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Motive

MAY 1963

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Motive

MAY 1963

VOLUME XXIII/8

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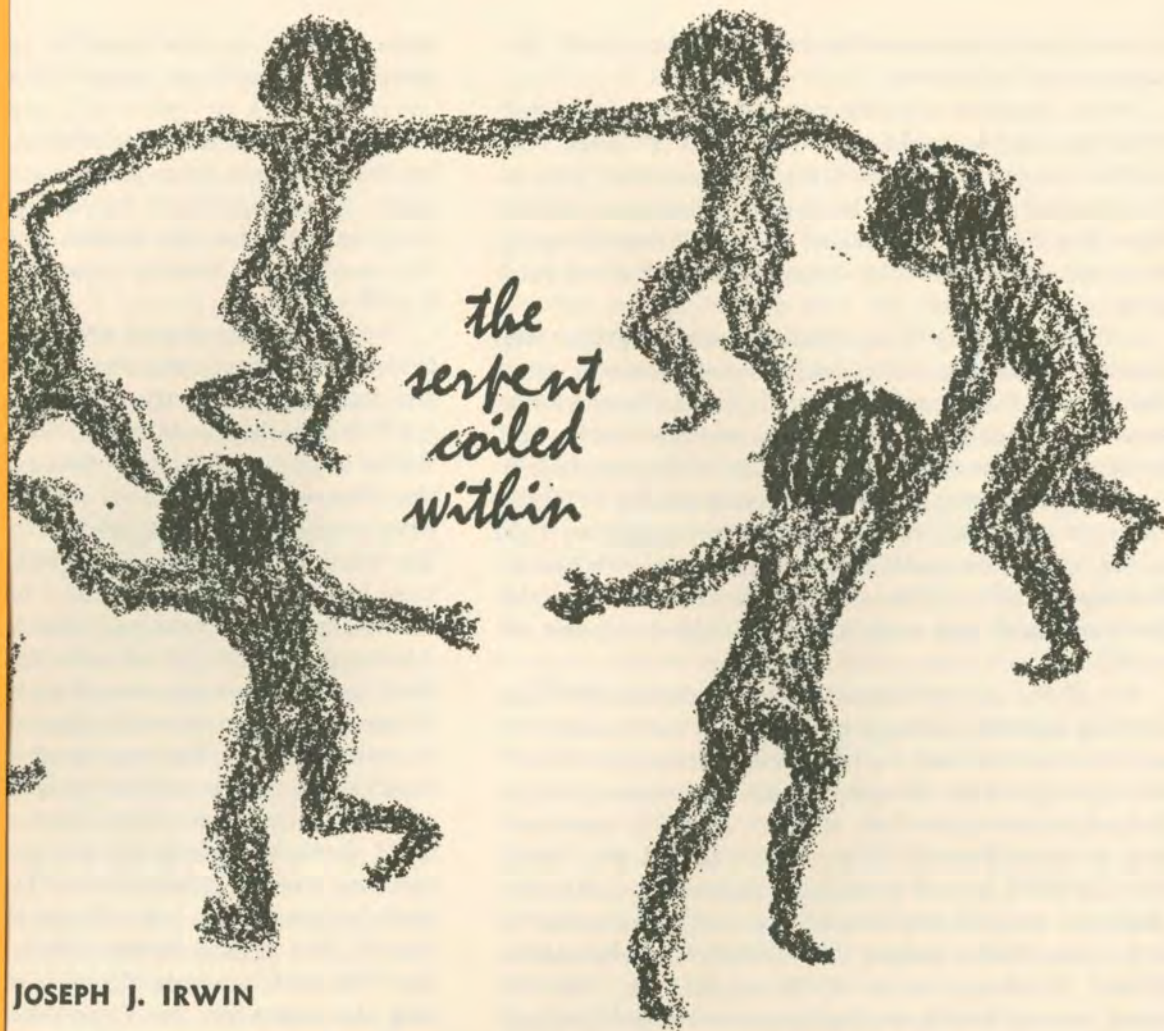
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EDITOR: B. J. STILES
ART EDITOR: MARGARET RIGG
CIRCULATION MANAGER: EDDIE LEE McCALL
STAFF ASSOCIATE: ALAN D. AUSTIN
SECRETARY: JANE JAMES

MOTIVE: P. O. BOX 871 NASHVILLE 2, TENNESSEE

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: HAROLD EHRENSPERGER, ROGER ORTMAYER, JAMESON JONES, HENRY KOESTLINE. EDITORIAL COUNCIL: JOHN O. GROSS, H. D. BOLLINGER, HARVEY C. BROWN, RICHARD N. BENDER, GLEN O. MARTIN, WOODROW A. GEIER, JAMES S. THOMAS, GERALD O. McCULLOH, RALPH W. DECKER, WILLIAM CORZINE, MYRON F. WICKE, ROBERT A. DAVIS.

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JOSEPH J. IRWIN

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BY JOSEPH J. IRWIN

THERE is nothing wrong with man's intelligence. The trouble is his nature." When William Golding put these words in the mouth of a pleasantly doddering Roman Emperor of the third century A.D., he was really making the practical old man express the essential theme that dominates Golding's novels, currently being widely read and discussed by college students. Elsewhere, in his play **The Brass Butterfly**, somebody asks, "What's wrong with men?" And the answer is, "Men!" Perhaps the rage for Golding among serious readers, particularly on college campuses, is that somehow Golding is saying what they themselves think.

Just a few years ago it was J. D. Salinger's **Catcher in the Rye** that seemed to suggest emotions felt but often unexpressed, but just now it is **Lord of the Flies** which brings up childish cruelties and implies that these cruelties belong to men as well as to children. The horror of **Lord of the Flies** is real horror, horror that is in all of us. Whoever said that modern readers like to read books which they do not understand perhaps himself does not grasp that the thousands of Golding readers do understand—and understand well. They like him for a particular reason.

Lord of the Flies is Golding's first novel, originally published in 1954 but now available—if you can get

it—in a paperback edition which has already sold more than 200,000 copies. A hard-cover edition is selling, too, and this has been hallowed by an introduction by E. M. Forster. The book's appearance in the classroom has not killed it. A film, not yet released, has been made of it but, if the film can portray the essential conflict between rational man and natural man which is overwhelmingly powerful in the book, it will be a film too powerful to see.

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of man and whose recollections show how well deserved is his nickname.

When did Samuel Mountjoy lose his freedom? Mountjoy wants to know. The reader of **Free Fall** (1959) learns in a book with less emotional punch than **Lord** or **Pincher** but with a good deal more to say about the fundamental evil of man, evil less obvious, less dramatic, just smaller—but evil very real and very close.

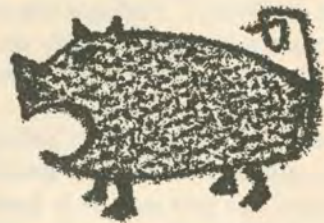
William Golding is not to be treated lightly. His novels are serious and say vividly and emotionally what many young men have felt vaguely and sadly and have sometimes expressed ponderously and abstractly. His sense of humor does not show up in his novels but appears instead in his play **The Brass Butterfly** (1958), which is scheduled for off-Broadway production this spring, and in the series of travel articles which ran in **Holiday** in 1961-62. Here Golding writes about the old familiar places but with a refreshingly wry point of view.

For all the current attraction of his novels, William Golding and his writings got off to a slow start. He was born in Cornwall in 1911; was educated at Marlborough Grammar School and at Brasenose College, Oxford, receiving his B.A. (Oxon.) in 1935; was married to Ann Brookfield in 1939; joined the Royal Navy in 1940, served on cruisers, destroyers, and minesweepers, and, at the end of the war, commanded a rocket-launcher; taught in Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury, since 1945 except for 1961-62 when he was Writer-in-Residence at Hollins College, Virginia; became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1955. His bibliography—novels and some articles for **The Spectator**—is essentially his biography. It was not until about 1961 that he began to attract the attention of Americans who were not very much slower than the British. At 50 he was recognized on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the most gifted and most original writers of our time.

WHAT does he say? Has it been said before? Does he say it well? He says that there is a struggle going on within men between man's rational being and man's animal being, and that it is man's animal being that is victorious in spite of the accumulation of centuries of civilization. Yes, it was said before by hundreds of the greats of the past almost every time they wrote about the conflict of good and evil for the soul of man, particularly by such men as Goethe and Dostoevski. Actually it has been demonstrated by everybody from Hemingway to Heller, from Algren to Wolfe—by almost every twentieth-century novelist who has raised an anguished voice of inquiry over the plight man finds himself in in the modern world. But nowhere except in Golding is it said with an emotional impact so great that the reader says fearfully in his inner mind, "Maybe that's . . ." and hesitates to supply the pro-

noun. And yes, he says it well, in spite of the quibbling which might be made about form and structure, the use of the trick or "gimmick" ending, the antiquated device of the fable, the shifts in point of view, the breaking of logic in sequences so that occasionally a reader thinks he is lost. But when a writer says something so well that the reader feels his meaning perhaps even better than he knows it, that writer has said it well.

The reader knows pain and terror when Ralph tries to hang onto reason to keep the boys from destruction and shouts, "Because the rules are the only thing we've got." But Jack shouts back, "Bollocks to the rules! We're strong—we hunt!" And no longer, in **Lord of the Flies**, can the voice of reason hold in check the voice of primitive nature, or the forces of good control the forces of evil. The school boys, ages 6 to 12, have been forced down on the desert island in the Atlantic and the grownups who had been with them are dead. At first they are delighted with their new freedom, for there are no grownups around to tell them what to do. Wizzard—a desert island to themselves! All the games in reality that all the boys want to play in make-believe! But a few remember that they need to be rescued. They must organize, elect a leader, find food, build shelters, arrange for a signal fire. They begin, but soon there is dissension, for Jack, leader of a boys' choir, ought to have been chosen chief—he can sing high-C. The chosen leader, Ralph, has no real authority. The choir assumes the task of being the hunters and also takes on the responsibility of keeping the signal fire going. But the little boys cannot do much but play and be frightened. The fire gets out of control and one of the little boys dies in it. Ralph tries to manage the island's affairs with the advice of Piggy, who, personally objectionable though he is, still is able to use his head as the miniature society disintegrates. At a crucial moment when a ship is passing, the fire is permitted to die out because its keepers are off for fun and games.



Golding has bit by bit, small detail by small detail, shown perfectly well-brought-up boys as they have lost their veneer of civilization and have slowly become little more than primitive beasts. He is able to build horror on horror until the greatest horror of all—the death dance re-enactment of the killing of the beast, which in its frenzy could end in the killing of a boy. For the hunters have killed a wild pig, disemboweled, cooked and eaten it, and then mounted its

head on a stick—an offering to the imagined wild beast which inhabits the island, and, indeed a Lord of the Flies.

The boys are rescued by a cruiser and the officer cannot quite realize what has occurred. At first he jokes about the condition of the little savages who stand about, "their bodies streaked with coloured clay, sharp sticks in their hands," and wants to know if they have been "Having a war or something." But then he learns that two boys have been killed.

"I should have thought," said the officer as he visualized the search before him, "I should have thought that a pack of British boys—you're all British, aren't you?—would have been able to put up a better show than that—I mean—." He does not know quite what he means, for it is almost beyond his comprehension. But the reader of the book knows only too well what it means.

Golding has also built up an elaborate system of symbols. For the island, read the world. For Piggy read civilized man and remember that he is destroyed. For Jack read the leader dependent for power on mass emotion. And Ralph tries to control the mass emotion by trying to reach some sort of compromise with reason. But he loses, for he underestimates the force of evil, Lord of the Flies, Beelzebub, the grinning pig's head mounted on a stick and being consumed by flies. One can carry this sort of thing on to even deeper levels of meaning but the crowning irony is that the boys are rescued by a cruiser, manned not by children but by adults, on its way not to a children's war but to a real war. Fun and games for grownups? Or is it "Bollocks to the rules! We're strong—we hunt!"?

These words and their implications might have been the starting point for **The Inheritors**, for, although the primitive ancestors of man are fleeing the unknown at the end of this book, they have demonstrated their strength and have hunted and destroyed the last of another species of man. Golding has moved from primitivism in modern man to primitivism in primitive man in his second novel, which lacks the emotional power of the first but which says again that mankind is dominated by evil forces within himself.

HE uses as his chief characters a small group of what must be the last of Neanderthal men. They are afraid of water; they have fire; they will not kill an animal but will feed on a killed animal; they eat insects and grubs; they are beginning to develop some rituals of living; they have a religion in their sense of oneness with the earth. They are kindly, gentle folk with a sense of humor and a love for each other and especially for their children. They seem to be able to think somewhat in a visual device which Golding calls "picture." One of their number disappears and, in searching for him, Lok learns of "the others." The "others" can make sticks fly through the air from other bent sticks, have

logs which carry them about in the water, and, most puzzling of all—to the naive Lok—drink from an animal who gets smaller and smaller, collapsing into a skin as the drinkers act more and more strangely. In spite of Lok's desperate efforts, the two Neanderthal children are carried away and one of them even shows signs of becoming like "the others." The little Neanderthal band is destroyed but its members have aroused enough fear so that the men fleeing in their boats speak of them as devils and the forest and mountains in which they live as darkness. "In this upland country, safe from pursuit by the tribe but shut off from men by the devil-haunted mountains, what sacrifice would they be forced to perform to a world of confusion? They were as different from the group of old hunters and magicians who had sailed up the river toward the fall as a soaked feather is from a dry one. Restlessly he turned the ivory in his hands. What was the use of sharpening it against a man? Who would sharpen a point against the darkness of the world?"

The question goes unanswered.

Nor is the answer to be stated in **Pincher Martin**, for Martin himself is completely self-centered. He is a lieutenant in the Royal Navy who has fallen off his destroyer when he made a maneuver with the ship which was intended to kill his friend Nathaniel, and who has been cast up on a rock in mid-Atlantic. His efforts at survival are magnificent, for he depends solely on his intelligence. He makes a fetish of it. He believes in it. He wants to be rescued so he builds the Dwarf of stones to stand guard for him and to be visible by sea, and he lays out seaweed as an SOS to be visible from the air. He wants to live so he eats the mussels and the sea anemone which encrust the rock and enlarges a natural reservoir to catch more fresh water. He knows that he must stay sane in the immense loneliness; he names parts of the rock after familiar places in London.

At first he is, "I am what I always was," and by means of perfectly natural recollections (natural under the circumstances) Golding tells of past events so that Martin becomes what he was—a man consumed by an insatiable greed. "That painted bastard here takes anything he can lay his hands on. . . . He takes the best part, the best seat, the most money, the best notice, the best women. He was born with mouth and his flies open and both hands out to grab." Later he is, "I am who I was," a man quite willing to try to seduce his friend's betrothed and to kill her if she refuses him, and a man who insists that he makes his own heaven. He regresses in the agonies of living on the rock to "I am" and then, as he nears death and the end, he cries out, "I am so alone. I am so alone!" "Because of what I did I am an outsider and alone." Here at least is a realization, but Martin had also summarized the problem earlier when he said, "Why drag in good and evil when the serpent lies coiled in my own body?"

This book is Golding's most powerfully written with

an accumulation of sensory detail that puts the reader through Martin's anguish of survival in body and of searching of soul. There is here, too, an elaborate set of symbols as the personality of Martin is dissolved in death or nothingness. (In an earlier version of the book, Martin died in the first chapter, with the remainder of the tale thus becoming a grim record of the experience of Purgatory. But in the book's published form—one is tempted to say, its Protestant form—Golding has placed Purgatory in the here and now.) Is Martin essentially consumed by his own teeth? And what of the maggots in the Chinese box? Is there more than usual significance in the rock? In the lobsters which are so loathsome? In the efforts at purging the body?

The emotions of **Free Fall** are less dramatic but the searching of soul is more enveloping. Samuel Mountjoy, successful painter, cannot quite grasp his sense of aloneness and of incompleteness and so, after being reborn out of darkness, he examines his life to learn what he has been. Christopher Martin's soul-searching is compulsory; he cannot help doing it. Samuel Mountjoy's is voluntary and deliberate, enervated by a German prison camp experience during World War II. Mountjoy is briefly confined in a small cell in total darkness but not until after the psychologist, in attempting to learn whether he has any worth-while information, has said to him, "There is no health in you, Mr. Mountjoy. You do not believe in anything enough to suffer for it and be glad. . . . You wait in a dusty waitingroom on no particular line for no particular train. And between the poles of belief, I mean the belief in material things and the belief in a world made and supported by a supreme being, you oscillate jerkily from day to day, from hour to hour."

Mountjoy is confined and spends a miserable eternity in total darkness, feeling the cement floor and the cement walls, crawling about them like a measuring worm as he attempts to realize his world of darkness. He is sure of the shapes, of the snake, of a pool of acid on the floor but he understands only that "a darkness ate everything away." When he emerges he is as though resurrected and he begins to see the beauty and harmony of the world about him even though it is a prison camp.

But he knows that "what men believe is a function of what they are, and what they are is a part of what has happened to them." He says, "Somewhere, some time I made a choice in freedom and I lost my freedom." But where? When? Mountjoy goes back through his childhood in the slums of London, in Rotten Row, looking. He relives his injury by the verger who caught him about to desecrate the altar in the church and relives the care given him by the scholarly, half-crazy vicar. He goes to school again, both to the infant school near Rotten Row and to an upper school where the machinery of religion was made despicable by a believer and the wondrous contradictions of the



world were made clear by a nonbeliever. He also recreates his careful campaign of seduction, his success, and his desertion of the girl. Now, years later, he goes to see her in the insane asylum and finds her a pitiful creature who, in the stress of seeing him, urinates on his shoes. Here he found his loss of freedom? Maybe and maybe not.

Golding's method here differs somewhat from that in his other books in that there are sentences and paragraphs of exposition to try to make clear his point of view. But they are not so clear as the narrative which demonstrates rather than explains. The book is more traditionally constructed in chapter-scenes than his other books and some of these scenes are wonderfully vivid, particularly those in *Rotten Row*, which are conventional but charming, and the one in the chamber of darkness where all the devices of stream-of-consciousness are brought into play, even to the hallucinations over the damp rag which has accidentally been left on the floor.

APPARENTLY *Free Fall* is intended to be Golding's statement but he had already made it bluntly and clearly in *Brass Butterfly*, a play which preceded *Free Fall* by a year. This seems to be a different Golding, a man who remembers the acting, directing, and playwriting which had interested him in the days before the war in whatever section of theatrical London corresponds to off-off-Broadway. The simple and direct comedy almost becomes a farce which radiates both heat and light and a great deal of laughter. To the Emperor's villa, sometime in the third century, a Greek inventor comes to offer his inventions and to ask for money to produce them. He is appointed "Director General of Experimental Studies" and told to go ahead. He makes a pressure cooker which delights the Emperor; a steam-boat which, when burned by a would-be usurper, steams about the harbor and rams and sinks the enemy ships; and a projectile, which, although trained on the palace, explodes and kills the attackers. What made it go off and save the Emperor, the inventor, and the pagan-Christian pair of lovers? Was it the Emperor's prayers to Jupiter? Or the Christian girl's prayers to God? Or Phanocles' invoking of the only thing he believes in—reason? But it really was because the Christian girl had removed the arming-vane, a brass butterfly. Is there another kind of irony here? At any rate, the inventor and his supporters are saved,

the Emperor-to-be becomes a Christian and everything would be fine except that the inventor has something else in mind—a printing press. The Emperor has had enough of inventions—except the pressure cooker which makes meat tender—and sends the inventor off as his Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary on a slow boat to China.

Golding, in a rich and wry humor satirizes a good many things: faith in a future made better by mechanical contrivances; confidence in the traditional, particularly as it is seen in the usurper's preservation of outmoded military customs; certain aspects of religion; inventions which seem to have minds of their own. The characters in the play are generally stock, one-dimensional types but the play is funny, made so by the absurdities of men and the situations they make for themselves.

There is something in the play, however, of Golding's seriousness. He makes the inventor say, "We build on the expectation of man's goodness and the foundations collapse under us." Over and over again, in four novels and a play, he has stressed the evil that is within man and has emphasized the destruction which it causes. In *Lord of the Flies* it is a group of children of the mid-twentieth century who are beset by Beelzebub in a way that they themselves are not conscious of, as they confuse playing with living. Pre-historic man has no comprehension of the evil, either, but at the end of *The Inheritors*, devils are suspected even though the men who fear the devils are themselves the cause of the disaster. In the late Roman times of *The Brass Butterfly*, it is not children or primitive man, but the most sophisticated company of all—a Greek intellectual, a Christian, an Emperor, a military commander—who treat evil lightly, to be sure, but are nevertheless nearly brought to destruction by it. *Pincher Martin* and *Free Fall* are concerned with adults who move in a pretty sophisticated world—one the world of World War II and before, the other before, during and after that war. Golding's thesis is demonstrated over a wide span of history, through persons of various ages and in various social groups. There are variations in settings, in persons, and in the various kinds of involvement but his thesis is always essentially the same: man's difficulties stem not from his intellect but from his nature. Evil must be recognized and reckoned with. "The serpent lies coiled" within.

a letter to graduates on
breaking
out
of the air-
conditioned
maze

BY NAT HENTOFF

It is not an era of repose. We have used up all our inherited freedom. If we would save our lives, we must fight for them.
—HENRY THOREAU

ANYONE graduating from college now steps into a mine field. I don't mean only the fact that the whole planet is now mined and that most careers could end in thirty minutes—unless you're on the staff of a Polaris submarine. I also mean that all areas of American society are mined. We are in a prerevolutionary period in the sense that simultaneous upheavals of basic social institutions are beginning—and in some cases, are well underway. The revolution itself may bring a pervasive constriction of individual initiative that will make Orwell's 1984 appear to have been only gingerly prophetic. Or the revolution may make possible a degree of fulfillment of individual capacities which only a few now experience.

On the one hand, there is the accelerating concentration of power in fewer and fewer decision-making centers. The most obvious monolith, of course, is that "military-industrial complex" which can get a fifty billion dollar defense budget passed by Congress with no significant dissent. I know a young, conscientious, doughtily independent Congressman who mourns his incapacity to understand exactly what he is voting for when that budget is presented. "But what can I do?" he said recently. "Where can I start really exploring the validity of each of these demands? Where will I find the time—and the allies? The pressure to get on with it is simply too massive for me to buck."

A similar conviction of impotence runs throughout society. Only at the apexes of corporations, the top-most points of school system pyramids, and equivalent eyries of power do there still appear to be life-size men within "The Establishment." Below them are hordes of those who anxiously adapt themselves to "the system" and utilize their atrophied power of dissent only in after-work conversations with "safe" colleagues. The majority of us have become so concerned with security that we have doomed ourselves to perpetual insecurity. By accepting the conviction of impotence, we allow society to manipulate us, and in view of the psychopathology of "nuclear deterrence," perhaps to destroy us.

Yet the majority of college graduates will head straight for the chain gangs. They go looking for the mine which will disintegrate their individuality. But in even the least sensitive of those who choose not to be insistently independent, there is a residual feeling of loss. The compression of the spirit inevitably has its side effects—floating anxiety, gnawing boredom, an aching question: "Is this all there is to living?"

motive

But that question is never allowed to become too loud because the full realization of the waste of our capacities would be too terrifying to contemplate. "A psychologist," Paul Goodman writes, "would say that our people suffer from a compulsion neurosis; they are warding off panic by repeating themselves; inevitably, they are very busy and very conformist."

I have never been as fully aware of how paralyzed most Americans are as I was during the Kennedy-Khrushchev crisis over Cuba. For two days in New York, the fear of imminent annihilation was almost palpable. Yet, except for a tiny nucleus of pacifists and students, there were no protests. The populace as a whole simply waited and hoped. And when the crisis was over, nearly everybody suppressed his memories of those days and supported the President's "courageous" action. It was as if we were all Jews being herded into a gas chamber in the 1940's.

There is, of course, a connection between this kind of malleability of a people who might well have been at the edge of death and their malleability in everyday life. I see men I've known since college compromise themselves daily in television studios, advertising agencies, law firms, chemical laboratories. Those who have not rationalized their abdication of self-responsibility beyond the point of discussion say they have no choice. "I have responsibilities" is a recurring obligato. "Sure, I could speak up and blow the job if it only involved me, but I have a family." Their responsibility to teach their children by example how to be men has become peripheral and eventually fades into a series of maxims on "how to get along."

On the other hand, there are the dissenters, some of whom are astonishingly optimistic. Jonas Mekas, a young, impregnable individualistic film maker and critic in New York, says: "I know that the periods of darkness are really periods of birth. The anxiety, the trembling of my generation, that to some of you may seem just an aimless desperation, is really the first condition of rebirth, of a more conscious existence."

I think too of Charles McDew, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee which is committed to a program of social dislocation in the South and works not only to get Negroes to register to vote but which also works to get Negroes to refuse any longer to acquiesce to any aspect of their exploitation. When I was introduced to McDew, our mutual friend said, "This guy has been arrested twenty-seven times, and that's all the introduction you need these days."

McDew himself emphasized, "I hope you don't think we're running all these risks in the South so that more Negroes can get more Cadillacs and television sets. This is only the beginning. America has been saying for years that we have to make the world safe for democracy. It's the other way around. We have to make American democracy safe for the world."

There are also the young people in the Committee

for Nonviolent Action who interpose their bodies in protest against any preparations for war. Some of them walked from San Francisco to Moscow to witness on both sides of the chasm. Others refuse to register for the draft. Some even refuse, in the tradition of Thoreau, to pay taxes so as not to help in that way to support the building of nuclear weapons.

Jail and civil disobedience are not the only meaningful routes for those of the young who do not want to succumb to the quicksand of "the system." But McDew, other Negro students in the South, and the nuclear pacifists do represent a course which anyone who wants to retain his self-respect and self-identity must take. It is the course of refusing to cooperate with what you believe to be wrong. The criteria of wrong inevitably will differ. For some on the Right, it is wrong to support most social-welfare activities by the federal government. For civil libertarians, it is wrong to support the suppression of anyone's rights—from George Lincoln Rockwell to functionaries of the Communist Party. For anyone, I would think, it is wrong to carry out the orders of a superior if those orders lead to dishonesty—no matter what your refusal does to your economic "security."

The important thing is to act according to conviction. Any equivocation is a self-betrayal that has to corrode every area of your existence. The late C. Wright Mills was opposed to peace-by-threat-of-war. He advocated that all intellectuals and scientists become conscientious objectors and "unilaterally withdraw from, and so abolish, the Science Machine as it now exists." A student said, however, "If I don't do a certain war job, someone else will."

Wright's answer transcended the question of pacifism. It applies as well to nonpacifists. It applies to lawyers, doctors, businessmen, teachers and all other vocations. It applies to any wrong. "If you do not do it," Mills replied, "you at least are not responsible for its being done. If you refuse to do so out loud, others may quietly refrain from doing it, and those who still do it may then do it only with hesitation and guilt. . . . To refuse to do it is an act affirming yourself as a moral center of responsible decisions . . . it is the act of a man who rejects 'fate,' for it reveals the resolution of one human being to take at least his own fate into his own hands."

If the social revolution underway is to be directed away from the distillation of power into so few centers of control that the most important decisions will be impossible for most men to make, we must first have the kind of negative self-assertion which Mills emphasized. We have already seen the effect of this quality of refusal to accept wrong in the Southern sit-ins and freedom rides. Increasingly, this "speaking truth to power" by direct action is also working in CORE sit-ins in housing projects, in "selective buying campaigns" initiated by Negro ministers, in picketing of neighborhood-segregated schools in the North.



The postwar era is ending



I know



These have been good but hard years



Life has had meaning



It may never be the same



no



I don't know what I'll do with myself



me either



A man must carry on

right

errol

The only way (however futile it may appear at the time) to prevent the obliteration of individuality is to start by saying, "No." In 1955, the Quakers issued a pamphlet, **Speak Truth to Power**. It advocated non-violence as a way of life, but, as in the case of C. Wright Mills' answer to the "pragmatic" student, the core of the pamphlet applies to anyone who wants to make his mark on the world by finding himself and then acting on what he knows of himself. The most important movement in our time will be the attempt to shape the coming revolution into individualistic rather than monolithic ends. Anyone who is not in some way part of that movement will have surrendered his own basic reason for existence—to be as fully as one's capacities allow.

"Before the majority of people can be reached," the Quaker pamphlet said, "there must be the unconditional acceptance of an ideal by a minority." As an example, Thomas Garrett, a nineteenth-century Delaware Quaker, was cited. "Haled into court and so heavily fined for his activity in the underground railway that he was left financially ruined, Garrett stood before the court . . . 'Judge, thou has not left me a dollar, but I wish to say to thee and to all in this courtroom that if any one knows a fugitive who wants a shelter and a friend, send him to Thomas Garrett and he will befriend him.' Such defiance was regarded then, as it would be regarded today, as a foolish and impractical gesture . . . but . . . it is precisely the demonstration of this kind of unlimited faith that shakes men's

motive

souls, and when this happens, the impossible moves nearer to the possible. Garrett's act was politically relevant in the most profound sense because it opened up new dimensions, new power, and new life beyond man's capacity to predict, and the forces thus released served to burst the bonds of practical politics."

Today, in all areas—war, the economy, integration—our problems, as Paul Goodman says, "are **not** technological and sociological; they are moral and political." Thoreau, moreover, was right when he wrote that "we have used up all our inherited freedom. If we would save our lives, we must fight for them." In order, therefore, to solve our essential moral and political problems so that we can generate a new reservoir of freedom, we will need men with the kind of "unlimited faith" in the power of refusal that Thomas Garrett possessed.

If one per cent—or less—of this year's college graduating classes were to become allied with the present nucleus of nay-sayers in our society, the changes they could bring about would be extraordinary. Before the dislocation of present overly centralized power structures can be effectuated, Americans have to be stirred to increasingly acute dissatisfaction with the overstuffed but chronically unsatisfying materialism of their lives. Dissatisfaction with their complicity in the discrimination and poverty they allow to fester by being at best apathetic. Dissatisfaction with a "system" so insanely irresponsible that the possibility—in horrifying fact, the probability—of nuclear war exists.

I can think of nothing more important than to be one of the agents of that dissatisfaction. It is a career that does not involve having to be a full-time agitator. This kind of questioning of the values of our lives and this kind of refusal to be silent before compulsive complicity in dehumanizing conformity can be an integral part of any profession. I am not "religious," but in recent years, I have come to understand the meaning of the vintage precept that you can only "save" yourself by working ceaselessly to "save" everyone else.

Proselytization for a world in which love and candor are the primary operating forces has now become the most selfish of vocations. It is no longer altruistic to preach and act on the belief that humanity is one and that when you diminish anyone else in any way, you diminish the capacities of us all. We live now at a time when the failure of this message to take hold will inescapably result in either our own physical destruction or in the increasing danger that we too will become faceless, interchangeable parts in a society in which automation of the spirit will have eclipsed automation of the labor force.

I have no blueprint for those about to leave college. I would hope that some become peace workers and supporters, in one way or another, of such groups as CORE and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Com-

mittee. But the essential way to take—if you are yourself to grow and survive **as yourself** (not as the manipulatable tool of some corporation or state)—is not to stay silent when you clearly feel a situation requires "speaking truth to power."

When the fugitive slave Anthony Burns was forcibly returned South in 1854, Thoreau wrote: "I have lived for the last month—and I think that every man in Massachusetts capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have had a similar experience—with the sense of having suffered a vast and indefinite loss. I did not know at first what ailed me. At last it occurred to me that what I had lost was a country."

In 1963, we are rapidly losing this country. We are losing the only kind of democracy that is worth preserving—the kind in which the citizen does have a say in the formulation and execution of the most basic policies. We are losing the promise of a truly mobile society as we see millions of Negroes and Puerto Ricans still trapped in dead-end ghettos and millions of their children becoming "drop-outs" with no place to go but the pursuit of aimless violence or aimless nirvana in drugs. We are losing a way of life in which children can at least have the expectation of growing up.

You could not have chosen a time to graduate in which noncompromisers are more needed than now. The usual euphemism is to congratulate you on how "challenging" a set of opportunities you have thereby. But if you do take the way of the individual rather than of "the system," you're going to have it rough. Financially, emotionally, in every way. You're going to be a conscience to your fellow citizens, and that's not the way to be popular.

W. S. Merwin in **The Nation** quoted a man in San Francisco watching a group of young pacifists demonstrate: "I guess they're the conscience of the country. On the other hand a conscience is a liability. You can't run a business with a conscience. I've compromised with mine all my life. We see things that are wrong, but we don't do anything about them. A conscience is a thing to brag about at banquets, but it's too uncomfortable to live with, for most of us. Those people down there, they're trying to wake up our consciences, but it won't work because what most of us want to do is to deaden them. Maybe that's why the human race isn't justified in looking forward to a long and happy future. They've temporized with everything. It's too late for an act of conscience, any act of conscience, to be effective any longer."

The man may be right, but the only way to be fully alive in this time in this place is to try to prove him wrong. And I don't think it's naive to say that he and millions like him **want** to be proved wrong. But he and millions like him have forgotten how to initiate an act affirming themselves as moral centers of responsible decision. They have to be shown again by example. By the example of some of you.

Arachne

(for Ingmar Bergman)

I THE LOOM

The shuttle clatters right to left to right,
and frond-green thread, like water seeking passage
through clumps of twigs, trickles between the warp.
The batten slams the woof. The thread holds tight.
Again the shuttle crosses; now it tugs
from warp to warp the kelp-covered strands
of wool, first of the seven final threads
to rim the ocean of this tapestry.
The seventh thread. The shore. Then it is finished.
Slim fingers open up the loom, lift out
this tapestry which swells, which heaves and grinds
boulders against the headlands of heaven.

II THE TAPESTRY

Why has she woven Job's life in her tapestry?
Job in the ash-heap wiping off with trembling fingers
pus-crusted sores, Job yelling a curse against his birth,
Job standing up and counting off before Jehovah
one by one the names of sons and daughters dead,
Job clapping one hand on his mouth, clutching his rags
against the whirlwind with his other boil-scarred hand,
descending inch by inch, knees pocketed in ashes
and saying, "I see God and God, it seems, is a spider"?

Hefner's Hasty Pudding

. . . a mixture of perception, naiveté and error

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON

WITHIN the past year, the American magazine-reader has been treated to two of the most remarkable credos ever written. Every age gets the credos it deserves, so perhaps we can find out a little about ourselves by looking at these two, and at one of them in particular. The first is by James Baldwin, appearing originally as "Letter from a Region in My Mind" in the November 17 *New Yorker* last year and since included in a little book called *The Fire Next Time* from Dial Press. Baldwin's credo is one of the most remarkable, important and moving pieces of prose written in many years. It is about color, about America, and about God. If a man, reading this, happens to be both white and Protestant, he will not come away unchanged.

The other credo is called "The Playboy Philosophy." Its author is Hugh Hefner, editor-publisher of *Playboy*, perhaps the best-written, best-edited, most consistently interesting magazine in America. It began appearing monthly in that magazine last December, and at last count there have been five installments. Judging by its elephantine pace and repetitiveness, it could go on for ten or twelve more issues. Each monthly piece says the same thing as the one before, and each month the series seems to get duller and more badly written. Now it began by being dull and badly written in its first installment, and it is hard to imagine that it could have deteriorated. But it managed to. Hefner's credo is couched in a kind of dictation-style which he, as a good editor, wouldn't allow in his wastebasket. For example:

If much of the foregoing—and of what follows—seems obvious, even elementary, it is necessary, we think, to clearly spell out those accepted beliefs that form the common ground from which our philosophy is derived. (*Playboy*, March, 1963, p. 55.)

So far, no plans have been announced to bring out Hefner's credo in book form. I feel sure, somehow, that it should be done, and I suggest onionskin paper, gilt-edged, and black limp leather covers. Perhaps even bullet-proof covers, to make it really useful.

The distance between Baldwin's astringent cry and Hefner's uncertain blast is the distance between the glory and the shame of American life today. It is the distance between conscience and success. Baldwin decides, against his will, that the colored man must come to love the white man today, for if he does not, the white man has no hope and no future. Hefner decides that we must each look out for number one and if religion or government gets in our way, so much the worse for religion and government.

Bad as it is, Hefner takes his credo very seriously, and he invites his readers to do the same. In its own way, it is an instructive and important document for every playboy and playgirl of the Western world.

Believe it or not, Hefner sets down two fundamental maxims as the foundation of his philosophy, or, as he likes to say, "our philosophy." (What is this "we"? Is it just humility? Is it merely the editorial "we"? No, Hefner is really speaking for an actual community of urban males which he, with real acumen, has partly discerned and partly created himself. The identification and description of this particular community is one of Hefner's really important contributions.) Can you imagine what these maxims are?

This above all, to thine own self be true,
And thou canst not then be false to any man.

And, inevitably,

A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Else what's a heaven for?

Perhaps a Christian should be grateful for the heaven bit in the Browning quote, and as a matter of fact, while Hefner doesn't have much interest in heaven (who does?), he does have some unusual things to say about God. The notable thing about these maxims is the straight-faced elevation of the pompous and sexually preoccupied Polonius into an authentic seer for the twentieth century. Young playboy Laertes was off to Paris, and we all know what young Danes did in Paris in those days. Shakespeare was contrasting the

vital and eager son with the suspicious and fatuous father, and his advice was intended to be irrelevant. As a matter of fact, Polonius was all too afraid that Laertes *would* be "true to himself" in Paris, and that is why he later sent investigators to spy on him.

HEFNER is not on his strongest ground when he is looking for the actual sources of his philosophy, whether it be Browning, Polonius, or "the founding fathers." He is better when he simply sets down his views. He believes in God, America, individualism, capitalism, pretty girls, and having fun, or as he puts it, living life with immense gusto and relish. He is against Puritanism, bad religion (usually of the organized type), censorship, Puritanism, the extremes of right and left, conformity, Prohibition, *The Readers' Digest*, and Puritanism. One would have thought that there were a great many people who are for the things he is for and against the things he is against, but Hefner seems to feel that his is a unique point of view, and he utters his words with an almost prophetic fervor, with the sense of being a solitary voice crying—to coin a phrase—in the wilderness.

Hefner actually has some very good things to say in defense of the element of joy and delight in this life. But Hefner's own literary style is curiously joyless, even worried. He cites far too often other peoples' defenses of his magazine and his ideas, and he worries far too anxiously about the criticisms his magazine has received. A genuine gusto is not so worried about criticism. And further, the playboy himself is far too worried a young man to make a genuine joy possible. There is an advice to the lovelorn page in the magazine called "The Playboy Advisor," and the playboy himself in these pages is a very perplexed and worried sort of

forgotten how to play, and works too hard at it, too anxiously, too much in need of approval and support from his peer group and his editor-leader.

But Hefner is not to be blamed for the conformist syndromes in the playboy. In fact, he's lucky they're there—he couldn't sell as many magazines if the playboy were a truly free spirit. Hefner knows a lot of things, and knows them well. He knows how to put out a magazine, he knows how capitalism works, he knows what the playboy really needs. He knows, on the other hand, very little about faith or about sex, though he talks about these two good things at great length in "The Playboy Philosophy."

HEFNER is neither very original nor very helpful on sex, and he gives the impression of not really caring much for it. He is both loud and sound when he attacks Puritanism. Not that he seems to know much about Puritanism; he gives the impression of having seen Miller's *The Crucible* three or four times. He is really busily engaged in defending the sexual rebellion of the 1920's (which was a rebellion against Pietism, not Puritanism): it's not evil, let's not cover it up, let's bring it out into the open. Now the traditional prurient sexual attitudes in American culture were bad enough, but the sexual crisis in American life was not solved by the new openness. He rightly affirms the goodness of the body (this is very biblical of him, even though he doesn't know it), but he misses something in sex that no post-Freudian man has the right to miss. He misses the power and mystery of sexuality; he misses the sense in which the body of a woman is not only—for a man—beautiful, but also desirable. For Hefner, sex seems to be merely one of the simple elements in life. The sense in which sex is in some way



guy. He is much too worried about the right cheese, the right wine, the right car, and the right way to carry off a seduction. We don't, from the advice column, get a sense of the joyous confident man at all. We get instead a portrait of a very anxious urbanite, afraid that he won't pack a picnic hamper correctly until he gets the comforting editorial OK. The **Playboy** reader, as against the image Hefner would like to paint, seems always to be looking at the color of his shoes and the knot in his tie. This playboy has

everything in life, that the whole of human life is life in the body—this passes Hefner by. His view of sex thus turns out to be curiously flat and uninteresting. This may explain the frequent remark made by observers of the Playboy clubs about the curiously sexless, even voyeuristic atmosphere. In one sense both vulgarity and pornography bear witness to this dimension of the truth. Sex is not only looking at, it is desiring, touching; it is passion. Lacking this dimension, Hefner's asexual sexuality is just plain dull.

Hefner is much more interesting as a theologian. Apparently he really considers himself to be one.

We're applying 16th Century religion to a 20th Century world; a more sophisticated time requires a more sophisticated faith. (*Playboy*, January, 1963, p. 52.)

What is the substance of this new faith? A jigger of Adam Smith, a pony of Polonius or Ayn Rand, and a twist of the Christian doctrine of creation. Faith in capitalism, faith in the self, and God's creation as manifest in the human body, primarily in the female body. The scriptural texts of this "sophisticated" eighteenth-century religious vision should be examined. First of all, we have fallen away from a true vision of ourselves. We have, indeed, fallen.

By subverting our faith in ourselves, both as individuals and as a nation, by shaking our faith in the superiority of the free enterprise system, we manage to bring the greatest country in the world to a near standstill. By again stressing many of the basic tenets upon which this nation was founded, we have begun forcefully to move ahead once more. (*Playboy*, February, 1963, p. 43.)

This sounds a little like the evangelistic political rhetoric of the Eisenhower era, and something like the pious protestant politics of a southern congressman today. It's hard to see just when it was that America ground to a halt, though ordinarily Hefner locates this dread period during the thirties and the forties when we "drifted dangerously in the direction of socialism" (*Playboy*, February, 1963, p. 43). Apparently he does not like the social reforms of 20 and 30 years ago, but he does not tell us which ones he doesn't like, nor whether he liked better the evils in America which those reforms attempted to remedy. So we ground to

foundation of **Playboy** magazine? Somehow America being on the march and **Playboy's** vision of things have a lot in common.

The thing that we've got to do, Hefner says, is get back to the founding fathers. Which ones, how, and in what way, he hasn't yet said. Most of them had a lot more theology (of the sixteenth-century unsophisticated kind) than he likes. No, we must just go back to the founding fathers in general. Hefner's appeal to go forward by going back to the founding fathers is untouched by any careful analysis or solid information on these gentlemen. But the appeal is both clear and interesting nonetheless. The founding fathers, in Hefner's edition of the texts, were the men who said that religion should have nothing to do with public life. This is Hefner's contribution to the current debate on church and state and the meaning of the first amendment.

What we oppose is any man's attempt to **force** his faith upon others. Religion should be a personal matter between man and God; it has nothing to do with man's relationship to government. They must be kept separate—totally separate—and apart. If they are not, man will not long remain free. (*Playboy*, March, 1963, p. 125.)

Now Hefner is good and angry, and perfectly sound, on the dangers of religious intolerance and self-righteousness. One wonders just how far he is willing to take this reduction of religion to the private realm. Not even Luther, with his doctrine of the two realms, not even the Baptists, with their wall of separation between church and state, come close to Hefner's vision. Does this mean that religion has nothing to do with the public realm, nothing to do with ethics, nothing to do with man's relation to his neighbor? These areas,



a halt sometime before the second world war. But, he adds, we didn't really get moving again until very recently. What were we doing between, say, 1941 and 1960? Was this period a good thing or a bad thing? Nor is it clear just what event it was that got us moving again. Was it the defeat of Nixon and the emergence of the New Frontier? Hardly. Was it **Life** magazine's silly issue on the Take-Over Generation? Perhaps. Hefner thought that was an inspiring issue. Or was the real motivating force for this new vitality the

after all, are the business of the government. The only public figure in America, besides Hefner, to have stated this reduction of religion to the personal, was Mr. Kennedy during the 1960 campaign, when the Roman Catholic issue came to the fore. If this radically nonsocial character of religion is maintained (and a man has a right to maintain and defend any sort of religious or nonreligious vision he likes), then it has to be said that Hefner really has no affinity with the Jewish-Christian tradition at all. This is more like a

kind of secularized mysticism, with laissez-faire overtones.

Parenthetically, it might be added that Hefner hasn't shaped all the elements of his religion into a consistent whole. While he insists that God has nothing to do with the public realm, he does insist that God has to do with the human body. The basis of his defense of the subject matter of the **Playboy** color photography is the doctrine of the goodness of creation. If religion is a private matter between man and God, why bring God in to defend the body of the woman? Maybe Hefner just wants God to stay away from the body politic, not the body female.

IF Hefner is good on religious self-righteousness, he is also good in his attacks on religious otherworldliness. He is right to note that there is a certain sombre and dour strain in some parts of the Protestant tradition, and to this combination of earnestness and hyper-seriousness, he rightly contrasts the right to find delight and joy in one's work. But by itself, unqualified, Hefner's view becomes simply the rationalization of the self-interest of a particular portion of the urban middle and upper-middle class. How does this apologist for free enterprise handle the problem of the vast number of members of our society who are caught in the trap of essentially joyless work, manufacturing the various status symbols and appliances the purchase and use of which Hefner is so anxious to defend? Hefner's vision has nothing to say to the problem of meaninglessness, drudgery, poverty in our time. It is simply a moralistic irrelevance to advise: have a ball, look out for number one, live life richly.

Here is another important text on the theological point:

Religion is based upon faith; democracy is based upon reason. America's religious heritage stresses selflessness, subservience to a greater Power and the paying of homage to Him in long-established, well-defined, well-organized ways; democracy teaches the importance of self, a belief in oneself and one's own abilities. Religion teaches that man should live for others; our democracy's free-enterprise system is based on the belief that the greatest good comes from men competing with one another. Religion offers a special blessing to the meek and the promise that they will inherit the earth; democracy requires that men speak out and be heard.

Most religion in America teaches that man is born with the stain of Original Sin upon him; a free democracy stands on the belief that man is born innocent and remains so until changed by society. Most organized religion in the U.S. is rooted in a tradition that links man's body with evil, physical pleasures with sin and puts man's mind and soul against the devil of the flesh; the principles underlying our democracy recognize no such conflict of body, mind and soul. (**Playboy**, March, 1963, p. 58.)

This goes on a bit further: religion mistrusts material acquisition, free enterprise likes it; religion is for the next world, democracy is for this one, and so on.

This is an astonishing statement, with some real perception of truth embedded in the midst of a large amount of confusion. What about this distinction between religion and "the principles underlying our democracy"? Is Hefner unaware that Protestant theology contributed vastly to those underlying principles? Apparently so, for he can be sure that democracy is based on innocence, when the whole basis of the idea of the separation of powers is a profound mistrust of man, a mistrust that comes straight from Protestant theology. As Lord Bryce remarked of the Constitution, it is a document written by men who believed in original sin, and this is one of the sources of its flexibility and power. The phrase "our democracy's free-enterprise system" confuses our democratic and economic institutions. There is simply no particular economic system that can be inferred from the Constitution. Free enterprise capitalism is really the central object of faith in this credo, and we can see why this should be the case. Hefner had a good publishing idea and he made it work. It brought him a fortune, a swimming pool, and serious notice being taken of his intellectual claims in religious periodicals—three real marks of achievement. But Hefner is really more laissez-faire than Adam Smith himself. At least Smith recognized that the competition of the free market needed some kind of regulation, in his case, regulation by the hidden hand of Providence. But there is not even this secular doctrine of Providence in Hefner.

The statements on religion in the quoted passage are, once more, a fascinating mixture of perception, naivete and error. The comments on faith, on material possessions, and on selflessness, are sound enough. The statement about American religion and original sin badly needs both clarity and modification. There is one perception here that is likely to be overlooked, and it is both shrewd and true. Hefner really sees that there is a radical gulf between the Jewish-Christian tradition and the realities of life in our technological society. "U.S. religion and free enterprise," he writes, "are, in certain respects, incompatible." (**Playboy**, January, 1963, p. 52.) Or, even more strongly:

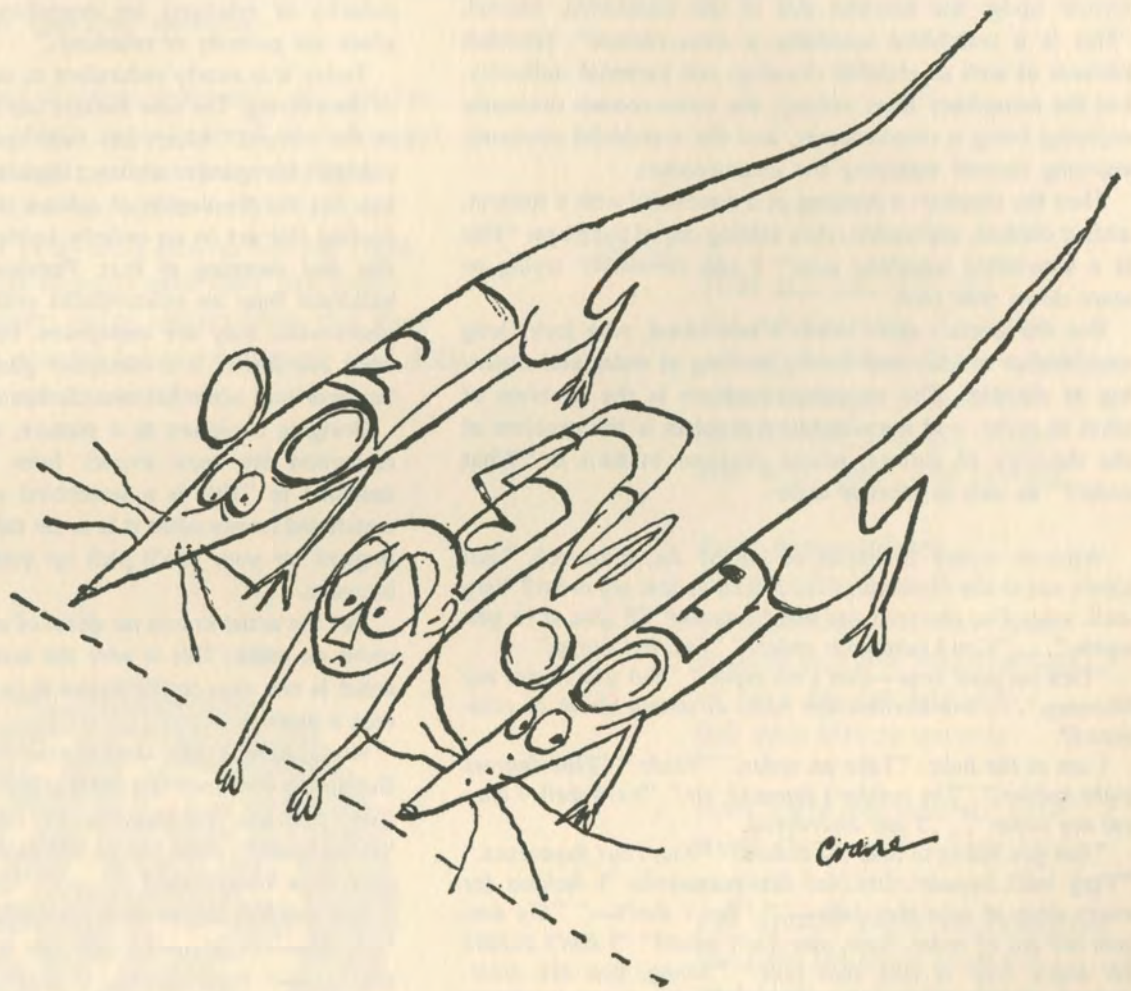
If what many of us profess to believe religiously were actually applied to American social, political and economic life, we would have a system more nearly socialist than capitalist. (**Playboy**, January, 1963, p. 52.)

This is true, and you've got to admire a man who sees it and says it so clearly. Seeing this gulf, he doesn't try to cover it up, or to pretend that religion and modern economic realities can really go together. If Hefner's faint religious longings distinguish him from Ayn Rand, whom he resembles in some other ways, his perception of this gulf distinguishes him from, say a Norman Vincent Peale or the idiocies of a James Fifiield. He sees the gulf, sticks to it, and frankly declares that religion is wrong because it is impotent in

helping man along the way in the acquisitive society. There is "love your neighbor" and there is "knife your buddy," and he honestly chooses the latter. Living for others, selflessness—these may do for the unsophisticated or for some other century. But the sophisticated twentieth century requires a new faith: the rat-race, selfishness, unconcern for others, looking out for number one.

At this point, the anxious editor, oversensitive to criticism, overattentive to praise, has disappeared, and there emerges a man without fear. A man willing to

tell the religious tradition of the West to go to hell, even though he badly misunderstands that tradition, he understands it just well enough to enable us to admire his rejection of it. Here is a man without fear, and also without conscience, willing to commit himself clearly and candidly to the judgment of the public. God is, for Hefner, really just a meddling nuisance, except as a justification of the magazine's pictures. You can't help but like this guy. Here, if you will, is a man really come of age. How do you tell a Hefner that Jesus Christ is his Lord?



ON YOUR MARK FOR ANOTHER WEEK

An Esthetic for Birdwatchers



By ROBERT ALLEN GOFF

As a child I was fascinated and occasionally upset by a children's cartoon feature that appeared in my mother's copies of *The Ladies Home Journal*. It was called "The Watchbird."

"The Watchbird" was designed to encourage civilized traits in the child who took its stern messages to heart. As I remember, its concern for neatness was registered in three stages. First, "This is a watchbird watching a room-messer" might be the caption (along with a short, scornful description of the room-messer) under a childish drawing of the room-messer under the scornful eye of the watchbird. Second, "This is a watchbird watching a clean-roomer" (childish phrases as well as childish drawing: not parental authority, but the conspiracy from within), the clean-roomer obviously enjoying being a clean-roomer, and the watchbird obviously enjoying himself watching the clean-roomer.

Then the clincher: a drawing of a watchbird with a neutral, almost clinical, expression, eyes staring out of the page: "This is a watchbird watching you." I can remember trying to stare down that bird.

But one doesn't stare down a watchbird, who looks long and hard or quickly and finally, smiling at order and frowning at disorder. The watchbird-problem is the problem of what to order, and the watchbird-problem is the problem of the theology of culture, whose problem in turn is "What order?" as well as what to order.

What to order? Breakfast or lunch? Ah, a brunch. "But that's not in the dictionary!" . . . "You've lost my order? Very well, since I've changed my mind anyway, I'll give it to you again." . . . "Can I take your order?" "Yes, but hurry."

"Pick up your toys—that's an order." "But you're not my Mommy." . . . Insubordination here, or wrong chain of command?

I am at the helm: "Take an order." "Yessir." "Five degrees right rudder." "The rudder's jammed, sir." "Very well, I cancel my order." . . . I am disordered.

"Are you ready to take the orders?" "Yes, Your Reverence." "Very well, repeat after me the passwords: 'I believe for every drop of rain that falls—'" "But I don't—" "My son, you are out of order. Now, you don't what?" "I don't believe for every drop of rain that falls." "Sonny, you are disordained. As you know, we cannot ordinate an insubordinate who won't confess to the ultimate co-ordinate." . . . Heresy and disorder. . . "But I know some very meticulous heretics."

Proud owner of an objet d'art: "—and finally, this detail repeats the suffering motif of strong diagonals that characterizes the whole. On the whole it is a very well-ordered work." "You mean—?" "Yes—it does my bidding." "Extraordinary!"

It is time to suggest that today's theologian of culture—the one who has been concerned to tell us of the place and sig-

nificance of the work of art in creation—has been making the work of art do his bidding. This may take the form of reading an inappropriate order into a work or of seeing an order when there is none. But this is only a kind of blunder—a matter of saying one thing rather than saying another thing in the same way. On this level of doing things one can be right or wrong, justified or unjustified.

There is a more fundamental dishonesty. This occurs when theology, always an orderly enterprise, demands of the work of art what it demands of reality at large: "A place (or polarity or relation) for everything and everything in its place (or polarity or relation)."

Today it is nearly redundant to note that our art is an art of disordering. The new theatre has been named "the theatre of the absurd." Much has been spoken of the role of "accidents" in regard to abstract expressionism and action painting. Yet the theologian of culture parodies himself by interpreting this art in an orderly fashion, attaching meaning to this and meaning to that. Perhaps there is nothing more ludicrous than an existentialist critic insisting on his metaphors—and they are metaphors. Feeling and "tasting" that what one insists is a metaphor gives him the sensation the Emperor had when his new clothes dawned on him.

Bringing a picture to a picture, which is the form of art education we may expect from the theologian, clearly amounts to "This is a watchbird watching an artist." The watchbird knows what it is to be tidy, and if you know what is good for you, you'll pick up your toys and get down to business.

But the artist knows no chain of command and will always resist an order. This is why the watchbird who watches the artist is one step to the better if he is frowning. At least he sees a mess.

Now, seeing a mess does not depend on there being a mess. But seeing and feeling a mess is the first step for most of us. (See, perhaps, the drawing by Paul Klee, "What a Mess You've Made!", page 117 in Will Grohmann, *Paul Klee: Drawings*, New York, 1960.)

But this has begun to seem easy. It is not simply to say, "Oh, yes—it's a mess," but (as it were), "Here's mud in the eyes—" Plop.

We have said that our arts are arts of disordering (and not that they are disorder). This and the feeling for messes point toward what may happen when a work of art is for us. Augustine says that "things making are to be preferred to things made" (*De Musica*, Book 6). And to this we must add: things unmaking are to be preferred to things made.

We—our expectations and distinctions—are first unmade and undone by the successful work of art. This is the route from recreation (passing the time) to re-creation (surpassing the time).

THE GARGOYLES AT ST. VINCENT'S

*Sadness rounds this corner of the plaza.
With me goes the sky's cracked route and your
Imprisoned lips shaping the word soul against
Your shape, which could have mentioned piety
But for those distorted judgments of the stone.
Chisels held your court, a kangaroo of angry
Years where love was voided as the
Falter of a voice at vespers. So now, publicly,
you welcome demons.*

*The welcomed demon sentences our wishes.
Pigeons who won't care beyond their hunger
Bring you peanuts, share your daylight;
We cannot. Your haunches mimic tension.
Release it on your own desire. Spring from
Your ten-story heaven and turn the task
Upon its master, enter raging from the time
Dealt you in granite between despair and duty.
Devour us our fear.*



RCB
+

Two poems

BY R. B. LARSEN

SHINE

*That star doesn't will
the whole story. To know
one night when Jesus whistled
snow through brutal lips
can matter. But the single
star must wear and scatter.*

*Suns communicate.
They sight through the
crossed highwires overhead
toward grief, at laundromats
or here by our bed, lips
full with kiss or speech.*

*How learn the sound? How
think the breath of ice into
warmth? Mind cannot. Yet by
our drastic parts we recognize
the suns for what they are
and learn to live by stars.*

MIMI GROSS and

a vision of the Old Testament

BY MARGARET RIGG

BEGINNING with the title woodcut print **Bible**, the whole series seems to sparkle and burst with a new light from the ancient stories. And, as each print is studied, each story vaguely or sharply recalled, the particular visual solution Miss Gross offers us appears fresh and delightfully direct. There are no heavy layers of theological underbrush to work through before the print becomes "understandable." There is very little intellectualizing, and there is a refreshing lack of the literary in these prints. It is a special trap artists fall into when dealing with literature by visual means. The temptation is usually to tell a story or preach a sermon. Miss Gross does neither.

Instead, she realizes a moment of the spirit, a feeling or emotion, an attitude or a relationship. This is done with candor, with humor and innocence. So much so, that they may well be misunderstood for being too simple, naive, or direct. Yet to me, the more they are looked at and into, the more I realize these are prints to live with for they bring me something new and unexpected day by day. Today I noticed the happiness in the quaint little smile on the face of Adam. This revealed a whole new aspect for me of my own feeling for the creation of man and woman.

In the print **Abraham Taking Isaac to Sacrifice**, the attitude of trust is expressed in the simplest of forms. A new perspective is offered. Lacking here are the many details which the biblical story gives us in full. We seem to be asked to contemplate the simplicity of obedience: Abraham's to God, Isaac's to his father.

A new perspective is offered us in **Jonah**, also. It is, for me, both a humorous caricature of a man in a fix thinking over his situation, and a stark portrayal of confrontation. The print of **Job** affects me in much the

same way. It reflects both deep humor and deep pathos.

Through her humor and innocence, Mimi Gross manages to not only delight but to surprise. The traditional stories are not done in the traditional way. The unexpected modesty, for instance, in the face and smile of the victorious **David** brings a surprise to anyone expecting the story to be merely retold graphically out of the Bible. And this is equally true of the expression given **Goliath**—in his death and defeat a benevolence is preserved which is perhaps more moving to the human emotions than all the raging, fearful characterizations offered us by Hollywood spectacles.

This benevolent atmosphere is even more evident in the print, **Creation of the World**. Both Genesis and the first chapter of John contain visions of creation as a great and overwhelming burst-into-being of the world. But a secondary vision of creation is one of a brooding and hovering peace: the peace of the Garden of Eden before the fall. In her surprising print of **Creation**, Miss Gross has formulated a picture of the harmony and essential goodness of creation. And the size of the print, so small to be "the mighty creation," is proper to the view of an event of such proportion seen in the soft light that she visualizes.

As Mimi Gross says in her remarks, she made each wood cut after she had learned to love each story. That love and intimacy and involvement at a direct and personal level enliven each print. Technical abilities alone could never render such depths. Miss Gross knows how to use her tools to explore and reveal with fresh depth, the human-divine encounter.



WOODCUT SERIES BY
MIMI GROSS



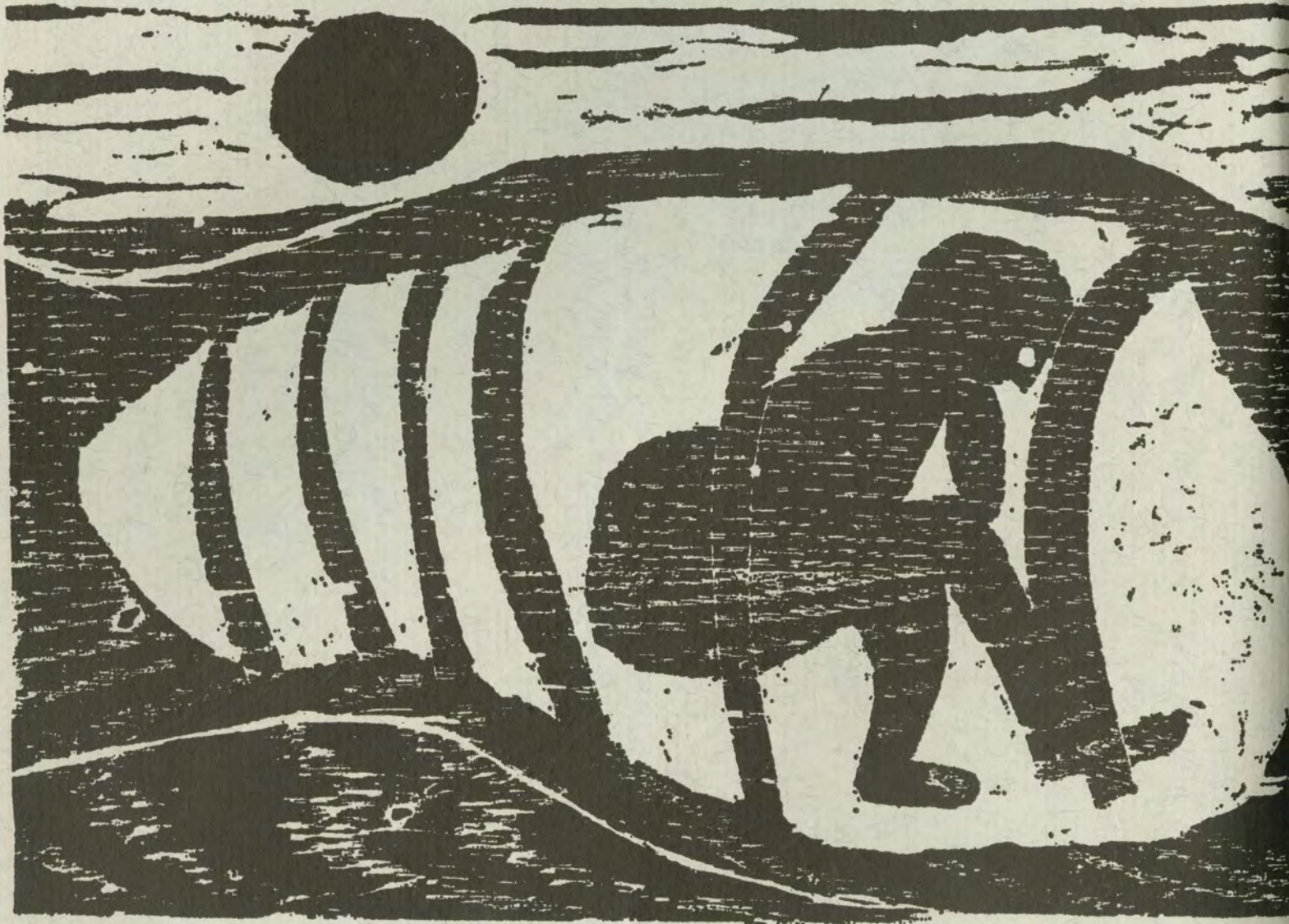
CREATION OF EVE



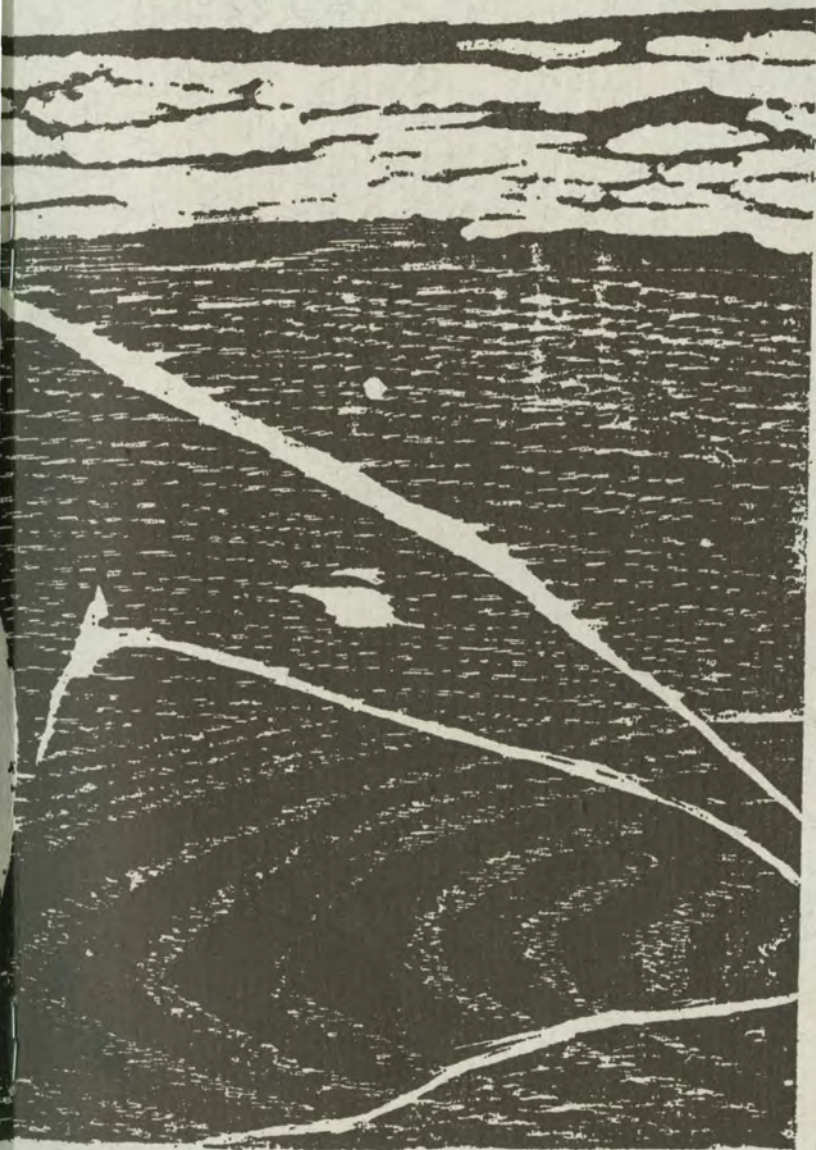
CREATION OF THE WORLD



DAVID HOLDING HEAD OF GOLIATH



JONAH IN THE WHALE



PARTING OF THE RED SEA



ABRAHAM TAKING ISAAC TO SACRIFICE



JOB

MAY 1963

31



FOR THE SONG OF KING SOLOMON

SOME NOTES ABOUT THE BIBLE SERIES AND PRINTMAKING

BY MIMI GROSS

Somehow it seems a little stiff to write about one's own work. Because—in addition to whatever one says about what they do or how—there is a tremendous mystical message which cannot be explained in words about a visual work. These are not so much religious in a usual way—but religious personally, and I feel that is an important feeling—especially pertaining to the Bible woodcuts. The Old Testament to me has so much family love and tradition that I felt very good working on it.

Woodcut prints have a quality I like very much since they are clear in contrast (of light and dark), and have a glowing texture that can be varied according to the grain of the wood. There is a fresh freedom in making woodcuts: every line is sharp; there are no mistakes: one cuts, it is definite, just as the ink drawing is definite. And, I like the almost primitive simplicity of cutting and printing a woodcut block.

I studied the techniques of woodcut making with Louis Schanker at Bard College. The Bible series was a project I began then. Whenever I learned to love a new story, e.g., Ruth and/or Song of Solomon, I would make an addition to the series.

I feel that prints are coequal in illustrating a story. They lend themselves to enhancing a narrative. And yet the visual "telling" also stands on its own. But both the print and the story enhance each other, if the reader cares to enjoy looking at how another person envisioned the story or characters.

My favorite woodcut prints are by the German Expressionist group. I especially love the prints by Emil Nolde who had a stark, sensitive intensity and preserved a constant sense of pathos in his line. And the portraits, street scenes, allegories done by Max Beckmann, Ludwig Kirchner, Edvard Munch, Kathe Kollwitz and Max Pechstein: These printmakers and their prints are my teachers.



RUTH AND THE MAIDENS



THE SERPENT TAKING EVE TO THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

MIMI GROSS was born in Manhattan, New York City, in 1940, and began drawing at a very early age. Since 1944 she has spent her summers with her family in Provincetown, Massachusetts, a community well known for its dense population of artists. In 1951 Miss Gross visited Europe and Israel with her family. She attended the High School of Music and Art in New York City, 1954-1956, and then majored in painting at Bard College for two years, 1957 and 1958. From 1959 until 1961 she traveled and painted in Europe, North Africa and Israel. "There new adventures were discovered in art history and seeing great master paintings, sculpture, architecture, archaeological sights and generally being away from active New York; the serenity and beauty of Florence, Italy, were great for retrospective thinking and new development to sprout healthily."



DOPPLER EFFECT

*Childstates in their
blue-green pear-shaped
earthpen
stockpile toys to punctuate
invectives
launched with pointed fury.
The spacesign reads:
Caution, earthchildren at play
watch
their sandcastles red-shift away.*

—LELAND STAVEN

CONCERNING NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

1.

*To see the world through leaves—
it's raining and I'm high!
is like seeing Eve behind her leaf—
it's beautiful!*

2.

*A firefly
flying over the water near the edge of a lake
celebrating the 4th of July.*

3.

*A CONTRACT or
Renewals of recitals rinse the ear*

*But Thou art Rich Thou Fulminating Air
Thou Greenery in bower's Presence
Thou lavish fame of water circling the garden
Thou sonnet's second self.*

—JOHN TAGLIABUE

WHEN the Bicentennial of Columbia University was celebrated in 1954, by a series of broadcast addresses surveying the whole field of knowledge, J. Robert Oppenheimer gave a memorable and unusually perceptive talk on the "Prospects in the Arts and Sciences." His observations are pertinent to our concern because he was dealing essentially with the "arts and sciences" which constitute the basic material of our colleges and universities, in the midst of which our work in religion must take its place and, as far as possible, validate itself.

"Never before today," says Oppenheimer, "has the diversity, the complexity, the richness so clearly defied hierarchial order and simplification, never before have we had to understand the complementary, mutually not compatible ways of life and recognize choice between them as the only course of freedom. Never before today has the integrity of the intimate, the detailed, the true art, the integrity of craftsmanship and the preservation of the familiar, of the humorous and the beautiful stood in more massive contrast to the vastness of life, the greatness of the globe, the otherness of people, and the all-encompassing dark." In short, this is the very world of college and university, where the huge mountain of accumulated data about the world and its history stands over against the brave but limited strength of the student to explore it. How much of it can he know; how high can he ascend? The terror is that it grows while he looks at it, and, even if he chooses to be concerned with only one aspect, it is likely that he will be separated from other climbers he can see who have chosen another route. Oppenheimer continues, "This is a world in which each of us, knowing his limitations, knowing the evils of superficiality and the terrors of fatigue, will have to cling to what is close to him, to what he knows, to what he can do, to his friends and his tradition and his love, lest he be dissolved in a universal confusion and know nothing and love nothing." What are the conditions you and I must meet if we are to conserve the essentially intimate reality of religion in such a vast, disparate, objective world of data and disinterestedness?

Like Hamlet, we could "be bounded in a nutshell and count ourselves kings of infinite space, were it not that we have had bad dreams." The realms of art and science are indeed large, seemingly infinite, and being bounded by college or university is not too much of a restriction, seeing its mountainous heap of knowledge, but the world in its violence has shaken us and left us with nightmares. The university, in all its greatness, does not solve the anguish of this angry dust. The world, its fevers and fears, its quick descent to madness, its precarious hold on sanity, its cheap and dangerous pretensions, its feeble, fickle resources of faith, seems untouched by the academic apparatus,



JIM CRANE

The "University Crisis":

INTEGRITY, IDEOLOGY, AND EXPERIENCE

BY SAMUEL H. MILLER

the finely strung systems of fact and formulae, the still witness of sterilized and impeccable data, classified and catalogued and ready for immediate reference if somewhere sometime someone were to want unexpectedly to use it. Even words wear out in this massive diffusion of ideas. They lose integrity, and can be attached to almost anything, signifying little or nothing.

When Albrecht Dürer wanted a diagnosis from his doctor, he sent him a portrait of himself in the nude, with a note: "There where my finger is pointing, the spot colored yellow, that's where it hurts!" Certainly higher education has had a great deal of self-diagnosis in the last few decades. It has struggled manfully with many diverse forces, drawn the picture of itself many times and marked it with yellow and with honest candor, inscribing it plainly: "This is where it hurts." I go over old ground, much plowed by better men than myself, but all I can do is to say, This is where it seems to me to hurt.

AND as a foreword, I do not think we should be dismayed that it does hurt in spots. In any college or university, operating at this juncture of history, there stands the vast accumulation of Western culture, with its amazing diversity of origins and immense capacity for exploring in all directions the ramifications of time and space. Martin Buber calls attention to this problem in the second chapter of his book *I and Thou*, where he makes plain that the increasing complications of culture which occur with each successive absorption of one nation by another or by one era of another or of one civilization by another, at last create a monumental block to any easy integration or intimate approximation of the whole. The "I—it" increases at the expense of the "I—Thou." The university spreads out in all directions in its effort to cover this astonishing expansion of the knowable, but it actually becomes less and less what it intended originally to be, namely, a university, a place where knowledge could be unified and a better way of life exemplified, and merely puts it together in a sprawling pattern where the pieces do not meet.

Let me begin our diagnostic portrait by calling attention to two results of this huge unembraceable accumulation of educational material. The first is its obvious massiveness. Just in its simple bulk, the way this thick increasing layer of knowledgeable information tends to bury the minds of students, like a blanket of snow that obliterates all angular realities and obscures the identity and character of all who submit to it, is indeed marked. Not only does such educational information take the place of education, but the indigenous mind, the shape and wit and humor of the self in its thinking, is smothered and lost. The mind

literally sinks into the common stock of ideas and the peculiar vocabulary by which they are articulated, and lives its life in this borrowed world. To be learned in this sense is not to be able to articulate with fresh perceptiveness and sound clarity the meaning and shape of circumstance and experience as they come into existence, but to become, as C. Ernest Wright has said, "clerks in a warehouse of ideas," shifting the stock, classifying and reclassifying the parts, and manufacturing nothing new. Professor Dobie, of Texas, changes the metaphor by saying that we are "digging up old bones and burying them in new graves." One thing we must begin to see. Bacon's old saw that knowledge is power is only partly true. A mind may be lost in too much knowledge, confused by it, deceived by its quantity into thinking itself wise, when it is only sophisticatedly stupid, and, because of its vast extension and detail in fact, betrayed into the superficial evasion of the depth and dignity of truth. You will remember Orwell's biting description of the intellectual class of England in that "they did not think, and they did not really love the truth." There are two ways to make a man ignorant—keep him from learning or teach him too much. Under the present conditions, with an indiscriminate craving for education (or at least for courses!), there is little danger of the former; but the latter may well prove to be the way to produce the **Massenmensch**. Massiveness of knowledge is not the meaning of wisdom.

THINK it is significant that religion has never directly concerned itself with the quantitative aspect of knowledge. It is not interested in the Faustian curiosity to experience everything, to go infinitely in all directions. Its concern rather has been to penetrate one event in depth, to reach beyond the phenomenal to the intention of it, to release the mystery in its ground, and, in such daring, to find in such experience a category in which fear and wisdom are associated with faith. The sheer bulk of educational information available for instruction has been accumu-

lated by a process of ideological abstraction. Events, circumstances, things, persons, experiences—everything has been stripped down and robbed of its particularity, uprooted from its mysterious aura of relationships, scrubbed clean of any traumatic dimension of feeling or human involvement, and then, skeletalized, sterilized, dried, pinned down and classified. The very massiveness of knowledge has been made possible by this de-reification, the disengagement from the palpable context of reality.

Thus conditioned, it is not strange that students utilize the same techniques with religion and find themselves with ideas aplenty but no faith. The truth is, none of the essential reality of religion can be ideologized without destroying it. As Trilling describes those characteristic encyclopaedists, Bouvard and Pecuchet, in Flaubert's novel: "Ideas are life and death to them." Everything in life was transformed into ideas before it was digestible, acceptable. This is the ideological character of the modern world, and as such represents our inability to accept reality directly or wholly or religiously. We have a similar difficulty with the myth and the symbol for the same reason. Only to the degree that we can reduce them to ideas, or abstract an idea from their structure, can we allow their validity. We simply do not think mythically or symbolically or in this whole and directly perceptive sense, religiously.

This may be one aspect of what Bonhoeffer calls, "coming of age." Wisdom is reduced to knowledge, knowledge is strictly ideological. We have no religious understanding of nature, no religious understanding of events or of history, no religious understanding of the self. All these areas are scientificized or rendered into ideas, their ontological mystery, traumatic dimensions, and spiritual realities having disappeared. Thus we come, as Max Weber put it, to live in a "disenchanted" world. Or, as many novelists from Dostoevski through Kafka to Camus show, the human environment becomes incredibly sordid or shabby. It scarcely sustains the human dream.



when you got real faith
you don't need theology



or all this
silly art stuff

ONE further thing must be said of this massive overlay of knowledge in its relationship to the spirit. It has long since lost its essential unity. This is certainly one aspect of the Nietzschean judgment that God had died, and thus coherence had departed from his world. This fact, increasingly apparent since the sixth century and remarked by poets and philosophers alike, now constitutes one of the heavy burdens of contemporary man. Integrity is implicit in the very nature of man, and it is toward this that he strives. A world in chaos, divergent in its nature, contradictory in its claims, as Oppenheimer points out, is not an easy world. As he says, "We shall have a rugged time to keep our minds open and to keep them deep." Born of great changes in the consciousness of man, the primary aspects of his spirit, namely the arts, sciences, politics, and religion, have assumed autonomous authority for their separate values, developed special and technical vocabularies, encouraged sectarian ways of looking at things and methods for knowing them until now we are not sure how each of them participates in the general truth or in common reality. This uncertainty and, in a sense, skepticism provide our burden, and often our paralysis. As Jaspers puts it, "When firm foundations are lacking, what is known hangs in the air."

Religion, too, is caught in this fragmentation. Restricted to dealing with things religious, it is often forced back to think of itself as only competent to deal with things ecclesiastical. Theology tends to be a closed system of dogmatic assumptions with special privileges; faith tends to be loyalty to the institution of the church; and Christianity ends up as a set of ecclesiastical exercises conducted at certain times and hours. Religion is actually nothing if it is not the faith and explicit witness to a coherence at the core of all reality, a unity only obscured but never overwhelmed in the diversity and contradiction of human experience. If religion cannot disclose the fact that somehow all things hang together, it has little to say to men bearing the burden of this brokenness in contemporary culture.



all you need is
the BIBLE



and you don't need to read it
when you've been to church
as often as I have

What are we to do in the face of these factors—first, of a seemingly neutral, ideological mass of facts, secondly, of a lack of framework or coherent principle by which to orient and make sense out of such divergent material; thirdly, the cornering and reduction of religion to mere cultic activities?

CERTAINLY our religion must have its intellectual content and discipline, but it is radically important at the present time to seek a deeper level than the ideological. One can operate at the ideological level with increasing speed. Ideas can be accumulated with greater and greater rapidity. But essential religious insight and involvement demand more than "learning." They demand time, and with time a certain reflective and meditative perseverance before the shell of the phenomenon or event is pierced and the mystery of being is encountered. This ontological shock is so removed from the speeded up and superficial ideational processes that the deepening seldom occurs and religion becomes a dry run after religious ideas. More courses, more instruction about historical criticism, more Greek words used technically to describe something we do not know existentially, all tend to keep us busy and lead us further and further from religion itself.

Most of you will remember the striking comparison made by Auerbach in the first chapter of *Mimesis* between the episode of Odysseus in book 19, when he had at last come home and the old housekeeper Euryclea recognized him by his scar, and the story of the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22. . . . As he describes it, "It would be difficult to imagine styles more contrasted than those of these two equally ancient and equally epic texts. On the one hand (in the *Odyssey*), externalized, uniformly illuminated phenomena, at a definite time and in a definite place, connected together without lacunae in a perpetual foreground; thoughts and feelings completely expressed; events taking place in leisurely fashion and with very little of

suspense. On the other hand (in Genesis), the externalization of only so much of the phenomena as is necessary for purpose of the narrative, all else left in obscurity; the decisive points of the narrative alone are emphasized. What lies between is nonexistent; time and place are undefined and call for interpretation; thoughts and feelings remain unexpressed, are only suggested by the silence and fragmentary speeches; the whole permeated with the most unrelieved suspense and directed toward a single goal (and to that extent far more of a unity) remains mysterious and "fraught with background."

Auerbach contrasts Zeus with God, saying that the latter extends further into the background; even the people in the biblical stories have greater depths of time, fate, and consciousness than human beings in Homer; their thoughts and feelings have more layers.

It is from this illustration that I want to extract a sense of something deeper than the ideological, something better than the clarity of ideas, something more significant than the contour of exact description. Reality, in the biblical sense—and I take it this means religious sense—is far richer and more complicated than in the Greek sense. As Auerbach points out, at the conclusion of the chapter, "The sublime influence of God reaches so far into the everyday that the two realms of the sublime and the everyday are not only actually unseparated, but basically inseparable." Similarly, hardly any of the biblical personages do not undergo the deepest humiliation, and yet strangely enough, are still deemed worthy of God's personal intervention.

Only the profoundest reflectiveness carried out with pertinacity could achieve this remarkable certitude in which the transcendent mystery of God blends with the simplest and most concrete events of history. We live on the surface of events, their firm ground hidden from us, because we fly from one circumstance to another, hopeful that some generalized idea will hold the phantasmagoria together.

The distinction shown here between the Greek and biblical styles of conceiving reality is excitingly significant, but try to imagine if you can what would happen were you to contrast the biblical now with journalese or newspaper lingo, where every dimension of mystery, of background, of character, of paradox, of subtlety, of destiny is coldly and systematically eradicated. There is no syntax, no structure of any complexity; the words are simple jabs pointing only to the external and the plainly obvious. It is dead-pan prose. Yet this "newspeak"—which may develop as Orwell suggested in 1984—represents the **thinking style** of much of our culture.

Let us turn to the second aspect of this ideological mass which comprises the Himalaya for brave explorers. Religiously I believe we should try to recover new levels of experience in the individual which may be dormant or potential, and by which more compre-

hensive bonds can be established in society. Here are two issues, namely, the loss of the self in contemporary life and the disintegration of society. The ideological level, both in individuals and in community, cannot embrace the centrifugal forces which now threaten us, individually or collectively. The widespread testimony in all the arts concerning the loss of identity, slipping into anonymity, seeking some sort of violence to galvanize the reality of existence, is notorious. **The Man Without Qualities**, by Musil, **The Metamorphosis**, by Kafka, **The Stranger**, by Camus, or the paintings of Oliveira, Bacon, Dubuffet, or the sculptures of Richier, Paolozzi, or the dramas of Ionesco, Genet, Beckett, all tell the same story. Man is in danger of disappearing.

And because man's reality has been reduced, so society finds itself trying to subsist on a very much simplified and precarious bond. The more individual a man became, the less he shared in the common destiny; the more he withdrew to observe mankind and the less he suffered the universal shame, the more atomistic society became, and in turn forced by the state to impose order where no vital relationships created any. Obviously, the more we depend on a technological fabric to hold the world together, the less organic ties will be exercised.

First in man and then in society deeper and higher, more human and sublime levels must be opened up if we are to conserve the human and maintain society. The redemptive level in man must be recovered, for the ideological is not vitally creative and does not sustain society. The religious level in society must be recovered, for the technological is not sufficient to sustain meaning for man. We must choose between the **Massenmensch** with its termite society and the redemptive man and society redeemed in the church.

The pressure of several centuries of cultural change, creating its own direction and in a sense philosophy of life, has been to achieve our human goal by transforming our environment. The advantages which have accrued are undeniable, but the question which asks whether any amount of external change will ever bring the human venture to its satisfactory destiny cannot be avoided. Both the search for something deeper than the ideological and the opening up of new levels of experience in the individual and society, point to the radical demand for an internal change. It has been the perennial concern of religion, and in its best days its very dynamic, to posit its validity on its work of transforming man from within. The biblical base for such a belief was the insistence that the "world" could be fulfilled not so much by directly changing its external character as by opening up in man the realm of the spirit, whereby he entered into freedom and faith and brought to fulfillment the whole creation, which until then had been groaning and travailing, not without hope but without power of its own to accomplish its goal.



CIVIL DEFENSE

*When the water is brackish and full of chemicals,
when a poor man boasts of progress,
when cancers, like all their bodies, flame
toward dissolution:*

I shall be caught in an abandoned mine.

*When treasures lie abandoned, not so fair
as the explosion's eye viewed for more than a second;
where air is more deadly than arsenic, when the tree
of the crime burns and kills also:*

*I shall think life is a stillness
between the fires of death.*

*When glory is outpassed, but its seared words
twist up hot, and crumble; when the dying in pantomime
have their dumb, bawling mouths open; when radio yields
to a vast static
and we are deaf from our ear-drums' crackle:*

I shall listen to a beast's Morse code of fear:

*will splendor have meaning, will you worship
all things beyond you, the least broken open and
the greatest brought down?*

—FRANK MERCHANT



TODAY in Dorcas when Oliver Comer goes by—and that is often, since Dorcas has only one real business block—the shopkeepers and loiterers narrow their eyes and listen closely for his stomach. But they have convinced themselves that it is nothing but a myth. To Oliver, now fourteen and apparently as normal as the others, their reaction to his presence is a thing of unexplained mystery, for though his own hearing is complete again, he was deaf at the time his stomach spoke.

It was two years ago that the growl in his stomach became an occasional rumble, that he suddenly lost all hunger, went deaf and back to bed all in the same early morning. It was the same day the two new preachers—one an elderly, prophetic man, the other young and energetic—came to Dorcas with their first sermons.

Just before Sunday breakfast Oliver was hurried back to bed in the front room by his foster parents. Mrs. Comer ran to the kitchen for the only thing she could think of so early in the morning—a warm onion poultice. Mr. Comer, slower to acknowledge a crisis, finally went for the doctor and roused him from bed. The doctor found Oliver's pulse perfect and his blood pressure fair, but the boy heard nothing. He lay there inert and mildly conscious, a dream smile at his lips.

As the doctor professionally and knowingly rubbed his chin and the Comers stood expectantly by, the stomach gave its first utterance. Beginning like the gurgle of water in a drain, it paused, then coughed two fairly clear syllables like a mama-doll. The doctor squeezed his chin colorless and slowly looked up at the startled couple.

"When did this start?" he asked. "It must be symptomatic."

Mrs. Comer stared at Mr. Comer, and Mr. Comer stared at Mrs. Comer.

"Then," she said and clutched her apron.

"Yes, right then," said Mr. Comer. He tried not to look disturbed.

"Let me think," the doctor said. He rose and went to the window, winding the rubber blood pressure tubing about his hand. He looked out at the early morning as if he were checking medical books on a shelf.

"It said mama," Mrs. Comer said softly and re-treated a step from the bed.

"No. Papa," said Mr. Comer, and he too took a backward step.

The doctor turned. "It must have started early. Have you heard his stomach before?" His eyes were penetrating, accusing the couple.

Mrs. Comer twisted her apron helplessly, and finding her husband looking speechlessly at her, she spoke. "Now I remember. When he came, it was. I had been on the back porch and just gone into the kitchen. There was a sound, a kind of growl outside. And when I looked out, he was lying there in a baby blanket. He didn't cry. His stomach just growled and I gave him some milk. We named him Oliver and kept him."

"Hmmm," the doctor said.

"That's right," Mr. Comer hastened to affirm. "It's always growled. It never talked before."

"You mean it never seemed to." The doctor paced to his bag, took nothing from it and paced back. "There must be a word for it," he said, "if I can diagnose it. Let me think of the word."

He stopped in mid pace as Oliver's stomach gurgled again, paused and began a long rumble. Intermittent in the sound came syllables like "heaven" and "earth" and at the end came rather distinctly "the seventh day."

THE doctor, as if afraid of haste, stepped to the bedside and lifted the boy's nightshirt. He looked over his glasses at the boy's stomach. Then the shirt slipped from his grasp and he hid his hands in his pockets. He moved to the door, but the Comers were there as if to block his way.

"What did you see?" they asked.

"Nothing." And that was true, for it was only a stomach. "Let me by. This calls for something at my office."

Neither moved.

"If I were a churchgoer," said Mrs. Comer, "I'd go there now."

"So would I," said Mr. Comer.

"That's your business," replied the doctor. "There are only two churches here. You are half way between them. Take your choice. I'm going to my office." And

he pushed between them, abruptly taking his hands from his pockets to fend with them.

When he got to his office, all he could find was ethyl alcohol and an orange soda. He mixed that and slowly drank. When his first new caller came, he was ready to talk and he did—about Oliver and his stomach. Before the new preachers arrived, the word was spreading over town.

At mid morning Mrs. Turner of the brick church and Mr. Roberts of the white board church came, leading a group of followers each, to the Comers'.

"We heard the sad news," said Mrs. Turner, for she took for granted that Oliver was on his death bed.

"Has he said anything more?" asked Mr. Roberts. "We are very sorry."

Mrs. Comer, also beginning to fear the worst, said, "We haven't—that is, he's been quiet and smiling all the time. We've tried everything. Where is the doctor?"

"At his office," answered Mr. Roberts. "Could we see the boy? Our presence might help."

"He's in here," Mr. Comer said and opened the door for them.

The two groups filed in and stood respectfully away from the bed. Oliver's lips still held to their dream smile, but he seemed not to see the people. He lay as he had all morning, quietly.

"It's a shame," said Mrs. Turner in an awed voice, as she clutched her bag. The others nodded and murmured, but they seemed bereft of words.

"He's been a good boy," said Mr. Comer. He was now a little proud of his pseudo-son, though afraid still to approach the bed. "It'll be a miracle if he comes through this." He suddenly hushed. The people stirred uneasily, and one or two looked toward the door.

On the bed Oliver stretched his legs dreamily. The smile on his lips indented at the corners and his stomach began to growl. The people became expectant and gathered more compactly. The growl paused and distinctly in short breath groups came the words "God saw—wickedness—great—in the earth."

No one moved until Mr. Roberts lifted his hand as if in benediction and walked solemnly from the room. Mrs. Turner, not to be outdone, bowed her head reverently and followed him. The rest looked knowingly at each other, accusing themselves of the words from Oliver's stomach, but they hastened forth as from the awful presence of almighty judgment. The Comers remained alone with their burden of illness in the house.

"Something has come upon us, Mama," said Mr. Comer. "On all of us." When he glanced out the window, he saw the people had all gone quickly.

At eleven o'clock the church bells stopped ringing. Though the Comers were still at home, both churches were filled. The new ministers rejoiced to see their ready flocks.

In the white board church the elderly preacher spoke in modulated tones about the need for baptism and the way of sprinkling. In the brick chapel the young minister lifted his energetic voice for total submersion. Both by implication spoke of the need of Oliver for this divine preparation for the hereafter. The heads of both congregations nodded at the appropriate moments; a few people even cried with pity. Before the end of services, both preachers were suggesting forthright that Oliver should be prepared.

AT twelve came the benedictions, and the people flocked forth to mill about outside. The elders met briefly with the new ministers. Fifteen minutes later the congregations surprised each other by arriving simultaneously at the Comers' house, the preachers in the lead.

The two shook hands gingerly and agreed on their purpose of baptism. The elders piously greeted each other and all turned to the house of the Comers. But the Comers, frightened by this display of attention, latched their door and retired to Oliver's room, won-



dering at what they now possessed in their twelve-year-old, adopted son.

Mrs. Comer was beginning to doubt. Looking at Oliver, she asked her husband, "What must we do? What must we do with him?"

"What does that crowd want?" Mr. Comer said. "The boy? What has he done?"

Mrs. Comer stared at Oliver's smile and her face softened. "He's ours, Papa. We took him in. We'll not let them hurt him." Her voice trembled, and for the first time in years she reached for her husband's hand.

"No," said Mr. Comer, gathering strength from her touch. "But maybe—maybe they don't mean to hurt him."

As they heard the insistent knocking at the front door, Oliver's stomach again made low noises. Gently but clearly came the words "Behold—fear of Lord—wisdom."

"What does it mean?" said Mrs. Comer. "I don't understand at all. Not at all."

"Neither do I," said Mr. Comer. "But we can see what they want, I suppose."

Mrs. Comer stared at her husband, and seeing no answer for escape, nodded. "I suppose so."

So they unlatched the front door. The two ministers contained themselves for a moment before crossing the threshold. Each seemed confident in what he was about to propose. Finally the young one spoke.

"On behalf of my congregation, Mr. and Mrs. Comer, I would like to offer our services. We feel your son should be prepared, and we have our church pool ready."

The older minister hastened to interpose. "We too offer our help, my friends. But all we need is a small amount of water, unless, of course, you insist on total submersion. I say it is the manner and not the amount. But it must be done, you know."

"Brother," said the younger man, "do you mean to imply that the soul can be cleansed by a few drops?" He stepped closer to the other, while four of his elders from the brick church moved into the house.

The older man's face took on a prophetic glare. "Brother," he said, "the lily of the field grows to perfection day and night with little more than dew drops. That's what I mean."

"This is a soul, not a lily," replied the other. "And with the consent of the Comers, I'll see personally that this one is properly prepared."

They turned to the Comers again, but the Comers were being forced to step aside as the four elders brought Oliver through the doorway on his mattress. Oliver was still quiet and inert, the smile hovering on his lips.

"Thank you, Brothers," said the young preacher with a serious smile. "I will help you." He caught one corner of the mattress.

As the bed moved across the porch, the older min-

ister clutched a corner. "If the Comers wish it, I think it is my duty to see that their son goes to my church," he said. But the Comers were lost in the two congregations.

When the mattress reached the sidewalk, elders from both churches had hold of it. Pulling against each other, they found themselves standing still. Then they put down their burden and eyed each other across Oliver.

"Brother," exclaimed the old minister, "I insist on taking him our way."

"Your way is not The Way," replied the younger. "There is only one Way."

A hush fell upon the crowd while the two ministers glared as if ready for combat.

It was then that Oliver's stomach growled. All eyes left the ministers. The people caught their breath and waited. One woman fainted in the long, expectant moment. But Oliver's stomach did not speak. Instead, the smile on the boy's lips deepened and beads of perspiration formed on his face. The sun glinted on the moisture as on diamonds. The rumble of his stomach died abruptly away, and Oliver rolled over and began to snore.

No one spoke for a while. Then the preachers fell to their knees and the people followed, all but the Comers, who stared at their boy in amazement. One man reached over with a handkerchief to wipe the boy's brow. But as if the natural moisture were something to be preserved, Oliver rolled back with his glistening face to the sky and continued to snore.

Later, when they had taken him back into the house, Oliver awoke, unable to hear but hungry. He did not see the people outside. That night the people were gone when the church bells rang, but through the night citizens wandered by at intervals. Monday was a short day, for no one had had any rest. But Tuesday Oliver was better and to the people it was like any other Tuesday of work. For days everyone paused fearfully when his own stomach growled. But no one else's spoke and many began to doubt; none forgot, however, though they seldom and finally never talked about it.

The two preachers have been succeeded in Dorcas. Today the congregations number as before and go their respective ways. Oliver, like his parents, does not number with them. And he is beginning to wonder. He also wonders about his stomach. Every time it growls, his mother reaches for the bottle of purgative and his father hands her a glass and spoon and says, "I don't think we'll call the doctor. This should do it."

Oliver is learning to tense his stomach muscles to stop the growling. But it does not always work, especially on Sundays, for that seems his day of growls. On those days of unrest the growl becomes almost an angry roar. Since Oliver does not like medicine any more than he did two years ago, Sunday is becoming something of a trial to him.

films

BY ROBERT STEELE

Lawrence of Arabia is a casualty of elephantiasis. It strives to be big in every way conceivable. It cost fifteen million. It has big stars: Alex Guinness, Anthony Quinn, Jack Hawkins, Jose Ferrer, Anthony Quayle, Claude Rains, Arthur Kennedy, and Donald Wolfitt. It uses extras and horses as if they were grains of sand on a desert. It took three years to produce. Locations were spread over Spain and Jordan. Since the box-office success of **The Bridge Over River Quai**, David Lean has been a big director. The film is shown on a huge screen. (It is sharp around the edges as well as in the center which proves Super-panavision 70 is the best of the wide-screen processes.) If you like big skies naturally blue and suns orange and white, you'll feel the Technicolor print is excellent. The film has gotten big raves and many agree it is the film of the year. It is a big contender for Oscars. It racked up ten nominations for the thirty-fifth Motion Picture Academy awards. The runner-up got eight. **Lawrence** in addition to six nominations got the following most sought-after mentions: the best picture of the year, best direction, best star performance, and best supporting male actor.

The film has a mighty hook beginning. (Hooks have been taken from radio and television which are contrived to catch persons who might turn a dial to a competitor in case they are not absolutely captured by the first minute of a show. What hooks have to do with films, when the audience is already captured, I often wonder.) The hook announces the larger-than-life proportions of the film and signals its being a gilded work by the golden rinse on Peter O'Toole's hair. No motor cycle has ever gone faster before a fatal crash, so it seems, than that of O'Toole as Lawrence. Although there was a lapse of twenty-nine

years between Lawrence in Arabia and Lawrence, alias Ross and Shaw, crashing on his cycle in England, he has the same golden hair and looks even younger in England than he did in Arabia. The hook has nothing to do with the remainder of the film and must be baffling to the viewer who comes to the cinema without having been briefed about Lawrence and his demise. After the trigger opening has been pulled, the film hangs together with some organic unity.

Robert Bolt, author of the screenplay and the moving, majestic play **A Man For All Seasons**, when confronted with the subject matter of Lawrence and probably a producer's determination to strike oil with this film, goes down. He was cursed by the predicament of presenting a historical figure that would have taken great courage to present truthfully and totally as best we know him. His long article on Lawrence in the **New York Times Magazine*** proves he knows much more about Lawrence than he cared to or was permitted to divulge. One wishes Robert Graves, who knew Lawrence well, and who wrote **Lawrence and the Arabian Adventure**, had been the author of the screenplay or at least a consultant. There is some candor in presenting Lawrence in the film which must be acknowledged. Bolt does not present him as an uncompromised, unsullied hero which would have been more fitting for such an adventure saga. In an extravaganza such as this a hero rather than a semi-hero would have made a better film. But attempts are made to cover, to give acceptable motivations, to make Lawrence someone he was not. This pillages its biographical accuracy. Bolt can hardly be excused for his presenting officers of the British Army sillier and more doltish than they were for the sake of providing dramatic foils for Lawrence.

David Lean, who has proved himself to be a superior director by his film **Brief Encounter**, made in 1945 with an assist from Noel Coward, has been lost in his recent work. Now the Lean style seems to be only bigness and titillation. His ambitious planning and labor show. He directs his actors so that they point lines in a good, old stagey manner. Thus, Lawrence tops a sequence by saying, "The trick is not minding if it hurts." Exit. Lean permits or causes Fred Young to compose shots with such carefulness, with such obvious attention to principles of good design, with such "beauty," that the viewer's following the film is interrupted while he relishes certain picturesque shots. The impact of the whole is undermined by repeated landscape shots that smack of calendar "art." Photography in Lean's **Brief Encounter** most of the time is invisible and its artistry conceals art.

Omar Sharif, a Syrian-Lebanese actor, lends believability and cohesiveness to the film. His being unknown to European and American audiences contributes to his belonging to this "historical" re-crea-

* February 25, 1962, p. 16 ff.

tion. Sam Spiegel, co-producer along with Lean, had a ray of insight when he said, "Various top-flight stars were considered for the role of Lawrence but rejected because the public would have to disabuse themselves of the image of anybody already known. A completely new actor could be Lawrence immediately." True. But what of Spiegel's logic or the extent of it, when we see Guinness, Raines, Quinn, and Hawkins popping up in strange clothes behind heavy make-up; what's illogical about having Richard Burton be Lawrence? Probably viewers have as much or as little pictorial image of Allenby or Prince Feisal as they do of Lawrence.

The interiors of **Lawrence** scream fresh paint, immaculateness, and the gracious appointments of English studios. Were British offices in Cairo ever like this? The backdrops of the city seen through the windows are so pretty they extend the trumped-up implausibility of the whole film.

Photography like the sets cries out for its effects. Despite Anne Coates' editing and Lean's having served his film apprenticeship as an editor, the film stops because of the insertion of fancy, irrelevant shots. The following is an example of these stops in the film: Men are drawing water from a well; then the camera is placed at the bottom of the well looking straight up at the men's faces; then again from eye level we see the men drawing water. Such a shot would make sense and not be too jarring if in the middle shot we looked into the men's faces to see their expression when they discovered they brought up no water because the well was dry. But the shot lacks motivation altogether. It is merely jazz that probably added two days' labor to the production at a cost of \$55,000. Our viewing orientation was given nonsensical treatment.

Sound is fancied up, too. It pours out of speakers from the back or sides of the cinema as well as from behind the screen. What sense does it make, I wonder, to have sounds from a picture, even though it be a stampede, echo, or chorus of angels singing, come at a viewer from multiple directions? Where is the viewer supposed to be in terms of what he is looking at? Probably, some hep sound man thinks he is contributing "reality" to the experience, when in reality he is reminding an audience of the artificiality of the experience. When one is sitting close to a speaker in the rear of the cinema, sound comes with an increased loudness that results in distraction and imbalance.

Maurice Jarre's music is showy and tedious. It tells us precisely what to think and feel when. Its technique is sheer old-fashioned cartoonery. It punches the climaxes and moods, gives us Westernized oriental motifs, harem and military clichés, and would make us suspect Dimitri Tiomkin's million and one Hollywood scores have been Jarre's mentor. Music swells when the sun gets hotter. It races when camels and horses run faster. Drums drum harder at crises. Violins purr to make the starry night starrier and the camp

fire cozier. In **Lawrence** film music has taken a step backwards. William Walton in **Henry V** and Bernard Hermann in **Citizen Kane** did the same thing but they did it ten times better.

Before the intermission comes—has an intermission ever made sense or contributed movement, power and beauty to a movie?—a viewer has expected and wished for it six times. (In this case the music fouls up one's expectations.) The film could have stopped this many times and it wouldn't have made much difference. There is no getting around it—this film, any film this long, is too long. Perhaps films and the Passion Play at Oberammergau have no business not selecting and compressing their subject matters so that running time is not over one and a half or two hours. **Lawrence** runs three hours and forty-two minutes without the very long intermission during which we were really weak, hungry, and thirsty. Probably at our present evolution eyes and ears have been used to their maximum for an hour and a half by a demanding film. Then, the form and nature of an **Anthony Adverse** may be suited to the novel, but it is not suited to the form of the film.

Lawrence strains away at being an epic. Like the obvious calculation in the photography, music, and script, it shows. No particle of improvisation or spontaneity took place in **this** creation. Something is very wrong when one discerns an epic is planned; the form requires a certain structural looseness.

Had the intention of Bolt and Lean been to give us a biography, a compressed or selected biography of T. E. Lawrence rather than an epic adventure story, we might have had a film to thank them for. (There **is** a film to be made about Lawrence, and it **can** be a fascinating and illuminating one. But this one is not it.) They had a different conception of what they wanted to do, and they did what they did with occasional success. It is more their conception rather than the film that is to be decried. Their conception is suited to an all-star desert saga intended to put in time and make money. Had they made **MacDonald of Arabia**, they would have been on sufficiently solid ground. Lawrence of Arabia, Shaw and Ross of England, Allenby of Arabia are historical figures. The film uses history where it is desirable and abuses it when it goes contrary to the film's conception. Fiction and fact are scrambled. **Lawrence** is probably as good as it could possibly be as the result of its hybrid conception. But a film using historical figures that is conceived as this one is an outrage against Lawrence and history. When history is used in a film that we know something about, the film maker has a responsibility not only to his subject matter but to an audience. Lawrence has received a pillaging from which his reputation will probably never recover.

Despite the skilled craftsmanship evident in the film, more films of this blockbuster variety will spell the decline of the film. The film is not technically

brilliant, but even if it were, this is not enough to make a film good today. It is the use to which technical skill is put which is its real test. The test is whether technique is well used to say something with clarity, power, beauty, meaning. The cover-up for having nothing important to express habitually is dazzling technique and size.

Bolt and Lean have not only wasted their abilities, the talents and monies of others, but have done something which is debased. Allenby and Lawrence have a talk in which Allenby admits he tells lies, but he says Lawrence tells half-truths or half-lies which is worse. When one knows he is telling lies, he knows he is hiding the truth. When one tells half-truths or half-lies, he is likely to forget what the truth is. Bolt and Lean have told some truths about Lawrence in Arabia, and they have also compounded Lawrence's own half-truths and half-lies. So where are we? Less than nowhere. When fifteen million dollars is at stake, probably Goliaths no longer come big enough to stick to the truth. When a film maker comes along who has the wisdom and courage to by-pass big money, spectacle and heroics for their own sakes, we may have a film about Lawrence which presents him as the human being he was living with other human beings in which all act, talk, and look like human beings. Then we may get an epic film, because it will provide us with a full experience of a man and his times, with insight if not vision.

David and Lisa is gripping entertainment. Beautiful and convincing performances are given. All is worked out so ideally the film seems overly pat, but the freshness of the story material and its significance redeem satisfactorily.

To Kill a Mockingbird has moments of nobility interspersed with those that insure its entertainment value for the whole family. The scare-the-wits hokum cheapens the novel, and it fails as do so many novels turned into films, in that it is a nosegay of reminiscences that do not add up to an effective dramatic structure. Recommended for the nondiscriminating kid sister or a date.

Cleo from 5 to 7 has style and could hardly be more French. It proves Paris when seen and heard by director Agnes Varda, can still be an absorbing locale for a film. Our protagonist is shallow and the film and its "conflict" and "resolution" are shallow, but the film makes no attempt to pull out the major stops; therefore, it is not pretentious.

The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner is so logically and soundly anti-establishment that some Americans are confused, giving their sympathy at the end of the film to the protagonist. Beautifully photographed, acted, and edited, this film climbs to the pinnacle thus far achieved only by **A Taste of Honey**.

The Lady With the Dog, a Soviet film adapted from a short story of Chekhov, has more Chekhovian mood, atmosphere, and "reality" than the players of the Moscow Art Theater's performances of **The Cherry Orchard** can project over footlights. It strikes one as being the slowest and quietest film he has ever seen, yet those silences, pauses, and blocks of "staticism" move as a film and move a spectator so he may breathe inside the skins of the characters.

Joan of the Angels, based on the same material as Huxley's **The Devils of Loudon**, having to do with nuns who are thought to be possessed by devils because they are said to dance nude in the garden while calling for an especially handsome priest to come to them, ought to pack a wallop. It does, visually; but dramatically it lacks sense and purpose. An impressive effort by director Jerry Wojcik of Poland.

books

Christian Faith and the Contemporary Arts, edited by Finley Eversole. New York: Abingdon, 1962, 255 pp., \$5.

Christian Faith and the Contemporary Arts, edited by Finley Eversole, is a delightful, disturbing, repetitious, fresh, commonplace, exciting, dull experience—it is all these, perhaps more. Since Paul Tillich began writing of culture and its phenomena in religious terms during the 1920's, Protestantism has begun to awaken from its historical indifference to art by experiencing broadside the prophetic, protest-ant rage of the modern arts. This present volume, in a real sense, stands as the fruit, the portrait, the example, and the exposure of this general response.

No general appraisal of the work can really stand for long, for the book is a series of essays by twenty-eight contributors (5 are reprints) representing not only the majority of religious thinkers writing in the field (the absence of Tillich himself and others such as Jacques Maritain is glaring) but also practicing artisans in various media as well as writers from such areas as philosophy, English, and the like. The book has no particular audience in mind, ranging in approach from the technicalities of philosophical aesthetics to an interesting attempt to "demythologize" **Peanuts**. Painting, architecture, poetry, sculpture, novel, drama, music, dance, television, motion pictures, and the cartoon all fall within the scope of these writers (complete with 22 pages of representative black and white illustrations). Nor is there any self-conscious "party line" or even fundamental agreement on overarching principles or approach, although the figures of Tillich and Maritain tend to shadow most pages.

The general "mood" of the volume can be indicated by two quotations from diverse perspectives and concerns. From a Roman Catholic stance, Celia Hubbard states: "If this dehumanized image of man [in modern art] disconcerts and upsets us with its revelation of anxiety, degradation, and evil, we should not blame this on art or the artist—who has done nothing to the image of man that man has not done already to himself" (p. 190). Speaking of "plain ol' Charlie Brown," James Miller states: "As the central character, a clear theme grows up around him: a presumption to fame and popularity and the refusal to be one's self lead to rejection from community, a sense of failure and despair when faced by reality, loneliness, and self-pity. . . . Theologically we may say Charlie Brown is caught in the confusing maze of original sin" (p. 229).

Any comments about this book tend to be comments about particular articles—some are quite good (this reviewer particularly appreciated the essays by John Dixon, Roger Shinn, Dora Sanders, Celia Hubbard, Robert Rambusch, James Miller), others are quite wasted effort (Robert Penn Warren's two pages of notations, for example, add little but his illustrious name). But even here, evaluation is largely determined by the interests of the reviewer. The value of this book is not in furthering significantly the theological thinking in this crucial area of religion and the arts. Rather, for those who have not been exposed to this exciting area this book is strongly recommended. To those who have a taste for this area but little inkling of its diversity and scope, recommendation is also given.

For those of us who are working in the area itself, however, this book suffers from several faults. First, the average essay is six pages in length (usually dealing with a huge topic), thereby providing no real opportunity for more than general comments or observations. Repetitiveness is inevitable. Second, there is no overarching perspective, intent, or method by which to make the book much more than a diverse collection. It is not always clear, for example, that these were assigned topics rather than the book being simply a collection of contributions grouped by general subjects. From all this it would seem clear that what is desperately needed in this area is a book on the relation of religion and art (one that is more than a collection of the author's previous essays) which will set forth a purpose, methodology, and working definitions for ordering this task. The weakness of the Eversole volume does not make it an inferior work in the field; it stands rather as an illustration of the unsure, undeveloped, somewhat contradictory and often confused nature of what must be called the present **beginning** reflections on the subject.

Perhaps this reviewer will be permitted a reflection upon this volume which may be relevant to this point. For the most part, there would seem to be in these essays a failure or unwillingness to distinguish be-

tween the area of "religion and art" and that of "theology and art." In the first area, most writers are willing to make axiomatic the Tillichian thesis that art is the most sensitive "barometer" of the spiritual condition of a culture, the mirror of that culture's "ultimate concern." In regard to the second area, however, religious thinkers are tempted but reticent to enter. Although theologians are willing to speak "definitely" concerning Truth and Goodness, they are hesitant indeed to affirm any relevance of theology for the third great area of reality, Beauty (in fact, they are willing to abandon the term in favor of one of the other two that they know better). The Eversole volume indicates a widespread willingness to let modern art and its creators dictate to religious thinkers the full nature of the relation between religion and art. It is no doubt true that the meaninglessness expressed by modern art is in large part due to the condition of modern society; but is it not also likely that it is in part due to the undermining of the task of art in our time, the frustration of the artist's attempts to understand both his task and his unique possessions? The "redemption" of art is not a matter of telling the artist what to portray, but it may well be very related to restoring to the artist the power and nobility of his sacred calling. This placing of the artist and his vocation within the context of ultimate meaning is a task for the theologian.

W. PAUL JONES

Letters

I have the greatest respect for Jim Crane as an artist, but I think that sometimes art becomes too cultist and ought to be called back to reality by the ordinary people in the real world.

Margaret Rigg (art editor, *motive*) says in commenting on Crane's art in the February art feature: "Now the forms refer to themselves and to one another. One is not distracted by subjects loaded with overwhelming social, cultural, or even religious connotation so that now there is not 'stock responses' to subject—but a more quiet and visual experience takes place. Simply as forms these paintings are rich and beautiful." If she means what she seems to mean, then she is admitting that his art is becoming increasingly irrelevant to life. Art is entering into a dialogue with itself instead of with the world and reality. One part of the artistic creation speaks to the other and we humans can't understand their language. Is art to become a mystery religion in which only the initiated can participate? If so it should be confined to art journals just as irrelevant philosophical debate is confined to philosophical journals. If art doesn't say anything except to itself or other artists, it has no place in *motive* . Paul says somewhere that speaking in tongues ought not to be allowed unless someone can interpret and make the babblings intelligible to the normal people.

Another thing that continually aggravates me about modern art

was confirmed by Mr. Crane's comments on his artistic method. He says (in the same February issue): "I can risk a painting—I cannot 'will' one. . . . The completed work is usually as much a message and revelation to me as it is to the viewer."

It has been my suspicion that some modern art is really more accidental than purposeful and this seems to confirm it. Precisely to the extent that an artist has no rational control over what is happening in his creation, it is non-art. (I don't mean a negative control of being able to destroy what he doesn't like. This is no way to express oneself either.) It seems to me that an artist ought to have a clear conception of what he is trying to express before he starts working with his forms. I don't believe that the Holy Spirit is able to guide the artist's hand without the artist's knowledge. Too often "art" is created by throwing forms together and seeing what emerges. The artist then looks at what has happened (and I use the word advisedly) and gives it a name. This is precisely the opposite of the proper order. The artist should have in his mind as full as possible a conception of what he wants to express through art; then he should proceed to create in such a way as to express this as well as possible. Art must be a product of the human mind, not of chance. To the extent that it is a product of accident rather than design it is non-art. A good example of this is Crane's collage entitled "Now And Now And Now." It looks like a piece of crumpled newspaper pasted on a board and sprayed with paint. In this kind of process the artist has almost no control and non-art is the result.

As Santayana says, the subject matter of art is life and the function is the betterment of that life. Art can be meaningful only as it is created by a rational mind, not by apes or machines or blind chance.

Rebuttals welcome.

JAMES PARK
university of minnesota
minneapolis

A RESPONSE FROM JIM CRANE:

A major intellectual scourge of our time is the spiritually fatal malaise of "hardening of the categories." The mind grasps ideas and concepts, uses them to impose order on a complex bombardment of sensation, events and internal promptings and goes beyond this to define reality as its own categories.

Mr. Park does not have an easily available category in which to catalog the ideas and images contained in the feature on my work. He assigns me to a "cult" inhabited by apes, machines and blind chance dedicated to the speaking in tongues (i.e., making of "non-art") which is irrelevant to life and unintelligible to normal people. Wow! What fantasies the rational mind can construct!

I know very well the categories Mr. Park uses: the "reality (of) ordinary people in the real world." They are part of our common culture. I also know they are not eternal realities but constructs of the mind not to be confused with ultimate reality.

When confronted by new information of reality we have several alternatives: 1. To reject it if it disrupts our conceptual reality. 2. To misassign it to an inappropriate category. 3. To become creatively engaged in a process of refining categories, discovering relationships and expanding awareness. The first two possibilities are mechanical and nonliving, nonreality. The third possibility alone offers life, growth and the possibility of continual renewal.

The interesting thing about "my" artistic method is the similarity it holds to the process of creation as poetically described in the first chapter of Genesis. I know the feeling of formlessness and void and of the moving spirit. Being only finite I cannot command the "light," but must wait for it as a gift. Illumination or an idea occurs, the work is still fluid (water) and finally the "dry land appears"—the work jells into an image. At each stage I see the "work" is "good" or I change it. Finally, I stand back and objectively judge the finished creation and find that "it is good" (or not).

I would describe an involvement in creation as closer to blind faith than blind chance. Failure and frustration are as much a part of the process as the hoped-for "message."

While the method itself is largely nonrational, the end result is the processing of unseen aspects of reality into "Now and Now and Now," as a case in point.

I discover that crushed paper has an almost organic quality like mountains and eroded hills. I further discover that working it on a black ground creates the illusion of an indeterminately deep space. A flooding of the paper with black pigment suspended in medium intensifies the sculptural quality of the form. I deliberately paint in some edges to increase the spatial illusion. The circle provides a foil for the organic configuration of the paper. I look at it and it is intriguing.

At this point my work as artist is through and to extract the meaning in rational formulations is as difficult for me as it is for any viewer. This requires disciplined imagination and a will to find meaning. The work seems to me a poem on being and nothingness, on time and eternity. What is a newspaper? What is a newspaper in the context of eternity? What is the relationship between the newspaper and the time in which we live? What good are all my pre-existing categories when confronted by a new context?

I readily own up to these assumptions and base my approach to art and life on them: 1. Ultimate reality is infinitely complex, not easily knowable and is largely inaccessible to the mind. 2. Meaning is extricated from events and is never so neatly constructed into them. 3. No meaning is eternally captured. A life of meaning is a life of constant creative renewal. This involves risk. 4. What I am talking about is close to the heart of the Christian message.

SUNDAY IN CHARLESTON

Sunday is every day, but
more slowly: serene ships
in the harbor: I hear sunrise
as a rush of wind, a few voices
years and years ago a ringing churchbell:

all on our knees in Charleston South
Carolina praying for snow: serene
ships in the harbor: gentle genuflecting
pariahs and a parade of lonely negroes
foraging the early streets for a crumb
of meaning, a discarded morsel of
a long, long time
ago, in some green jungle grove (do
you remember the Big Black drums?)
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus (on) Jesus (off)
sign: neon SAVES whose blue light
the sun cancels; on the radio
voices heard through a fever; "our
prejudices are rational, our reasons
biased."

—E. HALE CHATFIELD

Contributors

JOSEPH J. IRWIN teaches—at Albion College in Michigan where he's chairman of the English department.

NAT HENTOFF writes—for most of the stimulating and relevant publications now going, including *The Reporter*, *the village voice*, and *Playboy*.

ALBERT C. OUTLER impinges—whether he's teaching systematic theology at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas or officially observing at the Vatican Council in Rome.

WILLIAM HAMILTON incites—whether as puissant critic, catholic theologian, or inquisitive commentator on man's condition. He's on the faculty of Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

ROBERT ALLEN GOFF studies—philosophy of religion at Drew University where he's a Ph.D. candidate and graduate assistant to Will Herberg.

MIMI GROSS paints—and is identified more fully in the art feature this month. **MARGARET RIGG** writes—about Mimi. She's on leave from *motive* to paint at Chicago's Art Institute.

SAMUEL H. MILLER quickens—all who have despaired that a prophet in modern theological raiment could also be poetic. He's dean of Harvard Divinity School.

JIM CRANE impedes—the meteoric rise of modern life toward a conformed, anesthetized nirvana. He's domiciled in River Falls, Wisconsin.

THOMAS ROUNTREE formulates—fiction, poetry, and scholarly prose which appear widely. He teaches fiction writing and English at the University of Alabama.

ROBERT STEELE sees—beyond the vision of most in his viewing and writing. He teaches at Boston University.

W. PAUL JONES reviews—a book which has its roots in the *motive* tradition. He teaches at Princeton.

ROGER ORTMAYER mystifies—with parables and fables which defy credulity. He teaches at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas.

POETS are—(you fill in the blank). Those represented in this issue include **WARREN KIEWER**, widely published poet and playwright whose superb verse drama "Round the Cherry Tree" (November, 1962) has put a thousand witch-hunters on his neck and ours; **R. B. LARSEN**, graduate student at Emory University in Atlanta, whose work has appeared most recently in *Chiascuro*; **LELAND STAVEN**, another Georgian, an undergraduate at Berry College; **JOHN TAGLIABUE**, who teaches in Maine and publishes from *San Francisco Review* to *Carolina Quarterly*, with stops for *Poetry* and *Saturday Review*; **FRANK MERCHANT**, chairman of the English department and advisor to the student literary magazine at Union College in Barboursville, Kentucky. From *Epos* come the poems by **AARON KRAMER**, whose new collection is called *Moses*, and **E. HALE CHATFIELD**, graduate student at Rutgers whose work most recently appeared in *Saturday Review*.

May 1963

ARTISTS—we have always with us.

JIM CRANE, who needs no introduction to *motive* readers but was recently introduced to the constituency of *Evergreen Review*.

JEAN PENLAND, Nashvillian and another regular in these pages, staff artist for Abingdon Press.

ROBERT CHARLES BROWN, as versatile as he is prolific, paints while working as a motel night clerk in Uncasville, Connecticut.

JOE ALDERFER, a newcomer to *motive's* pages but not to the liturgical arts, is art editor of the *Mennonite Builder*.

JO KENDALL, triple-threat combination of free-lance artist, housewife, and mother, has been occupying the drawing board at *motive* in Margaret Rigg's absence. For her patience with pusillanimous staffers who like to think they have unexploited artistic skills, as well as her own talented contributions, we thank her a thousandfold.

END OF A SEMESTER

The hour drops like a bomb
through the roof on which we depended;
impudent breezes come
across the ruined room.

It was so well-lit and warm!
Professor in rare form.
I was about to understand it.
Why are all of you so calm?

Is no one else damaged? I'm
aware of a corpse, surrounded
by crushed things, subject to storm.
—Oh, put on your things and go home!

Another semester ended.
That's all. What more can we claim?
—In the notebooks are neatly entered
each prominent date and name.

—AARON KRAMER

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Herberg, Will The Strangeness of Faith	Feb.,	8
Hieronymus Bosch, by Vernon L. Bobbitt	Jan.,	15
Hinduism		
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Hodgell, Robert O. (January cover) See: Artists and their works		
Hoekendijk, J. C. The Drowning Phoenix the coming dissolution of the Church	Dec.,	10
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Howe, Irving Mass Society and Post-Modern Fiction	Feb.,	30
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In a Time of No Figs (poem), by Hollis Summers	Mar.,	12

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This Now Before Me	Feb.,	25
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Knowledge of Human Validity, The, by Richard E. Wentz	Mar.,	6
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New Observations and Reflections, by Jim Crane	Feb.,	16
New Song . . . A, new directions in music for worship, by Robert Shaw	Nov.,	17
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Photography Essays: Phil Troyer and Anderson Carmichael, Jr., by Margaret Rigg	Oct.,	26
Piper, Otto A.		
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Circumspect Knowledge; three poems, by Robert Burchess	Feb.,	3
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Love Song of a Cough Drop, by Jim Huffstutler	Jan.,	1
My Haunted Home, by Stanley J. Rowland, Jr.	Apr.,	10
O Splendiferous Morning! ! ! by Rosalie Staley	Oct.,	1
On Not Writing, by R. R. Cuscaden	Mar.,	44
Quick, Someone's Coming, by Kay Johnson	Feb.,	7
Randall Sharp Has Burned His Harp, by James A. Sparks	Nov.,	20
Seven Stanzas at Easter, by John Undike	Apr.,	46
Shine, by R. B. Larsen	May,	23
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Voluntary for Advent, by Alan Austin	Dec.,	40
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Wind at My Heart, by M. Shumway	Nov.,	1
Winter Dawn, by Antoni Gronowicz	Feb.,	7
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Rigg, Margaret		
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Right to Read, The (editorial), by BJS	Oct.,	9
Robert Freimark, by Eva Ingersoll Gatling	Apr.,	18
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Sheepfold, The, by Betty Woods	Apr.,	11
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Short, Ruth Ann		
The Student Movement Moves	Nov.,	8
Sing Along with a Shofar (editorial), by B. J. Stiles	Apr.,	1
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Some Notes About the Bible Series and Printmaking, by Mimi Gross	May,	33
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Submergence (poem), by Ralph Robin	Mar.,	13
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This Now Before Me (poem), by Will Inman	Feb.,	25
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Two Poems, by R. B. Larsen	May,	23
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Yesterday They Sold the Baptist Cemetery at Heliopolis, by Robert Bense	Apr.,	36
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INFORMATION

The painting, Dark Crucifixion, by Margaret Rigg, which was used for the cover of March, 1963, is in the collection of Miss Mary Grace Pritchard of Nashville, and is not for sale by the artist.

"Study in Color" by Malcolm Boyd (November, 1962) is one of three one-act plays on racial themes. The trilogy has been selected for inclusion in the off-Broadway section of **Best Plays of 1962-63**. The three plays are copyrighted by Boyd, and cannot be given any performance or public reading without his permission. Those interested in production rights must address inquiries to the Reverend John Morris, Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, Room 200, 5 Forsyth Street N.W., Atlanta 3, Georgia.

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THE TEMPTATION OF JOB

MIMI GROSS

the thirty-seven story parallel

THE waiter who brought the food up to the small and luxurious penthouse dining room wondered what outfit he was serving. Probably the religious group, and the tip would be tiny in spite of the expensive meal.

Like most of the hotel personnel he was grumpy. An ancient joke had been going its rounds: the crowd in the hotel had arrived with the Ten Commandments in one hand and a ten-dollar bill clutched in the other, and neither had been known to be broken . . . the pickin's were pretty slim.

As he set out the food his ears picked up scraps of the conversation. "If we are going to get any money, we will have to spend plenty of it." Across the table another commented, "You've got to have the sugar if you want to attract the flies." When someone else offered, "It's not flies we want," no one was listening.

The waiter's temper improved when a handsomely groomed man, who seemed to be in charge of the session, slipped him a sizable new greenback for a bit of special service. Was the polished gentleman an interloper among the divines?

The waiter soon realized he would not succeed in getting the dishes cleared before whatever speech-making there was to be got started. The personable fellow was obviously too efficient to allow any awkward lapses. The waiter was right, but he did not mind waiting; the tip was already generous.

"Now let me show you how my organization can help your church put over its crusade. You know," he became ingratiatingly confidential, "this is just the kind of assignment my organization likes to undertake. What you are doing is good for the people you do it to. That is wonderful. You know, once in a while I have to sell a product I am not sure is the best for the people who purchase. But it's different with what I'll help you sell; it is good for the people."

Most of those present nodded their heads in solemn agreement. They agreed that what they had was good for the people.

"And if we can persuade people to buy what is not good for them, think what results we can get when we set them after what they really need!" He was tempted to get even more eloquent, but resisted.

"The best-possible approach is to work a simple formula. We've got what they need—salvation. They are before the TV screens and lined up on the postal routes. They ride buses, drive cars, all we need to do is to get them into the churches. I think it can be done."

He had ready for viewing a series of posters, graphs, charts and film strips. They graphically showed the implications of the formula of People—Churches—Salvation. More charts, graphs and strips demonstrated the proven pull of billboard advertising which the personable gentleman's advertising council would themselves donate to the cause; three national preparedness patriotic organizations were ready to cooperate for they realized that salvation was good for military morale; three Hollywood stars, intoxicated with God as "an ever lovin' doll," would make spot fillers for use in theaters and on TV. The skids were greased, the wheels were oiled. America was ready to buy salvation, not in piddling little lumps, but by the trainload, to mix a metaphor a bit.

Finally the good-looking man closed the session, "Have you thought," he inquired, "of the parallels? Here **we** are in an upper room, in fact, we are a lot more upper than the Twelve, for we are thirty-seven stories above the group. What a symbol of progress we have! It took the Christians four centuries to win such a backward world as the Roman Empire. Think of what we can do with America in twelve months, the length of my contract with you."

Absentmindedly he scraped off some of the crumbs on the white linen tablecloth before him. A few of them caught on his flannel suit and he flicked them off on the floor, but accidentally upset his tumbler of fruit punch which stained the cloth and dripped on the floor.

"But there is a critical difference between the Jerusalem upper room and ours—here we have nobody named Judas!"

—ROGER E. ORTMAYER