing body of expert-decrees and therefore unable to place them in a proper perspective, the isolated man is forced to retreat from his once-spontaneous 'I am' to a faltering and unsure 'I am only'. The abundance of new words and theories used to define and evaluate his every activity has confused and displaced him to the point where he seeks in these theory-tools the definition of his identity. Greeted on all sides by what he interprets as evidence of his unknowing state, he looks to the 'he who knows' to fill the void. Just as the untrained reader, (if he accepts the word of the 'he who knows' in literature) finds his sincere response to reading inadequate, the 'unknowing' man finds his response to himself lacking in knowledgeable explanation and therefore deems it invalid. In his supposed state of ignorance, he accepts as valid and knowledgeable only the proclamations of the experts.

But, unknown to him, that which he seeks from the experts, and which the experts themselves seek, is the very thing he has refused to yield to them. Unconsciously managing to stay one step ahead of the probers, he has succeeded in keeping his secret of self — the basic why of his being — a mystery to which

the experts can find no solution or explanation. That which he sees as a void of valid knowledge, the experts seek as the basis of knowledge.

It is ironic that in their efforts to isolate and commit to definition this mystery-secret, the experts have so intimidated and awed the guardian of the secret that he has forgotten its existence. In dutifully trying to assimilate the bombarding complexities that the experts offer, the 'unknowing' man has obscured his principle of unity and lost the awareness of his self-simplicity — the very principle and awareness that the experts seek to identify. As the critic, in seeking an understanding of a satisfying experience divorce themselves from the experience and forget the satisfaction, so the expert, in seeking an understanding of the living experience, loses sight of the experience and its life. Just as the reader is made to know the inadequacy of the satisfaction that was once the critic's, the man is made to forget the secret which the expert seeks. Theories, systems, facts and figures have crowded him until he has felt compelled to become the fragments of himself that he has allowed to be isolated for study. His inborn simplicity has been replaced by expert-terms describing his complexity and, because he has not worded his self-secret, he has no weapon with which to challenge the threat of termed existence and must, he feels, submit to its conclusions and boundaries. Instead of rejoicing in and relying on the worldlessness of his why, he (accepting the supremacy of the experts) patiently awaits the announcement of the word which will define it.

The solution to the problem facing the 'untrained' would be simple if the 'untrained' were aware that the problem exists, if they were able to recognize the paradox and alleviate their discomfort with the knowledge that the gap between themselves and the experts is not a gap necessarily created by their own ignorance and inability to comprehend, if they were able to accept the expert's edicts as attempts rather than answers, if they were to be made conscious of the fact that it is their function to judge the findings of experts and assign them their appropriate value. But the untrained are not aware and are uncomfortable. They cannot assume their proper role of judge because they have not realized that they are the answer.

Should the reader be willing to risk the displeasure of the critics and the Average Man that of the experts, I would suggest that he read and consider himself in the light of the passage which Ann Fairbairn quotes as an introduction to her novel:

And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go . . . And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

I Samuel 17: 38-39

Miss McGeehin is a senior English major.



in memoriam

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f
k

A young man saw visions,
while the old men's dreams
were stale.

Hands were forming rigid folds
and wine soaked the land
crumbled grapes
squashed down in streets
revealed in flares.

visions grow
some escape the womb
and take birth
boneblood words
ready to evolve and mature
and
be.

(old men puff on pipes
and twirl lacy silk
scatter a few crumbs
to the black-birds
plucked-birds
dirty-birds
park-children whose wings
never take flight
because they never grow. . .)

. . . . the vision grew
the boy-man spoke
and the ears of the deaf were open
Hope took form in the eyes of the poor
the black grew out of the land
and stood tall

and
young men saw visions,
wiser men dreamed dreams;
action bleached the land.

the vision sparked
sprang
and
the old men jumped — scared
grabbed their
jewels and ran!!!

. . . then stopped, relief
molding in
for

the vision glared
too bright
too fast
too soon —

It stopped.

Today a meteor streaks the sky
and
a wet shroud drapes
the earth

The world:
a Rachel weeping at her
empty womb.

Sister Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

Unwombed

*I am wombed with your love
Tied to you securely I am fed
with your food
You speak to me
and I listen
(I don't yet
understand)
You sing a song
and, I close my eyes
cradled in your care.
But one day, I will put on the new man
I will be called forth
unwombed
born into darkness
Florescent
witnessing that love
I will step forth
your son -
First weaned I will
gradually walk
gradually speak
your words
incoherent at first
they will grow
men will stop
to hear
men will be
unwombed into light
By and by words will whisper
in flickering corners
how striking
the son
how like his father
he resembles him so
(whisper it)
yes,
he resembles him so.*

Sr. Mary Louise Templeton, RSM

THE NEGRO NOVELIST:

HIS SEARCH FOR FREEDOM

Mary Bedrin

The emergence of the Negro novel to a position of prominence in literature demands a new freedom for the Negro novelist. The conflicting loyalties of race and art have always been a problem for the Negro novelist. Seeking to be a spokesman for his people he is torn by his similar desire to be accepted as an artist.

The problem has shifted from concern with the writer himself to the area of subject material he chooses. Paradoxically he is asked to center his energy on racial protest and ignore it; to study individual distinctive qualities of the Negro and ignore the components of Negro life. His work as an artist and the aesthetic value of his subject matter have been obscured.

Choice of subject matter for the Negro novelist includes a consideration of two schools of thought, the traditional and the modern. According to the traditional view the Negro writer must use his art as a weapon. The freedom of the Negro as novelist is not considered as separate from the freedom of the Negro race as a whole. The social struggle should be the subject of his art and his race's battle won through his art.

The traditional camp is divided within itself on the question of approach. One faction holds that social propaganda be incorporated into the novel subtly, perhaps through the use of symbolism. A second group argues that the range of social propaganda, of protest, needs to be augmented. It is the belief of this group that struggle, protest, and conflict carry within themselves universality. Relying on the theory that the Negro struggle has become an epic in American literature and that the Negro battle is just a part of a universal struggle against American imperialism, the proponents of this traditional camp assign the Negro novelist the task of producing true universality. The novelist can achieve such a state by using his art as the mediator between Negro nationalism and class consciousness.

Art, however, must be considered as distinct from politics if the Negro artist is to grow. He must recognize the fact that the separation between black and white exists in reality not in books and it is the responsibility of politics, of reality, to dissolve the color line. The job of the artist is to develop his vision and ability to reveal what he sees to mankind.

The second school of thought maintains that the Negro novelist merely segregates himself and his race by writing about Negro life. Freedom lies outside the ghetto, therefore, novelists should write about life outside the ghetto, about whites. The essence of the theory is that the novelist must escape from the ghetto, if not in reality, then perhaps through his art. Contradictions exist within the theory itself. The Negro novelist wishes to be free but there is no freedom for him if he cannot write about Negro life. By fleeing the ghetto and reality he relinquishes his right to interpret the happenings of Negro life. Ignoring and avoiding race is not leading and cannot lead to freedom for the Negro novelist.

The ghetto approach is basically similar to the traditional art-as-weapon theory. Both are centered around politics rather than aesthetics. If the Negro novelist is to achieve freedom he must free himself from the politics of racial strategy.

The problem confronting the Negro novelist then is to create art-centered Negro literature. The solution to his problem lies in finding a balance or medium between the traditional and modern theories of freedom. The Negro novelist, as all novelists, is directed to subject material through literary standards. Once these standards have been established for all novelists, the more particular area of the Negro novelist will fall into place.

Distance and immediacy are two of the most basic requirements in the writing of any novel. Distance allows the author to move from the particular to the universal. Immediacy allows him to create an illusion of reality. By use of theme and approach the author can produce some distinction between the universal and the particular. Theme is an abstract concept and is developed by the author's choice of approach. The approach usually arises from the author's familiarity with a particular aspect of life. For the Negro novelist this would naturally lead to Negro life. His writing about Negro life does not then derive from misplaced loyalties or need for racial propaganda but from knowledge of something experienced.

The problem of race is not taboo for the Negro novelist. The choice of race as subject for his work is purely his artistic decision. Once he has chosen this course, however, he must temper it with art. Racial conflict cannot be excluded from any work in which race is treated. It is the novelist's duty to put the conflict in proper perspective. Racial conflict may be used in connection with the protagonist to indicate its effect on his personality or it may be expanded to include the dilemma of all mankind in dealing with all races. On the other hand, the Negro novelist may choose not to use racism in his novels and may then consider some other aspect of his protagonist's life.

There is no reason why the Negro novelist should not attempt "white life" as his subject matter. Of course, this may seem contradictory to the fact that the author write about what he knows best, what he has experienced. However, before attempting a novel concerning whites the Negro must acquire a knowledge of their life. As the color line is lowered and barriers removed, the Negro will find his experiences with whites greater in number and degree and will be able to write about his experiences more effectively. To produce an imaginary concept or interpretation of whites, the Negro must begin slowly, learning what he can about whites, their culture, habits and customs. He must then write his story when it is timely using proper perspective in placing whites in his story. The same holds true for the white author writing about Negroes.

The protest novel and the white novel then, can be used effectively by Negro authors in many situations. It is a matter of artistic selection of material, timing and appropriateness that will determine the success of the novel.

Once the Negro author has overcome the barriers of racial conflict and the use of white characters in his novel, there will be a greater freedom for him to write in many other areas. The Negro author is still bound to the rubrics of culture in the South, to his fear of defying Puritanism and certain misconstrued conventions involving race respectability. The key to the Negro novelist's freedom lies in his ability to recognize that all human beings are, essentially and basically, humans and all other characteristics vary. Once this barrier has been broken the Negro will be able to write about himself, his race, its peculiarities and perhaps even begin to explain the divisions which exist within his own race as in all others.

Negro authors who are presently breaking these barriers and achieving some measure of freedom for their art are an indication of the Negro-centered art which may one day give us a more objective view of contemporary life generally and more importantly, a view of Negro life and experience.

Miss Bedrin is a senior English major.

The

Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone, James Baldwin, Dial Publications, 1968, \$5.95.



In a year that witnessed the murder of Martin Luther King, the riots following his death, the emergence of Black Power groups, the Kerner report, and countless discussions and specials on Black America, James Baldwin's most recent novel seems remarkably insignificant.

Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone is the story of Lee Proudhammer, a Negro actor. After he suffers a heart attack, Proudhammer reviews his life. Baldwin uses a series of flashbacks to accomplish the narrative of Proudhammer's journey from Harlem, to the Village, to the experimental stage, to the Big Time.

Perhaps the finest section of the book is Lee's recollection of his childhood in Harlem. Recapturing some of the autobiographical quality of *Go Tell It On The Mountain*, Baldwin is able to picture the horrors of Harlem with childlike objectivity. There is little sermonizing or editorializing in these chapters of the book. Consequently, the impact on the reader is much sharper than that created by later sections of the novel.

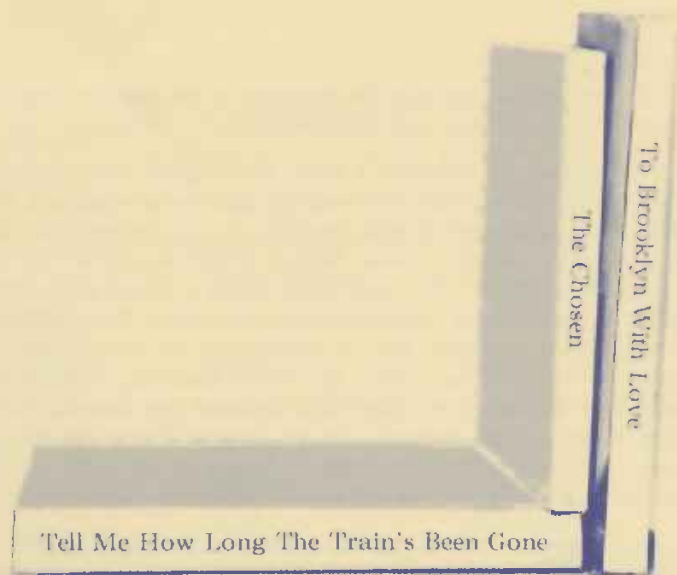
The characterizations in these early chapters are also far better than those that appear later in the book. Caleb, Lee's older and somewhat idolized brother, is a real influence on the child Lee. Their father, a black-skinned man from Barbados, who tells Lee that he is a descendent of kings, and their mother, a light-skinned beautiful woman from New Orleans, are also very real people in these pages. Later Caleb, who becomes a minister (without much justification in the context of the book) and Mr. and Mrs. Proudhammer are reduced to somewhat shadowy stereotypes.

The poorest characterization in the book is Barbara, a white actress from Kentucky. Her career parallels Lee's and they



THE
SOPHOMORE
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remain lovers throughout the book. Their love affair is disapproved by both Barbara's and Lee's families. While their relationship could have been the most powerful in the book, it quickly diminishes into a series of somewhat trite events. Again Baldwin fails to develop his character beyond young adulthood. Barbara, like Caleb and Lee himself, becomes merely a vehicle for the author's editorial comments.

The imagery in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* fails to increase the novel's literary merit. Baldwin substitutes violent language for genuine passion. The abundance of vulgarity so numbs the reader that it loses all effectiveness. As with plot and characterization, the best imagery occurs in the chapters about Lee's childhood.

Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone is not one of James Baldwin's better works. The author appears unable to approach the role of a black artist in America with objectivity. The scars of his own struggle have not yet healed. Rather than bare them, he cloaks them in conventional characters and situations. However, Baldwin has reached an artistic and personal maturity that allows him to reflect on his childhood experiences in Harlem.

I feel it is this mature reflection that makes the beginning chapters of the novel so superior to the later chapters. Perhaps if Baldwin were to write *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* twenty years from now, he would be able to create the adult Negro with the same artistry as he created *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and, to a lesser degree, the account of Lee Proudhammer's childhood.

Mary Grace Duffy

Miss Duffy is a senior English major.

The Chosen; Chaim Potok, Fawcett Publications, 1968, 95 cents.

To Brooklyn with Love, Gerald Green, Trident Press, 1968, \$5.95.

Contemporary Jewish-American writers have made a contribution to American fiction that should not be overlooked. Until recently, the Jewish novel was one of immigration, absorption, intermarriage or attendant conflicts within families. Both the books and their reviews were considered special — on a level with books on antique paperweights, Armenian grammar, fox hunting and the cultivation of prize-winning herb gardens.

However, the past twenty years have seen the production of novels by and about Jews become an important literary phenomenon. The two thousand years of exile in the Jewish past provide a range and intensity of human experience of incredible richness upon which they can draw.

In our academic community there is a definite need to come to grips with what might be called the "Jewish experience" and the questions of traditions it entails. Two recent novels, Chaim Potok's *The Chosen* and Gerald Green's *To Brooklyn with Love*, offer "goy" readers an almost painless lesson in Jewish-American culture. Both are set in Brooklyn and based on the lives of intellectually gifted adolescents and their relationships with their fathers. However, differences do exist, namely in the importance placed on the Jewish religion in the characters, and in the historical backgrounds (the 40's in the first and the depression years in the second).

The survival of Judaism is the central question in *The Chosen*, whether it shall remain static in its superstition and mysticism



or whether it shall convey the message of the secular Jew as the prophet of gentleness and understanding.

It is difficult to imagine a story about good boys being even slightly interesting, but the warmth and earnestness of Potok's style make it interesting and credible. Daniel Saunders is the son of a Hasidic rabbi; Reuven Malter is the son of a "Scientific" Talmudic scholar. The two clash on a softball field during a game between their rival yeshivas "to show the gentile world that yeshiva students are as physically fit, despite their long hours of study, as any other American students." Charged with hatred at the outset, the boys later become fast friends; but only after Reuven finds himself able to forgive Danny for the brush with blindness he suffered when Danny's softball pitch hit Reuven's glasses and set a fragment of the lens into his eye.

He comes to understand the pressures Danny is under — his father's authoritarian distance and remoteness and the tug of secular studies. Reb Saunders' silence, actually imposed on his son to save him from pride of his superior intellect, is a source of genuine pain for Danny. In addition, he is subjected weekly to a grueling discussion session with his father (the only time the silence is broken) concerning passages of Talmud before the entire Orthodox congregation of Williamsburg. These old-timers have nothing to cling to but the forms of their discourse and the creaking remains of an eviscerated tradition, and they take a strange pleasure in watching Reb Saunders put their future *tzaddik* through his paces.

The climax comes on the eve of the Israeli war of liberation when the Hasidic anti-Zionists and the rationalist Zionists clash. Reuven's father, a dedicated Zionist, speaks so successfully for the movement that Reb Saunders forbids his son to have any contact whatsoever with Reuven Malter. Danny, aware of the consequences of defying his father, acquiesces but not without a great deal of deep personal suffering.


As the two approach the end of their college years, Reb Saunders recognizes that none of his machinations can destroy the bond existing between the two and he removes the restrictions he had imposed. Reuven prepares calmly for his future in the rabbinate, which has been his goal since childhood. Danny is confronted with the decision to accept his pre-destined vocation as his father's successor or to make the crucial break in favor of graduate study in psychology. In the crisis of generations, the son of a rationalist who has come to love the tradition because he has been raised in love chooses to sustain it; the son of the mystic, reared in sterility, turns from it.

By contrast the Jewishness in *To Brooklyn with Love* is almost a non-entity. However, even its subtle presence is sufficient to make us aware of its significance in the life of the thirties in Brooklyn. Gerald Green speaks for all of us who found our own selves unbearable during adolescence through Albert Abrams.

Albert's father is a brawny, somewhat faded M.D. who is constantly angry with the infidelity, stupidity and pettiness in which he finds himself entangled. His mother is a repressive woman who makes little effort to understand her gifted and sensitive son.

Albert himself is a study in survival. He is an under-sized, weak-ankled, near-sighted twelve-year-old whose only salvation in the streets and at home is his wit. His love of Longview Avenue; his love-hate relationship with the Raiders; his sense of guilt over his inability to help his failing father provide the material for the novel. He recalls for us the very real pains of childhood with which we can readily identify. Yet his image is not nearly so forceful as that of either Daniel Saunders or Reuven Malter.

Perhaps this is due to the absence of those characteristics peculiar to the faithful Jews of *The Chosen*. Albert's Jewishness



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exists not as an integral part of his life, but as the singular trait which separates him from the Poles and the Negroes in the neighborhood. But as the influence of religious conviction fades, the psychological impact of Albert's situation becomes greater. And yet one is still aware of something intrinsically Jewish about Albert's fierce determination to cope with the torments of life as he knows it.

It would be most unfair to deny the merits of either Potok's or Green's approach. Despite the similarities the two books share, they must be evaluated separately since their central questions are basically different. *The Chosen*, as stated earlier, presents the endlessly wrenching interior dialogue of the practicing Jew as to the survival of his religion. *To Brooklyn with Love* simply presents the act of survival, which is obviously inherent in the Jewish culture, and leaves it to the reader to apply it to religion if he so chooses. To demand more than this in such a novel is unrealistic. This is as far as the author can go without violating his presentation of the nominal Jew, who is just as much a part of modern Judaism as the self-righteous hasidim.

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A Cultural Perspective

The era of social change surrounds us now. Individuals, institutions, societies, and cultures are caught up in a series of question marks. Probably one of the hardest hit institutions during this transition, both internally and externally, has been the Catholic Church.

In an attempt to diagnose and understand the Church's present problem, Leslie Dewart's *The Future of Belief* has caused "an important controversy in the Catholic intellectual community:

Before discussing in detail either the virtues or faults of this work, it is necessary to state some general points found in the book. Its purpose, as expressed by Dewart, is concerned with an attempt

" . . . to sketch an approach to what may be among the most fundamental theoretical problems which challenge Christianity (and specifically the Catholic Church . . .) in the present age, namely the problem of integrating Christian theistic belief with the everyday experience of contemporary man."

In other words, the difficulty of assimilating God by modern man is due to the Church's presentation of dogma in terms of "past cultural experience," more specifically, the Hellenic culture. The method of approaching and investigating the problem begins with an explanation of the contemporary dilemma as Dr. Dewart sees it. He centers this on a differentiation or distinction between a relativity and absoluteness found in both contemporary theism and atheism. After the presentation of this "now" situation, a flashback technique is used in order to show the chronological development of the problem. Dr. Dewart concludes by offering a speculation as to the possible course that Christianity may take in the future, given certain variables.

Most of the criticism provoked by Dr. Dewart has been theological and philosophical. However, there is another perspective from which *The Future of Belief* can be viewed — that is, culturally or sociologically. This, I believe, is justified since the main thesis revolves around "the present age," "everyday experience," and "contemporary man."

Judging this book in terms of itself, using both the stated purpose and the conclusion as standards, it can be said that Dewart does accomplish his intentions, and with painstaking detail. He very cautiously directs his ideas to a strict "approach" in a highly organized, logical manner. His objective is to work within the realm of theory, and this he does — possibly to the point of utter frustration on the part of the reader. Objectively then, in terms of the purpose, premises, and conclusion, Dewart's book can be rated exceptional.

But in order to evaluate his ideas fairly, more than a general criticism is needed. One must look deeper into what the author describes as the basic problem, that is "The meaningfulness of Christian belief for the experience and self-understanding of man in a modern, industrial, technological society." What is assumed here is that there is a general dissonance or incongruity between contemporary experience as a whole and Christian belief as whole. At the risk of over-simplification, it could be

said that this is due to a discrepancy between basic tenets of Christian belief and the norms of contemporary experience. And this in turn results from a grounding of Christian dogma in Hellenic philosophical semantics, logic, and proofs.

Although Dr. Dewart does not completely discredit the Hellenic mind, he is very harsh on their "static-ness." He is even more critical of its integration into today's theism, believing that the two are incompatible. His view of the Greek and Medieval world is that both are in the process of development and neither has reached the evolutionary point of conscious reflection. The picture drawn by the author is that of two children, wandering and searching for something — a common "unknown," they are unaware (or at best have a vague idea) of their purpose. They invent, therefore, a type of fairy tale to satisfy themselves or at least justify their efforts. This is in turn contrasted with a modern world, a world that has "grown up," and because of its maturity should reject fantasy, accept reality, and begin "not merely the demythologization of Scripture, but the more comprehensive dehellenization of dogma, . . . specifically that of the Christian Doctrine of God."

Dr. Dewart's proposal to up-date the "static" elements of dogma and thus make them compatible with such dynamic experience as modern man encounters is a valid tenet. Every institution has the potential, both structurally and ideologically, to adapt when confronted with the reality of social change. Christianity, if one may impose the label of "institution" on it, is no exception. Such an institution has not only the capacity but also the duty to do so if it is to be effective in achieving its goal, which in this instance is the unity of all mankind. From this perspective, the "dehellenization" of Christian dogma can be accepted.

However, if we go a step further, we can find a major difficulty in Dr. Dewart's proposals. This lies in the practicality of his "approach." One may question the validity of criticism in this area, since Dr. Dewart has written totally within the realm of theory, but theory is not totally divorced from practice. If what is to be reconciled is the discrepancy between dogma and experience, then practicality should be one test of its worth.

Dr. Dewart has been quoted as saying, "I write primarily for Catholic philosophers. I don't write for secular or non-Catholic philosophers, and I certainly don't write for the average Catholic . . ." Perhaps this text was not specifically intended for the "average Catholic," but can we deny that the ramifications of these ideas will affect the "average Catholic"?

In any case, it seems that Dr. Dewart's efforts were made only in terms of the intellectuals, and not in terms of the masses for whose benefit the Church was instituted.

Since two elements are to be brought into harmony, certain facts must be examined. Here we are dealing with all of mankind in a world society and an institution formulated and directed toward this society. In other words, a universal society and a universal religion. In theory and in print, these balance the scale.

What Dewart did not bring into consideration (and he is not the only contemporary writer guilty of this) is the difficulty

in the Future of Belief

Mary Jane Mesharer

presented in changing or "dehellenizing" Christian dogma in a very unbalanced world situation. How does one go about re-defining dogma so that it is attuned to a highly advanced technological society, such as America, and at the same time impose this re-defined dogma on a technologically deficient society such as Micronesia? Or does the element of relativity enter into the latter case? How does the Catholic institution "catch up" with an increasingly dynamic culture without risking its own internal disorganization?

One sees continual reference to contemporary man and technological advance. Are these inseparable terms to Dewart? The situation as it stands can hardly be generalized into his inference that all contemporary men are at the same level of advancement. Or is Dr. Dewart speaking of one particular culture? The Church, the Catholic faith, is steeped in a mission to bring Christ to every man. And every man of today is seen in a cultural situation. Not all cultures share the same perspective, nor do they share the same grasp on or enslavement in tech-

nology. True, technology has affected every culture, but not to an equal degree.

If the Church were to reflect and become attuned to the advanced man, how would this affect the majority of world societies who are "lagging behind" and how will it affect the internal organization of the Church in each society? Must the Church wait patiently until "all men are equal" in this respect?

These are just a few difficulties provoked by *The Future of Belief*. And this fact may be in Dewart's favor, for it forces the reader, whether "intellectual" or "average," to look at the present situation and to speculate about the future. It forces one to re-evaluate the effectiveness of a religious institution in a contemporary world. Perhaps the real value, then, is not found in the practical application of Dr. Dewart's approach, but rather in the manifestation that a problem exists, that action of some kind is needed, and that this will be an "ordeal of change".

Miss Mesharer received her B.A. in Sociology from Misericordia in 1968.

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