

Summer 1989

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Cleveland State University

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Cleveland State University
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THE GAMUT

Number 27
Summer 1989

- Louis T. Milic* 2 **Editorial**
The New Library of the Past
- Diana Orendi Hinze* 4 Expiation and Repression
German literature and the Nazi past.
- J. Heywood Alexander* 16 "Our Redeemed, Beloved Land"
Bands, songs, Lincoln, and the Civil War.
- Sylvia Whitman* 25 Mountain Nurses
Kentucky's Frontier Nursing Service for mother and child.
- Ron Haybron* 33 Fraud in Science
Can we place our trust in the heirs of Galileo and Pasteur?
- Pat Martaus* 45 Feminist Literary Criticism
Social reform or academic language game?
- J. E. Vacha* 51 Constance and the Con
The unlikely friendship between a Cleveland career girl and Sing Sing's celebrated editor inmate.
- Poetry**
- Ken Waldman* 62 Three Lessons in Taking Off Clothes
63 The Non Sequitur at the Intersection of Market and Vine
- William Virgil Davis* 64 Still Life
64 Stratagem
- Carolyn Reams Smith* 65 Know Old Caleb
66 Killing Old Caleb For Grandma Mary
- B. A. St. Andrews* 68 The Alchemists
- Victoria Neufeldt* 69 Catching Up With the Language
Revising *Webster's New World Dictionary*
- Hannah Gilberg and the editors* 80 A Good Bowl—and a Work of Art
A Portfolio of Ceramics by Theresa Yondo
- Review**
- P. K. Saha* 87 The Verbal Workshop
A review of *The Wordtree*, a thesaurus of ideas
- Back Matter**
- Ken Roby* 95 Rescuing Bentley

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THE COVER: Germany, 1945. The bombed-out buildings have been rebuilt, but Germans themselves are still coming to terms with war guilt. See "Expiation and Repression," pp. 4-15.

Editorial

The New Library of the Past

Last week I sat in front of my computer, called up the Cleveland Public Library's catalogue and ordered three books to be delivered to my local library. A few days later, they arrived, and I picked them up. This system is certainly not perfection—for one thing, it excludes the possibility of stumbling on a book one did not know about. But it is a great help to the scholar, who along with the unwilling student, the mystery addict, and the person too poor to afford a television set—is there anyone like that?—is the only one who uses books regularly today. Reading is definitely less popular than it used to be (although writing, *creative writing* that is, is queerly enough on the increase). But now we have some heartening news from across the Atlantic. President Mitterand, that rabid Socialist, wants to build "*une très grande bibliothèque*," the world's biggest and best library, in Paris. When did we last hear of a president wanting to build a library that was more than a mausoleum to his failed policies or a repository of his memorabilia? Anyway, I take comfort in it. It shows that the spirit of the eighteenth-century philosophers is not dead in its homeland.

Libraries are special places—in a literal rather than fashionable sense of the word *special*: they are unlike any other amenity of the modern world. The United States, in spite of its declining literacy, is the world's leader in the number and distribution of libraries. We have the biggest and the most. We have them everywhere: prisons, hospitals, army posts, grade schools, high schools, and of course colleges and universities, as well as in the nation's capital—the flower of libraries—the Library of Congress. The smallest villages (like Eskridge, Kansas, pop. 500) and the largest cities have them, even though some of the latter have now converted them into media or audio-visual temples of technology. Libraries proclaim our well-known desire to rise, our faith in education, including self-education.

Libraries, however, were not always there, nor were books. Some ancient Greeks, that coarse joker Aristophanes for example,

poked fun at highbrows who *read* books rather than heard them sung by rhapsodes. And certainly the books looked different: rolls about the width of paper towels but not nearly so long, stuck in boxes or in pigeon-holes like our mail boxes. Once book-collecting started in the ancient world it could not be stopped. The Ptolemaic Library in Alexandria held some half million books. Despite rumors promulgated by later discontented librarians, it was not burnt to stoke bath fires by Amr-ibn-al-'As, the Arab who conquered North Africa for Islam. It was apparently burnt several times, first accidentally during the siege of the city by Julius Caesar. Augustus Caesar, his nephew, to make amends perhaps, was the Carnegie of his time and built several libraries in Rome.

The philosopher Seneca, who was Nero's mentor and gave a memorable speech while committing suicide in his bath after his pupil wearied of his moral lessons, had earlier announced that a library was as essential to a fashionable house as a bath. We have more bathrooms than private libraries and books are more often bought and given than read. There is even a kind of book that is not expected to be read, partly because it is too heavy, the coffee-table book, a luxurious set of photographs of kings' dog houses or shoes that celebrities have worn. Books are delights to give and receive: the shape remains the same, but the content is as vastly varied as a meal. A champion giver, Antony, presented the 200,000 volumes of the library at Pergamum in Asia Minor to Cleopatra, the flatterer! How many did they read together, though? After this, nothing more is heard of that library because all the books were moved to Alexandria and added to the Ptolemaic collection.

To me libraries are museums of a perfect kind, unlike art museums, which seem artificial, and natural history museums with their stuffed gorillas and diplodocus skeletons. I always stop in one whenever I go to another city or to another university. Libraries have the self-effacement of the powerful: they don't insist on displaying their contents; they are aware that the student, the scholar, the

researcher, the inquisitive reader will seek them out. The books modestly rest on their steel stack shelves, patiently waiting, secure in the knowledge that their contents will one day be useful to someone, perhaps even essential. Walking through the bound periodicals in a library the other day gave me a distinct thrill, especially the section where the *Quarterly Review* and the others that have lasted a hundred years or more were shelved. Although what I saw was the old leather bindings and the newer buckram backs of these thick volumes with the faded and brittle pages, what I imagined were the nineteenth-century periodical writers, confident of their opinions about the poets, the classics, the new novelists. I visualized Jeffrey, Brougham, Saintsbury with his metal spectacles and his scraggly beard, full of optimism about a world we no longer recognize. Our librarians preserve these relics of the past intellectual life of our language. I cherish them for doing so, though they themselves may take more pleasure in their modern achievements as represented by labor-saving technology.

Some years ago, the president of Dartmouth, a visionary named John Kemeny, imagined that the library of the year 2000 would be located in the midst of a region and would serve a number of universities which would be connected with it by a device like the one that permits me to look at the Cleveland Public Library catalogue from my study but with the additional feature that calling up the book would permit me to read it and even to make a copy of it. The librarians have eleven years to bring that about, but personally I like the feel of the book, the interlinings and even the book-marks and other papers left in it, which all together carry with it the spirit of its previous readers. ■

Louis F. Milic

Expiation and Repression

German literature and the Nazi past

Diana Orendi Hinze

"We will kill you all, traitors, Jewish swine, Heil Hitler."¹ The graffiti on the walls of the Hessian city of Langen is not an ugly remnant from forty years ago, the youthful gang in dark uniforms roaming the city, breaking windows and shouting racist slogans not a group of actors filming a TV docudrama. They are members of the Party for the Liberation of German Workers (FAP), a small but militant new group whose avowed goal in the immediate future is to make Langen the first German city without any residents of foreign descent. They have taken their campaign to the streets where torch marches and leaflets against the large number of aliens asking for asylum and work in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) clearly recall Fascist tactics. The party's program calls for the re-establishment of a "fatherland of Germanic-Prussian tradition," a nation cleansed of all foreign elements. "The Turks must leave," is thus one of their most heavily publicized mottoes, since according to party founder and leader F. Busse, "The mixing of races is genocide in itself."² Though the FAP with its following of less than a thousand members has hardly a chance to make it past Langen municipal elections, the small but ultra-militant group espousing a Neo-Nazi doctrine has created a furor in Bonn with politicians passionately debating the pros and cons of making the FAP illegal, a measure taken only twice in West Germany's history.

In the fall of 1985, a play by Rainer Werner Fassbinder created a very similar uproar. Written shortly before the controversial film maker/writer's death, the play, *Garbage, the City and Death*,³ has as its protagonist a wealthy real estate magnate, whose dealings are corrupt and centered in Frankfurt's red light district. Fassbinder renders this character undoubtedly Jewish, and the drama a statement of unmistakably anti-Semitic sentiments. While preparations for the production were being made, the developing scandal took on such proportions among cultural and political circles that on opening day a stage occupation by citizens actu-



Diana Hinze was born in Frankfurt, Germany, during World War II. She attended the universities of Heidelberg and Munich, and earned a doctorate from Washington University in St. Louis; for the past few years she has taught German at Princeton University. She grew up, she says, in a postwar Germany without Jews. "That there had been a Jewish prayer house until Kristallnacht in 1938 even in the tiny village I grew up in did not seem noteworthy to anyone in my environment. My family—while not pro-Fascist—kept their grumbling against the regime private. The enormity of the disappearance of a large segment of the German population only recently began to dawn on me, as on many of my generation. As a literary scholar I felt compelled to investigate what amends, if any, German writers had offered. This then is my small contribution to the memorializing of the Holocaust and its insidious legacy."

ally prevented the première. Impassioned public debate, however, did not die down with the cancellation of the performance, a sign of the electrifying effect the issue of anti-Semitism still has in German society.

How is it that a small band of militant skinheads can throw the Bonn government into enough turmoil to warrant heated debates in Parliament? Why does a carefully rehearsed drama in one of the country's most renowned play houses have to be scrapped an hour before the curtain? Shouldn't a country that has worked within the principles of a democracy for forty years now be stable enough to sustain voices of dissent, to be able to negotiate different value systems? Both of these incidents are symptoms of contemporary German society's deep-seated insecurity and ambivalence when dealing with emotions and thought patterns reminiscent of the Fascist past. It may be more than forty years since the Third Reich collapsed in a heap of rubble, but Hitler's legacy and the effects of the twelve-year Nazi regime have never been integrated into the collective German conscience.

Sociologists, philosophers, and mass psychologists have discussed this problem, notably in *Inability to Mourn*,⁴ by Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich (1967). As early as 1946, philosopher Karl Jaspers had lamented an absence of moral renewal and warned of the traumatic implications for the nation in his treatise *The Question of Guilt*.⁵ In studying the national reaction to the end of the war these scholars had observed that, confronted with the true nature of the Nazi reign and the almost unimaginable extent of the mass killings, the majority of Germans had reacted with unexpected and stunning indifference. Rather than admitting the



A statue representing an inmate at the Dachau concentration camp is unveiled in 1950. Such attempts to recognize the horrors of the Holocaust met with deep-seated resistance in postwar Germany.



reality of these events and their partial complicity in them, they mustered a collective effort of denial. This effort became what Theodor Adorno in 1959 called an "atrophy of conscience," by which "the murdered could be cheated of the only thing left to them: remembrance."⁶

Mourning and grief, however, demand clear and unambiguous admission of pain, guilt, and shame. But in postwar Germany, defense mechanisms were quickly marshaled to avoid any sincere effort at self-knowledge. In spite of these evasions, the fact remains that millions died and that the small number of Nazis executed in Nuremberg could not have committed the unspeakable crimes alone.

Those few who insisted on reminding the national conscience were defamed as "nest dirtiers" and the nation's collective energies were directed toward rebuilding. But has this denial worked? Were the economic miracle and subsequent rearmament sufficiently stabilizing factors for a democracy erected on as fractured a foundation as in West Germany? "We have to be willing to work through historical conditions that led Germany into Fascism in order to prevent it from ever happening again," warns Margarete Mitscherlich in her 1987 book *Memory Work*,⁷ a sequel to *Inability to Mourn*.

The fact that there were indeed voices calling for the staging of Fassbinder's anti-Semitic play or welcoming the opportunity to debate political dissenters in Parliament can actually be seen as sign of health or healing. It shows that there are those in the society who feel a need to bring out in the open a debate too long suppressed and belittled. Has the collective conscience perhaps not atrophied beyond recall? Was Adorno's cautiously optimistic expectation,

Immediately after World War II, Allied Forces occupying Germany attempted to educate the public about the atrocities committed under the Nazi regime. Here, townspeople in Beckum, Germany, in 1945, look at photographs posted by the U.S. Army documenting some of these atrocities.

expressed thirty years ago—that "enlightenment must and can work against forgetfulness"—not totally unfounded?

The Mitscherlichs' 1967 book called especially upon literature to perform the act of therapeutic psychoanalysis for the nation. Literature, they claimed, was the institution best suited to awaken a dormant national conscience and most competent to decipher the "complex web of guilt and responsibility" (Adorno). But this process does not always work smoothly; it can be charged with hostility. The list of books dealing in any way with the theme of the Third Reich that attained recognition in the last forty years, as well as the books of some writers who were rejected by the public, may serve as an adequate thermometer of the national mood and attitude.

The literature published immediately after the war, officially called "*Trümmerliteratur*" (literature of ruins), consists mostly of short stories that present a defeated, bereaved, and demoralized Germany whose citizens are transfixed by the most basic concerns. These writers depict the miserable life of civilians at home as well as the shock and trauma of returning veterans. Both Heinrich Böll and Wolfgang Borchert had fought in the war; their central theme is hunger: hunger for food, affection, warmth, shelter, acceptance, and love. Böll's short stories⁸ reminisce nostalgically about lost youth, the loss of innocence of the schoolboy prematurely thrown by cruel, anonymous forces into the horrors of war. Borchert's play *Outside the Door*,⁹ the most frequently performed drama of the postwar era, is a raw cry for help by a returning veteran who finds his bed occupied, his position in society usurped, and his conscience burdened beyond tolerance. He seeks to be relieved of the memories tormenting him, the moral burden of having survived when many

Average German citizens after World War II tended to think of themselves as victims of the recent disaster rather than perpetrators—a view that many literary works reinforced. (Below: a scene in bombed-out Nuremberg in September, 1945.)



of his comrades did not. Finding no place in the new German state, so busy with rebuilding and forgetting, he drowns himself.

The special appeal these literary works held for the public is easy to detect: the hero, Mr. Average German Citizen, is seen as the victim of the recent disaster; he has been left homeless, his family has been killed, his fatherland has lost its pride, he feels deserted by the regime responsible for the war, and is desperately searching for some new identity. A victim cannot be a perpetrator, he feels, and so the notion of guilt is implicitly rejected. It is significant that there is no mention anywhere in these works of the recently dissolved concentration camps or their emaciated survivors. If there is any mention of refugees, it is of the misery and suffering of those Germans trekking from East Prussia and reluctantly relocating in the West. Dispossessed by the Russian imperialists, they appear deserving of compassion; the others must not or need not be brought to public attention. Neither are there discussions of the stubborn survival or revival of Fascist elements in the new republic which permitted the almost seamless transition from totalitarian regime to quasi democracy. It was years later that the Nazis remaining in the government and in the justice and educational systems were to some degree revealed.

And yet, there were writers who felt compelled to be a thorn in the national side. Wolfgang Koeppen's books, *Doves in the Grass* (1951) and *Death in Rome* (1954),¹⁰ parade a number of characters that, in the writer's view, were typical of the society and symptomatic of its ills. In *Death in Rome*, there is an old unreformed Nazi who has wintered well by training troops in the Middle East and is preparing to return. There is the good German citizen, Friedrich Wilhelm Pfaffrath, once a prominent party functionary and now the mayor of a large town. "He had," [I am translating Koeppen here] "no reason to be discontented. His life was blameless. . . . In Germany, one thought and felt German again, even though one did it in two separate halves; and he, Friedrich Wilhelm Pfaffrath, had become head of his city again by consent, affection, loyalty and through a democratic election; blamelessly, not through corruption, deceit and kickbacks or even by the grace of the occupying forces; no—they had elected him on their own, and he was content."¹¹

There is also in Koeppen's books a generation of sons; those who adjust and assent and thus become the next generation of yes-sayers and fellow travelers, well integrated and liked. And there are those who rebel against the values, the silence and the stifling; they remain, like *Death in Rome's* composer protagonist ever on the margin, disregarded and silenced. This is in fact the fate of Koeppen, whose work could have been instrumental in a moral awakening. His books were awarded some literary prizes, but were seldom read. He describes himself today as disaffected and burned out.

There were other ways of soothing the national conscience. In fiction and in life, there was a great increase in the number of former resistance fighters or—even better—

those who had in many little ways worked from within to destroy a regime now generally considered criminal. Writers gladly satisfied their own and the public's need for heroic figures who had risked their lives in quietly subversive ways to aid those pursued for political or racial reasons. In a strange twist of fate, one of the writers most prolific in this genre, Luise Rinser, whose heroine Nina¹² was so steadfastly anti-Fascist, has been revealed as a former Nazi-sympathizer, the author of unabashed "Blood-and-Earth" prose and a "Hymn to the Führer," all published in the Nazi journal *Herdfeuer* (Hearthfire) between 1933 and 1938.¹³

By the late '50s, major writers came from the generation that had been of Hitler-Youth age at the war's end. Now, fifteen years later, they needed to come to terms with what had been a significant part of their early education. Searching for the source of the Fascist bacillus they had been contaminated with, they turned an angry and reproachful eye on their fathers' generation. Heinrich Böll's *Billiards at Half Past Nine*¹⁴ and Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*¹⁵ are the best known of these works. The latter is very typical of the ways in which this genre questioned "paternal" authority.

In the *The Tin Drum* (1959) Grass vividly evokes the world of the petty-bourgeois in the East Prussian Danzig (now Gdansk). Although autobiographical in other respects, Grass's novel has as its protagonist a dwarf named Oskar Matzerath who stops growing at age three, and whose only means of communication are his uncanny skill at playing a small red-and-white tin drum and a voice capable of shattering glass. Utilizing to the utmost the freak's perspective from below, Grass observes his world's growing fascination with the new pan-German ideas as they manifest themselves in the everyday details of proletarian life. He portrays as the most susceptible to Fascist notions the unstable, the unsuccessful, the politically and sexually frustrated—those who can't make it without the strong arm of a militant organization. Of all these losers, hypnotized by the promise of grandeur, Oskar's acerbic wit and revulsion most sharply focuses on his father, or rather his two fathers, his mother being married to one man while having a life-long affair with another. Oskar's erotically-charged Oedipal relationship with his mother casts all father figures as contemptible weaklings. A posture is clearly delineated in which the generation of fathers, who marched with open eyes into the general malaise and then demise, is called to justice, put on trial and judged to have failed in every respect. As Grass draws the German inhabitants of Danzig, they are—like Oskar's father—politically naive opportunists all the more easily fooled since Hitler's promise to subjugate Poland provided them with great ego satisfaction. Indifference, laziness, and cowardice prevented them from opposition, but cowed and unenlightened as this class was, resistance to the regime was on nobody's mind anyway. Years later, lying in an insane asylum in West Germany and writing down his memoirs, Oskar concludes, with a great sense of self-satisfaction, that at least in his own case, justice had been served: he personally carried out the death sentence he had pronounced on his fathers. The Pole, Jan Vronsky, whom



Günter Grass, whose novel *The Tin Drum* reflected the tendency of postwar Germans to shift responsibility for the Nazi regime to the older generation.

little Oskar had lured back to defend the Polish post office, was executed for treason by the Germans. Father Matzerath choked to death on a—highly symbolic—party insignia he had tried to hide from a Russian soldier during the first hours of Danzig's occupation, an insignia which little Oskar had pressed back into his father's hand where he knew it belonged.

The mere wish that the generation of fathers may choke on its own past could not liberate the young, but these literary trials did offer a forum in which the generation of sons could vent feelings of helplessness and frustration at having been infused with a poisonous substance and then left without antidote or healing. Even religion offered no solace. The churches, as was clearly revealed, had failed their mission miserably, the Pope's pact with Hitler only the most tangible proof of an insidious alliance. In Heinrich Böll's *Billiards at Half Past Nine*, the son dynamites the monastery his architect father had built. This bombing is as much an act of rebellion against the father as against the church, the ruins of the blasted abbey a telling symbol of that institution's moribund state. Having deflected any charge of collaboration, the sons emerged from these symbolic calls for accountability purged of their own complicity and claiming a right to a rebirth, a new life, a cleansed nation, an identity of their own. Yet both Grass and Böll fail to mourn; their efforts to be freed of complicity are just that, an egomaniac's scream for liberation. The shift of blame to the older Germans precludes responsibility, points a finger elsewhere, and lets the sons don a clean garment.

If it had become generally accepted that Germans should finally be allowed to feel good about themselves again, the very public Eichmann and Auschwitz trials served to dampen the growing sense of German self-confidence. Almost twenty years later, the past was revealed to have been even more heinous than imagined. Peter Weiss, the half-Jewish writer, sat through the many hours of the Auschwitz trial while gory detail and grim memories were paraded. After listening to the testimony and visiting the site of the camp, the realization struck him that here had been his actual destination. Though he had been able to avoid his fate by going into exile in Sweden in 1934, millions of others had not, and like so many sons and daughters of victims, he felt the guilt of having survived.

This experience prompted him to write the play *The Investigation*,¹⁶ probably the most forceful indictment leveled against the Germans in their own language. The docudrama simulated the real Auschwitz trial in a series of testimonies given by both the accused and witnesses for the prosecution. Those apprehended and put on trial in the play remain anonymous, signaling their function as merely symbolic figureheads. As the atrocities are detailed in retrospect, Weiss's matter-of-fact language and faithful realism are an illustration of Hannah Arendt's well-known phrase, "the banality of evil,"¹⁷ coined as she observed the Eichmann proceedings in Jerusalem. As the unspeakable acts are enumerated as a series of well-organized steps in a work process meticulously planned and efficiently carried out,

nothing is more striking than their everyday nature. And the banality—the total lack of the demonic, mystical, or mysterious dimension which could serve as partial explanation, partial excuse—is the most shattering element in Weiss's play. What evolves in the drama's flat prose and cold camera-like narrative is an image of the Nazi universe as an organism in which there were no sadistic individuals, only many tiny cogs as incapable of effecting change as they were devoid of responsibility. By placing the victims on the level of objects, or worse, subhuman creatures, identification and compassion conveniently never arose. At the trials, the lack of remorse and the insensitivity to the proceedings exhibited by the accused resulted from defense mechanisms: would not admission of guilt have had to result in total annihilation of their sense of self? How could one confront the threatening loss of self-esteem, the humiliation, except by denial, mockery, and the belittling of the victims' loss? The drama's most gruesome moments occur when the group of former SS men breaks out in guffaws as their defense attorney redirects discussion to technical detail and doubts the accuracy of reported numbers. Weiss's pessimistic view of the West Germany in which he saw leftovers of Nazi ideals complementing the denial of past crimes no doubt contributed to his play's lack of success and outsider status. As opinion polls showed, the majority of Germans were tired of being assigned a position as the world's whipping boy, tired of the notion of "collective guilt," and especially tired of having to confront concrete evidence of wrongdoing.

As 39% of the German population, according to a poll, was opposed to staging any further war-crime trials, it should come as no surprise that *The Investigation* remained something of a cult play for that minority which, in the late '60s, evolved slowly into that segment of the German population willing to listen to voices like Weiss's, Celan's, Anna Seghers's, Brecht's, and Heinrich Mann's. These were the exiled writers, some of whom had returned (several of them to East Germany) but kept their distance. They voiced their skepticism about the honesty of the new Germany and especially the validity of the pronounced pro-capitalist stance of West Germany. The old and the new Left set in motion what was to climax as the revolution of 1968, a movement arising, not just in Germany, out of discontent with the conservative forces ruling the major democracies of the West.

This stormy period effected some significant changes. The young rebels had directed their zeal against all social institutions, family, school, university, and state, all of which were still governed by starkly patriarchal authority. University lecture halls reverberated with mocking and disrespectful slogans against professorial pretentiousness, one of the most telling, surely: "*Unter den Talaren/ Mief von tausend Jahren*" ("Under professors' robes/ rest the unaired odors of a thousand years": a reference to the fact that many of the professors had been there before and during the "Thousand-Year Reich"). In shocked disbelief the older generation watched their young reject all they had held dear, reject consumerism, materialism, and the unbridled belief

in progress. The changes initiated here produced a number of sub-culture movements including terroristic calls for an overthrow of the government, but also more peaceful groups. "New sensitivity" was the motto for these groups, soon to become the Green Party, proponents of peace who rejected nuclear armament, the feminists who questioned all patriarchal structures, and the environmentalists who demanded self-restraint from industry. The concern uniting these diverse sub-groups was the fear that the democratic foundation on which West Germany rested was far from stable, that the nation might have grown up, but not matured. How did this first so-called "white generation"—born during or after the war and thus untainted by complicity—try to heal the terrible rift in the national conscience? They did not. In fact, their movement did everything to deepen the division. The young summarily condemned their parents' past deeds. They saw in the old people's fascination with Fascist ideas only another proof of their gullibility, typical of the authoritarian and imperialistic mentality they themselves were trying to escape from. This was not the moment to open a compassionate dialogue on a subject that had been "killed by silence." Rather, they were transfixed by their own immediate needs. Idealistic though they were, their concerns were different ones now, more practical, and they were not in the business of righting wrongs by then twenty-five years old. As Peter Schneider, an active member of the student revolt, recently pointed out, the militant Red Army Faction (whose members Baader, Meinhof, Raspe, et al., were to die in German jails in the mid '70s) after initially assuming anti-Fascist postures, later made a pact with the PLO and sent members to Palestine to train for guerilla activities in Germany. "These young Germans [identified unreservedly with the PLO] precisely at a point when spokesmen of the PLO had declared their aim of driving the Israeli Jews into the sea."¹⁸

If the new sensitivity failed to produce works conducive to an awakening of the masses, this probably had as much to do with the nature of the new texts and their reception by the reading public as any aversion to the topic of German guilt. The schism between "serious" and "popular" literature—ever a difficult distinction in Germany—had widened to such extremes that there seemed precious little common ground. Many of the post-modern texts starting to appear during that time were so strangely inaccessible to the general reader that they constituted the domain of a minute sect. Much of the body of post-modern literature—including Handke, Bernhard, Botho Strauss, et al.—is for groupies only. Alexander Kluge, one of the writers emerging from the student revolt and one of the few concerned with a reevaluation of the past, is better known for his films, but he has published widely, much of his work on the Third Reich. His obscurity critic Andreas Huyssen sees as of his own making: "Kluge's unconnected, discontinuous stories systematically prevent reader identification and frustrate the pleasures of literariness."¹⁹ Kluge's best-known work, *Lebensläufe* (Curricula Vitae),²⁰ is a collage of biographies of Nazi victimizers, collaborators, and victims. It reads like "a



Christa Wolf: "The question should not be: 'How do you assuage your conscience?' but 'What must have been the conditions capable of effecting mass loss of conscience?'"

series of short-circuited and condensed anti-educational novels." There is no personal style, no commentary, lament or mourning, just the frozen language of reportage, protocol, document. If Kluge feels deeply about his message and intent and takes his charge of crying in the wilderness as moral obligation, he is also skeptical about the "possibilities for opposition and resistance, let alone redemption through literature,"²¹ and his own role in this battle. But, as he said in his acceptance speech for the 1985 Kleist Prize, he intends to continue sending out his "*Flaschenpost*" (bottled messages)—a concept Adorno devised to describe the writer as one isolated on an island sending desperate but also hopeful missives into a vast unknown.

Obscurity is something Christa Wolf does not have to contend with. For the past twenty-five years, this East German writer has produced books of both profound and accessible reflections on the human condition, specifically upon the issues of a divided Germany and the situation of women in her country. A socialist and moralist, she has written with humanity and honesty. In her early works she reminisced about the lives and deaths of friends, but studiously avoided her own past. When she turned to an exploration of her childhood in Nazi Germany, however, her search resulted in what to date is probably the best expression of grief, her novel *Kindheitsmuster* (A Childhood).²² Questioned in an interview about her approach to the problem of guilt and retribution, Wolf responded, "The question should not be: 'How do you assuage your conscience?' but 'What must have been the conditions capable of effecting mass loss of conscience?'"²³ Her book explores in subtle detail the myriad devious ways in which her *alter ego*, little Nelly, born in 1929, is shaped by her environment. Scared by nothing as much as by loss of approval or love, the "gifted child" soon learns how best to dissimulate, to comply with authority's expectations and mold herself into a model German girl, a strapping member of the BDM (Bund Deutscher Mädel, the girls' version of the Hitler Youth). The sixteen-year-old is shattered by the collapse of her universe and for a long period lives in a fabricated world of "selected memories,"

repressing or denying the unwelcome remainder. When she is finally forced to admit Hitler's defeat and death, she instantly turns toward socialism, espousing the new credo with a similarly unquestioning sense of obedience. A paradigm of the collective German fate, the lesson to be learned from Wolf's experience evolves: memories, seemingly encapsulated and stored away, can assume a life of their own. Like a cancer, they can finally threaten life itself. Healing starts the moment one sets out to uncover old truths, a search, at the end of which one arrives at one's own doorstep. Not coincidentally, the novel's plot, moving on several levels of time and place, traces the stages of a trip the writer takes with her teenage daughter to the locations of her early childhood. This homecoming facilitates a two-fold task: to come to terms with any Nazi influences of that early period that have survived in her subconscious; and to find her true self, repressed then, and perhaps irretrievably lost. It is not so much the results of these mental laborings but the process itself that validates Wolf's work as one of the most serious attempts at mourning in German literature.

I believe that some of this body of literature offered to German readers over the last forty years has indeed served as a vehicle for redemption, and has found fertile ground. A newly sensitized younger generation has turned to books like those of Wolf, Kluge, Weiss, and others not mentioned here. What meaning does this changed picture have in a pluralistic society such as modern Germany's? There are no dramatic, uncontradictory reversals. By the middle '80s, most of those directly implicated in Hitler's tyranny were dead or very old, and his twelve-year reign could have been a chapter of the past, just a subject for historical writing. But that it was a matter far from forgotten was evidenced by the Bitburg scandal in 1985, when Chancellor Kohl received President Reagan in a cemetery in which were buried not only the war dead of German and allied forces but also some members of the SS. Insisting on this as a symbolic act of reconciliation performed against the vocal protests of the liberal factions and international Jewish groups, Kohl acted in a way that was internationally perceived as an emotionally charged public reversal of the policies of the German government, policies handed down from Adenauer to Brandt, and now to Kohl. Kohl's gesture—variously interpreted as callous, insensitive, or merely unintelligent—clearly signaled an end to that tentative German-Jewish relationship which had for forty years been defined by the postures of victim and victimizer, and had dictated a special status for the victimized.

This affair spawned a rash of publications, a flood of official position papers by philosophers, politicians, and above all, historians. But this "historian's debate," as it was quickly termed, has not cooled tempers by putting matters into an objective frame of reference. There have been charges by liberals who accuse conservatives of dangerous oversimplification and callous revisionism. There have also been calls for a more relative perspective, placing this issue in context by focussing on the atrocities committed by the

Russians, the Turks, the Japanese, etc. The debate has served to open up old wounds in the collective conscience that festered unattended for all these years.

As psychoanalysts have determined, mourning work may sometimes be neglected owing to the "unspeakable" nature of the loss, a loss that may be socially inappropriate to discuss.²⁴ The result may be delayed mourning, the interim being filled with hectic activity designed to keep the bereaved from admitting the full dimension of the loss. Could the Bitburg scandal, the historians' debate, the Fassbinder controversy, the parliamentary deliberations about the Liberation of German Workers party all be signaling a healthy end of the delaying tactics? Could they be considered signs of a slowly erupting awareness of the significance of the past? A nation finally willing to open a painful dialogue with its own history should be able to muster the strength to lay aside still ambivalent attitudes. The admonishing words of historian Michael Stürmer that "anything is possible in a country without memory," should then be read as just that, a warning neither to fall into hysteria nor to lapse into apathy. ■

Notes

¹*Spiegel*, No. 49, 1988.

²*Ibid.*

³Passim in: Markovits, Benhabib, Postpone "Rainer Werner Fassbinder's 'Garbage, the City and Death.'" *New German Critique*, 38 (Spring/Summer, 1986).

⁴Alexander und Margarete Mitscherlich, *Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern* (München: Piper, 1967).

⁵Karl Jaspers, *Die Schuldfrage* (München: Piper, 1965).

⁶Theodor Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 10, part 2 (Frankfurt, 1977).

⁷Margarete Mitscherlich, *Erinnerungsarbeit* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1987).

⁸For example, "Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa . . ."; "Das Brot der frühen Jahre"; "Wo warst du, Adam?"

⁹Wolfgang Borchert, *Draussen vor der Tür* (1947).

¹⁰Wolfgang Koeppen, *Tauben im Gras* (Stuttgart: Scherz Verlag, 1951); and *Der Tod in Rom* (Stuttgart, Scherz, 1954).

¹¹Koeppen, *Der Tod in Rom*, 89.

¹²Luise Rinser, *Mitte des Lebens* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1950).

¹³*Herdfeuer. Zeitschrift der deutschen Hausbücherei*, 1925-38.

¹⁴Heinrich Böll, *Billiard um halb Zehn* (Gütersloh: Kiepenheuer, 1977).

¹⁵Günter Grass, *Die Blechtrommel* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1960).

¹⁶Peter Weiss, "Die Ermittlung," in *Dramen* (Stuttgart: Suhrkamp, 1968).

¹⁷Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (München, 1964).

¹⁸Peter Schneider, "Hitler's Shadow," *Harper's*, September 1988, 53.

¹⁹Andreas Huyssen, "Alexander Kluge," *October*, Fall 1988, 118.

²⁰Alexander Kluge, *Lebensläufe* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974).

²¹Huyssen, 127.

²²Christa Wolf, *Kindheitsmuster* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1976).

²³*Ibid.*, 428.

²⁴Aaron Lazare, *Outpatient Psychiatry* (Baltimore: William & Wilkins, 1979).

Our Redeemed, Beloved Land

Bands, songs, Lincoln, and the Civil War

J. Heywood Alexander

Last spring, for a symposium occasioned by the premiere of Edwin London's opera *The Death of Lincoln*,¹ I had the opportunity to take a look at what was going on musically in the United States, and specifically in Cleveland, during the time of the Civil War. What I found may be surprising to many readers, especially when they recall that our own ubiquitous sources of music—the tape player, the phonograph, and the radio—were not even dreamed of in those days. Yet music played an important part in people's lives, not only as entertainment and relaxation, but as an immediate expression of their feelings and beliefs in that time of national crisis.

Cleveland in the 1860s was a boom town. Between 1860 and 1870 its population more than doubled—from 43,417 to 92,829. The age of the railroad had arrived; the iron industry was transforming the Cleveland Flats, ships from Lake Erie were winding their way up the Cuyahoga River. In 1863 John D. Rockefeller organized Andrews, Clark & Company, which in 1870 became the Standard Oil Company. The increasing numbers of people attracted by new jobs were changing the city from a New England outpost in the Western Reserve to an industrial center bustling with German, Irish, Italian, and Eastern European immigrants. Each nationality brought its own music to Cleveland.

Common to all groups was the enjoyment and inspiration from band music. Although there were indoor concert hall programs, bands played most often outdoors: in parks, ceremonial and military events, strawberry festivals, and many more such occasions. For many Clevelanders band music was their principal source of musical exposure.

Bands played a significant role during the Civil War. About five hundred bands involving nine thousand players were attached to the Union Army at the height of their participation in the war. According to Raoul Camus,



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General Order 15 (4 May 1861) called for the raising of forty volunteer regiments for the Union (39 of infantry, one of cavalry). Each infantry regiment was authorized "2 principal musicians [and] 24 musicians for band," and the cavalry regiment was authorized 16 band musicians; in addition two field musicians were allotted for each company. General Order 16 extended the same organization to the regular army, and later calls did so to additional volunteer regiments.²

Inevitably there was objection in Congress about the dollars involved. In 1861 the formation of new bands and the filling of vacancies in existing ones was prohibited, and the following year General Order 91 required all volunteer regimental bands to be mustered out of service.

Cleveland bands participated fully in the war, both on the battlefield and at home. Leland's Brass Band, Cleveland's foremost band during the period and beyond, was apparently the first from this city to see service in the war, enlisting in the 41st Ohio Volunteer Infantry in October, 1861. It was mustered out of service in June of 1862 at Corinth, Mississippi. Later, as troops returned from the war, the band would meet them at Union Depot in Cleveland and would march with them for welcome-back ceremonies in Public Square. Over the next decades the band was frequently in evidence on all sorts of occasions, leading parades and processions with a colorful bandwagon, which was later purchased by P. T. Barnum for use in circus parades. Cleveland's second band to leave for the war was the Hecker Band, which joined the Fourth Michigan Regiment in June, 1861.

Besides the bands, Cleveland during the nineteenth century was a regular stop for visiting artists of all sorts, and many of the great names played and sang here. Although the number of musical events dropped somewhat during the war, music by visiting artists continued in some abundance, including visits by Theodore Thomas, the Hutchinson Family, Gottschalk, Camilla Urso, Carlotta Patti, and others. There was opera—some complete performances of the stan-

Before the radio and phonograph, band music was a great source of musical entertainment. Below: the Cleveland Grays, a private military organization, marching through Public Square with a band shortly after their formation in 1837. In the Civil War the Grays fought as 1st Co., 1st Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, first seeing action at Bull Run. From a painting owned by the Western Reserve Historical Society.



dard repertoire, some concerts providing mishmash programs such as were common in that era.

As an example of the latter: in December, 1861, a visiting troupe billed simply as the Celebrated Artists of the Italian Opera came to the city. Consisting of a vocal quartet, a cellist, and a conductor (Carl Anshutz), it gave on its opening night a program which consisted of a "concert" by the six artists, then Act II of Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*, followed by the last act of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, with Mr. Mollenhauer, "the unrivaled violoncellist," also performing between acts.

Cleveland groups continued their concerts during the war as well. Besides the bands, the Cleveland Musical Society, the Cleveland Philharmonic Society, the Zion Musical Society of Cleveland, the German Musical Society, and other local organizations gave programs here. Two singing schools were organized in this period. Concern for the war showed up in benefit programs: the Cleveland Musical Society gave a concert in 1861 for the families of teamsters in the army who had not been paid; soldiers' aid entertainments took place in 1863.

Concerning orchestral music, Brainard's *Western Musical World*, an influential music journal published in Cleveland, had time for a bit of humor (September, 1864): "It is a musical fact that nearly every orchestra contains at least two musicians with moustaches, one with spectacles, three with bald heads, and one very modest man in a white cravat, who from force of circumstances, you will observe, plays a bass instrument."

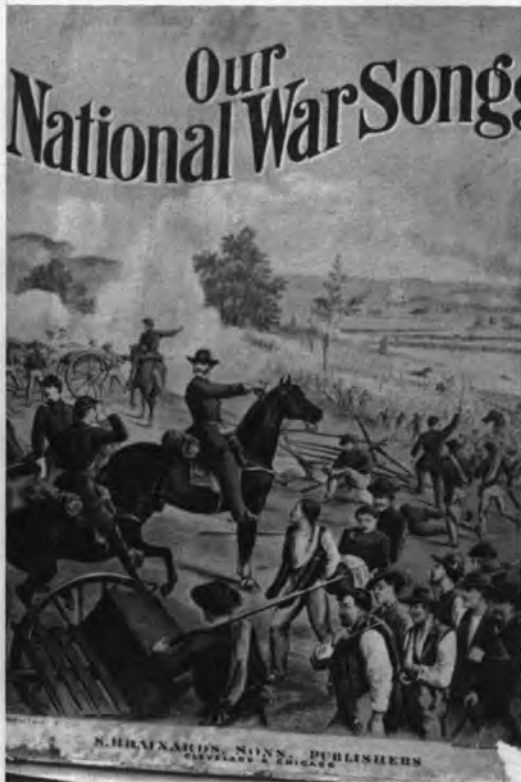
And the Civil War songs! This literature mirrored the emotions of the time and expressed people's involvement in the great conflict: heroism in the field, fear of battle, bravery in facing death, thoughts of mother; and, on the other side, the stoicism, devotion, and fears of loved ones left at home. These were common threads running through the music of both North and South. This music provided expression of basic human needs and feelings otherwise left unvoiced. A number of years later, with memories still fresh from the war, a goodly number of these songs were bound together and published in volumes by Cleveland's established music publishing house, Brainard and Sons.

During this period the *Cleveland Morning Leader* took note of Civil War songs newly on sale at Brainard's music store. At least three were also published in Brainard's *Western Musical World*, including Benedict Roefs's "Mother is the Battle over?":

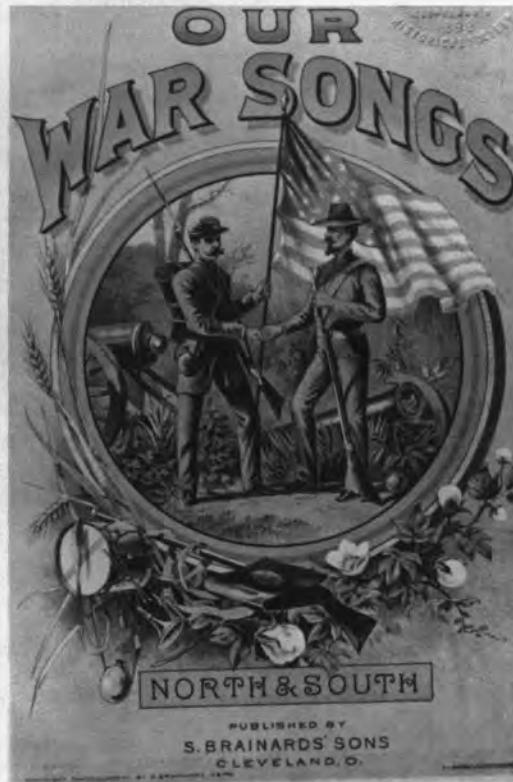
Mother is the battle over
Thousands have been killed, they say;
Is my brother coming, tell me
Has our Army gained the day?

Another was Isaiah Ickes's "The Flag and the Union Forever":

We will stand by the Union forever,
By the flag of the brave and the true,
By the glorious star spangled banner,
With its beautiful red, white, and blue.



The Cleveland Publisher Brainard's issued collections of war songs, including *Our National War Songs*, 1884 (left) and *Our War Songs, North and South*, 1887 (below).



Clevelanders could buy sheet music for Henry Work's "Our Captain's Last Words" (which were for "mother") and H. T. Merrill's "Take Your Gun and Go, John":

Then take your gun and go
Yes, take your gun and go
For Ruth can drive the oxen, John
And I can use the hoe.

Local composer Charles Brainard's "Oh, Massa's Gwine to Washington," with a rather enigmatic text in dialect, seemed to be on the right side in the war, but was not free of racism itself:

Ole massa say ole Abe will eat
De niggas all excep' de feet . . .
Dis nigga know Ole Abe will save
His brudder man, de darky slave;
And dat he'll let him cut and run
When massa gets to Washington.

Of Brainard's effort, the press ruminated: "The piece shows some musical talent"!

Charles Carroll Sawyer's "When this Cruel War is Over," written from the women's perspective, was deemed a great success:

But our country called you, darling
Angels cheer your way
While our native sons are fighting
We can only pray.

Henry Castle's "Mother Waiting for the News" (words by Mrs. S. Wolverton) appealed to the hearts of those who had lost loved ones in the fighting:

Mother waiting for the news
From the dark red battleground,
Hear you not the host of angels
Fondly circling you around?

"How Are You, Telegraph" (words by W. Collins, music by George W. Work) celebrated an unsuccessful Southern campaign:

John Morgan paid us a visit, you know
With a jolly good gang, four thousand or so,
And his cannon numbered three. . .

A great many of these songs dealt specifically with death, and constituted a kind of mass act of mourning for the approximately 800,000 casualties on both sides in the Civil War—3700 of them from Cleveland. One of these songs was Emma Scarr Ledsham's solo piece, "The Dying Flag Bearer" ("unto him my soul I yield"). Another was J. M. Kieffer's "Lay His Sword by His Side":

Lay his sword by his side, it has served him too well
Not to rest near his pillow below;
To the last moment true, from his hand ere it fell;
Its bright point was still turned to the foe.

Comments were made on other songs. Brainard's *Western Musical World* (January, 1864) singled out "The Battle Cry of Freedom": "We have assurances from officers, that in all the armies of the Mississippi Valley it is better known and more sung than any other patriotic song, old or new." The *Leader* (September 26, 1862) ran a comment about "Maryland, My Maryland": "It may be heard everywhere. . . as though that unfortunate bit of territory needed special compassion. . . It is a great pity that a respectable tune ("Oh Tannenbaum"), a tune to which so many fine scholars have got drunk in their day, should be impressed into so base a service." The Northern version went like this:

The traitor's foot is on my soil
Maryland, my Maryland,
Let not his touch thy honor spoil
Maryland, my Maryland . . .

and the unforgettable rhyme:

Wipe out the unpatriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore.

When this song was reprinted by Brainard's in *Our War Songs, North and South* in 1887, and also in its *Songs of Dixie* in 1890, a Southern version followed the Northern one:

I hear the distant thunder-hum
Maryland, my Maryland,
The Old Line's bugle, fife and drum
Maryland, my Maryland,
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum
She breathes! She burns! She'll come! She'll come!
Maryland, my Maryland.

All this activity received focus for Clevelanders in the towering figure of Abraham Lincoln, who was in the city on two occasions, which frame the Civil War. The first was on February 15, 1861, just on the eve of the war, as Lincoln was triumphantly en route to take over his duties in the White House. The second, on April 28, 1865, just two weeks after his assassination in Washington, gave Clevelanders the chance to mourn the murdered President, lying in state in Public Square.

On the first visit the President-elect was greeted by cheering crowds. His carriage moved down Euclid Street on its way to Cleveland's finest hotel, the Weddell House, in forbidding weather. Reported the *Cleveland Morning Leader* on February 16, the day after:

Upon the stoppage of the train, Mr. Lincoln descended from his car, leaning upon the arms of two gentlemen, and bowing acknowledgments to the repeated cheers of the vast assemblage, proceeded to the carriage provided for him.

At about 5 o'clock the cortege reached the Weddell House, and immediately the crowd became immense, and surged backward and forward like the waters of a troubled sea.

Lincoln addressed the crowd from the balcony of the Weddell House:

"Your large numbers testify that you are in earnest about something. . . A devotion to the Constitution, to the Union and the Laws; to the perpetual liberty of the people of this country.

"What they do, who seek to destroy the Union is altogether artificial. . . the crisis is artificial. . . before long it will die of itself."

During the evening the halls and parlors of the hotel were thronged, and great numbers pressed forward to give the new President a warm welcome.

As John Large, Jr., has put it in his article describing the second visit in 1865, Mr. Lincoln came as "the silent guest."³ His train traveled nearly exactly the reverse route from Washington, bound this time for Springfield, Illinois. Mrs. Lincoln was with her deceased husband. Again the Cleveland weather was forbidding. Outgoing Cleveland mayor George B. Senter had issued a Proclamation of Mourning. A special building had been erected in Public Square, a pavilion fourteen feet high, twenty-four feet wide, and thirty-six feet long, rushed through to completion just in time. The funeral train arrived at Euclid Street Depot



Abraham Lincoln's body lies in state in a specially built pavilion in Cleveland's Public Square, April 28, 1865.

(East 55th and Willson) early in the morning, and the column moved down Euclid Street to Erie (East 9th), thence to Superior and into Public Square. The line of march included black units as well as white. At about 9:00 a.m. a brief funeral service was held in Public Square, with the Rt. Rev. Charles McIlwaine, Bishop of Ohio Diocese, presiding. All day thereafter Clevelanders filed by the open casket, until the lid was fastened without further ceremony at 10:10 p.m. By midnight Lincoln's remains were back on board the special train, en route for Columbus.


As we might expect, bands played a major role on both of these occasions. The *Chicago Tribune*, in its report on the first occasion, mentioned "several bands. . . interspersed along the line." It is curious that none of the three Cleveland newspapers (*Leader*, *Daily Herald*, *Plain Dealer*) mentioned music, either then or during the remainder of the first one-night visit, but there must have been a considerable musical celebration. We do know that the Cleveland Grays, an independent Cleveland military organization, was in the line of march. It may well be that they fielded a band for the occasion.

For the second visit, in mourning, Cleveland provided a line of march of six divisions, according to the *Daily Herald*, with six thousand marching in the organized societies which took part. Each division except the sixth was led by a band. The Camp Chase Band from Columbus was the most prominent, standing near the hearse and leading Division I. Two bands from Detroit came next (Detroit City Band and Detroit Light Guard Band), with three bands from Cleveland behind them: the Temperance Band and the Aurora Band (both listed for Division IV), and Leland's Band (Division V).

CLEVELAND & ERIE RAIL ROAD.

TIME CARD

For Special Train, Friday, April 28th, 1865.



CONVEYING REMAINS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
AND ESCORT.

STATIONS.	Miles.	Miles.	Pilot Engine.		Cortege Train.	
			LEAVE	LEAVE	LEAVE	LEAVE
Erie			2.15 A.M.	2.25 A.M.		
Swanville	8½	8½	2.42	2.52		
Fairview	11	2½	2.49	2.59		
Girard	15½	4½	3.05	3.15		
Springfield	20½	4½	3.17	3.27		
Conneaut	27½	7½	3.39	3.48		
Kingsville	35½	7½	3.59	4.09		
Ashtabula	41	5½	4.17	4.27		
Saybrook	45½	4½	4.30	4.40		
Geneva	50½	4½	4.42	4.52		
Unionville	53½	3½	4.51	5.01		
Madison	55½	2½	4.59	5.09		
Perry	61	5½	5.13	5.23		
Painesville	66½	5½	5.31	5.41		
Mentor	72½	6½	5.47	5.57		
Willoughby	77	4½	5.58	6.08		
Wickliffe	81½	4½	6.10	6.20		
Euclid	86	4½	6.22	6.32		
Cleveland	85½	9½	6.50 A.M.	7.00 A.M.		

This Train and the Pilot Engine will have the POSITIVE RIGHT OF ROAD, and all Trains must be kept entirely out of their way. Train and Pilot Engine must be run strictly to card time as possible. Stricter carefulness is enjoined upon Agents, Train Men, and all Employees. You must be on duty, and know that every thing is right when Pilot Engine and this Train is due.
 Supt's Office C. & E. R. R., Cleveland, April 26, 1865. H. NOTTINGHAM, Supt.

Notice of special funeral train for Lincoln, with stops between Erie, Pennsylvania and Cleveland.

Leland's Band has already been mentioned. The Temperance Brass Band, which marched with the Father Matthew Temperance Society, had seen service during the war. Father Theobald Matthew was an Irish priest who visited Cleveland in August, 1851, and sparked the organization of a Father Matthew Total Abstinence Society, which claimed twelve hundred members here in the early and mid 1860s. The *Daily Herald* identified the Aurora City Band as being "from the West Side."

As Lincoln's funeral was solemnized by band music, so was his death mourned in song—in a sense the last of the

Civil War songs. One of the best known Civil War song composers, George F. Root, caught the tragic moment when he set to music an ode by L. M. Dawn, "Farewell Father, Friend and Guardian" (reprinted in *Our National War Songs*, Cleveland: Brainard's, 1884, p. 99):

All the land is draped in mourning
Hearts are bowed and strong men weep
For our loved, our noble leader
Sleeps his last, his dreamless sleep . . .
Farewell father, friend and guardian,
Thou hast joined the martyr band,
But thy glorious work remaineth
Our redeemed, beloved land.

Notes

¹Libretto by Donald Justice. Premiered at Cleveland State University, April 29 and 30, 1988.

²"Bands," *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 1980, I, 130.

³Unpublished ms. at The Western Reserve Historical Society, 1963.

Mountain Nurses

The Frontier Nursing Service for mother and child

Sylvia Whitman

At Sherman Wooton's bullfrog fry, the married men were trading insults to impress us. Courting the couriers from the Frontier Nursing Service is an old and honored ritual in Leslie County, Kentucky, although usually a fruitless one. "You're so ugly, they had to tie a pork chop around your neck to get the dogs to play with you," said the young father who had just entertained us by having his four-year-old smoke a cigarette. "Don't listen to him," a buddy shot back. "His family's so hungry they chains the kids apart. Otherwise, they'd eat each other." On the porch, the banjo, fiddle, and spoon players were warming up for another of our unlikely hoedowns.

The quirkiness of Leslie County amused me, as it did all the couriers in the summer of 1980. Eight of us had volunteered for these positions as glorified gofers, paying \$100 toward six weeks of room and board. We lived in a dorm and ate meatloaf and sinful Circle Pie (cornstarch and chocolate chips) in the Big House, the two-story log cabin that FNS founder Mary Breckinridge had built five miles outside of the county seat of Hyden. Over the years, the courier program had evolved into an institution: former couriers joined well-connected and well-heeled FNS patrons on the East Coast and recruited college students to go drive jeeps in the Appalachian foothills. As a Harvard-Radcliffe undergrad, I was unusual only in that I had heard about the FNS from my sister, a nurse-midwife, rather than the Boston committee. So badly did I want to sign up that on my application, I lied about my proficiency with a stick shift.

When Breckinridge opened her first clinic in 1925, Leslie County had no roads, no railroads, no doctors, and the highest infant mortality rate in the country. Remote and impoverished, Hyden fit her specs for a headquarters: she wanted a worst-case scenario to prove the feasibility of decentralized rural health care. "If it succeeds here, it will succeed anywhere," she said often and loudly, sending her midwives into the hills on horseback.



Sylvia Whitman was born in New York City. She earned her A.B. in folklore and mythology at Harvard University and is in the process of completing her M.A. in American studies at the University of Texas. Her thesis is on the 1930s historical novelist, Kenneth Roberts, of Northwest Passage fame. She has been teaching and writing since 1983, and her articles and stories have appeared in numerous publications, including Boston Globe Magazine, New Orleans Business, Seventeen, and The Writer.

Fifty-eight years after its founding, the FNS delivered its twenty-thousandth baby, with a mortality rate on a par with the national average. Only eleven mothers have died in childbirth, none since 1952. Graduates of the Frontier School of Midwifery and Family Nursing practice in forty-nine states and forty-one foreign countries. "Besides the district clinics, what makes the FNS unique is the large number of nurse-practitioners," says Dr. Paul Diamond, pediatrician and former medical director at the Mary Breckinridge Hospital. "I don't mean this to sound sexist, but they have the same effect that a woman does on a home of bachelors. They care for these families in a warm, fun, loving way."

The triumphs of the FNS have their roots in the tragedies of its founder's married life. Born into a patrician Kentucky family (grandfather John C. Breckinridge served as Buchanan's vice president and later as brigadier general and secretary of war for the Confederacy), she had two career goals—wife and mother. After her first husband died, she married again and had two children: Polly, who died at birth, and Breckie, who died at age four. Grief consumed her. (According to courier lore, up until her death in 1965 she tried to communicate with her dead babies through psychics.) She blamed the inadequate health care in rural Arkansas, where her husband was teaching college. When he began to philander, she divorced him and assumed her maiden name. Bitter and despairing, she cast about for a purpose to her existence.

To the dismay of her social class, she moved to New York City to train for the lowly occupation of nurse. While volunteering with the American Committee for Devastated France after World War I, Breckinridge met her first British nurse-midwife. A mission began to take shape. She studied at the British Hospital for Mothers and Babies in London, observed the decentralized care of the Highlands and Islands Medical and Nursing Service in Scotland, and returned to eastern Kentucky. As FNS director of development Ron Hallman, explains, "She wanted to do something for her state." Sizing up her undertaking, she also knew that as a Breckinridge she would have an *entrée* into public offices.

But her surname carried no cachet in the Appalachians. Who was this middle-aged lady minding everybody's business? Making cabin calls in the "hollers" and along the "cricks," Breckinridge and her two British midwives were appalled by the squalor. Raw sewage. Teenage brides. Retarded children kept in cages. For a fiddle, for a rifle, for a pittance, the mountaineers had sold or leased their lands and souls to coal and timber companies. They were just beginning to understand what it meant to be shafted. Inscrutable, stubborn, inbred, proud—the clans of Napiers, Morgans, and Couches greeted strangers with suspicion, if not shotguns.

But although the natives have not always been convinced, Breckinridge came to serve, not to judge. "The ethos of our program is that we work for social change in a positive way," says Ruth Beeman, retired dean of the midwifery

school, which accepted its first R.N.s as students in 1939. (Until then, FNS had recruited British-trained staff, but most of them returned home, at least temporarily, during World War II.)

"In our course on family and community assessment, we discuss power, geography, economy, social networks, and ecology," Beeman adds. "We always see our clients in terms of families. As nurses, we act as advocates, testifying before the legislature, writing letters. Some of the district nurses teach CPR, and one has been involved with the fire department getting fire protection in people's homes.

"Critics accuse the FNS of trying to remake the community. But we have a professional responsibility—and we also know there are some things you don't want to change."

When the Hyden Hospital and Health Center opened in 1928, patients and nurses slept at opposite ends of the floor. To keep care local, six midwives also moved into outpost nursing centers, connected to base camp by the rounds of mounted couriers. Problems did arise: to appease abandoned wives, Mary Breckinridge had to discourage her staff from dating. And accidents did happen. In 1964, a midwife's sister had her leg blown off when an FNS Jeep ran over a bomb which bootleggers had set for federal agents. But through floods and cave-ins and births and deaths, the FNS became a healing presence.

"We used to laugh at the English nurses driving on the wrong side of the road," remembers Mallie Pennington, whose guest book reads like a roster of the FNS. I signed there, too. Keeping up with the longtime friends of the service was one of our courier duties, and we came to know them by their tales and their crafts: Mallie and her Star of Bethlehem quilts, Cecil Morgan and his black walnut rockers, Sarah Hill and her cornhusk dolls, Sherman Wooton and his embalming moonshine—dug out of the earth and bottled for us in canning jars. When conversation lagged, we could always ask about the old days.

"They used to charge us fifty cents a year for house-calls," Mallie says, "but then they had to up the fee 'cuz they got too many. But the nurses, they'd stop by for dinner and play checkers with Ray." Paralyzed by a stroke, her husband lives in their four-poster bed and helps Mallie with her quilting. "And I liked Mary Breckinridge," she continues. "One time we was eatin' and she says, 'I *always* eat chicken with my fingers.'"

My first evening, the veteran couriers briefed me at the Big House. Don't walk on the paths after dark without a flashlight; copperheads can strike uncoiled. (Actually, it was a rattler we had to hoe to death one night later in the summer.) Don't swim in the middle fork of the Kentucky River—unless you enjoy snakes, mine slag, and hookworm. Don't challenge a coal truck on a one-lane highway. Above



A mother and baby in for a checkup.

all, don't talk religion or politics. Although more than half of Leslie County collected food stamps, most voted Republican. In 1978 Nixon came out of his post-Watergate seclusion for the first time to dedicate a \$2.6 million recreation center in Hyden, population six hundred, which was then without trash pickup or an ambulance service.

The New Yorker covered the dedication; in 1980 that was the only issue of that magazine that we could buy at the bookstore in Hyden. Otherwise, Main Street offered plenty of variety: vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry Sealtest at the drug store fountain and two aisles of overalls at the five-and-dime. Because the bank still identified accounts by names alone, merchants left blank checks on their counters for customers to sign.

As the county seat, Hyden set the moral tone for Leslie, which was dry, except for moonshine. When Kate Ireland, FNS's feisty national chairman, finally persuaded local financiers to help underwrite the construction of a motel (the Big House can hold only so many visitors), the planning board stipulated that no one from within the county be allowed to register. They didn't want a love nest. Yet during the 1970s, county judge George Wooton (Sherman's younger brother) "misplaced" \$150,000 in federal funds. His successor ran into some difficulties with mail fraud. Rumors circulated about dogs and the dead casting ballots.

When VISTA volunteers tried to organize a citizens' committee to oust Wooton, they discovered that 75% of all the registered voters were his kin. Even his rival shared a grandmother. VISTA failures passed into FNS lore as cautionary tales: the outhouses made out of abandoned car hoods that freeze-burned the flesh between November and March; the "hippie house," a community center of angular wood and glass designed by a Yale architect and destroyed by vandals. Do-gooders come and go, but the mountaineers survive on their own traditions. In health-related issues FNS meddling is tolerated, but suggestions in a 1980 survey included "Make nurses wear shorter skirts so we can see their legs" and "Why don't two people use the same last name if they're married?"

Cultural relativism has always been part of orientation at the FNS. "It takes a while to develop the trust of your patients, especially if, like me, you don't have a Kentucky accent," says Connecticut-born Dr. Diamond. "The only local customs I've found objectionable are some of the feeding practices for infants—biscuits and gravy, catnip tea.

"But you've got to temper your advice. If you come down hard on one thing, you might alienate your patients and lose their confidence when there's a bigger problem."



Couriers load mail and supplies for the outpost centers.

Associating couriers with the "longhairs" of the 1960s, disgruntled mountaineers almost ended the program. But the FNS tallied up the thousands of volunteer hours a year and stood firm. Although the Frontier School receives a grant from the U.S. Department of Nursing, the rest of FNS, including the forty-bed Mary Breckinridge Hospital, meets 70% of its \$8 million budget through fees (much of them charged to Medicaid). Donations and income from an endowment cover the balance. Anyway, by 1980 most of the unpopular muckrakers and federal interventionists had lost their funding. Most of us couriers were apolitical preppies, missionaries, or premeds. As long as we kept our beer drinking out of range of the newspaper's telephoto lens, we were covered by the FNS's diplomatic immunity.

Couriers fill in everywhere—in the garden, in medical records, in the prenatal clinic. Every morning the courier coordinator posted our assignments. I picked Brussels sprouts, filed pap smear reports, and transcribed oral history tapes. At nineteen, I was taking the temperature and blood pressure of a seventeen-year-old housewife whose chart listed seven pregnancies and one child. Did she wonder about my life as much as I did about hers? I doubted it.

Young teen marriages are not unusual in Leslie County and won't be, Ruth Beeman says, until women in the area have more options. In the meantime, FNS promotes family planning—to stop what a 1950s *Look* article labeled Leslie County's "Biological Joyride to Hell." That was not well-received, but FNS's low-key contraception campaign has been. In fact, midwifery students now must rotate through maternity centers in other states to fill their delivery quotas.

Although four-wheel-drive sedans have superseded the horses and Jeeps, couriers still make the rounds twice a week through Leslie, Harlan, Clay, and Perry counties. In our uniform khaki pants and white shirts, we were the spokes in the FNS wheel, dropping off lab results and supplies at Pine Mountain, picking up blood and urine samples from Wooton. Even when I lost the draw for the car with a radio or automatic transmission, I loved my routes—past the trailer groceries, the small clapboard Baptist churches where "the redeemed are gathered in, washed like snow and free from sin," and the plank bridges which sway like trapezes over Hell-For-Sartin or Greasy Creek.

Because the four satellite and two affiliate clinics fall within a ninety-minute radius of Breckinridge hospital, most women in labor make the trip to Hyden to meet their midwife. Sometimes they insist on an obstetrician, even for low-risk deliveries. Just as Yuppies are embracing natural childbirth, young Appalachians are beginning to reject it. On TV, the doctors remove babies as if they were tonsils.

Out in the field, though, family nurse-practitioners still specialize in preventive medicine and minor ailments: colds, sprains, bladder infections, and well-baby checkups. (One morning at Beech Fork, I found the nurse out back delivering pigs.) Although mountaineers are no longer born at the



Family nurse-practitioner Rose Rokas with a patient at the Community Health Center in Clay County.

hearth, they can choose to die there. FNS Home Health nurses make housecalls for patients too ill to visit the clinics.

"This is a real opportunity to see patients with a need—and to make a real difference in the community," says Dr. Diamond. "I'm amazed how word-of-mouth travels. I'll go over to somebody's house for dinner, and they'll say, 'Gee, I hear you did a good job on so-and-so.'"

Not everyone regards a post on the FNS nine-physician staff as a plum, however. At one time the National Public Health Service provided freshly minted M.D.s who owed a four-year debt of time in return for their tuition. But as that program folds, FNS has begun to recruit doctors who will stay longer—even if they have to live in a trailer. (Hyden has a housing shortage.) Since the local schools and social life also do not appeal to the average professional family, turnover is a problem. Service-minded practitioners more often opt for clinics in ghettos within commuting distance of Fairlawns.

"Here and in big cities there are a lot of similarities in health care—smoking, shotgun wounds, trauma, stabbings," Diamond observes. "Because they're poor, people tend to let their problems get severe before they come in. They're sicker than the patients you'd see in a middle-class suburb. [In Appalachia] some have outdoor toilets and no clean running water. And of course there's black lung."

For work or for worse, Leslie County is still wedded to the coal industry. The young men excused themselves early from parties: "I've got wake me up near to three in the morning to dodge them scales." Hauling loads from the non-union mines which the railroads refuse to service, the eight-and sixteen-wheelers ruptured the pavements and rattled us

joggers. In the courier dorm, our cots trembled. One night we had a small earthquake; I thought it was just a truck. Another afternoon, as I bagged litter on the road below the Big House, I looked up and saw Death driving a pickup. But he turned out to be only a sooty miner coming off shift.

Although I had browsed through all the books on the FNS reading list—*Hillbilly Women*, *Yesterday's People*, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*—nothing had prepared me for the beauty and contrariness of Appalachia. It is the sustenance of the mountaineers, part of their mettle. "Everybody got their sorrows, grieving, and when you're a-troublin', just take a walk in the mountains, look at the rocks, stand by a tree," Sarah Hill advises me. Of all the craftspeople, she was my favorite, with her cornhusk mums and dogwood sprays arranged in pickled bologna jars.

While her husband and grandsons watched costumed thugs wrestle on black-and-white TV, Sarah told her stories in the renegade English of the riffraff and gumption pioneers who settled this territory. Years ago, after she lost nearly all her blood in an operation, she couldn't have young-uns, so she adopted them, whoever showed up at her door. "We've always been real poor, but always had plenty of food," she says. "I'd sell things from the garden, do things for the nurses, and buy clothes for the orphans. But I had a real happy childhood, been real happy, that's all that matters. I had a job of work. We've always been a worky people."

Before I left, Sarah gave me a blue cornhusk zinnia. "There isn't no chance you'd come back down here to work?" she asked. I shook my head no. "Well, come back when you can."

According to Ron Hallman, Hyden has changed in the last eight years. A new county judge/administrator who used to be a counselor at the high school is restoring pride in local politics and removing garbage. The bank has numbered its accounts. Now in the planning stages, a new shopping mall will include a suite of FNS doctors in private practice, for those non-indigent patients who still don't believe that nurse-practitioners can handle 80% of all illnesses and know which 20% to refer.

"If we don't give it, they'll go to Hazard on the new roads," says Hallman. "It's a dilemma. People went off to the cities and came back, or they watch TV, and they want specialists with a lot of technology. We're still trying to convince people not to scorn general practice."

But Sherman Wooton hasn't stopped entertaining, and from the Knoxville airport, couriers still ferry visiting health dignitaries who come to study the FNS in action. It's a model. After retiring as dean, Ruth Beeman migrated to Philadelphia to direct a joint effort of the FNS and the Franklin Maternity Hospital to open feeder outpatient clinics in the inner city. For volume of experience, FNS midwifery students will now swing north to follow pregnant



Clinic visit to see Dierdre Poe, family nurse-midwife.

teenagers. Paul Diamond also moved, to a refugee camp in Thailand.

Although it was several more years before I really felt comfortable in first gear, I left Kentucky with more than Sarah's zinnia and the recipe for Circle Pie. The empty hangers on Sarah's living room wall, the white eyeballs of blackened miners, our dusk conversations on the screen porch of the courier dorm pop up at unexpected moments. Appalachia and the FNS have peopled my imagination.

"Just as you'd get to loving them, they'd leave," Mallie once told me. "But lawd, we had a good time with those nurses." ■

Photos in this article courtesy of Gabrielle Beasley, Frontier Nursing Service.

Fraud in Science

Ron Haybron

Most Americans have a high regard for science, despite its sometimes unfortunate products and side effects, such as lethal pollution and horrific weapons. Scientists are generally imagined to be selfless men and women dedicated to a lofty cause. They are the people in the white smocks whose imitators in commercials are expected to gain the confidence of viewers. So we are surprised and shocked when scientists are caught doing anything unethical.

But scientists do sometimes engage in fraudulent behavior. A recent article in *Science* describes charges that a prominent Indian geologist, Viswa Jit Gupta of the University of Punjab, has "inundated the geological and biogeographical literature of the Himalayas with a blizzard of disinformation so extensive as to render the literature almost useless." According to John Talent, a paleontologist at Macquarie University in Australia, Gupta has been producing fossils alleged to be from Himalayan locations which in fact were acquired at other places, for instance, Morocco. Talent claims that Gupta has been deceiving other scientists in this way for twenty years, drawing them into collaborations which were based on completely erroneous data.

Other examples of fraud or suspect scientific results have appeared in science since its beginnings. Claudius Ptolemy, author of the *Almagest*, which was published in the first century of the Christian era, probably doctored observational results to gain conformity with his mathematical predictions of the positions of the planets. Science historians have even questioned some of Isaac Newton's work, claiming that he achieved a precision of agreement between experimental observations and calculations from theory which was not possible without some fiddling of the numbers.

While I was working on my own doctoral thesis, I came across some published work by a distinguished scientist containing a result that seemed inconsistent with other parts of the paper. Although I worked over the data for several days, I could never resolve the discrepancy, and I concluded that something very careless or even improper had occurred. But the author was well known and I was not confident enough of my conclusions to bring the matter to the attention of others, so I did nothing. I found it difficult to believe that such a breach was possible for a distinguished scientist. The damage to science was not significant, but my disquiet was consider-



Ron Haybron—physicist, lecturer, writer, ditch digger, sailor—earned his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. at Case Institute of Technology (now Case Western Reserve University) in Cleveland, Ohio, where he still lives, teaching physics at Cleveland State University. Although he pursued the research for this article with vigor, it is for him a repulsive subject. "To me, 'science fraud' is an oxymoron. A person who commits fraud is not a scientist." He is also interested in ecology, and has followed the decline of a tiny village on the Outer Banks in North Carolina for twenty years, and expects to write a book on it—"the corruption of a simple, admirable culture by exploitation and ignorance."

able. One of the fundamental tenets of the "priesthood" to which I was aspiring had apparently been violated, and by one of the high priests at that.

The Example of John Darsee

At the time, my brush with science fraud seemed to me only an aberration, but in the past few years dishonest research has become front-page news, and the frequency and severity of incidents seems to be growing. Of course, the number of research scientists alive today is greater by far than those of all previous centuries combined, and it is reasonable to assume that the greater the number of scientists, the greater the chance of fraud.

But it is also true that there are new forces in society and science itself that are weakening the moral fiber of scientists. As a recent newspaper article comments, "Pressures to attract grants, develop drugs and publish new findings create an environment that tolerates fraud and misconduct in medical research."¹ Arthur H. Rubenstein, chairman of the department of medicine at the University of Chicago says that in the past decade competition for research funds and the need to publish to build reputations has served to create new stresses leading to research misconduct.

Medical researchers say that few of these incidents affect the public, but several cases have received widespread attention in the press and in such professional publications as *Science*, the weekly organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. One of the most spectacular is the case of Dr. John R. Darsee, widely regarded as a medical researcher of brilliant promise, who was forced to leave the Harvard Medical School in 1981 after he confessed that he had fabricated data for publication.

At Harvard Darsee conducted tests on dogs to determine the effects of drugs used to treat heart disease. Co-workers, who suspected that Darsee was faking data for publication, alerted the laboratory head to their suspicions. He asked to see Darsee's raw data. To appear to comply with this request, Darsee set up an experiment on one dog, and "to the utter amazement of the co-workers who were present, Darsee marked the chart coming out of the machine as day one, day two, and so on, as if the data were coming out of an experiment lasting for two weeks."² Darsee said he was merely reproducing lost data from prior experiments. This admission prompted a full-scale investigation of Darsee's research work at Harvard; the discovery of additional irregularities ended his academic and clinical appointments. Surprisingly, however, he was permitted to continue his research at the Harvard laboratory and was included as a co-author on several research papers dealing with its work in the following months.

Meanwhile the medical research establishment was grinding its way through an increasingly broader investigation of Darsee's entire research record. The National Institute of Health, the funding agency for the heart research in

which Darsee participated, found serious discrepancies between the Harvard data and those from other laboratories: the Dean of the Harvard medical school formed an investigative panel of professors from Harvard, Johns Hopkins, the New York University School of Medicine, and Tufts University School of Medicine; the NIH empaneled still other experts to look into the Darsee affair. Finally, nearly two years after the original revelation of data faking, Darsee was forced to leave Harvard.

While all this was under way, one of the senior scientists at Harvard, whose name had appeared on several publications with Darsee, had begun to look at the record compiled by the young researcher during the five years he had spent at Emory University after receiving his medical degree in 1974. This probe also turned up considerable evidence of fraudulent publications: "only two of the ten papers are still considered valid. Of the 45 abstracts. . . only two stand up to scrutiny."³

The Darsee affair raises many of the questions which attend other cases of science fraud. Are the mechanisms of supervision under which young researchers conduct their research adequate to discourage fraud? To detect it? Does the "courtesy" inclusion of the names of senior scientists in articles in which they played no direct role tend to shelter fraud through the halo provided by their reputations?

This latter practice was a key feature of the Emory investigation of Darsee's research. He included the names of several senior scientists on work in which they had taken no part, and in some cases without their knowledge. Curiously, however, none of them had ever requested that their names be deleted from those papers. Is taking undeserved credit for research results not just as fraudulent as the deliberate faking of data?

In addition, many believe that the scientific community is too inclined to close ranks to protect its fellows from outside scrutiny. This tendency surely exists, as any medical malpractice lawyer can testify, but scientists claim that its purpose is not to protect malefactors but to ensure that their misbehavior is handled by their peers, in a manner consistent with the overall traditions of science. The closed ranks of science can be infuriating to a reporter bent on revealing misconduct, but as the Darsee case demonstrates, sooner or later science fraud is detected and punished, and without the significant distortions and sensationalism so often introduced in reporting by the lay media.

One might expect that young scientists struggling to establish themselves and win research support and a permanent position would be the most likely to be tempted by the opportunity to commit fraud. But a recent culprit was a very senior person, Dr. Shervert Frazier, who had been director of the National Institute of Mental Health and president of the American College of Psychiatrists. Last fall, *The New York Times* reported that "One of the nation's most eminent psychiatrists has resigned his positions at Harvard Medical School and as head of one of its major teaching hospitals after he admitted plagiarizing large sections of four papers he wrote in medical journals and textbooks."⁴ The

Many believe that the scientific community is too inclined to close ranks to protect its fellows from outside scrutiny.

plagiarized materials appeared in review articles and were not attempts to misrepresent original data, but at the very least they revealed a peculiar brand of scholarship along with a foolish hope that the fraud would not be discovered. It appears that Frazier customarily quoted extensively from the writings of colleagues in his speeches and that apparently some of these materials were included in the review articles without attribution. There is the suspicion that had Harvard not already been in a period of intense self-scrutiny because of the Darsee case, Frazier's punishment would have been less severe. Nothing else has been found in his record which would suggest previous fraudulent publication.

The Need for Integrity in Science

The primary assumption of science is that there is a pattern in nature and that the scientist's goal is to discover it. At the back of every young scientist's mind is the dream of the "big idea," the kind of breakthrough in measurement or understanding that becomes a permanent, indispensable part of the scientific edifice. Such a breakthrough leads to wide recognition and citation. A Nobel Prize is generally considered the pinnacle of scientific achievement.

In pursuing this goal, scientists rely on the veracity of other researchers. In all important areas of research there are many people at work at the same time around the world, laboring with different points of view and experimental techniques, and accepting the work of others as authentic. It is neither practical nor even possible for each researcher or group to verify every reported calculation or measurement by repeating each bit of work. Mistakes or variability in the quality of results are to be expected as the inevitable consequence of differing temperaments, skills, and techniques. Researchers develop a sense of the quality of their colleagues' work, so that they can estimate the accuracy of a reported result. But there can be no question that the scientist reporting his or her results has been scrupulously honest. Not only must reports of research be as truthful as possible, they must be complete, not edited to conceal weakness in the experimental design. Legitimate science reports errors, deficient methods, inadequate samples. These are all facts needed for evaluation, permitting anyone with the proper expertise to repeat the work and verify the result. Though replication is not always practical, it must be possible. False trails can needlessly waste many other people's time and money, and it can damage the morale of those who have been duped.

Scientific knowledge is public knowledge. Professor Kohn writes: "The international scientific community evaluates and judges the work of its members. . . . It controls the activities of individual scientists by granting recognition to the successful members, and withholding it from those who violate the norms of scientific behavior."⁵ This statement does not comment on the role of the scientific community in the ordinary processes of science, but that feature is

important. Popular portrayals represent scientists as loners, working in isolation. In fact, any scientist works under the constant scrutiny of peers, with the amount of attention roughly determined by the number of workers interested in the problem.

Unfortunately this scrutiny leads some commentators to minimize the dangers of scientific fraud: "The traditional view among scientists, to which I subscribe," Kohn writes, "is that if falsehood is important enough to have damaging consequences it will be revealed soon enough, either via the unsuccessful attempts of others to replicate the work, or by inside information from the laboratory concerned. On the other hand, frauds involving experimentation without important consequences are by definition trivial and do little damage to science other than to clog up the scientific literature with the publication of fraudulent data." If this evaluation were true, the mounting concern about fraud would be unjustified. But fraud is indeed damaging to the scientific enterprise.

One is always prepared to deal with the consequences of mistakes in science—mistakes in judgment, mistakes in measurement. Most scientists have filing cabinets filled with the debris of their wild goose chases. A colleague once observed to me that had he been able to avoid all the false leads in his work, he would have reduced his work load by 90%. These excursions are part of the pursuit, and though unpleasant, are expected. But a deliberate fraud steals more than time and money. It weakens resolve, blurs purpose, saps the creative juices. In a loose sense, a scientific discipline is like a sports team: nature is the adversary. The team can always be defeated and that must be borne with grace. But to be unable to win because someone has cheated is a sorry and undeserved fate, and that is the effect of fraud in science.

In a spiritual sense, research can be dangerous to the researcher. It requires a degree of commitment seldom encountered in other pursuits. In some moments it can seem that all the achievements of a lifetime depend on a single result, and to the extent that a researcher's work tends to be cumulative, that can be close to true. To test a hypothesis, to pursue an elusive fact, the scientist must invest an unproved idea with a panoply of theory, equipment, and design, and must be willing to devote countless hours of work to it. A negative result is always a wrenching disappointment, but the betrayal that accompanies fraud is as disorienting as an earthquake.

What is Fraud in Science?

Although not every activity labeled as science would be accepted as such by all scientists, some agreement is possible. We physicists generally regard our discipline as the original and true science, with ourselves as the guardians of the "method"; but we also admit chemistry, biology, astronomy, and geology into the fold. But in recent years the term has been stretched to include medical research, psychology,

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sociology, anthropology, archaeology, and others. Increasingly, technical interests are called science if the methodology of science is utilized in their pursuit, whether there is an objective foundation underlying the "facts" of the "science" or not. Such are the disciplines which deal with the various aspects of human behavior—psychology, sociology, anthropology, and even marketing.

Fraud is usually defined as deceit or deception, but it can include such activities as conscious falsification, plagiarism, and concealment of information. Scientific fraud could even be extended to cover negligence and grantsmanship (the unscrupulous modification of a research design to suit the requirements of a granting agency). As used here, the word "fraud" means only deliberate misrepresentation. In this use, the intent is the deciding factor, whether or not harm was done to the science or to individuals. Fraud in science is principally an offense against the community of practitioners, the "scientific community."⁶

Fraud in civil affairs often ends up in the courts, especially when damage is done, and the penalties, exacted in the form of money judgments against the perpetrator, can be severe. But scientific fraud is not an actionable offense: it is an abstract crime, an offense against a collection of ideas and metaphors. In some cases, of course, the fraud may be accompanied by misuse of public or corporate funds or facilities, which can lead to damage actions or criminal penalties, or in the case of fraud in medical research injury to patients.⁷ But there is no statute prohibiting fraud in science. Ultimately, it is the scientific community that makes the indictment, weighs the evidence, returns the verdict, and exacts the penalty.

Although fraud in science is based on intent, the offending act is the actual propagation of fraudulent results. When a scientist represents information as having resulted from the application of his expertise, that communication can be regarded as "official." A misrepresentation or omission of crucial detail in such an official communication is fraud. Official modes of information transfer include published articles in scientific journals, any published material where the credentials of the scientist are represented, talks delivered at meetings or symposia, preprints of scientific articles, books, telephone conversations, etc. In this view, the way the scientist presents himself and the subject matter of the communication is essential to determining whether fraud did, or could occur. If a nuclear physicist makes a statement about nuclear physics, it will be presumed to be official and accurate. And, in contrast to contemporary politicians, scientists are not permitted to make misstatements. That is the principal reason it has traditionally been difficult to induce scientists to speak to representatives of the media. Such encounters involve questions and attitudes which don't always conform to the procedures familiar to the scientist, and opportunities for misstatements and misunderstandings arise which are intolerable to the careful specialist.

Historic Frauds

Although a considerable proportion of the science fraud which reaches the public eye occurs in medical research, other communities of the "society of science" have their own scandals and in some cases, frauds have remained on the record for very long periods. One such was the "Piltdown Man," a collection of bone fragments which was regarded by some as the "missing link" between ape and man for at least forty years. The original discovery was reported in 1912 when fragments of a human braincase were found together with an ape-like jaw and some teeth in a gravel pit on a farm in Sussex, England, near Piltdown Common.⁸ Up to then, anthropologists had been convinced that the evolution of a large brain had been a late step in human development, but these remains seemed to support an alternative view. For years the Piltdown find plagued experts, who had other fossil evidence that seemed clearly to contradict the implications of the association of an advanced cranium with a jaw resembling that of a chimpanzee.

Over the years, questions about the authenticity of the find kept cropping up: the age of the various pieces seemed different, the skull looked like that of a middle-aged person, while the jaw showed signs of youth. It was not until the 1950s, when so much fossil evidence contradicting the implications of the Piltdown bones had accumulated, that the possibility of fraud was raised publicly. Tests for the amount of fluorine absorbed by the bones from groundwater clearly demonstrated that the Piltdown jaw was of recent origin and could not have been buried for the millennia required to make it a genuine relic of an ancient prehuman. With additional evidence, including the identification of file marks on some of the teeth, it was concluded that the Piltdown find was a carefully wrought fake, composed of bones of different ages and from different animals. Current thinking about this forgery is that it may well have been intended as a practical joke which got out of hand. The Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould has speculated that the famous priest-paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin may have played a role in the hoax, as an accomplice to the discoverer Charles Dawson, perhaps with the motive of twitting establishment scientists. Gould supposes that Dawson's untimely death and Teilhard's increasing fame made a graceful admission of the deceit impossible.⁹

Although the Piltdown fraud is now remote enough in history to be remembered with tolerance and even amusement by those who regard it as a hoax which was not intended to deceive the scientific community for long, it evokes a passage from Darwin's writings. "False facts are highly injurious to the progress of science, for they often endure long; but false views, if supported by some evidence, do little harm, for everyone takes delight proving their falseness."¹⁰ The Piltdown man was such a false fact. The notion that this fraud was "only" a practical joke ignores the possibility that it could also have been an attempt to validate someone's theory of the evolutionary

process. And the likelihood that the fraudulent find led other investigators seriously astray in their own efforts to understand the origins of *homo sapiens* makes the matter less than comic.

Not too many years before the Piltdown "find," a very different kind of science fraud occurred in France—one in which the experimenter may have defrauded himself. In the fall of 1903, Professor René Blondlot, head of the physics department at the University of Nancy, while experimenting with x-rays, which had been recently detected by Roentgen, announced the discovery of a new kind of ray, which he called the N-ray. In the words of R. W. Wood, an American physicist who traveled to Nancy to learn about these curious emanations, the rays supposedly "were given off spontaneously by many metals. A piece of paper, very feebly illuminated, could be used as a detector. . . when N-rays fell upon the eye they increased its ability to see objects in a nearly dark room."¹¹

Blondlot claimed that a prism constructed of aluminum could separate the rays into a spectrum, as a glass prism fans out the various wavelengths of visible light into a rainbow. It was this device which proved to be the undoing of the N-ray story. When Blondlot and his assistant, in a darkened room, conducted a demonstration of the rays and of the positions to which they were deflected by the prism for Wood, the American managed to remove the prism midway through the experiment with absolutely no change in the results being reported by the Frenchmen. Wood subsequently published an account of this encounter exposing the N-rays as fictitious. After a few years, Blondlot resigned his professorship and the exposure eventually led him to madness and death.¹²

A curious twist in this story is that Blondlot apparently believed in his own fraud. There is no definitive explanation to show how Blondlot came to mislead himself about N-rays. J. Rostand has noted that "The phenomenon of N-rays depended on a threshold perception of faint luminosity, and once some preconceived physical calculations were available for the properties of the new rays, their observation could easily be steered by this foreknowledge." Although it seems likely that Blondlot was simply carried away by his enthusiasm and desire to make an important discovery and that this led him into a morass of self-deception, there is at least some possibility that his assistant played a role in the misadventure: "The whole discovery of N-rays might have been initiated by an overzealous laboratory assistant who tried to make himself indispensable to his professor. . . assistants are not usually given to scrupulous love of truth and have little aversion to rigging experiments: they are quite ready to flatter their superiors by presenting them with results that agree with their a priori notions."¹³

The idea of a conniving laboratory assistant involving his superior in fraud smacks of class bias, but such an allegation has also been leveled at Gregor Mendel's laboratory assistant. Mendel's revolutionary findings about heredity were based on work involving the tracing of traits in successive generations of peas. The quantitative basis of his claims

Blondlot resigned his professorship and the exposure eventually led him to madness and death.

depended on correct sorting and counting of peas displaying the various traits, and latter-day scientists have claimed that his results were simply too good to be true. One has suggested that Mendel's gardening assistant, aware of what his superior was looking for, made sure the data coincided with the expected results, out of sympathy and admiration for Mendel.

There are other examples of illusory results based on threshold visual effects in the physical sciences around the turn of the century, which more than anything else demonstrates that this was a time when the available instrumentation had for a time lagged behind the experimental demands being put on it. A combination of marginally observable "phenomena" and over-anxious scientists trying to find something new, in this period when the old physics, based as it was on macroscopic events directly accessible to the senses, was giving way to the new world of atoms and their parts, set the stage for self-deception and error, if not outright fraud.

The so-called "Davis and Barnes effect," which depended on observation of the scintillations of alpha particles striking a zinc sulphide screen, was proved to be a visual illusion. And the "Allison effect," which involved the interaction of polarized light with a liquid in a magnetic field and required for its detection visual detection of variations in light intensity, also proved to be a product of visual threshold phenomena.

Why Commit Fraud?

The motives for fraud are many, but they usually include some attempt to gain undue advantage, such as to advance one's career, particularly at universities where the number of one's publications are considered important; to get, keep, or expand research grants; to compete with a vigorous rival for status; to protect a cherished, firmly held conviction or theory; to respond to patriotic or political pressure; to commit treason or subversion.

Although there may be instances where direct financial gain is the motive, money does not seem to be the primary reason for reporting incorrect or misleading results. The underlying fault seems to lie in our society's emphasis on winning. Science, Robert G. Petersdorf of UCLA says, is "too big, too entrepreneurial and too bent on winning."¹⁴ The competition faced by medical students has been described as a cause of the moral erosion of future physicians. And the intense competition to gain academic promotion and federal research grants tempts some medical scientists to exaggerate or cheat in reporting their research.

One medical researcher, who had been first in his class in both college and medical school, claimed authorship or co-authorship of 118 research papers when he applied for an academic promotion. Subsequent investigation revealed that none of the co-authors had ever seen these papers, and evidence was lacking that the research described had ever been performed. The researcher resigned his post.

Scientists' Attitudes About Fraud

It is difficult for physicists even to discuss fraud, because the bedrock of their work is absolute integrity of reporting and because it is difficult to believe that a misrepresentation can go undetected. But the latter belief is now considered unrealistic by students of the problem. At a recent symposium on science fraud, held during the annual meeting of The American Psychological Association (August, 1987), it was asserted that the notion that science fraud will inevitably be revealed by subsequent research is a myth. According to Robert Sprague, a participant and a psychologist at the University of Illinois, "Rather than science being a model of self-correction, it appears that it is a cranky engine which needs considerable prodding from the outside to get on with the sometimes unsavory business of investigating its own members."¹⁵

A survey of 245 scientists, half of whom were senior researchers, led to the conclusion that one-third of scientists at major universities suspect a colleague of having falsified scientific data, but half would make no move to verify or report their suspicions.¹⁶ Researchers may fear that if they pursue such inquiries, they themselves will suffer.

Everyone who has been involved in investigating scientific fraud has characterized the process as long and tedious, with few incentives and much unpleasantness.¹⁷ Scientists whose allegations of an instance of fraud have proved accurate have asserted they might not do so again and would not encourage others to so act. Most fraudulent research claims are detected by journal editors or in the journals' peer review process.

In cases where fraud is ultimately proved, the process of allegation, gathering of evidence, and final disposition takes a long time, and while deliberations are under way, the suspected party may well continue to work and seem barely handicapped by the circumstance.¹⁸ The obvious discomfort of all concerned in fraud investigations might indicate an unwillingness to uncover and punish malefactors. But the process is slow because the punishment is so severe. A researcher who is found guilty of fraud is banished from the scientific community forever. There is no rehabilitation, no reduced sentence, no parole. To a person who has devoted the bulk of a lifetime achieving a position where scientific fraud is a possibility, this is the ultimate calamity. As a result of perhaps a single act of folly or fear or vanity or greed, the sinner is stripped of all the honors which attend scientific accomplishment, all opportunities to discover new truths and new ideas. It is a punishment as fierce as any conceived by the Greek dramatists and it is not surprising that it has driven some who suffered it to madness and death.

Public Response

The science community has begun to respond to mounting evidence of science fraud, especially in medical research, with an assortment of meetings, workshops and studies. But

A researcher who is found guilty of fraud is banished from the scientific community forever. There is no rehabilitation, no reduced sentence, no parole.

since the public health is at risk in some cases, the law-makers have also started to respond. Last fall, two anti-fraud bills were brought up before Congress as riders to pending legislation for the National Institute of Health. One, introduced by John Dingall (D-Michigan) was designed to remove investigative responsibilities from the NIH and vest it in a new office of "scientific integrity."¹⁹ Henry A. Waxman (D-California) promoted the other, which was aimed at requiring the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to "develop guidelines for use by scientific journals to protect against publication of manuscripts with respect to which there has been scientific misconduct."²⁰

These provisions are not likely to pass in their present form. Scientists and legislators alike would prefer that the policing be left to the science community. Science has become so complex that it is not reasonable to expect non-specialists to be able to follow or make judgments about all the varieties of fraud and misconduct which may arise. But some in the federal government fear that fellow scientists will be too slow to act against their colleagues, and too lenient.

If the scientists do not keep their house clean, others, whether qualified or not, will undertake to do so. But fraud is surely a mortal threat to science. In thinking about these matters, the question must be asked: is this wave of fraud a symptom of disease in science or a reflection of moral disorder in the broader culture? And if the answer is the latter, then how long can science continue, with its most vital element undermined? How can scientists be expected to honor truth, if society itself neglects it? ■

Notes

¹*The Plain Dealer*, 14 February 1989.

²Alexander Kohn, *The False Prophets* (London: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1988). Kohn is Professor of Virology at the Tel Aviv Medical School. His book contains a great deal of information about a number of science frauds, in medicine and other areas of research, and I refer to it frequently.

³Barbara J. Culliton, *Science*, 27 May 1983, 936.

⁴Lawrence K. Altman, *New York Times*, 29 November 1988.

⁵Kohn.

⁶I must emphasize that my use of these terms does not represent the consensus of the scientific community, unless I have accidentally stumbled onto it. There has been no international conference whose agreement I am describing. But I feel my definitions would not be rejected out-of-hand by most physicists.

⁷Ross S. Laderman, letter to *Science*, 26 June 1987, 1613.

⁸Bernard C. Campbell, *Humankind Emerging* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1979).

⁹Stephen J. Gould, *The Panda's Thumb* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1980).

¹⁰Charles Darwin, *Descent of Man*.

¹¹R. W. Wood, *A Random Walk in Science*, comp. R. L. Weber Crane (New York: Russak & Co., Inc., 1873).

¹²Ibid.

¹³J. Rostand, *Error and Deception in Science* (New York: Basic Books, 1960).

¹⁴*The Plain Dealer*, 31 May 1985. This article was a report of a previous *New York Times* piece.

¹⁵*The Virginia Pilot and The Ledger Star*, 30 August 1987.

¹⁶The survey was conducted by June Price Tangney, a psychologist at Bryn Mawr College. It was reported at the symposium described above. The 245 responders were from a group of 1100 who had received the questionnaire. Their institutions were not described, except as "major universities."

¹⁷Joan Wrather, *Science*, 6 November 1987, 813.

¹⁸Marjorie Sun, *Science*, 21 January 1983, 270. This article describes the Straus case. Straus was barred from receiving federal funds after he admitted fabricating data. Later he attempted to publish a paper which was challenged by the journal, and published after a review of the data. But Straus was allowed to appoint the reviewer himself. There was even some indication that the fraudulent work could lead to patient treatment with an unproven protocol.

¹⁹Barbara J. Culliton, *Science*, 14 October 1988, 187.

²⁰Ibid.

Feminist Literary Criticism:

Social practice or academic language game?

Pat Martaus

Feminist criticism, like all literary criticism, is preoccupied with analyzing the different kinds of stories—literary and literary-critical—we tell one another in order to make sense out of the experience of life. Unfortunately we who work in English departments, whose livelihoods depend on the production of theories, critiques, and interpretations, sometimes regard these texts, the by-products of thought and experience, as more real, more important than the living that generates them. But the world, in spite of what Schopenhauer says, is more than idea and representation, and history, culture, and society more than contexts for literary masterpieces. Acts, as well as ideas, constitute history beyond the walls of the university, and without action the critical analysis of literature is simply more "text" capable only of producing more talk. It seems to me that literary critics are presently in desperate need of a Wittgenstein to remind them that

The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language.¹

I recently attended a lecture on current approaches to literary criticism delivered by a senior faculty member here at The Ohio State University. The apparent purpose of this talk was to alert graduate students (critics in training) to the serious business of choosing a methodology with which to analyze and explain literary texts. The speaker announced that he had some anxiety about the way people claimed labels for themselves without being in touch with the disciplines they claimed to represent, and, by way of illustration, asked the students if they knew the difference between "vulgar Marxism" and the "genuine article." Noting uniform consternation in his audience, he explained that "gen-



Pat Martaus was born in Cleveland and has lived here all her life. She earned her B.A. in English, over a period of seventeen years, at John Carroll University, Lake Erie College, and Notre Dame College. Her M.A., also in English, is from Cleveland State University. She worked at a variety of jobs, primarily in the medical and health fields, but finally decided that her real interest was the use of language, especially in composition and other nonliterary forms. She is now a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University in Columbus. Although she was a radical of the '60s, she's skeptical about radicalism of the '80s.

uine Marxist criticism" was done by people like Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and Fredric Jameson, cultural critics past and present, members of an intelligentsia, who theorize about the collapse of bourgeois values, values which, they claim, are embedded in and perpetuated by great works of literature. "Vulgar Marxism," on the other hand, the speaker summed up like this: Boy meets tractor, boy falls in love with tractor, boy makes socialist revolution. "The kind of thing Stalin was very fond of"—not at all suitable, it seems, for the practice of academic literary criticism.

Although the lecturer at Ohio State was primarily interested in straightening out errant perceptions of Marxist criticism, he also included warnings against "vulgar psychoanalysis" and "vulgar feminism." Both of these methods of reading and interpreting literature, it seems, are equally liable to be abused if applied too literally to the critic's "job of work." As the graduate students filed out of the auditorium, they did not appear more enlightened than when they walked in. The speaker's observations had been nodded in response to and set down in notebooks, but I'm sorry to report that it did not occur to this next generation of academic literary critics to challenge the questionable distinction between what really takes place in society and what interpreting literature consists of, or the idea that cultural criticism is anything more than a special "theoretical" way of talking about things.

The lecturer's remarks certainly raise a number of questions for me, probably because I'm not—and don't plan to become—a literary critic. I wonder, for instance, what connection there is between academic cultural criticism (the "genuine article") and the various "vulgar" ideologies that circulate within culture itself. In particular, I wonder if feminist criticism—an endeavor that the majority of my female and some of my male colleagues claim to be engaged in—is a *bona fide* political activity, aimed at altering the social or economic balance of power in society, or a trendy institutional *vocabulary*, merely a conceptual map which organizes and generates slick analyses of literary texts for publication in academic journals. When someone claims to be a feminist critic, claims, for example, to be reading a novel or a poem or a play from a feminist viewpoint, what exactly does she—or he—mean? Are there now new ways to read old works, and urgent social or political reasons for doing so, as the title of an article by feminist critic Christine Froula seems to suggest: "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy"? Can you, gentle reader, guess that this writer intends to redress the inequality of women with a brilliant new interpretation of *Paradise Lost*? How real is the possibility of improving the socioeconomic status of women by changing the reading habits of students of literature? If "vulgar Marxism" is concerned with tractors and revolutions, is "vulgar feminism" concerned with daycare centers, abortion laws, equal pay for equal work, and maternity leave. . . the kind of thing that Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem are fond of? In short, if "genuine feminism" is

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mainly a cultural critique, an intellectual posture available to those in the academy, then how can it serve beyond the university?

Perhaps one way to shed light on feminist literary criticism is to survey some of the issues that feminist critics write about. Three positions within feminist criticism are evident: 1) out and out repudiation of the masculine critical tradition and its "literary canon"; 2) "*écriture féminine*," a feminist brand of deconstruction which insists on the linguistic nature of gender differences; and, 3) the curricular reorganization of English studies to allow and accommodate the actual production of literary works and critical analyses by women in the academy. A review of each of these positions might reveal the revolutionary potential, if any, of feminist criticism and those most likely to benefit from the work of feminist critics.

Some separatist feminist critics advocate abandoning the study of the traditional literary canon, those works of literature which comprise the cultural heritage of the humanist tradition, and substituting women's literature as a suitable corpus for critical discussion. Rather than situate women's writing within the traditional canon (Homer to Hemingway), where it is doomed to either benign neglect or actual condemnation, these critics propose the excavation and rehabilitation of "lost" women writers and the construction of a parallel literary tradition.² Recent examples include the publication of nineteenth-century texts by black women writers, and a new interest in "sentimental novels" written by British and American women.

But such an enterprise also demands the establishment of new critical criteria against which to evaluate this corpus, and the efforts of many feminist critics to articulate and justify alternative ways to understand and judge women's literature are not always convincing. Nancy Miller has argued, for example, that the plots in women's fiction should not be measured for "verisimilitude" (a likeness to external or public events), or against the "motivational ideology of male-dominated fiction" because women's plots are motivated by some essentially feminine trait, reflecting a stronger attunement to subjective experience.³ Episodes or events that may seem implausible to male readers—Jane Eyre returns to a blind Rochester and her love restores his vision—may be entirely appropriate in the structure of female fantasy.

What is obviously at stake in the "plausibility" issue is what counts as a good story. While there may be some differences in the structure of female and male fantasy, as Freud observed in "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming" (1908), the expectations that readers of either sex bring to fiction are thoroughly conditioned by history, social practices, and cultural values as well as by the "subjective experience" of them. This approach to women's writing characterizes feminine motivation as something private, mysterious, and outside custom and convention. It relies on intuition as the sole tool of critical analysis, but it does not provide criteria for evaluating what makes a story good or

the relative merit of women writers: what distinguishes George Eliot from Danielle Steel or Helen Steiner Rice from Emily Dickinson remains a mystery without recourse to the formal principles of traditional critical analysis.

While the separatists celebrate irreconcilable gender differences and urge the reading of alternative texts, feminist deconstructors, under the spell of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, reject altogether the distinction between "man" and "woman." They claim that "woman" is a figure of speech and "female" a grammatical construct, a conceptual category created by the formal properties of language, not a separate experience of reality. Culture has determined that "male" means logical, rational, reasonable, whereas "female" means unknowable, unsayable, irreducible, essentially formless, perhaps nonlinguistic. This brand of feminist criticism, a subsidiary of the contemporary French philosophy known as "deconstruction," turns on the paradoxical relation between the Word and the World, language and reality. "*Écriture féminine*" is a method of reading which simultaneously attempts to undermine our ability to represent human experience in language and to exploit the notion that the structure of language reflects the structure of the physical world.

Generally occupied with demonstrating how literary, philosophical, and critical texts have misrepresented or repressed the inchoate ineffable "feminine," feminist deconstruction works at subverting prior interpretations of traditional works and is, therefore, aimed at a special audience, one already familiar with (and often responsible for) a large body of literary criticism and theory. The overtly polemical nature of this writing, the allusiveness, the specialized vocabulary, linguistic snobbery, and insistence on the hopelessness of ever settling anything by talking or writing about it place "*écriture féminine*" outside the ken of average readers, who are mercifully unaware of the casuistry of academic critics.

In its incessant wordplay (take, for example, this explanation by critic Mary Jacobus: "The French insistence on '*écriture féminine*' . . . asserts not the sexuality of the text but the textuality of sex."⁴ Get it?) feminine deconstruction is far less revolutionary than its proponents believe because such criticism lends itself to little more than the formal analysis of literary and literary-critical texts—not, to be sure, to decide what they mean, but to show that they can't possibly mean anything at all. Furthermore, feminist deconstruction rejects, and thus undermines, the tension between feminist and "patriarchal" discourse: the idea of gender difference and its implications must matter if feminism is to make any kind of sense. While deconstruction destabilizes the meaning of texts, thereby creating the conditions for feminist reinterpretation, that is, for the production of articles and books by feminist critics, it certainly doesn't provide any support for the actual social, economic, or political formations which can alter the conditions of life and work

[Feminist deconstructors claim that "woman" is figure of speech and "female" a grammatical construct, a conceptual category created by the formal properties of language. . .

for women. I frankly doubt that the sisters at National Organization for Women know (or knowing, care) anything about this esoteric academic movement.

Whereas female deconstructors conceive feminist criticism as a subversive activity—the rewriting of canonical texts in light of contemporary critical theory—and the separatists conceive it as the actual construction of a separate but equal canon, other feminist critics—let's call them "agitators"—propose an openly political reinterpretation of the "Great Books" along with the introduction of "marginal" texts by women and other neglected authors into the college curriculum. But opening the canon to include texts previously ignored cannot, in their opinion, be considered a phenomenon separate from opening the academy to include women faculty. Feminism, in other words, is not simply a way of reading and analyzing, or a theoretical posture; it is a historical development which has forced the reexamination of the structure of knowledge and the system of power within the profession of literary studies. This development has been precipitated by the emergence of women (like Venus from the sea) on university payrolls.

Instead of rejecting the traditional canon or insisting on some mysterious subversive feminine style of critical writing, feminists who undertake a political critique of their own profession question the values which are embodied in novels, poems, and plays we read and which are preserved and perpetuated by a "priestly class" of academics, specially trained to explain their meaning and value to others. Rather than assume the mantle of mystification literary criticism shrouds itself in, feminist critics should, they believe, attempt to demystify literary works and the conditions under which they are produced by pointing out the connections between cultural and religious ideals, on the one hand, and historical and economic realities, on the other. For example, Christine Froula's interpretation of *Paradise Lost*, which I mentioned earlier, equates Milton's cultural and poetic authority with the spiritual authority of Christian doctrine.⁵ By reading the historical, social, and economic contexts surrounding the great poem and not just the poem itself, the critic reveals tacit assumptions and biases that operate within the cultural milieu of the artist, and explains why some works achieve "immortality" while others are ignored and eventually forgotten.

The goal of this approach to literary criticism, possibly the only one worth thinking about, is a reevaluation, not of isolated texts or critical principles, but of cultural values and social practices, in general, and of the intellectual productions of women in the literary and academic marketplaces, in particular. Feminist criticism, practiced this way, is, perhaps, capable of altering the nature of academic literary criticism, broadening the scope of literary discussion, and, not least important, giving women a unified political

This development has been precipitated by the emergence of women (like Venus from the sea) on university payrolls.

position of their own within English departments. Also, despite the fact that it is a local force operating within one profession, that profession's influence is wide-ranging.

Feminist criticism, then, under certain conditions, may provide professional academic women and the students they teach with a method of analyzing and a strategy for talking about literature which departs radically from the traditional "Great Books" approach without altogether discarding or subverting the worthwhile elements of the tradition. And yet outside the academy, even an openly political feminist criticism offers little of value to what used to be called the "women's movement." While it holds the possibility of providing jobs for and insuring a steady stream of publications from academic women, feminist literary criticism cannot become an active force for social change unless feminist critics themselves actively participate in the struggles of all women for equal pay for equal work, daycare, legal abortion, maternity leave. . . all those vulgar issues which supposedly stand outside the magical circle of pure theory. ■

Notes

¹Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), I, 119.

²Nancy K. Miller, "Emphases Added: Plots and Plausibilities in Women's Fiction," *The New Feminist Criticism*, ed. Elaine Showalter (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 339-359.

³Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722-1782* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

⁴Mary Jacobus, *Reading Women: Essays in Feminist Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

⁵Christine Froula, "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy," *Critical Inquiry* 10 (1983), 321-347.

Constance and the Con

*The unlikely friendship
between a Cleveland career
girl and Sing Sing's
celebrated editor-in-mate*

J. E. Vacha

For Constance R. Nelson, it must have seemed that 1924, at long last, was going to be her year. True, she was pushing thirty, but she had a promising job, a sympathetic employer, and the prospects of fulfilling her hopes for a writing career. Finally, she had acquired a new correspondent—one who, in his time, had fully tasted the exciting life of great affairs of which she dreamed.

She was born and raised in Wisconsin, but the war had brought her to Cleveland as a chief yeoman in the Navy, assigned as secretary to the commanding officer of the U. S. Naval Reserve Station. She lingered in Cleveland following the war, serving as secretary to the president of the Cleveland-Erieau Steamship Co. In 1921 she moved to the editorial department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. She had studied journalism at the University of Wisconsin and had had some newspaper experience before the war, and by the end of that year she had been named editor of the bank's house organ, *Federal Reserve Notes*. Constance was back in her chosen field, and working in one of the country's largest cities.

She moved around a lot in those years—at least annually, according to old city directories—but always she lived in the general reaches of Euclid Avenue, in a rectangle bounded by East 75th and East 124th. It was a residential area then favored by many local literati, newspapermen, and writers such as novelist Archie Bell and poet/columnist Edwin Meade Robinson. Occasionally Constance managed to snare a guest contribution from one of these luminaries for the *Federal Reserve Notes*.

Then one day—it must have been soon after the opening of the new Federal Reserve Building on August 27, 1923—Constance was given a reading tip by a fellow employee who knew of her journalistic ambitions. The book was



John Vacha teaches history in the Cleveland Public School system, currently at Lincoln-West High School. His B.A. and M.A., both in history, are from Western Reserve (now Case Western Reserve) University. He originally came across the Chapin story when he was researching the history of journalism. "When I heard about the Constance angle, I decided I'd like to retell the story as fully as possible from her perspective, making it partly a Cleveland story." Vacha lives in Lakewood, Ohio, with his wife Ruta and several dogs and cats, and spends "a good deal of time thinking about retirement, a year or so away."

Charles Chapin's Story (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1920), written from a cell in New York's Sing Sing prison by a confessed wife-killer and former editor of the famous *New York World*. Constance did more than just read the book. She wrote to the author, telling him of her career and soliciting his advice. Chapin replied in friendly and flattering tones which invited further correspondence. "You surely do not need a college journalistic course," the old pro reassured her. "Experience is a far better teacher; talent, ambition, energy you already possess. You'll get none of these from text books." Soon Constance was sending Chapin copies of *Federal Reserve Notes* for criticism. ("Give more space to personalities," he advised.) When another trade publication, *The Cleveland Banker*, was added to her responsibilities, she sent that on as well.

Things were beginning to happen. Constance was invited to chair the program committee of the Women's Advertising Club and was invited to participate in an American Institute of Banking debate in Chicago. She seemed to attribute this change in her fortunes to the benevolent influence of Chapin. Scheduled to address a publications conference during the American Institute of Banking Convention in Baltimore, she opened her speech by quoting the convict, ahead of Samuel Butler and Edward Bok, as an exemplar of "successful editing." Writing an article about the Federal Reserve's massive new Renaissance palace for an outside publication, she observed a bank requirement of anonymity by borrowing, with permission, her pen pal's name for a pseudonym, signing herself "Constance Chapin."

As for Chapin, he also seemed to blossom forth under the stimulation of his guidance of his young protégée. "A thousand years old, but with heart of twenty and the enthusiasm of callow youth," he had described himself in June. "Park Row would never recognize me."

* * *

He was probably right. For twenty years, Park Row had known him as "Hardboiled Charlie." Whenever newspapermen would later speculate on the model for the tough city editor in the Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur play, *The Front Page*, nominations generally stopped when they yielded the name of Charles E. Chapin—not necessarily because that was the correct answer, but because it opened up such a font of anecdote as to deflect the course of the conversation. Next to Hardboiled Charlie, the fictitious Walter Burns looked like a Milquetoast. There were other nicknames as well. Another favorite was "Simon Legree," not too original, but doubly appropriate—it seems that Chapin had actually played the role during an early fling in the theater. In the telegraphic code of *World* owner Joseph Pulitzer, for reasons best known to that eccentric, Chapin was "Pinch." "Something of Caligula" was offered by one of his reporters, while another contributed "gnarled genius."



Constance R. Nelson (from a photo in one of the *Federal Reserve Notes* she edited, provided by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland).

"I used to think him a sort of devil sitting on enthroned power in the *World* office and making Park Row gutters flow red with the blood of ambitious young men," later recalled one of his reporters. His flat-topped desk, as was common at the time, really did sit on a raised platform in the middle of the city room. It was there he sat and performed one of his favorite routines: after extracting two for himself and two for the drama critic, he meticulously ripped to shreds the remainder of the complimentary opening night theater tickets which other city editors normally passed on to their reporters. When a young reporter once returned to the office bruised and battered by a non-cooperative source, Chapin instructed him to "Go back and tell that son of a bitch he can't intimidate me!"

One of Chapin's most brilliant reporters, Irvin S. Cobb, sketched a memorable portrait of his boss, from his ophidian eyes to his "straight harsh slash" of a mouth. When excited, his "high-pitched and nasal [voice] rose to a sound that was partly a whine and partly a snarl." A reformed drinker, Chapin constantly craved sweets as a substitute for alcohol, and kept a steady procession of pies, preserved fruits, and other sugary concoctions flowing from the lunch room to his desk. Underneath the somewhat dandified dress and neatly-trimmed mustache, Cobb claimed that he could recognize "a man who was marked for tragedy." When Chapin called in sick one day, it was Cobb who was credited with the famous remark, "I trust it's nothing trivial."

Yet Cobb called Chapin "the best city editor I ever worked for." Stanley Walker, later city editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, named Chapin "Quite possibly. . . the ablest city editor who ever lived," though he inserted the qualifier, "viewed as a machine." That was precisely the self-image drawn by Chapin for Constance: "I was myself a machine, and the men I worked with were cogs. The human element never entered into the scheme of getting out the paper."

Chapin had taken over the city desk on the eve of the Spanish-American War, working for the *Evening World*, not the morning *World* which Pulitzer guided so zealously from his yacht. As long as the *Evening World* made money, Pulitzer let it alone. Chapin intimated that the half million a year cleared by the more sensational *Evening World* during his tenure helped to underwrite the liberalism of the morning edition.

Unmistakably, Chapin had innate news sense. He didn't know the *Titanic* was going to sink, but when it did, he remembered that an old colleague had sailed aboard the nearby *Carpathia* and arranged by wire to have a scoop ready on the survivors. When the French steamer *La Bourgogne* sank and no passenger lists were available, Chapin found one in his pocket which he had picked up while bidding goodbye to some friends.

Cobb described him during the big stories: "Sitting there at his desk, far remote from the scene of actual operations and yet mindful of their progress and their development, he



Charles ("Hardboiled Charlie") Chapin

suggested a spider in the heart of its web." Occasionally, the tension penetrated his professional *sang-froid*. Reporters assembling the story of the *General Slocum* disaster, in which a burning excursion steamer filled the East River with the bodies of a thousand women and children, swore that Chapin was humming happily as he scurried around the city room checking on their progress. "What a wonderful thing," he chortled when a *World* photographer brought in a picture of the attempted assassination of New York Mayor William Gaynor. "Look, blood all over him. And exclusive, too."

He wasn't entirely without a sense of humor. A reporter on the court house beat, who missed his ferry and called from dockside as if he were actually on the job, was told to "Cover the flood" because, Chapin said, he could clearly hear the boat whistles all the way up at the Criminal Court building. Another reporter hadn't heard of Chapin's ban on the phrase "melancholy waters," which had been enjoying a vogue in the *World*. Summoning the offender up to his desk, Chapin asked him to kindly explain just how the waters of the Hudson could be melancholy. "Maybe because they've just run past Yonkers," he replied. That appealed to Chapin, and the reporter survived.

Not all were that lucky. It wasn't for his wit or his competence that most of his men remembered Hardboiled Charlie, but for his cruelty. He was commonly described as sadistic, most aptly for his frequent exercise of the administrative prerogative of firing. "That's the one hundred and eighth man I've fired!" he announced from his dais after one of these terminations, for no apparent reason except to demonstrate that he was keeping count. He even fired the publisher's son (who had offered the novel excuse for tardiness that his butler had failed to wake him). The old man let it stand.

Some suggested lust for power as a motive, but one of his victims claimed that Chapin indulged in cruelty "solely because [he] enjoyed the process." One reporter displayed a bandaged foot to excuse his lateness, explaining that he had scalded it in the bathtub. Chapin didn't fire him until several days later, explaining that he had wanted to see how long the reporter could fake his limp. Another, calling in late with a story, was grilled in the following manner:

"You say you're Smith?"

"Right."

"And you say you work for the *Evening World*?"

"Right."

"You're wrong. Smith was fired an hour ago."

Chapin developed the process of firing into a diabolical art. "He was accused of waiting until men got into debt, or into other trouble, and then discharging them," said one reporter. "The gray-haired, the weak, and the unfortunate were always his especial victims," added another. A doctor once called Chapin to tell him one of his reporters had nearly drowned trying to get a story and to ask if the editor had a message for the victim. "You can tell him he's fired," snarled Hardboiled Charlie. Small wonder that yet another

of Chapin's men could later write to Lewis Lawes, Warden of Sing Sing, "If you enjoy him I hope you keep him long and carefully."

* * *

Charlie occasionally expressed concern to Constance over the effect his editorial reputation might have on her opinion of him, for his epistolary tone had eased quickly and smoothly from the professional and avuncular to something more personal. Within two months he was addressing her as "honey girl" and "Girl o' Mine."

"Do you know there is a very beautiful rose that must have been named after you?" he asked (Rose was her middle name). "Yes, 'Constance' is one of the favorites among the hundred or more varieties we have."

When it came to roses Chapin knew what he was talking about, since he was by then launched into his second career, as the "Rose Man" of Sing Sing, started after the termination of his first prison assignment to the Sing Sing newspaper, the *Bulletin*. As editor, Chapin had begun to attract so much attention to the *Bulletin* that nervous state authorities had decided that perhaps it would be better if public funds were devoted to more constructive, less controversial pursuits. As a result, Chapin turned his attention to the prison yard. Encouraged by Warden Lawes and the Catholic chaplain, he got the lawn into shape and began planting flowers. There were no funds, so Chapin used his writing skills to wheedle seeds, bulbs, shrubbery, and tools from nurseries, horticultural magazines, and other patrons.



Left: Charles Chapin's greenhouse and rose garden in Sing Sing prison. Below: Sing Sing prison, overlooking the Hudson River in New York (photo taken in 1913).



As Warden Lawes analyzed it, "He had to do something, and that something had to be identified with Chapin, peculiarly his own." Soon Sing Sing became an arboreal showcase, and Hardboiled Charlie acquired a national reputation as a gardening authority, especially on the roses he favored.

Several old buildings were converted into greenhouses for Chapin's use, including the former morgue next to the old Death House, which probably appealed to his mordant humor. Chapin was given airier quarters nearer his greenhouses and several trusties to boss, including an accomplished personal cook and general assistant, Larry. He began assembling an impressive library of gardening books and building a bird house to complement the gardens. It was not simply as an anonymous number, but as a kind of convict baron in his prison fief that Chapin could receive Constance when she came to visit him.

He and Constance were exchanging several letters a week. She sent a picture, and he found himself "almost . . . regretting that I couldn't be content to have you for my niece, or my daughter by adoption." As the meeting, set to take place in June, 1924, approached, he tried to fend against disappointment. "Age and white hair were never so embarrassing as now," he worried.

The sixty-six-year-old Chapin met her in the visiting room with a yellow Constance rose. He saw a wholesome, not unattractive young woman—"a large, warm-hearted, impulsive, nature-loving, fresh-faced girl of Scandinavian blood," in the words of a contemporary. They shyly shook hands, kissed, then cried, and went for a tour of Chapin's domain.

The meeting certainly did nothing to abate the ardor of Chapin's postal courtship. Constance's letters haven't survived, but Chapin's imply the existence of a mutual understanding regarding the future. All depended on Chapin's hopes for receiving a pardon from New York's governor, Al Smith, whom Chapin referred to as the "Man Behind the Fountain Pen." Chapin indulged in fantasies of Constance and himself sailing together on a windjammer "to the Land of Beginning Again" or sharing a "cabin in the deep woods on the edge of a lake, high up in the mountains." Sometimes the fantasies grew more prosaic, as when Chapin wished he had Constance there to rub in his "'Musterole,' a preparation [liniment] that is put up in Cleveland."

Chapin's letters struck a balance between playful intimacy and frank proprietorship. "Not an ounce, my dear," he scolded when she expressed a wish to lose twenty pounds from her generous figure. "You are just right—quite all right." He approved of her refusal to smoke and promised to "raise merry hell" if she succumbed to the flapperish fad of bobbed hair. Once Chapin chanced a *double entendre*, promising her not only a "Sunday letter" but "all else I have to give that you will accept. Interpret that any way you like."

Constance's response wasn't calculated to cool Chapin's fervor. She continued her visits, stopping next on her way home from a Baltimore convention. Over the next year or so, there would be eight meetings, a schedule that must

FEDERAL RESERVE NOTES



FEDERAL RESERVE NOTES



Covers of two issues of Federal Reserve Notes from 1923, edited by Constance Nelson. Courtesy of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.

have put a strain on her resources. Her career continued to prosper, though, as one of her magazines placed first out of 250 entries in a 1925 banking convention at Kansas City. She won the favorable notice of David C. Wills, chairman of the Fourth District Federal Reserve. She also formed a friendship with Cleveland's printer-philosopher, William Feather, whose own magazine of philosophical commentary also won Chapin's praise. He did not resent the fact that Constance sought Feather's professional guidance. "I like his face. . . and I like his philosophies," he wrote. "I can well understand that you value his friendship."

What worried Chapin more were the stories that kept cropping up about his editorial career. He directed Constance's attention to a rare sympathetic article, which told how Chapin once ostentatiously refused to contribute to a collection on behalf of a deceased *World* reporter, but quietly sent the widow a personal check to cover funeral expenses. One thing he avoided bringing up was any mention of the crime that had sent him to Sing Sing. He could not have hoped to hide it, since the facts were in his book. Constance was fully aware that in the early hours of September 16, 1918, Chapin had taken a gun and mortally shot his wife while she slept.

* * *

By all accounts it hadn't been an unhappy union. Chapin, the tiger of the city room, seems to have been a pussycat on the hearth. Nellie Chapin hadn't needed a whip to tame him; she possessed the equally effective weapon of helplessness.

He had met her during his brief theatrical career in the Midwest, when they were both members of a touring troupe operating out of Chicago. He was twenty-one and she was a few years older. When they married on November 4, 1879, it was on an impulse, after he had nursed her through an illness, but he never afterwards expressed a single regret. *Her* only regret had been the ill-omened black dress she happened to be wearing when Chapin took her to the preacher's house.

They lived in hotels their entire married life, the city room being all the castle Chapin ever needed or desired. Nellie dutifully followed wherever Chapin's career led. From Chicago, they went to New York, where Chapin left her waiting on a bench across from Park Row while he went into the *World* office and came out with a job.

There were no children. All Nellie had other than Chapin was a maid, Katie, who would accompany her to the theater and, later, the movies. Chapin took Nellie to the theater, too, and to fine restaurants, but he often took long trips to Europe and elsewhere without her. Yet, said Cobb, this "fragile, faded little woman" was one of three great loves of his life, along with authority—and money.

"Love of luxury was my besetting sin," confessed Chapin. "I was like the chap who declared he could get along without the necessities if he could have the luxuries." He was well enough remunerated by most standards, Pulitzer

giving him not only a generous salary but frequent bonuses, such as a \$1,500 riding horse on the occasion of one scoop, and several thousand dollars in gold pieces to commemorate another.

Chapin's standards were far from ordinary, however. He was a grandnephew of Russell Sage, the New York merchant and railroad magnate. Despite his wealth, Sage shunned luxury as assiduously as Chapin courted it. "In all his life he never spent more than twenty dollars for a suit of clothes," wrote the dapper Chapin. "He was more than eighty years old before he put on his first suit of underwear." Sage was without an heir, and Hardboiled Charlie began to cultivate him as if he felt himself preordained to spend the fortune his uncle had spent a lifetime accumulating. Cultivating Uncle Russell was not without annoyances, as when Sage would use his director's pass to get himself on the elevated but make Chapin pay his nickel, out of fairness to "the other stockholders." When Sage passed away at eighty-nine in 1906, his will left eighty million dollars to charity but only fifty thousand to his nephew.

"Then things began to happen," said Chapin. Actually, he did quite well on his own in the stock market, until the outbreak of World War I in 1914 sent prices plummeting. Covering his losses from a trust fund he was responsible for, he found himself "ruined and dishonored," and broke. Desperate, he obtained a revolver from no less than New York Police Commissioner Rhinelander Waldo, but since Nellie had no means of support but himself, Chapin decided the only fair thing to do would be to kill her before dispatching himself. He actually took her to Washington and went so far as to buy a cemetery lot there, but claimed that his hand was stayed at the last minute by an apparition from his dead mother.

Back in New York, Chapin managed to redeem his forfeited bonds but spent the next four years just one step ahead of his creditors. He repaid the lawyer who covered his defalcation by using his influence to get him a judgeship. He and Nellie moved from the Plaza to the more modest Cumberland Hotel at Broadway and 54th Street.

A second crisis approached in 1918, when Chapin was threatened with the humiliation of garnishment. Fearing he was on the verge of a complete nervous collapse, Chapin took Nellie to Atlantic City for a breather. On the street they met an old woman selling pencils, and Nellie worried aloud, "Oh God! I wonder if I will ever come to that." Silently, Chapin resolved to see that she didn't.

Back in New York at the Cumberland, they spent a quiet Sunday. After Nellie went to sleep Chapin sat waiting for her to turn her head, then placed Commissioner Waldo's pistol behind her right ear and pulled the trigger. Though rendered immediately unconscious, she lingered for an hour or two.

Chapin claimed that the necessity of seeing her safely gone prevented him from killing himself as he had intended. When her breathing finally did stop, however, Chapin left the apartment, telling the maid not to disturb his wife, and spent the day and night wandering the streets

from Central Park to Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Only after reading of his deed in Tuesday morning's papers did he return to reality and walk over to the 68th Street Station to turn himself in.

Although a commission judged Chapin to have been sane at the time of his crime, he was allowed to plead guilty to second-degree murder. The judge gave him twenty years to life at Sing Sing, and Sing Sing gave him the number 69690, whose digits add to the number "30"—journalese for "The End." On the day he was sentenced it was said that there was dancing on the desks in the gold-domed Pulitzer Building on Park Row.

* * *

For both Chapin and Constance, 1925 proved to be a letdown from the promise of 1924. Al Smith, who was not disposed to grant Chapin a pardon, had been reelected governor, and that seemed to put Chapin's hopes on hold. "Christmas might not come as soon as you hoped it might," he warned Constance. His young colleague Larry did receive a parole, which meant that Chapin would have to forego not only freedom but also the crêpe suzettes and other dishes which his devoted assistant had contrived for him.

A flavor of bitterness began to creep into Chapin's letters. "Some day he'll get his neck in a trap," he wrote Constance, about a mouse that had dropped in to share his cell. "Perhaps then he will regret that he was so unafraid of the white-haired old man who appeared so harmless." In one letter he would chide Constance for a "curt snippy letter" received while he was sick, though in the next he was apologizing for his "churlish" reply.

Constance meanwhile was trying to cope with problems of her own. They seemed to be instigated by the arrival at the Federal Reserve of an "Efficiency Expert," who questioned the cost of her editorial activities. Constance began to explore the job market in places like New York and Boston, which latter she had visited in April to deliver an address set up by William Feather. "I understand what you mean, when you say living in an industrial town like Cleveland points the contrast strongly when you discover a city with a place like picturesque Beacon Hill and a river like the Charles below it," wrote Chapin sympathetically. For "a person sensitive to beauty," he said, "there is more joy in walking along Beacon Street with its fan-lights and colonial doorways than along busy Euclid Avenue."

On October 22, 1925, David Wills died, and with the loss of the friendly branch chairman, Constance viewed her position at the Federal Reserve as untenable. Commiserating with her changing fortunes, Chapin regretted her "Five years of conscientious service and nothing to show for it," and lamented "that I should be so impotent at a time when I am needed."

Under such strains, the relationship between the convict and the career girl couldn't continue on its former idealistic plane. It was the ex-convict Larry who became the unwitting agent of discord. Chapin's former assistant had ended up clerking in a Lake Erie resort hotel not far from Cleveland. Lonely, he telephoned Constance at the bank, and she arranged to meet him. Thinking to please Chapin, Constance loaned Larry some money and helped find him a tutoring position more congenial to his introverted personality.

Chapin was anything but pleased when he heard. He fired off a letter, quoting ungenerously from *Othello*, that "I had rather be a toad and live upon the vapors of a dungeon than keep a corner of the thing I love for other's uses." Constance rushed up to Sing Sing to see him, but Chapin refused to say a word to her except to threaten to have Larry's ears cut off. She waited vainly outside the prison for another day, hoping for his mood to change, and then left Sing Sing for the last time.

Perhaps Cobb had hit it right when he talked about Chapin's tragic temperament, or, as another writer put it, his demon of self-destruction. Or perhaps Hardboiled Charlie simply couldn't resist the urge to fire someone once more. Of course, it's possible that for once Chapin was trying to perform an entirely selfless action, cutting the still youthful Constance free from what he regarded as a hopeless relationship. Shortly thereafter he told friends that he no longer wanted a pardon and wouldn't accept one even if it was tendered.

Eventually he wrote to Constance, but the premise of their correspondence had tacitly reverted to the original one of fatherly and professional advice. Constance resigned from her job at the Federal Reserve and took a public relations job in Boston. Illness sent her back home to Wisconsin, and she then made plans to spend some time in California. By the time she returned, Chapin wrote, he would probably be "at rest in Glenwood"—the Washington cemetery lot he had purchased for himself and Nellie.

Constance was back in Boston, though, when she heard of Chapin's death on December 13, 1930. Sing Sing had uprooted his gardens that summer for the installation of a new drainage system, and shortly afterward Chapin had taken to his bed with pneumonia. Asked by Warden Lawes what he wanted, Chapin answered, "I want to get it over with." His remains were sent to Washington to join those of his wife.

It turned out that Constance hadn't been Chapin's only pen pal, but that the old man had been exchanging letters with no fewer than ten young women. Some also were evidently under the impression that they had the same sort of commitment that Chapin had conveyed to Constance. It was Constance who won the rush into print, however, under the impression that his soft-hearted letters to her might counter the old Hardboiled Charlie stories resurrected in the press

by his death. She had been aware of Chapin's other correspondents; perhaps this was her way of asserting her primacy.

With the publication of *The Constance Letters of Charles Chapin* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1931), Constance Nelson made her exit from history. Whether she ever married or fulfilled her dreams is a matter for conjecture—probably not, if she was the same Constance R. Nelson who surfaced in the Boston telephone directory as a free-lance typist in the 1950s. If so, that last year but one in Cleveland must have represented the apex of hope and ambition for Constance Rose Nelson. And in his characteristically perverse way, Charles Chapin had played an important part in it. ■

Poetry

Ken Waldman

Three Lessons in Taking Off Clothes

Enthusiasts choose exclamation points—
Undress! Disrobe! Shed!—
denying that wool, cotton, silk cost
money. No sense ripping
good fabric on sharp
barbs. The first lesson:
If you care about clothes,
use your hands.

The actual procedure varies.
Some begin by unbuckling
belts. Others unbutton shirts,
untie shoes, unzip pants, slip
out of skirts. All methods work
as long as progress is steady.
The second lesson: Invite a friend
to take your clothes off for you.

The third lesson: Dive naked
into the sheets. Pull your friend
toward you. Rub knuckles.
Run fingertips. Grab anything
that moves. Wrestle and tickle.
Fumble. Grip and squeeze.
Hold tight until taut.
Let go with a shout.

Ken Waldman started writing poetry three years ago, his first year at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. He came to the M.F.A. program as a fiction writer, but as he read more and more of his classmates' poetry he thought it might be fun to try some himself. "Three Lessons in Taking Off Clothes" was an assignment; "The Non Sequitur" began as a collaboration. "Poetry is a serious calling, but I'm writing poetry because it's fun work. These [his first published] poems underline the fun part."

Ken Waldman

The Non Sequitur at the Intersection of Market and Vine

Love is timeless, the country-
western singer drawled, car radio crackling.
I turned the knob, the light changed
green, and I lurched
ahead to the next intersection,
the next red light
where I heard on the radio
a poet's running for president.

I didn't believe it,
not for a second, but I listened
close, ear stapled to the dashboard speaker,
waiting for an interview which I guessed
might be conducted in iambic pentameter,
or better, spoken in long, muscular lines laced with word-
play, ending in an image—
a field of delphinium,
or something equally poetic, blue.

Maybe a poet *was* running for president,
but as I listened in that steamy rush-hour
traffic, and hoped for a taste
of true poetic vision, I heard
a sophisticated melody
followed by a repetition of this:

Snakes in the air
Cows in the sea
Burger King French Fries
One, Two, Three.

The commercial lasted exactly one half minute—
I timed it—and when the light changed,
my fist felt like a loudspeaker
so I pressed hard on my horn
until the car in front of me accelerated,
the goddamned monkey.

William Virgil Davis

Still Life

These flowers were never arranged this way in life.
Still, we stare at them along the length of wall
in the small gallery (our almost private garden)
opposite the exhibition most must have come here for.
The backgrounds are always important. In this one,
for instance, the waterfall means life. The water
falls upon rocks, symbolizing death. On the opposite
side of the basket filled with the various flowers,
some Greek or Roman maiden, gone to stone, stands
naked and unarmed. Her blinded eyes forever gaze
through the flowers she almost hides behind. You
must move in close even to see her standing there.

Stratagem

This hour has lasted all the years. You think
of doing it all over again, differently, add
up all the ways you can find to fail. You lift
the glass and watch the light change in it.
The wine is chilled. The shadows lengthen
along the garden wall. The early autumn evening
hints at rain you know will never fall.

William Virgil Davis was born in Canton, Ohio, and is now professor of English and writer-in-residence at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He has had several books published, including One Way to Reconstruct the Scene (Yale University Press, 1980) which won the Yale Series of Younger Poets Award; The Dark Hours (1984); and a book of criticism, Understanding Robert Bly (University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

Carolyn Reams Smith

Know Old Caleb

Know Old Caleb is just a metaphor,
 a name some neighbor in his fear
 gave legs to. To find a spot where
 he is born, follow this ravine south
 in mid-winter. Be led by the slash
 of shadowy tulip trees. You are
 the storyteller. Walk, walk. Each
 messy step will form event, and
 like the slurp of an empty straw,
 mean something that only your gray
 shadow behind you keeps count of.
 At any point stop. You and shadow
 wait beneath the branches, caught
 there like wavery links, two lost
 dolls cut out in a pattern of paper
 chains. And this might be any
 ravine as numberless as memories.
 At any point, the emptiness is
 Caleb. From leaf, limb, loam—
 you raise him up. He walks.

Carolyn Reams Smith was born in London, Kentucky, and earned her M.A. in creative writing at Miami University of Ohio. She teaches high school in Middletown, Ohio. She had wanted to write the Caleb poems for a long time, she says. "My grandmother told me stories about Old Caleb when I was so young that I didn't understand what he really was. Some symbols permeate our lives. In my best poetry, I have allowed those symbols to surface, to speak for themselves."

Carolyn Reams Smith

**Killing Old Caleb
For Grandma Mary**

The dream:

Old Caleb has you in his claws,
but you know you're dreaming.
You startle with a shiver and think you're falling.
But Old Caleb has you
and you can't fall. You struggle
with the bear scent and the fur, ready for the worst,
hoping to waken before it really happens.

*Old Caleb is a panther, Mary said.
Johnny tried to kill him with a gun,
but no one kills Old Caleb.*

The stories Mary told when you were young:

Once Old Caleb stalked on all-fours around a cabin
and left his scent by rubbing fur beneath the window sill.
Once he stood on two legs and knocked at the door.
When Mary asked, "Who's there?" she thought she heard,
"Caleb."
Once she heard the dogs whimpering and heavy chains
rattling in alternating rhythm to heavy breathing
Mary watched
Old Caleb every time he came. He left signs.

*I lost four babies in a row, Mary said.
I couldn't blame a thing like that on God.*

The night Old Caleb comes:

You remove yourself as far as you can from her death
She sings *Jesus, Jesus, Sweet Lord Jesus.*

Still dreaming:

Asleep tonight you hear someone call, "It's Caleb."
The voice is guttural and as close as blankets.
You reach your arms around this familiar
loving fear. You snuggle toward
the bear scent and the fur,
hanging on to find out where he takes you,
hoping never to really waken, thinking now
that Caleb must be dead
and this your grandma you hold on to.

B. A. St. Andrews

The Alchemists

They agree the alchemy
of love should burn off
their dross and change them
both to gold. They share
more than the danger. She
weaves him roses while he,
Browning to her Elizabeth,
scatters sonnets through their
rooms. In such purifying fire
passion becomes virtue. She,
pounded almost to transparency,
lets light pass through her
on its way into his eyes. Tied
to her imagination's opalescent
thread, he moves through the maze
and finds his way home time
and time again. Knowing such
love is lethal, they risk
the beauty they've become
to be gold leaf over bone.

B. A. St. Andrews, an associate professor of English at the State University of New York in Syracuse, has published poems in The New Yorker, Saturday Review, The Georgia Review, The Paris Review, and elsewhere, and is author of a book, Forbidden Fruit: On the Relationship Between Women and Knowledge, which includes chapters on Margaret Atwood, Kate Chopin, Selma Lagerlof, and Doris Lessing.

Keeping Up with the Language

A dictionary editor's thoughts about a new edition

Victoria Neufeldt



This is the tale of a dictionary revision. Not a momentous undertaking, perhaps, in global terms, but one that occupied most of the time of a dozen editors, four administrative and clerical assistants, an artist, an etymologist, and a computer programmer over a period of about eight years. The dictionary in question was the Third College Edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary*, and the place of operation was Cleveland, Ohio.

Although the most common perception of a dictionary is a vague one of a single, immutable body of information (manifesting itself, however, in various different sizes, colors, and titles), new dictionaries continue to appear and existing dictionaries are being revised with greater frequency than ever before, and people continue to buy them.

The popularity of such books about words in the age of pictures—moving and still, in black-and-white and color—is astonishing, especially when one remembers that this is the age of the “dumbed-down” educational text and everywhere there is evidence that people in this purportedly literate society can hardly read or write; and even more especially when one considers that a dictionary is an unabashedly hard book to read: the print is minuscule and there is a great deal of it crowding every page from top to bottom in two or three columns (in word count alone, a college-size dictionary is the equivalent of more than sixteen typical—400-page—books); there is hardly a complete sentence in it; it is full of symbols and abbreviations and strange letters and characters; and the amount of information packed into most entry blocks is much more than most readers know what to do with. On the other hand a dictionary is the most accessible of all reference books (cheap and universally accessible in some form) and is in fact the only one that can be found in every home that has any reading materials at all. A dictionary is, after all, about the words of the language, something that every reader recognizes, if only intuitively, as important; and in the meanings of many of these

Victoria Neufeldt became involved with dictionaries by chance. She had intended to teach linguistics and literature on completing her Ph.D. at the University of Toronto, but there were no jobs available, so she accepted a position with a Toronto publishing firm and worked on a revision of a children's dictionary. She discovered almost immediately that she loved the work and that she was good at it. "Lexicography has been my work ever since." She has been editor-in-chief of Webster's New World Dictionaries since 1986, and is at present working on major revisions of their paperback dictionaries. She lives in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and in her spare time pursues her interests in the arts—as reader, viewer, listener—and in gardening.

words, as explained in dictionaries, there are nuggets of fact about our world and ourselves; for instance, *heart*: "the hollow, muscular organ in a vertebrate animal that receives blood from the veins and pumps it through the arteries by alternate dilation and contraction"; *shinsplints*: "with *sing. v.* painful strain of extensor muscles in the lower leg, caused as by running on a hard surface"; *ozone layer*: "the atmospheric layer within the stratosphere which extends from a height of *c.*15 to *c.*30 km (*c.*9 to *c.*18 mi.) and in which there is an appreciable concentration of ozone, absorbing much ultraviolet radiation and preventing some heat loss from the earth."

It is this factual aspect of dictionaries, so very important these days, that probably attracts most people initially (What on earth is a Denver boot? Is a golden parachute a good thing? Is it PCB or PVC that is poisonous?), rather than the niceties of the distinction between "luxuriant" and "luxurious," for instance. People in the middle of the aptly named "information explosion" need access to a wide variety of factual information just to cope, and it is dictionaries that bear the main burden of supplying the need. This situation explains at least in part the proliferation of new and newly revised dictionaries, and it is also an important reason for the emphasis on the latest words in the publicity materials of dictionary publishers and in reviews of newly published dictionaries.

It is also true that for most people the new vocabulary is the only reason they can imagine for producing a revised edition. The whole matter, however, is much more complex than that.

The foundation of any dictionary worthy of the name is a citation file containing examples of words as they have actually been used in context. The better a citation file (not only many citations but good citations—i.e., adequate context, complete documentation, variety of publications, etc.), the greater the chances are for producing a good, what might be called authoritative or trustworthy dictionary. The citation file is the basis of every major and even minor revision. Because of this, the gathering of citations must be an ongoing process, beginning long before the actual editing is started, continuing through the progress of the revision and on after it has been completed, looking ahead to the next revision. Thus the work of the readers (citators) continues unchanged through all deadlines. Webster's New World has two full-time general citators and one part-time citator of scientific and technical materials, who comb books and periodicals (excluding only the most abstruse and specialized publications) for new words and new meanings of existing words. In addition, the editors contribute many citations gathered from their off-duty reading.

Although, as stated, this gathering of citations is vital to the production of good dictionaries, citations are merely raw material. The bundles of 4" x 6" cards that periodically arrive on the editor's desk are rather like ore that has been discovered and mined, but that cannot have any direct value until it has been refined.

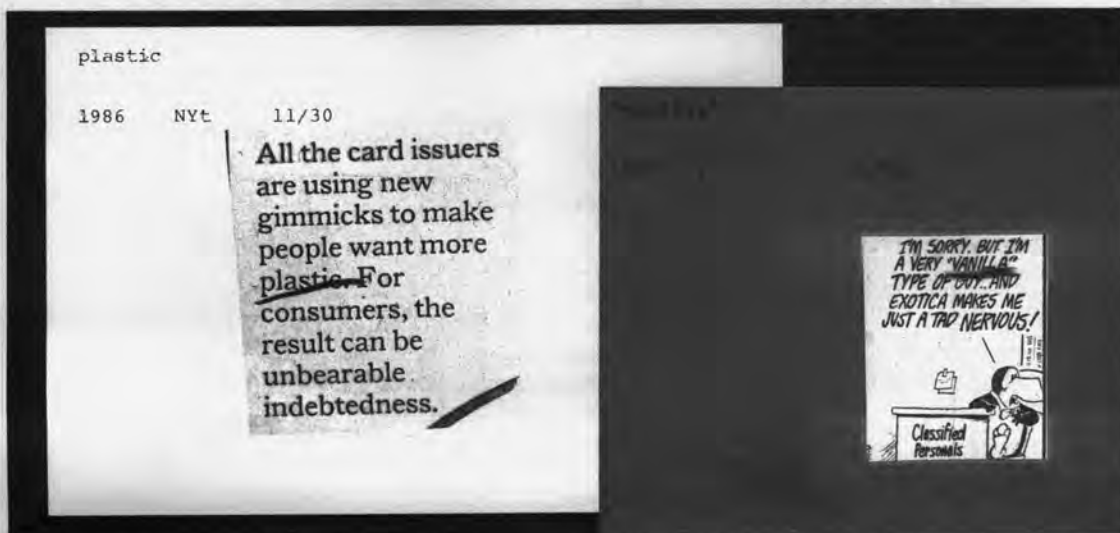
That is where the editor comes in—and an experienced editor at that. For College III the entire citation file, containing about a million cards, was examined by a senior editor. The process of looking at the citations and determining candidates for new entries took the editor, Andrew Sparks, about eight months of full-time work.

Much has been written, in approbation and condemnation, about the "descriptive" dictionaries of today as opposed to the "prescriptive" dictionaries of the past. But even Dr. Johnson's famous dictionary, first published in 1755, was based on actual usage. The difference between his "citation file" and that of Webster's New World is principally one of range; that is, in his time the field of acceptable sources, or valid input, was much narrower—it was only the authors recognized as worthy practitioners of the written language who were allowed an indirect vote on the acceptability of words. Another difference was that Johnson took an idiosyncratic approach to his work that modern lexicographers cannot allow themselves; that is, he could and did ban words that he thought unworthy of use and therefore unworthy of inclusion in his dictionary.

On the other hand, he included some words he disapproved of, deeming them "low" or otherwise "not wanted," and in so doing he foreshadowed the modern policy of including usage labels—"slang," "colloquial" or "informal," etc. In Johnson's case such labels were probably in every instance true editorial comments, direct statements of his own likes and dislikes. But modern lexicographers use these labels to describe what they perceive as the general attitude towards given words within the speech community as a whole. In other words, the modern lexicographer is much more a reporter than Johnson was, and the work of the modern lexicographer is therefore harder, both in terms of discovering this attitude and in terms of the suppression of personal preferences. Like a good news reporter, a good lexicographer must strive for objectivity in the work of defining and labeling.

The task of going through the citation file, then, is

Citation cards documenting new meanings for "plastic" and "vanilla," two of many thousands of such cards used to update WNW College III.



demanding. It would appear at first sight to be perhaps time-consuming as well, but essentially only a straightforward matter of counting the number of citations, the number of different sources, and the number of months or years from the earliest quotation to the latest, then applying a statistical formula, and there you are—this one yes, that one no.

But not all citations are equal and their evaluation and interpretation is a combination of common sense based on experience and insight that is as difficult to analyze and describe as the process by which an experienced medical doctor arrives at a difficult diagnosis. Determining the meaning of a new usage can be a serious problem, for when a word or phrase is used in a given sentence it is seldom defined. It frequently happens that it is impossible to determine the meaning or meanings of a word from the citations on hand, even with the entire relevant context included on each card. If the editor cannot rely on his own knowledge of the term, to at least serve as a starting point, he may be able to get some initial information from a consultant if the context is a specialized field; or he may decide to wait for more citational evidence.

The number of new words and meanings that are continually appearing is astonishing. A great many never get into any dictionary, either because their occurrence is too sporadic, or because, although they are on everybody's lips and in everybody's writing for a short while, they vanish as quickly as they come, often without a trace. Neologisms of the latter type are the ones the lexicographer must be on his guard against. It can be extremely tempting to jump the gun, especially when approaching a deadline, and add a buzzword just to be up-to-date, in hope that the word may last.

However, in the long run that is a fool's game, for one can waste a lot of precious space on what turns out to be deadwood, and it is impossible to be completely up-to-date anyway. The minute a new dictionary appears, it is literally dated. In other words, while it is necessary to represent the current language, that is not the most important feature of a dictionary; and any new dictionary, regardless of its overall quality, can be superficially the most up-to-date—for a while.

Examples of words and phrases from citations that entered our files between 1986 and 1987, but did not make it into the Third College:

absquatulate	low-bridge (verb)
addictionologist	masculinist
blipvert	McDonaldization
claymation	misery index
drive-by	notch baby/notch year
dweeb	securitization
friendshipping	stepfamily
heightism	supersmart card
heterosexism/heterosexist	teleprofessionalism
House music	tin parachute
jazzgrass	tollgating

Some of the above words may possibly make it into the dictionary for a future update or the next edition.

Some of the successful candidates for Third College, with the earliest citation dated 1985 or later, were

backchat	mag wheel
digital audio tape/DAT	red cloud
glasnost	substellar

For most new entries we have citations going much farther back. They were not added to the Second College for the 1984 or 1986 copyright updates either because the earlier citations were too few and far between or because of practical considerations; only the most important new words and meanings can be added for an update.

Concern for "up-to-dateness" can also involve the temptation to anticipate items of fact. For instance, if George Bush has been elected President but the dictionary must go to press before the inauguration, can we include him as President of the U.S., since it is a sure thing and we will look dated if we come out with a dictionary after the inauguration that does not include his name as President? The answer is, with a sigh, no. We cannot assume the future. All we can do in such a situation is stick to the facts and enter him as President-elect.

The issue of "up-to-dateness" remains an important one, however. The new vocabulary is one of the few elements of a dictionary that almost everyone can appreciate and become interested in, for itself rather than just for its practical function. For this reason, the new words make good press copy, and thus almost every reviewer concentrates on this aspect of a new dictionary, especially because even those reviewers who do not know how to evaluate a dictionary properly can comment on the new, often funny or catchy, vocabulary.

The public focus on new words is, when all is said and done, understandable and, to a degree, proper. After all, why else would we need to publish a revision? But there are other aspects to dictionary revision that are just as important.

The main concern of the responsible lexicographer is to interpret faithfully the current language as a whole, including new and established and even old-fashioned and archaic vocabulary, as it is used and perceived by the entire speech community that is the intended audience of the work. Basic to the successful realization of the lexicographer's purpose is the quality of the linguistic analysis of all the vocabulary represented, especially the analysis of meaning, and the quality of the definition written to express a meaning or sense. These most important aspects of the lexicographer's work are also the most difficult to evaluate, and thus most users have to take them on faith, trusting to the skill and integrity of the editors. The whole of an existing dictionary must come under scrutiny in the course of a major revision.

Although few people appreciate it, most of the time spent in the preparation of a revision is taken up with the "old." This does involve language change, for the language is continually shifting in subtle ways, and slight changes in usage, even if not enough to warrant a new sense being added, may require a broadening or narrowing of the focus of a definition. But revision of definitions is also a matter of improving an existing definition, by making it more comprehensive, by eliminating an ambiguity, by clarifying, or simply by making it more euphonious; that is, saying it better.

For examples of changes made to improve the semantic analysis or the wording of the definition, see Figure 1.

It would undoubtedly be possible to go on refining definitions almost indefinitely, even if language were static. Definitions are seldom as good as they would be in an ideal world. All dictionaries are of course produced under constraints of time and money—and editorial endurance. One finally has to make decisions about analysis and then about the phrasing of a definition and then go on to the next word. Even the incomparable *Oxford English Dictionary* eventually had to be completed, and even after all those years and all the brilliant mental effort that was spent on it, and all that *dedication*, it was not perfect.

Not only the definitions but every part of an entry for the Third College had to pass muster. Our pronunciation editor, Christopher Hoolihan, checked all the pronunciations for accuracy and also introduced policy changes (e.g. the treatment of syllabic consonants), which, like spelling changes, can only be carried out in the course of a major revision, when the whole book is typeset anew. This task, plus that of checking word division and implementing his original concept of preferred hyphenation breaks (for which each lexeme had to be dealt with separately, since the basic idea, apart from considerations of morphology, was the appearance of the divided word on the printed page) took

Figure 1: Improvements and Modernizations of Definitions

	WNW College II	WNW College III
analog computer	a computer that manipulates numerical representations of physical-quantity data (as lengths), the way a slide rule does; electronic analog computers work on voltages instead of numbers: cf. DIGITAL COMPUTER	a computer for processing data represented by a continuous physical variable, as electric current. Cf. DIGITAL COMPUTER
fair ball	<i>Baseball</i> a batted ball that stops in the infield, or first strikes the ground there, and does not pass the foul line before reaching first or third base, or that first strikes the ground inside the foul line after passing first or third base	<i>Baseball</i> a batted ball that stays inside the foul lines while in the air or, if it hits the ground before the outfield, stays inside the foul lines until it has passed first or third base
family planning	the regulation, by birth control methods, of the number of children that a woman will have	the regulation, as by birth control methods, of the number, spacing, etc. of children that the family will have
bey	1. in the Ottoman Empire, the governor of a minor Turkish district or province 2. a Turkish title of respect and former title of rank 3. the former native ruler of Tunis	a Turkish title of respect and former title of rank

ten months of intensive work to complete. On reflection, one is compelled to admit that in this age of simple-minded hyphenation rules in word-processing programs, which generate absurdities like "projec-ts," the elegance of Mr. Hoolihan's innovation will be lost on the vast majority of dictionary users.

A separate etymology paste-up was made and sent out to Redlands, California, to be reviewed by our chief etymologist, Dr. William Umbach. Over a period of about six years, from 1979 to 1985, he reviewed all the existing etymologies and researched the etymologies of new entries. He was able to incorporate the most recent scholarship and also did considerable research of his own. About half the etymologies underwent some revision and the system of cross-references was greatly improved, permitting the user to discover relationships between many more words, especially those of Indo-European origin.

A good number of etymologies were considerably expanded and in some cases Dr. Umbach was able to replace the "?" that indicates an unknown origin with a full etymology. One example of this is the word "fink," the entire etymology of which was "[?]" in the Second College Edition. Dr. Umbach's etymology for Third College, the result of his original research, is "[Ger, lit., FINCH, used since the 17th c. as generalized pejorative; adopted (c.1740) by students at Jena for nonmembers of fraternities (prob. in allusion to the wild bird in contrast to the caged canary); later extended to those not in organizations, esp. unions]." Another example of a greatly expanded etymology is that of "ciao." It was revised from "[It]" to "[It, altered dial. (Lombard) *schiaivo*; lit., slave, used as transl. of Austrian *servus* (for "your obedient servant"))".

To assist with the reviewing of etymologies, especially those involving non-Indo-European languages, thirteen language specialists were engaged as consultants. In addition to checking the etymologies involving languages in their field of expertise (which included the standardization of transliterations and transcriptions for etymons in languages that do not have an established orthography in the Roman alphabet), these consultants checked definitions of the relevant language names. They also performed a valuable service in

Figure 2: Improvements of Etymologies

	WNW College II	WNW College III	Consultant
Achernar	[Ar. <i>Akher-nahr</i> , lit., the latter part]	[Ar. <i>ʔakhir nahr</i> < <i>ʔakhir</i> , the end, final + <i>nahr</i> , river: the Ar name of the constellation itself is <i>nahr ʔurdunn</i> , lit., river Jordan]	Gragg
abalone	[AmSp. < Calif. Ind. <i>aulun</i>]	[Calif. MexSp <i>aulón</i> < Costanoan (a Penutian language) <i>aulun</i>]	Aoki
amok	[Malay <i>amok</i> , engaging furiously in battle]	[< Malay <i>amuk</i> , attacking furiously, ult. Old Javanese]	Wolff (etym. & def.)
Eskimo	[< Fr. < Algonquian; cf. Abnaki <i>esquimantsic</i> , Ojibwa <i>ashkimeq</i> , lit., eaters of raw flesh]	[earlier <i>Esquimaw(es)</i> , prob. via Fr < Sp <i>esquimao(s)</i> (used by 16th-c. Basque fishermen in Labrador) < Montagnais <i>ayashkimew</i> , lit., ʔsnowshoe net makers]	Goddard

checking the definitions of culturally related terms borrowed from languages in their area. For examples of the kinds of improvement we were able to make to our etymologies and definitions, see Figure 2.

There are quite a few changes in Third College in the "preferred" spellings and forms of words. For some of these words the evidence for change was gathered over a good number of years, as the speech community went through its collective agony over whether to change or not. A classic example is "life style" vs. "lifestyle." This term has been in flux for a long time, probably because of the whole idea of "lifestyle" as a concept, which was strongly resisted by many people. Thus it was not clear until just three or four years ago that the block, or solid, form would prevail. But prevail it did and therefore it has been given pride of place in Third College, though still looked upon with disfavor by a number of our editors (lexicographers have their feelings too!). Citations of this word have been collected since the 1960s. While we have no citations with the block form from the '60s, there are a good number of hyphenated examples. A few block examples appeared in 1970 and by 1987 this form predominated.

Hyphenated and even open forms, however, persisted into 1987, when our collecting of citations was discontinued. The indecision about its spelling for this word is rather interesting. We have examples of all three forms from the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* from 1971 through 1986. They now appear to have decided on the block form. UPI, which has long used the New World Dictionary as its dictionary of first reference, had deserted the Second College as spelling model for this word by 1977, for their stylebook copyrighted in that year lists it as a single word, with the parenthetical explanation "Exception to Webster's New World."

Another problematic spelling was "adviser/advisor." In this case it was a matter of gathering evidence from sources other than the print mass media, all of whom were following Second College; the evidence thus collected finally confirmed our suspicion that the "-or" spelling was taking over. Many readers of this journal will undoubtedly be surprised to learn that there is any controversy at all, having used the "-or" form themselves for years. Our evidence came from the publications of university presses, from federal government personnel lists (some waffling was evident here, in that we have one example of both spellings on a single page), business letters and brochures, book publishers, classified ads, and even informal personal surveys. The Third College entry reads "*advisor* or *adviser*," giving the two spellings almost equal status.

Sometimes changes have a personal origin. A writer for a large California newspaper sent me a letter about three years ago pleading that we accept the spelling "pinyon" for the pine species *pinus cembroides* etc. Second College listed only "piñon" and his editor insisted on following that dictionary exclusively for house spellings. The problem in this case was that the paper's presses were not set up for diacritics of any kind, so the word invariably appeared as "pinon," which the writer understandably found intolerable.

ble. The story has a happy ending: the writer had sent us citations from government publications and further research on our part confirmed that the "pinyon" spelling was indeed an acceptable one and in fact was becoming the more common one (by analogy with words like "canyon," no doubt). The main entry is therefore found at *pinyon* and *piñon* is cross-referred to it.

Most of the spelling changes consisted of the hyphenation or closing up of open compounds and the dropping of initial capitals. Some additional examples are: bestseller, boardroom, fallopian tube (vs. Fallopian), minefield, newsroom, paperwork, realtor (as noun sense in entry *Realtor*). All old spellings that are still in fairly common use have been retained as variants.

We were also able to improve our coverage of vocabulary that is characteristic of other English-speaking countries, the terms that an American is likely to encounter either as a tourist in these countries or in books or periodicals. We engaged two consultants, Patrick Drysdale in Britain and George Turner in Australia, whom we asked to review a printout we sent them of all the entries containing the labels "Brit.," "Austral.," etc. and to give us their opinions on the accuracy of our treatment of the relevant terms and whether they were needed in our dictionary, and we also asked them to suggest additional terms they thought would be desirable. Examples of the new vocabulary from Australia and New Zealand are "waterside worker," "wally²," "shout (n. 3 & vt2)," and "swag (4b)." From Britain: "public lending right," "pud," "turn (n.IV 7b)," and "screed." Our consultants also helped us improve some of our existing definitions. For example, the definition of "public house (sense 2)" in Second College was "[Brit.] a bar or saloon." Mr. Drysdale pointed out that it was not the same thing as an American bar. On his advice the definition was revised to, "[Brit.] an establishment licensed to sell alcoholic drinks for consumption on the premises and often serving meals as well."

I have discussed the etymologies, pronunciations, spellings, and decisions about new words. Now I must deal with the heart of the matter: the procedure for and process of editing the definitions themselves, old and new. This enormous task was broken down by type of vocabulary and by stage of editing.

Each editor, junior and senior, has a group of "categories" for which he or she is responsible. A master list of entries identified by category was made up by Christopher Hoolihan before editing was begun. This was a major job that took two years (1979-1980) and involved devising a coding system for subjects and then assigning individual words and in many cases individual meanings to the appropriate category. When the categories were assigned to the editors, each editor, from the master list, made up separate lists of all the words and senses in the various categories and dealt with them, category by category. The entire text of Second College was pasted up onto halvesheets (a halvesheet is a 5-1/2 by 8-1/2 sheet, half a regular sheet of paper), on

which this editing was done. It should be noted that Second College was set in metal type so that we did not have the use of computer printouts until the second editing phase.

The editors' category terms, (specialized vocabulary of heraldry, monetary units, jazz, etc. . . .) which make up about 30% of the vocabulary, were edited over a two-year period. At any one time during the period there were from seven to nine editors working on these terms. Meanwhile all the terms that had been identified as belonging to a category (e.g., botany, biophysics) which had to be dealt with by a specialist consultant were typed out on separate halvesheets and sent out to the appropriate consultant. Christopher Hoolihan corresponded with the consultants and our science and technology editor, Stephen Teresi, dealt with the material that they sent in. The whole process of preparing halvesheets, sending them out, processing the returned halvesheets, sending the rewritten or newly written definitions back to consultants in many cases, and keeping track of where everything was and what stage it was in, occupied all of Mr. Teresi's and a good part of Mr. Hoolihan's time from 1983 to 1987.

When the general editors had finished the category editing, the same halvesheets were once more gone over, this time for the general vocabulary. For this, each editor took bundles of halvesheets, beginning at A and working through the alphabet (a wall chart enabled us to keep track of what was where). This is what we termed the first-editing stage. At the same time as the editors were checking the existing text, they also wrote first draft definitions for the new words and senses recommended by Mr. Sparks, that fell within the alphabetic group of entries they were working on. This first-editing stage took us from November 1985 to March 1987.

As the first-editing was completed for each letter (the category editing having been done earlier, as noted above) those halvesheets were input, initially into a computer file and then, as the database was developed, the files were loaded into the database.

The statement about developing the database and then loading files into it sounds straightforward, but the database development occupied a major portion of the time and energy that went into the Third College revision project. First conceived of in the mid 1970's by David Guralnik, then editor-in-chief, and Thury O'Connor, our programmer, the database was developed in a process that was marked by difficulties of all kinds as the complexity of the task revealed itself bit by bit. It would be impossible to recreate the whole sequence of problems encountered and solutions devised, continuing into the typesetting phase. Suffice it to say that it did work and has exceeded all our expectations for usefulness both as the basis of the printed dictionary (with a sophisticated typesetting program that greatly facilitates the process of producing the printed book), but also for its potential as a source of new information that lies within it waiting to be discovered.

Once the database programs were in place we were able to make use of the typesetting program and a laser printer to produce printouts for the second-editing stage that were very close to typeset copy. The printing was enlarged, for ease of reading, and the lines were spaced for ease of editing (with additional space to the right of the column of type for major changes and additions), but the form of the type, including boldface, italic, italic boldface, and small capitals, and the number of characters per line was almost identical to what the final typeset copy would be.

In the meantime the artist, Anita Rogoff, had been making the drawings to illustrate certain entries like animals, machines and various shapes hard to describe in words for the new edition from the picture list that had been prepared earlier. This work had begun in 1984 and continued sporadically through the final typesetting stages. In addition, biographical and geographical name entries (*Henry IV, Houston*) and abbreviations and acronyms as entries (*lb, COD*) were prepared on separate halfsheets and then incorporated into the database.

The second editing, done by the more experienced editors on the first printouts, described above, after the printouts were proofread, was begun in August 1987 and completed in February 1988. This involved refining definitions written in the course of the first editing, and making deletions and a few additions (often suggested by first editors on "revision cards" which were filed separately and checked in the course of every editing stage). The revisions thus produced were input in turn, along with the proofreading corrections, and a second round of laser printouts was produced. These were proofread again and subjected to a final editing, after which the text was released for typesetting, letter by letter.

Thus, slowly but surely over the eight years, the whole great, unwieldy, and challenging—and even exciting—project was brought to completion and another edition of a dictionary was produced. It cannot claim to be definitive, or completely up-to-date, or even absolutely accurate. But it is a milestone, a unique document that is the product of the collaborative effort of a small group of people, a record of our language as it exists in this time and place. ■

A Good Bowl— and a Work of Art

Ceramics by Theresa Yondo

Hannah Gilberg and the editors

When Theresa Yondo looks at an unglazed ceramic bowl, she doesn't see only a potential container for vichyssoise, she also sees a canvas for a work of art—a three-dimensional canvas that puts special demands on the artist. The 31-year-old Cleveland potter uses her skills at glazing to capture in her dinnerware some of the creative excitement that she has found in painting. "For the first ten years I explored the craft, what makes a bowl a good bowl, not just a bowl; now I'm exploring what makes a good bowl a piece of art." A practical object like a plate, a bowl, or a mug may be a work of art, she feels, just as well as a canvas hanging on a wall.

Yondo attended Kent State University, where she studied ceramics with John Gill and weaving with Janice Lessmon-Moss, and in 1987 she received a B.A. from Cleveland State University, majoring in fine arts and crafts. At CSU she studied ceramics with Richard Schneider and painting with Ken Nevadomi. She has also been influenced, she says, by the work of Wayne Higby. Recently her work appeared in the Ohio Designer Craftsmen's annual show "The Best of '89," and she has been accepted into that organization's marketing program.

Her studio is in the Potters' Co-op in the basement of Coventry Library in Cleveland Heights, where she teaches classes through Community Services. She also teaches in grades 1-6 at the School of Fine Arts in Willoughby, Ohio. "I teach them the difference between what is functional and what is sculptural. When I asked a student how he could drink out of a bunny cup with big ears that he had made, he answered, 'It's sculptural.' That's fine! I just want them to know what they're doing."

A typical Yondo piece presents a semi-abstracted landscape, with bold cut-out shapes curving over the edges and down the sides—a device she picked up from John Gill and Wayne Higby. "Such an illusion is created," she says of Higby's work, "you're not sure what kind of surface you're looking at. It becomes an art form when you can trick the



Theresa Yondo and friend Milo.

viewer." There is an Oriental feeling in the economy and mystery of her designs. Too realistic treatment of a subject, she says, "can become trite, it can lead to something not very creative."

Clay is a grudging medium—a pot can't be reworked as readily as a painting; it takes considerable skill to turn a lump of clay into an object of aesthetic appeal. Yondo gives the following account of how she does it.

"When I am getting ready to throw"—that is, to shape a piece on the potter's wheel—"I have an idea already formed. I will go into the studio and decide to work on, say, soup bowls. Since I want a consistent shape for the bowls, I weigh out the same amount of clay for each. I may have ten balls of clay weighed out when I sit down to throw. For each, I center the clay and produce the desired shape, then move on to the next.

"When they are all done, they need to dry; they must become leather-hard before the next step, trimming. For trimming, the pot must be recentered on the wheel and turned as I skim off part of the clay with a sharp tool. It's at this stage that I make the foot for the pot to rest on." (She uses the term "pot" generically, whether she is referring to a plate, vase, or bowl.)

"The clay must be thoroughly dried before the first, or 'bisque,' firing. This is easy when there are no additions, such as handles, but a mug or casserole with a handle has to be dried slowly to make sure it doesn't crack. A plastic cover is good for slowing down the drying. When the pot is dry, I sand it smooth with a kitchen scrubbie and it's ready to fire." Yondo uses an electric kiln that heats up to cone

Yondo throws a pot on her wheel in Coventry Library.



06, or 1873° F. (Cones are little pointed ceramic pyramids compounded so that they will soften and bend at various specific temperatures; they are put into the kiln so you can look in and tell that a given temperature has been reached, when a particular cone has melted.) In the bisque firing, the raw clay fuses and chemical changes take place so that the piece becomes no longer water soluble. Oxygen must be supplied to the kiln atmosphere during this process to produce the desired chemical reactions.

Next comes the trickiest part—the glazing. First the pots must be waxed, so that in the next firing they won't fuse together or fuse onto the shelf. Glazes are liquid compounds that add different colors and textures to the pot. They are often applied with a brush, but for pieces such as those pictured here, Yondo lays down her designs with tape, which acts as a "resist"—a mask or stencil. "I literally draw landscapes with tape." The taped pot is then dipped in a glaze (in this case, black) and the tape is peeled off. A wax resist is now laid on the areas that are to remain black, and the piece is dipped in a white glaze. The areas previously covered with tape, which have no black glaze, are filled with white glaze. Where the white covers the black glaze, the mixture produces a blue. The areas given a wax resist remain black.

The glaze firing is done in a gas kiln between about 1751° F. and 2381° F. This is a walk-in kiln, with shelves stacked three deep. It has to be heated up slowly, for eight hours or so of "candling" before the actual firing, to prevent damage from sudden temperature changes. During this firing, chemical reactions called "reduction" take place, producing the pots' final color and texture. For this process the oxygen supply within the kiln must be depleted; the damper is closed down and the resulting carbon monoxide reacts with the compounds in the body and glaze of the pot. Yondo produces reduction in stages by alternately opening and closing the damper slightly until the highest temperature, cone 10, is reached.

At the final high temperatures, the pots vitrify, that is, their materials partially melt, making them denser and impermeable like glass. After the completion of this stage, the burners are turned off and the pots are allowed to cool gradually for 48 hours.

Thus the engaging, spontaneous-looking pieces on the following pages are actually the result of rigorous craftsmanship and control. "I am a fortunate potter," says Theresa Yondo. Perhaps; but also one who knows the skill and hard work necessary to make a good bowl into a work of art. ■



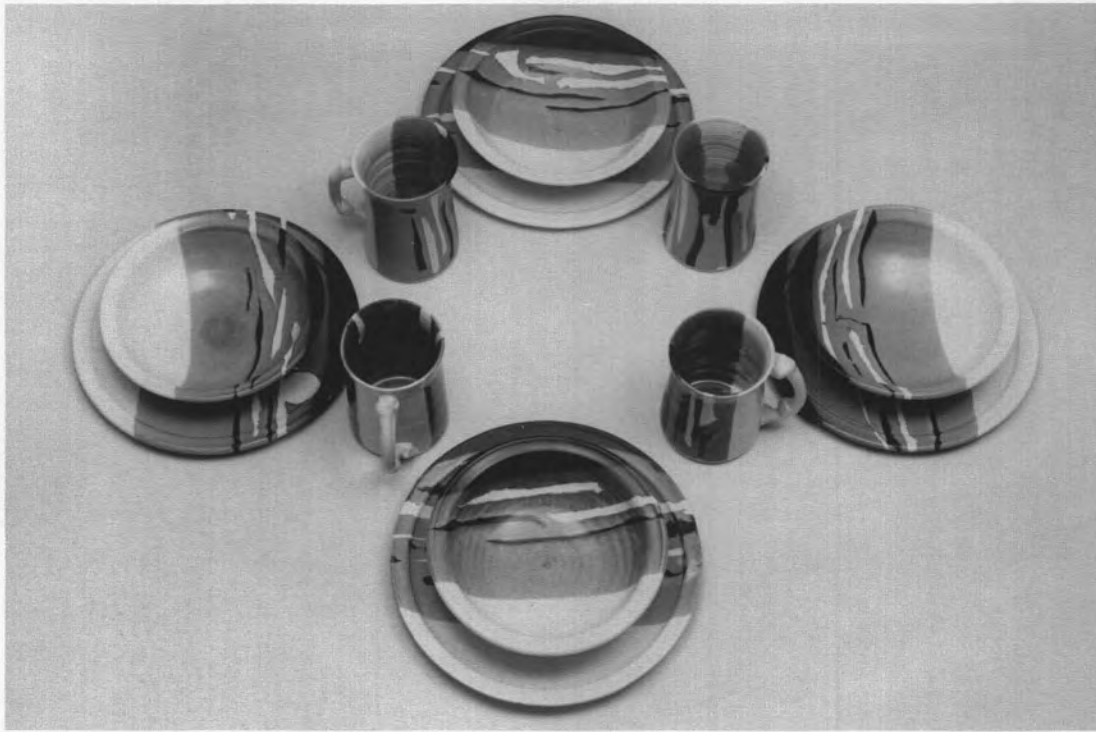
Peering into the electric kiln.



In this bowl, "Seascape" (1988), two sharks cruise beneath a hazy sun and forms suggesting clouds, waves, and other marine images.

Side view of "Seascape," showing how the forms from inside the bowl spill over the rim and down the sides.





Dinner set: "Landscape" series (1988).

"Movement" series (1988). Yondo's handles, inspired by driftwood and bamboo in Oriental paintings, are practical as well as graceful; they are sturdy, easy to grasp, and they keep the hand away from the heated lid.





"Cityscape" (1988). Selected for Ohio Designer Craftsman "Best of '89" show.



Another "Cityscape" design. For the "hustling and bustling" landscapes in this series, Yondo says "I try to incorporate the angles of the buildings into the bowl."

The Verbal Workshop

*Review of Henry G. Burger,
The Wordtree (Merriam, KS,
1984), \$149.00. ISBN 0-936312-00-9*

P. K. Saha

What does it take for a name related to wordstudy to become a household term? Countless people have compiled wordlists, but names like Roget or Webster belong to a highly select group. It helps, no doubt, to have the name included in the title as in *Roget's Thesaurus* or *Webster's New World Dictionary*, but that is only a superficial explanation. If compilers of wordlists do not offer the public something new and useful, mere inclusion of the name in the title will hardly guarantee fame. Furthermore, the innovative features of the successful dictionary or thesaurus must also be in reasonable harmony with the basic principles of language. *The Wordtree*® (1984), by Henry Burger, has the features of both a dictionary and a thesaurus; so, before examining its details, we should briefly review the historical background of such reference works.

In 1755, Samuel Johnson produced the first standard dictionary of the English language. It lists 40,000 words and uses some 114,000 quotations (from the best of the period 1580-1700) to exemplify usage and meaning. Even though it is a monumental achievement in the history of lexicography, Dr. Johnson's dictionary does lack many features that users of contemporary dictionaries take for granted. There is only a partial account of etymology, some of which is hilariously inaccurate, and there are no different inflectional forms, syllable divisions, or distinctions between bases (the portions of words that bear the basic meaning) and affixes (prefixes and suffixes).

Furthermore, Dr. Johnson chose, in a few instances, to indulge his private sense of humor. He defined *lexicographer* as "a harmless drudge" and *oats* as "a grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." (He seemed to have only scorn for Scotland. Legend has it that once in commenting on a person



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who had moved from England to Scotland, Dr. Johnson remarked that this person, by making the one move, had raised the intellectual level of both nations.)

In addition, there were weaknesses in Dr. Johnson's theory of language. In the preface to the dictionary, he did show remarkable understanding of the factors that bring about changes in language, but he did not take note of the distinction between language and culture. Twentieth-century linguists generally agree that culture may decay in a given society, but they are unlikely to accept the notion of linguistic decay. Since Dr. Johnson did not make such a distinction, he believed that "tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration." Today's linguists would agree with Dr. Johnson that changes in living languages are inevitable, but they do not view such changes as "corruption" or "degeneration." They simply describe the changes as objectively and clearly as possible and point out that there is nothing abnormal about linguistic change. Through all recorded history, all languages that have been used for everyday purposes have been known to change.

Despite all these shortcomings, the dictionary of 1755 is one of the great pioneering works in the history of English-speaking people. All English lexicographers since the eighteenth century are indebted to Dr. Johnson. If they did not have the privilege of standing on the shoulders of a giant like Dr. Johnson, they would probably have accomplished less.

Today's *Oxford English Dictionary*, containing 616,500 words and some 2,500,000 quotations, is probably the greatest dictionary in the world, especially in terms of the range of historical information it makes available in relation to the entire vocabulary of a language. This dictionary has a special abbreviation "(J.," at the end of many definitions in acknowledgment of its debt to Dr. Johnson. As of 1755, he had produced more reliable definitions of English words than anybody else in the history of the language. Earlier works like Robert Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall of Hard Words* (1604) or Nathaniel Bailey's *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (1721) were important precursors, but Dr. Johnson's dictionary was a new milestone by virtue of its reliability, range, and rational principles.

The first editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary* began drawing up their plans in the middle of the nineteenth century, and at about the same time, in 1852, there appeared the very first edition of a work which started out as a hundred-page notebook containing some 15,000 words and later came to be known as *Roget's Thesaurus*. The word "thesaurus" is derived from the Greek word *thesauros*, meaning "treasure" or, by extension, "treasury" or "storehouse," and Roget's work was a reverse dictionary; instead of providing words and their meanings, it offered ideas arranged in ways that would enable users to find the words for expressing the ideas. Dr. Peter Mark Roget, a retired physician, chess master, mathematician, physiologist, and former Secretary of the Royal Society, was seventy-three when the first edition appeared.

As D. L. Emblen, Roget's biographer, points out, Roget had worked on the project intermittently from 1805 on, but it was not until his seventieth year, in 1849, that he actually began writing the thesaurus. By the time Roget died, in 1869, at the age of ninety, twenty-five new editions and printings had appeared, and the continued popularity of the work is reflected by the sales figures. In America, for example, the Pocket Books edition (based on another Crowell edition) appeared in 1946 and in less than twenty years this edition alone sold over seven million copies. What exactly accounts for such phenomenal success? After all, Roget was an amateur in the field of language. Besides, there were nearly two dozen other thesauruses or works on English synonymy that had been published earlier, starting with a 1766 publication by one John Trusler.

According to Emblen, the precursors of Roget's thesaurus were of two types: simple word-finding lists and works that tried to explain distinctions among various synonymies. The first of these was probably Hester Lynch Piozzi's *British Synonymy* (1794), but the most important appeared in 1816: George Crabb's *English Synonymes Explained, in Alphabetical Order; with Copious Illustrations and Explanations Drawn from the Best Writers*. The work was weighted down by the numerous quotations and weakened by faulty etymologies and by Crabb's inability to keep his personal opinions out of the work. Roget avoided all such problems by placing enormous faith in his readers. He did not offer any definitions, etymologies, or explanations. He just assumed that his readers already knew the meanings of the words and were in search of verbal cross connections.

In order to help readers in finding these cross-connections, Roget developed what Emblen considers to be the truly innovative feature of the thesaurus: setting up six major "classes" of ideas, each of which was divided into three to eight "sections," with each section being further divided into twenty "heads." The total number of these divisions amounted to about a thousand and they were all numbered and presented in tabular form. The six major classes were (I) Abstract Relations, (II) Space, (III) Matter, (IV) Intellect, (V) Volition, and (VI) Sentient and Moral Powers.

Many people would question the validity of setting up these specific concepts as the basic classes, but Roget's success was probably dependent not so much on the validity of his classifications as on the availability of numerous categorizations which generally enabled users to locate groups of synonyms or antonyms from which they picked specific words that suited or seemed to suit their needs. They also had in a sense an information retrieval system.

Roget himself believed that his work was the beginning of a larger effort (to be undertaken by his successors) to organize a network of relationships between thought and word. In the introduction to the 1852 edition, he suggested extending his methodology to other languages. Such efforts, he dreamed, would culminate in a grand *Polyglot Lexicon* of the future. Attempts at machine translation in the twentieth century may be viewed as being imbued with the spirit of

Roget's dream of establishing cross-linguistic networks. In reality, though, adequate machine translation must await the development of adequate linguistic knowledge (of both the source language and the target language) that can be programmed into the computer.

Those who have followed in the footsteps of Johnson, Roget, Webster, and the first editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary* continue to refine dictionaries and thesauruses, and in our own time Henry Burger, Professor of Anthropology and Education at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, has attempted to break new ground.

"Authored, Compiled, & Edited by Henry Burger [and] published by 'The Wordtree,'" *The Wordtree* (hereafter WT) appeared in 1984. In the book itself there is no indication of price, but *Books in Print 1988-89* lists the price of the 380-page work as \$149.00. On its title page, WT is described as "A Transitive Cladistic for Solving Physical and Social Problems: The Dictionary that analyzes a quarter million word-listings by their processes, branches them binarily to pinpoint the concepts, thus sequentially tracing causes to their effects, to produce a handbook of physical and social engineering."

The word "cladistic" (derived from Greek *klados*, a branch) refers to a method of classifying organisms, and WT claims that it analyzes "every impact (transitive) verb" in terms of binary branches. The emphasis on transitivity reflects the author's belief that the world is best understood in terms of dynamic cause-and-effect processes, that is, in terms of the impact of action (indicated by transitive verbs) upon the entities affected by the action.

The main sections of the book are the "Hierarchy of the Wordtree" (Chapter X, pp. 55-185) and the "Index to the Wordtree" (Chapter XII, pp. 192-378). The former contains 20,484 "actemes, or transitive procedures . . . arranged according to their complexity," while the latter contains the "actemes, or transitive verbs, . . . arranged alphabetically." Other sections of the book provide features such as "directions for using the book," "citation sources," "theory," and "addenda."

A specific example might help to show what is valuable in this work. Take a word such as *fasten*. A traditional dictionary provides the meaning, etymology, and other information about the word, while a traditional thesaurus provides synonyms such as *attach* and *suture*, plus antonyms. In the alphabetized "Index" of WT, *fasten* is given the number 12510, and this number enables us to find it in the serial listing of the "Hierarchy" as entry number 12510. In the "Index," each word is assumed binarily to be the product of two "subactemes," that is, of "two subprocesses that combine to effect it," and consequently the heading for the word reads FASTEN = HOLD & STAY 12510.

Next follows an alphabetized vertical listing of thirty-seven processes that include the meaning of *fasten* and the thirty-seven verbs that refer to these processes. Some of these are common everyday words, while others are infrequently encountered in ordinary usage. Here are some samples (OB = object):



Henry G. Burger, author of *The Wordtree*.

Cover of *The Wordtree* features logo with branching head, reflecting the "cladistic" nature of the contents.



FASTEN BOUND OB = LASH
" CLUMPED OB = KNOT
" ENCIRCLED OB = HANK
" ENTERED OB = LATCH
" GROUNDED OB = STAKE
" PIERCED OB = BRAD
" RINGED OB = PARREL
" SEATED OB = BARNACLE
" TRANSVERSED OB = TOGGLE

In the "tutorial" guide that accompanies WT, readers are advised "to interpret a second subacteme as a mechanism of the first subacteme, rather than as a consequence of it. Thus FASTEN BOUND OB = LASH should be read to mean FASTEN by BINDING = LASH. Next there are nine entries in which readers may see the results of combining FASTEN with other verbs. For example:

FASTEN & DISABLE = INFIBULATE
" & ORNAMENT = BROOCH
" & POSITION = MOOR
" & UNARM = ARMLOCK

This listing is followed by entries for "synonyms which are transitive verbs" as well as by "noun or noun-like synonym(s)." The "Index" also provides other types of information, such as cause-and-effect relationships. For example, in the entry ILLNESS = INVALID, SICKEN (p. 275), an angle bracket in front of the last two words indicates cause and effect.

In the "Hierarchy," readers can look up FASTEN (12510) and find its antonym UNFASTEN next to it, followed by a vertical listing of serialized items. Here are some samples:

12912. TO LATCH = ENTER (91) & *.
CAUK, DOWEL, HOOK, MORTISE, SNECK
12921. TO BARNACLE = SEAT (878) & *.
12925. TO TOGGLE = TRANSVERSE (979) & *.

The symbol # means that the words which follow are synonyms that are transitive verbs, while * represents the word at the "beginning of that branch of the Hierarchy" (in this case, FASTEN).

At the top left and right of the pages in the "Hierarchy" are numbers in parentheses and numbers without parentheses. The former refer to the "subactemes," the components, while the latter represent the "superactemes," that is, the products. Clearly, WT provides valuable information about the meanings of words (in the tradition of dictionaries) and helpful access to networks of synonyms and antonyms (in the tradition of thesauruses). It also provides information about cause-and-effect relationships, step-by-step processes, alternative words, componential views of lexical items, and other aspects of the ways in which human beings use words to structure their world. The work is the result of a lifetime

of dedicated labor, and a diverse group of users such as lexicologists and lexicographers, information-theory students, patent lawyers, and writers can use WT profitably.

On the other hand, there are controversial aspects of WT that should be evaluated. First, there is the issue of the binary subprocesses that are assumed to combine and produce a given transitive concept. Is it valid to claim that all transitive processes can invariably be analyzed as the product of exactly two subprocesses? To take a random example, the "Index" lists DIAGRAM = OUTLINE & WRITE 5268. Would this analysis be in harmony with the intuitive responses of most native or fluent speakers of English? Is it not possible to think of countless situations in which one may *outline* and *write* without being concerned with *diagramming* at all?

To take another example, the "Index" lists DEINFLATE = DEFLATE & NORMALIZE 2446. Now, in relation to currency, *deinflate* may indeed mean *deflate* + *normalize*, but surely there are many situations in which *normalize* does not have to be included as part of the meaning of *deinflate*. (At least, when my car has a *deflated* tire it never seems *normalized* to me.) The analysis of *deinflate* may be valid for "currency" or "ego" but not for "tire" or "balloon." It may be recalled that in the nineteenth century one reason for George Crabb's work being superseded by Roget was a similar dependence on idiosyncratic opinions.

The second problem is that to many readers, WT might seem burdened by apparatus, esoteric symbols, and polemics. Symbols and apparatus serve the cause of economy in reference books and cannot be avoided if costs are to be contained, but polemics, though frequent and perhaps inevitable, tend to obstruct the reader (see front matter, throughout).

Third, some of the theoretical assumptions, explicit or implicit, in WT are questionable. It is claimed, for example, that the approach to language in WT "enables any idea, even the most complex, to be defined as the next simpler one plus the small addition—rather like mathematics, where the large number 25,000 can be defined as 24,999 plus 1." (p. 12) It is a commonplace of modern linguistics that language does not lend itself to additive or permutative analysis of the type appropriate for numbers. In arithmetic, "24,999 + 1 = 25,000" and "1 + 24,999 = 25,000" and "25,000 = 24,999 + 1 or 1 + 24,999." Language does not always permit similar reversals. "The cat ate the mouse" is not the same as "the mouse ate the cat." This type of additive approach to meaning in WT might account for some of the questionable aspects of the binary analysis explained earlier.

A similar approach seems to be responsible for the claim that in the "Hierarchy" all "the procedures in the language are branches . . . logically from simple to complex." (p. 15) A series of semantic primitives are assumed to combine in pairs to produce more complex meanings. There is insufficient space here to explore this matter fully, but those familiar with the disputes between generative and

interpretive semanticists understand the difficulties inherent in assuming that there are such chains of regular patterns in words as distinguished from numbers.

Another example of problematic theory in WT is this claim in the summary of the chapter on "Theory":

Utterances are of three different kinds: (1) that of the emotional system (interjections like OUCH); (2) that of passive description (such as the adjective BEAUTIFUL); and (3) that of environmental maneuvering (such as the transitive verb, TO BEAUTIFY. Wordbooks heretofore have commingled the three conflicting world-views. Only by interpreting interjections and passive-descriptors into transitive procedures can the language be codified into an engineering system. (p. 14)

Many linguists would challenge the claim that the three different types of utterances necessarily involve "conflicting world-views." Furthermore, they would point out that this threefold classification of all utterances makes it difficult to deal with a whole range of utterances such as questions, wishes, and requests that do not involve transitive verbs.

Finally, there is the implication throughout the work that a technocratic approach to the lexicon, a sort of verbal engineering, should replace the traditional lexicographic practice. Typical of this belief is a statement about the list of synonyms for FASTEN (the example cited earlier in this review): "Also here are all the more precise transitive synonyms for which the present word ['fasten'] is sometimes vaguely used" (p. 13).

By itself, outside of a specific context, no particular word is less precise or more vague than another. The word "fasten" is not inherently less precise than "barnacle" or "toggle." Consider, for example, Yeats's use of "fasten" in his famous poem "Sailing to Byzantium." In this poem, he thinks of his aging body as a dying animal from which he wants his soul to be liberated, and so he prays to the sages represented in a mosaic frieze: "Consume my heart away; sick with desire/ And fastened to a dying animal/ It knows not what it is" Surely, Yeats's line would not have been "more precise" if he had written "toggled to a dying animal." True, WT never proposes tampering with the lines of great poets, and citing this example from Yeats might seem unfair, but the point is that in attempting to promote word engineering, WT appears to inveigh needlessly against "litterateurs" and other nontechnicians who supposedly object to new words that sound technical.

All in all, however, WT contains much valuable information, which ought to be presented in the basically detached or neutral manner that was partially responsible for the enduring success of people like Johnson and Roget. Professor Burger is, of course, aware of the need to refine this first edition. In the "tutorial" worksheet that accompanies WT, he cautions the reader:

Remember that the regular alphabetical dictionary has had 400 years in which to be perfected. . . . *The Wordtree* began only in 1984. Hence after *The Wordtree* has shown you the

desirable word or solution, you would be wise to read the more extended definition of that term in the traditional alphabetical dictionary . . .

Reconsideration of the problematic issues outlined in this review would indeed be desirable, but even before such revisions can be undertaken, readers can use their own discretion and use the present edition profitably. The work is a veritable wordshop, and one can almost hear the wordsmiths hammering and sawing. ■

A rejoinder by Henry Burger will appear in our next issue. Ed.



Back Matter

Rescuing Bentley

Ken Roby

Rescuing trapped or stranded animals is not something we in the fire service like to do. It ties up valuable manpower and machinery and runs the risk of keeping us from answering properly another, perhaps more pressing emergency. After all, as we say to ourselves around the fire house, "Have you ever seen a cat skeleton in a tree?" Animals are usually quite capable of handling their own problems.

We felt differently about Bentley. Bentley, a large, shaggy sheep dog, tried to cross the ice on the Chagrin River one January morning under a high-span bridge which abutted a sheer rock face about one hundred feet high. The ice was too thin, and Bentley crashed through the ice into the frigid, rushing water. When he tried to climb back onto the ice, it continued to break underneath him. Bentley became exhausted and hypothermic, simply clinging to the ice as best he could.

The call came into the fire department as a "select call": a non-emergency requiring only a handful of firefighters. We responded, coming to the scene with a heavy rescue vehicle and a mini pumper. We assumed that we simply had a small dog stranded out on the ice, and that we would be home in time for dinner. We found instead a waterlogged Bentley, his head barely out of the water and his front paws clinging to the ice as the current swept past him. He was several yards from the opposite shore, and could not be reached from that side due to the one-hundred-foot cliff. Bentley had been in the water probably thirty to forty-five minutes.

Because of the swift current, the thin ice, and the freezing temperature of the water, walking out to Bentley would have been insane, although the water was only about four feet deep where he clung to the ice. An attempt of this sort would have ended up with the rescuer being dragged under the ice by the current. Rappelling down from the bridge was also too dangerous because of snowy weather conditions, and would have taken too long anyway. The cliff ruled out any rescue attempt from the opposite side, even though Bentley was very close to the face of the rock wall. With time running out, we had to decide whether to try an "on-the-water" rescue—always a risky venture—or to let



*One hundred fifty pounds (dry weight) of lovable sheep dog.
Photo: Gail Burger.*

Bentley go. But knowing only how to save lives, it was not possible for us to sit and watch a dog die in the icy water, only twenty-five feet from where we stood.

We carried our inflatable river rescue boat down through the trees to a spot where we could push ourselves across the ice to open water and from there float downstream to Bentley. Three of us were to make the attempt. I volunteered to do the actual rescue, in part because I knew Bentley: he lived at a nearby farm where I occasionally worked with the horses.

With safety lines tied to the bow and stern, we pushed the boat across the ice with long pike poles and our feet. The boat was cumbersome on the ice and the poles kept breaking through the ice and getting stuck. By the time we reached the narrow passage of open water, we were exhausted. We floated downstream to where Bentley clung to the ice and maneuvered the stern of the boat as close to him as we could by jabbing the sharp points of the long pike poles into the rocky river bed below. I leaned over the water with a snare and managed to get it partly over his head, but the boat shifted in the current. As I was pulled away from Bentley the snare pulled him into the water before I could get it off. Bentley started to go under, and I thought I had killed him. But he made a powerful effort, and regained his hold on the ice.

Maneuvering back into position, I was once again able to snare Bentley. I apologized as I tightened the noose around his neck and pulled him choking into the water. He struggled, but his waterlogged body dragged him under. Fearful that the river would tear the submerged dog away from me and under the ice, I pulled with all my might against the current, the cold, and 150 pounds of wet, frozen sheep dog, until Bentley's head surfaced by the back of the boat.

"Go!" I yelled, and the crew on shore pulled the safety lines, drawing us toward shore. Plunging my frozen hands into the water, I tried to lift Bentley into the boat, but he was too heavy and I decided to wait until we were ashore. But then something snagged the boat, stranding us half on the ice, half on the rushing water. While the others struggled to free the boat, I resumed my effort to get Bentley out of the water. He was unable to help, but somehow I got the strength and I pulled that dog over the side of the boat and he landed on top of me.

When the boat was free and had been dragged to shore over the remaining ice, the others pulled Bentley out of the boat and dried and blanketed him and sent him off to the veterinarian with his owners. We packed up our gear and headed, frozen but elated, through the snow for home. Bentley made the papers. We still don't get cats out of trees. ■

Ken Roby works as a farrier and equine dentist, and is a volunteer firefighter for the community of Chagrin Falls, Ohio.



Vera Orlock, Dancer


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