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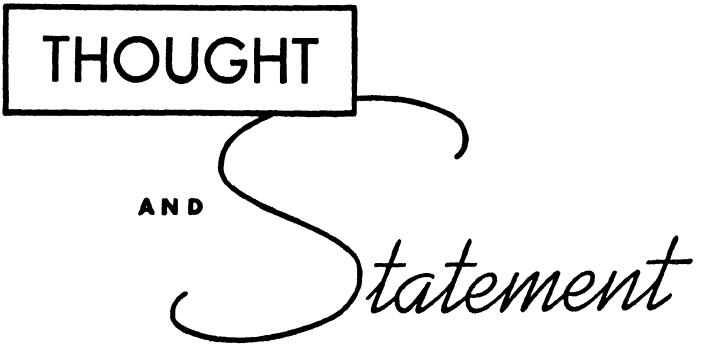

William G. Leary AND James Steel Smith

LOS ANGELES STATE COLLEGE

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY, NEW YORK

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Introduction

The teacher of written and spoken English has shown himself notably sensitive to one of the great purposes of education—to teach students to think critically. This is not to claim any special virtue for him; it is merely to recognize that he is compelled to be aware of the intimate relationship between clear thinking and clear communication. He cannot discharge his immediate responsibility—to teach his students to read, write, speak, and listen effectively—without concerning himself with the larger responsibility he shares with all teachers—to teach critical thinking.

But, by his own testimony, his heightened awareness of this responsibility has been no guarantee of his success in fulfilling it. He has repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the results he has obtained. And more often than not, this dissatisfaction has been directed at the methods and materials which he has felt constrained to use.

It was to help teachers carry out this recognized responsibility by means of new methods and materials that we brought out four years ago a textbook-anthology called *Think Before You Write*. That we had not misgauged the need for some such book was quickly demonstrated by the very gratifying reception which instructors and students alike accorded it. And in the intervening period the novel methods and materials of that book have steadily gained in acceptance.

We would be the first, however, to acknowledge that these methods were not uniformly satisfactory. Indeed, perhaps the healthiest reaction to *Think Before You Write* has been the criticisms of those teachers who cared enough about the book to point out its shortcomings. To all such critics we are indebted. One way to acknowledge this debt is to try to make a better book. *Thought and Statement* is the result.

Although our central purpose remains the same, we have introduced a number of modifications which clearly distinguish this book from its predecessor. These modifications in both organization and method have proved sufficiently radical and extensive to convert what started out to be a revision into a distinctly new book.

The most significant difference between the two books is in the internal arrangement of the selections within each section. In our first book we introduced each section with a "key" essay which raised most of the questions with which the entire section was concerned. Unhappily, and almost inevitably, this essay also frequently suggested the answers to these questions. As a result, students were inadvertently inhibited in their search for their own answers. They were too often deprived of the valuable experience of formulating their own conclusions before being overwhelmed by a full and complete exposition of the problem. This arrangement of selections with the "key" essay first also contributed to an unintentionally didactic tone which tended to crystallize the student's responses before he had genuinely won the right either to accept or reject, on a rational basis, the concepts to which he had been introduced.

The present book reverses this order. The student is now confronted with selections arranged inductively. He starts with a series of provocative essays treating particular aspects of the central problem. Only when he has had an opportunity to see several sides of the problem, weigh a considerable body of evidence, and assess a variety of different claims is he faced with the conclusions of a sophisticated and experienced writer who is addressing himself to the whole problem.

In keeping with this re-ordering of the selections, we have conscientiously striven to include more essays which *illustrate* various aspects of the central problem in a section and fewer which *explain,* and hence are more didactic. Thus once again the student is afforded greater latitude and asked to assume greater responsibility. Such freedom, while more attractive, is more dangerous. The student will often "go wrong." But this is a necessary risk. As John Stuart Mill reminds us, a truth which has not stood the test of rational examination of the opposing arguments "is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth."

These, then, are the basic modifications introduced in this second book of readings and related problems. But several other specific changes deserve a word. By combining the consideration of inductive and deductive reasoning in one section (they were separately considered in the earlier book) we not only mirror the actual processes of human thought more accurately but also guard against a tendency to treat these complementary processes as though they were somehow opposed to each other. In short, our present arrangement is both more philosophically sound and more in keeping with actual behavior. The introduction of OBSERVATION, as the first section in the book, corresponds, too, more naturally with the human thought processes—that is, we start our book as we start all thought with what James calls the "stuff" of experience.

Further, by postponing a consideration of ASSUMPTIONS until later in the book (we had introduced this section first in *Think Before You Write*), we deliberately forego the "shock treatment" which an early consideration of

some of their cherished beliefs always imposes on students, in favor of a more rational approach. Thus we run less risk of rousing heat without light early in the course, and provide students with concepts that permit them to reexamine popular beliefs in a cooler, more thoughtful way. The transposition of the section on REPORTS to Part II is also advantageous. It puts these materials where they more properly belong—as illustrations of one of the two main functions of language. Moreover, this arrangement permits a neat contrast with the materials in the succeeding section on PERSUASION, the other main function of language.

Part II differs in several other ways. By expanding the section on SYMBOLS into a fuller treatment of LANGUAGE, we have been able to include several important aspects of language not previously touched on—the common denominators of linguistic and non-linguistic systems of communication, the social basis for usage, the several levels of signs. The substance of the former section on EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE has been incorporated here and there throughout the entire book, because our experience with our first book disclosed how superfluous is a separate section to treat of a matter which is so ubiquitous when one is dealing with language. Propaganda, to which an entire section was formerly devoted, is here treated as one significant aspect of the larger problem of PERSUASION. In this manner we are at once able to put it in proper perspective and to introduce related and important considerations which a single-minded pursuance of propaganda techniques made impossible.

Changes in the *kinds* of selections also represent significant improvements, we believe. For example, we have made a conscious effort to improve the literary merit of the readings by drawing much more heavily from the work of accomplished stylists. Closely connected with this improvement in style and tone is the brightening of the entire book by the introduction of many more pieces of wit and humor. Furthermore, we have set out to reflect a greater variety and span of language experiences by placing much greater emphasis on the spoken word—formal speeches, informal talks and interviews, congressional debate, radio news commentary, and so forth. Finally, the expansion of the MEDIA section by offering a much fuller treatment of newspapers, magazines, radio-TV, motion pictures, and books, permits the student to *apply* all of the concepts he has encountered in the previous sections of the book to the precise sources of most of his information and opinions.

Our revisions have not been confined to the reading selections and their organization. The exercises which accompany the readings, and which are a much more integral part of this book than of most anthologies, have also been thoroughly overhauled. We said of the exercises in our first book: "These represent the editors' principal effort to get the student to grapple with the questions implicit in the whole book, to relate these questions to his own experience, to see, finally, these questions as inevitably *his* questions." This aim still holds true. But in an effort to increase the usefulness of these exercises

we have made these changes: (1) There are many more *explicit* speaking, writing, and reading assignments, here termed "Projects"; these are distinguished from "Questions for Analysis," which are primarily designed to stimulate the student to see the implications of his reading and to provoke lively class discussion. (2) The exercises are consciously geared more to campus, college, and student life, without sacrificing the broader social questions which we favored in the earlier book. The object here is to start with the homely and familiar in order that the student may gain some confidence before he meets the more complex problems of the larger society in which he moves. (3) Without in any way wishing to preempt the function of the instructor, who knows his own students best, we this time include more problems specifically on the text. This practice is confined primarily to the longer, more involved essays. But even here we do not emphasize this kind of question, because we feel that this is the peculiar province of the individual instructor. With classes needing much practice in textual comprehension, the instructor is most competent to supply it; with classes not needing this practice, the presence of such exercises is an annoyance. Moreover, we remain firm in our conviction that wide-ranging problems which emphasize the *application* of a principle to a fresh context provide a more valid test of true comprehension than do narrow exercises in exegesis. And even those who do not share this conviction will perhaps concede that such exercises provoke more interest among students and, therefore, lead them to speak and write with greater naturalness and vigor.

Any account of the changes which distinguish this book from its predecessor would be incomplete without an acknowledgment of the generous and enthusiastic assistance we have received from several sources. Although recognizing the truth of Frost's insight

> "Men work together," I told him from the heart,
> "Whether they work together or apart."

we had worked pretty much alone to put together *Think Before You Write,* largely because we were then working a relatively unexplored vein. Not so with *Thought and Statement.* This time colleagues, critics, and editors knew and sympathized with what we were doing. And so it is a very distinct pleasure to record our indebtedness to Professors Morris Garter, Charles Lang, Kenneth Lowery, Michael O'Leary, and William Vasels, all of whom used our first book with imagination and understanding at the college where it was first tried out, and in the process made numerous suggestions from which we have profited this time; to Professors T. A. Barnhart, State Teachers College, St. Cloud, Minnesota; Sara de Ford, Goucher College; Willard O. Eddy, Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College; David Welker, University of Minnesota; and Lester Wolfson, University of Houston, who wrote us detailed critiques of *Think Before You Write* which we found very useful when we

turned to the task of putting together a new book. And we have continued to benefit from the perceptive suggestions of our wives, who also teach.

Finally, our gratitude goes directly to those students whose relish for ideas has constantly encouraged our belief that the methods and materials we have assembled in *Thought and Statement* cannot fail to serve a useful purpose wherever the primary intention is to develop the clear statement of independent thought.

W. G. L.
J. S. S.

PART I *Thought:*

PROBLEMS OF STRAIGHT THINKING

1 OBSERVATION

Before anyone can do any thinking he must have something to think about. What he elects to think about must stem from his experiences. And the process by which he becomes aware of experience is here called *observation.*

Because observation precedes formal thinking, anyone who wishes to analyze his own thinking will find it useful to consider the observation process at the outset. But he cannot stop with a consideration of observation as mere sense impression and no more. It is not that simple. The following questions may make this clear.

Why is it that two observers exposed to the same sense impressions do not see or hear or feel the same things? Does their previous experience determine *what* they will observe? Does it determine what they will *conclude* as a result of their observations? Is observation just perception, or does *attention* play a part? Are our senses always reliable and accurate estimators of what they experience? Why are some persons thought to be more reliable witnesses than others? Is firsthand observation always more reliable than secondhand evidence? Can one be trained to be a better observer? How?

These are some of the questions which suggest that the process of observation is a complex and interesting one. The writers who are represented in this section have certainly found it so. Two of them, Levy and Averchenko, playfully pose a serious question: Why do people "see" such different things when viewing the same object? Because these two authors are telling stories instead of writing formal explanations, they leave the reader to discover the answers for himself. In so doing they help to establish a tone and pattern that this book attempts to maintain: a tone of curiosity and inquiry, and a pattern of provoking thought rather than supplying ready-made answers.

The two sober and shocking accounts of a twentieth-century "massacre" which follow raise the same question Levy and Averchenko posed, and a number of disturbing corollary questions as well. "Highway Scenes" illustrates the working habits of the trained observer, and serves to sharpen the distinction between what we see and what we infer from what we see. Pearson's "A Study in Murder" examines the question of the reliability of circum-

stantial evidence as opposed to eyewitness accounts, and supplies some unexpected answers against a backdrop of dramatic crime. Finally, Ryder, in the concluding essay, attempts a coherent summary and explanation of these and related problems of observation.

The order of these selections follows a careful pattern: selections which pose problems come first; a capstone essay which resolves some or all of these problems comes last. Thus you are encouraged to exercise your own wit and wisdom *before* being confronted with the conclusions of a writer who has studied these problems carefully.

WHO'S LOOKING?

The light-hearted approach of the authors of the two brief sketches which follow should not blind us to the seriousness of the problem they pose: When we observe persons, places, and things, what makes us see what we want to see and miss what we do not want to see? After reading these two pieces you may agree that there is more to observation than meets the eye.

Newman Levy

THE CAMERA EYE

We were seated in the lobby of the hotel as she walked swiftly by us, turned a corner sharply, and was gone.

"That's an uncommonly good-looking girl," I said to my wife, who was deep in a crossword puzzle.

"Do you mean the one in that imitation blue taffeta dress with the green and red flowered design?"

"The girl that just walked by."

"Yes," said my wife, "with that dowdy rayon dress on. It's a copy of one I saw at Hattie Carnegie's, and a poor copy at that. You'd think, though, that she'd have better taste than to wear a chartreuse hat with it, especially with her bleached hair."

"Bleached? I didn't notice her hair was bleached."

"Good heavens, you could almost smell the peroxide. I don't mind a bit of make-up provided it looks fairly natural. But you could scrape that rouge off with a knife. They ought to add a course in make-up to the curriculum at Smith."

"Smith? Why Smith?"

THE CAMERA EYE From *The Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1952. Reprinted by permission of the author.

"From her class pin, of course. You must have noticed it hanging from her charm bracelet.

"I wasn't looking at her wrist."

"I'll bet you weren't. Nor at those fat legs of hers, either. A woman with legs like that shouldn't wear high-heeled patent-leather shoes."

"I thought she was a very pretty girl," I said apologetically.

"Well, you may be right," said my wife. "I was busy with my puzzle and I didn't notice her particularly. What's the name of a President of the United States in six letters, beginning with T?"

A. Averchenko

POINT OF VIEW

"Men are comic!" she said, smiling dreamily. Not knowing whether this indicated praise or blame, I answered noncommittally: "Quite true."

"Really, my husband's a regular Othello. Sometimes I'm sorry I married him."

I looked helplessly at her. "Until you explain—" I began.

"Oh, I forgot that you haven't heard. About three weeks ago I was walking home with my husband through the square. I had a large black hat on, which suits me awfully well, and my cheeks were quite pink from walking. As we passed under a street light, a pale, dark-haired fellow standing near by glanced at me and suddenly took my husband by his sleeve.

" 'Would you oblige me with a light?' he says. Alexander pulled his arm away, stooped down, and quicker than lightning banged him on the head with a brick. He fell like a log. Awful."

"Why, what on earth made your husband get jealous all of a sudden?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "I told you men are very comic."

Bidding her farewell, I went out, and at the corner came across her husband.

"Hello, old chap," I said. "They tell me you've been breaking people's heads."

He burst out laughing: "So you've been talking to my wife. It was jolly lucky that brick came so pat into my hand. Otherwise, just think: I had about fifteen hundred rubles in my pocket, and my wife was wearing her diamond earrings."

"Do you think he wanted to rob you?"

"A man accosts you in a deserted spot, asks for a light and gets hold of your arm. What more do you want?"

POINT OF VIEW Reprinted from *This Week Magazine*. Copyright, 1947, by the United Newspapers Magazine Corporation.

Perplexed, I left him and walked on.

"There's no catching you today," I heard a voice say from behind.

I looked around and saw a friend I hadn't set eyes upon for three weeks.

"Lord!" I exclaimed. "What on earth has happened to you?"

He smiled faintly and asked in turn: "Do you know whether any lunatics have been at large lately? I was attacked by one three weeks ago. I left the hospital only today."

With sudden interest, I asked: "Three weeks ago! Were you sitting in the square?"

"Yes, I was. The most absurd thing. I was sitting in the square dying for a smoke. No matches! After ten minutes or so, a gentleman passes with some old hag. He was smoking. I go up to him, touch him on the sleeve and ask in my most polite manner: 'Can you oblige me with a light?' And what d'you think? The madman stoops down, picks something up, and the next moment I am lying on the ground with a broken head, unconscious. You probably read about it in the newspaper."

I looked at him, and asked earnestly: "Do you really believe you met up with a lunatic?"

"I am sure of it."

An hour afterwards I was eagerly digging in old back numbers of the local paper. At last I found what I was looking for: a short note in the accident column:

UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRINK

> Yesterday morning, the keepers of the square found on a bench a young man whose papers show him to be of good family. He had evidently fallen to the ground while in a state of extreme intoxication, and had broken his head on a nearby brick. The distress of this prodigal's parents is indescribable.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Is Levy suggesting: (*a*) that women are more observant than men, (*b*) that wives are more observant of other women than are their husbands, or (*c*) that men and women observe different things about women? Are any of these suggested conclusions safe generalizations all of the time?
2. Levy and Averchenko make the point that no two observers see the same thing when looking at the same object. For example, what do the experienced mechanic and the inexperienced motorist see when the hood of a car is lifted and both stare at the motor block? or what do you and your dentist see when you both look at the same X-ray photo of your teeth? Suggest other illustrations of this point.
3. What different kinds of things would the following spectators probably see at a football game: one of the players on the field? one of the players still on the bench? a spectator who attends one of the colleges? a spectator without any tie to either school? a scout for a rival team in the conference? the coach of one of the teams?

PROJECTS

1. Select some seemingly commonplace act with which you happen to be particularly well acquainted and the hidden intricacies of which you know at first hand, and disclose to your readers (or listeners) details which the untrained eye might miss. Choose some very homely act to describe. Suggestions: A baseball player's technique in sliding into base, a grocery store checker's technique in quickly ringing up the charges, a girl's technique in skillfully applying make-up, a house painter's technique in applying his brush to fresh lumber, a shrewd reader's technique in "sizing up" a chapter in a textbook, a magician's technique in executing some simple trick.
2. Form a small group and, in consultation with your instructor, prepare an apparently spontaneous (but carefully rehearsed) bit of dramatic action and pull it off unexpectedly in class. Ask those not in the know to record precisely what happened. Compare these written reports with a second playing of the incident.
3. Interview three classmates—or dormitory mates—to get their separate, individual accounts of an incident that all three witnessed. Report the three different accounts and point out in what ways they support—or fail to support—the general suggestion that observations of a specific situation may all be different and at the same time true.

MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE: TWO VERSIONS

A press release and a Congressional Report

Although the two preceding sketches involved a question of truth—"What happened?"—the approach was light-hearted because nothing very serious hung upon the question. In the following selection a number of important problems hung on the questions: Had injustice been done? If so, intentionally or not? Was the tragedy inevitable? If not, what could have been done to settle the problem without bloodshed? Moreover, the very significance of the issue at stake here made the question "What happened?" still more difficult to answer. All the participants, and many other people as well, were deeply concerned. Strong individual and group emotions further complicated the already complex situation.

Here the news reports of the famous riot at the gates of Republic Steel published in the New York Times *(universally respected among students of the American press for its high standards of accuracy and fairness) are immediately followed by portions of the report written by the Congressional Committee that investigated the riot.*

Contrasting observations of significant, moving events other than the Memorial Day Massacre might have been reprinted here—such more recent events as the dismissal of General MacArthur, Vice-president Nixon's defence of his finances during the 1952 campaign, the McCarthy-Army hear-

MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE: TWO VERSIONS Reprinted from the New York *Times,* May 31, 1937, with permission of the New York *Times;* and from a "Report of the Committee on Education and Labor," of the United States Senate, pursuant to Senate Resolution 266, pp. 30 ff.

ings, the Oppenheimer loyalty hearings. But there seemed to be one good reason for not using them as illustrations of the basic mental problem we are here concerned with: Your emotions might still be too hot to permit you to study these more recent accounts analytically and usefully. The passage of time, however, should enable you to examine the present accounts with that degree of detachment which clear thinking demands.

4 KILLED, 84 HURT
AS STRIKERS FIGHT POLICE
IN CHICAGO

Steel Mob Halted

1,000 Marchers Fail in Effort to Close Republic Plant

Many Felled by Shots

Crowd Uses Guns and Rocks, Police Employ Clubs, Tear Gas and Bullets

Horner Reaches the City

Immediately Arranged Parley With Both Sides—
Loyal Workers Hold Mill

BATTLE IN CHICAGO

SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHICAGO, May 30—Four men were killed and eighty-four persons went to hospitals with gunshot wounds, cracked heads, broken limbs or other injuries received in a battle late this afternoon between police and steel strikers at the gates of the Republic Steel Corporation plant in South Chicago.

One of the dead was identified as Earl Hanley, 37, of Indiana Harbor, Ind. He died tonight in the Burnside Hospital of a fractured skull.

Twenty-nine of the injured were victims of gunfire. Twenty-three were policemen, all hit by missiles.

The clash occurred when about 1,000 strikers tried to approach the Republic company's plant, the only mill of the three large independent steel manufacturers in this area attempting to continue production. About 22,000 steel workers are on strike in the Chicago district.

The union demonstrators were armed with clubs, slingshots, cranks and gear-shift levers from cars, bricks, steel bolts, and other missiles. Police charged that some of the men also carried firearms.

After their repulse in the march, which began at 4 P.M., the strikers tried to reassemble for another attack on the plant, but gave it up with the arrival of police reinforcements.

POLICE DISCHARGE TEAR GAS

The police said they stood their ground but made no effort to harm the invaders until showered with bricks and bolts. The police then used tear gas. When the rioters resorted to firearms, the police said, they were forced to draw their revolvers to protect themselves. Even then, the police declared, they first fired into the air as a final warning.

At a late hour three of the dead were still unidentified. Police interpreted this as a confirmation of reports that outside agitators had played a leading part in the raid on the plant.

Governor Horner arrived from Springfield shortly after the battle, accompanied by Adj. Gen. Carlos E. Black. He left the Congress Hotel with General Black and said he was going into conference with both sides.

"Are you going to call out the military?" the Governor was asked.

"I can't determine what I shall do until I know what the situation is," he replied.

It was understood that he was hoping to arrange a conference with James P. Allman, Police Commissioner, and Van A. Bittner, regional director of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee of the John L. Lewis Committee for Industrial Organization. It is the S.W.O.C. that ordered the strike which has thrown 70,000 steel workers out of work in five states.

Informed of the riot, Mayor Kelly, at his Summer home at Eagle River, Wis., attributed it to "outside mobs who came into Chicago to make trouble."

He expressed confidence that "the well-disciplined police" would fulfill its duty to "protect life and property" and added that "we can settle our troubles if we are left alone."

REPORT SENT TO MR. LEWIS

Joseph Weber, field representative of the S.W.O.C. and chairman of the meeting which preceded the riot, telephoned a report of the riot to Mr. Lewis.

Several women and several boys were among the injured. Some of these were mere observers.

The injured were taken to half a dozen hospitals on the South Side. Many of the less seriously injured were arrested after being treated.

The riot grew out of a meeting held by steel-mill strikers in protest against the action of police, who turned them back Friday night when they attempted to approach the Republic plant.

The march was organized at this meeting, held outside C.I.O. headquarters at 113th Street and Green Bay Avenue, three blocks from the plant. The strikers said they were going to march through the main gate entrance in an effort to force closing of the mill.

Heading the march were strikers from the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company and Inland Steel Company plants in the Calumet district. They

had been invited to the mass meeting and had volunteered to lead the march on the Republic plant, where about 1,400 workers were said to be still on the job.

The union men chose a time when the police were changing shifts, hoping, the police said, to catch them disorganized. But Captain James L. Mooney, Captain Thomas Kilroy and Lieutenant Healy, expecting trouble, kept all their 160 men on hand.

Carrying banners and chanting "C.I.O., C.I.O.," the strikers drew within a block and a half of the gate to find the police lined up awaiting them. Captain Kilroy stepped forward and asked the crowd to disperse.

ORDERS CROWD TO HALT

"You can't get through here," he declared. "We must do our duty."

Jeers greeted his words. Then the demonstrators began hurling bricks, stones and bolts.

The police replied with tear gas. The crowd fell back for a moment, choking, and then, the police say, began firing at the officers. The officers fired warning shots and, when, according to the police, the strikers continued firing, they returned it.

Men began dropping on both sides. The strikers fell back before the police bullets and swinging police clubs.

Police wagons then rushed onto the field and began picking up the injured. Some were taken to the Republic plant's emergency hospital, some to the South Chicago Hospital and some to Bridewell Hospital. . . .

VIOLATIONS OF FREE SPEECH AND RIGHTS OF LABOR

Report of the Committee on Education and Labor Pursuant to S. Res. 266

. . . After a careful consideration and analysis of all the evidence, oral and photographic, we conclude that the events which precipitated the encounter between the marchers and police were as follows:

The encounter first occurred at the right (or east) of the police line in the general vicinity of the patrol wagon parked in the road behind the line. We accept Captain Mooney's statement (corroborated by the photograph of the scene) that the police threw tear gas into the lines of the marchers before any shots were fired. The occasion for the use of tear gas is not clear from the evidence. Captain Mooney's own testimony makes it apparent that missiles were not thrown, at least in any number, until after the gas was employed. We find no evidence of any physical encounter before the tear gas was used. Possibly a small number of the front-line marchers were pushed into the police ranks by their fellows at the rear, although the tes-

timony of Mr. Lippett, who alone witnessed this incident, does not fix its location in the police line.

The photographic evidence and the testimony of Reverend Fisk suggests that the crowd had already begun to retreat before the gas exploded in its ranks. Within a few seconds after the gas was thrown a stick and perhaps other isolated missiles were thrown from behind the ranks of the marchers and at the same moment a policeman stationed just to the left of the patrol wagon fired three times into the air. Captains Mooney and Kilroy and Mr. Beck all agree that it was not until after this firing had commenced that a "shower of missiles" came from the ranks of the marchers, these also from some 50 feet behind the first line. Simultaneously with this shower of missiles the police fired a volley estimated by witnesses as from 20 to 200 shots. From the evidence of the sound track on the Paramount News film we believe that the number of shots more closely approximated the higher than the lower of these estimates. Any evidence that shots were fired from the crowd has been discredited.

The conflicting versions of the events which precipitated the encounter have been discussed. What happened immediately after the first shots is largely removed from controversy by the completeness of the medical testimony and by the news reels and news photographs taken at the scene.

The news reel, every frame of which was carefully studied, and the photographs taken at various times during the action, give the story in convincing detail. When gas was thrown into the east of the marcher's line the crowd in that section turned and fled, the police in full pursuit. The police then advanced all along the line swinging their clubs and shooting. The marchers in the front ranks in the center and to the west of the line attempted to escape, only to find their way barred by the mass of tangled bodies of those already shot or fallen in their haste to flee. The police surrounded the mass of fallen men and women, clubbing them as they attempted to rise. In groups of two or three, they continued their pursuit, struck laggards to the ground and clubbed the fallen where they lay. Within a minute those marchers who could had fled the immediate scene. They reformed at a distance, stood throwing stones at the police for a few minutes, then straggled back to Sam's Place. Many remained stretched out on the field. The police returned to drag them off to patrol wagons and to search the field for weapons and missiles.

An analysis of the injuries and fatalities sustained by both the marchers and the police was made by Dr. Lawrence Jacques, an experienced surgeon familiar with gunshot wounds, who had been retained by the union shortly after the outbreak of the strike. His testimony was based upon the coroner's reports, his personal examination of the marchers (including four of the fatalities), supplemented in the few cases which he did not himself treat, by consultation with the physicians who did, and the police accident reports.

He classified the gunshot wounds as "front," "back," or "side," according to their angle of incidence.

Ten marchers were fatally shot. Seven received the fatal wound in the back, three in the side, none in the front. Some of those fatally shot also received severe lacerations and contusions. Thirty others, including one woman and three minors, received gunshot wounds. Nine of these thirty, it was testified, are probably permanently disabled. Twenty-eight marchers received lacerations and contusions of the head, shoulders, and back requiring hospitalization, and between 25 and 30 others received injuries requiring medical treatment. The 40 marchers who were shot received a total of 45 bullet wounds, 1 being shot as many as 4 times. Eight of those wounded by bullets also had lacerations and contusions of the head and body. Only 4 out of a total of 45 inflicted wounds are classified as front wounds, and of these 3 bullets entered the extremities and are arbitrarily so classified. Twenty-seven of the forty marchers who were shot (67.5 percent) received back wounds, and the remaining nine (22.5 percent) were wounded in the side.

As against the injuries and fatalities suffered by the marchers, the police-accident and hospitalization records report 35 policemen injured, none shot. Nine of these received hospital treatment, although six of the nine were ambulatory, so that only three were actually hospitalized. The police injuries include four sprains and five gas cases. The remaining 26 were reported as lacerations and contusions, with the exception of one treated by a private physician and diagnosed some time after the clash as a rupture, with the comment: "Kicked in the groin, unaware of the injury at the time."

Dr. Jacques described the nature of the lacerations and contusions as follows:

"Of the lacerations, four occurred in the fingers and hands, three in the scalp, one in the leg. Of the contusions, 12 occurred in the lower extremities, and the rest were divided in the trunk, head, and upper extremities, the greatest number being in the trunk. . . . There were two head contusions."

Dr. Jacques added, as his opinion, that the police injuries "appear not to have been inflicted by instruments of any great weight or size, or by blows of great force . . . some of these injuries suggest that they may have been incurred during the process of the conflict and not inflicted by anybody else."

At least two of the police accident reports, on their face, confirmed this conclusion beyond question. In the case of one patrolman who sustained contusions of the knuckles and palm, the police report describes the cause of the injury as follows:

"While breaking up an unpermitted parade, participant tripped, causing above injury."

Another is reported to have been injured because—

"While dispatching reserve men to the scene of the riot, left leg was caught in middle upright of main gate."

The nature of the police injuries does not argue that the marchers put

up marked resistance to the police; the medical testimony of the nature of the marchers' wounds indicates that they were shot in flight. The police contended that the only shooting by the police was either in the air to intimidate the strikers and to stop the barrage of missiles, or by individual policemen, struck to the ground and defending themselves from attack. That shots were fired into the air is clear, although it should be noted that the photographic evidence makes it apparent that some of these were fired by patrolmen located well behind the police lines at a time when the crowd was already in full flight.

Common sense tells us that shooting in the air cannot explain 40 gunshot wounds, the majority of them in the back. The alternative theory of the police that they shot in self-defense, firing only when they had been thrown to the ground by assailants, is likewise refuted by medical, photographic, and oral evidence. We need not here repeat the labored efforts of the police to reconcile back wounds with any rational theory of self-defense. The only two specific instances of alleged self-defense—those testified to by Patrolmen Higgins and Igoe—have been analyzed above and rejected. Neither the news reel nor the newspaper photographs reveal any evidence of resistance on the part of the marchers. On the contrary, they show the crowd in flight from the moment of the encounter. They further show at least seven instances of police guns not fired in the air but leveled at those in retreat.

If corroboration of the photographic and medical testimony were required, it is supplied by Ralph Beck, the reporter, who testified that the police fired point-blank into the crowd. It is further corroborated by Frank McCulloch, of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, who saw a patrolman, 50 to 75 feet behind the police line and safely screened from the marchers by a fence, take deliberate aim and fire at the backs of the retreating crowd.

The police were free with their use of clubs as well as guns. We will not here repeat what we have already described. Suffice it to say that the evidence, photographic and oral, is replete with instances of the use of clubs upon marchers doing their utmost to retreat, as well as upon those who were on the ground and in a position to offer no show of resistance.

To all this evidence the police responded with a general denial and a reiteration of the plea of self-defense. When confronted by photographic evidence which could not be ignored or explained away, they took the position that the incident in question represented only an isolated case of the use of excessive force which could be both understood and defended because of the passions aroused in the breasts of individual patrolmen by the conduct of the marchers. The testimony of Assistant Corporation Counsel William V. Daly was typical of this position. When shown a photograph of a patrolman clubbing a prone marcher, Mr. Daly said:

"I don't know what that man might have done to this police officer immediately before that would arouse his passions, and, as I say, human nature

is human nature, and there have been men known to be killed for spitting in another man's face."

And again, in the same connection:

"I say that the fact that one or a few officers could have gone to extremes is no reflection on the police department. It has to be expected in a situation like that. It is a different thing where we sit here calmly and discuss it, but we don't know what our reactions will be if we went through the situation these men went through."

In the light of all of the circumstances which we have described, resort to such a position, even to explain the conduct of isolated patrolmen, is at best a sad commentary on the discipline of the Chicago police. But we cannot accept the view that the use of excessive force was only occasional or sporadic, the result of the emotional response of a few isolated patrolmen. On the contrary, the motion picture record makes it clear that the use of clubs, where clubs were clearly unnecessary, was the consistent policy of the police on the field. This conclusion is finally confirmed by the photograph (exhibit 1350) which shows Captain Kilroy, second in command, who stands idly by while several policemen are engaged in clubbing two marchers, both on the ground and incapable of resistance. Captain Kilroy himself reluctantly admitted that the police work here was "brutal" but failed to explain why he permitted it to proceed under his very eyes.

Our conclusion that the use of excessive force to disperse the marchers was deliberate is confirmed by a consideration of their care of the wounded. The uncontradicted photographic and oral evidence, corroborated by admissions of the police themselves, establish that their treatment of the injured was characterized by the most callous indifference to human life and suffering. Wounded prisoners of war might have expected and received great solicitude. If, as the police insist, they were inspired solely by their duty to preserve law and order, using only the minimum necessary force, we should expect, once the crowd was subdued and the field cleared, that they would devote themselves to rendering first aid and dispatching the more serious cases for hospital treatment with the least possible discomfort and danger to the victims. Such was not the case. By the frank admission of all the police, no attempt whatsoever was made to render first aid on the field. Nor was there any effort to classify the wounded into those for whom immediate hospitalization was vital, those whose injuries were minor and those for whom medical treatment was already too late.

Captain Mooney and Captain Kilroy did nothing whatsoever to organize the care and treatment of the injured. The record shows that, with the most perfunctory of commands, they either left the field or went about other business. It appears that on the preceding Friday Captain Mooney had ordered a fire department ambulance to care for police officers who had incurred only minor injuries. Yet on Sunday the wounded and dying strikers were unceremoniously thrown into police patrols along with uninjured prisoners.

The record shows that each patrol wagon was equipped with a stretcher, yet the evidence is clear that not a single stretcher was employed to remove the wounded from the field. Instead, as the photographs establish, the police dragged seriously wounded, unconscious men along the ground with no more care than would be employed on a common drunkard.

Not only did the police neglect the wounded; they prevented the union from giving aid. Patrolman Kelly testified that he stopped a private car bearing a Red Cross sign, removed two injured men from it and marched them to the patrol wagon. Patrolman Higgins, as an instance of his solicitude, told how he had applied a tourniquet to the thigh of a striker whose artery had been pierced by a bullet. Further testimony, confirmed by the photographic record, disclosed that in fact the man had been picked up and the tourniquet applied by a union member who drove his car upon the field after the fray. Before the car could drive away, the police removed the wounded man and dragged him off to the patrol wagon. The photographs, only one of which is reproduced (exhibit 1425), show that the tourniquet had slipped to the knee in this process. It need only be added that the marcher in question was among the 10 fatalities and that the medical testimony disclosed that the proper application of a tourniquet would probably have saved his life.

Although the police testified that only one seriously-injured man could safely be carried in a patrol wagon, the testimony established that as many as 16 marchers, uninjured as well as those whose wounds subsequently proved to be fatal, were piled into one patrol wagon with no regard to their condition or safety. . . .

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. *a.* List the sources of evidence drawn on by the Senate Committee but ignored by the news reporter.
   b. List the sources the news reporter did consult. Compare these two lists and indicate whether you believe (1) the reporter could not—perhaps because of limitation of time—consult all the sources used by the Senate Committee, or (2) the reporter might have used more sources.
2. Assuming that the reporter did not intend to mislead his readers, list all the reasons you can think of for any inadequacies of his report.
3. In the newspaper headlines were any opinions expressed or implied through (*a*) choice of words, or (*b*) selection and order of facts?

PROJECTS

1. Within the first ten plays of the Oklahoma A & M-Drake football game of the 1951 season Johnny Bright, Drake's star halfback and the nation's leading ground gainer, had to leave the game with a broken jaw; A & M won 14-27. After the game there were claims that Bright was intentionally slugged twice by an A & M defensive tackle in order to eliminate him from the game. Dur-

ing the game two news photographers kept their cameras focused on Bright, and these photographs were later published in papers and magazines across the country.

Rank in the order of their probable usefulness these six sources of evidence: (*a*) the injured halfback's statements after the game, (*b*) the statements of the tackle who twice charged Bright, (*c*) the statements of the referee, who was looking the other way because he was following the play, (*d*) the eye-witness accounts of sports writers who were covering the game, (*e*) the camera-men's photographs of Bright during those first ten plays, and (*f*) pre-game rumors that Bright would be put out of the game.

Now look up the November 5, 1951, issue of *Life* Magazine and study the photographs of the Drake-A & M game. After studying the photographs would you change the order of usefulness of evidence?

2. *a.* Write an imaginative account of an emotional incident—for example, an automobile wreck, a street fight, a panicky mob attempting to escape from a burning building—as that incident would appear to one or more of the persons involved.

   b. As a variation on this assignment, arrange to have several individuals write on the same incident but from different points of view. That is, each writer is to assume a different role—participant, spectator, reporter, photographer, and so forth. Then select student "judges" who, after hearing (or reading) all of the reports, attempt, like the Senate Committee, to reconstruct what "really happened."

3. Organize a panel to consider this problem: What questions does one need to ask in order to assess the validity of the following kinds of submitted evidence?

   a. Newsreels and news photographs.
   b. Medical testimony.
   c. Reports by newspaper reporters.
   d. Reports of participants.
   e. Reports of bystanders.

   This discussion would be based on the assumption that all evidence, even the most honestly collected and presented, is limited by the means by which it was obtained.

George Stewart

HIGHWAY SCENES

Before reading the following descriptions by George Stewart, take a close look at the accompanying pictures. Record all you see. Then read these accounts written by a carefully trained observer and discover how much you may have missed.

These articles-with-pictures are from a highly interesting book, U.S. 40. *In this book, Stewart, a well-known novelist, gives an account of what his*

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camera saw and what he inferred as he traveled one of America's great transcontinental highways. The result is a book that tells the reader a great deal about past events that occurred along the highway and about the lives and habits of those Americans who today live near Highway 40. The problems peculiar to close observation and careful inference seem to the editors more clearly exemplified by the following discussions and pictures than by some of the more spectacular, eye-filling photographs found elsewhere in the book.

Most of Stewart's writing, fiction and non-fiction, shows how accurate, close observation of facts can create dramatic interest. In Storm *he describes in compelling detail the course of a storm from the North Pacific down the West Coast and across California; in* Fire *he shows the small, particular beginnings of a great forest fire, and then goes on to narrate in detail its dramatic effects on certain individuals' lives; in* Ordeal by Hunger *he describes with the same factual thoroughness the tragedy of the Donner Party, which has long been obscured by a romantic mist of horror and heroism.*

SALT-FLAT

For the benefit of anyone not familiar with salt-flats, it may be stated that this picture was taken toward the middle of a blazing summer day and that there is absolutely no snow in it.

The view is eastward from a high rocky point, just east of the town of Wendover. . . .

Even without being told that a town was near, the experienced traveler should be able to deduce it from two evidences. First the railroad yards indicate the vicinity of a town. Second, the billboards begin about a mile

down the highway, and they are all on the left-hand side of the road, thus obviously placed to catch the eye of west-bound motorists, and advertise the business firms of Wendover.

The landscape is here again chiefly determined by Lake Bonneville. In fact, even the high point from which the picture was taken was once 800 feet beneath the surface of the water.

In the distance, about sixty miles away, the line of the Cedar Mountains is faintly discernible through the desert haze. The lake once washed high against their slopes.

The white line of the salt-flat seems to begin at the very foot of the mountains, but actually it is many miles this side of them. This flat, absolutely devoid of vegetation, a hard and level surface of salt, is about six miles wide and forty miles long, and represents the last part of this area of the lake to dry up. In a sense it is not even yet entirely dry, for in every winter it is likely to be covered with a foot or so of water.

Closer at hand the ground is a few feet higher, and so there is drainage toward the flat. For this reason some of the salt left by the evaporation of the lake water has been carried away, and a scattered growth of desert shrubs has become possible. Any minor depression, however, collects water, and therefore salt, and becomes so thickly encrusted that even the hardiest greasewood cannot grow there. Several such minor salt-pans, white as snow, appear just beyond the railroad. Precipitation is here down to well below five inches annually.

An amusing detail, showing the constantly rising standards of highway construction, is to be seen at the first bend of the highway. In the early twenties cars were still moving at comparatively slow speeds, and so the highway was run out almost to an angle. This actually meant the construction of a somewhat longer road, and therefore the use of more material. On the other hand, it meant simpler paper-work and surveying. Inevitably the curve had to be eased to accommodate the high speeds of modern cars.

The farther curve results from the necessity of avoiding the railroad right-of-way, which is broader in the vicinity of the yards. From that point on, the highway keeps as close as possible to the track. This was advantageous for construction, since the railroad had been built first, and materials were brought out by rail.

The highway parallels the track across the flat—with some minor deviations following a straight east-west line for almost forty miles. This is the second-longest interval between gasoline stations on U.S. 40, the longest being just to the west of Lovelock, Nevada.

ROOSEVELT, UTAH

The main street of Roosevelt presents the pattern of the far-western small town, with certain adaptations because of its complete dependence upon the highway.

Founded in 1908 and named for the out-going president, Roosevelt was originally a trading-center for scantily inhabited ranching-country. It now subsists largely from highway-income, being the best place between Vernal, 27 miles to the east, and Heber, 99 miles to the west, at which to find a decent lodging for the night, or eat a meal, or buy a new tire, or have a little garage-work done, or amuse yourself by an evening at the movies.

Roosevelt is interesting in that it is wholly a highway-town, having no means of reaching the outside world except over U.S. 40. The closest rail-head is fifty miles to the south, and there is no connecting road. The nearest practical contact with the railroad is at Heber, 99 miles away. The citizens of Roosevelt, however, are not at all concerned with their distance from a railroad. They are wholly adjusted to highway-life, and are getting along excellently.

The width of the street, 69 feet between curbs, is typical of the west, and may be contrasted with the narrow streets of Ellicott City and Frederick. Some say that western streets were made wide so that ox-wagons and four-horse stages would be able to turn around. More likely the width may be credited to the boom spirit which saw in every village a future metropolis. Certainly in an unsettled and unforested country there was little to work against wide streets.

A future historian, deprived of other evidence, could reconstruct much of the life of this town from the signs displayed along both sides of the block.

Two hotels, two cafés, and a grill indicate its preoccupation with the traveler. Its citizens are also able to buy shoes, drugs, hardware, appliances, and tires. They keep in touch with the dominant forms of American folk-art by patronizing two motion-picture houses, and by listening to radios. Both the height of the bent aerial on the top of the hotel at the right, and the absence of television aerials suggest the distance from large centers.

The architecture—low, flat-roofed, undistinguished—offers little that is outstanding, but is fully characteristic of its time and place. The hotel is carrying on, though in a modest way, the old false-front tradition of the early cow-town. Although no building in the picture can be as much as fifty years old, the general effect is somewhat dilapidated and run down. Like most towns in marginal farming country, Roosevelt has never had money on which to splurge. The showy and new electric street-lights are about the only sign of extravagance.

Roosevelt is a Mormon town, and the surrounding country was settled largely by Mormons who moved to this isolated area to escape the federal anti-polygamy laws. The picture, however, shows almost nothing that is typical of the Mormons. Their love of trees is very imperfectly demonstrated by the single tall cottonwood. Their love of running water along the streets is barely suggested by the deep gutter at the right, although there is actually a running stream beside the cross-street.

The picture was taken about eight o'clock on an August morning, before any clouds had yet had a chance to build up. Through the clear air, at the end of the street, appears one of the long level lines characteristic of the red sandstone plateaus of the region. The gravel scattered upon the pavement, both right and left, indicates that the highway is here only a narrow ribbon through primitive country, and that dirt or gravel roads and streets lead into it from both directions.

SHEEPHERDER

A few miles west of Craig, Colorado, is the proper place to meet Bill Mellos, the sheepherder, with his wagon and horse and two dogs, and his twelve hundred sheep. The sheep, however, are feeding, uphill to the right.

Mr. Mellos and his outfit present an interesting mingling of old and new. He himself, except for the bandanna around his neck, displays nothing conventionally far-western. He wears a battered felt knockabout, not a ten-gallon Stetson. Nevertheless, with the business-like short grip on the bridle-reins, he stands upright, the picture of a vigilant herder, a trifle self-conscious, his glance directed at the far horizon.

The horse, however, scarcely seems to be playing up. At most, he is no agile cow-pony but is more like some comfortable dobbin. Although the ears are alertly up, above the white star in the forehead, there is a general look of sleepiness, and the tight grip on the reins is scarcely needed.

As for the horse-trappings, the rope hackamore in addition to the regular bridle may be noted as a Western touch, and also the high pummel of the saddle, which could still be used for snubbing a rope. One actually hangs at the saddle-bow, but this must be considered a picket-line rather than a lariat. There is no need to rope sheep.

The two dogs refused to have anything to do with the picture. The older black one retired immediately under the wagon. The other, a half-wild four-month-old puppy, made a few threats at the photographer's legs, and then slunk back at his master's command. They are good with sheep, says Mr. Mellos, "Worth more than the sheep."

As for the wagon, all of it above the running-gear is straight out of the Old West. Its canvas cover—ribs showing slightly, weatherproof but light (so that the wagon will not be top-heavy)—goes back to the tradition of the emigrant's covered-wagon, and beyond that to the great Conestogas of the National Road. It is a home as well as a wagon—note the well-blackened stovepipe, the wash-tub, and the worn broom. The mushroom-profile is also traditional and was originally functional, since the old wagon-wheels were higher and the wagon-bed was set low down between them.

The running-gear of the home-on-wheels, however, is modern—taken from an old automobile truck. It shows that the sheepherder is now tied to some passable truck-road. When he has to change location, a truck comes out from headquarters, and tows the wagon. Sheep also are often moved by truck. An attempt to take this wagon across open country might be disastrous, since its center of gravity has been raised dangerously high.

The rolling hills in the background are typical of the Wyoming Basin. Sagebrush is the predominating growth, and to the left of the highway the bushes are luxuriant. The foreground, however, shows a considerable amount of grass between the bushes, and this supplies the feed for the sheep.

Telephone-line, house, and highway, although giving the modern touch, are far from being truly up-to-date. The poles carry only ten strands. The house is primitive, though recent enough to reflect light brilliantly from its new corrugated-iron roof. The rancher has cleared a field in a level spot and, according to Mr. Mellos, is raising "spuds." The herder is disgusted with the whole affair, since it takes some acres of feed away from his sheep. An economic geographer might be equally disgusted, since agriculture in this dry country is a marginal undertaking. In a few years an abandoned field may be developing gullies that will do much more damage than the crops of spuds ever did good.

The highway represents U.S. 40 at close to its lowest ebb—narrow, sharply curving, lacking good shoulders, unfenced, rising at a steep grade. Nevertheless, the daily average traffic (1948) is 900 cars.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. The story is told of the painter Whistler that, coming up from behind on an artist who was trying to paint every stone in a cathedral faithfully, he wrote in chalk on the artist's back, "I am totally blind." What point about observation does the story, true or apocryphal, seek to make?
2. What generalizations about railroad-yard locations and billboards does Stewart use to help him deduce that a town is near the salt-flats? If you have travelled in barren country, what evidence has told you of an approaching town? Was this evidence ever misleading?
3. Stewart suggests that the white of salt-flats might be taken for snow. Is the conclusion (salt or snow) on the basis of distant sight a fact or inference? Why?
4. What central conclusion about the town does Stewart draw from what he sees in Roosevelt? What evidence does he cite to support this conclusion? Which portions of this evidence are verified by the picture alone?
5. In his "Sheepherder" description Stewart makes a number of statements which *seem* to have the same factual, reportorial tone. Closer reading, however, will reveal a sharp distinction. Some of his statements are fact-based (indeed he provides the facts which support them); others are impressionistic, "fictionized." Distinguish the former from the latter.

PROJECTS

1. *a.* Bring to class a snapshot of a place you have photographed. Let someone who has never seen either the picture or the place report to the class what he "sees." Then interpret the picture, filling in details which your greater familiarity with the subject permits you to "see"—details which depend on prior knowledge and experience.
   b. As a variation on this experiment invite a member of the college art department to bring to class an original painting (or reproduction) with which he is thoroughly familiar. After the class report what they see, let the visitor

explain what he "sees" that the class has missed. (Similar experiments can be devised using the services of a botanist and a flower, an engineer and a tool, a zoologist and a skull, a geologist and a cut-away of some earth formation, a librarian and some original edition of a rare book, etc.)

2. An individual can be trained to see more, to observe detail that would escape an untrained eye. Ask your instructor to bring to class an object of his own selection (preferably one with which he is thoroughly familiar). Then let every member of the class study the object and make notes on what he sees during one entire class period. Finally, write a careful statement detailing all you saw and during the next class period compare your results with those of your classmates. The disparity in the results should prove both amusing and instructive. (A good introduction to this exercise is to have someone in class read the account of the teaching method used by Louis Agassiz, the first teacher of zoology at Harvard, to be found on pages 241-243 of Gilbert Highet's *The Art of Teaching*.)
3. Using Stewart's methods of observation and cautious inference from observation, try to reconstruct the history of a street, park, building, or other important spot in your town. That is, try, by looking at a park, to tell something about the people who use it, their interests, the uses to which the park has been put in earlier years, and so forth.

Edmund Pearson

A STUDY IN MURDER

Circumstantial evidence—that is, evidence based upon the implications of a series of allied circumstances, not on eye-witness accounts of the chief event —suggests to many people unreliability and uncertainty. But why? Is there anything in the very nature of such observations that should make them unreliable as evidence that such-and-such happened? Pearson argues no, and in the process he raises for the thoughtful reader many interesting questions about the nature of observation.

The following selection is an excerpt from Pearson's Studies in Murder, *a series of fascinatingly cold-eyed examinations of hot-blooded crimes. The quality in Pearson's writing that has appealed to many readers is his keen concern with the problems of observation and logical thinking that the annals of crime provide.*

During a trial like Hauptmann's, people talk endlessly about circumstantial evidence. About no other subject do they talk so much and know so little. If a dozen people are together, say, at a dinner party, and the Hauptmann case is discussed, half of them wag their heads sadly, and shudder over circumstantial evidence.

A STUDY IN MURDER Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc. Copyright, 1935, by Edmund Pearson.

"Never ought to convict on circumstantial evidence! Not safe."

Question these folk a little and you find that they are utterly unable to give any definition of what they denounce so readily. If you could look into their minds, you would discover that they use the words as a general term of abuse—that is, that circumstantial evidence is any kind of evidence which was used to convict their pet criminal. At best, they have a foggy notion that the words mean defective or perjured evidence, or mere suspicion.

Yet these people are acting, every day of their lives, and in all relations of life, on circumstantial evidence, and often preferring it to the other kind, which is direct evidence, or the testimony of eye-witnesses.

The brief, classic definition of circumstantial evidence is the footprint seen on the beach by Robinson Crusoe. He knew from that circumstance that there had been a stranger on his island. He wouldn't have cared for the direct evidence to the contrary of any number of people. If Mr. Clarence Darrow, Mr. Edward J. Reilly, and Mrs. Roosevelt had come down in an airplane to tell him to distrust circumstantial evidence, it would have made no difference. As District Attorney Knowlton said in the Borden trial, using the footprint illustration, "It was circumstantial evidence; it was nothing but circumstantial evidence, but it satisfied *him.*"

An often-cited definition by a famous judge comes from Chief Justice Shaw's charge to the jury in the trial of Professor Webster. Here it is, in grave, legal language: "The distinction, then, between direct and circumstantial evidence is this. Direct or positive evidence is when a witness can be called to testify to the precise fact which is the subject of the issue in trial; that is, in a case of homicide, that the party accused did cause the death of the deceased. . . . But suppose no person was present on the occasion of the death . . . is it wholly unsusceptible of legal proof? Experience has shown that circumstantial evidence may be offered in such a case; that is, that a body of facts may be proved of so conclusive a character as to warrant a firm belief of the fact quite as strong and certain as that on which discreet men are accustomed to act in relation to their most important concerns. . . . If it were necessary always to have positive evidence, how many criminal acts . . . would go wholly undetected and unpunished?"

Thoreau's epigram is: "Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk."

Mrs. Roosevelt, in her recent remarks about the Hauptmann case, said, "I thought from what I read that the verdict was based entirely on circumstantial evidence and, while not in sympathy with Hauptmann, I was a little perturbed at the thought of what might happen to any innocent person in a similar situation."

This sentence contains one misconception of the facts, and one fallacy. The conviction of Hauptmann was *not* based entirely on circumstantial evidence. And it is wholly unnecessary to be perturbed about an innocent person

in a position similar to Hauptmann's, because an innocent person never gets in such a position. Not in a million years would the powers of Heaven and earth unite to entangle an innocent person in a net of so many strands. That a lady as intelligent as Mrs. Roosevelt could fancy that such a situation is conceivable shows how general is the custom of taking our ideas of criminal procedure, and especially murder trials, not from what is actually happening in courts but from the fantastic inventions of novelists and screen writers.

It is a strange thing that few commentators on the Hauptmann case have remarked upon a fact that was apparent before the trial was a week old. That is that the case against the prisoner was not merely strong, it was overwhelming, crushing. I should like to ask somebody more familiar than I with the history of murder trials in this country if he can name any trial in which the actual killing was done in secret, and in which the accused denied guilt, where there was a larger, more varied, and more convincing body of evidence for the State than in the recent trial at Flemington. I know of none.

Considering that Hauptmann, a man with a criminal record, was given a longer and more patient hearing than would have been granted anywhere else in the world and that his astute and experienced attorney was allowed the usual licence in flinging his insinuations in every direction, the fact that the jury, from the beginning of their deliberations, were unanimous as to guilt is extremely impressive. Few murder mysteries are ever entirely cleared up; there usually remain a few dark points; but to say, as some are saying, that "the verdict has solved nothing; we are still completely in the dark" suggests not reasoning but stubbornness.

Hauptmann was convicted on the following significant pieces of *direct* evidence: He was identified as having been near the scene of the crime by more than one witness, but especially by one who seems to have impressed the jury, and, what is more interesting, certainly impressed the wise and just judge. He was identified as the sender of a note to Dr. Condon. At the payment of the ransom, he was identified by two witnesses, one who talked with him face to face, and one who heard his voice. He showed these that he was not a go-between, but the principal; and any theory that the negotiator and the murderer were different persons is shaken. He was identified, by numerous witnesses, as the passer of the blood money, and they were able to describe this man so well that a portrait drawn from their descriptions, before the arrest, proved to be a fair likeness of Hauptmann.

The chief items of *circumstantial* evidence were, first, his possession of the ransom money, to account for which he gave an absurd explanation. This alone is three-quarters of the way to a conviction. The ladder was partly made from wood from his house—one of the most convincing pieces of testimony ever offered in a murder trial. He had Dr. Condon's telephone number written in a secret place in his house, and he lied about it. That all the ransom letters were in his hand was evident without recourse to the experts on writ-

ing, while all but one of the experts called in his behalf refused to testify for him—an astonishing and unusual event. He was in possession of the child's sleeping jacket. He changed many of the ransom bills in a manner peculiarly furtive.

In addition to all this, what resemblances can be listed between the murderer and Hauptmann? It is not hard to name at least ten. Plainly, the murderer was a German, his headquarters were the Bronx, and he might reasonably be expected to have had some previous experience as a burglar, and to be capable of callous crimes against women and children. All of these are true of Hauptmann. The murderer was bold to the point of foolhardiness: to enter a lighted house in the early evening, and steal a child from the cradle, must, for its brazen quality, be rare if not unique in the history of crime. Hauptmann has given indications that he has exactly this mixture of courage and folly: one example is the face-to-face talk with Dr. Condon. The murderer was a second-rate carpenter—which describes Hauptmann. The murderer was avid for money—so greedy that he took frightful chances in its acquisition. And Hauptmann at the trial became liveliest, most alert, during the discussion of his Wall Street career. The murderer owned a car, had to be agile and athletic, and became suddenly affluent when the ransom was paid. All of which describes Hauptmann. The murderer had to be absent from home, at least part of a day and a night, at the time of the kidnapping, and the witness who so testified as to Hauptmann was not satisfactorily refuted. The murderer, not having an honest alibi, would cast about for a faked one. As did Hauptmann.

What is lacking of the ingredients of guilt? He was shown to have motive and design. He had opportunity. He had means and capacity. His known career in Germany is that of the typical criminal. He betrayed consciousness of guilt in hiding the money.

Everything that can decently be called evidence points to Hauptmann, and to nobody else. Attempts to implicate others have rested on gossip and insinuation. The theory of the guilt of one of the servants was adopted by many people early in the history of the case. It is clung to by few, except those who pride themselves on preferring "hunches" to evidence tested in court. The notion that somebody inside the house tipped off the kidnapper "when the coast was clear" is disproved by the fact that the coast was far from clear at the moment of kidnapping, so that the criminal escaped only because of extraordinary boldness and great luck.

Everything known tends to show that the kidnapper went by himself to the commission of the crime, and that, from the start, he planned murder. It has never been hinted that any provision was ever made for concealing the child alive, anywhere.

Against this mass of damaging evidence, the defence was astonishingly weak. The legal saying is that an alibi overthrown is a conviction. The comic

chorus of alibi witnesses, springing up at the eleventh hour, in answer to advertisements, and only after it was widely known at what place and hour the alibi must be established, needs little comment. The prisoner himself expressed disgust at the spotted crew. The tale of Fisch, and the shoebox containing fourteen thousand dollars, negligently left behind—by a pauper—was so incredible as to be ridiculous.

Hauptmann is the typical criminal, not without his amiable moments, but, like most deliberate murderers, a ruthless egoist. He had eluded the German police and fooled the American immigration officers. He came to think that he could pull off any job, and so would show the Yankees something big—quietly chuckling at their anger. His is the criminal's typical combination of courage and egregious folly, of superficial cleverness and genuine stupidity.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Pearson points out that whereas few people can give an adequate definition of the term, we are acting, every day of our lives, and in all relations of life, on *circumstantial evidence*. To test your understanding of this key term, supply examples of how you have recently drawn a conclusion as a result of relying on circumstantial evidence. (Have you, for example, recently concluded from such indirect evidence as frequent sales and lack of improvements that a store was having a difficult time?) How might circumstantial evidence become important in answering each of the following questions: (*a*) Is a friend of yours working hard despite the fact he says he "never cracks a book"? (*b*) Although everyone complimented the hostess on her dinner last night, did everyone relish the meal? (*c*) Is your father worried, although he hasn't mentioned any problems? (*d*) Did a tribe which left no literature behind them (and hence no statements of their beliefs) believe in an after-life?
2. Is an eye-witness account necessarily more "factual" than circumstantial evidence? Does this suggest that there may be more than one level of "facts"?
3. Does the difference in the specificity of the various bits of circumstantial evidence which Pearson advances in his review of the Hauptmann case illustrate a need for distinguishing between certain kinds of circumstantial evidence? Explain.
4. Frequently errors of fact are made because of confusion of terms. One common form of this error is the mistaking of individuals who bear the same proper names. Other errors of fact—that is, of observation of facts—are made because of close physical resemblances among people, objects, places, or events. Cite instances of each kind of confusion and suggest some underlying reasons for them.
5. Have you ever acted unwisely because of your momentary reliance on circumstantial evidence? If you have, was it because the evidence was circumstantial or because there wasn't enough evidence? Supply examples of how you recently acted unwisely as a result of direct observation. Do you believe that sometimes the number and relevancy of your facts are more important in determining the

wisdom of your decision than whether you obtained them from direct or circumstantial evidence?

6. Do you see any precautions it would be wise to observe in using circumstantial evidence? (For example, you might consider a teacher's problem in judging a student's ability in mathematics by the homework problems he hands in. Can one safely conclude a college is prosperous because it has many new buildings?)

PROJECT

As an exercise in imaginative writing and a test of the ability of your classmates to draw a reasonable conclusion from available facts, submit a paper in which you recount a series of circumstances which point to one or more possible conclusions. Now ask some of your classmates to state the conclusions they have drawn from the evidence. Then let a jury of other classmates pass on the reasonableness of the conclusions. You should not withhold any evidence to trick your classmates.

T. A. Ryder

OBSERVATION

The preceding selections have shown us how the complexities of observation may lead us into error. But it is not enough to be made aware of our errors; we want to know how to correct them. T. A. Ryder, a British psychologist, attempts to help us do just that. He analyzes the observation process, points out some of its components, and indicates ways by which we can improve our powers of observation.

Let us consider observation; the first point to be noted is that it is a conscious and a selective process. All normal people can see, hear, taste, and so on, but not all normal people are good observers. Few people are, unless they have been trained. One has only to compare the accounts given of the same event by different people to realise how much more some see than others. Although we see all the items in a given situation we tend to *observe* only a part of the situation. There is a classic story told in this connection of a lecturer who wished to drive the point home that people may see but not observe. He took a jar of asafoetida and held it up before his class, dipped a finger in it and then put a finger into his mouth with no apparent discomfort. He invited members of the class to come up to the desk and repeat what he had done. Each of the students who did so went back to his

OBSERVATION From *The Right Way to Efficient Thinking, Reasoning, and Conversation* by T. A. Ryder. Copyright, 1949, by A. G. Elliot, Kingswood, Surrey, England. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

seat with a very wry face, having put the asafoetida-covered finger into his mouth. None noticed that the lecturer had put different fingers in the liquid and his mouth.

Much of the success of conjurers depends on their realisation of this fact and they, of course, help to increase the gap between seeing and observing on the part of their audiences by indulging in diversionary patter which distracts the attention away from what they do not wish to be observed. Observation may thus be defined as perception *plus* attention. It can be developed. One can train one's powers of observation, or of attention. It may be necessary in one's work, or at least a specialised form of observation may be. Walk through a field with a botanist, for example, and you will find he will notice many things that you would not. Proof-readers notice mistakes in spelling that the ordinary reader would probably miss, mainly because the latter is not looking for them, whilst the former is; attention is what matters.

We attend, then, in observing, but we also infer. We add something, small though it may be, to our sense-perception. Take the case of distance, for instance; John Stuart Mill wrote:—

> We may fancy that we see or hear what in reality we only infer. For instance, there is nothing of which we feel more directly conscious than the fact of the distance of an object from us. Yet what is perceived by the eye is nothing more than an object of a certain size and a certain shade of colour.

We observe that the object is at a distance from us only by inference, that is by making a rapid comparison, so rapid as to be unconscious, between the size and shade of the particular object and of other objects seen at the same time, or of similar objects seen previously and remembered. We look at a cow and it appears smaller than a cow ought to be, we therefore infer that it is at a distance from us; in this case we compare with previous observations of cows. This would seem to suggest that another element is present in observation, namely, that of memory. . . .

Let us take another example. We hear a knock at the door just about the time that the postman usually calls. The natural thing is to say, "Oh, there's the postman." And if someone else walked into the room a few minutes later and asked if the postman had been there you would say that he had. But the knock heard may not have been made by the postman; in fact what we have done is to make an inference and yet how often similar inferences are termed observations. This sort of thing is made use of in stories sometimes, for instance, the front door slams just after a person has left the room. The natural inference—some would say observation—is that the person had left the house, whereas in reality he may have slammed the door and, remaining on the inside, have tiptoed across the hall and slipped upstairs waiting until you, deeming the house to be empty, go out later.

Sense perceptions give us sensations, our minds associate those sensations and we add inferences. Since individuals differ in their mind content,

it must be obvious that their inferences will differ too, to some extent at any rate. Previous experience is involved, for observation is perception plus recognition and some degree of inference or interpretation. It is necessary to consider the act of sense-perception in some detail as it is important in connection with memory. . . . poor memory is due, not so much to inability to retain impressions, but to poor learning, and poor learning is due to poor observation. Observation consists of two stages, attention and perception. The former brings the observer into the presence or awareness of the fact, whilst the latter is the grasping or knowing of the fact. We know from experience that attention can be caught by strong stimuli, by bright light (hence the use of illuminated signs), by vivid colouring, loud noises (hence heralds' fanfares and town criers' "Oyez's"), and similar devices, but the attention thus aroused may be only momentary. Sustained attention can only, as a general rule, be secured by appealing to some real interest of the individual concerned. We all know from experience how time flies, as we say, when we are engaged in something in which we are really interested; other things are forgotten and unnoticed. It is not unusual to receive a minor injury during a hockey or football match, for instance, and not realise it until the match is over, or there comes a dull moment in it. Anyone who has done any teaching will endorse the statement that attention demands interest. Inattention, so called, is really attention to something other than that to which one should be attending.

A practical point emerges here, . . . namely, if one wishes to develop good powers of observation (and memory) then one must be able to pay attention to the matter under consideration, and that means developing an interest in it. But how is that to be done? Some subjects are interesting but others, and especially, maybe, those that have to be studied for an examination, are not. What can the student do about it? The answer depends, to some extent, upon the individual, but one can often find a link with something in which one is interested. If I may be forgiven a personal illustration, this is apposite. When at school, I was not keen on English history and dropped the subject as soon as possible. But later on I developed an interest in it because I was interested in my native county, to understand which meant a study of its history, but that in turn meant English history for one cannot divorce the history of one *county* from that of the country.

The reason for the importance of observation is clear when one considers the individual's relations to his environment; through his senses, he receives stimuli from the environment, and through his muscles, he acts on that environment, and his responses must be adapted to the stimuli received if he is to adapt himself successfully. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he must adapt himself to the object or objects from which the stimuli came. Suppose one met a lion walking down a street, the sensory stimuli would be certain colours, perhaps certain smells and sounds, but one's reaction or response would be to the lion as a whole—in fact, one would react to him as an object in a certain situation, but if the situation were changed,

then the response might be different. Suppose, for example, one sees the same animal behind bars in a zoo, then the stimuli are the same, but the situation is different and the response is different, too.

It must be obvious that one cannot deal effectively with one's environment without in some way knowing that environment, not knowing merely the stimuli but the objects, for one's behaviour has to conform to the objects. Observation is involved and one or more senses may be used. Normally, we say that we observe objects and facts, rather than sense stimuli, but the latter can be discerned by attending to them. Stimuli are signs from the environment, the objects are the meanings which we ascribe to the stimuli; so, for example, we learn by experience to group together certain stimuli, say, those of whiteness, coldness, softness, and say "snow." Since we pass quickly from the signs to the meaning we are scarcely aware of the signs as such. The connection between sign and meaning has to be learned by experience, so that observation of objects and facts depends on previous experience and memory of that experience.

Any stimulus which we have learned to be characteristic of a given object may serve as a sign enabling us to observe the object—at least that is how we often act. If one hears the low droning sound overhead associated with an aeroplane, then one says that one has perceived an aeroplane, that is, one fills in a good deal from a sketchy sign. This may be all right more often than not, but it may mislead, and it is as well to remember this. In this connection, it is worth noting how incomplete a child's drawing of a man may be, and yet there is sufficient to recognise what is intended, the eye fills in the rest. Another illustration of this tendency to fill in is afforded by reading. It is very rarely a book is printed without several spelling mistakes, and that despite the fact that several people have read the text looking for such errors. If the misspelled word has sufficient resemblance to the right word then it arouses the same response and enables the reader to get the meaning of the sentence and so to pass on without spotting the mistake, unless he is deliberately looking for it, hence the need for proof-readers, who are consciously looking for errors. That brings us back to the point mentioned above, namely, *good observation requires attention.*

But, it may be asked, why do people observe badly or even falsely, that is, have illusions, since most people have good senses? Part of the answer has just been given, namely, lack of attention, but there are other reasons and it may be as well to say a little about them. The example of spelling mistakes cited above shows yet another reason, namely, resting content with total impressions, or with part only. We tend to guess many words from just looking at the first few letters in them and noting the sense of the sentence as a whole. Preoccupation, or bias, may affect our powers of observation, or our inferences from the sense stimuli that we receive. Take an example: a mother sitting downstairs, with a baby upstairs, will often tend to think that the howling of a dog outside is the child crying.

We should also note that in observing anything new we must use the tools to hand, that is, the experiences we have already had. If you are given a nonsense figure to copy, it is usual to look for a resemblance to some object with which you are already familiar in order that the nonsense figure may be the more easily remembered for copying. There is, of course, the danger that one may distort in favour of the object thought of. This leads to the practical point, that if we wish to learn anything new, not only should we notice the similarities to what is already known, but also the differences. A small child, seeing an aeroplane for the first time, may very sensibly say, 'A funny dicky bird," for it is connecting up the new with its previous experience that things which fly are birds, and yet noticing the difference, hence "funny."

We should be able to learn something from the scientists, for they rely very much on good observation; they submit their theories to the test of observation and experiment, which is observation under controlled conditions. The first thing to notice is that the scientist approaches nature with his questions already posed. He has a purpose in his observations and, as already noted, a good question is a great help to good observing. Again, the scientist takes much trouble to make his observations accurate, he uses aids to the senses, telescopes, microscopes, rulers and protractors, he does not guess, he measures. He has his observations checked—compare the consultant in medicine—and he records his observations right away in order to avoid lapses or distortions of memory.

It is also worth noting the criteria we may apply to test the value of our own, or other people's observations. It is a fact of experience that we notice much better, things in which we are interested or are going to use. We would examine a car that we were going to buy more thoroughly than one belonging to someone else. The circumstances at the time of observation are also important. There are internal circumstances, such as headache, bad eyesight, or anger, which militate against good observation. The aggrieved party in an accident will only notice the facts that tell against the other person. Then there are external factors, such as poor visibility. The man in the front row is better placed for seeing than the man at the back of the crowd. Again, we need to remember that some people are naturally more reliable than others, that is, we need to know something of a witness's temperament. There is also the length of time elapsing between the observation and its being retold; the greater the period that elapses, the more chance there is of unconscious distortion. When we are dealing with indirect evidence, it is helpful to have a second opinion. This is made use of in the law courts where it is necessary for evidence to be confirmed by, at least, a second witness. Finally, there is what we may term the test of consistency or coherence. It is worth querying anything that does not fit in with what we already know to be true. Of course, the new fact may be true, but it is as well to

check it or demand confirmation. The classic example of this sort of attitude is that of St. Thomas, hence his nickname of "Doubting Thomas."

Clearly, more weight can be given to any observation that can be repeated than to one that cannot be. Scientific experiments fall into this class, they can be repeated by other observers, therefore a scientific fact is far more likely to be true than the kind of fact, so-called, that cannot be repeated, such as those with which history deals, or those reported in the newspapers. This does not mean that historians do not use critical methods, they do. They use the test of consistency and they study the general attitude of the person who is reported as having acted in a certain way.

When we turn to reports in newspapers, it is interesting and useful to estimate for ourselves what degree of confidence we can place in them. All newspaper reports are printed in such a way as to give the impression that they are of equal reliability, whereas, actually, this is not so, some being directly observed facts, others may be at very second-hand. It is interesting to compare the reports of the same event in different papers. It is not difficult to detect the bias of the particular paper, even if we did not know it beforehand.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Ryder shows an awareness of the importance of defining his terms. How does he define *observation?* What other process closely associated with observation does he distinguish it from?
2. Ryder points out that a botanist walking through a field and a proof-reader reading a manuscript observe details that many of us would miss. What do these people bring to these several acts of observation that enables them to see what many of us are blind to: the mother watching her child, the boxer watching a fight, the painter studying a picture, the engineer regarding a bridge, a carpenter looking at a house? Are we justified in drawing any cautious generalization about observation from these considerations?
3. What view do you hold on each of the following matters? What specific pieces of evidence—observations—led you to arrive at these conclusions? Which conclusions seem most adequately supported? Why?
   a. Hitting a soft shoulder in the road at 65 miles an hour is dangerous.
   b. At certain stores you can purchase something although you have forgotten your money and have no checking account.
   c. Most diners in cafeterias tend to select more dishes than they would order from a waiter or would eat at home.
   d. Hot weather lowers—or does not appreciably lower—your ability to concentrate on school work.
   e. Sunbathing is good for one's health.
4. The last five paragraphs of Ryder's essay serve as a kind of checklist of good and bad practices in observation. Using these criteria, discuss the skill in observation displayed by the persons you have read about earlier in this section: Levy's husband and wife, Averchenko's handful of characters, the reporter

and the congressional committee investigating the "Memorial Day Massacre," George Stewart as he views various highway scenes, and the men who helped secure the conviction of Bruno Hauptmann.

PROJECTS

1. Ryder makes several distinctions between the methods of scientific observation and the hit-and-miss method most of us are content with. Using these distinctions as a guide, prepare a list of the kinds of things *you* observe scientifically (as Ryder defines it) and another list of those things which you observe casually and carelessly. What does this tell you about yourself as an observer?
2. Ryder reminds us of the role of *inference* in the process of observation: we add something to what we see (or hear) and draw a conclusion based on our memory of prior experiences with the object. Can this necessary and economical process be misleading? For instance, can we always safely interpret the baby's cry as a sign that he is either wet or hungry? Can we wisely disregard the school fire-drill because it has never signaled an actual fire? Prepare a brief oral report in which you recount to the class how this process of automatic inference led you into error.
3. Read one of the following stories, dramas, or poems as an analysis of *the problem of observing clearly* and then, in a paper or a talk, point out how the writer has illuminated the problem (you or your instructor may wish to supply other examples): "In a Grove" from Ryunosuke Akutagawa's *Rashomon and Other Stories,* Shakespeare's *Othello* or *King Lear,* Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," Faulkner's "Turnabout" (in *The Faulkner Reader,* 1954), Browning's "In a Spanish Cloister," Robinson's "Richard Cory," O. Henry's "The Last Leaf" in *The Trimmed Lamp,* and De Maupassant's "The Necklace" and "A Piece of String."

2 INFERENCE

On the basis of observations we draw inferences. Because we draw inferences so often and so hurriedly, most of the time we neither consciously pick the method we use to arrive at our conclusions nor retrace our steps to discover how we got there. But it is possible to do both, and it is fortunate that we can do so, for in that way we can determine the soundness of our reasoning. This dual ability to plan in advance or analyze in retrospect gives us a measure of control over our thoughts, and hence a measure of control over our actions. It is the distinguishing characteristic of rational behavior.

To cultivate this ability and so establish this control there are a number of questions we must learn to ask and answer. Among these questions, some of the most important are the following. On what evidence have I based my conclusion? Do I have enough evidence? Is my evidence relevant? Have I, consciously or unconsciously, selected my evidence to insure my arriving at the conclusion I want, or have I permitted the evidence to point to the conclusion? Have I considered negative evidence—i.e., evidence which might point toward a different conclusion? Is my conclusion verifiable? Is my conclusion consistent with the assumptions with which I began? Is this the only possible conclusion that can be drawn? Would others, given the same evidence, arrive at the same conclusion? Have I started my line of reasoning from the observation of many particulars, or from an assumption which is itself a previously-arrived-at conclusion?

Before you progress very far in your effort to draw inferences rationally you will discover that two basic patterns of thinking emerge. These are illustrated in the first selection by Davis, where, in the form of a fable, he outlines the significant thought patterns and working methods of the scientist. Immediately following is a painstakingly detailed illustration of the experimental method of testing conclusions that physical scientists have used with such conspicuous success. Here the example is from biology—specifically, about bees—but the techniques described by von Frisch are applicable to many fields. Elton Mayo's "The First Inquiry" is a case study showing how the imaginative social scientist adapts many of the techniques of the physical

scientist to current human problems. But human problems involve an understanding of the past as well as the present. Biographers, attempting to get a "true" picture of the past, encounter some thorny problems and some special temptations. Marchette Chute discusses these in her essay "Getting at the Truth" and, incidentally, reveals that the problems of biographers are remarkably like those that beset any honest thinker.

After you have been introduced to some of the main problems and methods of straight thinking, you are given a chance to distinguish straight from crooked thinking in the fables by James Thurber and the debate from *The Congressional Digest*. Here you can test your ability to apply what you have learned. Then Symonds provides an insight into one of the most elusive and pervasive sources of human error—the curious form of self-deception which has come to be known popularly as rationalizing. Finally, Altick summarizes all of these ideas, methods, and problems in a manner which will enable you to check your understanding of them and to correct any misconceptions you may have inadvertently acquired.

Once again, the overall view of the main problem of the entire section is deliberately left to the concluding article. In this way you are given a chance to examine *particular* aspects of the central problem in the earlier essays before being confronted with any *general* conclusions. This gives you more latitude for independent thought and a broader background against which to evaluate the conclusions advanced in the final essay. Even this early in the book it is hoped you will have begun to appreciate an arrangement of selections which permits you greater freedom to think for yourself. It need hardly be pointed out that such freedom includes the freedom to err as well as the freedom to be right. But even "right answers" arrived at without considering many sides of a problem are undependable. Only when you have reached sound answers by independent thinking based on a consideration of all the relevant evidence can you have any assurance that you really understand why these answers are sound.

W. M. Davis

THE METHOD OF SCIENCE

Perhaps "science" has become for you a strange, otherworldly sort of intellectual discipline, involving the use of something you have been told is "pure reason" or "theory." On the other hand, you may have conceived of "science" as just a mass of facts—or the collection of masses of facts. Now, on second thought, does it seem possible that two such contrary conceptions of something might really reflect two aspects of the same thing? This would seem

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to be close to the truth with science. Davis' article may suggest to you how both observation of facts and theorizing from the facts are a part of scientific thinking. Further, his little allegory, directly related to the physical sciences, may suggest how this kind of scientific thinking is related to sound (effective) thinking in any field, on any subject.

You will find other useful analyses of the scientific method in Alfred North Whitehead's Science and the Modern World, *James B. Conant's* On Understanding Science, *Hans Reichenbach's* The Rise of Scientific Philosophy, *J. W. N. Sullivan's* The Limitations of Science, *George Lundberg's* Can Science Save Us?, *John Dewey's* Human Nature and Conduct, *Hans Zinsser's* Rats, Lice, and Men, *Alexander H. Leighton's* Human Relations in a Changing World, *Philipp Frank's* Modern Science and Its Philosophy, *Sidney Hook's* Education for Modern Man, *and* Living Philosophies (*Sir Arthur Keith,* et al.).

A FABLE OF THE TIDES

Once upon a time—for science also has its fables—there dwelt a hermit on the shore of the ocean, where he observed the tides. He measured the period and the range of their rise and fall and, patiently tabulating his records, discovered that the tides run like clock-work. The interval between two high tides was determined to be about 12 hours and 26 minutes; the range from low water to high water was found to vary systematically, being greater one week and smaller the next, the total variation running its course in 14 days; more singular still, the high tides were found to exhibit an alternating inequality, such that, if they were numbered in order, the even-numbered would be stronger than the odd-numbered for two weeks and then the odd-numbered would be stronger than the even-numbered for two weeks; this cycle of alternating inequality completing itself in 28 days. The hermit then wishing to extend his observations, decided to travel overland to another ocean and learn whether the tides behaved in the same way there also.

Now at the same epoch, but far away in the center of a great continental desert, a recluse lived in a cave, thinking and reflecting. One problem in particular engrossed his thoughts. He knew Newton's law of gravitation, and he asked himself what other consequences ought to follow from it besides the revolution of the planets around the sun and of the moons around their planets. He at last convinced himself that if the earth and the moon attracted each other, the moon must produce a system of what he called earth-deforming forces, disposed in such a way as to strain the earth's crust, tending to raise it on the sides of the earth toward the moon and opposite the moon, so that at any one point on the rotating earth, the crust should be raised twice in a lunar day, or every 12 hours and 26 minutes; also, that similar but weaker earth-deforming forces produced by the sun should be combined with those produced by the moon so that the resulting total strains in the earth's crust would be stronger and weaker every 14 days; and fur-

thermore, that as the moon is north of the sky equator for one half of a lunation and south of it for the other half— Alas, that you dwellers in roofed houses are so little acquainted with the sky as not to know of your own seeing that the moon's course does carry it obliquely across the sky equator and back again every month!—but as the moon does move in this manner, the recluse saw that the deforming forces which tend to raise the earth's crust at any point must exhibit a sequence of alternating inequalities every 28 days. And beside these rhythmic variations in a little more than half a day, in 14 days, and in 28 days, he worked out several other variations of even longer periods. But his calculations also showed that the rhythmic forces were too weak to deform the stiff earth's crust perceptibly. "If only," he thought to himself, "some large part of the earth's surface were covered with a deep sheet of water, surely the deforming forces would make the yielding water sheet rise and fall every 12 hours and 26 minutes, with a variation of range every 14 days, and an alternating inequality of rise every 28 days, and so on." He thereupon resolved to travel into other regions and learn, in case a vast sheet of water were anywhere discovered, whether it really did exhibit rhythmic changes of level in systematic periods such as, according to his calculations, it ought to exhibit.

OBSERVATION, INVENTION, AND DEDUCTION

Curiously enough it happened that about this time the hermit reached a caravansery where he met an alert-looking individual who proved to be an inventor—not an inventor of machines but of hypotheses and theories and explanations. The hermit told him about the tides and their periodic variations, and asked: "What do you suppose makes them go?" The inventor thought a moment and then said: "Perhaps the tides rise and fall because Old Mother Earth is slowly breathing; or perhaps, inasmuch as you say the tides vary every 12 hours and 26 minutes, or twice in a lunar day, they may possibly be driven by the moon." How can they be driven by anything that is so far away in the sky, and why should one moon make two high tides in one lunar day?" asked the hermit. Just then the recluse came in and approaching the other two, inquired: "Can you tell me whether there is anywhere a vast sheet of water covering a large part of the earth?" "Yes, there is," said the hermit; "it is called the ocean. I have lived on its shores, observing the periodic rise and fall of its waters in the tides and I was just asking the inventor here if he could tell me how they are caused." The inventor repeated his suggestion that the tides might possibly be caused by a sort of earth-breathing, but that they were more probably caused by the moon. "Well, as to that," exclaimed the recluse, "I can tell you how the tides ought to run if the moon has anything to do with them. The moon ought to produce two high tides on opposite sides of the earth, so that as the earth rotates, the tides at any one point ought to rise and fall twice in a lunar day,

as you say they do; not only so, they ought to be extra strong every 14 days at new moon and at full moon, because the sun also must have a share in producing them; and besides that, the high tides ought to show an alternating inequality in a period of 28 days; and—" The astonished hermit interrupted, "They do exactly that, but how in the world did you know they do so, if you have never seen the ocean?" "I didn't know they did," replied the recluse, "but I was convinced that *if* the earth had an ocean its waters ought to have rhythmic oscillations of the kind I have described, because don't you see—" and he proceeded to explain his calculations.

VERIFICATION

"What are you men talking about?" said a sedate-looking onlooker of judicial aspect. So the hermit, the inventor and the recluse all repeated their stories to him. He pondered awhile and then remarked to the inventor—"It looks very much as if your hypothesis about the moon's driving the tides were correct, for it is hardly conceivable that the consequences of lunar attraction, as thought out by the recluse, and the period of the tides, as observed by the hermit, could agree so well unless the moon and the tides stood in a veritable relation of cause and effect; but the hypothesis needs modification because, as the recluse has pointed out, the secondary variations of the tides show that the sun also has something to do with them." "But," interposed the recluse, "there should be, besides those already mentioned, still other periodic variations in the tides if they are really caused by the moon and the sun, and it will demand of the observer at least a year to detect some of the longer ones." "Take your time," said the judicial onlooker, "go back to the ocean and make a long series of records, not only at one point but at many different points on widely separated coasts; and come back here for a second conference 10 or 20 years hence. We may then reach a well-established conclusion."

THE FOUR-FACULTY PROCEDURE

But the moral of the fable is yet to be told. The moral is that the observant hermit, the alert inventor, the thoughtful recluse, and the judicial onlooker represent not four different individuals, but only four different mental faculties in a single individual, the trained man of science, who uses his powers of observation to discover the facts of nature, his inventive ingenuity to propose various possible hypotheses for the explanation of the facts, his power of logical reflection to think out, or deduce, from each hypothesis, in accordance with previously acquired, pertinent knowledge, just what ought to happen if the hypothesis were true, and his impartial faculty of verification to decide which hypothesis, if any, is competent to explain the observed facts. In view of the leading part taken by these four faculties in

scientific investigation, we may speak of science as involving a four-faculty procedure. But the fable must not be taken to mean that every scientist has all his faculties developed to the full strength needed for the best work; one man may be a patient observer but not active-minded enough to be a good inventor of hypotheses; another may be an ingenious inventor of hypotheses, but too impatient to be a good observer and too flighty to be a good deducer, and so on. Nor must it be understood that the several faculties work independently; as a matter of fact, now this faculty, now that is called into play in irregular sequence, and very frequently they are summoned into conference with one another. If it were not that the phrase is preoccupied in another connection, we might call such conferences "faculty meetings." Furthermore, it must be pointed out that replacement of mental deduction by experiment is essential in problems of certain kinds; that is, the faculty of invention is called upon, after proposing an explanatory hypothesis, to devise special artificial conditions under which natural processes shall themselves be permitted or constrained to determine the consequences of the hypothesis; but mental deduction usually accompanies or follows experimentation, and therefore problems into which experiment enters may still be included under four-faculty science. . . .

Now what is the common feature in the problem of the tides and in all other scientific problems, in virtue of the possession of which they deserve to be called scientific? Evidently not the subjects that they treat, for the subjects of scientific study are remarkably diverse. The common feature inheres not in the content of the problems but in their method; and the common feature of their method is the quality of reasonableness; that is, a spirit of free inquiry, in which no prepossessions are accepted which are not themselves open to scrutiny, in which the conclusions reached are followed wherever they lead, and in which a revision of conclusions is made whenever it is demanded by new facts. Science is therefore not final any more than it is infallible. It is a growth, and its growth is by no means completed. . . .

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. The "four-faculty procedure of modern science"—observation, invention (hypothesis), deduction, and verification—is not limited to great ideas or great minds; it can be—and is—used in many everyday affairs. Make a careful analysis of what you do (*a*) when you switch on an electric light and no light comes, (*b*) when you notice that one corner patch of your lawn is always worn and brown and decide to do something about it, (*c*) when you lay plans for a week-end trip to avoid traffic. How do present and past observation, simple hypotheses, deductions, and verification all play a role in the successful resolution of these problems?
2. Explain how "theorizing," as well as observation, may be necessary in arriving at a sound conclusion about: (*a*) the advisability of diving into an unfamiliar pool, (*b*) the reasons for a club member's leaving your organization, (*c*) the

safe speed to drive your car on a particular stretch of highway, (*d*) the chances that a certain baseball club will win the pennant, (*e*) the meaning of frantic gestures made by a driver several lengths ahead of you.

3. The following is an excerpt from a student's theme: "I believe that my lucky number is the number nine, and I believe my evidence for this belief is entirely adequate. I was born on August 9 in 1929 at 9:00 P.M. I was born at our residence, number 29 on the block, and, last but not least, I tipped the scales at 9 pounds, 9 ounces. Several times while playing cards, poker in particular, I held nines or a nine in preference to higher cards and have drawn out and won the hand."
   a. What weaknesses do you find in the student's hypothesis-making?
   b. In what way is the student's reasoning similar to the logic behind the following statement: "Since the birthrate has risen during every world war of the past 150 years, it is obvious that in some way wars must lead to a higher birthrate"?
4. Have you demanded of yourself or others as full verification of proposed hypotheses about the causes of human actions (e.g., the mild hysteria which seizes some campuses each football season, hostility between some parents and their children in late adolescence, the suspicion of students concerning their teachers' motives, and crimes of violence) as you have asked of hypotheses about the dripping of a faucet, the stalling of your car, or "snow" in your TV set? If not, what are the probable reasons?
5. What was the fundamental difference between the ways in which the hermit and the recluse arrived at the same conclusion about tidal cycles? To be sure you really understand this difference in methods of obtaining answers to questions, try to determine how people using these different methods would arrive at the following conclusions (the point here is not to criticize the conclusions but to distinguish between two processes of arriving at them): (*a*) In hot weather most people become more comfortable and feel more energetic when evening comes. (*b*) Nations which become noted for fishing and shipbuilding are near the sea. (*c*) If the price of eggs goes to a dollar a dozen, fewer people will buy eggs. (*d*) In arid regions power tends to rest in those individuals or groups who control the water. (*e*) Victors in wars are those nations which are most advanced technically,

PROJECTS

1. Davis points out that not every scientist (and, by extension, not every man) has all four faculties developed to the full strength needed for the best work. Write a humorous paper in which you recount some experience of your own which led you to draw a very faulty inference because of your neglect of one or more of these four "faculties." For example, did you ever "load up" with all kinds of camping equipment suggested by your observations of other campers only to find that for the particular kind of camping trip you had embarked on, much of it was worse than useless? Or did you come to college with some preconceived hypothesis about college life drawn from inadequate evidence (or no evidence at all) and discover how hopelessly at odds with the facts of your college life this hypothesis was?

2. In Davis' fable both "the observant hermit" and "the judicial onlooker" were extremely thorough about the kinds, number, and variety of observed facts they recorded. Suppose your problem is to select the college major which best suits your most realistic estimate of your abilities, your future ambitions, and the resources of your college. Draw up a careful list of all the factual observations you would have to make in order to arrive at a sound conclusion (inference). Your list should include not only the kinds of data you should look for but the probable sources for obtaining these data.
3. The prowess of champion athletes presents a cause-and-effect problem—why can so-and-so swim faster, get a higher bowling score, hit the ball farther than all his competitors?—and of course it is constantly giving rise to hypotheses, many of them based on the assumption that the performer's superiority must rest on some one "secret" (see "Ben Hogan's Secret," *Life*, April 5, 1954). Analyze the performance of an athlete who can do something extraordinarily well, then develop a hypothesis as to the cause, or causes, of his superior performance.
4. It appears to many librarians that students often do not make use of simple observation, do not make intelligent guesses (hypotheses) as to where they might look, do not make obvious deductions from the resources at hand as to which is the best to consult, and do not verify their frequent conclusion that "the library doesn't have anything on my topic."

   Assume that you have been asked to write a paper (or prepare a talk) on a subject of current interest *concerning which little or nothing has been known until quite recently*. Suggest what you would do to go about getting the necessary information; then show how this involves the four-step process of (*a*) acting on observations, past and present, (*b*) simple hypotheses as to where to look, (*c*) deductions as to what steps to follow, and (*d*) verification of your procedures.

Karl von Frisch

EXPERIMENTAL PROOF

Sunday-supplement writers and the authors of pseudo-scientific fiction have helped to create in the minds of many of us a dramatic, highly unrealistic picture of the scientist at work. Still, the actual, day-to-day hard work of scientists is, in a more fundamental way, even more dramatic, if we do not lose sight of the mental hazards scientists must always be on the watch for, of the distance between the scientists' controlled experimentation and our vague, generalized thinking about most personal and social problems.

The following selection is an excerpt from Karl von Frisch's Bees: Their Vision, Chemical Senses, and Language. *Von Frisch, Professor of Zoology in the University of Munich, has for several decades been asking pertinent*

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questions about the senses of bees, painstakingly and ingeniously evolving hypotheses, and testing them under rigorously controlled conditions. If you are interested in other careful but not over-technical descriptions of carefully controlled experimentation, you will probably find to your liking the following books: Bernard Jaffe's Men of Science in America, *Warren Weaver's* The Scientists Speak, *and I. Bernard Cohen's* Science, Servant of Man. *For current reports of significant scientific experimentation, you may wish to consult* The Scientific American, *a journal about science addressed to the intelligent layman.*

Biologists have long believed that flowers are colored and scented to make them more striking for their insect visitors. In this way the insects can more easily find the flowers and get their food; and the pollination is also assured.

But this view has not been accepted by all biologists. About 1910 a famous ophthalmologist, Professor C. von Hess, performed many experiments on fishes, insects, and other lower animals. He tested them while they were in a positively phototactic condition—that is, under circumstances where they moved into the brightest available light. He found that in a spectrum the animals always collected in the green and the yellow-green region, which is the brightest part of the spectrum for a color-blind human eye. Therefore, von Hess asserted, fishes and invertebrates, and in particular bees, are totally color-blind. If this were true, the colors of flowers would have no biological significance. But I could not believe it, and my skepticism was the first motive which led me to begin my studies of bees about forty years ago. I tried to find out whether bees have a color sense.

By the scent of a little honey it is possible to attract bees to an experimental table. Here we can feed them on a piece of blue cardboard, for example. They suck up the food and, after carrying it back to the hive, give it to the other bees. The bees return again and again to the rich source of food which they have discovered. We let them do so for some time, and then we take away the blue card scented with honey and put out two new, clean pieces of cardboard at the site of the former feeding place—on the left a blue card, and on the right a red one. If the bees remember that they found food on blue, and if they are able to distinguish between red and blue, they should now alight on the blue card. This is exactly what happens.

This is an old experiment. It indicates that bees can distinguish colors, but it does not prove that they have a color sense, or color perception, for these are not always the same. Thus there are totally color-blind men, although they are very rare. They see objects as we would see them in a black-and-white photograph. Yet they can distinguish between red and blue; for red appears very dark to them, and blue much lighter. Hence we cannot learn from the experiment with bees which I have just described whether the bees have distinguished red from blue by color or by shade, as a color-blind man might do. To a totally color-blind man each color appears as a

gray of a certain degree of brightness. We do not know what the brightness of our various pieces of colored cardboard may be for a color-blind insect. Therefore we perform the following experiment.

On our table we place a blue card and around it we arrange gray cards of all shades from white to black. On each card we set a little watch glass, but only the glass dish on the blue card contains food (sugar-water). In this way we train the bees to come to the color blue. Since bees have a very good memory for places we frequently change the relative positions of the cards. But the sugar is always placed on the blue card so that in every case the color indicates where food is to be found. After some hours we perform the decisive experiment. The cards and the glass dishes soiled by the bees are taken away. We place on the table a new series of clean cards of different shades of gray, each with an empty glass dish, and somewhere among them we place a clean, blue card provided, like all the others, with an empty glass dish. The bees remember the blue color and alight only on the blue card, distinguishing it from all shades of gray. This means that they have a true color sense.

This type of experiment has been criticized on the ground that the blue cardboard might have a specific scent by which the bees could recognize it. We cannot perceive any odor, but this does not prove that it is odorless for bees; we must therefore consider the possibility that the bees found the blue cardboard by smell, and not by color. But this is not the case. For we can repeat the experiment with a glass plate lying over the cards; if there were any scent it could not pass through the glass. But the outcome of the experiment is just the same as before.

Training bees to come to food on orange, yellow, green, violet, or purple cardboard gives the same positive result. However, if we try to train bees to find their food on scarlet red, they alight not only on the red cardboard but also on black and on all the dark-gray cards in our arrangement. Thus red and black are the same to the eye of the bee; in other words, bees are red-blind. From these experiments it is clear that bees have a color sense, but that it is not quite the same as that of a normal human being.

To find out something more about the nature of color perception in bees, we modify our experiment. We train bees to find food on blue, and then we put on the table all the *colored* cards we have on hand, but no gray cards at all. The bees seek for blue, but it is surprising to see that they are unable to find it with certainty. They confuse blue cards with violet and purple ones. Furthermore, bees trained to yellow alight not only on yellow cards but on orange and green ones, too. If trained to orange, they actually prefer to alight on yellow, and the same happens if they are trained to green. It seems that to the eye of the bee orange, yellow, and green are the same color, and that our yellow cards are a more saturated color for them and therefore apparently more striking and attractive than orange or green. Bees

which have been trained to blue, purple, or violet seem to find blue and purple more attractive than violet (von Frisch, 1915).

In 1927 Professor A. Kühn repeated my training experiments, but instead of colored cards he used a spectrum. He was able to confirm my results: that bees are red-blind, that they can distinguish other colors from all shades of gray, and that they confuse yellow with orange and green, or blue with violet. But by using spectral colors he discovered two new facts: First, he noted that there is a third quality of color in the narrow blue-green region (480-500 mμ). Bees trained to blue-green distinguish it from blue and from yellow. I had overlooked this point because I had no suitable cardboard of this blue-green color. Second, he discovered a fourth quality in ultraviolet light. If bees on the experimental table are fed for some time in ultraviolet light, they alight on every spot irradiated by ultraviolet, even though this light is invisible to us; and they distinguish the ultraviolet from all shades of white or gray. It is a distinct color for the bees.

If we compare the color sense of bees and men, we find that the visible spectrum is shortened for bees in the red but that it is extended into the ultraviolet. In this way the visible region is merely shifted to shorter wave lengths. But a much more important difference is that the human eye can distinguish about sixty distinct colors in the visible spectrum, while the bee apparently sees only four different qualities of color: yellow, blue-green, blue, and ultraviolet.

It is interesting to consider the colors of flowers in relation to the color sense of bees. We can understand at once why scarlet-red flowers are so rarely found in Europe, since the visiting insects are red-blind. There are, however, many scarlet-red flowers in America and in Africa; but long before we had learned anything about the color sense of insects it was known that this shade of red is typical of flowers visited and pollinated by birds. We know from the experiments of Honigmann that the eyes of birds are especially sensitive to red.

Many of the flowers in Europe which we call red are really purple and appear blue to bees. There are also a few species of plants in Europe with blossoms of a clearer red. Biologists found long ago that these very flowers were visited and pollinated by butterflies. The color sense of butterflies has recently been studied by Dr. Dora Ilse; she discovered that butterflies are the only insects, as far as we know, which are not red-blind. Another apparent exception to the rule is the poppy (*Papaver*), which is frequently visited by bees although its flowers are scarlet-red. But poppies reflect the ultraviolet rays of sunlight. It is possible to show by suitable experiments that bees trained to the blossoms of the poppy are in fact recognizing the reflected ultraviolet light (Lotmar, 1933). We cannot perceive this light, and we see only the red. The bees, on the other hand, cannot perceive the red; they see only the ultraviolet. Thus the bees, although they are red-blind,

nevertheless see the poppy as a colored flower—for them it has the color ultraviolet.

There are certain plants that have inconspicuous flowers and are nevertheless visited by many bees, for instance, the bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus L.*) and the Virginia creeper (*Ampelopsis quinquefolia* Michaux). One might perhaps infer that these flowers have a striking scent for bees, so that they can be located by the sense of smell. But to us they are odorless, and it can be shown that this is also true for bees. In experiments that I performed some years ago, I found that the color of the green flowers of the bilberry is much changed for the bees if we eliminate the ultraviolet rays by placing a color filter over the flowers. Although I have not yet been able to test bilberry flowers with a spectrograph, I nevertheless believe that for bees they probably have the color ultraviolet.

The responses of bees to white flowers are a little more complicated. It is always very easy to train them to a true color, but training to *white* paper or cardboard is sometimes easy and sometimes quite difficult. This peculiar fact was explained by Dr. Mathilde Hertz (1937a,b,c, 1939). She tested various white papers and found that some of them absorbed ultraviolet rays. To these papers the bees could be trained very easily. But other white papers reflected the ultraviolet, just as they did the rays visible to us. This white the bees could not remember, and they could not learn to seek it out with certainty among other shades of white and gray. Yet the human eye cannot distinguish between the two kinds of white. To understand these facts we must consider the nature of "white."

The light coming from the sun appears white; but if we pass sunlight through a prism, the light rays emerge in an orderly arrangement corresponding to their wave lengths so that we obtain a colored spectrum. If we put the colored rays together again by means of a lens, we have white once more. Thus light containing all the colored rays in the same proportions as sunlight appears white to the human eye. If we take away a certain color the other wave lengths, when united again, are no longer white. If we take away the yellow, the remaining light looks blue, yellow being what we call the complementary color to blue.

The same may well be true for the eyes of bees. This would mean that white light for the bee's eye must contain all wave lengths visible to bees. But we have seen that bees are sensitive to ultraviolet rays. If the ultraviolet is taken away, the remaining light is no longer white to the bees, but has a color complementary to ultraviolet—probably blue-green. It seems that white light, containing all wave lengths visible to bees, is not striking for them; the light must apparently be colored in order to be attractive. In this connection it is interesting that nearly all white flowers do absorb ultraviolet rays, whereas yellow and blue flowers often reflect them strongly. Therefore most flowers that appear white to us are colored for bees and probably look blue-green to them.

One can see that the colors of flowers have been developed as an adaptation to the color sense of their visitors. It is evident that they are not designed for the human eye. But this should not prevent us from delighting in their beauty.

In Austria, and in Germany too, beekeepers put their beehives all together, one beneath another, to form a beehouse. In a large house with many hives, it is a little difficult for the homing bees to find their own hive; as a matter of fact, they very often shift from one hive to another. For the most part this does not matter, because bees carrying honey are welcomed everywhere. But sometimes a struggle occurs, and intruding bees may even be stung to death. A queen returning from an orientation flight or from a mating flight is in particular danger; if she alights on the wrong hive she is killed. In our country, therefore, we often see hives painted with different colors to help the bees recognize their own homes. But all beekeepers do not agree that this coloring is useful.

To study this question I placed a swarm of bees in one of a row of empty white hives and covered the front of this hive with a blue sheet of metal. On the right stood a hive that I covered with a yellow sheet, and on the left a white hive. After some days I wished to change the colors. But if I had merely interchanged the colored sheets, and if the bees had then flown to the wrong hive, I would not have known whether they were following the blue color or the scent of bees adhering to the blue sheet. Therefore the back side of the blue sheet was painted yellow, and the back of the yellow one blue. In this way I could change the colors by turning each sheet around, without moving it to a different hive. After thus reversing both metal sheets I saw many bees flying to the empty hive, which was now blue. Other bees hesitated, and after some time flew to the correct hive, despite the yellow sheet.

I decided that perhaps the bees were paying attention not only to their own hive but to the neighboring hives as well. In this case my experiment must have caused confusion. The bees had been accustomed to fly to a blue hive with a yellow one on the right, and a white hive on the left. Now they saw a blue hive with a yellow one on the left and a white one on the right. Here was a different arrangement; and perhaps this explained why some of the bees hesitated and finally found the correct hive by the sense of smell. I therefore repeated the experiment in another way. I reversed the blue sheet (so that it appeared yellow), but I shifted the reversed yellow sheet (which then appeared blue) from the right side to the left. The relative positions of the colors were now unchanged; the bees still found a blue hive with a yellow one on the right, and there was still a white hive to the left of the blue one (since all the hives in the row were white except those marked with my metal sheets). Under these circumstances every bee, without a single exception, alighted at the wrong hive and entered it even though this hive was quite empty. We can see from this experiment that a painted beehive is actually

a very good signpost to help bees recognize their own hive and distinguish it from others nearby (von Frisch, 1915).

But why do beekeepers disagree with one another about the effectiveness of colored hives? Simply because they have not considered the nature of the color sense of bees, as the flowers seem to have done. We often see hives stacked one beneath the other, one painted red and the next one black. This forms a contrast for the human eye, but the two look just alike to bees. The same confusion results when a green hive is placed beneath a yellow one. In such cases the painting of the hives is without effect, since there is no color contrast for bees. Beekeepers should use only blue, yellow, black, and white. Where they must use the same color repeatedly, they should change the color pattern formed by adjacent hives, because bees pay attention to the color of the neighboring hives as well as to their own. Furthermore, when a hive is to be painted white, it is important to choose the proper white. Zinc white seems to be suitable for this purpose because it absorbs ultraviolet and therefore looks blue-green to the bees. Lead white reflects ultraviolet and thus it is really white for bees, and hence less striking than a true color.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. To sharpen your awareness of the problems which an experimenter faces and the ingenuity which he must exercise to cope with them, make a careful list of the difficulties facing von Frisch and his means of overcoming them. Discuss the possible usefulness of such careful methods to the non-scientist.
2. Why was von Frisch's initial experiment inadequate as proof that bees are *not* color-blind? In what way would a person who, following this first experiment, had concluded that he had "proof" reveal a failure to recognize a problem of *definition?*
3. Which of Davis' "four faculties" does von Frisch seem to exemplify most clearly in this account? Cite examples.
4. A very noticeable characteristic of von Frisch, evidenced in his work on the color sense of bees, is his refusal to take anything for granted. In what ways is this sort of "systematic doubt" basically different from that sort of scepticism or loose cynicism symbolized in such phrases as "Oh, yeah?" or "You can't be sure of anything"?
5. One striking characteristic of scientific thinking is that scientists build on each other's findings. What evidence of this scientific exchange of data do we find in von Frisch's account? Could thinking in the college classroom become somewhat more scientific through greater student-collaboration in the solution of problems (exchange of suggestions, group research, etc.)? What particular circumstances or conditions could give teachers reason for being sceptical about student collaboration?

PROJECTS

1. The method of experimental proof illustrated by von Frisch can be used to solve everyday problems. Write a short paper demonstrating your ability to devise experimental proofs in one of the following simple situations.
   a. To test the relative durability of two different outdoor house paints on a wood surface under identical climatic conditions.
   b. To determine which of two materials—one plastic, one wood—will be more resistant to the corrosive effects of salt water.
   c. To test the relative suction force (and hence cleaning effectiveness) of two vacuum cleaners.
   d. To test for the relative amounts of tar and nicotine in the cigarettes of two competing brands.
   e. To compare the reading speed and comprehension of two English students.
   f. To test the relative batting skill of two candidates for the same position on the varsity baseball team.
   Warning: The job in all such experiments is to control (*i.e.*, keep constant) all of the variables except the one being measured.
2. Write a paper, or give a brief talk, on the problem of being objective—not letting one's preconceptions, assumptions, and desires determine the findings—in one of the following situations: (*a*) well-meaning parents designing and decorating a home—or buying a car—for their newly married daughter, (*b*) a husband and father determining a vacation spot for his family, (*c*) a hostess deciding what to serve her guests, (*d*) adults trying to find out the reasons for their child's being a "discipline problem" at school, (*e*) an architect designing a home for a client, (*f*) a twentieth-century man studying the "Dark Ages."

Elton Mayo

THE FIRST INQUIRY

"The First Inquiry" is a firsthand report of one attempt to apply the scientific method to thinking outside the physical sciences—in this case to a social problem. In 1923 the Mayo investigators were called in to find the reason for low output and high labor-turnover in a textile plant near Philadelphia. (Note that they had been preceded by several groups of "efficiency experts," who might, if one did not examine their methods, be inaccurately classified as "scientists.")

Following the successful resolution of this first problem, Mayo's investigations were continued with several companies whose managements "wished to find out why human co-operation could not be as exactly and accurately

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determined" as could other factors of organized industrial operation. These inquiries have produced significant results for industry and have stimulated the development of methods of scientific social investigation. The Hawthorne project, conducted under the auspices of the Western Electric Company, is doubtless the most revealing, and certainly the best known, of these studies. Students who wish for further details of this precedent-making experiment in social science will find full accounts in F. J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson's Management and the Worker, *and in T. North Whitehead's* The Industrial Worker, *as well as in Mayo's book. An account of this and other comparable experiments, with some tentative generalizations derived therefrom, is to be found in George C. Homan's* The Human Group.

Do you find anything significant in the fact that the results of these experiments, conducted in the 20's and early 30's, were not published until the very late 30's and the 40's?

Economic theory in its human aspect is woefully insufficient; indeed it is absurd. Humanity is not adequately described as a horde of individuals, each actuated by self-interest, each fighting his neighbor for the scarce material of survival. Realization that such theories completely falsify the normal human scene drives us back to the study of particular human situations. *Knowledge-of-acquaintance* of the actual event, intimate understanding of the complexity of human relationships, must precede the formulation of alternatives to current economic abstractions. This is the clinical method, the necessary preliminary to laboratory investigation. Only when clinically tested by successful treatment can a diagnosis be safely developed toward logical elaboration and laboratory experiment.

The first inquiry we undertook ran headlong into illustration of the insufficiency of the assumption that individual self-interest actually operates as adequate incentive. Rather more than twenty years ago we were asked to discover, if possible, the causes of a high labor turnover in the mule-spinning department of a textile mill near Philadelphia. The general labor situation elsewhere in the plant seemed highly satisfactory; the employers were unusually enlightened and humane; the work was exceedingly well organized in respect of operations and the company was generally regarded as an extremely successful venture. But the president and his director of personnel were much troubled by the situation in the mule-spinning department. Whereas the general labor turnover in other departments was estimated to be approximately 5% or 6% per annum, in the spinning department the turnover was estimated at approximately 250%. That is to say, about 100 men had to be taken on every year in order to keep about 40 working. And the difficulty tended to be most acute when the factory was busily employed and most in need of men.

Several firms of efficiency engineers had been consulted; these firms had instituted altogether four financial incentive schemes. And these schemes had been a total failure; labor turnover had not dropped one point, nor had production improved: it was almost as a last resort that the firm consulted

a university. Although other plants in the vicinity had apparently drifted into acceptance of low morale amongst mule spinners as inevitable, the president of this company refused to believe that the situation was beyond remedy.

On a first inspection the conditions of work in the department did not seem to differ in any general respect from conditions elsewhere in the mill. For some time Saturday work had been discontinued throughout the plant, so that the work week was of 50 hours—five days of 10 hours, two shifts of 5 hours each separated by a 45-minute lunch interval. The mule-spinner attendant was known as a piecer; his work involved walking up and down a long alley, perhaps 30 yards or more, on either side of which a machine head was operating spinning frames. These frames moved back and forth stretching yarn taken from the carding machines, twisting it, and rolling it up on cops. The number of frames operated by a machine head varied from 10 to 14. All had to be closely watched; threads constantly broke and had to be pieced together. The number of piecers in an alley, usually two or three, varied according to the kind of yarn being spun. To an observer the work looked monotonous—walking up and down an alley twisting together broken threads. The only variation in work occurred when a machine head was stopped in order to doff or to replace some spools.

Dr. S. D. Ludlum, professor of neuropsychiatry in the graduate school of medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, was of immense aid to us at this stage as later in the study. He arranged that a registered nurse, one of our group, should be able to relate her small clinic for minor troubles in the plant direct to the Polyclinic Hospital in Philadelphia. Serious cases she referred to the hospital clinicians; minor injuries, a cut or splinter, she could deal with herself. This arrangement seemed to do away with any need for further explanation. Workers gratefully accepted the services of the nurse and, in some instances, the further clinical aid of the hospital. These services were real and understandable. From the first the mule spinners formed a large part of the nurse's regular callers—and either when at work or in the clinic talked to her and to us quite freely. It was of course clearly understood that nothing said to any of us was ever repeated to anyone in the plant.

As the men began to talk to us, the picture of the situation developed quite differently from that obtained at first inspection. We discovered that almost every piecer suffered from foot trouble of one or another kind for which he apparently knew no effective remedy. Many also claimed neuritis in various localities of arms, shoulders, or legs. But above and beyond all this, the striking fact was the uniformly pessimistic nature of the preoccupations of these workers while at work. To this there seemed no exception: their own opinion of their work was low, even lower than the estimate of mule spinning held by other workers in the plant. We discovered also that the job was essentially solitary: there might be three workers in an alley, but the amount of communication between them in a day was almost nil.

One might be piecing threads together here; another, 20 yards away. And the doffing process when it took place involved rapid work with a minimum of communication. Some of the men were young—in the twenties, others were in the fifties—all alike claimed that they were too fatigued to enjoy social evenings after work. Occasionally a worker would flare out into apparently unreasonable anger and incontinently leave his job.

The whole group was characterized by a species of strongly held loyalty to the company president. He had been a colonel in the regular United States Army and had seen active service both before and during the First World War. Many of the workers had been in the trenches in France under his immediate command and had the highest opinion of him; they had come with him from his regiment to the textile mill. Perhaps for this reason their pessimistic moods showed no anger against "the Colonel" or "the company." For the most part the individual seemed to be almost melancholic about himself; this mood alternated with spurts of rage against some immediate supervisor.

After some discussion the management permitted us to experiment with rest periods—two of 10 minutes' length in the morning and two again in the afternoon. We arranged these rests so that the work period should be divided thus: 2 hours' work, 10 minutes' rest; 1½ hours' work, 10 minutes' rest; and a final work period of 1 hour and 10 minutes. The actual uninterrupted work period thus diminished in morning and afternoon. In these rest periods the workers were permitted to lie down; we instructed them in the best methods of securing the maximum of muscular relaxation. We encouraged them to sleep for 10 minutes and most of them were able to do so.

We began with one team of piecers, about one-third of the total number, and the results were encouraging from the outset. The men themselves were pleased and interested; they speedily adopted the method of rest we advised. The effect was immediate—symptoms of melancholy preoccupation almost wholly disappeared, the labor turnover came to an end, production was maintained, and the morale generally improved. Such immediate effects could not be attributed to the mere elimination of physical fatigue. This was confirmed by the fact that an almost equivalent improvement showed itself in the work of the other two-thirds of the piecers. These men had discussed the experiment at lunch time with their fellows and were confident that "the Colonel" would extend the system to them if it were found satisfactory. And in the October of that year, 1923, this expectation was fulfilled; the management, pleased with the improved condition of the men and the work, decided to extend the rest period system to include the entire personnel of the spinning department. This made it possible for us to do what we could not do before—to measure the effect of the rest periods upon the productivity of the department.

Until October, 1923, the spinning department had never earned a bonus under one of the incentive systems introduced; in October and for the months recorded thereafter, with one interesting exception, the spinners consistently

earned a bonus in addition to their wages. I have elsewhere described the bonus plan and shall not repeat this detail here. Enough to say that, if the production of the department in any month exceeded 75% of a carefully calculated possibility, every spinner was paid an excess percentage of his flat-rate wage equivalent to the average excess percentage of production over 75%. Thus a monthly man-hour efficiency of 80% meant a 5% bonus on his monthly wage to every employee in the department. As said above, no fraction of bonus had even been earned by the department. We were unable to get figures showing the average productivity of the department before October, 1923, when the experiment proper began; but it was generally admitted by executives and supervisors that production had never been above an approximate 70%.

The period from October, 1923, to mid-February, 1924, inclusive, showed a surprising change. The mental and physical condition of the men continued to improve, and, whereas the financial incentive of the bonus had not operated to stimulate production while they felt fatigued, they were now pleased by the fact that under conditions of work that seemed much easier they were earning bonuses as never before. The system was not, however, altogether satisfactory at this time. The immediate supervisors had never liked the sight of workers lying asleep on sacks while the mules were running; it occurred to one of them that the men should be made to "earn" their rest periods. That is to say, a task was set and, if finished within a given time, the men had their rest. For the most part, the workers had three or four rests every day and the innovation worked well enough. For example, the monthly average of productivity ran as follows:

	Efficiency	*Bonus*
October, 1923	79½%	4½%
November, 1923	78¾	3¾
December, 1923	82	7
January, 1924	78¾	3¾
February, 1924	80¼	5¼

This, for workers who had never before earned a bonus, meant much.

This general condition continued until Friday, February 15, when in response to a heavy demand for goods the supervisor who had introduced the idea of earned rest periods ordered the whole system abandoned. Within five days production fell to a point lower than it had been for months. And on February 22, we found that the old pessimistic preoccupations had returned in full force, thus coinciding almost exactly with the drop in production. The executive officer in charge ordered the resumption of the rest period system on Monday, February 25; this was done, but the idea of earned rest periods was also reinstated even more strongly than before. At this point, the workers gave every symptom of profound discouragement; they professed a belief that the system would be discontinued before long. In spite of this, the

daily record for March showed definite improvement, but the general average for the month was back at the old point, 70%.

At this point the president of the company, "the Colonel," took charge. His military service had taught him two important things—one, to care for his men, and, two, not to be afraid of making decisions. He called a conference in his office to discuss the remarkable diminution from 80% to 70% in the department's productive efficiency. We were able to point out that in March there had been a recrudescence of absenteeism, an ill that had notably diminished in the October to February period. This meant that the men were taking their rest periods in the form of "missed" days, a proceeding that did not greatly remedy their condition and that produced chaos in the plant. We put it therefore that the question was not whether a certain proportion of their working time was to be given up to rest. We pointed out that they took the rest, whether it was given them or not. We were asking that a less proportion should be thus allotted, but that it should be done systematically. Furthermore, we were able to claim that the whole rest period system had never had a fair trial. In other words, it had not been possible for a worker to know as he entered the factory in the morning that he was assured of his four rests in the day.

In order to test our claim, the president ordered that during the month of April the spinning mules should be shut down for 10 minutes at a time four times a day and that all hands from the floor supervisor down should rest as they had been instructed to do. There was some difficulty in securing the requisite amount of floor space for approximately 40 men to lie down by their machines and in securing sufficient sacking to provide for their comfort. With the exception of the president himself, there were few who believed that this drastic alteration of method could result in increased production. The men themselves believed that 40 minutes lost by 40 men per day during a whole month could not be recovered. They pointed out that the machines could not be "speeded up" and that there was no other way of recovering the lost time. In spite of this general belief, the returns for April showed an improvement on March. The March production-efficiency figure had been 70%, the April figure was 77½%. This, while it represented a 7½% gain in the company's rating, was actually a 10% gain. The men had had their rests, the pessimism had again disappeared; simultaneously, their morale had much improved, absenteeism had diminished, and every worker had earned a 2½% bonus on his wages. In the month of May and thereafter, the president ordered a return to the system of alternating rest periods, with this important difference that each group of three men in an alley was to determine for itself the method of alternation, the understanding being that every worker was to have four such rest periods daily and regularly. In the month of May, the average efficiency of man-hour production was 80¼%. In June it reached the then record high figure of 85%. During the following three

months the department maintained its improved capacity: July, 82%; August, 83½%; September, 86½%.

It is interesting to observe the difference that an absolute certainty of a minimum number of rest periods made. The months from April to September differed from the preceding months in this respect and they revealed a steady progress. Mondays and Fridays were no longer the worst days in the week. The irregularity reported in May was due to the fact that the spinning mules were constantly "running away from the cards," that is, outdistancing the carding machines which supplied them with spooled yarn. By June, the company had put in two new carding machines, and June was as steadily above 85% as March was below 75%.

The investigation began with a question as to the causes of a very high labor turnover. In the 12 months of experiment there was no labor turnover at all. This does not mean that no worker left the factory—during a period of trade slackness, some were laid off, one at least moved his place of residence and found work elsewhere, another was found to be phthisical and sent to the country. But the former problem of a highly emotional labor turnover ceased to exist. The factory began to hold its mule spinners and no longer had difficulty in maintaining a full complement in times of rushed work. The attitude of management to the innovation was revealed in the fact that the company purchased army cots for the workers to rest upon. When these cots proved unequal to the wear and tear, management installed a bed and mattress at the end of each alley as provision for the workers' adequate rest. And the workers developed the habit of sleeping for the last three rest periods of the day, the late morning rest and both afternoon rests. Experience seemed to show that the benefit was directly proportionate to the completeness of the relaxation—hence the beds. Several years later, the president of the company said publicly that from this time the labor turnover sank to an approximate 5% or 6% per annum and stayed there until the mules were taken out and ring spinning substituted.

At the time when we completed our part in this work, we were sure that we had not wholly discovered the causes of the high labor turnover. We could not even attribute the change to the mere introduction of rest periods; inevitably many other changes had been simultaneously introduced. For example, we had listened carefully and with full attention to anything a worker wished to say, whatever the character of his comment. In addition to this, we—supported by the president—had demonstrated an interest in what was said by the introduction of experimental changes, by instruction in the best methods of relaxation. The Colonel also had demonstrated unmistakably a sincere interest in his workers' welfare; he had lived up to his Army reputation. The supervisor who instituted the earning of rest periods was swept aside by the president and the company—thereby "placing" the company's attitude in the minds of its workers.

But, in addition to this—and we did not see this clearly at the time—

the president had effected another important change. He had helped to transform a horde of "solitaries" into a social group. In May, 1924, he placed the control of rest periods squarely in the hands of the workers in an alley with no one to say them nay. This led to consultation, not only between individuals, but between alleys throughout the group—and to a feeling of responsibility directly to the president. And the general social changes effected were astonishing—even in relationships outside the factory. One worker told us with great surprise that he had begun taking his wife to "movies" in the evenings, a thing he had not done for years. Another, equally to his surprise, gave up a habit of spending alcoholic week ends on bootleg liquor. In general the change was complex, and the difficulty of assigning the part played in it by various aspects of the experiment impossible to resolve. We should have liked to experiment further, but this desire—probably wisely in the circumstances—was disallowed. Thus the inquiry left us with many questions unanswered, but it pointed a direction for further studies, the results of which later proved helpful in reinterpreting the data of this first investigation.

But we had moved onwards. The efficiency experts had not consulted the workers; they regarded workers' statements as exaggerated or due to misconception of the facts and therefore to be ignored. Yet to ignore an important symptom—whatever its character—on supposedly moral grounds is preposterous. The "expert" assumptions of rabble hypothesis and individual self-interest as a basis for diagnosis led nowhere. On the other hand, careful and pedestrian consideration of the workers' situation taken as part of a clinical diagnosis led us to results so surprising that we could at the time only partly explain them.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Sometimes a deep-rooted assumption can blind an investigator to the significance of the facts he observes. What was the governing assumption which defeated the efforts of the "several firms of efficiency engineers" to solve the problems of absenteeism and rapid labor turnover in the Philadelphia textile mill?
2. How do you account for the fact that a special benefit—rest periods—conferred on only one-third of the spinners brought about an almost equivalent boost in the morale of the other two-thirds? What cautious inference might be drawn from this seemingly curious fact? How does this observation of the behavior of the two-thirds reveal the ability of Mayo's experimenters to steer clear of preconceived assumptions?
3. How did the decision of the management to extend the rest period system to include the entire personnel of the spinning department enable Mayo's investigators to establish a *controlled* experiment? What factor were they thus able to measure?
4. In what way was the reaction of the immediate supervisors, who did not like to see their men lying asleep, an indication of an unscientific type of thinking? In what way, ironically, did the interference of these supervisors permit Mayo's

team to make a second set of critical observations—that is, what new factor did these supervisors unconsciously introduce into the initial experiment?

5. How did Mayo show himself alert to the problem of definition when he pointed out to the management that the men were still taking their "rest periods" in the form of absenteeism after the supervisors had tampered with his initial program?
6. Which statements in the final three paragraphs of the article reveal the workings of the scientific mind? Specifically, which aspects of scientific thinking does each of these statements illustrate?
7. Probably Mayo's most important inference—which he arrived at with caution—was about what makes men work. What was this inference?
8. Mayo's predecessors, the "efficiency experts," had based their conclusion (that output would go up if the workers received greater financial rewards) on an assumption which Mayo did not feel was sufficiently proved to be a safe basis for a conclusion.

   In the following statements find the assumption (major premise) which lies behind each conclusion. The "truth" or "falseness" of these conclusions is *not* relevant here. You are seeking only the assumptions on which these conclusions are based.

   a. "He's an authority on the subject. He wrote a book on it."
   b. "Our last voluntary city-cleanup was a complete failure. How, then, can it possibly work well this time?"
   c. "There is no point in wasting our jokes on Phil. He's an Englishman."
   d. "How can we be sure of his loyalty to our organization when he is so often sharply critical of it?"
   e. "I say he must be guilty—in some degree, anyway. If he isn't, then why did he leave town just after the crime occurred?"
   f. "He should have known better than to let his wife in on the secret. She is clever and all that—but she's still a woman!"
   g. "Look! I know what I'm talking about. I *was there,* wasn't I?"
   h. "It's obvious that radio has the biggest influence on people's thinking. Many times more people listen to radio than read papers or books."
9. Indicate the different *conclusions* that would be drawn about the following problems by persons starting with these very different premises.

   a. THE PROBLEM: How can we prevent cheating in school examinations?
   Premise 1. Cheating results from improperly supervised examinations.
   Premise 2. Cheating is the result of improperly devised examinations, *i.e.,* those with easily copied answers.
   Premise 3. Cheating is generated by an atmosphere of hostile suspicion on the part of teachers and administrators.
   Premise 4. Cheating is the result of an artificial learning situation which puts a premium on "right answers," rather than on the ability to find independent answers, supportable by cited evidence.
   Premise 5. Chronic problems admit of no single, simple answers.

   b. THE PROBLEM: What can we do about "tramps" in today's society?
   Premise 1. Tramps are naturally shiftless men who, to avoid work, move from place to place, getting "handouts" from people who will give only once.
   Premise 2. Tramps are destitute men, suffering from a variety of personal

and social maladjustments, who move from place to place to avoid arrest under our vagrancy laws.

c. THE PROBLEM: What can we do about worldwide economic depressions like that of the 1930's?

Premise 1. Economic depressions result from the scheming of the international bankers.

Premise 2. Economic depressions are the inevitable result of the development of modern machinery and mass production.

Premise 3. Economic depressions are the result of prices rising faster than wages.

Premise 4. Economic depressions are the result of wages going up faster than profits.

Premise 5. Economic depressions are caused by war.

Premise 6. Economic depressions are brought about by a combination of various causes, some of which we understand fairly well and some of which, because of the comparative recency of the development of the social sciences, we know little about.

PROJECTS

1. Elsewhere in this book you have been given exercises which were intended to sharpen your ability to find assumptions. Now here are three somewhat more complex problems which require you not only to find assumptions but to reexamine them. Select *one* of these problems and write a critical analysis of the assumptions you find there. The questions which follow each will help you get started.

   a. "Careful surveys," wrote a student in a paper on study habits, "have proved that workers in factories have more accidents when they work long hours—say, twelve or fourteen hours. It would seem logical, then, that if a fellow doesn't take the week-end off from studies, he is likely to do sloppier work the following week."

   What assumption about the relationship of factory-work to college studies does the writer take for granted and use as his major premise? What important questions has the writer failed to ask himself concerning these two types of work?

   b. "Johnny can't be learning a thing in grammar school. He says they haven't had a formal recitation all week; they just build log cabins, and yesterday they saw a movie, and today they're all going to sing folk songs."

   What assumptions is this parent making? Is there any connection between these statements and the thinking of the supervisors in Mayo's account?

   c. "A spokesman for the Greenfield Taxpayers' Association last night once more raised the question about coddling convicts. 'With increasing demands on the tax dollar,' President Brown stated, 'for new schools, freeways, and other necessities for the lawful element in society, why should we squander public money on the lawless?' Brown was alluding here to proposed allocation of public welfare funds for establishment of a psychiatric ward at the State Penitentiary at Exeter."

What assumptions is President Brown making about all prison inmates? about what public money should be used for?

2. Mayo's inference that "social groups" often operate more effectively than do "solitaries" has implications for the group discussion method which is being used with increasing frequency in today's society. Organize a panel to discuss the merits and demerits of the use of group procedures and techniques in such organizations as (*a*) schools, (*b*) churches, (*c*) medical clinics, (*d*) labor unions, (*e*) legislative committees, or (*f*) Chambers of Commerce. (You should, of course, be aware that the question involves even the use of *this* panel.)

Marchette Chute

GETTING AT THE TRUTH

In the present article, Marchette Chute, who writes biographies of English historical figures, analyzes one of the researcher's greatest difficulties—to permit the facts rather than his own desires to determine what can safely be inferred from what has been discovered. Although Miss Chute draws primarily on examples from her special research field, she is fully aware that hers is just one form of the problem that faces all men when they try to find out the truth.

This is a rather presumptuous title for a biographer to use, since truth is a very large word. In the sense that it means the reality about a human being it is probably impossible for a biographer to achieve. In the sense that it means a reasonable presentation of all the available facts it is more nearly possible, but even this limited goal is harder to reach than it appears to be. A biographer needs to be both humble and cautious when he remembers the nature of the material he is working with, for a historical fact is rather like the flamingo that Alice in Wonderland tried to use as a croquet mallet. As soon as she got its neck nicely straightened out and was ready to hit the ball, it would turn and look at her with a puzzled expression, and any biographer knows that what is called a "fact" has a way of doing the same.

Here is a small example. When I was writing my forthcoming biography, "Ben Jonson of Westminster," I wanted to give a paragraph or two to Sir Philip Sidney, who had a great influence on Jonson. No one thinks of Sidney without thinking of chivalry, and to underline the point I intended to use a story that Sir Fulke Greville told of him. Sidney died of gangrene, from a musket shot that shattered his thigh, and Greville says that Sidney failed to put on his leg armor while preparing for battle because the marshal of the

GETTING AT THE TRUTH From *The Saturday Review*, September 19, 1953. By permission of the publisher.

camp was not wearing leg armor and Sidney was unwilling to do anything that would give him a special advantage. The story is so characteristic both of Sidney himself and of the misplaced high-mindedness of late Renaissance chivalry that I wanted to use it, and since Sir Fulke Greville was one of Sidney's closest friends the information seemed to be reliable enough. But it is always well to check each piece of information as thoroughly as possible and so I consulted another account of Sidney written by a contemporary, this time a doctor who knew the family fairly well. The doctor, Thomas Moffet, mentioned the episode but he said that Sidney left off his leg armor because he was in a hurry.

The information was beginning to twist in my hand and could no longer be trusted. So I consulted still another contemporary who had mentioned the episode, to see which of the two he agreed with. This was Sir John Smythe, a military expert who brought out his book a few years after Sidney's death. Sir John was an old-fashioned conservative who advocated the use of heavy armor even on horseback, and he deplored the current craze for leaving off leg protection, "the imitating of which . . . cost that noble and worthy gentleman Sir Philip Sidney his life."

So here I was with three entirely different reasons why Sidney left off his leg armor, all advanced by careful writers who were contemporaries of his. The flamingo had a legitimate reason for looking around with a puzzled expression.

The only thing to do in a case like this is to examine the point of view of the three men who are supplying the conflicting evidence. Sir Fulke Greville was trying to prove a thesis: that his beloved friend had an extremely chivalric nature. Sir John Smythe also was trying to prove a thesis: that the advocates of light arming followed a theory that could lead to disaster. Only the doctor, Thomas Moffet, was not trying to prove a thesis. He was not using his own explanation to reinforce some point he wanted to make. He did not want anything except to set down on paper what he believed to be the facts; and since we do not have Sidney's own explanation of why he did not put on leg armor, the chances are that Dr. Moffet is the safest man to trust.

For Moffet was without desire. Nothing can so quickly blur and distort the facts as desire—the wish to use the facts for some purpose of your own—and nothing can so surely destroy the truth. As soon as the witness wants to prove something he is no longer impartial and his evidence is no longer to be trusted.

The only safe way to study contemporary testimony is to bear constantly in mind this possibility of prejudice and to put almost as much attention on the writer himself as on what he has written. For instance, Sir Anthony Weldon's description of the Court of King James is lively enough and often used as source material; but a note from the publisher admits that the

pamphlet was issued as a warning to anyone who wished to "side with this bloody house" of Stuart. The publisher, at any rate, did not consider Weldon an impartial witness. At about the same time Arthur Wilson published his history of Great Britain, which contained an irresistibly vivid account of the agonized death of the Countess of Somerset. Wilson sounds reasonably impartial; but his patron was the Earl of Essex, who had good reason to hate that particular countess, and there is evidence that he invented the whole scene to gratify his patron.

Sometimes a writer will contradict what he has already written, and in that case the only thing to do is to investigate what has changed his point of view. For instance, in 1608 Captain John Smith issued a description of his capture by Powhatan, and he made it clear that the Indian chief had treated him with unwavering courtesy and hospitality. In 1624 the story was repeated in Smith's *General History of Virginia,* but the writer's circumstances had changed. Smith needed money, "having a prince's mind imprisoned in a poor man's purse," and he wanted the book to be profitable. Powhatan's daughter, the Princess Pocahontas, had recently been in the news, for her visit to England had aroused a great deal of interest among the sort of people that Smith hoped would buy his book. So Smith supplied a new version of the story, in which the once-hospitable Powhatan would have permitted the hero's brains to be dashed out if Pocahontas had not saved his life. It was the second story that achieved fame, and of course it may have been true. But it is impossible to trust it because the desire of the writer is so obviously involved; as Smith said in his prospectus, he needed money and hoped that the book would give "satisfaction."

It might seem that there was an easy way for a biographer to avoid the use of this kind of prejudiced testimony. All he has to do is to construct his biography from evidence that cannot be tampered with—from parish records, legal documents, bills, accounts, court records, and so on. Out of these solid gray blocks of impersonal evidence it should surely be possible to construct a road that will lead straight to the truth and that will never bend itself to the misleading curve of personal desire.

This might be so if the only problem involved were the reliability of the material. But there is another kind of desire that is much more subtle, much more pervasive, and much more dangerous than the occasional distortions of fact that contemporary writers may have permitted themselves to make; and this kind of desire can destroy the truth of a biography even if every individual fact in it is as solid and as uncompromising as rock. Even if the road is built of the best and most reliable materials it can still curve away from the truth because of this other desire that threatens it: the desire of the biographer himself.

A biographer is not a court record or a legal document. He is a human being, writing about another human being, and his own temperament, his own point of view, and his own frame of reference are unconsciously imposed

upon the man he is writing about. Even if the biographer is free from Captain Smith's temptation—the need for making money—and wants to write nothing but the literal truth, he is still handicapped by the fact that there is no such thing as a completely objective human being.

An illustration of what can happen if the point of view is sufficiently strong is the curious conclusion that the nineteenth-century biographers reached about William Shakespeare. Shakespeare joined a company of London actors in 1594, was listed as an actor in 1598 and 1603, and was still listed as one of the "men actors" in the company in 1609. Shortly before he joined this company Shakespeare dedicated two narrative poems to the Earl of Southampton, and several years after Shakespeare died his collected plays were dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke. This was his only relationship with either of the two noblemen, and there is nothing to connect him with them during the fifteen years in which he belonged to the same acting company and during which he wrote nearly all his plays.

But here the desire of the biographers entered in. They had been reared in the strict code of nineteenth-century gentility and they accepted two ideas without question. One was that there are few things more important than an English lord; the other was that there are few things less important than a mere actor. They already knew the undeniable fact that Shakespeare was one of the greatest men who ever lived; and while they could not go quite so far as to claim him as an actual member of the nobility, it was clear to them that he must have been the treasured friend of both the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Pembroke and that he must have written his plays either while basking in their exalted company or while he was roaming the green countryside by the waters of the river Avon. (It is another basic conviction of the English gentleman that there is nothing so inspiring as nature.) The notion that Shakespeare had spent all these years as the working member of a company of London actors was so abhorrent that it was never seriously considered. It could not be so; therefore it was not.

These biographers did their work well. When New South Wales built its beautiful memorial library to Shakespeare, it was the coat of arms of the Earl of Southampton that alternated with that of royalty in dignified splendor over the bookshelves. Shakespeare had been recreated in the image of desire, and desire will always ignore whatever is not relevant to its purpose. Because the English gentlemen did not like Shakespeare's background it was explained away as though it had never existed, and Shakespeare ceased to be an actor because so lowly a trade was not suited to so great a man.

All this is not to say that a biography should be lacking in a point of view. If it does not have a point of view it will be nothing more than a kind of expanded article for an encyclopedia—a string of facts arranged in chronological order with no claim to being a real biography at all. A biography

must have a point of view and it must have a frame of reference. But it should be a point of view and a frame of reference implicit in the material itself and not imposed upon it.

It might seem that the ideal biographical system, if it could be achieved, would be to go through the years of research without feeling any kind of emotion. The biographer woud be a kind of fact-finding machine and then suddenly, after his years of research, a kind of total vision would fall upon him and he would transcribe it in his best and most persuasive English for a waiting public. But research is fortunately not done by machinery, nor are visions likely to descend in that helpful manner. They are the product not only of many facts but also of much thinking, and it is only when the biographer begins to get emotional in his thinking that he ought to beware.

It is easy enough to make good resolutions in advance, but a biographer cannot altogether control his sense of excitement when the climax of his years of research draws near and he begins to see the pieces fall into place. Almost without his volition, A, B, and D fit together and start to form a pattern, and it is almost impossible for the biographer not to start searching for C. Something turns up that looks remarkably like C, and with a little trimming of the edges and the ignoring of one very slight discrepancy it will fill the place allotted for C magnificently.

It is at this point that the biographer ought to take a deep breath and sit on his hands until he has had time to calm down. He has no real, fundamental reason to believe that his discovery is C, except for the fact that he wants it to be. He is like a man looking for a missing piece in a difficult jigsaw puzzle, who has found one so nearly the right shape that he cannot resist the desire to jam it into place.

If the biographer had refused to be tempted by his supposed discovery of C and had gone on with his research, he might have found not only the connecting, illuminating fact he needed but much more besides. He is not going to look for it now. Desire has blocked the way. And by so much his biography will fall short of what might have been the truth.

It would not be accurate to say that a biographer should be wholly lacking in desire. Curiosity is a form of desire. So is the final wish to get the material down on paper in a form that will be fair to the reader's interest and worthy of the subject. But a subconscious desire to push the facts around is one of the most dangerous things a biographer can encounter, and all the more dangerous because it is so difficult to know when he is encountering it.

The reason Alice had so much trouble with her flamingo is that the average flamingo does not wish to be used as a croquet mallet. It has other purposes in view. The same thing is true of a fact, which can be just as self-willed as a flamingo and has its own kind of stubborn integrity. To try to force a series of facts into a previously desired arrangement is a form of

misuse to which no self-respecting fact will willingly submit itself. The best and only way to treat it is to leave it alone and be willing to follow where it leads, rather than to press your own wishes upon it.

To put the whole thing into a single sentence: you will never succeed in getting at the truth if you think you know, ahead of time, what the truth ought to be.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. *a.* Miss Chute reminds us, in her account of Sir Philip Sidney, that "nothing can so quickly blur and distort facts as . . . the wish to use the facts for some purpose of your own." Recount to the class a recent instance where you—or someone you have observed—used the facts for some special purpose, and thereby sacrificed the truth. For instance:
   (1) How did you interpret the facts the last time you were given a traffic citation? the last time someone broke a date with you?
   (2) Was there any difference in your interpretation of the facts when someone you liked was accused of poor sportsmanship at basketball? When someone you disliked was accused?

   b. Closely related to this wishful use of facts is purposely forcing them, as Alice forced her flamingo, to do a certain job for you. Describe in detail an experience in which you or someone you know did this. For example:
   (1) In applying for admission to college.
   (2) In making out an income tax return.
2. Miss Chute makes clear what several nineteenth-century biographers did to portray Shakespeare after their own desires. This making one's heroes after one's own desires is a practice that affects our homelier, everyday activities. Have you, for example, ever "explained away as though they never existed" some facts about a sweetheart, friend, home town, or other object of affection? Give reasons why it would have been better if you had "faced the truth" about these people and places.
3. Miss Chute's concluding sentence provides an admirable yardstick against which to measure the methods of drawing inferences illustrated in the previous essays in this section. Draw up a list of all those persons who "knew the truth ahead of time" and another list of those who were willing to follow where the facts led. Consider, among others, the four characters in Davis' fable; the beekeepers, the biologists, and von Frisch himself in the latter's essay on "Experimental Proof"; the efficiency engineers, the textile supervisors, and the investigators in "The First Inquiry."
4. Have you known—or can you imagine—particular kinds of situations in which a biased witness may prove useful in spite of his bias? (For example, many serious students of government maintain that lobbyists perform a necessary function in providing legislators with detailed information and arguments which the legislators would find difficult to collect unassisted.)

PROJECTS

1. Chute describes the temptation for the biographer to stop his investigation before all the facts are in, especially if the facts he already has appear to prove his thesis. Write a paper in which you describe in some detail how you or someone you know was tempted to investigate no further—to let sleeping dogs lie—because you feared that the facts and generalizations you had already gathered might not withstand the impact of new information.
2. To demonstrate your grasp of Chute's warnings (one, that a reporter is always open to the temptation to engage in special pleading; two, that sometimes even a lot of facts don't add up to a true picture), write a brief account of something with which your classmates are thoroughly familiar—the operation of your school coffee shop, or the management of your dormitory, or your school's registration procedures, for instance—using nothing but verifiable facts and at the same time creating a falsified picture. Then have other members of the class read your paper, or, if possible, put it on a screen by means of an opaque projector. Let the members of your class supply facts you have omitted or other inferences you have neglected so as to correct your total picture and bring it nearer the "truth."

James Thurber

FOUR FABLES FOR OUR TIME

Do you recall Aesop's Fables, *those stories about animals whose experiences really have human meaning? Like Aesop, Chaucer, and Fontaine before him, James Thurber has embodied many of his observations of human frailties in humorous animal-tales.*

One of the big problems for the reader of such fables is to get the humor without losing the point, and to get the point without losing the humor. Using Thurber in a serious book on thinking and language, we are, of course, running the latter risk. Still, there would appear to be considerable truth in the view that all real humor is wise, and that wisdom involves, among other things, seeing the joke.

THE FAIRLY INTELLIGENT FLY

A large spider in an old house built a beautiful web in which to catch flies. Every time a fly landed on the web and was entangled in it the spider devoured him, so that when another fly came along he would think the web was a safe and quiet place in which to rest. One day a fairly intelligent fly buzzed around above the web so long without lighting that the spider ap-

FOUR FABLES FOR OUR TIME Permission the author. Copyright, 1939, James Thurber. Originally published in *The New Yorker.*

peared and said, "Come on down." But the fly was too clever for him and said, "I never light where I don't see other flies and I don't see any other flies in your house." So he flew away until he came to a place where there were a great many other flies. He was about to settle down among them when a bee buzzed up and said, "Hold it, stupid, that's flypaper. All those flies are trapped." "Don't be silly," said the fly, "they're dancing." So he settled down and became stuck to the flypaper with all the other flies.

Moral: There is no safety in numbers, or in anything else.

THE SHEEP IN WOLF'S CLOTHING

Not very long ago there were two sheep who put on wolf's clothing and went among the wolves as spies, to see what was going on. They arrived on a fete day, when all the wolves were singing in the taverns or dancing in the street. The first sheep said to his companion, "Wolves are just like us, for they gambol and frisk. Every day is fete day in Wolfland." He made some notes on a piece of paper (which a spy should never do) and he headed them "My Twenty-Four Hours in Wolfland," for he had decided not to be a spy any longer but to write a book on Wolfland and also some articles for the *Sheep's Home Companion.* The other sheep guessed what he was planning to do, so he slipped away and began to write a book called "My Ten Hours in Wolfland." The first sheep suspected what was up when he found his friend had gone, so he wired a book to his publisher called "My Five Hours in Wolfland," and it was announced for publication first. The other sheep immediately sold his manuscript to a newspaper syndicate for serialization.

Both sheep gave the same message to their fellows: wolves were just like sheep, for they gambolled and frisked, and every day was fete day in Wolfland. The citizens of Sheepland were convinced by all this, so they drew in their sentinels and they let down their barriers. When the wolves descended on them one night, howling and slavering, the sheep were as easy to kill as flies on a windowpane.

Moral: Don't get it right, just get it written.

THE SCOTTY WHO KNEW TOO MUCH

Several summers ago there was a Scotty who went to the country for a visit. He decided that all the farm dogs were cowards, because they were afraid of a certain animal that had a white stripe down its back. "You are a pussy-cat and I can lick you," the Scotty said to the farm dog who lived in the house where the Scotty was visiting. "I can lick the little animal with the white stripe, too. Show him to me." "Don't you want to ask any questions about him?" said the farm dog. "Naw," said the Scotty. "*You* ask the questions."

So the farm dog took the Scotty into the woods and showed him the white-striped animal and the Scotty closed in on him, growling and slashing. It was all over in a moment and the Scotty lay on his back. When he came to, the farm dog said, "What happened?" "He threw vitriol," said the Scotty, "but he never laid a glove on me."

A few days later the farm dog told the Scotty there was another animal all the farm dogs were afraid of. "Lead me to him," said the Scotty. "I can lick anything that doesn't wear horseshoes." "Don't you want to ask any questions about him?" said the farm dog. "Naw," said the Scotty. "Just show me where he hangs out." So the farm dog led him to a place in the woods and pointed out the little animal when he came along. "A clown," said the Scotty, "a pushover," and he closed in, leading with his left and exhibiting some mighty fancy footwork. In less than a second the Scotty was flat on his back, and when he woke up the farm dog was pulling quills out of him. "What happened?" said the farm dog. "He pulled a knife on me," said the Scotty, "but at least I have learned how you fight out here in the country, and now I am going to beat *you* up." So he closed in on the farm dog, holding his nose with one front paw to ward off the vitriol and covering his eyes with the other front paw to keep out the knives. The Scotty couldn't see his opponent and he couldn't smell his opponent and he was so badly beaten that he had to be taken back to the city and put in a nursing home.

Moral: It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all the answers.

THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

There was once a wise young tortoise who read in an ancient book about a tortoise who had beaten a hare in a race. He read all the other books he could find but in none of them was there any record of a hare who had beaten a tortoise. The wise young tortoise came to the natural conclusion that he could outrun a hare, so he set forth in search of one. In his wanderings he met many animals who were willing to race him: weasels, stoats, dachshunds, badger-boars, short-tailed field mice and ground squirrels. But when the tortoise asked if they could outrun a hare, they all said no, they couldn't (with the exception of a dachshund named Freddy, and nobody paid any attention to him). "Well, I can," said the tortoise, "so there's no use wasting my time on you." And he continued his search.

After many days, the tortoise finally encountered a hare and challenged him to a race. "What are you going to use for legs?" asked the hare. "Never mind that," said the tortoise. "Read this." He showed the hare the story in the ancient book, complete with moral about the swift not always being so terribly fast. "Tosh," said the hare. "You couldn't go fifty feet in an hour and a half, whereas I can go fifty feet in one and a fifth seconds." "Posh," said the tortoise. "You probably won't even finish second." "We'll see about

that," said the hare. So they marked off a course fifty feet long. All the other animals gathered around. A bull-frog set them on their marks, a gun dog fired a pistol, and they were off.

When the hare crossed the finish line, the tortoise had gone approximately eight and three-quarter inches.

Moral: A new broom may sweep clean, but never trust an old saw.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. In "The Fairly Intelligent Fly" Thurber sums up wittily a number of important ideas you have so far encountered in this book. What is his point about observation? about the *number* of facts as opposed to the *relevancy* of facts? about the need for verification of an hypothesis?
2. How does the fly's reasoning resemble the reasoning expressed in the following statements: (*a*) "Look at that crowd outside the store! It must be bargain day." (*b*) "A girl with as many dancing dates as she has must certainly be popular." (*c*) "The movie at the Vogue can't be much good. It has been playing to a half-empty house for the past week." (*d*) "Our paper will go almost entirely to college graduates; so we can bank on uniformity of taste and interest and won't have to worry about appealing to many different kinds of readers."
3. Do you see any connection between the fly's reliance on numbers and a human weakness exploited by advertisers—whether they are advertising cigarettes, automobiles, "great books," or universities?
4. Thurber's sheepish reporters got hold of a fact all right. Why, then, did their reports prove so misleading? Can you cite any recent news report where the reporter made the same basic error in thinking?
5. The story of the Scotty illustrates that one of the first steps in tackling many problems is to ask the right questions; and that often the "right" questions are those to which a *factual* answer can be given. Consider the following questions all of which concern the choice of a college. Which are susceptible of factual answers in their present form? Which are not? Which are more *immediately* useful in arriving at an answer to this problem?
   a. Which school is farther from home?
   b. Which school has the larger student body?
   c. Which school has the higher tuition fees?
   d. Which school has the better teachers?
   e. Which school has the greater number of courses to choose from?
   f. Which school has the more attractive campus?
   g. Which school has, on the average, smaller classes (ratio of students to instructor)?
   h. Which school gives more careful consideration to the individual student?
   i. Which school has the friendlier atmosphere?
   j. Which school is recognized by the American Association of Colleges and Universities?
   k. Which school does my high-school counselor regard more highly?
   l. Which school offers more scholarships of various kinds?
   m. Which school has the larger library (number of books)?

n. Which school gives the more practical training?
o. Which school has more homey living quarters?
p. Which school has the larger number of social clubs?
q. Which school provides the better food?
r. Which school is closer to metropolitan areas?
s. Which school are more of my friends attending?
t. Which school provides better on-campus jobs?

6. Have you had any experiences—or do you know someone who has—which parallel the mistakes of the Scotty? Have you, for instance, underestimated an opponent in tennis because he used unorthodox strokes; overrated (or underrated) the difficulty of a certain college course; misgauged the difficulty of the slender, forty-page history book when you were looking for an easy way out of a book report assignment—all because you neglected to ask the right questions?

PROJECTS

1. Write a paper following the directions in *a* or *b*.
   a. Select an "old saw" or folk proverb. Determine whether or not it is reliable as a guide to intelligent behavior. Support your belief with evidence.
   b. Select one of the following popular beliefs and indicate reasons for questioning its validity.
      (1) That "only" children are spoiled.
      (2) That women are poor drivers.
      (3) That our "scientific age" is free from superstition.
      (4) That Americans are more "materialistic" than other people.
      (5) That students who perform best in school tend to be physically frail and unathletic.
2. In "The Tortoise and the Hare" Thurber underscores the danger of relying on ancient authority instead of careful, first-hand observation. History is rich in examples of this fallacy. Look into any of these books for brief popular accounts of such fallacies: Howard W. Haggard's *Devils, Drugs, and Doctors,* Bergen Evans' *Natural History of Nonsense* and his *Spoor of Spooks,* David J. Jacobson's *The Affairs of Dame Rumor.* Prepare a written report, possibly using these books as sources, giving one example of the danger of basing actions on unchecked authority.
3. Invent a fable of your own that will suggest a very common kind of illogical human thinking and its results.

SHOULD 18-YEAR-OLDS BE ALLOWED TO VOTE?

One main reason for including the following debate is that it shows us how two men, using a variety of methods, may arrive at opposite conclusions about the same subject. Another reason is that the question which the disputants are debating may be significant to you. One runs the risk of having his reader abandon logic for emotion when he chooses a live topic as a subject for analysis. But running that risk is, perhaps, a necessary part of any training in logic. The analytical, conscientious thinker must be able to set aside the temptation to approve or disapprove a spokesman's conclusions and to concentrate on the really antecedent question of how *the spokesman arrived at the conclusions he offers.*

We suggest that one of the best sorts of training in analytical thinking is to examine the reasoning in the speeches reprinted in The Congressional Digest, *and in the forum discussions in the* Town Meeting of the Air, *and* University of Chicago Roundtable *reprints.*

PRO

Hon. Kenneth B. Keating, U. S. Representative, New York, Republican

I think 18-year-olds today have more maturity of judgment than 18-year-olds did one or two generations ago. I have a daughter who is now 20, and I feel at 18 she was at least as well equipped to decide who she wanted to have for governor and what her position should be on public affairs, as I was at 21.

The mere fact that youth votes at 18 in Soviet Russia seems to be no argument that "evils of youthful voting" will follow. It makes no difference whether you are 18 or 80. Your vote doesn't count for anything in Soviet Russia anyway. The idea of getting the young people of America to do any goose-stepping around seems to me to show an utter lack of comprehension of the American youth. I don't think you can regiment the youth of this country in any such way. In fact, I think just the opposite is true.

You can't dictate to the young people the way you can to some of the older people. They have more independence of judgment. They are more apt to decide things on the issues. But I don't think it is a political matter. I think it is a matter of fair play. I think that as the life span gets longer in this country, as it is doing, people are living longer, there are more people in the older ages voting, and to offset that, to give a fair balance, to determine the great issues of the day and to determine who shall govern the

SHOULD EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLDS BE ALLOWED TO VOTE? From *The Congressional Digest,* March, 1954.

country, it seems we have to open it up at the lower end, and balance the thing out so that we get a fair expression of all the people of this country.

People are moving forward in this country. After all, they elected President Eisenhower, and that is a big step forward. And he has come out for this 18-year-old voting, and I believe that his backing for it will have a great effect in convincing people that 18-year-olds should vote. He has had experiences which show the need for 18-year-old voting.

I think 18-year-olds could understand the Bricker Amendment as well as their elders. I might say from both sides—and this is no reflection on either side—my mail has indicated a complete lack of comprehension about the Bricker Amendment. There are many people writing about the Bricker Amendment on both sides who don't fully understand it. I, as a member of the Committee on the Judiciary that will eventually have the bill if it passes the Senate, don't pretend that I yet understand it, either.

But the youth? They will study these questions. They won't go into a voting booth and just vote Republican and Democrat, because their father did, and so on, and as some of their elders have gotten into the habit of doing. It will cause them to have a greater interest in public affairs, a greater interest in what party should be dominant at the moment; with which party they want to affiliate themselves.

And I think they are fully as well equipped. After all, we have greatly increased the educational opportunities of the youth in this country. They are learning things in school today that I didn't learn, and much more than my father and mother learned.

So far as Georgia is concerned, Mr. Albert Tuttle, who is the counsel for the Treasury Department here, tells me it has worked very well in Georgia, that there isn't anyone who would want to change it in Georgia among the political figures of the day. He feels it has been a great suggestion.

I think the greatest objection to our legislating in Washington on the subject is not on its basic merit, but on the fact that it should be left to the individual States.

Now, that raises a very serious question, and I realize it. However, we *did* have enough sentiment in this country for the woman vote so that we finally passed a constitutional amendment that we should not discriminate on account of sex. I think the time has come when there is enough sentiment in the country that we should pass such a constitutional amendment as President Eisenhower has suggested.

If there isn't overwhelming sentiment, this will never become law, because any constitutional amendment must be ratified by three-fourths of the States. If three-fourths of the States don't want it, it will never become law.

The mere fact that the States have turned this proposition down in the past doesn't mean that it is for all time to be not considered. And, furthermore, if we pass this constitutional amendment and three-fourths of the States don't ratify it in seven years, it never gets on the books.

If it is such a bad thing, what is the danger in sending it out to the people again and letting them express themselves?

CON

Kenneth W. Colegrove, Professor of Political Science, Northwestern University

It seems to me that we have to take the question of voting onto broad philosophical grounds. Why should people have the ballot in the first place? I think that the answer can be found in our concept of democracy. Our democracy is government by the people, of the people, and for the people. Government for the people, as John Stuart Mill has said, implies the increase of the sum of good qualities in the governed, collectively and individually—namely, the well-being of the people is the sole object of government. All this means that we should have wise and efficient government. We can have it only by treating the vote as a privilege and not as a right.

If we are going to have a democracy, if we are going to fulfill our purpose of government, we must have intelligent and wise voters. Since voting is a right conferred by the State, the States can take the vote away from those persons who they think are not capable or wise enough to participate in this function of government.

Voting is a responsibility, but a very limited responsibility; and the State, of course, has the function of determining on whom that responsibility shall rest.

I think that it is unwise to lower the voting age from 21 to 18. The young people under 21 years of age today do not have the experience and the wisdom to exercise the vote, I think.

Although 18-year-olds today know more about the world and its problems than did the 21-year-olds of a generation ago, as freshmen and sophomores they are still Republicans or Democrats just because their fathers and mothers were Republicans or Democrats. It is only when young people become seniors or graduate students that they begin to think for themselves and determine their own decisions with reference to political questions.

While it is true that the 18-year-old today has more education, generally, than the average voter of 50 years and up, our adult population also has more education than the adult population several years ago. It is a relative matter.

One argument frequently advanced for the 18-year-old vote is that the only way to learn about American politics is through participation; that is, if the 18-year-old begins to participate in politics at that age, he learns much more readily than if he waits until later on. If that argument is valid, young men would be put into the first line of the football team right at the very

beginning, instead of being given a long training and practice beforehand. Football and voting are very different matters, but the more schooling a man has—the more experience a person has—before he exercises this privilege, rather than right of voting, the better he will perform.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Taking into account what you have so far learned about the amount and kind of evidence one needs to draw a sound conclusion, and disregarding your own feelings for the moment, do you think Representative Keating's opening paragraph presents sufficient or insufficient proof that 18-year-olds today have more maturity of judgment than 18-year-olds of one or two generations ago?
2. Does Keating's reference to voting practices in Russia contribute any relevant evidence to his argument?
3. Keating's proof that 18-year-old voting had worked in Georgia was that a lawyer for the Treasury Department had told him so. In what ways is this type of argument like the testimonial in advertising? Supply other examples of this kind of argument.
4. One of the most useful skills you can develop is to learn to distinguish an inference (conclusion) from the evidence on which it is presumably based. Go through Keating's entire statement carefully. Underline all the conclusions. Now put brackets around any factual evidence which supports these conclusions. Which do you find more of—conclusions or supporting evidence? How does this affect your opinion of the usefulness of Keating's argument?
5. The reasoning in paragraph one of Professor Colegrove's statement hinges on the *definition* of certain key words and phrases. What are these?
6. Colegrove's *explicit* assertion that 18-year-olds lack the wisdom and experience to vote responsibly carries with it an *implicit* idea about older voters. What is this unarticulated idea? Is any evidence advanced to support it?
7. What evidence can you find to support Colegrove's contention that only when young people become seniors or graduate students do they begin to think for themselves about political questions? What fairly simple means could you devise to check the voting preferences of college seniors and graduate students on the one hand and lower classmen on the other? How does his statement about *college* youth reveal a probably unconscious bias on the part of Colegrove?
8. Is there an unconscious contradiction between Colegrove's reasoning in the last sentence of his final paragraph and his reasoning in the first sentence of that paragraph? This final paragraph contains an example of the argument from analogy. Do you find it a plausible one? Does Professor Colegrove seem to?
9. What *assumptions* made by either of the two debaters about *you* and your generation appear to you to be shaky—that is, not necessarily wrong but certainly doubtful or unproved? Why? Are there any practical means of finding out whether these assumptions are correct?
10. You may have heard this rather common kind of remark: "Oh, well—who

am I to try to figure out which speaker has the right side of the question? After all, one man's opinion is as good as another."

a. What generalization about the beliefs of *all* men underlies this remark?

b. From your own experience give reasons for not taking this major premise (this basic assumption or generalization) for granted.

PROJECTS

1. Take a poll (you can do this anonymously and in writing) of the political, religious, and social preferences of your classmates as compared with those of their parents. [Three simple questions will do: (1) What political party (if any) do your parents support? (2) What church or religion do they consider themselves affiliated with? (3) What nationalities do they prefer for neighbors? After each student has recorded his answers, ask him to write "same" or "different" after each of these answers, indicating the degree to which he shares his parents' preferences.] What light does this throw on Keating's statement in paragraph six?

   You may wish to see how your findings compare with the findings of social scientists. Consult any standard text in social psychology for the published results of such studies. Do they confirm Keating's inference that youth will not follow the voting habits of their parents?
2. Write a paper for one side or the other of this controversy, making more use of factual evidence and less use of previously held conclusions and unexplained assumptions than Keating and Colegrove do.

Percival M. Symonds

RATIONALIZATION

"Rationalizing," a term borrowed by the general public from the psychologists, has become a popular catchword. Thus it has lost much of its original meaning; but, if carefully explained and concretely illustrated, as in Symonds' book Dynamic Psychology, *it reveals some of the ways by which we try to avoid admitting the real reason for an act or belief when that reason is in some way unsatisfactory to us. This mental dodging, of course, is highly relevant to our present study of the ways we think or infer: the rationalizer, as Symonds explains, is selecting certain facts to justify an answer he already has and wants.*

Rationalization may be defined as faulty thinking which serves to disguise or hide the unconscious motives of behavior and feeling. Rationalization, therefore, takes its place as another one of the defense mechanisms—a

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defense against having to recognize unconscious motivation in everyday life. It is a device frequently resorted to by many a person in attempting to reassure himself of his own prestige. It is a way of fooling oneself, of making oneself seem more able, more successful, more moral, and more honorable than one really is. Rationalization is the blanket which we throw over our own infirmities and weaknesses so that it will not be necessary for us to have to face them directly. A boy excuses himself for failing an examination by saying he did not study for it, whereas the examination was actually too difficult for him to be successful in.

FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Rationalization as Fallacious Thinking. Rationalization is fundamentally fallacious thinking. In terms of the syllogism, rationalization is a selection of facts that can be used as minor premises in order to justify certain conclusions already reached. One notes three things in this analysis of the process of rationalization: first, that the conclusion is given. Usually this is an act performed, since rationalizations are very frequently explanations justifying behavior which has already taken place. Second, in a rationalization the major premise is also given, and with this no particular fault is found, except that it may not always be a sound generalization. The essential feature of rationalization is the search for a particular circumstance to be used for the minor premise which, taken with the major premise, will lead decisively to the conclusion. Rationalization, therefore, represents a selection of possible circumstances or reasons which will justify the course of action already pursued.

> For example, Max comes late to school and on being sent to the office of the principal finds it necessary to have a reason for his lateness. Lateness is the action which must be justified. Among the real reasons are the boy's dislike of school, the pressure that he is under at home to make a good record, and the convenient way of showing his hostility toward his parents provided by the demerits he receives. Max, however, is only vaguely aware of the former reason and is entirely unaware of the latter. When faced with the necessity of finding an excuse to satisfy the principal, he begins to search for a reputable one. First it is necessary to persuade himself that it was not possible for him to get to school any earlier: "Yes, as I was coming down the walk I noticed a trolley car just leaving, and it was five minutes before the next one came. I am sure that there must have been a delay in the street-car service." This seems reasonably convincing to him, and so he plans to use it as his excuse. The syllogism in this instance would run something like this: Major premise—if there is a delay in the street-car service, I shall be late to school. Minor premise—there was a delay. Conclusion—therefore, I was late to school.

The distinction between a rationalization and correct thinking is the distinction commonly made between the good and the real reason. The real

reason is the state of affairs essentially and necessarily connected with the conclusion which is to be justified. A good reason is a circumstance selected out of many that could have been chosen which contains a superficial or concomitant explanation.

In this analysis, the implication is that certain facts are overlooked, and necessarily so, since they are repressed and therefore are facts of which the individual is unaware. In rationalization there is a disproportion of emphasis. Uncomfortable facts are disregarded in favor of ones which will not serve as deep-seated threats to the essential integrity of the person concerned.

Motivation. Rationalization is an effort to guard one's pride by escaping the necessity of recognizing the real basis for behavior for which one feels ashamed and guilty. . . .

A subsidiary motive for rationalization is the attempt to minimize the successes and virtues of another person toward whom we feel hostile or with whom we are in competition. As in the primary form of rationalization, one tends to find arguments and reasons for depreciating and degrading the behavior and motives of another person.

Characterized by Inflexibility. Rationalization as a method of thought is characterized in general by inflexibility, fixity, and stubbornness. Since in rationalizing the person is not entirely free to cast around for possible explanations from which to select one that seems, by all the canons of logic, most fundamental, he must protect his reasoning artificially, and this is frequently accomplished by the force of the assertion and the stubbornness with which the reason is held. One reason why rationalization is inflexible is that it usually is accompanied by or follows the arousal of emotion, and emotion notoriously leads to an exaggeration of response and inflexibility.

Logic-Tight Compartments of the Mind. The person who rationalizes also tends to show dissociation in his mental processes. The term, "logic-tight compartments" of the mind, has been used as a picturesque description of the mental processes of selecting reasons in rationalization. The person who rationalizes, for instance, is usually inconsistent. He may stand for liberalism in philosophy but he is quite reactionary in his political or economic views. He may stand for social security and be an active worker in various charitable enterprises, but when it comes to passage of laws which would limit the income of a corporation in which he has invested or which would increase his taxes, he takes a very reactionary stand. It is almost as though barriers were erected in his mind preventing him from seeing the essential relation between his point of view with regard to social security, on the one hand, and the necessity for the redistribution of wealth on the other. The same person will claim that cigarettes steady his nerves and stimulate him. People whose minds are divided into logic-tight compartments tend to accept things on authority rather than investigate all of the implications of their beliefs.

Signs of Rationalization. In the following illustrations of rationalization, one may feel as though all reasoning tended to be a form of rationalization

and may even begin to distrust any of his own reasoning. Of course this is not true; all reasoning is not necessarily a rationalization. Rationalization can be recognized by a number of clearly defined signs. One signal is the person's attempt to hunt for reasons. If the principal in asking Max, for instance, finds that Max stumbles and halts in his effort to produce a good reason for being late, he may suspect that Max will never give the real reason even if he knew it, but is searching for an approved one that will be a rationalization. Secondly, the extent to which a person avoids rationalization in his thinking can be determined by the consistency of his thought. If in discussion one uncovers certain inconsistencies that the other person fails to recognize, or, recognizing them, attempts to justify further, one may suspect that rationalization is at work.

> For instance, Mr. M., who is at a bridge party where it is proposed that they play for small stakes, refuses on the grounds that it is against his principles. On other occasions, however, it has been noticed that Mr. M. does not have the same scruples in regard to living up to some of his other standards with rigid consistency. If Mr. M. is willing to compromise in one situation, one may suspect that there is some unexpressed reason behind the refusal to do so when playing bridge. Perhaps at the bottom of his expressed conviction is some deep-seated feeling with regard to playing for money which outweighs any possible gain in wealth or prestige.

Another sure method of detecting rationalization is by noting the amount of emotion shown during a discussion. A person who rationalizes is almost sure to lose his temper if the adequacy of the reasons which he gives is questioned. The man who is not rationalizing meets challenges on their merits and pits one argument against another with a flexibility and a willingness to change his position, giving reputable explanations for doing so.

Rationalization as a Disguise. Rationalization may be thought of primarily as a disguise of the self for the self. First and foremost, we wish to protect ourselves against recognizing our own motives which a part of our personality would consider ignoble, mean, and discrediting. In order to maintain a certain integration of the personality and to find ways of making all kinds of behavior and circumstances acceptable, one resorts to rationalization. However, the integration is not complete; hence, the logic-tight compartments. It is after one has persuaded himself of his rightness and integrity that he then attempts to justify himself to the world and persuade others also that his reputation is still unsullied. One naturally thinks of rationalization as an attempt to prove to others that one's motives are noble, but it should not be forgotten that preceding this attempt is the necessity of persuading oneself.

Rationalization Used to Justify Fundamental Values. Rationalization may be used to *justify fundamental values,* which are acquired through the process of identification in early childhood. Every person grows up a citizen of a country, a member of a church, and a member of a political party with

certain basic personal values and philosophy. Later he finds it necessary to justify his membership in his political party, his adherence to a certain church, his loyalty to a club or state, and searches for reasons and arguments which will justify his choice. It is because of this that one must suspect much of the campaign oratory, for the arguments used in political speeches are more for the purpose of justifying choices made long ago rather than the attempt to help people form their opinions anew.

Use of Rationalization to Justify Behavior of Another Person. One can use rationalization not only to justify one's own behavior, but also that of another person with whom one has identified oneself or for whom one feels responsible. A mother, for example, may explain away the behavior of her naughty child by saying that he is tired. However, in this example, it may well be that she is protecting herself, as well as the child, by trying to hide her inadequacies as a mother. But as a parent identifies himself with his children, he will run to their defense and offer excuses for their delinquencies. Generalizing, we find a tendency to rationalize for the failure or shortcomings of our school, political party, golf club, or even state or nation. Whatever we feel a part of, that we must uphold and justify. . .

TYPES AND EXAMPLES OF RATIONALIZATION

To attempt to classify all the varieties of rationalization and to give illustrations of them would be an impossible task, since rationalization enters into every phase of human affairs. The best that can be done is to point out a number of these varieties in the hope that with them in mind the reader will become sensitive to the presence of rationalization in any form. . . .

Personality Limitation. Practically any personality limitation, either real or imagined, is subject to justification by the individual who feels the need to be protective. Any error or mistake will frequently call forth an attempt to justify the self. "The poor workman quarrels with his tools," and he readily finds occasion to excuse imperfections in his handiwork. The cabinet maker will find excuses in the grain of the wood; the tennis player in the uneven surface of the court; the billiard player in the fact that the table is not exactly level. Most persons in our culture find it necessary to rationalize their status and excuse their failures, whereas the real reasons may lie in their own deficiencies. The person who is in debt to another can usually find many excuses for postponing payment. One also finds it necessary to rationalize his social status. Persons in minority groups are especially given to rationalizing about their conditions and failures in life. This is possibly one of their greatest handicaps in that it keeps them from evaluating their circumstances in true perspective. The Negro business man rationalizes that he cannot succeed because Negroes prefer buying from white dealers when, as a matter of fact, he may not have used business tactics that insure success.

Incapacity. It would make an interesting study to ascertain what kind of incapacity makes people feel sensitive and inferior. Most persons do not feel it necessary to give excuses for not being good athletes, good musicians, good artists, or good scientists. On the other hand, most persons find it very necessary to justify their mental abilities. Probably there is no area in which people are more sensitive or in which it is more difficult to admit incapacity. This may be due to the pressure put on children to succeed in school. The school boy or girl must find a reputable excuse for failure if failure comes his way. In a study undertaken some time ago the question was asked of pupils who had left school at the end of the eighth grade, "Why did you find it necessary to leave school?" All sorts of reasons were given, but excuses on the ground of poor health and necessity of going to work were among the most frequent. Undoubtedly, there was some truth in these reasons, but the explanation of lack of ability to do the work in the succeeding grades or lack of interest in school was given much less frequently than should be expected.

A person who has an incapacity for being aggressive will feel particularly virtuous for the kind consideration which he has for the feelings of others. The person who is unable to defend himself against the attacks of others will satisfy himself on the basis of his capacity to understand other people. The man who is unable to go after what he wants will feel a glow of self-justification at his unselfish aims. There are many persons who because of infantile experiences find it difficult to have adequate sex experiences in later life. Most of these persons find it necessary to adopt certain rationalizations. Many unmarried women, for instance, have love-affairs but are blocked from consummating them in marriage because of fixations on earlier persons, perhaps on the father. They will rationalize each of these experiences, however, finding that the man in whom they were interested did not really measure up to their ideals of what a husband should be. One man, for instance, spends too much time following the racing news. Another is slack and untidy in his person, and still another, in the final analysis, lacks the push and drive to be the success which his sweetheart feels he must be. In each of these cases the affair is broken off and some such superficial excuse is given, whereas the real reason lies in the unresolved fixations coming from early life experiences.

Eccentricity. Most persons with eccentricities, for instance, obsessions, which are their bulwark against disturbing duties and anxieties, find it necessary to rationalize them, usually on the grounds of their social value. Indeed, most neurotic persons will find rational excuses for pampering their neurotic tendencies. The man who must have his whole household quiet from two to three every afternoon so he may have a nap justifies his behavior on the grounds of his health. The mother who has an obsessive need to nag at her son day in and day out about his work in school justifies the action on the ground that in no other way will Arthur be able to get through school.

Anxiety and Fear. Many people carry around a burden of anxieties and fears which they find it necessary to rationalize either verbally or in behavior

in order to protect themselves. Many women, for instance, are afraid of approaching old age, and they do everything in their power to retard its advance. The cosmetology industry has been developed largely to help women ward off the encroachments of age. Most persons adopt a variety of rationalizations against disease and pain. They will try to persuade themselves that the pain does not exist, or that its treatment can be postponed. Other commonly held anxieties against which most persons find it necessary to bolster themselves are the fears of being neglected, of being poor, and of being ugly. Fear of social disapproval and losing caste with others is a basic cause for rationalization both in word and in behavior.

Character Weaknesses. Then there are any number of character weaknesses which must be justified by rationalization. One person may attempt to justify his selfishness on the grounds that he must look after his own interests first, because only when he himself is healthy and satisfied can he be of service to others. Then there is the need for justifying the taking of personal advantage of others and being domineering. For instance, a man takes an active interest in politics, justifies this interest on the grounds of national and state welfare, and makes generous contributions to the campaign funds of the Republican party. He maintains that the economic well-being of the nation is possible only when the Republican party is in control. Actually, however, this may be a façade to cover up his interest in possible greater profits in connection with his own business.

Jealousy is frequently covered up by rationalization. Members of a society will institute rigid tests for membership and will carry on elaborate initiation rituals, all designed by the unconscious as a way of proving their own superiority and humiliating the newcomers who threaten their position.

> A group of high-school seniors were discussing the personnel of an important committee. Theirs was the job of nominating the members. Betty, a prominent girl in the group, objected, unjustly, to Lorraine; Lorraine would be a competitor of hers later on for citizenship honors, and she did not want her to be given this additional honor.
>
> Mrs. Y. protested against the appointment of Mrs. X. on a committee in the women's club. Mrs. Y. maintained that Mrs. X. lived too far out in the country and attempted to mollify her protests by saying that Mrs. X. was already carrying so many responsibilities that she would not have time to take on this additional one. Actually, however, underneath this reasonable protest was jealousy of Mrs. X. as a rival.

A man may attempt to justify his penuriousness by saying that he must save up for his old age or that he is looking forward to a vacation trip or to buying a new home. The reason this is called a rationalization is that the man cannot help being "tight"—it is a character trait ingrained by early infantile experiences.

The tendency to hate, which many persons seem to hold irrationally, is often justified by finding superficial reasons for disliking or hating the other

person. The man who frequently finds it necessary to escape from responsibilities must also accompany his refusals with reasons almost certain to be rationalizations.

Idealization. The process called *idealization,* in which a person in love tends to overvalue his loved object, rests in part on rationalization.

> James rhapsodizes over his sweetheart and in his fantasy attributes to her the most extravagant excellences. He gives expression to these spiritual merits by poems addressed to her. He fails to recognize the sensual basis of his attraction and worship, but rationalizes the sensual by reference to spiritual charms.

Sex. Finally, in our society where sex expression is taboo except in the institution of marriage, it becomes necessary to rationalize all premarital experiences.

> Kathryn, an emotional girl of seventeen, had sex relations with one of the boys in her high-school class. She justified her actions by saying that she was getting the experience which every woman should have before she marries. "No man wants to marry a woman who is a novice in such matters."

It is also common for adolescent girls who regret early sexual experiences to blame their parents for not informing them of the dangers involved or exercising firmer control, although this very control was bitterly contested at the time. . . .

VALUES OF RATIONALIZATION

Positive. Rationalization cannot be thought of as a commendable mechanism. Its values are mainly negative. The only positive values that one can see are those which make it possible for a person to avoid facing disagreeable and distressing motives. This device may for the time being alleviate the anxiety, but it is an unstable form of adjustment and is always in danger of being toppled over by force of circumstances. In general, one may say that good adjustment involves facing all kinds of reality, which is the very thing that rationalization attempts to prevent. . . .

Negative. Rationalization has more dangers than advantages. It tends to blind the man to the rational solution of his problems in the real world. It encourages postponing of the solution of real problems and helps a person to excuse himself from facing his problems. In rationalization there is also the danger of actually harming others. For instance, the mother who rationalizes concerning her child is putting off a realistic meeting of the child's problems. The mother of a dull-normal child may refuse to recognize the reality of his dullness. Her anxiety over school progress increases as the child continues to show increasing retardation. This anxiety leading to increased pressure creates neurotic disturbances in the child.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. The following specific problems which tap experiences common to most of us will test your understanding of the rationalizing process:
   a. For some months a father had intended to fix a loose railing on the front porch. One day, when his two children are climbing on the railing, it collapses, and one of his children breaks an arm. Which of the following "reasons" for the accident would a person who is rationalizing probably select?
      (1) Growing-up is a risky affair, anyway; you're peculiar if you reach maturity without your share of broken bones.
      (2) The kids had no business skirmishing on the front porch; someone was bound to get hurt.
      (3) He had not got around soon enough to fixing the railing.
   b. The authorities at a university are suggesting the deprofessionalizing of football at their institution (no scouting for players, no economic aid to good football prospects, less ambitious game schedules). They argue that the game has become too commercialized and that it has assumed too great importance in the life of the university. They are opposed by the alumni association. In advancing their arguments, which of the following "reasons" would the alumni put forward if they were rationalizing?
      (1) A strong team, no matter how it is gathered together, is good publicity for the school.
      (2) Football competition breeds good sportsmanship (sense of fair play, and so forth).
      (3) They (the alumni) like football.
      (4) Big gate receipts from football help to pay for sports that cannot pay their own way.
   c. A school board refuses to rehire a woman teacher because three out of five members disapprove of the teacher's smoking. Which of the following facts would be stressed by the majority as it attempted to rationalize its decision?
      (1) The teacher was popular with students.
      (2) The principal considered her one of his best teachers.
      (3) Her smoking had "caused talk" in "certain circles," which included a few mothers of students in her classes.
      (4) Numerous prominent women in the community smoke at social functions without meeting snubs or other forms of open criticism.
      (5) The teacher did not go to a church regularly; most—not all—of the teachers attend regularly.
      (6) Three members—a majority—of the board disapproved of smoking by schoolteachers.
      (7) The teacher had a temporary credential.
   d. During the war thousands of members of a minority race group work in the war industries of a large city. No disturbances occur during the war, when there is a shortage of hands. After the war some industries dissolve; others cut production. A year after the war there is a series of clashes between members of the majority and minority racial groups. No matter what

the facts of the case really are, which of the following "reasons" are likely to be emphasized by the majority as it attempts to rationalize its behavior toward the minority?

(1) Members of the minority race group are contributing to a breakdown of law and order in the community.
(2) Members of the racial minority are by nature inferior mentally and morally.
(3) Now that the emergency is over, the minority ought to go back where they came from.
(4) They are getting "too cocky," need to be "taken down a peg."
(5) They are in the tightening labor market and are making it hard for the majority racial group to get jobs.

e. Congress is considering a bill to reduce the tariff on a certain product. Both the employers and the employees in the affected industry are attacking the bill. Which "reasons" will they probably advance as they rationalize their opposition to the proposed legislation?

(1) The American standard of living should be kept at its present level.
(2) The manufacturers and employees fear that the imported goods will compete successfully with their own products unless economic barriers are maintained.
(3) The foreign competition, made possible by lower wages, is unfair.
(4) The foreign product is of inferior quality.

f. A nation acquired a colony by conquest 150 years ago. A strong movement for independence is growing in the colony. Which of the following "reasons" will the people of the ruling nation probably give in order to rationalize their keeping of this colonial possession?

(1) To the winner belong the spoils.
(2) A century and a half ago the people of the home country sacrificed blood and treasure to gain the territory.
(3) The home country needs the colony's products to keep its own factories going; the prosperity of the home country partly depends on its control of the colony.
(4) If this country does not keep the colony, some other power will take over.
(5) The colonizing power has brought the enlightenment and technological progress of modern Western civilization to a dark, barbarian area; it has given the natives modern sanitation, law and order, and the benefits of trade.

2. What motives would a person have for his rationalizing in the following situations? What "good" reasons, that is, rationalizations, would he probably give? What might be some of the more truthful answers to the questions?

a. "I thought you were going to slaughter that physics final? What happened?"
b. "Tapering off pretty slowly, aren't you? Didn't I hear you say you were off cigarettes until the end of basketball season?"
c. "What ever made you give Johnson $300 for that car?"
d. "How come Harry got his lieutenant's commission and you didn't?"
e. "When are you going to pay me the five dollars I loaned you?"

f. "When we made you president we thought you would put in lots of time building up the membership. How about it?"
g. "Why did your grades go into a slump this year?"
h. "You went through a stop light. What was the matter?"
i. "Why have you been cut from first string on the football squad?"

PROJECT

The rationalizing process is complex and is prompted by many different motives. Two of these are:

a. A man's compulsion to "hunt" for reasons to explain his behavior when it embarrasses him. (For example, a man prompted by idle curiosity to peer into his neighbor's garage is startled by his neighbor's sudden and unannounced appearance behind him.)
b. A man's wish to reconcile inconsistencies between a man's behavior and his stated "principles of conduct." (For example, a high-school principal, noted for his "tough" attitude toward classroom cheating, obtains a copy of the final examination for a graduate course he is planning to take that summer at the state university.)

Write a paper providing a vivid and detailed description of a man's behavior when he has either or both of these motives for rationalizing. This may be a fictitious account or one based on firsthand observation.

Richard D. Altick

TWO PATTERNS OF THINKING

Thus far in this section on inference we have seen men thinking their way toward conclusions on various matters—tides, color sense in bees, workmen's absenteeism, the cause of a famous Englishman's fatal wound, extension of the voting privilege to 18-year-olds. We may also have begun to see that two different methods of thinking run through these various mental efforts—methods that are sometimes closely intertwined, sometimes clearly separated. It is now time to stop for an orderly analysis of our thinking to determine what these two basic patterns are and how they are related to one another and to our daily writing and speaking, reading and listening.

In the following selection, Richard D. Altick, a professor of English at Ohio State University, analyzes these two basic patterns of thinking—induction *and* deduction. *But, although he discusses them in that order, he is careful to treat them as parts of a single mental process.*

To begin with, there are two kinds of formal reasoning: the inductive and the deductive. When we reason *in*ductively, our minds begin with particular facts and proceed to larger statements of general truth. When we reason

TWO PATTERNS OF THINKING From *Preface to Critical Reading* by Richard D. Altick. Revised Ed. By permission of Henry Holt and Company. Copyright, 1951.

*de*ductively, our minds begin with statements of general truth and proceed to particular facts which "logically" follow. To put it in another way, in inductive reasoning we move from the part to the whole, or from the result to the cause, while in deductive reasoning we move from the whole to the part, or from the cause to the result. As we shall see, these two types of thinking are intimately connected.

INDUCTIVE REASONING

Inductive reasoning takes two major forms, each of which we shall look at in turn. One involves the accumulation of statistical data in an attempt to draw a general conclusion from many bits of related evidence; the other involves the setting up and testing of hypotheses. Both forms of induction often occur in the course of a single inquiry, especially in the sciences.

1. *The accumulation of statistical evidence.* One is confronted with a question to which he wants the answer: Is the intelligence level of whites higher than that of Negroes? Do business depressions occur every twenty-one years? Do all bluebirds have red breasts? Is there a correlation between the sex of a baby and the month in which he is born? Are there more automobile accidents at night than in the daytime, in proportion to the number of cars on the road? Do guinea pigs multiply faster than any other animals suitable for laboratory purposes? Do college graduates spend more time reading than those who only finished high school? The primary way to settle such questions is to collect and analyze all the available evidence which bears on the point at issue. Sometimes the result may not be clear-cut; a study of birth statistics may not permit the investigator to say with confidence that, for example, a baby born in April is twice as likely to be a boy as it is to be a girl. But in other cases the available evidence may overwhelmingly prove that one assumption is correct, while its converse is wrong.

We are forever performing such inductions in our daily lives. Unconsciously, in most cases, our minds formulate questions about general truths, and our experience gradually answers them. After a few instructive incidents we learn that an electric light bulb which has been burning for an hour is hot, and that it would be wise for us to wait a little before trying to replace it with another. In a similar way we learn that the contents of a frozen-food locker may be depended upon to be both cold and hard, and that a badly written essay for an English class is not at all likely to win a good grade. Furthermore, the results of such inductions on the part of other people are constantly being brought to our attention in print or by the spoken word. We are, naturally, expected to believe those generalizations. But should we?

Two dangers are ever-present in generalizations. One is that of unconscious or deliberate exaggeration; the other is that of insufficient or weighted evidence.

If we were really to face the facts, we should have to admit that when

we generalize from our own experience we often go further than we are entitled to. Instead of reminding ourselves of what is actually the truth according to our own observation ("quite often, heavy black clouds in the west mean a thunderstorm is coming"), we prefer a sweeping generalization. "Those black clouds in the west mean we're in for a bad storm," we say, implying that black clouds in the west *invariably* foretell a bad storm. We seem to save mental exertion for ourselves when we take the short-cut of assuming that a certain generalization always is true, whereas the fact is that it is only usually so. When we make statements of general fact to ourselves or to our friends, we tend to plane off the qualifying words *usually, nearly all, few, seldom* . . . so as to have a shining surface which says (or implies) *always, all, only, never.* . . .

If we are aware of this human shortcoming in ourselves, we shall constantly discover that the sweeping "truths" which others express every day in print or in speech actually are not as all-embracing as they seem. There are comparatively few generalizations which always hold true. Most of those which are incontestably true (so far as all our evidence suggests) are found in the realm of physical science. Men are mammals, trees have roots, steel buildings conduct static electricity, magnesium burns with an intense white flame, human beings have a glandular system, light travels at a speed of 186,300 miles a second, and carbon monoxide gas, if inhaled in a specified quantity, is fatal. In all recorded history, with its billions of individual men, each offering the possibility of an exception, there has been no instance of a man not conforming to the definition of mammal which scientists have set up. Similarly, of all the millions and billions of trees men have actually observed, not one has been discovered that lacked roots. Although theoretically there is always the possibility of an exception, the odds against it are so astronomically large that we are justified in saying that *all* men are mammals and that *every* tree must have roots. There have been fewer steel buildings to observe and draw conclusions from, but the number is still great enough for us to be able to make a sound generalization as to their electrical conductivity.

The confidence with which one may assert that (in the absence of a single known exception) a given statement is *always* true depends, therefore, on the number of instances observed. For example, any statement which a marine biologist makes about the habits of a certain deep-sea fish must be tentative. While all examples of this fish that have been studied have behaved in the same way, the scientist has not been able to study enough examples to be fairly certain that there are no exceptions.

The first test to apply to a generalization, therefore, is this: If the speaker or writer uses such a sweeping word as *all* or *always* or *never,* is he justified in doing so? Are there really no exceptions to his statement? And if he does not explicitly use *all, always, never* . . . are those words implied? If they are, we must return to the same question: Is he justified in implying that there are, and can be, no exceptions?

But even if the generalization is hedged with what seem to be sufficiently cautious qualifications, its truth is still to be demonstrated. Often a reader is thrown off guard by the writer's willingness to concede the possibility of exceptions, which suggests that he is a careful, sober, scientific-minded person, unwilling to sacrifice truth for the sake of his argument. Granting that such caution may be a good sign, we are still entitled to ask whether his generalization holds true even in as many cases as he claims. Suppose he says "usually": might he really mean only "some of the time"? Suppose he says "few": might he really mean only "less than half"?

Having considered the possibility of exaggeration for rhetorical effect, the critical reader's next job is to ask just what evidence lies behind a general statement. To be sound, a generalization must be based upon a sufficiently large number of pertinent instances, and those instances must be as typical and as random as possible, not weighted in any way; they must provide as accurate a cross-section as it is possible to obtain. The terms "sufficiently large" and "typical" admittedly are not very enlightening; indeed, they are instances of the error which, later in this chapter, we shall call "question-begging." To define them more precisely we should have to borrow from books on statistics. For our purposes it will be easier and clearer to illustrate what we mean by an example.

Suppose we take the question of whether or not fraternity members are better students than men who do not belong to fraternities. A college professor may say that "fraternity members definitely are better students than non-members." What he means is that in his necessarily limited experience, and to his perhaps biased mind, fraternity members have proved better "teaching material" (however he may define the term) than non-members. Such a judgment must be regarded as an expression solely of personal opinion, being subjective and based on far too few instances. But now let us say that the dean of the institution, which is an engineering college, issues a statistical report which shows that for the year just ended, the fraternity members' average (on a 4.0 basis) was 2.756, while the non-members' average was 2.447. The student body of the college includes 967 fraternity members and 477 non-members. Such a report is of more value than the professor's, but its value is still limited, because, while it is based on objective statistics, the cases are few in comparison with the total number of men in college throughout the country. The dean says only, in effect, that *in his college,* the fraternity members during the past year proved to be somewhat better students than the rest. But this may not be true elsewhere, and a sweeping generalization to the effect that in the nation's colleges as a whole, fraternity men rank higher scholastically than the others, would be worthless. Suppose, however, that some ambitious research worker assembled reports from fifty institutions of every description, from small liberal arts colleges to great universities, and geographically scattered from Maine to California. His only aim in selecting those fifty institutions has been to get as wide a sampling as possible of all

American colleges which have male students and fraternities. He emerges with a report showing that in these fifty institutions, with a total of 56,980 fraternity members and 47,805 non-members, the fraternity men's average in grades for the year was some 15 percent higher than that of the non-members. Now, at last, even though we may question whether those who get higher grades are necessarily better students, we have some justification for the professor's general statement. It is based on a sufficient number of examples, which are widely representative of the country's institutions of higher learning. If the research worker were to analyze the record of fifty more institutions, the likelihood would be that his new results would closely approximate the first ones.

The operation of the most responsible of the public-opinion polls, whose stock-in-trade is the making of trustworthy generalizations, further illustrates this principle of statistical caution. They go to elaborate lengths to interview a number of persons sufficient, they feel, to permit generalization, and to distribute their interviews among various sections of the country and among various income-groups, occupations, and educational levels, so that they will have a reasonably true cross-section of that amorphous entity known as "the American public." A generalization on the state of national feeling on whether the United States should renounce a portion of its national sovereignty in favor of an international federation would be worthless if it were based solely on interviews with, let us say, fifty students at New York University. Obviously the cases are insufficient, and they do not represent a true cross-section of the whole country. But a generalization based on interviews with, in addition, fifty Iowa farmers, fifty Los Angeles bus drivers, and fifty Chicago bankers, would have more significance. There would be more cases, and those cases would include men and women drawn from various sections of the country and various walks of life.

General statements containing or implying such phrases as *tends to, majority, most, as a group,* etc., should therefore be examined no less critically than those which contain or imply the categorical *all, every, only, never, always,* etc. There is as much danger in the generalization that says "Most Germans are incurably militaristic" as there is in the one that says "All Germans are incurably militaristic." To assert that something is true in a majority of instances requires as much carefully gathered and examined evidence as to say that it is always true.

2. *The testing of hypotheses.* In many instances, however, it is impossible to collect a mass of evidence from which a generalization can be made. Then the investigator attacks his problem in another way. He sets up a hypothesis: That is, he makes an assumption of whose truth or falsity he is frankly in doubt. "Supposing, for the sake of argument," he says, "that such-and-such is true, what would be the logical consequences of its being true?" Having made a list of them, he proceeds to see if those consequences do exist. If they do—*and if there can be no other explanation for them*—he

decides that his hypothesis is correct. This is the method used everywhere in the experimental sciences.

A physician, confronted with a new case, finds upon preliminary examination that his patient has certain symptoms, which we shall call A, B, and C. From his medical training and his experience he knows that those symptoms are produced by pneumonia; but he also knows that those same symptoms can be caused by other, though less common, diseases. All he can say at the moment is that the presence of A, B, and C points to pneumonia *or* to some other disease. Under the circumstances he decides that it would be safest to assume, for the purposes of immediate treatment, that the patient has pneumonia. However, again drawing upon his medical knowledge, he is aware that in cases of pneumonia the further symptoms D, E, and F may be expected to appear within forty-eight hours after the appearance of A, B, and C. If they do, his tentative diagnosis of pneumonia will be made certain, for although those six symptoms appear separately or in small combinations in other diseases, only in pneumonia are they all present. But after two days, the patient does not show symptoms of D, E, and F. The physician must, therefore, reject the diagnosis of pneumonia and start over again. His next job is to consider what other diseases produce A, B, and C, but not D, E, and F, and to look for further symptoms which are not produced by pneumonia but are characteristic of other diseases.

Our doctor has used what the logicians call the method of convergent evidence. He has reasoned out what must be, in theory, the possible consequences of his hypothesis and then compared the actual observable facts with the expected ones. If the facts had all jibed with his expectations, they would have been said to "converge" to confirm his hypothesis. But some of the facts were at odds with those required by his hypothesis, and so the hypothesis had to be discarded and a new one set up.

The importance of considering all possible consequences of a given hypothesis is made clearer when we remember that plenty of phenomena (a peculiar tint in the sky, the failure of a radio set) have more than one cause. Our doctor recognized this when he discovered symptoms A, B, and C in his patient; although those symptoms are found in pneumonia cases, they are not exclusively associated with pneumonia. Hence the mere fact that those symptoms were present might equally well have indicated, say, influenza or pleurisy. Only when the whole complex of symptoms was examined could a positive diagnosis be made. (That is the reason why one disease is often mistaken for another until a complete study is made.) A hypothesis can be considered confirmed only if it *alone* can produce the effects noted. "The baby is crying. He must have an open safety pin in his clothing." Such a statement fails to consider the possibility that the baby instead may be hungry, or ill, or wet. "The way for a girl to get an A from the teacher is to sit in the front row and cross her legs. That's how Elaine got hers." But the possibility re-

mains that the instructor honestly thought that Elaine deserved an A for strictly academic reasons.

Failure to consider the possibility of alternate causes is especially common in thinking about historical events. In Sinclair Lewis' *Arrowsmith,* the bubonic plague in a West Indian island subsided after the inhabitants had been inoculated with a certain hitherto unproved vaccine. Many people immediately proclaimed the new treatment as the positive cure for the plague; but Arrowsmith, a careful scientist, knew that the reason the plague subsided might equally well have been that it had already reached its peak at the time the inoculations began. In other words, he refused to assume that because B (the subsidence of the plague) happened *after* A (the immunization), B therefore happened *because* of A. This assumption is what logicians call the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy: "after this, therefore because of this." It is a most common error to assume that because something occurred after something else, it must necessarily have been caused by that antecedent circumstance. "No wonder you have a cold today. You didn't change your wet clothes when you came home yesterday." "We gave the administration a free hand in regulating our national economy. Now look what we have on our hands—a first-class depression." "It rained hard the night after the battle, thus proving the old notion that the firing of the guns precipitates rain." The simple answer to all such assertions is, "Weren't there any other possible causes?"

These two procedures—the gathering of data and the testing of hypotheses, often joined as part of a single investigation—are the essence of the scientific method. They are used by all who work with verifiable data: mathematicians, the physical scientists—biologists, physicists, chemists, and the like—who try to find the principles and "laws" by which the physical universe operates, and the social scientists—sociologists, economists, political scientists, etc.—who try to find patterns and tendencies in human conduct and institutions. Because of the very different character of the materials with which these two groups work, the generalizations which they reach are of different quality. The physical scientists can verify their hypotheses either by direct laboratory experiment (manipulating their compounds and light-rays and animals as they wish) or by rigidly controlled observation. They can, in other words, virtually create the conditions under which they examine and measure their evidence. Thus in general their conclusions can be much more positive than can those of the social scientists, who cannot ordinarily create ideal laboratory conditions involving human beings but must, instead, rely on records of human behavior, past and present.

Thus far we have been speaking only of general statements concerned with verifiable data. But obviously there are many general ideas in the world which we cannot hope ever to prove; although some of them are backed by a considerable body of systematic evidence, that evidence is insufficient to raise them to the order of verified fact, especially since there may also be

much evidence on the other side of the question. Every tenet of religion, for example, ultimately is incapable of objective demonstration. Countless volumes have been written attempting to "prove logically" this or that article of religious doctrine, but every so-called "proof" rests upon some basic assumption the objective proof of which is lacking. Every argument ever conducted on questions of ethics, esthetics, philosophy—any field of human interest except mathematics and the physical and (to a lesser degree) the social sciences—is based ultimately upon such unprovable assumptions. "For the sake of argument let's assume . . ." is the essential, though often unexpressed, prelude to the beginning of any argument on such matters; without an arbitrarily agreed-upon common ground on which to stand, the disputants can get nowhere. "God is immanent in the universe"; "the nature of man is essentially evil"; "there is a life after death"; "democracy is the form of government under which the individual man has the greatest freedom and opportunity"; "common sense is the best guide to conduct"; "wars are unmitigated evils"; "the most important element in artistic creation is sincerity on the part of the artist"; "no society can endure when home ties and family life disintegrate." These statements may be true, or they may not; we simply have no way of finally proving them, however strong and sincere our convictions are. When we use them in our thinking, therefore, we must remember that they are assumed, not proved.

DEDUCTIVE REASONING

The second great kind of formal reasoning is the deductive, the means by which one reasons from a general truth to a particular conclusion. The classic way of analyzing this process is the syllogism: a rigidly organized series of three statements, the last of which is the conclusion inferred from the preceding two, which are called the major and the minor premises. In our limited space we cannot attempt to illustrate all of the many varieties of syllogisms. All we can do is show examples of a few of the most commonly used types, and point out two or three of the basic rules involved in their proper use.

From the point of view adopted in this book—that of the critical reader —the main importance of the syllogism is that it affords us a quick way of testing and perhaps exposing the fallaciousness of a statement which is assumed to follow logically from certain premises.

In our everyday reading we seldom encounter statements ready-made into syllogisms. Instead, the logical antecedents of the statement are usually only implied or half-stated. To expose the faulty reasoning by which a conclusion has been reached, we must, therefore, work backward by reconstructing the syllogism which seems to have been in the author's mind. Beginning with the statement in question, which serves as the conclusion of the syllogism, we build a major and a minor premise which the maker of the statement

seems to have assumed to be true. In order to whip a syllogism into shape, we must often change the wording of the original statement. There is no harm in doing this, *provided always that we do not change in any way the thought of the author.* The words we select for our statements, if different from his own, must be equivalent to them in meaning.

The major premise of most commonly encountered syllogisms is a statement of a general truth. A major premise may be derived in any of three ways: (1) It may be the product of an induction, that is, a generalization obtained from an examination of individual instances of verifiable fact, or from the verification of a hypothesis. (This is why we remarked, a little while ago, that inductive and deductive reasoning are intimately connected. The result of an induction serves very often as the major premise of a deduction.) (2) It may be an unverifiable assumption, which may or may not have a considerable body of evidence to suggest its truth, but which in any case is assumed to be true for the purposes of argument. (3) It may be the result of another deductive argument, derived logically from a larger truth.

In a large class of syllogisms, perhaps the most frequent of all in practical everyday thinking, the minor premise is a statement of the fact that a single individual, or a smaller class, belongs to the larger class mentioned in the major premise. The conclusion makes an inference from the connection between the major and minor premises. Its statement is: What is said, in the major premise, to be true of the greater class is also true of the individual member of that class, or the section of it, mentioned in the minor premise.

This type of syllogism takes the following form:

(Major premise)	All (or most) A's are B
(Minor premise)	c (an individual or a class) is A
(Conclusion)	c must be (or probably is) B

For example:

(Major premise)	All Catholics (A) are obligated to attend Mass (B)
(Minor premise)	Mr. McGuire (c) is a Catholic (A)
(Conclusion)	Mr. McGuire (c) is obligated to attend Mass (B)

and:

(Major premise)	All Catholics (A) are obligated to attend Mass (B)
(Minor premise)	All Knights of Columbus (c) are Catholics (A)
(Conclusion)	All Knights of Columbus (c) are obligated to attend Mass (B)

and:

(Major premise)	Most snakes in this part of the country (A) are harmless (B)
(Minor premise)	This creature (c) is a snake (A)
(Conclusion)	This creature (c) probably is harmless (B)

A handy way to remember the prescribed form of this kind of syllogism is to put it in terms of sentence structure: If the syllogism is correctly phrased and constructed, the subject of the conclusion (c) is also the subject of the minor premise (c), and the predicate of the conclusion (B) is also the predicate of the major premise (B).

In syllogisms of this type, both premises must be affirmative. There is another familiar form of syllogism one of whose premises is negative. In this form, the predicate of the major premise is also the predicate of the minor:

No Communist is a true American.	(No A is B)
Mrs. Walker is a true American.	(c is B)
Mrs. Walker is not a Communist.	(c is not A)

and

All fever-stricken patients are thirsty.	(All A's are B)
This patient is not thirsty.	(c is not B)
This patient is not fever-stricken.	(c is not A)

In the first example, it is argued that since A cannot be B, and c definitely is B, then c cannot be A. Mrs. Walker has a characteristic—the fact that she is a true American—which the major premise says cannot be shared by a Communist. Therefore her "true Americanism" proves she is not a Communist. In the second example, it is argued that since A is B, and c definitely is *not* B, then c cannot be A. This patient does *not* possess a characteristic—thirstiness—which the major premise says is always possessed by a victim of fever. Therefore his lack of thirst bars him from membership in the class (fever-stricken patients) which is marked by thirstiness.

Having seen two common types of syllogisms, we may now note a few of the most frequent errors in syllogistic thinking. These are among the reasons (there are, of course, many more) why statements which seem, on first glance, to be perfectly reasonable, turn out on examination to be derived from an unsound syllogistic argument.

1. *The terms must be accurately defined.* No matter how the major premise has previously been obtained—whether by induction or by deduction, or simply assumed—the wording must be as exact and clear as possible. "The intelligence level of Negroes is higher than that of whites": what, precisely, does that mean? "Intelligence" itself has never really been satisfactorily defined, although probably one may assume that for practical purposes the arbitrary standards of I.Q. tests are meant. But what does the phrase "intelligence level of Negroes" mean? The overall average I.Q. of southern Negroes tested between 1930 and 1950? The I.Q. of Negroes now in the colleges and universities of six midwestern states? The I.Q. of Negroes enlisted in the United States Army? And what, precisely, does "that of whites" refer to? The generalization is phrased too vaguely, too loosely, for a syllogism to be soundly developed. It needs to be an exact statement which takes into

account the limitations of the data upon which it is based. Again, just what is "a business depression"? What statistical criteria are involved—what is the difference between a depression, a panic, and a slump? What is meant by "the greatest freedom and opportunity" which "democracy" (what is *it?*) is said to afford to the individual? Every such phrase cries out for definition. If it is left undefined, for each party to the argument to interpret according to his own wishes, the argument is worthless, because the parties will not be talking the same language. . . . Hence, one of the first things to do in testing the logical validity of a statement is to determine just what the maker of the statement means by the terms he is using, and (as the next point will make clear) whether his terms mean the same thing in the conclusion that they were understood to mean in the premises.

2. *Any qualification in a premise must be faithfully retained in the conclusion.* As we saw when we were discussing the process of induction, generalizations involving verifiable data can be divided into two classes: (1) those which maintain that a given property belongs to *all* or *none* of a certain class, and (2) those which maintain that the property belongs to *most* or *some* or *few* of that class. This is a vital distinction, because if an example of the former type, allowing for no exceptions, is used as the major premise of a syllogism, the conclusion in turn must deny the possibility of exception. If, on the other hand, the generalization in either of the premises concedes the possibility of exception, the conclusion must in turn concede it. How much loose thinking in the world is caused by the failure to reproduce in the conclusion to an argument the qualification expressed or implied in the major premise!

It may really not be necessary, in ordinary writing, to be so careful to qualify a premise; in practice, the writer tacitly allows for exceptions: "The crime rate (in most cities) is highest in the slums"; "the efficiency of stenographers is improved (in nine cases out of ten) if they work in air-conditioned offices"; "the children of divorced parents (as a rule) have two strikes against them in life." But the danger here is that the uncritical reader will not realize that such exceptions are implied, and will therefore follow the reasoning through to an unwarranted conclusion. "Psychologists show that boys' minds mature more slowly than girls'. Bob and Mary are both sixteen. Therefore Mary's mind is more mature than Bob's."

There are the frequent instances, too, in which clever persuaders deliberately omit such words as *always, never, only, none but, every, all . . .* because without them, statements sound less sweeping, less uncompromisingly strict, and are therefore easier for readers or listeners to accept. But if we insist upon inserting one or another of those words into an apparently sound premise, the premise very often is proved to be faulty.

If we remember that the conclusion can be positive and sweeping only to the degree to which the major and minor premises are, we are well equipped to expose the false dogmatism of writers and speakers. Reading the

adventures of Sherlock Holmes, we are impressed by the uncanny accuracy of his split-second deductions. But our admiration is somewhat tempered when we realize that much of it is due to the unwarranted dogmatism with which the deductions were phrased. In "The Case of the Norwood Builder," for example, Holmes welcomed John Hector McFarlane to his Baker Street rooms with these words: "I assure you that, beyond the obvious facts that you are a bachelor, a solicitor, a Freemason, and an asthmatic, I know nothing whatever about you."

"Familiar as I was with my friend's method," writes Dr. Watson, "it was not difficult for me to follow his deductions, and to observe the untidiness of attire, the sheaf of legal papers, the watch-charm, and the breathing which had prompted them." [1]

The implication seems to be that Watson, following Holmes, had reasoned in this fashion:

> Men who dress untidily are bachelors.
> This man is dressed untidily.
> This man is a bachelor.

—and so on with the other three deductions. On that basis, we are prone to assume that there could be no question whatsoever that McFarlane was everything Holmes deduced he was. But let us phrase the syllogism more strictly:

> *All* men who dress untidily are bachelors.
> This man is dressed untidily.
> This man *must* be a bachelor.

or:

> A man who dresses untidily *can only* be a bachelor.
> This man is one who dresses untidily.
> This man *can only* be a bachelor.

Now we have brought the important idea of *all* or *only* (which was hidden in the syllogism as previously stated) into the open; and the weakness of the major premise is exposed. Obviously it is untrue that *all* men who dress untidily are bachelors; there must be some untidy men who have loving wives at home. Therefore the conclusion—that this man *must* be a bachelor—is unwarranted.

Actually, of course, what Holmes did, though his manner failed to reveal it, was to count on the probabilities. A sounder syllogism would be:

> *Most* men who dress untidily are bachelors.
> This man is dressed untidily.
> This man *probably* is a bachelor.

[1] Sherlock Holmes materials are used in this chapter by special permission of the executors of the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Thus it appears that even though the odds may have been heavily in favor of McFarlane's being a bachelor, it was quite possible that Holmes could have been wrong. The probability of the conclusion depended, as always in such reasoning, upon the probability expressed in the major premise.

To sum up this important point:

(correct) *All* Congressmen are United States citizens.
Mr. X is a Congressman.
Mr. X *must* be a United States citizen.

(wrong) *Most* Texas Congressmen are Democrats.
Mr. X is a Texas Congressman.
Mr. X *must* be a Democrat.

(What is the correct conclusion?)

(correct) *Most* of this county is farmland.
The township in which I live is in this county.
My township *probably* is farmland.

(wrong) March *usually* is a stormy month.
This month is March.
This month is *bound* to be stormy.

(There are two flaws in this syllogism, one possible, one certain. What are they?)

(correct) All the rivers on the western side of this watershed flow into the Gulf of Mexico.
Some of the rivers in question are on the western side of this watershed.
Some of the rivers flow into the Gulf of Mexico.

(wrong) *All* Quakers refuse to take oath.
Some of the witnesses in this case are Quakers.
All of the witnesses in this case will refuse to take oath.

3. *The first and second terms in a universal premise must not be assumed to have the same scope.* In a book on logic, this would be discussed under "the fallacy of the undistributed middle." But it is not necessary to go into technical terminology to explain what it means in the type of syllogism in which it most commonly occurs—the one with *all, always, only* . . . in its major premise.

All mammals are vertebrates.	(All A's are B's)
A whale is a mammal.	(c is an A)
A whale is a vertebrate.	(c is a B)

This is a sound syllogism. *All* mammals belong to the class of vertebrates, so if a whale is a mammal, it must necessarily be a vertebrate.

All mammals are vertebrates.	(All A's are B's)
A fish is a vertebrate.	(c is a B)
A fish is a mammal.	(c is an A)

This is a faulty syllogism. As we have already seen, the "middle term" (the one common to both premises) can form the predicate of both premises only when one of the premises is negative. In this syllogism the middle term (B) forms the predicate of both premises, but neither premise is negative. Therefore the form is wrong. If, in our attempt to "prove" that a fish is a mammal, we reverse the terms in the major premise, making "A" vertebrates and "B" mammals, we achieve the correct form:

All vertebrates are mammals.	(All A's are B's)
A fish is a vertebrate.	(c is an A)
A fish is a mammal.	(c is a B)

But, while the form is correct, the major premise is not true. Although all mammals are vertebrates, it is not true that all vertebrates are mammals; there are many other forms of animal life which are vertebrates yet not mammals.

In the attempt to correct the error in the *form* of the syllogism, then, we have shown that in this case the position of the two terms cannot be reversed. It is true that "all mammals are vertebrates"; it is not true that "all vertebrates are mammals." The point is that one must always guard against the assumption that in a major premise A and B have a one-to-one relationship—that they are connected as if by an equal sign. In most major premises, the predicate refers to a characteristic or a class which is not exclusively associated with the class in the subject. What is to be understood by the premise "All mammals are vertebrates" is, "All mammals are members of a *larger* class of vertebrates, which also may include other families besides mammals." There is a danger, therefore, in carelessly assuming that terms can be reversed in such a fashion when actually, in some classes of statements, they cannot. "All collies have soft coats"—true; but "all dogs with soft coats" are not collies. One more example will make the point clear enough for our modest purposes:

All Indiana is American territory.
Los Angeles is American territory.
Los Angeles is in Indiana.

The conclusion obviously is nonsense. When we revise the major premise to get the syllogism in the correct form, we have: "All American territory is Indiana." Now it is the major premise which is nonsense.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. This essay has been placed at the end of the section so that its explanation would have greater meaning for you *after* you had encountered examples of these two kinds of reasoning in the preceding selections. Test your grasp of induction and deduction by reviewing the preceding selections, picking out a few examples of both these processes from each of the selections in turn. Is

the organization of this section on "Inferences," which places the emerging generalizations last, an example of the inductive or deductive process?

2. In paragraph four Altick gives us a few examples of the homely generalizations we arrive at by induction in our everyday lives. List 4 or 5 more such examples and indicate, for each, the questions you were consciously or unconsciously seeking to answer, the particular facts you observed, and your final answer.
3. Consider critically this list of frequently heard generalizations. What indication do you find that *exaggeration, insufficient evidence,* or *weighted evidence* were involved in the reasoning that led to these generalizations? Are there *undefined terms* in these generalizations?
   a. People who read a lot are intelligent.
   b. Most artists are temperamental.
   c. Women are unpredictable creatures.
   d. Americans are a freedom-loving people.
   e. Salesmen are garrulous and extroverted.
   f. Hollywood films are aimed at a 12-year-old mentality.
   g. Private colleges are superior to state colleges.
   h. Modern design is more functional than conventional design.
   i. The twentieth century is an age of anxiety.
4. Here are four statements. Under each statement are several different conclusions drawn from the observation; only *one* conclusion in each group is *logically correct.* Give the number of the correct conclusion in each case.
   a. The son of the Reverend X has just been arrested for passing bad checks.
      (1) Ministers' sons always go bad.
      (2) The Reverend X should be ashamed to keep his pulpit.
      (3) The Reverend X is an upright, sincere man! The fault must have lain with the mother.
      (4) There is no necessary connection between the young man's criminal act and his being the son of a minister.
      (5) There's a black sheep in every family.
   b. John W— is a college graduate in engineering.
      (1) John W— is an educated man.
      (2) He will be a better engineer than if he hadn't gone to college.
      (3) He has taken, with passing grades, the credits for college graduation in engineering.
      (4) Pretty soon we're going to have a surplus of graduates in engineering.
      (5) He will think he is too good for a job as a plain mechanic.
   c. There were depressions after the War of 1812, the Civil War, and World War I.
      (1) We're going to have one after World War II for sure.
      (2) Wars always bring depressions.
      (3) The speaker is a pessimist.
      (4) This war was so different in many ways from these earlier wars (it was bigger, involved development of new industries, wrecked many countries that will call for a lot of work rebuilding) that we won't have to worry this time about a depression.

(5) If the same economic factors that operated after the other wars are allowed to work freely, a depression is very likely.

d. The newspapers report that Communists and Communist Fronters are marching up and down in front of the Capitol Building with banners urging Congress to vote for the atomic-power bill.

(1) The bill is a Communist measure.

(2) The bill is not intended to bring about Communism in this country, but that's what it will do.

(3) The Communist Party is apparently officially supporting the bill.

(4) This shows that Congressmen who are supporting the bill are really Communist-minded.

(5) The Communist Party apparently officially favors demonstrations in favor of the bill's passage. The demonstrations do not prove that the Communist Party does or does not want the bill passed.

5. Altick rightly reminds us that we seldom encounter written and spoken statements in syllogistic form. We must start with statements which are frequently conclusions and reconstruct the major and minor premises which the maker of the statement assumed to be true. Here is a dialogue which will afford you considerable practice reconstructing syllogisms from conclusions. When you have done so, examine the syllogisms carefully for the presence of any of the errors in deduction Altick has called your attention to.

A. Why did the city fathers go and put up a bunch of factory buildings in the middle of town and call it a "Civic Center"? That's all they are, Bob, just factory buildings, with all that glass and steel and that long wall of brick. Now take that Library building—did you ever see a library look like that before?

B. No, I never did.

A. Don't know when you're outside and when you're inside the doggone thing—you look over the magazine rack right into a garden. No statues of Homer or Shakespeare—no, uh, atmosphere—it's too light, not dim the way you expect a library to be—and it's got no class to it—it isn't impressive the way most libraries are.

B. But I know one of the librarians, Joe, and she says it's a lot easier to work in—more light and not all the drafts they had in the old Library—and she says the use of books has gone up 20 per cent in the two months since they moved in.

A. O.K., maybe it has, but that doesn't make it any more like a library or any less like a factory. And the same goes for these other things—that City Hall, for instance, set up on those concrete pillars with all that space underneath.

B. That's for parking, Joe.

A. I don't care *what* it's for, it looks silly, anyway. The old city fathers must be turning over in their graves. No marble steps; instead, you swoop up a ramp and there you are, right in front of a clerk. And there's nothing impressive out in front—no different than a factory. And that Hall of Justice doesn't look any more like a place of justice than I look like Judge McCarthy.

B. Judge McCarthy can fine you fifty dollars in the new one, just the way he did in the old one, Joe.

A. He better not try it again. But, as I was saying, some things just ought to be a certain way, and we know how a courthouse should be.

B. Still, Joe, you've got to admit the Recreation Center Building is all right on that score. We've never had one before, so—

A. And *there* you've got a point, friend! We've never had one before, and we don't need one now. A lot of foolishness—a whole big building—good taxpayers' money—for a lot of kids to fool around in, playing basketball, swimming, shooting pool, making clay statues! When I was a kid we got along fine, just going swimming at Craig's Point.

B. They've got a dock there now, Joe.

A. We got along, I say, and so should these kids today. But kids are spoiled today and expect a lot of trimmings. And who pays for the trimmings, huh? We do, you and me. I'm a loyal citizen, and I'm willing to pay my share, but I don't like paying for *frills*. Essentials, yes, but it's wrong to foot the bills for a lot of frills. We got to have firemen and policemen and decent streets, but what do we need swimming coaches for? Answer me that!

B. Yes, but—

6. A famous British historian, Henry Buckle, wrote, "The scientific inquirer . . . has only two ways of attaining his result. He may proceed from the external world to the internal; or he may begin with the internal world and proceed to the external. . . . If he begin with the facts his method is inductive; if he begin with the ideas his method is deductive."

   Here are two problem-situations to sharpen our awareness of this difference. [In each case answer both parts (1) and (2).]

   a. A baby is crying in his crib. The problem is this: Why is he crying?

   (1) One person says, "There must be something really wrong, because well babies don't cry." Point out his major premise (basic assumption or generalization), his minor premise (specific fact), and conclusion.

   (2) Now indicate the particular factual questions which a person approaching the problem inductively would consider.

   b. A student listening to a political candidate's speech on the radio hears the candidate say that if he gets into office he will sincerely try to clean up the corruption in the office he seeks. The problem is this: Will he probably try to do it?

   (1) The student's reaction to the statement is a loud "Ho! ho! ho!" Point out the student's major premise or assumption about politicians; then point out his minor premise; then point out his conclusion about *this* politician's promise.

   (2) List the questions a student using the inductive method of reaching a conclusion would consider before arriving at a conclusion to this problem.

7. Show how a person might arrive at answers (possibly the same answers) to each of the following questions by two different methods—first by the inductive method (from "particular facts" to "larger statements of general truth"), then

by deduction (from "statements of general truth" to "particular facts which logically follow"):

a. Who knows more about commercial law—Walters, who has had a year's course in it elsewhere, or Thompson, who hasn't yet had the course?

b. What is the cause of drowsiness of classes that meet in Room 202, where the windows are hard to open and, therefore, seldom get opened?

c. Does a college education improve one's chances of making a comfortable income by the time he is forty?

d. Is the new Italian movie directed by Rossellini worth seeing?

e. Will the trend for more and more Americans to attend college continue into and through the sixties?

f. Does regular participation in intramural sports improve students' ability to concentrate on their studies?

8. The ability to recognize the assumptions which lie at the roots of one's conclusions is basic to straight thinking. To develop this ability one must learn to begin with a conclusion and work back to the underlying assumption. Here are some commonly heard statements in the form of conclusions. What are the assumptions on which they are based?

a. "We are going into logarithms today. Most of you fellows have had 'logs' before. This work will be easy for you."

b. "I must go and see my oculist. I've been having too many headaches lately."

c. "Would you please tell me, Professor, what books I should read to pass the final examination in this course?"

d. "My neighbor, Mrs. Swift, must be a very intelligent woman. She belongs to several discussion groups and always attends serious lectures."

e. "He's not justified in criticizing the way I run my business. After all, he has never had to run a business."

f. "Greatest novel of this decade—one million copies sold!"

g. "No, I don't need a course in world history. My field is mechanical engineering."

h. "You will never get good teachers to teach at those migrant schools at J—— unless you give them a bonus."

i. "Last year we held our college assemblies on Thursday morning. This year we're holding them on Wednesday afternoon, and they are much more poorly attended. It would seem that afternoon meetings are not a good idea."

j. "Of course our student affairs are governed democratically. The officers are all elected by the students, aren't they?"

k. "Don't worry about these high-school kids. They may seem flighty now—but just wait till they're married and have the responsibilities of homes and families."

l. "An engineer is a planner. What we need in our state government is adequate planning. Elect Thomas Smith, engineer, to the office of governor."

9. Is it clear that by "statistical evidence" Altick does not mean merely data that has been gathered into tables of figures? How is one's observing that lawnmowers rust when left wet, or that tires squeal when underinflated, or that you have difficulty fixing attention on a professor's lecture when you have lost

sleep fundamentally similar to one's use of the season's batting average to prove who was the team's heaviest hitter?

PROJECTS

1. Conduct the following modest experiment. Make as complete a list as possible of the unqualified generalizations you encounter during the next 24 hours in the speech of your friends and acquaintances. Without publicizing the fact that you are making this survey, ask each speaker as tactfully as possible if he meant *all* he said, without any reservations. Record the answers privately as soon as possible after each reply. When your survey is over, study your examples and responses. How often do the replies indicate that the speaker was unaware that the facts did not stretch as far as his generalization? How many indicate that the speaker was merely verbally lazy and was just taking a conscious verbal shortcut? Do you find any pattern in the kinds of statements where the speaker was not aware that his generalizations were exaggerated? any pattern to the kinds of statement where he was aware? Prepare a careful written or oral report of your findings.
2. Tape-record a classroom discussion or other campus meeting. Play back the recording, listening for any indications of "exaggeration," the making of generalizations that go beyond the evidence. Prepare a report in which you point out the effects these generalizations have upon the factual accuracy and logical clarity of the discussion.

3 ASSUMPTIONS

The man whose conclusions are usually sound—i.e., anchored in evidence, verifiable, consistent with his premises—has demonstrated a measure of control over his thought processes. But such control is not easily come by. Nor is it a generalized talent: a man who may be able to draw sound conclusions about business may go wildly awry in his thinking about art, education, or politics. Whenever our conclusions prove wrong, as they often will, there are certain steps we can take to discover the difficulty and correct it. One of the most useful things we can do is to examine or reexamine our assumptions—the premises with which we began the chain of reasoning which led to our erroneous conclusions.

The great difficulty here is that our assumptions are sometimes buried. Not only do we frequently fail to articulate them, we also often fail even to recognize them. But since they may contain the source of our error, it behooves us to learn how to uncover them. Otherwise we may continue to draw erroneous conclusions, all stemming back to a faulty assumption.

The essays which have been brought together in this section have this in common: they all represent men re-examining, in various ways, assumptions which are widely held. Whether or not you agree in every instance with the analyses of these writers is by no means as important as your acquiring the ability to go behind popular notions and discover the premises on which they are based. Only then will you know why you subscribe to a belief or reject it.

It is appropriate to begin such a section with the work of a humorist—here Robert Benchley—because so much of humor consists of looking at old notions freshly and standing old ideas on their heads. Richard Neuberger, himself a successful politician, follows with a keen-eyed view of the practical politician's working conditions, a view which does much to explain why politicians behave as they do. This serious essay is succeeded by deft, light jabs at two current ideas which Irwin Edman feels will bear a second, thoughtful look. George Orwell, whose outstanding characteristic as a writer and man is a kind of shattering honesty which no humbug can withstand, writes a penetrating study of a subject—poverty—about which most of us

feel strongly but perhaps know little. This mixture of strong feeling and ignorance may characterize the attitude of many of us toward modern music, as well. John Tasker Howard sets out to show why we react to modern music the way we do, and in the process he suggests that our reactions may rest on some faulty assumptions about what modern music is and what it is trying to do. The most searching essay is left for the last. Cantril, a psychologist, discloses how deep are the roots of our assumptions about human nature and what consequences flow from our adopting one or another of several possible assumptions.

When you have completed an analysis of these essays and the problems that accompany them, you should be better able to unearth your own buried assumptions and to determine their relative strengths and weaknesses.

Robert Benchley

A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

Have you ever wondered to what degree some popular notion really corresponds with reality? In the following sketch Robert Benchley gives one such popular conception a rough but good-natured going-over. Benchley, in the 1920's and '30's, wrote his humorous impressions of everyday sources of confusion and also acted out some of them for the movies—in such brief but by now famous sketches as "The Treasurer's Report."

Sooner or later at every Christmas party, just as things are beginning to get good, someone shuts his eyes, puts his head back and moans softly: "Ah, well, this isn't like the old days. We don't seem to have any good old-fashioned Christmases any more." To which the answer from my corner of the room is: "All right! That suits me!"

Just what they have in mind when they say "old-fashioned Christmas" you never can pin them down to telling. "Lots of snow," they mutter, "and lots of food." Yet, if you work it right, you can still get plenty of snow and food today. Snow, at any rate.

Then there seems to be some idea of the old-fashioned Christmas being, of necessity, in the country. It doesn't make any difference whether you were raised on a farm or whether your ideas of a rural Christmas were gleaned from pictures in old copies of "Harper's Young People," you must give folks to understand that such were the surroundings in which you spent your childhood holidays. And that, ah, me, those days will never come again!

Well, supposing you get your wish some time. Supposing, let us say,

A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS From *Benchley Beside Himself* by Robert Benchley. Copyright, 1927, by Harper & Brothers.

your wife's folks who live up in East Russet, Vermont, write and ask you to come up and bring the children for a good old-fashioned Christmas, "while we are all still together," they add cheerily with their flair for putting everybody in good humor.

Hurray, hurray! Off to the country for Christmas! Pack up all the warm clothes in the house, for you will need them up there where the air is clean and cold. Snow-shoes? Yes, put them in, or better yet, Daddy will carry them. What fun! Take along some sleigh-bells to jangle in case there aren't enough on the pung. There must be jangling sleigh-bells. And whisky for frost-bite. Or is it snake-bite that whisky is for? Anyway, put it in! We're off! Good-by, all! Good-by! JANGLE-JANGLE-JANGLE-Jangle-Jangle-Jangle-jangle-jangle-jangle-jangle-jangle-jangle!

In order to get to East Russet you take the Vermont Central as far as Twitchell's Falls and change there for Torpid River Junction, where a spur line takes you right into Gormley. At Gormley you are met by a buckboard which takes you back to Torpid River Junction again. By this time a train or something has come in which will wait for the local from Besus. While waiting for this you will have time to send your little boy to school, so that he can finish the third grade.

At East Russet Grandpa meets you with the sleigh. The bags are piled in and Mother sits in front with Lester in her lap while Daddy takes Junior and Ga-Ga in back with him and the luggage. Giddap, Esther Girl!

Esther Girl giddaps, and two suitcases fall out. Heigh-ho! Out we get and pick them up, brushing the snow off and filling our cuffs with it as we do so. After all, there is nothing like snow for getting up one's cuffs. Good clean snow never hurt anyone. Which is lucky, because after you have gone a mile or so, you discover that Ga-Ga is missing. Never mind, she is a self-reliant little girl and will doubtless find her way to the farm by herself. Probably she will be there waiting for you when you arrive.

The farm is situated on a hill about eleven hundred miles from the center of town, just before you get into Canada. If there is a breeze in winter, they get it. But what do they care for breezes, so long as they have the Little Colonel oil-heater in the front room, to make everything cozy and warm within a radius of four inches! And the big open fireplace with the draught coming down it! Fun for everybody!

You are just driving up to the farmhouse in the sleigh, with the entire right leg frozen where the lap robe has slipped out. Grandma is waiting for you at the door and you bustle in, all glowing with good cheer. "Merry Christmas, Grandma!" Lester is cross and Junior is asleep and has to be dragged by the hand upstairs, bumping against each step all the way. It is so late that you decide that you all might as well go to bed, especially as you learn that breakfast is at four-thirty. It usually is at four, but Christmas being a holiday everyone sleeps late.

As you reach the top of the stairs you get into a current of cold air

which has something of the quality of the temperature in a nice well-regulated crypt. This is the Bed Room Zone, and in it the thermometer never tops the zero mark from October fifteenth until the middle of May. Those rooms in which no one sleeps are used to store perishable vegetables in, and someone has to keep thumbing the tomatoes and pears every so often to prevent their getting so hard that they crack.

The way to get undressed for bed in one of Grandpa's bedrooms is as follows: Starting from the foot of the stairs where it is warm, run up two at a time to keep the circulation going as long as possible. Opening the bedroom door with one hand, tear down the curtains from the windows with the other, pick up the rugs from the floor and snatch the spread from the top of the bureau. Pile all these on the bed, cover with the closet door which you have wrenched from its hinges, and leap quickly underneath. It sometimes helps to put on a pair of rubbers over your shoes.

And even when you are in bed, you have no guarantee of going to sleep. Grandpa's mattresses seem to contain the overflow from the silo, corn-husks, baked-potato skins and long, stringy affairs which feel like pipe cleaners. On a cold night, snuggling down into these is about like snuggling down into a bed of damp pine cones out in the forest.

Then there are Things abroad in the house. Shortly after you get into bed, the stairs start snapping. Next something runs along the roof over your head. You say to yourself: "Don't be silly. It's only Santa Claus." Then it runs along in the wall behind the head of the bed. Santa Claus wouldn't do that. Down the long hall which leads into the ell of the house you can hear the wind sighing softly, with an occasional reassuring bang of a door.

The unmistakable sound of someone dying in great pain rises from just below the window-sill. It is a sort of low moan, with just a touch of strangulation in it. Perhaps Santa has fallen off the roof. Perhaps that story you once heard about Grandpa's house having been a hang-out for Revolutionary smugglers is true, and one of the smugglers has come back for his umbrella. The only place at a time like this is down under the bedclothes. But the children become frightened and demand to be taken home, and Grandpa has to be called to explain that it is only Blue Bell out in the barn. Blue Bell has asthma, and on a cold night they have to be very patient with her.

Christmas morning dawns cloudy and cold, with the threat of plenty more snow, and, after all, what would Christmas be without snow? You lie in bed for one hour and a quarter trying to figure out how you can get up without losing the covers from around you. A glance at the water pitcher shows that it is time for them to put the red ball up for skating. You think of the nice warm bathroom at home, and decide that you can wait until you get back there before shaving.

This breaking the ice in the pitcher seems to be a feature of the early lives of all great men which they look back on with tremendous satisfaction. "When I was a boy, I used to have to break the ice in the pitcher every morn-

ing before I could wash," is said with as much pride as one might say, "When I was a boy I stood at the head of my class." Just what virtue there is in having to break ice in a pitcher is not evident, unless it lies in their taking the bother to break the ice and wash at all. Anytime that I have to break ice in a pitcher as a preliminary to washing, I go unwashed, that's all. And Benjamin Franklin and U. S. Grant and Rutherford B. Hayes can laugh as much as they like. I'm nobody's fool about a thing like that.

Getting the children dressed is a lot of fun when you have to keep pumping their limbs up and down to keep them from freezing out stiff. The children love it and are just as bright and merry as little pixies when it is time to go downstairs and say "Good morning" to Grandpa and Grandma. The entire family enters the dining-room purple and chattering and exceedingly cross.

After breakfast everyone begins getting dinner. The kitchen being the only warm place in the house may have something to do with it. But before long there are so many potato peelings and turkey feathers and squash seeds and floating bits of pie crust in the kitchen that the women-folk send you and the children off into the front part of the house to amuse yourselves and get out of the way.

Then what a jolly time you and the kiddies and Grandpa have together! You can either slide on the horse-hair sofa, or play "The Wayside Chapel" on the piano (the piano has scroll-work on either side of the music rack with yellow silk showing through), or look out the window and see ten miles of dark gray snow. Perhaps you may even go out to the barn and look at the horses and cows, but really, as you walk down between the stalls, when you have seen one horse or one cow you have seen them all. And besides, the cold in the barn has an added flavor of damp harness leather and musty carriage upholstery which eats into your very marrow.

Of course, there are the presents to be distributed, but that takes on much the same aspect as the same ceremony in the new-fashioned Christmas, except that in the really old-fashioned Christmas the presents weren't so tricky. Children got mostly mittens and shoes, with a sled thrown in sometimes for dissipation. Where a boy today is bored by three o'clock in the afternoon with his electric grain-elevator and miniature pond with real perch in it, the old-fashioned boy was lucky if he got a copy of "Naval Battles of the War of 1812" and an orange. Now this feature is often brought up in praise of the old way of doing things. "I tell you," says Uncle Gyp, "the children in my time never got such presents as you get today." And he seems proud of the fact, as if there were some virtue accruing to him for it. If the children of today can get electric grain-elevators and tin automobiles for Christmas, why aren't they that much better off than their grandfathers who got only wristlets? Learning the value of money, which seems to be the only argument of the standpatters, doesn't hold very much water as a Christmas

slogan. The value of money can be learned in just about five minutes when the time comes, but Christmas is not the season.

But to return to the farm, where you and the kiddies and Gramp' are killing time. You can either bring in wood from the woodshed, or thaw out the pump, or read the books in the bookcase over the writing-desk. Of the three, bringing in the wood will probably be the most fun, as you are likely to burn yourself thawing out the pump, and the list of reading matter on hand includes "The Life and Deeds of General Grant," "Our First Century," "Andy's Trip to Portland," bound volumes of the Jersey Cattle Breeders' Gazette and "Diseases of the Horse." Then there are some old copies of "Round the Lamp" for the years 1850-54 and some colored plates showing plans for the approaching World's Fair at Chicago.

Thus the time passes, in one round of gayety after another, until you are summoned to dinner. Here all caviling must cease. The dinner lives up to the advertising. If an old-fashioned Christmas could consist entirely of dinner without the old-fashioned bedrooms, the old-fashioned pitcher, and the old-fashioned entertainments, we professional pessimists wouldn't have a turkey-leg left to stand on. But, as has been pointed out, it is possible to get a good dinner without going up to East Russet, Vt., or, if it isn't, then our civilization has been a failure.

And the dinner only makes the aftermath seem worse. According to an old custom of the human race, everyone overeats. Deliberately and with considerable gusto you sit at the table and say pleasantly: "My, but I won't be able to walk after this. Just a little more of the dark meat, please, Grandpa, and just a dab of stuffing. Oh, dear, that's too much!" You haven't the excuse of the drunkard, who becomes oblivious to his excesses after several drinks. You know what you are doing, and yet you make light of it and even laugh about it as long as you *can* laugh without splitting out a seam.

And then you sit and moan. If you were having a good new-fashioned Christmas you could go out to the movies or take a walk, or a ride, but to be really old-fashioned you must stick close to the house, for in the old days there were no movies and no automobiles and if you wanted to take a walk you had to have the hired man go ahead of you with a snow-shovel and make a tunnel. There are probably plenty of things to do in the country today, and just as many automobiles and electric lights as there are in the city, but you can't call Christmas with all these improvements "an old-fashioned Christmas." That's cheating.

If you are going through with the thing right, you have got to retire to the sitting-room after dinner and *sit*. Of course, you can go out and play in the snow if you want to, but you know as well as I do that this playing in the snow is all right when you are small but a bit trying on anyone over thirty. And anyway, it always began to snow along about three in the afternoon of an old-fashioned Christmas day, with a cheery old leaden sky overhead and a jolly old gale sweeping around the corners of the house.

No, you simply must sit indoors, in front of a fire if you insist, but nevertheless with nothing much to do. The children are sleepy and snarling. Grandpa is just sleepy. Someone tries to start the conversation, but everyone else is too gorged with food to be able to move the lower jaw sufficiently to articulate. It develops that the family is in possession of the loudest-ticking clock in the world and along about four o'clock it begins to break its own record. A stenographic report of the proceedings would read as follows:

"Ho-hum! I'm sleepy! I shouldn't have eaten so much."

"Tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock—"

"It seems just like Sunday, doesn't it?"

"Look at Grandpa! He's asleep."

"Here, Junior! Don't plague Grandpa. Let him sleep."

"Tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock—"

"Junior! Let Grandpa alone! Do you want Mamma to take you upstairs?"

"Ho-hum!"

"Tick-tock-tick-tock-tick-tock—"

Louder and louder the clock ticks, until something snaps in your brain and you give a sudden leap into the air with a scream, finally descending to strangle each of the family in turn, and Grandpa as he sleeps. Then, as you feel your end is near, all the warm things you have ever known come back to you, in a flash. You remember the hot Sunday subway to Coney, your trip to Mexico, the bull-fighters of Spain.

You dash out into the snowdrifts and plunge along until you sink exhausted. Only the fact that this article ends here keeps you from freezing to death, with an obituary the next day reading:

"DIED suddenly, at East Russet, Vt., of an old-fashioned Christmas."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Benchley's fun at the expense of "good old-fashioned Christmases" is only one spoof of the deeply felt and widespread notion that things aren't quite what they were in the good old days. List a few echoes of this kind which you have heard—for instance, that the winters aren't as cold, manners aren't as nice, or family life isn't as stable. Assuming that these are misconceptions, what pitfalls in thinking so far discussed in this book might explain why people think that way? If you believe they are not misconceptions, what are the reasons for your belief?
2. What evidence of a yearning for the past do you find in the following: (*a*) popular magazines, (*b*) stage, screen, radio, and television programs, (*c*) book publishing, (*d*) house furnishings, (*e*) music? Consider, for example, the subject matter of many *Saturday Evening Post* covers, the vogue for "early American furniture," the great popularity of "historical romances" in books and films, and so on.

3. Have you ever considered to what extent humor is based on an awareness of the differences between our assumptions about reality and reality itself? For example, on a very elementary level, the clown smells a flower and is squirted in the eye. In broad situation-comedy the gentle bride turns into a domineering shrew or the ineffectual, little man becomes the hero of the day. Discuss a number of humorous situations and events (in real life or literature or in the situation-comedy of popular radio and TV comedians) to determine whether this incongruity between idea and reality may be an important factor contributing to the humor.

PROJECTS

1. Like Benchley, select some aspect of the past—immediate or remote—which has been sentimentalized and paint a contrasting, more realistic picture of it. Suggestions: "The Old Oaken Bucket," "The Little Red Schoolhouse," "When Knighthood Was in Flower," "My Old Kentucky Home," "The Sheik of Araby," "On the Banks of the Wabash."
2. Write a paper or prepare a talk comparing the idealized conception of Thanksgiving Day, high school graduation, Sunday School, a wedding, or Mother's Day with your firsthand experiences on such an occasion.
3. Select one popular, widespread conception of the "recent American past," such as (*a*) "The Gay Nineties," (*b*) "The Jazz Age," (*c*) "The Great Depression." Write down your present impressions of one of these periods. Check your impressions against the evidence supplied by some reliable account of the period. [For (*a*) see Thomas Beer, *The Mauve Decade;* for (*b*) see Frederick L. Allen, *Only Yesterday;* for (*c*) see Lloyd Morris, *Postscript to Yesterday.*] Finally, write a paper explaining to what extent, if any, your conception was modified by your reading.

Richard Neuberger

I RUN FOR OFFICE

The view that politics is a dirty, stupid game and that politicians are naturally inferior to men in other types of endeavor is a common one, surprisingly so in view of the fact that a democracy depends on politics and politicians for its very existence. It is an easy view to adopt—until one actually examines a politician and the conditions under which he operates.

Neuberger, an Oregon newspaperman who has been in and out of state office, here looks at politics from the vantage point of an ex-politician. If read hastily, his remarks may seem to support the common view; a more careful reading will show, however, that his criticism is centered not so much on the politician as on the politician's environment (that is, his

I RUN FOR OFFICE From *Harper's Magazine,* February, 1947. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

public), which helps determine his conduct as a public servant. Interestingly enough, Neuberger did not follow his own advice, to get out of politics: in November 1954 he was elected United States Senator from Oregon.

If the problem of reconciling ideals with practical politics interests you (and it has *to interest the citizens of any country that intends to remain a democracy), you may wish to turn to some other revealing, thought-provoking studies of politics, such as Lincoln Steffens'* Autobiography, *Winston Churchill's* Memoirs, *Harold Ickes'* The Autobiography of a Curmudgeon, *David Lilienthal's* TVA: Democracy on the March, *Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy's* On Active Service in Peace and War, *Robert Sherwood's* Roosevelt and Hopkins, *Karl Schriftgiesser's* The Lobbyists, *Alexis de Tocqueville's* Democracy in America, *and Richard Hofstader's* The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It.

And here is a handful of novels for those who prefer the oblique approach of fiction: Mark Twain and C. D. Warner's The Gilded Age, *John Dos Passos'* The Adventures of a Young Man *and* Number One, *Frank Norris'* The Octopus, *Robert Penn Warren's* All the King's Men, *and Lionel Trilling's* The Middle of the Journey.

I had not realized what quest of political office was doing to me until I received an invitation to speak in a neighboring city across the Columbia River. As I looked at the water through the trusses of the railroad bridge, I suddenly remembered that I had passed into another sovereignty. This was the state of Washington. Oregon's soil—and voters—were behind me.

For the first time in many weeks I would not be talking to people who could vote on my candidacy for the state Senate. Within the limits of taste and decency, I could say what I pleased. I might challenge the prejudices of my listeners and still be safe from retribution at the polls. No longer would fear and hesitation, those abject sentinels, mount guard over each word and syllable.

If I blurted out my true feelings on the sales tax or postwar military training in the colleges, I would not need to review the episode in terms of the school bloc or the Legion vote. An honest expression on state rent control would not inevitably be followed by cold sweat over housewives or landlords striking my name from their sample ballots. And if after the meeting I failed to listen attentively for half an hour to some crank's plan for correcting the evils of the money system, the sequel would not be a sleepless night worrying about his influence in Precinct 144.

Yet before indulging this new-found freedom of speech, I carefully examined the audience to make certain that no constituents had crossed the Columbia to eavesdrop on what I would say in alien surroundings.

Twice in my thirty-three years I have been nominated for public office in Oregon at the Democratic primaries. This experience has run a gamut of sorts, for I have both won and lost. In 1940 I was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives on President Roosevelt's coattails. In 1946 I was defeated for the state Senate in the Republican comeback.

The pursuit of votes in a great democracy should prove exhilarating. I have not found it so. I have learned much, and I commend the undertaking to students of political science—in fact, to all who would better understand their country. But the temptation to pussyfoot, to evade and parry rather than to voice one's candid opinion, is so overwhelming that the experience will surely torment any except the flintiest conscience.

The candidate commences with one or two issues on which he declares himself as forthrightly as he dares. From such positions he does not withdraw—although I have met politicians who can retreat as skillfully as Marshal Ney. But the candidate knows that these issues form his reputation. They are the basis of his publicity in the newspapers. He utters them over and over again. He becomes recognized as a friend of labor or a champion of free enterprise. He is for or against public ownership of electric power; perhaps he decides to premise his campaign on keeping communism out of the American home or freeing the farmer from Wall Street.

Once away from the few questions on which he has decided to take a stand, the candidate twists and turns like Katooshka fleeing across the steppes ahead of the wolf pack. The electorate seems to him ready to rend him limb from limb should he falter in his personal behavior, family life, or economic concepts. If politicians are moral cowards—and I believe they are—it is partly because the public has made them so. Two campaigns for office have convinced me that the American people are essentially cynical about candidates. This cynicism breeds a curious sort of hostility. At many public gatherings I have felt that the audience waited tensely to deny me support if I should utter one phrase contrary to the predilections of the group I was addressing. Charity definitely does not begin at the political meeting.

I recall the leader of the longshoremen who admitted my one hundred per cent record on labor legislation, but declared his union could not possibly back me because I had expressed doubt, in answer to a question from the floor, whether we should share the atomic secret with the Soviet Union. His attitude may have been due to communist leanings, but the same could not be said of the clergyman who conceded our full agreement on social problems, yet advised worshippers to vote against me because of an article my wife had written for the *Oregonian* about a local art group which hired females to pose in the nude.

Had I been aware originally of the desire to embarrass candidates rather than to tolerate in them the shortcomings common to the human race, I confess that I probably would have ducked the atomic question and told my wife to refrain from reference to the unclad models.

Candidates are timid and evasive because such conduct is politically profitable. I might say we are cowards literally in self-defense. The politician siding with a particular organization on nine issues out of ten is scorned for the tenth. Blunt speech in campaigns has always cost me votes—whether the topic involved was ridiculous or sublime. When I inveighed against the bill-

boards cluttering Oregon's roads, farmers renting barns and highway parkings to sign companies mobilized for my opponent. After I had denounced the persecution of returning Japanese-American war veterans, the American Legion commenced gunning for my political hide.

Minorities determine many elections, particularly in the primaries, and this is why equivocation pays. I have faith that a substantial majority of the voters approved my stand both on billboards and the attacks against the Nisei. But the majority was unorganized, while the Legion and the farmers with signs on their land were marshaled for action; and politicians know that one active enemy, constantly at the telephone or buttonholing acquaintances, can do damage to a candidacy which twenty indifferent supporters never offset.

As a writer on politics I liked to think romantically that forthrightness meant victory. I thought of George Norris, and forgot that he was the exception and not the rule. As a candidate, I am aware that forthrightness generally must be its own reward. The political retort perfect is that which sounds strident but offends nobody. "Say nothing, and say it well," I was advised by a United States senator who interested himself in my embryonic political career.

When I spoke in colored neighborhoods for civil rights legislation, I incurred the wrath of wealthy Negro night-club operators who did not want their people allowed to patronize public places frequented by whites. But when I cautiously straddled an old-age pension proposition on the Oregon ballot, I found that I picked up votes from both sides. Before even so sophisticated an organization as the League of Women Voters, outright endorsement of a new school tax did not return the same political dividends as approving the measure "in principle, with certain reservations." This was a way of riding two chariots—and also of convincing the disillusioned candidate that Barnum was right.

At the peak of the campaign, aspirants for all jobs from governor to constable traveled a circuit, addressing trade unions, women's clubs, pension groups, and Izaak Walton Leagues. Most of the candidates thought nothing of telling a property owners' association at eight o'clock that taxes had to come down, and before the evening was over promising a rally of old people the $24,000,000,000 Townsend Plan. When I remarked to a fellow candidate that this seemed a trifle inconsistent he growled, "Well, they're so darned anxious to trip us up that I don't really mind fooling 'em a little. I even kinda think they like it."

Maybe they do, for he had been on the public payroll nearly twenty years. . . .

I wonder, too, whether the writer can mix his craft with a personal political candidacy. He can support or oppose others, but should he himself run? Those who would govern us, we measure by a special yardstick. I was sharply criticized for being photographed soliciting a vote from a pretty girl in a brief bathing suit. A labor leader did not believe a genuine

friend of the common people could drive a car as new as my 1942 Oldsmobile. These are not charges leveled against the butcher, the baker, or the candlestick maker.

A writer, if he is to be reasonably honest, must express sentiments repugnant to a good many people. This is not the way to win votes. During one of my legislative campaigns, a loyal friend went to the public library and checked out all the copies of a book I had written because he had heard its contents assailed at a meeting. "Would that mine enemy had written a book," becomes particularly pertinent when the enemy is running for office. Nor is the novelist any safer than the author of non-fiction. In California's 1934 gubernatorial campaign sentences shrewdly culled from the novels of Upton Sinclair were plastered on thousands of billboards from the Klamath Basin to Mexico.

As long as the business of rounding up votes dominated my thoughts, I discovered an unconscious inhibition on what I wrote. Truth, at least as I saw it, became not the sole test. I speculated on whether my words might antagonize this or that group. Several times, I regret to report, my eraser modified original conclusions so they would be more generally acceptable. This is not a situation in which a writer can do justice to his profession, his topic, or to himself.

And I was seeking only minor office. What might the inhibitions have been if I had glimpsed ahead the prospect of the governor's chair or a United States senatorship?

The case against making politics my career is strong. I accept the case implicitly. Already it has persuaded me against becoming the titular head of the Democratic party in our state.

Yet the argument is only $99\frac{1}{100}$ per cent pure. The other fraction disturbs me occasionally. When I see Oregon's teachers paid the lowest salaries on the Coast, when I see a private utility company selling the power from the dam at Bonneville which the people built and paid for, when I see a Japanese-American soldier with forty-one blood transfusions denied a hotel room on a rainy night, when I see a million-dollar race track rising while veterans cannot construct homes—then my blood pressure rises, too, and I wonder if any case is strong enough to impel abdication in favor of those who tolerate these things.

But the slightest return of political ambition brings that degrading fear which is the curse of politics. I even ask myself if I have said too much in these pages.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Where does Neuberger look for clues to explain the conduct of politicians—in the *nature* of politicians or in the *conditions* under which they operate? Does this approach suggest *induction* or *deduction* as the governing thought process?

2. You have undoubtedly heard the opinion expressed in one way or another that politicians are morally and intellectually inferior to men in other occupations. Prepare a list—perhaps quotations from actual conversations, perhaps newspaper and magazine cartoons, perhaps radio jokes—of evidence that such beliefs exist. Opposite your evidence of such beliefs put down all the *facts* you know that might substantiate or refute them. What cautious inferences about politicians can you draw from your findings?
3. How thoughtful is the slogan of many a candidate in many an American community, "Turn the politicians out of office and elect a businessman for mayor"? What is the *inference* this slogan invites the voter to make? What is the *assumption* on which this inference rests? Are they sound? Why, or why not?
4. Name several specific effects that people's acceptance of the generalization about politicians as mentally and morally inferior might have upon their behavior as citizens. For example, how might such a belief affect their voting habits, determine to whom they are likely to turn for leadership, affect their willingness to participate actively in politics, and so on?
5. Do you think civics and political-science courses which focus exclusively on such details as the formal structure of government, the salaries of various officials, the age, residence requirements and other prerequisites for holding office, etc., are useful in helping students understand the workings of politics? Why or why not? What assumption underlies the thinking of legislators who pass laws requiring all high-school and college students to take such courses? Do you find any weaknesses in this assumption? Explain.

PROJECTS

1. In a paper or talk analyze your own behavior in a political situation—one in which you needed to win the approval and consent of a group. Such a situation might be your candidacy for a club office, your chairmanship of a committee, or an effort to persuade a number of people to organize in support of a project or proposal. As a result of this analysis, do you find yourself in agreement or disagreement with Neuberger's summary of the problems facing the practical politician?
2. A democratic society depends for its existence on the willingness of its citizens to engage actively in politics. What measures can such a society take to insure that able and responsible men will run for office? In order to bring the subject within workable dimensions, select only one measure and prepare a speech or paper based on your analysis of it.

Irwin Edman

ON SECOND THOUGHT

Each of the following short pieces by Irwin Edman is a "second thought" about a currently popular, widely accepted first thought. Edman was working here in his favorite role of perceptive observer, reopening questions and reevaluating evidence. He did this in a tolerant, open-minded spirit, not so much seeking to prove an idea wrong and mistaken as trying to find what in it is sound and what unsound.

Until his death in the fall of 1954, Edman expessed this spirit of free, persistent inquiry in his various activities—as a professor of philosophy at Columbia University, as the author of such popularizations of intricate subjects as Philosopher's Holiday, Philosopher's Quest, *and* Arts and the Man, *and as the originator of the column "Under Whatever Sky,"* in The American Scholar, *the journal of Phi Beta Kappa.*

ALIBI FOR DULLNESS

I am told, though not on very good authority (the friend of a friend of a second vice-president), that a certain large corporation requires executives above a certain grade to have an indeterminate number of hours of casualness every day. These periods of silence are naturally not to be at stated times; they are to be as random as life itself. Apparently the president of the corporation had been reading some efficiency magazine, published, unknown to himself, by a subsidiary of his corporation. In an article written by a professor of business administration, it was reported that the head of a billion-dollar industrial organization had found he got his best ideas when he was doing absolutely nothing; that the busier he was, the less creative thought he produced. Of late, since he had been promoted to chairman of the board and had had nothing whatever to do, he had been so filled with ideas that the new president of the corporation was busier than ever putting them into operation. The corporation had never declared such high profits as since its chairman of the board had had nothing to do but to think casually.

It has certainly occurred to many of us in moments of extreme busyness that if only we had time to think we should be fountainheads of creative ideas. In the noise of busy days, we light upon notions that we are too busy later to remember, too pressed immediately to develop. It occurs to us that if only we were really free, how many fertile hypotheses we should engender, how our unfrustrated genius would flower! We think of Poincaré, the mathe-

ON SECOND THOUGHT From *Under Whatever Sky* by Irwin Edman; originally published in *The American Scholar*. Copyright, 1951, by Irwin Edman. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

matician, walking along the seashore and having his most crucial ideas come to focus in contemplating the pebbles on the beach. We think of Newton under the apple tree, of Housman walking nonchalantly along a country road after lunch.

It is a little humiliating to be granted suddenly the blessed gift of leisure. One listens for the murmur of the Subconscious; one cups one's ear for the whisper of the liberating disclosure. Nothing happens; all is vast emptiness, a desert of dullness. It is perhaps summer in a remote place with no interruptions. There is for us not a single commitment, social or professional. Now, if ever, is the time when the creative wave should begin, the creative seed grow and blossom. Nothing occurs.

Perhaps, then one says to one's self, what one really needs is the friction and stimulation of other minds, the crush of action out of which ideas have always emerged. Perhaps what is lacking is the catalysis of work, the urgency of a deadline. Perhaps what is wrong, comes the blushing realization, is one's self.

EXCHANGE OF OPINION

Nothing, we have been told these many democratic years, is more educative than participating in or listening to an exchange of opinion. The colloquium, the seminar, the conference, the symposium, the panel discussion on the radio—how fine, how liberating, how instructive these are to us all, to the participants, to those in the gallery, to those at their receiving sets. The reputed values hardly need to be mentioned. Opinions we had long held are promptly modified; there are persuasively insinuated into our minds things we had never thought of up to that moment. Theories we had deemed incompatible are clearly synonymous. Why had it never occurred to us before that planned economy and free enterprise really go very well together? Why had we not realized that isolationists and internationalists are really saying one and the same thing? How stupid of us not to have comprehended that atheists and theists, socialists and capitalists, devotees of program music and of absolute music, vegetarians and beef-eaters, really have everything in common! In theory, at least, the chief value of a panel discussion is to help us see that intelligent men all agree on everything. All that is required is a skilled moderator to bring out this salubrious awareness.

How different in fact are the results of listening to or, even more, of participating in, such a discussion. After a half hour we *have* generally learned something, something wonderfully reviving too. It becomes perfectly clear that we were even more in the right than we had believed at the outset. How surprising to find that such intelligent colleagues can be so completely wrongheaded, even after the truth is made plain to them. It is gratifying to us to see that the only points sharp, relevant and true that were made were our own. And, as some friend, always happily present, points out to us, we were

the only one who spoke complete, grammatical sentences, who kept his temper; it is we alone who showed an unwavering concern for justice and truth. One would hardly have believed, until one actually heard the others, that such absurd convictions, such ineptness in debate, such bad intellectual manners could exist among literate people. There is nothing quite like an exchange of opinions for an hour or so to convince one of the superiority of one's own opinions to the quite silly ideas other people so naively broach.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Edman cites Poincaré, Newton, and Housman as examples of men whose great ideas came to them during moments of leisure. Does it follow that they were not pondering over these ideas during their busy moments? What, then, would seem to be an indispensable prerequisite to a great idea—leisure, busyness, or something else?
2. "The corporation had never declared such high profits as since its chairman of the board had nothing to do but think casually." What inference does this statement invite us to make? Might there be a flaw in logic here? If so, what is it?
3. In attacking one assumption Edman implies another—that being busy or having leisure makes no real difference to the man "who has the real stuff inside him." Subject this assumption to the test of evidence drawn from your own experience and from your reading.
4. Point out any oversights in Edman's claim that panel discussions are based on the assumption "that intelligent men all agree on everything."

PROJECTS

1. Why haven't you written that poem, painted that picture, designed that boat? What reasons have you given yourself for your procrastination? What are the real reasons? Write a short, possibly humorous, paper about your own use of leisure time.
2. Observe closely a discussion—in class, in your dormitory, at family dinner, in a club, or in a forum. Then write a paper discussing the following questions: (*a*) What evidence do you find that the participants really "came together" mentally and reached some degree of understanding and agreement? (*b*) What evidence do you find of what Edman noted—the use of discussion merely to preserve one's own position and one's pride in it? (*c*) In each case what lines of reasoning and what kinds of language were used that may partly account for the results?
3. In "Exchange of Opinion" Edman reminds us that new bottles do not necessarily mean new wine, that modish ways of discussing problems do not insure magic solutions. Point out some instances where a change in the *form* of doing something did not necessarily bring about a change in that thing itself. (Did the introduction of the wide screen improve the quality of the motion pictures projected on it?) Now cite instances of a new form's changing—possibly im-

proving—a process. (Have freeways changed the flow of traffic?) Using your examples to support your case, write an essay which makes clear what we should look for before concluding that a new *form* signifies a changed or improved *process.*

George Orwell

POVERTY

George Orwell (1903-1950) looked at his world freshly and presented his observations economically, honestly, sometimes bluntly. Such honesty and freshness are sufficiently rare qualities in any man for Orwell to appear to his readers as a strikingly original personality.

Orwell recorded in Burmese Days *his observations of his years as a civil servant in Burma; in* Down and Out in London and Paris, *his detailed report of his life as tramp and menial worker; in* Homage to Catalonia, *his clear-sighted perceptions of the complex struggle in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930's; and in* The Animal Farm *and* 1984, *his unblinking look at authoritarian tendencies in contemporary life. Much of his writing is autobiographical, based on his own experiences. It is a singular tribute to Orwell's objectivity that he could take a detached view of events in which he himself had been deeply involved.*

It is altogether curious, your first contact with poverty. You have thought so much about poverty—it is the thing you have feared all your life, the thing you knew would happen to you sooner or later; and it is all so utterly and prosaically different. You thought it would be quite simple; it is extraordinarily complicated. You thought it would be terrible; it is merely squalid and boring. It is the peculiar *lowness* of poverty that you discover first; the shifts that it puts you to, the complicated meanness, the crust-wiping.

You discover, for instance, the secrecy attaching to poverty. At a sudden stroke you have been reduced to an income of six francs a day. But of course you dare not admit it—you have got to pretend that you are living quite as usual. From the start it tangles you in a net of lies, and even with the lies you can hardly manage it. You stop sending clothes to the laundry, and the laundress catches you in the street and asks you why; you mumble something, and she, thinking you are sending the clothes elsewhere, is your enemy for life. The tobacconist keeps asking why you have cut down your smoking. There are letters you want to answer, and cannot, because stamps are too expensive. And then there are your meals—meals are the worst difficulty of

POVERTY From *Down and Out in Paris and London,* published by Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc. Copyright, 1933, by George Orwell.

all. Every day at meal-times you go out, ostensibly to a restaurant, and loaf an hour in the Luxembourg Gardens, watching the pigeons. Afterwards you smuggle your food home in your pockets. Your food is bread and margarine, or bread and wine, and even the nature of food is governed by lies. You have to buy rye bread instead of household bread, because rye loaves, though dearer, are round and can be smuggled in your pockets. This wastes you a franc a day. Sometimes, to keep up appearances, you have to spend sixty centimes on a drink, and go correspondingly short of food. Your linen gets filthy, and you run out of soap and razor-blades. Your hair wants cutting, and you try to cut it yourself, with such fearful results that you have to go to the barber after all, and spend the equivalent of a day's food. All day you are telling lies, and expensive lies.

You discover the extreme precariousness of your six francs a day. Mean disasters happen and rob you of food. You have spent your last eighty centimes on half a litre of milk, and are boiling it over the spirit lamp. While it boils a bug runs down your forearm; you give the bug a flick with your nail, and it falls plop! straight in the milk. There is nothing for it but to throw the milk away and go foodless.

You go to the baker's to buy a pound of bread, and you wait while the girls cuts a pound for another customer. She is clumsy, and cuts more than a pound. *"Pardon, monsieur,"* she says, "I suppose you don't mind paying two sous extra?" Bread is a franc a pound, and you have exactly a franc. When you think that you too might be asked to pay two sous extra, would have to confess that you could not, you bolt in panic. It is hours before you dare venture into a baker's shop again.

You go to the greengrocer's to spend a franc on a kilogram of potatoes. But one of the pieces that make up the franc is a Belgian piece, and the shopman refuses it. You slink out of the shop, and can never go there again.

You have strayed into a respectable quarter, and you see a prosperous friend coming. To avoid him you dodge into the nearest café. Once in the café you must buy something, so you spend your last fifty centimes on a glass of black coffee with a dead fly in it. One could multiply these disasters by the hundred. They are part of the process of being hard up.

You discover what it is like to be hungry. With bread and margarine in your belly, you go out and look into the shop windows. Everywhere there is food insulting you in huge, wasteful piles; whole dead pigs, baskets of hot loaves, great yellow blocks of butter, strings of sausages, mountains of potatoes, vast Gruyère cheeses like grindstones. A snivelling self-pity comes over you at the sight of so much food. You plan to grab a loaf and run, swallowing it before they catch you; and you refrain, from pure funk.

You discover the boredom which is inseparable from poverty; the times when you have nothing to do and, being underfed, can interest yourself in nothing. For half a day at a time you lie on your bed, feeling like the *jeune*

squelette in Baudelaire's poem. Only food could rouse you. You discover that a man who has gone even a week on bread and margarine is not a man any longer, only a belly with a few accessory organs.

This—one could describe it further, but it is all in the same style—is life on six francs a day. Thousands of people in Paris live it—struggling artists and students, prostitutes when their luck is sour, out of work people of all kinds. It is the suburbs, as it were, of poverty.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Many people have found their firsthand experiences with war, marriage, death, getting rich as surprising as Orwell found his experience with poverty. What does this surprise seem to indicate about our tendencies to make uncritical assumptions, to draw inferences without any attempt to verify them, to mistake second- and thirdhand ideas for the firsthand observations we have never made?
2. Orwell suggests that the simpleness and terribleness of poverty are illusions. *If* they are, what factors may account for the growth of those illusions? Do we tend to romanticize the grim and the terrible in life, even though we may have experienced neither? What are some of the sources of *your* information about poverty?

PROJECTS

1. Select *one:*
   a. If you *have* experienced real poverty, write a critical comparison of your experiences with those of Orwell. Do they confirm Orwell's generalizations about the nature of poverty?
   b. Perhaps you have not experienced the sharp poverty of Orwell but have been "hard up," having to "figure things closely" to "get by." If so, did you find in this kind of poverty any evidence of the "complicated meanness," the boredom, of which Orwell speaks? Describe in writing what *you* found.
   c. Describe hunger that you have personally experienced or have closely observed. Consider whether your facts square with some of the commonplace conceptions of this condition.
2. Have you noticed how many of life's mean little incidents, like a torn coat, can complicate existence for a few hours? A test of your powers of observation and awareness would be to describe in detail the subterfuges and awkwardnesses such a trivial accident forced you into. (Other small but distressing accidents: a run in a stocking, broken eye-glasses, an injured thumb, an unfortunate haircut, a pimple on the nose.) In your paper or talk report the effects as objectively as you can.
3. Describe in a carefully detailed paper or talk the dramatic difference between your notions about something before you experienced it and your actual firsthand experience with it. Suggestions: Your initiation into a fraternity or sorority, your effort to renew as an adult a friendship with someone you had not

seen since childhood, your first visit home after several months in college, your first contact with death, your first major operation. Note that the success of Orwell's description lies in his specificity.

Eric Hoffer

THE ROLE OF THE UNDESIRABLES

In this unconventional piece Hoffer tries to prove in error two popular conceptions—one about pioneers, and one about social misfits. Perhaps the most unusual aspect of his thinking here is his method of testing a generalization about people by asking the simple but often neglected question, "What do they do?"

Hoffer's life, like his thinking, does not fit into any neat, preconceived pattern. The self-educated son of a German immigrant, he has worked as dishwasher, box-factory laborer, gold miner, and, in recent years, longshoreman on the San Francisco waterfront. His book, The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements, *presents his theorizing about the nature of man and society.*

In the winter of 1934, I spent several weeks in a federal transient camp in California. These camps were originally established by Governor Rolph in the early days of the Depression to care for the single homeless unemployed of the state. In 1934 the federal government took charge of the camps for a time, and it was then that I first heard of them.

How I happened to get into one of the camps is soon told. Like thousands of migrant agricultural workers in California I then followed the crops from one part of the state to the other. Early in 1934 I arrived in the town of El Centro, in the Imperial Valley. I had been given a free ride on a truck from San Diego, and it was midnight when the truck driver dropped me on the outskirts of El Centro. I spread my bedroll by the side of the road and went to sleep. I had hardly dozed off when the rattle of a motorcycle drilled itself into my head and a policeman was bending over me saying, "Roll up, Mister." It looked as though I was in for something; it happened now and then that the police got overzealous and rounded up the freight trains. But this time the cop had no such thought. He said, "Better go over to the federal shelter and get yourself a bed and maybe some breakfast." He directed me to the place.

I found a large hall, obviously a former garage, dimly lit, and packed with cots. A concert of heavy breathing shook the thick air. In a small office near the door, I was registered by a middle-aged clerk. He informed me that

THE ROLE OF THE UNDESIRABLES From *Harper's Magazine,* December, 1952. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

this was the "receiving shelter" where I would get one night's lodging and breakfast. The meal was served in the camp nearby. Those who wished to stay on, he said, had to enroll in the camp. He then gave me three blankets and excused himself for not having a vacant cot. I spread the blankets on the cement floor and went to sleep.

I awoke with dawn amid a chorus of coughing, throat-clearing, the sound of running water, and the intermittent flushing of toilets in the back of the hall. There were about fifty of us, of all colors and ages, all of us more or less ragged and soiled. The clerk handed out tickets for breakfast, and we filed out to the camp located several blocks away, near the railroad tracks.

From the outside the camp looked like a cross between a factory and a prison. A high fence of wire enclosed it, and inside were three large sheds and a huge boiler topped by a pillar of black smoke. Men in blue shirts and dungarees were strolling across the sandy yard. A ship's bell in front of one of the buildings announced breakfast. The regular camp members—there was a long line of them—ate first. Then we filed in through the gate, handing our tickets to the guard.

It was a good, plentiful meal. After breakfast our crowd dispersed. I heard some say that the camps in the northern part of the state were better, that they were going to catch a northbound freight. I decided to try this camp in El Centro.

My motives in enrolling were not crystal clear. I wanted to clean up. There were shower baths in the camp and wash tubs and plenty of soap. Of course I could have bathed and washed my clothes in one of the irrigation ditches, but here in the camp I had a chance to rest, get the wrinkles out of my belly, and clean up at leisure. In short, it was the easiest way out.

A brief interview at the camp office and a physical examination were all the formalities for enrollment.

There were some two hundred men in the camp. They were the kind I had worked and traveled with for years. I even saw familiar faces—men I had worked with in orchards and fields. Yet my predominant feeling was one of strangeness. It was my first experience of life in intimate contact with a crowd. For it is one thing to work and travel with a gang, and quite another thing to eat, sleep, and spend the greater part of the day cheek by jowl with two hundred men.

I found myself speculating on a variety of subjects: the reasons for their chronic bellyaching and beefing—it was more a ritual than the expression of a grievance; the amazing orderliness of the men; the comic seriousness with which they took their games of cards, checkers, and dominoes; the weird manner of reasoning one overheard now and then. Why, I kept wondering, were these men within the enclosure of a federal transient camp?

Were they people temporarily hard up? Would jobs solve all their difficulties? Were we indeed like the people outside?

Up to then I was not aware of being one of a specific species of humanity. I had considered myself simply a human being—not particularly good or bad, and on the whole harmless. The people I worked and traveled with I knew as Americans and Mexicans, whites and Negroes, Northerners and Southerners, etc. It did not occur to me that we were a group possessed of peculiar traits, and that there was something—innate or acquired—in our make-up which made us adopt a particular mode of existence.

It was a slight thing that started me on a new track.

I got to talking to a mild-looking, elderly fellow. I liked his soft speech and pleasant manner. We swapped trivial experiences. Then he suggested a game of checkers. As we started to arrange the pieces on the board, I was startled by the sight of his crippled right hand. I had not noticed it before. Half of it was chopped off lengthwise, so that the horny stump with its three fingers looked like a hen's leg. I was mortified that I had not noticed the hand until he dangled it, so to speak, before my eyes. It was, perhaps, to bolster my shaken confidence in my powers of observation that I now began paying close attention to the hands of the people around me. The result was astounding. It seemed that every other man had had his hand mangled. There was a man with one arm. Some men limped. One young, good-looking fellow had a wooden leg. It was as though the majority of the men had escaped the snapping teeth of a machine and left part of themselves behind.

It was, I knew, an exaggerated impression. But I began counting the cripples as the men lined up in the yard at mealtime. I found thirty (out of two hundred) crippled either in arms or legs. I immediately sensed where the counting would land me. The simile preceded the statistical deduction: we in the camp were a human junk pile.

I began evaluating my fellow tramps as human material, and for the first time in my life I became face-conscious. There were some good faces, particularly among the young. Several of the middle-aged and the old looked healthy and well preserved. But the damaged and decayed faces were in the majority. I saw faces that were wrinkled, or bloated, or raw as the surface of a peeled plum. Some of the noses were purple and swollen, some broken, some pitted with enlarged pores. There were many toothless mouths (I counted seventy-eight). I noticed eyes that were blurred, faded, opaque, or bloodshot. I was struck by the fact that the old men, even the very old, showed their age mainly in the face. Their bodies were still slender and erect. One little man over sixty years of age looked a mere boy when seen from behind. The shriveled face joined to a boyish body made a startling sight.

My diffidence had now vanished. I was getting to know everybody in the camp. They were a friendly and talkative lot. Before many weeks I knew some essential fact about practically everyone.

And I was continually counting. Of the two hundred men in the camp there were approximately as follows:

Cripples	30
Confirmed drunkards	60
Old men (55 and over)	50
Youths under twenty	10
Men with chronic diseases, heart, asthma, TB	12
Mildly insane	4
Constitutionally lazy	6
Fugitives from justice	4
Apparently normal	70

(The numbers do not tally up to two hundred since some of the men were counted twice or even thrice—as cripples and old, or as old and confirmed drunks, etc.)

In other words: less than half the camp inmates (seventy normal, plus ten youths) were unemployed workers whose difficulties would be at an end once jobs were available. The rest (60 per cent) had handicaps in addition to unemployment.

I also counted fifty war veterans, and eighty skilled workers representing sixteen trades. All the men (including those with chronic diseases) were able to work. The one-armed man was a wizard with the shovel.

I did not attempt any definite measurement of character and intelligence. But it seemed to me that the intelligence of the men in the camp was certainly not below the average. And as to character, I found much forbearance and genuine good humor. I never came across one instance of real viciousness. Yet, on the whole, one would hardly say that these men were possessed of strong characters. Resistance, whether to one's appetites or to the ways of the world, is a chief factor in the shaping of character; and the average tramp is, more or less, a slave of his few appetites. He generally takes the easiest way out.

The connection between our make-up and our mode of existence as migrant workers presented itself now with some clarity.

The majority of us were incapable of holding onto a steady job. We lacked self-discipline and the ability to endure monotonous, leaden hours. We were probably misfits from the very beginning. Our contact with a steady job was not unlike a collision. Some of us were maimed, some got frightened and ran away, and some took to drink. We inevitably drifted in the direction of least resistance—the open road. The life of a migrant worker is varied and demands only a minimum of self-discipline. We were now in one of the drainage ditches of ordered society. We could not keep a footing in the ranks of respectability and were washed into the slough of our present existence.

Yet, I mused, there must be in this world a task with an appeal so

strong that were we to have a taste of it we would hold on and be rid for good of our restlessness.

My stay in the camp lasted about four weeks. Then I found a haying job not far from town, and finally, in April, when the hot winds began blowing, I shouldered my bedroll and took the highway to San Bernardino.

It was the next morning, after I had got a lift to Indio by truck, that a new idea began to take hold of me. The highway out of Indio leads through waving date groves, fragrant grapefruit orchards, and lush alfalfa fields; then, abruptly, passes into a desert of white sand. The sharp line between garden and desert is very striking. The turning of white sand into garden seemed to me an act of magic. This, I thought, was a job one would jump at—even the men in the transient camps. They had the skill and ability of the average American. But their energies, I felt, could be quickened only by a task that was spectacular, that had in it something of the miraculous. The pioneer task of making the desert flower would certainly fill the bill.

Tramps as pioneers? It seemed absurd. Every man and child in California knows that the pioneers had been giants, men of boundless courage and indomitable spirit. However, as I strode on across the white sand, I kept mulling the idea over.

Who were the pioneers? Who were the men who left their homes and went into the wilderness? A man rarely leaves a soft spot and goes deliberately in search of hardship and privation. People become attached to the places they live in; they drive roots. A change of habitat is a painful act of uprooting. A man who has made good and has a standing in his community stays put. The successful business men, farmers, and workers usually stayed where they were. Who then left for the wilderness and the unknown? Obviously those who had not made good: men who went broke or never amounted to much; men who though possessed of abilities were too impulsive to stand the daily grind; men who were slaves of their appetites—drunkards, gamblers, and woman-chasers; outcasts—fugitives from justice and ex-jailbirds. There were no doubt some who went in search of health—men suffering with TB, asthma, heart trouble. Finally there was a sprinkling of young and middle-aged in search of adventure.

All these people craved change, some probably actuated by the naïve belief that a change in place brings with it a change in luck. Many wanted to go to a place where they were not known and there make a new beginning. Certainly they did not go out deliberately in search of hard work and suffering. If in the end they shouldered enormous tasks, endured unspeakable hardships, and accomplished the impossible, it was because they had to. They became men of action on the run. They acquired strength and skill in the inescapable struggle for existence. It was a question of do or die. And once they tasted the joy of achievement, they craved for more.

Clearly the same types of people which now swelled the ranks of migratory workers and tramps had probably in former times made up the bulk of the pioneers. As a group the pioneers were probably as unlike the present-day "native sons"—their descendants—as one could well imagine. Indeed, were there to be today a new influx of typical pioneers, twin brothers of the forty-niners only in a modern garb, the citizens of California would consider it a menace to health, wealth, and morals.

With few exceptions, this seems to be the case in the settlement of all new countries. Ex-convicts were the vanguard in the settling of Australia. Exiles and convicts settled Siberia. In this country, a large portion of our earlier and later settlers were failures, fugitives, and felons. The exceptions seemed to be those who were motivated by religious fervor, such as the Pilgrim Fathers and the Mormons.

Although quite logical, this train of thought seemed to me then a wonderful joke. In my exhilaration I was eating up the road in long strides, and I reached the oasis of Elim in what seemed almost no time. A passing empty truck picked me up just then and we thundered through Banning and Beaumont, all the way to Riverside. From there I walked the seven miles to San Bernardino.

Somehow, this discovery of a family likeness between tramps and pioneers took a firm hold on my mind. For years afterward it kept intertwining itself with a mass of observations which on the face of them had no relation to either tramps or pioneers. And it moved me to speculate on subjects in which, up to then, I had no real interest, and of which I knew very little.

I talked with several old-timers—one of them over eighty and a native son—in Sacramento, Placerville, Auburn, and Fresno. It was not easy, at first, to obtain the information I was after. I could not make my questions specific enough. "What kind of people were the early settlers and miners?" I asked. They were a hard-working, tough lot, I was told. They drank, fought, gambled, and wenched. They were big-hearted, grasping, profane, and God-fearing. They wallowed in luxury, or lived on next to nothing with equal ease. They were the salt of the earth.

Still it was not clear what manner of people they were.

If I asked what they looked like, I was told of whiskers, broad-brimmed hats, high boots, shirts of many colors, sun-tanned faces, horny hands. Finally I asked: "What group of people in present-day California most closely resembles the pioneers?" The answer, usually after some hesitation, was invariably the same: "The Okies and the fruit tramps."

I tried also to evaluate the tramps as potential pioneers by watching them in action. I saw them fell timber, clear firebreaks, build rock walls, put up barracks, build dams and roads, handle steam shovels, bulldozers, tractors, and concrete mixers. I saw them put in a hard day's work after a night

of steady drinking. They sweated and growled, but they did the work. I saw tramps elevated to positions of authority as foremen and superintendents. Then I could notice a remarkable physical transformation: a seamed face gradually smoothed out and the skin showed a healthy hue; an indifferent mouth became firm and expressive; dull eyes cleared and brightened; voices actually changed; there was even an apparent increase in stature. In almost no time these promoted tramps looked as if they had been on top all their lives. Yet sooner or later I would meet up with them again in a railroad yard, on some skid row, or in the fields—tramps again. It was usually the same story: they got drunk or lost their temper and were fired, or they got fed up with the steady job and quit. Usually, when a tramp becomes a foreman, he is careful in his treatment of the tramps under him; he knows the day of reckoning is never far off.

In short, it was not difficult to visualize the tramps as pioneers. I reflected that if they were to find themselves in a singlehanded life-and-death struggle with nature, they would undoubtedly display persistence. For the pressure of responsibility and the heat of battle steel a character. The inadaptable would perish, and those who survived would be the equal of the successful pioneers.

I also considered the few instances of pioneering engineered from above —that is to say, by settlers possessed of lavish means, who were classed with the best where they came from. In these instances, it seemed to me, the resulting social structure was inevitably precarious. For pioneering de luxe usually results in a plantation society, made up of large landowners and peon labor, either native or imported. Very often there is a racial cleavage between the two. The colonizing activities of the Teutonic barons in the Baltic, the Hungarian nobles in Transylvania, the English in Ireland, the planters in our South, and the present-day plantation societies in Kenya and other British and Dutch colonies are cases in point. Whatever their merits, they are characterized by poor adaptability. They are likely eventually to be broken up either by a peon revolution or by an influx of typical pioneers—who are usually of the same race or nation as the landowners. The adjustment is not necessarily implemented by war. Even our old South, had it not been for the complication of secession, might eventually have attained stability without war: namely, by the activity of its own poor whites or by an influx of the indigent from other states.

There is in us a tendency to judge a race, a nation, or an organization by its least worthy members. The tendency is manifestly perverse and unfair; yet it has some justification. For the quality and destiny of a nation is determined to a considerable extent by the nature and potentialities of its inferior elements. The inert mass of a nation is in its middle section. The industrious, decent, well-to-do, and satisfied middle classes—whether in cities

or on the land—are worked upon and shaped by minorities at both extremes: the best and the worst.

The superior individual, whether in politics, business, industry, science, literature, or religion, undoubtedly plays a major role in the shaping of a nation. But so do the individuals at the other extreme: the poor, the outcasts, the misfits, and those who are in the grip of some overpowering passion. The importance of these inferior elements as formative factors lies in the readiness with which they are swayed in any direction. This peculiarity is due to their inclination to take risks ("not giving a damn") and their propensity for united action. They crave to merge their drab, wasted lives into something grand and complete. Thus they are the first and most fervent adherents of new religions, political upheavals, patriotic hysteria, gangs, and mass rushes to new lands.

And the quality of a nation—its innermost worth—is made manifest by its dregs as they rise to the top: by how brave they are, how humane, how orderly, how skilled, how generous, how independent or servile; by the bounds they will not transgress in their dealings with man's soul, with truth, and with honor.

The average American of today bristles with indignation when he is told that this country was built, largely, by hordes of undesirables from Europe. Yet, far from being derogatory, this statement, if true, should be a cause for rejoicing, should fortify our pride in the stock from which we have sprung.

This vast continent with its towns, farms, factories, dams, aqueducts, docks, railroads, highways, powerhouses, schools, and parks is the handiwork of common folk from the Old World, where for centuries men of their kind had been as beasts of burden, the property of their masters—kings, nobles, and priests—and with no will and no aspirations of their own. When on rare occasions one of the lowly had reached the top in Europe he had kept the pattern intact and, if anything, tightened the screws. The stuffy little corporal from Corsica harnessed the lusty forces released by the French Revolution to a gilded state coach, and could think of nothing grander than mixing his blood with that of the Hapsburg masters and establishing a new dynasty. In our day a bricklayer in Italy, a house painter in Germany, and a shoemaker's son in Russia have made themselves masters of their nations; and what they did was to re-establish and reinforce the old pattern.

Only here, in America, were the common folk of the Old World given a chance to show what they could do on their own, without a master to push and order them about. History contrived an earth-shaking joke when it lifted by the nape of the neck lowly peasants, shopkeepers, laborers, paupers, jailbirds, and drunks from the midst of Europe, dumped them on a vast, virgin continent and said: "Go to it; it is yours!"

And the lowly were not awed by the magnitude of the task. A hunger for action, pent up for centuries, found an outlet. They went to it with ax, pick, shovel, plow, and rifle; on foot, on horse, in wagons, and on flatboats. They went to it praying, howling, singing, brawling, drinking, and fighting.

Make way for the people! This is how I read the statement that this country was built by hordes of undesirables from the Old World.

Small wonder that we in this country have a deeply ingrained faith in human regeneration. We believe that, given a chance, even the degraded and the apparently worthless are capable of constructive work and great deeds. It is a faith founded on experience, not on some idealistic theory. And no matter what some anthropologists, sociologists, and geneticists may tell us, we shall go on believing that man, unlike other forms of life, is not a captive of his past—of his heredity and habits—but is possessed of infinite plasticity, and his potentialities for good and for evil are never wholly exhausted.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Hoffer's essay presents a useful means for reviewing the thought processes we have so far studied in this book. As the first step in your analysis list all the examples of careful, firsthand observation Hoffer engaged in. What does Hoffer say this close observation did for him? Explain the change in his behavior resulting from his earliest efforts to observe closely.
2. Point out Hoffer's *first* main inference about the connection between the "make-up of the migrant workers" and their mode of existence. What hypothesis did he formulate and decide to test as the result of his mulling over this initial inference? Identify the thought process by means of which he first sought to support this hypothesis—was it induction or deduction?
3. List the kinds of evidence Hoffer gradually acquired to support his hypothesis—was it acquired inductively or deductively, or by both means? Can you distinguish, with specific reference to the text, the one from the other? Does Hoffer ever make use of "negative instances"—that is, evidence which runs counter to his hypothesis?
4. Compare the last eight paragraphs of this essay with the first eight and identify the significant differences in both thought and language which characterize these two passages.
5. One of Hoffer's most interesting speculations is contained in the seventh-to-the-last paragraph. What is the main point expressed here? Can you muster any evidence to support or refute this proposition?
6. Cite examples—for instance, murals in public buildings, western movies, historical novels, Fourth of July and commencement oratory—which reveal how prevalent is the assumption that our pioneer forefathers were glamorous, heroic figures. Is there a connection between this assumption and the one Benchley was kidding in his "A Good Old-fashioned Christmas"?
7. Does Hoffer seem to assume that the "tramp" is a definite species? Can you conceive of circumstances and social changes that might push into tramphood some people who would not otherwise join the footloose? If so, does this in any way weaken a conception of the tramp as a distinct species?
8. Can you uncover any other examples of ways in which society's "undesirables" serve it usefully besides those enumerated by Hoffer? What does this suggest about the problem of definition underlying terms like *undesirable?*

9. Does Hoffer's fairly recent emergence from this rather squalid background to his present status as a provocative new writer contradict his own thesis about the role of the undesirables?

PROJECTS

1. Have you ever worked at a job that was considered rather "unrespectable" by the "respectable" people of your community—the sort of job left to "floaters," transients, temporary workers? If you have, bring together and record in a report, oral or written, your observations of the behavior of your fellow-workers; and, in the light of those observations, consider whether you can distinguish any significant tendencies among them and whether these tendencies supported the popular notions about these workers. (Be careful not to permit the picture Hoffer has given you to condition what *you* "remember," but recall what you really saw.)
2. Here is a suggestion for a term report or research paper. Consult in your college library several biographies or diaries of frontier life in America. (We suggest biographies and diaries to get you as close as possible to firsthand evidence—the goal of most research—rather than the generalizations found in the brief accounts in most history textbooks.) Write a paper showing to what extent your sources support or disprove Hoffer's contention that frontier life was to a high degree a matter of "hard work and suffering," "enormous tasks," "unspeakable handicaps," and "impossible accomplishments." (Do you see why consulting only one source would render any generalization you might make unsafe?)

John Tasker Howard

PEOPLE HAVE NEVER LIKED MODERN MUSIC—AT FIRST

John Tasker Howard suggests that people tend to reject entirely the thing they know least, and he describes how this attitude expresses itself in people's reaction to music. He asks us to lend an ear to unfamiliar music—to give it a hearing and then to give it further hearings until we really know *what we are listening to. He is not asking us to come to any particular conclusion about "modern music"; instead, he is offering reasons for suspecting that our reactions to "modern music" are frequently reactions to something we really do not know. In the book from which this excerpt is taken, Howard goes on to examine the nature of "modern music"—its origins, purposes, and methods.*

Howard has composed many songs and piano and orchestral works, and

PEOPLE HAVE NEVER LIKED MODERN MUSIC—AT FIRST From *This Modern Music* by John Tasker Howard. Copyright, 1942, by John Tasker Howard. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York.

he has written a number of books designed to make music understandable and enjoyable to a wide audience. These writings include Our Contemporary Composers, The World's Great Operas, *and* Our American Music.

Similar efforts to help us observe more fully and accurately in the visual *arts are made by Katharine Kuh in* Art Has Many Faces; *by Faulkner, Ziegfeld, and Hill in* Art Today; *by Herbert Read in* Art Now; *and by John Grierson in* Grierson on Documentary (*a book on motion pictures*).

It is not at all strange that people generally do not like modern music, particularly those of us who have arrived at middle age. Our ancestors didn't like it either, even though their modern music was written by Monteverdi, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner. Civilized human beings are by nature too complacent to like violent changes, and older generations have always lamented the passing of "the good old days." Even the most adventurous pioneers take with them as much of their home environment as they can carry, and as soon as they have made a permanent settlement, they recreate as much of the atmosphere of their former homes as the geography and climate of their new surroundings will permit. Thus, we find New England architecture in Ohio, Spanish buildings in California, and Chinatowns in our large cities.

If venturesome emigrants demand familiar surroundings, what about those of us who stay at home, among the same neighbors, working at the same jobs, playing the same old games? Fashion designers may create radical changes from season to season to force people to buy new clothes, but most husbands resent the way their wives look in their new hats as much as they are annoyed by the bills. And if anything so trivial as a new set of contract bridge conventions is upsetting to our peace of mind, is it any wonder that the New Deal gave everyone the jitters?

Most of us admit, however, that the world is changing: socially, economically, and politically, so whether we like it or not, we know that our mode of life will have to be adapted to the world about us. Yet, while we are broadminded and practical enough to accomplish this growth in the major matters of life, it seems to some of us a bit futile and unnecessary to disturb ourselves with changes in the less vital things, among them, music.

Music, however, is a living language; or rather, *good* music is. It is composed by human beings, and human beings do have to adapt themselves to shifting conditions, no matter how much they resist them at first. Hence, if music is to remain a living language, that is, if it is to be a sincere and honest expression of the men and women who compose it, it too must grow. Like all languages, it must constantly acquire new words and expressions to convey its meaning in a changing society.

The same principle is true of any language. Greek and Latin are dead languages because they are not used any more for daily conversation; they belonged to past civilizations and have not been adapted to more recent affairs. There are no Greek and Latin words for oil-burner, cocktail, movies or broad-

casting. The dictionaries and grammars of living languages—modern Greek and Italian, English, French, German—are continually revised and brought up-to-date by the inclusion of new words, and of new phrases and sentence constructions formerly considered bad usage.

It is because music is a living language that we have the so-called modern music. Music is a medium that is constantly increasing its vocabulary and taking into its grammar various devices of harmony, melody and rhythm that were formerly forbidden by rule. If it failed to accomplish such changes it would soon be as dead as Greek and Latin, and interesting chiefly to historians.

The term "modern," as applied to music, is so vague in its meaning that it will be well to clarify it and agree on its definition. Since the general conception of "modern music" is that of something which sounds strange and startling, the phrase has become elastic and relative, depending on the experience and taste of the individual who listens to it. To some, Debussy is still a modernist, even though a number of his works are in the standard repertory of concert artists and conservative music teachers. To others, Stravinsky's *Fire Bird* and even his *Rite of Spring* are no longer modern but have become altogether "old hat." Thus, the significance of the term depends on the point of view of the individual listener, on whether he has become accustomed to more recent idioms or whether he has exposed himself so infrequently to the works of the last half-century that he still holds the composers of Beethoven's day as the norm and standard of all music, past and present. . . .

We will consider as modern music that which is different from the traditional styles of past centuries, and which finds general acceptance difficult. We need not be concerned with music that is old-fashioned and conventional in style, even though it was composed as recently as last month. And since the term is entirely relative, we shall have to consider the modern music of various periods and places. In other words, Mozart wrote modern music in the latter eighteenth century, so we are concerned with Mozart's music. John Smith, in the year 1942, writes music that Mozart might have written, so we shall not bother our heads with it.

It may be that the music of our day is far more radical and breaks more sharply with tradition, than did the new music of Mozart, Beethoven, or Mendelssohn, though the conservative music-lovers of those days thought their new music shocking enough. Go back even further, to the sixteenth century, and you find Claudio Monteverdi causing as much furor by championing the major-minor tonal system as Schoenberg has caused in our time with his atonality. In the year 1600 a critic wrote of Monteverdi: "Though I am glad of a new manner of composition, it would be more edifying to find in these madrigals reasonable passages, but these kinds of air-castles and chimeras deserve the severest reproof. . . . You hear a medley of sounds, a variety of parts that are intolerable to the ear. . . . With all the best will in the world, how can the mind see light in this chaos?"

Not many of us today would think of Mozart as a disconcerting modernist, but read what an eighteenth-century critic thought of his latest string quartets: "It is a pity that in his truly artistic and beautiful compositions Mozart should carry his effort after originality too far, to the detriment of the sentiment and heart of his works. His new quartets . . . are much too highly spiced to be palatable for any length of time."

A Vienna music patron had several of these quartets performed at his home, and was so enraged at finding the dissonances in one of them actually printed in the music that he tore the parts to pieces. Haydn, however, remarked that if Mozart wrote his music with dissonances, he must have had good reasons for doing so.

Beethoven was a shocking radical. He opened his C major symphony, the first, with a chord from the key of F, and passed through the key of G before getting down to business in C, the ruling key of the symphony. At one point in his third symphony, the *Eroica,* he had two different chords sounded at the same time. A contemporary critic explained this by saying that "poor Beethoven is so deaf that he cannot hear the discords he writes." One conductor went so far as to correct the "error" at rehearsal.

The composers of the romantic movement—Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wagner—were all resisted by the conservatives and reactionaries of their time. Robert Schumann's teacher never forgave him for admiring Chopin, and when Schumann championed the young Brahms, he was a lone prophet crying in a classic wilderness.

Music is almost always an expression of the age in which it is written. If it isn't, we may be sure that the composer himself belongs spiritually to another age, or that he patterns his work after the music of earlier composers, unconsciously or perhaps deliberately. Then we say that his style is Wagnerian or Franckian, instead of John Smithian.

This does not mean that originality alone is a sign of greatness, or even a virtue in itself. Progress and change are by no means synonymous. Many things may be wholly original and yet be altogether worthless, and it must be admitted that some composers sacrifice a great deal for what they believe to be originality. It seems as though their chief concern is to keep their music from bearing even the slightest resemblance to anything that has been written before. In such cases, the composer is substituting for sincere expression a conscious style which will inevitably prove artificial and manufactured. If he announces that he never listens to other men's works for fear it will destroy his individuality, he is explaining the limitations of his own music.

The casual listener to music, in the concert hall or on the radio and phonograph, may wonder how he can possibly distinguish between the genuine article and the work of a charlatan. How, for example, is the man to whom the connecting links of a Beethoven symphony are still a mystery, to know whether Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* is an authentic art expression, which he ought to like, or merely a confusion of shocking, ugly sounds? And how is he

to acquire the ability to enjoy anything which is at first hearing so highly unpleasant to his ears and his nervous system? Why torture himself by listening to it? . . .

The music lover must make up his mind that he is going to hear a great deal of modern music if he goes to concerts, or listens to all the numbers on a radio program. If he buys tickets to hear a Beethoven symphony, he may have to listen first to a ballet-suite by Stravinsky. Even if he is willing to come late and miss half of what he is paying for, his wife, or whomever he is taking to the concert, may like Stravinsky, and insist that they hear the entire program.

He needn't feel too badly if he thinks the whole business a terrible mess. If the new music is being played for the first time, he will no doubt have plenty of company in his opinion among the professional critics. And he has a distinct advantage over the critics; he may express his opinions to any or all of his friends, and suffer no ill consequences. He has little to lose if the ensuing years prove him wrong. The critic, however, must go on record in print, and allow historians of the future to dig in the files and show him up to posterity.

And how often these unfortunate gentlemen have turned out to be wrong, down through the history of music right to the present day! Gounod once remarked that César Franck's D minor symphony represented the height of incompetence carried to dogmatic lengths, while the late Richard Aldrich described Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade* as "dull," with an "insistence on long drawn oriental chantings and dronings."

The following paragraph might well describe the worthless product of a third- or fourth-rate composition student:

> Last night's concert began with a lot of impressionistic daubs of color smeared higgledy-piggledy on a tonal palette, with never a thought of form or purpose except to create new combinations of sounds. . . . One thing only was certain, and that was that the composer's ocean was a frog-pond and that some of its denizens had got into the throat of every one of the brass instruments.

Those words were written for the New York *Tribune* of March 22, 1907, by Henry E. Krehbiel, one of the soundest and most learned critics who has ever written for a metropolitan journal, and the work he described was Debussy's *La Mer*. Fifteen years later Krehbiel again reviewed a performance of *La Mer,* and called it a "poetic work in which Debussy has so wondrously caught the rhythms and colors of the seas."

The inference to be drawn from these two opinions is clear. When Krehbiel first heard *La Mer,* its strangeness confused him. Fifteen years later he had absorbed the idiom, and become so familiar with it that it had ceased to bother him, and he was able to grasp the true beauty of the work. . . .

Resistance to new music has always existed to a certain degree, par-

ticularly on the part of critics, but it is only in the last century and a half that it has become a violent and hostile public reaction. It was in the nineteenth century that the worship of the "old masters" came into being, with its establishment of a standard repertory for symphony orchestras and for individual concert-artists. Nowadays new music is played by major organizations largely for general prestige, as a contribution to the advancement of music, not as an immediate box-office attraction. Concert artists look for cash customers for Beethoven, Wagner, or Tschaikowsky; not for Joe Smith, nor even for Hindemith.

In the seventeen hundreds the situation was considerably different. The repertory had not yet come into existence, and new works were performed more often than old ones. Some of this may be explained by the fact that music was still largely the diversion of kings and princes, who maintained their own musicians to perform for the court. It was the duty of the *Kapellmeister* to engage and train the musicians of the court. Music to play was needed, of course, and generally the *Kapellmeister,* in his own handwriting, would arrange and adapt the parts for performance as an incidental part of his duties. He was expected to compose music of his own for all occasions, and even when he played other men's music, it was generally new. Thus, Prince Esterházy required Haydn to keep his private orchestra supplied with new symphonies and his quartet with new chamber music.

At the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Bach was expected to write a new cantata each week, and his large family was kept busy copying out the parts as the father finished each page of the score. During the several years that Bach was *Kapellmeister* for Prince Leopold at Köthen, he wrote the bulk of his orchestral and chamber music. But this was for performance by the Prince's musicians, not for publication. It was not until years later that these works were published and available for performance elsewhere.

When concerts for the public became regular features of European cities, particularly in England, the people apparently wanted new music at first, for the eighteenth-century newspaper announcements invariably featured new works. When Haydn went to London, the contract called for twelve new symphonies to be played at his concerts—six on each visit. There was also a demand from the British public for a constant supply of new operas, oratorios and instrumental works by Handel. In 1742 the Dublin papers announced that "on Monday, the 12th of April for the benefit of the Prisoners of the several Gaols, and the support of Mercer's Hospital, In Stephen's Street, and of the Charitable Infirmary on the Inn's Quay, will be performed at the Musick Hall in Fishambe-street, Mr. Handel's *new Grand Oratorio, called the Messiah,* in which the Gentlemen of the Choirs of both Cathedrals will assist, with some Concertos on the Organ, by Mr. Handell."

It was the same in America. When George Washington visited Boston, a few months after his inauguration as president, a huge concert was planned in his honor. The newspapers announced that the program would contain the

"Oratorio of *Jonah,* which has been applauded by the best judges and has never been performed in America." Again in Boston, a Mr. Turner advertised a concert in 1773 and respectfully begged leave "to acquaint his subscribers that his last concert for the season will be on Tues. eve, at which time will be performed a variety of music received from London by Capt. Scott, which never has been performed in this place."

All of this was in the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, concerts and opera became the diversion of the people, not alone the luxury of aristocrats. With the public demand for the familiar, there came a resistance to new music which made it difficult for young revolutionary composers to gain a sympathetic hearing. As Křenek has written: [1] "Theaters and concert halls were thrown open to an enormously increasing number of people, and the operation of music as an institution had thenceforth to depend for its sustenance upon this new audience's desire to buy and its power to buy, a service which formerly was essentially performed by small privileged groups." Thus, in our own time, we find that radical new music generally has its first hearing at non-profit-making concerts sponsored by groups of composers or subsidized by philanthropists.

The inexperienced layman, then, is not alone in his disinclination to bother himself with listening to modern music. Sometimes, however, he is more receptive to it than professionals are, for though he may like best the things he is familiar with, he is often far less hemmed-in by traditions than is the veteran concert-goer. Virgil Thomson has gone so far as to claim that modern music is easier for the layman to understand than old music. In an article on "Understanding Modern Music" he writes:

> There is no reason why anybody in the music world, professional or layman, should find himself in the position of not understanding a piece of twentieth-century music, if he is willing to give himself a little trouble. . . . The art-music of the past, most of all that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century repertory known as "classical" music, is, on the other hand, about as incomprehensible as anything could be. Its idiom is comprehensible, because it is familiar. But its significant content is as impenetrable as that of the art work of the Middle Ages. It was made by men whose modes of thought and attitudes of passion were as different from ours as those of Voltaire and Goethe and Rousseau . . . were different from those of Bernard Shaw . . . and Gertrude Stein and Mickey Mouse. . . .

It is surely too much to say that a twentieth-century listener cannot penetrate to the spiritual content of Beethoven, but Mr. Thomson is sound in stating that, aside from the idiom of a contemporary work, no listener can fail to penetrate its meaning, at least partially.

The listener's problem is one of understanding something of the composer's method, and of how his style differs from that of composers in the

[1] *Music Here and Now.*

past. Then he can decide for himself whether or not the twentieth-century message is coherently and effectively expressed; in other words, he will know whether or not he is likely to enjoy a new composition when he has become used to its style and mode of expression.

If he is a lover of the classics, if he likes to listen to his "old favorites," he must realize why music must change its style with the centuries. . . . In the twentieth century, when a composer writes descriptive music, he will deal with the sights and sounds that belong to his own era, and instead of painting tone-pictures of sailing vessels he will depict the speedier locomotives and airplanes; instead of blacksmith shops, he will paint steel mills. In drawing his musical scenes, he finds that the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic vocabulary of Beethoven will not suffice for the mighty roar of the plunging giant of steel, and like Honegger in *Pacific 231,* he will draw on new combinations of sounds to sing the song of the great locomotive. Nor will the chastely simple pattern of Handel's *Harmonious Blacksmith* serve for describing an iron foundry. The crude dissonances of Mossolow's *Soviet Iron Foundry* are less tuneful, but more faithful to their subject.

Entirely apart from the descriptive functions of music, how can we expect the musical speech of Handel to express the restless, uncertain temper of our age any more effectively than the literary style of *Godey's Lady's Book* would describe an air raid in the pages of *Life* or *Time?* The march of science, the invention of machines, have created an atmosphere wholly unlike the environment that surrounded our fathers.

We need music which expresses the way we feel . . . in any current year in which we live. It is not sound to say that we have enough music already, for there must be music to express the voice of every age. If the music lovers of Mozart's day had refused altogether to listen to new music, we wouldn't have any Beethoven. And if the concert-goers of Beethoven's day had decided that they had enough music (which some of them almost did), then there would have been no Schumann, Mendelssohn, Wagner, or Brahms.

For unless we listen to our new music, it will not exist. When music is not performed, it is merely a set of symbols on paper. None of us can tell who the Mozarts or the Beethovens of the future will be, but we must make sure that when they come, if they are not here already, they'll have a chance to be heard.

There are just two things that the music-lover who wants to enjoy modern music need do. First, he must realize *why* it is what it is; why the composers of every age have written differently from those who preceded them. Secondly, he must acquaint himself, if only superficially, with a few of the methods used by modern composers to make their music different from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music. Then he will know whether they have used their tools and materials effectively or inefficiently. And he may come to have a fair idea as to which of them are creative artists and which are mountebanks and fakers.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Howard recognizes that no headway can be made in a discussion of "modern music" without a definition of *modern*. Using his definition, how is it possible to consider some of Mozart's music but none of Irving Berlin's modern? How can Debussy's music be modern to some listeners, no longer modern to others? Does the relativity of this definition bother you? (That is, do you want a more *fixed* definition?) If so, would you be satisfied with a definition that fixed modern music as any that has been written in the last 20 years? Would such a definition raise new problems?
2. Howard makes clear that resistance to new music has always been characteristic of most critics. But in the last century and a half since music has reached a wider audience, this bigger public has displayed the same resistance. Does this suggest that the larger the audience for any art medium, the more conservative and conventional must be the product designed for them? Is there any evidence in the mass media (radio-TV, press, magazines, and movies) to support this conclusion?
3. Is there any special reason why informed critics should so often miss the point of new material in music or any other field? Can you see a parallel between resistance to the new on the part of critics steeped in music and the resistance to something new in education by teachers and scholars conversant with a tradition?
4. We have already pointed out the pitfalls which sometimes accompany the argument from analogy. In this essay, Howard makes use of the analogy between music and "any language" to demonstrate the need for change in music. Reread paragraphs 3 through 6. Does this analogy seem sound?

PROJECTS

1. Listen to recordings of African, Oriental, or Indian music. (The Laura C. Boulton recordings of the music of various countries on Victor records is a convenient source.) You will probably be puzzled at first. In a paper record your impressions and the probable reasons for your quandary. The following questions may help you: Is knowing "better from worse" really important here? Is it more useful to see what the differences are between the unknown and the familiar sounds and instruments? How does this correspond to the way in which the trained scientist responds to new data and experiences?
2. Here is another subject for a research paper. There are "pioneers" of many sorts (settlers in new territory, experimenters in physical science and industry, unconventional thinkers in government, business, or education, unorthodox thinkers in religion and philosophy). Select some such pioneer (Penn and Sutter, Pasteur and Steinmetz, Jefferson and Gandhi, Ford and Filene, Horace Mann and Pestalozzi, Luther and Loyola, Schweitzer and Tolstoy—these are only a handful of the possibilities from which to choose) and read two or three accounts of his "pioneering." Write a documented paper which supports, refutes, or qualifies Howard's dictum that the new always meets resistance.

Hadley Cantril

DON'T BLAME IT ON HUMAN NATURE

Thus far in this section we have presented various reexaminations of popular assumptions. The following selection challenges one of the most common and probably the broadest of assumptions—"that you can't change human nature." This assumption has been used over and over again to justify war or a passive attitude toward social problems or personal conduct.

Cantril, a leader in the field of social psychology, has investigated such problems as the causes of panic (The Invasion from Mars, *research into the causes of the Mars-invasion scare of 1938 inspired by an Orson Welles radio broadcast*) *and the behavior of voters* (Gauging Public Opinion). *As the director of the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University, he has done much to evolve careful methods of collecting factual data about public opinion and of developing provocative hypotheses about it.*

Living as we do in the midst of numerous conflicts and of vague forebodings that even more and greater conflicts lie ahead, we are apt to wonder if the situation has to be as it is. Why is it that the only thing we can be sure about in tomorrow's newspaper is that the front page will continue the story of old frictions on the domestic or international scene or headline some new conflicts on the horizon? Why must men get themselves so embroiled? Is there something in "human nature" that makes all this trouble inevitable?

In critical times like these the phrase "human nature" is batted about by columnists, politicians, commencement orators, and spokesmen for special interest-groups who either openly or implicitly have their own versions of what man's nature is. Some see the reason for all our turmoil in "the cussedness of human nature." Others assume that "human nature" is aggressive and pugnacious, thereby making conflicts and wars inevitable. Some think that man is by nature selfish and competitive and that the best we can hope for is to establish some fair rules within which man's "competitive instincts" will be forced to operate. Others, more sentimentally inclined, argue that man is by nature kind and co-operative but has been perverted by what they call modern civilization.

Whatever the views expressed, the chances are that they are rationalizations for perpetuating the system of ideas, institutions, or social and economic conditions that their exponents subscribe to. Occasionally they are assumptions on the basis of which a good-will reformer is urging a social change.

And while being assailed by all these theories as to what human nature

DON'T BLAME IT ON HUMAN NATURE From *The New York Times Magazine*, July 6, 1947. By permission of the author and publisher.

is, we are also likely to hear from the rostrum, the pulpit, or the radio a repetition of the thesis that the physical sciences have far outstripped the social sciences so that what we need today is a more vigorous study of "human nature" to catch up with our knowledge of nature itself.

What can a psychologist say to all this? Or, to put it more strongly, what should a psychologist say to all this in his joint role of psychologist and responsible citizen? The psychologist has a self-appointed duty to try somehow to clarify the discussion of human nature, because he knows that much of the talk is potentially dangerous. He knows that some proposals for action, some important policies, are based on false premises concerning this thing called "human nature" and are therefore bound to turn into cruel illusions, bringing further conflicts and misery in their wake. On the other hand, some proposals promise more lasting progress because they are based on assumptions that square with what the psychologist and the social scientist know to be factually true.

What, then, is this thing we call "human nature"? Let's take a look at it the way a psychologist would.

He would point out first of all that "human nature" is an abstraction, one of thousands of abstractions upon which men unfortunately operate. The psychologist would say that this abstraction, like all other abstractions, can be understood only in relation to a specific individual or individuals reacting in certain concrete situations.

Take yourself, for instance. Presumably you are a living example of "human nature." What constitutes this "you"?

If we stick to a naturalistic explanation and avoid any easy supranatural or mystical generalizations, we find that this "you" consists of a physical organism endowed with a host of wonderful mechanisms and devices for adjusting to a certain part of your physical environment. We find, too, that you have certain basic desires and needs—among them, sexual desires and a need for food and protection from the elements. Beyond a few such basic needs most psychologists cannot yet go. They cannot subscribe to the existence of a whole host of instincts or a long list of needs which some men have conjured up as "explanations" for the varied directions human activities take.

In addition to the basic needs, you have a number of capacities—among them the ability to use words and concepts—which distinguish you as a human being from all other living organisms. Biologists seem agreed that man as an organism is an emergent species endowed with certain capacities which are qualitatively different from those of his nearest neighbors in the evolutionary scale and which make him unique. (So any analogies of human behavior to the behavior of other animals are highly suspect.) In addition to these capacities and physical characteristics common to you and other human beings, you yourself have certain dispositions, certain temperamental characteristics, certain skills that are mainly biologically determined and that

make you, as an individual, a unique personality, unlike all other people on the face of the earth unless you happen to be an identical twin.

In addition to these biologically determined drives and characteristics, you have certain tastes, certain standards, certain attitudes, certain beliefs, certain values and identifications. These are the things that give the direction to your behavior. These are the things that spell out what you regard as purpose, what you would consider as your own self-interest. The all-important point to remember is that these tastes and standards, these attitudes, beliefs, identifications, and values are things you have learned or that have been formed for good psychological reasons in the course of your life. They are not innate and inborn in the sense that your sex and temperament are inborn.

You will know without being an ethnologist that tastes, standards, and values vary from one culture to another. And if you have walked on the other side of the tracks, visited other parts of your city, mingled at all with people not in your own social class or your own customary group, you will also know that tastes, standards, and identifications vary a great deal even within a single culture.

If "human nature," then, means anything at all, it must include not only the innate biological characteristics that make you not only a human being but a unique human being, but it must also include the direction of your individual or your group effort as learned or formed through the identifications you have made in your particular process of becoming a member of society.

An important and necessary part of the psychologist's account of human motivation is found in the individual's identification with a specific group. For it is this that gives him his status, that builds in him his ego-satisfaction. Thus he strives to maintain or enhance his status; he strives to place himself as far up as he can in that social hierarchy whose values have become his.

If we could get firmly into our minds this distinction between those characteristics of man that are biologically determined and those directions of his activity that are learned according to the particular ideas of the particular social and economic groups with which he has lived, a great deal of the vagueness surrounding the phrase "human nature" would then certainly disappear.

Examine, for instance, the statement that "human nature can't be changed." Obviously, we cannot change the genetic characteristics of man (except perhaps experimentally). We cannot create people with three eyes; we cannot create a third sex; we cannot so change people that none of them has an I.Q. of less than 180. But this has nothing whatever to do with the potentiality of changing the *direction* of man's efforts.

Whether a man is going to be "competitive" or "co-operative"; whether he is going to be a Catholic, a Protestant, a Mohammedan, or an atheist; whether he is going to be a Republican or a Democrat—such things are almost entirely determined by the particular set of conditions and values the

man has learned. These identifications, these modes of behavior, even if diametrically opposed to each other, all serve the same basic psychological function for the individual. We do not need to drag in any instinct of gregariousness or any innate drive for status to account for man's activities. Group identifications emerge inevitably because man lives, not in complete isolation, but with other men.

"Human nature," then, is anything but static and unchangeable. It can and does change with conditions. In fact, it is always changing. And not only is there gradual change, but frequently there is the sudden emergence of new qualities and characteristics formed when a single individual or group of individuals find themselves in a new set of conditions. Technological developments, for example, such as the steam engine, the airplane, the harnessing of atomic energy, at first provide some means to a specific end. Generally, however, they soon begin to affect and modify the ends themselves.

Take, for example, the following case of a complete "reversal" of "human nature" effected by a war-created situation in a normal American boy who was not "cruel" or "pugnacious" by disposition. The case was reported to me by one of my Princeton students who knew the captain he describes:

> The captain was a Southerner in his mid-twenties. He had been a rifle-company commander on the Western Front. He was very well liked by both his fellow-patients and the hospital personnel. His outstanding personality traits were modesty and the friendliness and kindliness of his disposition. As a boy he had been fond of duck-hunting but had given up the sport because, as he said, "I didn't see much fun in killing." Once, during a discussion of war experiences, he told the following story:
>
> He had commanded a company during the disastrous Battle of the Bulge, when the German Army had broken through the American lines in the Ardennes Forest. The captain found himself cut off from the rest of our forces and surrounded by the enemy. His situation was desperate. He had only about forty men left, no food, little ammunition and no idea where the American lines were. In addition to these difficulties, his company had a large number of German prisoners on hand. There was no way to get rid of the prisoners by sending them to a camp in the rear area. Guarding them with his depleted forces was out of the question.
>
> Therefore, he determined to kill the prisoners. He and the sergeant took them out in the woods in small groups and shot them. Among the captain's group was a young boy, only about 15 or 16 years old. The captain concluded his story with this remark: "He was crying and begged me to save him and I was kind of sorry I had to kill him."

Hundreds of illustrations of this type could be given, with respect not only to individuals but to the changed directions of group activities such as occur in revolutionary situations. People are not gangsters or law-abiding citizens, Fascists or Communists, agnostics or believers, good or bad, because of innate dispositions. People's actions do not take the directions they do

because people are blessed or cursed with a certain kind of "human nature." People's actions take the directions they do because a certain set of conditions has provided status, meaning and satisfaction, or, in critical times, because status, meaning, and satisfaction must be sought in new ways.

Hence conflicts between one individual and another, between one group and another, are inevitable so long as conflicting identifications and conflicting purposes, springing from social conditions, continue to persist.

These conflicts will never be resolved by compromises or attempts to "change human nature" on any individualistic basis. They will be solved finally only when social, economic, and political relationships are so arranged that an individual, while retaining his own purposes, his own status, and his own ego-strivings, can identify these with the larger, all-inclusive goals of the whole society. Personal goals must become socially valuable goals and social goals must become personally valuable.

It should be stressed that this idea of a common purpose does not mean a leveling off of taste, interest, or performance with respect to the inherent and unique capacities and temperamental characteristics of the individual. For these differences in abilities and temperament will determine the specific role an individual can fruitfully play within his group and within the larger interests of society.

Someone is sure to ask the psychologist why, if he thinks he knows so much about human nature, can't he do something about it? Why must we endure unending conflict? Why can't the social psychologist tell people—especially those in power—what should be done?

Unfortunately, the psychologist knows that many people have so identified themselves with their own group standards that they would, literally, rather die than give up their identifications. Hence, we have conflicts between those human beings who identify themselves with capital and those who identify themselves with labor; between those who have become identified as Arabs and those who have become identified as Jews; between those who call themselves Moslems and those who call themselves Hindus.

In his recent address at Princeton's bicentennial, President Truman said that "As we gain increasing understanding of men, comparable to our increasing understanding of matter, we shall develop, with God's grace, the ability of nations to work together and live together in lasting peace." But the psychologist must point out that since an individual is largely what he has identified himself with, and since his identifications define his purposes, no amount of purely intellectual understanding is enough to bring about any change in the direction of his activities. The sort of understanding that changes purpose is one that a person somehow gets below the neck.

In casually patterned societies such as ours is today, the psychologist and the social scientist are apt to be laughed off by the "man of affairs" as impractical and starry-eyed dreamers. We need not argue the claim that the physical scientists are ahead of the social scientists. It is difficult to know what

measuring rod one should use. It might, however, be pointed out that the problems of man and his relationships are probably even more complex than the problems of nuclear physics and not so amenable to controlled experimentation.

But the main point is that we already know a great deal more about man and his social relationships than most people in our casually patterned society are willing to use. And we also know why people aren't willing to pay attention to scientists who deal with people. Apparently we have to wait until people learn the hard way that real democracy and real world peace can come about only when human beings recognize their common purposes as human beings. Further, they must see that the dignity and uniqueness of every individual (pathological cases aside) can be preserved and enhanced without in any way running head-on into the common purposes of all men.

We can say, then, that there is nothing fixed, or static, or immutable about human nature. We can say that there is no one single accurate characterization of it. We can say that it is fluid, constantly changing, that occasionally, under a new set of conditions, it exhibits new and heretofore undreamed-of possibilities. When conditions are changed, human nature is changed.

Human nature as it characterizes any group at any given time is what it is because of the conditions under which the individuals in that group have matured. And the only way to bring about the human nature we want is to plan scientifically the kind of social and economic environment offering the best conditions for the development of human nature in the direction we would specify—a direction that spells freedom from group conflict and freedom for personal development.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. It is important to distinguish between the basic needs (biologically determined drives and capacities) and the tastes, standards, attitudes, beliefs, values and identifications Cantril speaks of. What is the essential difference? How might understanding this help dispel "a great deal of the vagueness surrounding the phrase 'human nature' "?
2. After reading this essay, you can see that there are two general approaches to the "human nature" concept. One is deductive, starting with certain preconceived ideas about human nature. The other is inductive, starting with observation about particular persons behaving in particular ways under particular circumstances. Which approach does Cantril find more useful? Why?
3. Among the circumstances which frequently give rise to sweeping generalizations about "human nature" are reckless driving, mob violence, strikes, unemployment, wars, etc. But what of the drivers who exhibit consideration for others, the persons who refuse to join a mob, the labor-management differences which are settled by peaceful arbitration, the unemployed who aren't lazy, the men who wouldn't fight in certain wars? Do you see how these "It must be human

nature" shibboleths cannot meet the test of thoughtful induction? Can you cite similar examples?

4. One of the most frequently heard assertions about "human nature" is that "people are basically selfish"—that is, that they will satisfy their own desires even at the expense of others. Test this proposition in the following way:
   a. List at random a dozen things you have done during the past 24 hours.
   b. Check those things which were done to satisfy a conscious personal desire.
   c. Now place a second check in front of those *checked* activities which did not, so far as you can reasonably tell, hurt anyone. What conclusion about the alleged "selfishness of human nature" can you logically draw from your findings?
5. Cantril explains that many people's notions about "human nature" are rationalizations for perpetuating their ideas, prejudices, beliefs. What rationalization about human nature might persons in the following situations possibly advance?
   a. A student who has been caught cheating in a college which has an "honor system."
   b. A football coach whose teams are criticized for excessively rough play.
   c. A self-made business man who started with nothing and has made a tidy fortune, but who is criticized on all sides for his grasping and ruthless business methods.
   d. A motion-picture producer whose movies are characterized as "pap, catering to the mentalities of 12-year-olds."
   e. A group of property owners who refuse to permit members of a minority ethnic or religious group to own, lease, or rent property in a certain area.
   f. An organization which bitterly opposes any efforts of any American agency to assist foreign nations.
   g. The board of directors of a philanthropic society who have consistently rejected requests for funds to attempt the rehabilitation of paroled convicts.
6. Cantril's statement that many people "would, literally, rather die than give up their identifications with certain group standards" may at first seem exaggerated. But consider the conduct and motives of many persons who fought in the Civil War, the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe, and the medieval crusades. Cite other examples. Is it "human nature" for people to act this way?

PROJECTS

1. Choose one:
   a. Look at one trait or tendency which you are pretty certain characterizes you as a person. List the factors or events in your past or present environment which could largely account for it. With this list in front of you, write a paper explaining how these factors combine to produce this characteristic without your having to explain it by some "innate drive" based on "human nature."
   b. Write an essay describing some marked change in your behavior. Evaluate the reasons for this change. Are they the result of conditions peculiar to a certain time and place, or are they the result of something you call "human nature"?

2. Describe in a detailed report an instance of the change of a whole group of people (e.g., the behavior of the mutineers of the *Bounty* after they settled on Pitcairn Island). Be sure to select an instance about which you know—or can find out—the full details. Focus your report on this basic question: Does it appear that the altered behavior of the group can be accounted for by a change in human nature, or do the circumstances surrounding these people at a certain time seem in themselves sufficient explanation?

4 DISTORTION

The first three sections of this book have a certain time logic—that is, they parallel in their sequence the rough order of our own thought processes. Beginning with observations of our experiences we go on to draw certain inferences from those observations; these inferences must be tested against further experience, and when they prove unreliable we are forced back on an examination of our assumptions.

At any step in this process, however, an element of distortion can enter. Distortion can take many forms ranging from illusion, illustrated by the "bent" stick in water, to conscious deception, illustrated by the demagogue's deliberate use of innuendo to slander someone who is opposing him. These extreme forms of distortion are, fortunately, relatively easy to detect and correct. Not so easy to detect, partly because the source of error frequently lies in our own emotions, biases, and unconscious attitudes, are certain kinds of distortion dealt with by the essays in this section.

The initial essay by Montagu will at once acquaint you with a kind of distortion—the unsupported generalization—and a means to correct it. Mrs. Lee's brief dialogue serves to remind us that a foolish question is an open invitation to a foolish answer. In an age which considers itself "scientific" and which assumes that statistics is automatically a tool of science, the warning issued by Darrell Huff that statistical data are no better than the thoughtfulness and integrity of their compilers is timely. Two teams of psychologists, Allport and Postman, and Hastorf and Cantril, follow with analyses of two commonplace incidents which had potentially dangerous consequences because of the strong urge of many persons to "read into" a situation what they were already disposed to find there. Next, Cooke presents a sharp contrast between the conscious methods of a trained reporter who seeks specifics and particulars and the unconscious desire of many of us to seek a broad, sweeping, oversimplified answer to such a complex problem as "What are Americans really like?" The section is concluded by Walter Lippmann's philosophical discussion of many reasons for our desire to oversimplify—to seek easy answers to involved problems, to view situations through the glass of

ignorance, provincialism, or self-interest, to leap to generalized conclusions without sufficient evidence, to see surface similarities and ignore basic differences.

This fourth and final section of Part I of *Thought and Statement* will, it is hoped, accomplish three purposes: (1) point up a weakness in thinking which can infect any of the three thought processes previously discussed—observation, inference, assumption; (2) review and tie together these three so that they will appear as what they are—aspects of a single process; (3) reveal pitfalls of language as well as pitfalls of logic and so prepare you for a consideration of the problems in Part II of this book.

Montague Francis Ashley-Montagu

UNKNOWN QUANTITIES: CIGARETTES AND BLONDES

It seems appropriate to begin a section on "Distortion" with an article concerning two subjects which are often distorted in discussion—cigarettes and blondes. Ashley-Montagu, a social-anthropologist, points out ways of handling these and other subjects so as to arrive at useful conclusions.

Ashley-Montagu is perhaps best known to the general reading public for his work on race prejudice, Man's Most Dangerous Myth: the Fallacy of Race *(1942).*

Some time ago, over America's Town Meeting of the Air, Mr. Harold Ickes, at that time Secretary of the Interior, and Mr. Frank Gannett, publisher, discussed the question, "Do We Have a Free Press?" During the course of the discussion Mr. Ickes was asked to cite examples of news suppression. He gave several examples, and added, "I understand that at Johns Hopkins University there is a very sensational finding resulting from the study of the effect of cigarette smoking that has not appeared, so far as I know, in any newspaper in the United States. I wonder if that is because the tobacco companies are such large advertisers?"

Note that even if this "I wonder" was sarcasm, instead of tact, it was not a positive statement—it left an "out."

Now let us suppose that you, a smoker, wanted to discover what there was in Mr. Ickes' statement. There was some sensational finding about smoking, the implication being that it wasn't good for one's health, *sensationally not good.* You want to get to the bottom of this. The newspapers were stated

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to have suppressed the account of this "sensational finding." How do you find out for yourself?

You ask questions and listen to the answers. But first you insure yourself against asking foolish or unnecessary questions by looking carefully at the conditions you are to investigate. A statement has been made. You wish to check up on it. First of all make sure that you understand what was said. Then break that statement down into its component parts.

Mr. Ickes, speaking extemporaneously, stated that:

1. I understand
2. that at Johns Hopkins University
3. there is a very sensational finding
4. resulting from the study
5. of the effect of cigarette smoking
6. that has not appeared,
7. so far as I know,
8. in any newspaper in the United States.
9. I wonder
10. if that is because
11. the tobacco companies are such large advertisers?

Analyzing these parts of Mr. Ickes' statement, we find:

1, he says "I understand." This means that he has some kind of information. The information may be right or wrong. 2, he names a definite institution, Johns Hopkins University, to which you can go for your information as 3, the place where "there is a very sensational finding," which it is of real importance for you to know about, 4, this finding "resulting from the study," that is, that it was carried out by a scientist or scientists working in the afore-mentioned institution, a study, 5, "of the effect of cigarette smoking." Being a cigarette smoker, you find this of interest and want to know all about it, but an account of that study, 6, "has not appeared," 7, "so far," said Mr. Ickes, "as I know"; that is to say, such an account might have appeared and Mr. Ickes failed to see it; hence you may yet find it if you take sufficient trouble to look for it, 8, "in any newspaper in the United States"; that is something of a job, but if you're sufficiently interested and have the time you can do it. 9, "I wonder"—this is obviously a rhetorical "wonder," in which Mr. Ickes suggests that no account of this study appeared in "any newspaper in the United States," 10, "because" so much profit accrues to the newspapers from 11, "the tobacco companies who are such large advertisers."

You are now clear as to the various points involved.

You don't want to write to Mr. Ickes for further information because you want to check on Mr. Ickes' statement. Your job is to check on him from other sources.

You can write directly to the secretary of Johns Hopkins University for information on the smoking study. This is a good plan, for then you may be put into direct touch with the original researchers. You can try this, and maybe you will receive all the information you require.

You write. It is toward the end of January, 1939. Meanwhile you check on the newspapers. You begin by consulting the Index to the New York *Times* for 1938. Actually there is something on smoking. You consult the files of the *Times* at your local library and look the item up. It is at the foot of page 19, in the issue for February 25, 1938. It says, reporting a lecture given at the New York Academy of Medicine by Professor Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins University on February 24, 1938, that

> Professor Pearl also presented the "first life tables ever constituted" to show relation between tobacco and longevity. The tables showed, he said, "that smoking is associated with a definite impairment of longevity."
>
> This impairment, he added, is proportional to the habitual amount of tobacco usage in smoking, being great for the heavy smokers and less for moderate smokers. But even in the case of the moderate smoker, he said, the impairment in longevity is "sufficient to be measurable and significant."

Thus, by the simple expedient of using the annual index of one of the leading newspapers in the United States, you have at one blow solved several of the problems you set out to solve.

You now know who it was who carried out the study on smoking. You know something of the nature and the results of that study. You know that at least one newspaper did report the results of that study, however briefly.

In checking further you find that *Time* on March 7, 1938, also gave an account of those results.

The New York *Times* and *Time* take the advertisements of the tobacco companies, so that you now know that not *all* the papers that carry tobacco advertisements suppressed the Johns Hopkins findings. But these are only two papers out of many, and they did not give the story a front-page write-up, as it perhaps deserved.

Now you can do some real checking to determine *to what extent* the suggestion of suppression is true. New York City has a good many papers, so you take the most widely read of them and examine their contents for the year 1938. This is, of course, a big job. It takes you a few days, but at the end of your examination you are satisfied that the *Herald Tribune, Sun, News, Mirror, Post,* and *Journal-American* published nothing on Professor Pearl's findings, while the *World-Telegram* and the *Times* devoted a few lines to the subject.

In New York City, therefore, six out of the eight most widely circulated journals published nothing on the tobacco story. Two of the eight gave it only a few lines. All these papers carry tobacco advertising. Since Professor

Pearl's findings were of the highest importance you would reasonably have expected that they would give those findings some prominence. The demonstration by a leading scientist that something is associated with man's life span is surely important news.

Why, then, was it not published? Were those papers unaware of Professor Pearl's findings? It is a possibility you must consider; that is, you must continue to say "I wonder" and ask more questions.

Upon investigation you find that the Associated Press, the United Press, the International News Service, and Science Service sent the story to every newspaper in the United States!

You must therefore conclude that all those newspapers which did not publish the story suppressed it for reasons of their own.

Mr. Ickes' statement, therefore, was not far wrong as far as New York goes.

If you had checked on all the newspapers in the United States you would have found that the majority of them suppressed the story. But let us stick to your sampling of the truth through the examination of the New York papers.

What do you think of Mr. Ickes' suggestion that the story was widely suppressed because the tobacco companies are such large advertisers? Knowing what you do, and with the evidence at hand, you reach a conclusion which you put in the form of a working hypothesis; namely, that it is more likely than not, and therefore probable, that most newspapers suppressed the story because its publication might have endangered the income from tobacco ads.

That in itself is an interesting conclusion. You have already gone most of the way in discovering the answers to your questions—but not all of the way. By now you have made a number of useful discoveries (you always do when you start checking up on things in a scientific manner). You will have discovered that one of the best ways to unearth what has been going on during the year in science is through the pages of the popular, non-profit weekly journal *Science News Letter.* Another source you have learned about is *Science,* the official weekly organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Consulting the index of each of these journals, you find that there is a reference to Professor Pearl's work on tobacco. In *Science News Letter* there is a reference on page 163 (March 12, 1938). In the Index to *Science* you actually find that Professor Pearl has himself published an article on the subject in the issue for March 4, 1938, pages 216-217. You turn to page 216 and there you read the report of this research on 6,813 men, comprising non-smokers, moderate smokers, and heavy smokers. There is a simple table and a graph. Professor Pearl's conclusion is as follows: "In this sizable material the smoking of tobacco was statistically associated with an impairment of life

duration, and the amount or degree of this impairment increased as the habitual amount of smoking increased" (page 217).

Now you are virtually at the end of your chase—but not quite. What do you make of Professor Pearl's conclusion?

You remember that you are to listen carefully to the answers you obtain. There must not be anything more in your judgment of what Professor Pearl has written than he himself has stated. You may consider that he might have stated what he had to say a little more clearly. Scientific writing is a kind of shorthand, however, and its job is to say things as economically as possible.

Does Professor Pearl say that smoking *causes* impairment of life duration? He does not. He says that in his material "the smoking of tobacco was *statistically associated* with an impairment of life *duration.*"

Now statistical association is a very different thing from causation. Because two things occur together, one is not necessarily the cause of the other. Professor Pearl well knew this and was scrupulously careful not to say that smoking was the cause of impaired life duration. For all he knew, it might very well be something else. It might be, for instance, something that habitual smokers did or failed to do, which bore no obvious relation to smoking, that was the cause of their impaired longevity.

The smoker has heard from childhood that smoking is not good for the health, yet he smokes. This in itself suggests a person who is likely to be careless of his health in other matters, too; that he indulges in other habits which might be the actual responsible agents, either singly or together, for the impairment of his longevity. The person who does not smoke is one who, in general, is probably more careful of his health and who lives at a slower rate. It is such factors taken together, rather than his non-smoking, which may be responsible for his greater longevity compared to that of the smokers as a group.

Your questioning here has made clear the scientific truism that *in order to know the cause of any effect you must have a complete specification of the conditions entering into that effect.*

Meanwhile you have completed your investigation into the truth of a statement about smoking and you really know now how much truth there was in it. This knowledge could not have been obtained in any other way than by asking questions and working through the facts for yourself.

Was it worth your while? Did you learn anything? You did rather enjoy it, didn't you?

At a large advertising agency in New York a conference of executives discussed details of a nationwide poster campaign. One poster was to be placed at the entrances of stores, and the question arose whether it should be designed for the right or left of the shop door. Do more people turn to the right or to the left when they enter a shop?

Theoretical discussion waxed warm, and one executive suggested a little research. Just across the street a large cafeteria had two counters, one at the right and one at the left of the main entrance. The conference adjourned to the cafeteria to observe whether patrons turned left or right.

It was noticed at once that the longer line of customers stood before the left-hand counter. This pleased those who had held out for the left turn, but one partisan of the right would not be convinced so readily. He sought out the manager of the cafeteria and asked a question.

"Well, yes," said the manager, "I can tell which side they'll mostly line up on, but it isn't always the same side. See that blonde cashier over there? When I put her on the right they line up on the right. When I put her on the left, like she is today, they go to the left."

This is simply by way of proving that evidence must be examined, and doubt is a wise precaution, the precaution of the scientist or the judge. *Always remember that it is better to be truly uncertain than falsely certain.* The cultured mind prefers the former condition.

This does not mean that you may not generalize, but you must *be careful about sweeping generalizations.* Generalizations based on a sufficient number of facts are perfectly all right. In fact that is what a scientific law is: a generalization based upon a *sufficiency* of facts, from which a truth is deduced which is in *general* true—true most of the time but not necessarily in every case.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. As you follow Montagu's step-by-step analysis of Ickes' statement, list the specific pitfalls to clear thinking he is helping the investigator avoid.
2. Montagu's technique here in his proposed investigation of the effects of smoking is to ask many questions. Do you recall from your own experience and observation any inquiries which were begun with *more answers* than questions?
3. Take a question now in your mind, list five sources of information to be used in answering it, and evaluate each source as to: (*a*) firsthandedness, (*b*) completeness of factual information, (*c*) freedom from "special pleading."
4. As Montagu is careful to make plain, because two things are linked in time and place it does not follow that there is any causal connection between them. Draw up a list of commonly associated phenomena (colds and winter, large cars and wealth, suntanned appearance and beaches, tooth decay and eating candy, etc.) and show how in each instance the two need not be causally connected.
5. Recall the surprise that awaited the advertising executives who wished to determine whether people turn more frequently to the left or to the right when they enter a shop. Here are three other situations, with conclusions about them. Point out what possibilities need to be explored further before we finally decide whether *these* conclusions are true or not:

a. In a family of six children one of the children you know is very friendly and cooperative at school. *Conclusion:* He has learned in the family how to share with others.

b. X—— has been exposed to measles in a friend's home. He comes down with measles two weeks after his visit. *Conclusion:* He got the measles at his friend's home.

c. The ownership of a newspaper is bought by a man you know to be very bigoted. *Conclusion:* The newspaper will certainly become more biased than it has been.

PROJECTS

1. Montagu emphasizes the usefulness of breaking down a general statement into its component parts in order to determine precisely the questions you must ask and the conditions you must investigate if you are to discover what it's worth. Using his analysis of Ickes' statement as a working model, break down the following statement into its component parts and analyze each part in much the same way that Montagu does:

   According to usually reliable sources the War Manpower Commission will revise its policy of deferring from the draft college students who have completed one semester's work and are in the upper third of their class.

2. After investigating *one* of the following quite limited questions, evaluate the information you have collected and its sources in somewhat the same fashion as Montagu evaluates the information about cigarette smoking: (*a*) How and by whom the books in the college library are chosen, (*b*) the efficiency of a new "Hi-fi" component, (*c*) the color-fastness of a fabric, (*d*) the appropriateness of a gown to be worn at a coming prom, and (*e*) the growing habits of a certain type of lawn-seed.

3. Montagu's illustration of the need for testing a hypothesis before drawing conclusions about whether more people turn to the right or the left suggests experiences we have all had. Write a humorous anecdote designed to illustrate the need to test a hypothesis. Have you ever been fooled, for instance, by a red can labeled "gasoline" in the fishing boat you had confidently powered out to the middle of the lake? Or by the presence in your car's glove compartment of a box labeled "flashlight bulbs" when you set out hurriedly for a night drive over poorly marked roads?

Mrs. Irving J. Lee

THE INQUIRING REPORTER

Interest in problems of language and logic is not confined to college classrooms or to the teachers and students who occupy them. How many housewives, for instance, have recognized the verbal and logical inanities contained in the claims of some door-to-door salesmen or the ill-advised questions of some pollsters and inquiring reporters?

One such housewife, in any case, not only recognized such verbal distortion but set about satirizing it. Mrs. Irving Lee is the wife of a Northwestern University speech professor who has contributed much to the clarification of language problems. Here, we think, she does so too.

"Mrs. Lee, do you think women are better housewives than they used to be?"

"Which women?"

"Which women? Why, any women."

"But I don't know 'any women.' I only know certain women."

"Well, then, the women you know. Are they better housewives than they used to be?"

"In the first place, I don't know what they used to be. In the second place, I don't know what you mean by 'better housewives.' Do you mean, do their draperies match their slipcovers? Do you mean, do they check the ceiling prices before they buy? Do you mean, do they cook vegetables without destroying the vitamins?"

"Why, yes, we mean all those things."

"But I can't answer all those things at once."

"Well, then, answer one of them. Let's say, do the women you know cook vegetables without destroying the vitamins?"

'I couldn't say. I've never tasted their vegetables for vitamins. Wouldn't know how to."

"Well, just give us your opinion, Mrs. Lee."

"What good is my opinion? That isn't a matter of opinion; it's a matter of fact. The only way I can answer that question is to go and test their vegetables."

"But can't you just make a guess?"

"Oh, well, if you want me simply to guess, I can do that. Yes, my guess would be that most of the women I know destroy some of the vitamin value of vegetables by cooking. But actually, of course, I don't have any way of knowing."

"So, Mrs. Lee, you maintain that women are not better housewives today

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than they used to be. Well, we're all entitled to our own opinions, aren't we, folks?"

"Look here, I didn't say that. I made one little guess and you puffed it up into a big generalization."

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Lee."

"Why don't you quit asking people these ambiguous questions?"

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Lee."

"And what's more, the first time I hear a sidewalk interviewer who can distinguish between statements of opinion and statements of fact, I'll buy a whole case of your Fluffy Duff."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Mrs. Lee's imaginary interview reminds us once again that our answers can be no more thoughtful than the questions which prompt them. In what ways are the following questions like those asked of Mrs. Lee by the inquiring reporter?
   a. Do you think this is an irreligious age?
   b. Are Americans more moral than Frenchmen?
   c. Are people of this generation less courteous than their parents and grandparents?
   d. Do dogs make better pets than cats?
   e. Will a change of jobs make me happier?
   f. Would universal education bring an end to war?
2. Devise a set of five or more questions about the topics above, framing them in such a way that they *do* permit a useful, even though limited, answer. For example, the first question might be restated thus: Do the latest published figures appear to indicate an increase or decrease in church membership in California since the last count? Here the hopelessly vague term "irreligious," which could mean many things, is reduced to something measurable and verifiable—*i.e.*, church attendance. (Of course other possible meanings of this term could be got at by other limited questions.)
3. Mrs. Lee's dialogue reveals the foolishness of puffing up one tentative guess "into a big generalization." Here are three problem situations and some statements which could be made about them. Which statement would be most useful to you if you were confronted with this problem? Why have you chosen this particular statement?
   a. The problem is whether to buy a used textbook.
      (1) Used merchandise is always inferior to new goods.
      (2) New books instill a pride of ownership and insure greater care.
      (3) The used books are all heavily marked up and underlined. Since I find marking up a book a useful way of studying it, the marks of other students may not correspond to my own and could lead to confusion.
   b. The problem is to select between two movies—one foreign, the other domestic.
      (1) Foreign movies are dull.
      (2) The American movie is featuring my favorite comedian. I have never

been disappointed in his pictures. I don't know anything about the foreign film.

(3) College professors and other people who have intellectual interests seem to prefer foreign films.

c. The problem is to decide whether to vote for a certain candidate for U. S. senator.

(1) Green's past voting record as a member of the House of Representatives reveals his support of the things you say you stand for—price supports for farmers, social security, and protective tariffs.

(2) You're for Eisenhower, and Green is a Republican.

(3) Green has the support of all the best people.

Darrell Huff

HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS

Huff's article might be subtitled "Or How to Make Statistics Lie Down." If in your study of inference you avoided jumping to the oversimple conclusion that the inductive method of thinking is simply "getting the facts," then you will not take Huff's article as an attack on "statistics"; you will already understand how the interpretation *of facts is as essential a part of inductive thinking as is the initial fact-gathering.*

Huff's awareness of the importance of interpreting statistics correctly began in a college course in statistics. His article on the problem proved so popular that he recently expanded it into a full book bearing the same title.

"The average Yaleman, Class of '24," *Time* magazine reported last year after reading something in the New York *Sun,* a newspaper published in those days, "makes $25,111 a year."

Well, good for him!

But, come to think of it, what does this improbably precise and salubrious figure mean? Is it, as it appears to be, evidence that if you send your boy to Yale you won't have to work in your old age and neither will he? Is this average a mean or is it a median? What kind of sample is it based on? You could lump one Texas oilman with two hundred hungry free-lance writers and report *their* average income as $25,000-odd a year. The arithmetic is impeccable, the figure is convincingly precise, and the amount of meaning there is in it you could put in your eye.

In just such ways is the secret language of statistics, so appealing in a fact-minded culture, being used to sensationalize, inflate, confuse, and oversimplify. Statistical terms are necessary in reporting the mass data of social and economic trends, business conditions, "opinion" polls, this year's census.

HOW TO LIE WITH STATISTICS From *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1950. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher.

But without writers who use the words with honesty and understanding and readers who know what they mean, the result can only be semantic nonsense.

In popular writing on scientific research, the abused statistic is almost crowding out the picture of the white-jacketed hero laboring overtime without time-and-a-half in an ill-lit laboratory. Like the "little dash of powder, little pot of paint," statistics are making many an important fact "look like what she ain't." Here are some of the ways it is done.

The sample with the built-in bias. Our Yale men—or Yalemen, as they say in the Time-Life building—belong to this flourishing group. The exaggerated estimate of their income is not based on all members of the class nor on a random or representative sample of them. At least two interesting categories of 1924-model Yale men have been excluded.

First there are those whose present addresses are unknown to their classmates. Wouldn't you bet that these lost sheep are earning less than the boys from prominent families and the others who can be handily reached from a Wall Street office?

There are those who chucked the questionnaire into the nearest wastebasket. Maybe they didn't answer because they were not making enough money to brag about. Like the fellow who found a note clipped to his first pay check suggesting that he consider the amount of his salary confidential: "Don't worry," he told the boss. "I'm just as ashamed of it as you are."

Omitted from our sample then are just the two groups most likely to depress the average. The $25,111 figure is beginning to account for itself. It may indeed be a true figure for those of the Class of '24 whose addresses are known and who are willing to stand up and tell how much they earn. But even that requires a possibly dangerous assumption that the gentlemen are telling the truth.

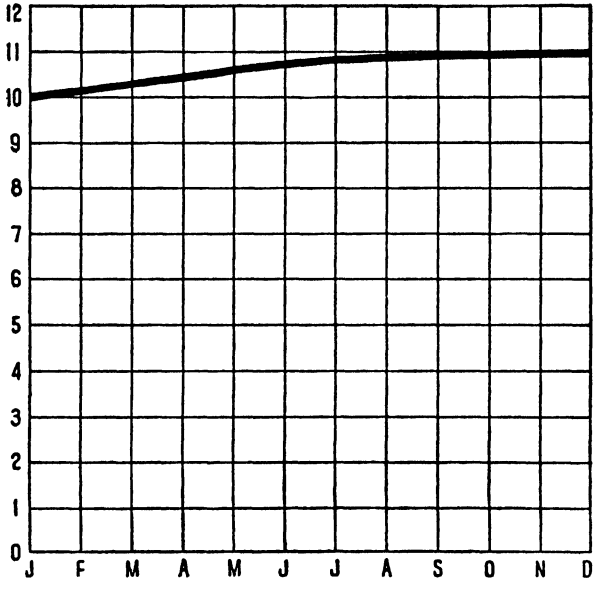
To be dependable to any useful degree at all, a sampling study must use a representative sample (which can lead to trouble too) or a truly random one. If *all* the Class of '24 is included, that's all right. If every tenth name on a complete list is used, that is all right too, and so is drawing an adequate number of names out of a hat. The test is this: Does every name in the group have an equal chance to be in the sample?

You'll recall that ignoring this requirement was what produced the *Literary Digest's* famed fiasco. When names for polling were taken only from telephone books and subscription lists, people who did not have telephones or *Literary Digest* subscriptions had no chance to be in the sample. They possibly did not mind this underprivilege a bit, but their absence was in the end very hard on the magazine that relied on the figures.

This leads to a moral: You can prove about anything you want to by letting your sample bias itself. As a consumer of statistical data—a reader, for example, of a news magazine—remember that no statistical conclusion can rise above the quality of the sample it is based upon. In the absence of information about the procedures behind it, you are not warranted in giving any credence at all to the result.

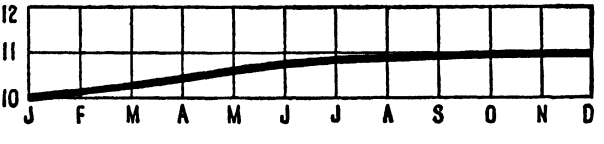
The truncated, or gee-whiz, graph. If you want to show some statistical information quickly and clearly, draw a picture of it. Graphic presentation is the thing today. If you don't mind misleading the hasty looker, or if you quite clearly *want* to deceive him, you can save some space by chopping the bottom off many kinds of graphs.

Suppose you are showing the upward trend of national income month by month for a year. The total rise, as in one recent year, is 7 per cent. It looks like this:



That is clear enough. Anybody can see that the trend is slightly upward. You are showing a 7 per cent increase and that is exactly what it looks like.

But it lacks schmaltz. So you chop off the bottom, this way:



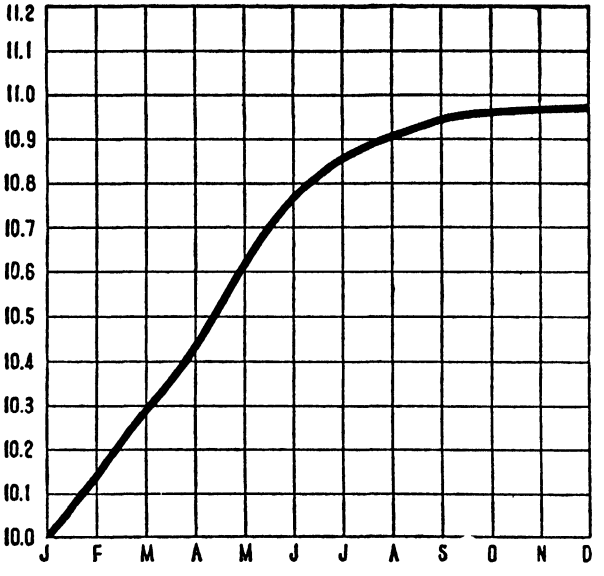
The figures are the same. It is the same graph and nothing has been falsified—except the impression that it gives. Anyone looking at it can just feel prosperity throbbing in the arteries of the country. It is a subtler equivalent of editing "National income rose 7 per cent" into ". . . climbed a whopping 7 per cent."

It is vastly more effective, however, because of that illusion of objectivity.

The souped-up graph. Sometimes truncating is not enough. The trifling rise in something or other still looks almost as insignificant as it is. You can make that 7 per cent look livelier than 100 per cent ordinarily does. Simply

change the proportion between the ordinate and the abscissa. There's no rule against it, and it does give your graph a prettier shape.

But it exaggerates, to say the least, something awful:



The well-chosen average. I live near a country neighborhood for which I can report an average income of $15,000. I could also report it as $3,500.

If I should want to sell real estate hereabouts to people having a high snobbery content, the first figure would be handy. The second figure, however, is the one to use in an argument against raising taxes, or the local bus fare.

Both are legitimate averages, legally arrived at. Yet it is obvious that at least one of them must be as misleading as an out-and-out lie. The $15,000-figure is a mean, the arithmetic average of the incomes of all the families in the community. The smaller figure is a median; it might be called the income of the average family in the group. It indicates that half the families have less than $3,500 a year and half have more.

Here is where some of the confusion about averages comes from. Many human characteristics have the grace to fall into what is called the "normal" distribution. If you draw a picture of it, you get a curve that is shaped like a bell. Mean and median fall at about the same point, so it doesn't make very much difference which you use.

But some things refuse to follow this neat curve. Income is one of them. Incomes for most large areas will range from under $1,000 a year to upward of $50,000. Almost everybody will be under $10,000, way over on the left-hand side of that curve.

One of the things that made the income figure for the "average Yale-

man" meaningless is that we are not told whether it is a mean or a median. It is not that one type of average is invariably better than the other; it depends upon what you are talking about. But neither gives you any real information—and either may be highly misleading—unless you know which of those kinds of average it is.

In the country neighborhood I mentioned, almost everyone has less than the average—the mean, that is—of $10,500. These people are all small farmers, except for a trio of millionaire week-enders who bring up the mean enormously.

You can be pretty sure that when an income average is given in the form of a mean nearly everybody has less than that.

The insignificant difference or the elusive error. Your two children Peter and Linda (we might as well give them modish names while we're about it) take intelligence tests. Peter's IQ, you learn, is 98 and Linda's is 101. Aha! Linda is your brighter child.

Is she? An intelligence test is, or purports to be, a sampling of intellect. An IQ, like other products of sampling, is a figure with a statistical error, which expresses the precision or reliability of the figure. The size of this probable error can be calculated. For their test the makers of the much-used Revised Stanford-Binet have found it to be about 3 per cent. So Peter's indicated IQ of 98 really means only that there is an even chance that it falls between 95 and 101. There is an equal probability that it falls somewhere else—below 95 or above 101. Similarly, Linda's has no better than a fifty-fifty chance of being within the fairly sizeable range of 98 to 104.

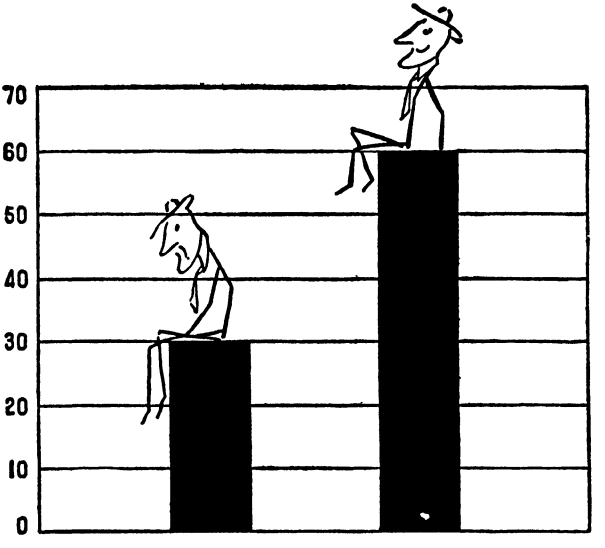
You can work out some comparisons from that. One is that there is rather better than one chance in four that Peter, with his lower IQ rating, is really at least three points smarter than Linda. A statistician doesn't like to consider a difference significant unless you can hand him odds a lot longer than that.

Ignoring the error in a sampling study leads to all kinds of silly conclusions. There are magazine editors to whom readership surveys are gospel; with a 40 per cent readership reported for one article and a 35 per cent for another, they demand more like the first. I've seen even smaller differences given tremendous weight, because statistics are a mystery and numbers are impressive. The same thing goes for market surveys and so-called public-opinion polls. The rule is that you cannot make a valid comparison between two such figures unless you know the deviations. And unless the difference between the figures is many times greater than the probable error of each, you have only a guess that the one appearing greater really is.

Otherwise you are like the man choosing a camp site from a report of mean temperature alone. One place in California with a mean annual temperature of 61 is San Nicolas Island on the south coast, where it always stays in the comfortable range between 47 and 87. Another with a mean of 61 is in the inland desert, where the thermometer hops around from 15 to 104. The

deviation from the mean marks the difference, and you can freeze or roast if you ignore it.

The one-dimensional picture. Suppose you have just two or three figures to compare—say the average weekly wage of carpenters in the United States and another country. The sums might be $60 and $30. An ordinary bar chart makes the difference graphic. [See following.] That is an honest picture. It



looks good for American carpenters, but perhaps it does not have quite the oomph you are after. Can't you make that difference appear overwhelming and at the same time give it what I am afraid is known as eye-appeal? Of course you can. Following tradition, you represent these sums by pictures of money bags. If the $30 bag is one inch high, you draw the $60 bag two inches high. That's in proportion, isn't it?

The catch is, of course, that the American's money bag, being twice as tall as that of the $30 man, covers an area on your page four times as great. And since your two-dimensional picture represents an object that would in fact have three dimensions, the money bags actually would differ much more than that. The volumes of any two similar solids vary as the cubes of their heights. If the unfortunate foreigner's bag holds $30 worth of dimes, the American's would hold not $60 but a neat $240.

You didn't say that, though, did you? And you can't be blamed, you're only doing it the way practically everybody else does.

The ever-impressive decimal. For a spurious air of precision that will lend all kinds of weight to the most disreputable statistics, consider the decimal.

Ask a hundred citizens how many hours they slept last night. Come out with a total of, say, 7.813. Your data are far from precise to begin with. Most people will miss their guess by fifteen minutes or more and some will recall five sleepless minutes as half a night of tossing insomnia.

But go ahead, do your arithmetic, announce that people sleep an average of 7.813 hours a night. You will sound as if you knew precisely what you are talking about. If you were foolish enough to say 7.8 (or "almost 8") hours it would sound like what it was—an approximation.

The semi-attached figure. If you can't prove what you want to prove, demonstrate something else and pretend that they are the same thing. In the daze that follows the collision of statistics with the human mind, hardly anybody will notice the difference. The semi-attached figure is a durable device guaranteed to stand you in good stead. It always has.

If you can't prove that your nostrum cures colds, publish a sworn laboratory report that the stuff killed 31,108 germs in a test tube in eleven seconds. There may be no connection at all between assorted germs in a test tube and the whatever-it-is that produces colds, but people aren't going to reason that sharply, especially while sniffling.

Maybe that one is too obvious and people are beginning to catch on. Here is a trickier version.

Let us say that in a period when race prejudice is growing it is to your advantage to "prove" otherwise. You will not find it a difficult assignment.

Ask that usual cross section of the population if they think Negroes have as good a chance as white people to get jobs. Ask again a few months later. As Princeton's Office of Public Opinion Research has found out, people who are most unsympathetic to Negroes are the ones most likely to answer yes to this question.

As prejudice increases in a country, the percentage of affirmative answers you will get to this question will become larger. What looks on the face of it like growing opportunity for Negroes actually is mounting prejudice and nothing else. You have achieved something rather remarkable: the worse things get, the better your survey makes them look.

The unwarranted assumption, or post hoc *rides again.* The interrelation of cause and effect, so often obscure anyway, can be most neatly hidden in statistical data.

Somebody once went to a good deal of trouble to find out if cigarette smokers make lower college grades than non-smokers. They did. This naturally pleased many people, and they made much of it.

The unwarranted assumption, of course, was that smoking had produced dull minds. It seemed vaguely reasonable on the face of it, so it was quite widely accepted. But it really proved nothing of the sort, any more than it proved that poor grades drive students to the solace of tobacco. Maybe the relationship worked in one direction, maybe in the other. And maybe all this is only an indication that the sociable sort of fellow who is likely to take his books less than seriously is also likely to sit around and smoke many cigarettes.

Permitting statistical treatment to befog causal relationships is little better than superstition. It is like the conviction among the people of the Hebrides that body lice produce good health. Observation over the centuries had taught them that people in good health had lice and sick people often did not. *Ergo,* lice made a man healthy. Everybody should have them.

Scantier evidence, treated statistically at the expense of common sense, has made many a medical fortune and many a medical article in magazines, including professional ones. More sophisticated observers finally got things straightened out in the Hebrides. As it turned out, almost everybody in those circles had lice most of the time. But when a man took a fever (quite possibly carried to him by those same lice) and his body became hot, the lice left.

Here you have cause and effect not only reversed, but intermingled.

There you have a primer in some ways to use statistics to deceive. A well-wrapped statistic is better than Hitler's "big lie": it misleads, yet it can't be pinned onto you.

Is this little list altogether too much like a manual for swindlers? Perhaps I can justify it in the manner of the retired burglar whose published reminiscences amounted to a graduate course in how to pick a lock and muffle a footfall: The crooks already know these tricks. Honest men must learn them in self-defense.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. If you are not already clear as to the difference between them, look up the terms *mean* and *median* in a standard dictionary or a beginning text in statistics. Now, in the following situations, which of these "averages" would be more meaningful?
   a. A teachers' association is computing the "average" wage of teachers in a community with the object of asking for a salary raise.

b. A farmer wishes to know the "average" gain in weight made by cattle which have been exposed to an experimental diet.

c. A teacher wishes to grade his students on the basis of their performance in relation to each other, *not* on the basis of an arbitrary set of scores (*e.g.*, that 90 is an A, etc.)

d. A draft board wishes to establish the "average" height and weight of inductees they have sent to the armed forces during the past year.

e. A publisher wishes to determine the "average" number of copies of a given book sold per year during the last ten-year period.

2. Huff explains carefully in what way the sampling of "Yalemen" was faulty. In what specific ways are the following people making the same error: the summer tourist who concludes that Southwest Indians "live on" the tourist trade? the high-school student who builds his picture of college undergraduates from the half-dozen undergraduates who came to his school to publicize "life at —— College"? the lecturer who concludes, largely on the grounds of his many meetings with clubwomen, that "American women are profoundly gregarious." Supply still further instances which reveal that sampling errors are not limited to statisticians working with lists of figures.
3. What is the similarity between the individual who "makes a lot of" a few selected incidents to "prove" a point and the statistician who, consciously or unconsciously, gives the impression of a quick rise in wages, and so forth, by use of "truncated" and "souped-up" graphs?
4. The test of the *randomness* of a sample is important. To check your grasp of this concept, determine which of the following procedures would insure a random sample:

a. A tax official investigates every tenth income-tax return to check for accuracy and honesty.

b. An agricultural inspector walks through an orchard picking an apple from every fifth tree.

c. A government official, interested in determining attitudes toward foreign nations, polls all the people in a community whose names begin with E.

d. A radio research director samples the morning listening habits of every twentieth owner of the best-selling radio set.

e. With the purpose of recording attitudes toward a newly proposed sales tax, a reporter stops in a doorway on a busy downtown street at 11 in the morning, starts his tape recorder, and interviews 30 passersby, anybody who is willing to talk.

f. A student who is trying to discover present trends in domestic architecture asks three of his dorm mates, who are architecture majors, what these trends are.

5. The appeal of what Huff calls "the ever-impressive decimal" is its spurious air of precision. What are some other trappings of "precision" which can mislead? Consider, for example, the student term paper heavily loaded with footnotes and an impressive-looking bibliography, or the chamber of commerce brochure with population tables, manufacturing indexes, and so forth.
6. A reader's acceptance of the "semi-attached figure" as proof is, of course, an error in deductive logic. Can you see how the reduction of such an argument

to syllogistic form—finding its major and minor premises and conclusion—can help one resist the appeal of this sort of "reasoning"?

PROJECT

We have already encountered what Huff calls "the semi-attached figure" and the "unwarranted assumption"—essentially the coupling of two phenomena to encourage the inference that they are causally connected. This is such a common error that it deserves further attention. Consider, for example, the dangers implicit in automatically assuming a causal connection between an epidemic of petty thefts in a high school and the recent enrollment of the children from a newly-established military reservation, or the outbreak of a typhoid epidemic and the employment of Oriental workers by the water company, or the increased incidence of crimes of violence and a change of city administration. Write a thoughtful account of some such coupling of incidents on your campus, pointing out the error in reasoning and the consequences to the people involved.

Gordon W. Allport and Leo Postman

THE BASIC PATTERN OF DISTORTION

What really happens to facts when a reporter, teacher, debater, novelist, or gossip "distorts" them? Allport and Postman trace the path of a crooked fact down a crooked mile with results that may make you think twice before passing on a rumor.

During the past decade Allport and Postman have done important work in the relatively new field of the analysis of public opinion and the effects of mass communications upon it. They and other social psychologists have tried to observe with scientific accuracy the ways in which public opinion grows, and the relationship between facts and people's conceptions of them. The opinion poll-takers, such as Gallup and Roper, have centered their attention on measuring changes in public opinion. Investigators like Allport, Postman, Lasswell, Doob, Lazarsfeld, and Cantril have been more interested in finding how *public opinion is formed.*

We choose a trifling rumor incident and select it almost at random from the wartime crop of stories current in a rural Maine community in the summer of 1945, shortly before Japan's surrender.

A Chinese teacher on a solitary vacation drove his car into the community and asked his way to a hilltop from which he could obtain the

THE BASIC PATTERN OF DISTORTION From *The Psychology of Rumor*, by Gordon W. Allport and Leo Postman. By permission of Henry Holt and Company. Copyright, 1947

pleasant view pictured in a tourist guide issued by the Chamber of Commerce in a neighboring town. Someone showed him the way, but within an hour the community was buzzing with the story that *a Japanese spy had ascended the hill to take pictures of the region.*

The simple, unadorned facts that constitute the "kernel of truth" in this rumor were never reported but were from the outset distorted in three directions. . . . They were *leveled, sharpened,* and *assimilated.* Let us consider each type of change in order.

(1) *Leveling.* Omitted from the rumor are many details which are essential for a true understanding of the incident: the courteous and timid, but withal honest, approach of the visitor to the native of whom he inquired his way; the fact that the visitor's precise nationality was unknown although he was certainly Oriental. Likewise not mentioned was the fact that the visitor had allowed himself to be readily identified by people along the way; and the truth that no one had seen a camera in his possession.

These omissions are scarcely attributable to the unreliability of people's memory. Rather they are systematic omissions. They dropped out because if told, they would tend to negate the preferred interpretation: "a Japanese spy is among us." We do not know to what extent the omissions are due to a misperception of the situation by the native who first talked with the stranger, and to what extent the details kept dropping out as the story spread from person to person. It is probable that the eyewitness himself did not perceive all the relevant evidence because the sight of an Oriental had immediately activated his long-standing biases and preconceptions. Perceiving and remembering are parts of a single process. . . .

(2) *Sharpening.* When some details are dropped, those that are preserved necessarily gain in emphasis and importance. Sharpening, as we have seen, is the reciprocal of leveling. Having accepted their special interpretation of the Chinese scholar's visit, the rumor agents accentuated certain features while minimizing others. The sharpening of selected details accounts for the overdrawn dramatic quality of the final story. What in the original situation was Oriental became specified as Japanese; what was merely a "man" became a special kind of man, a "spy." The harmless holiday pursuit of viewing the scenery became the much sharper, sinister purpose of espionage. The truth that the visitor *had* a picture in his hand became sharpened into the act of "taking pictures." The objective fact that no pictures of any possible value to the enemy could be taken from that particular rural location was overlooked. There were no industrial or military installations visible from that hill. Furthermore, the war was known to be in its last stages and spy activity, especially in remote regions, was, objectively considered, most improbable. Yet, such were the wartime emotions and suspicions that the sharpening occurred, putting point on the incident, making it crisp, understandable, and portentous. Here was something worth telling, worthy of rumination and respect.

(3) *Assimilation.* Leveling and sharpening, of course, do not occur haphazardly but take place in essential conformity with the past experience and present attitudes of the rumor spreaders. In the Maine countryside resident natives have had little contact with Orientals. Like most Occidentals they are unable to distinguish a Chinese person from a Japanese. They had only one available rubric for Orientals, firmly implanted in their minds by wartime news and stories: the "Japanese spy." No other category was available for the classification of this unusual visitation. A Chinese-teacher-on-a-holiday was a concept that could not arise in the minds of most farmers, for they did not know that some American universities employ Chinese scholars on their staffs and that these scholars, like other teachers, are entitled to summer holidays. The novel situation was perforce *assimilated* in terms of the most available frames of reference.

"To take pictures of the region" is another clear instance of assimilation. The visitor carried no camera, yet as a result of the government's campaign for "security of information," as a result of prohibitions against cameras in strategic war areas and lurid movies dealing with espionage, the rumor agents were provided with a plausible motive for the strange visitor. The association of ideas is crude: a yellow man—a Jap—a spy—photographic espionage. One idea led to the other with almost mechanical inevitability until the final conclusion emerged.

Such mechanical association of ideas accounts, in part, for the story that spread, but an unmistakable dynamic factor was also present. In this remote Maine community the war was profoundly felt. Nearly every house had its son in the service. Hatred for the Japanese was intense, desire to defend America deep, and suspicion of foreigners a long-standing cultural characteristic of the region. To these inveterate attitudes the perception of the event was assimilated, and from these attitudes came the impetus to concoct the rumor. Wartime created the conditions that brought these dynamic factors into play. The event had potential *importance* to the people. It also had considerable *ambiguity,* for they lacked correct information regarding the visitor's nationality and purpose.

The three-pronged process of leveling, sharpening, and assimilation reflects the rumor agents' "effort after meaning." The facts of the situation, but dimly understood, did not provide the meaning that the strange visitation required. Hence a single directive idea took hold—the *spy motif*—and in accordance with it, discordant details were leveled out, incidents sharpened to fit the chosen theme, and the episode as a whole assimilated to the preexisting structure of feeling and thought characteristic of the members of the group among whom the rumor spread.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Where in the Japanese-spy rumor do Allport and Postman see evidence of distortion—that is, of "leveling," "sharpening," and "assimilation"? Are there any similarities between these examples of distortion and the kinds of thinking described by Huff in "How to Lie with Statistics"? Explain.
2. How have leveling, sharpening, and assimilation been at work in the following situations? Select one.
   a. A man, looking back on his high-school days, concludes that they were great fun. (He had played hookey frequently and was graded low on "interest," but he had starred in football games and had "gone steady" with a pretty girl.)
   b. A young, inexperienced, nervous girl from a middle-class urban family is employed to teach in a rural high school by a principal well known for his emphasis on "absolute honesty" in all classroom tests and work. She sees two boys, who have been doing badly in her course, whispering during an examination, and she promptly sends them to the principal for cheating. Subsequent investigation reveals that the boys were discussing the advisability of cutting afternoon classes to go hunting, it being the first week of deer season.
   c. A mother visiting her daughter's home notices that the home is very simply furnished, without the niceties of sterling silver and cut glass and without certain household conveniencies (deep-freezer, sewing machine, electric ironer) to which she is accustomed. She is unaware of the presence in the home of a large library of books and records. Missing the things that are in her own home, and knowing that her daughter's husband makes a good salary, she concludes that her son-in-law is stingy.

PROJECTS

1. Select a recent rumor you have heard—for example, the recurrent rumors of the imminent discharge of a coach following a poor football season, the rumors of a "housecleaning" by the college administration following a fraternity party in the course of which certain college regulations were not observed—and in a detailed written analysis show the presence of "leveling," "sharpening," and "assimilation."
2. *The Psychology of Rumor,* from which this excerpt was taken, contains illustrated accounts of a number of fairly simple experiments conducted by Allport and others to demonstrate the leveling-sharpening-assimilation process. For your next oral assignment, obtain the book from your college library, if you can, and conduct one of the simpler demonstrations. It will rouse interest, provoke discussion, and will illuminate dramatically some of the key points made in this section of *Thought and Statement.*

Albert H. Hastorf and Hadley Cantril

THEY SAW A GAME: A CASE STUDY

In this report, a study of the attitudes of Dartmouth and Princeton students toward a highly controversial Dartmouth-Princeton football game, the social psychologists Hastorf and Cantril suggest that what people see *depends in varying degree on what they have been conditioned to see. It would seem that, in a psychological sense, the students attended different games—although they all were sitting in the same stadium on a certain fall day in 1951.*

An interesting example of scientific detachment is afforded by the fact that this study was made by social psychologists from the two universities involved in the controversy—Hastorf from Dartmouth, Cantril from Princeton.

On a brisk Saturday afternoon, November 23, 1951, the Dartmouth football team played Princeton in Princeton's Palmer Stadium. It was the last game of the season for both teams and of rather special significance because the Princeton team had won all its games so far and one of its players, Kazmaier, was receiving All-American mention and had just appeared as the cover man on *Time* magazine, and was playing his last game.

A few minutes after the opening kick-off, it became apparent that the game was going to be a rough one. The referees were kept busy blowing their whistles and penalizing both sides. In the second quarter, Princeton's star left the game with a broken nose. In the third quarter, a Dartmouth player was taken off the field with a broken leg. Tempers flared both during and after the game. The official statistics of the game, which Princeton won, showed that Dartmouth was penalized 70 yards, Princeton 25, not counting more than a few plays in which both sides were penalized.

Needless to say, accusations soon began to fly. The game immediately became a matter of concern to players, students, coaches, and the administrative officials of the two institutions, as well as to alumni and the general public who had not seen the game but had become sensitive to the problem of big-time football through the recent exposures of subsidized players, commercialism, etc. Discussion of the game continued for several weeks.

One of the contributing factors to the extended discussion of the game was the extensive space given to it by both campus and metropolitan newspapers. An indication of the fervor with which the discussions were carried on is shown by a few excerpts from the campus dailies.

THEY SAW A GAME From *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, January, 1954. Reprinted by permission of The American Psychological Association, Inc.

For example, on November 27 (four days after the game), the *Daily Princetonian* (Princeton's student newspaper) said:

> This observer has never seen quite such a disgusting exhibition of so-called "sport." Both teams were guilty but the blame must be laid primarily on Dartmouth's doorstep. Princeton, obviously the better team, had no reason to rough up Dartmouth. Looking at the situation rationally, we don't see why the Indians should make a deliberate attempt to cripple Dick Kazmaier or any other Princeton player. The Dartmouth psychology, however, is not rational itself.

The November 30th edition of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* said:

> But certain memories of what occurred will not be easily erased. Into the record books will go in indelible fashion the fact that the last game of Dick Kazmaier's career was cut short by more than half when he was forced out with a broken nose and a mild concussion, sustained from a tackle that came well after he had thrown a pass.
>
> This second-period development was followed by a third quarter outbreak of roughness that was climaxed when a Dartmouth player deliberately kicked Brad Glass in the ribs while the latter was on his back. Throughout the often unpleasant afternoon, there was undeniable evidence that the losers' tactics were the result of an actual style of play, and reports on other games they have played this season substantiate this.

Dartmouth students were seeing an entirely different version of the game through the editorial eyes of the *Dartmouth* (Dartmouth's undergraduate newspaper). For example, on November 27 the *Dartmouth* said:

> However, the Dartmouth-Princeton game set the stage for the other type of dirty football. A type which may be termed as an unjustifiable accusation.
>
> Dick Kazmaier was injured early in the game. Kazmaier was the star, an All-American. Other stars have been injured before, but Kazmaier had been built to represent a Princeton idol. When an idol is hurt there is only one recourse—the tag of dirty football. So what did the Tiger Coach Charley Caldwell do? He announced to the world that the Big Green had been out to extinguish the Princeton star. His purpose was achieved.
>
> After this incident, Caldwell instilled the old see-what-they-did-go-get-them attitude into his players. His talk got results. Gene Howard and Jim Miller were both injured. Both had dropped back to pass, had passed, and were standing unprotected in the backfield. Result: one bad leg and one leg broken.
>
> The game was rough and did get a bit out of hand in the third quarter. Yet most of the roughing penalties were called against Princeton while Dartmouth received more of the illegal-use-of-the-hands variety.

On November 28 the *Dartmouth* said:

> Dick Kazmaier of Princeton admittedly is an unusually able football player. Many Dartmouth men traveled to Princeton, not expecting to win—

only hoping to see an All-American in action. Dick Kazmaier was hurt in the second period, and played only a token part in the remainder of the game. For this, spectators were sorry.

But there were no such feelings for Dick Kazmaier's health. Medical authorities have confirmed that as a relatively unprotected passing and running star in a contact sport, he is quite liable to injury. Also, his particular injuries—a broken nose and slight concussion—were no more serious than is experienced almost any day in any football practice, where there is no more serious stake than playing the following Saturday. Up to the Princeton game, Dartmouth players suffered about 10 known nose fractures and face injuries, not to mention several slight concussions.

Did Princeton players feel so badly about losing their star? They shouldn't have. During the past undefeated campaign they stopped several individual stars by a concentrated effort, including such mainstays as Frank Hauff of Navy, Glenn Adams of Pennsylvania and Rocco Calvo of Cornell.

In other words, the same brand of football condemned by the *Prince*—that of stopping the big man—is practiced quite successfully by the Tigers.

Basically, then, there was disagreement as to what had happened during the "game." Hence we took the opportunity presented by the occasion to make a "real life" study of a perceptual problem.[1]

PROCEDURE

Two steps were involved in gathering data. The first consisted of answers to a questionnaire designed to get reactions to the game and to learn something of the climate of opinion in each institution. This questionnaire was administered a week after the game to both Dartmouth and Princeton undergraduates who were taking introductory and intermediate psychology courses.

The second step consisted of showing the same motion picture of the game to a sample of undergraduates in each school and having them check on another questionnaire, as they watched the film, any infraction of the rules they saw and whether these infractions were "mild" or "flagrant." [2] At Dartmouth, members of two fraternities were asked to view the film on December 7; at Princeton, members of two undergraduate clubs saw the film early in January.

The answers to both questionnaires were carefully coded and transferred to punch cards.

[1] We are not concerned here with the problem of guilt or responsibility for infractions, and nothing here implies any judgment as to who was to blame.

[2] The film shown was kindly loaned for the purpose of the experiment by the Dartmouth College Athletic Council. It should be pointed out that a movie of a football game follows the ball, is thus selective, and omits a good deal of the total action on the field. Also, of course, in viewing only a film of a game, the possibilities of participation as spectator are greatly limited.

RESULTS

Questions asking if the students had friends on the team, if they had ever played football themselves, if they felt they knew the rules of the game well, etc., showed no differences in either school and no relation to answers given to other questions. This is not surprising since the students in both schools come from essentially the same type of educational, economic, and ethnic background.

Summarizing the data . . . , we find a marked contrast between the two student groups.

Nearly all *Princeton* students judged the game as "rough and dirty"—not one of them thought it "clean and fair." And almost nine-tenths of them thought the other side started the rough play. By and large they felt that the charges they understood were being made were true; most of them felt the charges were made in order to avoid similar situations in the future.

When Princeton students looked at the movie of the game, they saw the Dartmouth team making over twice as many infractions as their own team made. And they saw the Dartmouth team make over twice as many infractions as were seen by Dartmouth students. When Princeton students judged these infractions as "flagrant" or "mild," the ration was about two "flagrant" to one "mild" on the Dartmouth team, and about one "flagrant" to three "mild" on the Princeton team.

As for the *Dartmouth* students, while the plurality of answers fell in the "rough and dirty" category, over one-tenth thought the game was "clean and fair" and over a third introduced their own category of "rough and fair" to describe the action. Although a third of the Dartmouth students felt that Dartmouth was to blame for starting the rough play, the majority of Dartmouth students thought both sides were to blame. By and large, Dartmouth men felt that the charges they understood were being made were not true, and most of them thought the reason for the charges was Princeton's concern for its football star.

When Dartmouth students looked at the movie of the game they saw both teams make about the same number of infractions. And they saw their own team make only half the number of infractions the Princeton students saw them make. The ratio of "flagrant" to "mild" infractions was about one to one when Dartmouth students judged the Dartmouth team, and about one "flagrant" to two "mild" when Dartmouth students judged infractions made by the Princeton team.

It should be noted that Dartmouth and Princeton students were thinking of different charges in judging their validity and in assigning reasons as to why the charges were made. It should also be noted that whether or not

students were spectators of the game in the stadium made little difference in their responses.

INTERPRETATION: THE NATURE OF A SOCIAL EVENT

It seems clear that the "game" actually was many different games and that each version of the events that transpired was just as "real" to a particular person as other versions were to other people. . . .

The particular occurrences that different people experienced in the football game were a limited series of events from the total matrix of events *potentially* available to them. People experienced those occurrences that reactivated significances they brought to the occasion; they failed to experience those occurrences which did not reactivate past significances. We do not need to introduce "attention" as an "intervening third" (to paraphrase James on memory) to account for the selectivity of the experiential process.

In this particular study, one of the most interesting examples of this phenomenon was a telegram sent to an officer of Dartmouth College by a member of a Dartmouth alumni group in the Midwest. He had viewed the film which had been shipped to his alumni group from Princeton after its use with Princeton students, who saw . . . an average of over nine infractions by Dartmouth players during the game. The alumnus, who couldn't see the infractions he had heard publicized, wired:

> Preview of Princeton movies indicates considerable cutting of important part please wire explanation and possibly air mail missing part before showing scheduled for January 25 we have splicing equipment.

The "same" sensory impingements emanating from the football field, transmitted through the visual mechanism to the brain, also obviously gave rise to different experiences in different people. The significances assumed by different happenings for different people depend in large part on the purposes people bring to the occasion and the assumptions they have of the purposes and probable behavior of other people involved. This was amusingly pointed out by the New York *Herald Tribune's* sports columnist, Red Smith, in describing a prize fight between Chico Vejar and Carmine Fiore in his column of December 21, 1951. Among other things, he wrote:

> You see, Steve Ellis is the proprietor of Chico Vejar, who is a highly desirable tract of Stamford, Conn., welterweight. Steve is also a radio announcer. Ordinarily there is no conflict between Ellis the Brain and Ellis the Voice because Steve is an uncommonly substantial lump of meat who can support both halves of a split personality and give away weight on each end without missing it.
>
> This time, though, the two Ellises met head-on, with a sickening, rending crash. Steve the Manager sat at ringside in the guise of Steve the Announcer

broadcasting a dispassionate, unbiased, objective report of Chico's adventures in the ring. . . .

Clear as mountain water, his words came through, winning big for Chico. Winning? Hell, Steve was slaughtering poor Fiore.

Watching and listening, you could see what a valiant effort the reporter was making to remain cool and detached. At the same time you had an illustration of the old, established truth that when anybody with a preference watches a fight, he sees only what he prefers to see.

That is always so. That is why, after any fight that doesn't end in a clean knockout, there always are at least a few hoots when the decision is announced. A guy from, say, Billy Graham's neighborhood goes to see Billy fight and he watches Graham all the time. He sees all the punches Billy throws, and hardly any of the punches Billy catches. So it was with Steve.

"Fiore feints with a left," he would say, honestly believing that Fiore hadn't caught Chico full on the chops. "Fiore's knees buckle," he said, "and Chico backs away." Steve didn't see the hook that had driven Chico back. . . .

In brief, the data here indicate that there is no such "thing" as a "game" existing "out there" in its own right which people merely "observe." The "game" "exists" for a person and is experienced by him only in so far as certain happenings have significances in terms of his purpose. Out of all the occurrences going on in the environment, a person selects those that have some significance for him from his own egocentric position in the total matrix. . . .

It is inaccurate and misleading to say that different people have different "attitudes" concerning the same "thing." For the "thing" simply is *not* the same for different people whether the "thing" is a football game, a presidential candidate, Communism, or spinach. We do not simply "react to" a happening or to some impingement from the environment in a determined way (except in behavior that has become reflexive or habitual). We behave according to what we bring to the occasion, and what each of us brings to the occasion is more or less unique. And except for these significances which we bring to the occasion, the happenings around us would be meaningless occurrences, would be "inconsequential."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Hastorf and Cantril conclude their report by saying, "And except for these significances which we bring to the occasion, the happenings around us would be meaningless occurrences, would be 'inconsequential.' " Do you agree? Compare your probable reactions to a World Series baseball game or a Rose Bowl football game with your probable reactions to a British cricket match.
2. Some college students were asked to record their reactions ("favorable" or "unfavorable") to the following statement which was attributed to Karl Marx: "Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed dis-

tinct interests in society." Most of the students recorded their reaction as "unfavorable." Later, they were confronted with the same statement, this time correctly attributed to America's second President, John Adams. And this time most of their recorded reactions were "favorable." *Problem:* The words of this statement remained unchanged; only the authorship to which the statement was attributed changed. Then, was the statement the "same" in both cases?

3. You have had some practice with syllogisms. Reread the statement printed in the *Daily Princetonian* for November 27. Now reduce the ideas expressed by the third sentence to a syllogism and point out any flaws in logic you discover.
4. Huff has taught you something about the problems of sampling. Can you see how the selection of students from "introductory and intermediate psychology courses" in both schools to answer the questionnaire might possibly bias the results? Defend your answer.
5. The two psychologists gave their movie viewers only two categories—"rough and dirty" and "clean and fair"—to describe the action. Over a third of the Dartmouth respondents introduced a third category of their own—"rough and fair." What possible weakness in the thinking of the psychologists does this reveal? Why do you suppose Dartmouth students introduced this third category on their own initiative and Princeton students did not?

Alistair Cooke

SIX TYPICAL AMERICANS

Probably in no area is oversimplified thinking more common than in our thinking about nationalities. We speak glibly of national types—typical Irishmen, typical Englishmen, typical Americans—and of typical national characteristics—"typical English lack of humor," "typical German efficiency," "typical French logic." In speaking and thinking this way how far do we depart from the realities of individual behavior, and to what extent do we add to the difficulties of understanding and getting along with the people of other nations?

In the following selection Alistair Cooke, an English journalist who is well known for his careful reporting and for his ability to avoid attractively simple clichés and sweeping generalizations, looks for "typical" Americans and finds none.

How Americans have looked to other Europeans is indicated in the collections America in Perspective (*edited by Henry Steele Commager*) *and* America Through British Eyes (*edited by Allan Nevins*); *many of the comments in these collections reveal the kinds of oversimplification Cooke avoids. Other amusing examples of oversimple treatments of America are provided in H. J. Duteil's* The Great American Parade (*America through the eyes of a Frenchman*) *and Ilya Ehrenburg's reports on his American travels to the Russian newspaper* Izvestia (*as reprinted in* Harper's Maga-

SIX TYPICAL AMERICANS Reprinted from *One Man's America* by Alistair Cooke, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright, 1951, 1952, by Alistair Cooke.

zine, *December, 1946*). *Mark Twain's* The Innocents Abroad *is an old and outrageous example of American oversimplification about Europeans—but in this case consciously done. For firsthand examples of this kind of stereotyping, you might listen carefully to the statements of friends and acquaintances just returned from Europe.*

Before I left to go off on a trip around this continent an old friend turned up in New York. He is a metallurgist, from Cambridge (England), and he was making his first visit to the United States. I had not seen him in sixteen or seventeen years. Back in those days my own interest in metal was not exactly raging, but this man had been, in the brisk days of our youth, the treasurer of a college dramatic society I had something to do with. He is still the treasurer. You might think that that is a slender thread by which to hold a friendship. But having become a reporter since I last saw him, I have come to be interested in lots of things that would have bored me stiff twenty years ago. It is one of the rewards of a reporter's life that he is always meeting people who are experts in fascinating things he never knew existed. I have become, down the years, interested in metals, especially light metals. And so at our first reunion in seventeen years we had the odd and refreshing experience of two old friends talking about none of the things that brought us together and talking madly about the only thing that in the interest of friendship was always politely ignored.

Then we parted. He to go off on a round of factories—Buffalo, Toledo, Pittsburgh, looking for the English equivalents of this specialty; I to take a train South and look for no equivalents. It is necessary for reporters to do this everywhere, lest they get too confident about the nation and the people they are reporting. It is essential in the United States where the mere size of the country encourages you for your self-respect to think of the other regions of the country in terms of what we call types: The typical Southerner, the typical Californian, the typical steel worker, New Englander and so on. But it is not a reporter's job to tell you what are the correct generalizations. It is to report what he sees, and if it doesn't fit into generalizations no harm is done. And the great good that you reap from going thousands of miles to discover the typical American is that you don't find him. You simply marvel again, as you do on any other continent, at the variety and richness of God's creatures. For America is not a bigger Britain. It is a bigger Europe.

So what I am going to do is to tell you briefly about six Americans I met on the road. The only thing they have in common is that they are Americans and that they came my way. But they are all typical. And I shall leave it to you to write the moral, if any.

And who were these fascinating creatures? The first I met when I went aboard a train in Richmond, Virginia, for the trip to New Orleans. I looked quickly around the car, or carriage, to pick out somebody who might be fun

to talk to. First thing I saw was a clergyman. The seat by his side was empty. So I plumped down. He was, I should think, in his late thirties or early forties. He had a soft, pale face, with steely-blue eyes, and many wrinkles around them. He was a placid, urban type, I figured, and when he spoke, and there was no Southern accent, I knew him for a Midwesterner. I thought to myself, he runs a church in a fashionable suburb of Cleveland or Cincinnati. Well, he came from Pittsburgh. And he was a priest. I might have known that from his collar in reverse, for there are about sixty denominations in the United States that dress like you and me. The chances are that a reverse collar means a priest. This man had been visiting his parents in Pittsburgh for the first time in four years. He was going back "home" as he said. And where was home? Home was in the extreme south of Arizona, in the middle of the desert and the wilderness. He was a missionary priest on the reservation of the Papago Indians near Ajo. He lived, as they did, in a mud hut braced with cactus ribs and ministered—as priest, doctor, builder, sports coach—to several hundred Indians. There are about seven thousand Indians on this reservation, but it is a big one, running north from the Mexican border for about a hundred miles. He worked in one of the parent villages and was far from any other white man. He nursed them and in many ways helped them make the best of a poor life, sustained mostly by growing beans (Papago means "the bean people") in a barren land to which hardier tribes—the Apache and then the even hardier whites—had forced them. But the important thing was—he shared this life with them. His pale face came not from a fashionable suburb but from always going covered in the blazing sun. The wrinkles around his eyes also. Before we settled for the night, he reached in his pocket and took out a little pack. "Gum?" he said.

The next two were a boy and a girl. A soldier and a girl. We stood in the hot dry night air at one in the morning, waiting for a train at an Arizona station. Nothing but the purple arc of sky and at the end of the platform the silhouette of a cottonwood tree lapped by a hot breeze. The stars big as sunflowers. The yellow cabs dozed in formation like enormous wasps. A coloured porter sat propped against the stanchions of an express truck. His arms were folded and his cap tilted over his eyes. There was no movement anywhere except for the gasping reflection of an unseen neon sign. A Mexican in a blue coat padded by and went off to the end of the world. The long tracks glistening in the moonlight seemed to bisect the earth.

On a bench was a girl sitting upright with the sleeping head of a soldier in her lap. She was not a pretty girl, but as she sat there with her legs out at a wide angle to leave a friendly lap for the head and shoulders, she was a Madonna, beautifully self-contained—wife, mother, mistress, guardian angel. She smoked a cigarette. And all around her was such a still and inoffensive world that the glowing ash of her cigarette was the only human aggression. And then the train light bristled on the horizon and it came snorting across

the desert and in about five minutes it was in the station. The porter came to life again. The soldier woke up with a start, looked up wildly at the girl for a moment, assembled his sprawling limbs, fixed his cap on his head and got up. He picked up a little bag. He touched his cap. "Pardon me, and thank you, ma'am," he said. The girl dusted the ash off her skirt with the back of her hand and without rising said, with a small smile, "You're welcome, soldier." He boarded the train and she sat back to wait for her friend or mother, or whoever, due on another train coming the other way.

The fourth American was a big man, sitting opposite me on the way up from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. He was about six feet five, with a weathered face and fingers fat as baseball bats. He was gloomy about something. He turned out to be a lumber-man, a big lumber-man from Portland. He'd been talking to ship-builders in San Francisco. They needed more and more wood for cargo-ships. His problem was that the great forests of the Cascade Mountains—the last remaining stand of forest primeval in America—were beginning to give out. They couldn't replant enough to replace what they cut down. The shipbuilders had said they were very short of wood for dunnage—for the protective covering they use for cargoes or the inner binding of ships' bottoms. Usually they used very cheap wood. They hadn't enough. They dared to suggest the great and beautiful monarch of the northwest forests—the Douglas fir that rises like thousands of cathedral spires on mountain sides carpeted with lupines. The lumber-man, a business-man out for a dollar after all, and no sentimentalist about chopping down trees—this man leaned over and tapped the fat tips of his fingers and shook his head and groaned. "Douglas fir," he kept saying, "Douglas fir for dunnage. No, sir."

The fifth man was a Chicago meat-packer. A prosperous Chicago meat-packer. I'm sure you know the type, everybody does. Well, this man was typical, in his queer way, of many a prosperous Midwestern business-man. His grandfather had been an Irish immigrant who came to work on the railroads. His father had slaughtered cattle and later came to see that what ambles into Chicago as a "moo" can, with the proper care, go out as steak or a tennis racket. This observation has been the basis of several Midwestern fortunes, and he passed it on to his son, who prudently let other people handle the gut and himself was content to pack the steaks. He was now about sixty, and very wealthy.

One day at the age of about forty-five, when he had had a heavy competitive morning, he sat back at his desk and told himself, "I simply have to take an afternoon off." He took it there and then. He went out and by chance into the Art Institute in Chicago, which by expert consent houses the finest collection anywhere of French impressionist painting. The meat-packer was in there for four hours and came out in a terrible glow. He had discovered to his rising astonishment that he liked pictures. Liking is the wrong word.

The man made the guilty discovery that he was an unwitting slave of good painting waiting only to be needled into a hopeless addiction. He was not a man who lay around contemplating his passions. He was a man with several telephones. He picked up one—he later, by the way, had a special line put in to take care of his hobby—and called the University. "Who've you got there," he asked, "who can teach me about art?" What sort of art? they asked, fine art, archaeology, Oriental art, frescoes . . . ? "Fine art, rough art—any art," he said.

He started with a university lecturer in modern painting. He soon employed almost a small faculty of his own. He travelled to every museum and private collection in the United States. He did the same in Europe. He talked to artists, to portrait-painters and landscape-painters, and miniature-painters, and curators, and buyers. He went into paint-manufacturing works. He talked to brush-makers and frame-makers. He saw the country and studied the light throughout the day over the landscapes his favourite men had painted. He read all their memoirs and notes. Today in his Chicago home he has the most exquisitely chosen collection—that has everything to do with his taste rather than his learning—of the minor works of a generation of great Frenchmen. One of the greatest of modern art critics has said that nobody alive has a finer flair for assessing the quality of disputed French moderns than this same hale, sixty-year-old, and still unretired Chicago meat-packer.

The last American of my half-dozen—and I put him last because it would be impossible to talk about anybody else after him—was a tattooist in San Diego, California. A sleek, foxy-looking little man in his early fifties with a bow tie, an Adolphe Menjou moustache, and his shirtsleeves rolled high, his arms blue with writhing snakes, cooch dancers, patterns of lacework, and assorted nick-names. The moment I asked him to open up about his work, he adopted the manner of the Government people in charge of defense in the last war. Deliberate, but not so that you could get a word in. Defiant, lest you dared to think that anyone in America was in a better position to feel the people's pulse. He announced, choosing his words with great weight, that "no trade or business in these United States is a better barometer, you might say, of the American mood and economy." In the first war, he said, "sailors used to come in here and ask for hearts, and their girl's names. No more," he said. "It's a very different picture. Now they seem to want their mothers, just the word Mother." He sighed. Tattooing, it seemed, wasn't what it used to be in the good old days of private enterprise. "I mean from the medical angle. I never had a customer yet get blood-poisoning. But in the last twenty years the doctors start hornin' in and settin' up what they call standards. Tattooing today's what you might call a scientific, surgical operation. Sterile needles and all that stuff. That sorta thing makes you pretty leery. They don't encourage tattooing on some parts of the body no more.

I have to take it easy. Girls used to come in here, they didn't give a damn what you tattooed on 'em or where. They just want it to hurt, get it? Most guys who get tattooed do it on a dare, just to show they're tough. Sure it hurts. That's the psychology of it. If it didn't hurt, I'd a been outa business thirty-five years ago. But don't forget there are ethics in this game. I don't want to harm nobody. I charge five dollars a square inch for the forearm, ten dollars on the upper arm. I wouldn't touch a chest for fifty bucks!"

I asked him what was the weirdest assignment he'd ever had. He looked me over and shut the door and lit a cigarette. He had obviously told this many times before, but he had to set the stage.

"Well, a woman about two years ago was sick some place up north, Los Angeles,—Glendale, I guess. But I mean sick. Had some sort of stomach trouble. And seems the doctor wanted to operate. Well, this guy—a brother —'phones here around one in the morning. Wanted to know how much I'd charge to get the way out to Glendale and tattoo her stomach. Now, I mean, I told him that was a tough thing to figure. You see, somebody asks a price on a job and you gotta know where it's gonna be. When I was young at this game I used to quote 'em so much a square inch, thinkin' it'd be a forearm or lower leg or some place where the skin's thin and tight. Hell, if you fix the price, then you have to go to work on a flabby leg. By the time you stretch it so's you can keep the needle goin' smooth, you'd cover an acre. So I figured she was a middle-aged dame and anyway I didn't wanna drive a hundred some odd miles out there. So I says a hundred and twenty bucks. Okay, says the guy, and charge the cab. Honest.

"So I collected the dyes and needles and stuff and I'm on my way. I get out there—to this house, I mean—and go up to the bedroom. It was like a morgue in there. Dark and everythin' and this dame lyin' across the bed screamin' about bein' cut up. Seems she was goin' in the hospital the next day for you know what they call it—observation? She was scared they'd operate on her, and me not get here. Well, I took one look at her and brother, I gypped myself on the deal. She was enormous. It took me three hours. She'd a been a whole lot more comfortable havin' the operation. I sure was glad to get outa that place. How's that?—what did I write? I wrote what she told me, sort of a note to the surgeon. Clear across her middle: 'Do not violate this Body.' "

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Imagine you had met each of Cooke's six characters *before* reading this essay. What significant particulars concerning them might you have overlooked?
2. Cooke, an Englishman, sturdily resists the temptation to type Americans. His reporter's training has taught him to observe people as individuals and to report what he sees even if it doesn't fit into the expected generalizations. What are some of the *assumed characteristics* which some of us have come to expect

of any New Englander? Texan? Southerner? Californian?—of the Englishman? the Frenchman? the Irishman? the German?

3. *Life* printed in its July 28, 1952, issue a group of pictures of three extraordinarily pretty young English actresses acting out "Anglo-American misconceptions" of how American and British girls sit, say goodnight, dance, and converse over Cokes or tea. What is *your* conception of how American and British girls behave in each of these situations? Now look up the *Life* pictures and compare your notions with the ones pantomimed by the actresses. (Before turning to the *Life* pictures you might ask some girls in your class to pantomime *their* mental pictures.)
4. Cooke says there is no such thing as a typical American; yet he calls these six Americans "typical." Cooke suggests his reader write the moral. Can you?

PROJECTS

1. Cooke says that the good you reap in looking for the typical Californian or Southerner is that you don't find him. After looking for the typical "fraternity man," "sorority sister," "non-org," "college professor," "football player," "liberal arts major," or "engineering major," can you say the same thing? Present your reasons in some detail in a class discussion. If you find distinct differences of opinion, organize a representative panel to thresh them out.
2. Following the pattern established by Cooke, write an account of your encounter with an individual whom you might easily have dismissed as "typical" of some group (salesman, taxi driver, sailor, nightclub hostess, etc.) but who, on closer acquaintance, emerged as a distinct individual with unique qualities.
3. Language plays a very big part in this process of typing, or stereotyping. Contrast your reactions to the terms listed in column one below with those to the terms in column two.

I	II
tramp	homeless unemployed
Jap	Oriental
spy	intelligence officer
bureaucrat	public-office holder
G-man	Federal agent
bobby-soxer	high-school girl
old maid	unmarried woman
labor boss	union official

Select any pair of terms and write a brief descriptive paragraph of what you "see" when these terms are used. Does this indicate something about the way that language affects (and reflects) our thought process?

Walter Lippmann

STEREOTYPES

In one way or another each of the preceding selections in this section has focused on some aspect of oversimplified thinking. Walter Lippmann, in his book Public Opinion, *proposed that oversimplifying characterized a great deal of so-called "public opinion," and he was the first to introduce a term for it—"stereotyping"—that since then has entered into general circulation. Often it is used to describe unsupported generalizations about* people; *but as Lippmann explains his concept here it would appear that the term may be appropriately applied to much of our thinking about* objects *and* events *as well. Although written in 1922, Lippmann's analysis remains unsurpassed for clarity and incisiveness.*

For the past 30 years Walter Lippmann has been recognized as one of the nation's most thoughtful commentators on national and international affairs. Among his best-known books are A Preface to Morals *and* The Good Society. *Both his books and his syndicated daily column reflect a sensitivity to the complexity and importance of "public opinion" and an awareness of the multiple ways in which the language and thinking of all of us can become distorted.*

Each of us lives and works on a small part of the earth's surface, moves in a small circle, and of these acquaintances knows only a few intimately. Of any public event that has wide effects we see at best only a phase and an aspect. This is as true of the eminent insiders who draft treaties, make laws, and issue orders, as it is of those who have treaties framed for them, laws promulgated to them, orders given at them. Inevitably our opinions cover a bigger space, a longer reach of time, a greater number of things, than we can directly observe. They have, therefore, to be pieced together out of what others have reported and what we can imagine.

Yet even the eyewitness does not bring back a naïve picture of the scene. For experience seems to show that he himself brings something to the scene which later he takes away from it, that oftener than not what he imagines to be the account of an event is really a transfiguration of it. Few facts in consciousness seem to be merely given. Most facts in consciousness seem to be partly made. A report is the joint product of the knower and known, in which the role of the observer is always selective and usually creative. The facts we see depend on where we are placed, and the habits of our eyes. . . .

For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world

STEREOTYPES From Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*. Copyright, 1950, by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture. Of the great men who assembled at Paris to settle the affairs of mankind, how many were there who were able to see much of the Europe about them, rather than their commitments about Europe? Could anyone have penetrated the mind of M. Clemenceau, would he have found there images of the Europe of 1919, or a great sediment of stereotyped ideas accumulated and hardened in a long and pugnacious existence? Did he see the Germans of 1919, or the German type as he had learned to see it since 1871? He saw the type, and among the reports that came to him from Germany, he took to heart those reports, and, it seems, those only, which fitted the type that was in his mind. If a junker blustered, that was an authentic German; if a labor leader confessed the guilt of the empire, he was not an authentic German.

At a Congress of Psychology in Göttingen an interesting experiment was made with a crowd of presumably trained observers.

> Not far from the hall in which the Congress was sitting there was a public fête with a masked ball. Suddenly the door of the hall was thrown open and a clown rushed in madly pursued by a Negro, revolver in hand. They stopped in the middle of the room fighting; the clown fell, the Negro leapt upon him, fired, and then both rushed out of the hall. The whole incident hardly lasted twenty seconds.
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> The President asked those present to write immediately a report since there was sure to be a judicial inquiry. Forty reports were sent in. Only one had less than 20% of mistakes in regard to the principal facts; fourteen had 20% to 40% of mistakes; twelve from 40% to 50%; thirteen more than 50%. Moreover in twenty-four accounts 10% of the details were pure inventions and this proportion was exceeded in ten accounts and diminished in six. Briefly a quarter of the accounts were false.
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> It goes without saying that the whole scene had been arranged and even photographed in advance. The ten false reports may then be relegated to the category of tales and legends; twenty-four accounts are half legendary, and six have a value approximating to exact evidence.

Thus out of forty trained observers writing a responsible account of a scene that had just happened before their eyes, more than a majority saw a scene that had not taken place. What then did they see? One would suppose it was easier to tell what had occurred, than to invent something which had not occurred. They saw their stereotype of such a brawl. All of them had in the course of their lives acquired a series of images of brawls, and these images flickered before their eyes. In one man these images displaced less than 20% of the actual scene, in thirteen men more than half. In thirty-four out of the forty observers the stereotypes preëmpted at least one-tenth of the scene.

A distinguished art critic has said that "what with the almost numberless shapes assumed by an object . . . what with our insensitiveness and in-

attention, things scarcely would have for us features and outlines so determined and clear that we could recall them at will, but for the stereotyped shapes art has lent them." The truth is even broader than that, for the stereotyped shapes lent to the world come not merely from art, in the sense of painting and sculpture and literature, but from our moral codes and our social philosophies and our political agitations as well. Substitute in the following passage of Mr. Berenson's the words 'politics,' 'business,' and 'society,' for the word 'art' and the sentences will be no less true: ". . . unless years devoted to the study of all schools of art have taught us also to see with our own eyes, we soon fall into the habit of moulding whatever we look at into the forms borrowed from the one art with which we are acquainted. There is our standard of artistic reality. Let anyone give us shapes and colors which we cannot instantly match in our paltry stock of hackneyed forms and tints, and we shake our heads at his failure to reproduce things as we know they certainly are, or we accuse him of insincerity."

Mr. Berenson speaks of our displeasure when a painter "does not visualize objects exactly as we do," and of the difficulty of appreciating the art of the Middle Ages because since then "our manner of visualizing forms has changed in a thousand ways." He goes on to show how in regard to the human figure we have been taught to see what we do see. "Created by Donatello and Masaccio, and sanctioned by the Humanists, the new canon of the human figure, the new cast of features . . . presented to the ruling classes of that time the type of human being most likely to win the day in the combat of human forces. . . . Who had the power to break through this new standard of vision and, out of the chaos of things, to select shapes more definitely expressive of reality than those fixed by men of genius? No one had such power. People had perforce to see things in that way and in no other, and to see only the shapes depicted, to love only the ideals presented. . . ."

2

If we cannot fully understand the acts of other people, until we know what they think they know, then in order to do justice we have to appraise not only the information which has been at their disposal, but the minds through which they have filtered it. For the accepted types, the current patterns, the standard versions, intercept information on its way to consciousness. Americanization, for example, is superficially at least the substitution of American for European stereotypes. Thus the peasant who might see his landlord as if he were the lord of the manor, his employer as he saw the local magnate, is taught by Americanization to see the landlord and employer according to American standards. This constitutes a change of mind, which is, in effect, when the inoculation succeeds, a change of vision. His eye sees differently. One kindly gentlewoman has confessed that the stereotypes are of such overweening importance, that when hers are not indulged, she at least is unable to accept the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God: "We are

strangely affected by the clothes we wear. Garments create a mental and social atmosphere. What can be hoped for the Americanism of a man who insists on employing a London tailor? One's very food affects his Americanism. What kind of American consciousness can grow in the atmosphere of sauerkraut and Limburger cheese? Or what can you expect of the Americanism of the man whose breath always reeks of garlic?"

This lady might well have been the patron of a pageant which a friend of mine once attended. It was called the Melting Pot, and it was given on the Fourth of July in an automobile town where many foreign-born workers are employed. In the center of the baseball park at second base stood a huge wooden and canvas pot. There were flights of steps up to the rim on two sides. After the audience had settled itself, and the band had played, a procession came through an opening at one side of the field. It was made up of men of all the foreign nationalities employed in the factories. They wore their native costumes, they were singing their national songs; they danced their folk dances, and carried the banners of all Europe. The master of ceremonies was the principal of the grade school dressed as Uncle Sam. He led them to the pot. He directed them up the steps to the rim, and inside. He called them out again on the other side. They came, dressed in derby hats, coats, pants, vest, stiff collar and polka-dot tie, undoubtedly, said my friend, each with an Eversharp pencil in his pocket, and all singing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

To the promoters of this pageant, and probably to most of the actors, it seemed as if they had managed to express the most intimate difficulty to friendly association between the older peoples of America and the newer. The contradiction of their stereotypes interfered with the full recognition of their common humanity. The people who change their names know this. They mean to change themselves, and the attitude of strangers toward them.

There is, of course, some connection between the scene outside and the mind through which we watch it, just as there are some long-haired men and short-haired women in radical gatherings. But to the hurried observer a slight connection is enough. If there are two bobbed heads and four beards in the audience, it will be a bobbed and bearded audience to the reporter who knows beforehand that such gatherings are composed of people with these tastes in the management of their hair. There is a connection between our vision and the facts, but it is often a strange connection. A man has rarely looked at a landscape, let us say, except to examine its possibilities for division into building lots, but he has seen a number of landscapes hanging in the parlor. And from them he has learned to think of a landscape as a rosy sunset, or as a country road with a church steeple and a silver moon. One day he goes to the country, and for hours he does not see a single landscape. Then the sun goes down looking rosy. At once he recognizes a landscape and exclaims that it is beautiful. But two days later, when he tries to recall what he saw, the odds are that he will remember chiefly some landscape in a parlor.

Unless he has been drunk or dreaming or insane he did see a sunset, but he saw in it, and above all remembers from it, more of what the oil painting taught him to observe, than what an impressionist painter, for example, or a cultivated Japanese would have seen and taken away with him. And the Japanese and the painter in turn will have seen and remembered more of the form they had learned, unless they happen to be the very rare people who find fresh sight for mankind. In untrained observation we pick recognizable signs out of the environment. The signs stand for ideas, and these ideas we fill out with our stock of images. We do not so much see this man and that sunset; rather we notice that the thing is man or sunset, and then see chiefly what our mind is already full of on those subjects.

3

There is economy in this. For the attempt to see all things freshly and in detail, rather than as types and generalities, is exhausting, and among busy affairs practically out of the question. In a circle of friends, and in relation to close associates or competitors, there is no shortcut through, and no substitute for, an individualized understanding. Those whom we love and admire most are the men and women whose consciousness is peopled thickly with persons rather than with types, who know us rather than the classification into which we might fit. For even without phrasing it to ourselves, we feel intuitively that all classification is in relation to some purpose not necessarily our own; that between two human beings no association has final dignity in which each does not affirm as an axiom the personal inviolability of both.

But modern life is hurried and multifarious, above all physical distance separates men who are often in vital contact with each other, such as employer and employee, official and voter. There is neither time nor opportunity for intimate acquaintance. Instead we notice a trait which marks a well-known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry about in our heads. He is an agitator. That much we notice, or are told. Well, an agitator is this sort of person, and so *he* is this sort of person. He is an intellectual. He is a plutocrat. He is a foreigner. He is a "South European." He is from Back Bay. He is a Harvard Man. How different from the statement: he is a Yale Man. He is a regular fellow. He is a West Pointer. He is an old army sergeant. He is a Greenwich Villager: what don't we know about him then, and about her? He is an international banker. He is from Main Street.

The subtlest and most pervasive of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes. We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception. They mark out certain objects as familiar

or strange, emphasizing the difference, so that the slightly familiar is seen as very familiar, and the somewhat strange as sharply alien. They are aroused by small signs, which may vary from a true index to a vague analogy. Aroused, they flood fresh vision with older images, and project into the world what has been resurrected in memory. Were there no practical uniformities in the environment, there would be no economy and only error in the human habit of accepting foresight for sight. But there are uniformities sufficiently accurate, and the need of economizing attention is so inevitable, that the abandonment of all stereotypes for a wholly innocent approach to experience would impoverish human life.

What matters is the character of the stereotypes, and the gullibility with which we employ them. And these in the end depend upon those inclusive patterns which constitute our philosophy of life. If in that philosophy we assume that the world is codified according to a code which we possess, we are likely to make our reports of what is going on describe a world run by our code. But if our philosophy tells us that each man is only a small part of the world, that his intelligence catches at best only phases and aspects in a coarse net of ideas, then, when we use our stereotypes, we tend to know that they are only stereotypes, to hold them lightly, to modify them gladly. We tend, also, to realize more and more clearly when our ideas started, where they started, how they came to us, why we accepted them. All useful history is antiseptic in this fashion. It enables us to know what fairy tale, what school book, what tradition, what novel, play, picture, phrase, planted one preconception in this mind, another in that mind.

4

Those who wish to censor art do not at least underestimate this influence. They generally misunderstand it, and almost always they are absurdly bent on preventing other people from discovering anything not sanctioned by them. But at any rate, like Plato in his argument about the poets, they feel vaguely that the types acquired through fiction tend to be imposed on reality. Thus there can be little doubt that the moving picture is steadily building up imagery which is then evoked by the words people read in their newspapers. In the whole experience of the race there has been no aid to visualization comparable to the cinema. If a Florentine wished to visualize the saints, he could go to the frescoes in his church, where he might see a vision of saints standardized for his time by Giotto. If an Athenian wished to visualize the gods he went to the temples. But the number of objects which were pictured was not great. And in the East, where the spirit of the second commandment was widely accepted, the portraiture of concrete things was even more meager, and for that reason perhaps the faculty of practical decision was by so much reduced. In the western world, however, during the last few centuries there has been an enormous increase in the volume and scope of secular description,

the word picture, the narrative, the illustrated narrative, and finally the moving picture and . . . the talking picture.

Photographs have the kind of authority over imagination today, which the printed word had yesterday, and the spoken word before that. They seem utterly real. They come, we imagine, directly to us without human meddling, and they are the most effortless food for the mind conceivable. Any description in words, or even any inert picture, requires an effort of memory before a picture exists in the mind. But on the screen the whole process of observing, describing, reporting, and then imagining, has been accomplished for you. Without more trouble than is needed to stay awake the result which your imagination is always aiming at is reeled off on the screen. The shadowy idea becomes vivid; your hazy notion, let us say, of the Ku Klux Klan, thanks to Mr. Griffith, takes vivid shape when you see *The Birth of a Nation.* Historically it may be the wrong shape, morally it may be a pernicious shape, but it is a shape, and I doubt whether anyone who has seen the film and does not know more about the Ku Klux Klan than Mr. Griffith, will ever hear the name again without seeing those white horsemen.

5

And so when we speak of the mind of a group of people, of the French mind, the militarist mind, the bolshevik mind, we are liable to serious confusion unless we agree to separate the instinctive equipment from the stereotypes, the patterns, and the formulae which play so decisive a part in building up the mental world to which the native character is adapted and responds. Failure to make this distinction accounts for oceans of loose talk about collective minds, national souls, and race psychology. To be sure a stereotype may be so consistently and authoritatively transmitted in each generation from parent to child that it seems almost like a biological fact. In some respects, we may indeed have become, as Mr. Wallas says, biologically parasitic upon our social heritage. But certainly there is not the least scientific evidence which would enable anyone to argue that men are born with the political habits of the country in which they are born. In so far as political habits are alike in a nation, the first places to look for an explanation are the nursery, the school, the church, not in that limbo inhabited by Group Minds and National Souls. Until you have thoroughly failed to see tradition being handed on from parents, teachers, priests, and uncles, it is a solecism of the worst order to ascribe political differences to the germ plasm.

It is possible to generalize tentatively and with a decent humility about comparative differences within the same category of education and experience. Yet even this is a tricky enterprise. For almost no two experiences are exactly alike, not even of two children in the same household. The older son never does have the experience of being the younger. And therefore, until we are able to discount the difference in nurture, we must withhold judgment about differences of nature. As well judge the productivity of two soils by compar-

ing their yield before you know which is in Labrador and which in Iowa, whether they have been cultivated and enriched, exhausted, or allowed to run wild.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Lippmann and writers on social psychology use "stereotype" in a metaphorical sense. Consult a dictionary for the term's earlier literal, non-metaphorical use. How does this knowledge help you to see the aspect of human thinking Lippmann is trying to identify and describe?
2. Lippmann points out that each of us "brings something to the scene which later he takes away from it, that . . . what he takes to be an account of an event is really a transfiguration of it." How does this observation relate to the Princeton-Dartmouth football game described by Hastorf and Cantril, the spy rumor discussed by Allport and Postman, and the comments by Ryder (in Section I) on the role of inference in the act of observation?
3. Lippmann asserts that "for the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see." How does this explain the notion of many of us that American Indian life is "quaint"? The notion of many Occidentals that life in the South Seas is "idyllic"? The popular concept of medieval times as the "Dark Ages"? Take stock of all that you have heard about Hollywood, or Florida, or Alaska, or some other highly-publicized place. Do you see how this preconception would serve to "define" what you would "see" if you visited these places?
4. To what extent are the oversimplifications involved in stereotyping necessary, according to Lippmann? If, as Lippmann concedes, stereotypes are sometimes necessary—even inevitable—what can we do to guard against their adverse or undesirable effects?
5. Point out evidence of stereotyping in the following situations and indicate in what ways this process might lead to waste or unfairness.
   a. The decision of some business houses to hire no one over 40, to retire everyone after 65.
   b. The policy of excluding stipulated "minority groups" from a social fraternity.
   c. The policy of segregating students into different "ability groups" throughout their high-school classes on the basis of aptitude tests administered during the ninth year and based largely on reading and arithmetical skills.
   d. The assigning of immigration quotas on the basis of the proportion of various nationalities living in the U. S. in 1924 when the number of Northwestern Europeans in America greatly exceeded the number of Southeastern Europeans.
   e. The removal of all books containing pictures of nude figures from the open shelves of a library. (Note: there are at least two stereotypes operating here—can you spot them?)
6. Oscar Wilde once wittily observed of a person's behavior that "it was a case of life imitating art." Lippmann quotes the distinguished art critic Berenson to the same effect. If you find this difficult to understand, consider your own half-conscious efforts to imitate a favorite movie star or character from fiction.

Recall, too, your own notions of what a landscape ought to look like and the initial shock of seeing a landscape on the canvas of a Chinese painter or a contemporary abstract painter. Can you add further examples of how notions derived from the pictures, books, movies, and TV programs we are accustomed to, condition our expectancy of how a thing "ought to look"; or of how the same influences condition our behavior when we first encounter an experience which up to that moment we have only known vicariously?

7. Point out as many specific ways as you can in which each of the following common stereotypes might be reinforced in the public's thinking through the contents of newspapers, magazines, comic books, radio programs ("Our Miss Brooks"? "Mr. Peepers"?), and motion pictures:
   a. The common conception of "the old maid" as a lean, disappointed, hatchet-faced, middle-aged woman, probably an ornery school teacher.
   b. The familiar picture of the college student as a "rah-rah," football-crazy, superficial adolescent.
   c. The common view of politicians as unintelligent, crooked, wordy parasites with their fingers always in the public's pocket.
   d. The stereotype of scientists as absent-minded, impractical dreamers who do not understand the everyday world.
   e. The stereotype of today's school children as being weak in the so-called "fundamentals" or "three R's."
8. Earlier in this book Pearson pointed out "how general is the custom of taking our ideas of criminal procedure, and especially murder trials, not from what is actually happening in courts but from the fantastic inventions of novelists and screen writers." Cite some examples of fiction (as relayed to us in books, on the motion picture or TV screen, or over the radio) creating false-to-fact impressions of an entire social group or institution. (Consider, for instance, the generalized image held by many people of an F.B.I. investigator, a prostitute, a "juvenile delinquent," a priest, a bull fighter; of a court trial, a session of a legislative body, a board of directors' meeting, a labor picketing operation.)
9. If you have ever tried to draw "typical" tree-shapes, you will have discovered that the number of distinctly different tree-forms is small, probably under a dozen. Yet there is a tremendous variety in the appearance of trees. When are such oversimplifications appropriate, and when are they misleading?

PROJECTS

1. What are some of the stereotypes that have come to be associated with the following groups of persons: newspaper reporters, movie stars, gypsies, truck drivers, bobby-soxers, jazz musicians, college professors, U. S. marines, Scotchmen, Chinese, Scandinavians, Turks? Make a list of the stereotyped characteristics of *one* of these groups (or some other group of your own choosing) and contrast it with a very careful written analysis of some individual member of this group whom you have observed at firsthand. Care must be exercised that in the second half of this assignment you depend entirely on verifiable, factual evidence; that you "see" what is there, not what you have been conditioned to "see."

2. Write a thoughtful, detailed analysis—a sort of "case study"—of a motion picture you have seen recently. In this analysis present any evidence of stereotyping (oversimplification) of people, places, situations, or human emotions and evidence of any tendency to break away from stereotypes.
3. With your class, decide on a half-dozen vocations which most of us have "typed." Every member of the class should compose in writing a mental picture of the "type" of person he associates with this vocation. Then have representatives of the class interview individuals in the community who are actually engaged in this vocation. (These representatives of the class should be armed with questions which the entire class has decided on—questions designed to discover the nature of the job, the individual's preparation for it, etc.) Finally, make a careful comparison of the characteristics listed by the entire class when they were thinking of the "types," and those obtained by the interviewers when they actually saw and talked to *individuals.*
4. In a detailed paper show how a stereotyped approach might lead to *inefficiency* and *injustice* in the following situations:
   a. There has been an outbreak of petty thefts in a small, rural community which recently received an influx of soldiers coming for their annual national-guard training.
   b. There has been a relatively steep increase in the costs of a city government after the adoption of a city-manager plan.
   c. A staff doctor at a mental institution has been murdered by a convicted criminal who was sent to the institution for psychiatric treatment.

PART II *Statement:*

PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE

5 LANGUAGE

The selections in the first half of this book have raised questions and suggested answers about the content of what we say—the *thought* in our statements. But these questions and suggestions have also pointed forward in many ways to the consideration of the *statement*—the language by means of which we communicate our observations and conclusions. Such a pointing forward is entirely natural and logical, for it suggests the actual closeness of thoughts and statements, the shaping of each by the other. Having, then, in the first half of this book focused on the *thought* in our statements, we shall now consider the *statement* of our thoughts.

In this section we shall look freshly at language and try to develop our own useful working definition of its role among other systems of communication. The selections and problems will very likely raise questions about the soundness of some of your present conceptions of language.

In an excerpt from a novel by Silone and in a piece from Albert Deutsch's writings on juvenile delinquency you will encounter people who are having trouble with symbol-systems, failing to keep such symbols as cards and words *in their place as symbols.* Thomas Mann's short story, "Disillusionment," concerns a man for whom language created an illusion that reality finally, but too late, destroyed. And the Mark Twain description of Buck Fanshaw's funeral may make clear through overstatement still another problem with which language confronts us—the confusion that results when people using the same mother tongue are not speaking the same "language." These several oblique approaches to the nature of language are followed by two articles by Mario Pei and Charles Morris which meet the central problems of language head on. Pei makes clear the similarities and differences between language and other symbol systems, and Morris gives us a detailed anatomy of the symbol system that is language. Morris' essay, in particular, provides the concepts necessary to understand the problems raised in the remaining sections of this book.

Ignazio Silone

THE KING OF DIAMONDS

This short selection is from Ignazio Silone's novel Bread and Wine, *which portrays primitive South Italian peasant life and its relation to the world conflicts of the twentieth century. The scene centers around an argument over the nature of a symbol, in this case a visual symbol.*

Silone is generally considered one of present-day Italy's most distinguished novelists. His best-known writings, besides Bread and Wine, *are* The Seed Beneath, Fontamara, *and* A Handful of Blackberries.

Four youths playing settemezzo had started a quarrel about the king of diamonds. In settemezzo the king of diamonds is the most important card. Matalena only had two packs of cards, and in both the king of diamonds was so worn and easily recognizable that it was impossible for the game to be fair. Daniele Maglietta made a proposal to avoid disputes.

"Since the king of diamonds is recognizable, let us substitute, say, the three of spades, for it. The king of diamonds which is recognizable, will count as the three of spades, and the three of spades, which is indistinguishable from the rest, will count as the king of diamonds."

"That's impossible," Michele Mascolo objected. "It would be impossible, even if we all agreed to it."

"Why?"

"It's obvious," said Mascolo. "The king of diamonds is always the king of diamonds. He may be filthy, or marked, or have holes in him, but he's still the king of diamonds. This, for example, is a pipe. You ask me why. It's obvious. It is a pipe because it is a pipe. In the same way the Pope is the Pope. Why? Because he is the Pope. The king of diamonds is the king of diamonds in the same way. That's what he is and that's what he remains."

"It doesn't matter if we all agree," said Daniele. "If we all agree, it will be perfectly all right. And it will be a better game, because no one will know in advance who has the king of diamonds."

Mascolo remained unconvinced.

"You say it won't matter if we all agree?" he said. "I say it will matter. You say that the game would be the same? Perhaps it would, but it would be a false game. It would be like a wife committing adultery with her husband's consent. Isn't that a sin? It's a double sin, even if everybody agreed."

Sciatàp, who was sitting at the other table, the old man's table, had overheard the argument.

THE KING OF DIAMONDS From *Bread and Wine* by Ignazio Silone. Copyright, 1937, by Harper and Brothers.

"You must ask Don Paolo," he said.

Don Paolo came down from his room once more and the arguments were repeated for his benefit.

"Tell us who is right," Sciatàp asked him.

The priest held up the king of diamonds.

"Do you think this card has any value in itself or that its value was given to it?" he asked Michele Mascolo.

"It's worth more than the others, because it's the king of diamonds," said Mascolo.

"Where do cards come from?" the priest asked.

"From the printer's," several voices answered.

"What was this card before it was printed?" the priest asked Mascolo.

"A piece of paper, like all the rest of the pack," various voices answered again.

"So its value was given it by the printer," the priest went on. "It had no value in itself, but it's value was given to it. And that's not all. Is its value constant or does it vary? Does the king of diamonds have the same value at all games, at tresette, briscola, and scopa, for instance?"

"It has different values in different games," said Mascolo.

"And who invented the games?" the priest went on.

Nobody answered.

"Don't you think the games were invented by the players?" the priest suggested.

Everybody agreed, including Mascolo. The game had been invented by the players, and the value of the cards was different in different games and was therefore fixed by the players.

"So if this card has a value," the priest concluded, "not in itself, but because a value was attributed to it, if it has a value which differs according to the players' whim and fancy, it means that you can do what you like with it."

Enthusiasm for the priest broke out again. "Hurrah!" they shouted. "Bravo! Bravissimo! Never has there been such a wise man of God in our part of the world!"

Don Paolo turned to Sciatàp and said:

"Once upon a time there was a man here, at Pietrasecca, named Carlo Campanella, and now there's a man in New York named Mr. Charles Little-Bell, Ice and Coal. But are Carlo Campanella and Mr. Charles Little-Bell, Ice and Coal, one man or two?"

"They're the same man!" a number of voices replied.

"Sha-tap!" Sciatàp shouted. "It's I who ought to answer that question!"

He answered it.

"They are the same man under a changed name," he said.

"If a man can change his name, why can't a card?" the priest asked.

"A king is always a king," Mascolo replied.

"A king is only a king as long as he reigns," said Don Paolo. "A king who no longer reigns is no longer a king, but an ex-king. There is a country, a big country, in the direction the sun comes from, which used to have a king. Let us call him a big king of hearts. He used to rule over millions of peasants, but from the moment the millions of peasants stopped obeying him, he no longer reigned, and so he wasn't a king any longer. Not far away, in the direction in which the sun sets, there is another country where there used to be a king. Let us call him the king of diamonds. But from the moment his subjects ceased obeying him he ceased to reign. He ceased to be a king and became an ex-king, and now he is a political exile, which is a thing that even a peasant can be. So go on playing at settemezzo how you like, and good-night!"

Don Paolo handed the cards back to Daniele, once more said good-night to everybody and went up to his room, followed by acclamations.

"As you're worn and filthy, from this moment you cease to reign and are not king any longer. You're barely even an ex-king," said Daniele to the king of diamonds.

Then he addressed the three of spades.

"From now on you take the place of the king of diamonds at settemezzo," he said. "Don't get filthy or marked, or you'll lose your crown to another card!"

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Why was Mascolo unable to substitute one card for another? What basic principle had he apparently not been able to grasp?
2. The quaintness and remoteness of Silone's setting may encourage some readers to feel that they are too sophisticated to make Mascolo's mistake—confusing a symbol with the thing a symbol stands for. Before you smile patronizingly, consider: Are you making this mistake when you conclude that your school's football fortunes are looking up when it hires a former "All-American" as coach, even though you know absolutely nothing about his coaching ability?
3. Do you realize the extent to which we make use of *non-verbal* symbols every day? What symbolic devices do you see in the classroom? What symbolic devices are worn or carried by you and your classmates? What other non-verbal symbols have you encountered during the past 24-hour period?
4. Don Paolo points out that Mascolo's mistake about playing cards can carry over into more serious matters. Point out what symbols might be mistaken for proof of (*a*) professional competence, (*b*) genuine friendliness, (*c*) loyalty, and (*d*) piety.
5. Assuming that each of the following sets of *names* designates the same thing, consider whether people frequently react differently to the different names. If you find they do, explain why.
   a. Room 12, Room 13.
   b. Social security, relief.
   c. A work stoppage, a work holiday, a strike.

d. Mr. A——, Dr. A——; Andrew Mull, Sir Andrew Mull.
e. A bureaucrat, a government official.
f. Saloon, cocktail bar.
g. Lobbyist, public-relations representative.

6. What conception of language symbols seems to underlie the following beliefs and behavior, and what inadequacies in that conception may be revealed by these situations?
   a. Inquiring about someone's political beliefs, a student is satisfied when he finds the man is a Republican or a Democrat.
   b. A person will not read the Greenville *Democrat* newspaper because he doesn't approve of the Democratic party.
   c. A citizen objects to "censorship" but believes that "security regulations" over newspapers are necessary.
   d. In a class discussion a student argues that no state of war exists between two countries because neither country has issued a formal declaration of war on the other.
   e. A teacher believes that questions of the following kind are testing his students' grasp of a subject: "A sentence is a ———." "The life substance is ———." "Water is composed of ——— and ———."
7. A reporter wrote an article attacking the Commission on the Freedom of the Press and its report *A Free and Responsible Press.* In criticizing the personnel of the commission, the reporter charged that the members were supposed to be "philosophers" but that eleven of the twelve commission members were not philosophy professors at all. Was the reporter doing what Mascolo did? Explain.
8. In what way does this embarrassing event reported in a West Coast newspaper illustrate the central fact of all systems of symbols?

   Britain's Board of Trade, after two years of uneasy silence, finally revealed a guilty secret last week.

   The "Imperial Standard Yard" had shrunk. The metal alloy master yard stick, which had been measured in 1898 and sealed away in a special vault, was shorter by two-millionths of its original length. The shortage could only be restored by an act of parliament.

   A British scientist, pondering the shrinkage, exclaimed: "Astounding. It really shouldn't have happened, you know."
9. How does this little story illustrate the main point made by Silone?

   Once upon a time a really tough character burst into a saloon with a manifestly belligerent air. After reaching the bar, he turned to glower at the other occupants, who were by this time quiet to a man, staring apprehensively at him. With a sweep of one ham-like hand he indicated the swinging doors and bellowed, "Okay, every one of you blankety-blank-blank-so-and-so's get the hell out of here."

   There was a mad scramble for every available exit, and a few that were not available. When the dust had subsided there was still one little fellow, quite sober, who sat placidly sipping his beer. With an almost growl the big man said, "Well?"

   Smiling, the little fellow answered: "There sure were a lot of 'em, weren't there?"

PROJECT

Re-read Don Paolo's explanation to Mascolo of how the "value" of a playing card depends on agreement among the players. Do you see how precisely the same process underlies the determination of the *meaning* of words? Conduct the following demonstration to make this point clear. Write on the board some well-known slogan or famous saying. Make up four or five "nonsense words." Substitute the nonsense words for some key words in the statement. The statement will then appear nonsensical. Ask the class why it appears meaningless. Would it if everyone *agreed* that the unfamiliar words would hereafter mean what the familiar words mean? Test this by inviting the class to write new statements incorporating the nonsense words with their new, agreed-upon meanings.

Albert Deutsch

THE SEMANTICS OF REFORM

In this selection from his study of present-day care of juvenile delinquents, Our Rejected Children, *Deutsch suggests that language can get out of touch with the facts. Moreover, he implies that this divorce can act as a barrier to needed reforms. You might find it interesting, after reading Deutsch on the language of delinquency reform, to consider whether you have noticed a similar separation of language from reality in some other field of activity.*

Deutsch, who is also the author of The Shame of the States *and* The Mentally Ill in America, *has established a reputation as a thoughtful journalist-reformer whose inquiries into the conditions prevailing in many of our public institutions have provided the public with some of the information it must have if these conditions are to be corrected.*

In my studies of the care and treatment of the mentally sick—both as historian and as journalist—I had developed a respect for the power to distinguish between the word and the deed. I learned that many neologisms, or new words, were to old actualities what perfume was to the unbathed bodies of the Elizabethan court. No magical change came about in the treatment of mental patients when "mental hospital" was substituted for "insane asylum." No stigma was actually erased, in the minds of the general public, when "lunatics" and "madmen" became classified as "psychotics." The old strait jacket held the same terrible power of confinement when it became known as the "camisole." I had learned that cruel and unusual punishments were

THE SEMANTICS OF REFORM From *Our Rejected Children* by Albert Deutsch, copyright, 1950, by Albert Deutsch.

often inflicted on patients under such fancy names as "hydrotherapy" and "chemical restraint."

The modern term, I found, was too often a euphemistic cloak for an ancient and persistent usage. An accepted principle was not always the same as a tolerated practice.

Students of history are sometimes too apt to mistake an isolated reform for a general development. Histories pertaining to a particular field of human endeavor frequently stress the peaks, without sufficient notice of the valleys and abysses in the evolutionary process. A progressive theory enunciated by one person, a progressive practice adopted in one place, does not necessarily signify a general trend. In the evolution of reform movements, the tempo of practical change has invariably lagged far behind the tempo of progressive theory. I was reminded of this hard fact of history during a visit to Paris in 1948. At the time I made my first pilgrimage to the ancient psychiatric hospital, La Salpêtrière, where the immortal Philippe Pinel struck the chains from the insane in 1795 and ushered in the "era of humane treatment." I had expected to find, in 1948, that this world-famous institution remained at least a center of decent physical care of the mentally sick. How great was my shock when I found mental patients—men, women and children—quartered in the same gloomy rooms that were called "cells" when Dr. Pinel strode through them on his chain-breaking crusade a century and a half earlier!

When the first juvenile reformatory—the House of Refuge in New York City—was opened in 1825, it marked the first concrete application of the philosophy that institutions for child delinquents should be places of reform and rehabilitation rather than places of punishment.

On the theoretical side, the humanization of attitudes toward juvenile delinquency and its treatment progressed at a steady pace. The new philosophies were often incorporated in new laws. Gradually, in many states, the supervision and control of juvenile delinquents were shifted from penal to welfare authorities. The more overtly brutal forms of corporal punishment were prohibited, and some states enacted laws forbidding any kind of corporal punishment in public institutions for children. Social workers, in the face of stubborn opposition, gradually took over some key spots formerly held by correction officers. Emphasis (on the theoretical level, mostly) shifted from the ideal of custody and punishment to that of cure, and finally to prevention of juvenile delinquency. Modern slogans and catch phrases symbolizing this trend became increasingly popular—"There's no such thing as a bad child," "You can't beat badness out of a boy," and the like. In laudable efforts to remove stigmas, the "youthful criminal" became in turn the "juvenile delinquent," the "problem child," and finally the "child with a problem." The public "juvenile reformatories" became "industrial schools," "agricultural schools," and "training schools."

New terms were invented in rapid succession to express the newer ideas and approaches. People in the field, good and bad, caught on to the lingo.

Whatever the actuality, whatever their personal views and practices, they deemed it discreet to adopt the modern slogans, catch phrases and neologisms.

But the institutions themselves, for the most part, remained isolated, geographically and socially, from the general community. They were rarely visited by members of the general public. It took legislative appropriations to transform the new theories into practice, and these were seldom forthcoming. After all, children have no votes and hence no political pressure power—least of all the delinquents among them. Progressive theories and progressive phrases increasingly became, in effect, merely fine webs spun around institutional treatment, hiding the reality from outsiders.

I was forcibly struck by the semantic ironies that had developed in this field as I made the rounds of fourteen state training schools for delinquent boys and girls in nine states and the District of Columbia. Most of these institutions were reputed to represent the best. Several were known as "model" training schools. I was told by competent authorities thoroughly familiar with the field, that, on the whole, they certainly were above the average among the ninety-odd state training schools throughout the country, with a total population of some twenty-three thousand children.

They called them "training schools," but I wondered what they trained for—when upward of 70 percent of their inmates graduated into adult crime. In many respects, they were not even "reform schools," but rather juvenile prisons.

Many other modern phrases were dinned into my ears during my rounds. To the uninformed listener, they might sound like impressive symbols of progress. But, to the experienced observer, they often had a hollow and hypocritical ring.

The disciplinary or punishment barracks—sometimes these veritable cell blocks were more forbidding than adult prisons—were known officially as "adjustment cottages," or "lost privilege cottages." Guards were "supervisors." Employees who were often little more than caretakers and custodians were called "cottage parents." Whips, paddles, blackjacks and straps were "tools of control." Isolation cells were "meditation rooms." Inmates were "students," former inmates "graduates." Children helping in industrial and farm labor and ordinary kitchen drudgery—primarily to save expense, not to train the boy or girl for a useful occupation—were in "vocational rehabilitation." Catchwords of the trade—"individualization of treatment," "rehabilitating the maladjusted"—rolled easily off the tongues of many institutional officials who not only didn't put these principles into practice but didn't even understand their meaning.

Within the institutions, old-line staff members and child inmates enriched my vocabulary with quite another series of esoteric terms, not found in the standard textbooks. Most of my friends in social work were loftily unfamiliar with these terms, which nevertheless were in many ways more accurate reflections of typical institutional life than they could see from afar.

I learned that "brick counting" is a form of punishment wherein the boy or girl is made to stand erect for specified periods with his or her nose to the wall, and that "star gazing" means standing at attention with the eyes turned toward the ceiling. I learned that "rice polishing" means forcing a boy to crawl on his hands and knees across a floor strewn with rice grains until bleeding starts or until suffering is intense enough to satisfy the disciplinarian that justice has been done. I learned that "runaway pills" is a humorous term applied to laxatives and cathartics forced on captured runaways "to help keep them running." I learned other significant slang expressions for penal practices—terms like "hydrotherapy" or "fire-hosing," "duck-walking," "standing on line," "the slicks," "burlap party," and "walking posts."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Deutsch reminds us that a change in words does not necessarily signify a change in practice, although many people appear to think so. Cite other examples of the use of *new words* to make more palatable an *old practice.*
2. Although the book from which this excerpt was taken is largely concerned with exposing and denouncing present practices in juvenile care, Deutsch feels it necessary to begin his book with this revelation of the way *talk about* juvenile correction differs from what is actually *done* about it. Can you see any reason for his doing this before he proposes actual reforms? What possible obstacle to any effort at reform does this gap between language and practice suggest?
3. The use of words to camouflage realities has its lighter side. H. L. Mencken has been one of the chief recorders of the attempts of various groups to verbalize their way to a more exalted status. Among other examples, he has noted *mortician* for undertaker, *memorial park* for burial grounds, *realtor* for real-estate salesman, *sanitary engineer* for plumber, *beautician* for beauty-shop operator. Mencken even coined a term for strip-teasers, at the request of one of the most famous practitioners of this art—*ecdysiast!* Can you cite some more recent examples?
4. Mild expressions substituted for other expressions that may be offensive are called *euphemisms.* Euphemisms sometimes suggest our unwillingness to confront unpleasant realities. What are some euphemisms used by people engaged in the process of collecting money owed them? some polite terms for drunkenness? some substitutes for the word *death?* terms for other unpleasant realities?
5. Can a useful distinction be made between euphemisms used to evade realities and expressions used to give a kind of clinical objectivity to certain biological and sociological discussions? Is calling a leg a *limb* in the same category as referring to spit as *sputum?* Can you defend one as opposed to the other?
6. Deutsch reports that terms used by the inmates of juvenile institutions were often more descriptive of actual practices than those used by social workers and administrators of these institutions. How do you account for this?

PROJECTS

1. Examine the current vocabulary in one of the following fields (or some other field in which you are interested) and try to determine to what extent the vocabulary *agrees with practice* in that field: (*a*) military recruitment, (*b*) college athletics, (*c*) community "boosting," (*d*) medicine.
2. In a brief talk or paper describe and analyze the uses of euphemistic language in one of the following: (*a*) your home, (*b*) your college studies, (*c*) your dormitory, (*d*) a fraternal organization to which you belong. Besides pointing out the euphemisms, consider probable reasons for their rise and survival.

J. B. Kerfoot

LEARNING TO READ

It may at first surprise you to find an essay on "Learning to Read" in a college textbook. If you are surprised, the chances are that you have never closely examined what learning to read may involve. Kerfoot makes such an examination, and we think you will agree that the problem of "learning to read" in his sense goes pretty deep into the nature of learning and thinking and, in fact, into the whole problem of using language tools to our advantage rather than to our disadvantage.

Do not allow yourself to miss the point of this article because the movies Kerfoot saw are different from the ones you see.

A few months ago I happened to be present at a dinner where a chance question led to an interesting talk. Some phase of primary education was under discussion; and in the course of it the host, turning to one of the guests, asked, "When did *you* learn to read?"

"At three," was the prompt reply, given with a touch of pride.

"And you?" said the host to the next guest.

"Oh, I don't know. About five, I suppose."

"And you?" to a lady beyond.

There was a moment's embarrassed hesitation. And then, with something about scarlet fever, came the confession that she had not learned her letters till she was nine. . . .

There was a cumulative inflection of finality in their declarations. It almost sounded as though, in dealing with the primary-school meaning of "learning to read," they felt that they had dealt with the whole meaning of that expression. And while it never entered my head at the moment that this

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was really true, the fact that it was somehow being made to appear true struck me as amusing. It struck me as amusing enough to call attention to. And so, presently, when the host asked me when I had learned to read, I answered with a smile that I was still learning.

And to my utter astonishment it developed, in the chaffing and talk that followed, that no single member of that largely literary and more or less intellectual company had ever thought of the expression "learning to read" as *having* any other meaning than the technical, primary-school meaning; that, namely, of learning the alphabet, learning to recognize words made out of the alphabet, learning the dictionary meanings of more, and more, and still more words, and thus learning to *receive messages sent by print or handwriting.*

No one of them, it turned out, had ever asked himself what it is, exactly, that we do when we read. No one of them had ever watched himself in the act of reading. And all of them, in consequence, had retained intact the careless assumption that reading is essentially a *receptive* process. They all looked upon it, let us say, as though print were a sort of silent telephone, into one end of which an author delivers a message, and from the other end of which (by simply "knowing how to read") his audience receives it.

Now, as a matter of fact, and as we shall see presently, this is not true at all. It is not even an inadequate statement of the facts; it is a misstatement of them. And when I had pointed out something of this,—when I had, hurriedly, and to the poor best of my surprised unpreparedness, mobilized a few arguments and illustrations in defense of what I had regarded as a neutralized axiom,—we began, in the course of the give-and-take of the talk that followed, to make discoveries. And we continued, excitedly and joyously, to make them until 1 A.M.

We discovered that the common-school definition of "learning to read" is so universally accepted as the whole definition, that, while almost every newspaper and magazine publishes regular articles on *what* to read, none of them, so far as any of us knew, ever publishes articles on *how* to read. We discovered that, while there is a whole literature of books about books,—about what books it behooves us to read, and why it behooves us to read them, and what (according to the author) it behooves us to read into them,—there is little or nothing in the whole literature about literature that tells us anything at all about how we *have* to read books and what it is that we *have* to read into them. We discovered—But, enough! What we are here concerned with is the last discovery that we made; the discovery upon which, so to say, the inquiry culminated and broke up; the discovery that I have tried to summarize in a sentence on the title-page of this book.

We discovered that reading, so far from being a merely receptive act, is a creative process. That it is "creative," not simply in the more or less cant-sodden "artistic" sense, but in a biologic sense as well. That it is an active, largely automatic, purely personal, constructive functioning. That it is, indeed,

a species of anabolism. In short, that it is *a form of living*. And as this last expression will be found, as we proceed, progressively to absorb and adequately to sum up the essence of our successive conclusions, I will put it that it is this last "discovery"—the discovery of reading as a form of living—that I propose to examine and hope to elucidate in the following pages.

And now, having said this much by way of introduction; having, as it were, established a mental take-off; let us, like sensible swimmers, dive at once into the deepest pool that our preliminary subject affords.

II

Until ten or twelve years ago, no man who ever lived could tell another man a story.

I am sorry to begin by making so obviously idiotic a statement. But I have two excuses for doing so. One (which I merely mention in passing) is that the statement is literally true. The other (upon which I want to lay all possible emphasis) is that the trueness of this truth is of the essence of our inquiry.

Allow me, therefore, to repeat the statement.

From the beginning of time, right down until about ten years ago, no man ever lived who could tell another man a story. Moses couldn't. Homer couldn't. Chaucer couldn't. The minstrels and minnesingers couldn't. Dante couldn't. Dickens couldn't. Even Conan Doyle couldn't.

The best that the very best of them ever succeeded in doing was to trick, or to coax, or to compel their readers or their hearers into *telling stories to themselves.*

"Pshaw!" you are very likely going to exclaim at this point. "Here is a man pretending to explain one idiotic statement by making another." And perhaps it does look that way. But, before we continue the discussion, let us take a few minutes off and go to the movies.

III

That stirring photo-play, "The Two Rattlesnakes," is on the bill.

We scuttle down the darkened aisle and slip into some vacant seats near the front.

There is a little hissing splutter overhead. A flickering green frame, with *"Jim meets a rattler"* inside it, springs into view on the dim curtain. And a moment later the entire audience, and we with them, have settled down into an eager, yet perfectly passive, receptivity, and are looking (through a hole in the darkness) at the arid slope of an Arizona sheep-ranch, where a cowboy with a lamb in his arms and an old ewe at his heels is picking his way down the rocky and cactus-grown hillside. On he comes, twisting and turning; near enough now for us to see the litheness of his limbs and his cheery eyes. Then, suddenly, there is a blur of motion at his feet. A snaky something launches its length and strikes for a second at his knee. Bewilderment, horror, realiza-

tion, chase each other across his face. We see him drop the lamb; snatch out a knife; rip away the cloth; slash the naked flesh; bend to suck the poison from the wound. We watch him make a tortion bandage from the kerchief at his neck. We watch him start, limping, down the hill. We watch him waver, and stumble, and stop to rest with his hand on a boulder. We watch him press on; and fall; and get up; and struggle on again. We see him fall, and fail to rise. We see him, with a last spurt of strength, pull his six-shooter from its holster; fire three slow shots in the air; and drop back into unconsciousness. And we see a little cloud of distant dust turn into the mounted figures of his friends; see them ride furiously up; leap to the ground; gather round him; examine his hurt; lift his inert body to a horse's back, and ride away—just as the hole in the darkness disappears and we find ourselves back again in the dim-lit, crowded hall.

Now it would be nice to sit out the show. To see how *"Mollie gets the News"*—Mollie in her Harlem flat; with her sleeves rolled up above her plump forearms; interrupted in the act of touching a moist finger to a hot iron by the coming of a telegram—"Jim bitten by a rattler. Come at once." To see her drag a chair to the corner cupboard; take down the old teapot; empty its contents on the ironing-board; stuff the money into her purse; put on her wraps and go. To see her, in the next reel, poring over time-tables in an emigrant sleeper; while the other rattlesnake—a human one—watches her from across the aisle. To see him scrape acquaintance with her; learn her story; get out maps; offer suggestions; finally send a telegram of his own—"Meet me at Dry Gulch with the buckboard." To see her whisked behind fast horses to the cattle-thieves' camp. To see the cowboy raid; the timely rescue; the ride to the ranch; the reunited lovers. To see the human rattler tied hand and foot and tossed (on the same hillside that Jim came down in the beginning) into the center of a grim-faced circle and within reach of a coiled something that writhes, and springs, and dashes obscene fangs against his contorted face.

But we haven't time for that. We must get back to our discussion. Let us slip out quietly while the hall is dark.

IV

Do you happen to know how the movies are made?

They begin, like any other piece of fiction, in the mind of a man who has *told himself a story*. Having done so, he undertakes, by means of a short piece of descriptive writing (called a scenario) to guide the imagination of his readers along the road his own imagination has followed. And this scenario is submitted to a movie-manager, who, if he likes it, buys it and turns it over to his producing department.

Now the producing department of a moving-picture concern is a remarkable establishment. It has a long list of actors at its beck and call. It has storehouses full of stage properties. It has clothes-presses full of costumes. It has a card index of "likely places." It has a corps of mechanics to do its

bidding. And when the scenario of an author's story is turned over to the directing intelligence of this establishment, he chooses actors for it from his troupe. He supplies them with costumes from his cupboards. He draws stage properties from his stores. He selects scenes from his card index. He has his mechanics provide effects that are not in stock. And finally, before the recording eye of the camera, he proceeds—well or ill according to his ability and his resources—to *re-tell the author's story in the concrete terms of his own equipment.*

And for us who sit in the audience his re-telling—his reading of the story—is final. *You* may know a hillside far more picturesque than the one *Jim* comes down. But you cannot substitute it, in your mind, for the movieman's hillside. *I* may know a girl a dozen times more Molly-ish than the *Mollie* of the film. But I cannot cast her for Mollie's part in "The Two Rattlesnakes." The movieman is reading the author's story, not we. For the moment he stands, like St. Peter, at the gates of our imaginations. What he chooses is chosen. What he puts in is in. What he leaves out is out.

He is the first man who has told another man a story since the world began.

"But," you are perhaps exclaiming, "how then about the others? How about Virgil? And Cervantes? And Balzac? And—Marie Corelli?"

Every one of them, from the least to the greatest, has but written for the movies.

Not for the movies of the photo-theater, but for the movies of our minds.

For a novel is nothing but an elaborate scenario. And each of us is a moving-picture concern.

When we examine a book at a bookstore; when we look at the opening sentences, and read a snatch of conversation on page 247, and turn back to the last page to see how it all ends,—a scenario has been submitted to the manager. When we pay down our $1.35 or present our library card to be stamped,—we have purchased the local rights in it. And when we switch on our electric reading-lamp, and stretch out in our favorite chair, and open the book at the first chapter,—we turn the tale over to our producing department.

And the producing department of a human moving-picture concern is also a remarkable establishment.

All the people we have ever known, plus thousands we have spoken to, or crossed eyes with in a crowd, or watched in public places, or merely glimpsed in passing, are actors at its beck and call. And it can, moreover, pick and choose, not only among these actors, but among their attributes. It can, and that in the twinkling of an eye, take a chance expression on the face of one's best friend, the body of a blacksmith seen years since at a country crossroad, the mustache of yesterday's organ-grinder, and the eyes of last year's cotillion leader, and cast the composite of them (together with the composite suggestion of personality that results) as the villain of a piece.

It, too, has memory storehouses full of stage properties; mental cupboards crammed with costumes; a brain-cell index of likely places. It, too, has a marvelous mechanic, called Imagination, that contrives effects that are not in stock out of odds and ends of raw material.

And when a story-teller's scenario is submitted to it, the directing mind of this establishment—contriving, as they are needed, actors from this troupe; stage properties from these stores; costumes from these cupboards; scenes from this cell catalogue—proceeds, paragraph by paragraph and page by page, before the estimating eye of our intelligence, and well or ill according to its ability and its resources, to *re-tell the author's story in the recollective and imaginative and emotional terms of its own equipment.*

V

Do you, by any chance, doubt this?

If so, I have a confession to make. I have, deliberately and with malice aforethought, deceived you. The photo-play performance of "The Two Rattlesnakes" never took place. *There never has been such a photo-play.*

I made that all up "as I went along," as the children say. And I placed before you, not a story, but only the skeleton of a story—the merest dry bones of a half-finished scenario.

Yet I'll warrant that in reading it you pictured to yourself a *Jim* of your own fancying, walking down a hillside of your own invention. That you contrived a *Mollie* to your own liking and placed her in a flat of your own furnishing. That at the last you invested the horrid death of the villain with emotions dictated by your own temperament. That you either exulted in a punishment that so poetically fitted the crime, or shuddered to see men, made in God's image, capable of such horrors.

Is it not so?

Moreover, when you stop to consider it, you will see that this cannot be otherwise.

The terms of one's own equipment are the only terms in which a story *can* reach us.

For the heroine that the author imagined is forever invisible to us, no matter how minutely he describes her. And though his scene for the moment be Chicago, and though we chance to live there, it is in *our* Chicago, and not in his, that we stage that chapter of his tale. Indeed, if he describes a character *too* minutely,—if he keeps our minds too long from imagining their own protagonists in the effort to imagine his,—our minds end by shrugging their shoulders, going on strike, and refusing to imagine *any*. And it is for the same reason that we so often skip elaborate descriptions of scenery, and that meticulously word-painted landscapes commonly prove invisible to the eyes of our imaginations.

Nor is it alone to the things of the senses that this inexorable law applies. It is the same with less tangible stage properties. When we are called

upon to "register" horror, we have only our own brands of that emotion to register. When a mental attitude is asked of us, we can but place our own minds, like lay figures, in, or somewhere near, the posture demanded. And if the specifications of our author's scenario include a spiritual reaction, we must either supply it, or a substitute for it, from the laboratory of our own spirit, or else pass on, saying in effect (as the motion-picture man would say in the vernacular), "Kill that soul stuff!"

VI

But let us go back for a moment to that beginning which we have skipped. Let us go back to the nursery and to our own "learning to read."

Let us suppose that you have just mastered your letters (or, if you happen to belong to the later order, that you have not mastered them) and that you are about to receive your first lesson in reading.

A book is placed before you, open at the first page.

On this page is the woodcut of an animal. And below that are the mystic hieroglyphics, *See the Cat.*

Do you see what has happened?

Do you perceive the significance—the practical symbolism—of this performance? Do you see that at the very threshold of "learning to read," even in the restricted, common-school sense of learning to interpert an arbitrary code of black marks on white paper, there has been placed before you, as a symbol of what you are to do, *the moving picture reduced to its simplest form?* Do you see that in effect, and by the silent pantomime of that juxtaposition, they are saying to you, "Visualize, darn you!"?

But perhaps you will balk at this interpretation.

Let us, therefore, suppose again.

Let us suppose that there is no house cat in your home.

Let us suppose that the weeks have gone by and that you have learned to read many pages in your picture primer; and that one fine morning, on a pictureless page in another book, you come across again those now familiar characters, *See the Cat.*

What happens now?

Why, instantly and inevitably you *visualize the woodcut.*

Why? Because it is the only cat you have in stock; and so, willy-nilly, you cast it for the hero of the sentence. You have, in short, on a ridiculously inadequate capital, begun your career as a moving-picture concern.

Let us pursue the inquiry.

Let us suppose that you go for a few weeks' visit to some cousins in the country, and that one of them has a Maltese kitten.

And let us suppose that on your return, fearing perhaps that you had forgotten your lessons, they put that old primer in your hand, open at the first page.

What happens this time?

Do you accept the woodcut?

Not you. As you take in the words *See the Cat,* your mind presents you, unasked, the picture of a blue-gray kitten, the extreme tip of its tail twitching back and forth above the grass and one curved paw tapping a red apple just fallen in the orchard. And with this picture comes a swift sense of soft winds; and just a taste of cider.

You have, you see, increased the capital of your moving-picture establishment and are already exercising your prerogatives as a producing manager. You have just rejected with scorn the illustrator's offer to supply your equipment. You are *telling the author's story yourself.*

VII

And now I think that we are ready to sum up.

Or, shall we put it that we have now acquired the equipment necessary to read what follows? For that, after all, is what we really mean.

We read, then, quite literally, with our own experience. We read with what we have seen and heard and smelled and tasted and felt. We read with the emotions we have had—with the love we have loved, the fear we have feared, the hate we have hated. We read with the observations we have made and the deductions we have drawn from them; with the ideas we have evolved and the ideals we have built into them; with the sympathies we have developed and the prejudices we have failed to rid ourselves of.

"Learning to read" in the common-school sense—learning, let us put it, to *read print* and learning to *read handwriting*—has exactly as much (and exactly as little) to do with our reading of a novel as it has with Forbes-Robertson's "reading" of Shakespeare.

Learning to read, in the real sense, means enlarging our equipment, and learning, creatively, to use it.

We *receive* in reading; but we receive, not directly by what the author tells us, but indirectly, by the new uses that he stimulates us into putting our experience to.

For reading consists of our making—with the aid of the pattern and the hints supplied by the author, but out of *our* mental stock, which we have produced by living—something that never existed before; something that only exists at all in so far as we make it; something that can never be duplicated by any other reader; something that we ourselves can never wholly reproduce.

Reading is a copartnership. What we receive from it is in the nature of dividends on a joint investment. . . .

X

When you began this chapter, you quite definitely didn't have in your head several ideas that are now there.

You didn't, for instance, have in your head the idea that authors do

not tell us stories; that they only issue instructions to us for telling ourselves stories; that they only write "scenarios" for us to "produce."

How, then, did this idea get into your head?

Not, certainly, by my putting it there.

If you are inclined, for the moment, to think that I did this, you have only to turn back to section II of this chapter in order to see how you felt toward *it,* and what you thought of *me,* when I pretended to think that I *could* put this idea into your head.

No. I didn't put it there. I couldn't.

All that I could do was to furnish you, in the proper order, the various formulae needed for distilling it; to see that you were supplied, on occasion, with certain necessary raw materials; and to stimulate you, from time to time, to make certain combinations out of these ingredients.

I knew, for instance, that you were going to need the idea that there were two meanings to the expression "learning to read"; and I was afraid that you might not have this idea in stock. So I suggested that you take a number of ideas that I knew you *could* supply from stock—the ideas of an inquisitorial host; of a series of guests, each of whom thought in his own way that he had learned to read, once for all, when he was a child; and of one guest who thought that he hadn't—I suggested that you take these simple ideas and mix them in a certain way. And you did as I suggested and got the desired result—the more complex idea.

And I took pains to "stimulate you into making this new combination of ideas that were already on hand."

That was a part of my job as author.

I did it, in this case, by inducing you to dramatize the ideas; by inducing you to imagine people holding these ideas, or enacting them. In fine, I did it by *inventing this dinner party;* which, like the photo-play of "The Two Rattlesnakes," never took place.

But the dinner party and the photo-play were invented for entirely different reasons. In the latter case I knew that you were going to need the idea that *we read in terms of our own equipment and not in terms of the author's equipment;* and I was also afraid that you did not have this idea in stock.

But this is an idea that is not easily derivable from the mixing of other, simpler ideas. This is an idea that we get best first-hand, from experience—by actually doing the thing and watching ourselves do it. It is practically one of those realization-ideas, like the idea that fire is hot. Its extreme complexity is due to the extreme complexity of the experience itself.

So I took measures to supply you with the experience.

I wrote a scenario and I tricked you into "producing" it.

And then, while the experience was fresh in your mind, I called your attention to what you had done.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. How do firsthand experiences (many or few, rich or impoverished) contribute to the *meanings* words have for you? In what special sense is the man with the widest range of experiences the "best reader"? How is this related to the scientific thinker's contention that those generalizations are soundest which are based on the greatest number and variety of relevant particulars?
2. How does the popular notion of what "learning to read" means illustrate a failure to think inductively? How does Kerfoot get us to use the inductive method to demonstrate the validity of his proposition that reading is a "creative process"?
3. Kerfoot stresses the need for experience (not just words about words) as a basis for real understanding of the writer's intent. Do you remember the story of the little girl who told her mother that they sang a song about "Gladly, the cross-eyed bear" in Sunday School? What recollections do you have of using words with very little real understanding of what the words signified? What of poem recitations, catechisms, high-school orations, and so on?

PROJECT

Kerfoot's idea—that fiction is an elaborate scenario and each of us a unique moving-picture concern—can be tested. With your instructor's help select a piece of short fiction which the entire class can read. Permit various class members to describe in detail—orally or in writing—the way some particular episode or character appeared to *them*. Compare the results. Determine to what extent different interpretations were based on the different prior experiences of the readers.

Thomas Mann

DISILLUSIONMENT

Can words help us create—and then stubbornly cling to—illusions? That they can would seem to be one of the suggestions in this story by Thomas Mann.

"Disillusionment" reveals Mann's concern with basic human problems—a philosophical tendency that runs through his many novels, short stories, and essays.

Mann, born in Germany in 1875, is best-known for such novels as The Magic Mountain (*a symbolic tale of modern thought set against the background of a mountain tuberculosis sanitarium*), Buddenbrooks (*a fictional*

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study of the changes within a wealthy German middle-class family as social patterns shift), and the Joseph *series (imaginative re-creations of the Bible story of Joseph, with much exploration of contrasting philosophies). He was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1929. When Hitler came to power in Germany, Mann came to America and continued his work there. He is the brother of another famous writer, Heinrich Mann, and the father of Erika and Klaus Mann, both well-known writers.*

I confess that I was completely bewildered by the conversation which I had with this extraordinary man. I am afraid that I am even yet hardly in a state to report it in such a way that it will affect others as it did me. Very likely the effect was largely due to the candour and friendliness with which an entire stranger laid himself open to me.

It was some two months ago, on an autumnal afternoon, that I first noticed my stranger on the Piazza di San Marco. Only a few people were abroad; but on the wide square the standards flapped in the light sea-breeze in front of that sumptuous marvel of colour and line which stood out with luminous enchantment against a tender pale-blue sky. Directly before the centre portal a young girl stood strewing corn for a host of pigeons at her feet, while more and more swooped down in clouds from all sides. An incomparably blithe and festive sight.

I met him on the square and I have him in perfect clarity before my eye as I write. He was rather under middle height and a little stooped, walking briskly and holding his cane in his hands behind his back. He wore a stiff black hat, a light summer overcoat, and dark striped trousers. For some reason I mistook him for an Englishman. He might have been thirty years old, he might have been fifty. His face was smooth-shaven, with a thickish nose and tired grey eyes; round his mouth played constantly an inexplicable and somewhat simple smile. But from time to time he would look searchingly about him, then stare upon the ground, mutter a few words to himself, give his head a shake and fall to smiling again. In this fashion he marched perseveringly up and down the square.

After that first time I noticed him daily; for he seemed to have no other business than to pace up and down, thirty, forty, or fifty times, in good weather and bad, always alone and always with that extraordinary bearing of his.

On the evening which I mean to describe there had been a concert by a military band. I was sitting at one of the little tables which spread out into the piazza from Florian's café; and when after the concert the concourse of people had begun to disperse, my unknown, with his accustomed absent smile, sat down in a seat left vacant near me.

The evening drew on, the scene grew quieter and quieter, soon all the tables were empty. Hardly any strollers were left, the majestic square was wrapped in peace, the sky above it thick with stars; a great half-moon hung above the splendid spectacular façade of San Marco.

I had been reading my paper, with my back to my neighbour, and was about to surrender the field to him when I was obliged instead to turn in his direction. For whereas I had not heard a single sound, he now suddenly began to speak.

"You are in Venice for the first time, sir?" he asked, in bad French. When I essayed to answer in English he went on in good German, speaking in a low, husky voice and coughing often to clear it.

"You are seeing all this for the first time? Does it come up to your expectations? Surpasses them, eh? You would not say so in order to seem happy and enviable? Ah!" He leaned back and looked at me, blinking rapidly with a quite inexplicable expression.

The ensuing pause lasted for some time. I did not know how to go on with this singular conversation and once more was about to depart when he hastily leaned towards me.

"Do you know, my dear sir, what disillusionment is?" he asked in low, urgent tones, both hands leaning on his stick. "Not a miscarriage in small, unimportant matters, but the great and general disappointment which everything, all of life, has in store? No, of course, you do not know. But from my youth up I have carried it about with me; it has made me lonely, unhappy, and a bit queer, I do not deny that.

"You could not, of course, understand what I mean, all at once. But you might; I beg of you to listen to me for a few minutes. For if it can be told at all it can be told without many words.

"I may begin by saying that I grew up in a clergyman's family, in quite a small town. There reigned in our home a punctilious cleanliness and the pathetic optimism of the scholarly atmosphere. We breathed a strange atmosphere, compact of pulpit rhetoric, of large words for good and evil, beautiful and base, which I bitterly hate, since perhaps they are to blame for all my sufferings.

"For me life consisted utterly of those large words; for I knew no more of it than the infinite, insubstantial emotions which they called up in me. From man I expected divine virtue or hair-raising wickedness; from life either ravishing loveliness or else consummate horror; and I was full of avidity for all that and of a profound, tormented yearning for a larger reality, for experience of no matter what kind, let it be glorious and intoxicating bliss or unspeakable, undreamed-of anguish.

"I remember, sir, with painful clearness the first disappointment of my life; and I would beg you to observe that it had not at all to do with the miscarriage of some cherished hope, but with an unfortunate occurrence. There was a fire at night in my parents' house, when I was hardly more than a child. It had spread insidiously until the whole small storey was in flames up to my chamber door, and the stairs would soon have been on fire as well. I discovered it first, and I remember that I went rushing through the house shouting over and over: 'Fire, fire!' I know exactly what I said and what feel-

ing underlay the words, though at the time it could scarcely have come to the surface of my consciousness. 'So this,' I thought, 'is a fire. This is what it is like to have the house on fire. Is this all there is to it?'

"Goodness knows it was serious enough. The whole house burned down, the family was only saved with difficulty, and I got some burns. And it would be wrong to say that my fancy could have painted anything much worse than the actual burning of my parents' house. Yet some vague, formless idea of an event even more frightful must have existed somewhere within me, by comparison with which the reality seemed flat. This fire was the first great event in my life. It left me defrauded of my hope of fearfulness.

"Do not fear lest I go on to recount my disappointments to you in detail. Enough to tell you that I zealously fed my magnificent expectations of life with the matter of a thousand books and the works of all the poets. Ah, how I have learned to hate them, those poets who chalked up their large words on all the walls of life—because they had no power to write them on the sky with pencils dipped in Vesuvius! I came to think of every large word as a lie or a mockery.

"Ecstatic poets have said that speech is poor: 'Ah, how poor are words,' so they sing. But no, sir. Speech, it seems to me, is rich, is extravagantly rich compared with the poverty and limitations of life. Pain has its limits: physical pain in unconsciousness and mental in torpor; it is not different with joy. Our human need for communication has found itself a way to create sounds which lie beyond these limits.

"Is the fault mine? Is it down my spine alone that certain words can run so as to awaken in me intuitions of sensations which do not exist?

"I went out into that supposedly so wonderful life, craving just one, one single experience which should correspond to my great expectations. God help me, I have never had it. I have roved the globe over, seen all the best-praised sights, all the works of art upon which have been lavished the most extravagant words. I have stood in front of these and said to myself: 'It is beautiful. And yet—is that all? Is it no more beautiful than that?'

"I have no sense of actualities. Perhaps that is the trouble. Once, somewhere in the world, I stood by a deep, narrow gorge in the mountains. Bare rock went up perpendicular on either side, and far below the water roared past. I looked down and thought to myself: 'What if I were to fall?' But I knew myself well enough to answer: 'If that were to happen you would say to yourself as you fell: "Now you are falling, you are actually falling. Well, and what of it?" '

"You may believe me that I do not speak without experience of life. Years ago I fell in love with a girl, a charming, gentle creature, whom it would have been my joy to protect and cherish. But she loved me not, which was not surprising, and she married another. What other experience can be so painful as this? What tortures are greater than the dry agonies of baffled lust? Many a night I lay wide-eyed and wakeful; yet my greatest torture re-

sided in the thought: 'So this is the greatest pain we can suffer. Well, and what then—is this all?'

"Shall I go on to tell you of my happiness? For I have had my happiness as well and it too has been a disappointment. No, I need not go on; for no heaping up of bald examples can make clearer to you that it is life in general, life in its dull, uninteresting, average course which has disappointed me—disappointed, disappointed!

"What is man? asks young Werther—man, the glorious half-god? Do not his powers fail him just where he needs them most? Whether he soars upwards in joy or sinks down in anguish, is he not always brought back to bald, cold consciousness precisely at the point where he seeks to lose himself in the fullness of the infinite?

"Often I have thought of the day when I gazed for the first time at the sea. The sea is vast, the sea is wide, my eyes roved far and wide and longed to be free. But there was the horizon. Why a horizon, when I wanted the infinite from life?

"It may be narrower, my horizon, than that of other men. I have said that I lack a sense of actualities—perhaps it is that I have too much. Perhaps I am too soon full, perhaps I am too soon done with things. Am I acquainted in too adulterated a form with both joy and pain?

"I do not believe it; and least of all do I believe in those whose views of life are based on the great words of the poets—it is all lies and poltroonery. And you may have observed, my dear sir, that there are human beings so vain and so greedy of the admiration and envy of others that they pretend to have experienced the heights of happiness but never the depths of pain?

"It is dark and you have almost ceased to listen to me; so I can the more easily confess that I too have tried to be like these men and make myself appear happy in my own and others' eyes. But it is some years since that the bubble of this vanity was pricked. Now I am alone, unhappy, and a little queer, I do not deny it.

"It is my favourite occupation to gaze at the starry heavens at night—that being the best way to turn my eyes away from earth and from life. And perhaps it may be pardoned in me that I still cling to my distant hopes? That I dream of a freer life, where the actuality of my fondest anticipations is revealed to be without any torturing residue of disillusionment? Of a life where there are no more horizons?

"So I dream and wait for death. Ah, how well I know it already, death, that last disappointment! At my last moment I shall be saying to myself: 'So this is the great experience—well, and what of it? What is it after all?'

"But it has grown cold here on the piazza, sir—that I can still feel—ha ha! I have the honour to bid you a very good night."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Mann's singular character accounts for his disillusionment in these lines: "For me life consisted utterly of those large words; for I knew no more of it than the infinite, insubstantial emotions which they called up in me." What light does the preceding essay by Kerfoot throw on the conduct of this pathetic figure?
2. The enslavement of a man by words has interested other writers. Name some of the word-smitten figures—comic and tragic—immortalized in literature. Cervantes' Don Quixote will serve to start your list.
3. For purposes of class discussion, furnish some less extreme examples of this behavior among people you have observed. For instance, what of the gullible boy who finds the claims of the muscle-building ads completely plausible? Or the person who has developed an addiction for "True Love Romances"?
4. Psychologists, like writers, are interested in manifestations of the effects of language on behavior. They report that persons with deep-seated psychological cravings frequently reveal these obsessions by means of the language they use to express them. For example, men who subscribe to the notion of a "superior race" are dealing with myth, but the very expression in language gives this notion a certain air of reality to them. Point to other verbal traps which can lead people to profound mistakes and unnecessary unhappiness. What about the notion of "a perfect marriage," for instance? Or the feeling of being "a complete failure"?

PROJECTS

1. Write a memoir in which you recount some painful disillusionment you yourself have undergone—a disillusionment which might have been avoided if you had seen that the illusion and the words with which you clothed it had no link with reality.
2. Have you, like Mann's character, had an experience you thought would be dramatic but which turned out to be anti-climactic? If so, write a paper in which you describe not only the event and its effects upon you but also the role language played in creating your picture of it.

Mark Twain

BUCK FANSHAW'S FUNERAL

The humor of Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) was frequently the result of his fantastic exaggeration of a real situation. The account of Buck Fanshaw's funeral, from Roughing It, *by its use of this humorous exaggeration vividly illustrates the breakdown of communication when two people who presumably speak the same language are really speaking different languages.*

Clemens worked as a miner and newspaperman in Nevada and California during the eighteen-sixties. These experiences provided the rough ore from which he mined the hilarious sketches found in Roughing It.

Somebody has said that in order to know a community, one must observe the style of its funerals and know what manner of men they bury with most ceremony. I cannot say which class we buried with most éclat in our "flush times," the distinguished public benefactor or the distinguished rough —possibly the two chief grades or grand divisions of society honored their illustrious dead about equally; and hence, no doubt, the philosopher I have quoted from would have needed to see two representative funerals in Virginia before forming his estimate of the people.

There was a grand time over Buck Fanshaw when he died. He was a representative citizen. He had "killed his man"—not in his own quarrel, it is true, but in defense of a stranger unfairly beset by numbers. He had kept a sumptuous saloon. He had been the proprietor of a dashing helpmeet whom he could have discarded without the formality of a divorce. He had held a high position in the fire department and been a very Warwick in politics. When he died there was great lamentation throughout the town, but especially in the vast bottom stratum of society.

On the inquest it was shown that Buck Fanshaw, in the delirium of a wasting typhoid fever, had taken arsenic, shot himself through the body, cut his throat, and jumped out of a four-story window and broken his neck—and after due deliberation, the jury, sad and tearful, but with intelligence unblinded by its sorrow, brought in a verdict of death "by the visitation of God." What could the world do without juries?

Prodigious preparations were made for the funeral. All the vehicles in town were hired, all the saloons put in mourning, all the municipal and fire-company flags hung at half-mast, and all the firemen ordered to muster in uniform and bring their machines duly draped in black. Now—let us remark in parentheses—as all the peoples of the earth had representative adven-

BUCK FANSHAW'S FUNERAL From *Roughing It* by Mark Twain. Harper & Brothers, publisher.

turers in the Silverland, and as each adventurer had brought the slang of his nation or his locality with him, the combination made the slang of Nevada the richest and the most infinitely varied and copious that had ever existed anywhere in the world, perhaps, except in the mines of California in the "early days." Slang was the language of Nevada. It was hard to preach a sermon without it, and be understood. Such phrases as "You bet!" "Oh, no, I reckon not!" "No Irish need apply," and a hundred others, became so common as to fall from the lips of a speaker unconsciously—and very often when they did not touch the subject under discussion and consequently failed to mean anything.

After Buck Fanshaw's inquest, a meeting of the short-haired brotherhood was held, for nothing can be done on the Pacific coast without a public meeting and an expression of sentiment. Regretful resolutions were passed and various committees appointed; among others, a committee of one was deputed to call on the minister, a fragile, gentle, spirituel new fledgling from an Eastern theological seminary, and as yet unacquainted with the ways of the mines. The committeeman, "Scotty" Briggs, made his visit; and in after days it was worth something to hear the minister tell about it. Scotty was a stalwart rough, whose customary suit, when on weighty official business, like committee work, was a fire-helmet, flaming red flannel shirt, patent-leather belt with spanner and revolver attached, coat hung over arm, and pants stuffed into boot-tops. He formed something of a contrast to the pale theological student. It is fair to say of Scotty, however, in passing, that he had a warm heart, and a strong love for his friends, and never entered into a quarrel, when he could reasonably keep out of it. Indeed, it was commonly said that whenever one of Scotty's fights was investigated, it always turned out that it had originally been no affair of his, but that out of native good-heartedness he had dropped in of his own accord to help the man who was getting the worst of it. He and Buck Fanshaw were bosom friends, for years, and had often taken adventurous "pot-luck" together. On one occasion, they had thrown off their coats and taken the weaker side in a fight among strangers, and after gaining a hard-earned victory, turned and found that the men they were helping had deserted early, and not only that, but had stolen their coats and made off with them! But to return to Scotty's visit to the minister. He was on a sorrowful mission, now, and his face was the picture of woe. Being admitted to the presence he sat down before the clergyman, placed his firehat on an unfinished manuscript sermon under the minister's nose, took from it a red silk handkerchief, wiped his brow and heaved a sigh of dismal impressiveness, explanatory of his business. He choked, and even shed tears; but with an effort he mastered his voice and said in lugubrious tones:

"Are you the duck that runs the gospel-mill next door?"

"Am I the—pardon me, I believe I do not understand?"

With another sigh and a half-sob, Scotty rejoined:

"Why, you see we are in a bit of trouble, and the boys thought maybe you would give us a lift, if we'd tackle you—that is, if I've got the rights of it and you are the head clerk of the doxology-works next door."

"I am the shepherd in charge of the flock whose fold is next door."

"The which?"

"The spiritual adviser of the little company of believers whose sanctuary adjoins these premises."

Scotty scratched his head, reflected a moment, and then said:

"You ruther hold over me, pard. I reckon I can't call that hand. Ante and pass the buck."

"How? I beg pardon. What did I understand you to say?"

"Well, you've ruther got the bulge on me. Or maybe we've both got the bulge, somehow. You don't smoke me and I don't smoke you. You see, one of the boys has passed in his checks, and we want to give him a good send-off, and so the thing I'm on now is to roust out somebody to jerk a little chin-music for us and waltz him through handsome."

"My friend, I seem to grow more and more bewildered. Your observations are wholly incomprehensible to me. Cannot you simplify them in some way? At first I thought perhaps I understood you, but I grope now. Would it not expedite matters if you restricted yourself to categorical statements of fact unencumbered with obstructing accumulations of metaphor and allegory?"

Another pause, and more reflection. Then, said Scotty:

"I'll have to pass, I judge."

"How?"

"You've raised me out, pard."

"I still fail to catch your meaning."

"Why, that last lead of yourn is too many for me—that's the idea. I can't neither trump nor follow suit."

The clergyman sank back in his chair perplexed. Scotty leaned his head on his hand and gave himself up to thought. Presently his face came up, sorrowful but confident.

"I've got it now, so's you can savvy," he said. "What we want is a gospel-sharp. See?"

"A what?"

"Gospel-sharp. Parson."

"Oh! Why did you not say so before? I am a clergyman—a parson."

"Now you talk! You see my blind and straddle it like a man. Put it there!"—extending a brawny paw, which closed over the minister's small hand and gave it a shake indicative of fraternal sympathy and fervent gratification.

"Now we're all right, pard. Let's start fresh. Don't you mind my snuffling a little—becuz we're in a power of trouble. You see, one of the boys has gone up the flume—"

"Gone where?"

"Up the flume—throwed up the sponge, you understand."

"Thown up the sponge?"

"Yes—kicked the bucket—"

"Ah—has departed to that mysterious country from whose bourne no traveler returns."

"Return! I reckon not. Why, pard, he's *dead!*"

"Yes, I understand."

"Oh, you do? Well, I thought maybe you might be getting tangled some more. Yes, you see he's dead again—"

"*Again!* Why, has he ever been dead before?"

"Dead before? No! Do you reckon a man has got as many lives as a cat? But you bet you he's awful dead now, poor old boy, and I wish I'd never seen this day. I don't want no better friend than Buck Fanshaw. I knowed him by the back; and when I know a man and like him, I freeze to him—you hear *me*. Take him all round, pard, there never was a bullier man in the mines. No man ever knowed Buck Fanshaw to go back on a friend. But it's all up, you know, it's all up. It ain't no use. They've scooped him."

"Scooped him?"

"Yes—death has. Well, well, well, we've got to give him up. Yes, indeed. It's a kind of a hard world, after all, *ain't* it? But, pard, he was a rustler! You ought to seen him get started once. He was a bully boy with a glass eye! Just spit in his face and give him room according to his strength, and it was just beautiful to see him peel and go in. He was the worst son of a thief that ever drawed breath. Pard, he was *on* it! He was on it bigger than an Injun!"

"On it? On what?"

"On the shoot. On the shoulder. On the fight, you understand. *He* didn't give a continental for *any*body. *Beg* your pardon, friend, for coming so near saying a cuss-word—but you see I'm on an awful strain, in this palaver, on account of having to cramp down and draw everything so mild. But we've got to give him up. There ain't any getting around that, I don't reckon. Now if we can get you to help plant him—"

"Preach the funeral discourse? Assist at the obsequies?"

"Obs'quies is good. Yes. That's it—that's our little game. We are going to get the thing up regardless, you know. He was always nifty himself, and so you bet you his funeral ain't going to be no slouch—solid-silver door-plate on his coffin, six plumes on the hearse, and a nigger on the box in a biled shirt and a plug hat—how's that for high? And we'll take care of *you*, pard. We'll fix you all right. There'll be a kerridge for you; and whatever you want, you just 'scape out and we'll 'tend to it. We've got a shebang fixed up for you to stand behind, in No. 1's house, and don't you be afraid. Just go in and toot your horn, if you don't sell a clam. Put Buck through as bully as you can, pard, for anybody that knowed him will tell you that he was one

of the whitest men that was ever in the mines. You can't draw it too strong. He never could stand it to see things going wrong. He's done more to make this town quiet and peaceable than any man in it. I've seen him lick four Greasers in eleven minutes, myself. If a thing wanted regulating, *he* warn't a man to go browsing around after somebody to do it, but he would prance in and regulate it himself. He warn't a Catholic. Scasely. He was down on 'em. His word was, 'No Irish need apply!' But it didn't make no difference about that when it came down to what a man's rights was—and so, when some roughs jumped the Catholic boneyard and started in to stake out town lots in it he *went* for 'em! And he *cleaned* 'em, too! I was there, pard, and I seen it myself."

"That was very well indeed—at least the impulse was—whether the act was strictly defensible or not. Had deceased any religious convictions? That is to say, did he feel a dependence upon, or acknowledge allegiance to a higher power?"

More reflection.

"I reckon you've stumped me again, pard. Could you say it over once more, and say it slow?"

"Well, to simplify it somewhat, was he, or rather had he ever been connected with any organization sequestered from secular concerns and devoted to self-sacrifice in the interests of morality?"

"All down but nine—set 'em up on the other alley, pard."

"What did I understand you to say?"

"Why, you're most too many for me, you know. When you get in with your left I hunt grass every time. Every time you draw, you fill; but I don't seem to have any luck. Let's have a new deal."

"How? Begin again?"

"That's it."

"Very well. Was he a good man, and—"

"There— I see that; don't you put up another chip till I look at my hand. A good man, says you? Pard, it ain't no name for it. He was the best man that ever—pard, you would have doted on that man. He could lam any galoot of his inches in America. It was him that put down the riot last election before it got a start; and everybody said he was the only man that could have done it. He waltzed in with a spanner in one hand and a trumpet in the other, and sent fourteen men home on a shutter in less than three minutes. He had that riot all broke up and prevented nice before anybody ever got a chance to strike a blow. He was always for peace, and he would *have* peace—he could not stand disturbances. Pard, he was a great loss to this town. It would please the boys if you could chip in something like that and do him justice. Here once when the Micks got to throwing stones through the Methodis' Sunday-school windows, Buck Fanshaw, all of his own notion, shut up his saloon and took a couple of six-shooters and mounted guard over the Sunday-school. Says he, 'No Irish need apply!' And they didn't. He was

the bulliest man in the mountains, pard! He could run faster, jump higher, hit harder, and hold more tanglefoot whisky without spilling it than any man in seventeen counties. Put that in, pard—it'll please the boys more than anything you could say. And you can say, pard, that he never shook his mother."

"Never shook his mother?"

"That's it—any of the boys will tell you so."

"Well, but why *should* he shake her?"

"That's what I say—but some people does."

"Not people of any repute?"

"Well, some that averages pretty so-so."

"In my opinion the man that would offer personal violence to his own mother, ought to—"

"Cheese it, pard; you've banked your ball clean outside the string. What I was a drivin' at, was, that he never *throwed off* on his mother—don't you see? No indeedy. He give her a house to live in, and town lots, and plenty of money; and he looked after her and took care of her all the time; and when she was down with the smallpox I'm d——d if he didn't set up nights and nuss her himself! *Beg* your pardon for saying it, but it hopped out too quick for yours truly. You've treated me like a gentleman, pard, and I ain't the man to hurt your feelings intentional. I think you're white. I think you're a square man, pard. I like you, and I'll lick any man that don't. I'll lick him till he can't tell himself from a last year's corpse! Put it *there!*" [Another fraternal hand-shake—and exit.]

The obsequies were all that "the boys" could desire. Such a marvel of funeral pomp had never been seen in Virginia. The plumed hearse, the dirge-breathing brass-bands, the closed marts of business, the flags drooping at half-mast, the long, plodding procession of uniformed secret societies, military battalions and fire companies, draped engines, carriages of officials, and citizens in vehicles and on foot, attracted multitudes of spectators to the sidewalks, roofs, and windows; and for years afterward, the degree of grandeur attained by any civic display in Virginia was determined by comparison with Buck Fanshaw's funeral.

Scotty Briggs, as a pall-bearer and a mourner, occupied a prominent place at the funeral, and when the sermon was finished and the last sentence of the prayer for the dead man's soul ascended, he responded, in a low voice, but with feeling:

"Amen. No Irish need apply."

As the bulk of the response was without apparent relevancy, it was probably nothing more than a humble tribute to the memory of the friend that was gone; for, as Scotty had once said, it was "his word."

Scotty Briggs, in after days, achieved the distinction of becoming the only convert to religion that was ever gathered from the Virginia roughs; and it transpired that the man who had it in him to espouse the quarrel of the weak

out of inborn nobility of spirit was no mean timber whereof to construct a Christian. The making him one did not warp his generosity or diminish his courage; on the contrary it gave intelligent direction to the one and a broader field to the other. If his Sunday-school class progressed faster than the other classes, was it matter for wonder? I think not. He talked to his pioneer small-fry in a language they understood! It was my large privilege, a month before he died, to hear him tell the beautiful story of Joseph and his brethren to his class "without looking at the book." I leave it to the reader to fancy what it was like, as it fell, riddled with slang, from the lips of that grave, earnest teacher, and was listened to by his little learners with a consuming interest that showed that they were as unconscious as he was that any violence was being done to the sacred proprieties!

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Earlier in this section we referred to euphemisms—expressions which reveal our desire to avoid unpleasant realities. Mark Twain pokes fun at this practice of polite side-stepping of realities. Point out a few of his funniest euphemisms.
2. It is not uncommon to hear persons who use a good deal of slang make fun of people who use "learned" or "specialized" terms; they often imply that the user of "fancy words" ought to talk more simply. But is the problem just one of using "shorter," unacademic words? In what way may the slang-user fall into the same error that the technician and scholar is sometimes guilty of? In what circumstances may they both fail to communicate?

PROJECTS

1. Select a "special lingo" with which you feel reasonably sure your classmates will be unfamiliar—the lingo of jazz musicians, Broadway actors, racetrack touts, hot-rod enthusiasts, bobby-soxers, etc. Prepare a dialogue between two persons conversant with this special lingo and with the help of a classmate read it aloud to the class. See to what extent your classmates can follow what you are talking about.
2. Read a page in a still unread section of one of your college textbooks or perhaps in an issue of *Harper's Magazine* or the *Atlantic*. List all the words or phrases the meanings of which (as used in the article) are not clear to you. Classify these under two headings: (*a*) words totally unfamiliar to you, (*b*) words whose *meanings in this context* are unfamiliar to you. Indicate in a brief, pointed paragraph how the results of this little investigation explain the difficulties of Scotty and the minister in Mark Twain's yarn.

Mario Pei

NON-LINGUISTIC SYSTEMS OF COMMUNICATION

Mario Pei, in this excerpt from his book The Story of Language, *points out what we do when we communicate, and suggests that what we think of as language is only one form—the most complicated form—of communication. His discussion of gestures and other kinds of symbol-systems should make clearer to us the distinguishing characteristics of the language system of symbols evolved by the human race.*

Pei's book is a popular reflection of the revolution that has occurred in the study of linguistics during the past half-century. No longer is language studied as a static set of forms and rules. Rather, it is conceived and examined as a continuing, emergent, highly complex process by means of which men seek to think and communicate more effectively. Linguistics provides an evolutionary picture of language, and as such it contributes to such other sciences as anthropology and social psychology. Recent books reflecting this modern viewpoint toward language, and which are well within the understanding of the non-specialist, include Robert J. Hall's Leave Your Language Alone, *Charlton Laird's* The Miracle of Language, *John B. Carroll's* The Study of Language, *and Thomas Pyle's* Words and Ways of American English.

"There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture."
—SHAKESPEARE, *The Winter's Tale*

You are travelling along a motor highway. At the side of the road there appears an octagonal sign-post, with no lettering on it. If you do not know the code, you will go right on past it, into the arms of a traffic policeman or, more tragically, into a crash. If you know the code, you will come to a full stop. In like manner, a round disk with a cross tells you you are approaching a railroad crossing, a diamond-shaped sign tells you to slow down, a square sign indicates that you are entering a school-zone. Most States have now replaced these symbolic sign-posts with lettered signs, because illiteracy is rapidly diminishing. They depended upon a visual symbolism of shape, and served their purpose well when a segment of the driving population was still illiterate or semi-literate.

The red, green and yellow lights and "blinkers" which are now so common are equally effective, save in cases of color-blindness. They depend upon a visual symbolism of color, in which red arbitrarily stands for "stop"

NON-LINGUISTIC SYSTEMS OF COMMUNICATION From *The Story of Language* by Mario Pei. Copyright, 1949, by Mario Pei, published by J. B. Lippincott Company.

or "danger," green for "safety" or "go," yellow for "slow" or a transitional signal, a blinking light for "caution."

You are trying to pass a truck on a narrow highway at night. In response to the tooting of your horn, the truckman flashes his rear outline-lights off and on. If you know the code, you know that you can pass him safely. But if instead of signalling with his lights he waves his arm up and down, you know there is a car coming in the opposite direction, and drop behind till he gives the welcome flash. Here we have a symbolism of light and one of gesture.

In none of the cases outlined above has there been an interchange of language, spoken or written. There has, however, been an interchange of meaning, a transfer of significant concepts. If we accept only the narrower etymological definition of "language" as that which is produced by the human vocal organs and received by the hearing apparatus, we shall have to deny the name of "language" to these transfers. If we accept the broader definition of language as any transfer of meaning, they are forms of language differing in degree but not in kind from a spoken or written message.

In their anxiety to restrict language to a pattern of sounds, too many linguists have forgotten that the sound-symbols of the spoken tongue are neither more nor less symbolical of human thought and human meaning than the various forms of activity (gestural, pictorial, ideographic, even artistic) by which men have conveyed significant messages to one another since the dawn of history. It is a common-place among linguists that the spoken language antedates the written language by thousands, perhaps millions of years. Insofar as the written language is a symbolical replica of the spoken tongue, this is undoubtedly true. But there is little or no assurance that organized sound-language, as distinguished from mere animal cries, antedates pictographs painted on the walls of caves or petroglyphs carved on rocks, whose purpose undoubtedly was to convey a significant message or establish a permanent record.

Some scientists claim that certain animal species communicate by non-linguistic devices; that bees, for example, convey significant messages to one another by odor and by dancing in their hives, or that ants use their antennae in a significant way. The evidence for this seems to be about as conclusive (or inconclusive) as that in favor of animals with vocal organs communicating significantly by means of a "language" of barks, yowls and whines.

Meaning may be transferred by devices that have nothing to do either with the spoken language or with its written counterpart, and this basic proposition few will be so hardy as to deny. A logical corollary is that language as we know it did not necessarily have to become the great thought-conveyor that it is. Granted a different historical development, it is conceivable that the human race might have reserved its oral passages for purposes of eating and breathing only, and developed an entirely different machinery for the transfer of meaning. That this might have been so is proved by the

truly vast number of auxiliary meaning-conveyors that the human race has actually devised, and employs side by side with the spoken and written language. Our justification for discussing them here lies partly in the fact that they *are* auxiliaries to language, partly in our partiality for the broader definition of language as that which serves to convey meaning, partly in the fact that a historical discussion of language would be incomplete without them.

In the written language there are two possibilities: the written language may follow the spoken language, symbolizing its sounds, or at least its words; or it may avoid any connection whatsoever with the spoken language, and symbolize thoughts, ideas and objects. In the former eventuality, the written language is, of course, a handmaiden to the spoken tongue; in the latter, it is altogether free of spoken-language restrictions. In either case, it resembles the spoken tongue in that it depends upon symbols which require common acceptance. The same is true of any non-linguistic system of communication. There must be common agreement upon a symbol before the latter can become meaningful, serve the purposes of transfer, and be dignified, even figuratively, with the name of "language."

The systems of communication that have been devised by man's fertile brain since the inception of civilization are numerous, not to say innumerable. An interesting question that arises in connection with them is whether and to what extent the mutual acceptance that characterizes them is based on a previous understanding depending upon spoken language. The story of the fall of Troy, for instance, tells us that the news of the final victory was relayed from Asia Minor to Greece by a series of signal fires. Signal fires have been in use ever since, and are believed to have led to the use of the heliograph, whereby the sun's rays are reflected from a mirror at significant intervals. But was not the meaning of the signal fires of Troy previously agreed upon through the agency of the spoken tongue?

The same question arises in connection with the tomtom used by African natives as a long-distance telephone. Its significantly spaced beats antedate the Morse code by several centuries and, unlike the latter, are not based upon the spoken languages of their users. We have, however, no assurance that they were not originally arranged at a series of spoken-language conferences. The same may be said of the smoke signals of the American Indians. If it could be proved that all non-linguistic systems of communication were originally systematized through the spoken-language medium, the historical priority of the spoken language would be established. While this proof is readily forthcoming in the case of many systems, it is lacking in others, notably in the field of gestural language.

Certain non-linguistic forms of communication come close to the spoken, others to the written language. The "uh-huh" uttered in three distinct tones, and without accompanying gestures or nods, to signify "yes," "no" and "maybe" in some sections of the South is so close to spoken language that one is left in doubt whether it should be mentioned in this chapter. Very

close to the spoken language is also the whistling language used by the natives of Gomera, in the Canary Islands, who communicate by means of it over very long distances (some say six miles); it seems established, however, that this whistling language is based on Spanish rhythms and pitch. Greater doubt attaches to the American wolf whistle and its Italian equivalent, a clucking sound made with the tongue. Symbols of this sort, however, serve to express only one basic emotion, and are therefore to some extent disqualified for the status of language, which must express a variety of things. On the other hand, they share one important characteristic of language; they are based on mutual agreement, and become quite meaningless if the requisite general acceptance is not there. American Wacs were quite bewildered by Italian clucks, and Italian girls by American wolf whistles, until the meaning was explained. In like manner, the American hiss in token of disapproval and loud whistling in sign of enthusiastic applause are quite misunderstood in many European countries, where violent disapproval is expressed by whistling and the hiss is never heard. In Japan a variant of the hiss, a loud sucking-in of the breath, betokens polite recognition. International difficulties arising out of a language of nonlinguistic symbols are apparently almost as great as those originating from spoken tongues.

Other varieties of non-linguistic forms of communications come close to the written language, and are supposed by some to have given rise to it. Under this heading fall firstly the pictographic drawings of primitive groups concerning whose ability to speak there is some doubt; secondly the knotted ropes and notched sticks of the ancient Chinese, the South American Indians and the West African and Australian natives. For the first, the question of priority in time appears insoluble. Did the Cro-Magnons and other still more primitive men who developed a very effective rudimentary form of pictorial art, whereby they left significant messages and records, possess speech? Or are their efforts indicative of an abortive tendency to communicate by means of pictures before connected language began? For the second, the problem that poses itself is to what extent the mutual understanding of the symbols in question rested upon a previous linguistic understanding. All we can say with definite assurance is that the meanings conveyed by the ropes and sticks are independent of the spoken languages of their users, and of such a nature as to afford the possibility of international use among speakers of different languages. The *quipu,* or "knots," used by the Peruvian Incas, for instance, included red ropes to symbolize soldiers, yellow ropes for gold, white ropes for silver, green ropes for grain, with a single knot signifying 10, two knots 20, a double knot 100, and so forth. The messages conveyed by means of the *quipu* were so complicated that special officials called *quipucamayocuna,* or "keepers of the knots," were ordained to interpret them.

A third great division of non-linguistic communication is gestures, which have no connection, save in a few specific instances, with either the spoken

or the written language. Here the problem is more complicated. Granted that many conventional modern gestural signals, like those of a baseball umpire, football coach, boxing referee or traffic policeman are based upon previous linguistic understanding, the fact nevertheless remains that gestural language is commonly conceded to have preceded oral speech, some say by at least one million years. It is further estimated that some seven hundred thousand distinct elementary gestures can be produced by facial expressions, postures, movements of the arms, wrists, fingers, etc., and their combinations. This imposing array of gestural symbols would be quite sufficient to provide the equivalent of a full-blown modern language. It is quite conceivable: first, that a gestural system of communication could have arisen prior to and independently of spoken language; second, that such a system, had historical conditions been favorable, might have altogether supplanted the spoken tongue; third, that it could today supply the world's needs for an international common system.

The third part of this proposition requires no proof. Many North American Indian tribes are known to have developed a system of sign-language whereby members of different groups, speaking dissimilar languages, could carry on lengthy conversations about any topic (the northern tribes generally used two hands, the southern tribes one). The International Boy Scout movement, with a courage based on ideological conviction, resolutely adopted the Indian sign-language and proceeded to develop a science of pasimology, or gestures, which serves the Jamborees in perfect fashion. Representatives of as many as thirty-seven different nations have met at various times and carried on both general business and private conversations in pasimology.

The gesture-language idea was carried on by teachers interested in the training of deaf-mutes. Here, however, we have a secondary ramification. Some deaf-mute language systems express gesturally and by means of facial expressions only ideas and states of mind, in which case they can be internationally used. Others spell out words, which means that a particular language is called into play, whereupon the gestural system becomes a mere auxiliary of the spoken tongue. Still other systems combine both approaches. A fourth approach is that of lip-reading and the consequent reproduction of audible speech by the "deaf oralists," but this, of course, is merely a phase of the spoken language.

It is interesting that the American Indians should have contributed to the world's civilization their own particular form of pasimology, used for the avowed purpose of avoiding international language difficulties. Their systematic reduction of meaning to gestures, however, has less developed counterparts in other portions of the world. It has been noted by students of pasimology that many gestural forms are universal. For example, the gestures describing a beard, a headdress and a cupped hand raised to the mouth denote respectively a man, a woman and water in Armenia, Russia, among the

Australian Bushmen, and among the deaf, while American Indian signs for "child," "man," "no," "tear" and "night" have been traced in Egyptian, Chinese and Mayan symbols on monuments, representing the same ideas. Both ancient Egyptian and ancient Chinese monuments represent "no" by a pair of outstretched arms or hands.

Gesticulation used as an aid to the spoken language is universal, but to different degrees and with different symbolisms. Southern Europeans use many more gestures than the inhabitants of northern Europe. When French fliers were being trained in this country, gesticulation was systematically used and found extremely helpful in teaching them English.

Differences in gestural symbolism are often striking. To the ancient Greeks, a downward nod of the head meant "yes," an upward nod "no." The modern Neapolitans express "no" by an upward jerk of the head, coupled with the sticking out of the lower lip. Americans usually wave good-bye with the palm of the hand down, but many Europeans give the same wave with the palm of the hand up and the fingers moving back and forth, which gives their signal a "come hither" look. An Italian downward motion of the forearm, with the extended fingers sweeping down past the chin, which they barely touch, means, "Nothing doing!" while a wave of the forearm, with the fingers and thumb cupped close together and coming to a point, means, "What is it all about?"

Among ancient gestures that have given rise to language clichés is the *pollice verso* ("thumbs down," in our parlance, but the thumb was actually turned up) of the ancient Romans, which meant death to the gladiator who had been overcome. The Romans' expression for "to applaud" was *pollicem premere* ("to press the thumb"), but actually they displayed their approval by clapping, snapping their fingers, and waving the flaps of their togas.

A few special gestures have interesting historical origins. Our military salute goes back to medieval times, when knights raised the visors of their helmets on meeting so they could recognize one another. The Fascist salute, with extended arm and outstretched hand, goes back to the days of ancient Rome; its significance was in origin a peaceful one, indicating that there was no concealed weapon, and the American Indians used a very similar greeting. The clenched fist of the Communists arose in opposition to the Fascist salute.

Gesticulation used for a specific, even professional purpose, is an ancient phenomenon. In the traditional dancing language of Japan, China, Korea, Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies there is a series of conventionalized gestures which serve to convey both the narrative and the emotional states that are to be symbolized. Among the latter, there are said to be some two hundred symbols to express various phases of love. The flirt-language of the fan, widely used by lovers in past centuries, conveyed very complicated messages. Somewhat similar was the sign-language used for a time by modern bobby-soxers, in which bobby sox straight up meant "open for date," one

fold meant "going steady," rolled down had the meaning of "taken," beads knotted on the neck meant "dated," unfurled, "open for date."

Recently gestural language has been commercialized in interesting fashion. The ushers in New York theaters use a series of conventionalized gestures whereby they signal to one another. A raised fist indicates that no more patrons are to be admitted; right fist on hip and two fingers of the left hand touching the elbow indicate two doubles half way down; right arm held out from the waist with left hand pointing to shoulder, elbow or wrist indicates single seat in rear, center or front; crossed arms indicate all seats filled in an aisle. Over forty such signals are in use.

The casino croupiers of Monte Carlo also have developed a complete system of sign-language. Finger-tips touching the table mean, "There's a chiseler here"; a finger behind the ear is a distress call for the head man; the finger of one hand touching the thumb of the other means, "O.K.; let him play"; crossed index and third finger is "please take over"; palm and fingers extended downward means, "They are cleaned out."

In all these modern phases of gesturing, however, previous understanding achieved by linguistic means is implicit. The same may be said of scientific and semi-scientific systems of communication such as semaphores, flags, cable codes and the universal weather-reporting code, intelligible in all parts of the world, recently devised by the Meteorological Division of International Civilian Aviation, and based upon the use of groups of five figures.

To the question why did gestural language not become generalized in the place of spoken language, a fairly satisfactory, though somewhat mechanistic answer was given by Darwin. Gestural language requires use of the hands, while the spoken language leaves the hands free for other tasks; gestural language requires light and unobstructed view, while the spoken language can operate in the dark and around obstacles. On the other hand, the international advantages of gestural language are more apparent than real, since spoken language could, if desired, be made equally international, while gestural language, as has been seen, is not necessarily international in scope. Even the greater expressiveness and emotional release of gestural language is largely hypothetical, in view of what can be and is achieved along these lines by the spoken tongues.

In sum, systems of communication not based on speech, while extremely useful on specific occasions, are generally inferior to the spoken tongue as meaning-conveyors. The one great exception to this general statement is writing, which by sublimating and multiplying symbolical values has succeeded in implanting itself by the side of the spoken tongue, of which it is a substitute and an auxiliary, to the point where some prefer it and consider it an instrument of transfer superior to its oral counterpart.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Can *any* thing be used as a symbol? Support your answer.
2. What, according to Pei, is the one basic requirement of an effective "language"? Using this as a criterion, consider whether some words or phrases you used today (as speaker, writer, reader, or listener) failed to measure up to that requirement.
3. Point out examples of the use of a "gestural system" as a "mere auxiliary of the spoken tongue." You might start with gestures you use yourself and go on to gestures you have observed in others.
4. Pei states that, with the exception of writing, systems of communication which do not employ speech are generally inferior to the spoken tongue as conveyors of meaning. What are some reasons for this "inferiority"?
5. An important point made by Pei, which may not have occurred to you, is the distinction between spoken and written language. Identify some fairly obvious examples of special vocabularies and even entire languages which are seldom or never used in speech, but which may be written and read.
6. Pei, like the preceding writers, stresses the fact that any language in order to be a successful vehicle of communication must consist of symbols whose meanings are agreed upon by its users. Does this mean that simple words are any guarantee of clear communication? Consult a standard collegiate dictionary and find ten words for which only one meaning is listed. Then record ten words for which five or more meanings are listed. What does this inquiry reveal about *simple* words?
7. The desire for a universal language has given rise to numerous attempts to invent one and secure its adoption. All such attempts have failed. In the light of what you have so far learned about the bases for the *meaning* of a word, can you suggest some reason for this failure? Note that Pei discloses that even gestural language is not international in scope. Why not?
8. Pei notes that for some people written language appears as an instrument of communication superior to spoken language. What are some reasons for thinking so? In what way does *spoken* language appear superior? What do your answers to these questions suggest to you about the *meaning* of the word *superior?*

PROJECTS

1. Pei has indicated the rich variety of non-linguistic systems of communication, but he does not pretend to have exhausted them all. Doubtless many of you have pursued special interests, hobbies, or vocations which involve the use of some such systems of communication. Prepare a demonstration of the non-linguistic signs, signals, or symbols used. The signals used by baseball players, umpires and referees in various sports, headwaiters and waitresses, band and orchestra directors, winch operators and longshoremen, sailors and yachtsmen —these are just a few that suggest themselves.
2. In the news of the next week note one news story which reflects the power of symbols, linguistic or otherwise, to influence human behavior. (For example,

at the time of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Gibraltar in 1954 the news contained references to the care that the British were taking of the Barbary apes there because, according to ancient legend, when the apes left Gibraltar the British, too, would have to depart. Also, do you recall the many news stories at the time of Queen Elizabeth's coronation reporting the widespread feeling in England that now England's luck would change with a second queen *called* Elizabeth on the throne?) Analyze the effect of the symbol in the news event you select.

Charles W. Morris

SIGNS! SIGNS! SIGNS!

Do the fresh approaches to language suggested in the preceding selections and exercises point to any philosophical conclusions about language? In this selection from The Open Self *Morris sees the use of signs as a central human activity, and language not as something to be taken for granted but as our chief mode of conveying meaning or "significance."*

Morris, who teaches philosophy at the University of Chicago, is particularly interested in theories of signs, theories of value, and pragmatic processes. His main work, Signs, Language, and Behavior, *presents a philosophy of language and its effects on the rest of our thinking. This somewhat technical work is probably thorny for general readers, but his* The Open Self *gives the gist of many of his ideas in terms a non-specialist can understand.*

Man is unique among living beings in the extent to which he lives in a world of signs. This is the sea in which the human fish swims. This is its natural element. Other animals, to be sure, respond to some things as signs of other things, and kinship with the rest of life is never lost. But what to other animals is incidental and episodical is to man essential and continual. While other organisms steer themselves by the signs which the world provides, the human being changes himself and changes the world by the signs he himself produces. Individual men and women differ in this respect as in all others, but with respect to the production of signs for the regulation of their own lives human beings differ from all other living beings. In shaping himself by the signs he produces man is unique. The measure of his signs is the measure of his freedom.

This is why the study of signs is of such crucial importance, and why it must assume a central place in the science of man. Some call this study "semantics," some "significs," some "semiotic." Some like it hot and some like it cold. But whatever it is called and whatever its temperature, it is pivotal

SIGNS! SIGNS! SIGNS! Charles Morris, *The Open Self* (copyright, 1948, by Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York), pp. 52-67. Reprinted by permission from the publisher.

for our task. So we must square accounts with it. In another book, *Signs, Language, and Behavior,* I have given the colder account appropriate to a science of signs. Here we need only the essentials, and warm enough to keep us on the hunt for ourselves. A primer to prime us.

Never before in history has there been a greater interest in learning about signs. It is revealing that the periods of maximum interest in this study have been times of pervasive social change, such as the period of Confucius, or the Hellenistic period of declining Greece, or the centuries when the feudal structure of medieval Europe was falling away before the rising commercial and industrial middle class. In such periods the symbols under which men have lived together begin to lose their clarity and persuasiveness, and the new symbols appropriate to a changed society have not been found. Communication is no longer easy communion, for emerging meanings clash with older ones. Language becomes ineffectual and the cultural symbols a problem because they no longer can be taken for granted. Men pay conscious attention to their signs when they no longer serve them well, just as they pay attention to their food when their stomachs hurt. In this sense the current vogue of semantics is a crisis phenomenon, a sign that all is not well with our signs.

But it is more than that. For the study of man has forced the scientist himself to scale this wall. And for a simple reason. Put a hungry animal before food it likes and it will in all but the rarest cases simply start to eat. But put a hungry man before food he likes, and he may simply start to eat, or if he is a Gandhi at a certain moment in his life he may not eat at all, or if he is a Balinese he will not eat unless he is permitted to eat with his right hand, or if he is a pious Christian or Jew he will not eat until a blessing has been said. There is no simple "law" of human behavior which states that a hungry person will eat food placed before him, no automatic "response" to a given "stimulus." Ordinarily we would explain this by saying that what a person does may depend on his ideas and ideals. The more cautious scientist, seeking for something that can be objectively observed, hits upon signs; he will say that how a person responds to something is in part dependent on how this something is signified. Signs intervene in almost everything men and women do. This means that the scientist has to gain knowledge of signs in order to build a science of man. For the sake of science itself it proves necessary to add a study of signs to the study of bodies, physical environment, and cultures.

But this study is also needed by the individual trying to become what he really is. For not only must a person understand how signs work if he is to understand how he acts, but he needs this knowledge in order to work effectively upon himself. Since the unique thing about the human being is that how he will act toward something is largely dependent on how he signifies that something, signs are the tool or tools for man-making. For man works on himself by his ideas and ideals, and these require signs for their operation, perhaps for their very existence. That is another reason why the study of signs is not a fad. And a good ground for adding this instrument to our pack.

THE VARIETIES OF SIGNS

The ring of an alarm-clock. Time to get up. A glance out the window to see what the day's weather will be. A look in the mirror for a report on how one is faring. A shave or a careful hair-do, and the right clothes, so that one will be judged as one wishes to be judged. Pressure on oranges to select a good one. The smell of an egg, just to make sure. A hasty note to the milkman. A choice of busses by the numbers they carry. Scrutiny of black-on-white newspaper marks. A day of talking and being talked to. Constant attention to the material upon which one is working in the office or factory—or to clouds and animals and grain if the work is away from the city. Flowers at dinner, or a pat on the face, or a scowl. Movies or the theatre. Or a book. Or more talk. Then talking to oneself in falling asleep. And dreams to finish the day's unfinished business. Then another morning. The alarm-clock again.

Signs, signs, signs! From sounds, sights, tastes, feels, odors. From things, from persons, from oneself. Take them away and we would be more humanly naked than if we walked the streets without clothes.

What do all these events have in common that causes us to lump them together as signs? One core similarity: *they all influence the way we tend to react toward something other than themselves.* The alarm tells us the time, the sight of our face in the mirror informs us about our appearance, the newspaper tells us what has happened in the world, the pressure from the oranges or the odor of eggs determines which one we will select, the note to the milkman tells him how we wish him to act. The appearances of the sky or the words of the weather report influence the way we will dress, the way we will behave outdoors. We do not put on our raincoats indoors nor raise an umbrella between us and the newspaper. We eat not the menu but rather what its printed words stand for. Signs denote something other than themselves, other things or other aspects of the thing of which they are a part. The marks on the newspaper stand for happenings in China; the rate of our pulse beat stands for the condition of our heart. Signs influence our beliefs, our preferences, our feelings, our actions with respect to what they signify. They dispose us to react to something other than themselves in one way rather than another.

Just what happens to us when something is a sign is a complex puzzle, but one we do not here have to unscramble. Some persons would say that the sign causes in us an idea or a thought of something else, makes us conscious of something else. Other persons distrust this manner of talking, and prefer to say that the sign sets up some physiological or neural process in us, and so changes us that we tend to react differently to something else than we would have done if the sign had not occurred. We do not have to decide which account is correct or whether both are correct. For both agree that the

sign does influence our reactions, does dispose us to act differently than we would otherwise act, does make us different from what we would otherwise have been. No one denies that signs and ideas are closely connected. To concentrate on signs may not tell the whole story, but it is good science, and it cannot lead us far astray. And for our purposes it is sufficient to regard a sign as anything which disposes us to react in a certain way to something other than itself.

It is obvious at once that there are different kinds of signs, since we are disposed by signs to react in very different ways. Some signs mainly report, tell us what to expect, prepare us to encounter one kind of thing rather than another. The weather report is an example, or the numbers on the bus which report the route and destination of the bus. Such signs may be called designative signs.

Other signs, however, influence our reactions in another way: they dispose us to look with favor or disfavor upon something, to slant our preferences, to select or reject this rather than that. They do not report what we can observe by our senses and instruments, but chronicle the goodness or badness of things. A certain odor disposes us to reject the odoriferous egg—or to offer it to someone we dislike. If we are told that there are oranges in the next room we expect round orange-colored fruit of a certain size and taste. If we are told merely that there is something good in the next room we are not informed what kind of thing is there, but we are inclined to seek it out, to pay attention to it, to favor it. If we are told that the orange on the table in the next room is better than the orange on the window-sill we both expect oranges and are disposed to prefer the one to the other. Signs which influence our preferences in this way we shall call appraisive signs.

There is still another main kind of sign, a sign which disposes us to react to something by a definite course of action. These signs have a command quality, an imperative tone. They tell us not which exists, or what to like or dislike, but what to do. Such signs we shall call prescriptive. The note to the milkman tells him what to do, disposes him to leave a definite assortment of milk and cream and butter. We command ourselves in the same way. When we tell ourselves that we must buy a refill for our pens that write in the stratosphere or under the shower we are setting in motion a course of action in ourselves, prescribing to ourselves what is to be done when we pass Penman's store.

The first lesson with respect to signs is to distinguish their designative, appraisive, and prescriptive elements. Most signs have all these facets: they are pure as seldom as selves are pure. Pure or impure, the distinctions are important. It makes a great difference whether "all men are equal" designates that persons are identical, or whether it appraises all men as equal in dignity, or whether it prescribes that we extend equal opportunities to all persons. We must know our signs. That is a prescription, of course. But not pure.

THE LEVELS OF SIGNS

The second lesson concerning signs is to distinguish their levels. And this in two senses. Originally signs are about what is not a sign. But then there arise signs about signs, and even signs about signs that are about signs. A picture of our friend is not our friend, and the words "picture of our friend" are not a picture of our friend, nor our friend. This seems simple enough to fool no one, but it does. We constantly confuse these levels, believe we are talking about things when we are talking about signs. To call the villain in a play a good villain means that the portrayal of a villain by the actor is good, not that villainy is good. If a philosopher tells us that only actualities are real we have to make sure whether he is disclosing to us how he uses words or making a statement about the world's furniture. The "determinism" attributed to science frequently harbors the same confusion: to say that something "must" happen is merely to say that the statement describing the happening is a logical consequence of our present knowledge; the "must" signifies primarily a relation between signs; as our knowledge (and skill) changes, the "musts" change. So it is easy to be tricked, easy to confuse words and things, easy to believe that wherever there is a word a thing is named. In the extreme cases we are victims of sign-magic; in the less extreme ones we are guilty of sign-confusion.

Signs have levels in a second sense, levels of complexity. There are signs which occur independently of language, there are language signs, and there are signs which while not language signs depend on such signs for their meaning. Let us call these in order pre-language, language, and post-language signs. The alarm-clock will redeem itself by serving as an example. Dogs can be trained to seek food in a certain place when the alarm sounds; the alarm is then to them a sign—but a pre-language sign since it is not dependent on language. Our word "alarm-clock" is a sign in the English language, and so a language sign. But the alarm-clock itself may become a sign in a still more complicated sense. For we talk about it to its face and it then gains a new meaning even though it can't talk back. Suppose for example we tell an alarm clock that it is the great curse of our life, getting us up earlier than we wish, sending us off into a day's activity we did not like. Then the clock itself may become a sign with all such meanings. It is not now a word in the English language, but it has taken on meanings first carried by words. It is a post-language sign in that sense. One can imagine that hoboes might set up an Alarm Clock on a pedestal in each of their jungles as a Symbol of the Industrial Age of Work—designative, negatively appraisive, and negatively prescriptive post-language symbols. Dogs cannot do this, not even the easy-going hobo dogs.

Language in this way gives to events in our world and in ourselves a meaning they would not otherwise have. The world and our bodies say differ-

ent things to us because we have talked to them. And so we act differently to them. Language is a wondrous human work. How we talk is a momentous matter.

A language is social and has a vocabulary and a grammar. As social, language signs affect all those who share the signs in a similar way, awaken in them similar expectations, similar preferences, similar types of conduct. In having a grammatical structure a language permits a great variety of sign combinations, and so makes it possible to form new ideas and new ideals from old ones. As signs producible by those who share the language, language to some degree frees individuals from the simpler pre-language signs which the world and the body provide, and floods the world and the body with new meanings. The more we determine by our signs how we shall behave to things, the freer we are from their brute domination. . . .

THE USES OF SIGNS

There is still a third lesson to be conned: the multiplicity of the ways signs can be used. The language of our daily life uses all kinds of signs for all kinds of purposes. It is a jack-of-all-trades tool, the tool of tools. We could get along without it as little as we could get along without our nervous systems. But special jobs need specialized tools, and specialized forms of language have been developed for better performance of specific tasks. Ways of Talking have appeared. The talk of scientists, the talk of artists, the talk of religious men. Many more, of course. But these are central, and sufficient to impress upon us the richness of the forms of symbolism which human living has engendered.

The language of science is a specialization of ordinary language for the purpose of accurately designating what has happened, what will happen. The task of the scientist is to inform us truly about such matters, to give us reliable information as to what occurs under what conditions. We need such knowledge to determine correctly our expectations. Because to believe is so easy, and because our wishes so easily compel our beliefs, we need persons with special training, special methods, special caution to examine the evidence for our beliefs, and to give us sound data upon which to build new beliefs. Science lends a note of intellectual asceticism to our beliefs; as scientists we rein our preferences and plan-making, and pause for a moment before evidence. We ask the scientist to give us warranted statements, not to tell us what to like or dislike, or what to do. We may be stirred by what he says but we do not ask him to say it stirringly. We expect him to prune his language, to adapt it to his unique task of giving us "the facts." We want his statements designatively precise, accurate, reliable, cold—just because life is so warm.

Not so with art and the artist. The talk of paintings, novels, poetry, music, the dance, the theatre is slanted, biased, unneutral. It may be warmly or coldly for something, or warmly or coldly against it, but in any case it is

for or against. The language is highly appraisive, and plays on our likes and dislikes. Appraisive of anything whatsoever, from dimples to deeds to death. Filled with the likes and dislikes of the artist, filled with himself, filled with ourselves. The artist may and does make statements, may even include statements of science among his means. But we go to him not primarily for his statements but for his appraisals. Partly of course to find an expression of our individual likes and dislikes—the pessimists will linger longest among the poets of despair, and the optimists among the poets of affirmation. But partly to sample alien and strange likes and dislikes, to try out via the artist's signs new ways of being biased. For the high mission of the artist is to explore novel ways of being for and against, and to let us share his explorations through the specialized language which he has created. In this way we live vicariously, seeing things as others have seen them, standing as they stood before things, and falling as they fell. And in so living vicariously we enjoy our characteristic appraisals, test them, gain material for their transformation, perhaps repudiate them. That is why we honor the artist for his work as we honor the scientist for his. We do not choose between them because we need them both.

But at times we must decide to do something—or do nothing. Having learned what we may expect, made our commitments and chosen sides, we must play the game. And here too signs suggest the answers. There are specialized signs for prescribing what precisely we are to do, the language of the ought, the language of imperative tone. The most comprehensive form of this language occurs in the religions, most comprehensive because the religions prescribe an overall pattern for our lives, a path to follow to the end. Just as the artist informs as well as appraises, so the religious prophet appraises as well as prescribes. He sets before us in his words and in his life an ideal of selfhood. But he does more. He tells us by word and deed how to realize this ideal; he prescribes a technique for living. Become such and such a kind of person, and become it in such and such a way: this is the religious imperative.

The religions speak in commandments, and their commands vary with the personality ideals they proclaim as good. But they all tell us how the burden of the complex self may be carried, and lost. The ways of salvation are ways of annihilation, ways of using up our lives. We turn to the prophets for hints of an appropriate ideal for our ultimate allegiance and for instructions as to how we may attain the self we finally choose to become. As we listen to them we try out symbolically possible costumes of selfhood. We may or may not find the one that fits us well. Our individual differences work here as they do in our reactions to art. But the prophets give us material for our widest orientation and our total integration. We select and reject; but we are grateful. Rejections are as basic to life as acceptances. They are the heads and the tails of the coin of choice. We honor the prophet even when we reject

him. For we need him in the making of ourselves, need him as we need the scientist and the artist.

PITFALLS

Signs are sign-posts, oases, and springboards. They point out what things are where, they allow us to delight in our achievements and aspirations, they fling us into the wide sea of endeavor. They come upon us from everywhere. From the words of other persons, from our non-human environment, from the monuments of our culture, from every nook and cranny of our bodies. We are in a sense always reading—reading persons, reading things, reading books, reading ourselves. Signs press upon every phase of ourselves, checking some motivations and releasing others, influencing our opinions, slanting our likes and dislikes, coloring our attitude to ourselves, inciting us to one course of action rather than another. They intervene between almost every human need and its satisfaction.

Yet the process is not one-way, not alone from outward to inward. If we are pressed upon by signs we also press upon signs. If signs sometimes serve to drive us mad by their pressure they are also tools for relieving our anxieties, tools for a greater sanity. If they are ropes which bind us they are also knives to cut to freedom.

The point is to master signs instead of being mastered by them. We do this by knowing about them. We ascend to higher levels of language and talk about talking itself. We stand at our own center, and demand of signs that they show their credentials. We avoid being taken in by giving out. In this way we work upon signs through other signs. We sharpen our tool of tools.

Yet the pitfalls of signs are numerous, easy to discern but hard to avoid.

There is the Pitfall of Over-Generalization. To generalize is to say something that applies more than once. It is easy to generalize, necessary in the economy of thought, but fraught with peril. Seductively simple to go from "this" to "some" to "most" to "all." Perilous if (but only if) we omit the qualifying conditions. "Men are more straightforward than women"—instead of "Men of such and such a sort under such and such cultural conditions are more straightforward than such and such women under such conditions." "Buddhism is the best religion"—instead of "Buddhism is for certain persons under certain historical and cultural conditions the best religious alternative." "Men of x inches in height should weigh y pounds"—instead of "Men of such and such bodily build in such and such a society average y pounds and should for most purposes keep their weight in the neighborhood of y pounds."

It is hard to find, and to keep in mind, the qualifications required for sound generalization. The refinement of knowledge is in large part the finding of such qualifications, and accurate knowledge is as difficult as it is rare. That is why we have science. And why Whitehead's advice should be pinned on our walls: "Seek simplicity, but distrust it." But it is also hard to avoid Undue

Generalization because we bludgeon others by our generalizations; we keep silent on the qualifications because to admit them would weaken our case. If we want to make all men Buddhists we shall hardly qualify our appraisal of Buddhism as "the best religion." The sins of our generalizations reflect our general sinfulness. It is well to remember this in our statements. And for the statements of others, this motto is good: "Listen to their generalizations—but qualify them." Unless you give out countersigns, you will be taken in by signs. Hypnotism supplies the evidence.

Then there is the Pitfall of Perfect Communication. Because other persons make the same sounds or write the same words that we do we assume that what they signify to them is exactly what they signify to us. We fail to realize that communication is a matter of degree. It is true that most words in a language have a common core of meaning for those who share the language; if this is not true there is in fact no language. But a common core is compatible with different fringes. Not all blondes dress alike. Not all who use the words "democracy," "freedom," "liberalism," "communism," "fascism," mean exactly the same thing by these words; and in some cases the common core of meaning is very small indeed. If "democracy," for instance, stands for the sum total of ways Americans now behave, then to advocate any change in these ways of acting is to oppose democracy; but if "democracy" stands for a certain ideal that is partly realized and partly unrealized then those who advocate certain changes are the friends of democracy while those who oppose any change are its enemies. If two persons used this term in these different ways, and each assumed Perfect Communication, they would be talking at cross purposes and without mutual understanding. Each would be for democracy in one sense of the term and against it in the other. A group of clergymen not long ago battled several days over whether the leaders of their meeting were or were not Communists. It took two days to find out they meant different things by the term. They never got to the problem that had provoked the meeting. Perhaps some of them did not want to. For we always use the good words for our friends and the bad words for our enemies.

This pit is deep. It is sometimes said that education is at fault, that we must all be given identical meanings so that communications will be perfect. But this is too simple in theory and too hard in practice. Persons of different temperaments and different experiences inevitably develop different fringe meanings for their words. . . . Education cannot stop this growth and variation of meaning. What it could do is to develop techniques by which we can find out in a given discussion what someone does mean by the terms he uses, and techniques by which we can in a given discussion make clear what we ourselves mean. If we concentrate on how to improve each instance of communication we need not worry so much about the differences and changes of meaning. One device is to give concrete illustrations of what one is talking about—instances of a democratic society, instances of a free man, instances of a liberal society, instances of a Communist. And demand of one's opponent

in the boxing-ring of discussion similar concrete instances. It would be even better in discussions to lay aside all Great Words. But that is perhaps asking too much of human nature—under present historical conditions.

A third major pitfall is Gullibility. We are gullible before the signs of others, and gullible-plus before our own signs. Signs dispose us to act in certain ways, and if we are not on our guard they jerk us into puppet-action when they appear. We are told that war is inevitable because human nature is unchangeable; we nod in assent and prepare our youngsters for the cannon. We are told we are queer; and we stick out a puppet-tongue at our own uniqueness. We are told that we ought to be fatter or slimmer or stronger; and we worry ourselves into the offered coat even if it is a plaster cast. But above all we are gullible to our own remarks. For most of our lives are spent in trying to keep a high opinion of ourselves. We do this in amazing ways. We almost break an arm to pat ourselves on the back. There is hardly a thing we say that is not aimed at signifying ourselves in a good light. Since we are often afraid to meet ourselves, afraid we will disturb our precariously attained equilibrium, we fall hard for every good thing we manage to say about ourselves. And so remain stalemated and unachieved.

The antidote to the poison of Gullibility is evidence. We must inquire into the reliability of what is said, assess appraisals in terms of actual needs, demand that prescriptions fit the person prescribed for. . . . Openness to evidence requires, however, flexibility in ourselves, courage to delay commitments, knowledge of individual differences, active scrutiny of signs. The process is circular. Only as we lift the mask of signs can we lift the masks of ourselves. But only as we grow into what we deeply are, and cast off false images of ourselves, can we become puppeteers and not puppets in the theatre of signs. Each step taken in one direction frees the other foot for its step forward. This is the way we move, and the only way.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Morris's essay is tightly packed with ideas, some of them perhaps quite novel to you. To be sure that some of these ideas come clear, we shall raise a number of specific questions which bear directly on what he has written here.
   a. Morris calls signs that report, convey information, or indicate reliably what will happen, *designative* signs. He supplies two examples—weather reports and bus numbers. How many other examples from everyday life can you supply?
   b. Signs which influence our judgment, invite us to state our preferences, call for approval or disapproval, Morris calls *appraisive* signs. Again, cite examples.
   c. *Prescriptive* signs are those which tell us what to do. As students in school you may feel you know all about this variety. But note Morris's hint that we command ourselves by such signs. Supply a wide-ranging list of examples.

d. Having evolved some examples of your own, work through the following list of signs—both verbal and non-verbal—indicating which of them are primarily *designative,* which *appraisive,* which *prescriptive.* Morris reminds us that few signs are "pure." If, then, you think some of these fit into more than one category, explain under what circumstances they do.

(1) The "Exit" sign in a movie house.
(2) The sign on the rear of a bus, "This vehicle equipped with air brakes."
(3) The newspaper headline: "Senator Ducks Investigation."
(4) A name, address, and telephone number in a city directory.
(5) An ad: "Use Flux. It's Pure!"
(6) A road sign with an arrow curving sharply to the right.
(7) A picture of George Washington on the letterhead of an insurance company.
(8) A "For Rent" sign in the window of an apartment.
(9) A ranch brand on the flank of a steer.
(10) An "I Like Ike" sticker on the bumper of a car.
(11) A picture of Bob Hope on a billboard advertising gasoline.
(12) A motto, "All The News That's Fit To Print," across the top of page one of a newspaper.
(13) The station identification during a "break" in a radio broadcast.
(14) The name of an author on the cover of a book.
(15) The words "Air Mail" written across an addressed and stamped envelope.
(16) The number 13 on the door of an apartment.
(17) A list of the ingredients printed on the label of a can of paint.
(18) A cartoon depicting "Uncle Sam" shaking hands across the Atlantic with "John Bull."
(19) A red cross painted on a ship's sides in war time.
(20) The census figures for 1950 for your community.

2. Under the caption "The Level of Signs," Morris comments on the confusion which ensues when we confuse a *thing* with the *sign* that stands for the thing. Here is a cluster of anecdotes which point up this kind of confusion. Spot the precise nature of the difficulty in each instance.

a. At a college where only a few years ago students were forbidden to live in off-campus social clubs because of some "incidents" which had brought complaints from townspeople, a movement to introduce Greek-letter fraternities has been started. Because of crowded conditions on the campus, such fraternities will have to be housed in the town. When reminded of the fate of the "clubs," proponents of the fraternity movement reply: "This is different. Greek-letter fraternities are national organizations with respectability and prestige. There is no danger that they will engage in the kinds of 'incidents' that gave the clubs a bad name."

b. A man was recently offered a valuable collie by a dog fancier who was going to breed other kinds of dogs and was looking for a good home for his last collie. The man wanted the dog, a gentle animal with a good disposition, as a pet for his children. He was not particularly interested in the collie's pedigree or the "papers" that proved it. Because he inadvertently revealed this to the dog fancier, the latter indignantly refused to give him

the dog, exclaiming, "I won't give up this dog to anyone who cannot appreciate his fine qualities."

c. Recently a state legislature employed a committee of educators to analyze and report on higher education in that state. One of the committee's purposes was to assist the legislature to see that the state university and various of the state colleges did not needlessly duplicate services and functions. As a result, the committee recommended that the architecture department of one of the state colleges delete the word "Design" from its catalogue description because, said the committee, the function of the *university's* architecture department is "Design, Research, Development" and that of the *college* architecture department is "Planning, Production, Maintenance." So the word "Planning" replaced the word "Design" in keeping with the committee's directive. Members of the *college* architecture department later disclosed that their curriculum, courses, and methods remain precisely as they were before the *word* "Planning" replaced the *word* "Design."

d. Some years ago, a well-known radio commentator and columnist enunciated this doctrine on radio's "Town Hall Meeting of the Air." She committed the future of civilization to the "English-speaking world," arguing that whereas "The German world of Hitler thinks that man is determined by his blood," the English-speaking world "holds the idea that man is determined by his speech, by his mind, and by his soul." She pointed out that it is the Anglo-Saxon tradition that has given mankind the *words* "freedom," "congress," "suffrage," and "rule of the people," and concluded that "the English language instead of being the great separator of men has been the great uniter of men."

3. In his discussion of "The Uses of Signs," Morris notes that "special jobs need specialized tools, and specialized forms of language have been developed for better performance of specific tasks." So the task of the scientist is best accomplished by means of *designative* language, the task of the artist by *appraisive* language, and the task of the religious prophet by *prescriptive* language. This is a useful classification, but it should not blind us to the fact that all of us use all three kinds of language constantly in the conduct of our daily affairs. It is important that we learn to distinguish among them so that we may determine which of them best fit specified tasks of our own. To sharpen your awareness, draw up a list of the activities in which you engage for which designative language is best suited, a second list for which appraisive language is most appropriate, and a third list for which prescriptive language is most useful. For every activity you might ask yourself—"What is my purpose here?" And then, "Which language will best accomplish that purpose?"

4. Morris concludes his essay by discussing "three pitfalls of signs." One of these, "the pitfall of perfect communication," rests on the assumption that *our* meaning of some abstract word is understood and agreed to by all. He offers one very practical suggestion to help us avoid this pitfall: give concrete illustrations of what you are talking about.

   Select one of the following highly abstract words and supply concrete illustrations of it so that *your* meaning is unmistakably clear. The point here is not to argue for the "rightness" of your meaning; just make clear *what* you mean.

a. Intelligence
b. Honesty
c. Loyalty
d. Immorality
e. Dignity
f. Integrity
g. Independence
h. Irresponsibility

5. Morris states: "A language is social. . . . As social, language signs affect all those who share the signs in a similar way, awaken in them similar expectations, similar preferences, similar types of conduct." How does the Mark Twain yarn illuminate this comment? Supply other examples of language as a reflector of the life, preferences, conduct, and expectations of various social classes in America.
6. Perhaps you are familiar with the optical illusion in which a series of triangles, one within another, seem to become a pyramid, or with the silhouette of a vase which seems to become two faces in profile and then, as we stare at it, continues to change back and forth between vase and faces. In what sense are words like those visual patterns?

PROJECTS

1. Morris classified the uses of language as scientific ("designative"), artistic ("appraisive"), and religious ("prescriptive"). For each of the following write a brief, typical reaction in the language of a scientist, an artist, and a religious thinker: (*a*) a blade of grass, (*b*) a bird, (*c*) a storm, (*d*) night, and (*e*) birth.
2. Delegate a member of your class to bring in the April 7, 1952, issue of *Time*. Either have the article "The Jaskpurt of Naustrent"—found in the Radio and Television section of the magazine—read to the whole class, or, better, using an opaque projector, have it reproduced on a screen. Then conduct a five-man discussion tackling these three questions: (*a*) What are some of the reasons why the people he interviewed thought doubletalking Dick Christman was asking sensible questions? (*b*) What non-linguistic factors may have contributed to making these foolish questions seem meaningful? (*c*) What basic problems of language are pointed up by these interviews?

6 DEFINITION

The preceding analyses of the nature of language have made clear that language is one kind of symbol system for things observed and thought. If, then, language is symbolic, there is no real evading two stubborn facts: first, that there is a gap between the word we use for something and the thing the word signifies or stands for; second, that this gap can be bridged only when speakers and writers are in agreement with listeners and readers on what their symbols will mean. Thus, we are compelled by the logic of our findings about language to reconsider the nature of definition and to find more effective ways of bridging the gap between words and the experiences our words signify. The writers represented in this section have attempted to do this.

Allport's "Reading the Nature of Prejudice," the film "Defining Democracy," Becker's "Socialism, Communism, Fascism," and John B. Carroll's "Language" are examples of the effort to define by avoiding words *about* words and getting as close as possible to the actual processes which people have in mind when they use these words. The problems encountered by these writers, and the methods they use in meeting them, are analyzed in detail and clarified with further examples by R. W. Jepson in "When Words Fail Us" and by Anatol Rapoport in "What Do You Mean?" Emerging from this series of essays is a central concept which thoughtful students of language are finding increasingly useful. After reading these essays and discovering what this concept is, you can test its utility for yourself.

Gordon W. Allport

READING THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE

"Prejudice" is a fighting word—one we hurl at people whose ideas we disapprove of; indeed, in general usage it has become almost synonymous with "opposition to what I believe." Allport here tries to bring some sense out of the confusion by describing four cases *of what* he *means when* he *uses the word "prejudice."*

This definition by Allport is, of course, just the opening part of his talk on prejudice—an opening, however, on which he lavished much more care than is usually given by a speaker to his definitions.

In 1943, you will remember, four of the six largest cities in the United States had disastrous riots. Although sinister enough in themselves, these disorders had the unexpected advantage of drawing attention forcefully to the problem of human relations in this heterogeneous land of ours. They led to the formation of mayors' and governors' civic unity committees all over the country. What is more, they stimulated social scientists for the first time in history to do concerted and intensive research on this field. We've made more progress, I'd say, in the last five years, in the scientific study of prejudice and group relations than we had made through all previous history.

Before I attempt to define prejudice, let us have in mind four instances that I think we all would agree *are* prejudice.

The first is the case of the Cambridge University student, who said, "I despise all Americans. But," he added, a bit puzzled, "I've never met one that I didn't like."

The second is the case of another Englishman, who said to an American, "I think you're awfully unfair in your treatment of Negroes. How *do* Americans feel about Negroes?" The American replied, "Well, I suppose some Americans feel about Negroes just the way you feel about the Irish." The Englishman said, "Oh, come now! The Negroes are human beings!"

Then there's the incident that occasionally takes place in various parts of the world (in the West Indies, for example, I'm told). When an American walks down the street the natives conspicuously hold their noses till the American gets by. The case of odor is always interesting. Odor gets mixed up with prejudice because odor has great associative power. We know that some Chinese deplore the odor of Americans. Some white people think Negroes have a distinctive smell and vice versa. An intrepid psychologist re-

READING THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE From Gordon W. Allport, "Reading the Nature of Prejudice," *Claremont College Reading Conference 17th Yearbook,* Claremont College Curriculum Laboratory, 1952. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

cently did an experiment; it went as follows. He brought to a gymnasium an equal number of white and colored students and had them take shower baths. When they were nice and clean he had them exercise vigorously for fifteen minutes. Then he put them in different rooms, and he put a clean white sheet over each one. Then he brought his judges in, and each went to the sheeted figures and sniffed (olfactory reading, *Ed.*). They were to say, "white" or "black," guessing at the identity of the subject. The experiment seemed to prove that when we are sweaty we all smell bad in the same way. It's good to have experimental demonstration of the fact.

The fourth example I'd like to bring before you is a piece of writing that I quote. Please ask yourselves who, in your judgment, wrote it. It's a passage about the Jews.

> The synagogue is worse than a brothel. It's a den of scoundrels. It's a criminal assembly of Jews, a place of meeting for the assassins of Christ, a den of thieves, a house of ill fame, a dwelling of iniquity. Whatever name more horrible to be found, it could never be worse than the synagogue deserves.
>
> I would say the same things about their souls. Debauchery and drunkenness have brought them to the level of lusty goat and pig. They know only one thing: to satisfy their stomachs and get drunk, kill, and beat each other up. Why should we salute them? We should have not even the slightest converse with them. They are lustful, rapacious, greedy, perfidious robbers.

Now who wrote that? Perhaps you say Hitler, or Goebbels, or one of our local anti-Semites? No, it was written by Saint John Crysostom, in the Fourth Century A.D. Saint John Crysostom, as you know, gave us the first liturgy in the Christian church still used in the Orthodox churches today. From it all services of the Holy communion derive. Episcopalians will recognize him also as the author of that exalted prayer that closes the offices of both matin and evensong in the *Book of Common Prayer*. I include this incident to show how complex the problem is. Religious people are by no means necessarily free from prejudice. In this regard be patient even with our saints.

What do these four instances have in common? You notice that all of them indicate that somebody is "down" on somebody else—a feeling of rejection, or hostility. But also, in all these four instances, there is indication that the person is not "up" on his subject—not really informed about Americans, Irish, Jews, or bodily odors.

So I would offer, first a slang definition of prejudice: *Prejudice is being down on somebody you're not up on.* If you dislike slang, let me offer the same thought in the style of St. Thomas Aquinas. Thomists have defined prejudice as *thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant.*

You notice that both definitions as well as the examples I gave, specify two ingredients in prejudice. First there is some sort of faulty generalization in thinking about a group. I'll call this the process of *categorization.* Then

there is the negative, rejective, or hostile ingredient, a *feeling* tone. "Being down on something" is the hostile ingredient; "that you're not up on" is the categorization ingredient. "Thinking ill of others" is the hostile ingredient; "without sufficient warrant" is the faulty categorization.

Parenthetically I should say that of course there is such a thing as *positive* prejudice. We can be just as prejudiced *in favor of* as we are *against*. We can be biased in favor of our children, our neighborhood, or our college. Spinoza makes the distinction neatly. He says that *love prejudice* is "thinking well of others, through love, more than is right." *Hate prejudice* he says, is "thinking ill of others, through hate, more than is right."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Allport says in paragraph two: "Before I attempt to define prejudice, let us have in mind four instances that I think we all would agree *are* prejudice." Is this process of providing concrete illustrations or examples itself one way of defining a word? How does it differ from a dictionary definition? Would you have been as clear about what Allport meant by "prejudice" if you had only his abstract statement that it involves "a feeling of rejection, or hostility"?
2. Having cited four examples of actual behavior, Allport then advances two definitions which are alike, except that one is in slang. Do these definitions describe *behavior* (people doing or thinking something)? Do the definitions of Spinoza, which he quotes at the end of the article, likewise describe behavior? Does this method of defining an abstract word like *prejudice* seem useful to you? Why?
3. In defining a tricky word like prejudice, what is the advantage of providing four examples of behavior, widely separated in time and place and involving peoples of different color and religion? Can you see the possible dangers and limitations of a definition that used examples of a single people, time, or place?
4. How do Allport's procedures in defining an abstract word show an awareness of the multiple levels of language-meaning pointed out by Morris and Kerfoot?
5. What is the common error in thinking which Allport terms the process of *categorization?* How does it relate to what Lippmann has to say in his article "Stereotypes"? to what Altick says about drawing an inference from data in his "Two Patterns of Thinking"?
6. Can you see the significance in Allport's use of the term "Reading" in the title of his lecture? Is he, to use Morris's terminology, "reading" *for signs* of prejudice? In what way is his concept of reading similar to Kerfoot's.
7. Drawing on your study of the previous selections and problems, distinguish sharply between the experimental method of collecting evidence used by "the intrepid psychologist" and the other ways of gathering evidence cited by Allport. Does the experimental method lend itself more readily to the clarification of an abstract term like "prejudice" than do the other methods? Explain.

PROJECT

Assume that you have been asked by a foreigner to clarify the meanings of shade as used in the following sentences:

a. We need a new *shade* for that library window.
b. Your dress is a different *shade* of blue from mine.
c. *Shade in* the area immediately above the head of your portrait.
d. Come and sit in the *shade.*
e. Mary is a *shade* better in tennis than her sister.

Describe in careful detail the "operations" you would perform (the things you would do) to make these distinctions clear, assuming that you could not depend on words about words to clarify these distinctions for your foreign friend.

Do the same thing for five different meanings of *cast,* only this time determine the different meanings and contrive your own sentences to illustrate them.

Encyclopædia Britannica Films

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

"Defining Democracy" illustrates the operational method of definition in a medium of pictures-with-words. The editors have found this film very suggestive in teaching students to translate abstract ideas and words into terms of "what is done." The following selection, the actual script of the film, gives a clear picture of the step-by-step process taken to formulate one useful working definition of "democracy" along with "despotism" or "non-democracy."

The motion picture was produced under the supervision of Milan Herzog, producer of Encyclopædia Britannica Films, with the assistance of Professor Harold D. Lasswell, a well-known social scientist who has pioneered in the field of propaganda-analysis.

NOTES ON THE FILM

This film is primarily definitional in purpose. It is intended to give student and adult forum groups a common basis for discussing and further investigating problems of democracy and despotism.

The film has been built around subject matter on which there is a substantial body of general agreement. Out of the wealth of material available, four major concepts have been chosen. These are defined in the film as simply as possible.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY Reprinted by permission of Encyclopædia Britannica Films, Inc., Wilmette, Illinois.

SIGNS OF DEMOCRACY

The importance of defining terms before starting a discussion of democracy or despotism is stressed throughout. Several definitions are presented to clarify the key terms used in the film. Any community can be rated somewhere along the scale running all the way from democracy to despotism. In deciding where a community rates on the democracy-despotism scale, it is practical to search for two signs of democracy—*shared respect* and *shared power.* If respect and power are shared in a community, that community is democratic. Shared respect implies that a community respects the dignity of the individual, first for the very fact that he is a human being, and second for the nature of his contribution to the community. Restricted respect is a characteristic sign of despotism. Respect is restricted in a community when common courtesy is withheld from people because of their political opinion, their poverty, or their religion; or where all members of the community are not given an equal opportunity to develop and use important skills.

Power is concentrated in a community where decision-making is handled by a few individuals. Examples of concentrated power are political bosses and a lack of free elections. A community is democratic when citizens share in the making of important decisions and when they can do so through free secret elections. An index of shared power is the opportunity of all groups in society to send representatives to the legislature—and opposition in legislatures should be strong and articulate.

CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRACY

The prospects for democracy depend on two important conditions that can also be measured on the democracy-despotism scale. These conditions are *economic balance* and *enlightenment.* A community has a better chance to stay democratic when it contains large middle-income groups. When economic distribution is slanted, democracy is in danger. Enlightenment is defined as that condition in which a community makes authentic information freely available to its citizens and gives them the skill with which to judge it. Democracy is in danger when the educational system prefers indoctrination to critical analysis, and when censorship dictates the contents of newspapers, radio, television, and other forms of communication.

The film concludes that if a community works to balance its economy and enlighten its citizens, it can achieve shared power and shared respect.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

continuity of the film

Scenes	*Commentary*
Leader Main Title	
	SEQUENCE A: ORIENTATION
1. Legislature voting	Democracy has been defined in many ways. We would all agree that democracy includes government by majority. Let's see if we can, each of us,
2. Speaker	sharpen up our own ideas of democracy. We know that democratic words and forms
3. Constitutional document	have been written into laws. But it is the way people *practice* democracy that really counts.
4. Social observer	Let's ask this man about defining democracy. He is a specialist who studies communities and the way people
5. Close up of books on desk	live in them. He goes about his job scientifically: observing . . . recording . . . analyzing . . . and reporting.
6. Social observer	SOCIAL OBSERVER: Well . . .
7. Stepping over to bookcase	I'll tell you one thing . . .
8. Indicating books	Students of society have been reporting their observations and analyses
9. Social science books	for a good many centuries. And as yet there is not one single definition of democracy they would all accept. There is one point, however,
10. Social observer at bookcase	they would all agree on—and this is it:
11. Close up of social observer	In thinking seriously of democracy, one must define his words carefully, and use them consistently. When you have your own definitions clear, you know exactly what to look for in a community.
12. Close up of globe map turning	NARRATOR: You can roughly locate any country in the world
13. Democracy-Despotism scale	somewhere along a scale running all the way from democracy to despotism. One community may be near the democracy end; another somewhere in

Scenes	*Commentary*
	the middle; and a third may be near the despotism end. The question is: What makes one community
14. Social observer at map	democratic? Is it the form of government? SOCIAL OBSERVER: Well, for one thing—
15. Social observer turning to map	avoid the comfortable idea that the mere form of government can of itself safeguard a nation against despotism.
16. Map; pre-1933 Germany	NARRATOR: Germany under President Hindenburg was a republic,
17. Flag and swastika over map	and yet, in this republic an aggressive despotism took root and flourished under Adolf Hitler.
18. Social observer turning from map	When a competent observer looks for signs of despotism in a community,
19. Flag pledge	he looks beyond fine words and noble phrases CHORUS: ". . . Republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible,
20. Lynching	with liberty and justice for all."
21. Social observer indicating chart	SOCIAL OBSERVER: Many observers have found that two workable yardsticks help in discovering how near a community is to despotism: the Respect scale and the Power scale.
	SEQUENCE B: RESPECT SCALE
22. Respect scale	NARRATOR: Let's take respect first. A careful observer can find out how many citizens get an even break in a community. As a community moves away from democracy, respect is restricted to fewer people.
23. Street scene; party officials approaching	A community is low on a respect scale if common courtesy is withheld from large groups of people
24. Officials jostling old lady	on account of their political attitudes . . .
25. Officials proceeding	if people are rude to others because
26. Employer entering office	they think their wealth

Scenes	*Commentary*
27. Employer snubbing employee	gives them that right;
28. Rebuffed secretary	or because
29. Camp Gentilhomme folder	they don't like a man's race
30. Application blank	or his religion.
31. Town hall audience assembling	In a democracy, respect must be shared. Shared respect means that each shares the respect of all, not because of his wealth
32. Executive and workman	or his religion
33. Negro and clubwoman	or his color.
34. Town hall audience	But because each is a human being and makes his own contribution to the community . . .
35. Physician and child	from healing its sick,
36. Railroad executive	from managing its railroads,
37. Locomotive	to running its trains.
38. High school exterior	One sign of shared respect in a community is that everybody
39. Students in a chemistry laboratory	is given a fair chance
40. Close up of Chinese student	to develop useful skills,
41. Chinese inventor	and the chance to put these skills to effective use.
42. Riverside Church	And, there is shared respect,
43. Rural church	if various groups in the community
44. Catholic church	recognize each other's right
45. Synagogue	to hold different
46. Suburban church	faiths and opinions.

SEQUENCE C: POWER SCALE

Scenes	*Commentary*
47. Power scale	A power scale is another important yardstick of democracy. It gauges the citizens' share in making the community's decisions. Communities which concentrate decision-making in a few hands rate low on a power scale, and are moving away from democracy.
48. Louis XIV statue	Like France under the Bourbon kings, one of whom said, "The State?—I am the State!"
49. Political boss: press conference	Today, democracy can ebb away in communities whose citizens allow power
50. Conference ending	to become concentrated in the hands of political bosses,
51. Election poster	because true democracy can flourish in a community only if there is shared power . . .
52. Counting ballots	that is to say, only if many people have a share in making decisions
53. Traffic light	that the community will support—
54. Policeman	with force, if necessary.
55. Exterior of polling place	More specifically, you can say that power is shared wherever regular popular elections are authorized,
56. Employer and employee receiving ballots	and are actually held. There is shared power wherever people actually
57. Men entering booths	get out voluntarily and vote,
58. Employer voting	and if they can vote without interference
59. Employee voting	or pressure from anybody.
60. Plebescite polling place	Look beyond the legal formalities
61. First party official	of an election in measuring a community on a Power scale
62. Voter entering booth	to see if the ballot is really free.
63. Voter leaving booth	If the citizens can vote only the way they're told,
64. Second party official	a community approaches despotism.

Scenes	*Commentary*
65. Legislature	There is shared power if officeholders are drawn from representative groups in society,
66. Farmer in legislature	if they include men
67. Farmer on tractor	from the farms,
68. Lawyer in legislature	men
69. Lawyer pleading	from the law courts,
70. Grocer in legislature	men
71. Grocer in store	from the stores,
72. Mechanic in legislature	men
73. Mechanic at lathe	from the factories.
74. Legislature	In a democratic legislature, shared power shows itself in a strong opposition. Listen—
75. Administration speaker	ADMINISTRATION SPEAKER: And that is why I am confident the governor will have the support of the House on this bill.
76. Opposition speaker	OPPOSITION SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker . . . As usual, the honorable gentleman is quite wrong. He and the governor he serves so dutifully
77. Front view of Assembly	can expect no support for their policy from this House.
78. Animation: political party system	NARRATOR: A strong opposition is made possible by an effective political party system.
79. Hitler addressing Reichstag	When legislatures become ceremonial assemblies and have no real control
80. Reichstag audience	over lawmaking, their community rates low
81. Hitler; audience applauding	on a Power scale.
82. Audience	AUDIENCE: Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!
83. Concentration camp sign	In a downright despotism, opposition is dangerous,

Scenes	*Commentary*
84. Executioner tightening noose	whether the opposition is official
85. Ku Klux Klan	or whether it is unofficial.
86. Town hall audience assembling	The two most important signs of democracy, then, are Shared Respect and Shared Power.
87. Ballot count	They, in turn, depend on many conditions.

SEQUENCE D: ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION SCALE

88. Social observer indicating chart	SOCIAL OBSERVER: The spread of respect and power in a community is influenced by certain conditions which many observers measure by means of the Economic Distribution and Information scales.
89. Animation: Land concentration in township	NARRATOR: Where land is privately owned, one sign of a poorly balanced economy is the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a very small number of people.
90. Farmer and wife	When farmers lose their farms, they lose their independence.
91. Notice of foreclosure	This one can stay on—
92. Farmer and wife	but no longer as his own boss.
93. Land concentration in nation	To the extent that this condition exists throughout a nation, the likelihood of despotism is increased.
94. Feudal disintegration	In past centuries, economic balance was improved when large feudal estates were gradually reorganized into independent farms as one part of the development of democracy. This creation of better economic balance aided the further growth of democracy.
95. Animation: factory town	It is also a sign of poor economic balance in a community if it depends almost entirely on a single company—a factory or a mine.
96. National liquid wealth concentration	If this condition exists over the nation as a whole so that the control of jobs and business opportunities is in a few hands, despotism stands a better chance.
97. Animation: heavy tax burden on poor	Another sign of a poorly balanced economy is a taxation system that presses heaviest on those least able to pay.

Scenes	*Commentary*
98. Sales tax	A larger part of a small income is spent on necessities such as food. Sales taxes on such necessities hit the small income harder.
99. Tax collector and peasant	In the days of the salt tax, feudal despotisms were partly sustained
100. Close up of tax collector	by this and other forms of sales tax.
101. Social observer at bookcase	SOCIAL OBSERVER: A relationship between economic balance and democracy has been noted and reported for centuries by students of society.
102. Picture of Aristotle	Aristotle said
103. Social observer with books	that a government made up of middle-income people has the best chance to be democratic. That was over two thousand years ago in Greece. And well over a century ago in America, James Madison warned that extremes of riches and poverty set group against group.
104. Animation: growth of middle-income group	NARRATOR: The social observers of our time have also noted that the development of democracy usually goes hand in hand with the growth of large middle-income groups. In today's world of giant technology one of democracy's serious problems is how to maintain flourishing middle-income groups.
105. Animation: national economic distribution	Economic distribution, therefore, is an essential condition of democracy. Another one is information.

SEQUENCE E: INFORMATION SCALE

106. Information scale	A community rates low on an information scale when the press, radio, teaching in schools, and other channels of communication are controlled by only a few people; and when citizens have to accept what they are told. In communities of this kind, democracy weakens.
107. Teacher training class	See how such a community trains its teachers.

Scenes	*Commentary*
108. Professor lecturing	PROFESSOR: Bear this in mind: young people cannot be trusted to form their own opinions. This business about openmindedness is nonsense.
109. Student taking notes	It's a waste of time trying to teach students to think for themselves. It's our job to tell 'em!
110. Same student as classroom teacher	NARRATOR: And when teachers put such training into practice, despotism grows rapidly.
111. Boy rising with question	These children are being taught to accept uncritically whatever they are told.
112. Teacher noticing him	Questions are not encouraged.
113. Boy and teacher	TEACHER: How can you ask such a question? Have you got a textbook? BOY: Yes, Ma'am. TEACHER: Doesn't it say right here that our law
114. Rebuked boy sitting down	courts are always just? BOY: Yes, Ma'am. TEACHER: Then how dare you question the fact? Sit down!
115. Same boy at home	NARRATOR: And so we aren't surprised when— BOY: But it must be true. I saw it in this book, right here!
116. Propaganda Ministry	NARRATOR: And if books, and newspapers and the radio are effectively controlled, the people will
117. Internal Censorship Office	read *and* accept
118. Close up of censor's stamp	exactly what the few in control want them to. Government censorship is one form of control.
119. Man posting suspension notice	A newspaper which breaks a government censorship rule
120. Suspension notice	can be suspended.
121. Close up of student in graduation ceremony	Therefore, enlightenment is an important condition for democracy.
122. High school	As public education increases, democracy grows.
123. Teacher at blackboard	In checking a community for democracy,

Scenes	*Commentary*
124. Teacher questioning class	we must find out whether it provides schools adjusted to the needs of its young people.
125. Teacher writing newspaper checks	But just being able to get books and newspapers
126. Student reading funnies	is no guarantee of democracy.
127. Teacher completing third check	The newspapers of a real democracy meet these tests—
128. Newspaper checks	Balanced presentation of news, disclosure of source, competence of the staff.
129. Boy and girl	In applying these tests to newspapers,
130. Reading paper	we find out first of all
131. Front page	if they report both sides, if the news pages contain news only,
132. Boy and girl reading	and if opinion is kept
133. Editorial page	for the editorial page. Next we see if the paper says plainly who publishes and edits it, so we know which side they're on.
134. Newspaper editor	Newspapers in a real democracy meet a third test: competence of staff. This test requires newspapermen to value accuracy
135. Editor blue-pencilling copy	and impartiality and to interpret the news skillfully for the public.
136. Editor telephoning	The competence test also requires newspapermen
137. Specialist listening	to use the services of experts.
138. Editor phoning	EDITOR: I want five hundred words on freedom of the press for our anniversary edition. How about it?
139. Specialist listening	But professor . . . you know more about the history of freedom of the press than probably any other man in the country.
140. Editor completing conversation	Yes, that's right. I mean the *responsibility* of a free press—and other forms of communication like

Scenes	*Commentary*
	the radio and the movies—to enlighten the public in a democracy.
141. Washington monument	As George Washington said in his farewell address,
142. Close up of inscription	"In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion be enlightened."
143. Washington monument	It is no less true today that enlightenment is an essential condition for democracy.
	SEQUENCE F: INTEGRATION
144. Airview of community	What sort of community do you live in?
145. Democracy-Despotism scale	Where would you place it on a Democracy-Despotism scale?
146. Respect and Power scales	To find out whether citizens get an even break, you can rate it on a Respect scale. And to find out whether they share in the making of decisions, you rate it on a Power scale.
147. Information and Economic Distribution scales	If you want to know what way it is likely to go in the future, rate it on scales for Economic Distribution and Information. The lower your community rates on economic balance and enlightenment, the lower it is likely to rate
148. Respect and Power scales	on the Respect and Power scales. To make sure that democracy is safe in your community,
149. Democracy-Despotism scale	first see whether you can find in it two distinct signs of democracy,
150. Montage (Music in)	shared respect and shared power. Then turn your attention to two important conditions on which they depend—economic balance and enlightenment. There is no standing still. The more economic balance and enlightenment, the more shared respect and shared power. Democracy's something that's never finished. If a community works to balance its economy and if it works to enlighten its citizens, such a community can

Scenes	*Commentary*
	achieve shared respect and it can achieve shared power.
151. Spinning globe; word DEMOCRACY superimposed	By working hard at it, the citizens of any community can achieve democracy.
End Title (Music out)	

END

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. This educational film makes use of two "scales"—the Respect Scale and the Power Scale—to distinguish *democracy* from *despotism*. These scales, in turn, are based on "operational definitions" (things people do, the way they behave). To be sure you understand their use, list all the "democratic behaviors" mentioned in the film of people who share respect and share power. Then list all the "despotic behaviors" of people who restrict respect and restrict power. Now add to these lists other behaviors which you have observed in everyday life which further illustrate democratic and despotic conduct as defined by the Respect and Power Scales.
2. Follow the same procedure with the Economic Distribution and Information Scales.
3. Applying the two sets of concepts—*shared respect* and *shared power* (or their opposites, *restricted respect* and *concentrated power*) and *economic balance* and *unrestricted information* (or their opposites, *economic imbalance* and *restricted information*)—determine which of the following situations, all having to do with the publishing business, demonstrate democratic tendencies and which show despotic tendencies. (The editors do not wish to suggest that these problems are all capable of black-and-white, "either-or" answers.)
   a. The publication of lists of "undesirable" books by such groups as anti-vice societies.
   b. Only one paper in a city.
   c. Government censorship in wartime of information concerning troop movements, shipping losses, etc.
   d. The limits placed by libel laws on what one may print about people.
   e. High publishing costs which force many small-scale publishers out of business.
   f. The determination by state agencies of the kinds of comic books which may be published.
   g. The chain ownership of newspapers.
   h. Dependence of a newspaper or magazine on a small number of advertisers for its chief income.
   i. Easy accessibility for all to the published findings of government-sponsored research agencies.

j. Regular appearance of paid-for editorials in the form of advertisements.
k. Appearance of the same syndicated columns in many newspapers throughout the U. S.
l. The power of a present user of one of the great press services to deny its use to a non-member of the press association.
m. A large number and variety of "special interest" papers and magazines (farm, labor, trade, professional).
n. Dependence of a rural press on large amounts of "boiler-plate," i.e., editorials, news, and features furnished by syndicated news services.

4. Now try your hand in much the same way with these educational institutions or situations:
   a. Private schools and colleges with relatively steep tuition fees.
   b. State colleges and universities:
      (1) Appointment of policy makers (board of regents) by governor.
      (2) Limiting of offerings of state university to academic type mainly suited for professional training.
   c. Control of campus politics by fraternities and sororities.
   d. Large gifts to a college by just a few individuals, families, or groups.
   e. Closed school-board sessions.
   f. Efforts by organized pressure groups to influence the practices of administrators and teachers.
   g. Hiring, firing, and promotion policies largely formulated by representatives of the faculty.
5. Finally, consider in the same fashion some phases of community life:
   a. Many public parks and playgrounds.
   b. Unofficial agreements among property owners to limit property ownership on the basis of race.
   c. A great variety and number of churches.
   d. Many movie houses under one management.
   e. A uniform system of medical fees charged by all doctors in town.
   f. No appreciable difference between the policies of the several veterans' organizations.
   g. A crowded, outmoded library.
   h. Work opportunities in town concentrated in a few types of work.
   i. Sharp cleavage between "good" and "bad" parts of town.
   j. Siphoning off of much of the town income to out-of-town financial interests.
   k. Dependence of community concerts upon New York booking agencies.
   l. Appointment of the mayor by the city council.
   m. Private ownership of most available beach property.
   n. Clear radio and TV reception limited to one major network.
   o. Municipally-owned power and water companies.
   p. Legal restrictions on civil servants' and teachers' taking part in politics.

PROJECT

By now you should be reasonably familiar with the process of defining a vague, abstract word by specifying the *activities* which the word stands for. One of the vaguest of the commonly used abstractions on a college campus is "school

spirit." Using some modification of the procedures illustrated by Allport and the editors of the Encyclopædia Britannica film, write a paper defining this term so that no one could possibly mistake *your* meaning. Note: the object of this exercise is to clarify meaning, not to argue for or against a specified definition.

Carl L. Becker

SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, FASCISM

Becker (1873-1945), for many years a professor of history at Cornell and one of America's best-informed and most perceptive thinkers about contemporary political philosophies, was especially concerned with discovering the ends and means of democracy. In his analysis he tried to get beneath the labels of periods and events, to determine the trends of events, and to find what help they might give in our efforts to understand, and usefully label, today's history-in-the-making. He saw politics and society as processes, not as set, finished things. And so, when he needed to define, he defined largely in operational terms; that is, he went behind the words and labels and defined by describing what "went on," or was being done, under certain circumstances. This practice enabled him to obtain and pass on to us his insights into the meanings of such confusing abstractions as Socialism, Communism, and Fascism.

Among Becker's main writings are The Declaration of Independence, Freedom and Responsibility, Everyman His Own Historian, *and* Modern Democracy.

That the defects of the capitalist system are inherent is the contention of those ideologies known as Socialism and Communism. Socialism and Communism, taken in the generic sense of the words, are at least as old as Plato; but in their modern forms they derive from the doctrines formulated by Karl Marx in the middle of the last century.

Marxian Socialism, inspired by the failure of democratic institutions to effect an equitable distribution of wealth, was essentially a reinterpretation of the modern doctrine of progress, and as such it comprised a social theory and a philosophy of history. As a social theory it maintained that the social structure at any time is fundamentally determined by the methods of production and distribution of wealth, and that the prevailing institutions and ideas are those best adapted to maintain the interests of the class which, by ownership and control of the chief forms of wealth, dominates the social structure in its own interest. As a philosophy of history it maintained that social change, or progress, is the result, not of a conflict of ideas, but of economic forces, a

SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, FASCISM From *Modern Democracy* by Carl Becker, Yale University Press, 1941. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

conflict between the economic interests of the ruling and the dispossessed classes. Not by the persuasive force of ideas, but only by the impersonal pressure of economic conditions, could the ruling class ever be dispossessed, or the institutions and ideas through which its power operates ever be transformed.

Applying this theory to European history, Marx found that the liberal-democratic revolution was the result of the conflict between the economic interests of the landed aristocracy and the rising capitalist class. So far from reflecting the triumph of true over false ideas, it reflected the triumph of capital over land as the predominant factor in production; and the superstructure of liberal-democratic ideas and institutions, so far from having a universal validity, had merely the relative and temporary value of being suited to the functioning of the capitalist system and the interests of the ruling bourgeois class. The liberal-democratic revolution could not, therefore, be regarded as the final term in the historic process. On the contrary, the capitalist system once established, there necessarily developed within it a new conflict between the interests of the ruling bourgeois class and the dispossessed proletariat which would inevitably issue in another social revolution.

The coming social revolution was inevitable, according to Marx, because the capitalist system, like the landed aristocratic system before it, contained within it the defects that would transform it—defects inherent in the institution of private property and the competitive system. The ruthless competition for profits would necessarily result in an increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of those who proved most able in the ruthless competition for profits, thereby reducing the laborers and the defeated capitalists to the level of a bare subsistence; and when this process reached a certain stage the system would collapse for the simple reason that there would be no profit in producing commodities when the underlying proletarian population was no longer able to purchase them at a price that would yield a profit. When this state was reached, the proletariat, made class conscious by their misery, instructed in the dialectic of social change by their leaders, and united for the defense of their class interests, would by revolutionary action abolish private property in land and capital, and through a democratic government based upon a classless society, organize the production and distribution of wealth for the common good.

The Marxian doctrine provided a new and persuasive ideology for the oppressed working classes whose hopes were persistently defeated by liberal-democracy as a going concern. Its analysis of the capitalist system justified their grievances against their employers, while its philosophy of history promised them that all would be made right in the future, and assured them that in defending their class interests they could not fail since they were supported by the indefeasible forces that shaped the destiny of mankind.

Inspired by the Marxian faith, the industrial workers formed new political parties, for the most part called Socialist, and for the most part accept-

ing the Marxian doctrine of the social revolution. But meantime, while waiting for the coming revolution, and as a preparation for it, the Socialist parties adopted a program of social legislation designed to benefit the masses at the expense of the classes. Attracted by this practical program, lower middle-class people, mostly timid folk who abhorred the idea of violence, voted in increasing numbers for Socialist candidates in the hope of benefiting from the legislation which the Socialist parties promised to support. One result of this trend in practical politics was that the Socialist parties derived their chief support from voters who were not Marxian socialists; another was that the leaders of the Socialist parties, in order to win and hold non-Marxian voters, found it necessary to soft-pedal the doctrine of imminent, catastrophic revolution. In the decade before the Great War the dominant Socialist parties had therefore virtually abandoned the Marxian conception of the revolution as a violent upheaval, and conceived of it as a slow and peaceful process in which the masses, by established political methods, would gain control of the government and by normal legislative procedure within the existing democratic regime would abolish private property in land and capital and socialize the production and distribution of wealth.

During the Great War the influence of Socialism naturally declined, but the orthodox Marxian tradition, barely kept alive by minority groups within and without the dominant Socialist parties, was given a dramatic and world-wide significance by the Russian Revolution. As reinterpreted by Lenin and realized in the Soviet regime, neo-Marxianism took the name of Communism, and must be clearly distinguished from Socialism as understood by such pre-war Socialists as Bernheim and Kautsky, and such present-day Socialists as Norman Thomas. Present-day Socialism and neo-Marxian Communism agree in one thing only—the necessity of abolishing private property in the means of production. In respect to the means for accomplishing this desired end they disagree radically. Socialism maintains that it can be accomplished by peaceful political methods within the framework of the existing democratic regime; Communism maintains that it can be accomplished only by violent revolutionary expropriation of the capitalist class, carried through for the masses by the dictatorship of a disciplined Communist party.

It was also an essential part of Communist theory that the establishment of Communism in one country would be the prelude to an international Communist revolution. So far, the prediction has not been realized. Revolutions there have been, in Italy, in Germany, in many European countries. But these revolutions, stimulated in part by the fear of Communism rather than by devotion to it, have taken the name of Fascist; and until recently at all events Communism and Fascism have been commonly regarded, especially by the Communists and Fascists themselves, as being fundamentally opposed to each other.

In respect to political theory there are certain differences between Communism and Fascism. In theory Communism maintains that the dictatorship,

a drastic technique essential to the revolution but ending with it, will be replaced by a democratic government of free and equal individuals, while Fascism rejects the democratic ideal altogether in favor of the permanent dictatorship. In theory Communism professes to be international, while Fascism frankly accepts the doctrine of racial superiority and national egoism. In theory Communism recognizes the value of reason and science, while Fascism is essentially anti-intellectual in its subordination of reason to will.

In theory, yes; but the Soviet regime in Russia has failed, even more conspicuously than existing democratic societies, to harmonize theory and practice. Although the revolution has long since ended, the classless society has not emerged. The dictatorship is now more firmly established, the prospect for a democratic government is now more remote, than in the time of Lenin. The Stalin regime is no less nationalist and no more international than the regime of Hitler, and its regimentation of opinion and scholarship no less effectively subordinates reason to the will of the dictator. The revolution in Russia, as Trotsky said, has been betrayed; but it has been betrayed less by men and circumstances than by a radical contradiction in Communist theory. The rational and humane values proclaimed in Communist theory are frankly divorced from the means by which they can be realized; they are regarded as ideal ends projected into the future, but incapable of being attained except by the temporary resort to antirational and inhumane means. So far at least the result of this radical contradiction between ends and means has been, and as I think must under any circumstances have been, that the ideal ends were defeated by the very means employed to attain them.

It is in this fundamental discord between ends and means that Communism and Fascism, as they actually function, are alike—alike in the methods they employ and in the assumptions by which the methods are justified. The Communist and the Fascist revolutions were carried through by the same political technique and the same resort to naked force. The personal power of Mussolini and Hitler is no more arbitrary, more complete, or more ruthlessly employed than that of Stalin. Both Communism and Fascism assume that the welfare of the community and the progress of mankind are in some mystical fashion identified with an abstract entity, called in the one case the dialectic of history and in the other the totalitarian state. Both assume that this abstract entity is realized in the person of an inspired leader to whom the truth has been revealed and the direction of affairs committed. Both assume that the individual, in comparison with the state or the dialectic process, has no significance except as an instrument to be used, with whatever degree of brutality may be necessary, for realizing ends which the leader judges to be good. Both do in effect, whatever they may proclaim in theory, subordinate reason to will, identify right with naked force as an instrument of will, and accord value to the disinterested search for truth only in so far as the leader judges it to be temporarily useful for the attainment of immediate political ends.

Communism and Fascism claim to be theoretical formulations of a "new order" in the world. But as revealed in their works they are no more than the recurrence of old political forms, that is to say, the recurrence in practice of what is variously known as tyranny, dictatorship, absolute monarchy; the recurrence in theory of what is known as divine right. As such they are alike, and alike at war with the fundamental values and assumptions which liberal-democracy, if it is to retain any significance, must preserve.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Throughout this essay, Becker distinguishes carefully between *means* (what men do, the methods they use) and *ends* (what men say they want, the goals they're striving for). If a person were interested in distinguishing between such vague abstractions as Socialism, Communism, and Fascism by using the definitional procedures we have employed in the two preceding essays, on which of these two—means or ends—would he concentrate? On which does Becker concentrate?
2. Drawing on Becker's essay, make up a careful list of the *theoretical* differences between Communism and Fascism. Now draw up a list of the *actual* similarities between the two. How does this help to explain how the means determine the ends? How does this illustrate further the need for "operational" definitions when we are attempting to make useful distinctions between political philosophies?
3. Does the Marxian "dialectic of history" (social change is the result of economic forces only; these forces are immutable and impersonal, not subject to influence by the pressure of ideas; social revolution is, therefore, inevitable) seem to you to be a result of inductive thinking or deductive thinking? Explain.
4. Do you see a connection between the confusion which has arisen over the use of these three terms—Socialism, Communism, Fascism—and the confusion between *signs* and the things signs stand for, discussed and illustrated by Morris and Silone in the section on Language? Does the method of "operational definition" (defining abstractions in terms of what men actually *do*) assist us in overcoming this confusion? If so, in what ways?
5. The following letter appeared in the Letters to the Editor section of a West Coast newspaper at the time of the last census:

   Editor—Because of a firm conviction that government snooping always precedes regimentation, we of this family refused to answer any questions except those that were necessary to enable the Census Bureau to determine the number of representatives each State can send to Congress.

   So the Census Bureau sent over a tough agent who loudly praised the ways of Socialism. Throughout an hour and 15 minutes of heated debate we exposed the fallacy in every one of his arguments.

   So instead of the present regime taking advantage of the situation to gain a new convert, I think they lost one to the concept of free enterprise. By free I mean really free, not requiring insurance, licenses, permits, or public bookkeeping.

Whether or not you agree in any way with the writer of this letter, do you find his final sentence useful to you in understanding his views? Why?

PROJECT

With Becker's help, list the "operations" (means) which distinguish present-day Socialism from "neo-Marxian Communism." Now take the next step and, using the same technique of definition, distinguish present-day Capitalism from either or both. Formulate your answer in a paper.

John B. Carroll

LANGUAGE

One of the main problems that Carroll works on in his "survey of linguistics and related disciplines in America," The Study of Language, *is the nature of definition; and one of the best explanations of what he means by "definition" is his own attempt to define "language." As we have already noticed in the preceding section, language is complex and the defining of it is no easy, quickly done task. Carroll attacks the problem by trying to imagine what a person using language would be doing, what the characteristics of the sounds he is making would be.*

Suppose we go to some remote corner of the world and observe two persons conversing with one another. We ask ourselves whether these persons are speaking the same language. (This need not be the case; on a visit to the conclaves of the United Nations we happened to observe one delegate speaking in French and another replying in Russian.) We make a tape recording of the sounds we hear, and upon careful study of this recording it turns out that the sounds uttered by the two persons have at least some similarities. Though many of the sounds may seem strange to our ears, we can learn to recognize, fairly well, the vowels and consonants which occurred in the speech of our subjects. Suppose we find that the various vowels and consonants we recognize sound approximately the same no matter which one of our subjects is talking, and that they occur on the average with about the same frequencies. This would be partial evidence for concluding that the two persons are speaking the same language. But it is not enough: they might perchance be speaking two different languages with the same systems of elementary sounds (though this would be a rare case). We analyze our tape

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recording further and find that the sounds often occur in similar sequences; if we listen carefully to the breaks between these sequences we might conclude that our subjects use many "words" in common, and we would then have further evidence that they are speaking the same language. We could go on in this way, making increasingly detailed analyses. We should want to study how the longer sequences of sounds are put together; we would try to discover certain constancies or invariances in the structure of our subjects' utterances. We would probably have to go back to our subjects for further information. We might, for example, be able to get them to give us verbal responses to a number of common objects and situations, with a view to seeing whether their responses are similar. If we could find a high degree of similarity in their verbal responses, or at least a large number of common traits in their utterances, we would probably be justified in concluding that they are speaking the same language.

Let us consider several things about this observation.

First, the mere fact that our subjects seem to "understand one another" is no guarantee that they are speaking the same language. Mutual intelligibility is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for such a conclusion. We might have a situation in which the speakers are using two languages, but in which each speaker understands the language of the other. Our conclusion that the same language is being used must emerge from our finding that a high degree of similarity, in some sense, is manifested in the utterances of the two speakers.

Second, the utterances do not have to be similar in all respects. Even the elementary sounds which we ordinarily call vowels and consonants may vary slightly in their acoustical properties, and certainly the total utterances of the two speakers will rarely be found to be even approximately parallel. It is only when we find that these utterances are in most respects *structured* according to the same self-consistent *system* that we can conclude that they are in the same language.

Third, we might find that the utterances of one or both of our speakers occasionally depart from the self-consistent *system* we have discovered. We might suspect, in such a case, that our speakers are occasionally making "quotations" from still another language, just as we do when we use a French or Latin phrase in our English speech, or when we utter a foreign surname (like Turgenev, for example, particularly if we give it the Russian pronunciation) which does not pattern itself like English names. There would be enough self-consistency in the bulk of the utterances to enable us to spot such "quotations" from another language and lay them aside.

Fourth, let us notice that the discovery that two speakers are using the same language does not imply that we would necessarily find any other human beings using this language. Our two subjects might have developed this language themselves, or they might be the last remaining speakers of a moribund language. Whatever the case, the system we have discovered would still be

a language. As a matter of fact, everyone knows of languages without speakers currently living, but ancient Greek or ancient Hittite can still be called languages.

Finally, we might ask ourselves whether our two subjects are merely uttering structured nonsense. The test of this would be to see whether they verbally respond in any similar and consistent way to certain objects and situations, whether their verbal responses represent discriminations between various aspects of their physical environment, and finally whether the speakers are in any sense able to control differentially each other's behavior in ways depending on their use of structured verbal responses. If these things are found to be the case, we can say that the language common to the two speakers has a symbolic, communicative function. A structured system of verbal responses would not be a language unless it has a symbolic, communicative function. Of course, there is hardly any reason for such a system to be structured unless it is to be used for communication.

One may rightly ask why we have introduced *two* speakers in our illustration. It is true that a language can be a system possessed by only one person. (He could have invented it for his own purposes, assigning his own arbitrary symbolic functions of the language.) Furthermore, it is possible to make an analysis of a language system solely on the basis of the utterances of a single informant; in fact, this has often been done. Nevertheless, there is much reason to believe that the symbolic function of a language arises only by social facilitation—that the elements of a language system come to have symbolic functions only by virtue of the discriminative verbal responses of two or more human beings who desire to influence each other's behavior in various ways. The users of a common language system constitute the *speech community* of that language. All the major languages of the world have, or have had at some time, a speech community of considerable extent. It is characteristic of a language system to correspond to a certain speech community, represented in the present illustration by our two speakers. There can of course be such a thing as a speech community consisting of one speaker, but this is usually a historical residue from a larger speech community. Even the man who invents a new artificial language does so by virtue of the verbal habits he has acquired in a larger speech community.

A language is never perfectly uniform throughout a speech community of two or more persons; as the speech community gets larger, there is likely to be less uniformity. Indeed, each member of a speech community may be said to possess his own *idiolect,* his own personal variety of the language system. A single individual will often possess several idiolects, to be used as the situation demands—for example, one for talking to contemporaries and one for talking to children. (Of course, such idiolects would have their parallels in other speakers.) Furthermore, the various members of the speech community will not possess *all* the linguistic items which properly belong to the language; for example, large numbers of people in the English speech com-

munity do not use or even recognize the meanings of many words which are used by the educated classes or by members of specialized trades and occupations. All these items, however, are structured according to the patterns which are characteristic of the English language. The learned word *psychoanalytic,* for example, contains sounds which are characteristic of other, more common English words; its syllabic structure and its accentuation follow usual patterns; and from the standpoint of word order it falls into sentence positions at least partially similar to those of numerous common words like *good, proper, lovely,* etc. The abstract system of common traits in the idiolects of all members of a speech community, then, is what we call a language. If we find certain members of a speech community whose idiolects resemble each other rather more than they resemble those of other members of a speech community, we say that their system of common linguistic traits constitutes a *dialect.*

We are now ready to essay a formal definition of a language, if we bear in mind the various issues raised in the foregoing discussion.

A language is a structured system of arbitrary vocal sounds and sequences of sounds which is used, or can be used, in interpersonal communication by an aggregation of human beings, and which rather exhaustively catalogs the things, events, and processes in the human environment. The sounds and sequences of sounds are arbitrary only in the sense that they have no inherent or necessary connections with the things to which they are said to "refer," or to the situations or contexts in which they are used—these connections having been established only by specific processes of learning.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. In the preceding essays we have been encountering definitions which tell us what to do or look for in order to experience or recognize the thing to which the word defined refers. This is called the method of "operational definition." Is Carroll's definition of *language* an example of this method? Explain.
2. Before reading this essay you were perhaps sure you *knew* what language is. In a sense you did. But what are several distinctions between the popular definition of language you accepted before reading this essay and the definition given by a linguistic scientist?
3. Carroll concludes that language is a "structured system of verbal responses" with "a symbolic, communicative function." Apply these criteria to: (*a*) American slang, (*b*) a two-year-old child's talk, (*c*) doubletalk, (*d*) grunts, groans, and expletives ("uh huh," "damn," "ouch," etc.), and (*e*) a special jargon of people in institutions (convicts, Deutsch's juvenile delinquents, etc.).
4. By *structured* what does Carroll appear to mean? Can you supply some actual examples of this "structuring" of language—for example, certain sounds or sound combinations that appear regularly in English, or certain word-orders or arrangements which are characteristic of English sentences?
5. As one test of whether or not two speakers are using the same language Carroll suggests getting them "to give verbal responses to a number of common objects

and situations, with a view to seeing whether their responses are similar." How does this test suggest the relationship between *experience* and *meaning* which Kerfoot says lies at the root of mature reading skill?

6. Carroll states that language is a system of *"arbitrary* vocal sounds and sequences of sounds." Test this hypothesis by comparing the sounds used for selected English words with the sounds (words) used for those same objects or actions in a foreign language of which you have some knowledge. For example, what about the piece of lumber you open to enter a room? Could it as well be called "porte" or "tür" as "door"?
7. Carroll describes language as a communication system "which rather exhaustively catalogs the things, events, and processes in the human environment." In what way is the "cataloging"—or classifying—function of language illustrated by the conjugation of a verb (e.g., I go, I went, I have gone, I had gone, I will go, I will have gone)? by singular and plural forms of a noun (man, men; boy, boys)? by differences in names (men, women; hammer, nails; car, tire, wheel)? What about such words as *and, or, but, although,* which are not conjugated, have no plurals, and are used over and over again in different contexts?
8. Can you point out several instances in which Carroll proceeds with the caution characteristic of the scientist, refusing to draw an inference from partial evidence?

PROJECT

To test your understanding of Carroll's technical definition of language, prepare a talk in which you provide fresh illustrations for each of the specific parts of the italicized definition in his final paragraph.

R. W. Jepson

WHEN WORDS FAIL US

Jepson, a British educator with a special interest in the relation of clear language to clear thinking, here tries to indicate by a series of simple, homely examples from everyday communication the main pitfalls that lie in the way of a man who is trying to make something clearer to a fellow human being. Those of his examples which are drawn from English life have their parallels in American life.

I heard a mistress exclaiming about her maid the other day: "It's no good. I don't pretend to understand her, and she doesn't understand me. We mightn't be speaking the same language."

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Now, when two people cannot reach a mutual understanding, it is frequently because they interpret the same word differently, or because they use different words for the same thing. In this particular case, mistress and maid could not agree on the exact interpretation of *early* rising and coming home *late*. And there was another difference: when they could not agree on the exact word to describe the state of the scullery sink after washing up.

Now, if people are to live and work together amicably, if disputes are to be settled without resorting to violence, if discussion of problems is to lead to fruitful results, then the parties concerned must "speak the same language." That is, they must see eye to eye when they come to interpret fundamental terms. They must use the same name for the same thing. In fact, when the parties to a dispute have mutually agreed on how to interpret some particular word, very often the dispute is as good as over.

So our mistress and maid will begin to "speak the same language" when they have agreed on the definition of *early* and *late*. But that definition will not apply to other people in different circumstances. What is *late* to a milkman on his morning rounds might well be *early* to a bank clerk; and what is *early* to a bright young person at a night club is likely to be *late* to a staid spinster in a country village. You cannot use such terms as *early* and *late* in a discussion until you have determined their precise meaning and application. As long as they remain vague and indefinite, confusion may arise, and different people may put different constructions on them. . . .

When we come to the wider sphere of international politics, the chances of misunderstanding are naturally greater. Do you remember an incident at an international conference at the Hague some years ago? What a hullabaloo there was when that blunt Yorkshireman, the late Lord Snowden, called a proposal of a French minister "grotesque and ridiculous"! Admittedly, the phrase is not expressive of that politeness usual in diplomatic circles; but it sounded far more rude to French ears because *grotesque* in French means *clownish*. The Frenchman's enemies immediately caricatured him in their cartoons as a clown. His friends retorted by calling Snowden "the Yorkshire pig." A similar incident arose a few years later out of an important German communication. An answer was requested, according to the English translation, *forthwith*—a word more like an ultimatum than a request. English opinion was scandalised until it was explained that the word translated *forthwith* ought to have been *in due course,* a milder and harmless expression that could mean almost anything—or nothing.

Such hitches cannot perhaps be avoided in correspondence between nations. But people who boast a common native tongue do not find it at all easy to make their thoughts understood. Why is this? It is partly because language is still a very imperfect instrument for expressing thought. Words are not mere signs and symbols, like the plus and minus signs in arithmetic. They do not possess fixed and stable meanings. They are not dead, impersonal

things, and they do not possess invariable and permanent values which are independent of each other and which can be separated from the person using them and the person to whom they are used. They are very much alive, and they are rather like chameleons in that they take colour from their surroundings. Their meanings change just as we do and as everything around us does.

Consider the fate of the word *propaganda*. Before the war of 1914-18 it was rather a learned word. It moved mostly in literary circles and it possessed a reputable and dignified connection. It meant simply spreading information to enlist sympathy and support. *Now* look at it! Every Tom, Dick and Harry is familiar with it. It has a bad name and a shady reputation. When the man-in-the-street calls anything "merely propaganda," it is only a polite and fancy name for a lie. We can trace the word's downward career during the years 1914-18. In the early years some of the governments set up press bureaux. Their business was to unite public opinion behind the various national efforts, and to put their own case to neutral countries in a favourable light. These bureaux were first called Departments of Propaganda. By 1918 this name was changed to Departments of Counter-Propaganda—in itself a suggestion that the information published by the other side was untrue and that it was necessary in the interests of truth and self-defence to correct the false impressions spread by it. When the Americans entered the war, the word stank so, that they appeared anxious at all costs to avoid it. So they called their bureau the Committee on Public Information. The word propaganda became utterly discredited, and now we have no word to perform the function it once performed so well.

Propaganda took a year or two to change its meaning. But what of the word which changes its meaning in the course of a single argument? There are many words with a wide and a narrow sense. Often people will draw false conclusions, because in their argument they have used a word first in its wide and then in its narrow sense. They either do it unconsciously without noticing the switch over, and so deceive themselves, or they do it consciously. In this case they hope that others will be deceived and not notice the change.

Let us take an example. Those who defended war as an instrument of national policy often used an argument running more or less like this: "In order to develop his personality, man must engage in a perpetual struggle against his environment. Fighting is the salt of life. He who wishes to live must fight. He who does not wish to fight does not deserve to live. If the human race ceased to fight it would soon degenerate. Therefore even if it's possible to abolish war, the results would be highly undesirable."

Now, it is not hard to see that the sense of the word fight has changed in the course of this argument. First it is used to mean the instinctive effort on man's part to master the difficulties of his environment. Then, at the end, it is used in the narrow sense of trying to enforce his will upon his fellow-men by recourse to arms. This change makes the argument unsound. It may be true that man has to fight against his environment or go under; but it does

not follow that it involves killing other people. Those who use such an argument are either deceiving themselves—they are so anxious to find support for a view they already hold—or, they are playing a deliberate trick on the uncritical listener.

Again I am not so sure that the word *live* in this argument is not used in two different senses. Let us look at it again. "He who wishes to live must fight." Does not *live* here mean *live a full life* or *live a life worth living?* And in the next sentence—"He who doesn't wish to fight doesn't deserve to live" —does not *live* here mean to *remain alive?* It is so easy to confuse the different meanings of the word *live*. For example, the *right to live:* what does it signify? The right to a bare subsistence—just enough to keep body and soul alive? Or the right to a livelihood? Or the right to be kept at the public expense?

Then take the word *law*. *Law* is most frequently used in the sense of a legal enactment—some rule which citizens cannot disobey without the risk of pains and penalties; something which we English people regard with awe and reverence. But we also speak of the law of averages or the law of supply and demand. And these are merely statements of general tendencies. But just because they are called laws, some people seem to think that they are invested with the sanctity and inviolability accorded to the Law of the land. They imagine that they are as unbreakable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

Justice also is used in two widely different senses. When we refer to justice, do we mean the justice administered by the judges in the Law Courts? Or do we mean a kind of abstract justice, embodying a set of moral principles which we think ought to regulate human relations? When we demand justice, do we mean that we have been denied something to which we are legally entitled? Or do we mean that we have a grievance which we want redressed, or a hardship which we want removed? Similarly with the word *rights*. When we talk of our rights, do we mean rights enforceable at law? Or are we referring to privileges we think we ought to have?

It is so easy to confuse what is and what we think ought to be. Suppose some political reform is proposed. We do not happen to like it, perhaps, because it would mean disturbing our usual mode of life. Then it is very tempting to call such a proposal *unconstitutional.* Not because it conflicts with the Constitution as it actually exists, but because it conflicts with our idea of what the Constitution ought to be. Then we should be using a term which ought to have a definite meaning in a special private sense of our own, which we leave conveniently vague and indefinite.

We also find the reverse process at work. Words which are indefinite in meaning are often used as if they meant something fixed and definite, something which can be measured according to some absolute and permanent standard, which, as a matter of fact, does not exist. I mean such words as "beneficial," "harmful," "dangerous," "objectionable," and the like. It is useless to call a project *beneficial,* unless you make it plain who is to benefit from

it. It is useless to call something *objectionable,* unless you explain who is going to object to it. Too often such terms are used rather like blank cheques which the reader can fill in to his taste. The only person who can know exactly what is meant is the user himself, and then he probably has his own reasons for not being explicit. Probably he does not want to commit himself too deeply. But often enough his own ideas are too vague to be put into precise terms.

As you know, the school-leaving age was a year or two ago raised to fifteen. But children were allowed to leave school before that age to enter *beneficial* employment. Beneficial to whom, we should like to know. The children themselves? Or is it the parents, or the employer, or the community at large? It really *does* make a difference, does it not? . . .

So, when we hear of a *beneficial* or *desirable* scheme, we should ask: "To whom?" When we hear of a movement called *subversive,* or *revolutionary,* or *destructive,* we are quite justified in inquiring what it is going to upset, or change, or destroy. If precise information is not forthcoming, we should probably not be far wrong if we suspected that all the speaker meant was that he personally approved of the scheme and disapproved of the movement.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Which pitfall to clear communication is less easily recognized—using different words for the same thing, or interpreting the same words differently? Why?
2. Here are a number of statements with the circumstances under which they were made. In each case indicate what different interpretations might be placed on the statement and show why it is ambiguous.
   a. Traveler (to a travel agent): "Get me accommodations at reasonable prices."
   b. Instructor (to another instructor): "I found Higgens to be an outstanding student."
   c. One student to another: "I'm trying to work into my schedule as many practical courses as possible and avoid the theoretical ones."
   d. A student (writing a description of a course): "In English 140 we were required to read a lot of deep writers."
   e. A student (sitting at his desk, where he has been reviewing for a memory-type examination): "Gosh, I'm tired!"
3. Bring to class an example, taken from the editorial pages or advertisements in your daily newspaper, of words "indefinite in meaning" but "used as if they meant something fixed and definite." Let the rest of the class determine what possible meanings these words could have in the context in which they are used. Is there general agreement or not?
4. Have each member of the class list on a slip of paper the names of musical compositions he considers "classical." Do you find not only differences in titles but obvious differences in the *kinds* of music for which the label "classical" is used by the various members of your class? If so, what problem in our use of language is indicated here?

PROJECTS

1. Each of the following statements contains one or more potent abstract terms; these terms are italicized. What questions would you have to raise and answer in order to obtain any very clear idea of the "meaning" of these abstractions? List just the questions, not the answers.
   a. It should be apparent to any *thinking* man that a college education is *indispensable.*
   b. The French are an *immoral* people.
   c. What our schools need above everything else today is *superior* teachers.
   d. The *American people* will never surrender their *liberties.*
   e. The problem of the Navajo Indian is unsolvable: you can't do anything with a *backward* people.
   f. Wartime strikes are *un-American.*
   g. Greenfield is a more *religious* community than Overhill.
   h. Williams has a deep sense of *loyalty.*

   Here is an example of the kind of question-asking which might lead to a clearer understanding of the issue under consideration and of the writer's view of it.

   Any female schoolteacher who smokes should be fired; women who smoke are not *respectable.*

   Respect for what? (Conformity, timidity, intellectual ability, self-restraint, self-sacrifice, human warmth, social grace, ability to do the job?)

   Respect of whom? (The town's bar set? most of the parents? the more tolerant parents? the less tolerant parents? the school board? the principal? the principal's wife? a certain religious sect? the children?)
2. Point out in a two-paragraph expository paper how the meaning of "moral" changes within the following two sentences: "When the moral code of a civilization breaks down, that civilization is on the way to extinction. That is why we must protect our young people from the immorality contained in the many pornographic 'sex' magazines now being published."
3. Here are a few words "rather like chameleons." Suggest at least two sets of circumstances in which these words would "change color":

   neutrality *imperialism*
   radical *American*
   aggressive

   Now select *one* of these words, determine the precise meaning of the word you intend to convey, and write a paper in which you describe and illustrate this meaning without once letting the word "change color." (Here the essay by Allport may serve as a useful model.)

Anatol Rapoport

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

For Rapoport the question "What do you mean?" is much more than a question about words, more than a request for other synonyms or verbal equivalents. As he puts it, it is a philosophical question—a query about the realities *we refer to through our language symbols. And as a means of discovering the meanings of words as we and other people use them Rapoport suggests that we define in terms of what happens, what is done—that is, in terms of* operations; *this is what Allport, the producers of the film "Defining Democracy," Becker, and Carroll have also been trying to do.*

For a fuller discussion of this approach to definition you might read Rapoport's Operational Philosophy *and* Science and the Goals of Man, *or the opening chapter of P. W. Bridgman's* Logic of Modern Physics. *Bridgman, a Nobel-prize winning physicist, was the first to popularize the use of the term "operational" to describe this general concept of defining in terms of processes.*

Student: Yet in the word must some idea be.
Mephistopheles: Of course! But only shun too oversharp a tension.
For just where fails the comprehension,
A word steps promptly in as deputy.

GOETHE, *Faust*

For thousands of years philosophers have inquired into the "real" meanings of words, with no agreement to show for their efforts. From the semantic point of view, to inquire into the *real* meaning of any word, whether democracy or tyranny, friendship or virtue, taxation or education, is senseless.

Take the word "rot." To a German it means "red," to a Russian "mouth," and to us you know what. How good a philosopher do you have to be to discover the "real" meaning of "rot"?

One may object to this example, since there is nothing remarkable in the fact that a similar sound may have different meanings in different languages.

Take, then, the word "rod," and consider what it means to a land surveyor and what it means to a gangster, both presumably speaking English. Words do have a variety of sometimes unrelated meanings, and these are not inherent in the words themselves but in their *usage*. Usage depends on the experiences associated with the *use* of words. The various meanings of a

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? From *Science and the Goals of Man* by Anatol Rapoport. Copyright, 1950, by Harper & Brothers.

word may overlap in spots. But it is no less important to know that other areas of their meanings may be far apart.

There is a mistaken belief that the etymology (ancestry) of a word is somehow a key to its "real" meaning.

Some time ago the Ukrainian delegate to the United Nations charged the government of Greece with "antidemocratic" motives in wanting to demilitarize the Bulgarian border. The Greek undersecretary of foreign affairs replied:

"Democracy is a Greek word, and Greece knows better than anyone else how to interpret it."

Sigmund Freud once pointed out in a lecture on hysteria that men as well as women were often subject to its symptoms. A distinguished Viennese professor upon hearing this walked angrily out of the hall.

"Never have I heard such nonsense," he fussed. "Men subject to hysteria! Why, the very word 'hysteria' is derived from the Greek word for *womb!*"

Both the Greek diplomat and the Viennese professor were making the same common mistake: they were confusing words with the things to which words are supposed to refer.

Words are invented by human beings, and their meanings are attributed to them by persons. These meanings arise out of experience. Different sets of experiences may map on the same word.

DEFINITIONS OF DEFINITIONS

How, then, can the meaning of a word be made clear? Obviously by indicating the experiences associated with it. But how do we communicate experiences? By words. Are we in a vicious circle? It looks serious, but there may be a way out.

The question "What do you mean?" asks for the meaning of some words or expressions you are using. Meaning is associated with experience. So actually the question "What do you mean?" is a request to share the experiences associated with the words you are using. In answer to such a request, a definition is usually made.

We shall examine several types of definitions and gauge their usefulness from the standpoint of sharing experience.

1. *Defining a word by giving a synonym.*

Pocket dictionaries are full of such definitions. Asked to define "man" a pocket dictionary will often tell you that a "man" is a "human being."

2. *Making a definition by classification.*

Such definitions haunt the classroom. Pupils who can rattle off "Autocracy is a form of government in which power is concentrated in the hands of one man" and "Capitalism is an economic system based on competition and free enterprise" are most likely to get an A in civics. In the days of Aristotle (about 350 B.C.), "man" was often defined as a "rational animal,"

also a definition by classification. Such definitions tell first what sort of thing the word you are defining refers to (capitalism is a sort of economic system; man is a sort of animal); then it tells how to distinguish the *special* thing the word refers to (not *any* kind of economic system, but one based on competition and free enterprise; not *any* kind of animal, but a rational animal).

3. *Defining a word by enumerating words to which it refers collectively* (definition by enumeration).

Spices are cinnamon, cloves, paprika, ginger, and such.

The kings of the house of Stuart were James I, Charles I, Charles II, and James II.

4. *Defining by exhibiting an example.*

That is the way Robinson Crusoe taught English to Friday. He would point to a hairy animal and say "goat," to the strange object he carried and say "umbrella," etc. Friday learned fast. Children also learn to speak this way.

5. *The Operational Definition.*

Such definitions are commonly used in modern science. A physicist asked to define, say, the "Joule-Thompson effect" will *usually describe the experiments,* in which this effect can be *observed.* A more homely example of an operational definition can be found in the *recipe.*

An operational definition tells *what to do* in order to experience or to recognize the thing to which the word defined refers.

Now let us see how the different kinds of definitions serve their purpose. We recall that a definition is used to answer the question "What do you mean?"—a request to *share experience.*

Definition by synonym is useful only if the synonym is closer to our experiences than the word defined. Sometimes this is the case. People for whom "abdomen" is just a noise, may know very well what "belly" stands for. But the opposite situation is rare.

If you have used pocket dictionaries a great deal, where words are defined by synonyms, you must have experienced the disappointment of finding a synonym that means no more to you than the word you have looked up. The disappointment may grow into a minor frustration if you look up a synonym only to find it defined by the original "sticker."

Definitions by classification are more often useful than definitions by synonym. Their usefulness depends on the familiarity of the person who asks for the definition with the *class* of things into which the word defined is placed. For instance, Jones can explain the grapefruit to Ivanov, who may never have seen one, by such a definition.

"A grapefruit is a citrous fruit, more sour than an orange and less sour than a lemon, larger than both, and canary yellow."

Ivanov has eaten both lemons and oranges. He can form at least some idea of what a grapefruit is like. The shortcoming of a definition by classifi-

cation is that it does not *necessarily* bring the word defined closer to experience.

A Jabberwock can be defined by "classifying" it.

"A Jabberwock is an animal with 'jaws that bite and claws that snatch.' " But the definition does not bring us any closer to an actual experience with a Jabberwock.

Similarly, one can define anything one pleases by stringing words together in such a way as to make it appear that one is clarifying meaning. Here are a few examples. It is easy to invent them.

"An irresistible force is a causative agency, able to overcome all obstacles."

"The First Cause is that event which was preceded by no other."

"The Good is what all things aim at."

"The devil is a being who is responsible for the existence of evil."

"Love is that affection which, being compounded of animal desire, esteem, and benevolence, becomes the bond of attachment and union between individuals of the different sexes, and makes them enjoy in the society of each other a species of happiness which they experience nowhere else."

Definitions which by their sentence structure seem to be clarifying something, but actually are not, resemble useless patent medicines. The harm of patent medicines is often not in themselves but in that the addicts keep hoping they will be helped and delay seeking competent advice and effective measures. Similarly, the addicts of definitions by classification (Aristotelian definitions) are often pedantic in "defining their terms" without realizing the futility of such definitions.

Definitions by enumeration are useful in defining classes of things if the names of the members of the class defined are closer to experience than the class itself. A person may not know to what the Pentateuch refers, but he may be familiar with Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. He may have seen frogs, newts, and salamanders, but he may not know that biologists refer to all of them collectively as amphibia.

As a rule, definitions by enumeration do carry words closer to experience, because terms referring to collections of events are less directly connected with experience than the events themselves.

The weak spot in this sort of definition is that some words seem to refer not to classes, as, for example, the sun, and some classes are too large to enumerate. If I wanted to define "man" by enumeration, I would have to put down some two billion names, a fourth of them Chinese, a difficult and rather useless task. Fortunately, in some cases only a few examples are needed to make the meaning of the class clear. An "etc." placed at the end of such a partial list is a reminder that the class has not been exhausted.

A great advantage in making definitions by *exhibiting an example* is that one cannot define fictions that way. Just try to define Jabberwock or the First Cause by pointing to something and see how sticking to definition by exhibit-

ing an example protects you from believing in ghosts. However, this advantage becomes a disadvantage when one wishes to define something which is not immediately at hand or something more abstract than objects to which one can point. Jonathan Swift made great fun of definition by example. He describes in his satire, *Gulliver's Travels,* how the academicians of Lagado decided to do away with spoken language altogether, arguing that

> . . . since the words are only names for things, it would be convenient for all men to carry about them such things as were necessary to express the particular business they are to discourse on . . .

Accordingly, says Swift, the learned men of Lagado

> adhere to the new scheme of expressing themselves by things, which hath only this inconvenience attending it, that if a man's business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in proportion to carry a greater bundle of things upon his back, unless he can afford one or two strong servants to attend him.

The great value of making a definition by exhibiting an example is that it does bridge the gap between words and experience. This, in fact, is the only purpose of definition. Definition by synonym and definition by classification may indirectly bridge this gap if the words used in the definition are closer to experience than the words defined. But this is not necessarily so. In the case of definition by example it is *necessarily* so, because what you exhibit is *not* a word. Still a difficulty remains, quite aside from Swift's objections, to this kind of definition. Many words refer to real things, and these may not be at hand to point to, or one may not point to them at all. Here are a few examples:

electric current	hydrogen
standard deviation	habeas corpus
the French language	mumps
acrophobia	sonata
chiaroscuro	taxes

The *operational definition* succeeds most effectively in connecting such *abstract* words with experience.

In discussing operational definitions of abstract physical concepts, Philipp Frank says:

> These sentences [operational definitions] contain the abstract word of the physical principles like "current" . . . also the words of the everyday English language. Obviously, they contain words like "wire" and other words which describe the apparatus by which the intensity of a current is actually measured.

Note how the operational definition works. One cannot point to an ampere of electric current (the most one could point at would be the wire that

carries it). But one does not dodge the issue by defining a word with other words without bothering to determine whether they are any closer to experience. One gives a set of *directions,* in words, to be sure, but words almost certainly closer to experience than the word defined (wire, magnet, etc.). If one follows these directions, one has the experience summarized by the words "one ampere of electric current."

Sometimes a definition that sounds like an Aristotelian one performs the job of an operational definition. If I say "Acrophobia is a mental disturbance characterized by a fear of high places" I seem to be making an Aristotelian definition. But it can easily be translated into an operational one: "Question a great many people on how they feel about high places, and you will find that a certain percentage of them will declare that they are 'afraid' of high places. Furthermore, if such a person happens to be on a roof or a mountaintop, he usually exhibits a quickening of heart beat and expresses a desire to get down. Such people are said to suffer from acrophobia."

Let us see what happens when we apply an operational definition to a fiction. A vampire, for example, can be defined by a good Aristotelian definition: "A vampire is a person who habitually sucks other people's blood." If we attempt to translate this definition into an operational one, we would have to say something like this: "Have a great many persons watched at night, and you will find that some go abroad and suck blood out of sleeping people, usually from a small lesion in the neck. Such people are called vampires." This operational definition is formally as good as the one of acrophobia except for one thing: you will probably not find any people with blood-sucking habits.

So it appears from the operations prescribed by the operational definition that if any "meaning" is to be attached to the word "vampire," it cannot refer to a person (since no such persons are observed). The operations have revealed that the Aristotelian definition of a "vampire," although formally flawless, is meaningless.

Practically all operational definitions say in fact "Do so-and-so, and you will find . . ." They *predict* an experience. They may also be called definitions by prediction.

In modern semantic literature, definitions by synonym and by classification are often called "intensional definitions," while those by enumeration, example, and operation are called "extensional definitions." From the standpoint of bridging the gap between words and experiences, extensional definitions are to be preferred. As a matter of fact, if that gap is bridged at all, somewhere a definition by example or an operational definition is involved.

The definition by example need not involve language at all. The syntactic structure of an operational definition involves an imperative form of a verb (do so-and-so) and a predictive assertion, (you will find . . .). This structure is sometimes clumsy and may be discarded for the elegant structure of the Aristotelian definition (a so-an-so is a such-and-such which is character-

ized by a this-and-that); but if a definition is to serve its purpose (sharing experience), an indication of experience must be involved.

"The stockyards are an area where animals are processed into meat" is a short, elegant definition of the stockyards. But the *reality* of the stockyards is implied in another, clumsier definition, which I would give to a visitor in Chicago if I wanted to bring the stockyards within the range of his experience.

"Take the Halsted Street car to 39th St., etc. . . ."

"Hell is the place where the wicked go when they die" also looks like a definition. But when you try to translate it into operational terms you will immediately get into difficulties. You will be at a loss to indicate a proper procedure in order to experience hell.

Just as assertions about things must be traced to the experiences that gave rise to them, the meanings of words must also be traced in this way.

Words which fail to show an ancestry of experience may nevertheless be well "defined" by intensional definitions, that is, by other words. But they usually cannot be defined by extensional definitions, especially by exhibiting an example and by the operational definition, because these, by their very nature, imply connection with experience.

Extensional definitions, therefore, especially the operational ones, are more generally valuable for the purpose for which definitions are intended—to bridge the gap between words and experience.

An operational definition can do everything all the others can do and often more. In some cases only an operational definition can bridge the gap between words and experiences. Its drawback is that grammatically it is not very elegant. Therefore, if one is concerned with literary style, one might avoid the operational definition; but if one is concerned with communicating meaning, one should use it at the slightest indication that the meaning is otherwise not clear.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. To illustrate Rapoport's point that no two people have precisely the same experience and that, therefore, the meaning of a word or phrase might not be exactly the same to everyone, discuss different experiences which two or more persons might associate with the following: (*a*) camp, (*b*) factory, (*c*) farm, (*d*) country club, (*e*) slum, (*f*) jail.
2. The selections in this section have made two facts about words abundantly clear:
   a. Most words have more than one meaning.
   b. The meaning a word has for you depends upon your experiences.
   Why, then, do we get less confused about words like *cat, clock, radio, lake,* and *rowboat* than with words like *beauty, honor, justice, evil,* and *good?*
3. To demonstrate that even simple words have multiple meanings, construct as many sentences as you can using the following words. In each sentence show

the word used with a different meaning: (*a*) right, (*b*) fire, (*c*) run, (*d*) post, (*e*) take, (*f*) out.

4. Re-read the final nine paragraphs of this essay until you have well in mind the distinction between "intensional definitions" and "extensional definitions." Can any of the following words be defined by extensional definitions? (*a*) witch, (*b*) satyr, (*c*) free will, (*d*) utopia, (*e*) infinity.
5. Below are three very difficult words which the authors and editors of this book have tried to make clear to you. Here, two ways are tried. Which way makes the meaning clearer for you? Explain why.

   a. STEREOTYPING

   (1) Uncritical way of thinking about persons or events.

   (2) A tendency to overlook the actions of a person or the features of an object which make this person or object unique. To think of Harry Goldberg as a Jew instead of thinking of him as the blond, athletic-looking boy who writes the humor column for the college *Daily*, and who plays a good "hot piano," is to engage in stereotyping.

   b. LANGUAGE

   (1) The means of communication used by human beings.

   (2) An agreed-upon set of symbols—sounds (as in speech) or letters (as in writing or print)—which the people of a given time and place use as a convenient way to exchange information and opinions. Language is different from other symbol systems in that it may be used and responded to without the things the symbols stand for being present. A dog may experience fear in the presence of another dog who is snarling. A man may experience fear hearing about or reading about an event which took place 1000 years ago.

   c. SYLLOGISM

   (1) A form of deductive reasoning.

   (2) A formal analysis of an argument which establishes a general assumption ("All men are mortal"), a particular assumption ("Socrates is a man"), and the conclusion which is drawn from these two assumptions ("Therefore, Socrates is mortal") in order to see if the conclusion is consistent with the assumptions from which it is derived.

PROJECTS

1. Rapoport discusses five ways of defining words, showing the advantages and limitations of each. Select one of the following words—or some other of your own choice—and employ all five ways of defining it if possible: (*a*) dictator, (*b*) sportsmanship, (*c*) cowardice, (*d*) patriotism, (*e*) intelligence, (*f*) circle.
2. Since World War II there has been much discussion in newspapers, radio forums, etc., of the existence or non-existence of "recessions," "depressions," and "booms." The use of these and similar terms to describe present economic conditions has become a central political issue.

   Try to develop a workable set of operational definitions of these terms that would make for intelligent observation and discussion of economic trends. Present your suggestions in a paper or talk.

7 REPORTS

In the two sections on "Language" and "Definition" we have considered language as a complex symbol-system men use to convey meaning to one another, and definition as the process of establishing the connection between the symbol and what the symbol stands for.

Two distinct functions of language can be determined by the different kinds of things which language may represent. Having examined some language symbols and having learned to trace their meanings to the actual things symbolized, we are ready to take a third step—to discover what useful distinctions can be made between these two functions of language.

The selections in the following two sections suggest that we use language for two main purposes—to symbolize experiences observed and to symbolize how we feel about those experiences; that is, to report observations and to convey our feelings about what we have observed. The selections under "Report" illustrate and analyze the use of language to convey information; and the selections under "Persuasion" are examples and explanations of the use of language to transfer attitudes to listeners and readers.

Only one of the three illustrations of the use of language to "report" is a newspaper "report"; this would suggest that the problem of "reporting" goes beyond any one vocation or communication medium. Also, you will notice that these three illustrations cover a wide range of both time and subject matter. They move from 399 B.C. to 1953, and from the execution of a famous philosopher to a sensational incident in World War II and the hazardous pursuit of the biggest mammal on earth. (Do not assume, by the way, that these articles are "pure" report. Distinguishing between the reporting and the judging in these examples should help you to understand the relationships between the two principal functions of language.) The nature of the "reporting" function of language is then analyzed and illustrated more fully in Hayakawa's "capstone" essay. This author not only assists us to see both the advantages and the limitations of this important language func-

tion, but also provides some useful clues to help us recognize and identify "reports."

Henry J. Taylor

GENERAL PATTON AND THE SICILIAN SLAPPING INCIDENTS

During the earlier part of American participation in World War II the American newspaper-reader was encouraged by news of General Patton's slashing armored drives against the Axis forces in Sicily, but at the same time he was worried by reports that Patton had slapped hospitalized soldiers for what he considered cowardice. It became very difficult to get the facts *of the case and to keep them in mind, for the incidents had touched off, in an explosive wartime period, the feelings of soldiers and civilians about loyalty, treason, military discipline, tradition, fair play, and the relatively new science of psychology. It was not until 1947, when tempers had somewhat cooled, that this news report by Henry J. Taylor, correspondent and radio commentator, was published, along with other previously censored dispatches, in the collection* Deadline Delayed.

Headquarters Seventh Army
A.P.O. #758, U. S. Army
29th August, 1943

My dear General Eisenhower:

Replying to your letter of August 17, 1943, I want to commence by thanking you for this additional illustration of your fairness and generous consideration in making the communication personal.

I am at a loss to find words with which to express my chagrin and grief at having given you, a man to whom I owe everything and for whom I would gladly lay down my life, cause for displeasure with me.

I assure you that I had no intention of being either harsh or cruel in my treatment of the two soldiers in question. My sole purpose was to try and restore in them a just appreciation of their obligation as men and soldiers.

In World War I, I had a dear friend and former schoolmate who lost his nerve in an exactly analogous manner, and who, after years of mental anguish, committed suicide.

Both my friend and the medical men with whom I discussed his case assured me that had he been roundly checked at the time of his first misbehavior, he would have been restored to a normal state.

GENERAL PATTON AND THE SICILIAN SLAPPING INCIDENTS From the book *Deadline Delayed,* by Members of the Overseas Press Club. Copyright, 1947, by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.

Naturally, this memory actuated me when I inaptly tried to apply the remedies suggested. After each incident I stated to officers with me that I felt I had probably saved an immortal soul. . . .

Very respectfully,
(*signed*) G. S. Patton, Jr.
Lieut. General, U. S. Army

General D. D. Eisenhower
Headquarters AFHQ
APO #512—U. S. Army

When General Patton gave me a copy of this letter he lay back on the bed in his field-trailer and said, "What does that sound like to you?"

"It sounds to me like only half of the story," I said.

So, first, let's see what actually happened.

Private Charles H. Kuhl (in civilian life a carpet layer from South Bend, Indiana), ASN 35536908, L Company, 26th Infantry, 1st Division, was admitted to the 3rd Battalion, 26th Infantry aid station in Sicily on August 2, 1943, at 2:10 P.M.

He had been in the Army eight months and with the 1st Division about thirty days.

A diagnosis of "Exhaustion" was made at the station by Lieutenant H. L. Sanger, Medical Corps, and Kuhl was evacuated to C Company, 1st Medical Battalion, well to the rear of the fighting.

There a note was made on his medical tag stating that he had been admitted to this place three times during the Sicilian campaign.

He was evacuated to the clearing company by Captain J. D. Broom, M.C., put in "quarters" and given sodium amytal, one capsule night and morning, on the prescription of Captain N. S. Nedell, M.C.

On August 3rd the following remark appears on Kuhl's Emergency Medical Tag: "Psychoneuroses anxiety state—moderately severe. Soldier has been twice before in hospital within ten days. He can't take it at front evidently. He is repeatedly returned." (signed) Capt. T. P. Covington, Medical Corps.

By this route and in this way Private Kuhl arrived in the receiving tent of the 15th Evacuation Hospital, where the blow was struck that was heard round the world.

"I came into the tent," explains General Patton, "with the commanding officer of the outfit and other medical officers.

"I spoke to the various patients, especially commending the wounded men. I just get sick inside myself when I see a fellow torn apart, and some of the wounded were in terrible, ghastly shape. Then I came to this man and asked him what was the matter.

The soldier replied, "I guess I can't take it."

"Looking at the others in the tent, so many of them badly beaten up, I simply flew off the handle."

Patton squared off in front of the soldier.

He called the man every kind of a loathsome coward and then slapped him across the face with his gloves.

The soldier fell back. Patton grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and kicked him out of the tent.

Kuhl was immediately picked up by corpsmen and taken to a ward.[1]

Returning to his headquarters Patton issued the following memorandum to Corps, Division and Separate Brigade Commanders two days later:

Headquarters Seventh Army
APO #758 U. S. Army
5 August, 1943

It has come to my attention that a very small number of soldiers are going to the hospital on the pretext that they are nervously incapable of combat.

Such men are cowards, and bring discredit on the Army and disgrace to their comrades whom they heartlessly leave to endure the danger of a battle while they themselves use the hospital as a means of escaping.

You will take measures to see that such cases are not sent to the hospital, but are dealt with in their units.

Those who are not willing to fight will be tried by Court-Martial for cowardice in the face of the enemy.

(*Signed*) G. S. Patton, Jr.
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,
Commanding

Five days later General Patton, not a medical man, again took matters into his own hands.

He slapped another soldier.

Private Paul G. Bennett, ASN 70000001, C Battery, Field Artillery, was admitted to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital on August 10th at 2:20 P.M.

Bennett, still only twenty-one, had served four years in the Regular Army. He had an excellent record. His unit had been attached to the II Corps since March and he had never had any difficulties until four days earlier when his best friend in the outfit, fighting near by, was wounded in action.

Bennett could not sleep that night and felt nervous. The shells going over "bothered" him. "I keep thinking they're going to land right on me," he said. The next day he became increasingly nervous about the firing and about his buddy's recovery.

A battery aid man sent him to the rear echelon, where a medical officer gave him some medicine which made him sleep. But he was still nervous, badly disturbed.

On August 10th the medical officer ordered him to the 93rd Evacuation

[1] There Kuhl was found to have a temperature of 102.2 degrees F., gave a history of chronic diarrhea for the past month, and was shown by a blood test to have malaria.

Hospital, although Bennett begged not to be evacuated because he did not want to leave his unit.

General Patton arrived at the hospital that day.

Bennett was sitting in the receiving tent, huddled up and shivering.

Patton spoke to all the injured men. He was solicitous, kind and inspiring. But when he and Major Charles B. Etter, the receiving officer in charge, reached Bennett and Patton asked the soldier what his trouble was, the soldier replied, "It's my nerves," and began to sob.

Patton turned on him like a tiger, screaming at him:

"What did you say?"

"It's my nerves," sobbed Bennett. "I can't take the shelling any more."

In this moment Patton lost control of himself completely. Without any investigation of the man's case whatever, he rushed close to Bennett and shouted: "Your nerves, hell. You are just a . . . coward, you yellow b——."

Then he slapped the soldier hard across the face.

"Shut up that . . . crying," he yelled. "I won't have these brave men here who have been shot seeing a yellow b—— sitting here crying."

Patton struck at the man again. He knocked his helmet liner off his head into the next tent. Then he turned to Major Etter and yelled, "Don't admit this yellow b——, there's nothing the matter with him. I won't have the hospitals cluttered up with these SOB's who haven't got the guts to fight."

Patton himself began to sob. He wheeled around to Colonel Donald E. Currier, the 93rd's commanding Medical Officer. "I can't help it," he said. "It makes me break down to see brave boys and to think of a yellow b—— being babied."

But this was not all. In his blind fury, Patton turned on Bennett again. The soldier now was managing to sit at attention, although shaking all over.

"You're going back to the front lines," Patton shouted. "You may get shot and killed, but you're going to fight. If you don't, I'll stand you up against a wall and have a firing squad kill you on purpose.

"In fact," he said, reaching for his revolver, "I ought to shoot you myself, you —— whimpering coward."

As he left the tent Patton was still yelling back at the receiving officer to "send that yellow SOB back to the front line."

Nurses and patients, attracted by the shouting and cursing, came from the adjoining tent and witnessed this disturbance.

Patton made no initial report of these affairs to his superior, General Eisenhower, who was then in his Headquarters at Tunis on the North African mainland.

"I felt ashamed of myself," General Patton told me, "and I hoped the whole thing would die out."

But an official report by Lieut. Colonel Perrin H. Long, Medical Corps consulting physician, was already on the way to Allied Headquarters through Medical Corps channels.

"The deleterious effects of such incidents upon the well-being of patients, upon the professional morale of hospital staffs and upon the relationship of patient to physician are incalculable," reported Lieut. Colonel Long. "It is imperative that immediate steps be taken to prevent a recurrence of such incidents."

General Eisenhower received this report on August 17th. His communication to General Patton was sent off that night.

In his message, which Patton showed me, the Commanding General told Patton of the allegations, told him that he could not describe in official language his revulsion, informed Patton that he must make, on his own initiative, proper amends to the soldiers involved and take steps to make amends before his whole army.

"This all happened practically on the eve of a new attack in which I had been written in for a large part of the plans, already issued," Patton explained, "and General Eisenhower stated therefore that he would temporarily reserve decision regarding my relief of command until he could determine the effect of my own corrective measures.

"Then Eisenhower did four things: He sent Maj. General John Porter Lucas to Sicily to make an investigation of the charges, sent the Theatre's Inspector General to investigate command relationships in my entire army, sent another general officer to interview the two soldiers and made a trip to Sicily himself to determine how much resentment against me existed in the army.

"Eisenhower's problem was whether what I had done was sufficiently damaging to compel my relief on the eve of attack, thus losing what he described as my unquestioned military value, or whether less drastic measures would be appropriate.

"I went to see both Kuhl and Bennett," Patton continued, "explained my motives and apologized for my actions.

"In each case I stated that I should like to shake hands with them; that I was sincerely sorry. In each case they accepted my offer.

"I called together all the doctors, nurses and enlisted men who were present when the slappings occurred. I apologized and expressed my humiliation over my impulsive actions.

"Finally, I addressed all divisions of the 7th Army in a series of assemblies, the last of which was an address before the 3rd Division on August 30th.

"I praised them as soldiers, expressed regret for any occasions when I harshly treated individuals and offered my apologies as their Commanding General for doing anything unfair or un-American.

"Beyond that, except to leave the Army and get out of the war, I do not know what I could have done."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. After you have read the entire selection, re-read Patton's letter to Eisenhower at the beginning of the selection. Distinguish carefully those words and phrases which are primarily reports of what happened from those which are mainly expressions of personal feeling about what happened. Which predominates?
2. Apply the same procedure to Patton's memorandum to Corps, Division, and Brigade Commanders, dated 5 August, 1943. Does the language of command (Morris's *prescriptive signs*) play a part here?
3. How do you account, in part, for the extraordinary difference between Patton's language as represented by the quotations in the last nine paragraphs and his language as it appears quoted elsewhere in this news report?
4. What does the inclusion of so much quoted material (letters, memoranda, direct speech) do to establish the reportorial tone of Taylor's account?
5. Now, consider those portions of Taylor's account which do not depend on direct quotation. To what extent are these portions composed in the language of report? In the language of opinion?
6. Finally, consider the entire selection. Assuming that the reporter's job is to let his readers know what happened and to permit them to draw their own conclusions from the evidence, how successful would you say Taylor has been in carrying out this function of a reporter?
7. Columnist Drew Pearson has begun to use in his weekly newsletter, "Personal from Pearson," a sort of guide to the authenticity of his news stories: " √A story we have attempted to check without success, or a story which is impossible to check. √√A story we believe to be true but have not been able to authenticate. √√√ . . . a story we've been able to authenticate in every respect." How can this method be useful to a reader of Pearson's newsletter? to Pearson himself?

PROJECT

Selecting one of the following incidents, write a description of *what happened* and *not* how you *felt* about what happened.

a. Receiving a traffic citation under circumstances which you felt made the giving of the citation unfair.
b. Receiving a grade lower than the one you felt you deserved.
c. Being humiliated under circumstances in which you felt you were an innocent victim.
d. Being punished for a foolish act for which you felt you were not directly responsible.
e. Having to give up doing something which you had found pleasant or profitable (e.g., being required to drop school or to leave a town or job which you liked).

Plato

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES

In 399 B.C. Socrates was sentenced to death on the charge of corrupting the youth of Athens with his philosophical probing and questioning. Plato, a disciple of Socrates, gave the following remarkably full and objective account of Socrates' death—particularly remarkable for its objectivity when one considers the closeness of Plato to Socrates the teacher, and the deep clash of state, personal, and intellectual loyalties that centered on the figure of the condemned Socrates.

SCENE: *The Prison of Socrates*
PLACE OF THE NARRATION: *Phlius*

Echecrates. Were you yourself, Phaedo, in the prison with Socrates on the day he drank poison?

Phaedo. Yes, Echecrates, I was.

Ech. I should so like to hear about his death. What did he say in his last hours? We were informed that he died by taking poison, but no one knew anything more; for no Phliasian ever goes to Athens now, and it is a long time since any stranger from Athens has found his way hither; so that we had no clear account.

Phaed. Did you not hear of the proceedings at the trial?

Ech. Yes; some one told us about the trial, and we could not understand why, having been condemned, he should have been put to death, not at the time, but long afterwards. What was the reason of this?

Phaed. An accident, Echecrates: the stern of the ship which the Athenians sent to Delos happened to have been crowned on the day before he was tried.

Ech. What is this ship?

Phaed. It is the ship in which, according to Athenian tradition, Theseus went to Crete when he took with him the fourteen youths, and was the saviour of them and of himself. And they are said to have vowed to Apollo at the time, that if they were saved they would send a yearly mission to Delos. Now this custom still continues, and the whole period of the voyage to and from Delos, beginning when the priest of Apollo crowns the stern of the ship, is a holy season, during which the city is not allowed to be polluted by public executions; and when the vessel is detained by contrary winds, the time spent in going and returning is very considerable. As I was saying, the

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES From *The Phaedo.*

ship was crowned on the day before the trial, and this was the reason why Socrates lay in prison and was not put to death until long after he was condemned.

Ech. What was the manner of his death, Phaedo? What was said or done? And which of his friends were with him? Or did the authorities forbid them to be present—so that he had no friends near him when he died?

Phaed. No; there were several of them with him.

Ech. If you have nothing to do, I wish that you would tell me what passed, as exactly as you can.

Phaed. I have nothing at all to do, and will try to gratify your wish. To be reminded of Socrates is always the greatest delight to me, whether I speak myself or hear another speak of him.

Ech. You will have listeners who are of the same mind with you, and I hope that you will be as exact as you can. . . .

Phaed. I will begin at the beginning, and endeavour to repeat the entire conversation. On the previous days we had been in the habit of assembling early in the morning at the court in which the trial took place, and which is not far from the prison. There we used to wait, talking with one another until the opening of the doors (for they were not opened very early); then we went in and generally passed the day with Socrates. On the last morning we assembled sooner than usual, having heard on the day before when we quitted the prison in the evening that the sacred ship had come from Delos; and so we arranged to meet very early at the accustomed place. On our arrival the jailer who answered the door, instead of admitting us, came out and told us to stay until he called us. "For the Eleven," he said, "are now with Socrates; they are taking off his chains, and giving orders that he is to die to-day." He soon returned and said that we might come in. On entering we found Socrates just released from chains, and Xanthippè, whom you know, sitting by him, holding his child in her arms. When she saw us she uttered a cry and said, as women will: "O Socrates, this is the last time that either you will converse with your friends, or they with you." Socrates turned to Crito and said: "Crito, let some one take her home." Some of Crito's people accordingly led her away, crying out and beating herself. And when she was gone, Socrates, sitting up on the couch, bent and rubbed his leg, saying, as he was rubbing: How singular is the thing called pleasure, and how curiously related to pain, which might be thought to be the opposite of it; for they are never present to a man at the same instant, and yet he who pursues either is generally compelled to take the other; their bodies are two, but they are joined by a single head. And I cannot help thinking that if Aesop had remembered them, he would have made a fable about God trying to reconcile their strife, and how, when he could not, he fastened their heads together; and this is the reason why when one comes the other follows: as I know by my own experience now, when after the pain in my leg which was caused by the chain pleasure appears to succeed.

Upon this Cebes said: I am glad, Socrates, that you have mentioned the name of Aesop. For it reminds me of a question which has been asked by many, and was asked of me only the day before yesterday by Evenus the poet—he will be sure to ask it again, and therefore if you would like me to have an answer ready for him, you may as well tell me what I should say to him:—he wanted to know why you, who never before wrote a line of poetry, now that you are in prison are turning Aesop's fables into verse, and also composing that hymn in honour of Apollo.

Tell him, Cebes, he replied, what is the truth—that I had no idea of rivalling him or his poems; to do so, as I knew, would be no easy task. But I wanted to see whether I could purge away a scruple which I felt about the meaning of certain dreams. In the course of my life I have often had intimations in dreams "that I should compose music." The same dream came to me sometimes in one form, and sometimes in another, but always saying the same or nearly the same words: "Cultivate and make music," said the dream. And hitherto I had imagined that this was only intended to exhort and encourage me in the study of philosophy, which has been the pursuit of my life, and is the noblest and best of music. The dream was bidding me do what I was already doing, in the same way that the competitor in a race is bidden by the spectators to run when he is already running. But I was not certain of this; for the dream might have meant music in the popular sense of the word, and being under sentence of death, and the festival giving me a respite, I thought that it would be safer for me to satisfy the scruple, and, in obedience to the dream, to compose a few verses before I departed. And first I made a hymn in honour of the god of the festival, and then considering that a poet, if he is really to be a poet, should not only put together words, but should invent stories, and that I have no invention, I took some fables of Aesop, which I had ready at hand and which I knew—they were the first I came upon—turned them into verse. Tell this to Evenus, Cebes, and bid him be of good cheer; say that I would have him come after me if he be a wise man, and not tarry; and that to-day I am likely to be going, for the Athenians say that I must.

Simmias said: What a message for such a man! having been a frequent companion of his I should say that, as far as I know him, he will never take your advice unless he is obliged.

Why, said Socrates,—is not Evenus a philosopher?

I think that he is, said Simmias.

Then he, or any man who has the spirit of philosophy, will be willing to die; but he will not take his own life, for that is held to be unlawful.

Here he changed his position, and put his legs off the couch on to the ground, and during the rest of the conversation he remained sitting.

Why do you say, enquired Cebes, that a man ought not to take his own life, but that the philosopher will be ready to follow the dying?

[At this point Socrates begins his inquiry concerning the immortality of the soul. He demonstrates the truth of this proposition to the apparent satisfaction of his auditors by means of those probing questions to which the term "Socratic" has ever since been applied. His concluding statement concerning this proposition is repeated below, followed by Phaedo's account of his death.]

A man of sense ought not to say, nor will I be very confident, that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who having cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and working harm rather than good, has sought after the pleasures of knowledge; and has arrayed the soul, not in some foreign attire, but in her own proper jewels, temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth—in these adorned she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her hour comes. You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as a tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead.

When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children, or any matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, Crito, he replied: only, as I have always told you, take care of yourselves; that is a service which you may be ever rendering to me and mine and to all of us, whether you promise to do so or not. But if you have no thought for yourselves, and care not to walk according to the rule which I have prescribed for you, not now for the first time, however much you may profess or promise at the moment, it will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito: And in what way shall we bury you?

In any way that you like; but you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not run away from you. Then he turned to us, and added with a smile:—I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body—and he asks, How shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavour to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine, with which I was comforting you and myself, have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me to him now, as at the trial he was surety to the judges for me: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was surety for me to the judges that I would remain, and you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my

death, and not be grieved when he sees my body burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that whatever is usual, and what you think best.

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into a chamber to bathe; Crito followed him and told us to wait. So we remained behind, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath his children were brought to him—(he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; then he dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the Eleven, entered and stood by him saying:—To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me, when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are to blame. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be—you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us, he said, How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good to me as could be, and now see how generously he sorrows on my account. We must do as he says, Crito; and therefore let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hill-tops, and I know that many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and enjoyed the society of his beloved; do not hurry—there is time enough.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in so acting, for they think that they will be gainers by the delay; but I am right in not following their example, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should only be ridiculous in my own eyes for sparing and saving a life which is already forfeit. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by; and he went out,

and having been absent for some time, returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of colour or feature, looking at the man with all of his eyes, Echecrates, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said: But I may and must ask the gods to prosper my journey from this to the other world—even so—and so be it according to my prayer. Then raising the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept, not for him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having to part from such a friend. Nor was I the first; for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up, and I followed; and at the moment, Apollodorous, who had been weeping all the time, broke out in a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not misbehave in this way, for I have been told that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience. When we heard his words we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard, and asked him if he could feel; and he said, No; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said—they were his last words—he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt? The debt shall be paid, said Crito; is there anything else? There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend; concerning whom I may truly say, that of all the men of his time whom I have known, he was the wisest and justest and best.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Echecrates makes very clear to Phaedo what he would like the latter to tell him. How successfully does Phaedo convey the desired information? In what ways is Phaedo's language appropriate to his particular purpose here?
2. If Phaedo had been more concerned with making the figure of Socrates facing death more impressive, what facts might he have omitted or at least played down, and which ones might he have dwelt on and elaborated? If Phaedo had been eager to make Socrates appear foolish and undignified, which facts would he have neglected, and which facts would he have played up?
3. Might the notion that the language of reports is never a suitable means for handling an emotional subject represent a kind of oversimplification? What light does the present account of the death of Socrates throw on this question? Under what circumstances might reportorial language be the most appropriate means for creating emotion? How might a lawyer effectively use reportorial language for this purpose? A political leader—a president or a prime minister —facing a national emergency?
4. Both Plato and Taylor make heavy use of quoted statements. How does this contribute to the total impression of "objectivity" on the part of the reporter? In what ways might this device be misleading? In what way, for instance, might the quoting of an irresponsible statement made by some public figure represent a failure to attain "objectivity"?

PROJECTS

1. Perhaps no public executions in recent American history stirred more excitement than those of Sacco and Vanzetti. Feelings ran high not only in this country but throughout the civilized world. Accusations of "frameup" were hurled, demonstrations were held, and opinion was bitterly divided as to the justice of the sentence. Imagine, then, the difficulty of the assignment given Louis Stark of the New York *Times* to report the executions of these two men. To measure the extent to which he was able to write an "objective report" of this stirring event, turn to page 452 of *A Treasury of Great Reporting* (edited by Louis Snyder and R. B. Morris, published by Simon and Schuster, 1949) and read his account as it is reprinted there. Write a critical analysis of Stark's news dispatch in which you appraise his relative success in writing "objectively" about this emotional event. Support your own conclusions by careful reference to Stark's report.
2. For most of you the Sacco-Vanzetti case is an historical event with little immediate emotional impact. But what of the recent Rosenberg executions? Consult the New York Times *Index* for the date of their executions. Then turn to the files of some national newspaper available to you in your college library, read the account of these executions, and write a paper in which you compare the tone and language of that account with the present report of Plato.

R. B. Robertson

OF WHALES AND MEN

A lonely and little-known part of the world, ships on the sea, and the clash of tiny men with the largest living animals—these ingredients of whaling have always touched men's emotions deeply. The close, detailed, unexaggerated reporting of whaling is no easy task.

R. B. Robertson has attempted it in his book Of Whales and Men, *most of which was first published in* The New Yorker. *Robertson is a Scottish doctor; he has had extensive experience with mental diseases, and has served in the British and American armies on many fronts. In 1950 he signed on with a floating whaling factory as senior medical officer for the fleet. The result was his highly popular account of modern whaling.*

" 'Fish,' he said, 'I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before the day ends.' "

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

One of our little whale catchers, commanded by Thor, our leading gunner, who, astonishingly, was a former New York taxi-driver, had gone ahead of our party to scout for whales. Thor had headed straight for the edge of the pack ice and was now skirting the ice in an easterly direction somewhere below the South Sandwich Islands. Every few hours, he reported back to the factory ship, and we plodded along after him. Ahead, astern, and on either side of us were the sixteen other small vessels that made up our fleet—twelve catchers, two corvettes, and two buoy boats. They could all do up to seventeen knots, and when we had reached whaling waters, the catchers would draw ahead of us and fan out over the ocean in an arc about fifty miles across. Within this arc, between us and the catchers, would steam the two buoy boats, vessels similar to the catchers, whose job was to round up the whales the catchers killed and attach buoys to them, and to do a bit of hunting themselves if circumstances permitted. Also in the arc would be the two corvettes, which, acting as a fast shuttle service, would tow the dead whales in to the factory ship. Communication within the fleet was by radiotelephone, called the "blower," which was in operation day and night.

"I'd better show you how the blower works, Doc," Mark said to me one morning. "The little ships will be wanting to talk to you oftener than to me—to yarn about their aches and pains and how to deal with their hangovers. All whaling gunners have stomach ulcers—have you found that out

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yet? And most of them will have the d.t.'s sometime during the trip, and the mates of the catchers will be calling you to ask what to do."

Mark led me into the chartroom, just off the bridge, where the blower was situated, and under his tutelage I soon got the hang of the one-way conversations and the "over-to-you" procedure. "Now, the first thing to remember," Mark warned me, "is that the whole fleet will be listening to every word you say, and they'll be especially interested in any secrets you have to give away. There's a duplicate set in the wireless room and another in the manager's cabin, and speakers in the wheelhouse and the secretary's office, and every one of the small ships leaves its set on all the time to pick up whatever gossip there is. Now let's talk to Thor, on Number One catcher. He's about a hundred and fifty miles away, and that's about as far as this set carries." Mark twisted the dials, the machine came to humming life, and he spoke into it: "Hello, Number One! Hello, Number One! Factory calling! Factory calling! Is the gunner there? Is the gunner there? Good morning, Thor! Good morning, Thor! Over!" Mark threw the "over" switch, and the low, whining hum of the machine changed into a mighty roar, in which I was eventually able to distinguish words: "U-u-u-rgh! Hello, Factory! Hello, Factory! Number One here! Number One here! Good morning, Mark! Good morning, Mark! You want to know about whales? You called at the right time! We're chasing sperm now. Plenty of sperm around here. Maybe we'll be 'fast fish' in a few minutes. Send up the other catchers now. We'll have a good day's fishing tomorrow. You talk to the mate now. I'm going forward and kill the first whale of season." The instrument was silent for several minutes. Then it began to roar and crackle again, and we heard the voice of the catcher's mate: "Hello, Factory! Hello, Factory! Number One here! Number One here! Fast fish! Large sperm! Lots of others around. Weather good. Lots of ice. We'll stick around here and wait for the corvettes to come up. Gunner reckons he'll get three or four sperm, anyway. Get the other catchers up quick! G'bye!"

"Bloody fool might have told us where he is!" Mark said. "Except he probably doesn't know himself. However, we should pick them up in a few hours. I'll leave you to amuse yourself now, Doc, if you don't mind. I've got work to do." He glanced at a chart, looked up at a gyrocompass nearby, scanned the radar screen for a moment, read the speed from an electric log, shouted a word to an assistant out on the bridge, then picked up a ship's telephone and informed the engineer of the watch profanely and dogmatically that it would be entirely his fault if we did not have a whale on the deck by nightfall.

I should like to be able to say that I dashed straight off on one of the catchers to see the first of the whales being killed, but it was not so. No sooner would I plan a catcher trip than some whaleman would thrust his foot into a piece of machinery where no man had ever thrust a foot before, and

it would take all night to extricate him and a lot longer to get his foot looking like a foot again. Indeed, for a while I despaired of ever getting a first-hand view of the business of whaling. I was aware of frenzied activity all around me, and from time to time I would watch for a few minutes as a dead whale was hauled aboard our ship, but for the most part my mind and my energies were concentrated on the sick bay. When at last I could get away, I chose to go with Thor, for he was universally recognized as the best gunner in the antarctic.

Standing on the tiny bridge of Thor's catcher was very different from standing on the comfortable bridge of the factory ship, with its electrically heated, glassed-in wheelhouse, its windproof doors, and its de-icing equipment. The bridge of the little ship was entirely open; the catcher men face the antarctic weather without any protection but their thick clothing. At first, this seemed like masochism, but I soon discovered that they have good reason for forgoing protection from wind and snow and spray. In a whale hunt, it is necessary to have a clear, uninterrupted view in every direction, and the distant feathery spouting of many a whale would be missed if the keen-eyed men searching for it were behind glass. Thor grasped the rail of the little bridge in front of him like a steering wheel, and though the helmsman, three paces behind him, was actually guiding the ship, Thor seemed to be physically pulling the vessel this way and that with his large, ungloved hands as we wound in and out among the ice floes. "Anyone who can drive a taxi in New York City can handle a whale catcher in the Southern Ocean," he said. "It's the same sort of thing. Start! Stop! Hard astern! No right turn! Mind that iceberg! Look out for that truck! And all the time you have to keep an eye out for a fare spluttering on the sidewalk or a whale spouting on the horizon." Easing his life history out of him piece by piece, I learned that he was a Swede who had been born and brought up in Norway. Emigrating to America, he had become trilingual and had worked as a hack-driver in New York for several years. But driving a taxi was not adventurous enough for him, so when he saw a chance to leave his cab and go to sea, he took it. "I served my apprenticeship on small fast vessels trading between Bermuda and some lesser-known ports on the Eastern seaboard of the States," he told me. "I got some very good training in navigation by night."

"I gather you mean you were a rum-runner," I said.

"Well, it was a good preparatory education for whaling," he replied indirectly. "The Long Island Coast Guardsmen aren't as quick-witted as whales, but dodging them taught me a lot about handling small fast ships." He went on to say that the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment had been a great setback in his career. Finding himself idle, he made his way back across the Atlantic and drifted into the British whaling business. He had been in it ever since, except for six years during the war, when he commanded a North Sea minesweeper, was blown up twice, and survived to rise to the rank of lieutenant commander. "Whaling is a dull job at times, but it will do

to fill in until America or some other big country starts prohibition again," he ended sadly.

As we talked, Thor's eyes moved restlessly but systematically over the horizon. The little ship had slowed down as the ice became thicker—we had got quite far south—and now we were creeping along at a gentle seven knots. Other eyes were searching, too. The mate—a young Canadian seaman called Nick—stood beside us looking through a pair of strong glasses. The man at the wheel behind us—an old Hebridean Islander named Angus—had his eyes on the sea more often than on the compass in front of him. And above us, in the crow's-nest, or "barrel," the youngest lad on the ship, a little Norwegian mess boy, who by reason of his juniority was given the coldest and least attractive job on the catcher, also scanned the horizon for the elusive puffs of vapor that would disclose our innocent victim.

Thor explained to me that everyone was desperately hoping to sight some really big whales. "I'm sick of sperm and fin and sei, and tiddlers like that," he said. "I haven't had a really big blue this year, and I want to get in among them. They're around here somewhere, I feel certain."

"How do you know?" I asked. "Nobody's seen any yet."

"No, but I can smell the bastards," he said. "I'll lay you half my bonus we kill one before the sun goes down."

I was glad I had not accepted his bet, for a moment or two later there came wild cries from the boy up in the barrel—*"Hvalblaast! Hvalblaast!"*—followed by a stream of excited Norwegian that caused all hands to peer off the starboard bow. I could see nothing, and felt chagrined when old Angus, who, like me, had no glasses, said, "Aye! They're blues. Three, four of them, at least—maybe more. Heading sou'-sou'east. We'll hae a bit to add tae the bonus ere nighttime!"

Thor had already rung down to the engine room for full speed, and as the catcher swung to starboard she gathered up her seventeen knots and charged through the water. Luckily, the stretch between us and where the whales apparently were was fairly clear of ice. The clang of the engine-room telegraph and the increased speed had warned those below of what was afoot, and several of them began to appear on deck. The Scottish chief engineer heaved himself—he weighed nearly two hundred and fifty pounds—out of the miniature saloon below the bridge and climbed down to the foredeck, where he fiddled with a powerful winch, to which the whale line was attached; the second mate and two seamen came up dishevelled from their bunks and went forward to the gun platform in the bow to check the gun and clear the lines. A combination seaman and radio operator turned on the blower, so the gunner could inform the factory ship that we were chasing, and then went forward to heave some massive chains through hawseholes in the ship's bulwarks.

I looked aft. A moderate sea was running and, with the catcher going at full speed, the only part of the deck aft of the bridge that was not being

constantly flooded was the engine-room coping. On this stood the steward and the third engineer, who had seen hundreds of whales killed in their time and could have remained below had they wished. But they could not resist the excitement of yet another chase, and every now and again I saw the white poll and clay pipe of old Julius, the second engineer and the oldest man in the whaling business (I figured him to be around eighty), sticking up through a skylight to see how things were going, when he should have been standing by his telegraph and controls down in the engine room.

I looked again out toward the horizon. This time I did see something there; had I known what I was looking for, I would probably have seen it before. I had expected to see a great fountain of water shooting toward the sky, but at our distance from the quarry—a mile or more, I imagine—the only signs of life were momentary feathery puffs of vapor, which seemed no more than a few inches high against the gray sea beyond. I grabbed Nick's glasses when he turned to attend to something, and through them the puffs became real jets, which rose straight and slender, in a shape and at an angle that told the experienced men around me they came from blue whales, and not from sperm or humpback. Occasionally, I could see, below the jets, a rounded black shape just awash on the surface of the water. Angus, at the wheel, kept up a running commentary to himself: "Aye! There's twa there 'tween eighty an' ninety feet. The ones on the port bow's probably a cow and calf—that's a gey wee spout, the yin on the left—but thon's a muckle beggar over there. Are ye wantin' me to steer for that one, Gunner?"

Thor did not take his eyes off the sea or bother to answer Angus but pushed him away from the wheel and took it himself. "Tell Julius to give us more speed, for Chrissake!" he said to the mate, and from then on there were only Thor and that muckle beggar. The rest of the crew simply stood around trying to anticipate his every need or wish before he could express it.

There was no point in trying to creep up on the whale, for the thrash of our propeller could be heard by every living thing in the sea for miles around. Thor's intention was to get to the spot before the whale gathered its wits sufficiently to sound; a second possibility was that we might scare it into a surface dash to windward, and then our two or three knots greater speed would enable us to get within hitting distance, which, with the modern harpoon gun, is anywhere up to a hundred feet. This whale chose to flee. We gradually gained on it, and as we came within range, Thor precipitately left the wheel, which old Angus had been standing ready to grab, and ran down an elevated catwalk that joined the bridge to the gun platform in the bow, where the harpoon gun stood ready—a simple swivel gun with a sighting bar along the top. It was loaded with a harpoon six feet long and weighing about two hundred pounds. Murderous enough in itself, the harpoon was made more lethal by a grenade attached to its point and timed to explode three seconds after the harpoon penetrated the surface of the whale's great body.

Standing by the gun, Thor still kept control of the ship. By arm signals and shouted orders to his mate on the bridge, he directed her to port or starboard, and a duplicate telegraph beside him on the gun platform carried his commands to old Julius in the engine room. As we closed in on the whale, Thor alone could see it. We spectators by the wheel and on deck and on the flying bridge (no one but the gunner may set foot on the gun platform during a chase) saw nothing but Thor's bottom bouncing up and down as he swivelled and sighted his gun. Thus frustrated, I consoled myself by listening to Thor's language and that of the crew. Thor swore at the mate. The mate swore back, and found time in between to curse old Angus at the wheel and the boy in the barrel. The plump engineer down at the winch began to yell profane encouragement to all. The engine-room telegraph yammered as Thor started and stopped his little ship, wheeled it, and sometimes went astern. The cross talk became even more heated and impious. Thor's bottom bounced up and down even more agitatedly. Then, in the middle of it all, there was the clap of a cannon shot, and it seemed obvious to me that Thor had accidentally pulled the trigger in a paroxysm of excitement. But no. There was the whale thrashing the water fifty feet off our bow, with the harpoon securely fixed just forward of the dorsal fin. Blood was gushing from the wound into the sea. Then came the dull detonation of the grenade inside the whale's body.

Sometimes the whale is killed outright, but more often it either races away on the surface or dives deep, as if to ponder its distressing predicament. This one was a "sounder," and rope whirred out of a locker in the bow of our ship as the whale plunged down. Then began a battle between whale and man that can best be appreciated by those who have played a fighting fish on rod and line—except that this fish was no salmon to be measured in pounds but a beast the size of a large Coast Guard cutter. The hook is as heavy as a plowshare, and twice its size. The leader is not a thin strand of gut but twenty fathoms of three-inch nylon cord, and the line is an even stouter hemp rope. The rod is the heavy steel mast of the catcher, up which the line runs and which bends to the strain of the whale as the angler's rod does to that of the salmon. And the reel at the butt of the rod—now taking in line, now letting it run—is the catcher's winch. On this winch, our fat, cheerful Scottish engineer played the whale, as in his youth he had played salmon in his native Highland rivers. The whale did not stand a chance, for, unlike a fish, it had to rise to the surface to breathe, and when it did so, Thor was waiting, his gun loaded with a second harpoon, known as the "killer," which also has a grenade in its tip but to which no rope is attached. The harpoon gun boomed again, there was a welter of blood under our bow and flowing around the ship, and the whale, which did not oblige us with the traditional spout of blood—or "chimney afire," as the old whalemen used to describe it—quietly turned its belly upward and was dead.

Thor ambled back along the flying bridge, wiping his hands on his trous-

ers, and glanced once—casually but also, I thought, a little sadly—at the mighty thing he had fought and killed. Perhaps, like me just then, he was reflecting that ten minutes before, this harmless monster had not known that man existed, and now it lay, smashed and upside down, without having comprehended how or why it had been attacked. Perhaps Thor also was thinking that had the whale been less innocent—had it realized its strength and its ability to fight back—it might easily have killed us all, and so gained revenge on its tormentors before it died.

Sometimes whales do avenge themselves on their attackers. More than once, a tautly stretched nylon leader has been cut in two by a catcher boat's propeller and has snapped back inboard like a whiplash, crushing the limbs of all on the deck. The whale occasionally gets its revenge in even more freakish ways. There is the case of the whale that shot the gunner. This occurred in the Southern Ocean not long ago, after a gunner had made his harpoon fast in a fin whale. He had a killer harpoon loaded and ready in his gun, but when the whale, which still had plenty of life in it, came up under the bow of the catcher, he decided that the harpoon in the beast was not embedded deeply enough to hold and that another harpoon with a line was needed. He trained his gun inboard, and was about to replace the killer harpoon with a harpoon that had a line when the harpoon in the whale tore loose. As it did so, the nylon leader flew up, caught the trigger of the gun, and fired it. The killer harpoon struck the gunner, shattering his right arm and his ribs and hurling him violently against the fo'c'sle rail. He lived only long enough to be taken to the factory ship. Next day, he was buried at sea. The whale is presumably alive somewhere in the vast Southern Ocean where the gunner found his grave.

Thor's whale was indubitably dead, but the battle was not quite over. Had it been a sperm or a right whale or any of the smaller breeds the old whalemen used to hunt, we could have left it for the buoy boats while we went on to kill others, but this was a hundred-ton blue whale, which would soon sink. Therefore, the engineer was now racing his winch to haul the whale alongside. Once there, it was made fast to the little ship by a wire rope passed around its tail. Then the radio-operating seaman leaned over the side brandishing whaling's equivalent of a gaff—a long bamboo pole with a blubber spade attached to one end—and made a neat puncture in the side of the whale's belly. A hose was inserted in the hole, and thousands of cubic feet of compressed air hissed into the whale's carcass, effectively keeping it afloat.

"There," Thor said to me. "Makes another seven pounds ten shillings for me and another ten shillings for old Angus here. Now we flag her, then we leave her for the other boats to pick up, and off we go to kill some more. Which way did the others head, Angus?"

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What aspects of whales and whaling might make (have made!) the objective reporting of it a rather rare thing?
2. Does Robertson ever depart from the language of straight reporting? If so, when and for what purpose?
3. You will recall that several times in this volume you have been warned that the use of an analogy can be misleading. Robertson gives us a rather detailed analogy between playing a harpooned whale with ship's rope and winch and playing a fighting fish with rod, line, and reel. What do you think is his purpose in doing so? In view of this purpose evaluate the soundness of the analogy.
4. What is the connection between Robertson's failure to sight the blue whales sooner and what you learned about stereotypes in Section 3 and about observation in Section 1 of this book?
5. You will recall Pei's discussion of many systems of communication. How many distinct "communication systems" can you identify in operation in this brief account?

PROJECTS

1. One main secret of arousing interest in the reporting of episodes like the whale hunt is the introduction of many specific details. Try your hand at a piece of straight reporting by setting down in detail an account of some incident, event, or process with which you are thoroughly familiar. Do not necessarily seek to write about strange, out-of-the-way affairs. Rather try to capture and keep your reader's interest by re-creating the scene so vividly that he has no difficulty understanding precisely what took place.
2. Do you know of a trade which has come to seem very dramatic and romantic to many people outside the trade? (A few suggestions: high-construction work, piloting planes, acting, writing, architecture.) Selecting one such trade, look into it as closely as time permits; you may find visits and interviews, as well as articles and books, useful for this purpose. The purpose of this investigation will be to determine whether the picture you get from such observation is markedly different in particular respects from the popular notions of the trade. The findings of such an investigation could be appropriately presented in a long term paper.

S. I. Hayakawa

THE LANGUAGE OF REPORTS

The Taylor, Plato, and Robertson accounts told of events that were, in their own particular ways, deeply moving; yet each appears to be an effort to indicate as clearly as possible what happened, *rather than what the writer felt about—or believed about—these events.*

In the following selection Hayakawa applies the term "report" to this use of language. He describes this "report language," suggests some of the difficulties in using it, and seeks to distinguish it from what he labels the language of "inferences" and "judgments."

For the general reader Hayakawa's book Language in Thought and Action *is an excellent introduction to the semantic approach to language,* i.e., *the study of problems involved in our use of word-symbols to represent our experiences and ideas. He explains through the use of illustrations from everyday life how language shapes many of our ideas. Other useful introductions to general semantics are Irving Lee's* Language Habits in Human Affairs *and Anatol Rapoport's* Science and the Goals of Man. *A longer, more difficult, but curious and interesting study, to which most of these other writers are indebted for many of their ideas, is Alfred Korzybski's* Science and Sanity.

For the purposes of the interchange of information, the basic symbolic act is the *report* of what we have seen, heard, or felt: "There is a ditch on each side of the road." "You can get those at Smith's hardware store for $2.75." "There aren't any fish on that side of the lake, but there are on this side." Then there are reports of reports: "The longest waterfall in the world is Victoria Falls in Rhodesia." "The Battle of Hastings took place in 1066." "The papers say that there was a big smash-up on Highway 41 near Evansville." Reports adhere to the following rules: first, they are *capable of verification;* second, they *exclude,* as far as possible, *inferences* and *judgments.* (These terms will be defined later.)

VERIFIABILITY

Reports are verifiable. We may not always be able to verify them ourselves, since we cannot track down the evidence for every piece of history we know, nor can we all go to Evansville to see the remains of the smash-up before they are cleared away. But if we are roughly agreed on the names of things, on what constitutes a "foot," "yard," "bushel," and so on, and on

THE LANGUAGE OF REPORTS From *Language in Thought and Action* by S. I. Hayakawa, copyright, 1941, 1949, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

how to measure time, there is relatively little danger of our misunderstanding each other. Even in a world such as we have today, in which everybody seems to be quarreling with everybody else, *we still to a surprising degree trust each other's reports.* We ask directions of total strangers when we are traveling. We follow directions on road signs without being suspicious of the people who put them up. We read books of information about science, mathematics, automotive engineering, travel, geography, the history of costume, and other such factual matters, and we usually assume that the author is doing his best to tell us as truly as he can what he knows. And we are safe in so assuming most of the time. With the emphasis that is being given today to the discussion of biased newspapers, propagandists, and the general untrustworthiness of many of the communications we receive, we are likely to forget that we still have an enormous amount of reliable information available and that deliberate misinformation, except in warfare, still is more the exception than the rule. The desire for self-preservation that compelled men to evolve means for the exchange of information also compels them to regard the giving of false information as profoundly reprehensible.

At its highest development, the language of reports is the language of science. By "highest development" we mean greatest general usefulness. Presbyterian and Catholic, workingman and capitalist, German and Englishman, *agree* on the meanings of such symbols as $2 \times 2 = 4$, *100°C.*, HNO_3, *3:35* A.M., *1940* A.D., *5000 r.p.m., 1000 kilowatts, pulex irritans,* and so on. But how, it may be asked, can there be agreement about even this much among people who are at each other's throats about practically everything else: political philosophies, ethical ideals, religious beliefs, and the survival of my business *versus* the survival of yours? The answer is that circumstances *compel men to agree,* whether they wish to or not. If, for example, there were a dozen different religious sects in the United States, each insisting on its own way of naming the time of the day and the days of the year, the mere necessity of having a dozen different calendars, a dozen different kinds of watches, and a dozen sets of schedules for business hours, trains, and radio programs, to say nothing of the effort that would be required for translating terms from one nomenclature to another, would make life as we know it impossible.

The language of reports, then, including the more accurate reports of science, is "map" language, and because it gives us reasonably accurate representations of the "territory," it enables us to get work done. Such language may often be what is commonly termed "dull" or "uninteresting" reading: one does not usually read logarithmic tables or telephone directories for entertainment. But we could not get along without it. There are numberless occasions in the talking and writing we do in everyday life that *require that we state things in such a way that everybody will agree with our formulation.*

INFERENCES

The reader will find that practice in writing reports is a quick means of increasing his linguistic awareness. It is an exercise which will constantly provide him with his own examples of the principles of language and interpretation under discussion. The reports should be about first-hand experience—scenes the reader has witnessed himself, meetings and social events he has taken part in, people he knows well. They should be of such a nature that they can be verified and agreed upon. For the purpose of this exercise, inferences will be excluded.

Not that inferences are not important—we rely in everyday life and in science as much on *inferences* as on reports—in some areas of thought, for example, geology, paleontology, and nuclear physics, reports are the foundations, but inferences (and inferences upon inferences) are the main body of the science. An inference, as we shall use the term, is *a statement about the unknown made on the basis of the known.* We may *infer* from the handsomeness of a woman's clothes her wealth or social position; we may *infer* from the character of the ruins the origin of the fire that destroyed the building; we may *infer* from a man's calloused hands the nature of his occupation; we may *infer* from a senator's vote on an armaments bill his attitude toward Russia; we may *infer* from the structure of the land the path of a prehistoric glacier; we may *infer* from a halo on an unexposed photographic plate that it has been in the vicinity of radioactive materials; we may *infer* from the noise an engine makes the condition of its connecting rods. Inferences may be carelessly or carefully made. They may be made on the basis of a great background of previous experience with the subject-matter, or no experience at all. For example, the inferences a good mechanic can make about the internal condition of a motor by listening to it are often startlingly accurate, while the inferences made by an amateur (if he tries to make any) may be entirely wrong. But the common characteristic of inferences is that they are statements about matters which are not directly known, made on the basis of what has been observed.

The avoidance of inferences in our suggested practice in report-writing requires that we make no guesses as to what is going on in other people's minds. When we say, "He was angry," we are not reporting; we are making an inference from such observable facts as the following: "He pounded his fist on the table; he swore; he threw the telephone directory at his stenographer." In this particular example, the inference appears to be fairly safe; nevertheless, it is important to remember, especially for the purposes of training oneself, that it is an inference. Such expressions as "He thought a lot of himself," "He was scared of girls," "He has an inferiority complex," made on the basis of casual social observation, and "What Russia really wants to do is to establish a world communist dictatorship," made on the basis of casual

newspaper reading, are highly inferential. One should keep in mind their inferential character and, in our suggested exercises, should substitute for them such statements as "He rarely spoke to subordinates in the plant," "I saw him at a party, and he never danced except when one of the girls asked him to," "He wouldn't apply for the scholarship although I believe he could have won it easily," and "The Russian delegation to the United Nations has asked for A, B, and C. Last year they voted against M and N, and voted for X and Y. On the basis of facts such as these, the newspaper I read makes the inference that what Russia really wants is to establish a world communist dictatorship. I tend to agree."

JUDGMENTS

In our suggested writing exercise, judgments are also to be excluded. By judgments, we shall mean *all expressions of the writer's approval or disapproval of the occurrences, persons, or objects he is describing.* For example, a report cannot say, "It was a wonderful car," but must say something like this: "It has been driven 50,000 miles and has never required any repairs." Again statements like "Jack lied to us" must be suppressed in favor of the more verifiable statement, "Jack told us he didn't have the keys to his car with him. However, when he pulled a handkerchief out of his pocket a few minutes later, a bunch of car keys fell out." Also a report may not say, "The senator was stubborn, defiant, and unco-operative," or "The senator courageously stood by his principles"; it must say instead, "The senator's vote was the only one against the bill."

Many people regard statements like the following as statements of "fact": "Jack *lied* to us," "Jerry is a *thief*," "Tommy is *clever*." As ordinarily employed, however, the word *"lied"* involves first an inference (that Jack knew otherwise and deliberately misstated the facts) and secondly a judgment (that the speaker disapproves of what he has inferred that Jack did). In the other two instances, we may substitute such expressions as, "Jerry was convicted of theft and served two years at Waupun," and "Tommy plays the violin, leads his class in school, and is captain of the debating team." After all, to say of a man that he is a "thief" is to say in effect, "He has stolen *and will steal again*"—which is more of a prediction than a report. Even to say, "He has stolen," is to make an inference (and simultaneously to pass a judgment) on an act about which there may be difference of opinion among those who have examined the evidence upon which the conviction was obtained. But to say that he was "convicted of theft" is to make a statement capable of being agreed upon through verification in court and prison records.

Scientific verifiability rests upon the external observation of facts, not upon the heaping up of judgments. If one person says, "Peter is a deadbeat," and another says, "I think so too," the statement has not been verified. In court cases, considerable trouble is sometimes caused by witnesses who can-

not distinguish their judgments from the facts upon which those judgments are based. Cross-examinations under these circumstances go something like this:

> WITNESS: That dirty double-crosser Jacobs ratted on me.
>
> DEFENSE ATTORNEY: Your honor, I object.
>
> JUDGE: Objection sustained. (Witness's remark is stricken from the record.) Now, try to tell the court exactly what happened.
>
> WITNESS: He double-crossed me, the dirty, lying rat!
>
> DEFENSE ATTORNEY: Your honor, I object!
>
> JUDGE: Objection sustained. (Witness's remark is again stricken from the record.) Will the witness try to stick to the facts.
>
> WITNESS: But I'm telling you the facts, your honor. He did double-cross me.

This can continue indefinitely unless the cross-examiner exercises some ingenuity in order to get at the facts behind the judgment. To the witness it is a "fact" that he was "double-crossed." Often hours of patient questioning are required before the factual bases of the judgment are revealed.

Many words, of course, simultaneously convey a report and a judgment on the fact reported, as will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. For the purposes of a report as here defined, these should be avoided. Instead of "sneaked in," one might say "entered quietly"; instead of "politicians," "congressmen," or "aldermen," or "candidates for office"; instead of "bureaucrat," "public official"; instead of "tramp," "homeless unemployed"; instead of "dictatorial set-up," "centralized authority"; instead of "crackpots," "holders of uncommon views." A newspaper reporter, for example, is not permitted to write, "A crowd of suckers came to listen to Senator Smith last evening in that rickety firetrap and ex-dive that disfigures the south edge of town." Instead he says, "Between seventy-five and a hundred people heard an address last evening by Senator Smith at the Evergreen Gardens near the South Side city limits."

SNARL-WORDS AND PURR-WORDS

. . . it is important to remember that we are considering language not as an isolated phenomenon, but language in action—language in the full context of the nonlinguistic events which are its setting. The making of noises with the vocal organs is a muscular activity, and like other muscular activities, often involuntary. Our responses to powerful stimuli, such as to something that makes us very angry, are a complex of muscular and physiological events: the contracting of fighting muscles, the increase of blood pressure, change in body chemistry, clutching one's hair, and so on, *and* the making of noises, such as growls and snarls. We are a little too dignified, perhaps, to growl like dogs, but we do the next best thing and substitute series of words, such as "You dirty double-crosser!" "The filthy scum!" Similarly,

if we are pleasurably agitated, we may, instead of purring or wagging the tail, say things like "She's the sweetest girl in all the world!"

Speeches such as these are, as direct expressions of approval or disapproval, judgments in their simplest form. They may be said to be human equivalents of snarling and purring. "She's the sweetest girl in all the world" is not a statement about the girl; it is a purr. This seems to be a fairly obvious fact; nevertheless, it is surprising how often, when such a statement is made, both the speaker and the hearer feel that something has been said about the girl. This error is especially common in the interpretation of utterances of orators and editorialists in some of their more excited denunciations of "Reds," "greedy monopolists," "Wall Street," "radicals," "foreign ideologies," and in their more fulsome dithyrambs about "our way of life." Constantly, because of the impressive sound of the words, the elaborate structure of the sentences, and the appearance of intellectual progression, we get the feeling that something is being said about something. On closer examination, however, we discover that these utterances merely say, "What I hate ('Reds,' 'Wall Street,' or whatever) I hate very, very much," and "What I like ('our way of life') I like very, very much." We may call such utterances "snarl-words" and "purr-words." They are not reports describing conditions in the extensional world in any way.

To call these judgments "snarl-words" and "purr-words" does not mean that we should simply shrug them off. It means that we should be careful to *allocate the meaning correctly*—placing such a statement as "She's the sweetest girl in the world" as a revelation of the speaker's state of mind, and not as a revelation of facts about the girl. If the "snarl-words" about "Reds," or "greedy monopolists" are accompanied by verifiable reports (which would also mean that we have previously agreed as to who, specifically, is meant by the term "Reds" or "greedy monopolists"), we might find reason to be just as disturbed as the speaker. If the "purr-words" about the sweetest girl in the world are accompanied by verifiable reports about her appearance, manners, skill in cooking, and so on, we might find reason to admire her too. But "snarl-words" and "purr-words" as such, unaccompanied by reports, offer nothing further to discuss, except possibly the question, "Why do you feel as you do?"

It is usually fruitless to debate such questions as "Was President Roosevelt a great statesman or merely a skillful politician?" "Is the music of Wagner the greatest music of all time or is it merely hysterical screeching?" "Which is the finer sport, tennis or baseball?" "Could Joe Louis in his prime have licked Bob Fitzsimmons in his prime?" To take sides on such issues of conflicting judgments is to reduce oneself to the same level of stubborn imbecility as one's opponents. But to ask questions of the form, "Why do you like (or dislike) Roosevelt (or Wagner, or tennis, or Joe Louis)?" is to learn something about one's friends and neighbors. After listening to their opinions and their reasons for them, we may leave the discussion slightly wiser, slightly

better informed, and perhaps slightly less one-sided than we were before the discussion began.

HOW JUDGMENTS STOP THOUGHT

A judgment ("He is a fine boy," "It was a beautiful service," "Baseball is a healthful sport," "She is an awful bore") is a conclusion, summing up a large number of previously observed facts. The reader is probably familiar with the fact that students almost always have difficulty in writing themes of the required length because their ideas give out after a paragraph or two. The reason for this is that those early paragraphs contain so many judgments that there is little left to be said. When the conclusions are carefully excluded, however, and observed facts are given instead, there is never any trouble about the length of papers; in fact, they tend to become too long, since inexperienced writers, when told to give facts, often give far more than are necessary, because they lack discrimination between the important and the trivial.

Still another consequence of judgments early in the course of a written exercise—and this applies also to hasty judgments in everyday thought—is the temporary blindness they induce. When, for example, an essay starts with the words, "He was a real Wall Street executive," or "She was a typical cute little co-ed," if we continue writing at all, we must make all our later statements consistent with those judgments. The result is that all the individual characteristics of this particular "executive" or this particular "co-ed" are lost sight of entirely; and the rest of the essay is likely to deal not with observed facts, but with the writer's private notion (based on previously read stories, movies, pictures, and so forth) of what "Wall Street executives" or "typical co-eds" look like. The premature judgment, that is, often prevents us from seeing what is directly in front of us. Even if the writer feels sure at the beginning of a written exercise that the man he is describing is a "loafer" or that the scene he is describing is a "beautiful residential suburb," he will conscientiously keep such notions out of his head, lest his vision be obstructed.

SLANTING

In the course of writing reports of personal experiences, it will be found that in spite of all endeavors to keep judgments out, some will creep in. An account of a man, for example, may go like this: "He had apparently not shaved for several days, and his face and hands were covered with grime. His shoes were torn, and his coat, which was several sizes too small for him, was spotted with dried clay." Now, in spite of the fact that no judgment has been stated, a very obvious one is implied. Let us contrast this with another description of the same man. "Although his face was bearded and neglected, his eyes were clear, and he looked straight ahead as he walked rapidly down

the road. He looked very tall; perhaps the fact that his coat was too small for him emphasized that impression. He was carrying a book under his left arm, and a small terrier ran at his heels." In this example, the impression about the same man is considerably changed, simply by the inclusion of new details and the subordination of unfavorable ones. Even if explicit judgments are kept out of one's writing, implied judgments will get in.

How, then, can we ever give an impartial report? The answer is, of course, that we cannot attain complete impartiality while we use the language of everyday life. Even with the very impersonal language of science, the task is sometimes difficult. Nevertheless, we can, by being aware of the favorable or unfavorable feelings that certain words and facts can arouse, attain enough impartiality for practical purposes. Such awareness enables us to balance the implied favorable and unfavorable judgments against each other. To learn to do this, it is a good idea to write two essays at a time on the same subject, both strict reports, to be read side by side: the first to contain facts and details likely to prejudice the reader in favor of the subject, the second to contain those likely to prejudice the reader against it. For example:

FOR	AGAINST
He had white teeth.	His teeth were uneven.
His eyes were blue, his hair blond and abundant.	He rarely looked people straight in the eye.
He had on a clean blue shirt.	His shirt was frayed at the cuffs.
He often helped his wife with the dishes.	He rarely got through drying dishes without breaking a few.
His pastor spoke very highly of him.	His grocer said he was always slow about paying his bills.

SLANTING BOTH WAYS AT ONCE

This process of selecting details favorable or unfavorable to the subject being described may be termed slanting. Slanting gives no explicit judgments, but it differs from reporting in that it deliberately makes certain judgments inescapable. The writer striving for impartiality will, therefore, take care to slant both for and against his subject, trying as conscientiously as he can to keep the balance even. The next stage of the exercise, then, should be to rewrite the parallel essays into a single coherent essay in which details on both sides are included.

> His teeth were white, but uneven; his eyes were blue, his hair blond and abundant. He did not often look people straight in the eye. His shirt was slightly frayed at the cuffs, but it was clean. He frequently helped his wife with the dishes, but he broke many of them. Opinion about him in the community was divided. His grocer said he was slow about paying his bills, but his pastor spoke very highly of him.

This example is, of course, oversimplified and admittedly not very graceful. But practice in writing such essays will first of all help to prevent one from slipping unconsciously from observable facts to judgments; that is, from "He was a member of the Ku Klux Klan" to "the dirty scoundrel!" Next, it will reveal how little we really want to be impartial anyway, especially about our best friends, our parents, our alma mater, our own children, our country, the company we work for, the product we sell, our competitor's product, or anything else in which our interests are deeply involved. Finally, we will discover that, even if we have no wish to be impartial, we write more clearly, more forcefully, and more convincingly by this process of sticking as close as possible to observable facts. There will be, as someone once remarked, more horsepower and less exhaust.

A few weeks of practice in writing reports, slanted reports, and reports slanted both ways will improve powers of observation, as well as ability to recognize soundness of observation in the writings of others. A sharpened sense for the distinction between facts and judgments, facts and inferences, will reduce susceptibility to the flurries of frenzied public opinion which certain people find it to their interest to arouse. Alarming judgments and inferences can be made to appear inevitable by means of skillfully slanted reports. A reader who is aware of the technique of slanting, however, is relatively difficult to stampede by such methods. He knows too well that there may be other relevant facts which have been left out. . . .

The importance of trying to "slant both ways" lies not in the hope of achieving a godlike impartiality in one's thinking and writing—which is manifestly an impossible goal. It lies in discovering what poor reporters most of us really are—in other words, how little we see of the world since we of necessity see it from our own point of view. To discover one's own biases is the beginning of wisdom.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Although Hayakawa uses a set of terms that is somewhat different from Morris's, you should be able to see that he is talking about some of the same matters. Which of Hayakawa's key terms (report, verifiability, judgments, inferences, snarl-words and purr-words, and slanting) relate to what Morris calls *designative signs? appraisive signs?*
2. What is the difference between saying: "That picture shows both the front view and the side view of a woman's figure at the same time," "That picture shows a distorted figure of a woman," "I don't like that picture," and "That picture is no good"? Between saying: "The bridge is unsafe," "The piling of the bridge has been eaten by termites," and "The bridge timbers are in a weakened condition"?
3. Here are 11 statements. Which of them satisfy the criteria established by Hayakawa for the "language of reports"? Explain your selection.

a. The Giants won four straight games in the 1954 World Series.
b. This cow has a high production record.
c. Today the automobile mechanic is no longer a skilled craftsman.
d. Our records show that we sell twice as many of this brand as we do of that brand.
e. Our dormitories are overcrowded.
f. My instructor in social science has asked me at least two questions every class meeting so far this term.
g. Hitting him was the biggest mistake I have ever made.
h. Don't take his course—he's tough!
i. The information comes from authoritative sources in Washington.
j. C—— obtained a liberal education, while D—— became an expert in business administration.
k. The grass seed you sold me this spring was of low quality.

4. Reword the following fictitious headlines so as to exclude judgments and inferences. You are provided with the necessary facts in each case.
   a. GOVERNOR DEFIES PARTY BOSSES
   (The governor announced his support for one candidate to head the State Republican Central Committee; the retiring head of the committee and a majority of the committee members are backing another candidate.)
   b. CONGRESS SELLS VETERANS DOWN THE RIVER
   (The U. S. Congress defeated a measure to give veterans a cash bonus.)
   c. HATE GROUP HOLDS MASS RALLY
   (The Ku Klux Klan held its annual meeting in a large auditorium in Atlanta, Georgia.)
   d. LABOR COLOSSUS SEEN
   (Leaders of the C.I.O. and the A.F.L. announced plans for a merger of the two union organizations.)
   e. AMERICA BACKS DOWN
   (The U. S. State Department announced its refusal to promise military aid to the Burmese government.)
5. Distinguish in each of the following statements those parts which are in the language of reports from those parts which are in the language of opinion.
   a. "There is now less flogging in our great schools than formerly,—but then less is learned there; so what the boys get at one end they lose at the other." —SAMUEL JOHNSON.
   b. (From student theme): In fire-fighting night time is the best time to work; during my two weeks' working for the Forest Service this August I worked nights, slept days.
   c. Weather, fine; competition, keen; starting pitchers, Brown and Jensen; a great day for a ball game.
   d. Local 167 is out on strike for the second time this year—further evidence of their leaders' irresponsibility.
   e. (Advertisement): The Choice of Men of Distinction!
   f. It's time for a re-examination of teaching methods and subject matter when only 10% of the Centerville students taking the military deferment test achieved 70 or above.

g. Picasso is a great artist, but that does not excuse his political views.
h. Because of the mayor's high-handed acts three members of the City Water Commission have resigned.
i. The United Nations has not prevented war; it's no better than the old League of Nations.

6. Here are three different statements about a single situation. (1) Point out in each statement any words or phrases which report facts; (2) indicate which of the three statements would probably be most useful to you if you wanted to know what was happening in the plant, and give detailed reasons for your answer.
   a. Jones is an efficient manager. He has helped to smooth out the unfortunate employer-employee relations in the Manning plant.
   b. Jones, by pretending to be a friend of the employees, has managed to boost his company's profits.
   c. Since Jones became manager of the Manning plant, the factory's output has increased 10% over the output under the former manager. Each week he meets with employee-representatives, and reports and explains to them changes being considered by the employers. He recommended the introduction of a new system of rest periods and started a training program for new workers.
7. Does the fact that a certain kind of communication has come to be called "report" necessarily mean that it is "reporting" by Hayakawa's definition? Explain. (You might find it useful to consider the use of the term in such titles and labels as Washington News Report, the President's "Report to the Nation," or a commentator's use of the phrase "your reporter.")
8. According to Hayakawa, what is the ideal method of verification? What makes it possible to rely on some kinds of secondhand reports? Which kinds? What is the "language" of these reliable kinds?
9. Substitute for the following *inferences* some verifiable reports which might make these inferences plausible:
   a. Newport football teams are no good.
   b. Graduate students are more serious than undergraduates.
   c. College libraries are better than most public libraries.
   d. Recently built highways are safer.
   e. There is a growing anti-American feeling among Europeans.

PROJECTS

1. Rewrite the following paragraphs as straight reports, omitting opinions, judgments, and slants.
   a. "Two columns of burly Patton tanks thrust into the outskirts of Kumsong, shot up everything in sight, and retired to their lines without losing a vehicle, although the Reds had fired on them from a respectful distance with antitank guns. After that, it was clear that Kumsong was finished as an enemy base. There was no need for Van Fleet actually to occupy it until he could do so with a minimum of casualties. This week, after another bold tank raid in which the U. S. armor braved enemy mortar fire, a U. S. patrol

moved up to within 600 yards of the blasted rail and road junction. Chinese resistance seemed to have melted." [1]

b. "Tom, who is seven years old, is neat in his appearance, but has never learned how to control his temper. For this reason he is not popular with his classmates. In fact, they do everything they can to make his life miserable. Tom lives with his mother and his four brothers and sisters. His parents are divorced. His mother works in a department store from 9:00 to 5:00 and doesn't have time to help Tom solve his problems."

2. Select from among the themes you have recently written one which contains a good many broad conclusions and sweeping judgments. Re-read the section in Hayakawa's essay called "How Judgments Stop Thought." Re-write the theme substituting observed facts for the judgments and conclusions. Submit both versions to the criticism of your classmates and invite their opinion of which theme "says more." (Note: Do not conclude that there is necessarily a "right" answer here. The purpose of the theme will do much to determine whether the language of report or the language of opinion is the appropriate vehicle.)
3. Write a business letter which, in its avoidance of oversimplification and its clear, objective reporting of facts, will indicate how well you can apply in everyday practice the distinction between report and judgment language. This letter may be either a letter of application (e.g., applying for a part-time job or for admission to a certain school), a letter of complaint (e.g., pointing out defects in the college curriculum or in an article you recently purchased), or a letter recommending some specific course of action (e.g., recommending a campus improvement).
4. Make a written list of all the common forms of communication, both oral and written, which need to be primarily *reporting of facts.* (Here are a few suggestions to get you started: highway directions, ordering letters, doctors' prescriptions, laboratory reports, job reports, calendars, handbooks, weather reports.) Then make a second list—this time a list of all the common forms of communication, oral and written, in which the language of report may not always be of primary importance. (A few suggestions: editorials, jokes, lyric poems.)

[1] From "Siege of Kumsong," *Time* Magazine, October 29, 1951. Courtesy *Time* Magazine; copyright Time Inc. 1951.

8 PERSUASION

Not only do we wish to give and receive *information;* we also want to express our *opinions* and *attitudes* and learn the opinions and attitudes of others. We wish to tell and to learn what happened (i.e., to *report* and to interpret *reports*), and we seek to have other people see and do things as we see and do them (i.e., *persuade*). However, the language of persuasion is explosive stuff. The emotional power of language gives it a special strength; at the same time this power creates difficulties for writers and readers, speakers and listeners. The selections here suggest some of the emotional potentialities of language, and also some of the main difficulties created by this power.

Garrett Starmer's "And Shun the Frumious Jabberwock!" suggests the possibility that language devoid of real meaning can seem to have meaning merely because of the emotional effects of certain sounds and the rhythmic effect of certain sentence patterns. This selection is followed by five widely varying examples of persuasion. In the first two, both famous examples, the emotional content of language is dominant. These are followed by three efforts at persuasion—one on atomic-bomb defense, one on racial discrimination on the college campus, and one on academic freedom—in which the emotional power of words is not forgotten but in which language is used to present closely reasoned argumentation. In the capstone-piece for this group of articles Gilbert Highet suggests that all of us, in our various kinds of living and with our different temperaments, are teachers and so are constantly seeking to persuade other people to believe as we do. His article implies, then, that there is nothing very special or reprehensible about persuasion but that the important distinction lies between kinds of persuasion—or between kinds of "teaching."

The next two selections—Fishwick's "The Folk Hero as Tycoon" and Hitler's "Advice from an Expert"—indicate how language, because of its emotional capacities, can be used to fool rather than to enlighten men. They raise the old specter of "propaganda." Tenney and Wardle, in the selection

"What Is Propaganda?" propose some helpful ways to distinguish between useful and dangerous kinds of persuasion, and suggest how language, with its possibilities for moving men, may be used and abused.

Garrett L. Starmer

AND SHUN THE FRUMIOUS JABBERWOCK!

In the preceding section, "Reports," we considered three selections which were, in the main, efforts to communicate what happened, *and one article, Hayakawa's, which discussed the reportorial function of language. This function is all too easily lost sight of and therefore requires firm and repeated emphasis. But it is not the only function of language. Besides describing accurately what happened, language may seek to tell how the writer or speaker feels about what he describes and how he wants you to think about it. Language can express attitudes and beliefs, and can seek to persuade other persons to accept them. This power of language to convey and stimulate emotion, of course, involves very real dangers. One of these dangers is pointed out in Starmer's brief commentary.*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed a great and undeserved privilege to address such an audience as I see before me. At no previous time in the history of human civilization have greater problems confronted and challenged the ingenuity of man's intellect than now. Let us look around us. What do we see on the horizon? What forces are at work? Whither are we drifting? Under what mist of clouds does the future stand obscured? My friends, casting aside the raiment of all human speech, the crucial test for the solution of all these intricate problems to which I have just alluded is the sheer and forceful application of those immutable laws which down the corridor of time have always guided the hand of man, groping, as it were, for some faint beacon light for his hopes and aspirations. Without these great vital principles we are but puppets responding to whim and fancy, failing entirely to grasp the hidden meaning of it all. We must readdress ourselves to these questions which press for answer and solution. The issue cannot be avoided. There they stand. It is upon you, and you—and even yet upon me—that the yoke of responsibility falls.

What, then is our duty? Shall we continue to drift? No! With all the emphasis of my being I hurl back the message—NO! Drifting must stop. We must press onward and upward toward the ultimate goal to which all must aspire.

But I cannot conclude my remarks, dear friends, without touching briefly upon a subject which I know is steeped in your very consciousness.

AND SHUN THE FRUMIOUS JABBERWOCK! From *Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 1953. Reprinted by permission of author and publisher.

I refer to that spirit which gleams from the eyes of a new-born babe; that animates the toiling masses; that sways all the hosts of humanity past and present. Without this energizing principle all commerce, trade and industry are hushed and will perish from this earth as surely as the crimson sunset follows the golden sunshine.

Mark you, I do not seek to unduly alarm or distress the mothers, fathers, sons and daughters gathered before me in this vast assemblage, but I would indeed be recreant to a high resolve which I made as a youth if I did not at this time and in this place and with the full realizing sense of responsibility which I assume, publicly declare and affirm my dedication and my consecration to the eternal principles and receipts of simple, ordinary, commonplace JUSTICE.

Seventy-three college freshmen and sophomores were asked to listen to the above oration, then to record in writing a synopsis of what they had heard. The speech, brilliantly constructed by the late Professor A. Parker Nevin, formerly of Princeton University, was delivered with most careful sincerity by the instructor in charge of the groups. They not listen . . . ? Read on!

Gratifyingly, all of the 73 students tested rccognized and accepted the grave sincerity of the author and his piece. None challenged.

It must be admitted, in passing, that a small percentage of the group did miss the message somewhat. For instance, eleven, typical, perhaps, of the cynicism of today's youth, doubted the compositional worth of the masterpiece, while ten others, and more honestly, I'm sure, doubted their own abilities. They made brief, bungling attempts to interpret the meanings, only to give up in despair. Not all, however, gave up without devious attempts to conceal questionable abilities.

I did not understand it because of a certain word which I failed to hear at the beginning of the address. I believe this was a very important word—maybe even the key word of the address—but I'm not sure because I still don't know what that word was. It sounded like "noun" and if it was the entire address could have been filled with subtle humor. If it was another word the address could have been serious or sarcastic (doubtful).

One student, happily, found the master craftsman's touch,

. . . a professional speaker—you could use that speech for a small classroom debate or for a debate upon the action of the UN on the atom and world affairs,

while another leveled a despicable charge, reflecting, no doubt, the successful attempts of subversive groups to undermine the high reverence, standards, and credulity of our wholesome American boys and girls.

I sincerely doubt that the audience knew what the man was talking about. The subject matter was extremely vague and could be interpreted in many different ways depending upon the individual's emotions, characteristics, and general attitude.

There were 16, also, who stubbornly failed to admit lack of comprehension, who, unfortunately, did gyre and gimble in the wabe, wallowing in vague verbiage and meaningless phraseology, lost where clarity stands obscure.

But of greater importance to our present consideration than those who failed are the 36 who, gratifyingly, heard clear and meaningful messages, who heard *superlatively,* and without special training! Observe these examples, honest reader:

I believe that the speaker felt very firmly about religion and I think this is what he was talking about.

. . . He mentioned that the audience as well as himself had a duty that they must press onward and upward, which I felt was in reference to heaven. . . .

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

. . . all children are born sinless and therefore there need be no injustices or wrong doings in this world . . .

. . . he meant people weren't eager to learn, they just want to do as they please.

(He) . . . is trying to rouse the people . . . as they are being taken advantage of and misinterpreted to the advantage of a few unscrupulous persons who intend to do wrong and are doing wrong.

. . . possibly to a certain labor group about certain issues concerning wages. Possibly about not to strike for higher wages.

(The speech) . . . must not have been given to a group of common people. I'm sure most people would not have gotten the fact that he was talking about justice, until he mentioned it, any more than I did.

. . . a speech to proclaim the U. S. way of life as the right way . . . The immutable laws are slowly stopping the progress of civilization . . . We are puppets responding to hidden fancies.

. . . there are . . . so many laws, practically for anything you do, that people merely think that since it is a law it must be right, but one never stops to realize that some of the laws were made so long ago that they do not exactly fit to the standard life of today.

"What do we see before us?" Thus we would look at the problem that faces us in our government. Such as "Reds" and inflation.

Man must recognize true justice, probably stressing commutative and distributive.

I think that he might have been hinting of total destruction of the world through man's carelessness in an atomic age and that something should be done before it is ended. . . .

The speaker, believing that justice or the rationalization of relationship between countries, communities, or individuals is the foundation upon which to build our world, has attempted to arouse the masses to recognize this fact and to use this theory on which to base their actions towards their environment.

In my opinion, (he) was speaking of a language, a universal language . . . a working language known to all nations, a basis for understanding. To set rules, or binding rules referred to, are the rules of grammar and rules of word usage . . . he thinks that now is the time to start laying the foundation for an international language. Not wait until the future or let somebody else do it, but do it in this generation. By justice, I take it that he means give and take in preparing this basic language. . . .

The light that shines in a baby's eyes is what we have left—energy!

With such overwhelming evidence of hearing as this bit of research shows, can anyone worthy of the label *American Educator* give honest credence to the suggestion that we clutter the curriculum with lessons in *listening? Surely* such hypocrisy must fade and disappear as surely as the blackest night yields to the morning sun!

The result of this bit of research is pregnant with implication. Learn to listen . . . ? Teach to hear *more* . . . ? Frumious Bandersnatch! Beware of the Jubjub word, my Son, or leave us all go snicker-snack!

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Before you smile condescendingly at the naïveté of most of the 73 students who were fooled by this hoax, list as many reasons as you can which might explain why they were fooled. What do these reasons tell you about the various factors —non-linguistic as well as linguistic—which determine what an audience "gets" from a speech?
2. To what extent did the *structure* of the sentences in this mock address contribute to the illusion that something was being said? Which of the criteria of a language outlined by Carroll in a preceding essay does this mock speech successfully fulfill? Which criteria are not met?
3. Re-read the mock speech carefully. Mark the key words on which the speech appears to depend for its "meaning." Do these words appear to be highly abstract or concrete? What does this suggest to you as a means of checking the thought content of future speeches you listen to?
4. List in your own words the devices used by this speaker to persuade a large segment of his audience that he was saying something worth listening to. For example, note the implied flattery of the audience and the mock modesty of the speaker in the first sentence. Now go on to list other appeals.
5. Do you believe there is a useful distinction between "language meaningless to you" and just "meaningless language"? If so, how would you classify the specialized vocabularies of medicine, psychology, office administration, etc.? If you were to encounter a passage in which the language was meaningless to you,

how would you determine whether it was merely obscure to you or entirely meaningless?

6. Evaluate the following response of a student who had been fooled by a similar experiment: "This experience convinced me once and for all that speakers who use big words and fancy language are not to be trusted."

PROJECT

Find in the editorial columns or letters-to-the-editor departments of newspapers or magazines—or in some similar source—an example of rhetoric which you believe to be almost empty of meaning. Explain your reasons for thinking so and present your findings to the class in a paper or talk.

THE POWER OF SPEECH

The power of words to move men deeply is suggested by the following two famous speeches. Although both evoke emotional associations and responses, it is interesting to note that one is different from the other in many particular ways. For example, you may notice that Shakespeare's Antony, in speaking about Caesar, uses the evocative power of word repetition—a device which Patrick Henry, in his speech to the Virginia Convention, did not use to any considerable degree. And Henry's elegant vocabulary of abstractions is quite unlike Antony's relatively frugal, economical vocabulary.

A careful re-reading of these two classics in the light of your recently acquired insights into thought and language will doubtless make them appear fresh and provocative once more.

William Shakespeare

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION

ANTONY. Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men—

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION From William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar.*

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And sure he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause:
What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?
O judgement, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason! Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

FIRST CITIZEN. Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

SECOND CITIZEN. If thou consider rightly of the matter,
Caesar has had great wrong.

THIRD CITIZEN. Has he, masters?
I fear there will a worse come in his place.

FOURTH CITIZEN. Mark'd ye his words? He would not take the crown;
Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

FIRST CITIZEN. If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

SECOND CITIZEN. Poor soul! his eyes are red as fire with weeping.

THIRD CITIZEN. There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

FOURTH CITIZEN. Now mark him. He begins again to speak.

ANTONY. But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have stood against the world. Now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O master, if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men:
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose

To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar;
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read—
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue.

FOURTH CITIZEN. We'll hear the will: read it, Mark Antony.

ALL. The will, the will! we will hear Caesar's will.

ANTONY. Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it;
It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
And, being men, hearing the will of Caesar,
It will inflame you, it will make you mad:
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;
For, if you should, O, what would come of it!

FOURTH CITIZEN. Read the will; we'll hear it, Antony;
You shall read us the will, Caesar's will.

ANTONY. Will you be patient? will you stay awhile?
I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it:
I fear I wrong the honourable men
Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar; I do fear it.

FOURTH CITIZEN. They were traitors: honourable men!

ALL. The will! the testament!

SECOND CITIZEN. They were villains, murderers: the will! read the will.

ANTONY. You will compel me, then, to read the will?
Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,
And let me show you him that made the will.
Shall I descend? and will you give me leave?

SEVERAL CITIZENS. Come down.

SECOND CITIZEN. Descend.

THIRD CITIZEN. You shall have leave.

[*Antony comes down.*]

FOURTH CITIZEN. A ring; stand round.

FIRST CITIZEN. Stand from the hearse, stand from the body.

SECOND CITIZEN. Room for Antony, most noble Antony.

ANTONY. Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off.

SEVERAL CITIZENS. Stand back; room; bear back.

ANTONY. If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle: I remember
The first time ever Caesar put it on;
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,
That day he overcame the Nervii:
Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:
See what a rent the envious Casca made:
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;
And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it,
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel:
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!
This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statua,
Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.
O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
O, now you weep; and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.
Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.

FIRST CITIZEN. O piteous spectacle!

SECOND CITIZEN. O noble Caesar!

THIRD CITIZEN. O woful day!

FOURTH CITIZEN. O traitors, villains!

FIRST CITIZEN. O most bloody sight!

SECOND CITIZEN. We will be reveng'd.

ALL. Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay!
Let not a traitor live!

ANTONY. Stay, countrymen.

FIRST CITIZEN. Peace there! hear the noble Antony.

SECOND CITIZEN. We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him.

ANTONY. Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
They that have done this deed are honourable:
What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,

That made them do it: they are wise and honourable,
And will no doubt with reasons answer you.
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
I am no orator, as Brutus is;
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That loved my friend; and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him:
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits and put a tongue
In every wound of Caesar that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

ALL. We'll mutiny.

FIRST CITIZEN. We'll burn the house of Brutus.

THIRD CITIZEN. Away, then! come, seek the conspirators.

ANTONY. Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

ALL. Peace, ho! Hear Antony. Most noble Antony!

ANTONY. Why, friends, you go to do you know not what;
Wherein hath Caesar thus deserv'd your loves?
Alas, you know not: I must tell you, then:
You have forgot the will I told you of.

ALL. Most true! The will! Let's stay and hear the will.

ANTONY. Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.
To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

SECOND CITIZEN. Most noble Caesar! We'll revenge his death.

THIRD CITIZEN. O royal Caesar!

ANTONY. Hear me with patience.

ALL. Peace, ho!

ANTONY. Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbours and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Caesar! when comes such another?

FIRST CITIZEN. Never, never. Come, away, away!
We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.
Take up the body.

SECOND CITIZEN. Go fetch fire.
THIRD CITIZEN. Pluck down benches.
FOURTH CITIZEN. Pluck down forms, windows, any thing.

[*Exeunt Citizens with the body.*]

ANTONY. Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt!

Patrick Henry

SPEECH TO THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION OF DELEGATES, MARCH 23, 1775

No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the house. But different men often see the same subjects in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the house is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the magnitude of the subject, ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth and listen to the song of that syren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those, who having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with

SPEECH TO THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION From William Wirt, *Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry,* 1817.

which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the house? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation, the last arguments to which kings resort.

I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains, which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we any thing new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find, which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconcilation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight!—I repeat it, sir, we must fight!! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak, unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make

a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come!! I repeat it, sir, let it come!!!

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Powerful persuasive speeches have customarily appealed to their listeners' emotions. Analyze one or both of these famous speeches and list the emotions (love, hate, fear, envy, greed, courage, etc.) to which the speakers appeal. Identify the passages which make a specific appeal to each emotion. Do they rouse this emotion in you? Why or why not?
2. Having identified the passages of greatest emotional appeal, study the *language* of these passages. Does the language tend to be "designative," "appraisive," or "prescriptive," or any combination of these? (See Morris's essay for a review of these terms, if necessary.) Do the key words tend to be abstract or concrete, or is there any consistent pattern? Does the language make heavy use of figures of speech, or little, or none at all? Are there any cautious generalizations about the language of emotional appeal which you feel safe in making on the basis of this analysis?
3. What purposes may Antony have had in speaking consistently in terms of "if"? Have you ever found yourself going much farther in agreeing with someone than his argument justified because you were impressed with his moderating "ifs," "maybes," and "perhapses"?
4. Assuming that Antony was fully aware of what he was doing, consider his probable purposes in (*a*) repeating that Brutus was "an honourable man," (*b*) speaking often of his personal friendship with Caesar, (*c*) mentioning the word "mutiny" with increasing frequency, (*d*) speaking at length of Caesar's wounds, and then showing Caesar's wounds, (*e*) speaking disparagingly of himself as a "plain, blunt man," (*f*) frequently mentioning Caesar's will before displaying its contents, and (*g*) finally telling what Caesar had left the citizens.

5. Did you notice the number of times Henry spoke metaphorically? Do the metaphors serve to persuade in this speech? If so, why? Do you think they prove the points Henry is advocating? Explain.

PROJECT

Sometimes students who have just been made acutely aware of the techniques of persuasion are startled to discover similar techniques employed by people they respect and agree with and by people they dislike and disagree with. This discovery can sometimes lead to a kind of cynicism about the role of persuasion. But need it?

Select two examples of persuasive speaking or writing on the same subject but from two different points of view. Make a careful analysis of the similarities and differences between the two speakers' or writers' techniques of persuasion. Write a paper in which you detail your findings; and then go on to indicate *all* of the considerations one should raise before concluding that these two examples of persuasion are of equal merit.

Philip Wylie

PANIC, PSYCHOLOGY, AND THE BOMB

Will the American population panic if atomic or hydrogen bomb disaster hits this country? Wylie believes it will, and he seeks to convince us that this is so by full, detailed argumentation. His method here is to present facts that will show the assumptions behind the contrary belief to be shaky.

Wylie has engaged in a great variety of writing activities as movie scenarist, editor, newspaper columnist, novelist, and essayist. His most recent activities in connection with United States defense plans are explained in his essay.

In this essay it will be held that the official position on "panic-proneness" of the American people is mistaken owing to a superficial approach to the subject by the psychologists who made the determination. It will be argued that a huge fraction of the public, perhaps the majority, *already* displays clinical symptoms indicative of hysteria and predisposing to panic. It will also be suggested that, from the psychological standpoint, our approach even to the problem of bomb effects has been naive.

For three years, I have been attached to the Federal Civil Defense Administration as a consultant in this area of the problem. My qualifications are a good lay knowledge of nuclear physics, professional experience in public

PANIC, PSYCHOLOGY, AND THE BOMB From *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, February, 1954. Reprinted by permission of author and publisher.

relations, and a perhaps unique background in psychology. My familiarity with that discipline includes not only the objective (academic) "psychologies" but a thorough study of "depth" or "dynamic" psychology. As a consultant, my special concern is with the putative psychological effect of enemy weapons. My clearance gave me complete access to the necessary data and my reports and extrapolations, which were at variance with the official conclusions, resulted from long and careful study. Here I shall summarize certain of my cardinal points in the hope of attracting attention to my method.

What I have called the "official position" embodies a multitude of investigations of public responses to calamity. These were begun by the Rand Corporation and furthered under Projects Lincoln and East River. They involved, in the main, behavior studies of American response to such disasters as flood, fire, epidemic, earthquake, hurricane, mass food poisoning, and tornado. They also included psychometric tests of population samples designed to show how people thought they would react (and statements of what the investigators thought about such self-estimates). They further included inquiries into human behavior under high explosive bombs, fire bombs, and the two atomic bombs loosed on Japan.

Such surveys of objective behavior and such appraisals of conscious statement represent the usual approach of the majority of university-trained psychologists to all biological problems. They rarely examine, or examine only peripherally (as by Rohrshach tests), the functioning of the *unconscious* mind. Many of the academicians, among them the Behaviorists, even doubt the hypothesis of "unconsciousness." What I have called "dynamic" psychology is regarded by many others among them as a "science" only when it is used therapeutically—owing to the fact that it was discovered by Sigmund Freud in his investigation of morbid states of mind. Since, furthermore, dynamic psychology is based upon the thesis that animal instinct still operates in man, frequently in disguised forms, it is opposed fervently by all those who accept the idea that man is wholly the product of reason-plus-culture.

However, most of the "dynamic psychologists" are working medical doctors while most of the practicing theorists and laboratory workers (who usually eschew instinct and deny unconsciousness) are university luminaries. So it is not surprising that a baffled government would turn to the latter for enlightenment concerning the mental hazards of atomic bombardment. Our national prejudice runs that way, besides!

I do not propose to explore here all the postulates of the opposed groups of "objective" and "subjective" students of human behavior. A library full of such debate already exists. I wish merely to enter some evidence (based on certain principles of dynamic psychology) as a demurrer to one conclusion on which present defense policy so largely is based. I shall let the reader make an appraisal according to his own common sense, acuity, experience, and training—with a minimal use of technical explanation.

HOW AMERICANS WILL RESPOND TO ATOMIC BOMBING

In effect, the conclusion of our government in this matter is that the American people will not stampede or panic under atomic bombs—not, at least, enough to interfere with those military requirements which involve speedy recovery from any blow, the saving of all possible production facilities, and a quick return to work. Such behavior is necessary to continue the waging of war. That conclusion was set forth recently in *Collier's* magazine by federal civil defense administrator Val Peterson. The administrator is not a psychologist. His article—complete with data, charts, and self-tests for one's own "panic-proneness"—was merely a popular presentation of the results of the government-sponsored studies noted here.

It was my conclusion (based on the same data seen from a different point of view) that the American people undoubtedly *would* panic under such bombing *in their present state of mind.* (I am not, of course, alone in this opinion; and it is shared by some "authorities.") I further held that a study of familiar disasters could furnish little valuable insight into expectable reactions to an atomic disaster, which, owing to the general dearth of understanding of A-bombs and their effects (both physical and psychological) would be entirely different from usual responses to understood catastrophe. Colonel Albert J. Glass, an Army psychiatrist, recently pointed out to a medical symposium that atomic attack would give rise to mass mental illness and to panic. He suggested a CD structure to oppose those possibilities. But such concepts are rare.

REASONS WHY THE PUBLIC WILL PANIC

My conclusions were based mainly on two factors:

First, our public is already exhibiting on a massive scale a vast variety of "symptoms" which, in clinical psychology, are known to be the results of deeply repressed fear, and these symptoms, classical in nature, are called "hysterias."

Second, the psychological effects of atomic attack, even on persons not already afflicted with hysteria, would be greater and more damaging even than the awesome physical and material effects.

Hysteria has nothing to do with "intelligence level" and it is not possible, except through prolonged psychiatrical process or, occasionally, the dramatic use of psychiatry aided by drugs, to demonstrate to a hysterical person that he or she is in fact thus afflicted. "Hysteria" (in the technical sense used here) is a form of *self-deceit.* It is a stratagem for psychobiological defense against the undesirable, the unknown, the intolerable—in short, that which is painfully feared. Fear is the normal signal of animal alarm-to-action.

However, in man, where "reason" or "culture" sets specific standards for inward and outward behavior, some fears require response that is regarded by the individual as shameful or anti-social or unpopular. Other fears may, simply, be so vast and intense as to seem "unendurable" in their real form.

The defense of the individual assaulted by any fear he cannot or will not face literally is *repression into the unconscious.* But, according to the laws of dynamic psychology (which parallel the thermodynamic laws and the laws of motion), the "energy" of the repressed fear cannot be made to disappear: it must exert itself along some course of motion which, in psychology, is emotion. But a person acting by that "stratagem" is one, obviously, who acts illogically and irrationally—wherefore inappropriately. If (to illustrate its simplest form) the victim is a small boy who dreads his father and cannot admit that fact because he must also believe he loves his father, he may "take it out" by swatting his baby sister. Such a child has acted, essentially, in a "hysterical" way. To understand what follows, that much concerning hysteria must, at least, be granted for the argument's sake.

It has been found that repressed fear may thus be converted into many forms of action (and stasis!) to supply an "outlet" (however inappropriate) that tends to hide from the individual his real fear and at the same time to give him a sense of having "done something" about it. In the clinic, many results of such hysterias are noted. A person who does not wish to "see" some abstract reality may become physically blind. This is "hysterical blindness," as real as eyelessness. One who fears his mental legs may carry him to dangerous ideas may paralyze his actual limbs. Here is "hysterical paralysis." One who represses a great dread may translate it into aggressions against a *symbol*—a "whipping boy," as in the case of the father-fearing child who attacked his sister as a substitute. Another may try to resolve the pain of repressed fear by fantasy, by "living in a dream world," by what is then called "hysterical fugue."

Hysterical paralysis, hysterical substitution, hysterical fugue are the commonest results of such "neurotic" repressions. In all of them, let me repeat, the subject is unaware of his true fear and, proportionately, over-sensitive in his use of whichever substitute mechanism he has unconsciously selected as a defense of his presumed integrity. (Another person may, of course, see the nature of the affliction very clearly!)

The behavior of large groups of Americans exhibits, to my way of thinking, exactly such phenomena.

"ATOMIC JITTERS"

We are accused of having "atomic jitters" (hysteria) by the rest of the world. *Do we have them?* We surely do!

One example is our widespread "apathy." We are a people who insure ourselves against every "Act of God" from fire to sickness. We spend bil-

lions to control floods. We practice preventive medicine on a national scale. We set up fire towers in forests, frost warning services—heaven only knows what other protective devices. But, against a foe whose philosophy will triumph only if we and our institutions are crushed—a foe rapidly building nuclear weapons—we have taken less than a formidably disproportionate number of the protective steps recommended by government experts who have contemplated *only the physical risks*—and not the psychological jeopardy envisaged here. Is not a good part of that immense "apathy" a sign of hysterical paralysis? Can anybody bring forth logical, rational arguments to support such behavior as appropriate under the existing conditions? It is, of course, unreasonable inaction.

Its actual nature as hysteria was made very clear to me a year ago at a large dinner party in Baltimore. I had arrived in that city after a visit to New York and the dinner guests began guying the people of New York for having atomic jitters. New York, they said derisively, was "plastered with air raid shelter signs." I pointed out that Baltimore was "plastered" with identical signs. Every person at the table categorically denied there was a single such sign in Baltimore—the "home town" of them all! Yet the shelter signs were there, on the main streets and in the big department stores. Subsequently, I questioned more than a hundred Baltimore citizens. Nearly all were aware that *other* cities displayed raid shelter signs. But *only one* in more than a hundred had "seen" the Baltimore signs—though the eyes of every one had fallen upon them innumerable times.

That circumstance was entirely understandable to a dynamic psychologist. The atomic fears of those persons were so great they could not let their minds recognize the signs. To do so would be to admit the reality of their fears: Baltimore could be erased from the earth. Furthermore, though they could "let" themselves "see" the same signs in other cities, their defense was *still* maintained by the expedient of jeering at such cities for a kind of municipal cowardice. Those Baltimoreans suffered *en masse,* a year ago, from simple, hysterical blindness.

The mechanism which substitutes for a fear repressed as unbearable, a target for aggression, a "whipping boy," is equally noticeable today.

The only basic concepts that can be usefully opposed to communism are liberty and the protection of individual rights. (To be sure, "religion" is opposed to communism—but half our people are virtually irreligious! Moreover, any attempt by Americans to use "religion" as the "spearhead" of anti-Communist effort would usher in a local religious struggle over whose doctrine, whose church, whose "God" was the proper instrument—thus, again, subverting intellectual liberty and damaging private rights.)

Freedom *alone* can oppose communism. It is not a group of people—as many seem to think—but an idea. However, myriads of Americans have passionately devoted themselves to a solitary anti-Communist maneuver: the

"ridding" of government—and "related agencies"—of Communist persons—and all other "poor security risks." This effort, *per se,* is good and necessary.

But the *means* many of these people employ—even including some congressmen—violate the philosophy of freedom itself and thus greatly weaken our "spiritual" defenses against communism. The further means recommended by some to "fight communism" degrade America before the world as the chief protagonist of liberty, outrage the sovereignty and freedom of our allies, and throw suspicion and fear in the hearts of all true American patriots. Such dire and immensely stupid results are exactly those toward which the Soviet propaganda machine has been striving for decades!

In addition, the efforts of the followers of "McCarthyism," even if they are ideally achieved, will not much decrease what they fear and detest: communism itself and the Communist menace. For, though they attain all their goals, upward of a half billion Communists, Communist slaves, associates, and satellites, will *still* be as formidably arraigned against us as before. The extirpation of every American traitor, commie, spy, and bad security risk would not even slow down a single Soviet reactor or alter by a jot the master schemes of the Kremlin. To feel that the whole "fight" against communism is the *relatively minor* and *wholly local* problem of "spies" is to be very hysterical indeed. But the emotion does serve to drain away a gigantic amount of hysterical energy in a seemingly effective effort—which actually merely *deludes* millions. Because it is a kind of unreason and not a logical or systematic phenomenon, I suggest the name "McCarthyism" be withdrawn and a suitable, pathological term be used, such as "McCarthy-itis."

A FALSE SENSE OF REALITY

Closely associated with McCarthy-itis is an allied manifestation common among hysterics and typical of those truly insane persons who suffer from paranoia. To maintain an unreal expression of a real fear that has been repressed requires the individual to establish a false sense of *reality itself.* His hysteria and its expression, *by definition,* do not correspond with fact and truth. All effort to insist on such distorted reality takes great energy and requires a constant, suspicious vigilance. Wherever it is necessary to defend one's false position, principle and truth must either be sacrificed or warped to match the obsessive escape-concept. This leads to *rigidity* of the personality. It causes an absolute antagonism to controversial or disagreeing opinion. Its further defense, since logic cannot be brought to its side, is often mere slander, mere libel, the tendering of the big lie. Among the sufferers of McCarthy-itis, needless to add, those pathological symptoms are constantly exhibited. In fact, no other responses are *possible* to them, when their repressions are opposed by reason, logic, high principle, or the rules of fair play. Freedom does not appeal to them any longer because they have given up *their own* freedom, their own power of choice and integrity of values. Neither

ill will nor deliberate bad citizenship motivates them; but only the automatic pattern of a mental sickness.

THE PRESENCE OF FUGUE

Examples of the third common form of clinical hysteria—fugue—are equally apparent. Again I cite only one—for reasons of space; but it should interest an audience of physicists.

A neo-religion surrounds what are called "flying saucers." Millions of people today "believe" in saucers and, of them, the majority more or less believes that "higher beings" of a humanesque (or truly human) nature have noticed from afar our experiments with atomic bombs, and are now coming to earth as Saviors—to rescue us from ourselves. One hardly need note how such ideas parallel countless other hysterical outbreaks of false faith in hours of dire anxiety. Yet the belief in Saucer Salvation is persistent, pernicious, and has been accepted by many persons who should know better.

The only "evidence" for this notion is negative: the scientific fact that it is not utterly inconceivable that some beings with high intelligence might exist somewhere and might some day reach the earth.

To believe that there is *more* "evidence" of a reliable nature is to believe our government leaders are liars and our Air Force is mad. It is to hold the same belief concerning all other governments, military bodies, and scientists. The believers cannot explain why their astronauts never hover over big cities where tens of thousands can witness them together and photograph them. (Cities, one would think, would be the logical spots for such extraterrestrial "observers" to observe! Great trust is put on "radar blips" simply because the trusting understand neither blips nor radar.)

Milton Eisler, the anthropologist, has shown how the likelihood that the evolution which produced man would be repeated step by step anywhere else, mathematically precludes the probability of the existence of "men," even if millions of habitable planets exist. The history of our own evolution, furthermore, strongly indicates that if there is a living species in cosmos able at this time to fly through space and reach the earth, it will be a "higher" species than man, wherefore detrimental to man. The fate of "lower orders" in the presence of "higher" is so well-established that people who "believe" in saucers and still retain any fragment of logic must be wild with alarm.

The "unidentified sightings" which are the source of so much of this nonsense—a public antic which at any other time would be laughed out of credence in a week—are of such a variety of alleged vehicles as to insure, if regarded as valid, that the inhabitants of a hundred or more "planets" must somehow have happened to come this way all at once!

What the credulous day-dreamers *ignore* is the capacity of man to delude himself when his motive for doing so is potent. For they have the motive! People who hallucinate, people who "see" by hundreds the same "visions"

first reported by teen-age girls in public parks, people riddled with superstition and disinclined in the main to adhere to fact, need only a slight suggestion to see saucers, chariots in the sky, or anything else. For the one thing a hysteric *must* doubt is the possibility of hysteria.

Enough. I have tried to show, by a few samples, that a great deal of current and commonplace behavior is (expectably) of a classically hysterical sort. If any of us, in 1924, could have looked ahead thirty years and beheld our present apathy in the face of hideous peril, our widespread blindness, our rationalizations, our McCarthy-itis, and our truly silly belief in saucers, I think we would have stood aghast. I think we would have realized that the American people, in millions, had gone utterly nuts.

Such—from my viewpoint—is the "pre-condition" of multitudes of my fellow-citizens who, for all anybody can promise, may find themselves face-to-face with atomic bombardment. This is the place to say that if my assumption is correct, our national state of mind vastly increases our danger *of and from* such assault, by making us far more vulnerable than we would be as a people realistic and brave enough to keep our eye on the fireball.

This *psychological vulnerability,* let it be added, has been openly discussed in *Red Fleet,* an official Soviet military journal.

MENTAL HAZARDS OF ATOMIC BOMBING

What of the specific subjective dangers of the bombs?

Space permits only a summary of such mental hazards. They have been "worried about" by the few, ignored by the many, and dealt with—by no one. We have concerned ourselves officially with blast, heat, and radiation—the material effects of atomic bombs. We have done *less than nothing* about certain effects reported as of greater magnitude by several Japanese scientists studying Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those "more devastating" effects are psychological. I say we have done "less than nothing" because what we *have* done is to accumulate a mass of costly, official data to show that, since we Americans do not panic when poisoned by potato salad at a church social, we shall not panic if nuclear holocaust obliterates our city-cores.

The Japanese found the most perilous bomb effects to be:

First, the *spectacle* of the bomb and its after-effects.

Second, the sight of the *casualties* and their overwhelming numbers.

Third, the fear of all survivors of *another bomb.*

A little thought will show what an immense factor each one of these could be. Movies and TV have given the American public no adequate idea of the mere spectacle of the bomb, its sky-filling, multi-hued aftermath, the peculiar rains and the cubic miles of rolling dust—not to mention a city afire.

When I reflect that, after a test shot one morning in Nevada, the wind changed and the surging dust enveloped us where we stood, numbers of men

broke and ran though the Rad-Safe crews reported the fallout to be harmless—and when I reflect that those men were concerned intimately with the bomb and among them was high brass from every service branch—I feel certain that the public, radiation-scared and terribly ignorant—will run like mad until it drops, *even from the dust!*

As for the sight of the wounded—what informative experience have we had with that? We Americans shun bloodshed; we wrap every accident case in a blanket and whisk it away in an ambulance. Several American doctors have told me that, to them, a badly burned human being is the most nearly unendurable sight; having seen many, I agree. Even mere unhurt *nudity* will shock many since nakedness—by long, puritanical decree—is here regarded as illegal, obscene. The bomb would denude thousands—burn off their clothing, blow it off, force people to rip it off when the flash sets it on fire. Burned cases—hideous and ambulatory—would abound, along with every other imaginable slicing, cutting, and mangling. Will our tender-minded people stand firm in the presence of such a novel, horrible black-bloody shambles of human flesh? Less-prissy Japanese were stunned near to coma.

And what about the third factor? What about the millions who may have experienced all this, *times a thousand,* and survived? Will they immediately turn to succoring the sticky human gobs around them? Will they ignore the torrential sky above and douse the fires? Will they rush back to offices and to factories where the radioactive dust swirls—and recommence industrial production? Or will they wonder if, perchance, in an hour or a day, *another* bomb will descend and turn *them* into the things they have witnessed? The thought will occur to all—and nearly all, I fear, will try to get out of town before it is too late.

To those three psychological factors, noted by the Japanese, must be added at least two more for our population. One is that panic feeds on panic; it is a contagion. And we have not only failed to take account, in our civil defense measures, of the probability of panic but we have, in my opinion, employed many measures that will *add* to that catastrophe.

For example: over the years, the main highways leading into (and out of) big cities have been posted. In case of enemy attack, the signs say, these roads will be closed to all but defense vehicles. Lately, I have noticed similar signs on main residential streets in some cities. To think that people, a bomb cloud above, a fire storm behind, screaming wounded around and rolling, radioactive dust on their heels, will obey these signs—is almost insane. In particular, people will ignore attempts to close off the streets *on which they live.* To imagine they can be checked is like imagining Niagara Falls can be reversed by a regiment equipped with teaspoons. The posting of such signs amounts to what the Freudian psychologists call "magic thinking," a trust in mere symbols.

Even if the grownup, normal population obeyed, there are myriads in

every city who could not. More than a quarter of us are children. About a tenth of our adults are "emotionally unstable" even without external provocation. About 6 per cent of every big city population is criminal. Half the hospital beds are occupied by the mentally ill. In every city, thousands cannot read English. The bomb would turn them all loose.

Finally, the general population has been subjected, for nearly nine years, to a "war of nerves" unwittingly waged against it by its own leaders. There has been no coherent plan for atomic information, for public education, or even for presenting simple facts. Secrecy has built up potential psychological catastrophe to a degree so great that secrecy *alone* (in a nation unused to it) explains much of the "repressed fear" discussed here. *Hysteria and panic rise from the unknown and the misunderstood, the withheld, the hinted, the suspected, the ignored, and from the repressed dread that materializes unexpectedly.*

In addition to making the average citizen feel he is not allowed to understand atomic weapons—the leaders and spokesmen of the government—along with a multitude of military men—have produced a nine-year torrent of *contradictions.* Some statements—such as the cautious, measured, and often palpably inadequate announcements of AEC—have been reliable. Others—such as Groves' original statement that it would take the Russians fifty years to make a bomb—have been foolhardy. Truman's recent assertion that he didn't believe the Soviets had a bomb was another example of innocent folly. Eisenhower's press conference admission that he "hadn't thought" what he would say if the Russians announced (and shot off) new and more formidable weapons, is a third instance of poor procedure. There have been literally *thousands.*

If an enemy had wanted to achieve the utmost in the sabotage of American morale in the Atomic Age, he could have found no better method than to let American "spokesmen," officials, soldiers, airmen, sailors, and other "experts" blow their atomically empty tops on TV, radio, and in the press, for nine shameful years. This amounts to an inadvertent, nationwide use of the psychology lab method of driving test animals crazy! Yet this is what *has happened!* In addition, Russia has, from time to time, calculatingly augmented the confusion and horror by making reports of its progress at moments psychologically effective—for Russia.

The reader may feel from the above that I favor restrictions on "free speech." Not so. What I favored, from the day the Enola Gay returned with her bomb bay empty, was an *authoritative federal committee to present the facts and to suggest a constant, rational basis for atomic "public relations."* But, for nine years, with the exception of this *Bulletin* and the limits imposed on it, there has been no reliable information source and no responsible, continuous discussion anywhere. Such a committee as I suggest should have access to all facts and—among all the sciences, to the science of the unconscious mind, which I have made use of here.

The particular reason I have had for pursuing my study is this:

Atomic war is possible; if it comes, American panic is likely, in my opinion. Russian panic is likely, too. But we have the roads, cars, and communications to make panic into chaos, irremediable and absolute. They do not. If all their big cities are wrecked, some 15 per cent of the Russian population will feel the immediate effects. If only two score of our larger cities are hit, two-thirds of us all will swiftly know a full measure of horror. That difference represents only in its lesser part, the fact that we are urban dwellers and the Russians are not. The *larger part* of *our* catastrophe would be the product of *panic!*

Hence unconscious attitudes may be America's Achilles' heel, supposing the postulates of dynamic psychology are more searching—where fear and instinct are concerned—than the neat tables of those students who assume that human response to a break in the levee is a good index of reaction to Armageddon.

The most recent study of our attitudes, the so-called "Lehigh Report"—a nine-volume effort which was declassified last December—reinforces the statements made here concerning national unawareness. But even the Lehigh Report appears to regard our public "unawareness" not as the evidence of a formidably dangerous hysteria, of a national *repression,* but as the result of somehow insufficient educational and informational activity.

The trouble, as I see it, is quite different. The people "know" enough—enough to be *afraid to a degree they cannot even acknowledge.* And the problem, as I see it, is so immense and so difficult that only the full use of Executive authority in the formation of a committee or committees of overwhelming populate authority and credibility to put to use the principles of dynamic psychology itself, can take the measure of our vast vulnerability. To wait "until a few bombs teach us the facts"—which, some say, is the only way out of our present dilemma—would be to wait until the *Bulletin's* clock-hands passed midnight—and vanished altogether.

For to exploit the whole of physics without employing all known psychology is like arming apes without considering instinct.

Up until now, it is *all* we have done.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Wylie's essay is clearly an attempt at persuasion. Yet it differs markedly from the speeches of Mark Antony and Patrick Henry. What is this essential difference?
2. What widespread assumption is Wylie attacking? Aside from its soundness or unsoundness, what strong emotional appeal does that assumption hold?
3. The "official position" of the Civil Defense Administration is derived from an analogy between American responses to a variety of past calamities and their assumed response to a possible future calamity—atomic bombing. In this book

we have repeatedly called your attention to other arguments by analogy, some apparently sound, some obviously not. Do you think *this* analogy is sound? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Much of Wylie's argument rests on his definition of a technical term—*hysteria.* In view of what you learned about the methods of definition outlined by Rapoport and exemplified by other writers in the section on "Definition," do you think Wylie's definition is clear and useful? Which of Rapoport's five methods does he use?
5. Are the various kinds of hysteria described by Wylie—hysterical paralysis, hysterical substitution, hysterical fugue—related to the process described earlier in this book by Symonds as "rationalizing"? If you think they differ, then in what ways?
6. Wylie says that Americans demonstrate all three kinds of hysteria in their "current and commonplace behavior." He cites the Baltimoreans' ignorance of the presence of air-raid signs in their own city, the spy consciousness of many citizens and public officials, and the continuing "reports" of people who claim to have seen flying saucers as evidence. Do you agree that these examples are all reliable indicators of hysterical paralysis, hysterical substitution, and hysterical fugue, respectively? Can you cite other evidence of public attitudes toward war, the atom bomb, and the Communist threat which either tends to support or refute Wylie's thesis? Finally, do you see how a really violent reaction on the part of some individual against Wylie's argument might be advanced as evidence tending to support that very argument?
7. In the fifth paragraph of his section "Reasons Why the Public Will Panic," Wylie states that the laws of dynamic psychology parallel the laws of thermodynamics and the laws of motion. What do "laws" mean in this sense? Is the evidence for the laws of dynamic psychology of the same kind as the evidence for the laws of thermodynamics and motion?
8. In the final third of his article, where he discusses the "Mental Hazards of Atomic Bombing," Wylie calls the present use of street signs which declare that in event of attack, roads will be closed to all but defense vehicles " 'magic thinking'—a trust in mere symbols." His point is that a poorly informed and inadequately prepared public cannot be controlled by signs or words. Cite instances you have observed where signs *do* suffice to control public behavior, instances where they do *not,* and instances where they succeed with some and not with others. From your study of the essays in the "Language" and "Definition" sections of this book, how do you account for the varying success of these efforts to control public behavior by signs?

PROJECTS

1. As a means of analyzing an argument so that you can see how it is constructed and test its soundness for yourself, an outline may prove very useful. Because Wylie's subject is of great importance to us all, and because his argument deserves close analysis, we suggest that you outline his essay. (Note: his opening paragraph provides you with a useful suggestion for beginning such an outline.)
2. As an interesting and useful bit of research, investigate a limited group of persons (your classmates, the occupants of your dormitory or fraternity, the

residents in your immediate neighborhood) to find out (*a*) to what extent a belief in flying saucers from outer space exists in the group, and (*b*) what reasons these people have for believing—or disbelieving. Having gathered your data, write a paper comparing your findings with those of Wylie.

Chet Huntley

A CAMPUS PROBLEM

Chet Huntley is a West Coast radio-TV news commentator who seeks to bring a careful and responsible interpretation of the news to his listeners. In 1954 he shared with Edward R. Murrow the distinction of winning the Peabody Award for "his skill in analyzing the news and his talent for mature commentary." He had previously won another Peabody Award, in 1942, for a series of documentary broadcasts on Spanish-Americans called "These Are Americans."

The following selection is the transcript of a portion of one of Huntley's quarter-hour broadcasts. The occasion was the presentation to Huntley of an honorary membership in the U.C.L.A. chapter of Beta Sigma Tau, a relatively new national college fraternity devoted to promoting interracial tolerance. Huntley introduced a student from the fraternity who presented him with the award for his efforts to further mutual good-will and understanding among national and racial groups. Then, after a pause for the usual commercial, Huntley proceeded with the following argument against racial discrimination on college campuses.

Mr. Alston, I thank you and your fraternity for this commendation. I appreciate it and I trust you will listen and observe to what extent I live up to its inference of trust and confidence.

This award comes from the college fraternity Beta Sigma Tau. I should like to talk about college fraternities and Beta Sigma Tau in just a moment after this brief message from our announcer.

[*Commercial*]

True, this subject is not of cosmic nor perhaps even thermo-nuclear proportions, but it's a live issue nevertheless; and it's one which has a very decided bearing on the attitudes of our young men and women in the formative and highly impressionable years of their lives.

The fraternities and sororities of our colleges have been in need of some examination for a long time. This examination is being undertaken at a somewhat accelerated pace.

It should be obvious that it falls upon some citizens in certain positions

A CAMPUS PROBLEM From a radio broadcast over the ABC network, May 5, 1954. Reproduced by permission of the author.

or endeavors, and it falls upon some of our institutions particularly, to maintain a special awareness of what the democratic process is and to make certain that they practice it or implement it just a little better than other individuals and other institutions. Such is the American college or university. Is there any place in our national life where the basic tenets of the democratic way would be more clearly realized and more stubbornly practiced? The college or the university should be the showcase of American democracy . . . the advance guard leading the rest of us toward a richer and more ideal fulfillment of what we have come to call "the unfinished American dream."

Yet, to put it quite bluntly: the college fraternity or sorority is, in many cases, a shocking repository of racial, economic, social, and religious bigotry.

Here are some typical excerpts from the constitutions and by-laws of college fraternities and sororities:

"Members must be of the Aryan race and not of the black, Malayan or Semitic race."

How different is that from the rules of the German college clubs which Hitler used to his advantage?

Candidates for pledge-ship "must not be of Mongolian, Malaysian, Negro or Jewish blood."

The words "white Caucasian" are found frequently in the constitutions and by-laws of the fraternities and sororities. In some cases, not only are Negroes, Jews and Orientals disqualified, but Catholics are precluded, too.

My own fraternity has a clause in its constitution which, as I recall, precludes all but those of the Caucasian race. At least it did have that rule. Some time ago, this reporter wrote to the national headquarters asking that his name be stricken from the rolls until such time as that clause were removed. I received a reply, containing the nonsensical advice that my name could not be stricken from the rolls because once a member you're a member for life. Well . . . I have a bit of news for the fraternity on that score.

This is not to suggest for a moment that every college fraternity and sorority should rush out day after tomorrow and swear in a few representatives of every minority group. But when a qualified member of a minority group comes along, one whose attributes and character and future might be appreciated by the members of the fraternity, one with whom the members might care to associate . . . then that individual should not be barred because of his race, his color, or his national origin.

One day it may well occur to some of the members of these fraternities and sororities that the Communists in Asia and Africa seem to be having tremendous success in causing other peoples of the world (who outnumber us, incidentally, about 5 to 1) to hate and despise us. These present undergraduates on our campuses may wonder how and why this hatred is entertained, particularly as they prepare to send their own sons off to military service and possible combat.

One very important reason for this hatred exists right in the college

fraternity and sorority. To foreign students and to peoples of other lands it's taken as a sure sign that the white man still insists that he's carrying his "burden." It convinces too many foreign people that we in this country are living a lie and engaging in shameless hypocrisy. It's looked upon as part of the whole picture: the attitude of the white man toward the Chinese coolie or the Arab peasant or the African villager; the flogging with the white man's cane, the shouted orders, the whole air of superiority.

If there's any truth in this world, it's the description of the present struggle as one for the minds of men. That being so, foreign students are coming to this country by the thousands. Every college campus in this country has foreign students attending every conceivable sort of class. We may rightfully and logically expect these students to form the elite corps of the leadership of these countries in the not too distant future. So what will be their attitudes about this country? To be sure, they'll be aware of our many splendid characteristics and refinements, but they'll also be aware of the bigotry that exists on the college campus.

Put ourselves in the places of these men and women. How would we react if in some foreign country we were informed that there was something wrong with us that automatically precluded our identification with a group which we might wish to join? That sort of burning resentment can be transformed into hatred so very easily.

The pity of it is that on virtually every college campus there is a scientist who will point out what Harvard anthropology professor Earnest Albert Hooton has said: "A race is a major physical grouping of mankind based upon the inheritance of combinations of anatomical features.

"Hence, members of the same race look somewhat alike, but they do not necessarily think alike or behave alike. Science knows no psychological or behavioral peculiarities certainly attributable to race. Nor are there 'superior' races ranked by scientific tests. All civilized nations consist of racially mixed people. 'Pure' races are virtual abstractions. Aryans are not a race, but a linguistic classification. Jews are not a race, but a specially selected, inbred, cultural and religious group. Racial prejudice and racial discrimination arise from human competitiveness, selfishness and stupidity, not from real racial differences in psychology and behavior. There are probably more differences in temperament and behavior between fat men and thin men of the same race than between Negroes and whites of similar body builds, or between Jews and gentiles."

It was interesting to me, therefore, to become aware, not too long ago, of a new national college fraternity called Beta Sigma Tau. May I read a portion of its preamble:

"Seeking comradeship, believing that the ideals of fraternity are to level, not to raise barriers among men, understanding that our school, our country, our world is best served by a spirit of brotherhood among free men, we students and alumni of American colleges and universities establish this Constitu-

tion of Beta Sigma Tau founded upon a Brotherhood and Democracy which transcend racial, national and religious differences."

It was in 1948 that Beta Sigma Tau was founded in Chicago. Today it's an expanding and growing national fraternity, opening its doors to Christian, Mohammedan, Jew, Hindu or whatever; to white and Negro, Oriental or Indian; to rich and poor.

Therefore, it seems to me that it's incumbent upon this reporter to turn this award around, and to offer it to Beta Sigma Tau for its splendid and rewarding work in behalf of the brotherhood of man, in behalf of the "American dream," and in behalf of our cause in this world struggle for the minds and sympathies of men.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Huntley makes the broad generalization that "the college fraternity or sorority is, in many cases, a shocking repository of racial, economic, social, and religious bigotry." Are all aspects of this generalization equally well supported in his talk?
2. Besides citing some evidence designed to show that discrimination exists in college fraternities, Huntley also seeks to persuade his listeners that such discrimination leads to unfortunate results. What major argument does he use in support of this contention?
3. Anyone attempting to persuade others to share his point of view on such an explosive subject is faced with some interesting language problems. Mark those passages in this talk which are in "designative" language, "appraisive" language, and "prescriptive" language, respectively. What is the connection between the ratio of these three kinds of language signs and the methods of persuasion used by Huntley?
4. Several of the previous writers have emphasized that the *meanings* of words depend on the *experiences* of the user with those activities which the words symbolize. How might this explain the college student who is theoretically without prejudice against other racial and ethnic groups but whose reactions to specific social situations reveal prejudice?
5. Huntley's fraternity declared that his name could not be stricken from the rolls, because "once a member you're a member for life." Is this declaration of the fraternity an example of confusing a language symbol with a reality? Explain.
6. Political observers have frequently noted the tendency of many voters to focus on national and international political issues and to ignore local issues. Is there a parallel between the attitude of such voters toward political issues and that of some college students toward race problems? Explain.
7. In what ways does Huntley's argument seem adapted to his medium, radio? Are there any limitations radio may place on serious discussions of this kind?

PROJECT

If you agree with Huntley's position, write a paper advancing arguments which the limits of a 15-minute radio talk did not permit him to introduce. If you disagree, write a paper presenting arguments and evidence which he ignored.

Robert Maynard Hutchins

IN DEFENSE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Robert Hutchins, as Chancellor of the University of Chicago, appeared before the Broyles Commission of the Illinois State Legislature in its 1949 investigation of alleged subversion at the University of Chicago. At the time of his appearance the enactment of various bills to eliminate "subversives" was being contemplated. The legislation was not carried through.

Note the simple, very factual presentation in the early part of the talk and the interspersal of occasional witty barbs, then the shift to his basic philosophical arguments not only against certain restrictions on his university but against restrictions on all institutions of learning. Hutchins moves from the particular problems to the underlying questions.

Robert Hutchins left the University of Chicago in 1951 to become an associate director of the Ford Foundation. Most recently he has administered the foundation's Fund for the Republic, which is concerned with ways of meeting threats to intellectual freedom.

My name is Robert M. Hutchins. I have been the chief executive officer of the University of Chicago for twenty years.

The subpoena I have received summons me to testify concerning subversive activities at the University of Chicago. This is a leading question: the answer is assumed in the question. I cannot testify concerning subversive activities at the University of Chicago, because there are none.

The Trustees of the University of Chicago are: [Here Chancellor Hutchins read the names and business connections of the 34 Trustees.]

These gentlemen are responsible for the conduct of the University of Chicago. Legally they *are* the University of Chicago. They, and particularly those who reside in Chicago, spend countless hours familiarizing themselves with what is going on at the University. It will not be charged that they are engaged in subversive activities. It can hardly be supposed that they would sanction such activities.

The faculty of the University is, as everybody knows, one of the most

IN DEFENSE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM Reprinted by permission of The University of Chicago Magazine from an article in *Tower Topics,* June, 1949, by Robert Maynard Hutchins entitled "Hutchins at Springfield."

distinguished in the world. The faculty numbers 1,000. None of its members is engaged in subversive activities. The principal reason why the University has such a distinguished faculty is that the University guarantees its professors absolute and complete academic freedom.

Nobody has ever ventured to say that any member of the faculty of the University of Chicago is a Communist.

It has sometimes been said that some members of the faculty belong to some so-called "Communist-front" organizations. The University of Chicago does not believe in the un-American doctrine of guilt by association.

The fact that some Communists belong to, believe in, or even dominate some of the organizations to which some of our professors belong does not show that those professors are engaged in subversive activities. All that such facts would show would be that these professors believed in some of the objects of the organizations. It is entirely possible to belong to organizations combating fascism and racial discrimination, for example, without desiring to subvert the government of the United States, even though some other members of these organizations may desire to subvert the government of the United States.

The University has many thousands of students. None of them, so far as I know, is engaged in subversive activities. One or two students are alleged to have said publicly that they are Communists. I am not aware that they have advocated the overthrow of the government by violence. If they have, they have broken the law of this state, and the proper officials should have instituted proceedings against them.

As is well known, there is a Communist Club among the students of the University. Eleven students belong to it. The Club has not sought to subvert the government of this state. Its members claim that they are interested in studying communism, and some of them, perhaps all of them, may be sympathetic toward communism. But the study of communism is not a subversive activity. I am not sympathetic toward communism; but I do not see how the sympathetic feelings of ten or a dozen students at the University of Chicago can be a danger to the state.

The policy of the University is to admit law-abiding students who have the qualifications to do the University's work. It would not be in the public interest to exclude students of Communistic leanings. If we did, how would they ever learn better?

The policy of the University is to permit students to band together for any lawful purpose in terms of their common interests. This is conformable to the spirit of the Constitution of the United States, which guarantees free speech and the right of the people peaceably to assemble. There are 130 student clubs of one kind or another on the campus.

Fourteen years ago a legislative committee attempted to find evidence of subversive activities at the University. You know that no evidence was found. There have been no changes since that would justify this investigation.

Since the last investigation the University has been intrusted by the government of the United States with the most momentous military secret in history. The first chain reaction took place on the campus of the University. The University today manages for the government its principal laboratory of atomic research. In addition, the University is engaged in many other secret research projects on behalf of the defense establishment. The government maintains a security officer on the campus. Because of the secret projects I have referred to, federal agents constantly visit the campus. It is unlikely that if there were activities there they would not have reported them.

An investigator for this commission spent days on the campus a year ago. Neither the Legislature nor the University has been informed that he discovered any subversive activities at the University. I can only conclude that he found none.

The resolution calling for this investigation originated in the House, of which the chairman of this commission is not a member. The reason was that some hundreds of young people, about 20 per cent of whom were students at the University of Chicago, demonstrated in an impolite manner against certain bills pending in the Legislature.

The penalty does not seem to fit the crime. Rudeness and redness are not the same. I recognize that it is provoking to the Legislature to be impolitely treated when it is conscientiously performing its duties. But even if I admitted that students of the University of Chicago were as impolite as they are alleged to have been, I could not admit that impoliteness was even presumptive evidence of subversive activity or that the fact that students were impolite showed that they had been taught to be impolite or subversive by the faculty of the University of Chicago.

The bills against which these students demonstrated were not so obviously perfect as to suggest that anybody who demonstrated against them was subversive or engaged in subversive activities. Three out of four newspapers in Chicago are opposed to these bills.

These students exercised their right as American citizens to protest against pending legislation of which they disapproved. They were entirely right to disapprove of this pending legislation. The Broyles bills are unnecessary, since any dangers against which they are designed to protect us are already covered by laws now on the statute-books. They are, in my opinion as a former professor of law, unconstitutional. And, worst of all, they are un-American, since they aim at thought control. They aim at the suppression of ideas.

It is now fashionable to call anybody with whom you disagree a Communist or a fellow-traveler. So Branch Rickey darkly hinted the other day that the attempt to eliminate the reserve clause in baseball contracts was the work of Communists.

One who criticizes the foreign policy of the United States, or the draft, or the Atlantic Pact, or who believes that our military establishment is too

expensive can be called a fellow-traveler, for the Russians are of the same opinion. One who thinks that there are too many slums and too much lynching in America can be called a fellow-traveler, for the Russians say the same. One who opposes racial discrimination or the Ku Klux Klan can be called a fellow-traveler, for the Russians claim that they ought to be opposed. Anybody who wants any change of any kind in this country can be called a fellow-traveler, because the Russians want change in this country, too.

The Constitution of the United States guarantees freedom of speech and the right of the people peaceably to assemble. The American way has been to encourage thought and discussion. We have never been afraid of thought and discussion. The whole educational system, and not merely the University of Chicago, is a reflection of the American faith in thought and discussion as the path to peaceful change and improvement.

The danger to our institutions is not from the tiny minority who do not believe in them. It is from those who would mistakenly repress the free spirit upon which those institutions are built. The miasma of thought control that is now spreading over the country is the greatest menace to the United States since Hitler.

There are two ways of fighting subversive ideas. One is the policy of repression. This policy is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of this country. It cannot be justly enforced, because it is impossible to tell precisely what people are thinking; they have to be judged by their acts. It has been generally thought that the widest possible latitude should be given to freedom of speech and publication, on the ground that the expression of differing points of view, some of which are bound to be unpopular, is the way to progress in the state. Hyde Park Corner in London, where anybody may say anything, has long been a symbol of the confidence of the Anglo-Saxon world in the ability of democratic institutions to withstand criticism, and even to nourish itself upon it. There are numerous laws already on the books which provide for the punishment of subversive acts.

The policy of repression of ideas cannot work and never has worked. The alternative to it is the long, difficult road of education. To this the American people have been committed. It requires patience and tolerance, even in the face of intense provocation. It requires faith in the principles and practices of democracy, faith that when the citizen understands all forms of government he will prefer democracy and that he will be a better citizen if he is convinced than he would be if he were coerced.

The Legislature and the University of Chicago are both opposed to Communism. The task of the Legislature is not merely to protect the people by passing laws that prevent the minority from overthrowing the state. It is to eliminate those social and economic evils and those political injustices which are the sources of discontent and disaffection. The members of the faculty of the University have many times assisted the Legislature in its efforts to dis-

cover and remedy these evils and injustices, and they are ready at all times to assist it.

The task of the University is to enlighten the community, to provide citizens who know the reasons for their faith and who will be a bulwark to our democracy because they have achieved conviction through study and thought. The University does not claim that it is perfect or that it always succeeds. It asserts, however, that the policy of education is better than the policy of repression and that it is earnestly dedicated to making the policy of education produce the results that the American people have believed it can produce. All the University asks of the Legislature, and all it has ever asked of it, is a sympathetic understanding of this task.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. The doctrine of "guilt by association," which Hutchins criticizes, can be reduced to a syllogism. For example, suppose someone were to insist that because you belong to the campus music society you are a "longhair." Reduce his argument to a syllogism, indicating his major and minor premises and conclusion. Now examine the charges leveled against some Chicago University professors because of their membership in certain organizations. Again, reduce the reasoning behind these charges to a syllogism. How does the logic stand up?
2. Point out examples, close to hand, of how you and your classmates may occasionally engage in this line of reasoning. Consider, for example, your opinion of athletes, or of girls who are members of a sorority which does not enjoy high social status—opinions not based on personal acquaintance but on your initial reactions to persons who belong to either of these groups. How does "guilt by association"—or "prestige by association"—resemble the stereotyping process described earlier in this book?
3. How sound is the reasoning of a person who, having satisfied himself that the "guilt by association" doctrine is not *logically* sound, concludes that "association" is never a useful index of a man's belief and character? If you think this second line of reasoning is unsound, demonstrate by means of a syllogism what might make it so.
4. The University of Chicago at the time of this statement permitted a Communist Club on the campus. What is the basic assumption about the results of free inquiry into controversies which underlies Hutchins's defense of this university policy?
5. What was the line of reasoning followed by the members of the Broyles Commission who pressed for an investigation of the university as a result of some Chicago students' joining in demonstrations against certain bills pending in the state legislature? Reduce this reasoning to a syllogism. Discuss its logic.
6. Hutchins objected to "leading questions." Distinguish between the question, "Why do you go to a college which shows favoritism toward athletes?" and the question, "What is your college's policy on athletic scholarships?" Cite examples of your own of "leading questions."
7. What premises concerning freedom of speech and the growth of ideas does

Hutchins use as proof that "education" rather than "repression of ideas" is the best way to fight subversion?

8. What would seem to be Hutchins's purpose in describing the business connections of the University's trustees? (These are only alluded to in the first part of the present account but were spelled out in impressive detail in the original talk.) Do you consider it a valid type of proof? Support your answer.

PROJECT

Write a careful paper answering these questions: (*a*) In what specific ways does Hutchins seek to show that Communism among students is no danger? (*b*) Do any of his arguments seem to be more valid than others?

Gilbert Highet

EVERY MAN A TEACHER

By now it has become evident that each of the preceding writers and speakers—Antony, Patrick Henry, Wylie, Huntley, and Hutchins—was seeking to persuade, to inculcate an idea, to gain acceptance of a point of view. Some were trying to persuade by emotional language and associations, others by closely reasoned argumentation.

In the following selection from his book The Art of Teaching *Highet proposes that most of us are constantly involved in persuading others that such-and-such a procedure or conclusion is the correct one, that it makes sense. His article may suggest that the politician, preacher, teacher, and writer are merely doing in one form what fathers, mothers, doctors, artists, and students are doing in another form all day long.*

Highet is a well-known teacher of classical languages and literature at Columbia University, and, until the fall of 1954, was the regular book reviewer for Harper's Magazine.

We all teach and learn, all our lives. . . . Every father and mother do an astonishing amount of teaching. Their lessons cover the entire universe, from "Where is God?" to the use of soap, and have a lifetime effect. Thirty years from now, an eminent politician will be surlily refusing an important invitation because his parents did not teach him table manners, and a playwright will be going to sleep with veronal and waking up with benzedrine because his family encouraged him in bad sleep habits. The disciplinary kind of parental teaching is tiresome to do, although necessary. But there is another kind which is so interesting and exciting that it is hard to see why anyone misses it or cuts it down. Children ask thousands of questions, because

EVERY MAN A TEACHER Reprinted from *The Art of Teaching* by Gilbert Highet, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1950 by Gilbert Highet.

their world is all new, all strange and bright. If they ask at the wrong time, when we are fishing out the laundry or trying to get them to sleep, they should—no, they should not be shut up, they should be told: "Ask me again, at breakfast-time, will you?" When they ask at the right time, they should always be answered. It is hateful to hear a little boy in a train asking, as he looks out of the window: "What makes the wires go up and down?" and receiving a reply which would be downright rude from one grown-up to another, and is anyhow stupid and stupefying for a child. "Never mind" and "Don't bother me now" and "Sthespeedofthtrain." What good is that? It merely makes him (*a*) decide that all grown-ups are stuffy and ill-tempered and unable to enjoy wonderful things, (*b*) become a little less hopeful about understanding the world, slower, a little stupider, less interested in learning, (*c*) draw a little away from his parents, so that the family group feels more strain and has less of the easy communal life which is natural to it. Of course it is difficult to answer all their questions. It is impossible to answer some of them completely. But an answer should be given, if only to keep them interested in learning and friendly to their parents, for that is what all children are naturally, and anything else is a distortion. When they ask "Where does the rain come from?" tell them. If you don't know, tell them that too, and promise to find out. It is hard for them to think you know everything. It is good for them to think you like learning: that you find the world a place to enjoy, and not a mere factory to work in.

Fathers and mothers might do a great deal more talking about central subjects, when the children get older. Boys and girls in their teens are sometimes very distant, hard to talk to. But if you talk to them about the subjects which worry them, like war and money and love, or the subjects which they foresee will worry them, like getting a job and holding it and getting married, they ask very sharp questions and talk without any sign of boredom. Not enough fathers talk to their sons about their own jobs. Many a boy finds out with astonishment that his father holds a post which is important and interesting, and about which the two have never exchanged a sentence. Or he learns too late that he could have profited from his father's experience in a career he thought quite unconnected with his own.

And in general the relation between parents and children is essentially based on teaching. Many of us forget this. Some think it is based on Love, others on control. But you can give a child as much love as it can absorb and still make it an idiot unfit to face the world; while the best and surest way to control your children is to explain the rules you intend to enforce. And there is a great quantity of learning which can never be acquired outside the home, unless the family is abolished altogether and twenty-four-hour-a-day schools are set up. It is ridiculous that schools should be asked to teach children how to brush their teeth, or save money, or organize their personal lives. Parents can, if they try, do all that more wisely and effectively than any

school-teacher. Long afterwards the children will remember such teaching and see that it has become part of themselves.

Husbands and wives also teach each other and learn from each other. Many of the angers and sorrows of married life arise because they forget this. A wife sees her husband making a fool of himself with his pay. She has her own ideas about how it should be spent. Usually she sets out to break his will and impose her own will upon him. The obvious results follow. Either he resists, and breaks hers; or he yields, and hates her for dominating him; or there is a fifteen-round draw, leading to a continuous series of grudge-fights. A husband finds his wife lazy and untidy. Usually he complains, and then shouts. Either she resists, and makes a point of being lazier; or she yields under protest, and rapidly and reluctantly clears up the house they both live in; or the result is another draw in which neither is satisfied. Yet, looked at from outside, one of the two is more right than the other, and instead of being a trial of will-power the problem should be one of persuasion and education. Every young husband and wife can realize, when they think, that they are not equally competent in all subjects; but uncountable quarrels break out because one of them is unwilling to acknowledge his or her inadequacy and learn from the other. Men, we can still learn, even from our wives. Ladies, . . .

Looking about, we find that there are a great many relationships in ordinary life that depend on teaching and learning. For instance, a well-run office always has an efficient manager. And the efficient manager always spends most of his energy explaining what he knows should be done and persuading people to do it. So many efficiency systems have broken down because they were based on the assumption that people could be used like machine parts. But when the people, instead of being treated as "hands" or "units" or "bodies" or even "personnel," were told what they were doing and why—*sincerely*—they worked efficiently. Foremen, secretaries, shop-stewards, production-managers, department heads, all these essential persons have been taught, and have learnt, and are teaching others. One good sergeant is worth fifteen men, because he can teach the fifteen men with him so well that their effectiveness doubles.

Doctors can cure people by chemical and surgical interference, but they can only keep them well by teaching them. After correcting the throat condition, they say "You must cut down on your smoking. You must avoid abrupt changes of temperature. You must be careful about sources of infection." That is teaching. Not every doctor does it well. Often it is done by authority without persuasion, the worst method of teaching. That is why modern medicine is so efficient in curing diseases and sometimes so inadequate in averting them. That is why the legend has grown up that doctors are willing to stop illnesses, but not unwilling to see them start. Or perhaps

the recent shift in proportion has deceived us, and they have merely been concentrating more upon the more urgent problem, which is to stop diseases; and now they are going to turn to the preliminary job of educating their patients not to catch diseases. More and more we are beginning to see how the mind affects the body and can make it ill or well. A man does not simply "contract" stomach ulcers as a car "contracts" a smashed fender. He gives them to himself by eating and digesting wrongly. He cannot be prohibited from making these blunders. He can be frightened; or he can be taught. The good doctor will teach him what mistakes he has been making, why they are mistakes, and how to avoid them. There are still some people who will continue to make the mistakes even after that, just as there are people who will smash up their cars by passing on a turn, although they have learnt the traffic rules; but these types suffer from a deeper psychological illness, which the ordinary doctor cannot cure. The ordinary man will accept the lessons, and learn.

The ordinary doctor cannot minister to a mind diseased. The specialists who can are the psychiatrists. And they are essentially teachers. To begin with, they did not think of themselves as teachers. They thought of their job as analogous to that of the chemist who analyzes an obscure substance, slowly and patiently, until he has measured all its components, discovered the cause of their interactions, and explained its peculiar powers, instabilities, opacities, and resistances. They hoped that once their patients saw the hidden components of their minds exposed, they would become able to conquer the weaknesses from which they had suffered. But experience has proved this to be wrong. The psychiatrist's patient usually does not sincerely thank him for the exposure of his hidden weaknesses, but proceeds to build up another set of concealments to preserve them. Analysis is only half the doctor's job in these cases. The other half is teaching. After finding the weaknesses, he must start a process of education designed to complete and correct the education which his patient's father and mother bungled. Because of her mother's cruelty, a girl is convinced that no man will ever love her normally, that she can never marry and have a home like her mother. This conviction, which she may never put into words, makes her behave strangely, foolishly, badly. If she goes to a psychiatrist, his first duty is to find out why she is misbehaving. With patience, he will discover the conviction, which she may have hidden away by "forgetting" or obscuring it. But he must then start to substitute a new and healthy conviction for it, explaining to her that she is an ordinary girl, that her chances are as good as those of all her friends, that the world is full of normal healthy marriages, and so on, gently and patiently for many hours. If he effects a real cure, he will have done it by discovering the faults in her education and teaching her to correct them. He will be like the orthopedic surgeon who gets a patient with distorted muscles, diagnoses the cause of the distortion, and then prescribes and supervises a set of exercises to correct it. The teaching is as important as the analysis.

Clergymen and priests have something of the same responsibility. Their congregations see them as friends and as fellow-workers, and listen to their teaching in the form of sermons; but it is when something really goes wrong that they are called upon for help. The help they give is largely in the form of teaching. Guidance, it is called, and consolation. A great deal of it consists in talking over problems which have always existed, but which some sudden crisis has made urgent. An only son is killed, a husband deserts his wife, a woman is told she has only a year to live. The sufferers ask "Why?" They ask "What am I to do?" They ask "How can I bear this?" Sometimes they make violent threats which they themselves know to be wrong, which they want someone to overcome by persuasion. A minister of God can do a great deal by merely being there. Company is sympathy. (After Job had lost all his sons and daughters, his friends came to comfort him. What they said is in the Book of Job; but their best consolation was given before they spoke, when they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, in silence.) But after silent sympathy has done all it can, consolation still has to be given in words. If these words are to have any permanent effect, they must have some content. What content can they have, except advice, explanation, teaching? The Christian church has been best in those periods when it took its mission of teaching most seriously, and its priests still show their noblest side when they teach us how to bear what must be borne.

In public life, on a larger but shallower scale, there are many men who use the techniques of teaching although they may not think of themselves as teachers. Advertising men have grasped some of these essential methods more firmly than many professional educators:

(1) *Make it vivid:* every package has a symbolic design, every poster has a picture.

(2) *Make it memorable:* the name of the product must be clear, crisp, and attractive, easily pronounced and remembered; slogans must be devised to cling to the slippery mind of the public.

(3) *Make it relevant:* this is the advertiser's chief difficulty, for how on earth can he persuade millions of people that their lives will be improved if they try one kind of toothpaste rather than another? However, he solves it, partly by association (Toothpastium supports a favorite radio comedian, and so it is attractive; Soapium always has a picture of a girl with a pretty smile, in bridal dress), and partly by persuasion in double-talk, heavily controlled by the Pure Food and Drug Laws (Cleanium contains that New Magic ingredient, Cleano, which 1,589 doctors say makes every one of your 32 teeth Cleaner.)

However debased—and however lucrative—this is still teaching.

Commercial advertising is only one branch of a large activity which is growing larger all the time. In politics this is called propaganda. (The word, by the way, means "spreading," and comes from the name of one of the Roman Catholic church central committees, De Propaganda Fide, for the

Spreading of the Faith.) It is a mistake to believe this new. Nearly all states and statesmen have always been trying to get the people to support their policies: the only exceptions are a few of the secret-police oligarchies, like Venice and Sparta. The only thing that is new about it is the scale on which it can now be done, because of the invention of printing and of instantaneous communication over distances, and the introduction of universal education and adult suffrage. And I believe in the long run we shall find that the difference in scale has not made any important difference in kind. It seems to me that the Reform Bill agitation of 1831-2 in Britain and the abolitionist propaganda of the fifties in America stirred these nations more deeply than equally important causes which have been more heavily propagandized in recent times. In our own lifetime we have seen a number of propaganda lines, after being heavily plugged and widely accepted, fade away into nothing—for instance, the idea that world wars were fomented by private armament firms. Yet on its highest level political propaganda is a very honorable, necessary, and useful form of statesmanship. We believe, and others profess, that good government is built on the consent of the governed. The governed cannot consent fully to any course of action unless they know what it is. It is therefore the duty of every good government to tell them what is being done for them and in their name. They may refuse their consent because they do not understand it. If so, the government will explain more fully and simply. They may withhold consent because they do not approve. If so, the government will try to persuade them more convincingly. And this is where the distinction between explaining the truth and embroidering it begins to fade away. A government easily assures itself that if it tells a lie, it does so to bring about a greater truth; if it conceals a fact, it is doing so for tactical reasons only; if it distorts the whole nation's view of history, it is acting in the service of the people rather than for its own self-perpetuation.

Is there any hope, then? Must all governments corrupt themselves and then the people they govern? Is all political propaganda bound to teach lies and to encourage lying?

The answer is *Yes, unless*— Yes, certainly, if only one group holds power and permits no opposition or contradiction. Yes, unless every government's tendency to lie itself into success is checked by the criticism of its opponents. Yes, unless the governors realize their responsibility to their people. The wisest of the Greeks used to say that a politician was bound to be a teacher. He is not, they thought, merely bossing the people, but educating them as he goes along. By each law he sponsors, he encourages them to behave in a certain way—to be saving or extravagant, to be brave or cowardly, dutiful or irresponsible. By the general trend of his policies he makes the people shape their lives in one direction rather than another. It is his duty, therefore, to choose such policies as will make the people develop good qualities rather than bad ones. If a statesman, however powerful, leaves the nation more silly and lazy and vicious than he found it, then, Plato says, he has

been a bad statesman. If that is true, the real danger of political propaganda is that it is a powerful instrument which stupid and irresponsible men may use; and the best check on it is the intelligent distrust of the citizens. . . .

Like politicians, authors and artists are teachers, because they persuade their public. There are a number of reasons which make this difficult to believe at first hearing. For instance, how can it be applied to music? Do artists not merely copy what they see? Do they not merely make decorative patterns? Is a novelist not supposed to tell the truth rather than to persuade? Does propaganda not spoil any art it invades?

Yet to these and other objections there are good answers. For instance: music appeals to the emotions and can strengthen or weaken our control of them; painters do not copy what they see, but select very carefully, and the elements which they choose to select carry a meaning, all the more powerful for being sometimes irrational; novelists usually claim to be telling the strict truth, but that means one set of truths out of the million million possible sets; and therefore that one set, told vividly, acquires a special power of persuasion; and propaganda does not necessarily spoil art, or else all the medieval cathedrals, from their † shape to the stained-glass pictures in their windows, would be bad art, and so would Dante's *Comedy,* Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound,* Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and many another mighty work of imagination.

But every artist knows in his heart that he is saying something to the public. He does not want merely to say it well. He hopes that it is something which has not been said before. He hopes the public will listen and understand, either at once or, at worst, after his death. That is, he wants to teach them something and he wants them to learn from him. What visual artists like painters want to teach is easy to make out but difficult to explain. They can hardly ever explain themselves, because they put their experiences into shapes and colors, not words. Basically, they seem to feel that a certain selection of shapes and colors, out of the countless billion possible, is exceptionally interesting for them and worth showing to us. But for their work, we should never have noticed these shapes and colors, or felt the delight brought by them to the artist. Most artists have taken their shapes and colors from the world of nature and from human bodies in motion or repose; from animals, buildings, food, and furniture. They mean that these aspects of the world are worth looking at, that they contain beautiful sights. Contemporary artists would say that there was nothing more in it, that they merely choose subjects that provide an interesting pattern. But they do not choose entirely without reference to the character of the things they paint. If one painter chooses to paint a gangrenous leg and another to paint a lake in moonlight, each of them, as well as showing us shapes and colors, is directing our attention to a certain aspect of the world. He is telling us something, he is showing something, he is emphasizing something: which means that (often unconsciously)

he is trying to teach us. When Piet Mondrian spends his life on constructing pictures made purely of straight lines and rectangles of color, he is (*a*) making interesting patterns in the same way as a designer of carpets and pottery, and (*b*) saying that a certain world of pure mathematical shapes is more valuable, for him at least, than the world of people, animals, and nature. It is possible to admire the patterns without accepting the judgment for ourselves, if we think over the pictures carefully. But usually approval of the patterns made by an artist brings acceptance of the judgment they imply: the people who like Chinese scroll-paintings do in fact often prefer a calm contemplative life from which extreme emotions and violent colors are banished.

In books the problem is much easier. Books are about people. People act in a moral world. As we read the books, we hear the voices of the characters, and see their actions. Behind both we hear the voice of the author himself, implying praise of this action, making fun of that, omitting a cruel consequence here, inserting a detailed description there. All this adds up to a series of judgments about life which he wishes us to accept. Any author who heard a stranger praise his latest book by saying: "It was beautifully written, and admirably constructed, although the way he made the characters behave was quite unreal and their standards were ridiculous," would be deeply wounded, because it would mean that his judgments about life were rejected and nothing was praised but the pattern they made. Yet many writers will not admit this. They will not say they are trying to persuade us. They will not say they are teaching. They say: "I am trying to put down the truth as I see it," and if we ask: "Why?" they shrink from the obvious answer, which is "To communicate my view of the truth to others" and means "To teach them what I believe." All books contain persuasion. All books communicate a selection of judgments about life. All books try to teach. The differences are between those which teach well and those which teach badly, and between those which teach valuable things and those which teach bad or trivial things. Criticism deals with these important differences. They should never be forgotten, and they cannot be denied. If style alone mattered, and content were irrelevant, it would be possible and desirable to write a book describing, in exquisite prose, with the finest sensitivity of phrasing and the most vivid and attractive detail, the pleasures felt by certain criminals who experience life very keenly: for instance, the delights of setting fire to a stranger's house at night, making sure that the doors and windows catch first, the gorgeous colors of the flames, the blend of the crackling wood and crashing brick with the shrieks of the family, the godlike pleasure of the "gratuitous action" (as an eminent French immoralist has named it), the sense of power, the assertion of the individual above society. It is easy to imagine similar perversions which could be made the subjects for very fine writing. But society would not admire such books, or any society which did would soon extinguish itself. Therefore the judgments which are implied in a book are the lesson that it teaches; and that lesson is one of the criteria on which the value of the book will be judged.

It is not by any means the only criterion, but it exists and it must be recognized by the author as well as by his readers. An author who does not care what he teaches is just as likely to be a bad author as one who does not care how he writes. Confused and shallow judgments or vicious and stupid ones spoil a book as surely as a bad style; and if an author is to defend himself against critics of his ideas, he will do so more effectively by justifying the ideas than by saying he did not mean to teach them. For teaching is a serious responsibility.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. If you were surprised by Highet's point that all of us are teachers all our lives, what does that indicate about *your* definition of teaching? What is Highet's definition?
2. What were the two distinct kinds of teaching which Highet notes that parents do, or can do? Which of the two is more often neglected? Why?
3. Many of Highet's examples of teaching emphasize *explanation;* other examples emphasize *persuasion.* Which kind (or kinds) does he think commercial advertisers usually engage in? doctors? artists? authors?
4. Highet shows that he is not afraid of the word *propaganda.* Does he seem to favor a kind of propaganda which is exclusively an act of persuasion or a propaganda which mixes explanation with persuasion? Why?
5. Highet cites a number of works of art—medieval cathedrals, Dante's *Comedy,* Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—which are also vehicles for a kind of propaganda. Name as many other examples as you can from painting, music, literature, and architecture of art that has some propagandistic function.

PROJECTS

1. To test your grasp of Highet's thesis—that we are all teachers—select some vocation, occupation, or profession he did not mention and write a carefully detailed paper pointing out the specific teaching functions of a person pursuing this line of activity. How might a traffic officer, your City Clerk, or a ship's captain teach, for example?
2. Students react very differently to different kinds of *classroom* teaching. There is material for a stimulating panel discussion here. Arrange to have 4 or 5 class members who are serious proponents of different teaching methods (lecture, laboratory experimentation and demonstration, recitation, seminar, "Socratic questioning," free discussion, etc.) present their case for their favorite method. Then have the full panel determine if there are certain common denominators which they all agree are desirable in any of these methods.

Marshall W. Fishwick

PAUL BUNYAN: THE FOLK HERO AS TYCOON

One may feel that his believing or not believing in the reality of a Paul Bunyan or John Henry or Robin Hood or any other "folk hero" is not a serious matter, but the reasons why *such a belief comes into existence may tell us a good deal about the ways in which we come to hold opinions on serious questions as well.*

Very probably you are acquainted with the massive figure of Paul Bunyan and with at least a few of his impressive feats. Fishwick, a historian at Washington and Lee University with a special interest in American heroes and hero worship, decided to try to find out the origins of these stories and the reasons for their wide acceptance. In "The Folk Hero as Tycoon" he presents his findings.

A few years ago, seeking a suitable figure to conclude a two-year series on American heroes, "Fortune" magazine selected Paul Bunyan as "the one fictional character" fit to stand with the nation's historical heroes. For, said the editors, Paul is "a genuine American folk character, created by the people themselves, in the bunkhouse and ordinary logging camp."

This claim to folk authenticity had been frequently made before and is still repeated in many quarters. According to such claims, Paul Bunyan simply grew out of the American environment by some mysterious folk process; he is a pure product of mass creativity. Carl Sandburg, for instance, in his preface to Harold W. Felton's collection of Bunyan legends (1947), raises the question "Who made Paul Bunyan?" and gives the answer: "The people, the bookless people, they made Paul and had him alive long before he got into the books for those who read. . . . Paul is as old as the hills, young as the alphabet."

But the Paul Bunyan who appeared in the pages of "Fortune" was not created in a bunkhouse, but in the offices of enterprising advertising men, professional writers, and scouring scholars. The Paul who romps through the pages following Sandburg's introduction is a good deal younger than the hills—no older, in fact, than a scheme to get new customers, hatched by the Red River Lumber Company at about the same time that Sandburg's "Chicago Poems" appeared.

This is not to say that there never was a lumberjack-hero whose exploits filled many a dull evening around a bunkhouse stove. Certain old loggers really did talk about Paul Bunyan before he made his appearance in print,

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but their stories did not concern the Paul Bunyan extolled by "Fortune" and Carl Sandburg. The lumberjack's Bunyan was what the sociologists call a "vocational in-group hero," whose idiom, methods, and feats could appeal only to that comparatively small and rugged band who knew at first hand the specialized business of lumbering. The retelling of his exploits (which chiefly concerned the conquest of adversity and teasing the tyro) was of necessity limited to this group; when technological change did away with their ways of working and the need for their brute strength and endurance, the oral tradition inevitably began to wane.

The few authentic tales recorded in the Middle West between 1910 and 1916 were supplied by men who were even then old. How little general appeal these stories would have may be judged from the following example, written down by a lumberjack in 1916 at the request of Professor Homer A. Watt:

> Paul B. Driving a large Bunch of logs Down the Wisconsin River When the logs Suddenly Jamed. in the Dells. The logs were piled Two Hundred feet high at the head. . . . When Paul Arrived at the Head with the ox he told them to Stand Back. He put the Ox in the old Wisc (River) in front of the Jam. And then standing on the Bank Shot the Ox with a 303 Savage Rifle.

Characteristically, the narrator assumes that his hearer will be quite familiar with the business of lumbering and such equipment as a "303 Savage Rifle." There is no evidence that the present-day lumberjacks (or any other workingmen, for that matter) have kept the oral tradition alive or transformed it to suit their occupations.

The Bunyan known to most Americans—he might be called Paul Bunyan II, to distinguish him from Paul Bunyan I, the lumberjacks' bona fide hero—is a giant of a considerably different order. He has a literary, not a folk origin. He speaks a "printed page" English and not a dialectical English, and he never gets technical or profane. He utilizes parachutes, steam-driven concrete mixers, pipe lines, and other devices unknown before the turn of the century; and he ranges far afield to work in mines, airfields, and ranches, but never as an in-group hero. His exploits are not passed on in ballad or song, nor do workmen improvise on the old themes at their leisure, or invent new situations. Most of them do not read the literary accounts where the real improvisation takes place. Today Paul Bunyan serves a multitude of functions and ends that the creators of Paul I never dreamed of. For Paul II is no mere comic hero. On the contrary, he is an exponent of American "know-how," industrialism, and the "American way of life." Dan G. Hoffman, a leading Bunyan expert, has pointed out that "as a symbol of American size, strength, and ingenuity, he threatens to replace the less lively figure of Uncle Sam."

With a nod of deference, then, to the declining Paul Bunyan I, who might in different circumstances have grown to be a regular ring-tailed roarer, per-

haps even the hero of an American epic, we turn to Paul Bunyan II, who has usurped his forerunner's role and supporters, and who even disguises himself as a folk hero in popular and learned accounts.

The first poem about the literary Paul was published in "The American Lumberman" in 1914. The author was Douglas Malloch:

> Those were the days in Michigan
> The good old days, when any man
> Could cut and skid and log and haul,
> And there was pine enough for all. . . .
> Paul Bunyan (you have heard of Paul:
> He was the king pin of 'em all,
> The greatest logger in the land.
> Paul Bunyan bossed that famous crew:
> A bunch of shoutin' bruisers, too . . .).

As the reader might suspect, these verses caused no literary sensation. But the Bunyan boom was on its way. In the very same year William B. Laughead, who more than any other man deserves the title of creator of Paul II, began his work. It was not as a poet, however, but as an advertising layout man trying to sell lumber that he created his hero. His Paul Bunyan was conceived, in a manner of speaking, on a commission basis.

Details of Laughead's early efforts are fortunately preserved in a newspaper interview. When the Red River Lumber Company decided to move from the well-worked timberlands of Minnesota to California, the secretary of the company, a man named Archie D. Walker, was instructed to devise an advertising program to publicize the move and acquire new customers. Walker passed the problem on to his cousin, a young free-lance advertising man named William Laughead. Thus Walker may be thought of as Paul's literary grandfather, or the *homo economicus* in Paul's family tree, though he does not pretend that his achievement was a great event in the history of American folklore. "All I wanted to do," he has said, "was to sell lumber."

The man Walker called upon to help him with this task was a happy choice, for Laughead had worked for eight years in Minnesota logging camps, moving up the ladder from choreboy to assistant bull cook and on to timber cruiser, surveyor, and construction engineer. When he went into the advertising business he hoped to put his logging lore to good use; his assignment was almost too good to be true. Right away he remembered some funny stories about an imaginary lumberman which might make good copy if they were reinterpreted and put into a palatable form. The name usually given this character, Laughead recalled, was Paul—Paul Bunyan.

Laughead says he first heard of his hero-to-be from certain old loggers in Minnesota, and he saw that Paul would make a good trademark for a lumber company: his occupation was suitable; except for Malloch's poem, he had not appeared in print; and for all practical purposes, he was totally unknown to his fellow Americans. Of course, the jargon-filled and frequently

profane Bunyan stories the old-timers had told were unsuited for a general reading public, which probably wouldn't have understood very much of them except the profanity. Yet Laughead saw possibilities.

After a few months he produced a small booklet of 32 pages called "introducing Mr. Paul Bunyan of Westwood, California." It was divided equally between Bunyan material and straight advertising. A "warning" on page one indicated that Laughead intended to pass Paul off as a widely-known folk hero and a paragon worthy of taking care of Red River Lumber Company problems:

> Everything we tell you about Red River lumber and its manufacture is the Gospel Truth. Everything we tell you about Paul Bunyan is lumberjack mythology. Paul is the legendary hero whose exploits have been related to generations of tenderfeet from time immemorial. We have gathered a few of them up, and pass them on to you with a few trimmings of our own.

It would be very interesting to know just what those "few trimmings" were; but today Laughead is not sure where recollections ended and contrivance began. For inventing such Bunyanesque characters as Babe the Blue Ox, Brimstone Bill, and Big Joe the Cook, he takes credit; and no one disputes his claim that it was he who first vested Bunyan with a commercial mission. He was responsible for devising the first pictorial representation of Paul Bunyan (his Paul has a round face, black hair, and cat's-whiskers moustache), which was copyrighted as the Red River Lumber Company trademark. Accompanying the original portrayal is a reminder that "he stands for the quality and service you have the right to expect from Paul Bunyan." Under the picture is the warning that the picture is "registered." It is as clear a case of *ars gratia pecuniae* as one will find in the annals of American heroes.

After a slow start the Bunyan booklets picked up speed, and they gained a wide circulation in the next few years. In 1922, when Laughead was made a regular employee of the company, he devised a larger pamphlet which was mailed not only to potential customers but also to newspaper editors, historians, and the general public. They found the Bunyan stories to their liking. For the editors they made good copy; for the historians grounds for endless speculation and quibbling; and for the general public items that inflated their national and regional egos. The lumber States, in particular, knew a good thing when they saw it, and they decided that Bunyan was a latter-day epic hero who had been roaming around in their forests from time immemorial. Minnesota became belligerent over Bunyan, and possessive about any of the stories or legends that surrounded him. Neighboring States like Michigan and Wisconsin fought to center Bunyan lore within their boundaries. Paul and his Blue Ox bedecked the walls of the new Student Union Building at the University of Wisconsin, while Michigan supporters proclaimed that the "Saginaw Paul Bunyan" was the real McCoy. The Far Western States entered the com-

petition with enthusiasm, and in the last decade Oregon has become one of the leading promoters of Bunyania.

Soon scholars joined the copywriters employed by tourist centers, Chambers of Commerce, State offices, and booster clubs in the campaign to win national recognition for Paul. Many of them devised methods to prove that he was indeed a folk hero, a kind of Beowulf west of Boston; some traced down the "original" historical figure who was Paul Bunyan; while others explained why the lumberjacks had decided that Babe the Blue Ox was precisely 42 axe handles and a plug of Star tobacco between the eyes. A somewhat more hardbitten scholarly segment found more of the hoax than the historical in Paul, and squared off for wordy battles with the faithful.

The cultural scene was ready for such a folk hero. High-powered advertising and journalism needed material for copy; historical and literary scholars—and more particularly, the rising school of folklorists—needed subjects to investigate; painters and poets were searching for new and native themes. Chauvinism gave a nudge and Paul Bunyan filled a cultural vacuum.

The Bunyan promulgators did a good job; their candidate is now generally regarded as the leading American folk hero. So far as organizational backing is concerned, the Red River Lumber Company remained over the years Paul's best friend, having distributed 100,000 Bunyan pamphlets and, incidentally, a good deal of lumber. By 1945 they had sold Paul Bunyan to a very considerable portion of the American public. They had also sold all their lumber, so that the same Archie D. Walker who put Laughead to work creating Bunyan in 1914 helped to liquidate the company's holdings in 1945. There was something typically American about the whole story. In the lifetime of a single man much of the lumber of two heavily-wooded areas had been cut, with little thought of the morrow; and the stories fabricated to sell it were reaching their greatest popularity when all the Red River Lumber Company lumber had been marketed. Whether that gentler and in many ways more appealing folk hero, Johnny Appleseed, will be able to keep up with Bunyan is a question our most astute folklorists have not been able to answer. For some reason the hero who planted trees has not fared so well as the hero who cut them down.

Meanwhile other writers had not waited for the liquidation of the Red River Lumber Company to make use of its symbol, "registered" or not. In the 1920's, newspapers in both Seattle and Portland featured tall tales about Paul Bunyan supplied by their readers, and another lumber-company publicist—James Stevens—has turned out to be very nearly as important as Laughead in popularizing the legend. In 1925 he produced the first group of Bunyan stories to be published by a New York press. This volume he has supplemented by several articles in popular magazines, a second edition of the book, and a willingness to do battle with anyone who dares to challenge the folk authenticity of Paul Bunyan II.

Whatever Stevens' merits as a historian or folklorist, he is a gifted writer

and a devout worshipper at the axe-hewn Bunyan altar he has worked so diligently to build. Originally his interest in Paul was purely professional. He was director of public relations for the West Coast Lumbermen's Association when he first learned of Laughead's success with the Bunyan trademark and stories. But he has given the trademark a new elegance. His Bunyan is "powerful as Hercules, indomitable as Spartacus, bellowing like a furious Titan, raging among the Queen's troops like Samson among the Philistines," and the lumbermen who raided the forests appear as "toiling demigods and sweating heroes" in the dark woods, workaday poets who created "the marvelous mythical logging camp, with its cookhouse of mountainous size and history of Olympian feats." Though Stevens demonstrates to his own satisfaction that the historical Bunyan was a Frenchman and though he constantly utilizes the framework of the classical hero in his own stories, he is sure that "Paul Bunyan, as he stands today, is absolutely American from head to foot," and that thousands of lumberjacks "contributed their mites to the classical picture of Bunyan," who "will live as long as there is a forest for his refuge, as long as there are shadows and whispers of trees."

Though Stevens' book was a popular success, it had its detractors. J. Frank Dobie, the Texas scholar and folklorist, noted in a review that Stevens "assumes the liberties of a judicial novelist, frequently putting his own dull ideas into the mouths of his characters, even of the great Paul himself," and found some sections "utterly foreign to the bunkhouse yarn."

A more thorough-going attack on Paul II was launched by Carleton C. Ames, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, whose article called "Paul Bunyan—Myth or Hoax?" appeared in "Minnesota History" (March, 1940). While others merely speculated about whether the old lumbermen really knew about Paul, Ames took to the field to find out. Touring northern Minnesota and the drainage basins of the Marinette, Wisconsin, Chippewa, and St. Croix rivers, he talked with hundreds of lumbermen, with startling results. Not one of them had even heard of Paul Bunyan. "It seems incredible," concluded Ames, "that if the Paul Bunyan yarns had any kind of circulation during the heyday of the loggers, they should not have come to the attention of at least some of these individuals."

Cries of defamer and debunker were showered on the young investigator from all sides; newspaper editors peppered their editorial pages with anti-Ames tirades; there was even a suggestion that the state legislature should investigate the University of Minnesota. But other scholars came to Ames's defense. One of them, Mrs. Grace S. McClure, State Librarian of Michigan and a native of the Saginaw region which was supposed to be a Bunyan stronghold, said that in hundreds of talks with lumbermen she had never found a single one who knew about Paul Bunyan, and that she didn't even know of the literary accounts in Michigan until around 1930.

Stevens had a chance to reply when he was asked to write an introduction for a second edition of his Bunyan collection in 1948, and he castigated

the professors who had "sweated their pale blood to prove the legend a hoax, only to expose themselves as futile dabblers in nonsense." He also revealed that for three years he and his wife "gave time and income to the pursuit of clues and the study of wearisome old lumber-trade publications" in the hope of finding some bit of documentary evidence to prove that Bunyan was older than the pale-blooded scholars intimated. But nothing was found, for the Paul Bunyan that Mr. and Mrs. Stevens were defending and the disappearing oral hero of the lumberjacks were different creatures, with different origins and histories, brought into being for different purposes.

Yet the great folk hero was catching on. He was prominent at both the New York and California World Fairs in 1939; he has made his appearance in ballet, opera, painting, and poetry; and talents as different as those of Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, W. H. Auden, and Benjamin Britten have celebrated his exploits in various ways. Books about him continue to appear. Dell McCormick prefaces one with the assurance that "the spirit of Paul Bunyan lives on in America, and no task becomes too great or difficult when we think of the hardships Paul endured and the mighty exploits he performed." In a wartime volume Thomas Binford hurried Paul off to fight the Nazis and Japanese. Among other feats, Paul assembled 500-ton airplanes by the thousand, built a 15,000-ton steel ship in five days and bombed Germany with redwood logs. Walter Blair has gone so far as to suggest that "when World War II started, Paul invented high income taxes, corporation taxes and such, and stopped worrying."

Bunyan benefits from that adaptable American hero pattern from which Mike Fink, Kit Carson, Davy Crockett, and Daniel Boone are cut. Boone, more than any other one figure, set the style for the Western hero, and in a sense Paul is an oversized Boone, sharing Carson's mobility and Fink's colorful vocabulary, and duplicating Crockett's extraordinary feats. Of course, Paul has more "know-how" than any of his nineteenth-century predecessors. With the shift from an agrarian to an industrial society, one might expect that there would be a shift from heroes who use their hands to heroes who use machines, and Paul II fills the bill. Robust, uncouth, destructive, resourceful, friendly, when he moves into the forest he gets things organized and he wants results; he can't be very much concerned with who or what suffers in the process. When others think in terms of tens or hundreds, he thinks in terms of thousands. He believes in the survival of the fittest and will take his chance when tooth and claw come into play.

W. H. Auden suggests that in essence Bunyan is a bumptious, swaggering, optimistic nineteenth-century Victorian, "a projection of the collective state of mind of a people whose tasks were primarily the physical mastery of nature." But the Paul of the advertisements does not master nature (as Boone and Crockett did) with his physical strength alone. He depends on the latest technology and machines, and enjoys nothing more than a flowing pipe line. He is obsessed with the problem of saving time, which did not

bother earlier American heroes. He frequently devises methods of doing things faster and with less effort. Paul Bunyan has brought the assembly line to American folklore.

In an age which has enjoyed unprecedented business expansion and prosperity Paul Bunyan has become ever more prominent. As new industries and factories are opened, advertising men have put him to work with gratifying results. In 1941 Bunyan went to war with the greatest ease. It was a war of production and procurement, and in these matters Paul was a past master. Hadn't he had boys skate around his skillet with bacon on their feet to grease it for his pancakes? Hadn't he installed elevators to carry the cakes to the ends of the table, where boys on bicycles rode back and forth on a path down the center of the table dropping the cakes when called for? Hadn't he fed his men pea soup through a pipe line, and perfected a method for pulling curves out of rivers?

If "Fortune" erred in calling Paul Bunyan "a genuine American folk character," there was still a certain poetic justice in the editors' selecting this tycoon of the imagination for an exalted place among the brilliant advertisements of the mighty.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Most writers on propaganda assume that propagandists know precisely what they are about. Certainly Laughead, the Red River Lumber Company's publicist, knew what he was doing. But Fishwick reveals the irony of many different men, acting from many different motives, unwittingly contributing to the success of a propaganda stunt which went far beyond the anticipation of its originators. Who were some of the men who fed the Bunyan legend, and what were some of their motives? What are some of the implications about propaganda and its effects suggested by the snowballing effect of this particular propaganda effort?
2. Folk heroes—whether genuine or literary—are interesting to cultural historians as reflectors of certain national ideals. What aspects of twentieth-century American culture does the literary Paul Bunyan typify?
3. The attitudes and thought processes of the various Bunyan "experts" described by Fishwick present an interesting contrast between deductive and inductive thinking. Which of these "experts" reveal their essential dependence on deduction? Which turned to inductive methods? Support your answers with specific references to Fishwick's account.
4. What are some pieces of internal evidence (specific activities of Paul Bunyan described in some of the Bunyan stories) which might make a thoughtful person skeptical of the *folk origin* of these particular tales?
5. Such literary celebrities as the poets Sandburg, Frost, and Auden, and such journalists as the editors of *Fortune* took the folk origin of Paul Bunyan for granted. Does this suggest that they would be equally susceptible to all kinds of propaganda? Do you think the common notion that all propaganda is pretty much alike a useful one? Explain.

6. Earlier in this book your attention was called to the fact that men sometimes fight over symbols even when the reality behind the symbol is shown to be non-existent. What instances of this behavior does Fishwick cite?

PROJECT

Organize a panel to discuss the particular methods (not necessarily limited to pure fabrications or distortions) used in the promotion or "buildup" of some of the following: (*a*) a college "homecoming," (*b*) a certain well-known commercial product, (*c*) Christmas as a day for giving, (*d*) a new fashion, (*e*) a piece of "popular music," (*f*) a book, (*g*) a type of food, (*h*) a college course of study, (*i*) a school tradition. Each member of the panel will consider in detail the methods used in one of the buildups; and then the whole panel will consider whether the various campaigns have common denominators.

Adolf Hitler

ADVICE FROM AN EXPERT

To learn how something is done, one may try doing it himself, observe an expert doing it, or study the findings of men who have studied the techniques of the experts. Here we will consider the advice of an expert in the art of propaganda.

There can be no doubt that Hitler was a master of propaganda. His use of this instrument of mass persuasion was at least partially responsible for the welding of the Germans into a fanatic working-fighting unit, for the creation of a state of mind that could lead seemingly civilized men to organize the slaughter of whole races, for the rearing of a generation of German youth to venerate their own leader and their own "race." Meager as Hitler's understanding of other matters, such as ethical issues, world geography, and military strategy, may have been, his mastery of propaganda methods was proved by results.

In looking into the suggestions of Hitler and others, we are doing so not as apprentices in the craft of propaganda but as members of the propagandists' public. We want to be, so far as possible, masters of our own fates; therefore, it will be necessary for us to be able to recognize the propaganda techniques of men who use those techniques to make themselves masters of our fates.

To whom should propaganda be addressed? To the scientifically trained intelligentsia or to the less educated masses?

It must be addressed always and exclusively to the masses.

What the intelligentsia—or those who today unfortunately often go by

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that name—what they need is not propaganda but scientific instruction. The content of propaganda is not science any more than the object represented in a poster is art. The art of the poster lies in the designer's ability to attract the attention of the crowd by form and color. A poster advertising an art exhibit must direct the attention of the public to the art being exhibited; the better it succeeds in this, the greater is the art of the poster itself. The poster should give the masses an idea of the significance of the exhibition, it should not be a substitute for the art on display. Anyone who wants to concern himself with the art itself must do more than study the poster; and it will not be enough for him just to saunter through the exhibition. We may expect him to examine and immerse himself in the individual works, and thus little by little form a fair opinion.

A similar situation prevails with what we today call propaganda.

The function of propaganda does not lie in the scientific training of the individual, but in calling the masses' attention to certain facts, processes, necessities, etc., whose significance is thus for the first time placed within their field of vision.

The whole art consists in doing this so skillfully that everyone will be convinced that the fact is real, the process necessary, the necessity correct, etc. But since propaganda is not and cannot be the necessity in itself, since its function, like the poster, consists in attracting the attention of the crowd, and not in educating those who are already educated or who are striving after education and knowledge, its effect for the most part must be aimed at the emotions and only to a very limited degree at the so-called intellect.

All propaganda must be popular and its intellectual level must be adjusted to the most limited intelligence among those it is addressed to. Consequently, the greater the mass it is intended to reach, the lower its purely intellectual level will have to be. But if, as in propaganda for sticking out a war, the aim is to influence a whole people, we must avoid excessive intellectual demands on our public, and too much caution cannot be exerted in this direction.

The more modest its intellectual ballast, the more exclusively it takes into consideration the emotions of the masses, the more effective it will be. And this is the best proof of the soundness or unsoundness of a propaganda campaign, and not success in pleasing a few scholars or young aesthetes.

The art of propaganda lies in understanding the emotional ideas of the great masses and finding, through a psychologically correct form, the way to the attention and thence to the heart of the broad masses. The fact that our bright boys do not understand this merely shows how mentally lazy and conceited they are.

Once we understand how necessary it is for propaganda to be adjusted to the broad mass, the following rule results:

It is a mistake to make propaganda many-sided, like scientific instruction, for instance.

The receptivity of the great masses is very limited, their intelligence is small, but their power of forgetting is enormous. In consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan. As soon as you sacrifice this slogan and try to be many-sided, the effect will piddle away, for the crowd can neither digest nor retain the material offered. In this way the result is weakened and in the end entirely cancelled out.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. In this passage Hitler does not mention the specific ends or purposes of his propaganda; he confines himself here to a statement of *means* or *methods* of propaganda. What methods does he recommend?
2. In describing what qualities propaganda should have and toward what audiences it should be aimed, Hitler supplies us with the suggestions for one possible definition of propaganda. Construct a definition from these suggestions. Is this an "operational definition"?
3. What purposes can propaganda so defined best serve? What purposes can it not serve? Does this definition seem entirely adequate to you, or does it lack some ingredients which you feel ought to be present?
4. On what basic premise about human intelligence (a premise you will recall Cantril examined) are Hitler's recommendations to propagandists based? Is it a sufficiently self-evident and sound generalization to serve as a major premise? If not, what limited truths may it contain? In what specific ways may these observations be helpful to a person who wishes to listen and read intelligently?
5. Would you say the producers of our mass media of entertainment and information (radio-TV, movies, newspapers, magazines) reflect, consciously or unconsciously, some of Hitler's assumptions about the intellectual limitations of "mass audiences"? Do you see a problem of definition here, turning on the distinction between *a* mass audience and *the* mass audience? How might a manufacturer miss out badly in reaching for the potential market for his product if he thought solely in terms of *the* mass audience?
6. Hitler distinguishes carefully between the formula for successful propaganda and that for "scientific instruction." What is the basic distinction he sees? Which method of reasoning, inductive or deductive, does he want his audience to use?
7. In one passage Hitler seems to imply that propaganda will not appeal to the "educated." Did Fishwick find this to be true? Does Hitler's notion coincide with *your* observations of everyday life? If not, are you defining "propaganda" or "educated" differently from Hitler? In what ways?

PROJECT

List the statements (measures, plans, ideas, and so forth) which have during the past few weeks become linked in your thinking with the term "propaganda." Now, going down that list, make a check beside each proposal to which *you*

are opposed. What percentage of ideas did you check? What does this percentage indicate about your working definition of propaganda?

Why is a definition of propaganda as "persuasive devices used by the opposition" not a useful definition? Why is a definition which would cover publicity both for and against "my side" more useful?

Edward A. Tenney and Ralph M. Wardle

WHAT IS PROPAGANDA?

In the preceding selections in this "Persuasion" section we have considered the arts of persuasion at various levels and related to various purposes. And we have moved through instances of persuasion that we would probably not classify as propaganda to instances of persuasion that we would not hesitate to label "propaganda." Do these selections reveal basic and illuminating relationships between "persuasion" and "propaganda"? specific differences?

To bring together and clarify our observations on the nature of propaganda, let us consider a selection from Tenney and Wardle's book A Primer for Readers. *Although primarily interested in written propaganda, the authors point out various aspects of good and bad propaganda which are equally applicable to the listening and viewing audience.*

The task of unmasking words is sometimes easy and sometimes difficult. Most of us have undue respect for the printed word, and we fail to heed Thomas Hobbes's warning: "Words are wise men's counters—they do but reckon by them—but they are the money of fools." As citizens of a democracy we must be able to detect counterfeits and counterfeiters. Democracy—the rule of the many—can succeed only if the people can distinguish truth from falsehood. Too often the people have been misled by the masked words of men eager for their own advancement; too often they have been unable to discriminate between good leaders and bad. In autocracies, the few or the *one* make decisions for all; in democracies the many are privileged, by means of representation, to make their own decisions. But again and again the many have not bothered to seek out and insist upon truth; they have been content to "muddle through" to short-sighted, ignominious conclusions. They have failed to detect the treachery and inordinate ambition of demagogues or the stupidity of sincere blunderers, and they have forfeited thereby their privileges as citizens of a democracy. If you doubt this, read the history of ancient Athens or modern France.

We in this country have been extraordinarily fortunate in the leaders whom we have chosen—the more so since most of us act not from reasoned

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principles but from weak prejudices. Yet we may not always be so fortunate; as we have been told times without number, "it *might* happen here." When one of our legislators says, "In the best interests of the country I cannot do other than vote in favor of this appropriation," and means, "My district gets a cut of this," we laugh. But we must do more than laugh; we must cultivate a healthy skepticism, a skepticism which raises questions not because it wishes to ridicule and destroy, but because it wishes to come nearer to the truth.

Let us now experiment with a common masked word, *propaganda.* It is a loosely used, general label which we may, if we are so minded, pin on almost any statement of opinion with which we disagree.—But before going further into the meaning of the word we want you to stop here and write on the handiest scrap of paper your definition of the word. Define *propaganda* as fully as you can. Keep the definition to read in class if called upon to do so. Be sure not to read the following essay until after you have written your own definition.

ON READING PROPAGANDA—*E. A. Tenney*

The greatest menace to our democracy, to our existence as a free, independent, and peace-loving people, is that insidious thing called *Propaganda.* Like the thief and the outcast it lurks in dark corners and in broken-down alleys, and like the pickpocket it stealthily insinuates its slimy snakelike fingers into the pockets of the mind and filches from us our intellectual integrity. One touch of its corroding influence debases the purest passion, and one whiff of its breath contaminates the purest air. The stench of those thousands upon thousands of God-fearing Americans infected and diseased by it is greater than the stench that arose from the putrefying bodies of the unburied victims of the bubonic plague. The more one considers the ghastly effect of propaganda upon modern life the more one hates it for the evil thing it is and the evil it has wrought. Speak propaganda and please the devil, your master, all of you who traffic in unclean words and in foul, perverted thoughts!

In the foregoing paragraph, I practiced my hand at writing some propaganda against *propaganda* just to see whether I could do it and also to give you, my reader, a chance to test yourself to see whether you are susceptible and are readily taken in. I observed the rules not for writing honest propaganda but for writing inferior or unscrupulous propaganda, insincere stuff. The difference between good and bad propaganda is the difference between good and bad persuasion—a topic treated in the next paragraph. Before turning to it, I wish to point out the principles upon which I wrote in composing the preceding paragraph. In the first place I posed the questions to myself, "How shall I prejudice my readers against this word? How shall I give to the word an evil connotation so that in the future they will feel an emotion of hate or loathing or anger when next I use it?" The paragraph itself is an answer to the question. I was insincere in that I wrote only half of what I believe to be true; I was unscrupulous in that I employed glittering generalities, appealing to the conventional stock prejudices, resorted to name-

calling, personified the word into an evil thing and associated it with bad smells, unsavory places, the slimy snake, and the devil. Now it so happens that I dislike propaganda of the type I wrote—it does not play the game fairly; but I admire much propaganda, i.e., persuasion which makes no attempt to conceal its aim and which argues its case with intelligence and sincere emotion. Of late a great cry has gone up against propaganda as though it were some new evil thing which must be exterminated. In New York City a number of men have organized an "Institute for Propaganda Analysis," [1] and each month they publish a leaflet to warn their readers against various propagandas. The paradox is that they are propagandists propagandizing against propaganda. What these men are doing is analyzing bad propaganda and striving to raise its quality.

Whenever there is an organized movement to persuade people to believe or do something, whenever an effort is made to "propagate" a creed or set of opinions or convictions or to make people act as we want them to act, the means employed are called propaganda. When the means are base, then the propaganda is base; when the means are honorable, it is honorable. The means which I employed in the opening paragraph were unworthy of a good citizen or honorable and just man, for they were intended to create an emotional prejudice against propaganda without giving the word a fair trial. On the contrary, in this paragraph I am writing good propaganda because I am honestly using what means I have to persuade you, the reader, that the word has a good connotation as well as a sinister one. The word has many synonyms—persuasion, publicity, proselytism, conversion, advertisement. Missionaries, salesmen, advertisers, publicity or public relations men—for colleges, political parties, business firms, etc.—"ambassadors of good will" are all propagandists to be admired or despised in proportion to the quality of the means they use in converting others to their opinions. When Edmund Burke said that there are ways and means by which a good man will not save even his country, he meant that there are some devices of propaganda to which a sincere and honorable man will not stoop. Bad propaganda is a species of fraud; good propaganda is a process of enlightenment. The subtle, hidden, indirect lie, the lie which is intended to arouse the base passions of hate and by so doing enable the liar to achieve some unjust end—this is propaganda in its lowest, most fraudulent form. Its opposite is propaganda at its best. Between these two extremes lie all imaginable degrees of worth and worthlessness.

Now compare your definition with the definition given in the preceding essay. If you have a healthy skepticism, you have not been deceived by the loose, vague, ambiguous, popular use of the word, and your definition will parallel that given above. If on the contrary you are accustomed to a naive, uncritical, unhealthy use of words, your definition will not coincide.

Because it is an efficient means of coalescing public opinion, honest propaganda is essential in a democracy. We must be able to distinguish it from the dishonest variety, which tries to persuade the people to accept ideas

[1] The Institute ceased functioning in 1942; its founders said they could not publish impartial analyses in wartime.

which are not for the common good. Such propaganda is dishonest in method as well as result; it relies on false reasoning, it rouses unjust prejudices, and it appeals to the baser emotions. It commonly deals altogether in extremes, insisting on the villainy of the group attacked and implying the blamelessness of the attacker. Its devices are patent, but they have been none the less efficacious in swaying men's thoughts. . . .

Many modern advertisers have adopted the methods of bad propaganda as a means of persuading the public to buy their wares. Every reader is familiar with their appeals to vanity, greed, and fear, which thinly mask the advertisers' desire to make people buy what they do not need and cannot afford. Thumb through the advertisements of cigarettes, cosmetics, medicines, soaps, motorcars, in newspapers and popular magazines, and ask of each advertisement: "To which of my emotions were you designed to appeal? Would I be wiser or happier if I did as you suggest?"

As an exercise in reading a more complicated problem, consider the partisan newspaper. Although we regard newspaper stories as mere factual chronicles of events, we sometimes find that a reporter is not above manipulating the facts. Compare, for example, the two following versions of one piece of news.

1. ROCKEFELLER WANTS U. S. IN WAR NOW [2]

The Rockefeller stamp was openly put on the Roosevelt war program yesterday when John D. Rockefeller, head of the vast oil, coal and banking empire, called for a war "if necessary" against Germany.

The paymaster of the thugs who burned the miners' wives and daughters to death in Ludlow, Colo., said, "I would rather die fighting" than live in a world dominated by Hitlerism.

Rockefeller attacked the right to strike, raised the cry of "Communist" against strikers, and called for support of President Roosevelt.

The international magnate, who dominates much of Latin America, said all the Americas should unite to aid Britain "to the limit and at any cost." He called in substance for convoys, saying the President must take necessary measures to deliver American goods to Britain.

Sinking of Rockefeller ships in the war zone was a pretext for entry into the last war.

Rockefeller's statement was made in a letter to Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the *Times* and trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation.

2. ROCKEFELLER ASKS PRESIDENT TO CONVOY ARMS AND ELIMINATE NAZI AND RED FIFTH COLUMNS [3]

Emphasizing that every minute is precious in "this fateful hour," John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in a letter made public yesterday, urged that President

[2] From *The Daily Worker*, April 28, 1941.
[3] From the New York *Times*, April 28, 1941.

Roosevelt take immediate action to see that American war materials and foodstuffs are "laid down at Britain's door," and that Nazi and Communist fifth columns, which he blamed for some recent disputes between industry and labor, are eliminated from our defense program.

The philanthropist also asked that industry and labor get together to bar strikes, lockouts, and stoppages of all kinds for the duration, and called on everybody to unite solidly behind the President in any measures that may be necessary to help Britain win.

He made public these statements in a letter to Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the New York *Times,* in which he expressed the belief that the President would take "prompt and effective action" as soon as he received assurance of general public support. Although he hates war, Mr. Rockefeller said the issue here was freedom against slavery, and stated his "firm conviction," reached in "anguish of spirit," that it would be better to die fighting Hitlerism than to live in a world dominated by it, and that all Americans should stand by the British Empire "to the limit and at any cost."

Mr. Rockefeller has five sons. The only unmarried one, Winthrop, volunteered for a year of training under the Selective Service Act in January, and at his own request was sent to Plattsburg, New York, for training with the Twenty-sixth Infantry, Regular Army. Nelson A. is an official of the Council of National Defense as co-ordinator of commercial and cultural relations among the American republics. The others, Laurance S., David, and John D. 3rd, all registered for selective service.

Obviously the author of the second account has no grudge against Mr. Rockefeller, and the author of the first does have. Each by his diction, his emphasis, and his omissions seeks to influence the reader. What words in each article serve to prejudice a reader rather than to inform him? What irrelevant events are introduced? Why? You can see for yourself that a person who accepts only one source of information as his gospel may soon fall a prey to distorted ideas and unjustified prejudices. If you are level-headed, you will refuse to accept another person's opinions without analyzing them; you will ask of any piece of writing which attempts to shape your ideas: Where did it first appear? Who wrote it? What were his motives?

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Tenney distinguishes "good" propaganda from "bad" propaganda. What are the bases for his distinctions? What do both "good" and "bad" propaganda have in common?
2. Suppose you were asked to write an example of propaganda designed to persuade your friends and associates to support a particular cause in which you sincerely believed. Then suppose you were asked to write an example of propaganda to enlist support for some cause in which you had no confidence. Would the fact that you sincerely believed in the first cause and not in the second guarantee that your first effort would be "good" propaganda and your second

"bad" propaganda? Defend your answer. In what way does this question turn on the problem of the relation of means to ends?

3. Tenney comes pretty close to saying that propaganda is synonymous with persuasion. If we accept this definition, then we would call everyone who persuades anyone else to do or believe anything a propagandist. Does this seem useful, or do you find today some practical reasons for limiting the meaning of propaganda to *systematic* efforts at *mass* persuasion? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What *may* a magazine-writer or radio-commentator *be trying to do to your mind* when he does *each* of the things listed below? (Go beyond the obvious suggestion that he may be trying "to influence your mind in favor of or against something." Consider *how* the particular thing he is saying might thus influence your thinking. Remember that he might do these things in writing on anything from the high cost of living or the merits of a certain city councilman to the need for a new foreign policy.)

   a. Mentions that he was once a "barefoot boy" and loved the old swimmin' hole.
   b. Describes beautiful scenes in nature that have no particular connection with his main point.
   c. Refers to various persons as "bureaucrats," "war-mongers," etc.
   d. Suggests that this is a time of *grave peril* to all we hold dear (or to some particular thing we value highly).
   e. Warns that this is a time when corruption is abroad in the land.
   f. Suggests that the thing he is opposing is part of an organized plot.
   g. Quotes Scripture, Abraham Lincoln, or other sources that most people admire.
   h. Emphasizes the *power* of those opposed to what he is advocating.
   i. Emphasizes the potential power of us readers or listeners.
   j. Quotes long lists of figures rapidly.
   k. Suggests that he is very much aware of the great debt this country owes to the land of his readers' (or listeners') ancestors.
   l. Tells a very funny story or a very touching story.
   m. Refers frequently to "plain common sense" or "horsesense."
   n. Informs his readers or listeners that, in spite of its seeming complexity, the answer to the problem is really a very simple one.
   o. Implies that the person whom he is criticizing thinks of himself as more intelligent or better informed than we—the readers and listeners—are.
   p. Points out (before he gets into the heart of the subject) that he is a supporter of free-and-open fair debate.
   q. Hints darkly that, in these confusing times, *somebody* is going to be made a sucker.
   r. Frequently refers to well-known people as being his personal acquaintances.
   s. Refers admiringly to mothers, little children, the home, animal pets.
   t. In attacking a policy, spends a good deal of time associating with the supporters of that policy certain persons and organizations who, justly or unjustly, are under public disapproval. (In supporting a policy, does the opposite.)

If you find a writer or commentator doing any of these things, should you then conclude that his whole article or talk is designed to fool you? Explain your answer.

5. A famous Charles Addams cartoon shows two shorts-clad gentlemen sitting on a porch in the tropics surrounded by snakes and alligators. One of the "colonials" is comfortably relaxed; the other is shrivelled up in terror. The relaxed one says to his terrorized companion, "Bothered me a bit, too, until I discovered they were real." Do you see the connection between this and identifying a piece of propaganda, its sponsors, their motives and their methods?
6. The following advertisement, accompanied by a picture of a sad boy and a girl in tears, has appeared in many large-circulation newspapers. What appeals do the advertisers use most frequently in this ad?

THERE ARE SOME THINGS A SON OR DAUGHTER WON'T TELL YOU!

"Aw, gee, pop, why can't we get a television set?" You've heard that. But there's some more you won't hear. Do you expect a seven-year-old to find words for the deep loneliness he's feeling?

He may complain—"The kids were mean and wouldn't play with me!" Do you expect him to blurt out the truth—that he's really ashamed to be with the gang—, that he feels left out because he doesn't see the television shows they see, know the things they know?

You can tell someone about a bruised finger. How can a little girl describe a bruise deep inside? No, your daughter won't ever tell you the humiliation she's felt in begging those precious hours of television from a neighbor.

You give your child's body all the sunshine and fresh air and vitamins you can. How about the sunshine for his morale? How about vitamins for his mind? Educators agree—television is all that and more for a growing child.

When television means so much more to a child than entertainment alone, can you deny it to your family any longer?

PROJECTS

1. In three advertisements—or three editorials or three printed speeches—selected at random, underline the *masked* words. Do you find any recurrence of certain words? Do the masked words share certain characteristics?
2. Analyze today's issue of your newspaper in terms of *honest* and *dishonest* propaganda, using Tenney and Wardle's suggested criteria. Do you find any correlation between the purposes and subjects of the propaganda and the honesty or dishonesty of the means used? Present your findings in a paper or talk.
3. Decide on a working definition of propaganda on the basis of all the considerations that have been called to your attention by this and the preceding essays. Test its usefulness by applying it to examples of persuasion that confront you every day—e.g., advertising, publicity campaigns, political oratory, newspaper editorials, etc. Underline all evidences of propaganda in these examples and

show them to your instructor. What light does this test throw on the utility of your working definition?

4. Analyze the possible persuasive effects of the *voices* of one or more of the following radio commentators: Gabriel Heatter, Elmer Davis, Paul Harvey, Fulton Lewis, Jr., Drew Pearson, Walter Winchell, Chet Huntley, Edward R. Murrow. Do you see any connection between the speaker's way of using his voice and his degree of logicality, factualness, and honesty in handling a subject? Can the use of a speaker's voice be itself a propaganda device? Does a voice determine whether the meaning itself is logical or illogical, factual or non-factual, true or false?

9 MEDIA

In an orderly way we have sought to explore, step by step, the chief characteristics and problems of thought and statement; now we need to consider all these characteristics together, for in reality they occur together, not neatly separated and classified.

For this purpose we shall consider the present-day mass media of communication. All of us to some extent use newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies, and books as sources of information and opinion. So, in using the media as a testing ground for our understanding of the problems of thought and statement, we shall be examining them in a context with which we are already somewhat familiar and which is of immediate significance to each of us.

The following selections concern themselves with newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, movies, and books, in that order. The *Time* Magazine account of an outstanding newspaper ("The Fair Lady of Milwaukee") raises the double questions "What do we want from newspapers?" and "What do we get?" Two well-known journalists, James Wechsler and August Heckscher, debate the question "Can newspapers survive without sex?" and, in doing so, really return by another route to the basic problem: If papers are capable of maintaining high standards of information and logical thought, will we, the public, permit them to do so? And nine capable journalists—a group of Nieman Fellows—summarize many of the central problems of present-day journalism in their description of what they would do if they could start a newspaper.

Most of us have a code of behavior, more or less rigid, which determines what we do and don't do. Can the same thing be said of magazines? That is, do they behave according to a more or less fixed formula? And, if they do, what forces help to determine what those formulas will be? Relevant to these questions are Bainbridge's analysis of the *Reader's Digest,* a poll of magazine editors' policies on taboos ("Taboos in Slick Fiction"), an analysis of current magazines by the distinguished editor of one of the best of them

("From the Editor's Desk") and *Life* Magazine's analysis of photography as a means of reporting and editorializing.

Turning to radio and TV, we find John Crosby commenting wittily on some causes and effects of our radio fare ("Out of the Wild Blue Yonder"), Fred Allen lamenting radio's past and predicting no good for television's future, Marya Mannes summarizing the findings of a survey of TV programs ("Tidings of Joy?") and commenting on the problem of bias and ignorance in radio and TV audiences ("Portrait of a Mob"), and Gilbert Seldes thoughtfully analyzing the worth of radio and TV offerings and questioning some common assumptions about public taste.

Lillian Ross ("Onward and Upward with the Arts") describes the painful birth of a movie and implies why some kinds of movies never get born at all. You may find that her article on movies raises in connection with that medium some of the same questions encountered in Seldes' article. Arthur L. Mayer ("Myths and Movies") assumes the role of attorney for the defense and seeks to answer the most frequently heard criticisms of the motion pictures.

Even though books may be used much less frequently than the other media, they can by no means be discounted, because book readers, by and large, exercise an influence out of proportion to their numbers. Barzun, Hayakawa, and E. M. Forster suggest that serious literature, for the most part available only in books, can perform unique functions not frequently or regularly performed by the more popular mass media. They also suggest why books have always had a rather limited audience.

Bruce Bliven ("Towards Better Communication") brings together and summarizes those central problems which relate to our use of all the media.

This section makes no attempt to be a comprehensive survey of *all* the problems which beset our means of obtaining facts and ideas today. Rather, it offers a number of opportunities to get better acquainted with the forces at work shaping the media which we use, and at the same time provides many specific instances of the language-and-thought problems with which we have been primarily concerned in this book.

Press

Time Magazine

THE FAIR LADY OF MILWAUKEE

Here is a description of one American big-city newspaper. Descriptions and analyses of other papers might just as well have been included here, for the main purpose is to give us a measuring stick against which we can compare other papers we know and use. The paper used as a basis for comparison need not be outstanding in any respect; it chances, however, that many students of American journalism feel that the Milwaukee Journal *is in some particular ways one of the country's superior newspapers—one of a rather rare company with the New York* Times, *New York* Herald Tribune, *St. Louis* Post-Dispatch, *Louisville* Courier-Journal, *and a few others.*

Out from Miami's palm-lined Biscayne Bay headed the 71-ft. white-hulled motor cruiser *High Tide,* bound for a day of fishing in the Gulf Stream. At a table on her afterdeck sat the *High Tide's* owner: Harry J. (for Johnston) Grant, 72, a florid-faced millionaire with china-blue eyes, a mouthful of flashing gold teeth, and the booming voice of a sideshow barker. But energetic, stubby (5 ft. 8¾ in., 220 lbs.) Harry Grant did not act like the run of carefree yachtsmen. When he was not tending the deep-sea fishing line trailing over the stern, he riffled through mountains of papers, pounded out letters and memos on a portable typewriter, talked by ship-to-shore phone.

For two hours of the day, he stopped everything else while he concentrated on an evening newspaper that had been air-mailed from 1,268 miles away. The newspaper: the Milwaukee *Journal* (circ. 339,532). Harry Grant was no ordinary reader—and the *Journal* is no ordinary paper. Harry Grant is boss of the *Journal,* which he has made into one of the best newspapers in the U.S. He has also made it one of the most controversial.

THE STAMP

From the center of the Midwest, often considered a seedbed for isolationists, the *Journal* speaks in a ringing, uncompromising, internationalist voice. In Senator McCarthy's home state, the *Journal* attacks him so fiercely that McCarthy calls it "that left-wing smear newspaper, the Milwaukee edition of the *Daily Worker.*" Other readers, damning its doggedly independent, liberal

THE FAIR LADY OF MILWAUKEE From *Time* Magazine, February 1, 1954. Courtesy *Time* Magazine; copyright Time Inc. 1954.

ways, refer to it as "that damn *Journal.*" (One prominent Milwaukeean pays his newsboy 25¢ a week to tear out the editorial page before delivering the paper.) Isolationist Chicago *Tribune* Publisher Colonel Robert McCormick, who considers the *Journal* a radical upstart in the *Trib's* Chicagoland, calls it a "wood pussy."

Onetime Wisconsin Governor Phil La Follette, still smarting from the long feud between his family and the *Journal,* has vowed that he would rather have his children grow up "illiterate" than read the *Journal.* On the other hand, Milwaukee's Socialist Mayor Frank Zeidler, who has been opposed as often as he has been supported by the *Journal,* has only respect for the paper: "The *Journal* is almost utterly dominant in the community. It's the intellectual life of Milwaukee. You discuss the issues the *Journal* raises [and] you hardly know of the existence of any other issues. The *Journal's* standard of morals, political and social, sets an all-enveloping stamp on the city."

None of this bothers Harry Grant, who talks about the *Journal* with the purple sweep of a Fourth of July orator and the fervor of an evangelist. Says he: "The *Journal* must be our Fair Lady. We must have freedom, freedom, freedom—not to be willful, or bigoted, or swell-headed, or to give us delusions of grandeur—but so that the *Journal* can act entirely as it thinks best for the community. The *Journal* is above our frailties. The *Journal's* job is to serve the public. It can't be anything else."

The Milwaukee *Journal* serves the public by 1) reporting virtually everything that happens in the city of 637,392, even down to the theft of a few chickens; and 2) covering national and world news with meticulous thoroughness. To European visitors, and even Americans from cities much bigger than Milwaukee, the *Journal* is often a sharp surprise, for it confounds both the mistaken idea that the American Midwest is a wellspring of unrelieved isolationism or that "provincial" journalism must indeed be provincial.

FIFTY-ONE MILLION

Board Chairman Grant himself lives in Milwaukee only six months of the year. The rest of the time is spent on *High Tide* or in his home on Biscayne Bay; they are the paper's nerve center and Grant's office. Grant makes "the *Journal's* decisions whenever I want and wherever I am," and "nobody's ever challenged that." There is little reason for challenge. Under Grant, the *Journal's* fat (up to 100 pages) weekday and Sunday (up to 400 pages) editions average 1,140 columns of local, national and international news a week. They are brightened by the best newspaper color printing in the U.S., for both news pictures and ads. For the last four years, the *Journal* has run more advertising than any other paper in the world (51 million lines in 1953). Though it has a monopoly of the afternoon field, its ad rate is the lowest of any major eight-column daily. Its radio-TV station, WTMJ, is one of the top moneymakers in the U.S. For close to half a century, the *Journal* has earned a handsome profit ($2,000,000 after taxes in 1953), which is

shared by many of the 1,337-man staff; the *Journal* is one of the few U.S. dailies whose employees own the paper they work for.[1]

THE THREE B'S

Milwaukeeans (nine out of ten families read it) rate the *Journal* on their own even scale. They know that the paper's all-encompassing interests have brought the city everything from the Milwaukee Braves (TIME, March 30) to a $327 million expressway, now abuilding. They also know that the *Journal's* campaigns have helped cut local crime to the lowest rate of any major city in the U.S. Milwaukeeans can thank the *Journal* for virtually eliminating gambling (it prints no daily horse-racing results), helping to give the city high health and housing standards and a government whose bonded indebtedness is only $30 million, one of the lowest metropolitan debts in the U.S. In this climate of civic rectitude, says Police Chief John W. Polcyn, the *Journal* "watches officials like a hawk. God help you if you get out of line. They take the flesh right off your bones."

In molding Milwaukee, the *Journal* has also been molded by it. Milwaukeeans have never taken crime or corruption lightly. Largely the descendants of sturdy Germans and Poles, Milwaukeeans have a healthy respect for civic discipline, orderliness and hard work. While *Journal* stories may seem too long and stodgy to outsiders, Milwaukeeans like the *Journal's* Germanic thoroughness, relish its fondness for lengthy details and rich quotation.

Machinery and beer are the city's best-known industries, and it leads the U.S. not only in beer production (13 million bbls. a year) but in consumption (39 gals. per capita). Nightclubs are as hard to find as skyscrapers, although the city has 2,137 taverns. "Milwaukee," observes one longtime resident, "is a big town that's still a village." Milwaukee has had a Socialist mayor for 30 of the last 38 years, because Milwaukeeans have learned to vote on men and issues instead of parties. Says one of the city's leading politicians: "A Milwaukee Socialist is just a good, average guy. About the only thing publicly owned is the waterworks. Mayor Zeidler behaves more like a conservative Republican than a Socialist."

Milwaukeeans pride themselves on having a *gemütlich* city, where hospitality and friendship bubble out of every stein of beer. "The three Bs of Milwaukee," says one Milwaukeean, "are not Beethoven, Bach and Brahms but beer, baseball and bowling. We haven't got a city of great culture. We can make any machine in Milwaukee, but we have no first-class theater building or art museum or orchestra—and no real prospect of them." For its lack of the outward signs of culture, the *Journal* has to share the blame. If Harry Grant had resolutely exercised his evangelistic fervor a generation ago in favor of such cultural monuments, Milwaukee would probably have them. "It's very unusual for one man to have all the power I have," says he. "Men

[1] Others: Cincinnati *Enquirer*, Kansas City *Star*.

tolerate me because they know I don't want a thing for myself. I want it for the *Journal,"* and thereby for Milwaukee. "Hell's bells, the *Journal* has got to remain a simple, clean thing. Nothing must ever besmirch the *Journal."*

The *Journal,* as alert and sharp-eyed as a rooster, has a tabloid-moralistic habit of playing up any smirch involving a Milwaukeean. When the wife of a prominent businessman was caught by a private detective in a hotel room with another man, the *Journal* front-paged the story: FOUND IN HOTEL WITH A FRIEND. Recently, a distraught Milwaukee housewife telephoned the city desk to beg the paper not to print the news that her husband had been arrested for being drunk and disorderly. "Lady," a *Journal* reporter told her, "I'm going to give you a break. I won't ask his name. If we knew his name we'd have to run it. This way he has a chance of being missed."

The *Journal* treats its own staff the same. When a top *Journal* executive was arrested for drunken driving after an auto accident, the *Journal's* only competitor, Hearst's morning *Sentinel* (circ. 183,772), offered to keep the story out of the paper. The *Journal* not only turned down the *Sentinel's* offer but played the story on Page One. After the story, the executive resigned. The *Journal* has fought gambling so effectively that a bridge party with a door prize has been a front-page story (although the paper's executives match coins for the lunch check in the executive dining room). When the owner of a taxi company gave each of Milwaukee's 27 aldermen an electric blanket for Christmas, the *Journal* exposed the "bribe." (Some of the blankets were returned.) The *Journal* never lets up its effort to instruct its readers in the ways of civic virtue. "It takes a long time to educate a community," explains Grant, "and it can't be done by spellbinders, moneybags, hypnotizers or magicians, by J. Rufus Wallingford or Aladdin's lamp. Character is what matters on a paper."

"JUST JULIUS"

In no place in the *Journal* does the educational effort stir up more of a storm than on the editorial page. The paper calls itself "independent" as many other dailies do, but for the *Journal,* the term is an understatement. In a single election, the paper once supported a Socialist, a Republican, a Democrat and a Wisconsin Progressive. The *Journal,* which backs losers as often as winners, backed Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936, Willkie in 1940 (because of the third-term issue), no one in 1944, Dewey in 1948 and Stevenson in 1952. Politicians have learned that *Journal* support can easily be turned into opposition. In his two successful campaigns for governor, the paper backed Republican Candidate Julius Heil, who used the slogan "Julius the Just." Next election, when the *Journal* turned against Heil, it sneered at him as "Just Julius." He lost.

When Joe McCarthy, then a circuit judge, ran against the late Bob La Follette, Jr., in the Republican senatorial primary in 1946, the *Journal* did not support La Follette, and McCarthy squeaked through by little more than 5,000 votes. "One editorial for Bob," recalls a *Journal* editorial writer rue-

fully, "would have turned the tide, and McCarthy might never have got to the Senate at all." A month after the primary, the paper realized its mistake. It charged that Judge McCarthy had granted quick divorces to political friends. Later, it found that he had been censured by the Wisconsin Supreme Court for destroying official court records, and had been delinquent in thousands of dollars of state income taxes. The *Journal* later deflated his "war injury" as a broken foot he suffered in a rough equator-crossing party aboard a Navy transport. His whole record, the *Journal* pointed out, is "an appalling record of fraud and deceit." "McCarthy," said Chief Editorial Writer Lindsay Hoben, "is a very simple issue for us: integrity and truth, or not."

It was opposition to McCarthy that helped put the *Journal* behind Stevenson in 1952. The paper's editors were ready to support General Eisenhower as soon as he was nominated, but Grant stopped it. Said he: "We'll wait for the Democrats, see who they nominate and decide then." But the *Journal* did not decide until Ike campaigned in the Midwest and met McCarthy. "Ike didn't keep a decent distance," said Hoben, "and we did think he showed insufficient strength in dissociating himself from McCarthy. From then on, it was impossible for us to back Ike." Even the two of the six editorial writers who voted for Ike agreed that "the *Journal's* traditions made it necessary to back Stevenson."

Since the election, the *Journal* has often backed the Republican Administration, insisted that Ike's biggest battle is against the "forces inside his own Republican Party," hailed Vice President Nixon for the good job he is doing. The *Journal* hammers at the Administration for not revising the McCarran Internal Security Act, while it campaigns for free world trade and backs the U.N. and the International Court of Justice as staunchly as it supported the League of Nations. Grant's independent attitude "is to go to the truth wherever you find it, and to hell with left or right."

SOCIETY WEDDING

The fiber of Harry Grant's independence threads back through his entire life. He was born in Chillicothe, Mo., the son and grandson of stable owners. The family moved to St. Louis, and when Grant was 15, his father killed himself, leaving Grant's mother to make ends meet by teaching dancing. Harry Grant quit high school after his freshman year, went to work as a $5-a-week railway messenger. He was earning $60 a month as a ticket clerk when he quit to make more as a bookkeeper and cattle checker in Swift & Co.'s stockyards. He bought schoolbooks and studied at night, and by the time he was 22, he had saved enough money to enter Harvard as a special student.

In his first year, with his usual energy, Grant took seven courses (four was standard), lived in an attic, wore secondhand clothes, and did odd jobs to add to his savings. By the end of the year, his money ran out, so Grant took a job selling roofing in the Southwest until he saved enough for a second

try at Harvard. After struggling through the second year, he gave up and moved to a cheap room in Hoboken, having lost his "illusions about what an education could do for me." By limiting himself to 11¢ a day for lunch and not much else, he held out until he found a job he liked, working for N. W. Ayer advertising agency in Manhattan. Grant moved through every department, was so able at whatever he turned his hand to that in three years he was sent to London to represent the agency.

In Europe he met Dorothy Cook, a wealthy American girl, whom he married the same year at what he describes as a "goddamned society wedding." Grant felt that his in-laws wanted him to be "a gentleman of leisure." He had different ideas, and his marriage was unhappy. (Mrs. Grant died in 1923.) Grant went to Chicago to work for O'Mara & Ormsbee, Inc., the *Journal's* advertising representative. There he quickly rose to vice president and caught the eye of Lucius W. Nieman, owner of the *Journal.* Nieman hired Grant for $250 a week as business manager, with a promise of stock in the paper if things went well.

"A PUBLIC STENCH"

Nieman, a veteran newsman, had bought the newborn *Journal* in 1882, when it was barely 22 days old (the *Journal* considers Nieman its "founder"). Nieman was disgusted with the timidity of the city's half-dozen dailies, which he thought were more interested in pleasing businessmen and politicians than in covering the news. He set the *Journal* on a different course with his dictum: "Never care about classes, but about people. Get all of the information [you can] about matters of importance to the public, giving them all sides of the question." When more than 70 people died in a hotel fire and the other papers called it an unavoidable tragedy, the *Journal* said the hotel was a "known firetrap" and denounced its owners for "greed" and "criminal negligence." The words "liar," "jackass" and "public stench" were familiar epithets in the *Journal.* By 1915, Lute Nieman was describing Germany as an international menace and urging preparedness for war. In Milwaukee, where German was a second language to thousands of families, the paper was denounced and threatened.

Nieman stuck to his guns. The *Journal* translated and printed more than 5,000,000 words of pro-German propaganda flooding the U.S. (including stories from German-language Milwaukee papers), to prove that some Americans were more loyal to the Kaiser than to the U.S. Government. *Journal* reporters smuggled themselves into pro-German meetings, wrote long eye-witness accounts. Many Milwaukeeans were so furious that Nieman posted armed guards outside the paper's doors, barred the windows and gave staffers revolvers to carry. For its campaign, the *Journal* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1919. The campaign also intensified the *Journal's* feud with the pro-isolationist Progressive Party, a feud that started when Democrat Lute Nieman had a political falling out with onetime Republican Bob La Follette.

When Harry Grant arrived in 1916 in the midst of the battle, the *Journal* was thriving on controversy, with a circulation of 97,598, though still far behind the *Sentinel* (where Nieman had been managing editor). Three years after Grant joined the staff as business manager, Nieman's health failed and Grant became publisher. Though Nieman lived until 1935, Grant has run the paper since 1919. With characteristic lack of modesty, Grant says: "The *Journal* became, through my energy and driving force—God knows I had an abundance of both—a thing worth buying."

WHAT CONTRACT?

In the Nieman tradition, Grant runs the *Journal* on a simple principle: "You've got to have good editorial matter for a paper to get circulation, and you've got to have circulation to get advertising. Editorial matter is the base of it all." *Journal* advertisers learned early a primary rule of U.S. journalism: the more successful a paper, the less susceptible it is to influence from advertisers. Harry Grant taught the lesson to Milwaukee in a typically forthright manner. When an advertiser asked for special treatment in the news columns because of "my $50,000 ad contract," Grant asked him: "What contract?" "Why, the contract I have with you," answered the advertiser. "You mean the contract you *had* with the *Journal,*" answered Grant.

To keep free from ties and commitments that might jeopardize the paper's independence, Grant and his staff take little direct part in Milwaukee public life. "I have something everybody else in Milwaukee wants," explains Grant. "They want to use the *Journal* through me. They'll do the damnedest tricks—throw dinner parties, ply you with liquor, find pretexts to get on your blind side. We're not out to make friends. We stick by principles instead of to individuals."

THE FIVE

When he is in Milwaukee, Grant leaves his twelve-room, lake-view apartment on Milwaukee's fashionable Prospect Avenue (he owns the nine-story apartment house) every morning at 9:30. By 10, he is in his richly decorated office in the *Journal's* five-story building on Fourth and State Street. In meetings with his high command, Grant is as voluble as a Salvation Army brigadier at a mission meeting, acting out each part in the drama he creates. Once, in the middle of such a speech, Grant stopped, then bellowed: "I talk too goddamn much. Kick me in the tail and get me out of here." He seldom sees a piece of copy before it is printed, keeps apart from the staff, rarely making an appearance in the *Journal's* city room. Some reporters with years of service have never met him.

The staff is nominally responsible to Editor and President J. (for John) Donald Ferguson, 63, a friendly, Missouri-born, white-thatched newsman, who, like Grant and the *Journal's* managing editor, started out as a railway worker. Like every other staffer, he always calls Grant "Mr. Grant." (Once he addressed him as "Boss," and Grant exploded: "That reminds me of

Uncle Tom's Cabin and Simon Legree.") Editor Ferguson leaves the day-to-day operations to Managing Editor Wallace ("Chink") Lomoe, 56, a capable, hard-driving ex-state editor who came to the *Journal* as a reporter 25 years ago, is president of the Associated Press Managing Editors' Association. Chief Editorial Writer Lindsay Hoben, 51, who joined the paper in 1925, runs the five-man staff of editorial writers. Publisher Irwin Maier, 54, devotes his time to keeping the balance sheet healthy, and Business Manager Donald B. (for Byron) Abert, 46, who ably runs the plant operations, good-naturedly admits that marrying Grant's only child, Barbara, has helped his climb. Says Grant: "Some men get s.o.b.s for sons-in-law. I'm lucky. I got a hard-working son-in-law."

GREEN & PEACH

The *Journal,* bound by old-fashioned ideas of editorial responsibility, bars syndicated columnists; it aims, says Editor Ferguson, to be able to be "responsible for every word in the paper" and to stand behind what it prints. For its national and international news, it relies on the wire services and the New York *Times* news service, has only two correspondents of its own outside Wisconsin (in Washington and New York).

The *Journal* drives home its position on such matters as segregation by its own example. On its society pages, it prints—as very few other papers do—pictures and stories about Negroes. The paper doesn't crusade in the manner of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* (TIME, Dec. 21). It aims to nip corruption before it gets a start, as it covers the city like a vacuum cleaner, picking up any small specks of dirt along with everything else. It also never forgets that it is a home-town daily. Cinemactors Pat O'Brien and Jack Carson are "Milwaukee movie stars." (But when Pianist Liberace, the "latest Milwaukeean to hit the big time," triumphantly returned to the city, the *Journal's* critic roasted his playing.)

Readers get their entertainment from the *Journal* in one neat, lively package: the daily, four-page "Green Sheet," the paper's most popular feature, filled with comics, pictures, a crossword puzzle, bridge column, advice to the lovelorn, crisply written local profiles, etc. Across the "Green Sheet's" front page runs a trademark nonsense banner. Sample: EVER STOP TO THINK THAT YOU COULDN'T GET VERY FAR WITHOUT HOLES IN YOUR HEAD? For late news that misses its last edition, the *Journal* puts out a two-page "Peach Sheet" every afternoon, gives it away free all over the city.

EMPLOYEES INTO OWNERS

For Grant, his crowning achievement is employee-ownership. The death of Lute Nieman, who owned 55% of *Journal* stock, and that of his wife four months later, rocked the *Journal.* Mrs. Nieman's estate 1) set up a $1,400,000 fund for Nieman Fellowships, which, for the past 16 years, has sent 193 newsmen to Harvard for a year's study; 2) gave the rest of her interest in the paper to Harvard to dispose of to the group "most likely to

carry out the ideals" of the *Journal.* Grant persuaded Harvard that the employees should get the Niemans' stock for $3,850,000.

Grant, who already held 20% of the stock, arranged for the employees to get a $250,000 cash bonus to pay for a quarter interest on 25% more, declared a first-year dividend enabling them to pay another quarter, and got a Milwaukee bank to lend the employees the balance at 3% interest. Since the dividends averaged 10% a year, the employees were able to pay their debts largely out of earnings. Grant's stock is now down to 12½%. Last year he announced that the staff, which now holds 55% of the stock, will in five years own 67½% of the paper (the remainder will be held by heirs of early stockholders). None of the top five executives under Grant, whose salaries average about $40,000 a year, owns more than 3% of the *Journal's* stock (at $26.27 per share, Grant says each of the five is worth "from $250,000 to $500,000"). Grant need not fear the employees' power. More than 95% have given him their voting proxies, and they are not allowed to sell stock outside the *Journal.*

He has been seriously challenged only once. In 1943, the American Newspaper Guild tried to organize the *Journal.* Grant stopped it in his own way. He met the employees in small groups, announced: "By law [the Wagner Act], I am not allowed to make a statement to you. But the time has come for you to choose my management or the Guild—you can't have both. I'll get out if you want the Guild. Here's my record. You decide." The speech ended the drive, and the *Journal* still has no Guild.

Do *Journal* employees really feel they own the paper? Many do, especially those who have worked for the *Journal* for long (258 employees have more than 25 years' service). But some *Journal*ists argue that the executives really own and run the paper, and that stock ownership is, whether intended or not, a device for keeping staff salaries lower than they should be (the *Journal's* highest-paid reporter makes $250 a week, most average under $140). However, their dividends ($7,176,000 to date) and the tremendous increase in the value of their holdings ($8,669,100 at present) give them security they might not otherwise have.

As boss, Grant has created around him not only a newspaper tradition but a group of men who know how to carry it out. Thus, Grant's successor is likely to be not an individual but a group of *Journal*ists. For their part, Milwaukeeans will continue to read the *Journal,* often feeling the same shuttling between love and hate for the paper that children sometimes feel toward their parents. That's all right with Harry Grant. Says he: "We're trying to lead. The only way to lead is to get out ahead. We're not a loved paper. But we're a respected one."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

Here is a practice test which will at once check your reading comprehension of this article and your grasp of some of the main ideas introduced earlier in this book.

1. *Time's* reporter writes: "Harry Grant is boss of the *Journal,* which he has made one of the best newspapers in the U. S. He has also made it one of the most controversial."

   What deduction does this passage invite the reader to make? Is it a sound one?
2. Here is a quotation from Grant on the *Journal:* ". . . the *Journal* can act as it thinks best for the community. The *Journal* is above our frailties."

   When Grant talks about the *Journal* this way, is he talking about an actuality or an abstract symbol? Explain your answer.
3. Is *Time* practicing one common form of oversimplification when it says: "Largely the descendants of sturdy Germans and Poles, Milwaukeeans have a healthy respect for civic discipline, orderliness and hard work"? Explain.
4. How does Harry Grant's dislike of the word "Boss" square with the realities of managerial control of the *Journal?* Was Grant reacting against a *word* or a *situation?*
5. If the *Journal* can be successful without resorting to sensationalism, as *Time* says, does that mean that papers which sensationalize the news are miscalculating the nature of their public? If this conclusion seems faulty to you, can you draw a sounder inference?
6. Cite all the evidence you can recall which supports the conclusion that the *Journal* is an "independent" paper. Now cite evidence to the contrary. Is there really a contradiction here, or does the apparent difficulty lie with a changing definition of the word *independent?*

PROJECTS

1. Earlier in this book you became familiar with the "operational definition"—a process of defining an abstraction by pointing out the actual "operations" or *experiences* to which the abstraction refers. Here you have a chance to put this idea into practice. The Milwaukee *Journal* is considered by the writer of this article—and by many newsmen—as one of the "good newspapers" in the U. S. Prepare a concise list of the distinguishing characteristics of the *Journal* —for example, its very complete coverage of local news, its use of color printing for news pictures and ads, and so forth. If you do your job well, you will have one possible operational definition of a "good newspaper."

   Use this operational definition of a "good newspaper" as a kind of yardstick against which to measure a metropolitan newspaper with which you are familiar. Then prepare a concise oral or written report (as your instructor sees fit) summarizing your findings.
2. Organize a symposium to consider the characteristics of a "good" newspaper. Each of the members of the discussion group should hold himself responsible

for the analysis of *one* of the following widely admired American newspapers: New York *Times,* New York *Herald Tribune,* St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* Louisville *Courier-Journal, Christian Science Monitor,* Detroit *News,* Atlanta *Constitution,* Chicago *Sun-Times,* Minneapolis *Star Tribune,* Kansas City *Star-Times,* Washington *Post, Wall Street Journal,* Cleveland *Press.* (Your instructor may wish to supplement this list with the names of other papers more readily available in your locale.)

After each student has described what he considers to be the "good" features of his newspaper, the group will determine from these analyses what all these newspapers have in common.

3. *Time* says that the Milwaukee *Journal* "serves the public" by reporting home news and national and world news in careful detail. Do you believe that their operational definition of newspaper "service" is sufficiently inclusive? If so, defend your agreement in writing. If not, explain your reasons for each "service" you would add to "the public service" of a newspaper.

CAN NEWSPAPERS SURVIVE WITHOUT SEX?

In newspapers as in other areas of human activity one is continually having to face the question, "Do the means we use affect the ends we seek?" If a newspaper plays tricks on the emotions of its readers to get them to accept or "go along with" highly intelligent public policies, does this emotionalism hinder the development of real intellectual maturity in those readers? If a newspaper with a sense of public service dodges a "hot issue" so that it won't lose one segment of the community, is it thereby jeopardizing its ability to do good on other matters? If a newspaper uses scare headlines and news stories about sex and violence to build up circulation, will this weaken its ability to stimulate intelligent thinking in its readers?

The third of these ends-and-means questions is debated in the following twin articles by James Wechsler, editor of the New York Post, *and August Heckscher, an editorial writer for the New York* Herald Tribune.

James Wechsler

THE TECHNIQUES OF SHOWMANSHIP

The other day I got a letter-to-the-editor which read: "Although I agree with almost everything *The Post* stands for and I think it is terribly important that a liberal newspaper succeed in New York, I must tell you that I am distressed by some of the features your paper has carried in recent months. The recent series on Ingrid Bergman, for example, seem designed to get the kind of circulation that *The Daily News* attracts. . . ."

THE TECHNIQUES OF SHOWMANSHIP From *The Saturday Review,* June 24, 1950. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

My impulse is to reply that the accusation is entirely just. I do not believe the Lord in His infinite wisdom placed a ceiling on the circulation of *The Post* or that he regards readers of *The Daily News* as less worthy human beings than others. To put it another way, I do not believe that He would have let *The Sun* die if He had felt the readers of *The Sun* were the chosen people. I do not mean to be irreverent or facetious in discussing a serious problem; I confess some amazement, however, that most of the lamentation over the fate of *The Post* since Dorothy Schiff, Paul Sann, and I took over its direction last year seems to come from very earnest liberals who agree with most of the things we say on the editorial page, who applaud each of our crusades, wish us a long life, but are horrified by what they call the "sensationalism" which has given us a real chance for survival.

One of the axioms of liberal journalism in the last couple of decades seems to be that there is a direct correlation between high circulation and spiritual corruption. There seems to be a general suspicion that the liberal weeklies would probably cease to be liberal if they got too many readers. There is a curious paradox in the discussion for liberal journals are most fond of picturing themselves as spokesmen and champions of The People. They depict most mass-circulation newspapers and magazines as organs of "vested interests" and, by and large, I sympathize with the charge. Yet the unexplained paradox is that The People have persistently crowded the newsstands to buy the journals which are against them and left the liberal publications to a select, self-righteous audience. I do not believe that this is really as puzzling as it sounds.

Within the last decade two newspapers have died in New York City. One was *The Sun* and the other was *PM* (later called *The Star*). Editorially, they had almost nothing in common. *The Sun* was as reactionary a newspaper as any published in America. *PM,* if unpredictable and intermittently plagued by Stalinist direction, proclaimed itself the embodiment of all the liberal virtues. If I may say so, I would guess the basic cause of death in both cases was not a product of editorial policy; it was a product of dullness. In the long run both were so preoccupied with their messages that both succeeded in boring thousands of people. They seemed to be published chiefly to articulate the passions and prejudices of their editors rather than to entertain or enlighten their readers.

Having served my time on both *The Nation* and *PM,* I must state the categorical position that a newspaper which professes to be a spokesman of The People must display some real capacity for interesting them; that it cannot depend for survival on the tenacious doctrinaire support of those who agree with its editorial policy (any more than *The Sun* could ultimately endure simply because it had the devotion of the people who hated Roosevelt most). It ought to be neither self-conscious nor apologetic when it applies techniques of showmanship aimed to bring a heterogeneous crowd into the tent. There is little *The Post* has done in the past ten months that has not been done by

most liberal and radical newspapers in Europe which have been able to build mass circulations. To cover a lot of ground swiftly, I think New York City has effectively demonstrated that the fact of being liberal is no guarantee of success for any newspaper; I hope *The Post* will prove, however, that the fact of being liberal can be an asset rather than a liability for a newspaper that is livelier (and occasionally lustier) than its competitors.

Let me say emphatically that I am not contending that the present *Post* formula is the only defensible one for a newspaper (or that the small-circulation liberal magazine performs no function). If there were no *Times* nor *Herald Tribune* in New York somebody would have to invent them. For approximately 900,000 people a day want a detailed, relatively complete morning newspaper which earnestly tries to cover the world. I might deliver several lectures on how both of them might perform that function more effectively; every newspaper reader believes that he can edit the newspaper he reads more effectively than the editor and every editor is sure he can improve somebody else's newspaper. But I will not press the point. For even if *The Times* and *Herald Tribune* recklessly adopted all my secret recommendations, I suspect they would still be operating in roughly the same circulation area in which they now find themselves. The experiment has been going on for a long time and the results seem fairly conclusive.

In any case, the fact that there is both a *Times* and a *Herald Tribune* necessarily influences one's judgment about what *The Post* ought to be. If neither of them existed it might be both the wise and the responsible thing to fill the vacuum. But they do exist.

Meanwhile, *The Daily News,* a morning tabloid, has a circulation of more than 2,000,000 each day and *The Mirror* has a circulation of 1,000,000. The arithmetic of the morning field indicates that approximately three out of four New Yorkers prefer a tabloid to a "complete" newspaper, just as, ironically, three out of four New Yorkers preferred Roosevelt to any Republican who ran against him. Thus, in the stronghold of American liberalism, a Patterson and a Hearst newspaper run away each day from the soft-spoken *Times* and the moderate-Republican *Herald Tribune.* The statistics in the afternoon field are no less revealing. There the Hearst *Journal-American* leads all the rest. *The Post* (with the application of some of the techniques being debated here) had passed *The World-Telegram* shortly before the latter's merger with *The Sun.* The ABC figures for last autumn show that we actually led *The World-Telegram* (for the first time in history). We were still substantially behind *The Journal-American* despite the fact that for more than a decade *The Post* had offered readers the chance to buy newspapers as they voted.

The meaning of these numbers is not mysterious. They prove beyond dispute that newspapers which displayed the deepest interest in crimes of passion and passionate crimes have remained far out in front in New York,

despite the presence of *The Times,* the *Herald Tribune,* the late *Sun,* and the later *PM* to compete with them.

Is that bad? I have no pious judgments about the answer. It may be that the world would be a prettier place if the statement of twelve physicists on the atomic bomb stirred as much public debate and discussion as the statement of Roberto Rossellini on the fatherhood of Ingrid's child. But I have little doubt as to where the balance of public interest lies and I seriously doubt that the newspapers themselves can be blamed for it. Recently a labor newspaper chided a number of papers for giving a greater front-page display to the trial of Robert Bednasek, the Ohio State student accused of killing his sweetheart, than they did to the Senate debate on the natural gas amendment This is a serious indictment. But I know of no formula by which the admittedly grave question of natural gas prices can be presented as an appealing page-one theme. The labor newspaper which published the indictment could afford to speak freely because it is entirely subsidized and distributed to union membership, whether they like it or not. It does not have to be entertaining or interesting because its audience is guaranteed. It can't lose.

With the world reported to be on the verge of total disintegration it may be argued that any preoccupation with any lesser issue than atomic policy is absurd. I suppose that it might also be argued that any man who devotes himself to anything except the prevention of the explosion is wasting his time. But one might perversely maintain that, as the inability of men to solve the problem of human survival becomes more apparent, the more frivolous fellows are offering humanity at least one more fling before the debacle. (It might even be argued that total preoccupation with the atomic issue is as morbid a bid for circulation as any emphasis on lesser gang fights or local depravity.) In any event, no one would really contend that we must always put first things first or this planet would become as dull as it is dangerous.

When the issue of sheer survival hangs in the balance, any news short of cosmic crisis is essentially trivial. In that sense debate over the Taft-Hartley law is ludicrous when we are told that "a dust cloud" could wipe out every living person; similarly, a leopard loose in Oklahoma could hardly compete with an atomic physicist loose in Minsk. But no one really contends that most people are capable of living continuously on the plane of cosmic debate. The truth is that most human beings are so absorbed in the immediate machinery of life that, perhaps fortunately, they can't really fix their undivided attention on the ultimate mysteries of life.

The truth also is that, even in our comparatively advanced society, most men and women find the machinery of life—meaning the struggle for individual survival—a gray and humdrum thing and seek all manner of vicarious experience to impart excitement to their lives. They may find this in the Bergman-Rossellini story or in the adventures of a girl reporter who spends ten nights in a dance hall or in the gruesome ordeals of wayward females. The Bergman saga is the glamorous projection of every frustrated marriage.

every furtive triangle, every imagined infidelity. These were not inspired by newspapers, nor, would I guess, have they vanished in the Stalinist fatherland despite the failure of *Izvestia* and *Pravda* to give them adequate coverage. I would even suggest that the afore-mentioned proletarian journals would probably be read with great eagerness if they dealt with broader phases of production than the output of a local ball-bearing factory.

When the subject of this exchange was presented to me I gathered that it was to be headlined something like "Is Sex Necessary on Page One?" I assume we have deliberately burlesqued this theme and in a sense I may seem to be debating whether sex is necessary, which I am sure Augie Heckscher would not propose to argue. Others may contend that the real controversy is whether the specific series published by *The Post* in recent months deserve journalistic immortality. But I would be the last man in the world to contend that all our prose has been priceless. I suspect, however, that the real issue is not the narrow one of whether sex should rear its ugly head on the front page of a liberal newspaper or even whether l'affaire Bergman warrants close coverage. The most serious and insistent complaint leveled against *The Post* is that we do not always give important play to the most important news of the day—that we reach out for human-interest stories at the expense of stories which may have the greatest significance for the future of humanity. We do. By human-interest stories I mean nothing more or less than those stories which interest most humans.

This does not mean that we have ceased to take ourselves seriously. Occasionally I hear someone murmuring: "After all, circulation isn't everything." I philosophically concede the point but I would hate to argue it with a corpse. As I have tried to indicate, I see no contradiction between publishing a newspaper that fights hard for a better break for a lot of people and simultaneously evokes the interest of those people. We said a year ago that a newspaper ought to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable" and we haven't changed our minds on that point. (I might observe at this time that I don't believe liberal intellectuals are utterly bored by stories which contain wide popular appeal; I find no evidence that our critics failed to read the series they deplore.) I do not believe that this involves "writing down." I believe it involves an awareness of the intensity and range of individual interest. In a review of "A Treasury of Great Reporting" published in *The Saturday Review* not long ago Herbert Brucker wrote that "the vast majority of these treasures of great reporting deal with blood, butchery, brutishness, or bestiality in one form or another . . . Laymen constantly deplore the newspapers' preoccupation with the untoward. But it is the mass of laymen themselves, giving testimony as incontrovertible as it is unconscious through what they buy to read, who account for it."

Back in 1900 a man named George Bernard Shaw had some words to say on a not unrelated topic. Discussing the timidity of the theatre in handling sex, he wrote in his preface to "Plays for Puritans":

> . . . Love is assumed to be the only theme that touches all of your audience infallibly, young and old, rich and poor. And yet love is the one subject that the drawing-room drama dare not present. . . .
>
> . . . Life has its realities behind its shows; the theatre has nothing but its shows. But can the theatre make a show of lovers' endearments? A thousand times no; perish the thought of such unladylike, ungentlemanly exhibitions. You can have the fights, rescues, conflagrations, trials at law, avalanches, murders, and executions all directly simulated on the stage if you will. But any such realistic treatment of the incidents of sex is quite out of the question. . . .

Substitute "family newspaper" for "drawing-room drama" and you have a reasonable statement of the taboos under which the anti-tabloid journals operate.

As a footnote to all this, one might note the enormous popularity—and respectability—accorded the findings of Dr. Kinsey. The liberal intellectuals lustily joined the chorus of praise. Yet the astonishing thing is not the variety of sexual patterns unfolded by Dr. Kinsey; it is that the reader of the tabloid was probably far better prepared for the findings than the reader of the "informative family newspaper." I do not want to parody the point; I am simply suggesting that the preoccupation with sexual behavior—and relative sophistication in reading and writing about it—is several thousand times greater than a casual reader of *The Times* would ever guess. If a newspaper is (among other things) supposed to reflect the interest of the age in which it is published, *The News* offers a more accurate picture of the period than does *The Times;* at the very least, a rounded newspaper would be a blend of the two.

There is a parenthetical point that might be made. Some critics of *The Post* have deplored the page-one displays given to specific sex stories. We do not pretend there has been no exaggeration. There has been. For many years *The Post* was known as a "policy paper." That meant its news columns were crowded with dispatches that reflected its editorial interests, regardless of their value in human interest. We deliberately undertook a kind of "shock-treatment" designed to tell a lot of people that there has been a big change on West Street. Since the advertising columns of the big-circulation papers are closed to us, our page one becomes our major medium of advertising.

Arthur Hays Sulzberger recently asked: "Is it more urgent to inform a thousand readers or entertain a million? Much as this generation needs a sense of humor, I'm afraid my vote goes for the paper that informs."

My vote goes for the paper that both entertains and informs, that reaches a million rather than a thousand, that not only puts up a fight for the welfare of most of the people all of the time but also persuades them to read all about it.

August Heckscher

A FALSE FORMULA

New York City needs all the newspapers it has. It seems incredible indeed that a city of such diverse views and interests, such bounding and irrepressible vitality, should sustain but eight papers of general circulation. To wish a long life for Mr. Hearst's *Journal-American* might seem excessive. Yet Churchill is quoted in the latest instalment of his war memoirs as having remarked that if Hitler had invaded hell, he, Mr. Churchill, would have made "at least a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons." In the same spirit, if even *The Journal-American* were to go down some sigh of regret might be expressed in those quarters where the welfare of American journalism is a genuine concern.

The virtues of *The New York Post,* however, are not confined to the mere fact that it exists. It happens, also, to have the makings of a good newspaper. After a confusing period during which two editors pulled in opposite directions the editorial page has settled down under Mr. Wechsler to speak forcefully and consistently for a point of view that is too seldom reflected in our press. This might be called liberalism—except that *The Post* is too hard-hitting quite to fit the classification; it might be called the view of the non-Communist Left—except that *The Post* is refreshingly undoctrinaire and as informal as a small-town daily. The emphasis on columnists and features which Mr. Wechsler inherited has been maintained, with Max Lerner being called to write (at least as well as he ever has before) on things in general; with Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., being persuaded (did he need much persuasion?) to add weekly columning to his many chores, and people like Joseph Lash and Robert Bendiner being given space which they fill to advantage. These are added to old standbys like Leonard Lyons, Sylvia Porter, Earl Wilson, and the whole is embellished with a concise, if somewhat cavalier, coverage of the news.

But that, unfortunately, is not all. It is also embellished, saturated, and wrapped up in what, for want of a longer word, must be called sex. When news of the day lends itself to being exploited from this angle, *The Post* is in its element. When news of this kind needs to be beckoned, nudged into being, or just plain dug up, *The Post* is ready. But beyond these intermittent developments there has been a steady stream of feature articles on girls—of the wayward, delinquent, dance-hall, and KO varieties; there have been books

A FALSE FORMULA From *The Saturday Review,* June 24, 1950. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

skillfully condensed so as to put the spotlight on the bedroom and the parked car, and there has been a constant hospitality to pictures of Hollywood starlets and would-be starlets which must warm the more or less exposed hearts of these females.

This emphasis on sex many of the friends of *The Post* find disconcerting. It must be presumed that these friends are not actually averse to sex itself, that they do not lack a sympathy for outcasts or unfortunates, and that they are not unwilling to pursue any social problem to its roots. If they object it is on the practical grounds that they do not like being compelled to leave their favorite evening newspaper on the train, or otherwise dispose of it, before entering homes where growing children are entitled to be protected against at least the most brutal and the most sordid facts of life. They object, on moral grounds, to having their sex dished up as bait. The only thing worse than an obviously bad paper is a paper, like *The Post,* which is obviously good and makes ugly sounds as a matter of deliberate policy and choice.

The answer to these objections, as I understand it, is that sex makes a paper pay. A liberal newspaper, the argument runs, cannot sustain itself on its own liberalism. The mass audience which advertisers require must be recruited by another appeal. The most obvious, the cheapest to cultivate, and the one least inherently antithetical to the paper's primary cause is claimed to be such an emphasis as we find in today's *Post.*

Now it has always been a charming occupation to tell an editor how to run his affairs, as the letter column of any newspaper attests. I do not intend to deny myself that pleasure entirely. Yet it must be acknowledged that the game of tell-the-editor has lost some of its allure amid the overwhelming and almost insoluble problems of the modern newspaper. For any except the most solidly established, as Max Ascoli has argued in a recent issue of *The Reporter,* merely to continue becomes a victory. "The advertisers," he says, "strengthen the papers that are already strong, while the labor unions weaken those that are already weak." Nevertheless there are grounds, which I propose to state, for believing that the arguments which I have summarized above are not the whole answer and that they may, in fact, make success for a newspaper in the long run impossible.

It is true that a newspaper cannot exist on the strength of its liberalism alone. But then neither can one exist, as *The Sun* proved, on the strength of its conservatism. Indeed it can be argued that neither the liberalism nor the conservatism of a paper's editorial views crucially affects its popular standing. *The New York Daily News* has maintained its steady, undeviating upward climb while its political views have veered from the most ardent support of the New Deal to the most violent and rabid opposition. This change and all the subtle variations between might be attributed to a sensitive response to a shifting popular mood. The more likely explanation is that the people have read *The News* because they have found it to be, as indeed it has been at its

best, a lively and interesting newspaper. If its circulation has now leveled off it is not because the man in the street has become sated with obscurantism but because the genius of Patterson's journalistic touch cannot be indefinitely prolonged and probably cannot be duplicated.

If liberalism is not enough, can a strong seasoning of sex suffice? *The Post* apparently believes so. The response to lurid features and sensational handling of news has reportedly taken it out of the red; it has certainly stilled rumors of its demise. Yet there are limits to how far the harping on sex can be carried. When Mr. Wechsler finishes with his wayward, delinquent, dance-hall, and KO girls there are still a number of imaginable types remaining; when the novels of O'Hara have all been reduced to their spicier passages, there will exist other books susceptible to this treatment. But an end must sometime come. And even if the material were not subject to exhaustion the sensibilities of the readers would be.

The late *Graphic,* edited by Bernarr MacFadden, stands as the classic example of the limits beyond which a preoccupation with sex cannot be carried. The law of diminishing returns applies here as elsewhere and as it begins to operate a feeling not only of boredom but of distaste and revulsion becomes dominant.

The formula of sex plus liberalism must rest basically on the assumption that the two parts, the two emphases, of the paper can be kept separate. The former is assumed to support financially, but not necessarily to corrupt or obscure, the latter. The idea seems comparable to that prevailing in some university circles to the effect that the academic pursuits of the college can be sustained by money brought in through the commercialization of athletics. Whatever may be the results in the academic field of this approach (and I am inclined to doubt that it will be successful in the long run) there is every reason for believing that it will not work with a newspaper.

A newspaper has, as its most valuable asset, a character and a style. These it compromises or distorts at its peril. Mr. Wechsler may have persuaded himself that his liberal and enlightened readers will look indulgently upon his more sensational excursions, and, indeed, they may try to, in so far as they understand the liberal editor's dilemma. But there is a limit to such indulgence. The pleasure of reading a really good editorial is not to be minimized in a day when too many newspapers dodge and mumble. Mass circulation is not to be discounted as a lure to the advertiser. But both the reader and the advertiser draw back in the end from associating themselves or their product with a paper that caters to puerile curiosity and cheap desire.

Even if it were theoretically defensible, the separation between liberalism and sex cannot be maintained in practice. A newspaper is neither read nor edited in water-tight compartments. A liberal newspaper must be liberal all through; it must pay its readers the compliment throughout of assuming them

to be intelligent and mature. For a time it may carry on a double life successfully. But at some point, if it continues, it will cease being a liberal newspaper and become a sensational paper with an editorial page that is irrelevant and without influence. It is important, after all, that right views not only be printed but that they bear weight.

The fallacy of trying to separate *The Post's* two chief appeals may be illustrated by a specific example. A series of articles on sex criminals was recently featured. The way this was played made it evident the series was part of the continuing effort to hold the reader with an interest chiefly in perversion, rape, and mutilation. Yet it happens that the sex criminal, besides being a subject capable of satisfying these interests, is one of the gravest social problems. It is not something for a newspaper to snare the prurient with, but to treat responsibly according to its lights. Yet for the serious reader *The Post's* articles only increased the confusion.

The Post had played up the menace of sex criminals, describing in detail how they go from one crime to another, each more horrible than the last. It had maintained the thesis that a sex criminal is always a sex criminal, so that a minor deviation having been observed the most fateful and inevitable developments can be predicted. But was *The Post* saying that because as a fearless and liberal newspaper it believed it to be true? Or because as a sensational newspaper it was compelled to make a good story?

A short while after the series had ended a New Jersey Commission, having investigated the subject, reached conclusions of an entirely different nature. It claimed sex offenders to be among the less frequent of repeaters and denied that there is any inescapable connection between the minor abnormalities of an adolescent and the monstrous crimes of a mature fiend. In a discussion of these matters in which I participated the opinion of *The Post* was cited. "Oh, *The Post*—" was the reply. "It would let down its readers if it had not adopted the most sensational view."

The Post may have been far nearer the truth than the New Jersey Commission. I am not arguing that point. I am simply saying that one could not trust *The Post* in such an area. One could not take it seriously. And not to be taken seriously in the discussion of a major human problem is about as bad a fate as could befall a liberal newspaper.

My thesis has been that liberalism alone cannot keep a newspaper alive and that liberalism plus sex cannot preserve it indefinitely. What, then, is the answer? It is, I suspect, that the only real assurance of survival and longevity is in being a thoroughly good newspaper—lively, human, provocative, inquisitive, accurate, bold. That, of course, is easier to prescribe than to achieve. Yet *The Post* at its best, despite its persistent dallying with the lewd, shows that it has a fair hunch as to how such a paper would be made. A real coverage of the news of New York City would by itself be a good beginning for a formula.

In developing and carrying out the formula it might well be that enough girls of various types would reappear to satisfy those whom Mr. Wechsler has recently won over as readers. Certainly no one could maintain that the life of a great city is lacking in the scandalous or the picturesque. Nor is there any reason why a liberal paper should not report these things as they appear and talk about them in plain words. The same quality of liberalism that enables a paper to call a spade a spade on the editorial page may well lead it, in its news section, to call a criminal assault a rape. Certainly it would feel no compulsion to bury the birth of Ingrid Bergman's son, as *The New York Times* did, under a small head at the bottom of its entertainment page.

To be plain speaking, to be somewhat audacious, to keep one eye slanted for the bosom or the leg, is by no means incompatible with good journalism and may even be of a piece with the eclecticism at the heart of the liberal spirit. If *The Post* had been going along only in this way it would not have troubled some of its most faithful readers. But *The Post* has been trying something very different. It has abstracted sex from its reporting of life in general, divorced it from realities and passions, and dished it up raw. This, as I see it, is the great defection—a denial both of true liberalism and of good journalism. *The Post* can do better than this; in spite of itself it often does.[1]

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Wechsler bases much of his argument on two generalizations about human nature. Do you recognize these generalizations? Does your observation of human nature support them?

   What basic assumptions about human nature underlie Heckscher's criticism of his opponent's contention?
2. What main kinds of inductive evidence does Wechsler use in arriving at his conclusion that newspapers like the *Post* need to indulge in sensationalism if they are to stay alive? Test the soundness of his inductive reasoning. Is the conclusion he draws from his evidence the only possible one?
3. List Heckscher's basic arguments against a newspaper's using sex as reader-bait. Discuss the soundness of each of these arguments.
4. Have you observed situations in which spectators were attracted and amused to such an extent that they were distracted from the real purpose? For example, Visitor's Day on a college campus, or Parent's Night at a public school? Do these observations support Heckscher's views or not? Discuss.
5. Does the *Post's* use of sex seem to be a particular kind of distortion? Does the New York *Time's* relegating sex stories to a very minor role in the paper appear to be a kind of distortion?
6. Is it safe to conclude that the absence of conspicuous stories playing up sex

[1] An article entitled "Trouble in New York" in "The Press" section of *Time* magazine, December 20, 1954, provides an interesting sequel to this debate. Here you will find an account of the latest circulation figures of the *Post* and the *Herald Tribune*, together with an indication of the editorial practices these and other New York dailies are adopting in their struggle for survival.

and crime denotes a paper free from sensationalism? Bring to class two or more papers readily accessible to you. Compare their handling of some really hot controversy. Can you detect in the use of headlines, the use of photographs, the language of the opening paragraphs, the language of paragraph captions, and similar devices the methods by which certain papers emphasize the sensational aspects and neglect the factual, informative side of such controversies? Look also for these papers' handling of epidemics, disasters, traffic accidents, and so forth.

7. Compare the policies of the New York *Post* (as described by Wechsler) and the Milwaukee *Journal* (as described by the editors of *Time*). In what respects are they different? similar? What are some of the conditions affecting the *Post's* struggle for survival which do not appear to affect the *Journal?*
8. Turn to pages 28 and 29 of the May 21, 1949, issue of *The New Yorker.* What criticism of the press is implicit in this series of cartoons? Does your own experience with newspapers support the cartoonist's criticism? Does this criticism apply to other media, such as magazines, radio, television, and movies? Explain.

PROJECTS

1. A careful reading of these two essays will reveal that the disputants are not hopelessly far apart. Prepare a paper or talk in which you make clear the areas of *agreement* between Wechsler and Heckscher and suggest a way in which this "debate" might be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.
2. You may already be aware that newspaper and magazine editors, movie, radio, and TV-show producers, and advertisers are often consciously attempting to evolve a "formula" which will appeal to that segment of the public whose support they wish to capture and hold. Certainly Wechsler makes clear how the *Post* is trying to do this. Select a newspaper, magazine, radio program, or TV-show with which you are thoroughly familiar and write an analysis of its "formula" (the devices it deliberately emphasizes) in order to determine the kinds of audience at which it is aimed. For purposes of simplicity, you might select some paper or program which has a rather special appeal.

IF WE COULD START A NEWSPAPER

A practical, critical understanding of the newspapers we use requires, first of all, factual knowledge of what they are and do, but it also calls for standards—some conception of what a newspaper should *do, what may be* expected *of it. The facts without values lead to pointless mental clutter; the values without a basis in facts result in empty wishful thinking.*

In the following article a group of practicing journalists have suggested what they think should—and could—be done to improve American news-

IF WE COULD START A NEWSPAPER From Leon Svirsky (editor) and nine Nieman Fellows, *Your Newspaper.* Copyright 1947 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

papers as sources of information and mental stimulation. The authors, at the time of writing, were at Harvard on a year's Nieman Fellowship, which permitted them to pursue whatever studies they felt would improve their abilities and understanding as newspapermen.

DESIGN FOR A DAILY

It is a risky business to try to draw a blueprint. Any plan that plunges off the beaten path is bound to look more or less Utopian. There is also a danger that a blueprint may be misinterpreted as a general formula, applicable to any situation.

It is not our intention to suggest a general formula. On the contrary, we think that more variety and experimenting is one of the crying needs of the press. A newspaper ought to be shaped by its own unique situation—the size and character of its community, the special abilities of its staff, the imagination of its editor. But for purposes of illustration, let's consider a specific case. The rough blueprint here to be outlined is intended to describe a hypothetical daily in a certain hypothetical city.

We assume a lively metropolitan area of about 1,500,000 population (like, say, San Francisco). Our hypothetical city has a symphony orchestra, a theater, several colleges and universities, large industries, three competing newspapers (including ours). The paper we propose is a morning daily, published seven days a week, aiming at a daily circulation of about 250,000. We shall try to describe, in a general way, the paper's appearance, content, and staff.

FORMAT

The first thing to consider is making the paper convenient to read. The standard-sized newspaper certainly cannot be accused of being convenient. The unwieldy eight-column sheet, which admittedly is a dangerous thing to open in a subway or in a breeze, is a holdover from the days of flat-bed presses, when it was desirable to crowd as much reading matter as possible on a page which could be printed at a single stroke. With modern rotary presses, this is no longer necessary. Another reason why publishers stick to the large-size page is that it makes possible bigger ads and hence (they believe) brings in more money. The person who is forgotten is the reader.

The ideal would be a small paper fitting in the hand like a magazine, with pages stapled together so that the paper wouldn't turn into garbage when dropped. But some compromise must be made between ease in turning pages and attractive display of news, pictures and ads.

The paper we suggest would have a six- or seven-column page, intermediate in size between the present full-size paper and a tabloid (we were not unanimous on this; two held out for the standard size and three for the

tabloid). It would be printed in larger, easier-to-read type. (The present small print is looked on fondly by printers and publishers and hardly anybody else.) As far as possible, stories started on the front page would end there, eliminating the necessity of jumping to an inside page to finish the story (which readers seldom do). To do this, we would have stories written more compactly and sharply and would use a horizontal make-up; that is, instead of running a story straight down the page, we would square it off under a head spread across several columns. If a story was so long and so important that it couldn't be trimmed to stay within its front page space, readers would be referred to further details on an inside page, where, either by a continuation of the story or in a separate supplementary article, the full picture would be filled in.

We would avoid big streamer headlines at the top of page 1 except on really tremendous stories. The practice of the New York *Herald Tribune* and *Times,* which in normal times do not use a full eight-column headline more than a dozen times a year, seems a good model to follow.

Headlines would be allowed more flexibility; the horizontal make-up would help headline writers get away from hackneyed words like "solon," "plot," "looms," "blasts," "voids," etc. When a story defied summary in a headline (*e.g.,* certain feature stories), we would not hesitate to use a provocative title instead.

The front page would carry the most interesting and important stories of the day, whether in international or local news, science, sports, the theater or whatnot. We would not try to cram the page with a great number of stories; a few really good ones would encourage reading instead of scanning. The front page would also carry a column of comment on the news, at least one picture or other illustration, and a page index to departments inside the paper.

The inside pages, and as far as possible the front page, would be departmentalized, so that readers could easily find the news they wanted to read first. This would mean grouping stories under a label—international, national, local and so on. The daily departments would include Sports, Science, Education, Theater, Music, Movies, Books, Radio, Press, Woman's Page, Editorials, Letters, Business, perhaps one or two others; weekly departments would include Religion, Art, Houses, Gardening, Aviation, Automobiles, various other special interests and hobbies. Of course not all daily departments would necessarily be published every day; if there were no news, a department might occasionally be dropped. But each department would have an editor responsible for digging up news in his field.

Wherever it would add to attractiveness, as on the editorial page and in some feature departments, we would use magazine-type make-up, with wider columns and picture layouts.

As for ads, they would be stacked neatly in a squared-off arrangement instead of the painfully familiar jigsaw pattern. This would make possible an orderly layout of news and pictures. The New York *Times* does it every

Sunday on most of its pages, and virtually all magazines do it with great success. Nothing is more exasperating to a make-up editor than to be faced with an ad dummy, prepared by the advertising department, which leaves only awkward-shaped holes on each page into which to throw a few lines of news.

In short, we suggest a simple, functional format, designed to give the reader the news as quickly and conveniently as possible.

CONTENT

What about the goods in the package? Let us say at once that this is not going to be a solemn newspaper. It will be as much fun to read as a good novel. It will not ignore crime, sex or frivolity. It will even have comics (we would not part with the pixies and supermen), but half a dozen good strips, with an extra helping on Sundays, ought to be enough, and if they can be tucked away in the classified ad pages, so much the better.

The editorial money and skill available to our newspaper will be devoted primarily to producing brightly written, well-illustrated news. One of the first essentials of a good newspaper is good writing. We don't mean fancy writing. It should be clear and succinct, and whenever possible lightened by a sense of humor.

Most present newspaper writing is pompous, tasteless, inexcusably long-winded. We favor a more colloquial style, using short, vivid words and calling a spade a spade. Whenever possible a newspaper story should be told as a narrative, enriched by the physical and emotional setting. It should also make a point. Nothing is more discouraging to a reader than a story that pointlessly strings together a lot of undigested facts or assertions. Every story should have some central idea, fact, conclusion or emotion, and drive it home as clearly as possible.

The news should be told, whenever feasible, in terms of people—those who make the news and those who read it. As to the former, the paper will try to sketch in each important news-making individual's character, motives and orientation. A statesman who forms a foreign policy, or a scientist who makes some new discovery, is in a sense more interesting, and significant, than his policy or discovery. The statesman, for instance, representing a geographical section, a system of education, a class, an environment, a point of view, sums up in his own dramatic person the conflicts and influences that led to the policy. Explaining the man helps to explain the policy in human terms.

Explaining the scientist, by the same token, helps to explain his discovery. He may, for example, have discovered something about body cells, itself of no immediate importance. But if one understands what the scientist is searching for, how he has made the search, and how far he has got in it, one sees not only a fascinating human story but the significance of his discovery.

It may be a link in the chain of research that will eventually lead to the solution of cancer.

Descriptions should be specific and informative. For instance, if a congressman with large real estate holdings demands the removal of rent ceilings, it is pertinent to note his specific interest in the matter; by the same token, a congressman who denounces Wall Street to please his farmer constituents should be similarly identified. On the dog-bites-man principle, such a demand or denunciation will not be considered page 1 news in our paper if the individual is making it for the umpteenth time. . . .

With the growth in size of mass media, the news has tended to become more and more impersonal. The names and faces are there, but the individual human spirit and dignity are lacking. A model paper would try to remember that the reader is an individual, too. He has a personal interest in the weather, his ailments, occupation, taxes, purchases and amusements. Most newspapers try to serve these informational wants; when a tax bill comes up, for instance, they promptly print tables showing how much it will cost typical taxpayers, and their ads and advice columns offer counsel to typical consumers. These services generally try to sell the consumer something. Often it would be more helpful to advise him what *not* to do or buy. Our newspaper will make it a point to compare and evaluate—both goods and ideas. It will try to promote an appreciation of expertness, and to inform readers where they can get expert counsel on their individual problems in education, health, work and recreation.

The paper also will encourage readers to write or visit us for information and to register kicks about our reporting. We'd like readers to consider the paper a service institution like the weather bureau or the public library. It will be a part of the community, scolding when necessary, taking its lumps, acknowledging every citizen's stake in the paper. But its editors will not let readers ride roughshod over them; they will stubbornly defend the paper's fundamental principles.

In its approach to the news, the paper will start with the community and fan out from there. Beginning with people's worries, wants and conversation about houses, schools, jobs, illness and traffic problems, the news trail will lead to police stations, hospitals and business institutions, to the City Hall, to the State Capitol, to Washington, to the whole wide world. The paper will probably give nearly as much space to international and national news as to local, but international stories (and national) will be brought home at every opportunity with some local angle. The paper will keep a spotlight on the congressmen from our town and state; they will become as well known to our readers as the mayor or the cop on the beat.

The paper will use by-lines freely. The object will be to emphasize the reporter's responsibility, and give readers an opportunity to judge his reliability. The reports of our national and foreign correspondents will be printed as they come in, without editing of their facts or interpretations. If a corre-

spondent's report looks questionable or over-excited, the editors will caution readers with a box or shirttail to the story presenting (1) any contradictory facts they may have, and (2) the source of their information.

Besides good writing, our paper would strive for good pictures. It would be copiously illustrated. Newspapers, thanks to the picture magazines, are printing more and more pictures, but there has been no noticeable improvement in their quality. Photographs in the paper seldom succeed in the elementary function of information, because newspapers don't know how to use groups of related pictures, and because their pictures fall into clichés. It is incredible that they should go on printing deadpan faces, even whole rows of them in a single photograph. The Greeks had a solution in their pictures, namely, an attribute. If Mercury's job could be made clear by showing him with winged feet, every American should be pictured working at whatever he is good at.

With the plentitude of photographers on tap since World War II, it is impossible to understand why papers print pictures in the style that prevailed before World War I. Here the picture magazines, and for that matter magazines in general, have left newspapers far behind. The paper we are describing will illustrate every story that can be made more vivid with pictures; it will tell many stories primarily with pictures. This means not only photographs but charts, drawings and diagrams.

An ideal newspaper might perhaps combine the snap and readability of the New York *Daily News,* the pictorial excellence of *Life,* the thoroughness of the *Times,* the crusading fire of the *Post-Dispatch,* the human interest and intelligence of the *Herald Tribune,* and the sense of responsibility of the *Courier-Journal.* That would be quite a newspaper!

STAFF

This paper will need a big staff of reporters, photographers and editors—at least 150 men and women. That is not an impractical dream. It has been proved that a successful paper of 250,000 circulation can support a staff of that size; there are several that do.

We would have about twelve foreign correspondents. They would not attempt to cover routine news but would supply us with the background and interpretative reporting that the wire services fail to provide. Some would cover a given area (one in London for Great Britain, one in Moscow for Russia, etc.); others would have roving assignments. We like the plan adopted by Joseph Barnes, foreign news editor of the *Herald Tribune,* of using three or four roving specialists—say in science, diplomacy, economics and trouble —who would be ready to be sent anywhere in the world where big news in their field was breaking, or who would go hunt it up themselves.

Our Washington bureau would have three or four topnotch reporters, again leaving routine to the A.P. and working on the most vital stories, as

the late Paul Y. Anderson of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* did so well. They would be supplemented by two or three roving reporters covering the nation.

Our state and local staff, about thirty reporters, would cover the usual runs—state capitol, city hall, courts, police headquarters, district attorney, federal building, labor, transit, social services, etc. But they would not be tied down too closely to fixed posts; on a morning paper they would not have to worry about hourly deadlines through the day. As specialists in their jobs, they would build up news sources and could do some of their work by telephone instead of hanging around offices and pressrooms. That would give them time to get around the city and make firsthand investigations. They would visit hospitals, study the traffic and transit systems, investigate political frauds, talk with labor union members, spend a day with a butcher, doctor, policeman or teacher and write an eyewitness story.

Seven or eight sports writers and some twenty other specialists (science, movies, press, homemaking, etc.) would round out our reporting staff. If this seems a large number of specialists, may we remark that in 1946 the New York *Post* (circulation 250,000) had thirty-eight columnists, from Harold Ickes to Earl Wilson—and columnists are not cheap.

We have no prejudice against rewrite men, but there would not be many of them on our paper. Part of the feel and understanding of a story is lost when it is written at second hand. Furthermore, a reporter should be something more than a leg man; he ought to be a high-calibre observer who can dig out and write the story as he sees it. Instead of leg men, we would have a group of editorial assistants not now employed by any newspaper that we know of: researchers such as are used by *Time* and *Newsweek*. Their job would be to provide reporters and writers with brief digests of long reports, look up facts in books and encyclopedias, get information by telephone and interviews and verify facts of which the reporter is not sure. Such researchers can save writers' and editors' time and thus make possible more effective use of the paper's high-priced talents.

The copy desk is a problem. Copy readers on most newspapers are charged with the duty of "tightening up" and editing reporters' copy—often with distressing results. On a paper whose reporters were all capable writers, this would be unnecessary. We would adopt the practice of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* which does not permit copy readers to edit reporters' copy. The general news editor and department heads would do the editing and any necessary cutting for space, whenever possible in consultation with the writer. The copy reader's function would be to question points in the story that seemed unclear and to write headlines.

A board of editors would decide editorial policies. But experience shows that a great newspaper needs a great editor at its head, a Horace Greeley, Charles Dana, Joseph Pulitzer, Carr Van Anda or O. K. Bovard. The late O. K. Bovard, managing editor of the *Post-Dispatch,* seems to us close to the ideal; he was not only a journalistic genius but a man of tremendous integrity

and keen social conscience. The challenging kind of paper we are proposing is more likely to attract men of his stature than is countinghouse journalism.

We are setting our sights for a high order of talent from the editor down through the whole staff. Such talent is not now generally available to newspapers. Topnotch reporters like Vincent Sheean (a free-lance), John Hersey and A. J. Liebling have quit news journalism because they have greater freedom of expression and can make a good deal more money lecturing and writing for magazines than in newspaper work. . . .

Better pay and security will not automatically create an effective staff of newspapermen. Also needed are better methods of selecting and developing them. The traditional copy-boy-to-reporter route for breaking into the newspaper business is a hit or miss system that produces very uneven results. Under that system the lad who is a hustler and has an eye for a hot story is most likely to make the staff. But it does not give nearly enough weight to maturity, education or understanding. . . .

It is often argued that a good newspaperman cannot be picked by rule of thumb: he must have certain indefinable qualities which are hard to measure. That is undoubtedly true. But even if it be true that a good newspaperman is born and not made, it would certainly not destroy his usefulness as a journalist to require him to meet certain minimum standards of education and information. It should be possible for newspapers to set up some kind of test—a college degree or one from the right kind of journalism school, or examinations for the self-educated—to determine whether a candidate fulfills these minimum requirements. From the candidates who passed such tests, newspapers could then select those who seemed to possess the other, indefinable qualities. An able newsman, prospective or already employed, who lacked the minimum of education, might be encouraged or required to study to make up his deficiency to obtain promotion. . . .

Well, there is our blueprint. Like all blueprints, it is subject to a good deal of argument about details. We have been happily surprised, however, at the large amount of agreement we have found, even on details, among ourselves and our consultants. In any case, whatever the newspaper we have tried to picture might eventually look like in detail—and certainly the plan should be flexible enough to enable the newspaper to live and grow—we all agree on certain basic things it must have: Confidence in and the confidence of its readers; a sense of responsibility for informing them, rather than just entertaining or exciting them; a concern for the background and perspective that transcends the day's headlines; a staff consisting of the ablest writers and editors who can be found, and editorial management which respects and makes full use of the special abilities and knowledge of the staff.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What precautions do the authors of this "blueprint" for a daily newspaper take, at the outset, to guard against oversimplification by readers of their article?
2. What would be the probable effect upon the reader, of the "turn-to-page-six" requirement in papers? The effect of the lack of departmentalization in newspapers? The effect of the relegating of the news to uneven columns by the presence of advertisements?
3. Do you find that the writing on the front page of the current issue of *your* newspaper supports the Nieman Fellows' claim that "Most present newspaper writing is pompous, tasteless, inexcusably long-winded"?
4. Is there any danger of distortion in the advice that scientific news, and so forth, be told "in terms of people"? In considering this problem it might be helpful to read and compare articles on a current scientific investigation in recent issues of the *Reader's Digest* and *Scientific American.*
5. Do you see any possible "local angle" in any of the international news stories in this morning's or evening's paper? Was this "local angle" sufficiently important to deserve consideration? Did the editors exploit the "local angle"? If not, how might they have done so?
6. Do you know any recent instances of news reporters or commentators making news? (For example, you may recall that George Sokolsky was in the news as an alleged bearer of an offer from the Joseph McCarthy group to the Army. Also, there have been the many libel suits brought by—or against—Westbrook Pegler, Drew Pearson, Quentin Reynolds, and Walter Winchell.) If a newspaper reporter becomes a subject of the news, how might this affect his usefulness as a reporter?

PROJECTS

1. Make a list of the changes these writers propose in the *format* of a paper. With this list in hand, pick up a daily paper accessible to you and see if it has adopted any of these proposals. Next, studying both your list and the paper before you, draw your own conclusions as to the desirability of the proposed changes. Organize a demonstration-talk in which your purpose is to *persuade* your audience of either the desirability or the undesirability of these proposed changes. (You may wish to use a number of newspapers and possibly the services of a classmate or two to carry out this demonstration effectively.)
2. Select any *one* of the main points from the section of this article called "content" (for example, the point about good and bad style, or that news should be told in "terms of people," or that newspapers should use pictures more imaginatively). Having selected *one* of these, read through a number of papers until you find appropriate examples of practices which the Nieman Fellows find "good" and of those which they consider "bad." Cut out and mount these examples and write a clear explanation of why the "good" ones are superior to the "bad" ones.
3. Over a period of several days study the newswriting of two foreign correspond-

ents or two Washington reporters to determine: (*a*) kinds of events covered, (*b*) aspects of those events emphasized, (*c*) fullness of factual reporting and amount of persuasive writing and argumentation, and (*d*) degree of slanting. Write a paper comparing the two.

4. If you have been genuinely moved by some recent event or incident on your campus or in your community, write a letter to the editor of either your college or town newspaper expressing your reactions. But before mailing it, describe the incident to your classmates in a brief, informal talk and then read the letter to them. Invite their criticism of its effectiveness, not their agreement or disagreement with your viewpoint. Finally, edit your letter in the light of these criticisms and submit it to the paper.
5. On the basis of your use of newspapers, make your own blueprint for a newspaper that would suit you. Do not let yourself be influenced by considerations you do not honestly hold.

Magazines

John Bainbridge

DIGESTING A DIGEST

Today most of us can read. Such literacy, a relatively recent development in man's history, has meant, among other things, a tremendous increase in the number of magazines designed to meet the demand for reading material. Many magazine readers, however, have run into two obstacles: first, their inability, under the pressures of work, play, and indolence, to read more than a fraction of that total output, and, second, their difficulty in understanding the writing of specialists. Now, what could seem a more sensible way of getting over these two obstacles than to have somebody go through the monthly mass of magazine-writing, pick out the most interesting, most comprehensible, and most representative articles, boil these down (tossing out time-wasting irrelevancies and technicalities), and offer them to the hurried, tired public in one small, tidy package? This kind of answer has seemed to millions of readers to settle both the problems of amount and of difficulty quite adequately.

In the following selection, John Bainbridge suggests that the "digest" sort of answer may not be so adequate as many of us have imagined.

When DeWitt Wallace established *The Reader's Digest,* he summed up the aim of his magazine in a slogan: "An article a day from leading magazines, in condensed, permanent booklet form." This slogan, reminiscent of Dr. Eliot's Five Foot Shelf and other short cuts to culture, was printed on

DIGESTING A DIGEST Part III of a Profile in *The New Yorker.* Copyright, 1945, John Bainbridge.

the first page of every issue of *The Reader's Digest* from August, 1923, through May, 1939. In the issue of June, 1939, the motto was quietly altered. Wallace deleted the phrase "from leading magazines" and substituted the less reassuring phrase "of enduring significance." To many people in the publishing business, this change was more amusing than surprising; it seemed to them long overdue. For years, the fact that *The Reader's Digest* had ceased to be solely a reprint magazine had, to its devoted students, been as obvious as the falseness of Groucho Marx's mustache. By millions of less analytical readers, however, the *Digest's* metamorphosis has as yet apparently never been noticed. It is evidently as hard for a *Digest* fan to think of his favorite magazine as anything but a regurgitative journal as it would be for a clean-shaven Groucho to stalk Mrs. Rittenhouse. The *Digest* has not exerted itself immoderately to shatter the illusion. A year after acknowledging, by implication, the changed character of his magazine, Wallace printed a warm testimonial to it by John Kieran, the amiable permanent expert of "Information, Please!" Kieran, paraphrasing the chant of millions of other *Digest* devotees—"I don't have time to read *all* the magazines, so I just read the *best* from all of them in the little magazine that fits right into my pocket"—said that the *Digest* performed a great service for him by sifting the best articles from the "vast flood of contemporary letters. It is the one periodical I read regularly, knowing that in it I will get the best sum and substance of today's literary output." Kieran ended, not unexpectedly, with a quotation from *Hamlet:* "For this relief, much thanks." Alas, poor Kieran! He did not know the *Digest* well.

The transformation of *The Reader's Digest* into something other than a digest began in the early thirties. Among other things, it was a maneuver of self-defense. A small rebellion against the *Digest* had broken out among a group of strong-minded publishers and editors, who considered denying the *Digest* the privilege of reprinting articles from their magazines. Threatened with the possible loss of his sources of supply, Wallace countered by hiring a few men to write articles directly for the *Digest.* The rebellion petered out, but Wallace, perhaps expecting another one later on, continued to build up his defenses by having his writers turn out more and more material. In June, 1930, he began publishing occasional articles that were on the borderline between reprints and originals. These, it was announced in the *Digest,* were based on articles that had appeared in other publications. The magazines were not identified and the articles, written by Wallace's staff authors, were anonymous. These articles, presented under a rather evasive editorial note reading, "It was felt that on this subject, the interest of our readers is best served by this summary, specially prepared by one of our editors," bore such arresting titles as "Music and Animals" and "Why Be Bald?" Wallace continued to serve the best interests of his readers with similar summaries until February, 1933, when he at last decided to publish the first admittedly original

article. This historic contribution was written, and signed, by Henry Morton Robinson, at present a Roving Editor of the *Digest,* and was entitled "Insanity—The Modern Menace." There were fourteen other original articles in the *Digest* that year, none of which seemed to charm its readers more than a piece called "The Burning Question," an article about cremation.

Until 1935, Wallace may reasonably have wondered whether he hadn't made a mistake in going into the intricate business of manufacturing articles instead of simply reprocessing old ones. As far as anyone could tell, the customers seemed to like the reused goods as well as the new. He nevertheless kept offering more samples, and of the forty originals he printed that year, one turned out to be a startling success. This was a sanguinary piece about automobile accidents called "—And Sudden Death," written by J. C. Furnas. It turned out to be the most widely read magazine article ever published anywhere. . . . What effect the extensive distribution of this gruesome work of art had on reckless driving is hard to say with certainty, but it may be significant that in 1936, the year after it came out, 1,720 more persons were killed in automobile accidents in this country than the year before, and the figure rose even higher the next year.

Whatever the practical results of the Furnas article, the effect on Wallace was exhilarating. It bolstered his confidence in his editorial judgment, and it provided an excellent retort to the editors of other magazines who had got into the habit of patronizingly calling him "the world's greatest second-guess editor." In thirteen years as a publisher, Wallace had reprinted hundreds of articles published by other editors and not one had been half as sensational as a piece he thought up by himself. . . . Since it seemed clear that his hunches about what people want to read were as good as or better than those of any of his colleagues, and since he was also suffering from a combined creative and evangelical itch, Wallace determined to become a permanent first-guess editor. To do this overtly, he was aware, would bring up a perplexing publishing problem, for if the *Digest* began appearing with large numbers of frankly original articles, many readers like John Kieran might get the impression that their favorite periodical was no longer providing them with an accurate cross-section of the best sum and substance of the current literary output. Wallace solved the problem by inventing the "planted" article—perhaps the most important journalistic innovation since the invention of the digest magazine itself. A *Digest* "plant" is the same as a *Digest* original, with one exception. Both plants and originals are planned, assigned to authors, and paid for by the *Digest.* The original articles are published in the *Digest* without being ascribed to any other magazine. Before a plant appears in the *Digest,* however, it is sent to some other periodical; say, the *Rotarian.* The *Rotarian* publishes the article. The *Digest* then "reprints" it, under a line saying "Condensed from the *Rotarian.*" The advantages of the planting system to Wallace are obvious; it allows him to have the fun of

being a first-guess editor and at the same time to observe the letter, if not the precise spirit, of what is expected of a reprint magazine.

For some reason, Wallace has always been something less than garrulous about the extent of the *Digest's* planting activities. People who have been interested enough to ask the *Digest* how much of the magazine's content is supplied by other periodicals and how much is originated by the *Digest* have received responses in straight-from-the-shoulder double talk. However, an irrepressible statistician named George W. Bennett recently knocked himself out getting up some figures and arrived at a reasonably accurate answer to this question. During the five years from 1939 through 1943, the *Digest* printed 1,908 articles of one page or more in length, not including the book section or such filler items as "Picturesque Speech and Patter." Of the 1,908 articles, Mr. Bennett was able to identify 1,718, or ninety per cent, either as articles the *Digest* actually reprinted or as articles the *Digest* actually produced itself. Mr. Bennett was unable to get scientific data on the other ten per cent because of unanswered letters, unanswered telephones, slammed doors, and blank memories. Of the 1,718 identifiable articles, 720 were merely reprinted, in the old-fashioned meaning of the word, by the *Digest* from other periodicals. Bennett calls these genuine reprints. An additional 316 articles were written solely for the *Digest* and printed there only. Bennett calls these bona-fide originals. The remaining 682 articles were written for the *Digest,* planted in other periodicals, and then "reprinted" by the *Digest.* Bennett calls these plants, or disguised originals. In other figures, 720 articles, or forty-two per cent, were genuine reprints, and 998, or fifty-eight per cent, were either bona-fide or disguised originals. Later samplings made by Bennett show about the same percentages for 1944 and 1945. Thus, approximately three out of every five *Digest* articles now originate in the *Digest's* offices. Or, in fewer words, considerably less than half of its content is reaped from other periodicals. Or, in still fewer words, *The Reader's Digest* is no longer primarily a digest.

This entertaining state of affairs is not so obvious to ordinary magazine-readers, because the *Digest's* planting operations are so scattered. In the five years from 1939 through 1943, the *Digest* planted articles in more than sixty publications. During this period, the *American Mercury* was credited as being its largest source of reprinted articles. Of the seventy-four pieces taken from the *Mercury,* the majority were planted by the *Digest.* More than half the articles credited to the *Rotarian, Hygeia,* the *Kiwanis Magazine, Survey Graphic,* and the *American Legion Magazine* were also originated by the *Digest.* Of forty-seven articles reprinted from *Harper's,* eight were *Digest* plants; of thirty-nine furnished by the *Atlantic Monthly,* eight were plants; of four credited to the *Yale Review,* three are known to be plants; of eight taken from the *Nation,* five were plants; of twenty-six credited to the *New Republic,* eight were plants and thirteen others were on the *Digest's* presses before the *New Republic* appeared on the stands with them. This is a plain

indication that they were prepared under what a *New Republic* official has called "a special arrangement." Two, and perhaps more, of the four articles credited to the *North American Review* were placed there by the *Digest,* and of four winnowed from *Asia,* two were planted. The *Digest* gave *Commonweal* credit for nine reprinted articles; all were plants. In the same period, twenty-one articles were credited to the Baltimore *Sunday Sun;* all were plants. During these five years, the *Digest* reprinted one or more articles from *Harper's Bazaar, Free World, Saturday Night, Parents' Magazine, Woman's Press, National Safety News, Stage, Yankee, Progressive Education, South Atlantic Quarterly, Family Circle Magazine,* and the *Virginia Quarterly Review;* all were plants.

Not every magazine and newspaper that has had relations with the *Digest* has participated in its planting system. Between 1939 and 1943, there were six periodicals which, though they took no articles from the *Digest,* supplied it with two dozen or more articles apiece. These were *Life,* the *American Magazine, Collier's,* the *New Yorker,* the New York *Times,* and *Fortune,* in the order of the number of articles reprinted. Among the other non-collaborating periodicals that furnished only genuine reprints, though fewer than two dozen, were the *Saturday Evening Post, Time, Good Housekeeping, McCall's, Newsweek, Woman's Home Companion,* and the New York *Herald Tribune.* Recently, the *New Republic,* the *Nation, Free World,* and *Commonweal* have announced that they will be sown no more. Their reasons range from disagreement with the *Digest's* editorial bias to a lack of interest in the kind of article offered. "We just got fed up with printing their buncombe," the editor of one of the reconstructed journals has explained.

The reasons given by editors who support the planting system are varied, too. Probably the most enticing ones are that it is a handy way to get articles and that the articles don't cost anything. Some substantial publications, such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and the Baltimore *Sun,* however, refuse to accept the pieces as charity; when editors of these periodicals take an article submitted by the *Digest,* they pay the author of the piece at their regular rates. The author has, of course, already been paid by the *Digest.* . . .

The Reader's Digest feels that its planting operations are completely misunderstood. For example, it is inaccurate, the *Digest* explains to its critics, to say that a piece it sends to another magazine is a planted article; it should be called a coöperatively planned article. Since the *Digest* believes that it is misunderstood, it seems only fair to present the publication's position, and perhaps such a presentation can best be accomplished by adopting the "Mr. Pro and Mr. Con" running-debate technique that the *Digest* itself has often used in dealing with such controversial questions as "Should Post-Mortem Examinations Become Common Procedure?" That form will be followed here in considering the question "Is It Is or Is It Ain't a Digest?" All the statements made by Mr. Pro are quoted verbatim from a report submitted by

The Reader's Digest to the Board of Education of Passaic, New Jersey, which had expressed to the management of the *Digest* an interest in certain aspects of its procedure, including the operation of the planting system. Mr. Pro's remarks can therefore be assumed to represent the official *Digest* view. He begins:

MR. PRO: The next charge leveled against the *Digest* had to do with the practice of "planting articles in other magazines." Here the critics of the *Digest* took a very simple routine process in the production of the magazine and distorted it, misrepresented it, and unblushingly lied about it, with the result that there is created in the mind of the uninformed the image of a conspiracy—

MR. CON: Get to the point, Mr. Pro.

MR. PRO: Let us look at the facts. It is true that the *Digest* does not confine itself to publishing articles and stories previously and independently published by other magazines. In large part it does just that.

MR. CON: On the contrary, it does just the opposite, if by "in large part" you mean a major portion—which, I grant you, you wouldn't necessarily have to mean. Over half the articles published in the *Digest* in a five-year period studied by George W. Bennett were not previously and independently published by other magazines. They originated in the office of the *Digest.*

MR. PRO: But it also published original articles which have appeared nowhere else and it furthermore obtains material which it offers to other magazines prior to publication in the *Digest.* In none of these procedures is there anything secret or sinister.

MR. CON: Would you mind, then, stating just how many original articles the *Digest* prints and how many it plants, or, as you say, offers to other magazines before publication in the *Digest?*

MR. PRO: (*No answer.*)

MR. CON: Proceed.

MR. PRO: It is true that the *Digest* sometimes offers to other magazines complete articles, condensed versions of which subsequently appear in the *Digest.* Often these articles are worked out in collaboration with the editors of other magazines.

MR. CON: And more often they are not. As a rule, the editor of a magazine has never seen or heard of a *Digest* plant before it turns up in his office. If the articles were, as you say, worked out in collaboration with the editors of other magazines, how do you explain the fact that editors reject so many of these pieces? The rate of return of articles sent out for planting is, as you know, high. Many editors remark with pride that for every *Digest* plant they accept, they reject from two to four more. But go ahead.

MR. PRO: A fee is paid to various publications which guarantees to the *Digest* the right to republish their available material. This is simple business practice, and in no sense implies any editorial control of these publica-

tions. The core of criticisms of this procedure consists in the accusation that articles politically slanted are farmed out in this way. The balance of facts is all on the other side. How much does *The Reader's Digest* influence the policies of other publications on political or economic matters? Or how much—

MR. CON: Sorry to interrupt, Mr. Pro, but you're getting off the subject again. What you were going to say is that only a small percentage of *Digest* plants are concerned with such controversial issues as economics, government, politics, and industrial and international relations. That may well be, but perhaps the reason is that not all other magazines want to be sown with *Digest* articles concerned with these issues, or with your point of view on them. Can you think, offhand, for example, of a half-dozen magazines that would have been glad to take the responsibility for printing that curious *Digest* piece called "Our Deep Dark Secrets in Latin America"? Many people, you recall, considered the article so mischievous and full of misinformation that they agreed with Senator Joseph Guffey, who said in Congress that the *Digest* owed an apology and an explanation to the people of the United States for publishing it. Anyway, the question isn't how many articles on controversial topics the *Digest* plants. The question is how many articles on *all* topics it plants. The fact that it plants so many is the real core of the critcisms.

MR. PRO: (*Serenely*): Certainly there is no reason to attribute any possible "influencing of other editors, or periodicals, or public opinion itself" to the practice of offering an article on the habits of animals to a nature magazine, or a report on dental progress to a dentists' journal. This is not a public disservice but a public service.

MR. CON: Oh, come now, Mr. Pro. You're talking as if *The Reader's Digest* were the Rockefeller Foundation. The *Digest* is a commercial enterprise, like any other magazine, not a philanthropy. It gives planted articles to nature magazines and dentists' journals and other publications so it can use the names of these periodicals on its cover and over the articles and thus keep up the pretense that it is a reprint magazine. If it isn't solely for this reason that the *Digest* plants these pieces, why does it go to all the trouble of planting them? Why doesn't the *Digest* simply print them as original articles? Furthermore, Mr. Pro, you refer to the planting business as "a very simple routine process," giving the impression that it is common practice in the trade. Of course it isn't. The planting system is unique with the *Digest,* and it doesn't seem so very routine even to the *Digest.* For one thing, the job takes the full time of a senior editor of the *Digest,* Mr. Howard Florance, and his staff, who are kept busy peddling these so-called "coöperatively planned" articles. And don't forget that time the *Digest* condensed an article from the *Nation* so ingeniously that it ran four hundred and sixty-eight words longer than the article it was condensed from. Apparently the *Digest* occasionally neglects to get the coöperation of other editors very far in advance. Many letters accompanying articles sent out for planting are

dated only two or three days before the *Digest* goes to press. "We are hoping," one of these letters reads, as you may recall, "to print the story in our July *Reader's Digest,* out about June twenty-fifth, and would be happy to credit it to your periodical." The letter is dated May 21st, one day after the normal date for closing your July issue. Other letters give the impression of even greater hurry. "If you don't want it," one reads, "will you let us know promptly? Or, rather, will you forgive me if I call up Monday afternoon to ask if you are at all interested?" Another: "Would you be very kind and read it as soon as possible, as we are making up the next issue? Perhaps you would be able to telephone some time today?" Some have a pleading note. One, scribbled in pencil, says, "Can you use this? Before Jan. 25. In haste." In haste indeed. The letter was written two days after the usual *Digest* press time.

Since the rate of rejections is high, Mr. Pro, many articles have to be peddled from one magazine office to another before they are finally planted. Even then, trouble sometimes occurs. For example, there was an article about a South American newspaper that the *Digest* planted, or thought it had planted, in a periodical that I will call *Good Neighbor.* In checking the piece, the editors of *Good Neighbor* discovered some errors, decided not to print it after all, and notified the *Digest.* But the *Digest* had already gone to press with the article, confidently crediting *Good Neighbor* as the source. So the *Digest* appeared with the article which it said it had "Condensed from *Good Neighbor.*" This was a rare feat; the article from which the condensation was presumably made had never been published by any periodical on earth.

No, planting articles is not very simple, Mr. Pro. It is a tricky business. Do you remember a magazine called the *Living Age?* It was, as you know, once an old and respected periodical, but it fell on hard times and was bought for fifteen thousand dollars in June, 1938, by three men, Joseph Hilton Smyth, Walter Grey Matheson, and Irvine Harvey Williams. The money to buy the magazine was furnished by the Japanese government through the local Japanese vice-consul, Sintaro Fukushima, who also helped underwrite the magazine's overhead by contributing about twenty-five hundred dollars a month. In September of 1942, Smyth and his colleagues were arrested by the F.B.I. and later pleaded guilty to having run the *Living Age* in behalf of the Japanese government between June, 1938, and December, 1941. During this time they had accepted approximately a hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the Japs. Smyth and his colleagues were sentenced to seven years in a federal penitentiary. While the *Living Age* was being run for the benefit of the Japanese, the *Digest* reprinted thirteen articles from it. Actually, the majority were plants, or, to use the *Digest's* phrase, articles coöperatively planned by the editors of the *Digest* and the editors of the *Living Age.* Three of the pieces were written by *Digest* editors. Of all the articles furnished by the *Digest,* possibly the one that caused Sintaro Fukushima the most amusement was the piece the *Digest* planted in the May, 1940,

issue of the *Living Age* and "reprinted" in the *Digest* in June. This was entitled "How Smart Are the Japanese?" Of course, the editors of the *Digest* had no way of knowing that the *Living Age* was a Japanese propaganda organ, so there was nothing treasonable about dealing with it. But the case does illustrate that planting is not at all a routine procedure. It is an involved technique, and sometimes even perilous. Since you said earlier, Mr. Pro, that there is nothing secret about the planting system, do you feel that to describe its operation constitutes what the *Digest* has called a smear?

MR. PRO: In view of these facts, it clearly appears that the so-called "planting" of articles has to deal with a variety of subjects, very few of which are controversial in character; that, in fact, what is a simple magazine procedure has been misrepresented and made into a smear. It has been alleged that the *Digest* has changed. In a sense this is true. . . . The *Digest* has outgrown the limitations of selecting its material from magazines alone, and now includes selections from newspapers, books, and professional and trade journals; from public speeches, from radio programs, motion-picture scripts, and from any other source, including any original source, that provides material which, in the judgment of its editors, will be of interest to its readers. . . . So the *Digest* remains the true digest of American literature today.

MR. CON: *Caveat emptor.*

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Before reading this article, what was your conception of the way in which the *Reader's Digest* is written and put together? On what evidence had you based your conclusion? If your picture of the magazine has changed, can you now see clues in the *Digest* itself that you had overlooked?
2. Now that you are aware of Bainbridge's article, what questions might you ask yourself before deciding to use, or not use, the *Reader's Digest* as source material for such customary classroom assignments as debates, panel discussions, and oral and written reports?
3. Are there any similarities between the "digest" practice of printing "planted" articles and the following situations: (*a*) a magazine that calls itself a "news magazine" or "news survey" and in various ways (statements of opinion, emphasis, omission) expresses its editors' own views; (*b*) a small newspaper that depends on "boiler plate" (news and views "all ready to go"), sent out by central news agencies to which it pays a set subscription fee; (*c*) editorializing under the guise of advertising?
4. Here are two "Letters to the Editor" printed in *Time* following a lengthy *Time* article on the *Reader's Digest*. To what extent do you consider these criticisms of the *Digest* justified? Explain.
   a. "*Time* (Dec. 10, 1951) says: 'The *Reader's Digest* is one of the greatest success stories in the history of journalism.' Admittedly, the *Digest* enjoys circulation superiority. But is that equivalent to success? The real test of success is not size but quality. I regret to note *Time* contributing to the

American heresy that bigness is the same as goodness, that success can be tabulated on an adding machine.

"The measurement of a successful publication is its approximation to the true and the good . . . and a publication which caricatures truth by pretending all truths are not really complex but simple and simply digested . . . is only effective in spreading the trite and the superficial."

b. "For most young people the *Reader's Digest* serves as a pleasant introduction to adult reading. . . .

"I suppose that my main objection is that the food for thought has been so carefully sweetened for swallowing whole that the readers themselves digest very little. There is little stimulation for careful analysis or deeper inquiry. . . ."

PROJECTS

1. Most magazines have a "formula"—that is, an editorial policy which determines what goes into the magazine. To determine whether the *Reader's Digest* has a formula, examine closely three or four issues to see if there is any pattern of topics, tone, attitudes, or slants pro or con that might fairly be called a formula.
2. Read the final paragraph in each of 10 articles chosen at random from a single issue of the *Reader's Digest*. Write a brief paper in which you point out to what extent these paragraphs—regardless of their subject—resemble each other in tone. Draw a careful inference about the *Digest's* editorial policy on the basis of your findings.
3. Would reading a variety of periodicals presenting various viewpoints help to protect a person from being misled, or "taken in," by any one of them? For instance, would a reader of liberal *and* conservative journals be able to see in what direction an unfamiliar journal might lean? To test this idea, read through several issues of *Newsweek* and the *New Republic,* or of *Time* and *The Nation,* or of *American Mercury* and *The Reporter.* (Choose issues which cover the same time span so that you may compare the treatment of the same events by these quite different periodicals.) Then read another journal, presently unfamiliar to you, and see if your reading of this pair helps you identify more readily the bias of the unfamiliar journal.

TABOOS IN SLICK FICTION

Do the popular, mass-circulation magazines consciously include certain kinds of situations and attitudes and omit others? If so, what are their criteria for inclusion and exclusion? What are their "taboos"? One way to discover this is to examine the magazines themselves in a thorough, analytical manner. Another way is to note what the makers of the magazines—the men responsible for what eventually finds its way between the covers of

TABOOS IN SLICK FICTION From *Writer's Digest,* October, 1953. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

our periodicals—suggest are their requirements. The Writer's Digest *used this approach and asked a number of editors to set forth their magazines' "taboos." Of course, the fact that an editor says that he opens his magazine to the honest treatment of sex or politics does not necessarily mean that he does so or that he means by it what* we *mean by it. His claim needs to be checked against what one finds in his magazine. Still, the way in which a man claims or denies something may reveal the real thinking behind the formal statement.*

Is an unhappy ending taboo?

What about sex: illegitimacy, homosexuality, etc.?

May the criminal ever get away with it?

Is profanity taboo?

Are sketches taboo?

How realistic may I be? May I portray my Middle West town as stodgy, prejudice-ridden and impossibly dull?

So run the questions on taboos in slick fiction. To get the answers, we went to the slick editors themselves. What taboos—of whatever kind—are fairly constant at your magazine?, we asked them. How can these taboos be surmounted? And, do you feel that taboos in the slicks are on their way out?

Our editorial canvass proves that:

1. They all have taboos.

2. They'll all dump 'em in order to publish a particularly forceful or moving story.

3. Sexual aberration, for instance, homosexuality, is still beyond the pale.

4. Times have changed and magazines like *Ladies' Home Journal, Redbook* and *McCall's* will publish stories that would have made their editors shudder 25 years ago. In fact, today's editors don't like the look or sound of the word "taboo." If they can rationalize their way out of calling a restriction a taboo, they'll do so: "this isn't taboo, mind you, but—"

But read for yourself.

ELEANOR STIERHEM MAC MANNIS, FICTION EDITOR OF "COLLIER'S":

We are quite free from the restrictions slick magazines are supposed to impose upon their writers. Our main guide in considering unconventional behavior or situations in any story is simply: is this a good enough story to justify publication, and is the unconventionality handled in good taste so that there is no moral recommendation within the story for this kind of behavior, but simply a fictional interpretation of it which belongs to this particular story and this particular character—a dramatic reporting job which stands as that rather than as a mass recommendation?

A lot of authors, by the way, tend to complain that *all* mass-circulation magazines seem to worry over drinking, to take the Martinis out of characters' hands in stories and insert coffee and soft drinks instead. Well, this could be quite a legitimate complaint—for the reason that too many stories these days

seem propelled by drinking; whenever authors run out of things for characters to say or do, they hand them a drink or take them to a bar or have them go mix a drink. It's not alcohol that bothers many editors so much as it is the dull lack of variety that creeps into material when an entire scheduled issue turns out to have this same flaw. Authors should be more inventive on this score.

Taboos definitely are on their way out in the slicks. The growth of the sciences which examine human behavior has made all people more willing to talk about themselves and their motivations and actions and reactions—and with more exact words, too. The conversation you hear in living rooms today—about human psychology and human behavior as explored in books such as the popular psychology volumes, the *Kinsey Reports,* etc.—is much franker than it ever was before. Today, people who have read the Kinsey magazine articles are using frank words they would have blushed to consider 10 years ago, and using these words in mixed and dignified conversations in their own homes—often with their children present and participating. Certainly, fiction follows the mores of the nation and our mores are changing. Since what we will talk about even to relative strangers is changing, fiction will as a consequence be liberalized more and more in the magazines if it is to have any verisimilitude.

FREDERIC A. BIRMINGHAM, EDITOR OF "ESQUIRE":

We have no taboos—except a prejudice against stuffiness, hypocrisy, and bad taste.

Are taboos on their way out in the slicks? No—it looks as though they still keep a lively existence.

MARGARET COUSINS, MANAGING EDITOR OF "GOOD HOUSEKEEPING":

We eschew abnormal sex of all kinds and blatant descriptions of normal sex relationships. As a magazine read by all members of a family, including the young, we feel a responsibility in this direction.

We don't publish flamboyant profanity or anything else vulgar—certainly no four-letter words. Overwhelming profanity rarely adds anything to a story.

We don't solicit stories about illegitimacy, but we have published stories containing such subject matter because they were excellent stories.

Writers can be as realistic as they want usually, but first they have to think about being interesting. So much realism is so deadly dull. To be realistic, writers often write about locations and characters and situations which weren't interesting enough to merit the effort to begin with. The writer who portrays his Midwestern town as prejudice-ridden, dismal, etc., may lack personal percept on the matter. He may be prejudice-ridden himself.

We prefer a moral ending to a criminal story but have been overpowered by quality on occasions and let the criminal get away with it. We often publish unhappy endings, though we'd rather not. We rarely publish real tragedy.

Are these taboos ever broken? Yes. They can be surmounted by extreme quality. Few taboos stand up in real literature. Few writers write real literature. We published "The Kent Affair" by Richard Sherman. It is a chrono-

logical record of assignations, culminating in an illegitimate child. It is so beautifully written that it is powerful without being offensive. We also published a tragedy of Sherman's called "The Life of Riley." I think almost all taboos go over the dam in the case of a great story, with the possible exception of those dealing with sexual aberration. We really feel our responsibility strongly in the latter.

In general, I feel that taboos are on their way out in the slicks. The change in attitude over the past 15 years is remarkable. Consult some of the files of women's magazines in the past—they were pretty namby-pamby. *Good Housekeeping* has been a pioneer in the publication of the quality story which may contain such taboos. "The Birds," by Daphne Du Maurier, which we published last fall, is typical of the sort of thing I mean. It is a real horror story, but so expertly done that it has received wide acclaim.

ANNE F. EINSELEN, IN CHARGE OF UNSOLICITED MSS. AT "LADIES' HOME JOURNAL":

To answer your questions is like standing on a Maine beach in early June and wondering whether to take the first sea-bath of the season by slow stages or in a plunge; or, indeed, whether it's worth taking at all. For in spite of everything that has been written advising beginning writers about taboos, they continue to ask the same questions year after year, *and* they continue confused. No wonder.

Take the samples from your mailbag (I get them, too, all the time): answer any with the simple Yes and No the writers think they want, and the very next issue of your magazine will disprove that Yes or No. Editors buy the stories *they* like; certainly we at the *Journal* do. We like to be amused, excited, moved, inspired; we never consciously consider taboos. But because you ask specifically, here goes:

We have no real taboos. We *prefer* beauty to ugliness, happiness to misery, health to sickness, and life to death. Since our classic definition of a "story" is based on three words—*characters in conflict*—we like to catch glimpses of those characters in moments of gaiety, contentment, love, hope, generosity, and mercy and courage and self-sacrifice; we like our mirror to reflect, in motion, good rather than evil. If that reflection includes "a criminal getting away with it," illegitimacy, a curse, prejudice, etc., those things are not taboo. Practically anything can be written about if it's written about in good taste and for a valid reason.

At the *Journal* our lasting taboos are bad writing, bad taste, and unrelieved badness. I do not think any of these are on the way out. But a comparison of current magazines with those of, say, 25 years ago shows that some taboos of that time have disappeared. . . .

BETTY PARSONS RAGSDALE, FICTION EDITOR OF "MC CALL'S":

I can honestly say that incest and homosexuality are about the only subjects the editors of *McCall's* consider taboo. Practically every other item you can mention has at one time or another been treated in a *McCall's* fiction story. It is true that whodunits, period stories and whimsy are not too popular

as a rule with our readers, but they are not taboo in the sense that we refuse to publish them on moral grounds.

In general, I believe that taboos are on their way out in the magazine field—for the simple reason that magazine readers seem to be more enlightened these days and more receptive to story ideas and situations which formerly they would have regarded as "sordid" or "disgusting."

Let me cite as an example James A. Michener's great new novel "Sayonara," which appears serially in *McCall's* in October, November and December. Briefly, this is the passionate story of an American Army officer who falls deeply and tragically in love with a Japanese girl. We at *McCall's* are very proud to publish the story and believe that any other magazine, given the opportunity, would have been equally proud.

LILIAN KASTENDIKE, FICTION EDITOR OF "REDBOOK":

Redbook fiction is primarily measured on the yardstick of reader identification and good taste. Both of these requirements cover the so-called taboos. Taking your questions in order:

1. *An unhappy ending* can be used if it is the logical consequence of the situation presented and if there is reward and compensation for having read the story.

2. A *criminal* usually is not an identifiable character. Therefore, we have not run into the situation where, as a hero, he can get away with breaking laws. If such a situation were merely the springboard of the story, it could be a possible premise for a suspense or adventure yarn.

3. *Sex.* On this subject good taste is the main requirement. We have used themes that are not generally found in wide-circulation magazines. The sensitivity and quality of the writing can put them across. For instance, we have used stories revolving around illegitimacy, seduction, frigidity in women, sexual inadequacy in men, etc. We have not used fiction on the subject of homosexuality because so far we have not found such a story which has not violated good taste.

4. *Profanity* is used when it is in character with the situation. It is not used to shock; nor is it used as a prop for ultra-sophisticated types of characters who do not have reader identification for our audience.

5. *Realistic* presentation of the dullness and prejudices of a small town is possible. Of course, it is a character's point of view. We doubt that all the inhabitants of any community would share such an indictment. Therefore, it is one opinion rather than complete condemnation.

In general, there are fewer taboos than, say, before World War II. Our audience is primarily made up of readers from 18 to 35 years of age and they face life with a realism which has grown out of wars and threats to their future security. They therefore like "substance" stories. We believe that while fiction's first purpose is to entertain, it *can* say something.

STEWART BEACH, EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF "THIS WEEK":

Quite frankly, I dislike talking about taboos without reference to a particular story, since the way in which any theme is handled makes all the difference in the world. We have very rarely ruled out a fine story because of

any automatic taboo. But in a general magazine of huge circulation, there is always the matter of good taste to be considered. This does not mean "soft" fiction, but it does mean that certain subjects which it would be difficult to discuss freely in any casual group of men and women—sex, for example—rarely seem suitable for us.

Unhappy ending? If it is a logical outcome of the situation and conflict and provides a really satisfactory conclusion, no objection.

Profanity? In its milder forms, but we do not go in for the tough, hard profanity which shocks many people.

Criminal getting away with it? That would depend. But usually there is less of a moral implication involved than the simple fact that such an ending rarely provides a satisfactory conclusion. Even though a man escapes arrest, he can never be free from his fear of apprehension. Nor can the reader be sure his crime will not be discovered later.

Sketches? We feel that all our fiction should have the classic beginning, middle and ending.

The dull, stodgy town? I wouldn't say there is a taboo on it, but I can't imagine that anything but a dull, stodgy story would result from such an approach. No town is dull except in terms of an individual who fails to find interest there. It might indeed seem dull to an outsider, but the people who live there presumably enjoy it.

Are taboos on their way out in the slicks? Certainly, a number of them have been dropped from most magazines, but I think that in the general magazines good taste will always keep certain subjects from very frank discussion. As social customs change and barriers are dropped, however, magazine fiction will reflect the acceptance of different standards.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Do you find any agreement among the editors of the big-circulation magazines discussed in the preceding article? If so, what is the nature of the agreement? How do you account for it?
2. Would you expect a magazine which observes many popular taboos to have a larger or smaller circulation than a magazine which does not observe them? Why? (The succeeding articles by Allen will enable you to check your answers to this question.)

PROJECTS

1. Examine one of the magazines mentioned in this article to determine: (*a*) to what extent the "taboos" referred to by the editor are in evidence, and (*b*) whether certain taboos either denied or not mentioned by the editors are there. Present your findings in a written or oral report.
2. Having learned from the editors of *Collier's, Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, This Week* (the magazine section of many Sunday newspapers), and *Redbook* which taboos affect the selection of their fiction,

read through the fiction of two or three issues of *Saturday Evening Post, Woman's Home Companion, Cosmopolitan,* or *American Magazine* to see if the same taboos appear to influence the editorial policies of these magazines. Prepare a talk in which you cite your evidence and present your conclusions.

3. Read through the fiction in representative issues of one such magazine as *Harper's, Atlantic Monthly,* or *New Yorker* with the same list of taboos in mind. Do you find any evidence of these taboos operating here? In a talk explain your findings and give reasons that might explain them.
4. As one of the best-known and most widely-circulated magazines, the *Saturday Evening Post* deserves careful analysis. A subject suitable for a long paper would be an analysis of the *Post* following some such pattern as the following:
   a. In considering the *Post* as a source of factual information, do you find that certain subjects are dealt with more frequently than others, and that certain kinds of subjects are not dealt with at all? If so, how do you account for this?
   b. In examining the *Post* as a source of opinions and attitudes, do you find a full sampling of opinions on controversial questions, or a tendency to emphasize certain attitudes to the exclusion of others? If you find the latter, what are the attitudes which are emphasized?
   c. What evidence of a "formula" do you note in the *Post?* (Look at fiction, advertisements, cartoons, letters-to-the-editor, and other features as well as at editorials and articles for your evidence.)
   d. What aspects of American life are most frequently presented to *Post* readers? Do these add up to a full or to an oversimplified picture of the American scene?
5. What hypotheses concerning the contents of *three* of the following magazines and the audiences at which they are aimed can you evolve from an examination of *just their covers* over a period of two months: *Saturday Evening Post, Fortune, Time, Coronet, Woman's Home Companion,* and *True?* Give your observations and hypotheses in a talk or written report.
6. Compare the cartoons in several issues of the *New Yorker, Esquire,* and *Collier's.* What do they tell you about the differences among the reading publics of these three magazines?
7. Arrange a panel discussion in which each member of the panel concentrates on some aspect of this question: Does a mass audience impose *inevitable* limitations on the editorial policy of the magazine or newspaper which has a mass circulation? (Note: the key word here is *inevitable.*) Some aspects of the question which might be explored include the following:
   a. Do the tastes of a large public remain unchanged and unchanging?
   b. Does a journal with a large circulation have any responsibility for elevating the taste of its readers?
   c. Are there any mass circulation journals which have experimented (or are experimenting) with the presentation of unconventional, or unfamiliar, or unpopular ideas?
   d. Is there anything faulty in the logic of editors who say, in effect, the mass public gets what it deserves because we give them what they want?

e. What are the assumptions—conscious or unconscious—behind the conclusion that mature ideas will never appeal to more than a tiny minority of the general public?

Frederick Lewis Allen

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

In the two preceding articles we have observed and appraised a number of mass-circulation, so-called "popular" magazines. Now let us turn to magazines that are definitely not "mass circulation" publications and to the problem of determining what they give their comparatively small body of readers.

The Atlantic Monthly *and* Harper's Magazine *have for many years been respected among thoughtful readers for their editorial integrity and the significance of their contents, and Frederick Lewis Allen, the editor of* Harper's *until his recent death, has been widely regarded as one of the most vigorous of twentieth-century editors.*

Both Harper's *and Allen have established a reputation for thoughtful and spirited analysis of the contemporary scene, its major characteristics and possibly significant trivia. You may have encountered Allen not only as editor of* Harper's *but also as author of a number of lively books*—Only Yesterday, Since Yesterday, *and* The Big Change.

The first of the following two selections is Allen's view of what various kinds of magazines are doing—and not doing—toward lifting the general level of public information and comprehension; the second is his personal statement of his conception of the role of the Harper-Atlantic *type of magazine today.*

THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE GROWS UP

Certainly the innumerable magazines which pile up on the newsstands today provide a range of entertainment, titillation, and specific information which makes the periodical array of 1857—and even of 1900, for that matter —look meager. Certainly the standard of physical production—letterpress, reproduction of pictures, layout, design—is superior to that of former days; in some cases, as in the fashion magazines, it is strikingly superior. Almost as certainly the standard of editorial competence is far more professional; even within my own years of experience there has been a marked change—more careful editorial planning, much more careful and detailed work on factual reporting, processing of manuscripts, copy editing, and fact checking. It goes almost without saying, too, that there has been a similarly increased precision in the business operations of publishing—in advertising promotion,

THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE GROWS UP From *The Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1947. Reprinted by permission of Agnes Rogers Allen.

circulation promotion, and the diligent (and sometimes slavish) assessing of readers' tastes. As an industry, magazine publishing has grown up with a vengeance.

There were new and surprising changes . . . after World War I. Let me list a few of them briefly:—

1. The rise of the confession magazines. This was the cynical result of the discovery that you could fake stories of personal adventure, preferably with a high content of sexual excitement but ending with a lofty if bogus moral lesson, and thereby allure a big audience on the lowest levels of sophistication. Bernarr Macfadden's *True Story,* a leader of this pack, was started in 1919 and had almost two million readers by 1926—a fast climb. The confession magazines still continue, though somewhat tempered by a rising level of sophistication.

2. The success of the *Reader's Digest.* When, early in the nineteen-twenties, a tall, mild, Presbyterian-looking young man named DeWitt Wallace approached various editors in New York to ask permission to reprint their articles in his new digest, they foresaw for him no success at all. Who would want to read warmed-over material a month late? But these editors had forgotten that it isn't the formula which makes or breaks a magazine, but the way in which the formula is carried out. Convinced—and rightly—that most articles were overwritten, Wallace learned the art of condensing five thousand words into two thousand without destroying much of anything but the author's style. This art, and his unerring sense of what would interest ordinary men and women, began to have a startling effect on the *Digest's* circulation by about 1930; it began a rapid climb to the highest figure on record. A magazine which made such a fetish of brevity could almost never achieve subtlety or deal with complex material; Wallace showed as little interest in the riddle of the Depression as in literary art; but by gauging correctly the appetite of his countrymen for pellets of easy and varied information, optimistic success hints, and inspiration, he achieved the miracle of delighting millions with a magazine which contained almost no pictures, almost no fiction, no scandal, and no advertising.

3. The rise of the *New Yorker.* Beginning uncertainly in the middle twenties, this magazine developed, both in its text and in its pictures, a new school of American humor, far subtler and more deft in its social comment than anything previously seen on these shores. As time went on, it became also a vehicle for excellent short stories—mostly of a very restrained variety —and some of the shrewdest reporting in the United States; and incidentally it was edited with an errorless perfection which not only surprised those who had thought Harold Ross lacking in regard for polish of expression, but aroused the wonder and envy of his competitors.

4. The coming of the news weeklies and picture magazines. Since the demise of *Harper's Weekly* and the rise of the Sunday rotogravure sections it had been an axiom in publishing circles that there was no place in the

United States for a weekly dispenser of news or for a magazine of pictures. But Henry Luce upset this axiom as neatly as DeWitt Wallace had upset the axiom that timeliness was everything. First with *Time,* which he started with Briton Hadden in 1923, and then with *Life,* which took off in November, 1936, with the aid of the camera craze which was then sweeping the country, Luce developed to an unprecedented degree the assembly-line technique of producing magazine copy, relying not upon outside contributors but upon salaried employees. The process—with its somewhat standardized style—was abhorrent to the literary temperament; but Luce proved that magazines could win millions of readers without resorting to sentimentality, fakery, or evasion—if they combined a conscientious coverage of the news of the day with enough sensation, horror, and cheesecake to satisfy those human impulses which the civilized share with the uncivilized.

5. The rise of the pulps and comics. At present the huge market for comics is chiefly juvenile; it remains to be seen how many of their fanciers will drop them on growing up. They appeal to tastes which, while not necessarily unintelligent, have no relation to literature, or even journalism.

After all these revolutions and innovations, what a contrast between the scene today and ninety years ago! There are now over six thousand magazines, as against six hundred then; but the most striking difference is in the size of magazine operations. Take a look at the following facts—remembering that in 1857 no periodical had as many as half a million readers, and that claims of a quarter of a million were somewhat dubious. At the beginning of 1947 there were *no less than 32 magazines in the United States*—under the narrowest interpretation of the term "magazine"—*with circulations of over a million apiece.* If to these we add four magazines which are distributed with various Sunday newspapers, the total comes to 36. If we add two more which are distributed through chain stores, it comes to 38. If we include *Mother's* of Winona, Minnesota, with an estimated, but not sworn, circulation of 1,200,000, it comes to 39!

The [following] table . . . gives the list, in order of size of circulation, with all these doubtful eligibles included. (With the exception of the *Reader's Digest* and *Coronet,* the figures are from *Ayer's Directory* for 1947.)

CIRCULATIONS OVER ONE MILLION

The Reader's Digest (estimated)	10,000,000
The American Weekly (distributed with Sunday newspapers)	8,804,881
This Week (distributed with Sunday newspapers)	8,281,339
Life	4,699,688
Ladies' Home Journal	4,463,950
Saturday Evening Post	3,710,392
Woman's Home Companion	3,691,238

McCall's	3,586,333
Parade (distributed with Sunday newspapers)	3,526,781
Collier's	2,809,341
Woman's Day (A & P chain store sale)	2,800,939
Good Housekeeping	2,794,565
Better Homes and Gardens	2,644,722
Farm Journal & Farmer's Wife	2,540,092
American Magazine	2,482,544
American Home	2,345,755
Look	2,300,592
True Story	2,215,048
National Legionnaire (veteran)	2,212,500
Coronet (Publisher's estimate, late 1946, excluding school circulation)	2,205,125
Cosmopolitan	2,148,537
Country Gentleman	2,122,753
Household	1,893,821
Redbook	1,750,875
True Confessions	1,733,579
Superman (comic)	1,672,169
Time	1,554,323
Family Circle (chain store)	1,527,478
National Geographic	1,454,445
Batman (comic)	1,451,053
Modern Screen	1,421,360
Capper's Farmer	1,315,334
Liberty (since turned monthly)	1,309,764
Photoplay	1,297,185
American Legion Magazine	1,247,386
Mother's—Home Life and the Household Guest (estimated)	1,200,000
Successful Farming	1,185,645
Modern Romances	1,043,874
New York Times Magazine (Sunday)	1,002,765

Nor is this all. For there are various comics, pulps, movie magazines, and confession magazines which are organized in groups and report their circulations only on a group basis; the total circulation for a group may reach two millions or more even if no member of it is in the million class. For instance, take the Fiction House Magazine Group, consisting of *Action, All-American Football, Baseball, Detective Book, Flight, Football Action, Football Stories, Frontier, Jungle, Lariat, Northwest, Planet* and *Wings;* total circulation: 1,899,673. Such groups are at least active competitors for newsstand space and for the advertiser's dollar.

Do you wonder that the editors of magazines whose individual circulations come to less than a sixth of a million feel, when they confront such fig-

ures, somewhat as if they were driving jeeps in a procession of supertanks, and have to remind themselves that a list which put the magazines in order of influence would be vastly different?

Glance, too, at the majestic proportions of some magazine enterprises. Take a single example, Time Incorporated. During the year 1946 it included four magazines (*Time, Life, Fortune,* and the *Architectural Forum*), a radio program, and a documentary movie; on these it spent, all told, ninety million dollars. Its editorial departments alone employ about a thousand people (by contrast, *Harper's Magazine* has only ten full-time people in its editorial department.

But what of quality in the higher sense, meaning interpretation of the world we live in, and service to our civilization?

I myself believe—though I have moments of doubt—that even in this respect a better over-all job is being done today than in the nineteenth century. Let us grant at once that a vast amount of trash burdens the newsstands—silly stuff, faked stuff, venally distorted stuff designed to placate advertisers; and also that many of the successful magazines whose editors possess consciences—many of the big slicks and women's magazines, for example—contain much machine-made and trivial fiction, deal timidly and superficially with public affairs, and seldom produce anything that could be considered a contribution to literature. But there is another side to the argument. In the first place, the second- and third-rate material produced today goes largely to people who in an earlier day would hardly have read at all. And in the second place, the best work produced today, whether creative or journalistic, is not concentrated in one or two magazines—where it would make the most impressive showing—but scattered through a great many, large and small. A thoroughly illuminating article on foreign policy may, for example, see the light in the *Atlantic,* or *Harper's,* or *Foreign Affairs,* or the *Nation,* or *Life,* or the *Saturday Evening Post*—although some of these magazines are so intent upon their "policy" (whether declared or undeclared) that they will reject work of high quality that deviates from it. In bulk the output of quality is impressive, even though it sometimes seems swamped in a flood of mediocrity.

What, then, is lacking or in short measure? Well, it seems to me that several trends of the day—the trend toward staff-writing, plus the trend toward editing to supply what is established by polls to be sure-fire entertainment, plus the trend toward more and more disproportionate rewards for those who can supply such entertainment, plus the trend toward slavery to editorial policy, plus the dominance of the market for advertising, as it is now organized, by the organs of huge circulation and such other organs as deliberately flatter advertisers' opinions, if not their goods too—that all these trends limit in one way or another the chances for men and women with

fresh and pioneering ideas, or with special and unorthodox literary talent, to find a hearing adequate to what they have to offer.

That is why I hope there will continue to be room on the highway, for a long time to come, for magazines which stand for thoroughness, distinction of thought and style, liberal hospitality to fresh ideas and above all independence. . . .

AN EDITOR'S CREED

On an occasion like this, the target for all these rhetorical posies can't help looking back and wondering what he thinks he's been doing through all these thirty years of work on one magazine, and why he liked doing it, and what he thinks he has been contributing to the gaiety of nations by reading hundreds of thousands of manuscripts and spending tens of thousands of hours talking to authors and revising their stuff, and reading mile upon mile of proof.

It's easy enough, to begin with, to acknowledge my debts. First, to Ellery Sedgwick, who in my first magazine job, on the *Atlantic Monthly,* taught me so much about editing that sometimes I feel that everything I've done since then might be described as variations on a theme by Sedgwick.

Second, to Tom Wells and Lee Hartman, my predecessors at *Harper's,* wise guides and counselors, who knew when to give a junior his head and when to rein him in. And to Virginia Watson, that exacting and indomitable champion of good writing.

Third, to my individually and collectively brilliant colleagues on the magazine—Russell Lynes, Katherine Gauss Jackson, Eric Larrabee, Catharine Meyer, Anne Goodman Freedgood, John Kouwenhoven, and of course Jack Fischer—for the inspiring way in which they have worked together as a productive team, in complete candor, mutual trust, and devotion to our common purpose.

And finally to the management of Harper & Brothers—the only book publishing house which still publishes a general magazine—and especially to Cass Canfield, for setting a model of financial supervision and all-round counsel without the least interference with editorial freedom.

What have we all been aiming at, and why? However you look at *Harper's Magazine,* it certainly has at least three marked characteristics. One is that it does not specialize: for it combines the publication of news—in the wide and long-range sense—and of ideas on public affairs, international affairs, education, science, personal and family life, and practically everything else under the sun, with the publication of fiction, reflective essays, and verse.

AN EDITOR'S CREED From *The Atlantic Monthly,* December, 1953. Reprinted by permission of Agnes Rogers Allen.

Another characteristic is that *Harper's* is not edited for any hypothetical mass audience, but for readers whom we assume to be at least as bright as ourselves, as wide-ranging in their curiosity, as sensitive to good writing, and as willing to go through pretty difficult reading assignments, on occasion, to get at some complex of fact or some nugget of thought that we believe can be reached in no other way. And the third characteristic is that it offers a medium for a variety of opinions, and revels in that fact.

There are many sorts of magazine journalism today in the United States. I should like to pay humble tribute to the way in which the best of the mass-circulation magazines have lifted their standards during the past generation; to their salutary over-all influence in hastening the American approach to a classless society; and to the frequency with which their editors put into print material which in an earlier time would have been considered over the heads of their readers. I marvel, too, at the best of the staff-written magazines, whose organized coverage of the course of human events is so thorough, and so expert, that reading them often makes the rest of us feel like ill-informed amateurs. And then there are the specialized magazines in all their bewildering variety—shelter magazines, fashion magazines, age-group magazines, trade and technical and hobby magazines, magazines dedicated to this or that cause—some of them splendid in appearance, and many of them extraordinarily useful in broadening and deepening the special knowledge and equipment of their readers. What room is left in this variegated picture for the peculiar sort of general, nonspecialized, limited-audience, contributor-written journalism that *Harper's* represents?

Well, sometimes we get a manuscript at 49 East 33rd Street which puts forth new ideas about the national economy, or about American policy toward Germany, or about the place of science in our lives, or what not, and the author says to us, in effect: "If you don't publish this manuscript, who will? It's probably too highbrow for this magazine, too contentious for that; it won't fit the strict editorial policy of this or suit the special concerns of that; and it bears no well-known name to make it palatable to another. My only chance would seem to be with *Harper's,* or maybe the *Atlantic*—unless it's to go to some somber and little-read review." That's the sort of remark that makes me realize all over again why we believe in what we are trying to do: to facilitate a lively traffic in ideas; in an age of conformity, to welcome satire and dissent, without ever embracing dissent as a form of counter-conformity; in an age of orthodoxies, to invite unorthodoxies; in the congress of opinions, to offer a hearing not only to the yeses and the noes, but to the yes-buts and the no-buts, and even to those who say that the whole discussion is proceeding on the wrong premises; in short, to nourish, in the realm of ideas, that inventive and fruitful diversity which in the realm of practical affairs is already the peculiar genius of America. For this kind of journalism

there is very ample room in the country today. And if America is to set the mark which now appears to be within its possible reach, not only in material progress and economic health, but in cultural and spiritual enrichment, the job must not be left undone.

I think it's the realization that what we have been doing—however fumblingly and inexpertly—is well worth doing, that has given us the wallop that we at *Harper's* have got out of our daily chores on the magazine. I am confident that my successors will hold fast in this faith and in these changing times will find new ways of making their service of it effective. Not only that; I hope, too, that they will never lack for rivals in the business of looking for fresh ways of leavening Western thought. For I am sure that whoever serves our American diversity serves both the republic and the cause of freedom.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. By now you should be fairly alert to the problem of definition. Can you distinguish at least *three* different meanings of "grows up" as Allen applies that term to American magazines? Which of these three meanings is based on the most easily verifiable evidence? How do these different meanings illustrate the distinction between the language of report and the language of opinion?
2. In his first essay, Allen speaks of the "lofty if bogus moral lesson" that is used for the ending in the confession magazines. What does he mean by this? Why do you suppose such endings are used, not only in confession magazine stories, but also in crime movies, TV soap operas, and some of the recently popular Biblical-historical motion pictures?
3. What are three distinguishing characteristics of *Harper's Magazine,* as pointed out by Allen in his second article? Do these differ from the distinguishing characteristics of the magazines you regularly read? In what ways?
4. Do you feel that the mass-circulation magazines which you read reveal "a lively traffic in ideas," "that inventive and fruitful diversity which in the realm of practical affairs is already the peculiar genius of America"? Give specific evidence for your answer.

PROJECTS

1. Measure *one* of the following magazines against the three characteristics claimed for *Harper's* by Allen: *Cosmopolitan, Coronet, American Magazine, The Reporter, Saturday Review, Esquire, Ladies' Home Journal.* Present your analysis in a paper or talk.
2. Early in his article, "The American Magazine Grows Up," Allen gives brief but incisive analyses of the confession magazines, *Reader's Digest, New Yorker,* and *Time* and *Life.* Select at random one issue of any of these magazines and examine it carefully for proof or disproof of Allen's characterizations of it. Organize your evidence and conclusions into a paper or talk.

3. With the help of your instructor, select an influential magazine with which you are not now familiar. Read at least three or four consecutive issues of it, and prepare a fairly detailed written or oral analysis of it: its editorial policy, its "typical" contents, its apparent audience, its contributors, and so forth. (A useful variation of this project is to arrange a panel discussion with each participant responsible for some one aspect of the magazine under study—as, for example, its fiction, its advertising, its apparent social and political bias.)

   As a sequel to this investigation of one or more influential magazines, conduct a symposium in which you and your classmates match your reactions to these magazines against the demanding standards that Allen set for his own distinguished magazine, *Harper's*. For a statement of these standards see the last two paragraphs of his first essay and his entire second essay.
4. How do American magazines see themselves? Here is a small research job for you: Find descriptions—by magazines themselves—of their own principles and methods (e.g., *Time,* March 8, 1948, and the "house ads" regularly found in the advertising pages of *Life, Time* and *Fortune*). Compare these descriptions with your own reactions to the magazines. Write a paper showing why you agree or disagree with *one* of these self-portraits.
5. Sometimes one can learn a good deal about the familiar by studying the unfamiliar. Have you ever heard of the *Antioch Review, Kenyon Review, Partisan Review, Yale Review, Sewanee Review, Virginia Quarterly, American Scholar, Pacific Spectator?* What do you know about the ones you have heard of? If you do not know much about them, examine copies of two of these periodicals. In what significant respects do their contents differ from the contents of the magazines you have been reading regularly?

PHOTO-JOURNALISM

The use of pictures to tell stories is a very ancient practice (the pictograph would seem to have preceded written language), but the elaborate presentation of events and of opinions about these events primarily by means of photographs is a relatively recent development. Life, Look, *and others started in the 1930's, and in the following two decades they have evolved a highly complex sort of "photo-journalism" that reaches millions of people every week.*

Here is a group of four advertisements in which Life, *advertising its own wares, states what it thinks it is doing for and to its readers.*

THE CAMERA AS ESSAYIST

When people think of the camera in journalism they think of it as a reporter—the best of reporters: the most accurate of reporters: the most convincing of reporters.

PHOTO-JOURNALISM From *Life,* April 26, 1937, Feb. 26, 1951, Mar. 5, 1951, Dec. 17, 1951. Copyright Time Inc.

Actually, as *Life* has learned in its first few months, the camera is not merely a reporter. It can also be a commentator. It can comment as it reports. It can interpret as it presents. It can picture the world as a seventeenth-century essayist or as a twentieth-century columnist would picture it.

A photographer has his style as an essayist has his. He will select his subjects with equal individuality. He will present them with equal manner. The sum total of what he has to say will be equally his own.

From *Life*, February 26, 1951

WHAT'S IN A PICTURE . . .

There he stood, the sullen bachelor, driven to this distasteful refuge by the ceaseless chatter of innumerable female monkeys. To many, this unforgettable *Life* photograph, and the anecdote the caption told, were just plain fun. To others, pondering the baleful and defiant eyes, the glowering sky, the desperate escape, there was a wry philosophical parallel between monkey and man—man harassed by the human problems of the world and yearning even momentarily to escape.

Sometimes pictures speak with many voices, mean many different things to the many different persons who see them. In them can be read an ironic commentary on the human comedy and the human tragedy. That's why they make, like this one of 12 years ago, an indelible impression on the mind.

From *Life*, December 17, 1951

WHAT'S IN A PICTURE . . .

The man on the Outside is ex-Democratic Chairman Bill Boyle.

The man on the Inside is his successor, Frank McKinney.

Only you—and *Life* photographer Hank Walker—saw it happen this way.

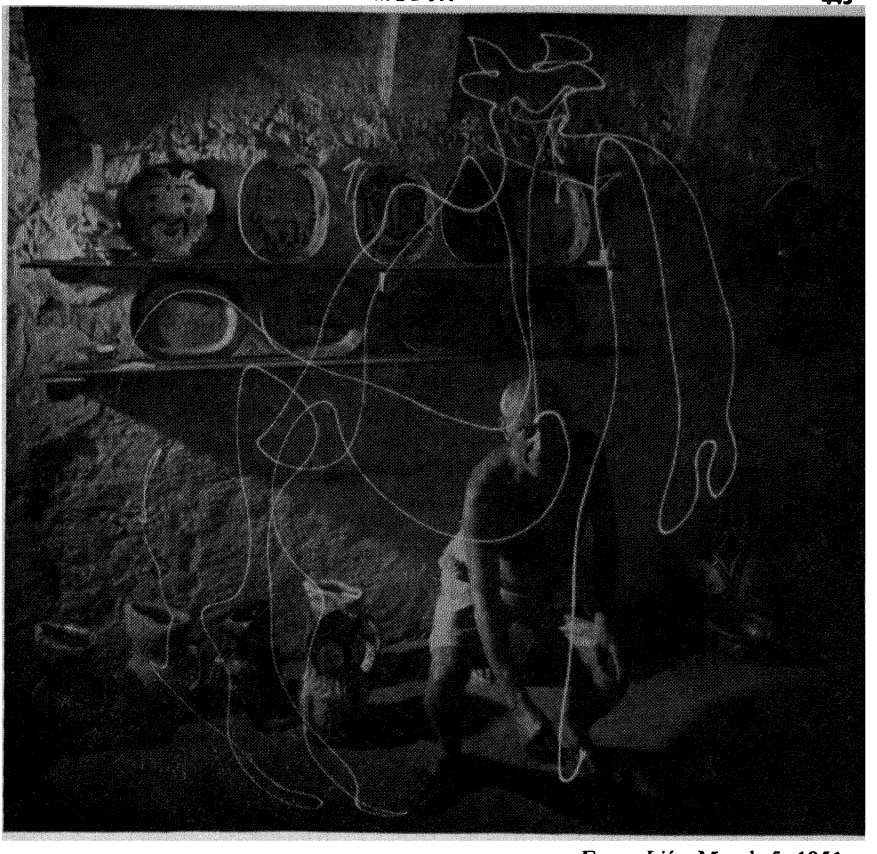
The news event covered here is McKinney's arrival in Washington. The photographer, in this picture, ignored him—to include the man who was ignored by all the others. He lets you see, almost as if it had been you, how it feels to be out in the cold greeting the man who will take over your job.

WHAT'S IN A PICTURE . . .

This *Life* picture is something new in the photography of art. It shows the modern artist, Picasso, in the actual act of creation. He is not staring at the camera or at us. He is alone with his art and is seeing, through the eyes of his genius, a strange image in space.

We are detached observers watching as Picasso draws the image with a flashlight. Through this photograph we are able to see him at work even better than if we were right in his studio.

Pictures like this show us things impossible for us to see in actuality. Even the photographer could not see this picture as he took it because it con-



From *Life*, March 5, 1951

sists of two images on the same negative. It was a deliberate double exposure. First the photographer set off his big lights to record Picasso and the background at the very moment Picasso began to draw. Then the camera shutter stayed open while the artist, in total darkness, drew the centaur-like image with a flashlight. Through the imaginative use of camera devices, photography can show us a new world and enchant us with its magic.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. *Life* makes certain claims for photography as a source of communication of fact, "a record of the here and now." On the basis of your own examination of *Life's* use of photographs in two or more issues, identify some photographs which fulfill this intention and others which do not. Do you find that the reportorial photography tends to be more common in certain sections of *Life?* and only in connection with certain subjects? What proportion of the whole magazine seems to be given over to photographs that do a reporting job?
2. *Life,* in several of these advertisements, has proposed that photography, be-

sides being a record of the here and now, can suggest and symbolize, can interpret, point out the significance of a situation or event. Examine a recent issue of *Life* or *Look*. Do you find that some of the individual photographs do this? Do you find any instances where a point of view, a suggestion, is presented not so much by particular photographs as by the cumulative effect of the grouping of the photographs?

PROJECTS

1. Many of you have *taken* photographs; all of you have *seen* many. Write a paper in which you point out what you consider to be the strengths and limitations of photography as a means of *reporting fact.*
2. Examine at least six of *Life's* major photo-essays, which present a social problem, an aspect of religion, an historical epoch, a personality, or an artistic movement, to determine: (*a*) the specific characteristics of the photo-essay as developed by *Life,* and (*b*) the usefulness and limitations of this journalistic development as a source of facts and ideas.

Radio and TV

John Crosby

OUT OF THE WILD BLUE YONDER

A mixture of serious concern for the future of radio and television with a keen eye for the nonsensical in those media has made John Crosby one of the liveliest and shrewdest commentators on them. The main reason for Crosby's refreshing effect on his readers is that he takes seriously the neglected potentialities of radio and television while at the same time laughing at those things the networks, the advertising people, and many of their audience take most seriously.

The book Out of the Blue *is a collection of Crosby's daily columns. The following three selections are irreverent treatments of the effects of television on home life ("Two Dying Arts"), the inanities of some television writing ("This Is Madness! Sheer Madness!"), and radio self-censorship ("Forbidden Words").*

TWO DYING ARTS

The impact of television on our culture is one of the liveliest little topics of discussion to come along in some time, much of it conducted between clenched teeth. The most obvious and dire effect, one that strikes everyone

OUT OF THE WILD BLUE YONDER From *Out of the Blue* by John Crosby. Copyright, 1952, by John Crosby. Reprinted by permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc.

who has seen more than two television broadcasts, is on conversation. There isn't any. The moment the set goes on, conversation dies. I don't mean it languishes. It dies. Messages are transmitted back and forth by means of eye-rolling, eyebrow lifting and frantic wigwagging of the hands. (Only high priority messages are permitted: You're wanted on the telephone. Could I have another drink? that sort of thing.) People who will venture an occasional whisper in church remain awed and silent in front of a television set.

There are two points of view concerning the death of conversation. One group—an aging, moss-backed crowd—finds it altogether deplorable. Conversation, these people say, is one of the highest exercises of the civilized mind and its end means the end of civilization. Another group, composed largely of silent, irritable, restless folk, is convinced that the death of conversation is the greatest boon to mankind since polygamy fell into disfavor.

The other day I ran into Jim Mainwaring, a member of the last-named group and he explained his point of view. "Television," he said happily, "is the only thing that has ever managed to suppress Joe Pratt and his damned stories about Bermuda. He was over at the house the other night with a bunch of people and every time he opened his mouth, every one said 'sssh' at once. We'd been trying to shut him up for weeks but this was the first time we succeeded. There's something about television that intimidates people. Even Joe Pratt.

"He just sat there, storing up his stories, figuring he'd get a chance later. I didn't give him the opportunity. After the fights ended, I switched over to a fashion show at Grand Central Palace. Went on for hours, dullest darn thing I ever saw, but better than those stories. I tell you, television is the greatest invention since the wheel."

Jim Mainwaring isn't the only one who has found this out. I know another man who has an Aunt Priscilla he's been trying to head off for twenty years. He bought a television set recently and already he has assumed that air of furtive happiness which distinguishes Jim Mainwaring these days. She can't get a word in edgewise.

Of course, that's only one point of view. The opposite point of view is held with equal firmness by quite a lot of people, notably Joe Pratt and Aunt Priscilla.

That's one social aspect of television. There are many others, not the least of which is its effect on hostesses. Grace Mainwaring, Jim's wife, looks on television not nearly so kindly as does her husband and with good reason. The other night the Mainwarings had one of those small dinner parties which women dash off with as little as four days' concentrated effort. The dinner table gleamed with damask. The silver candlesticks—the ones they got from Pete Thristle for a wedding present—were justifiably radiant, Grace having spent a large measure of the afternoon polishing them. Grace had also pulled out of the camphor those little silver nut dishes which appear only on state

occasions. They were polished and replete with nuts. The centerpiece glittered with flowers, representing a good half-hour's work on Grace's part.

Altogether the table was a splendid spectacle, the sort that provokes cries of admiration from the ladies and an exhibition of superb depreciation from the hostess. Nobody ever got to the table at all. That was the night of the Ryan-Puccini fight and it was a honey. Grace couldn't drag anyone away from the television set and ultimately everyone ate in the living room, the plates balanced on their laps. Someone spilled salad dressing all over her petit point chairs and little piles of crumbs appeared here and there on the carpet, where eventually they were ground in as the men-folk argued as to whether Puccini was robbed.

The art of conversation, the art of dining, they're both on the way out. Take care of your eyesight, brother. It's all you'll have left.

"THIS IS MADNESS! SHEER MADNESS!"

My wife and I are as derivative as lizards, changing the color of our thoughts and our speech habits according to our environment. Since we have been exposed to television, it has left a deep mark on our conversation. It was just the other night, speeding the departing guests, that I found myself exclaiming:

"Goodbye for now. You've been a perfectly *wonderful* audience."

The guests, a non-TV crowd, turned a little pale, I thought. Uneducated people.

My wife, who knows her lines as well as Wendy or Faye or any of the girls, threw in that classic, almost unavoidable line: "You must come back again—real soon."

The guests fled. Haven't seen them since. It's just possible they didn't have a good time. My wife and I were discussing it just the other day, employing only the very best clichés.

"John, you don't think . . ."

"I don't know *what* to think."

If you follow the well-established precedents laid down by television's emcees and quizmasters, "the wonderful audience" and "come back again real soon" are the only respectable formulas for getting the guests out of the house. Getting them *into* the house is another matter. Our favorite, a line that must be declaimed with the utmost joviality, is:

"Almost anything can happen in this house—and it usually does."

I think this is a perfectly wonderful opening gambit but it does seem to unsettle the guests. Not nearly so much, though, as our new form of introduction, something we also picked up from TV: "I want you to meet the most wonderful girl in the world AND HERE SHE IS—MARY CROSBY!" The cheers and wolf whistles and tumultuous applause are provided by my small

son, another devotee of television, who can imitate an audience of 500 persons with the utmost ease.

My wife's opening line here is: "We have some perfectly marvelous drinks coming up. But first, a word about something that I'm sure will be of interest to *everyone.*"

She has another line, this one for use when we are doing the visiting in other people's houses. She says brightly: "I feel as though I'm sitting right in your living room." The last time she used it, the host snapped back: "You *are* sitting right in my living room." I ought to explain that he is a non-television churl, a man unacquainted with the ordinary civilities of life, especially television life.

It was a stiffish and, in the end, disastrous visit we had that night, though we tried everything to put them at their ease. "Here we are again, folks," I exclaimed, "with a half hour of fun and frolic all for *you.*" They didn't seem to think it was all for them and they didn't take very kindly to the fun and frolic, even the custard-pie throwing which has always been a surefire bit in our repertoire.

In fact, it was just about then that we got thrown out of the house. My wife got in a good line, though, just before she was tossed out: "This is madness! Sheer madness! I should never have come."

I got in an even better one. Just as I hurtled out the front door I fixed my host with a steely glance—difficult thing to do in midair—and declared, ringingly: "I'm seeing you now—for the first time—as you really are!"

We don't see them any more either. As a matter of fact, we don't seem to *have* any friends any more.

FORBIDDEN WORDS

In his chapter on forbidden words in the brilliant work "The American Language," H. L. Mencken wrote: "The radio is almost as prudish as Hollywood. Late in 1934 its syndics actually forbade the verb 'to do' in songs, feeling that it was a bit too suggestive."

The verb "to do" actually started the censorship of lyrics in radio, a practice which has been carried on so far that many song publishers now issue two sets of words, one for the radio and one for night clubs, records and you and me. It was Cole Porter who started all this with his song "Let's Do It." ("Birds do it, bees do it . . . Let's do it, let's fall in love.") This was on the air for some time before someone decided it sounded nasty. Banned from the air with it were a couple of other "do" numbers such as "You Do Something to Me," another Porter number, and "Do It Again."

Porter's sophisticated lyrics have been a headache for the song-clearance departments of radio networks for years. Many of his lyrics have had to be laundered for radio and others have been banned outright. Remember "Get Out of Town"? "When you are near, close to me dear, we touch too much"

is the way Porter wrote it. Over the air it somehow came out "When you are near, close to me dear, the spell's too much."

Then there was Porter's "I Get a Kick Out of You," which had the line "I get no kick from cocaine." Mention of drugs is absolutely taboo on the air. The line was changed to "Perfume from Spain." As a matter of fact, the way perfume advertisers are running rampant these days perfume also may be a forbidden word any day now.

The broadcasters took a long, long look at "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" before it was allowed on the air. Then, for obscure reasons of their own, they decided young ladies could sing it but young men couldn't. Several other Porter songs, "Miss Otis Regrets," "Miss Lowesborough, Goodbye" and "You've Got That Thing," just couldn't be cleaned up, short of rewriting them entirely, and were banned in toto.

Sex or any implication of that horrid business is No. 1 on the strike-out parade in songs. The late Lorenz Hart, Richard Rodgers's lyric writer, was frequently too outspoken for broadcasting circles. Hart's lyric "Have You Seen Miss Jones?" contained one line which read "The nearest moment that we marry is too late." It had to be changed to "No other couple are as much in love as we," which didn't rhyme with anything in particular but included that non-inflammable word "love," which has nothing to do with sex, at least over the air.

Irving Berlin, that gentle little songwriter who never had a thought you couldn't fry an egg on, has run afoul of the censors, too. His song "These Little Things Remind Me of You" carried a couple of lines which had a vaguely salacious sound to the censors. "Gardenia perfume, lingering on a pillow" was changed—never mind the meaning—to "a seaplane rising from an ocean billow." Another line, "silk stockings thrown aside" was, of course, strictly taboo. It became "a glove you threw aside." Gloves are something you dispense with in the living room. Stockings are generally removed in the bedroom and the networks want the song-writers to stay out of the bedroom as much as possible.

In fact, the very word "bed" is not well liked by the song censors. The classic example of all song censorship was "Let's Turn Out the Light and Go to Bed" which became "Let's Turn Out the Lights and Go to Sleep," the reason being that you can't get into mischief when you're asleep. The censors probably don't know it but the substitution of the euphemism for "bed" is also widely practiced by mountaineers in the Ozarks where no one goes to "bed." In the Ozarks they "lay down."

A moment ago, I said you can't get into trouble asleep but as a matter of fact, songwriters have to tread carefully around slumber too. A few years back there was a torch song called "Billy" in which a young lady confided, "And when I sleep I always dream of Billy." What sort of dreams, asked the censors, Freudian dreams? They took no chances and the line was changed to "I want you to know I love him so."

A song called "Thank Your Father," which was more or less a paean of praise to procreation, had to be thoroughly cleaned and pressed before airing, particularly the lines: "Though your father's name was Stanley, thank heaven he was manly."

The networks don't always see eye to eye on a song's acceptability. N.B.C. couldn't see anything wrong in a Negro spiritual called "Satan, I Give You My Children," but C.B.S. thought the title was sacrilegious. The title, and of course the entire meaning, was changed to "O Lord, I Give You My Children," but C.B.S. still refused to pass on it.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Douglas Jerrold, a famous editor of the British humor magazine, *Punch,* once received a letter from an exasperated female reader charging that, "Punch isn't as funny as it used to be." Jerrold replied, "Madame, it never was!" How might this shrewd retort be applied to Crosby's charge that the art of conversation is dying?
2. Deliberate oversimplification for humorous effect is employed by John Crosby when he pronounces the art of dining as dead—slain by TV. Without being ponderous about it, point out a few pieces of evidence about dining which Crosby has deliberately overlooked.
3. In "This is Madness! Sheer Madness!" Crosby reminds us again of the number of overworked expressions (clichés) that creep into everyday speech. What clichés are used by people you know—by salesmen, sports writers, jazz enthusiasts, book reviewers, commencement speakers, for example?
4. Crosby talks about one obvious kind of censorship on the radio—"forbidden words." Have you encountered any evidence of this or other kinds of radio censorship? What kinds? What may have been the causes?
5. Discuss possible "forbidden words" avoided by political parties in power when economic conditions are unsatisfactory? by foreign correspondents reporting a military setback for *their* side? by publicity agents when describing a movie star who is over 40? Supply other instances where certain words are "forbidden."
6. May the words which are censored or avoided in popular songs indicate a society's dislikes and fears, as well as the songwriter's difficulties with rhyme? Discuss.

PROJECTS

1. Try your hand at writing a companion piece to these brief sketches by Crosby, in which you delineate as clearly as possible some other ways in which radio-TV affects some people's behavior. The following suggestions might help you get started: "The Selective Ear" (a discussion of the ways in which recent generations of youth study with the radio on); "Lullaby of Broadway" (on the effects of listening to a car radio while driving in traffic); "Musical Mastication" (the effect of eating in a restaurant to the accompaniment of "canned

music" played in different tempos); "The Roving Eye" (an account of attempts to read in a room where a TV set is operating).

2. Write a paper or give a talk in which you describe the specific effects of television, as you have observed them, on a family group—or on some other group, such as the occupants of a dormitory. Support with detailed evidence any generalizations you may make. (Do you see the need for fresh, careful observation to avoid preconceived ideas?)

Joe McCarthy

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF TELEVISION, MR. ALLEN?

You have perhaps heard the expression, "He's a poet's poet," or "He's an actor's actor." And you have been aware that this is the highest praise the practitioner of some art or craft can win—the praise of his fellow practitioners. Fred Allen enjoys the reputation of being "a comedian's comedian," among other reasons because, unlike many professional comedians, he is funny off-stage as well as on. Turn a sardonic wit loose on the subject of his own vocation and you get some shrewd insights into that vocation. Here, Allen delivers himself of some uninhibited remarks about radio and television from the point of view of a man who has been too long inhibited by the men who preside over this vast mass-entertainment industry.

Fred Allen, the only radio comedian who has been compared seriously to Shaw and Swift, and one of the last remaining network entertainers who tried to cater, at least partly, to sophisticated adult tastes, decided recently to give up swimming against the tide. He is retiring from the field to let the giveaway shows fight it out among themselves. When the new radio season opens next fall there will be no weekly Fred Allen program on the air. At lunch in the Oak Room of the Plaza Hotel the other day, Allen explained that the decision was advised by his doctors. They found that the sad state of radio and the increasing confusion of television was affecting their patient physically.

"This insane modern civilization is too much for the Moses Model human body," Allen said. "Here we have an organism that was designed for biblical times. Yet we expect it to cope with artificial lighting, executive board meetings, the din of automobile horns and soap operas, carbon monoxide, cigar smoke and bubble gum. No wonder we've all got ulcers and high blood pressure. To get along nowadays, man should be equipped with a tin head

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF TELEVISION, MR. ALLEN? From *Life*, July 4, 1949. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

and three eyes. The extra eye could be used for watching television so the other two won't get red."

Without consulting a menu, Allen ordered a chef's salad with Russian dressing and declined a drink. Because of hypertension, he has not touched alcohol or tobacco in three years.

"Everybody's cracking under the strain," he added. "I just saw that fellow with the lemons hanging all over his car. Have you seen him? He has hundreds of lemons dangling from the outside of it and a big sign that says, 'This car is a lemon.' I've seen him twice in the last week. A few minutes ago he was driving slowly down Sixth Avenue. I should think the manufacturer would have bought him off by now."

Allen does not intend to go into complete retirement like Thoreau at Walden. He may appear as a guest on other programs from time to time, and he is toying with the idea of writing a show for somebody else. "I like the creation of a script," he says, "but I don't get much of a kick out of the actual performance itself any more. Some of those faces in the studio audience, they drain the enthusiasm right out of me as soon as I see them." His attitude puzzles show people who remember his success in vaudeville and on the musical-comedy stage. They cannot understand why Allen is not rushing headlong into television.

"Television is nothing like vaudeville," Allen says. "In vaudeville you had one act and a constantly changing audience. You used a routine in Philadelphia one week, and you used it again in Wilkes-Barre the next week. You could work it into a state of perfection. Television, like radio, is just the opposite. You have the same audience all the time, so the act must be changed after each performance. Naturally the quality of the material gets low. Look at Milton Berle. He's already scraping the bottom of the barrel. He's using up all those old routines he stole from Ed Wynn and Olsen and Johnson. A couple of weeks ago he even resurrected a gag I used in *The Passing Show of 1922*. I walked out on the stage in a suit five sizes too big for me. Somebody asks me about it and I say, 'I bought this suit up in New Rochelle, my home town, and in New Rochelle I'm a much bigger man than I am down here.' Berle used that same gag a couple of weeks ago. I think he added one original touch of his own. He substituted Yonkers for New Rochelle."

Allen took a sip of water, thought for a moment and continued. "The big problem is the value of words. Russel Crouse put his finger on it last summer in a piece he wrote for John Crosby's column while Crosby was on vacation. Russel pointed out that the arrangement of words that he and Howard Lindsay put together in *Life with Father* possessed enough value to stand unchanged for 7½ years on Broadway. Those same words were used again at the same time all over the U. S. and foreign countries by road companies. They were translated into foreign languages and they were used in a screen play without much change. So you see, the value of the written word in the theater can be very high. On the other hand, the value of the word in

radio and television is very low. An arrangement of words written for radio or television is worthless after one performance. A medium of expression that places such a low value on words doesn't attract good writers. That's why the best creative writing today is being done in the theater and for book and magazine publishers, who also place a high value on words. And that's why the worst writing is in radio and television."

Allen is quite bitter about the radio industry's lack of concern about its creative writers. "Those madmen milling around in the marble corridors of Radio City," he said, "not one of them realizes that he wouldn't be there if it wasn't for the poor guy who sits alone in his room with a pencil and a blank piece of paper, trying to work out an idea for a program. I don't know. It seems the same in any business. Ten percent of the people do the work. The other 90% tax them, exploit them and hustle them."

Aside from the rapid consumption of creative material, which bothered him so much in radio that he was always seeking a sponsor who would agree to one show a month instead of one each week, the thing about television that makes Allen leery is its current technical shortcomings. The screen on the average receiving set is too small for his taste. He feels that it prevents subtle touches of expression from getting across to the audience.

"The screen isn't the only small thing in television," Allen said. "Smallness seems to be the outstanding characteristic of the whole medium right now. It has small minds, small talents, small budgets. In fact you can take anything connected with television, and you'll find it so small that you can hide it in a flea's navel and still have enough room beside it for the heart of a network vice president. But the screen is a problem. How can you show a glint in somebody's eye? The eye itself is as big as a fly speck. A beautiful girl in television has as much sex appeal as a clothespin. The only way you can register mild disapproval on that screen is to hit somebody over the head with a broom. And there's something about the television screen that prevents the close, personal contact between the actor and the audience that you had in radio—the kind of familiar connection with the listener that Tony Wons and Singin' Sam were able to establish. Gabriel Heatter has it and so has Mary Margaret McBride. But the television screen seems to stop it. Don't ask me why. A lot of people say Arthur Godfrey doesn't exercise the spell over the audience on television as he does on the radio. It's not Godfrey's fault. It's the screen. People tell me that after the novelty wears off, the only things they like on television are sports, an occasional documentary, like the thing that was done with Eisenhower's book, and Berle. Now you'll notice that none of those three types of shows requires much subtlety of expression, especially Berle. How long will Berle last? You can go only so long when you get your laughs by running out in front of the audience wearing a pair of lady's drawers."

The mention of Berle's future in television led to speculation about the future of television comedy in general. Allen feels that the next big television

comedian may be a man who simply acts like a casual visitor sitting in your living room. "On the other hand," he added, "comedy in television may turn out like comedy in the movies. A movie comedy needs no comedian."

"Photographed comedy," Allen said, "is different from stage comedy or radio comedy. The great stage comedians, like W. C. Fields, Groucho Marx and Bobby Clark, were never really indispensable in Hollywood. Why? Because you can make a funny moving picture with anyone. A smart comedy director, like Leo McCarey, can take two straight actors with no special comic talent, like Cary Grant and Irene Dunne, and he can make a picture with them that will get howls. Remember Garbo in *Ninotchka?* She was a scream. Yet you can hardly classify Garbo as a comedienne. The director of that picture, as I recall, was Lubitsch, a great comedy man. Maybe that's how it will be in television—the key man may be the director instead of the actor. I doubt it though. Live television is closer to the theater than the movies."

Allen finished his salad and ordered a fruit compote for dessert. The well-worn question of radio's future in competition with television was brought up and dissected. Allen mentioned a recent survey which showed quite conclusively that television set owners in the New York area no longer listen to invisible radio programs.

"If that's the trend, radio is done," Allen said. "It's a shame, too. There's a medium with wonderful possibilities, and it never came anywhere near realizing them. None of the visual modes of dramatic expression—the stage, the screen or television—can use the imagination of the audience the way radio can. On a radio broadcast anything goes. You can have a man walking up the side of a building like a spider. You merely plant a suggestion in the listener's mind, and his imagination supplies all the details, all the scenery, props, extras and costumes. A few words in a radio script can create a fantastic setting that couldn't be constructed in a Hollywood studio for millions of dollars. But radio never really took advantage of its opportunities."

Why not? What held back radio?

"Oh, a number of stupid things," Allen said. "Mostly the fact that it was controlled by businessmen instead of creative showmen. They weren't interested in producing anything good that the people might like. They only wanted to sell things. Then there's Hooper and his ratings. In 24 hours he can tell the sponsor whether a show is selling things or not. He makes a couple of phone calls to Cleveland and he tells you, on the basis of those two phone calls, how many people are listening to the show in Cleveland. On his say-so you can get thrown out of work immediately. At least radio was able to get in about 15 years before Hooper came along. Television is starting from scratch under that handicap. But probably the worst thing that ever happened to radio was the studio audience. Those hordes of cackling geese. Somebody like Eddie Cantor brought them in because he couldn't work without a bunch of imbeciles laughing at his jokes. The sponsors thought it was a Jim Dandy idea and from then on everybody had to have a studio audience.

The script had to be kept down to the level of the studio audience's intelligence, and that was a very low level. Would anybody with a brain be caught dead in a studio audience? Would anybody with a sense of taste stand in line to watch half a dozen people in business suits and tortoise-shell glasses standing around, reading into microphones off pieces of paper?"

Allen sighed and pushed his dessert dish aside. "It never occurred to the highly paid executives," he continued, "that some of the most successful comedy shows in radio had been done without an audience in the studio. The old 15-minute Amos and Andy show, for instance. Remember some of the things Stoopnagle and Budd did in the old days? They had a skit about two guys running a motorboat salesroom. There are only two boats on display in the place, but they don't discover that one of the boats is missing until they take inventory at the end of the year. It was wonderful. Try stuff like that on a studio audience, and you won't get a chuckle. You'd have to switch it around and give one of the guys a Southern accent and have lines like, 'Do you-all wanna buy a yawl?' But can you convince the network moguls and the advertising-agency rajahs that a few million unseen listeners have a sharper sense of humor than the 200 morons that are sitting in the studio with their mouths open? Oh, no. If radio only had a little more imagination and a little more common sense it would be so solidly established today as an entertainment medium that television, or any other kind of vision, would be unable to disturb it."

Allen shook his head sadly.

"It's the poor average man who gets it in the end," he said. "As I said, up until now he could at least listen to the radio and use his imagination. Now they're even taking his imagination away from him. He has to grope his way around in a darkened living room while his 8-year-old kid has her supper served on a card table so she can watch the cowboys kill the Indians while she eats. You think we've got troubles? Imagine the digestive disorders in the next generation."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What, according to Fred Allen, are the effects of a studio audience on a comedy show? Without arguing for the moment whether or not these effects are bad, as Mr. Allen thinks, name some other kinds of radio programs for which a studio audience might be desirable or even necessary. Give reasons for your answers.
2. Allen refers to the potent effect of the audience ratings on the design and caliber of radio-TV programs. In this connection recall Huff's article, "How To Lie With Statistics." Criticize the procedures used by the audience raters. (For a very witty attack on current methods of audience raters, see Goodman Ace, "The Same Old Rate Race," *Saturday Review Reader No. 2*, pp. 190-199.)
3. Fred Allen complains that the demand for a new show every week leads to the devaluation of words—sloppy writing, imitation, clichés, and so forth. In

what other language situations do you find the same devaluation of words that Allen discovers in radio and television? Do you find it, for example, in the final stages of a political campaign, when all channels of communication are jammed with last-minute arguments, allegations, and defenses?

4. Allen believes certain advantages are peculiar to radio. What are some fictitious and real events that radio can make "real" to people more easily than can movies or television? Point out the reasons why.

PROJECTS

1. Allen, *speaking in 1949,* makes a series of generalizations about TV. The following are discussion-suggestions relating to these generalizations. Organize a panel to discuss one of them.
   a. Do you find that the "technical shortcomings" of television noted by Allen have been remedied or in some ways reduced?
   b. Is Allen's allegation of television's "small minds, small talents, small budgets" justified—in whole or in part—by your own observation of recent TV programs?
2. Using the radio-TV listings in your local newspaper as a guide, listen to (or look at) three or four representative radio-TV comedy shows. Then prepare a written or oral report in which you assess the accuracy of Allen's charge that the studio audience has reduced these shows to a set of tired gags. Be careful of your sampling and be alert to the necessity for defining your terms.
3. As a class, examine the proposition that spectator sports and TV are producing a kind of "creeping paralysis" among large sections of people who increasingly get their entertainment sitting down. Arrange for a debate in your class between representatives of those persons who prefer to pursue their entertainment afoot (more or less literally) and those who prefer to sit and watch others entertain them. The issue might be formulated in some such way as this: Resolved that spectator sports and TV are having a deleterious effect on the physical and mental health of large segments of the American population.

Marya Mannes

CHANNELS

Like John Crosby, Marya Mannes gives serious thought to the criticism of radio and television, as well as other mass media. Her commentary appears fortnightly in The Reporter.

In Tidings of Joy? *Mannes summarizes the findings of a group of researchers who monitored every minute of New York television on seven stations for a week to see what the listening-viewing public was getting.*

In Portrait of a Mob *she sets forth a hypothetical cross-section of the audience for one kind of radio or TV commentator. She assumes that lis-*

teners have psychological needs. From this assumption she logically proceeds to the question, "What needs are satisfied in these people by the radio programs they use?"

TIDINGS OF JOY?

During the same calendar week on three successive years, a group of trained masochists under the direction of Dr. Dallas W. Smythe of the University of Illinois have monitored every minute of New York television on seven stations, providing the doctor with the basis for a 161-page report which was instigated and supported, respectively, by the National Association of Educational Broadcasters and the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation.

Here are some of the findings:

Entertainment-type programs increased their predominance in 1953 to 78 per cent of all TV time. Of these, dramas showed the sharpest increase, from 33 to 47 per cent. Of these, in turn, Crime Drama, 15.3 per cent of the total, more than doubled its share of children's-hour time.

Information for the general audience decreased to 2.4 per cent of the total time. News Reports took one-fourth less time than a year ago (4.3 per cent). Children's Information and Instruction remained constant at about 1 per cent.

In 1953, Religion became, for the first time, the largest class of orientation-type programming. Discussion and debate dwindled in proportion.

The average saturation of acts and threats of violence increased from 5.8 per hour in 1952 to 6.2 per hour in 1953. The highest frequency for violent acts was in Comedy Drama for Children, where they averaged 36.6 per hour. There were 3,421 acts and threats of violence during the week.

The children's hours, representing one-fourth of the total time on the air, contained two-fifths of acts of violence in 1953. The rate of violent acts and threats in 1953 was twice as high for programs aimed at children as for those aimed at domestic or general audiences. Any questions?

Live programming decreased in the last year, recorded material providing 53 per cent of the total New York TV time.

Advertising increased by more than half and now occupies 18 per cent of program time. Primary advertisements (interrupting the flow of the program) are 22 per cent more numerous and take 27 per cent more time. The bulk of the increase in primary advertising fell in the children's hours, which in 1953 devoted 78 per cent more time to it than in 1951.

TIDINGS OF JOY? From *The Reporter,* January 5, 1953. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

"... THAT HAS SUCH PEOPLE IN IT"

Now for some lighter moments—if you laugh easily. Here is life in the world of TV drama as compared with the actual world:

Males outnumber females on TV by two to one, whereas in the real world the population is almost equally divided.

The TV world is peopled predominantly with characters at the peak of their sexually attractive ages—an average of thirty-eight for males, thirty-three for females. In apposition with this heavy overrepresentation of the courting, child-bearing ages was the consistent neglect of the real population under twenty and over sixty.

In the field of nationality and race, the most striking inference to be drawn is the fact that serial drama was concerned almost exclusively with American whites. "The largest degree of under-presentation was that of the Negroes, who constitute 10 per cent of the United States population and 2 per cent of the TV population."

Males in serial dramas were 90.9 per cent white Americans, with characters from other planets amounting to 4.5 per cent, Danes and Germans to 2.3 per cent each. Females in serial dramas were 95.7 per cent white Americans; the remainder, representing only one character, was extraplanetary.

Pursuing this line, the report comes up with the suggestion that there is a latent scale of nationality values, roughly classified as "desirable" and "undesirable." "Desirable" are American White, English, German, Australian, Norwegian, and Irish; "undesirable" includes American Negro, Mexican, Italian, Yugoslav, Russian, and Chinese.

There is one added touch: "It would appear then that a selective mechanism was operative to concentrate more than a chance proportion of males in a 'desirable' nationalities group, and of the females in an 'undesirable' nationalities group, but the exact criteria for the two groups was not discerned."

Leaving you with this substantial cud, we proceed to some equally fascinating aspects of the TV drama world. "If TV drama is an image of the real world, the version of the real American at work presented to TV viewers in New York was one which over-represented Managers, Officials, and Proprietors, Professionals, Unemployed (but employable), Service Workers, and Private Household Workers. These groups composed 50.8 per cent of all TV characters and only 11.4 per cent of the United States population."

"Among the professional groups shown on TV," we read, "the journalists were generally closer to community ideals and scientists generally most distant from them in character attributes." Teachers were the cleanest, kindest, and fairest of the professional groups, although the weakest, softest, and slowest. Journalists were the most honest, scientists the least honest, least

kind, and most unfair. Lawyers were pictured as both the dullest and dirtiest.

The report goes to town on the hero-villain criteria of television and comes up with some delightful observations. Speaking of TV heroes, whose characters were, of course, brave, attractive, honest, clean, and fair, it discovers that "They were, however, hardly more happy than sad and only moderately generous." Villains were more brave than cowardly, but "moderately sad, dirty, disloyal and miserly."

Heroines—and let this rankle in the female breast—"were consistently less brave, less honest, etc.," than male heroes, and "weaker, softer, duller, slower and dumber than, and as cold as, their male counterparts. . . . Female heroes were softer, duller, slower and dumber than female villains, while the only one of these qualities in which male heroes were inferior to male villains was in softness."

Now a report of 161 pages is not to be judged by these excerpts alone, failing as they do to give any indication of the standards accepted, monitoring methods employed, and tabulations adhered to. Although these appeared to me to be reasonable within their limitations, I have long been wary of the conclusions drawn from tables of figures and arbitrary classifications, which often elude or obscure the simple truth.

When the report concerns percentages of time allotted to certain types of programs and to advertising, however, and when it defines these programs, it is dealing strictly with fact. When it breaks down percentages in terms of race or type, it is also dealing with fact. When it deals with human qualities—dumb, soft, attractive, sad, generous—one might well ask: What do you mean by soft, dumb, etc.? Who are you? Who decided what was dumb, soft, attractive? Why?

It is also possible to share the alleged TV drama opinion of scientists and brand this report as "unfair, unkind and dishonest," or merely to go on laughing at Jackie Gleason and pretend it never happened.

Nor is the report, if taken seriously, completely alarming. It can be no cause for surprise, for instance, that TV—which is predominantly an entertainment medium—prefers to show white American males above all other beings, or that it thinks highly of Managers, Officials, and Proprietors.

Some comfort can be derived in some quarters that religion—of all creeds—is gaining and that two years ago there was no Ed Murrow "See It Now." (Special Events and Features account for only 0.2 per cent of the total time.) Quizzes and contests have not increased. Music showed an increase, and both Fine Arts and Dance raised their fractional heads where three years ago they were imperceptible. We are free from at least one kind of discrimination: In the week of monitoring, according to the report, no Jews were identified.

Whatever other cause for rejoicing this report may provide you will have to find for yourself. I myself find *King Lear* a barrel of laughs com-

pared to it. Nor do I wonder any more—with acts and threats of violence at a record high on TV—why Joe McCarthy has a following.

PORTRAIT OF A MOB

You would not think to look at Curtis—gray, hearty, prosperous—that all his life he has been afraid. He has been afraid of losing; and all his energies have been bent on keeping. When he was graduated from Princeton he had a real desire to become an archaeologist and go to far places, but he was afraid of losing the security of a job in his father's brokerage firm, so he became a broker. He was in love with a girl who had foreign parents and played the piano, but he was afraid he might lose the approval of his friends if he married her, so he married a girl who would have it, although he did not love her. In spite of taxes, Curtis has made more and more money every year, but he is so afraid of losing it that he imagines its possession is threatened by everyone and everything.

It was threatened first by Roosevelt and his social reforms, so Curtis became a lifelong enemy of Democrats. It was threatened later by war, so Curtis became an America Firster. After Pearl Harbor he became a dedicated patriot and sold a great many war bonds. But after the war he felt his possessions threatened by socialism in Great Britain and its spreading contagion here, so he became very anti-British. Even now, under the Republicans, he feels that wars and taxes are the fault of the government, and that its errors constantly threaten his capital. He is therefore very gratified that there is a man on the radio who confirms his fears every night. Curtis is still afraid of loss, but he knows now that there are many like him, and that if things really get too bad, some action—under the proper leadership, of course—can be taken.

Emily is a widow of fifty who lives with her seventy-year-old mother in a small town not far from Shreveport, Louisiana. If one were to describe Emily, a recurrent word would be "confused." Wispy and disorganized in dress and manner, she has the look of a woman who has never known what hit her. Since her husband died ten years ago of undiagnosed diabetes, she has kept house for her deaf and irritable mother in a mansion too large for them on an income too small for it. When she looks at the indifferent young colored girl who cleans once a week for outrageous wages, Emily remembers bitterly the smiling servants of her youth.

Now she does most of the work, cooking flavorless snacks for the two of them and waiting for the hot days to pass. Aside from the church, of which she is an active member, Emily's only real diversion is the radio, and she listens regularly every day to at least five soap operas. Her only other

PORTRAIT OF A MOB From *The Reporter*, June 23, 1953. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

fixed radio date is during suppertime, when she listens to the news presented and commented on by a man who seems to make clear to her all sorts of things she never understood before.

Until five years ago, when she first tuned him in by accident, Emily had avoided listening to the news because it upset and confused her. There were so many things going on in the world, usually dreadful, and you never could make head or tail of them. But this man could. He took her into his confidence with his kind, quiet voice, and told her why things were as they were. The reason they were living so poorly was the taxes, and the money for the taxes was all Wasted by the Government and Given Away to Foreigners, and food too, so that people like Emily and her mother had to eat out of cans. And Minturn died of diabetes because the Democrats were trying to bring in socialized medicine. And the Negroes were so rich and uppity because the government was trying to make everybody equal, as if anybody was. And there were traitors just everywhere trying to take America away from the Americans, right under their noses. All these things were clear now, and the dim inchoate anger that had smoldered so long in Emily's breast was burning bright and sharp. She wished there was something she could do to help.

"One of the smartest men in the business," they say of Roy. And indeed a man has got to be smart to be the sales manager of a large aviation firm in California at the age of thirty-six, to have a beautiful wife, three handsome kids, and a swimming pool.

Aside from great boyish charm, the ingredients of Roy's success have been three: mechanical genius, business vision, and nerve. The first and the last combined to push him ahead in the Air Force in the last war; the business vision has kept him constantly one jump ahead of his competitors. All in all, he should be a happy man.

But one thing gnaws at him in secret: He has had practically no education. Restlessness and bad marks made him leave high school before graduation and—over the protests of his ambitious parents—take a job at the local airport. One thing led to another and here he was now, a big shot who hardly ever read anything in his life but comics, trade papers, and Hearst editorials. Although nobody, including his wife Betty, feels this to be a limitation, Roy does. Deep down is a corroding envy of the educated. Roy has been able to convince himself that most of our troubles come from the intellectuals, and so many people are coming around to his way of thinking that Roy's vindication is almost complete.

Leading this new enlightenment and providing all the evidence anyone might need is a radio commentator Roy listens to every night while he bathes before cocktails. This man expresses what Roy has always felt: that the brain boys are the bad news. First Roosevelt, of course, with his Groton accent and New Deal professors; then Acheson, with his fancy talk and English clothes, filling the State Department with cookie-pushing Phi Betes; and now,

my God, the U.N. And look at the traitors: Hiss, Fuchs, Nunn May—the brain boys again.

Forgetting, or ignorant of, the painful and magnificent self-education of Lincoln, Roy—like the commentator—cites him as the sort of citizen we need today: an honest, plain guy, a real American, with none of this international stuff. If enough of them could only get together. . . .

"Morton has always been so sensitive," says his mother to anyone who will listen. This sensitivity has caused his expulsion from three different schools and the inward anguish of a mother who has found no means to communicate with her son. Now twenty-one, Morton lives in a world of his own, which he cherishes. It is a world of imaginary violence, and his passports to it are many: comic books of crime and sadism, crime movies, accidents, sensation of any kind so long as it is shocking and so long as he himself is in no danger.

Lately, however, there has been an addition to this world, or rather an extension of it into reality. It all happened while he was looking at a horror show in a downtown movie and was picked up by an older man who seemed to understatnd Morton better than anyone before and to recognize the latent power within him. This man introduced him the following week to a secret society dedicated to a pure America. The only condition of membership was to pledge extermination of its enemies within and without, and—on occasion—to hand out literature.

This pledge and the literature were very exciting to Morton, and he soon became an ardent and active member of the group, which—it seemed—was gaining converts from all sides and even being condoned (though not openly) by certain Members of Congress and supported (though not openly) by certain pretty big businessmen. The leader said that before long they could come out in the open and form clubs and hold rallies, and that in the meantime each one of them should listen to certain radio commentators, particularly one in the evening who could give them sound arguments for their crusade.

Morton's mother is amazed at the change in him these days. He seems to have a lot of important work to do and is much nicer to her. He has finally taken her into his secret and they listen together to this commentator who gives Morton, at least, a great exaltation and strength. He will Show Them, Morton keeps telling himself; just wait.

Curtis, Emily, Roy, and Morton, left to themselves, are four individuals worlds apart in character, background, capacity; faceless and lost in the great host of their countrymen.

Each by himself is without direction or destination, his motion through life not unlike the movement of a mote in the sunlight or of a bacillus in fluid.

It remains for an outside force to give them a direction and a destination; and in the case of these four—or four times four times four and so on, in a long, unhappy process of multiplication—it is the voice of a commentator on the radio, speaking to their viscera and impelling them along one course.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What specific evidence is there in "Tidings of Joy?" to indicate that the author is aware of the dangers of oversimplification, illogicality, unexamined assumptions, and other language-thinking pitfalls which this book warns against?
2. Earlier in this book you wrestled with some of the difficult problems that arise when a thoughtful person attempts to distinguish between fact and opinion. How successfully does the author distinguish between fact and opinion in "Tidings of Joy?"?
3. In what specific ways do the findings of the Smythe report, discussed by Miss Mannes in "Tidings of Joy?", support or refute what you learned earlier about the kinds and extent of stereotypes in American thinking? About the formulas and taboos which help determine the editorial policies of many popular American magazines?
4. The Smythe survey discovered that "entertainment-type programs" and "information" programs had certain percentages of TV time. Do you find this information complete? If not, why?
5. Do the findings of the Smythe survey suggest that TV programs are doing more and more or less and less to challenge popular beliefs and stereotypes? Explain.
6. Do the crime programs with which you are acquainted include warnings that crime does not pay? Do these programs seem to be deeply concerned with understanding and controlling crime, or are they designed mainly to thrill? If designed mainly to thrill, then why are "moral" messages incorporated into the script?
7. The final paragraph of "Tidings of Joy?" contains a buried syllogism. Can you discover the major and minor premises and the conclusion? Do you find anything questionable about the logic?
8. Do Mannes' imaginary portraits suggest some common denominators relating the four types of radio-listener to one another?
9. In "Portrait of a Mob" Miss Mannes draws a clear picture of four listeners. She leaves the portrait of the radio commentator to be inferred by the reader. Fill in the details of this portrait by specifying the language techniques such a commentator would use; the thought patterns he would adopt; the devices of persuasion he would customarily employ.
10. Have members of your class nominate a nationally known commentator whose appeals seem to parallel Marya Mannes' imaginary commentator. Class discussion of the nominations would at once test your understanding of her article and Mannes' own realism or lack of it in identifying a demagogue.

PROJECTS

1. To compare the language, logic, and persuasive techniques of representative radio commentators, make a tape recording of the broadcasts of three or four of them on the same day, when, presumably, they would be talking about some of the same matters. Play this tape back to the class. Discuss the results to see if you can, as a group, distinguish the man who leans heavily on fact from the man who deals chiefly in opinion; the man who supports his conclusions from the man who offers them without supporting evidence; the man who appeals chiefly to reason from the man who appeals chiefly to emotion; the man who seems to be interested in permitting you to draw some of your own conclusions from the man who wishes to draw your conclusions for you. (A useful collection of commentators might include Edward R. Murrow, Gabriel Heatter, Fulton Lewis, Jr., and Edwin Canham.)
2. Select one radio-TV personality with a large personal following (such as Arthur Godfrey, Ted Malone, Kate Smith, Dave Garroway, or Liberace) and try to discover some bases for his appeal in terms of the particular psychological needs his personality is meeting. Write a sketch of one of the faithful listeners to whom this personality appeals.
3. Try a modest experiment in "monitoring" a week's TV showings in your community. Using the Smythe report as a rough guide, have each member of a committee select some particular part of the report and test those findings against his own observations over a week's time. Do not approach this study with any preconceived assumptions. Be careful that your sample (the programs you view) is fairly representative of the programs available during the period selected for examination.

Gilbert Seldes

RADIO, TV, AND THE COMMON MAN

The tremendous growth of all the mass media—newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies—in this century has created many questions, or raised old questions in new forms, and so it was to be expected that sooner or later there would arise a group of serious observers and critics whose main job would be to suggest answers to these questions. Serious, well-informed commentary on the mass media was, perhaps, a bit slow in developing, but now there are such articulate critics as John Crosby, Marya Mannes, and Gilbert Seldes.

Seldes, in his widely read book The Great Audience *and in many articles, has addressed himself most persistently to questions centering around the nature of American audiences. What are the reasons for the present content of the mass-media channels? Are these reasons valid ones? Are the*

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mass media really reflecting the taste of the majority of Americans? or are they more often reflecting the guesses of a small number of advertising agents and network executives? Are they really creating *mass preferences? If the media are reflecting mass taste,* should *they? If they are creating it,* should *they? And, in either case, are they overlooking the needs of certain segments of their* potential *audience?*

In the following article Seldes challenges some widely accepted assumptions about the nature of "public demand" for certain kinds of offerings on radio and television.

In the Thirty Years' War between the broadcasters and their critics the heavy battalions and God—as represented by the public—have been on the broadcasters' side. If television hadn't revived some ancient misgivings and made some early blunders, serious criticism of the broadcasting industry might have disappeared entirely; the critics had become fretful and ineffective, and the broadcasters—who had been occasionally apologetic—were so secure in public favor that they showed few symptoms of the guilt complex that had haunted them in their earlier phases. As far as the public was concerned the critics were asking irrelevant questions, withholding praise where it was clearly due, and setting themselves up as the enemy of whatever was popular. The coming of television gives the critics a second chance to ask the right questions and thereby arrive at a useful relation to the industry.

The question being asked by *The Saturday Review* is one of the right ones. It is part of a general inquiry into the relation between the communicative arts and the public, and as it applies to broadcasting it can be put in simple terms: Is it true, as has often been said, that the broadcasters underestimate the taste, intelligence, and maturity of the public? Are the masses ahead of the media?

Oversimplified like this, the question is also overloaded. The critics are asking the broadcasters, "How much longer do you intend to go on beating your wives?" and the broadcasters' answer is usually a combination of "We aren't legally married" and "They love it."

Obviously you can't discuss the relationship between broadcasters and audience until you know what an audience is. If you dig down to the bedrock on which the industry is founded, these solid facts become apparent: (1) an audience is what the sponsor buys; (2) an audience is what the broadcasters deliver; (3) an audience is a measurable fraction of *the* audience; (4) all the fractional audiences put together fall short of being "the public." Not at all apparent, but confirmed by experience, is the hypothesis that *audiences are created by broadcasting.*

The fundamental attitudes toward audiences are all simple. Broadcasters (including sponsors) attempt to satisfy the current wants of large sections of the total audience; critics assert that the people making up these audiences have other interests and curiosities, perhaps not intense enough to be called

wants, but legitimate; they also assert that the definite wants of smaller, but sizable, audiences should also be satisfied. And the Government, representing us as the third party in the discussion, licenses broadcasters to operate "in the public interest," which transcends all partial interests and is greater than their sum. It is, for instance, in the public interest that a vast number of citizens should be alert and intelligent enough to meet the successive crises of the world today, and it is therefore against the public interest if broadcasting fails to contribute to our awareness of problems and our capacity to solve them. But the individual broadcaster can be and usually is absolved of this responsibility.

The fact that an audience is a commodity to be bought and sold is usually concealed, because technically sponsors buy "time on the air." But both the jargon of the trade and some recent rulings of the FCC indicate that what is actually bought is the time and attention given by the audience. To attract sponsors broadcasters often promise to *build* an audience for the time-period he has chosen, and there is ample evidence that audiences have been prevented from coming into existence. The hypothesis stated above can be expanded: *audiences are created by broadcasts and exist only at those times and in those places that the broadcasters want them to exist.*

This is the central fact about broadcasting, because it is the central fact about the audience, but its implications are so grave that I think some proof must be brought forward. There's a lot of it.

Several years ago CBS issued an effective promotion piece called "Our Sixty-ninth-Most-Popular-Program"; it pointed out that, although sixty-eight other programs on the network had higher ratings, "Invitation to Learning" still had an impressive audience of over a million listeners. At about the same time (according to FCC records) "Invitation to Learning" was being heard on only thirty-nine CBS stations; ninety-seven other affiliates of the network did *not* carry the program. No proof exists that any significant number of people in these ninety-seven other cities demanded to hear "Invitation to Learning," but commonsense rejects the idea that *nobody* in ninety-seven average cities wouldn't be glad to hear a program that a million people in thirty-nine other cities listened to with pleasure. That an audience in the ninety-seven cities did not come into being was simply because the creative act, making the program available, was not performed.

The same thing has happened on other networks and with all kinds of programs. Thus 216 Mutual stations did not carry a round-table discussion and only forty did; a Labor for Victory program during the war was taken by thirty-five NBC stations, refused by 104; and so on. We do not yet have comparable data for television, but the principle is the same.

Parallel and opposite is the case of symphonic music. The precarious lives of great orchestras in pre-radio days, their constant "drives" for endowment funds, indicate that at most a few hundred thousand musical individuals

actively wanted to hear the classics. This hardly constituted a demand by broadcasting standards. It is a matter of record that when William S. Paley proposed to broadcast the concerts of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony he knew that an audience for them did not exist and declared his intention of creating one. He was successful; eventually the Philharmonic even acquired a sponsor, and its audience was at one time estimated at about ten million. The demand is so intense that an attempt to broadcast the concerts by transcription, at various hours, brought violent objections and was abandoned after a single season.

The effect of symphonic broadcasts and other musical programs on concert-going and the sale of classical records—some $50,000,000 a year spent on the first and 40 per cent of all record sales for the latter—are in a sense secondary proofs of the creative power of broadcasting. The primary effect is radio's own audience. In creating this audience sponsors were unable to afford the long pull; they paid for orchestral music but withdrew support after a short time, so that it required a network with all its resources (and the happy coincidence of unsold time on the air) to sustain the programs long enough to let the audience form, to let enough people know that they didn't dislike "long-hair" music as much as they thought they did. Again, considering broadcasting only, and not cultural effects, it should be noted that the significance of this entire episode lies not in the fact that the music was good and serious, but that the broadcasters offered all kinds of music, widening the area of choice; if the prevalent mode had been classical and the broadcasters had created an audience for hot music, the moral would still be the same: audiences are created by programs.

There is a more significant but less spectacular case in which the broadcasters acted in the public interest far ahead of public demand. They began to supply international news and commentary of a high order in the 1930's, at a time when the people at large preferred not to be troubled by such matters, a period of marked self-absorption in domestic affairs and strong isolationism. These programs were unsponsored for many years and almost without exception they demanded real mental activity on the part of the listener to match the alert intelligence of the correspondents abroad. These broadcasts were a specific case of giving the public what the public ought to have—and no damned nonsense about what the public wants; and I believe that the high level of emotional stability of the American people after Pearl Harbor is largely due to the creation of an audience, of substantial size, aware of the international situation. This is one of the most honorable services radio has rendered to our country, and I think the industry ought to be proud of it, without reservation.

But the industry does make a reservation, in principle. It cannot accept the Paley principle of creative broadcasting because of the responsibility that principle implies. For you cannot logically say, "We created the audience for

great music and for the discussion of public affairs, but in the case of neurotic daytime serials and sadistic murder playlets we weren't creative at all, we were merely satisfying a demand that already existed." Demand is generalized and diffuse—for entertainment, for thrills, for vicarious sadness, for laughs; it can be satisfied by programs of different types and different qualities; and only after these programs have been offered is there any demand for them. Supply comes first in this business and creates its own demand.

A few months ago *Time* published a letter from a reader in Nigeria which gives a perfect, though extreme, instance of this principle. The writer said: "In the Gold Coast one movie owner possesses only two features, 'King Kong' and 'The Mark of Zorro.' . . . On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays he has packed them in for years with the former; [the other three weekdays he shows the latter] . . . On Sundays there is always a surefire double feature—'King Kong' and 'The Mark of Zorro.' " I submit that this enterprising exhibitor began by satisfying an unspecific demand for entertainment, then created an audience for a specific kind of entertainment, and finally prevented an audience for any other kind of entertainment from coming into existence.

Our mass media, the movies as well as radio and television, offer a greater variety of entertainments, but they are for the most part aimed at the same intellectual level and call for the same emotional responses, the level and the responses being relatively low. The challenge to the mind comes infrequently, and we are being conditioned to make frequent emotional responses of low intensity—the quick nervous reaction to melodrama and the quick laugh at everything else. If material cannot be adapted to give the thrill or the laugh, it is thrown out. A spectacular instance of this occurred recently in the Ford anniversary show, where the entire story of life in the United States in the past half century was reduced to vaudeville, the violent strikes of the 1920's being presented as part of a jocular newsreel, the Depression in a ballet, and the revolution of the New Deal, being intractable, omitted entirely. It was a very successful program, and its success is part of the conditioning process which I call creative, by which the audience is persuaded that it is getting all it can ever want.

Statistical evidence exists that actually the audience—the public, to be more accurate—wants more. I place few bets on the automatic answer given to researchers, "Yes, we would like more serious programs on the air," because, for one thing, some of the respondents call quiz shows educational and because this "want" is a pious aspiration as diffused and uncertain as what the broadcasters say they get from the public. Yet it is noteworthy that *all* the researches point in the same direction: people at every level of education, in significant numbers, do imply some dissatisfaction with the programs they are getting, and among these there are ten million people, not habitual book readers, not college graduates, who consistently ask for programs of a higher intellectual content. (Book readers and college graduates

make the same request twice as often, but they are numerically less important. All these figures come from studies made for the industry.)

Direct corroborative evidence comes from the report of the FM stations; the Lowell Institute station in Boston, wholly educational, has a constantly increasing audience of unswerving loyalty; and the University of Michigan, broadcasting at unfavorable hours, within a small area, has an audience for its TV programs large enough to indicate that the same programs transmitted at good hours over a national network would attract a sponsorable audience.

The evidence favorable to the broadcasters (in music, for instance) and the unfavorable evidence (the prevalence of third-rate crime programs, let us say) come together at this point. If the broadcasters accept their social responsibility, they can continue to pile up huge profits without corrupting the taste and undermining the mental activity of the audience. Sponsors, agencies, packagers, stations, and networks taken together have created the kinds of wants they could satisfy, and while broadcasting has not lost audiences—as the movies have—by repeating the sure thing over and over again, there have always been vast untouched segments of the public. (At the time the two major networks were offering daytime serials all day long and protesting that women wouldn't listen to anything else 76 per cent of all women who had radios in such a city as Boston were simply not listening; within a few years it was discovered that women would listen to many other kinds of programs.) It takes time, intelligence, and conviction to face the simple mathematical fact that 1 is not the only common denominator of 4 and 8 and 16 and 64. The broadcasters have ratings which prove to their satisfaction that a sufficient number of separate individuals watch each of the 100 or more programs of violence on television every week, but that is no proof of public demand for so many of these programs and it certainly is not proof that other kinds of programs would not build up equally satisfactory audiences.

The huge costs of television production have introduced a new element. The pure sustaining program of radio, experimental and not intended for sale, has disappeared, and the status of television may now be described as "commercialism mitigated by Foundations." "American Inventory" (Sloan) and "Omnibus" (Ford) are essentially comparable to network sustaining programs in radio, and all the networks and many stations are bringing in inexpensive programs from museums and universities with or without special endowments or other funds for broadcasting. Broadcasters have been glad to shift the burden of costs for such programs. Provided a sufficient number of them continue on the air, it doesn't matter to the public who pays the bill.

Other developments also point to the same ill-defined feeling that commercial broadcasting alone cannot satisfy all the legitimate wants of the public. Grand opera has been "narrowcast" into theatres, the audience pay-

ing admission, and there are a dozen plans to handle plays in a similar way. And while pay-as-you-go transmission of movies is more an economic move than a social one, it adds another variant from the standard commercial system. "Omnibus," the most successful of the experiments, makes the point of divergence particularly clear. It seems to assume that the usual commercial sponsor is not bound by any social duty to take long risks, to keep a program running until its audience forms; the program is therefore produced (as all radio programs were in the beginning) without reference to or interference from the sponsor, but is made available for sponsorship on these terms. Doing what neither the network nor the sponsor can do, such a program signifies that an area outside their capacities must be cultivated if television is to be satisfactory, not only to particular audiences, but to the public as a whole.

We know, in sum, that the broadcasting business has been ahead of the public as well as behind it. We know that better programs often fail to get support. One reason for this is that the better programs are often conceived as something totally different from good programs—the rhetorical documentaries of Norman Corwin, for instance—and not, as they should be, as a constant improvement in the quality of programs already proved acceptable. Another reason is that the volume and velocity of the average program surfeits the appetite and makes it progressively less likely that a keener taste will develop.

It is at this point that the broadcasters share responsibility with other manipulators of the public. They dodge it by the ancient excuse of giving the public what it wants, conceiving the public as a mass with tastes already formed. Once they admit that the media can raise or lower the public taste, in the very act of satisfying the public demand, they will come closer to their function, which is defined legally as operating in the public interest, and which, morally, does not insist on raising the public taste but demands, as a minimum, that the public be given every opportunity to find its own level of taste by having access to the best as well as to the mean—which, in this case, is far from golden.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. How does Seldes, in the first three paragraphs of his article, show his awareness of oversimplification and "question-begging" statements? What are the undefined terms which he challenges here?
2. Seldes gives several examples of how broadcasters may "create" an audience (for example, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra and international news broadcasting). Can you give other instances where an audience, small or large, came into being where none had existed?

   What recent experiments in book publishing parallel these efforts to create an audience for "good things"? Can you give examples of any widely circulated magazines which are deliberately trying to elevate the taste of their readers?

3. Seldes suggests that most of our radio, television, and movie entertainment is devised to produce "frequent emotional responses of low intensity—the quick nervous reaction to melodrama and the quick laugh at everything else." Consider a half-dozen radio-TV programs that have great current popularity and test them against Seldes' generalization. Do you find that the results support or refute Seldes' judgment?
4. A broadcasting studio is trying to determine whether any of the following programs should be continued. What dangers should the studio guard against in drawing conclusions about the potential audiences for such programs?
   a. Unsponsored programs given at eleven o'clock at night or eight o'clock on Sunday morning
   b. A program put on the air at the same time as two shows that have a huge following
   c. A new program that has received little or no advance publicity
   d. An educational program featuring university professors and scholars unknown to the lay public
5. Here is an excerpt from the published program of an FM subscription station in Berkeley, California:

   7:45 Folk Music Series: Folk Music of Haiti (second program)
   8:00 Conversations at KPFA: "Pressure Politics and Lobbying." Fifth in a series of discussions on major problems in American life by R. Gordon Agnew, Richard Weinerman, J. Raymond Cope, and Lewis Hill
   9:00 Concert Preview: Recordings of rare items played in advance of recital hall concerts
   9:30 Chekhov: An interview with Professor Oleg A. Maslenikov, Chairman of the Slavic Language Department at the University of California
   10:00 Second Concert: The "Eroica" theme in Beethoven's music. Contradances (CB Symphony—Barlow); Piano variations, Op. 35 (Arrau); The Creatures of Prometheus, Op. 43 (Winterthur Sym. —Goehr); Symphony #3: finale (NBC Symphony—Arturo Toscanini)

   In what specific ways is this not typical of most radio programing? How does it reveal, by contrast, what ordinary programs are like? Which one of Seldes' main points does this illuminate?
6. Is it sheer numbers of people an advertiser should try to reach if his object is to sell rare books, abstract paintings, high-priced securities, or vintage wines? Cite some "special publics" which radio and TV have so far left untouched but which might respond to special appeals.
7. Seldes suggests that the better programs do not have to be totally new, but can be fresh approaches to already popular kinds of programs. Are there any existing radio and TV programs which reinforce Seldes' argument? Can you give examples of fresh, off-beat movies, comic strips, adventure and detective fiction, and popular song lyrics which, in their respective fields, also illustrate Seldes' point?
8. Can you think of a better word for "educational television"—a word that will not lead to immediate negative reactions in people's minds?

PROJECTS

1. Is there a TV or radio program you would like to see grow in popularity? In a detailed paper present your suggestions for changes that would make this program more appealing and yet not sacrifice its quality.
2. The Peabody Awards are presented annually for distinguished achievement in radio and television. Below are a number of persons and programs winning the awards in 1954: ABC news analyst Chet Huntley, news analyst Gerald W. Johnson, NBC's TV Opera Theater, Philco-Goodyear TV Playhouse, Camera Three, NBC's Mr. Wizard, and CBS's news analyst Edward R. Murrow.

   Delegate five or six members of your class to listen to and observe these programs for a week or so. Then organize a panel discussion in which these observers report to the class any special qualities that appear to set off these programs from run-of-the-mill radio and TV offerings.
3. Seldes discloses that radio, for the moment partially eclipsed by the greater popularity of TV, is beginning to experiment more boldly in seeking special publics it once ignored. They are looking for fresh suggestions of ways to win new audiences.

   With the cooperation of your instructor, a local radio editor, and a radio studio official organize a contest with a series of appropriate cash prizes for the best suggestions offered. The editor would doubtless give this contest publicity and, together with a representative of a studio and someone from the college English staff, would make a good judge of such a contest.
4. Seldes offers the hypothesis that the producers and exhibitors of entertainment create *specific* kinds of entertainment to meet *generalized* demands. To see more clearly what he means, place yourself in the position of a broadcaster who wishes to meet some *generalized* demand he knows to exist in the "general public"—a desire for humor or for exciting, unrealistic "escape" drama or for drama about real problems or for children's entertainment or for information. Your job is to determine the various kinds of *specific* programs you could evolve to meet the generalized demand. Present the program-descriptions in a paper or talk and indicate whether your findings give some support to Seldes' proposition.

Movies

Lillian Ross

ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

What happens in Hollywood when someone tries to produce an "off-beat" movie, a movie that does not neatly fit any of the sure-fire, accepted formulas—in short, when someone tries honestly to create something new? In her reporting of the making of one movie, "The Red Badge of Courage," Lillian Ross implies a rather grim, bitter answer. The following selection consists of excerpts from a series of "Profiles" in the New Yorker *which were later published together in book form as* Picture.

The making of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer movie "The Red Badge of Courage," based on the Stephen Crane novel about the Civil War, was preceded by routine disclosures about its production plans from the columnist Louella Parsons ("John Huston is writing a screen treatment of Stephen Crane's classic, 'The Red Badge of Courage,' as a possibility for an M-G-M picture."); from the columnist Hedda Hopper ("Metro has an option on 'The Red Badge of Courage' and John Huston's working up a budget for it. But there's no green light yet."); and from *Variety* ("Pre-production work on 'Red Badge of Courage' commenced at Metro with thesp-tests for top roles in drama."), and it was preceded, in the spring of 1950, by a routine visit by John Huston, who is both a screen writer and a director, to New York, the headquarters of Loew's, Inc., the company that produces and distributes M-G-M pictures. . . .

Huston, at forty-three, was one of the most admired, rebellious, and shadowy figures in the world of motion pictures. I had seen him a year before, when he came here to accept an award of a trip around the world for his film contributions to world unity. He had talked of an idea he had for making a motion picture about the nature of the world while he was going around it. Then he had flown back to Hollywood, and to the demands of his employers, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and had made "The Asphalt Jungle," a picture about a band of criminals engaged in pursuits that Huston described somewhere in the dialogue of the movie as "a left-handed form of human endeavor." Now, on this visit, shortly after the sudden death, in Hollywood,

ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS From *Picture, A Story About Hollywood,* by Lillian Ross, copyright 1952 by Lillian Ross, reprinted by permission of Rinehart & Co., Inc.

of his father, Walter Huston, he telephoned me from his Waldorf Tower suite and said he was having a terrible time trying to make "The Red Badge of Courage." Louis B. Mayer and most of the other top executives at M-G-M, he said, were opposed to the entire project. "You know something?" he said, over the telephone. He has a theatrical way of inflecting his voice that can give a commonplace query a rich and melodramatic intensity. "They don't want me to make this picture. And I want to make this picture." He made the most of every syllable, so that it seemed at that moment to lie under his patent and have some special urgency. "Come on over, kid, and I'll tell you all about the hassle," he said. . . .

"Hel-lo, kid," Huston said as we shook hands. He took a step back, then put his hands in his trouser pockets and leaned forward intently. "Well!" he said. He made the word expand into a major pronouncement.

Huston is a lean, rangy man, two inches over six feet tall, with long arms and long hands, long legs and long feet. He has thick black hair, which had been slicked down with water, but some of the front strands fell raffishly over his forehead. He has a deeply creased, leathery face, high cheekbones, and slanting, reddish-brown eyes. His ears are flattened against the sides of his head, and the bridge of his nose is bashed in. His eyes looked watchful, and yet strangely empty of all feeling, in weird contrast to the heartiness of his manner. He took his hands out of his pockets and yanked at his hair. "Well!" he said, again as though he were making a major pronouncement. He turned to Fellows. "Art, order some Martinis, will you, kid?"

Huston sat down on the arm of a chair, fixed a long brown cigarette in one corner of his mouth, took a kitchen match from his trouser pocket, and scraped the head of the match into flame with his thumbnail. He lit the cigarette and drew deeply on it, half closing his eyes against the smoke, which seemed to make them slant still more. Then he rested his elbows on his knees, holding the cigarette to his mouth with two long fingers of one hand, and looked out the window. The sun had gone down and the light coming into the suite, high in the Tower, was beginning to dull. Huston looked as though he might be waiting—having set up a Huston scene—for the cameras to roll. But, as I gradually grew to realize, life was not imitating art, Huston was not imitating himself, when he set up such a scene; on the contrary, the style of the Huston pictures, Huston being one of the few Hollywood directors who manage to leave their personal mark on the films they make, was the style of the man. In appearance, in gestures, in manner of speech, in the selection of the people and objects he surrounded himself with, and in the way he composed them into individual "shots" (the abrupt closeup of the thumbnail scraping the head of a kitchen match) and then arranged his shots into dramatic sequence, he was simply the raw material of his own art; that is, the man whose personality left its imprint, unmistakable, on what had come to be known as a Huston picture.

"I just love the light at this time of the day," Huston said as Fellows returned from the phone. "Art, don't you just love the light at this time of the day?"

Fellows said it was all right.

Huston gave a chuckle. "Well, now," he said, "here I am, spending the studio's money on this trip, and I don't even know whether I'm going to make the picture I'm here for. I'm auditioning actors at the Loew's office and talking production up there and doing all the publicity things they tell me to do. I've got the 'Red Badge' script O.K.'d, and I'm going down South to pick locations for the picture, but nothing is moving. We can't make this picture unless we have six hundred Confederate uniforms and six hundred Union uniforms. And the studio is just not making those uniforms for us. I'm beginning to think they don't *want* the picture!"

* * *

Financial problems, Huston said, had prevented him from taking the trip around the world. Although his M-G-M salary was four thousand dollars a week while he was making a picture, he had had to get the company to advance him a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which he was paying off in installments. He was bound by his contract to make at least one picture a year for the next three years for M-G-M. He was a partner in an independent company, Horizon Pictures, which he had started a couple of years before with a man named Sam Spiegel, whom he had met in the early thirties in London. Huston had directed one picture, "We Were Strangers," for Horizon, and he was scheduled to direct another—"The African Queen," based on the novel by C. S. Forester—as soon as he had completed "The Red Badge of Courage" for M-G-M. Huston said he thought "The African Queen" would make money, and if it did, he would then make some pictures on his own that he wanted to make as much as he did "The Red Badge of Courage." The reason L. B. Mayer and the other M-G-M executives did not think that "The Red Badge of Courage" could be a commercial success, Huston said, was that it had no standard plot, no romance, and no leading female characters, and, if Huston had his way in casting it, would have no stars. It was simply the story of a youth who ran away from his first battle in the Civil War, and then returned to the front and distinguished himself by performing several heroic acts. Huston, like Stephen Crane, wanted to show something of the emotions of men in war, and the ironically thin line between cowardice and heroism. A few months earlier, Huston and an M-G-M producer named Gottfried Reinhardt, the son of the late Max Reinhardt, had suggested to Dore Schary, the studio's vice-president in charge of production, that they make the picture.

"Dore loved the idea," Huston said. "And Dore said he would read the novel." A couple of weeks later, Schary had asked Huston to write a screen treatment—a rough outline for the detailed script. "I did my treatment in four days," Huston said. "I was going down to Mexico to get married, so I

took my secretary along and dictated part of it on the plane going down, got married, dictated some more after the ceremony, and dictated the rest on the plane trip back." Schary approved the treatment, and the cost of making the picture was estimated at a million and a half dollars. Huston wrote the screenplay in five weeks, and Schary approved it. "Then the strangest things began to happen," Huston said. "Dore is called vice-president in charge of production. L. B. Mayer is called vice-president in charge of the studio. Nobody knows which is boss." His voice rose dramatically. "We were told Dore had to O.K. everything. We got his O.K., but nothing moved. And we know that L.B. hates the idea of making this picture." His voice sank to a confidential whisper. "He just hates it!"

For the role of the Youth, Huston said, he wanted twenty-six-year-old Audie Murphy, the most-decorated hero of the Second World War, whose film career had been limited to minor roles. Huston said he was having some difficulty persuading both Schary and Reinhardt to let Murphy have the part. "They'd rather have a star," he said indignantly. "They just don't see Audie the way I do. This little, gentle-eyed creature. Why, in the war he'd literally go out of his way to find Germans to kill. He's a gentle little killer."

"Another Martini?" Fellows asked.

"I hate stars," Huston said, exchanging his empty glass for a full one. "They're not actors. I've been around actors all my life, and I like them, and yet I never had an actor as a friend. Except Dad. And Dad never thought of himself as an actor. But the best actor I ever worked with was Dad. All I had to tell Dad about his part of the old man in 'Treasure' was to talk fast. Just talk fast." Huston talked rapidly, in a startling and accurate imitation of his father. "A man who talks fast never listens to himself. Dad talked like this. Man talking fast is an honest man. Dad was a man who never tried to sell anybody anything."

It was now quite dark in the room. We sat in the darkness for a while without talking, and then Huston got up and went over to the light switch. He asked if we were ready for light, and then snapped the switch. He was revealed in the sudden yellow brightness, standing motionless, a look of bewilderment on his face. "I hate this scene," he said. "Let's go out and get something to eat."

* * *

When I arrived on the West Coast, Huston set about arranging for me to meet everybody who had anything to do with "The Red Badge of Courage." The day I met Gottfried Reinhardt, the thirty-nine-year-old producer of "The Red Badge of Courage," he was sitting in his office at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio, in Culver City, studying the estimated budget for the picture. It would be the fifteen-hundred-and-twelfth picture to be put into production since Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer was founded, on May 24, 1924. The mimeographed booklet containing the estimate was stamped "Production No. 1512." (The estimate, I learned later on, informed Reinhardt that the

picture would be allotted nine rehearsal days and thirty-four production days; the footage of the finished film was expected to come to 7,865 feet; the total cost was expected to be $1,434,789.) Reinhardt's office was a comfortable one. It was a suite, which included a small bath and a conference room furnished with leather armchairs. A brass plate engraved with his name was on the door. In his private office, in addition to a desk and several green leather armchairs and a green leather couch, he had a thick brown carpet, a bookcase with a set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and a potted plant six feet high. The walls were hung with old prints. On his desk, near several large cigarette lighters, a couple of ball-point pens, and a leather cigar box, stood a framed photograph of Max Reinhardt. The elder Reinhardt had a look of gentle but troubled thoughtfulness. There was a considerable resemblance between father and son.

"Where you have your office is a sign of your importance," Reinhardt told me as we sat around talking. "I'm on the first floor. Dore Schary is two floors up, right over me. L.B. is also two floors up. I have a wash-basin but no shower in my office. Dore has a shower but no bathtub. L.B. has a shower *and* a bathtub. The kind of bath facilities you have in your office is another measure of the worth of your position." He smiled sardonically. "An important director is almost as important as a producer," he continued, getting up and straightening one of the prints. "John's office is a corner one, like mine."

Reinhardt is a paunchy man with a thick mane of wavy brown hair; in his cocoa-brown silk shantung suit, he looked like a Teddy bear. There was a cigar in his mouth and an expression of profound cynicism on his face. A heavy gold chain hung in a deep loop from under his coat to a trouser pocket. He speaks with a German accent but without harshness, and his words come out pleasantly, in an even, regretful-sounding way. "We promised Dore we would make our picture for one million five or under, and that we would make it in about thirty days," he said, sitting down at his desk again. He put his hand on the estimate and sighed heavily. "The producer's job is to save time and money." He bobbed his head as he talked. A strand of hair fell over his face. He replaced it and puffed at his cigar in a kind of restrained frenzy. Then he removed his cigar and, bobbing his head again, said, "When you tell people you have made a picture, they do not ask, 'Is it a good picture?' They ask, 'How many days?' " He tapped the ash from his cigar tenderly into a tray and gave another heavy sigh.

* * *

At Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Gottfried Reinhardt had witnessed a succession of struggles for power among the executives at the studio. He had learned many lessons simply by watching these battles, he told me. "M-G-M is like a medieval monarchy," he said. "Palace revolutions all the time." He leaned back in his swivel chair. "L.B. is the King. Dore is the Prime Minister. Benny Thau, an old Mayer man, is the Foreign Minister, and makes all the important deals for the studio, like the loan-outs of big stars. L. K. Sidney, one vice-president, is the Minister of the Interior, and Edgar J.

Mannix, another vice-president, is Lord Privy Seal, or, sometimes, Minister without Portfolio. And John and I are loyal subjects." He bobbed his head and gave a cynical laugh. "Our King is not without power. I found, with 'The Red Badge of Courage,' that you need the King's blessing if you want to make a picture. I have the King's blessing, but it has been given with large reservations." He looked at me over his cigar. "Our picture must be a commercial success," he said flatly. "And it must be a *great* picture."

There was a stir in Dave Chasen's Restaurant in Beverly Hills when Dore Schary walked in. Chasen's is run by the former stage comedian whose name it bears, and it is popular with people in the motion-picture industry. The restaurant is divided into several sections. The first one, facing directly upon the entrance, contains semicircular booths. This section leads to a long bar opposite another section of booths. There are additional sections behind and to the sides of the first two. The headwaiters took up sentrylike positions there, facing each other across the table. All the other patrons focussed their attention on Schary. They seemed to be looking around at everybody except the people they were with and with whom they were managing to carry on conversations.

"I'll read you Ben's letter," a man near us was saying. "He writes, 'Whenever I think of Byzantium, I remember you. I hope you survive the court intrigues of Hollywood's twilight, and when the place crumbles, may you fall from a throne.' "

"I have news for you," said his companion. "It's not twilight yet. It's only smog."

"I have news for *you,*" the first man said, staring without restraint at Schary. "Ben will be back here. He *likes* the court intrigues."

Schary was not a bit self-conscious. He had an aura of immense self-assurance, as though he had reached a point where he could no longer be affected by anything that might happen in Chasen's. He is an optimistic man, and he was talking to me optimistically about the movies. He respected foreign movies, he said, but he believed that the American picture industry provided more entertainment and enlightenment than any other movie-makers in the world. "Our scope is international," he said. "Our thinking is international, and our creative urges and drives are constantly being renewed with the same vigor that renews so many things in the American way of life." The motion-picture community generically referred to as Hollywood, he told me, is no different from any other American community that is dominated by a single industry. "We're the same as Detroit," he said. "We just get talked about more, that's all." He was almost the only man in Chasen's who was not at that moment looking around at someone other than the person he was talking to.

Dave Chasen, a small, solemn man with soft, wistful eyes, came over and told Schary how happy he was to see him there.

"How are you, doll?" Schary said.

"You're looking good," Chasen said sadly.

Schary gave him a genial grin and went on talking to me about the picture industry. A man who seems to be favorably disposed toward the entire world, Schary has a chatty, friendly, homespun manner reminiscent of the late Will Rogers', but there is in it a definite hint of the firm-minded and paternalistic Sunday-School teacher. He is six feet tall, and he has a big head, a high, freckled forehead, and a large nose, shaped like a Saint Bernard's. He spoke earnestly, as though trying to convey a tremendous seriousness of purpose about his work in motion pictures. "A motion picture is a success or a failure at its very inception," he told me. "There was resistance, great resistance, to making 'The Red Badge of Courage.' In terms of cost and in other terms. This picture has no women. This picture has no love story. This picture has no single incident. This is a period picture. The story—well, there's no story in this picture. It's just the story of a boy. It's the story of a coward. Well, it's the story of a hero." Schary apparently enjoyed hearing himself talk. He was obviously in no hurry to make his point. "These are the elements that are considered important in determining success or failure at the box office," he said, and paused, as if he felt slightly bewildered by the point he was trying to make. He finally said that there had been successful pictures that did not have these so-called important elements. "Crossfire," which he had made, was one, and "All Quiet on the Western Front" was another. "Lew Ayres was the German equivalent of our boy," he said. "I'll almost bet you that Remarque knew 'The Red Badge of Courage.' In the main, when you set out to make a picture, you say, 'I just have a hunch about this picture.' And that's what I felt about this one. Call it instinct if you will. I felt that this picture is liable to be a wonderful picture and a commercial success." . . .

Schary began talking about L. B. Mayer. "I know Mayer," he said. "I know this man. I know Mayer because my father was like him. Powerful. Physically very strong. Strong-tempered and willful. Mayer literally *hits* people. But my father made this guy look like a May party." He gave me an easy grin.

Just then, a young man rushed over to the table, grabbed Schary's hand, and cried, "Dore! Wonderful to see you, Dore!" He held on to Schary's hand, giving him an incredulous, admiring stare. "You look wonderful, Dore! You look wonderful!"

"Sweetie, how are ya?" Schary said amiably.

The young man continued to stare at Schary; he seemed to be waiting for confirmation of something. Then he said, "You remember me, Dore! Dave Miller!"

"Of course, doll," Schary said.

"R.K.O.!" Miller announced, as though he were calling out a railroad

stop, and in the same tone he announced that he was directing a picture at Columbia. Schary gave him a broad, understanding grin.

Miller shook his head unbelievingly several times and then, reluctantly, started to back away. "You're doing wonderful things now, Dore. Wonderful! The best of everything to you, Dore," he said. "The best."

The maze of paths followed by all the individuals at M-G-M who worked together to make a motion picture led inexorably to the office of Louis B. Mayer, and I found him there one day, behind a series of doors, talking to Arthur Freed, a producer of musicals for the studio. Mayer's office was about half as large as the lounge of the Music Hall, and he sat behind a huge cream-colored desk over-looking a vast expanse of peach-colored carpet. The walls of the office were panelled in cream-colored leather, and there was a cream-colored bar, a cream-colored fireplace with cream-colored fire irons, cream-colored leather chairs and couches, and a cream-colored grand piano. Behind Mayer's desk stood an American flag and a marble statue of the M-G-M lion. The desk was covered with four cream-colored telephones, a prayer book, several photographs of lions, a tintype of Mayer's mother, and a statuette of the Republican Party's elephant. The big desk hid most of Mayer, but I could see his powerful shoulders, decked in navy blue, a gay, polka-dot bow tie that almost touched his chin. His large head seems set upon the shoulders, without an intervening neck. His hair is thick and snow-white, his face ruddy, and his eyes, behind glasses with amber-colored frames, stared with a sort of fierce blankness at Freed, who was showing him a report on the box-office receipts of his latest musical, then playing at the Radio City Music Hall.

"Great! I saw it!" Mayer said, sweeping Freed back with his arm. "I said to you the picture would be a wonderful hit. In here!" he cried, poking his index finger at his chest. "It wins the audience in here!" He lifted his snowy head and looked at the cream-colored wall before him as though he were watching the Music Hall screen. "Entertainment!" he cried, transfixed by what he seemed to see on that screen, and he made the face of a man who was emotionally stirred by what he was watching. "It's good enough for you and I and the box office," he said, turning back to Freed. "Not for the smart alecks. It's not good enough any more," he went on, whining coyly, in imitation of someone saying that winning the heart of the audience was not good enough. He pounded a commanding fist on his desk and looked at me. "Let me tell you something!" he said. "Prizes! Awards! Ribbons! We had two pictures here. An Andy Hardy picture, with little Mickey Rooney, and 'Ninotchka,' with Greta Garbo. 'Ninotchka' got the prizes. *Blue* ribbons! *Purple* ribbons! Nine bells and seven stars! Which picture made the money? 'Andy Hardy' made the money. Why? Because it won praise from the heart. No ribbons!"

"Hah!" Mr. Freed said.

"Twenty-six years with the studio!" Mayer went on. "They used to listen to me. Never would Irving Thalberg make a picture I was opposed to. I had a worship for that boy. He worked. Now they want cocktail parties and their names in the papers. Irving listened to me. Never satisfied with his own work. That was Irving. Years later, after Irving passed away, they still listened. They made an Andy Hardy picture." He turned his powerful shoulders toward me. "Andy's mother is dying, and they make the picture showing Andy standing outside the door. *Standing.* I told them, 'Don't you know that an American boy like that will get down on his hands and knees and *pray?* They listened. They brought Mickey Rooney down on his hands and knees." Mayer leaped from his chair and crouched on the peach-colored carpet and showed how Andy Hardy had prayed. "The biggest thing in the picture!" He got up and returned to his chair. "Not good enough," he said, whining coyly again. "Don't show the good, wholesome, American mother in the home. Kind. Sweet. Sacrifices. Love." Mayer paused and by his expression demonstrated, in turn, maternal kindness, sweetness, sacrifice, and love, and then glared at Freed and me. "No!" he cried. "Knock the mother on the jaw!" He gave himself an uppercut to the chin. "Throw the mother's good, homemade chicken soup in the mother's face!" He threw an imaginary plate of soup in Freed's face. "*Step* on the mother! *Kick* her! That is *art,* they say. Art!" He raised and lowered his white eyebrows, wiggled his shoulders like a hula dancer, and moved his hands in a mysterious pattern in the air. "Art!" he repeated, and gave an angry growl.

"You said it," said Freed.

" 'Andy Hardy'! I saw the picture and the tears were in my eyes," Mayer said. "I'm not ashamed. I'll see it again. Every time, I'll cry."

"In musicals, we don't have any of those phony artistic pretensions," Freed said.

Mayer gave no sign that he had heard Freed. "Between you and I and the lamppost," he said, straightening his bow tie, "the smart alecks around here don't know the difference between the heart and the gutter. They don't want to listen to you. Marie Dressler! Who thought you could take a fat old lady and make her a star? I did it. And Wally Beery. And Lionel Barrymore." He leaned back in his chair, one hand tucked into his shirt, his eyes squinting, his voice, turning into the querulous rasp of Dr. Gillespie informing Dr. Kildare of his diagnosis of the disease. Then resuming his natural manner, he said, "The audience knows. Look at the receipts. Give the audience what they want? No. Not *good* enough." He paused.

"Thoreau said most of us lead lives of quiet desperation," Freed said quickly. "Pictures should make you feel better, not worse."

Again Mayer did not seem to hear. " 'The Red Badge of Courage,' " he said. "A million and a half. Maybe more. What for? There's no story. I was against it. They wanted to make it. I don't say no. John Huston. He was going to do 'Quo Vadis.' What he wanted to do to the picture! No heart.

His idea was he'd throw the Christians to the lions. That's all. I begged him to change his ideas. I got down on my hands and knees to him. I sang 'Mammy' to him. I showed him the meaning of heart. I crawled to him on hands and knees. 'Ma-a-ammy!' With tears. No! No heart! He *thanked* me for taking him off the picture. Now he wants 'The Red Badge of Courage.' Dore Schary wants it. All right. I'll watch. I don't say no, but I wouldn't make that picture with Sam *Gold*wyn's money."

* * *

[After the picture was shot, Huston went to Africa. In his absence studio officials made changes designed to meet the objections of preview audiences.]

Mr. John Huston
Darkest Africa

Dear John:

This is not an official letter. This is not the producer writing the director, but rather the Tall Soldier addressing the Youth. For despite the physical incongruities implied in this statement, that is exactly how I feel: like the Tall Soldier, having "in his ignorance" held the line, now giving up his soul, telling the Youth who ran away what happened. "Laws, what a circus!"

Lacking all signs of life from you, I find it difficult to carry the analogy much further. I am too unfamiliar with your present circumstances, although I presume that on a Spiegel location you will have had a brush with a Tattered Man, a very short one, to be sure, for the Tattered Man turned out to be one of the first casualties, in more ways than one, and is one of the main reasons for this accusatory confession.

However, whatever these transitory episodes, one development is inevitable, one happening is sure to be in store for you: you will one day return to your regiment, and that will be painful. True, your desertion will not have been noticed. People will say you have been fighting somewhere "on the right." And you will say we have seen nothing of the real fighting. But it will be painful just the same. For, no matter what anyone says, you will find your regiment decimated. Irretrievable casualties will stare in your face, and the survivors are bruised and battered and bitter.

The Tall Soldier will be gone, or at least his soul. The real adversary of all of us, Louis, the Captain—he will be gone. The minor executives, the Lieutenants, will be, as usual, asleep. But in Dore you will find again your Friend. For that he is.

He did have *his* moments of wavering, and serious moments, too. When, in the heat of battle, he parted with his watch, when he cut out the death of the Tattered Man, when he wanted to cut out "John Brown's Body" (or shall I say: "John's Body"?), a surgical operation which I was able to prevent him from performing, when he shortened the last shot of the picture, when he eliminated the first veterans as well. Maybe, deep in his heart, sometimes he, too, felt tempted to run away. And the only reason he stuck it out in the end was that he was more afraid of the Captain than of the public. Be

that as it may, he did stick it out. And he *is* a Friend. And, whatever his mistakes (and who knows, maybe they aren't even mistakes; maybe he is right?), if this war of ours should be a miracle, in spite of all the confusion, the intramural disagreements, the unpopularity of the cause, the abundance in casualties, be crowned by victory, he will in his way be as responsible for it as the Tall Soldier or even the Youth.

But even if you should disagree with him completely your position will be a weak one. Just as the Youth's triumph, when he returns the watch to the Friend, is a hollow one, no arguments of yours can retroactively make up for your absence. Right or wrong, the decisions in battle must be made by those who take part in the fighting. As you know, it doesn't matter how beautiful the strategy may be. The test of battle is what counts. So, all that remains for you upon your return is to "get mad" and, even if somewhat belatedly, to become a hero, and to fight bigger and better battles, make better, if not necessarily bigger, pictures, and stay with them.

This, in short, is what happened: after you left us, there was a long lull in the fighting. The picture was taken off the release schedule and all decisions were postponed until, as we discussed doing the day before your departure, we had another preview with narration. Only four weeks ago did we have this preview. The reason for this delay was that we couldn't get inside the dubbing rooms. A lot of other products had to be rushed through first. Unfortunately, it leaked out what kind of an audience reaction we had had at the first two previews and there were some damaging items in the press to that effect. Especially, a New York *Times* story did word of mouth a good deal of harm. Professional circles in New York and locally were whispering that M-G-M had a dud on its hands and didn't know what to do with it. Some went so far as to assert that "The Red Badge" was so bad it couldn't be released. There were those who conceded that the picture may very well be an artistic achievement but would surely be a commercial disaster. There was very little I could do to stem this tide of unfavorable and often vicious comment, especially as some of it unquestionably emanated from the studio itself. The New York *Times* man, for instance, told me that his information came directly from one of our executives. Naturally, the whole Mayer situation, which thank God has since come to its dénouement, did not help matters any.

Reinhardt told Huston about the picture's new opening, which involved the shots of the book and the portrait of Crane, about Schary's introduction and about the narration, which "seemed to succeed in keeping the audience concentrated on the Youth's inner development." "Fewer people walked out," he said, "and while I did not kid myself and still felt that a large part of the audience did not care for the picture at all, I was quite satisfied with our effort. I felt we had a very distinguished, immensely beautiful, and, to those who appreciated it, very moving and even great picture." He then said that Schary, seeing the picture for the first time with an audience, had become worried:

Dore had secretly higher hopes for the picture box-officewise than I. I was long resigned to the limited appeal I believed we could count on. And all I tried to do was to put the picture in its best possible shape to further this appeal, recognizing fully its limitations. Dore was not quite in the same mood. He wanted to conquer the resistance of the audience, which he clearly —and we both—felt. I, frankly, believed that was futile. And dangerous to boot. Because I seriously questioned our ability to win the hearts of those who objected to the picture basically; those who hated it. On the other hand, we might easily, in trying to win them, lose those who were already our friends, those who loved the very things the others hated. Actually, there wasn't much of a fight. I was in a very bad position to fight. Dore had behaved wonderfully all along in the face of violent opposition, bordering on sabotage. I had to be—and *am*—very grateful to him for that. In acting so courageously, he assumed a definite and heavy responsibility for the picture. How could I deny him the privilege to salvage a million-and-three-quarter-dollar investment?

It took Reinhardt several more hours to outline the changes that had been made in the picture. And then he wrote:

Well, John, I felt very bad. Except for the time when I finally gave in to you on Audie, I hadn't been that miserable. You see, I had been able to fight all studio opposition, because I always had the deep conviction that I was helping make a work of art. Not these two times. The fact that I could have never won my fight without Dore's blessing made this last situation only more difficult and painful. I never harbored much hope for a commercial success. I know you did. I reminded Dore of his letter to Mayer where he explained that this kind of picture would be made by a studio like M-G-M regardless of commercial considerations. It was to be a "classic." Mayer and all the other executives loathed the idea. To go ahead with the project under the circumstances was a fateful decision for a producer. More than for a director. A producer is not supposed to divorce his judgment from commercial considerations. Even the head of a studio can sometimes with impunity think in purely artistic terms. He makes forty pictures a year. The producer makes one or two. If those are flops—that's his product. He is a flop. He may be an "artist" but a flop. I knew and weighed all that. I didn't care. I was delighted to make this picture with you. Up to these two moments, when I suddenly saw before me the spectre of the unartistic flop.

I sincerely hope that all this is terribly exaggerated. In any event, my dwelling on it seems highly superfluous. The fourth and last preview with these changes (all except the cavalry charge, which I made Dore put back before) went unquestionably much better. The cards too for the first time showed an astonishing improvement. Only thirty per cent would not recommend the picture this time. The picture had lost some of its complexities and colors. It was now a straighter, simpler picture. The consensus was, "You can follow it now. You can understand it now." Whether that is desirable I shall leave to posterity's judgment. Anyway, Dore was happy. He felt—and, in a way, was—vindicated. He was sure. Everybody agreed with him.

Weingarten, Kaper, the cutters, the assembled studio personnel, even Silvia. It is probably a very fine picture. Everybody tells me it is.

But I would have to lie if I said it was the picture that I had hoped for (even in my "limited" way) or that I wanted to make. I cannot speak for you, of course. For you are not here. But I tried to. In fact, I did. I did try especially to persuade Dore to put back the Tattered Man scene. He was adamant. And, I admit, there is a lot of sense in what he says. And I believe that the audience, or a large part of it, agrees with him. Certainly very few will miss the death of the Tattered Man, since they haven't seen it. But I have seen it.

I would never have made this picture without you, John. I wanted it to be a John Huston picture. For it to be anything else now seems to me senseless. I told Dore that. Dore thinks it still *is*. Maybe he is right. Everybody tells me so. Maybe I have a special idea of a John Huston picture. Maybe even more special than John Huston has.

Dore told me that he would write you, that he accepts the whole responsibility for the present cuts, that he knows he is right, that this is one of those times when an executive has to step in and make the final decision—if he wants to be an executive.

I sincerely hope that he is right. I pray that he is right. I know that I have done everything I could to make this what it should be and what it is is not too great. I wish nobody ill. I believe in sincerity and friendship and talent. Yet I realize that these three priceless qualities can be easily defeated by geography and power. I bow smilingly and, as I said before, without ill will. And with humility. Because I can be terribly wrong.

Good luck, John.
Yours always,
GOTTFRIED REINHARDT

* * *

As I arrived in Nicholas M. Schenck's office he was talking with Howard Dietz about the reviews of the new M-G-M Technicolor movie "Scaramouche," which had just opened at the Music Hall. "I would have bet a hundred to one that 'Scaramouche' would get the finest notices," Schenck said. "I can't understand it. It opens at the Music Hall, and Mr. Tribune knocks it. Three stars in the *News*. I would have given odds it would get four stars."

"There are no rules in this business," Dietz said flatly.

"I still think that 'Scaramouche' is a very good picture, my boy," Schenck said seriously, and he raised his right index finger at Dietz in a gesture of kindly warning. "And I think the audiences will think so, too."

Schenck spoke decisively, confidently, and with a strong air of knowledgeability about his business. He is a compactly built, energetic man in his late sixties, with graying hair brushed back and parted on the left. He has a quietly direct manner and a benevolent air. The day I saw him, he was deeply tanned, and he was wearing a double-breasted gray suit, a white shirt with blue stripes, a small-figured dark-blue necktie, and tortoise-shell glasses. He sat behind a large, highly polished mahogany desk, on which stood framed

photographs of his three daughters as children, all with long curls; a carafe and two glasses; an ash-tray; a brown leather folder; and four yellow pencils with sharp points. At his feet was a brass spittoon. His office was small and modest. It had a green carpet; a fireplace, on the mantel of which stood a black iron statuette of the M-G-M lion; a couch covered with brown fabric; four worn chairs, and Italian walnut panelling. The panels had been bought from the mansion of Senator William A. Clark, on Fifth Avenue. Schenck had gone to work for Loew's in 1907 and had been in the same office for thirty years. When he shifted from executive vice-president to president of Loew's, after the death of Marcus Loew, in 1927, he refused to leave the office.

Schenck lit a cigarette and cocked his head slightly at Dietz, who took a cigarette, too. "I like 'Scaramouche,' " Schenck said. "I like entertainment. Clean, wholesome entertainment. Romance and love. I love dramatic, romantic stories. But I can't go only by my own taste. I don't like slapstick. Audiences like slapstick. What are you going to do? The audience is the final judge."

"I wish I knew who first said that popular entertainment had to be art," Dietz said blandly.

Schenck shrugged. He had been working hard, he said, studying the budgets of various pictures, considering their casting problems, and seeing, on an average, four films during the week and three over the weekend at his home in Sands Point. "You have to see other people's pictures as well as your own," he said. "Any picture that becomes good or important, I see it. You have to know about everybody's taste. Everybody must work and we all have a job to do."

"It's no secret around here that you work hard," Dietz said.

Schenck smiled broadly and, unbuttoning his coat, patted his ribs. "I weigh a hundred and forty-one in the morning, a hundred and forty-three at night," he said.

"I don't know whether it's your work or your golf that does it," Dietz said.

Schenck's smile broadened, and he buttoned his coat. "You're right, my boy, there are no rules," he said, raising his right hand again. "It all comes from the brain. You can't get into the other fellow's brain. You decide what pictures will be made. You decide who will be in the cast. You decide what it will cost. The budget means a lot to me. Unfortunately, stories don't grow on trees, so you have to compromise on what you are going to make. You can't take too many chances where you are paying terrific overhead and terrific weekly salaries."

"There are no rules for choosing what you're going to make," Dietz said. "You know what to choose only by growing up in the fabric of the business."

Schenck said that he did not read the scripts of all the movies M-G-M was planning to make, but he did read an outline of each script or idea for

a script. When he read the outline for "The Red Badge of Courage," he said, he felt that the studio was taking a big chance. At the time, Schary was in New York, and was not feeling well. "I went right over to Dore's hotel to talk to him," he said. "Dore had been having differences with Louie about the picture. They had not been getting along too well before that, even. I found Dore sick, and sicker over the trouble with Louie. Right from the hotel, I called Louie, and had him talk to Dore. I arranged for Dore and Louie to talk it over when Dore got back home. But Louie remained opposed to making the picture, and on other things he wasn't seeing eye to eye with me. Eventually, I had to support Dore."

Schenck lit another cigarette. "Dore is young," he said. "He has not had his job very long. I felt I must encourage him or else he would feel stifled. It would have been so easy for me to say no to him. Instead, I said yes. I figured I would write it off to experience. You can buy almost anything, but you can't buy experience." He smiled in a wise, fatherly manner.

" 'The Red Badge of Courage' was not a whole motion picture," Dietz said. "It was a fragment. It wasn't a good picture."

"Before I saw it, I had heard it was very bad," Schenck said. "But it was better than I had been led to expect. I would call it a fairly good picture. Only, it was above the heads of our audiences. For me, it was good entertainment. But not for our audiences. I felt immediately we would have to take a loss on it, and we have. When I saw the picture was not doing any business, we stopped spending money on promoting it."

"Yes, I decided that," Dietz said to Schenck. "You know, I don't always *have* to go to you about what money I'm going to spend. We tried a concentrated campaign on the picture in a couple of spots and it didn't go."

"The public didn't take to the picture," Schenck said. "The next picture John Huston made—and this time he was making it for his *own* company—he made a commercial picture, a tremendous hit."

"Don't forget he made the picture with *stars,*" said Dietz.

"The best performances I have ever seen them give," said Schenck.

" 'Red Badge' had no stars and no story," said Dietz. "It wasn't any good."

"They did the best they could with it," said Schenck. "Unfortunately, that sort of thing costs money. If you don't spend money, you never learn." He laughed knowingly. "After the picture was made, Louie didn't want to release it," he said. "Louie said that as long as he was head of the studio, the picture would never be released. He refused to release it, but I changed *that.*"

Schenck puffed quickly on his cigarette. "How else was I going to teach Dore?" he said. "I supported Dore. I let him make the picture. I knew that the best way to help him was to let him make a mistake. Now he will know better. A young man has to learn by making mistakes. I don't think he'll want to make a picture like that again." Schenck picked up one of his yellow pen-

cils and jotted something down on a memo pad. Then he buzzed for his secretary and asked her to get Mr. Schary on the telephone at Culver City. After a couple of minutes, he picked up the phone and said, "Hello, my boy. How are you doing?"

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to Huston, the producers were fearful that "The Red Badge of Courage" would not be a box office success because the film "had no standard plot, no romance, and no leading female characters, and, if Huston had his way in casting it, would have no stars." Recall the last five (or more) pictures you have seen? Did they adhere to the formula which "The Red Badge of Courage" rejected? Do your findings indicate why the producers had these fears?
2. What factors that help determine the nature of motion pictures are obliquely suggested by the behavior of the patrons in Dave Chasen's Restaurant toward Schary?
3. What do you think Louis B. Mayer meant by "heart" appeal in entertainment?
4. Reinhardt, in his letter to Huston in Africa, seems to be suggesting that in American audiences there are some who love what others hate. In your recent attendance at movies, or in conversations about particular movies, did you observe any specific indications of such deep differences? If there are such deep differences, what very real problem does this create for movie-makers? How does this relate to what Seldes had to say about the problems of the radio-TV producers?
5. Schenck said, "The audience is the final judge." What evidence is there that his actions are consistent—or inconsistent—with his statement?
6. There are many reasons for going to the movies. These include:
   a. To see a particular star
   b. To escape from serious consideration of daily problems
   c. To see one of the following popular types of movies: Western, crime, mystery, comedy, musical, "spectacle," historical romance
   d. To see the dramatization of a literary masterpiece
   e. To see evidence of unusual technical skills, e.g., photography, direction, set-design, musical scores, etc.
   f. To see a particular treatment of some important controversial issue
   g. To acquaint yourself with an unfamiliar set of values and mores: attitudes toward sex, crime, the family, etc.
   h. To see unconventional and imaginative treatments of universal human situations and problems

   If your motive for going is item *a, b,* or *c,* can you usually find what you are looking for? If your motive is *d* or *e?* If your motive is *f, g,* or *h?* What do your answers to these questions indicate about the range of choices normally available to you? To what extent does Ross's story of the making of one picture explain this range of choices?

PROJECTS

1. In the light of what you have observed concerning the prevailing pressures on motion-picture making, list ten books or stories which you would like to see made into moving pictures but which you believe would have little chance of getting produced. Then, select one and describe in detail the reasons for your misgivings about the probability of its being filmed.
2. It is frequently alleged that most box office religious hits are merely stock Hollywood offerings of "sex, horror, spectacle, and sentimentality" tied-in with the bare outlines of a Bible story. Analyze two recent Biblical-story movies and write a paper presenting your arguments supporting or refuting this allegation.

Arthur L. Mayer

MYTHS AND MOVIES

The critics thus far heard from in this section appear to feel that the present levels of quality in the mass media are mainly attributable to the judgment—or misjudgment—of the producers *of this mass product. Mayer raises a voice in partial disagreement. He argues that the public gets what it deserves—that is, what it will support financially.*

Mayer for 15 years operated the Rialto Theater in New York. He is executive vice-president of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations and has served as film adviser to many agencies, from ECA to the Civil Liberties Union. Other facts about this man of many interests appear in the following article.

While I was serving in Germany as Chief of the Motion Picture Branch of Military Government, we produced a documentary film one episode of which took place in an amusement park. There were two entrances to the park; one marked, "This Way to Heaven," the other, "This Way to a Lecture on Heaven." The first was deserted but hundreds of ardent Germans were pouring through the second.

Many of my American friends seem to me to have a similar second-hand approach to motion pictures. They read books about them, attend lectures about them, disparage them at cocktail parties. The only thing that they do not do is to attend them, or at least attend those "adult films" about which they talk so earnestly. They pay lip service to the cinema but they don't pay admission. Or else, if they do, they must represent a very small minority, much smaller than you would suppose from the amount of noise they make.

MYTHS AND MOVIES From *Harper's Magazine*, June, 1951. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

Their talk is reminiscent of the answers to questionnaires circulated by public opinion researchers concerning double features. Invariably these indicate an overwhelming sentiment against two pictures for the price of one but exhibitors who seek to operate single-feature theaters in competition with double-jeopardy houses quickly discover that this is double talk.

Some years ago I was sufficiently naïve to prevail upon my partners to institute a policy of playing one carefully selected picture on weekends in Somerville, New Jersey. We operate the only theater in that high class residential community but its inhabitants were not to be deprived of their entertainment bargain. On Saturdays and Sundays they drove to the nearby town of Bound Brook, where my friend and canny competitor, Mr. George Skouras, reaped an unearned harvest until we reverted to sanity and a second feature. At the present time, in some of the, theatrically speaking, depressed areas double features have not only been replaced by triple features but actually by quadruplays, or whatever you care to call four pictures.

Another prevalent myth among the intelligentsia is that foreign films are far superior to American. Partially this is merely an expression of snobbishness; partially a tribute to the skillful and unremitting research of men like Joseph Burstyn—modesty forbids my mentioning myself. We used to look at hundreds of French and Italian films in an effort to cull out a few that were worthy of importation. Popularity in their domestic market is no assurance of success in the United States. "The Bicycle Thief," for instance, was a failure in Italy. Theater-goers casually dismissed the plight of the hero which so distressed American audiences. "What a boob," they said. "If his bike was stolen, why didn't he rent another?"

Occasionally, Mr. Burstyn and I would have the Balboa-like thrill of unexpectedly coming upon some superb cinematic treasure but by and large the pictures we looked at were inferior to the American product in story, acting, and technical proficiency. I highly recommend to those who regard Hollywood as a petrified forest of decaying formulas and escapist morasses, a closer acquaintance with the product of Cinecitta and Elstree.

The easy game of taking pot shots at the American penchant for potboilers is also sedulously cultivated in current books for the cultured anent movies and movie making. A myth maker, appropriately named Powdermaker, descends upon the Pacific Coast announcing her intent to investigate the habits of the strange inhabitants of Hollywood, much as she studied the mores of the South Sea Islanders. In the guise of an anthropologist, she collects an anthology of all the ancient and disgruntled gossip which persistently circulates in the film capital as in all other capitals. This she labels "science" and publishes a book which must be far more embarrassing to anthropologists than to picture people, although practically everyone in the producing end of the industry—directors, writers, actors, alike—is labeled venal or frustrated.

Jack Rosenstein, intriguingly described as "Hedda Hopper's leg-man," is sufficiently candid to make no pretense at scientific research. He announces that nothing is holy in Hollywood, that movies will never produce another great film star, that producers without exception are fat, lazy, and unimaginative, and that the industry has alienated its public by indulging in pictures with social significance. Exactly the opposite attack is leveled by my distinguished friend Gilbert Seldes, who titles the first chapter of his book *The Great Audience,* "The Audience Vanishes," and who is convinced, profit and loss statements to the contrary, that Hollywood is in sore financial straits because it does not produce enough "mature" pictures to appeal to American audiences.

What puzzles me is that these books are greeted with approval in the press although an intensely interesting and informative account of movie-making procedures, *Case History of a Movie,* written by an expert, Dore Schary, receives comparatively slight attention. Our literary critics seem prepared to applaud anything written about Hollywood as long as it is opprobrious. It is easy to understand that having to read as many books as they do, they should have little time to attend pictures, but with their firsthand awareness of the limited relationship between literary merit and best-seller lists, they should, one would think, accept these easy strictures on the screen scene with a reasonable degree of caution.

Some writers have even gone so far as to prophesy, with obvious relish, that "the cinema theater, as we know it, is dead as a dodo." Book sales have diminished in the past few years but no one, I think, is under the impression that the publishing business is about to disappear. I am equally confident that the movie theater is an institution which will, for many years to come, continue to flourish.

II

Actually, motion picture attendance has declined only if we regard the amazing business done by the movies in 1946 and 1947 as normal. That is much like saying that because there were fewer marriage licenses in 1949 than in 1946 there is a declining market for sex. Correctly to ascertain the public demand for any available commodity, movies or marriage, you have to study and chart its course over a period of years. Some utterances of eminent movie magnates may have served to create the impression of impending bankruptcy, but these discouraged gentry remind me of a deceased uncle of mine who at one time in his career was, if Dun and Bradstreet are to be believed, the possessor of $10 million. In the Depression years, however, he came upon hard times and passed on feeling hopelessly disgraced. He was down to his last $3 million.

In 1939 American theaters grossed $673 million, and in 1948, the last year for which we have a report from the U. S. Census Bureau, they took in $1,569 million, an increase of 133 per cent. Gone are the lush picture pickings of the years immediately following the war, but the seven major com-

panies last year made a profit of over $50 million, almost three times as great as what they reported in 1940.

This profit was earned in the face of a substantial decline in actual movie attendance due in part to the inroads of television—if I may use so indelicate a word in a magazine designed for home consumption. It hardly seems surprising that the appearance of an amazing new phenomenon in the field of entertainment should exert a profound effect on competitive forms of warding off boredom such as reading books, making love, or going to the movies. It is premature to estimate, however, what the permanent effects of television on motion-picture attendance will prove to be. Investigations conducted in Washington and Detroit seem to indicate that after a period of six to nine months the interest of all except its juvenile devotees wanes and that papa, mama, and the older children revert to previous patterns of passing time.

As far as the movies are concerned, television, like radio, may eventually prove not an antagonist, but an ally. It has already helped to develop talent for the screen. It is serving increasingly as the ideal medium for advertising coming attractions. It will eventually hugely expand the appeal of motion-picture theaters by enabling them to show prize fights, crime investigations, and baseball games while they are taking place, national spokesmen delivering important addresses, and current shows while they are still on Broadway. It may siphon off some of the less critical movie patronage, which might prove to be a blessing in disguise; but the limitations of a comparatively small screen, of an insatiable demand for more talent and material than can reasonably be anticipated, and of advertising budgets which cannot hope to equal potential box-office receipts, will for a long time shackle television as a competitive medium of entertainment. Visualize "King Solomon's Mines" on a nineteen-inch rather than a nineteen-foot screen, William Wyler turning out a picture a week instead of one a year, or "Born Yesterday" with Brod Crawford, after knocking in Judy Holliday's teeth, delivering a few comments concerning the merits of Colgate's Dental Cream, and you have some vision of the problems confronting television.

III

Most of the industry's highbrow critics, however, are disinterested in the possible inroads of television on movie revenue. When they speak of a "lost audience" they refer to a presumably frustrated group of seekers for "mature films." This substantial segment of the public they affirm is being denied the privilege of seeing the type of pictures they crave by the obstinacy and stupidity of the movie moguls. Many critics at one time or another have leveled all sorts of criticism at Messrs. Skouras and Schenck, Zanuck and Zukor, but never has it been suggested that they were inferior in business acumen and foresight to writers or scientists. The bulk of the pictures they make are rented on the basis of a percentage of exhibitor receipts and the fluctuation of those receipts affords a daily national barometer of what audi-

ences accept and what they reject. If a large portion of the American public really desires pictures with greater intellectual, social, or artistic content it can get them and get them quickly by acting in the only fashion that any business enterprise, whether it makes pictures, pajamas, or pretzels, can understand. It can make them profitable.

In my experience of over thirty years in the motion-picture industry the American people have had plenty of opportunities to support such pictures and almost invariably have failed to do so. Although I have helped to import many of the finest pictures ever brought into this country, I was able to maintain this activity only because I was simultaneously operating the Rialto Theater, which consistently showed the worst. The profits on the bad pictures enabled me to stand the losses on the good ones. Most of the critics of the industry are optimists because they only write and speak about the demand for superior films. I am a pessimist because I have invested my money in them. . . .

As far back as 1934 I wrote a piece in *Liberty* entitled "Why Hollywood Loses Money on Good Pictures," which compared in painful detail the box-office receipts of such intelligent productions as "Berkeley Square" and "The Emperor Jones" with the intake of such moronic abortions as "The Half Naked Truth" and "They Had to Get Married." A short time thereafter I met Cecil B. De Mille and he said: "Mr. Mayer, how can you say good pictures lose money? *My* pictures are invariably profitable." Quick as a flash at this embarrassing moment, I responded, "But yours are the run of De Mille pictures."

A few years later I was instrumental in persuading Adolph Zukor to make a screen version of the delightful imaginative play "Beggar on Horseback." James Cruze converted it into charming picture terms, but not long after its release Mr. Zukor spotted me on the street. He shook his fist playfully under my nose. "If I make any more pictures of the kind that you suggest," he said, "I'll be a beggar without any horse at all."

Only recently Walter Wanger told me that in his memorable career receipts on his pictures have been in approximately inverse ratio to their cinematic merits. The public made the pot boil with potboilers like "Arabian Nights" and "Canyon Passage" but they were cold to masterpieces like "The Long Voyage Home" and "Stagecoach." Equally unprofitable were such unforgettable films as Garson Kanin's "A Man to Remember," Leo Carey's "Make Way for Tomorrow," and William Wellman's "The Ox Bow Incident."

Of course there have been exceptions to my thesis. How many depends upon a definition of what maturity in films consists of, a study in semantics left in the limbo of uncertainty by their proponents. "The Lost Weekend," "The Best Years of Our Lives," "Henry V," if they qualify, were all unquestioned box-office successes although, I suspect, not entirely for reasons related to their intellectual content. Those who contend that there has been marked progress in recent times in the reception of more serious subjects,

are, I think, victims of wishful thinking. Two years ago Humphrey Bogart's "The Treasure of Sierra Madre" was received so unkindly that he had to revert to smacking alluring ladies in alluring places to regain his popularity. Dore Schary, upon becoming head of the Metro studio, made a notable effort to raise the studio's maturity batting average with "Intruder in the Dust," which Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times* called "one of the great cinematic dramas of our times." It proved one of the great cinematic flops of all times. Mr. Schary has now gone back to the mines—profitable mines, I mean—such as King Solomon's. His recent tribute to liberalism, "The Magnificent Yankee," is as unworthy of a great judge as it is of a great studio executive.

Stanley Kramer, after leaving the U. S. Army, devoted himself to making exactly the type of pictures for which the intelligentsia plead. Recently he fashioned with rare skill and courage a film about paraplegic veterans. Archer Winsten of the New York *Post* termed it "superb, popular entertainment." Certainly it was superb. Equally certainly it was not popular. It was entitled "The Men" but apparently neither men nor women, regardless of brow measurements, cared to attend a nonsentimentalized treatment of so grim a subject.

Two years ago Universal was over $4 million in the red. In 1950 its red corpuscles had been reactivated by a profit of almost a million and a half. This was largely due to the "Ma and Pa Kettles," a series ingeniously tailored for what is insultingly known as the family trade. The pictures cost about $500,000 each to make, and although they play almost exclusively in small towns and neighborhood theaters, gross about $2,500,000. It will require three of them, however, this year to make up for the losses that Universal will suffer from its dalliance with the world of fantasy in a fine screen version of "Harvey."

Similarly, Paramount redeemed the heavy loss it suffered with Willie Wyler's exquisite "The Heiress" when it produced "Samson and Delilah," which will gross approximately $11 million, probably the third most successful picture in movie annals. The average film plays to an audience of about thirteen million people but "Samson and Delilah" should triple that figure. It would appear as if what the industry needs is more Victor Matures (not to mention De Milles) rather than more mature pictures. . . .

IV

The indomitable Mr. Seldes, however, is not so easily discouraged. He contends the fault is not with the taste of the public, but with the distribution practices of the major companies. They ought, he says, to play the adult pictures in the little theaters, and I imagine the adultery ones in the big theaters. Prejudiced as I am by a financial stake in several small houses, I heartily agree that pictures are frequently booked into inappropriate theaters. The problem, however, of inadequate public support for what it refers to dis-

paragingly as "message pictures" lies far deeper than any distribution practices. I played King Vidor's stirring pre-New Deal saga, "Our Daily Bread," at the little Rialto to unprecedentedly low receipts. I sought to enlist the support of every social-minded organization in New York City with a picture about child labor called "Boy Slaves." I wanted it to be a great success, not only for the personal profit and satisfaction involved but also to encourage RKO to make more pictures of this nature. I advertised it widely in the liberal press. I spoke about it before ladies' clubs and in YMCA halls. I brought it to the attention of editorial writers and columnists. It lasted just six days!

I freely admit that the Rialto, which specialized in pictures of murder, mayhem, and mystery to such an extent that I became known as the Merchant of Menace, was not the correct theater to play a film of this type. It might have done better in one of the so-called art theaters of which there are approximately 250 located in the larger cities and select suburbs. These used to be referred to as "sure-seaters" because of their sadly limited patronage. They are transformed, however, into sure non-seaters when they play pictures whose appeal is sensual rather than sensuous. At present, for instance, "Bitter Rice," an Italian film, is attracting hold-out audiences in all of the "art" theaters of the United States. It is devoid of cinematic merit, but as Howard Hughes said of "The Outlaw," there are two good reasons why every man should see it.

There were plenty of good reasons why people of taste and artistic appreciation would want to see "The Titan," recently crowned by the National Board of Review as the best foreign film of 1950. This magnificent study of the life and works of Michelangelo played in the same group of small theaters but it has not yet recovered the modest cost involved in its American re-editing.

Similarly, my former firm, Mayer-Burstyn, showed "The Quiet One" in these houses. The movie critics rallied to the support of this lovely little picture with the marvelous reviews which it so fully merited. Our final gross was less than that of many Hollywood shorts!

Actually, the only sensational successes scored by Burstyn and myself in the twenty years in which we were engaged in business—incidentally the longest period that anyone has ever survived the hazards of supplying foreign films to American audiences—were with pictures whose artistic and ideological merits were aided and abetted at the box office by their frank sex content. These we were able to exhibit profitably in big theaters as well as small. "Open City" was generally advertised with a misquotation from *Life* adjusted so as to read: "Sexier than Hollywood ever dared to be," together with a still of two young ladies deeply engrossed in a rapt embrace, and another of a man being flogged, designed to tap the sadist trade. The most publicized scene in "Paisan" showed a young lady disrobing herself with an attentive male visitor reclining by her side on what was obviously not a nuptial couch. In the case of "The Bicycle Thief," which was completely devoid of any erotic embellishments, the exhibitors did their best with an imaginative sketch of

a young lady riding a bicycle. The Motion Picture Association rushed in to reinforce their efforts by denying it a seal unless the little boy with an urge to urinate was eliminated. In spite of this inadvertent first aid to the box office, and in spite of the critics' rave reviews, it did far less business than either "Open City" or "Paisan."

V

Much has been made of the fact that approximately two-thirds of movie attendance comes from people under thirty-five years of age. I cannot see, however, why this should be a source of surprise to anybody. If I go to a football game, or into a store that sells sheet music or to a night club (I never do, but if I did) I am surrounded almost exclusively by young people. If we can generalize about such matters, youth likes to go out; middle age likes to stay home. Youth is eager for entertainment; middle age prefers ease and comfort. I do not agree, however, for one moment that on youth's shoulders alone rests the responsibility for the popularity of some tawdry, trashy pictures any more than they are responsible for the popularity of some tawdry, trashy books and plays.

Surely it is to the young rather than to the old that we must look for the interest in experimental techniques, the readiness to accept innovations and creative ideas, the willingness to greet new faces on which all progress rests. The vast auditorium where Cinema 16 holds its showings of strange *avant-garde* documentaries is composed 99 per cent of people not under thirty-five but under twenty-five. When I attended Cocteau's "Orpheus" I looked around in loneliness for another gray head beside my own. I thought the picture bordered on the ludicrous but that is exactly how my mother felt thirty years ago about "Caligari."

If my own experience is a reliable guide, financially the industry would surely be well advised to continue to aim its primary appeal at youth. Recently I imported a charming compilation of movie clips made at the turn of the century whose major box-office value resided in their appeal to a nostalgic older generation. The nostalgic older generation, however, preferred to remain home by the fire or television side. "Paris 1900" bids fair to lose me $19,000. When, however, I acquire a film like "Seven Days to Noon," which deals realistically with the threat of the atom bomb to men and women of every age, a younger generation which wants to live sweeps the picture to a success.

During the past year, however, Hollywood cannot fairly be accused of catering exclusively to any single age or interest group. It has sought to speak to every segment of the people with diversified products like "All About Eve," "Annie Get Your Gun," "Asphalt Jungle," "Battleground," "Born Yesterday," "Cheaper by the Dozen," "Cyrano de Bergerac," "Fourteen Hours," "Glass Menagerie," "Halls of Montezuma," "Harvey," "Intruder in the Dust," "Jackpot," "Mr. 880," "No Way Out," "Of Men and Music," "Panic in the Streets," "Red Badge of Courage," "Sunset Boulevard," "The Brave Bulls," "The

Men," and "Twelve O'Clock High." I do not claim that these are pictures which future ages will cherish, nor do I expect anyone, myself included, to be enthusiastic over every one of them. What I do maintain is that in the face of censorship restrictions, pressure groups, police authorities, and now license commissioners, they represent a wider general appeal and a higher average of merit than that supplied by popular fiction magazines, by the radio, or by television, and fully as high as that of current books or drama. . . .

The shape of films to come is daily molded in the curve of yesterday's box-office window. You may deprecate that box office as a standard of merit but in the words of an insignificant writer with whom I find myself constantly in amazing agreement, "It is an unfailing barometer of what we want in our heart of hearts . . . frippery or meaning, shadow or substance. The responsibility," if I may continue to quote from Arthur Mayer in the *Theatre Arts Anthology,* "for making the motion picture a mighty instrument of mankind's hope and salvation lies not with producers, distributors, or exhibitors, not even with authors or directors, but with the audience. That audience is you and me and our relatives and our friends. If we support, not with chatter but with cash, not in the drawing room but in the theater auditorium, those films which give a true account of our honest problems and highest aspirations, we can make our motion pictures a symbol and token of all striving humanity—a living voice speaking among the people."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Opinions concerning the merits of foreign films exhibited in America tend to be extreme. Either the foreign films are said to be vastly superior to the pedestrian American product or they are dismissed as "dull, odd, strange, crazy." How does Mayer account for the first kind of response? How do you account for the second?
2. What is the error in language and thinking implicit in talking about "*the* American movie," *the* foreign film, "British movies," and so on?
3. Mayer is at some pains to refute the charge that the motion picture industry is economically dead or dying. From what you have learned about logical argument, and more especially about using "figures," assess the strengths and weaknesses of his argument.
4. It is interesting to note the similarity between Mayer's point about the box office value of sex appeal and James Wechsler's argument for the use of sex sensationalism in the press. Disregarding for the moment the moral issue involved, what is the buried assumption about public taste which lies at the root of both these arguments?
5. Mayer agrees that movie audiences are drawn largely from the young. (Not only are two-thirds of the movie goers under 35, but a very large percentage of this two-thirds are in the 15-25 bracket.) What other factors besides Mayer's generalization that "youth likes to go out; middle age likes to stay home" might account for these attendance figures?

PROJECTS

1. The main part of Mayer's article is devoted to supporting the thesis that "good pictures" don't make money and "poor pictures" do—that to stay in business Hollywood must give the public what it wants. Mayer presents the classic arguments for one point of view. Seldes, in the earlier essay, "Radio, TV, and the Common Man," provides many arguments for another point of view—arguments which are as applicable to the movies as to the radio and TV. Using these arguments and fresh points of your own, conduct a debate on this problem.
2. If you wish to view movies with greater understanding, you need to know what to look for. Below are just two suggestions. Select *one* and view the next movie you go to with it in mind. Then write a detailed paper reporting and analyzing what you observed.
   a. Do you see in this picture any evidence of stereotyping (oversimplification) of people, places, situations, or human emotions? If you do, give such evidence.
   b. Do you see ways in which this picture might possibly influence the thought and behavior of individuals—their speech and gestures; their tastes (clothes, food, entertainment, etc.); and their attitudes and beliefs concerning social, occupational, or racial groups, government, science, and moral codes (sex, selfishness, violence, social responsibilities of the individual, etc.)? (Here you could single out aspects of behavior ranging from such overt manifestations of behavior as speech, to covert manifestations such as beliefs, attitudes, and values.)

Books

Jacques Barzun

THE CLASSICS OFF THE SHELF

The role of newspapers and magazines, radio and television, and motion pictures as channels for facts and ideas, for information and entertainment, has loomed large thus far in this section, but the number of articles on this role and the space occupied by them should not lead us to infer that they form the entire story. One might at this point ask, "What about books, especially the books that contain the more substantial, less ephemeral material that the other media usually don't handle? Don't we need to give serious

THE CLASSICS OFF THE SHELF From *Teacher in America* by Jacques Barzun, by permission of Little, Brown & Co. and the Atlantic Monthly Press. Copyright 1944, 1945 by Jacques Barzun.

consideration to their place in our lives, as potential influences on readers' minds?" The answer, of course, is yes—with certain qualifications. Putting statements between book-covers does not make them "literature"; books and literature are not synonymous. Through the past few centuries printed books have contained much of the ephemera that now escapes into the air, onto the screen, and into magazines. Also, although we must not ignore the possibility that readers of serious books may carry their influence farther, readers of books (even of trashy books) are in a definite minority, and even steady book-readers are generally exposed simultaneously to all the other media. These obvious limitations on the importance of serious books in today's world need to be admitted if we are to consider realistically their very important potential *contribution to our lives.*

In the following excerpt from his book Teacher in America *Jacques Barzun considers one of the foregoing problems. That is, why are great books, assuming their greatness stems from some basic significance to human beings, so often unimportant and insignificant for so many readers? In answering this question Professor Barzun poses some fresh questions about the ways most of us are introduced to literature and trained in its use.*

Barzun, a teacher of history at Columbia University, is the author of numerous books, including Darwin, Marx, and Wagner; Berlioz and the Romantic Century; *and, most recently,* God's Country and Mine.

"Th' Bible an' Shakspere—I use thim f'r purposes iv definse . . . I have niver read thim," I says; "they shtand between me an' all modhern littrachoor," says I; "I've built thim up into a kind iv breakwather," says I, "an' I set behind it, ca'm an' contint, while Hall Caine rages without," says I.

—MR. DOOLEY ON BOOKS.

Classics has more than one meaning. I have used the word to signify the Greek and Latin languages and literature—the ancient classics. But the list of books that have survived contemporary vogue or neglect is now enormously lengthened, it takes in writings of all nations, and deserves the common epithet of modern classics. The distinction between the two groups of books has in fact broken down and the lot are lumped together in phrases like "our precious heritage" and "the best that has been thought and said."

Whether it is these very phrases that chill the ordinary reader's ardor, or the books themselves, the fact is that for the public at large Mr. Dooley's position remains representative; it is even more classic than any of the works to which it applies.

But that position is not the simple one which it seems to be at first sight. I shall not spoil by analysis Mr. Dooley's precious utterance. Rather I shall quote from three recent advertisements now lying before me, in the belief that all publicity bases its appeal upon some widespread public conviction. The first and largest, illustrated with the busts of poets wearing drooping laurels, covers half a page of the New York *Times.* What it promotes is a syndicate selling the Sunday Comics as "a major national medium with a circulation of fourteen million copies." The point, however, is that it begins

with three short paragraphs identifying Homer, Virgil, and Horace, and then goes on:—

"These were the Big Three of the Classics. Their words endure, in libraries, and to plague students—mean little in the life of today."

The second advertises a whiskey and leads up to its merits by depicting Shakespeare and an airplane, side by side with the bottle of liquor. The caption over each is "You're sure when you say— 'Shakespeare' . . . '100 Octane' " and, of course, when you call for that particular brand of Scotch. But what are you sure of about Shakespeare? Beneath a forbidding portrait of the bard you find "—sure that you're naming the supreme master of dramatic art."

The third advertisement urges the reading of a popular newspaper, and it starts in abrupt epic fashion: "His family owned four books: the Bible, the works of Shakespeare, the poems of Burns, the dictionary." Then comes a brief account of the career of James J. Hill— "one of America's great success stories. And, like so many others, it is a story of success that came, in great part, out of books."

Summing up our data, the classics are "withered laurels *versus* words that live"; they are the embodiment of high quality (you're sure of Shakespeare); and reading even a small handful of classics is a principle of success.

The public can believe all three things simultaneously. But where does it pick up the component parts of its creed? Shakespeare idolatry is easy to trace: it comes from school and it serves as it did Mr. Dooley, like a bulwark against all other literature. When you've said "greatest master of dramatic art," you've paid your debt, you've dropped your pinch of incense on the altar of the hall of fame. The influence of books on success is taught in the same way. It happens to be true that many great men were great readers. Lincoln, James J. Hill, John Burroughs, are near to us in many ways, and the correlation between their success and their books is taken for granted.

As for the last feeling—that the classics mean little in the life of today—it comes from precisely the same source—the school. Only whereas the first two are taken second hand on trust, the last article of faith comes from first-hand observation. The classics are taught in school as being great in virtue of their difficulty, or remoteness, or "eternal" truth—and what is held up as eternal has a way of looking as if it suited no particular time. When, some twenty years ago, the old comic magazine *Life* guaranteed anonymity and freedom from reprisals if a score of American celebrities would write in their honest opinion of Shakespeare, the replies they received and printed showed an overwhelming revolt against the tyranny of school bardolatry. Though some comments were obviously exaggerated for effect, the replies ranged from indifference to painful boredom, with many allusions to early "conditioning" against the classics.

Shakespeare is only a representative example for the English-speaking world. But everywhere the old-masters feeling is bred by the schools and

resented by the pupils. Not only everywhere but at all times, as far back as the Greek and Latin golden ages, you find complaints that great literature is neglected in favor of current best sellers—except in the schools. There, only dead men tell the tales, to the detriment of both pupils and great authors. Samuel Butler has defined the canonization of books by teachers as "the meanest revenge that dullness can take upon genius," and this is so painfully true that in the life of a teacher who feels not only humble before genius but exhilarated by it, there come moments when he would gladly banish it and its works from the classroom.

This does not come from the fear that "youth will wipe its feet on Milton" but from the fact that in order to acquaint the student with a fine book the teacher must begin by taking all the savor out of it. Imagine the paradox of what might be called the Shakespearean destiny. At one moment in history, *Macbeth* is the latest thing out—a rattling good play—horror, murder, thrills, ghosts, with good poetry thrown in free. It could, should be, and was, described in Hollywood terms. Gradually it becomes last year's success, then old stuff, then quaint old stuff. More time and it rises from its ashes, but transformed into a "text." Scholars peck at it like domestic fowl. The play is "early" or "late." It exemplifies the "second manner" or the use of the supernatural. Children are made to feel guilty for failing to remember where the climax comes. In due course, the name "Shakespeare" stands for a consecrated bore, with the odd result that once in a while a good stage performance surprises everybody into feeling that "it isn't so bad after all."

Bear in mind that what I assume in this process is not bad teaching of the written classics, but just teaching, the average kind. Teaching great books differs from the handling of the other arts in this respect, that with music and painting the sensitive student can always behold the work as an entirety before him. He can make himself deaf to the teacher's lecture because it goes on to one side of the object. But in literature, history, and philosophy, there is no path to the attainment of pleasure but through first hacking and parsing and shredding the very thing that should be seen whole. One is reminded of the satirist's fancy, "I saw a woman flayed the other day and you would not suppose how much it altered her looks for the worse."

But why this preliminary destruction, dignified by the name of analysis? Because for intrinsic and historical reasons, the classics are rich fruits encased in thick and bitter rind. When an honest man tells me he took down a classic from the shelf and found it dull, I tell him he is right. If he says it was more than dull, it was exasperating, awkwardly written, roundabout, and perversely redundant, I agree with him again. I am not placating a lowbrow but recognizing an inevitable reaction. Have you seen an infant have his first taste of carrots or swallow of beer? All tastes above pap, in any realm, are acquired; and pap goes down easy because it has no taste. The acceptance of stronger sensations may be slow or rapid, but even with the first olive of the man who

can tell he will become an addict, there is probably a split second of indecision.

With the classics as with food and drink, there is only one way: develop the habit of withstanding the bitterness of novelty. People who like "foreign" food of one kind will at least show readiness to try other kinds. It is a principle born of past pleasure. They are not committed to liking but to trying out. So with books, try everything once, for in numbers there is strength—of stomach. That is why earlier I recommended that children be allowed to read everything. The ravenous appetite will digest stones unharmed. Never mind the need to discriminate; it will come in its own time.

If what I say is true, then the way to improve the unhappy situation of schools-and-great-books is to read more of them, oftener, and in many different kinds. There are great books for every age and taste, but they must be fitted more or less to each child, or each group of children. The trying out must also be less heavy-handed. The high schools have made a mistake, as I see it, in devoting the senior year of English to teaching one or two plays of Shakespeare. They should read six or eight. But I am not sure I should have Shakespeare read in high school at all; anyhow I should certainly urge greater speed. This means letting "form" go and concentrating on ideas. These are always easier than words, as we saw before. We must bear in mind that youth's most characteristic feeling about life is that of the man overboard who sees miles of water between himself and the shore. Can he make it? "Making it" means coping with life, alone, unhampered by parents. This means that young boys and girls will gladly take up with anyone who will talk freely of the things I mean by "ideas"—moral rules, personal traits, virtues and vices, ways of fulfilling ambitions, all the paraphernalia, in short, of the explorer who does not know what dangers the jungle will present.

It happens to be a fact that all classic works without exception deal directly or indirectly with problems of conduct. That is their great virtue for school use. Not that they teach a plain goody-goody morality, but that they show and discuss and solve dilemmas that a shipping clerk or an athlete can be made to understand. For this understanding, the discussion of any classic *must be superficial.* If you dive below the surface with your pupil you drown him. Certain teachers are always terrified of superficiality; they seem to think other teachers will scoff or that the dead author will scold. Let them remind themselves that their colleagues' profundity would strike the great author as either surface scratching or pedantry; and let them remember that for every reader there is a time when a given book is being read for the first time.

The greater the book, the less distinct will the details remain in the mind after the first reading. One freshman who was failing and whom I quizzed about his reading of *King Lear* told me that he was not uninterested, but that all he had "got out of it" was the terrible hurricane at sea, when everybody was going crazy and threatening to put their eyes out. Though he was

mixing up *Lear* with *The Tempest* and was wrong in every detail, he had nevertheless grasped and combined two moments of stress having common features in them. This is not nearly enough, for better minds of the same age can derive far more from even a single reading, but it is something, and something more genuine than "correct" facts about subplots or lines with feminine endings.

I should be content to have secondary schools leave all the classics for a first reading in the college freshman year. This does not mean that I question the ability of high school teachers to do the needful things, but only that I find their notions of what is needed far too set. Probably they are weighed down by state education laws and College Entrance examinations; in any case, they seem to me—with notable exceptions—to be trying to make young scholars in English instead of stouthearted readers. Even the latest trick that I have heard of, namely, translating Shakespeare into slang, is beside the point. It is nothing more than making a system out of what may be useful from time to time on the spur of the moment. The truth is that good reading does not come out of systems, just because each great book—if it really is great—establishes its own language, manner, and point of view. A great book is in effect a view of the universe, complete for the time being. You must get inside it to look out upon the old familiar world with the author's unfamiliar eyes.

Fortunately there are connections between one great book and another, which enable us to capitalize on our reading experience. These connections come from the fact that great men tend to read the great books of their predecessors and form what we call a "tradition." And this in turn implies that reading the classics (no specified number) is like entering a company of notables and learning their friendships and hatreds, prejudices and wisdom. Judging by the fables of all lands, men have always wanted to descend into the lower regions and converse with the great dead. Well, students can soon be made to share that desire, even if it quite literally means, for a while, Hell on earth.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Have you accepted any of the three assumptions that Barzun finds symbolized in newspaper advertisements? If so, try to recall how you came to hold each of these beliefs. Do your findings differ from or agree with Barzun's?
2. Contrast the way in which you have read a book for pleasure and the way you have studied a "classic" in the schoolroom. What are some of the obvious differences? Do these differences support or refute Barzun's suggested ways to get "the classics off the shelf"?
3. Have you re-read any books read in high school or college classes? If so, which ones? Have you since then read any other books by the same authors you read there? Or books of a type in which you became interested through course-reading (for example, Elizabethan plays other than the Shakespearean

plays which you studied)? What do your answers to these questions suggest about the effects of your school education in literature?

4. Name some books you once read with pleasure without knowing they were "classics." What gave you pleasure—the form, style, structure, or what Barzun calls "ideas"?
5. Barzun accepts the classics as inevitably difficult. Indicate in what respects you consider this assumption valid or invalid. Recall your own experiences with three classics, and give examples of how these experiences seem to prove Barzun's assumption sound or unsound.
6. Barzun speaks of "the bitterness of novelty." Does this apply to books alone? What is the evidence that the consumers of the mass media often fight shy of the untried and the unfamiliar?
7. Many teachers are attempting to carry out some of Barzun's suggestions in their classrooms. Instead of asking an entire class to "study" one book, they are encouraging individual students to read many different books. One obstacle to such a method, however, is the feeling that the entire class should share some common learning experiences. Accepting this assumption for the moment, propose some specific ways in which students can read individually and still realize some common purpose.

PROJECTS

1. Demonstrate the freshest, most invigorating method you can of interesting your classmates in a favorite "classic."
2. Drawing on your own reading resources, write a paper designed to illustrate the *connections* between a familiar book and a "classic"—connections which may enable you to capitalize on your reading experience. This should help you get beyond "the thick and bitter rind" of the classic. Consider, for instance, the connections between *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Huckleberry Finn,* between *All the King's Men* and *Julius Caesar,* between *The Track of the Cat* and *Moby Dick,* between Thurber's *Fables for Our Time* and Aesop's *Fables,* between *Animal Farm* and *Gulliver's Travels.*

S. I. Hayakawa

WHAT LITERATURE IS FOR

In the preceding selection it was more or less assumed that the "classics" or "good literature" contain something of value for the person who turns to them. Barzun's most urgent concern was how to get this valuable commodity to the individual—that is, how to break through the barriers of mistaken awe and equally mistaken indifference and establish contact between the work and the contemporary person. In this next essay, Hayakawa moves

WHAT LITERATURE IS FOR From *Language in Thought and Action* by S. I. Hayakawa, copyright, 1941, 1949, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

back beyond this question of "How *can we?" to* "Should *we?" or* "Why *should we?" He does not assume any higher value in "literature." Instead, he looks for the things the creators of literature do, and distinguishes these things from the things done by persons using language in non-literary ways for non-literary purposes.*

Our first and most obvious conclusion is that since the expression of individual feelings is central to literature, affective elements are of the utmost importance in all literary writing. In the evaluation of a novel, poem, play, or short story, as well as in the evaluation of sermons, moral exhortations, political speeches, and directive utterances generally, the usefulness of the given piece of writing as a "map" of actual "territories" is often secondary—sometimes quite irrelevant. If this were not the case, *Gulliver's Travels, Alice in Wonderland, The Scarlet Letter,* or Emerson's *Essays* would have no excuse for existence.

Secondly, when we say that a given piece of affective writing is true, we do not mean "scientifically true." It may mean merely that we agree with the sentiment; it may also mean that we believe that an attitude has been accurately expressed; again, it may mean that the attitudes it evokes are believed to be such as will lead us to better social or personal conduct. There is no end to the meanings "true" may have. People who feel that science and literature or science and religion are in necessary conflict do so because they habitually think in opposites of black and white, true and false, good and evil. To such people, if science is "true," then literature or religion is nonsense; if literature or religion is "true," science is merely "pretentious ignorance." What should be understood when people tell us that certain statements are "scientifically true" is that they are useful and verifiable formulations, suitable for the purposes of organized co-operative workmanship. What should be understood when people tell us that the plays of Shakespeare or the poems of Milton or Dante are "eternally true" is that they produce in us attitudes toward our fellow men, an understanding of ourselves, or feelings of deep moral obligation that are valuable to humanity under any conceivable circumstances.

Thirdly, let us consider an important shortcoming of the language of reports and of scientific writing. John Smith in love with Mary is not William Brown in love with Jane; William Brown in love with Jane is not Henry Jones in love with Anne; Henry Jones in love with Anne is not Robert Browning in love with Elizabeth Barrett. Each of these situations is unique; no two loves are exactly alike—in fact, no love even between the same people is *exactly* the same from day to day. Science, seeking as always laws of the widest possible applicability and the greatest possible generality, would abstract from these situations *only what they have in common.* But each of these lovers is conscious only of the *uniqueness* of his own feelings; each

feels, as we all know, that he is the first one in the world ever to have so loved.

How is that sense of difference conveyed? It is here that affective uses of language play their most important part. The infinity of differences in our feelings towards all the many experiences that we undergo are too subtle to be reported; they must be expressed. And we express them by the complicated manipulation of tones of voice, of rhythms, of connotations, of affective facts, of metaphors, of allusions, of every affective device of language at our command.

Frequently the feelings to be expressed are so subtle or complex that a few lines of prose or verse are not enough to convey them. It is sometimes necessary, therefore, for authors to write entire books, carrying their readers through numbers of scenes, situations, and adventures, pushing their sympathies now this way and now that, arousing in turn their fighting spirit, their tenderness, their sense of tragedy, their laughter, their superstitiousness, their cupidity, their sensuousness, their piety. Only in such ways, sometimes, can the *exact* feelings an author wants to express be re-created in his readers. This, then, is the reason that novels, poems, dramas, stories, allegories, and parables exist: to convey such propositions as "Life is tragic" or "Susanna is beautiful," not by telling us so, but by putting us through a whole series of experiences that make us feel toward life or toward Susanna as the author did. *Literature is the most exact expression of feelings, while science is the most exact kind of reporting.* Poetry, which condenses all the affective resources of language into patterns of infinite rhythmical subtlety, may be said to be *the language of expression at its highest degree of efficiency.*

In a very real sense, then, people who have read good literature have lived more than people who cannot or will not read. To have read *Gulliver's Travels* is to have had the experience, with Jonathan Swift, of turning sick at the stomach at the conduct of the human race; to read *Huckleberry Finn* is to feel what it is like to drift down the Mississippi River on a raft; to have read Byron is to have suffered with him his rebellions and neuroses and to have enjoyed with him his nose-thumbing at society; to have read *Native Son* is to know how it feels to be frustrated in the particular way in which Negroes in Chicago are frustrated. This is the great task that affective communication performs: it enables us to feel how others felt about life, even if they lived thousands of miles away and centuries ago. It is not true that we have only one life to live; if we can read, we can live as many more lives and as many kinds of lives as we wish.

Here, the reader may object by asking, are we not twisting language somewhat to talk about "living" other lives than one's own? In one sense, the objection is correct; two different meanings of the word "live" are involved in the expressions "living one's own life" and "living other people's lives in books." Human life, however, is "lived" at more than one level; we inhabit both the extensional world and the world of words (and other sym-

bols). "Living other people's lives in books" means, as we shall use the expression here, *symbolic experience*—sometimes called "vicarious experience."

In the enjoyment and contemplation of a work of literary or dramatic art—a novel, a play, a moving picture—*we find our deepest enjoyment when the leading characters in the story to some degree symbolize ourselves.* Jessie Jenkins at the movie, watching Ann Sheridan being kissed by a handsome man, sighs as contentedly as if she herself were being kissed—and *symbolically,* she is. In other words, she identifies herself with Ann Sheridan and Ann Sheridan's role in the story. Humphrey Bogart fighting a crowd of villains is watched by thousands of men who clench their hands as if *they* were doing the fighting—which they are, *symbolically.* As we identify ourselves with the people in the story, the dramatist or the novelist puts us through *organized sequences of symbolic experiences.*

The differences between actual and symbolic experiences are great—one is not scarred by watching a moving-picture battle, nor is one nourished by watching people in a play having dinner. Furthermore, actual experiences come to us in highly disorganized fashion: meals, arguments with the landlady, visits to the doctor about one's fallen arches, and so on, interrupt the splendid course of romance. The novelist, however, *abstracts* only the events relevant to his story and then *organizes* them into a meaningful sequence. This business of abstracting (selecting) events and organizing them so that they bear some meaningful relationship to each other and to the central "theme" of a novel or play constitutes the "story-teller's art." Plot construction, development of character, narrative structure, climax, denouement, and all the other things one talks about in technical literary criticism have reference to this organizing of symbolic experiences so that the whole complex of symbolic experiences (i.e., the finished story or play) will have the desired impact on the reader.

All literary and dramatic enjoyment, whether of nursery tales in childhood or of moving pictures later on or of "great literature," appears to involve to some degree the reader's imaginative identification of himself with the roles portrayed and his projection of himself into the situations described in the story.[1] Whether a reader is able to identify himself with the characters of a story depends both on the maturity of the story and the maturity of the reader. If a mature reader finds difficulty identifying himself with the hero of a cowboy story, it is because he finds the hero too simple-minded a character to serve as an acceptable symbol for himself, and the villains and the events too improbable to serve as symbols for his own enemies and his own

[1] At what age does the capacity for imaginative identification of oneself with the roles portrayed in a story begin? The writer would suggest, on the basis of very limited observation, that it begins around the age of two or earlier. An interesting test case is to read the story of the Three Bears to a very small child to see when he begins to identify himself with Baby Bear.

problems. On the other hand, an immature reader, reading the same story, may have a deep need to imagine himself a courageous cowboy, and may also be too inexperienced or uneducated to know what kinds of people or events are probable or improbable—in which case he may enjoy the story enormously. Again, the immature reader, confronted with a story in which the central character is someone far removed from him in outlook and background (say, for example, an eighteenth-century French cardinal, involved in problems and events the reader has never heard of or thought about before) will find it impossible to find in the "hero" any kind of symbol for himself—and will therefore lay the book aside as "too dry."

One of the reasons for calling some people immature is that they are incapable of confronting defeat, tragedy, or unpleasantness of any kind. Such persons usually cannot endure an "unhappy ending" *even in a set of symbolic experiences.* Hence the widespread passion for happy endings in popular literature, so that even stories about unhappy events have to be made, in the end, to "come out all right." The immature constantly need to be reassured that everything will always come out all right.

Readers who mature as they grow older, however, steadily increase the depth and range and subtlety of their symbolic experiences. Under the guidance of skilled writers who have accurately observed the world and were able to organize their observations in significant ways, the mature reader may symbolically experience what it feels like to be a Chinese peasant woman, a Roman emperor, an early nineteenth-century poet, a Greek philosopher, an irresolute Prince of Denmark, or a dispossessed Mexican sharecropper. He may symbolically experience murder, guilt, religious exaltation, bankruptcy, the loss of friends, the discovery of gold mines or new philosophical principles, or the sense of desolation following a locust invasion in North Dakota. Each new symbolic experience means the enrichment of his insight into people and events.

The immature reader, satisfied with the narrow range of characters that popular literature offers for the reader to identify himself with (almost invariably handsome young men or beautiful young women of acceptable social status, income level, and skin color), and satisfied with the narrow range of symbolic experiences offered (love, love, and more love), may read abundantly the offerings of the drugstore newsstand and the gift-shop lending library all his life without appreciably increasing his knowledge or his sympathies.

If, on the other hand, we are mature readers, we progress in our reading, each new extension and exercise of our imaginations making possible still further extensions. Gradually, the "maps" which we have inside our heads become fuller, more accurate, pictures of the actual "territories" of human character and behavior under many different conditions and in many different times. Gradually, too, our increased insight gives us sympathy with our fellow human beings everywhere. The Kings of Egypt, the Tibetan

priest behind his ceremonial mask, the Roman political exile, and the embittered Harlem youth are presented to us by the novelist, the poet, and the playwright, at levels of vivid and intimate description, so that we learn how they lived, what they worried about, and how they felt. When the lives of other people, of whatever time and place, are examined in this way, we discover to our amazement that they are all people. This discovery is the basis of all civilized human relationships. If we remain uncivilized—whether in community, industrial, national, or international relationships—it is largely because most of us have not yet made this discovery. Literature is one of the important instruments to that end.

By means of scientific communication, then, with its international systems of weights and measures, international systems of botanical and zoological nomenclature, international mathematical symbols, we are enabled to exchange information with each other, pool our observations, and acquire collective control over our environment. By means of affective communication—by conversation and gesture when we can see each other, but by literature and other arts when we cannot—we come to understand each other, to cease being brutishly suspicious of each other, and gradually to realize the profound community that exists between us and our fellow men. Science, in short, makes us able to co-operate; the arts enlarge our sympathies so that we become willing to co-operate.

We are today equipped technologically to be able to get practically anything we want. But our wants are crude. There seems to be only one motivation strong enough to impel us to employ our technological capacities to the full, and that is the desire for "military security." The most expensive concerted national effort in every major nation goes into preparations for a war that nobody wants to start. The immediate task of the future, then, is not only to extend the use of scientific method into fields such as economics and politics where superstition now reigns and makes calamity inevitable. It is also to bring, through the affective power of the arts and of literature, civilizing influences to bear upon our savage wills. We must not only be *able* to work together; we must actively *want* to work together.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What is the connection between what Hayakawa means by the "truth" of a piece of literature and what Barzun calls the "ideas" in literature to which even the untrained reader will respond?
2. Is there a contradiction between Hayakawa's assertion that literature expresses *unique* relationships and experiences, and his later assertion that the reader can live many kinds of lives by sharing the experiences of the characters he reads about? Explain.
3. Hayakawa says, "In a very real sense . . . people who have read good literature have lived more than people who cannot or will not read." What do you

think he means by "lived more"? Under what circumstances might it be charged that a constant reader lives less?

4. Do you agree with the author that "we find our deepest enjoyment when the leading characters in a story to some degree symbolize ourselves"? Is this kind of enjoyment necessarily confined to the reading of "literature"?
5. In what ways can reading assist us to attain greater maturity? In what ways might it defeat this purpose?
6. Find a selection in this book which illustrates "scientific truth" and another which illustrates "literary truth." What is the difference?

PROJECTS

1. Write a paper in which you make clear how a piece of literature clarified a problem of conduct for you in a way that deepened your understanding of yourself and your own attitudes and motives, or your understanding of the attitudes and motives of another.
2. Select a novel which presents a way of life in one section of this country—for example, Faulkner's, Glasgow's, or Caldwell's novels of the South, Sinclair Lewis's or Willa Cather's novels of the Midwest, Steinbeck's of California, Marquand's of Boston. In a talk or paper point out the special ways in which the book has increased your understanding of life in that part of the country, and then the particular kinds of information which the novel does not give you and for which you will need to turn to "non-literary" sociological reports and analyses.
3. Compare three pieces of literature by different authors on the same general subject (modern warfare, New York City life, working in a factory, love between people of different social backgrounds). Then write a paper answering these questions: Do you find that these writings differ significantly from one another? Do your findings seem to support Hayakawa's proposition that literature conveys the "difference," the "uniqueness" in our human experiences rather than what they have in common?
4. Working with other members of your class, delineate a dozen or so major problems of human conduct. Then, pooling your reading resources, compile a bibliography of first-rate books which comment on and illuminate these problems. This assignment will prove most helpful if you make an annotated bibliography that provides some clue as to what each book contributes. The finished product will provide you with a useful source for future reading.

E. M. Forster

ANONYMITY: AN ENQUIRY

In this essay an inquisitive mind probes behind the ordinary assumptions and clichés to find what *literature is,* why *it is what it is and not something else. E. M. Forster approaches from a different direction the same basic question Hayakawa tried to answer, and in doing so reveals different aspects of a highly complex reality which we hide under the one big label, "literature."*

Forster's writing—whether short story, novel, or essay—reveals a mind that is never content with broad, easy labels or with neat, taken-for-granted answers. This inquiring spirit is clearly present in A Passage to India, *a novel about the meeting of Eastern and Western attitudes, in his short stories,* Collected Tales of E. M. Forster, *and in his recent collection of essays,* Two Cheers for Democracy, *from which the present selection is taken.*

Do you like to know who a book's by?

The question is more profound than may appear. A poem for example: do we gain more or less pleasure from it when we know the name of the poet? The *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens,* for example. No one knows who wrote *Sir Patrick Spens.* It comes to us out of the northern void like a breath of ice. Set beside it another ballad whose author is known—*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.* That, too, contains a tragic voyage and the breath of ice, but it is signed Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and we know a certain amount about this Coleridge. Coleridge signed other poems and knew other poets; he ran away from Cambridge; he enlisted as a Dragoon under the name of Trooper Comberback, but fell so constantly from his horse that it had to be withdrawn from beneath him permanently; he was employed instead upon matters relating to sanitation; he married Southey's sister, and gave lectures; he became stout, pious and dishonest, took opium and died. With such information in our heads, we speak of the *Ancient Mariner* as "a poem by Coleridge," but of *Sir Patrick Spens* as "a poem." What difference, if any, does this difference between them make upon our minds? And in the case of novels and plays—does ignorance or knowledge of their authorship signify? And newspaper articles—do they impress more when they are signed or unsigned? Thus—rather vaguely—let us begin our quest.

Books are composed of words, and words have two functions to perform: they give information or they create an atmosphere. Often they do

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both, for the two functions are not incompatible, but our enquiry shall keep them distinct. Let us turn for our next example to Public Notices. There is a word that is sometimes hung up at the edge of a tramline: the word "Stop." Written on a metal label by the side of the line, it means that a tram should stop here presently. It is an example of pure information. It creates no atmosphere—at least, not in my mind. I stand close to the label and wait and wait for the tram. If the tram comes, the information is correct; if it doesn't come, the information is incorrect; but in either case it remains information, and the notice is an excellent instance of one of the uses of words.

Compare it with another public notice which is sometimes exhibited in the darker cities of England: "Beware of pickpockets, male and female." Here, again, there is information. A pickpocket may come along presently, just like a tram, and we take our measures accordingly. But there is something else besides. Atmosphere is created. Who can see those words without a slight sinking feeling at the heart? All the people around look so honest and nice, but they are not, some of them are pickpockets, male or female. They hustle old gentlemen, the old gentleman glances down, his watch is gone. They steal up behind an old lady and cut out the back breadth of her beautiful sealskin jacket with sharp and noiseless pairs of scissors. Observe that happy little child running to buy sweets. Why does he suddenly burst into tears? A pickpocket, male or female, has jerked his halfpenny out of his hand. All this, and perhaps much more, occurs to us when we read the notice in question. We suspect our fellows of dishonesty, we observe them suspecting us. We have been reminded of several disquieting truths, of the general insecurity of life, human frailty, the violence of the poor, and the fatuous trustfulness of the rich, who always expect to be popular without having done anything to deserve it. It is a sort of *memento mori,* set up in the midst of Vanity Fair. By taking the form of a warning it has made us afraid, although nothing is gained by fear; all we need to do is to protect our precious purses, and fear will not help us to do this. Besides conveying information it has created an atmosphere, and to that extent is literature. "Beware of pickpockets, male and female," is not good literature, and it is unconscious. But the words are performing two functions, whereas the word "Stop" only performed one, and this is an important difference, and the first step in our journey.

Next step. Let us now collect together all the printed matter of the world into a single heap; poetry books, exercise books, plays, newspapers, advertisements, street notices, everything. Let us arrange the contents of the heap into a line, with the works that convey pure information at one end, and the works that create pure atmosphere at the other end, and the works that do both in their intermediate positions, the whole line being graded so that we pass from one attitude to another. We shall find that at the end of the pure information stands the tramway notice "Stop," and that at the extreme other end is lyric poetry. Lyric poetry is absolutely no use. It is the exact antithesis

of a street notice, for it conveys no information of any kind. What's the use of "A slumber did my spirit seal" or "Whether on Ida's snowy brow" or "So we'll go no more a roving" or "Far in a western brookland"? They do not tell us where the tram will stop or even whether it exists. And, passing from lyric poetry to ballad, we are still deprived of information. It is true that the *Ancient Mariner* describes an antarctic expedition, but in such a muddled way that it is no real help to the explorer, the accounts of the polar currents and winds being hopelessly inaccurate. It is true that the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens* refers to the bringing home of the Maid of Norway in the year 1285, but the reference is so vague and confused that the historians turn from it in despair. Lyric poetry is absolutely no use, and poetry generally is almost no use.

But when, proceeding down the line, we leave poetry behind and arrive at the drama, and particularly at those plays that purport to contain normal human beings, we find a change. Uselessness still predominates, but we begin to get information as well. *Julius Caesar* contains some reliable information about Rome. And when we pass from the drama to the novel, the change is still more marked. Information abounds. What a lot we learn from *Tom Jones* about the west countryside! And from *Northanger Abbey* about the same countryside fifty years later! In psychology too the novelist teaches us much. How carefully has Henry James explored certain selected recesses of the human mind! What an analysis of a country rectory in *The Way of All Flesh!* The instincts of Emily Brontë—they illuminate passion. And Proust—how amazingly does Proust describe not only French Society, not only the working of his characters, but the personal equipment of the reader, so that one keeps stopping with a gasp to say "Oh! how did he find that out about me? I didn't even know it myself until he informed me, but it is so!" The novel, whatever else it may be, is partly a noticeboard. And that is why many men who do not care for poetry or even for the drama enjoy novels and are well qualified to criticise them.

Beyond the novel we come to works whose avowed aim is information, works of learning, history, sociology, philosophy, psychology, science, etc. Uselessness is now subsidiary, though it still may persist as it does in the *Decline and Fall* or the *Stones of Venice*. And next come those works that give, or profess to give, us information about contemporary events: the newspapers. (Newspapers are so important and so peculiar that I shall return to them later, but mention them here in their place in the procession of printed matter.) And then come advertisements, time tables, the price list inside a taxi, and public notices: the notice warning us against pickpockets, which incidentally produced an atmosphere, though its aim was information, and the pure information contained in the announcement "Stop." It is a long journey from lyric poetry to a placard beside a tramline, but it is a journey in which there are no breaks. Words are all of one family, and do not become different because some are printed in a book and others on a metal

disc. It is their functions that differentiate them. They have two functions, and the combination of those functions is infinite. If there is on earth a house with many mansions, it is the house of words.

Looking at this line of printed matter, let us again ask ourselves: Do I want to know who wrote that? Ought it to be signed or not? The question is becoming more interesting. Clearly, in so far as words convey information, they ought to be signed. Information is supposed to be true. That is its only reason for existing, and the man who gives it ought to sign his name, so that he may be called to account if he has told a lie. When I have waited for several hours beneath the notice "Stop," I have the right to suggest that it be taken down, and I cannot do this unless I know who put it up. Make your statement, sign your name. That's common sense. But as we approach the other function of words—the creation of atmosphere—the question of signature surely loses its importance. It does not matter who wrote "A slumber did my spirit seal" because the poem itself does not matter. Ascribe it to Ella Wheeler Wilcox and the trams will run as usual. It does not matter much who wrote *Julius Caesar* and *Tom Jones*. They contain descriptions of ancient Rome and eighteenth-century England, and to that extent we wish them signed, for we can judge from the author's name whether the description is likely to be reliable; but beyond that, the guarantee of Shakespeare or Fielding might just as well be Charles Garvice's. So we come to the conclusion, firstly, that what is information ought to be signed; and, secondly, that what is not information need not be signed.

The question can now be carried a step further.

What is this element in words that is not information? I have called it "atmosphere," but it requires stricter definition than that. It resides not in any particular word, but in the order in which words are arranged—that is to say, in style. It is the power that words have to raise our emotions or quicken our blood. It is also something else, and to define that other thing would be to explain the secret of the universe. This "something else" in words is undefinable. It is their power to create not only atmosphere, but a a world, which, while it lasts, seems more real and solid than this daily existence of pickpockets and trams. Before we begin to read the *Ancient Mariner* we know that the Polar Seas are not inhabited by spirits, and that if a man shoots an albatross he is not a criminal but a sportsman, and that if he stuffs the albatross afterwards he becomes a naturalist also. All this is common knowledge. But when we are reading the *Ancient Mariner,* or remembering it intensely, common knowledge disappears and uncommon knowledge takes its place. We have entered a universe that only answers to its own laws, supports itself, internally coheres, and has a new standard of truth. Information is true if it is accurate. A poem is true if it hangs together. Information points to something else. A poem points to nothing but itself. Information is relative. A poem is absolute. The world created by words exists neither in space nor time though it has semblances of both, it is eternal

and indestructible, and yet its action is no stronger than a flower: it is adamant, yet it is also what one of its practitioners thought it to be, namely, the shadow of a shadow. We can best define it by negations. It is not this world, its laws are not the laws of science or logic, its conclusions not those of common sense. And it causes us to suspend our ordinary judgments.

Now comes the crucial point. While we are reading the *Ancient Mariner* we forget our astronomy and geography and daily ethics. Do we not also forget the author? Does not Samuel Taylor Coleridge, lecturer, opium eater, and dragoon, disappear with the rest of the world of information? We remember him before we begin the poem and after we finish it, but during the poem nothing exists but the poem. Consequently while we read the *Ancient Mariner* a change takes place in it. It becomes anonymous, like the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens*. And here is the point I would support: that all literature tends towards a condition of anonymity, and that, so far as words are creative, a signature merely distracts us from their true significance. I do not say literature "ought" not to be signed, because literature is alive, and consequently "ought" is the wrong word to use. It wants not to be signed. That puts my point. It is always tugging in that direction and saying in effect: "I, not my author, exist really." So do the trees, flowers and human beings say "I really exist, not God," and continue to say so despite the admonitions to the contrary addressed to them by clergymen and scientists. To forget its Creator is one of the functions of a Creation. To remember him is to forget the days of one's youth. Literature does not want to remember. It is alive—not in a vague complementary sense—but alive tenaciously, and it is always covering up the tracks that connect it with the laboratory.

It may here be objected that literature expresses personality, that it is the result of the author's individual outlook, that we are right in asking for his name. It is his property—he ought to have the credit.

An important objection; also a modern one, for in the past neither writers nor readers attached the high importance to personality that they do today. It did not trouble Homer or the various people who were Homer. It did not trouble the writers in the Greek Anthology, who would write and re-write the same poem in almost identical language, their notion being that the poem, not the poet, is the important thing, and that by continuous re-handling the perfect expression natural to the poem may be attained. It did not trouble the mediaeval balladists, who, like the Cathedral builders, left their works unsigned. It troubled neither the composers nor the translators of the Bible. The Book of Genesis today contains at least three different elements—Jahvist, Elohist and Priestly—which were combined into a single account by a committee who lived under King Josiah at Jerusalem and translated into English by another committee who lived under King James I at London. And yet the Book of Genesis is literature. These earlier writers and readers knew that the words a man writes express him, but they did not

make a cult of expression as we do today. Surely they were right, and modern critics go too far in their insistence on personality.

They go too far because they do not reflect what personality is. Just as words have two functions—information and creation—so each human mind has two personalities, one on the surface, one deeper down. The upper personality has a name. It is called S. T. Coleridge, or William Shakespeare, or Mrs. Humphry Ward. It is conscious and alert, it does things like dining out, answering letters, etc., and it differs vividly and amusingly from other personalities. The lower personality is a very queer affair. In many ways it is a perfect fool, but without it there is no literature, because unless a man dips a bucket down into it occasionally he cannot produce first-class work. There is something general about it. Although it is inside S. T. Coleridge, it cannot be labelled with his name. It has something in common with all other deeper personalities, and the mystic will assert that the common quality is God, and that here, in the obscure recesses of our being, we near the gates of the Divine. It is in any case the force that makes for anonymity. As it came from the depths, so it soars to the heights, out of local questionings; as it is general to all men, so the works it inspires have something general about them, namely beauty. The poet wrote the poem, no doubt, but he forgot himself while he wrote it, and we forget him while we read. What is so wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it towards the condition of the man who wrote, and brings to birth in us also the creative impulse. Lost in the beauty where he was lost, we find more than we ever threw away, we reach what seems to be our spiritual home, and remember that it was not the speaker who was in the beginning but the Word.

If we glance at one or two writers who are not first class this point will be illustrated. Charles Lamb and R. L. Stevenson will serve. Here are two gifted, sensitive, fanciful, tolerant, humorous fellows, but they always write with their surface-personalities and never let down buckets into their underworld. Lamb did not try: bbbbuckets, he would have said, are bbeyond me, and he is the pleasanter writer in consequence. Stevenson was always trying oh ever so hard, but the bucket either stuck or else came up again full of the R.L.S. who let it down, full of the mannerisms, the self-consciousness, the sentimentality, the quaintness which he was hoping to avoid. He and Lamb append their names in full to every sentence they write. They pursue us page after page, always to the exclusion of higher joy. They are letter writers, not creative artists, and it is no coincidence that each of them did write charming letters. A letter comes off the surface: it deals with the events of the day or with plans: it is naturally signed. Literature tries to be unsigned. And the proof is that, whereas we are always exclaiming "How like Lamb!" or "How typical of Stevenson!" we never say "How like Shakespeare!" or "How typical of Dante!" We are conscious only of the world they have created, and we are in a sense co-partners in it. Coleridge, in his smaller domain, makes us co-partners too. We forget for ten minutes his name and our own, and

I contend that this temporary forgetfulness, this momentary and mutual anonymity, is sure evidence of good stuff. The demand that literature should express personality is far too insistent in these days, and I look back with longing to the earlier modes of criticism where a poem was not an expression but a discovery, and was sometimes supposed to have been shown to the poet by God.

The personality of a writer does become important after we have read his book and begin to study it. When the glamour of creation ceases, when the leaves of the divine tree are silent, when the co-partnership is over, then a book changes its nature, and we can ask ourselves questions about it such as "What is the author's name?" "Where did he live?" "Was he married?" and "Which was his favourite flower?" Then we are no longer reading the book, we are studying it and making it subserve our desire for information. "Study" has a very solemn sound. "I am studying Dante" sounds much more than "I am reading Dante." It is really much less. Study is only a serious form of gossip. It teaches us everything about the book except the central thing, and between that and us it raises a circular barrier which only the wings of the spirit can cross. The study of science, history, etc., is necessary and proper, for they are subjects that belong to the domain of information, but a creative subject like literature—to study that is excessively dangerous, and should never be attempted by the immature. Modern education promotes the unmitigated study of literature and concentrates our attention on the relation between a writer's life—his surface life—and his work. That is one reason why it is such a curse. There are no questions to be asked about literature while we read it because "la paix succède a la pensée," in the words of Paul Claudel. An examination paper could not be set on the *Ancient Mariner* as it speaks to the heart of the reader, and it was to speak to the heart that it was written, and otherwise it would not have been written. Questions only occur when we cease to realise what it was about and become inquisitive and methodical.

A word in conclusion on the newspapers—for they raise an interesting contributory issue. We have already defined a newspaper as something which conveys, or is supposed to convey, information about passing events. It is true, not to itself like a poem, but to the facts it purports to relate—like the tram notice. When the morning paper arrives it lies upon the breakfast table simply steaming with truth in regard to something else. Truth, truth, and nothing but the truth. Unsated by the banquet, we sally forth in the afternoon to buy an evening paper, which is published at midday as the name implies, and feast anew. At the end of the week we buy a weekly, or a Sunday paper, which as the name implies has been written on the Saturday, and at the end of the month we buy a monthly. Thus do we keep in touch with the world of events as practical men should.

And who is keeping us in touch? Who gives us this information upon which our judgments depend, and which must ultimately influence our char-

acters? Curious to relate, we seldom know. Newspapers are for the most part anonymous. Statements are made and no signature appended. Suppose we read in a paper that the Emperor of Guatemala is dead. Our first feeling is one of mild consternation; out of snobbery we regret what has happened, although the Emperor didn't play much part in our lives, and if ladies we say to one another "I feel so sorry for the poor Empress." But presently we learn that the Emperor cannot have died, because Guatemala is a Republic, and the Empress cannot be a widow, because she does not exist. If the statement is signed, and we know the name of the goose who made it, we shall discount anything he tells us in the future. If—which is more probable—it is unsigned or signed "Our Special Correspondent"—we remain defenceless against future misstatements. The Guatemala lad may be turned on to write about the Fall of the Franc and mislead us over that.

It seems paradoxical that an article should impress us more if it is unsigned than if it is signed. But it does, owing to tne weakness of our psychology. Anonymous statements have, as we have seen, a universal air about them. Absolute truth, the collected wisdom of the universe, seems to be speaking, not the feeble voice of a man. The modern newspaper has taken advantage of this. It is a pernicious caricature of literature. It has usurped that divine tendency towards anonymity. It has claimed for information what only belongs to creation. And it will claim it as long as we allow it to claim it, and to exploit the defects of our psychology. "The High Mission of the Press." Poor Press! as if it were in a position to have a mission! It is we who have a mission to it. To cure a man through the newspapers or through propaganda of any sort is impossible: you merely alter the symptoms of his disease. We shall only be cured by purging our minds of confusion. The papers trick us not so much by their lies as by their exploitation of our weakness. They are always confusing the two functions of words and insinuating that "The Emperor of Guatemala is dead" and "A slumber did my spirit seal" belong to the same category. They are always usurping the privileges that only uselessness may claim, and they will do this as long as we allow them to do it.

This ends our enquiry. The question "Ought things to be signed?" seemed, if not an easy question, at all events an isolated one, but we could not answer it without considering what words are, and disentangling the two functions they perform. We decided pretty easily that information ought to be signed: common sense leads to this conclusion, and newspapers which are largely unsigned have gained by that device their undesirable influence over civilisation. Creation—that we found a more difficult matter. "Literature wants not to be signed," I suggested. Creation comes from the depths—the mystic will say from God. The signature, the name, belongs to the surface-personality, and pertains to the world of information, it is a ticket, not the spirit of life. While the author wrote he forgot his name; while we read him we forget both his name and our own. When we have finished reading we

begin to ask questions and to study the book and the author, we drag them into the realm of information. Now we learn a thousand things, but we have lost the pearl of great price, and in the chatter of question and answer, in the torrents of gossip and examination papers we forget the purpose for which creation was performed. I am not asking for reverence. Reverence is fatal to literature. My plea is for something more vital: imagination. Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion (Shelley). Imagination is our only guide into the world created by words. Whether those words are signed or unsigned becomes, as soon as the imagination redeems us, a matter of no importance, because we have approximated to the state in which they were written, and there are no names down there, no personality as we understand personality, no marrying or giving in marriage. What there is down there—ah, that is another enquiry, and may the clergymen and the scientists pursue it more successfully in the future than they have in the past.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Forster suggests that all printed matter falls somewhere along a line between the poles of pure information (the tramway notice "Stop") and pure atmosphere (lyric poetry). Arrange the following "printed matter" along that line in a manner which would fit his definitions:

   Your desk calendar
   Forster's own essay
   Hemingway's *Old Man of the Sea*
   Byron's lines: "I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
   A palace and a prison on each hand."
   Vaughan's: "I saw Eternity the other night,
   Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
   All calm, as it was bright;"
   The directions on a fire extinguisher
   Any "cover story" from *Time* magazine
   A restaurant menu
   The Declaration of Independence
   A school's football yell
   The ordinary greeting, "How are you?"
   Popular song titles

2. As Forster hypothetically does with "all the printed matter of the world," line up the books, pamphlets, etc., now on your desk or "active" shelves—your own and also borrowed materials—on an imaginary line from "pure information" to "pure atmosphere." What does this lineup reveal to you about your reading?
3. Is there any connection between Forster's information-atmosphere dichotomy and Hayakawa's scientific and literary "truth"?
4. Against your personal experience and knowledge test Forster's generalization,

"Lyric poetry is absolutely no use, and poetry generally is almost no use." (Is a basic question of definition involved here? If so, what is it?)

5. Forster holds that information should always be signed. Test this proposal against articles in today's daily paper or this week's news magazine. Does the signature help you to understand and evaluate what you read there? Why?
6. The following comment on American fiction appeared in the January 11, 1954, issue of *Life:* "For some while now many American readers have been . . . pretty startled at the pictures of American life drawn by American novelists. It has been pointed out that our good fiction writers have seemed to feel like giving up on their country long before their readers have felt like doing so. This, however, is not a recent development: American fiction of merit started turning pessimistic about 70 years ago. . . . In short, few of our good fiction writers have ever had a sunny slant on their native land. We have had writers to burn who have been almost unbearably sunny, but what they have written has been largely trash."

   Assuming *Life's* description to be accurate, why would novels be more likely to present the less happy sides of American life?
7. What does the anonymity of most medieval writing, painting, etc., suggest as a basic difference between the culture and values of the Middle Ages, and ours?
8. How does the question, "Who is your favorite author?" reveal a failure of the kinds of insight into books Barzun and Forster argue for? What might be the appropriate reply of someone who really knew great literature thoroughly?
9. If one accepts Forster's analysis of the nature of "literature," then how should one "study literature"?

PROJECTS

1. Compile a list of kinds of printed matter purporting to be informative (aside from newspaper articles) which you feel ought to be signed. Give your reasons for including them in the list.
2. Compile a list of writers whose writings are of the kind that Forster suggests "want not to be signed," and another list of writers, like Stevenson and Lamb, who "append their names in full to every sentence they write." What are some of the distinctive characteristics of these two sets of writings?

Bruce Bliven

TOWARDS BETTER COMMUNICATION

All the articles included in this section on Media have been concerned either with particular media or with particular problems in certain media. It is time that we try to look at present-day media of communication as they relate to one another and to consider what basic problems face us as users of all—or most—of the communication media. In the following excerpt from his book, Preview for Tomorrow, *Bruce Bliven reviews some of the main problems for the modern user of all these forms of communication and makes a number of cautious suggestions.*

Other sources of serious thinking on the central issues of the mass media today are Charles Seipmann's Radio, Television and Society, *Gilbert Seldes'* The Great Audience, *the Commission on Freedom of the Press's* A Free and Responsible Press, *Llewellyn White's* The American Radio, The Communication of Ideas (*Lyman Bryson, editor*), *Leonard Doob's* Public Opinion and Propaganda, *A. J. Liebling's* The Wayward Pressman (*serious matters presented with a light,* New Yorker *touch*), *Morris Ernst's* The First Freedom, *and Curtis MacDougall's* Understanding Public Opinion.

In purely physical terms, the means of communication are remarkable. If doubt and fear have never been so widespread as today, it is wholly because of restrictions which man has made and man could remove if he had the will.

High on the list of obstacles comes censorship. This is certainly nothing new; censorship has existed in varying degrees as long as communication itself. In fact, it is possibly fair to say that the idea of tolerating free and full expression of dissenting points of view is itself a modern invention—and one that has made less headway than many people imagine. Almost never does any community come remotely near to being as tolerant as its most tolerant members; the pressure for conformity is always and everywhere strong.

In the matter of tolerance, America is close to the top of the list; yet even here, unorthodox behavior as to dress or conversation is a grave handicap to advancement in any small town, for instance, or among the executives of a big corporation; and holding "the wrong ideas" on political or economic matters is even more so. We demand, tacitly but uncompromisingly, that our schools shall teach and our pastors shall preach the prevailing ideas of the community. . . .

Political censorship is the simplest and most obvious form of dictation in the realm of ideas. At the present time about one-third of the world popu-

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lation lives completely muzzled. In these countries, newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television (if any), movies, speakers, teachers, all express the official line or they are choked off. Not only is truth strictly suppressed—unless it happens to fall in with the purposes of the regime in power—but an enormous mass of propaganda is poured out by every conceivable means, and any resemblance between this propaganda and the facts is only coincidental. Another third of the world's people live under an uncertain and fluctuating degree of freedom which, like credit at the bank, tends to disappear at the moment when it begins to be needed. Only a third of the population, at most, lives with even an approximation of democratic conditions. . . .

The second great classification of censorship, after government action, is that exerted by the communicator, either on his own behalf or as the assumed guardian of the interests of the communicatee. Let us look for example at the American daily press.

A good deal of nonsense has been written about the successful pressures on American publishers, and notably the pressure of the advertiser, who is assumed to be in a position to dictate editorial policy. The plain truth is that usually he doesn't have to, rarely does he try, and when he does it is far from certain that he will succeed. Newspaper publishing is big business nowadays. Any daily in a city of even moderate size represents a capitalized value in the millions; the man in charge of such an enterprise is almost sure to be a conservative whose outlook is similar to that of most of his advertisers and other leading figures in the local financial community. While there are notable exceptions, most newspapers tend to reflect the interests of the dominant economic groups. To be sure, this sometimes needs to be done discreetly. The primary necessity of every newspaper is to get and hold a large amount of circulation; it must not therefore too openly challenge in its pages the dominant attitude of the majority of its readers, which may be to the left of its owners.

Fifty years ago, actual suppression of news hostile to the political, social, and economic views of the publisher was not at all uncommon; today it is much more rare. In most communities there are now enough alternative outlets for news to make suppression impossible even if somebody wanted to try it. The tradition of printing both sides of controversial issues, even though it is quite new, is now firmly embedded in the philosophy of the newspaperman. It has many times been remarked that during the three election campaigns of Franklin Roosevelt from two-thirds to three-quarters of the nation's newspapers were against him, and the proportion was even higher than that in the big cities of the North which he carried overwhelmingly. It is argued that this proves the declining power of the editorial page. Nearly all the papers—except a few diehard opponents like *The Chicago Tribune*—printed Roosevelt's speeches, and reported the activities of his administration; people simply took the judgment of the news columns over that of the

editorials. (They were also influenced by Roosevelt's great skill as a radio orator.)

To suggest that every publisher always act as the spokesman for his class or to further his economic interest is so great an oversimplification as to be essentially false. There are publishers who fight for the right even when it is against their own best interests; unfortunately, those who do this consistently are in a minority. There are also publishers who are just plain eccentrics and force their eccentricities on the public even at substantial financial loss to themselves.

Beyond the self-censorship that protects the views of the newspaper owner and his class there is the censorship exerted on behalf of the views, actual or assumed, of the reader. At the lowest level, this censorship attempts to keep out obscenity; mortal man being what he is, the result is sometimes to suppress honest discussion of important sexual problems, but to permit leering lubricity.

This situation is most acute in relation to movies, radio, and television. These are all desperately anxious not to overestimate the intelligence of their public nor to offend its prejudices. The movies, in particular, get a great deal of volunteer help in their effort to avoid the offending of prejudices. Several of the states and some cities have censorship boards whose members are frequently people of inferior intelligence and standards of taste, and whose antics would be comical if the results were not so serious. In addition there are private groups that are equally effective, and often at a much earlier stage. Every motion-picture script prepared by any of the large companies in Hollywood is submitted in advance of shooting to a man who is, in fact, a designated representative of the Roman Catholic Church, who suggests any changes which seem to him desirable. These changes are almost invariably accepted by the studios, since the alternative would be to have thirty million Catholics in the United States forbidden to see the film in question. Many other groups, among whom the American Legion is conspicuous, also take active steps to make sure that motion pictures conform as far as possible to their views.

Not only is this sort of censorship exerted in deference to the supposed weaknesses of the public, but it is often the result of pressure brought to bear on behalf of special groups who don't want their collective dignity impaired. Thirty years ago the villain in almost every Western film was a Mexican; the government of Mexico protested, backing up its protest with threats of boycott. The Mexican villain disappeared; so, in the course of time, did villains of every other identifiable nationality or ethnic group.

In the free countries, where the media of communication are still in private hands, a tremendously effective form of censorship is certainly that imposed by the communicatee, who is reluctant to accept any idea that runs counter to his existing prejudices. The Republican, wherever possible, reads only a Republican paper; the white Southerner, unless he is exceptionally

tolerant, boycotts motion pictures in which Negroes play sympathetic leading roles. The communicator, whether in journalism or the entertainment world, is in the position of the minister who always preaches to the saved because the damned refuse to come to church. Not only does this result in the preselection of an audience, but it severely shackles the individual—the newspaper or magazine editor, for example—once he has found an audience willing to accept his opinions. He dare not alter those opinions, on pain of losing his audience, or at best, he dare not change faster than his readers do under the pressure of events.

Perhaps more important than all the types of censorship combined, in a country like the United States, is the problem created by ignorance, prejudice, and superstition on the part of the communicatee. The psychologists tell us that everyone reads newspapers, magazines, and books, looks at movies or television or listens to radio in terms of his own emotional state of mind. This is not only a highly complicated matter but one that varies from day to day and almost from minute to minute. We shy away from any material that we know or suspect to be in disagreement with our existing convictions, and what we do receive is filtered through our own personality in extraordinary ways.

For a single illustration: psychologists studying race prejudice have many times made an interesting experiment. They seat a few people in a row, show a picture to the first in line, and ask him to whisper a description of it in a few words to a second who will whisper the information to the third, and so on. The picture is of a policeman and a badly dressed, uncouth Negro. The policeman is holding a knife in his hand; the Negro is unarmed. Almost never is the description transmitted to more than two or three individuals in succession, before the knife has passed from the hand of the policeman and is now being held in a threatening manner, by the Negro! In other words, the picture is transformed until it fits the preexisting concept in the mind, which is that an open knife is far more likely to be held by a Negro than a policeman. This sort of unconscious alteration of what is perceived, to make it accord with what is already believed, is universal and is one of the most important of all the facts with which communication has to deal.

The problem of low intelligence on the part of a large proportion of the population is of course a serious one in terms of communication. Average intelligence is represented by an IQ of 100, since the scale itself was set up by testing many thousands of individuals to find the level that may be expected of the median person. There are about nineteen million people in the United States with IQ's of only eighty to ninety, and six million with IQ's of seventy to eighty.

These twenty-five million people constitute a large part of the total audience for all mass-communication media. Their working vocabulary is usually confined to a few hundred words; they are incapable of understanding complicated ideas, or of remembering abstract thoughts for very long. Obviously,

any operation in the communications field that must accommodate itself to members of this group will be severely limited, and its limitations will prove objectionable to those who are materially higher on the IQ scale—let us say, from 125 up, the level usually required by anyone who wants to go to college. . . .

In the United States, problems of overwhelming importance arise from the fact of the mass market. Most of our important media for communication are supported by advertising, which in nearly all instances depends on reaching a maximum number of communicatees; and even when advertising is not involved, the steadily rising cost of production usually makes a large audience an imperative economic necessity. (The few special media catering to the rich on a luxury basis are so atypical that they can be ignored in this discussion.) The Sunday newspaper in New York City which in 1952 sold for twenty cents a copy contained raw newsprint costing more than that amount, to which must be added the tremendous expenses of collecting, writing, editing, and printing the news—all, plus any profits that are to be earned, to be met by advertising revenue. The same thing is true of every popular magazine; a single copy selling, say, for twenty-five cents, may represent a total investment of fifty or seventy-five cents or even more. The result is that reaching and keeping the largest possible circulation become life-and-death matters, and every other editorial consideration, such as genuine service to the reader, or the maintenance of the highest integrity, becomes secondary.

Huge circulation is important, not only for the revenue it brings in, but because advertisers insist on it. . . . Advertisers show a heavy tendency to flock to the one periodical with the largest circulation in each field. For this there are several reasons: the advertiser wants to be associated with success; the biggest paper is often one that is still growing and there is usually a bonus of extra circulation beyond the amount stipulated on the rate card; and finally, advertising agencies dislike the bother of preparing special copy and cuts and ordering and billing advertising for a dozen small papers when they can reach the same number of people with only one transaction in a single big medium.

The great increase in printing costs has also affected the publication of books. The comment is often made that publishers nowadays are compelled by necessity to think twice about publishing any book that does not seem likely to have an immediate substantial sale. This militates against the author of the important work which, because of subject or style, can appeal to only a few, and against the author of a first novel whose work is promising but not yet sufficiently mature to be assured of a maximum audience. It is to the credit of the book trade that it still goes as far as it does in the direction of publishing works of limited appeal.

The economics of book publishing is now in transition because of the

advent of the low-priced volumes in flexible plastic covers, sold through many retail outlets other than book stores. Beginning chiefly with reprints of popular fiction, these inexpensive books have gone on to include the classics (which of course have for many years been sold in various formats at lower rates than new trade books), volumes especially written for the new format, and plans for simultaneous publication in cheap and more expensive editions.

The cost of producing these twenty-five-cent or fifty-cent books is not much less than the cost of producing the standard format. Setting the type is no cheaper, and the difference in price between a hard and flexible cover is only a few cents. The advantage comes in the size of the edition: whereas the average hard-cover book sells 5,000 or 10,000 copies, the plastic-covered book has a first printing of 200,000 or more.

How this problem affects the movies is so well known as to require little comment. Today a cost of $1.5 or $2 million is not at all exceptional for even a run-of-the-mill film. Hollywood's wastefulness has long been notorious and still seems notable by other standards than its own; but there is no doubt that Hollywood has tried hard in recent years to retrench and put its operations on a businesslike basis. Today's high film costs partly represent substantial increases in wages which are certainly a social good, not only from the standpoint of the recipients but from that of society as a whole. The result is even stronger pressure for the safe and the conservative, for the sort of thing that has earned big money in the past, regardless of its artistic merit or intellectual level.

Even Hollywood is outdone by the fantastic costs of television. In 1951, the average annual expense of operating each TV station in New York and Los Angeles was $2,688,000; eight of these stations lost, on the average, $538,000 each. At that time it was estimated that to construct a new television station in the VHF range would cost up to $550,000 and one in the UHF, still more. The annual minimum required to run any television station in any city is estimated at $200,000 in terms of the 1952 purchasing power of the dollar. In that year, a single variety program an hour and a half long represented a cost on the network to its several sponsors of about $100,000 each week, or more than $1,000 per minute. The expense of production was so heavy that in the trade this charge was not considered excessive, and certainly was not believed to "price the show out of the market."

As in the case of the movies, financial expenditures of this kind mean tremendous pressure for what has proved acceptable before, regardless of any other consideration. More than one critic has remarked the amazing speed with which television has gone through the process of getting old and timid so that daring experimentation or indeed, anything off the beaten track, is already forbidden. . . .

The high costs of operation have accelerated a trend toward monopoly in all these fields. *The Yale Law Review* summarized some of the facts in its issue for June-July, 1952. It pointed out that a majority of the stations for

AM radio or television are affiliated with one of five major networks; "a handful of publishers" supply the bulk of the circulation of popular magazines, and a small number of regional and national chains own newspapers representing almost half the total daily circulation in the country and more than half of the Sunday. The number of newspapers is shrinking, although total readership is going up; from 1929 to 1950 there was a net loss of 149 papers. Cities with only one newspaper have increased from 43 per cent of the total to 81 per cent. It is common, moreover, for a newspaper to own a radio or television station. In 1949, 24 per cent of all AM broadcasting stations, 39 per cent of those using FM and 47 per cent of the television stations were owned by newspapers. In 245 cities the only newspaper controlled the only one or two radio stations.

Press-association service also tends toward monopoly, although it is vital to anyone seeking to start a new paper. The Associated Press is a cooperative organization like a gentlemen's club; any member can blackball a new paper seeking a franchise directly competitive with itself in any city; while in theory an A.P. franchise cannot be sold, in fact it may represent an asset of a million dollars or more.

The other two major services, the United Press and the International News service, are supposedly open to all competitors who will pay the stipulated fee, usually based on total circulation. *The Yale Law Review* says, however, that these organizations sometimes give the first subscriber in any city a rate guaranteed to be lower, by a specified percentage, than any of his direct competitors will subsequently receive.

The publisher of newspapers, magazines, or books, the owner of a movie studio or a radio or television station, in the United States—and all other countries where these enterprises are conducted as private industry—is constantly being pulled in two directions. Our society is still sufficiently dominated by the Puritan philosophy for the owner of any such enterprise to feel that he is under an obligation to do his patrons good, to inform, edify, and uplift them. He is also under an obligation to himself and his stockholders to make money, and almost always maximum money is to be made only by expanding the size of his market to its utmost limits. Aside from the cost of newsprint and time on the press, the expense is as great to print one copy of a newspaper as a million; a television show has the same overhead for a single viewer as for fifty or sixty million. These two purposes, to do good and make money, are at best tangential to each other; in many cases they are antithetical. I am not being cynical, but reporting a proved fact, when I say that in case of conflict, the necessity for earning a profit almost invariably prevails.

Instances of the results of such a conflict occur a hundred times a day. I shall mention a few at random:

Almost every newspaper in the United States carries two pages or more of so-called comic strips daily and a whole section of them on Sunday. Some

of these are done by men of high talent and have notable qualities of their own; but the majority are such that any literate editor would prefer to omit them, if he dared. He doesn't dare.

A successful weekly magazine has an editorial formula which demands that in every issue there shall appear what the shop nicknames "the weekly grue"—a picture or group of pictures of a partly dissected cadaver, a major operation, animals fighting to the death, or something else calculated to upset the sensibilities of the delicate. The editors themselves have no relish for such material; they believe they must keep it up for the sake of the circulation.

Currently, cheap books with plastic covers consist largely of murder mysteries or novels heavily drenched in sex and sadism. Most of the men who write, illustrate, and publish these books are ashamed of what they are doing, but justify it sheepishly on the strictly commercial ground that they can sell larger quantities of such books than of any other.

Many other low-priced books with decidedly more respectable contents have cover illustrations of a sort that would have shocked our grandfathers; the archetype of these is a picture of a gangster (or a gorilla) tearing the dress off a beautiful blonde, who was half-naked to begin with. These covers often have little or no relation to the contents of the book, and they are used strictly for commercial reasons, as the men who produce them admit.

For thirty years we have been hearing about the educational potentialities of the radio, about "universities of the air," use of radio in the classroom in grammar and high school, and the like. There is no doubt that much edifying material has been broadcast in these thirty years, even though it is also true that each of the elaborate plans announced with such fanfare has dwindled away into nothing after a few months or a year or two. The real test is a simple one: has any advertiser sponsored a truly educational program, at a popular time of day, over an extended period? I believe the answer is "No." Even the most popular "educational" shows, those consisting of debates on controversial subjects, which usually display belligerence rather than erudition, are kicked around by the broadcasters, often ending up on Sunday morning, or at 11:30 P.M., times that are available because no sponsor is willing to buy them.

In the effort to return a profit in the face of high expenses, radio and television stations and networks have delegated their editorial authority in toto. They sell a blank space on the air to the advertiser who, in cooperation with his advertising agency, proceeds to fill it with any program, no matter how vapid, sensational or distorted in its interpretation of reality, that he thinks will attract a maximum number of listeners of viewers. The completely passive role of the station or network is merely that of a censor on the lowest possible level, to insist on elimination of all material that some sensitive viewer—or the FCC—would find objectionable. The result is what might be expected: a general level so mediocre that the contrasts between it and what

these media might bring to their viewers is painfully sharp. The intelligentsia in the United States have spent the last quarter of a century boasting that they did not own a radio set. It seems likely that they will spend the next quarter century making a similar boast in regard to television.

One annoying result of the over-commercialization of both radio and television is the way in which cycles of similar programs sweep these media. When big expensive variety shows seem to capture large audiences, big variety shows are to be found on every channel, and the listener or viewer who happens to dislike them is simply out of luck.

The Federal Communications Commission, charged with the duty of giving away the radio-television channels which produce for the broadcasters a billion dollars annually in revenue, should be, and to some extent is, concerned with the low quality of nearly everything that goes out on the air. When frequency-modulation radio was developed to the point of practicality the FCC carefully set aside a group of channels for educational and other forms of non-commercial broadcasting. The results, however, can only be described as a great disappointment. The manufacturers of receiving sets, most of whom are tied in many ways to the AM broadcasters, proved reluctant to manufacture FM receivers and especially to do so at moderate prices. The universities and labor unions that had made most of the applications for the FM non-commercial licenses soon found that the expense of operation was much higher than they had anticipated, and was rapidly increasing. By 1952, many of them had discovered that the influence they had hoped to exert on the community was still elusive. A large number had sold their stations or were trying to do so.

As recorded above, in 1952 the FCC authorized an increase in television stations from 108 to 2,051, most of them to be in the UHF range. Once more the FCC set aside a group of licenses, this time 242 in all, for educational and other non-commercial institutions. As I write, it is not yet clear what will happen in response to this invitation; the colleges and labor unions, which had leaped so lightly into the field of FM radio, seemed much more timid about television, where the costs are astronomical and the techniques much more difficult. They had finally learned the lesson that it is a waste of time and money to broadcast either by radio or television against overwhelming competition from a popular program on a commercial station. Three months after the FCC had invited applications from educational and other non-commercial institutions it had received only nine requests for the 242 licenses, and of these five came from a single institution—the University of the State of New York. . . .

Various plans have been offered in the United States to enable the public to have radio or television shows without advertising. Before the Second World War a plan was under foot whereby radio listeners would pay a fee and get a choice of three unsponsored programs—classical music, popular music and one in which news would alternate with speeches, lectures and re-

ports of public events. These shows would be put on the air in a distorted, unintelligible form; the subscriber would rent each month a small device to attach to his radio set that would unscramble the waves. Because without the device the station would produce only a loud unpleasant wail, the enterprise was nicknamed "pig-squeal radio." The Second World War forced postponement of this plan, and since 1945 television has been going ahead so much faster than radio that the scheme has not been revived. Senator Benton, who was interested in the idea, stated that when it was first broached many thousands of people professed they would be glad to pay a dollar a month or more to get programs without advertising.

Television shows are so much more expensive than those on radio that, thus far, no one has come forward with any plan for regular programs supported by the viewer directly and not in his capacity as a purchaser of advertised products. There have, however, been several plans by which good current motion pictures would be made available for a fee to special groups of viewers. One of these is like pig-squeal radio; a special device would be rented to unscramble the signal. Under another system, you would drop a quarter into a meter attached to your television set.

In a third plan, the signal would be transmitted by telephone wires; you would notify the operator which of several motion pictures simultaneously on view you wished to see, she would pull the proper switch, and the cost, probably about one dollar, would be added to your telephone bill; this scheme was tried experimentally in Chicago for a short time and the sponsors said that they got an excellent reaction, foretelling a profitable enterprise.

Advocates of these various plans, none of which is in full commercial operation as I write, point out that a popular motion picture might earn in a single night revenue far greater than has been earned in the past by any Hollywood product except three or four of its outstanding successes which have played all over the world through a period of years. When there are fifty million television sets, if even one-third of their owners should be willing to pay a dollar to see a new picture the returns to Hollywood could be huge.

Whether any of these plans will be followed in the long run is still doubtful; the whole relationship between television and Hollywood is changing so rapidly that long-range predictions are impossible. The trend in television is heavily toward putting nearly all entertainment programs on film, leaving for live presentation only sports and other news events. By the summer of 1952, more than half the film used in Hollywood was for television rather than motion pictures; this fact is even more striking than it sounds because directors making TV films rarely shoot the same scene more than once or twice, whereas the prodigal movies often try ten or twelve times.

At present, the movies have the clear advantage of color; but this seems likely to be dissipated within a few years.

The damage that television has done to motion-picture theaters has often been exaggerated, but there is no doubt that it is a formidable rival. Already,

the movie houses have learned to dread the night of a championship prize fight or any other outstanding event on TV. Most programs on television today are certainly far inferior to most programs offered by the movies; but it is reasonable to suppose that TV quality will improve, and it is doubtful that the movies will. Quite conceivably in the long run the two industries will merge.

There is an important clue to the future in what television has already done to radio. In 1951, for the first time advertisers spent more money in the younger of these media than the older; and as things are going, it seems probable that television billings may soon be larger by a scale of ten to one. Nearly all of radio's chief personalities have already moved over into television, if they have proved acceptable to the searching eye of the camera; those who could not make the change are going into retirement as the stars of the silent screen did when the talkies came along. Already, the financial pressure on radio has noticeably lessened. Good music, almost entirely crowded out in the recent hectic years, is beginning to be heard again on the networks; panel discussion shows are being resurrected from the graveyard shift, and we are beginning to have a revival of some of the courageous and interesting experimentation that was tried thirty years ago and then died out with the arrival of the stodginess that heavy advertising investment always brings to everything it touches. The social usefulness of radio seems to increase almost in exact reverse ratio to its financial rewards.

A great deal has been said in recent years about the possible usefulness of television as a powerful medium for communication in the political field. We are often told that by enabling every citizen to see and hear government officials in action and to watch political candidates being interviewed before the camera, which supposedly detects the slightest lack of candor, television can restore something of the conditions of the New England town meeting where every citizen was thoroughly acquainted with all possible facets of the personalities and issues with which he had to deal.

Laying aside the question whether the New England town meeting was as pure as we now like to think, one may question whether the optimism regarding the social usefulness of television is justified by the facts. The great example always cited is the hearings of the Senate Crime Committee of which Senator Estes Kefauver was head. It is certainly true that the televising of these proceedings in a few cities provided fascinating fare for the television audience, chiefly because of the parade of weird underworld characters across the screen. It is also true that two of the spokesmen for law and order had their political careers advanced by the publicity—Senator Kefauver himself, and Rudolph Halley, who became President of the City Council of New York City.

Yet it is impossible to point to any important political result of these hearings that could not have been achieved in other ways. Senator Kefauver became a candidate for President in 1952, but so did about a dozen other people who, until then, were largely unknown to the television screen. Mr.

Halley's rise in New York City politics was no more meteoric than that of other men before television was invented—or radio either, for that matter. A few individuals have been indicted and convicted for contempt of the Senate Committee for refusing to answer questions; in most cases they probably could have escaped if their attorneys had had wit enough to tell them to hide at once behind the Fifth Amendment and doggedly stay there.

The real and almost fatal flaw in television as an aid to good government is that seeing the wrongs that may be depicted on the television screen provides no immediate, direct and clear route to action in which the citizen himself can participate to make these wrongs impossible. I can find no record that important new laws have been written in the cities where the Kefauver hearings were televised, or that existing laws have been better enforced as a result of the hearings. Few social psychologists would put much reliance on the supposed ability of the television camera to reveal the bad character hidden behind the smiling mask of the politician. Millions of Germans saw Hitler in the flesh, but this does not seem to have given them the ability to penetrate to his true character.

We must not underestimate, on the other hand, the power of television to educate the citizen about processes that have long existed but of which he has remained in ignorance. While substantial evidence is lacking, there seems no doubt that the intensive—and sometimes, certainly, too exhaustive—coverage of the Republican and Democratic National Conventions in July 1952 had a powerful influence on what those conventions did. (The conventions of 1948 were also televised but there were too few receiving sets in that year for the operation to have had a real social impact.) In 1952, an estimated twenty million people saw a large part of everything that was done. Masses of these people who had never before had very much direct contact with politicians were disturbed by many things: the merciless use of power in defiance of justice, as in the seating of state delegations; the cynical trading and bargaining among various men controlling large numbers of votes; the low and indeed almost illiterate level of much of the oratory. Here, again, no clear route exists between the indignation that was felt at what was televised and the ability to do something about it; but I would guess that a certain amount of influence on the right side of the scales was created.

The situation as a whole in the field of communication is not as dark as the foregoing pages have probably suggested. Here are some of the items on the optimistic side that should be mentioned:

In all the mass arts, sincere and talented men are to be found who try to do work of high quality. Though they are often prevented from succeeding, their influence is on the right side and contributes to betterment over the years.

In a few cities there are enough people of superior intelligence and emotional stability to make possible the publication of newspapers of high quality.

the New York *Times,* for one illustration among a number, has never compromised its standards in any really important matter and, as of this writing, it is still financially in the black. Indeed, vulgarity and salaciousness are not at all automatic guarantees of success; one of the worst papers ever published in the United States was the New York *Graphic,* which was unable to stand the competition of better journals.

While the high-brow magazines have shrunk drastically in circulation and number, the popular magazines that have taken their place do print some material that would once have gone into their pages. Winston Churchill's account of the Second World War has been published (heavily condensed, it is true) in *Life,* not in *Harper's* or *The Atlantic.* People who formerly deplored the comparatively small number of books read in the United States as compared with the per-capita consumption in, say, France, overlooked the fact that if we include books serialized in magazines, the amount of such reading has always been enormously higher here. This criticism is no longer heard, since we are now buying a quarter of a billion books annually in inexpensive editions.

In many ways the standards of public taste appear to be rising. Even though many playwrights have deserted Broadway, the average year's stage output is tremendously superior in every respect to the average year's output before the First World War. In spite of the alleged American predilection for jazz, the interest in serious music in this country is tremendous, quite possibly larger than has ever been known before in all history. Millions of people in the past few decades have been up-graded musically from boogie-woogie to Bach. For this it is certain that the radio—and the electronic phonograph—are largely responsible.

Popular illustrated magazines, and *Life* in particular, distribute each year billions of technically superior reproductions of the world's greatest paintings, both classical and contemporary.

The best motion pictures produced abroad find an audience in the United States which, while not large, is steadily increasing; interest in them has resulted in the building of special theaters in all our leading cities where these films, plus the best of the Hollywood product, are shown repeatedly, using especially the technique of the old-fashioned stock company reviving the classics.

We are making available to the entire mass of the population the intellectual and cultural resources that were formerly confined to a limited group of "gentlemen and ladies" at the top of the social scale. Nothing like our present situation has ever been seen in any large country, with almost 2.5 million young men and women in college and with all the general increase in sophistication that is aided by our 50 million newspapers that are read daily, our 10,000 books published annually, our 100 million radio sets and our more than 20 million TV receivers.

Cultural change on such an immense scale cannot be hurried; in the

perspective of history it would be a miracle if important alterations should take place in as short a time as a century. We should not get impatient because our colleges produce so many "football alumni," because comic books outsell all other periodicals combined, or because a television comedy of young married life bearing no relation to reality has sixty-eight times as many viewers as one of the best serious educational programs. These are the growing pains of our culture; their sharpness is proof of the pace of our growth.

Certainly this situation can be dangerous. We have placed a large part of the responsibility for our culture in the hands of men who are primarily interested in making money and have complete liberty to abandon all efforts at "uplift" at any moment if they believe some alternative course may bring larger profits. We always face the danger that our new instrumentalities for communication may be employed by a plausible demagogue like Father Coughlin or Huey Long (Long came to power in Louisiana solely by use of the radio, at a time when almost every newspaper in the state was against him). If our times today called for a Savonarola or a John the Baptist, he would find it difficult—perhaps impossible—to get a hearing.

How are these problems to be met? Not, certainly, by attempting to double back on our tracks, by trying to return to a situation where "the finer things of life" are again the exclusive privilege of a limited class. Neither should we seek any quasi-authoritarian rule under which we would withhold the means of communication from anybody on the grounds that he might abuse them. We need on the contrary to push further, and with all possible speed, along the road on which we are now embarked. The cure for the dangers of propaganda, in particular, is still more propaganda, a conscious and deliberate effort to see that both sides of disputed questions are given a substantially equal hearing even when, as sometimes happens, one side has enormously larger financial resources than the other.

Beyond all this, we ought to do far more than we do at present to teach the mass of the population to detect false and misleading propaganda whatever guise it appears in and whatever source it comes from. A few years ago there was an organization called the Institute for Propaganda Analysis which tried among other things to teach school children how to read newspapers, watch newsreels, and listen to public speeches, so that they could better detect the man with an axe to grind. The organization was a casualty of the Second World War, but the idea was and is a good one.

We must, again, guard against "the cult of the second-rate." There is a dangerous tendency to assume that because "all men are created equal," in the words of the Declaration of Independence, they are or should be equal in intellectual and cultural level, or at least that the standards of the average man in these matters are somehow preferable to the best standards anybody is capable of achieving. We see this attitude appearing in many ways and places: in the popular scorn for the "highbrow," the care with which some intelligent men among politicians conceal their erudition, the low place the

poet holds in what might be called the "peck order" of our society, the uneasiness with which college professors take pains to let it be known that they read a murder mystery every night.

A popular columnist recently established a regular feature in his daily column in which he scolded other writers, by name, for using long words, demanding angrily to know why they had not employed shorter equivalents; he overlooked the fact that almost always, the long word had a special shade of meaning that the supposed Anglo-Saxon equivalent did not supply. (I am of course not arguing now that an elaborate and esoteric vocabulary is necessarily a good thing in itself; often it is not.)

While the economic basis for the major media of communication in the United States is one that has had many unhappy results and is still fraught with potential dangers, it is no coincidence that the parts of the world where freedom is at the lowest ebb are the parts which differ most widely from our present pattern. It is also true of course that the degree of freedom in any society is largely determined by a cultural situation that is built up slowly over many generations and cannot be bettered in a hurry. Amelioration must be slow and piece-meal. The weaknesses of our communications grow out of the weaknesses of our whole culture; and our dilemma is partly due to the fact that we must improve our culture by means of devices somewhat circumscribed by it.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Bliven shows clearly that "censorship" is not a simple, single operation. What sources of censorship does he discuss? What are some sources he does not refer to?
2. Bliven suggests that superstition and ignorance can act as a kind of censorship of what readers, listeners, and viewers are exposed to. Is there any relation between this proposition and Hitler's doctrine that the masses of the public can absorb only the most simplified, elementary concepts?
3. What are the "problems of overwhelming importance" that Bliven suggests "arise from the fact of the mass market"? Which of these problems have been raised and commented on in previous essays in this book? Does Bliven throw any new light on them?
4. Why, according to Bliven, are so few "educational" radio and TV programs sponsored by advertisers? Why do advertisers shy away from even the popular educational broadcasts and telecasts featuring forums and debates on public issues? What plans have been attempted in America and elsewhere to sponsor radio-TV programs without advertising? Which ones seem most promising? Why?
5. We were assured by many people that the televising of political events would make our politicians more responsible. What doubts does Bliven express about this? What is your opinion? Defend your answer.

PROJECTS

1. Probably the most available form of art in your town is the movies. Assume that in your town the three movie houses are well patronized and show monotonously commonplace, unoriginal, adolescent movies. You would like to see better movies—original ideas, honest treatment, experimentation—and perhaps to have other people be able to see them, too. But the manager of the three theaters tells you *his* only criterion of a good movie is the box office and that "the same old hooey" (he recognizes it as such) seems to keep his box office fairly busy, whereas the movies you would like to see sprinkled through the mediocre fare probably won't pay their way. However, you persuade him to try—just once a month—an outstanding movie that lacks the box-office assets of big Hollywood names, Hollywood machine-made glitter, and stock plots and characters. But he will do this only so long as these movies make a profit.

   What can *you* do to try to insure the continuance of the series? You might, of course, fill the house for the first movie or two by a flashy publicity campaign, but you realize that the only real solution is to get more people to like the stronger, more honest motion pictures. In what ways do you think this partial changing of public taste might be achieved? On what observed facts are your suggestions based?
2. Four or five students might collaborate effectively on this problem: By means of magazine articles and occasional chapters in books on freedom of speech and press, discover what books and movies have become the targets of various segments of the public bent on censorship within the past 10 years. (Consult the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* under the heading "Censorship"; this will supply you with book reviews as well as magazine articles.) Find out as much as you can about the real, as well as the alleged, reasons for the demand for censorship, and in each case determine what happened. Then, on the basis of your findings, consider: (*a*) whether these efforts at censorship are frequent and serious enough to indicate a threat to freedom of speech, and (*b*) the arguments for and against the kinds of censorship activities you uncovered.
3. The American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council issued the following declaration in 1953: "The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label 'controversial' books, to distribute lists of 'objectionable' books or authors, and to purge libraries.

   "These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. . . .

   "The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy."

   These generalizations can be tested in a variety of ways by a panel. Panel members can draw on their own experiences as users of books and other printed matter and compare these with the picture delineated by the A.L.A. and

A.B.P.C. They can read about recent attempts at censorship as recounted in current magazines and newspapers. (The *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* would be the logical place to turn to for such material.) Or they can do both.

4. Bliven suggests that the public is not getting or, at least, absorbing, sufficient general information from the channels of communication. The editors of this book have sometimes, when discussing with college classes this problem of public information, noted a tendency on the part of students to assume that lack of general information is found in "the general public" but not in people who have "had more education." To test this, the classes have sometimes been asked to have a committee formulate a series of *factual* questions on matters of current importance in economics, science, politics, engineering, the arts, etc., which were then given to the entire class. The results have never ceased to astonish the class. Try it.
5. The history of the development of radio, as Bliven suggests, may have foreshadowed the course of television and may help to illuminate it. Read such an account of radio's main developments in Chapter 19 of Leonard Doob's *Public Opinion and Propaganda* or the early chapters in Charles Siepmann's *Radio, Television and Society* with the purpose of noting any clear parallels between what happened in radio as a medium of mass communication and what has thus far happened in television. Present your evidence and conclusions orally or in writing.