

The BOOKPRESS

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE LITERARY ARTS

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Washington Wonderland



William Benson

Hortense J. Spillers

As far as I know, no other living soul has said yet that a sequence of events might be tragic and farcical at once, but the interlocking scandals aswirl the Washington Beltway suggest that on the road to the millennium, anything like that could happen, and everything like it already has. To catch the drift of the farcical side of things, consider the following comparisons, entertainingly sketched some weeks ago by CNN's Bill Schneider, between Watergate on the one hand and "Monicagate" (even *Le Monde* calls it that!) on the other: By now our model impeachment proceedings, the former had to do with real crimes—the solicitation of government agencies to wreck the careers of one's political enemies, actual or imagined, starting with the in-/famous burglary itself, while the latter concerns "real crimes" that yield a handful of morsels to our repertoire of bathroom humor—the intrusion of one lone cigar (a Freudian blue-plate special), which really wasn't one, and, according to what a Secret Service agent was supposed to have said, one helluva mess of used Kleenex. As for that "cancer growing on the [Nixon] Presidency," your guess about what got extended in the Clinton Oval Office during those encounters, so vividly described in the heavy-breathing *Starr Report*, is certainly as good as mine. For John Dean, substitute *the intern*, whom we know (and really don't want

to) only because of a lady over in Maryland by the name of Linda Tripp, who looks like the "dog" she is, and for Howard Baker's simply majestic "What did the President know, and when did he know it?" or Barbara Jordan's eloquent evocations of the U.S. Constitution, bring in "What did the President touch?" and doesn't it all turn on how you're defining *touch*? or even partisan Henry Hyde's insipid ramblings about "censure plus" and combining the charges against the prez, and on and on, through the endless sickening bathos of unattractive characters, chasing book deals, the kissing and telling, with every garbled sentence of it, every idiotic word and gesture in it, *snatched* to the Office of the Independent Counsel. But if you believe that those moiling atoms of debased talk, of seduction and betrayal, have nothing to do with us, the law-abiding out here in the boonies, then I have some land I want to sell you down in Arkansas. When we're done snickering, there are genuine consequences here to consider.

(Meanwhile, the recent mid-term elections did little to alter the congressional balance of power and obsessive talk of impeachment, even though they did place Republican California back in play and cut the House majority by five seats; the real news to write home about the aftermath, however, is the fact that diaper-ready Newt G. has been dispatched back to Georgia on Gladys Knight's midnight train—at least for now, be warned—as

Alfonse D'Amato's countenance gives way to Chuck Schumer's, Mr. Faircloth of North Carolina faces retirement, and former Navy seal, Jesse Ventura, acquires The Mind with which to govern the state of Minnesota. Not exactly what the smart money told us to bargain for, but entirely appropriate to the incoherent state of American politics in the late twentieth century.)

I stopped laughing about all the "gates" long before the First Lady's ridiculed (in some quarters) interview took place on the "Today Show," following her husband's embarrassing denials that morning he shook a chiding finger at the television cameras where we sat. Remembering how, for example, Maggie Williams, former secretary to the First Lady, and Craig Livingstone, former White House functionary, implicated in the so-called "Filegate," were hassled and hounded, among many others, by the D'Amato and the Thompson investigations over in the Senate, I am as convinced as I will ever need to be that the display of animus toward the Clinton Presidency is not only unusual in its intensity, but downright dangerous in its intransigent character because its proponents appear ready at all costs to reverse the outcome of the last two presidential elections. Throw in the particular venom of Dan Burton and his ignorant, investigative zealots over in the House, and we have what looks like, for all the world, a relic of the McCarthy era, with hearings rehearsed in rolling sequence from virtually one end of

this two-term presidency to the other. Not of age during the Roosevelt years, I am told how viscerally hated FDR and Eleanor were in certain quarters of the country, and if the bullet that killed Abe Lincoln can be imagined in suspense for a moment, then finally reposed, just under a century later, in the brain tissue of JFK's skull, then it is painfully clear that the response to pathological feelings occasionally directed at the Oval Office and its occupant constitutes one of the most dreadful chapters in the career of U.S. democracy. Details aside for the moment, these simultaneously loved and hated figures—the polarized alignment lying close to the heart of the sacred—appear to have a few crucial things in common: Whether it is true or not (and one has been hard-pressed to *consistently* believe it about William Jefferson, small boy from Hope), each of these leaders is linked in public imagination with the man lowest down and the pursuit of policies that might benefit him and, by the slightest turn of the screw, with practices not inimical, at least, to a leading national mytheme called "The American Negro," by her various other names today, *mutatis mutandis*, virtually the same character—"black," "African-American," etc. Keep this little detail in mind, for it is hardly minor in this discussion, no pun intended. But if the Clinton Presidency has catalyzed such malicious feelings of revolt, then some of the horror gener-

continued on page 8

Educating Ourselves

The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions. William G. Bowen and Derek Bok. Princeton University Press. 472 pages, \$24.95.

Edward T. Chase

In the title of their scrupulously objective and rigorous new study, William Bowen and Derek Bok invoke Mark Twain's Mississippi, which, as they point out, was "symbolically central to the progress of the country." They go on to say that "[t]he image of the river is also central to the story of our book, which is concerned with the flow of talent—particularly of talented black men and women—through the country's system of higher education and on into the marketplace and the larger society."

Bok and Bowen's "story" is actually a comprehensive examination of a revolutionary large new database of over 80,000 matriculants to 28 selected colleges in the falls of 1951, 1976 and 1989. In addition to analyzing admissions procedures and academic outcomes, they evaluate the post-education careers of 45,000 students of all races of the classes of 1976 and 1989. This post-school research constitutes a "first."

Perhaps the most singular emphasis in *The Shape of the River* is on the benefits to society in general of race-sensitive admissions policies to superior colleges and professional schools. Bok and Bowen produce remarkable statistics evidencing the financial success, leadership, and civic participation of the minority graduates.

In a telling passage, the authors construct a profile of the roughly 700 black

matriculants in the 1976 cohort they estimate would have been rejected by the schools involved in the study had race-neutral admission policies been in effect. The results of their analysis are striking:

- Over 225 members of this group of retrospectively rejected black matriculants went on to attain professional degrees or doctorates.
- About 70 of them are now doctors, and roughly 60 are lawyers.
- Nearly 125 are business executives.
- Well over 300 are leaders of civic activities.
- The average earnings of the individuals in the group exceeds \$ 71,000.
- Almost two-thirds of the group (65 percent) were very satisfied with their undergraduate experience.

A large majority of interviewed matriculants, both black and white, testified that diversity enhanced their ability to understand and work well with members of other races. "Of the many thousands of former matriculants who responded to our survey," Bok and Bowen write, "the vast majority believe that going to college with a diverse body of fellow students made a valuable contribution to their education and personal development. There is overwhelming support for the proposition that the progress made over the last thirty years in achieving greater diversity is to be prized, not devalued."

In a detailed analysis of the admissions records of five of the schools in the database, Bok and Bowen estimate that a race-neutral standard would reduce black enrollment by 50-70%. The most selective schools, they find, would experience the largest drops in black enrollment, to less than 2% of all enrollment.

Furthermore, the authors estimate that a race-neutral standard would result in only

a modest increase in white students' odds of admission to these schools. If white students filled all the places created by reducing black enrollment, the overall probability of admissions for white students would rise only one-and-one-half percentage points: from 25% to roughly 26.5%. Here the authors invoke Thomas Kane's shrewd analogy of misperception in the case of parking places reserved for the handicapped: "Eliminating the reserve space would have only a minuscule effect on parking options for non-disabled drivers. But the sight of the open space will frustrate many passing motorists who are looking for a space. Many are likely to believe that they would now be parked if the space were not reserved."

This reviewer wishes the authors were not quite so leery of commenting on the "affirmative action" given to college legates and athletes. Perhaps they would argue there are some overall societal rewards to these policies, since they buttress the finances of worthy institutions like those each author once headed—Bowen is a former President of Princeton, Bok of Harvard. (Although, actually, these Ivy League institutions are limited recruiters of athletes per se and chary of mediocre legates.)

Most of us personally experience some informal "affirmative action." In my case, my father was a Woodstock artist, broke after the 1930s Crash, who guilelessly persuaded the headmasters of two top prep schools, Hackley and then Lawrenceville, to take a chance on accepting me for free, which in turn facilitated my later getting full scholarships at Princeton. Purely my luck—with benign chain-reaction consequences for my own children.

From a long perspective, we practiced affirmative action long before the term

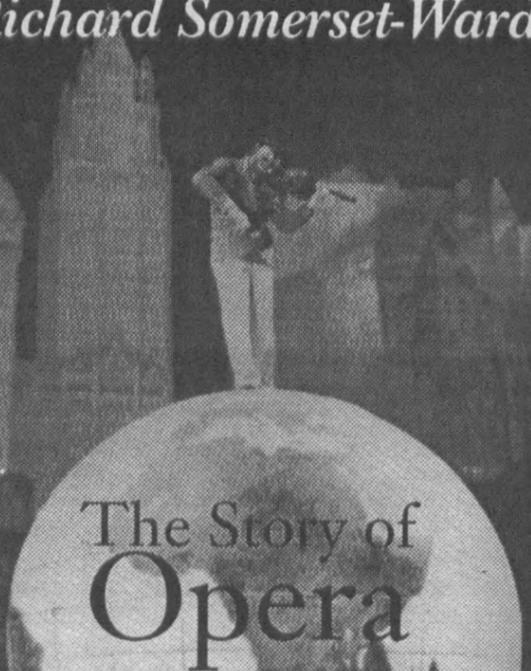
emerged. Economists identify "compensatory transfers" in social welfare among all market-oriented nations. The Roosevelt Administration's PWA and collateral programs were instituted to help artists collectively to survive the Depression, on the grounds they contributed to society—this decades before the Kennedy and Nixon Administrations' affirmative action policies, such as mandating specific "outreach" measures for hiring laborers on federally contracted projects, and minority employee "set asides."

The authors make clear that their advocacy of race-sensitive admissions in higher education, their limited focus, does not necessarily illuminate specifically how affirmative action should be implemented in other areas. Nevertheless, their book constitutes a powerful case for affirmative action's benefits to society as a whole.

The Shape of the River bears indirectly on the fundamental issue of socio-economic inequality, which is on the increase in all capitalist-market-oriented polities, including the United States. Egregious inequality is notoriously a source of societal instability, crucially affecting crime, public health, mortality rates, and, in the extreme, the risk of war. Humanity will never see "equal shares" of the world's goodies for all. But the subjection of the vast majority of people to subsistence levels remains an abomination which, ignored, is a peril for all of us. Bowen and Bok show that, with respect to inequality, affirmative action policies, at least in America, can make an increasingly important difference.

Edward Chase is the former editor-in-chief of New York Times Books and senior editor at Scribner. He is a frequent contributor to The Bookpress.

Richard Somerset-Ward



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Apples of the Eye

David Weiss

I don't know what it is about these phrases—*every beast of the field, every fowl of the air, everything that creepeth upon the ground, the fish of the sea*—that fills me with a covert exultation, a momentary buoyancy. It is hard to know exactly what moves us when we are moved unaccountably, especially by things that germinated in those tropics of our own personal pleistocene. To mouth these words of creation to myself, *and everything that creepeth upon the ground*, was and, if I can catch myself off-guard, still is—to restock the earth, to make it teem with nervy, muscled life. It's as if Sir Philip Sidney's idea about the singularity of poets were true: Though their will be infected, their "erected wit maketh [them] know what perfection is." By perfection, Sidney has in mind the prelapsarian, as though by means of the poet's words we could pass beneath the flaming, angelic swords back through the gates into Paradise.

I have often tried to isolate the spring mechanism which catapults me into that reverie (as awe-inducing and brief as a shooting star). For a time I thought it was the preposition *of* and that discredited poetic use of the possessive: *fowl of the air*. The lean no-nonsense of air's fowl or sea's fish has nothing effervescent or giddy-making about it. For a time I thought there was perhaps something talismanic about the redundancy: Of course *fish of the sea* are of the sea. Where else would they be of? Was the author of Genesis, or the King James committee, making a distinction between salmon and smelt, or between trout and tree skippers by using that canny *of*? No, but maybe the sense of plenty, of cornucopia, comes from this uneconomical usage, as though the redundant were an expression of the prolific, the unnecessary a form of the fecund and generative. "Fowles in the frith/ Fishes in the flood" a middle English lyric starts off, echoing Genesis, perhaps, envious of things in their element, a condition the poet is exiled from. "Much sorwe I walke with," he laments, in felt contrast.

In those prepositions, there is clearly something joyous; I can almost recollect seeing in the mind's aquarium *the fish of the sea* leaping or breaching as if that preposition, *of*, had inspired them to it. As I think of it, though, I am unsure now if this glimmer of Paradise flashed from the words themselves or from pictures in books (I half-suspect that the illustrations from Edward Lear's *Scroobious Pip* might be the source of the leaping, swarming images I half-recall), or from films (the pre-historic world in a film like "Lost Continent," say) or from my simply having crawled about in the grass beneath one of those woodslatted concrete benches on which my mother used to rest between perambulations in St. James Park in the Bronx.

And maybe it's not solely the prepositions; maybe, against the grain of that poetic injunction to shun generality, it's that *beast, fowl, fish*, however generic, remain, nevertheless, potent and concrete, as though these Linnaean categoricals carried with them all their instances, the

entire tribe of creatures. Milton's conjurings of creation in *Paradise Lost* don't suffer from such broad strokes.

Good poetry or bad, those phrases cast a long shadow, or the opposite of a shadow. They gave or restored something to me, I don't know which. In any case, it amounts to little more than a kind of dream, a memory trace from the collective imagination that permits us to grasp what we have hardly experienced. Yet I wouldn't be surprised if some part of me doesn't still consider this glimmer as having more actuality than the *materia* of daily life.

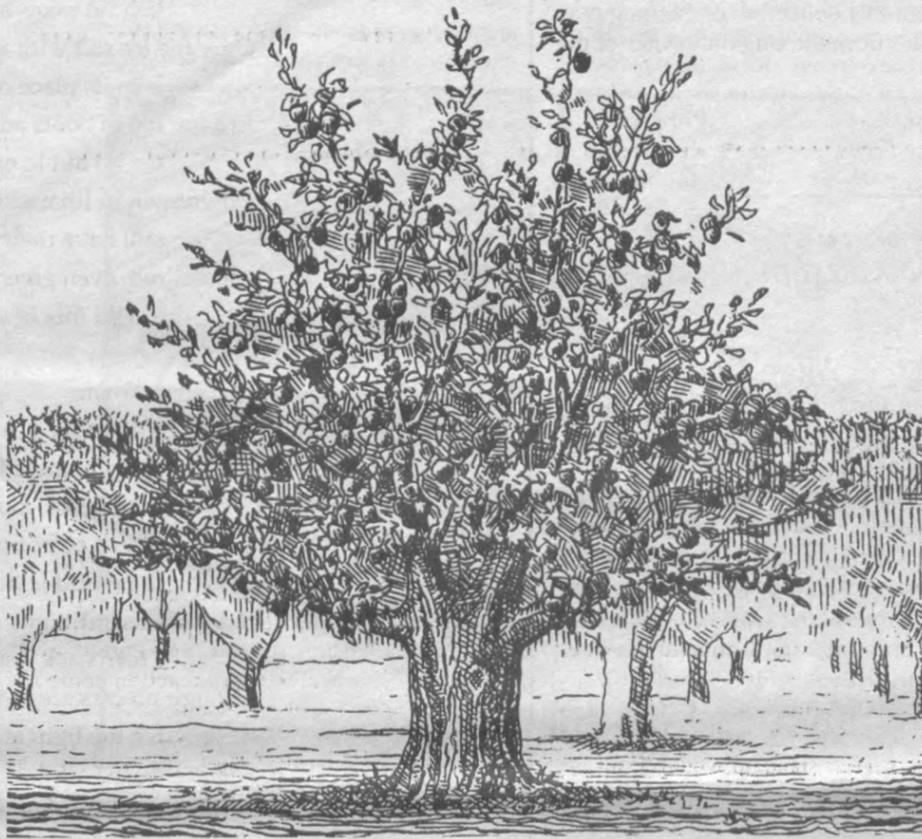
And I shouldn't have been surprised when, in early October, I took my daughter to a local orchard where we often go to pick cherries or

it mentions the animal world. Well, cattle. That says it all. They're just creatures created for our benefit. So, basically, creation is, like, for us, for our use, not for its own sake. As if that's the criteria. Well, we're not the center of the earth, and the earth is not the center of the universe.

Smart kid, I thought. But I was disturbed. Isn't there anything pleasing, anything you like about creation? I asked her.

No, she said after a moment. She nibbled around the core of her apple and tossed it into a row of heavy-headed sunflowers. Such a yellow yellow, I thought. Not really, she went on, it all just seems so egocentric.

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air,



Don Karr

plums or apples, sometimes just to test the ripening fruit and stroll the laden rows. It's a steep, beautiful place. This time we were going there to talk specifically about a part of Genesis, the portion of the Pentateuch she had to give a talk on to the congregation as part of her Bat Mitzvah rite. In the apple-y air, she would talk, I would take notes. We sat with our backs to a stand of corn and squinted across a small meadow toward a gaudy field of flowers you could pick by the hand- or armful, clippers hanging from a nail on a low post for the purpose. Sun made the distant hills to the east hazy. We chewed on sharp-juicy, pale-flavored, not-quite-ready Macintoshes, so firm they made with each bite a sound like wood splitting.

As I see it, she said, creation's made to look like we're getting a God's eye view of it, but we're not. I mean, *behold, it was good*, it keeps saying as though God's thinking it. But what's *good* mean? Good for whom? I think it means good for us. Like it only mentions *cattle* when

I mumbled to myself, not knowing what to say to this. "And bears man's smudge and wears man's smell," I thought, too, not because I breathe poetry but because I teach it. It was odd to feel a need to defend the beauty of the earth against a twelve-year-old, with everything around us so evidently brimming. But the earth, more often now called *the planet*, was to her despoiled, polluted, at risk, finite, never mentioned in school or in books without a sober reminder of looming ecological disaster if we don't wise up fast. The earth, *the planet*, was something you couldn't take for granted any longer like a mother's utter but unremarkable there-ness, for example. She thought of it as a child—neglected, mistreated, fragile, and lonely as she herself must sometimes feel. And so, how against this rage, this outrage, can beauty hold a plea?

You can't argue or beg or prod a person into pleasure; I couldn't even coax. I remembered how as a boy my own dark feelings and moods

had been made fun of and trivialized to get me to seem happier, to snap me out of them. Now I understood the desperation that could lead one to plead for even a simulated innocence; yet it felt underhanded, like cheating.

... *And every beast of the field, every fowl of the air, everything that creepeth upon the ground, and the fish of the sea*, I intoned, getting, again, that little *frisson* she seemed so immune to. Next to her, I watched the clouds which I thought of stupidly as mashed potatoes gliding across a slippery blue Formica table top of sky. I couldn't cast a spell for her. Besides, I was against spells, just then. And what spell could be greater than this very day, which she clearly was not insensible to, and might always remember as exquisite, archetypically, in a special daughter-father sort of way? But which, however charged, would be set for her in a frail and struggling, not a glorious, Nature. I began, guiltily, to curse the murderers of delight, not knowing just where to cast my stones.

I recalled then where Gerard Manley Hopkins, the poet whose line had jumped into my head, had set the blame, and how Hopkins got the delight back in, though delight might have seemed to him too tepid a word, an effect, rather than a source.

He, like my daughter, felt a horror at the earth's ruination and condemned its cause: "all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil"—strong stuff. She would certainly go for his "all," though she wouldn't yet identify the problem twinned this way as "trade" and "toil," commerce and soul-deadening labor. The latter my daughter hasn't seen yet or experienced herself, though chores for her are a chore. But the former, trade, has so completely attained in her short life the status of the only quo she knows that no alternative really obtains. Nothing seems, these days, to exist outside an economic framework. Who hasn't repeatedly stamped his child's efforts with the approving, "Good job!?" As if basic developmental skills were acquired at an hourly wage. I wonder if my daughter's dream of universal humane treatment for all animals partly issues from this fact: that the utopian—and the dystopian, too, for that matter—is a symptom of not being able to envision a plausible alternative. Her heart is wholly with the underground animal rights activists.

Hopkins' picture is grim: "Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;/ And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;/ And wears man's smudge and bears man's smell." No pulled punches. The verbal repetition, the excessive internal rhyme and alliteration are meant to make it feel unbearable and call to mind Blake's "dark, satanic mills." Yet the word "toil" is rooted in the Latin *tudicare* and from that comes *tudicula*, a machine used to crush the oil from olives; from *tudicula* the word *toil* derives. The etymology points to a more gratifying model of labor, which Hopkins has in mind. Earlier in the poem, he contrasts the Dickensian and industrial smear of toil, unproductive and repetitive, to the grandeur of God that "gathers to a greatness, like the ooze

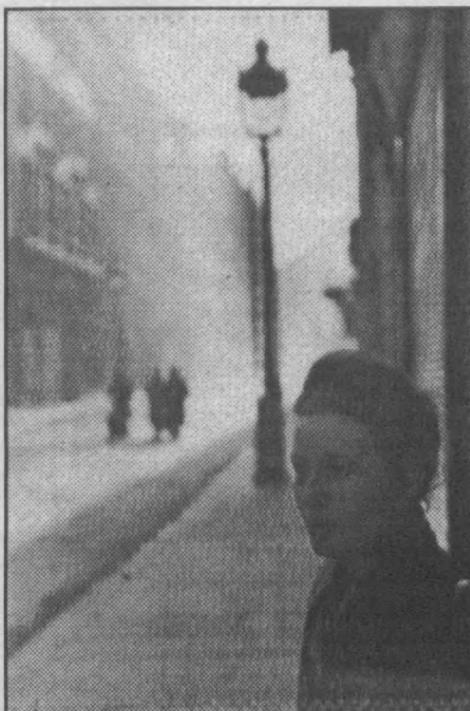
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Join the friends of Alice Cook in this commemorative group reading and discussion of her last published work, **A Lifetime of Labor: Ninety Years of Work and Activism**. Alice Cook, who passed away last February, was professor emeritus at the College of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

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Answers to last month's Crossword:

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The BOOKPRESS

welcomes comments,
responses and
letters to the editor.

Snow Before Winter

Who would have expected
snow so soon?
The fields are lost;
So is the wheelbarrow,
left leaning against the shed.
Gutters not yet emptied of leaves,
sag; and
the empty feeder swings
in an aimless arc.

The snow shovel is buried
behind rakes and digging forks.
Only the ice salt with a plastic spoon
is in its place on the porch.
In a jumble of boots and gloves and caps,
we go out to excavate the car.
Downtown in Ithaca, the trees in DeWitt Park
still have their leaves;
yellow, red, even green, but white-trimmed now,
a wild mix of dress to rival ours.

I go on my own,
to wander in and out of shops.
Emerging from one, I feel lost
in the cold, fading light.
It is only three p.m., but
the world is turned on edge.
Sidewalks slant, signs waver and blur.
I turn back toward the Library.
Though no cars are coming, I wait
for the light at Cayuga and Buffalo.

Is this how astronauts felt
leaving earth for the moon?
Did the first sea-creature to flop up on land
gasp for breath like this?
What I'm really asking is if I will survive
the Darwinian leap of another Ithaca winter.
Or did I grow one set of gills too many
in Mississippi's humid heat,
which though vestigial, will always
ache in arctic air?

— Peggy Billings

Peggy Billings is a poet living near Trumansburg, NY.

Place for Us

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—Barbara Johnson



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D.A. Miller

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By those who ne'er succeed.

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Fiction

Painting in Unison

Niko Tomlinson

Kari:

I only enjoyed painting alone or with my trinity team. Everything besides that was excessive show-boating: a public display of our own ability and dexterity with a paint can. Vanity is a sin, even in painting.

In the beginning, the main concern of the artist was that of proving his self to others. There were several things which the artist was trying to achieve in his early years of painting: self-propagation, the extension of his self into the vast world; the respect of his peers through hard work, consistency and ingenuity; his own identity; perfection of his craft; notoriety. Once this initial period of awkward inequality was over, the painter pursued his own interests. The one thing that needed to remain evident throughout his work, and everyone's work for that matter, was a message. Whether it be of religious, social, economic, political, or even sexual nature, that message needed to be there.

We never constricted ourselves to painting in any one area though we still managed to spread our word and preach our beliefs as publicly or as prolifically as our competitors. And we chose only to paint in black. The choice was nothing overly symbolic or political, just a matter of personal expression. We experienced everything as white and black, no grey areas. A grey area in someone's life or in someone's work implied indecision, misguidedness, and confusion. This affected the cohesiveness of both the artist's expression of himself and the critic's interpretation of the work. There was not enough room for convoluted drivel.

Everything inside and outside of us was distinguishable only through the expression of black and white and we painted through that understanding. That clarity was extended to various levels such as respect, integrity, conviction, confidence, and artistic value: all reflected simply as expression in black and white, in our work. This was what put us head and shoulders artistically ahead of our time and our competitors. This is what made our work outstanding amongst the myriad of mundanity. This is what made everything into a competition.

We were competing against the other teams of painters; which group could cover the most territory and whose work could constantly be in the public eye. We were competing against the law—trying to get our names out in the brightest spots, the most vulnerable and prominent walls without getting caught. We were competing against each other—never malevolently, just a driving force of creativity to express ourselves and our motives. And then, most importantly, we were competing against ourselves. There was the eternal battle between perfection in the public eye and perfection in your own heart. There was the triumph of painting an entire street car without any real recollection of a start and a finish to the work, just a sense of completion. Then, right at that moment, realizing a complete refurbishing that could make the masterpiece better, to make it emanate emotion. Never to be satisfied with work can be frustrating and fulfilling at the same time: satisfaction breeds a sense of divinity in one's work—a sense that everything is completed and all is right when, in fact, your masterpiece is nothing more than a selfish representation of your own world-views. Nothing is universally satisfying, yet that is my goal. That's why I wake up every morning and that's why I go out bombing.

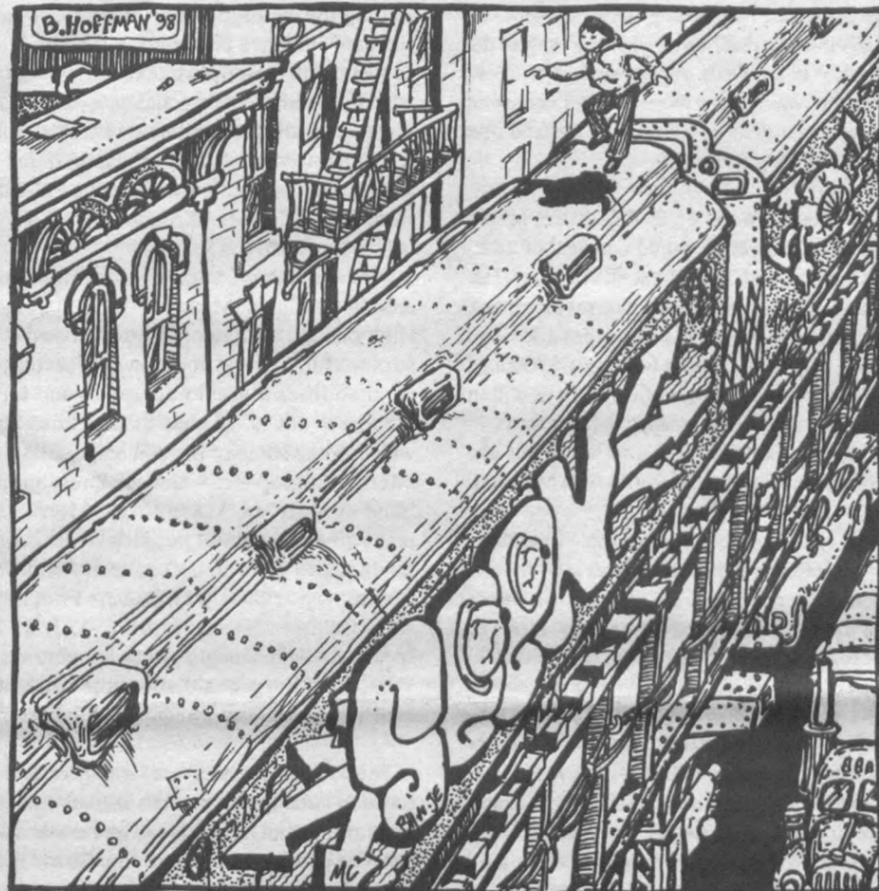
Spirit:

The most important thing in painting is love. You have to love what you are doing and love your own expression or else people can see right through your work. I get that love from Kari and Suave, but it's my own self-love that motivates me. It's my own success and flourish drives me.

One of the most memorable experiences I've had with painting was when I was twelve years old. Back then people were still bombing subway cars; there was still uncharted territory. Nowadays the only open spaces are those created by the government in city-wide communi-

ty activism bursts. They'll paint over an old mural, put up a new building, tear down an old building and leave the foundation, or simply condemn a building that previously, no one dared bomb. Condemned buildings were like buried treasure to which everyone had a map. Though never completely sanctified, they were areas of free expression and privacy. Privacy is very important. When you paint publicly, there is the possibility for influence and bias in your work. People influence feelings, moods, and temperament—the very essence of painting. How are you going to tell the artist how to paint the picture? By painting alone, I avoid changing anything about my work to suit the people who observe it.

I was bombing solo that night, trying to get both reputation and practice by going public for the first time. Up until this point, I stuck to tagging and soft-core graphing, purely for con-



Barry Hoffman

scientious reasons. I was afraid of getting caught and arrested, even though primary offenses usually resulted in a fine or a night in jail, possibly ten plus hours of community service, cleaning and repainting the easel you soiled earlier that week. However, part of the reconciliation of pouring your soul out through a spray-can comes from the adrenaline injection of illegally defiling a public place while the police are having their handcuffs pre-fitted for your wrists. Not all of the satisfaction of bombing comes from the actual painting portion, or else it would just be called painting.

I went out to the train yard about 10 p.m., dressed in black polyester sweat pants, black canvas Reeboks with pre-purchased black shoe-laces, bright new white socks and underwear for good luck, and a dark blue t-shirt turned inside out to cover up the neon-green Nike symbol across the front. All that I had brought with me was my backpack full of six cans of ultra-flat black. Glossy paint doesn't stick well and it tends to run more on all types of surfaces, especially metal.

Crews were out tagging that night, mainly the smaller crews without notoriety; that's why they let me paint in peace that night. Bombing never gets violent, it just gets very competitive, especially when it's over open space. The crews out that night were inexperienced; they let me go to work on an entire train car by myself. Open space is so sparse nowadays that kids will attend contracting-bidoffs to know in advance where and when new buildings are getting erected. Some even attend city-council meetings to know which old buildings are getting condemned. Just to get that extra step.

I had no idea what I had set out to paint that night. All I knew was that it was going to be magnificent; it was going to stand out from the rest. I would make my mark. I started with random paint splotches but soon my hand took over, manifesting my mind, my heart and my

soul through one media. To this day, I don't think I've painted that deeply, that boldly, or that freely. Unfortunately, I never got to finish the piece. The other crews out that night weren't low key, they weren't inconspicuous. At around 10:45 p.m., police came through the train yard looking for vandals and trespassers. One cop in particular chased me for several minutes down the tracks, but that's what eventually got me away that night. Here we were, thirty-five feet above the ground, pitch black out, no street lights and faint moonlight, running across the train tracks. There were three-foot gaps between ties, gaps which had nothing to save you from falling forty feet flat onto asphalt. Instinct and confidence were your hand-rails, ignorance was your safety net. I ran for about half a mile down the tracks until I saw a support pole clearly in the glint of the foggy moon-lit night. Before the cop could draw his

gun, yell my name, or call for help, I had fallen through the tie-gaps and slid down the pole to the lower train yard, running safely into the night. If the cop had chosen to intercept me by going down the stairs to the lower level as soon as he saw me take off down the tracks, I'd have been picking up trash in the park later that month.

Cops didn't care that much. By the time they had reached the stairs to get down to my level, I was buying a soda from the corner store around the block from my house. That night and that train yard were my bar mitzvah—my trip into manhood.

Suave:

The best piece I've ever done is on the wall around the community children's center about three blocks from where I grew up. It was literally awesome. I violently sprayed the black paint across the stopped subway car. Soon arbitrary paint splotches formed into triumphant orgies, just through random hand gesticulations transferred out of the relative plain of my mind. People gathered, soon to become fans and admirers but not truly understanding why. I was pulling stunts with the spray can, my hand rotating around the axis of my wrist as if masturbating each spray can to ejaculate the paint.

And the world was my tissue, spread wide with anticipation of my next work, ready to soak up my mental, physical and spiritual juices.

"You can't do that, that's physically impossible to our known consciousness," I heard from deep inside the crowd. But that's just it, I'm painting, I'm not struggling with my own grasp of reality. That is, not until I run out of black paint.

I remember doing it over a period of about 14-15 hours, no breaks. I didn't eat and I didn't stop painting. I brought with me that day 20 cans of black paint and a grey towel to wipe the

sweat off my fore-brow. It was supposed to be humid that day, high in the nineties—blinding heat—enough so that it might swell the paint and clog up the tip. It turned out that the heat only added to my inspiration.

We were having a community-sponsored fund-raiser for the children's center that day and I got involved mainly because I was interacting with my own community and partly because I needed a platform to paint. Unlike Kari and Spirit, I like a public forum.

If there's one thing that singles me out among the three of us, it's the fact that I love painting in front of a crowd. I can feed off of their energy. People gather around to give me feedback while I'm in the process of painting. Whether it's a conscious effort or not on the part of the audience, I can sense what they're feeling and how they're feeling about my work. This resolves itself in me being a very understanding and empathetic painter. Empathy has its rewards, one of which is resolution in the simplest manner. That doesn't correlate to me compromising myself or my artistic integrity, because in the end, it is me who gets satisfaction out of other people being moved by my pieces. Essentially, there are no completely selfless motives, especially in art. Everything I paint eventually rewards me, just like everything Kari paints rewards him and everything Spirit paints rewards him. Some call painting the selfless act of self-expression and the release of the soul, but that, in itself, is a reward—a selfish goal. I may paint for other people and give my soul to them for an hour or two, but it's my soul that gets massaged in the end. I'm looking out for myself by giving myself to others in return for their praise and the manifestation of their souls in my work. Also, I don't paint what I don't want to. If I'm painting a piece and it becomes objectionable to my personal beliefs, I'll stop painting. It's that simple.

After the first six hours I began to become exhausted. The sun's rays were spot-lighting me that day. They were watching me paint in awe, giving me their input just like everyone else from my neighborhood. But the heat alone couldn't stop me. If I had stopped, it would have broken my Zen, broken my flow, broken my soul. Maybe it was the anticipation and the actual fulfillment of the energy that day, but I meditated over this piece for weeks before actually coming up with a concept and a method. Only after careful planning and excavating of my experiences did I develop what would become my manifesto. Some painters in this world can make it on their own. For every claimed individual success story that exists, there are at least twenty people behind that individual who made their success possible. The same principle applies to bombing, which is why crews are formed and why we continue to paint together.

The concept of conflict among personal views of the crew members is never a problem. In fact, it is what makes the crews more solidified and effective. This is what makes the group paintings more complete: a combination of all the different tastes, styles, beliefs, thoughts, and even idiosyncrasies that present a more clear picture of the human enigma—the mystery that is life and death on earth.

Crews also create a wider spread of notoriety. When you're part of a crew, everyone else knows, everyone else recognizes your presence with the group and individual signs of that crew. One of the goals of bombing is to be noticed and remembered. While individual reconciliation and appeasement is essential, there is nothing gained from the art without public recognition. Our mosaics paint pictures of the human soul. Our tags paint pictures of the human ego. Our murals paint pictures of the human life. Without outside recognition, our paintings are lifeless, spiritless and devoid of meaning. People place meaning into our art. Though it may not be the intended meaning, it is this interpreted meaning that represents what we were striving for: the love we receive from others in return for expressing the love for ourselves.

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Photography: Art or Craft?

Dorothea Lange:

Photographs of a Lifetime.
Aperture, paper, 1998.
182 pp., \$29.95

Dan Finlay

There is never a single approach to something remembered.
—John Berger

Dorothea Lange: Photographs of a Lifetime, first published by Aperture in 1982 and recently reissued, is a refreshing exception to the way books vanish these days, and a tribute to the power of Lange's images.

This is a book we are likely to read too quickly. We are not used to looking at photographs carefully. A few months after Lange died in 1965, a retrospective show of her work opened at The Museum of Modern Art, and in the introductory essay to the book that accompanied the exhibit, George Elliott goes to the heart of the difficulty in appreciating any serious photographic work: "In every art glancing is an enemy of vision, but in none so much as in photography."

Photographs are so common in everyday life, we are so used to glancing at them and moving on, whether they depict intense tragedy in the news or a cherished moment in personal life, that it is hard to give them full attention. This was already true at the time Lange was alive—she worried about the best way to present her work—and it is more true today, flooded as we are with images made to call us to consume rather than see.

The social context in which we look at photographs also contributes to this difficulty of seeing. Lange worked in the flow of a political movement committed to changing injustice. She was accused in her lifetime of focusing too much on the negative—the "ash-can school" of documentary photography—but she had a strong social movement to support and encourage and fund her work for a while, and a public ready to see what she called "the record of human erosion." How does a reader in the 1990s, ignorant of the impact of the Great Depression, living in a culture which blames the poor and which sensationalizes and sentimentalizes all news event, see a Lange image with the depth it deserves?

The single image is not enough. We have to create a context for attentiveness. I agree with Elliott when he writes that:

only by meditation can you see what the photographer is showing... There are ways to get a viewer to second-look at photographs which do not make a socko first impression, and the photographer can do something about some of these ways. However, the essential pre-condition is beyond his control. The viewer must be willing to pause, to look again, to meditate.

The quality of this kind of looking—the contemplative side of love of creation—is what is usually missing, whether we are paging through a book or walking through a museum.

How did Lange succeed in capturing an attentive audience, and how does this monograph help us to the same purpose?

It is remarkable that Lange, by the time she graduated from high school in 1913, knew that photography would be her life work. Before she ever had a camera or used one, she told her family (who felt she should be a teacher) that she was going to be a photographer. She apprenticed herself to learn the craft and headed west, intending to travel around the world. When her money was stolen by a pickpocket in San Francisco, she decided to stay there and opened a portrait studio.

Robert Coles' monograph has few pictures of her work before 1932, when she started to search for her subjects in the streets. The earlier pictures (best seen in the MOMA monograph or in *Dorothea Lange: A Visual Life*, edited by Elizabeth Partridge) show her eye for detail and faces, but she had less sense of direction. Coles writes of that portrait phase: "She had no reputation beyond the city [San Francisco], and she did not consider herself an

artist, but she took pride in honest, often charming studies of her clients." For these portraits at least, Lange had no reason to worry how they were seen. Their context was culturally prescribed.

Of her own life during this period, Lange wrote:

I was married in the meanwhile [to Maynard Dixon]. I have never watched any person's life as closely, up to that time, as I watched his, what it held, how he lived it. He was at that time forty-five years old, and I was twenty-one years younger.

I had energy and health in those days. I had a family to hold together, and two little boys to rear without disturbing [Maynard] too much, though he was very good to us. But it was sort of myself and the little boys, and he. It wasn't so much he and I, and the little boys. I thought I was protecting him, helping him in his work.

But I wasn't really involved in the vitals of the may, not in the vitals. All the years that I lived with him, which were fifteen years, I continued to reserve a small portion of my life, and that was my photographic area.

Her portrait work, or, as Elliott said, people "out of context in the pseudo-context of a studio" trained her for her street photography. Her photography of family life or travel (Maynard, a painter of Western landscapes, decided where they went and she followed) broadened her range. But her sense of calling was still in gestation and she struggled to find her focus. In an interview with her two sons late in life, she spoke about being in the Sierras with Maynard:

I tried to photograph the young pine trees, and I tried to photograph some stumps, and I tried to photograph skunk cabbage, with big pale leaves and the sunlight showing all the veins. I tried to photograph these things. I just couldn't do it. And I decided then that I would only photograph what my life touched—the kind of photography they call 'documentary' now... I remember thinking how good it would be to devote myself to that kind of work, without trying to maintain it on the portrait business. I remember being there at Fallen Leaf and thinking, 'What am I doing up here? I should be down here.'

Finally, in 1932, accompanied at first by her brother, for safety, Lange did go out in the streets. Of one of her most famous photographs, "White Angel Bread Line, San Francisco 1932," she says, "I made that on the first day I ever went in an area where people said, 'Oh, don't go there.' It was on the first day I ever made a photograph actually on the street." The image shows a group of men in a soup line, their backs against a barricade. The couple of faces that are turned looking at the camera show anger. But it is mostly backs, dark coats, in an attitude of somber reigned waiting. At the center, though, one man is turned and leans on the barricade, his hands folded in front of him, his arms cradling an empty bowl. This solitary figure humanizes the anonymity of the crowd by personalizing the emotions—loss, anger, resignation—but also by affirmation of uniqueness. No one else in the picture has hands, or a bowl, or the grim down-turned mouth. His back turned against the crowd, he seems to say, this may be my fate too, but I do not accept it.

It is with these pictures that Lange found her calling, and in an exhibition organized by William Van Dyke, her photographs quickly gained recognition. Paul Taylor, whom Coles describes as "a socially-minded economist, a compassionate activist, a committed populist," saw the show in Oakland, understood the potential of the photographs, and soon began collaborating with Lange on projects among agricultural workers. (They married in 1935.) Their efforts prompted California's funding of the first migrant workers' camps, and it led both of them into work with the Farm Security Administration. Through photographers like Lange, Walker Evans, Russell Lee, and Arthur Rothstein, the FSA recorded the impact of the Depression and marshalled public opinion in support of government-assisted social programs.

Lange's most famous photographs date from this period (1932—1941). Her intention was to offer a documentary record, which sometimes involved the inclusion of text along with her photographs. *An American Exodus*, her collaborative book with Paul Taylor on the Depression, is a famous example of this approach. For those who favored photography as a pure art form, the use of documentary text was problematic. Paul Strand wrote:

Many of the photographs do little more than illustrate the text. Or vice versa, the text at times simply parallels the information given explicitly by the photographs. Thus there is a tendency towards negation rather than active interaction between image and word.

Lange did not define herself as an artist. Getting the message out by recording what she saw—images above all, but scraps of conversation, descriptive texts, titles—was what mattered. Context could never be just a museum wall. Nevertheless, she did not repeat the format of *An American Exodus*, and she collaborated on an exhibition of her work at the Museum of Modern Art shortly before her death.

What makes Lange's most famous images—"Migrant Mother," "Women of the High Plains," "Migratory Cotton Picker"—so powerful? She was not known for her technical abilities as a photographer, and left printing to others. She had a range of styles which evoke some of her contemporaries or later photographers—Cartier-Bresson in "End of Shift" (p. 128), Wright Morris in many images without people, W. Eugene Smith in the series on the courts in Alameda County (pp. 148—151), Robert Frank in some California scenes (pp. 136—137). Her special strength, though, was in her portraits. What John Berger said about the work of Paul Strand might apply equally to Lange:

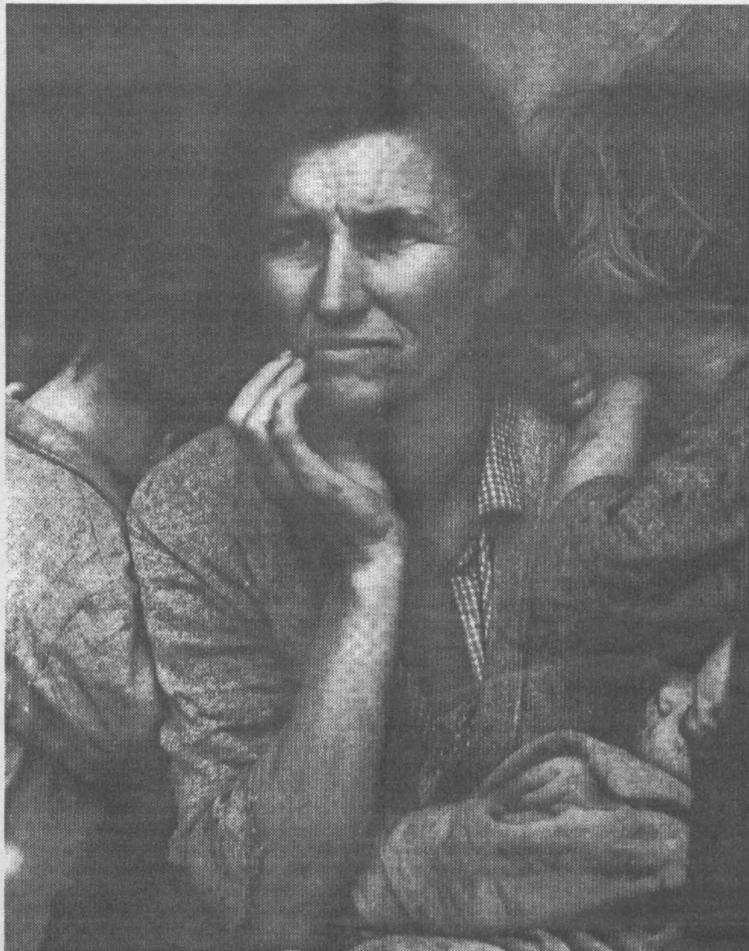
The photographic moment for Cartier-Bresson is an instant, a fraction of a second, and he stalks that instant, as though it were a wild animal. The photographic moment for Strand is a biographical or historic moment, whose duration is ideally measured not by seconds but by its relation to a lifetime. Strand does not pursue an instant, but encourages a moment to arise as one might encourage a story to be told...

What has finally determined his success in his photographs of people is his ability to invite the narrative: to present himself to his subject in such a way that the subject is willing to say: I am as you see me.

Yet Lange approached people ("invited the narrative") very differently than Strand, so how did she come to that same quality? I believe the secret was her conversation, a quiet, respectful, non-intrusive interaction. Especially in rural areas, she found she was able to engage her subjects in ways that allowed her to go beyond the merely documentary qualities of her city images, "Migrant Mother"—though the interaction is brief—is the result of such a conversation:

I saw and approached the hungry and desperate mother, as if drawn by a magnet. I do not remember how I explained my presence or my camera to her, but I do remember she asked me no questions... She told me her age, that she was 32. She said that they had been living on frozen vegetables from the surrounding fields and birds that the children had killed. She had just sold the tires from her car to buy food. There she sat in that lean-to tent with her children huddled around her, and seemed to know that my pictures might help her, and so she helped me. There was a sort of equality about it.

Robert Coles' introduction contains three other images of the same woman with her children. They show the physical progression of the interaction, the changing expression, the shift in the movement of the children to their mother, so that her final expression is more than worry or anguish, it has the reflective quality of a person who has told her story



"Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California, 1936"

Dorothea Lange

and been listened to. The people in Lange's photographs of this kind show no self-consciousness, even though they know they are being photographed. That was her special gift—to create an atmosphere where that happened. It accounts for the dignity of her subjects.

In his introduction, Coles reflects on the complexity of the relationship of any writer or photographer to her subject. Coles himself has interviewed people in all walks of life and in politically-charged situations; he knows what it is like to be an outside observer trying to "get" information, and his insights add complexity to the book. Despite the inevitable degree of distortion in any artistic effort to capture "the truth," Coles affirms the work of Lange and her FSA colleagues. "They were obsessed with the realities of their time: they confronted not a 'subject', an 'example' or a 'respondent'—they confronted fellow human beings." Like the poetry of William Carlos Williams, Lange's photographs inhabited the realm of the concrete—saying what she had to say not through abstract ideas, but "in things."

Aside from the photographs themselves, another pleasure of this book is Coles' narrative of Lange's life. She was a remarkable woman who overcame adversity and followed her vocation without cultural support for the kinds of choices she made. The two most frequently mentioned events of her early life are her polio and her father's abandonment of his family. Of the first, she said: "Then also, I was physically disabled, and no one who hasn't lived the life of a semi-cripple knows how much that means. It formed me, guided me, instructed me, helped me, and humiliated me. All those things at once." Of the second, she refused to speak all her life.

Nothing came easily. In her first marriage she started out with the complexity of stepfamily life and the difficulty of preserving space for her creativity. Her second marriage, to Paul Taylor, merged two families, five children. Pulled between responsibilities, she found the role of mother difficult. Late in life, battling

Arnold Singer

Thirty years ago, photography had not yet acquired the exalted status it enjoys today, either in the wide world of culture or in the narrow world of university art departments. At Cornell's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning the architects employed a photographer for the purpose of training students in the use of the camera for on-site studies, and the Art Department offered a two-credit Special Studio elective supervised by a printmaker.

During the first year of her residency, one of the college's first photography professors installed an exhibition of her work in Sibley Hall Gallery. Included in the politically-motivated imagery was the representation of a nude woman crouched upon a very middle-class, well-appointed dining table and defecating onto a plate. (Presumably the fecal matter was playdough or some such material.) Although that particular image was considered by most observers to be exceedingly tasteless, the fear that a negative response might be interpreted as reactionary muted criticism. Our intrepid professor by now be in the history books, for she was years ahead of Andres Serrano, whose *Piss Christ* is one of the most familiar images in contemporary art-photography.

For visual interest the professor's work depended primarily on unique or shocking subject matter. As a result of the mechanical nature of their medium, contemporary photographers all too frequently are compelled to search out and identify with the uncommon, bizarre, or surreal in an effort to acquire a persona and claim a measure of originality. When Ansel Adams turned his lens toward anything other than wild, unspoiled nature the results resembled that of any number of competent professionals. Unfortunate human beings were the private preserve of Dianne Arbus, and Mapplethorpe cornered the market in sado-masochism. Celebrities in the world of science, art, and politics were Arnold Newman's favorite hunting grounds. His portrait of Piet Mondrian, which employs dominating verticals and horizontals, is one of the finest contemporary photographic images. There is, however, in general, no unifying aesthetic principle present in Newman's work, as one finds in Mondrian or any first-rate painter. Many of his images depend on the presence of famous or colorful personalities.

Seventy years ago, at the time of this century's devastating Depression and prior to photographers entering into open competition with painters, their labors were essentially of a documentary nature. Concerned with reporting, rather than fame in the galleries, their efforts were more expressive of the broader aspects of contemporary life than those of present-day art-photographers. As a result, within the limits of journalism, many photographers of the '30s and '40s made a considerable contribution to the history of the time.

Carefully avoiding reference to the offending Sibley hall exhibition, yet deeply concerned by the ever-increasing evidence that photographers, many in possession of lucrative careers in advertising or illustration, were aggressively engaged in raising the status of their profession to that of a fine art, I submitted a letter to the *Cornell Daily Sun* outlining my reservations. Aware I was traversing a mine field and in need of all the support I could muster, I quoted Charles Baudelaire and Le Corbusier. I referred to Le Corbusier's treatise "Creation is a Patient Search" in which he scathingly defined the camera as "a tool for idlers who use a machine to do their seeing for them." True creativity, Le Corbusier believed, required an expenditure of infinitely greater intellectual and imaginative resources than photography, which he inferred might be defined as instant creativity. Previous to the publication of Le Corbusier's treatise, Charles Baudelaire, commenting on the

unprecedented enthusiasm accompanying the invention and development of photography warned, "So much the worse for us if photography is allowed to encroach upon the domain of the impalpable and imaginary, upon anything whose value depends solely upon the addition of something of a man's soul." Equally prescient his warning that, "when art and progress meet on the same road one must give way."

For one week following the publication of my critique, the *Sun's* Letters to the Editor columns were devoted almost exclusively to exceedingly hostile responses coming from various parts of the university. A few days later, my department called a special meeting and peremptorily rescinded my recent appointment as department chairman for the coming academic year. Having a strong presentiment of the meeting's intent, I attended wearing an improvised hangman's noose. Having family to support, I fortunately had had the good judgment to keep my heresies private before being granted permanent employment. Had it not been for my tenured status there is a good chance I would have been terminated. So much for freedom of speech in academia.

Rereading my letter these many years later, I realize it was unnecessarily abrasive. Along with questioning the pretensions of photography to be accepted as genuine art, Baudelaire did elaborate on its virtues. "Let it adorn the naturalist's library, and enlarge microscopic animals; let it even provide information to corroborate the astronomer's hypothesis; in short let it be the secretary and clerk of whoever needs absolute factual exactitude in his profession—up to that point nothing could be better." As for Le Corbusier, we know he took thousands of photographs, depending upon their assistance in various architectural projects.

In addition to the critical assessment of photography by Baudelaire and Le Corbusier, the world recently learned that one of its most distinguished cameramen, Cartier-Bresson, has, in the last years of his long life, turned to drawing and simultaneously expressed strong doubts about the skills which previously brought him fame. It is no accident that the most serious reservations concerning the pretensions of photographers to be considered as bona-fide artists have originated in France, the very birthplace of the daguerrotype. In the plastic arts, the domination of the French along with their Spanish expatriates during most of the past three hundred years is reason enough to take their opinions on aesthetics seriously, regardless of how contrary and offensive they seem to contemporary Americans.

At schools such as Cornell, fine art programs generally reflect the wider world of art. Photography, which twenty-five or so years ago just managed a foot in the door, is now a full-fledged major and competes with painting as one of the most popular courses in the Art Department.

Whether curricula should follow trends is highly controversial. During the dozen or so years Abstract Expressionism dominated American art, the discipline of drawing became irrelevant. It is impossible, for example, to imagine Jackson Pollock researching a theme with pen or pencil on paper. Along with his Cedar Tavern associates, he simply lacked patience for such time-consuming, out-dated procedures. It is more likely he researched a pint of whi...y, thus providing fuel for his creative fire.

Abstract Expressionism, as well as the various short-lived movements that followed, denigrated drawing, an art and discipline that Ingres, as serious students know, thought of as representing ninety percent of painting. But Ingres was French and his love of drawing rubbed off on Picasso, whose classicism is strongly reminiscent of the earlier master.

Drawing, of course, is foreign to Daguerre devotees. Until recently the most celebrated photographers rarely set foot in an art school, let alone recognized one end

of a pencil from another. Given the history of dominant trends in American art during the last half-century, it is evident that, despite ever-changing and contradictory externals of style and content, a consistent characteristic has been a general lack of interest in the art of drawing, both in itself and as it relates to painting and sculpture. Photography emphatically closes the book on the time-honored tradition of drawing.

Cartier-Bresson is not the first photographer to prefer pencil or brush over camera. It is, however, an exceedingly rare occurrence. More common than Cartier-Bresson's defection is the painter seeking refuge in the darkroom and, now that the establishment has conferred respectability upon photography as art, an ever-increasing number of young talents who in the past might have turned to traditional fine arts, now opt for the Leica and light meter.

It is sad yet perfectly understandable. The camera does seem to offer a more expeditious and efficient method of image making than the time-consuming, labor-intensive, high-risk tradition of serious drawing, painting or sculpture. Whether it can claim legitimacy as art is another matter. In Janet Malcolm's survey of photography, *Diana and Nikon*, we find the following, "If the camera can't lie neither is it inclined to tell the truth since it can reflect only the usually ambiguous and deceitful surface of reality." I would add to Malcolm's observation by suggesting that the manipulation of form necessary for transcending appearances and determining truth is, for the photographer, out of reach.

Though "ambiguous and deceitful" to borrow Ms. Malcolm's words, the photograph does communicate, but in a manner making little or no demands upon the viewer because it rarely if ever challenges familiar concepts of reality, which, of course, is generally where truth and beauty may be found. At the very time the Paris public became infatuated with images fabricated by Daguerre's clever invention, the Post-Impressionists were ignored simply because their paintings represented deviation from accepted norms.

As a novice art student, one of the first things I recall being taught was that art is predicated upon illusion. In that prewar (World War II) innocent time in America, the art of the Renaissance was considered the most truly meaningful expression in the plastic arts. Perspective, chiaroscuro and realistic anatomy, we were informed, contributed toward elevating Renaissance art above all else. It took me many years and the help of an insightful teacher to understand that the best Renaissance artists never permitted illusionistic devices to get out of hand. For example, in all of Rembrandt's vast oeuvre one rarely finds dominating diagonals defining perspective. Rembrandt's reverence for classicism, particularly in Persian painting, which he collected and frequently copied, never wavered. By classicism I mean reverence for formal clarity and nonillusionistic truths. In the finest artists of the Renaissance, as well as those immediately following, classicism remained dominant. As a result of its essentially mechanical nature, the photograph, for all of its remarkable utilitarian achievements, remains mired in illusionism. The expressive elongations of Modigliani, El Greco, or the Mannerists, the dramatic and classicizing impositions common in Rembrandt, Mantegna, or Ingres, the perfection of weight and proportion realized by Mondrian or any of the masters, the unprecedented invention of the Cubists or Paul Klee, to mention but a few examples, are simply unavailable to the camera. The photograph offers illusionism with a vengeance—the very quality the finest artists throughout history have struggled valiantly to put to rest.

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Washington Wonderland

continued from page 1

ated in the observer grows out of our fear of, our revulsion at, the constellation of forces that are so cooperatively engaged in trying to subvert it. That is new, I believe, and the tragic feature of consequences that might be reversible, but only if we pay close attention. By not tossing Democrats out of office, wholesale, on November 3, the American voter was signalling his/her willingness to do just that, but the recent hearings, conducted by the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Impeachment Interpretation,¹ tell us that the House majority leaders are still tone-deaf, elections be damned, even as they fall back on the claims of constitutional duty and prerogative.

(It is important to note, however, that there is a bit of movement within Republican ranks away from a definitive disposition on an impeachment program, or so we are told by the bean-counters and the professional fixers; according to certain "talking heads," Hyde and Co. are trying to figure out how to "gavel down" what they've started up, or, in effect, how to get loose of the "tarbaby" they have concocted. With an admirably skillful nose for the main chance, Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter (R), went on the "box" just a few days ago to sketch a way out—if the House votes articles of impeachment that wend their way to the Senate chamber for a trial, there will not be enough votes in that body to accomplish the deed, but—Specter continued as if he were simply going over logistics for a St. Pat's Day Parade—not to worry, inasmuch as the ex-president could be prosecuted for lying under oath. In other words, the failure of an impeachment vote in the Senate now needn't mark the end of the world for those who hanker after the big Fall because the courts could try him once he is bereft of whatever protections of office he currently enjoys, and for my money, they are, in this case, neither numerous nor unassailable. Bear in mind that the gist of this strategy was aired a few weeks ago on "Larry King Live" by Governor Cuomo. Following out this logic, we would let Clinton off the hook for now, but might experience the satisfaction of a civic catharsis later on. That we are having recourse here to logic-chopping of the most scholastic sort goes far to explain the terrible dilemma of meaning and practice of which the Clinton Affair is only symptomatic. Did we make this bed?)

There are so many places where one might start an inquiry into this ongoing mess that even thinking about it brings on a headache, but one needs to dispose of the man first, since he is the current eye of a storm that the rest of us might be buffeted by well beyond elections 2000 and his Presidency. Today's incredible talk of impeachment, then, has both to do with Bill Clinton, most immediately, and, in the long term, with prospects for a progressive social and political practice and its implications for pluralist democracy in the United States. We are in the midst, no less, of a concrete trial of the staying power of democratic principles and the extent to which the citizen body is able to discern the difference between banditry under the cover of law and outright rejection of it and the authentic workings of constitutional justice. On the latter point, the President himself has been unhelpful. Even though outrage at his folly will do little to stanch the powerful hemorrhaging that threatens to overwhelm his legacy, we are stunned nevertheless at the degree of arrogance and forgetfulness that brought him to this pass. We, let alone he, could not afford the Monica error; now when I say "we," I'm not trying to sneak one over on the reader—I should say that I am a lifelong Democrat, voted for the "big guy" twice, admire Hillary Rodham, and I have always pulled for him, even in moments of gravest doubt and suspicion, e.g., the Grenier, Elders, and Foster fiascoes, etc. There has even been a tad of regional pride in my vigilance, inasmuch as I share a childhood and a river with this President; my "we," then, refers to that cadre of readers for whom Clinton's lapse of judgment has been exceedingly costly, as I am even willing to invoke, a bit of

cynicism in the matter—if you can't be good then be careful, stupid! That he got caught with his drawers down in this thing is simply ridiculous. Even if he were entrapped and cajoled into it, his behavior was still stupid. The eminently missable Monica—my hairdresser calls her the "Pillsbury doughboy"—might have been sent packing, with a note hair-pinned to that blue cocktail dress, back home to mama, but she wasn't, and what might have in fact remained "private," "nobody's business, but ours," and stayed, thereby, out of the collective sight and hearing has escaped to oxygen and the light of day. Now what? The muddle that Clinton has made—albeit, mightily assisted—is absolute and mimics the confusion that his gestures of political compromise have engendered often enough. For that reason, it defies sense, somehow boggles the mind: If the public hadn't found out about the liaison, would it have been wrong-doing nonetheless? I have never learned sufficient philosophical patience, which is the true terrain of a question like the one I have posed, analogous as it is to that tree that fell in the forest, but no one heard, or more oppositely, the multiple sexual shenanigans that have unfolded in the White House over the tumbling decades, we might imagine, but the public never knew, and except for the most elaborate of ruses (at least semi-criminal), would be none the wiser now. But the impeachment proponents tell us that the problem here is not the sex piece, but the President's having lied, first, to a federal judge during a civil deposition (January 17, 1998) and then to a federal grand jury. (August 17, 1998). The defense answers back that the lie was not material, because: 1) the grand jury to which the President bore false witness had been convened in a civil case—Paula Jones vs. Clinton—in which the judge who conducted the deposition would later rule that facts divulged on discovery, concerning Monica Lewinsky in particular, would not be admissible at trial in the Jones case and 2) even if the President did commit perjury in response to questions concerning Lewinsky, his doing so became moot, insofar as Judge Susan Webber Wright granted the President's lawyer, Robert Bennett, a summary judgment, which ruled that the sexual harassment charges brought by the Jones party were not legally sustainable.² Whew! The byzantine character of the legal profile of the Clinton Affair will not flatter the lay person's normal intelligence. Its nice distinctions (as the wording of reason #1 outlined above will demonstrate) require a kind of "poetic faith" in a context never meant for the "willing suspension of disbelief." And if the way here is treacherous and winding, then we understand more fully how one small linguistic slippage lets a camel's hump right through the eye of a needle.

Judge Wright's stipulated definition of "sexual relations"—as the Jones lawyers were trying to determine how many women, who, what, where, etc.—and what exactly happened to it in the President's hands are nothing short of miraculous: Advanced for the purposes of the Clinton Deposition in January, Judge Wright's messed-up grammar yielded this judicial glitch—"A person engages in 'sexual relations' when the person knowingly engages in or causes—(1) contact with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person with an intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person . . . 'Contact' means intentional touching, either directly or through clothing." (p. 4 of 146). A year ago, "sexual relations" were a lot easier to define, as one could usually tell whether or not she was having them, but what difficulties we are going to endure now! Our clever "deponent," raised in the Bible Belt, where the favored "missionary position" marks both a state of grace and the decline from it, disposed of the breach that the judge's definition opened: "[I]f the deponent is the person who has oral sex performed on him, then the contact is with—not with anything on that list [well, technically speaking, he was not wrong!], but with the lips of another person. It seems to be self-evident that that's what it is. . . Let me remind you, sir, I read this carefully" (p. 5 of 146; emphasis mine).

So, let me get this straight—Republican lawmakers, months before a new century, would have us believe that this configuration of legal maneuver is sufficiently weighty to impeach a President who lied about sexual encounters that he sort of didn't have and certainly didn't reciprocate? And that the lying about a rather something is comparable to what is articulated in section 4 of Article 11 of the U.S. Constitution: "The President, Vice President and all Civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors"?³ As foolish as he now seems and as raffish and repulsive as his behavior has been and as much as I am horrified by males who really do believe that sexual expression is degrading, after all, and act it out on their unfortunate partners, over and over again, I doubt very much that you can reach the status of the impeachable from here. We would be reminded that impeachment proponents, for all their disclaimers, to the contrary notwithstanding, are focussed on this pitiful non-spectacle about which lie did not occur before January, 1998, when the object of investigation, so old by now that one barely recalls what in the world it was and couldn't care less, had been invigilated by two Offices of Independent Counsel since January, 1994.⁴ There is a candidate for impeachment in this matter, but it is not the President, I fear, whatever one might think of him and his ways. Actually, a clear path to a presidential impeachment would be quite a lot simpler and sleek than the pile up of toxic waste now strewn across the body politic. I feel like the Raging Cajun, James Carville—we've been had; more precisely, we've been expletive deleted to the tune of 40 million bucks, they say, and severe damage to the public trust and the entire concept of civil rights.

The bill of particulars that I would submit includes all of the following items and all of the ones that I will think of once this writing is beyond revision:

1) I know well that the United States Supreme Court sits high and looks low, but opening up the Executive Office to any private citizen who might want to take a wrecking ball to it during the course of a Presidency runs off this bitter earth, to my mind. What in the world were the justices thinking about when they granted the Jones party the green light back in the spring of 1997? (I do not believe, by the way, that concern about women's rights and the protection of women against sexual harassment had the least thing to do with motivating the Jones partisans, including Jones herself; sexual harassment laws provided a convenient legal mechanism for a bunch of venal clowns who have made a mockery of justice to women. With Paula Jones treated like an infant, by the transparent likes of Susan Carpenter McMillan, for example, and responding in kind, I have been made ashamed that the high moral ground of equal justice to women has been pissed on. Leaders of feminist organizations were quite right to have been suspicious and to have avoided knee-jerking in support of this case, which has nothing at all in common, I should think, with the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas episode.)

2) Has anybody seen the American Civil Liberties Union here lately? How many times is Webster Hubbell going to be kicked around before somebody cries out about what seems to me a terrible injustice? How could Americans—all of us—have watched Susan McDougal hauled around in chains, no less, in worse condition than a Jeffrey Dahmer, say, and not been outraged by it? I believe that she was pressured to make stuff up about the Clintons, and isn't that wrong? Has anybody seen the American Civil Liberties Union lately?

3) The entire procedure by which Kenneth Starr came to power is as clear to me as a genuinely blue day over the Pacific along California Route 1 in the vicinity of Big Sur in the springtime, from details surrounding the firing of Robert Fiske, right through Attorney General Janet Reno's induced paralysis; for anyone to say or believe that Reno's Justice could dismiss Mr. Priss is wholly disingenuous,

inasmuch as her, or the President's, doing so would release a fire-storm roughly the equivalent of war in the Persian Gulf. My sense that the nation has been helpless, really, against the flagrant abuse of prosecutorial power, which, even at this writing, has not ceased, is overwhelming. I've even wondered what Germany must have looked and felt like before the arrival of Hitler and the Nazis. We would have to admit that Starr's unrelenting brutal exercise of power is taking place in a social and political context jaundiced by ideological extremism, propagandistic violence, and a public discourse so degraded by greed and the celebration of mediocrity that we wouldn't know the truth if it smacked us in the face, and indeed it has: If the President of the United States can be treated the way Bill Clinton has been, from "jump," then what about you and me?

As a black woman, with a long American history up my collective sleeve, my Geiger counter starts to rock steady as soon as I even approach difficult terrain, and if I am not mistaken, the nation has reached it—the drumbeat of impeachment and of malice rolls on, despite three elections now, as hate crimes escalate and Republican spokesmen have the temerity to complain that the black vote came out this fall! Prosperity is a blessing, and we, here, in the U.S. have had a good run of it. But is the cost too great, if it means the thorough commodification of every element of our lives, from the most intimate, to the most public? Somewhere in the fallout that surrounds us, it is the economy—stupid, but only partially in the way that Carville meant it back in '91. The hidden other part has to do with that "bottom line" which dictates the behavior of the national media, from print journalism, to poll-driven television news and its corrupt practices, to a poisoned public sphere that ratifies the stupid and idolizes all instant celebrity; it is this unchecked mentality in a climate that represses the counter intelligence that allows the players in all the "gates" to thrive. It will be our crucial business in the new millennium to look very carefully at what our rich gardens have grown.

1. Broadcast on Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-Span) on Monday, November 9, these hearings took testimony from a variety of sources that included, among others, Father Robert Drinan and Professors Susan Low Bloch, Matthew Holden, Gary McDowell, Arthur Schlesinger, Cass Sunstein, Laurence Tribe, Jonathan Turley, and William Van Alstyne. The set ran the entire day.)

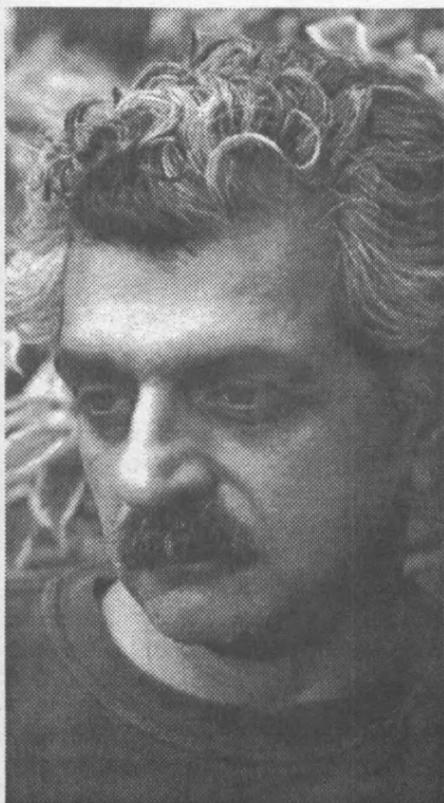
2. *The Independent Counsel's Report to the United States House of Representatives*. September 12, 1998. The Referral; p. 4 of 11. Although I subsequently purchased a bound copy of the *Report*, I obtained from my local bookstore, the good Bookery, a mimeographed copy of it soon after its release. All references to the Referral items come from this source, pagination hereafter noted in the text.

3. Gerald Gunther, ed. *Constitutional Law*. University Casebook Series. (Mineola, NY: The Foundation Press, Inc., 1985); Appendix A: The Constitution of the United States of America, A-6.

4. James Carville, . . . *And the Horse He Rode In On: The People v. Kenneth Starr* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998). This rip-roaring critique of the Office of Independent Counsel is not only a fun-read, but a serious engagement (although some of the reviewers have called it a "quicky," and it is) that lays out the paper trail on Mr. Priss and what looks like a good deal of evidence amassed in support of Carville's theory about where the man is "coming from."

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Street Writing Man



Tariq Ali

Jason Cons

Tariq Ali has been involved with radical politics since the 1960s. A principle figure in the British anti-war movement, Mr. Ali edited the radical journals *Black Dwarf* and *Red Mole*. This year, he published two novels, a timeline of the political upheaval of 1968, and a play attacking the British New Labour government. Mr. Ali is also a documentary film maker and an editor of *New Left Review*. *The Bookpress* spoke with Mr. Ali during his recent visit to Ithaca.

Bookpress: Tell me about your new play.

Tariq Ali: One of the things I do is write plays and I have a long-time collaborator, Howard Brenton, who is a sort of playwright of the '60s and '70s. He and I have been collaborating for some years now. Our first collaboration was on a play called *Iranian Nights*, which was about the Rushdie affair. We wrote it in about two weeks and put it on at the Royal Court Theatre in London, where it played to packed houses. It was a sort of immediate response to a cultural crisis which had gripped Britain. Every night it brought in people who normally didn't go to the theatre. And every night there were arguments on the pavement. We were very encouraged. Arthur Miller came to one of the shows and sent us a message saying that this was what the theatre should be about.

The next play we collaborated on was called *Moscow Gold*, which was performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1990. That was an epic about Gorbachev and the collapse of Communism.

Seven years later, we met to see how we could deal with the experience of the new Labour government, which is in many ways a continuation of Thatcherism. They haven't had the guts to make a decisive break with Thatcherism even though they were elected with a very large majority to do something different.

So Howard and I wrote a satirical play called *Ugly Rumors*. The central characters are Tony Boy: a Prime Minister, Gordan McDuff: a Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Ghost of John Smith: former leader of the Labour Party who is dead, Margaret Thatcher, and the Queen.

It's been savaged by the critics. People don't like, or don't want, to see the Blair government attacked. The tenor of the criticism has largely been political.

In one part of the performance, Tony Blair speaks to the Queen and she quotes Gramsci on hegemony at him. Some of the actors didn't know who Gramsci was. After the reviews came in, Howard said to them, "This is it! This is hegemony!" It's a demonstration of how complete the hegemony of Thatcher/Blair is in Britain. But we've done it and the audiences are coming every night. The audiences are loving it; the critics are not. Whether we can beat the critics or not I don't know. I think the general feeling is that it's too soon to attack the government.

BP: You have produced quite a large volume of work this year in a number of seemingly disparate areas. How do you see all of this work, whether fictional, political, or theatrical, tying in together?

TA: Well, most of my work since the late '80s, whether on television or in fiction or stage plays or screen plays, strives to encourage free thought, critical thinking, dissent, and to challenge the status quo on a number of different levels. That's what I enjoy doing and that's what I'll carry on doing, even though the culture at the moment is not sympathetic to such work.

Both *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree* and now *The Book of Saladin* are selling much better and have a much better reception in Germany. It says something, I guess, about the book-reading public. It's a constant struggle in the English-speaking world. Somehow the Reagan/Thatcher steamrollers did affect the culture quite deeply, and I think coming out from under it and organizing a resistance to it has to be done, but it's not easy.

BP: Both *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree* and *The Book of Saladin* are part of a planned quartet focusing on conflicts between Christian and Islamic cultures. Could you tell me a little bit about the background to this project?

TA: The project began during the Gulf War, when Baghdad was being pulverized

and we were told that there was little "collateral" damage. In the course of that war, I heard some commentator on British television say that the Arabs were a people without a culture. This angered me and I began to ask myself, "Why is it that of all the world's great religions—the three great universal religions—Islam is the one that has not modernized itself." Of course, the answer is that whereas the other religions modernized in Europe, Islam was defeated in Europe militarily and exterminated. The ethnic cleansing of Jews and Muslims in Medieval Spain cleansed Europe of the presence of Islam, and when industrialization and modernization took place Islam was on the margins. I decided to deal with this through fiction, first in *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree*, which is about the extinction of Islam in Spain.

To my pleasant surprise, that book did very well and it traveled. It's been translated into eight or nine languages including Arabic, Urdu, Malaysian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Recently, it was translated into Serbo-Croatian and was published in Bosnia, where it jumped to the top of the best-seller list. The Bosnian translator rang me up and said that people stopped her in the streets to congratulate her, including the Imam of the Sarajevo mosque, who said that he thought it was a wonderful book and that he had advised his whole congregation to read it "because it's our story." She asked him if he knew it was written by an atheist, someone who's on the Left, and he said, "Oh I didn't know that, but who cares."

BP: Given that sort of positive reaction to *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree*, what do you expect to see with *The Book of Saladin*, which discusses some quite controversial issues within the Islamic faith?

TA: *The Book of Saladin* is very different in texture and structure from *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree*. It's the story of an outsider, a Kurdish upstart, who becomes the most significant ruler in Arab history as the man who takes back Jerusalem from the Crusaders. Few people realize that when Jerusalem fell in 1099, the atrocities committed by the Crusaders shocked the whole Arab world. Jews were burned alive, Muslims were slaughtered, and Jerusalem suddenly, from being a multi-cultural city open to all religions, became a citadel of Christian fundamentalism. For that city to be taken back was a very major event in the history of that world. So that is one story. The other story, well there are lots of stories—stories about romantic love, passionate love, spiritual love. There are stories about the inability of the Muslims, the believers, to unite with each other against the Christians, and that is a very modern component of the book. It's factually accurate, but that could be read in the Arab world today as saying nothing's changed. It's interesting that, in the Arab world, historical memory goes back a long way. People still talk about the

Crusades and Salah al-Din is constantly referred to. There are frequent cries saying, "We need a modern Salah al-Din."

So it is a controversial novel in some ways and we shall see how it's received, but I think that even when people disagree with it—some orthodox Muslims or even orthodox Jews might—it will be debated quite rationally. I don't think that there is anything provocative or shocking in it. I certainly didn't write it with that in mind.

BP: What often makes historical fiction interesting is its ability to simultaneously comment on the present even as it appears to take place in the past. What parallels between modern and medieval Islam did you hope to draw with *The Book of Saladin*?

TA: One thing which is very striking in the Arab world today is that Jews and Muslims are now enemies. They are at each others throats. Both in *Shadows* and in *Saladin*, I wanted to stress that for long periods in the past Jews and Muslims, although they obviously sometimes quarreled, coexisted in relative harmony. And the Christians did as well, prior to the Crusades. The Jews were fully integrated in Islamic Spain. Eighty percent of Saladin's advisors were Jews. I think this is very important to stress against present-day fundamentalists of every hue. What they're doing runs completely counter to history. That's the degree of irrationality.

The other point is that it's almost as if the Arab world hasn't changed. Lots of the Arabs collaborated with the Crusaders. Lots of Arab states today collaborate with countries like the United States which are regarded as hostile to Arab interests. So there are certain loose parallels and analogies, but one shouldn't go too far; they were very different worlds.

BP: You have another new novel, entitled *Fear of Mirrors*. Could you tell me a little about that?

TA: *Fear of Mirrors* was written about three years ago. It's an attempt to write a European novel which takes as its backdrop the Communist idea. It explores the idealism which existed among many people who were moved by this idea to fight for it and sacrifice their lives for it. But it is also about how that idea was betrayed. The betrayal was political as well as individual, and finally led to the collapse of the system. It's quite a bleak book, very different from my Islamic novels.

Fear of Mirrors is the second in a trilogy of novels on socialism in the twentieth century. The first was a satire on Trotskyism called *Redemption*, which lost me lots of good friends all over the world. *Fear of Mirrors* is the serious side of that, a sober assessment of what people on the Left have been through in recent years.

I was giving a talk on it at a literary festival in Cheltenham, not too long ago, and I

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Apples of the Eye

continued from page 3

of oil/ Crushed." The problem for Hopkins lies in a Marxist analysis of the forces of production, but in the barriers that trade and toil erect to perceiving "the dearest freshness deep down things." I wonder if my daughter feels, in spite of all, that freshness. Is it even possible to feel it without an apprehension that there is a "deep down" to things? And especially if, unlike Hopkins, she feels that nature *is* spent? Nature's deepest nuance may lie in our sensation of its inexhaustibility. Without it, we may well be nearing the end of nature, which takes its revenge by diminishing us as we diminish it. It makes me panicky, the thought of this mutual contraction.

I'm beginning to understand something about Hopkins' insight into our situation. When Hopkins gives us his version of our plight, "generations have trod," etc., he does so without metaphoric language. For Hopkins, the world's essential horror is that it does not allow for, and destroys, imagination. It's a literal-minded place, and a literal-minded making place. Trade and toil, or "getting and spending" in Wordsworth's phrase, insidiously blunt our ability to apprehend what is being destroyed, to feel as a loss what is being lost. In his like-minded sonnet, Wordsworth groans, "we have given our hearts away, a sordid boon;" Hopkins similarly laments, "the soil/ is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod." Yet when Hopkins turns to the evidence of God's presence, and Wordsworth to nature, both poets erupt metaphorically: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God./ It will flame out, like shining from shook foil," Hopkins proclaims. "This sea that bares her bosom to the moon/ The winds that will be howling at all hours/ and are upgathered now like sleeping flowers," says Wordsworth tenderly. In the presence of nature and in the presence of the signs of God in nature, a quantum change occurs. Without those presences, the metaphoric mind becomes quiescent; too long without them, it might even molder.

No one is without a metaphoric mind, my daughter least of all. Yet alarm over her elegiac unresponsiveness sounds in me. Whatever inspiration is, it clearly comes from outside of us; we must take it into ourselves, literally breathe it in, be sensible of it. Hopkins worries that it has become inaccessible to us. His verbs, sear, blear, smear, and smudge, say that nature is illegible. When "the world is too much with us," we can only distort the natural. If we suffuse it with our "smell," how will be able to sense its spirit or be suffused by it? When we are "out of tune" with nature, Wordsworth cries out, "it moves us not."

Just here, I think, is where the murderers of pleasure have overstepped with their good intentions and their responsible, somber indignation over what's been done to our good earth. No discussion of rivers, songbirds or forests seems to occur without "consciousness raising" around the sad, ugly facts of degradation and loss. No breath of air can be taken without smoke from fires in the rainforest in it, without the taste of acid rain; no beam of sun warms the

forehead without our awareness of the depletion of the ozone layer and the dangers of ultraviolet radiation. How often I have insisted on a thorough application of sunblock while my daughters begged, Can't we go into the water yet? Ozone depletion: the HIV of summer fun, sunblock its latex condom. A love of nature seems impossible to express without attaching a cautionary footnote, as though the nature of love inherently requires that we express qualification. Whereas the nature of love may be to think metaphorically.

I, too, am one of these joy-binders whose parental sobriety and truth-telling, so it seems to me, helps keep my daughter from unalloyed pleasure. I hold out more hope for her, less for me; jailers can be more pathetic than the jailed. Yet it does seem we are all doomed to be shadowed by the tenuous fragility of things, to feel it always near like the seeds inside an apple which my daughter and I have been spitting at each other as we pluck near-ripe Jonagolds, going down a long row. It's a comfort that thought's hard work can so quickly devolve into slapstick. Seeds have slipped down inside my shirt; hers, too, I hope.

But it remains to be said that neither Hopkins nor Wordsworth thought the metaphoric mind the most desirable or significant one. Hopkins was goaded into writing his sonnet, I think, by Wordsworth's remark in his earlier sonnet that he'd "rather be a pagan" if being a Christian meant being out of tune with nature. Hopkins's bone to pick with Wordsworth was not with his solution but with his tepid faith.

There *is* in Wordsworth's poem something troubling, though not, to my mind, in its threatened renunciation of Christianity. The trouble lies in the way that his metaphoric imagination "shares man's smell." Personification helps us to know the non-human world, perhaps even to establish our relation to it. Wordsworth's "sea that bares its bosom to the moon," though possibly an erotic image, strikes me as a maternal one. It provides an alternative to "lay[ing] waste our powers" just as Hopkins "ooze of oil crushed" provides an alternative to "toil." These figures of thought imply that Nature, attended to, can tutor us in right relations. Yet with those winds likened to "sleeping flowers," Wordsworth's scene feels too Disneyfied, too gentled. As it will turn out, this evocation of nature is inadequate for Wordsworth; it can't provide enough resistance to the too-much-with-us world.

Even this day and place, gravid with patient cultivation as my daughter and I amble along stopping to decorticate a stalk of Brussels sprouts, wouldn't be sufficient for Wordsworth, at least in the mood of his poem. He wants something less comfortable than his own sweet, domesticating imagination. He's feeling lonely, bereft, "forlorn," as he puts it (and as Keats does after him) in solid Romantic fashion. He wants not just to resonate with nature; he wants a glimpse, a vision of the gods: "Proteus rising from the sea, or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn." He wants sea and wind infused with divinities. More than a metaphoric mind, he craves a mythical one. Not to humanize the

natural but to divinize it is his wish, not to liken but to transform. The closest he'll get, however, is his own conditional projection of it, only the hypothesis of a solution.

A desperate poem takes desperate imaginative measures, maybe ultimate ones. But I'm out of sorts with it right now. Put this stalk of Brussels sprouts in Wordsworth's hand to use as a walking stick, as I'm doing, and he'd feel better about things. My daughter and I are surely less forlorn, me with this stalk, she chucking windfall Northern Spies down the rows, the two of us amidst the fruits of the earth, companionable. Wordsworth in his poem and Hopkins in his are solitary. In the presence of divinity, real or wished for, there may be little room for others.

What can call forth our fullest capacity for delight? Hopkins felt he knew. And he also knew that to prove his truth to Wordsworth he'd have to exceed him in mythical imagination; he'd have to demonstrate it. For poems are demonstrations, seldom arguments. You have to turn them on and see that they work. Yet Hopkins concurred with Wordsworth on the power source needed to run their sublime linguistic gadgets: the mythical or religious imagination, a higher order than the metaphoric. It's not enough to characterize the stilled winds as upgathered as sleeping flowers, or God's grandeur as flaming out like shining from shook foil, or to call the trees God's thoughts, as Jung did, though that is arresting with its wonderful animism. Something greater is needed, something more highly "charged."

Here is how Hopkins switches over from 110 to 220 volts after his assertion, "there lives the dearest freshness deep down things" (as strong an undemonstrated assertion as can be made): "And though the last lights off the black West went/ Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward springs—/ Because the Holy Ghost over the bent/ World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings." Where Wordsworth's vision is subjective, speculative—"so might I, standing on some pleasant lea have visions that would make me less forlorn"—Hopkins is all immediacy, pure present indicative.

It's always seemed strange to me that Hopkins refuses to call the sun the sun here. That "ah!", after all, is the moment of sunrise, just as "oh" is the less exclamatory figure for day-break. When I teach this poem, students tend not to realize at first that the image has to do with the sun at all. It's not that Hopkins refuses to say "the sun;" he's choosing instead to name what for him it is a symbol of. Really, it's more than that, even. The sun isn't the sun. It *is* the Holy Ghost. *That* is what he literally sees.

This poem, like Wordsworth's, is about quantum states of imagination. The literal mind sees only a reflection of itself in what it sees. "Odd how a thing is most itself when likened," says the metaphoric mind (in the voice of Richard Wilbur). The mythic mind (in the voice of William Blake) retorts, when we "see not with the eye but through it," we see most truly; through the eye, Hopkins sees not the sun but the Holy Ghost, which he likens, maternally, to a bird nesting on its egg, the earth. This is

an image of birth, of dawn as rebirth, renewal: the mythological mind in full feather. Hopkins has gone Wordsworth one better: not god in nature, but god *as* nature—the literal sublime. Through Hopkins we are witnessing what is really there.

If you are susceptible to linguistic legerdemain, then Hopkins has made it happen right before your eyes. You catch a ride on the mythic mind and see through the poet's eyes. Though a poem may not be real, we live it in our reading as if it were. Whatever a poem can demonstrate acquires, in our experience of it, the status of a truth.

The trouble now is that the earth, *the planet*, can sustain us neither in the manner to which we have accustomed ourselves nor in our mythological imagination. To feel the requisite awe, we have to resort to the scales of the infinite and the infinitesimal: black holes, the accelerating universe, quarks, and neutrinos. Delight we have always regarded as a lesser thing than terror and awe. We're more impressed by death than living. We are, when not in love, increasingly literal-minded. For me, the mythological imagination, perhaps now an endangered species, can be most often chanced upon in the preserve of literature and art, in which none of the animals is kept behind bars or restrained by enclosure. Sometimes, like today, however, some manage to escape into this recurring evanescence we mark off on the calendar as another day.

Maybe I've got my daughter all wrong. Words as emissaries, as messengers, may come later. For now, there is still this animal life from which the mythological imagination may arise. Side by side, leaning against a warm stone slab as wind gusts over us and takes some leaves with it, we scan the patternless patchwork of autumnal colors across the valley, as though observing its change. A watched tree never changes color, my daughter says, deadpan. I ask her what else she's going to talk about in her speech. After all, the beginning of Genesis has so many great stories.

The story of Adam and Eve and their leaving the garden, she says. That's what this whole thing is like for me, leaving the garden. I think it's a sign that God thinks they're responsible enough to go live on their own. That's how I feel sometimes about turning thirteen.

The Macs were too tart but the Jonamacs we've found are ready. We fill a grocery bag with them and pay as we leave. My daughter sits on the roof of the van as I drive us slowly out to the entrance. At the main road, she climbs back in.

Do you remember me and my friends picking cherries from up on the roof a few years ago? There were so many cherries on those trees that whenever you'd pull forward to a new spot it felt just like passing through a meteor shower. She puts her face out the window and her hair flies back.

Passing through a meteor shower, she says into the wind. Now that would be very cool.

David Weiss teaches English at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

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Street Writing Man

continued from page 9

was very touched when a couple in their fifties came and asked me to make out an inscription to their daughter. They gave me her name and asked if I could write an extra line that says, "—just to show you who your parents are."

BP: Another of your new works, *1968: Marching in the Streets*, relates to the protest movement against the Vietnam War and protest against authoritarian governments in general. Independent presses played a central role in political organizing in 1968. You were involved in several important independent magazines such as *Black Dwarf* and the *New Left Review*. What continuing role do independent presses have in politics today?

TA: I think there's more of a need for independent papers today than there was in the '60s and '70s. For example, when you look back 30 years, *The New York Times* was a much better paper than it is today. The culture of the United States and Britain hadn't been Murdochized. We weren't into the politics of the sound-bite. The rest of the world hadn't been trivialized into tiny pieces of exotica. Serious coverage could be found on television and in the mainstream press. If it hadn't been for some very brave and talented journalists writing about the war in Vietnam in *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The London Times*, *The Guardian* in London, it would have taken longer for the anti-war movement to take off. Despite that, we felt that it wasn't sufficient to have these papers and we created our own presses. When I edited *Black Dwarf* and *Red Mole*, two radical papers of the '60s and '70s, we mixed politics and culture. The formula worked, but because we were so heavily engaged in politics and activism, we viewed the papers as instruments to aid the cause and we let them go when circulation fell, instead of trying to keep them alive.

Today I think that the need for independent papers, political papers, cultural papers, a mix between the two, is more crucial than ever before because of the decline that has taken place in the quality of the culture in which we live and work. So it is very important to publish papers which may not even necessarily be radical, but which encourage people to think for themselves. To produce alternative films, books, and newspapers is a crucial task for anyone who considers herself or himself a free spirit, even if they don't see themselves as politically radical.

BP: What do you see as some of the other legacies of 1968?

TA: Some people say that the world has changed and that there will be no protest anymore. I don't believe that. Let's start from a small example. A few months ago, when Clinton was thinking of bombing Baghdad, there was that famous meeting in Columbus, Ohio where Madeleine Albright was among the speakers. Because this whole generation of politicians is not used to public protest, she was visibly taken aback by the vigorous opposition in the audience to the bombing. And the U.S. retreated. Now, maybe they would have retreated anyway, but that single act of opposition and dissent was shown all over the world. It had a very big effect. It showed that the American people, or important sections of them, were not in favor of a bombing raid just for the hell of it without any political objective. You will

have noticed, that in the most recent crisis involving Iraq—while the US once more stayed its hand—no similar public forum with government officials was hazarded. That's a small example.

Recently there was a student strike in Paris. They were coming out demanding more money for schools, so that the quality of teaching would be better, buildings could be improved—very basic stuff. This was the school students marching in solidarity with their teachers. It was a very joyous protest. I remember watching it sitting in London. On British television, a reporter was questioning a young French school kid and saying "Why are you on strike?" The kid gave the reasons and then said, "But there is another reason I am on strike. It is only when I'm on strike that I have a chance to dream." When you hear stuff like that, it's very encouraging. There's a big big difference between that and Britain and the United States at the moment.

On a larger scale, what we've seen in Indonesia with the courage of the students to maintain their protests shows that when people are really pushed against the wall they will fight back. Also, given the level of the economic crisis and the real dangers of a worldwide recession, we will see more protest movements arising.

BP: Do you see the Clinton scandal as having any effect in Europe?

TA: I don't think so. Europe has had a lot of fun with this. Cartoons and political commentators have been laughing themselves hoarse. But I think apart from paralyzing the American presidency, it's not had any fundamental effect—people just want the whole thing to be finished. There was a phase when large numbers of people, from *The Economist* magazine leftwards, were saying that Clinton should go quietly and let Gore run the show until the next election. I think that the mid-term elections have ended all such speculation.

The question is, "What is the U.S. presidency and what has the Clinton presidency achieved?" This is a matter for discussion, but I think that the Clinton model is not the model that the bulk of European leaders want to affect. Tony Blair is the only European leader who is a total Clintonite. But there's no one else in Europe who's keen on the politics of the new Democrats. Blair is so pathetic, he even calls Labour "New Labour." It's an attempt to completely break with social democratic politics of any sort. There are currents in Europe that would like that, but it hasn't happened that way.

BP: Do the recent elections in Germany represent a significant shift in the political climate of Europe?

TA: Well, it's early to talk about lasting results, but the parties of the Left received the highest vote they've ever seen. So it's a big shift. In Oskar Lafontaine, Germany has a finance minister who is opposed to neo-liberalism. He and his wife Hilda Müller, in fact, have written a book in defense of Keynesian economics and Keynesian politics. If Germany moves decisively away from neo-liberalism and forms a block with the French, it could move Europe in that direction and that would be a major event.

BP: What possibilities do you see for re-forging an international network on the Left?

Crossword by Adam Perl

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60							61					62		
63							64					65		

Across

- 1. Early man
- 5. Ridge
- 10. Gossip bit
- 14. Sole
- 15. Brett for one
- 16. Bash
- 17. Kind of activity
- 20. See
- 21. Urn
- 22. Come from behind
- 23. Tops
- 24. Puckett for one
- 26. Kind of system
- 29. Scowl
- 32. Not quite fast
- 33. End
- 34. Showtime rival
- 36. Expulsion
- 40. Not sweet
- 41. Ruth beater
- 42. Daughter of James II
- 43. Quite a punch
- 45. Lanes
- 47. ___ many words
- 48. Chimney part
- 49. Car buyer's option
- 52. Dump
- 53. ___ live and breathe
- 56. Sartre et al
- 60. Art movement
- 61. Microscopic
- 62. Not virtual
- 63. The final word
- 64. Small change
- 65. Leonardo's co-star

Down

- 1. In the shelter
- 2. Trollop
- 3. ___ up
- 4. Terre's counterpart
- 5. Secret
- 6. Get up
- 7. Jane ___
- 8. Do the drive
- 9. Bush or Clinton
- 10. Night of the ___
- 11. With 39 down, exaggeration
- 12. One way to Israel
- 13. Contrary girl
- 18. Where the Globe is found
- 19. Black Sea peninsula
- 23. Kind of mat
- 24. Dress part
- 25. Packers home for short
- 26. Day to beware
- 27. Makes drinks
- 28. Where pilgrims progress to
- 29. Salami type
- 30. Blanc de ___
- 31. Key wood
- 33. Kind of cabinet
- 35. Part of a wad, perhaps
- 37. Kind of school
- 38. Kind of bar
- 39. See 11 down
- 44. Sentra for one
- 45. Puts to rest
- 46. Hiatus
- 48. Trick
- 49. Swan lady
- 50. Final
- 51. Spin doctor
- 52. British gun
- 53. In the Red?
- 54. RBI eg
- 55. Man for one
- 57. List ender
- 58. Born
- 59. Bother

TA: Given that the economy is so globalized now, it's a complete irony and a tragedy that the opposition to what's being done is so fragmented.

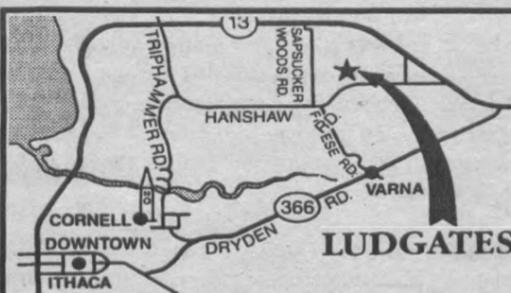
Why are there no people demonstrating outside the Indonesian embassies, against firms selling arms to the Indonesian dictators, etc? So far at least, none of that has happened. Politics in the last two decades has been dominated by 1989 and the collapse of Communism. Not that that system didn't deserve to collapse. It did. But for millions of people, what that collapse meant was that there was no alternative. That created apathy which leads to passivity and even fear. The absence of secular political alternatives may also help to explain why so many people are attracted to extreme forms of religion. For those of us trying to keep political struggle alive, it is an uphill struggle at this point.

BP: If the economic crisis which is now affecting Southeast Asia, South America, and, of course, Russia, spreads to Europe

and North America, do you see the possibility of a resurgence of political struggle and dissent?

TA: I think that could create a certain sense of unity, though don't underestimate one thing: recessions and economic crisis are not the best times for movements filled with hope. Recessions and depressions also create a sharp polarization in society. Fascism and certain extreme moves to the right also gain popularity because of the easy solutions they present to such a crisis by pointing fingers at everything except the real problems. This is true in Europe as well. There are large proto-fascist organizations in France and Italy and a smaller one in Germany. So I think politics will become more polarized. As to how those on the Left will be able to act, I don't know. I do think the only solution for the Left is international organization and building global coalitions.

Jason Cons is a writer and managing editor at The Bookpress.



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The Death and Life of Anne Frank

Anne Frank: The Biography.
Melissa Mueller.
Metropolitan Books, 1998.
330 pp., \$25.00.

Dear Anne Frank: Poems.
Marjorie Agosin.
Brandeis, paper, 1998.
121 pp., \$11.95.

Harvey Fireside

The facts about Anne Frank can be summarized in one paragraph: born June 12, 1929, in Frankfurt, Germany; moved with her family to Amsterdam, February 1934; after her sister, Margot, received an order to report for deportation, the family hid in a "secret annex" to her father's business July 6, 1942; she kept a diary until August 4, 1944, when the family was arrested and shipped to Auschwitz; her mother died in Auschwitz January 6, 1945; she and her sister died at Bergen-Belsen in March; her father, who survived Auschwitz, returned to Amsterdam June 3, retrieved her diary and had it published in Dutch in 1947, in English in 1952.

How can such a brief life, snuffed out by the Nazis at fifteen, lend itself to a biography? Isn't Anne Frank's undying legacy the diary that was miraculously kept intact by Miep Gies, the family's guardian angel? Millions have read it, seen it on stage in a dramatized version or in the film based on it. In remarkably precise, plain language, it records the fate of one Jewish family and, thereby, offers living proof of the worst mass murder in our time.

Melissa Mueller, a German journalist, attempts to frame this brief life by concentrating on the thirteen years before Anne began her diary and on her final half-year in the death camps. Her work clearly began as a labor of love, involving interviews with two dozen survivors whose lives intersected Anne's. But it is, alas, a very uneven job.

For example, the opening chapter, "The Arrest," opens with the tragic betrayal of the Franks and their four housemates by an anonymous informant. A squad of three Dutch policemen commanded by an Austrian Gestapo officer bursts in upon the terrified group of hidden Jews. The suspense of this account is not recaptured until the penultimate chapter, "The Last Train," which follows Anne to the transit camp, Westerbork, then to Auschwitz and her final days in Bergen-Belsen. The other eight chapters are filled with the minutiae of a young girl's growing up in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, with a detailed genealogy of scores of relatives and friends.

Even the two "bookend" chapters raise some critical questions. Why did the author promise "to avoid conjecture" in her biography (p. xi), yet resort repeatedly to relating what the main characters "must have thought" or "probably felt?" Further, why does she assume that "the Nazis had other things on their mind than torturing Jews," since "their one mission" in 1944, was "the defense of Holland" (p. 232)? *Au contraire*, a key fact of Holocaust history was the monomaniacal pursuit of every last Jew whom the Nazi killers could find, long after they realized they were losing the war. Manpower, railroad stock and the costly operation of hundreds of death camps were invariably assigned top priority to achieve Hitler's "final solution" no matter what the cost.

Mueller's middle chapters describe the rather comfortable life of the Franks in Amsterdam before the war. They establish the budding personality of young Anne, the rebel, compared by her elders to her well-behaved older sister, Margot. There are asides about Anne's upbringing, such as a discussion of the Montessori school she attended. Little of this background material helps to explain how Anne, the author, developed her powers of psychological observation or her instinct for the exactly right phrase in her writing.

Still, Mueller's copious data from people she interviewed about those times helps set the stage for the central phase of Anne's life, in

hiding at the 263 Prinsengracht attic for two years. Unfortunately, the author's informants seem to have glossed over the fissures in Dutch prewar society that made the situation of the Franks and other German refugees so perilous. This book only hints at the homegrown fascist movement that spawned the militants who later raided Jewish hide-outs at the command of the Gestapo. It minimizes the role of the Dutch National Socialists by citing their vote total in April 1939 as "less than 4 percent." (p. 85), a figure that does not begin to explain the much higher degree of wartime collaboration.

Deborah Dwork and Robert-Jan van Pelt's essay (in David Wyman's *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, Johns Hopkins UP, 1996) supplies the wartime history absent from Mueller's survey. Here we learn of the pervasive anti-Semitism directed by Dutch upper strata at the German refugees who arrived in Holland from 1933 to 1938. At that time the government closed the border and the following year set up an internment camp at Westerbork for "illegal immigrants," at a desolate location chosen after Queen Wilhelmina vetoed the initial site as too close to her royal estates. The native Jews didn't dare to criticize the authorities even when they were asked to pay for running the camp. They harbored their own antipathies to the German newcomers.

The barriers between the Jews who basked in their Dutch identity and the despised

assassination in Paris supplied the excuse for Kristallnacht (p. 78); and the monarch in the mythical story of Purim is Ahasuerus, an unlikely stand-in for King Xerxes I (p. 98). Finally, phrases like Hitler's "stripping the opposition parties in the diets of power" (p. 35) cry out for revision.

Nonetheless this book reaches a lyrical climax in narrating the final months of Anne's life. It seems that she was at first quite relieved to be out of her prison-like annex. Even Westerbork let her be reacquainted with nature that, for her, evoked manifestations of God. After a month in this camp, however, all four Franks were packed into a cattle car for the nightmarish three-day trip to Auschwitz. There Anne had to endure having her beloved hair shaved and watching terrified children led off to be gassed.

The dehumanization of the victims grew even worse when, with the Russian army nearby, Anne and Margot were shipped off to the North German camp at Bergen-Belsen in late October 1944. They were among the overflow of prisoners housed in tents, which collapsed during the winter storms. The weakened inmates died of hunger, epidemic diseases and their inhuman treatment. Evidently, Anne suffered from scabies, the result of infestations of lice. Still, she dragged herself to the barbed-wire fence to rediscover Hanneli Goslar, a childhood friend. Incredibly, Hanneli had been

Agosin's text was written in Spanish, in the conversational style of Pablo Neruda's love poems. The translations on facing pages, mostly the work of Richard Schaaf, catch the cadence and wonderment of the original.

One of the untitled poems addresses Anne's Dutch neighbors.

Have you seen Anne Frank
running transfigured on the sheer edge of
orphanhood?
Did you crack your door for her?
Offer her a blanket?
Receive her secrets?
Shelter her?
Have you seen Anne Frank
in her bloodstained dress?

The idiom "crack your door for her" is a rather free version of Agosin's Spanish line, literally, "Did you see her when you opened the door a crack?" Despite this odd variant, the translation conveys the poem's shift from abstract to concrete images—from the fugitive Anne to her shroudlike dress. The questions imply that the bystanders' failure to protect Anne ultimately caused her death.

Three concluding poems go beyond the stream of spiritual messages from Agosin, as a medium, to Anne. The first, "Amsterdam," has Anne deliver a pathetic soliloquy from beyond the grave. She has second thoughts about the

Her words affect us because we know that her voice was smothered before it could attain maturity.

"Duitskers" who had fled Hitler led to the illusion of the 140,000 resident Jews that they would all be protected by the government, as their ancestors had been for three centuries. For the most part, Dutch Jews and non-Jews alike, according to Dwork and van Pelt, followed a policy of "accommodation" to the Germans from 1940 to 1943. During that period, any sign of resistance—such as the February 1941 general strike—was ruthlessly suppressed by the Nazis, who started killing hostages.

A *Joodse Rad* (Jewish Council) was constituted in Amsterdam by German fiat. Soon its leaders prepared lists of Jews to fill the quotas set by the Nazis for shipment east. The end result is one of the worst records in western Europe, with three out of four Jews murdered, compared to 40 percent in France and Belgium, and only 1.6 percent in Denmark. This history is essential to an understanding of why the Frank family—and others, totaling some 20,000 people—were protected by courageous Dutch people yet frequently betrayed by opportunists who wanted to collect their few guilders reward from the Gestapo. Roughly half of the ones who were hidden ended up in freight cars to the death camps.

Mueller's informants seem to have swallowed the postwar legend of a united, effective resistance, rather than recounting the pervasive capitulation and the belated protests that began in 1943 yet scarcely slowed the Nazi extermination schedule. The biography also gives little insight into the desperate attempt by Jewish Council leaders to save themselves, even if it meant shepherding more and more victims to the railroad stations from which they never returned.

Without that background, we cannot fully appreciate the tragic mistake of Anne's father, Otto, in refusing to leave Holland, when there were still chances to join relatives in England, Switzerland or the United States. He might also have found a relatively safer hide-out in the countryside than in Amsterdam. His promise to his family that, come what may, he would keep them all together must have rung especially hollow when he became the sole survivor.

Mueller's biography compounds a myopic historical perspective with careless editing and occasional lapses in translation. *Pogrom* is derived from *gromit* (to destroy), not *grom* (thunder) (p. 79); Ernst von Rath was a lowly, rather than "a high-ranking" official, whose

able to survive as one of the "exchange Jews," whom the Nazis kept alive as items to be bartered to the Allies for prisoners of war—a bargain that was, of course, never consummated. Anne and Margot finally succumbed to typhus only a few weeks before April 15, 1945, when the camp was liberated by British troops.

Such senseless horrors should be allowed to speak for themselves. Yet Mueller tries to find some upbeat meaning in a final chapter that, incongruously, views Anne as having achieved the goal she set herself in the diary: to "give pleasure to the people around me yet who don't really know me" by her God-given writing ability. Did she really fulfill her wish, "to work in the world for mankind?" Surely, the lasting power of the hopes in her diary for a better world are due to the reader's knowledge of the terrible suffering that was inflicted on the Jewish children of her generation. Her words affect us because we know that her voice was smothered before it could attain maturity.

The existential paradox of this young girl's murder also animates the poetry cycle, "*Dear Anne Frank*," by Marjorie Agosin, a prolific writer of fiction and poetry, who teaches Spanish at Wellesley College. This work has a consistency and focus lacking in the biography. In her introduction, Agosin finds a parallel between the death of Anne and the unknown fate of the thousands who were "disappeared" by Latin American dictators, notably Augusto Pinochet in her native Chile, during the 1970s.

Agosin's spiritual life has been intertwined with Anne's since her grandfather, a Viennese Jew living in Santiago de Chile, gave her a "little photograph of Anne Frank, which I will one day pass on to my children." This intimate connection brings Anne to life more vividly than a biography could. Indeed, when the poet directly addresses "Ana," she proves that the Holocaust experience is best dealt with either in silence or by resonating with a private passion.

Many of these poems ask questions, such as "How did you sleep, Anne Frank, during the nights riddled by airplanes delivering dread?" and "Where am I going to find you today?" or simply, "Was it possible to be human?" The dialogue is one-sided, because Anne cannot answer. The absence of an echoing voice underscores how her young life was cut short.

oft-quoted entry from the diary, that she "believed in the goodness of men." Instead, she expresses regret for what might have been. "If only I could have reached/ the sunlit clearing/ to affirm myself with the light/ of a flower/ If only/ I could see the face of my mother."

The second poem, "Women of the Fields," is an elegy for the tortured souls of Auschwitz, without singling out anyone. In a haunting scene, "The bald ones spoke to each other,/ hair grew,/ They chased after their names."

The final poem, "Anne Frank," is Agosin's farewell to her imagined friend. The poet tells her readers, "She and I want to/ be writers/ or women who write./ Anne is dead,/ I am alive,/ however, we talk." In the concluding stanza the two women trade places, as Agosin tells Anne, "I sleep with you/ and hug your life in my sleeplessness/ and I name you/ and you are alive, Anne,/ although I died/ while reading you."

It is remarkable to sense the vital bond that can unite a long-dead German girl and a Chilean woman who has yet to visit Amsterdam. But then the slight opus of Anne Frank has been known to display magical powers. I became aware of them when I entered the Frank house, one of the most-visited sites in Holland. Downstairs I saw a display of folded paper cranes left by hundreds of Japanese children.

There I also learned that neo-Nazis had been inveighing against the authenticity of the diary—much too eloquent, they said, to have been composed by a teenager. Dutch forensic experts, therefore, began to examine every scrap of writing Anne had left behind. They not only affirmed the authenticity of the diary but, in the process, uncovered one-third more entries than Otto had originally allowed to be made public. So we indirectly owe to the so-called Holocaust revisionists the new "definitive edition," which restores Anne's caustic remarks about her mother as well as her inchoate expressions of sexuality. Just the other day, five more pages of the diary turned up. To the chagrin of her detractors, Anne Frank keeps on publishing, long after her untimely death.

Harvey Fireside is completing a memoir, *Interesting Times: Tales of a Viennese Boyhood*. Two extracts have appeared in *The Bookpress*.