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COMMUNICATIONS ISSUE

motive

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***motive* cover artist: Peg Rigg shows the symbol of the Holy Spirit as communicator between man and God.**
(Cover photos: Courtesy, Religious News Service for the Lamech Scroll photo; Edward Wallowitch for his excellent portrait of the woman.)

Prayer means that we address ourselves to him who has already spoken to us in the Gospel and in the Law. We find ourselves face-to-face with him when we are tormented by the imperfection of our obedience and the discontinuity of our faith. . . . He alone is able to heal us of it. In order to ask him to do so, we pray.

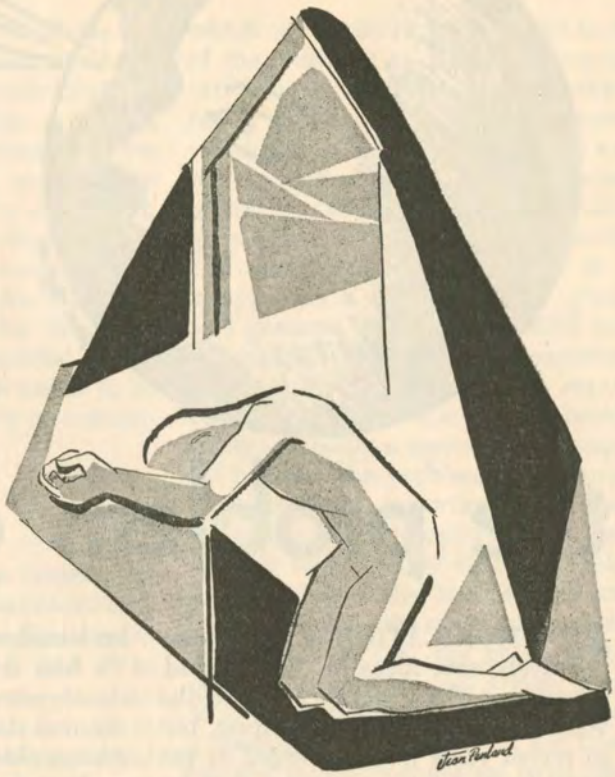
Prayer cannot . . . in any way estrange us from men; it can only unite us since it involves a matter that concerns us all.

How is it possible for me to have an encounter with God? I have heard his word, I wish sincerely to listen to it, and yet here I am in my insufficiency. . . . The Reformers tell us the first thing is to pray.

But even while we are in the communion of the saints . . . we are also in communion with those who do not yet pray . . . but for whom Jesus Christ prays, since he prays for mankind as a whole. . . . When Christians pray, they are, so to speak, the substitutes for all those who do not pray. . . .

We pray in order that God's action, which is already taking place, may reach its end.

From: Prayer by Karl Barth, translated by Sara F. Terrien. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 1952.



PRAYER AS COMMUNICATION

All progress in prayer is an answer to prayer. . . .

Prayer is an act, indeed *the* act, of fellowship. We cannot truly pray even for ourselves without passing beyond ourselves and our individual experience.

His patience is so long and kind that He is willing to begin with us when we are no farther on than to use Him as a means of escape or relief. The holy Father can turn to His own account at last even the exploiting egoism of youth. And He gives us some answer, though the relief does not come, if He keeps us praying, and ever more instant and purified in prayer. Prayer is never rejected so long as we do not cease to pray. The chief failure in prayer is its cessation. Our importunity is a part of God's answer, both of His answer to us and ours to Him.

In God's eyes the great object of prayer is the opening or restoring of free communion with Himself. . . .

. . . lest communion subside into mere meditation it must concentrate in prayer.

His best answer to us it to raise us to the power of answering Him.

The Soul of Prayer. P. T. Forsyth. Independent Press. Lt. London. 1954.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, *Protestant Episcopal Church.*

O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee; and these know that thou hast sent me. I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

(John 17:25-26)

the problem of communication

COMMUNICATION is a comparatively new focus of thought and discussion. The usual meaning of the word suggests means of transport, but in recent years it has emerged as the word for the contact betwen men by way of language, which is of quite a different order. The well-known phrase "mass communication" has made this new significance universal. There is some irony in this fact, because the coupling of "mass" and "communication" in this new and deeper sense is very questionable.

As far as I know, it has not been theologians who have started this new career of the concept and word communication, although it concerns them more than any other category of men, because of the missionary nature of Christianity. It is rather the philosophers and sociologists who have taken the lead here for obvious reasons, based on our modern situation of revolutionary transition in the field of culture and of life of society as a whole. We are living in a convulsive time, which brings the deeper-lying motives and needs of men to the surface. Among the philosophers, the existentialist variety, bidding farewell to abstract metaphysical thinking and also to the superficial kinds of positive thinking, which dominated the scene for such a long time (and still dominates it, more than we are often aware of), has put the problem of communication again on the list of subjects worthy of attention. And among the existentialists it is Karl Jaspers who has made it a central philosophical topic. Of the many books he has published, there is hardly one in which he somehow does not touch upon it. To him it is necessary for a sound development of culture, a matter of life and death. In his main work *Die Philosophie,* a considerable section is exclusively devoted to communication as a fundamental and indispensable part of human life.

The sociologists have been producing studies on it, of various degree and value for years. The dynamic and extremely mobile character of modern social life forces us to study very closely such phenomenon as acculturation and social and cultural adjustment. Sociology, being the attempt to study scientifically the many kinds of relationships which make up human life everywhere, naturally meets the subject of communication.

The same trend is to be noted in the vague Philosophy of Language at present enjoyed. I mention only one book of great merit in this field, produced by the American philosopher W. W. Urban, entitled *Language and Reality.*

Last, but not least, the newly awakening missionary and evangelistic consciousness in many Christian churches has waked a great discussion on communication which is, particularly in continental Europe, of a passionate character. One is fully justified in saying that, by its missionary nature, Christianity has a great stake in this subject of communication.

THE CHANGE IN CHRISTIAN THINKING

A remarkable fact has to be noted. Especially in missionary circles, though also in others (such as the ecumenical world), for thirty years it was the custom to speak about "approach." Most of the books and articles have appeared under such titles as: *The Approach to Hinduism* (Islam, etc.); *The Christian Approach to Communism* (Secular Humanism), etc. More and more, however, the word "approach" is exchanged for communication. This is not merely a question of words. It denotes a considerable change as to orientation. In my opinion a beneficial change, indicating that we are moving toward a deeper dimension of insight. By "approach" is meant to try to penetrate in a sympathetic way into the understanding and valuation of an alien world of culture; and spiritually generous-minded and sympathetic as it may be, it is, however, the effort of an outsider. He "approaches." The word communication suggests a deeper level, which is not the endeavor of an outsider, but the meeting of different minds and worlds, which want to communicate, to enter into the common solidarity of our humaneness.

Let us, after these inevitable introductory remarks, turn briefly to the subject as such. Roger Mehl, in his fine phenomenological study on communication (*La Rencontre de l'Autrui,* that is: *The Encounter with the Other*), says quite rightly: *Communication est le fait humain fondamental.* (Communication is the fundamental human fact.) I propose, for the sake of clarity and right distinction, to distinguish between two kinds or aspects of communication. I call

by HENDRIK KRAEMER

them *communication-between and communication-of*. The first expresses the wide realm of all possible manifestations of human intersubjectivity. The second expresses the various forms and subject matters of communication, that is to say, information, teaching, discourse, discussion, debate, friendship, love, etc. Our peculiar concern is, of course, the communication of the Christian message. Both communication-between and communication-of (in the sense of communication of the Christian message) are, in the biblical view of man, his nature and destiny, organically related; for the Christian message, as contained in the biblical revelation, presupposes the most emphatic recognition of communication-between as *the* fundamental human fact. Theology, which tries to be a somewhat adequate expression of the biblical revelation (and that is the main task of *true theology*), is necessarily relational theology. For the primary, all-decisive fact and starting point of all theological thinking is that God created man as a being, destined for communication with him, and with one another (Gen. 1). This fundamental relation between God and man, which is the essence of the particularity of man, has, according to the biblical view, been broken, and as a logical and factual result, the communication of men between one another has been vitiated. We call this in theological language, the Fall. Therefore, after the Fall, the whole Bible becomes the grandiose story of *God's* initiative to restore this primeval relation and Christ is the central and basic reality in this whole divine attempt. Therefore, the great words of the Christian faith are reconciliation, recapitulation of all things in Christ, restoration of the full communication between God and man, and of men between one another. This is, in short, the meaning of the *Heilsgeschichte*. The church is the provisional embodiment of this restoration in Christ, and should, therefore, be the body which has to say the essential things on communication, and is meant to be the body where the reality of communication is restored.

THE BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNICATION

The great cause of the present ensuing discussion on communication is what is called in Europe "the breakdown of communication," that is to say: the breakdown of the communication of the Christian message to that mysterious, elusive being called modern man. I stress that in Europe we speak in these terms, and in many quarters with great passion. The problem has to be put in different terms, but I am convinced that, in spite of the religious *hausse* America is going through, the problem of breakdown of communication is a real problem here of the greatest actuality.

It is helpful, it seems to me, to distinguish between two breakdowns. The first I propose to call the fact of the universal breakdown of communication. This universal breakdown has existed since what we theologically call (as I said already before) the Fall. It marks and clogs the whole history of man, his present, and will mark and clog all future periods of history. It is, in the real sense of the word, a matter of fact, observable to everybody and experienced by all human beings in all periods of history, that the world is more a scene of frustrated failing than of successful communication. The Bible knew this always. The present science of Phenomenology of Communication has found it out as the ambiguous fact in human life. The Ecumenical Movement is nowadays the place where the churches show the manifestation of the frustrating, failing and partly succeeding character of communication.

The second form of the breakdown of communication is the specific example of the breakdown of the communication of the Christian message, which we confront in so many parts of the world. It is one of the crucial problems of the churches everywhere in the West and East. The two reasons, which can be only mentioned here and not elaborated, are the secularization of the world, and the far more dangerous secularization of the church. Far more dangerous, because it is wrapped in a cloak of "holy" words and gestures, and often justified and rationalized by theological reasoning. There is a strong tendency to regard the overcoming of this specific breakdown as mainly a matter of language. To be sure, the problem of language is exceedingly important. We need badly a good philosophy of language. It must be conceded that many philosophers are active in this field, and a look at the history of philosophy can inform us that the great philosophers have always had a keen sense of its importance. We need still more a theology of language, but the theologians, generally speaking, have been rather defective, although they especially should be aware of the importance and the limits of language for expressing the problems of truth. If there were developed a theology of language, in my opinion three biblical starting points would be pivotal: 1. Adam giving names to every creature (Gen. 2); 2. The story of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11); and 3. Pentecost (Acts 2).

Yet, in my opinion, language is not *the* main issue in regard to the breakdown of communication of the Christian message. Nor is the main issue: evangelistic plans and campaigns, necessary and indispensable as they may be: *The* main issue, the royal road in an overcoming of the breakdown of the communication of the Christian message, is *the radical revival of the church*, which by definition includes evangelism and apostolate.

I close by drawing attention to the fact that the two fundamental forms of communication (i.e., communication-between and communication-of) show their intrinsic unity in the famous motto of the Ecumenical Movement, in the words of John 17: 21: "That they may all be one, even as thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be in us (communication-between), that the world may believe that thou has sent me" (communication-of).

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Communicating

ONE appeals in vain to methods of communication if they are not enlightened by the message. Public relations bureaus can catalogue every soft spot in the public's sales resistance and never have a positive suggestion for Christian communication. Writers may know every literary strategy from Aeschylus to Yeats and yet be powerless to evoke an act of Christian faith.

Artists may be able to see beneath the surface of ordinary affairs to the turbulence and formlessness beneath, yet lack the authority to say "Peace, be still" or the one perspective that makes "all things cohere." Before the physicist Helmholtz could arrive at the nature of vision, he had to do more than study the human eye. He had to study the properties of light. Similarly, the clue to the strategy of Christian communication is best found in the nature of the message itself.

The communication of the Gospel is not directed, then, to just any old question people happen to be asking. It is directed to the question about the ultimate meaning of life and a man's relation to it. As Gabriel Marcel has observed, one can spend a whole day in an art museum and appreciate nothing if he has asked the wrong questions. "Will I recognize these paintings when I see them again?" "Is this a profitable experience I am having?" The realm of beauty is dumb before such queries. A schoolboy may simply study the answers at the back of his book, as Kierkegaard points out. But he should know that in the process he will never learn to solve a problem. People who are confronting the message of Christianity with questions which the Gospel is not really attempting to answer, or digging out answers to questions which they themselves have not yet asked, violate a basic condition for Christian communication; namely, that the truth about God and the truth about men involve each other.

BUT human questions which do not pertain to the mystery of man's ultimate significance will never open the way for the coming of the divine answers. Cervantes' Don Quixote may not be any nearer the Kingdom of Heaven simply by virtue of his painful sense of being a stranger in this world, nor Dostoevsky's Ivan by virtue of his burdening sense of guilt. But at least the Gospel can be addressed to such questions. The Gospel is God's answer to questions of a certain quality. "What must I do to be saved?" Who will deliver me from the body of this death?" "Why am I something and not nothing?" It would be sheer vanity, then, to attempt to accommodate the Gospel answer to other kinds of questions. It would be roughly parallel to attempting to solve lessons in French grammar by solutions at the back of an algebra text.

The Gospel is the good news about God and man which comes in a certain form, the form of proclamation. Now proclamation is basically auditory. The witness or the preaching is an appeal more to the ear than to the eye. It was the Apostle Paul who laid down that formula. "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? . . . So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:14 and 17). Or, as Luther says it in his commentary on this passage, "Faith is an acoustical affair."

WHAT, then, does one proclaim when he communicates the Gospel? The New Testament does not leave us in doubt about that. Everywhere the apostles were saying substantially the same thing. They were uttering short, terse, summary statements about the significance of the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ. "The God of our fathers raised Jesus whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witness to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him" (Acts 5:30-32). The rather extensive history of the short life of Jesus was summarized in just such pithy proclamations, called in the Greek language, *kerygma.*

Such an emphasis on the summation of the Gospel in short sentences could, of course, convey a false impression. While the witness of the church took the form of propositions, with acoustical concomitants, essentially the communication was not the spoken word but the event of speaking the word. The revelation of God came originally in the event of Jesus of Nazareth preaching himself as the revelation of God. Everything recorded in the Gospels is a reflection of this basic Gospel, as dewdrops on grass record the simplicity of the rising Sun. It is possible to read the Gospels and to become enamored of the details of Jesus' amazing life. But that could be to miss the synoptic event which is his very significance as revealer of God.

Now God has entrusted to us the message of reconciliation. "So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us" (2 Cor. 5:19, 20). The event of God's revelation in Christ which is the Gospel, continues to take place among us when the people of God witness to that event. The witness is itself an event in which God turns again to his people.

SOMEONE recently gave my son a compass. I see it almost anywhere around the house amid the rest of our domestic clutter. Nothing in our house seems to stay in the same place: not even that compass. But the compass always seems to know where it is. Every time I see it, it is pointing in the same direction. This is the impressive thing about the Christian witness. In a world of miscellaneous directions it is the event which, wherever it occurs, signifies the polar event in the destiny of man. No man is irremediably lost as long as there is a Christian witness. And now that there is, men who seek God through other media "are like mariners who voyaged before the invention of the compass" (John Donne).

The main objection pagans had to early Christianity was its newness. Now, usually in order for communication to occur, one must, as Plato said, "presuppose similar mental states." Hence, no one would present *A Certain Smile* to a Cub Scout or the works of Paddy Chayevski to a Christopher Fry addict. But when the Christians presented the Gospel, it was as if they were talking in a foreign tongue. For this reason many rejected and continue to reject the faith. Karl Jaspers, the German existential philosopher, says such breakdown in communication is a characteristic of the insane, or, as Korzybski the semanticist would say more charitably, it is a sign of the sickness in our language. And indeed, the preaching of the cross was to some foolishness, to others an offense, while being to Christians the power of God unto salvation.

HOW then does one overcome the chasm of novelty and unexpectedness

the Gospel

by CARL MICHALSON

in communicating the Gospel? He turns necessity into a virtue. He does not attempt to cross bridges where there are no bridges nor set down bridgeheads where the ground is loose. It may be a scandal and an offense to propose Jesus of Nazareth as the one in human history through whom God is turning himself to man. But that scandal is a wholesome alternative to seductive lies which say "there is only one man in the world and his name is All Men" (Carl Sandburg), or its classical prototype, "Man is the measure of all things" (Protagoras).

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.

This very perspective from "the outsider" saves us from the assumption that everything is as we see it. There are some things about which we will remain totally unaware until some outsider calls them to our attention. Estelle in Sartre's play *No Exit* complains that when she cannot see herself she begins to wonder if she really exists. Well, the play is taking place in hell, and there are no mirrors in hell, for hell is any place where there are no possibilities for self-understanding. "I pat myself just to make sure, but it doesn't help much," she confesses.

Tennessee Williams has a provocative dramatic device which appears with conspicuous frequency in his scripts. One character picks up and inspects an object that has always been within sight of the other character but never really noticed. Immediately thereafter the other character goes to the object and inspects it as if for the first time. The Gospel communicates itself to us with this same quality of otherness. It does for us what nothing in our own control could do. It sets our lives within perspectives completely engrossing, yet utterly unanticipated. Kierkegaard has said, no man needs to be told when he has lost a leg, or a wife, or a fortune. But few men seem to notice the loss of a self! The Gospel becomes, as the Epistles of James suggests, the mirror in which we see the matters that pertain to our very lostness—or salvation. In that sense it makes contact not with something we already know but with something we do not know at all.

ACTUALLY, the problem of communication is somewhat exaggerated if one is limited to the framework which Plato proposed. If the presupposition for communion between two persons is "similar mental states," as Plato claims, then who can ever really communicate anything new! One must in some way either presuppose a mental state congenial to the gospel he is communicating, or he must provide the condition for the creation of a hospitable mental state. Plato assumed the former possibility in his doctrine of innate ideas. You can recognize almost any good idea because it is already in some sense in your thinking. In that case, there is no such thing as a new idea.

Aristotle took the other way out. Drama and poetry can *elicit* new mental states. You need no congenial mental state as a presupposition for the communication of a creative artist, for he can sweep you off your feet by the irony and pathos of his work, as humorists evoke your laughter even against your will, although with your concurrence. And inasmuch as thought itself depends for its very existence on language (and not vice versa, as common sense suspects), communication does not presuppose similar mental states so much as it presupposes a language evocative of reliable mental states. It seems right to say that if you think the right thoughts you will communicate the right language. Aristotle put it the other way around. In order to think the right thoughts, you must be tutored in the right language.

This structure is helpful to a certain degree in understanding how something so utterly new as the Christian Gospel can be meaningful to minds that have not been able to anticipate it. The Gospel itself provides for the possibility of its own understanding. Therefore, one does not testify to others with the expectation that their prior acquaintance with the subject will help them understand. One rather testifies with the expectation that what he is saying is providing the conditions for the very understanding of the truth.

THE Gospel, which is the good news proclaimed by Christians as something new every day, is at the same time the once-for-all news (Romans 6:10, Hebrews 7:27). It is the *final* edition. One who hears it should have the same sensations one feels when hearing the voice of a newsboy cracking the night with the latest headline on the war, the elections, or the fights.

But if the Gospel is final in this sense, its language is cast less as past history and more as present address. The event of God's turning to us in Christ, when expressed propositionally, would sound less like "Washington crossed the Delaware" and more like "I love you." The Gospel is the final news in the sense in which a wedding ceremony is final: you date it, as you date Washington's crossing the Delaware, but you commit your future, as in the marriage covenant, and you keep the commitment up to date by the repetition of the covenant in daily whispers of self-surrender.

This characteristic of the Gospel has a real bearing on the desired response to the Gospel. If the witness goes about insisting "This is so," he is virtually inviting the response "Prove it!" But the Christian Gospel is not an assertion of facts nor a simple claim to truth, a possible response to which might be skepticism. The Christian Gospel is a mobilization of decision. It begins not with a series of facts but with a call for an act of will. It says, "*Do this* (and thou shalt live)!" How would stock replies to Christian witness sound in the face of the call to decision? How would "Prove it!" sound in response to, "Do this!" or, "I don't believe it!" in response to "Love thy neighbor!" One may respond with rejection. He may say, "I will not do it!" But at least the position is then quite clear. A decision has been made in which the hearer has taken a step, however regrettable, in determining his destiny. At least he has not been encouraged to filibuster

(*Continued on page 29*)

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS IN GOSPEL COMMUNICATION

by F. W. Dillistone

LET me first ask a basic question. Can there be a communication of the Gospel without the use of any kind of symbol? There springs to mind the testimony of a great Christian missionary to Ceylon who, some time after his retirement from active service, revisited the sphere where he had previously worked. Amongst those who were then active Christians he made enquiry as to what had been the decisive factor in leading them to embrace the Christian faith. And he found that in the large majority of cases, it was simply some act of kindness, some unexpected self-sacrifice, on the part of one who was known to bear the Christian name.

What does this mean? That symbols are unnecesary and irrelevant? Such a conclusion would be far too simple. It was not the case that an entirely anonymous person had performed the act of kindness in a kind of social vacuum but rather that an individual, known to belong to the Christian community and known to be committed to the service of Christ, had behaved in this way. In other words, a symbolic person had expressed himself in a symbolic act. Through a particular symbolic event in modern world history the self-giving *agape* of the Son of God, declared in the Gospel, had been symbolically re-enacted. Thus it would be untrue to say that symbols are unnecesary. Indeed, I think it possible to affirm that without symbols the distinctive Christian Gospel cannot be communicated.*

Before attemping to describe the symbols that are available, let us look at one or two simple examples of the ways in which symbols may have their use in gospel communication. One area of life in which well-planned programs of evangelism have been carried through over the last few years has been the Royal Air Force serving in Britain and in other parts of the world. A constant stream of young men flows into the Service, and the chaplains have been eager to use the opportunity of presenting the Gospel to those with whom they are brought into close personal contact.

In relation to this work one thing was told me by the Chaplain-in-Chief which I found of particular interest. Again and again, he said, they had found that the first point of contact was a church building. Though a recruit might know virtually nothing about the Christian faith he had at least seen a parish church. He knew there was something distinctive about it. Questions could be raised about the church. What was it for? What was its history? What did it represent? Here was a Christian symbol which many a man had passed daily and at least something out of his experience could

be used as a starting point for further Christian communication.

Again there are probably few symbols more important for potential Christian communication than the great Christian festivals which are still widely observed in the West. We all know that Christmas has been well-nigh submerged under sentiments and activities which have virtually no relationship to its inner meaning. Yet it still provides a talking point, a moment of common concern, a symbol of communication. At least we can raise the question: What mean ye by this celebration? What is its origin? Its value? Its reference? Here is a time-symbol of which all are aware and which can still be used as a starting point for further Christian communication.

What Symbols Are Available?

In attempting to give a brief survey of the *classes* of symbols which can be used in Christian communication, I shall retain the main divisions which I made in my book *Christianity and Symbolism* and which I have found no reason to change.

(1) *Symbols of Space.* This class includes buildings, sculptures, carvings, paintings, tapestries which have a definite and distinctive Christian reference. Any enclosure of space, any shaping of material in space, which is deliberately designed to express or represent some element of the Christian Gospel can make its impact upon the imagination of man and begin to mold it toward the pattern of the ultimate Christian revelation.

(2) *Symbols of Time.* This class includes regular periods of observance, special periods of remembrance and anticipation, celebrations of individual and social crises of development, which are related in some specific way to the Christian Gospel. Any deliberate setting apart of a time period, any patterning of events within a time sequence, which is intended to express or represent some aspect of the Gospel can influence man's whole life in time and can begin to imprint upon the history of the individual or of the society the pattern revealed in the Gospel.

(3) *Symbolic Persons.* This class includes ministers in settled charges, superintendents, traveling evangelists, missionaries—any, in fact, who have been set apart to represent or to reenact in symbolic fashion some part of God's revelation in Christ. And this, the most important part of Christian communication, will be made through:

(4) *Symbolic Speech,* including lections, prayers, liturgies, sermons, recordings of speech, the printed word and

(5) *Symbolic Actions,* including sacramental observances and special acts of healing and mercy performed

* It would perhaps be claimed by some Christian mystics that God comes to them ineffably and directly without any form of symbolic mediation. Any description of such an experience, however, is bound to be communicated through symbols and even the original experience is not likely to be independent of traditional Christian imagery.

in the name of Christ and as expressions of the Christian Gospel.

The Wholeness of Christian Symbolism

Obviously such a classification covers a wide variety of symbolic forms and may seem too vague to give any guidance for present-day use. Yet it is, perhaps, good to remind ourselves that we are all constantly being influenced by symbols belonging to each of those categories, whether or not they have any distinctively Christian reference. It is therefore most important in the whole enterprise of Christian communication to make sure that there shall be an integration or harmony of the symbolic forms employed.

Is a stadium, for example, an appropriate symbolic setting for the proclamation of the Gospel? Or, for that matter, do the ugliness and artificiality of many Christian church buildings conduce to a true communication of the beauty of holiness to which the Christian should bear witness? What kind of Sunday can be an impressive and valuable symbol within the context of Christian communication? Is it any longer possible for the Lord's Supper to be a symbolic celebration of the redemption and integration of time for the whole community?

The truth is that we are exposed to symbolic forms almost every hour of our working day—through the press, radio and television, through the forms belonging to commerce and industry, civic government and national politics. These are not necessarily anti-Christian, though it is perhaps increasingly open to question how far the values and interests which these symbols represent are compatible with *Christian* values and interests. What is certain, however, is that Christian communication is not adequately performed simply by one man, declaring through the medium of symbolic speech, the essential facts of the Christian Gospel. That such a declaration is vastly important goes without saying.

But unless it is surrounded by and followed up by a wholeness of Christian symbolism which declares and represents symbolically the redemption of space, time and the human person-in-society, it is likely to issue either in a severely limited and restricted form of religious life apart from the world of reality or in a temporary symbolic response which speedily becomes swallowed up again within the manifold forms of secular life.

The Task Today

The communicator of the Gospel, then, must take into account the whole symbolic environment into which the Gospel is to be communicated, and must constantly be aware of his responsibility both to be faithful to the past and to be sensitive to the changing present. This obligation is widely recognized in the world of *language*. At the time of the Reformation and again during the past century unwearying efforts have been made to grasp the exact and comprehensive significance of the original languages within which the Gospel took shape and to translate them into the idiom and vernacular of our own time.

Indeed so much time and effort have been expended upon this part of the communication enterprise that it has tended to be assumed that a correct and if possible a vivid translation of language is all that matters.

But man does not live by language alone. Just as important—some would say more important—are the images he sees, the symbolic forms which make up the structure of the cultural world in which he lives. This fact is coming home to us more and more as we talk about visual aids and the influence of television and the power of the film. The stupendous task now waiting to be done is not so much the *verbal* translation of the linguistic symbols of the first century A.D. but rather the *visual* transposition of the images of the period. Such a task involves not simply a reproduction: to draw attractive pictures of life in the Holy Land is not difficult. It involves rather a transposition of the essential Christian imagery as it embedded itself within its original environment into the total symbolic environmental situation of our own day.

In this enterprise, which is a supremely difficult one, we need the help of those who are on the one hand prepared patiently to study the symbols of their own craft and on the other hand ready to take theology seriously and to be instructed in the profound significance of the essential Christian Gospel. Architects (a church building may be adequate technologically and utterly inadequate as a Gospel symbol), painters (a picture which may seem to have a biblical reference may be a travesty of the Gospel), sculptors, decorators, bear a heavy load of responsibility in this matter and the church may need to pray as much for an architect who is about to design a church building as it does for an evangelist who is about to launch a campaign of proclaiming the Word of God. Visual forms are not irrelevant and indifferent: they can be a grave impediment to true Gospel proclamation and a continuing hindrance to the edifying of the church in the Gospel.

I have only touched the fringe of a vast subject. Dare we hope for such a regeneration of the human *imagination* as will result in the emergence of new symbolic forms worthy of the Gospel and in some measure adequate for the communication of its essential message?

the crucial problem of **communications** IN MASS MEDIA

by Gardner Cowles

FOR thirty years, I have been an active journalist—a reporter, an editor, a publisher. Over these thirty years, I have been privileged to meet some of the ablest people of three decades, some of the best minds, some of the most powerful leaders, some of the wisest thinkers, some of the most dangerous and deluded fakers. I have done a great deal of traveling over these thirty years—into every state of the union, and in most of the countries of the world.

Increasingly I have come to believe that the central fact we face is this: The world has grown so small and all peoples so interdependent, there will not long be security and freedom and happiness for even the most advanced nations, unless *all people everywhere feel hope,* and believe they are at least *inching* their way also toward a better life.

I advisedly say "all the people everywhere" because I am convinced the United States will not be able permanently to find a good life if the rest of the world sinks deeper into squalor and tyranny. It troubles me and I hope it troubles you, that the per capita income in the United States is now about twice that of such industrialized nations as Great Britain and West Germany, and about seventeen times that of the rest of the world.

Do not mistake my meaning. I do not wish abundance to be replaced with impoverishment. I merely raise the question: How much richer than the rest of the world can the United States afford to be, politically, militarily, morally? If we become increasingly the only fat duck in a hungry world—look out! This state of imbalance, projected into the next fifty years, will surely destroy the peace our upcoming generation is entitled to.

THE world has undergone at least four major social revolutions since the beginning of this century: First, the astonishing developments in transport, which have compressed time and space beyond all previous comprehension, bringing what were once "the far-reaches of the world" within immeasurably shorter spans of time and distance. Secondly, the revolution in communication, which means that immense masses of people can be talked to (or heard from) more rapidly and more effectively than anyone ever dreamed possible. Third, education has become so widespread, so "popular" (in both senses of the term) that the potentialities of ordinary men keep breaking open new frontiers. Fourth, the expansion of suffrage has conferred political decision-making on masses of men and women who, a generation ago, were not only without the vote but without even the minutest sense of political influence or political participation.

These four social revolutions have transformed the nature of world politics. Power has moved away from the kings and princes, the castes and the generals. Vast numbers of human beings have won power on the premise that every individual deserves a share in political life. This power is being abused, or used stupidly, in many places throughout the world; but the important fact remains that for the first time in history, the common man has seized upon the fact that he has the right to ask for a better life for himself—that he *counts;* that he matters; that politics is no longer the province of the well born and the wealthy alone; that one central purpose of politics, indeed, is to give the common man a better life.

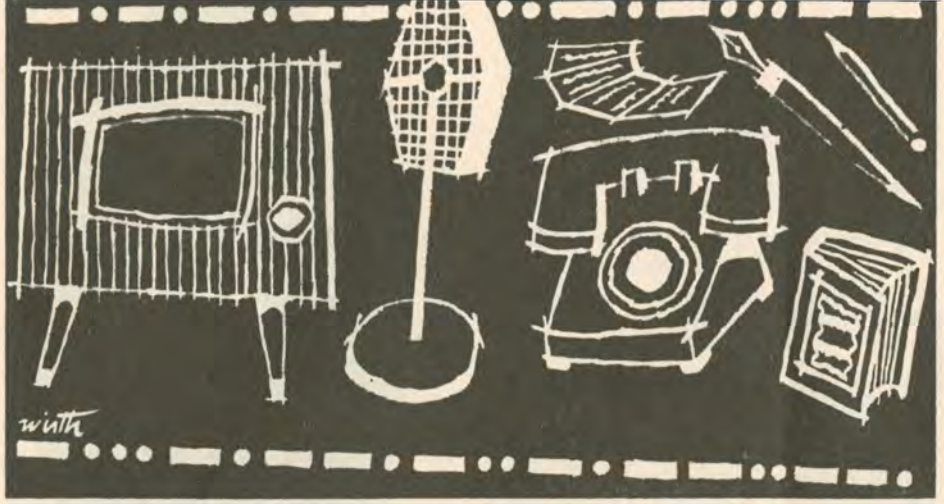
FOR today men everywhere know that it is possible for the world to produce enough for all. The masses of the world are demanding their just share. The common man feels he has the *right* to this. If he fails to get it, he is willing to flirt with the Devil. If he doesn't get help from the United States, he will try to get help from the Soviet Union. If the great masses of Asia and Europe and Africa don't begin to get more of a share of the world's good things—in health, in security, in happiness—then I fear for the continued security of our unprecedented standard of living in the West.

Let me state it another way: Those of you who have majored in history and government will agree with me, I believe, that the triumph politically of the last two centuries in the *western world* was the finding of a formula by which the *freedom* of the individual and order in society could be properly combined. The task of this century, it seems to me, is to extend that formula world wide and to make it apply to the economic as well as the political field so that everyone can lead a life more prosperous and secure and at the same time win more freedom.

I believe a properly educated America can furnish the leadership the world so desperately needs in these days of the hydrogen bomb if we constantly remind ourselves of Lewis Mumford's definition of civilization. "Civilization," he said, "is the never-ending process of creating one world and one humanity." The trouble today is we too frequently no longer believe in humanity. We believe only in nations, usually just in our own.

Democracy is a new thing in the world. Compared with despotism, it is but a few minutes old. Communism has thrown a challenge at us. I'm not worried that it may win in the military field. But in the field of ideas—in the fight for men's minds, we have a real struggle on our hands. We seem to know far too little what goes on in the minds and hearts of men of different races and different cultures. We know too little how to communicate with them.

When people use the word "communications" today they mean the press, magazines, radio, TV, movies. But these are simply instruments, technical facilities, methods. The real point about communications is this—someone is trying to say something to someone else. This sounds simple enough and innocent enough. Yet its study and exploration have become as complicated as the most abstruse investigations in physics.



For notice what is involved in communications: through the use of words or pictures, ideas or visualization, someone tries to get something into the head of someone else. Truly to understand the process by which this is achieved requires the most advanced knowledge and insights from psychology, social psychology, history. The simplest processes of communication have baffled our most expert investigators. They admit they know relatively little: They may know *how* something happens, but they don't know why. And they cannot guarantee that Method A will really succeed in imposing itself on the consciousness of X or Y.

Consider the Cold War. The Cold War is, in effect, a struggle for power through the use of nonviolent means. We and the Russians are trying to influence each other and our potential allies—how? By communicating. We keep trying to persuade the Russians that we are *not* hostile or aggressive, that we are *not* "imperialists," and we do *not* want war. We try to say this to them through diplomacy, through offers, treaties, negotiations, publicly, privately. Yet we have been unable to change the stereotype of us which is in the Russian mind. For despite all our efforts, the Russians believe that we are "inevitably" prisoners of our own system and are therefore "inevitably" driven to threaten their safety and oppose their interests. Russians have been raised on the basic idea, to quote Lenin and Stalin, that the capitalist and the communist systems cannot exist in peace, side by side. How can we change this conviction? Never was a problem in communications so urgent, so significant, so complicated, so discouraging.

COMMUNICATIONS has become the central and crucial problem of our world because we have reached a dead end insofar as military power and military strategy are concerned. We already possess weapons so destructive that the military can simply order the amount of destruction it wants. In the world of H-bombs, military "strategy" has become pretty meaningless. No amount of strategic brilliance or generalship or skill can counterbalance the sheer, crude, staggering wide power of nuclear weapons. Since we can smash up an awful lot of Russia, and they can smash up an awful lot of us, we have reached a sort of stalemate of weapons—and now the contest of wills and purposes and interests is located in the field we call "communications."

There is not a single phase of life which is not bound up, part and parcel, with the central, crucial problem of communicating. The official, the politician, the businessman, the editor, the diplomat, the general, the orator, the scientist, the lawyer, the judge, the father, the child, the teacher, the student—each is trying to say something which he wants someone else truly to understand. Some people are more gifted at this than others—but we really do not know why except to say that they *are* more gifted. Some methods are more effective than others—but we don't know why, except to say they work better. The good businessman is not necessarily a good politician, nor the good salesman a good teacher. Why can A persuade B of something C could not—though C can persuade D, with whom A is ineffective?

In our society, note that the increasing disruption of our family life shows many husbands and wives have failed truly to communicate with each other; the figures on juvenile delinquency suggest how many parents and children have failed to communicate—their wants or their needs, their laws or their values. The problems of the conference table are simply larger than those of the dinner table. The "family of nations" is as given to dispute, misunderstanding, acrimony, and failures really to communicate as the smaller family with which each of us have had more experience—though not necessarily more success.

I KNOW few fields which offer so much to the fresh mind, the determined scientist, the dedicated investigator. Any gifted person who would now devote himself to the study of communications may make a contribution of no small worth to a field which is crying for data, insights, theories, research.

As the head of two large newspapers in my state, and of two radio and television stations, and as editor of a national magazine going into more than four million homes each issue, I suppose I should be able to reveal important mysteries in the art of communication. But I can't because I don't know any.

The greatest editors I know are just like the greatest educators, and are successful for the same reasons. They are thoughtful men with a scrupulous regard for the truth. They are men who strive to stir the best in the human race, not pander to the worst. They are men of courage who dare to lead, even when the direction is at least temporarily dangerous and unpopular. They are men wise enough to know that if they want an audience they must be clear and simple, concise and logical. They are men who see the world whole, who know that mankind is capable of mounting to the sublime, as Winston Churchill said, if someone will but fire the imaginations and sketch a vision.

To be sure, these editors know how to use, and use well, the technical tools of their craft—but that is relatively unimportant. It is their sincerity, character, and knowledge of human nature and the world that fit them to head great media of communication and let them succeed.

THIS subject, "The Art of Communications," is something which even those of us experienced in journalism and broadcasting understand only dimly. I know the techniques, but I do not know why one time in one place they succeed; another time in another place they fail.

I suspect the character of the man behind the techniques is more important than the techniques themselves. The public is astoundingly quick to sense whether it should trust the men running a particular magazine or a particular newspaper or radio network. And this reputation of trust or confidence is the most priceless ingredient any medium can have.

STEERSMAN . . . GOD . . . AND YOU . . .

by Robert J. Golter

THE relevance of communication to religion is so great that one is tempted almost to speak of the one in terms of the other. The theologian communicates about God, and in so doing, he elaborates a communication system.

The mystic communicates with God and communicates with himself about his communication to discover that he and the communication are one. The ritual-maker and the symbol-maker communicate a communication, theological or mystical, to the communicant, through which he may be led to commune with himself, the community of saints, and God. We commune in such a ritual even as we affirm our belief in the "communion of saints."

The preacher and the missionary communicate with the members of their communities about their communications with the world (comprised of physical communication systems), with themselves, with one another, with the community universal, and with God. The Bible itself is a medium of communication presenting the communications of men about the communication of men and God.

Prayer is communication.

Love, the central dynamic of Christianity, is, perhaps, the optimum communication system. The *Logos* concept of John is a communication concept. There is a sense in which metaphysics has always been meta-communication, or communication about communication. Yet, we must stop here, lest we, in our effort to communicate something of the relation between communication and religion, compound the two into meaningless ambiguity.

When a scientist of the stature of Norbert Wiener speaks in bold tones of this new Age of Communication, we whose stock in trade has always been communication, have a right, nay a responsibility, to be excited. When engineers, physicists, social psychologists, neurologists, biological mathematicians, epistemologists, ecologists, anthropologists, etc., pick up the refrain, we do well to pause and ask: What is in this for religion?

There is little danger that we shall become so enamored of the new terms that we shall forget the old process; for the process is one, and the terms are but new vessels for old wine. Perhaps they can make the wine more appealing for the contemporary consumer. Perhaps they can preserve the wine against spilling and spoiling. Perhaps they can facilitate its handling, use, and distribution. This is all that we should attempt to claim for the potential contributions of science to communication in religion.

YET, what a significant claim this adds up to! Now for the first time since ancient Greece is an integration of disciplines both possible and immanent. Science is midwife to a new *lingua franca*, or at least, if there is speaking in many tongues, a means by which each may understand the other speaking in his own tongue. If there is a contribution, it is in the provision of a means by which religion may assume its rightful role at the cohesive and creative core of man's commerce with God and the universe.

In the science of communication, this is already being realized. Wherever man probes the darkness, bows humbly in the presence of an awesome insight into meaning, orders his actions in accordance with the best system of values that he can structure from the information available, and invests his life in the creation of more abundant life, he participates in religion of the highest order. Truly, the creative moment knows no boundary between science and religion. So we do not speak here of the contributions of science to religion, nor of those of religion to science, but, rather, of the contributions of science to communication in religion.

We have the right to ask now: What, more specifically, is the nature of these contributions? Essentially, they are analogizing through models on the one side and differentiating through quantification on the other side—both but different aspects of the same coin.

Communication might well be called the model-making function, whether it be of man and man, or of animal and animal, or of machine and machine, or of any of these in combination with any of the others. Indeed, the function does not stop here, and it remains for philosophers and theologians to speculate just where it does stop. By a model is meant a structure which represents another structure. It does not matter whether either of the structures or both are considered as static or in process. It matters only that there is a correspondence between relevant points. All symbols are models of a sort, deriving their points of relevance

through arbitrary agreement, which is the way words in a language are born.

More complex models may be constructed of many such symbols. It is impossible to deal in concepts without making multitudes of manipulations upon these models. The aim of every philosopher is to build ever more complex structures until all available models are incorporated into the structure of one model. Perhaps the theologian differs only in that he begins with the superstructure and tries to elaborate the interrelations. Science has always used models, but only on the more elementary levels.

WHEN the scientists began to build, however, electronic models of their own thought processes—models which apparently are able to duplicate some of these processes, and, in some respects, to improve upon them—they began to study these electronic representations to see if they might learn more about themselves. This was when the science of cybernetics made its appearance. When one considers that this model-making function is basically purposive or teleological in its orientation (hence the term, *cybernetics*, from the Greek χυβερνήτης, or *steersman*) and that the scientist is able actually to create purpose-seeking mechanisms capable of discovering and achieving these purposes, one wonders who will derive the most benefit or substantiation from these findings, the philosopher or the theologian.

To answer this question, one would perhaps have to ask which branch of study has derived most benefit from Aristotle's principle of the *causa finalis*. To ask this, of course, is pointless, except to indicate that what we have here is a truly old wine.

Neither is the analog a new concept, exclusive to the province of analog-digital computers. Aristotle anticipated it in his idea of the metaphorical leap, and the words and the structure of the Hebrew language are, in themselves, anticipations in practice. Poets, philosophers, and theologians have always made use of the analog to facilitate the process by which man conceptualizes, learns, plans and effects his plans.

But today, thanks to the new containers, educators are constructing entirely new curricula on the principle of the analog, so that synthesis of knowledge will come in for as much emphasis as analysis has traditionally. No longer will the student learn more and more about less and less, but he will learn to incorporate more and more models into fewer and fewer structures. In other words, every student will be encouraged to become poet, philosopher and theologian. All this is by way of saying that the science of communication is rapidly erasing the confusing boundaries between the disciplines.

The elimination of boundaries is also the business of religion.

PERHAPS the most important concept in communication theory is proving to be that of freedom. If the communication scientist should take a text, it would surely be: "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free." The healthy communication system seeks the state of maximum freedom. This is considered to be a state in which all available choices have equal probability. When one alternative is more probable than the others, freedom diminishes, for that alternative is the one which must be chosen. It is quite possible, however, that more refinement in the theory will discover that freedom in choice is but one aspect of a process of freedom which might include also the propensity toward and effecting of homeostasis, a state of self-maintaining system in the midst of entropy.

Homeostasis, like the previous definition of freedom, might be defined as that state in which all available choices are equally probable. It may be seen that a circularity is provided here by which a system may deal with the more random impingements always to achieve and re-achieve balance, integration, and symmetry in the midst of entropy. The concept of entropy has been taken over bodily into communication theory to express the universal trend to more probable states: change in the direction of randomness.

The implications of all this for theology may be quite significant, though, it must be admitted, they lean somewhat more to the hypothetical than the interpretative at this point.

Confronted with randomness, or entropy, or noise, a system requires information in order to maintain freedom. Operationally speaking, information is that which allows the receiver to structure a model more nearly in accordance with that which it represents.

Information is available, however, only through a circular causal process. Not until the notion of the one-dimensional, cause-and-effect chains was replaced with the bi-dimensional notion of a circular process, was the scientist able adequately to analyze such systems as self-reproductive organisms, stable social systems, or physiochemical aggregates in a steady state. When we consider that this was the same process which Jesus taught his followers—unity growing in the circularity of love—we cannot help rejoicing that science, while rattling the chains, is, nevertheless, following after to make substantiation. Paul had laid hold of the same concept when he spoke of growing in grace; while, today, in the new vessels, social psychologists and psychotherapists are using it to combat social entropy and neurosis.

A TERM of great currency in connection with the circular causal process is *feedback*. Information is obtained by projecting a model to a receiver and noting the modifications in it has been returned. The return process is called feedback. Feedback is necessary in good communication, for it makes available the information essential for the achieving of optimum freedom. Here again, we might cite the classic injunction: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." In such a frame of reference, almost all the apparent paradoxes of Jesus take on new meaning.

We have been talking, for the most part, about the analogizing or analog aspect of communication and of religion. Information and consequent freedom, however, are not possible without the differentiation which is effected through mathematical and

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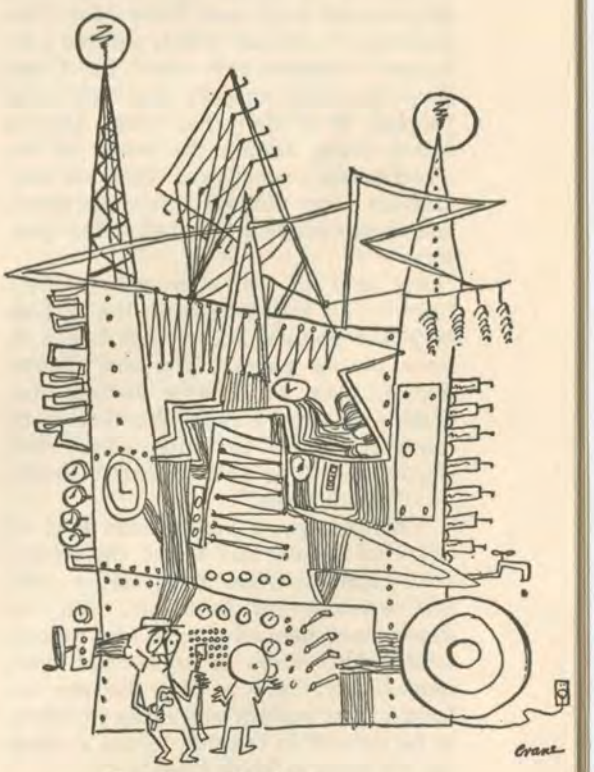

"It tells me the *facts*.
I care not for opinions!"

DEMYTHOLOGIZING PEANUTS

BY JAMES MILLER

The art form which has developed within mass media and which is probably the most influential form, at least in the United States, is the daily newspaper comic strip. In comparison with films it tends to be a continuous sequence moving through years, developing its own vehicles of communication, forming its own characters, and is perhaps the most widespread art form transmitting and almost subconsciously educating and influencing the children and the grown-up children of our culture. The grown-up children on the campus today especially delight in *Peanuts*. He seems to communicate.

NOT until recently has the comic strip been taken seriously, even as an art form, much less as a vehicle for cultural myth. Most strips up to now have been pictorial, realistic fiction (Buz Sawyer, Mary Worth, etc.). Some have been fantastic-realism (Smilin' Jack, Dick Tracy with an emphasis on fantastic). Fantasy is not far removed from the completely personal expressions in esoteric poetry or painting; except that the comic strip has to be intelligible enough to sell. The attiture toward communication is the same: nothing important can be communicated. Enough thinly cloaked moralisms are inserted to flavor the strip for popular consumption.

Little Orphan Annie acquainted us long ago with the possibility of the comic strip as a springboard for propaganda. For years we have derived ready-made quotes for homey philosophy to ingrain us into the comfortable belief that all capitalists are benevolent and persecuted by foreigners, criminals, and fifth-columnists lurking on every uninhabited island. At the risk of being political, one wonders how much President Eisenhower's magic popularity has to do with his resemblance to our beloved Daddy Warbucks. But propaganda here is always the propaganda of the *status quo*, "what people want."

Propaganda of social criticism, or rather social comment by comic irony, is more difficult, but Al Capp has managed to keep at it for more years than most people would have believed possible. In addition to Mammy Yokum (American Monism), Li'l Abner (the all-American boy) and Daisy Mae (the American cheesecake cult), and the permanent criticisms they stand for, Capp keeps his strip topically and politically peopled. Walt Kelly has joined him in recent years, adding the world of the Okeefenokee swamp from which we may examine our cultural pre-suppositions and meet ourselves in a befuddled 'possum.

But as Pogo was winning our affections by his introduction to the realism of power politics, a new strip began in some of our papers. We met Charlie Brown, plain ol' Charlie Brown, just plain ol' Charlie Brown. We then went down the street to Patty, whose first words were "Go away, Charlie Brown . . . I'm not home!"

Then Snoopy, a very human kind of dog, and Shermy and Violet, the sophisticate, and Schroeder, the sensitive artist and worshiper of Beethoven. But we didn't meet them all at once and we certainly didn't come to understand them immediately. Only as they became related to one another and came somehow to be defined in reaction to one another did we come to know them.

With a remarkable ability to allow characters to grow, Charles M. Schulz has brought us a new microcosm of our world. *Peanuts* fans enjoy it not because it is another step in the development of the comic strip as art form. Nor need they be aware that *Peanuts* may be expressing an existential mythology. They like it because it is unpretentious.

Just plain ol' Charlie Brown is just plain ol' Charlie Brown. His problems seem fairly simple, but because they are the problems of human relations, of separation and restoration to community they are also our problems. We always had thought the problems were not simple at all, but complex almost to the point of being insoluble. In fact, we have thought them so complex we have given ourselves complexes refusing to admit their simplicity. We see our ridiculous rationalizations in the singleness of Charlie Brown's one-block world.

By reducing the drawing to the barest suggestion and depending on a twist of a line for humor, the cartoonist has integrated words, meaning, and action better than any of his predecessors. (Walt Kelly comes very close.) By keeping each daily sequence complete in itself and reinforcing the continuity by character themes and theme-situations, Schulz has found a tricky balance which is essential to a continuing strip. A reader can begin anywhere with *Peanuts* and having seen two or three strips in any order, he will begin to catch on enough to be amused by and interested in these little people.

By keeping to a pattern in each strip of building up to an urgency in the first three panels and undercutting it by a simple but unexpected solution in the fourth, Schulz has brought a new kind of humor to comic strips. It is not the slapstick Mutt-and-Jeff brand, repeating endlessly ancient puns; but the humor of character, the humor of undermining pretension. It depends upon a great effort built up in the first panels encountering in the last a void, or an obvious truth which embarrasses the great effort.

The simple, straightforward answer disenchants our illusions and leaves us standing somewhat ridiculous at the edge of having faced ourselves. We laugh at our former presumptions when we see who we really are. As long as we stay to ourselves, what we are does not become clear, but as soon as Charlie Brown asks Patty or Violet to assure him that he is perfect, he discovers he is just plain ol' Charlie Brown. His worry over being himself amuses us because we know he is exactly what he is supposed to be and we love him for it. But it is harder to laugh at our own presumptions not unlike his, when even national policy is determined by "the need to be loved" without loving.

Who is Charlie Brown? Why do we have such identification with his embarrassments? As the central character, a clear theme grows up around him: Presumption to fame and popularity, 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.

Charlie Brown's introspective suffering amuses us because we know that he is only a little boy and that his problem is not an ultimate one. But when the same thing happens to us we respond just as Charlie Brown does, and unless we have a much larger world from which to view our failures we are caught in the same wallow of self-pity and embarrassment that amuses us in him.

Theologically we might say Charlie Brown is caught in the confusing maze of original sin. He tries everything possible to escape his involvement in finitude. He makes a running leap to hide in a newfound pile of autumn leaves. Exulting, he jumps into this place of isolation only to find that he lands in the midst of everyone of the relationships from which he thought he was escaping.

Charlie Brown began as the very simple, noisy four-year-old down the block. Early in the comic series we learn that

he is in competition with other characters who share his determining desire for recognition.

With Patty first, also a relatively simple character, we find that as Charlie Brown demands her admiration, she simply ignores him, busy trying to secure her own status. She pursues Charlie Brown to assure her that she is beautiful. She arranges parties to make sure that she gets invited.

Very early the more poised and sophisticated Violet joins with her in a stable social alliance over against Charlie Brown and Shermy. Shermy becomes the straight man of the act. While aligned with Charlie Brown against the social ostracism of the girls, Shermy threatens just plain ol' Charlie Brown by being more stable, more capable, by getting the better of him in situation after situation.

Even Snoopy, the sensitive dog with the human desire for recognition, gets the better of Charlie Brown. Sociograms of the *Peanuts* situations would find collaborations of different combinations lining up against each other, but most of them against Charlie Brown. Sometimes Patty and Violet enlist Shermy to play a direct trick. Sometimes among themselves they close the ranks and find their friendship in disliking the same things in Charlie Brown. ("We should wear uniforms," Violet says at one place.) They also hold arguments among themselves to discover which likes him more. The lines of separation in their community are never very lasting. The humor lies in these short-lived and easily overcome, in fact, almost unreal barriers.

Schroeder, as a baby, brought out the filial instincts in Charlie Brown and was at first a threat to him by knowing more at four than Charlie Brown at six. This musical prodigy made his teacher look ridiculous. Now every one in the strip has rather matter of factly taken for granted that Schroeder can play all of Beethoven and Brahms, most of Bach and Bartok, in addition to the remarkable feat of whistling Sinding's op. 32, no. 3.

Schroeder is one of the most interesting characters. As the twentieth-century artist, he is amazingly gifted on his toy piano, sensitive, threatened by commercialization (he is forced to play "Three Blind Mice" for Violet's baby brother). He adores Beethoven, molds his whole life to his music. He too is frustrated because his standards of excellence are not generally accepted. Lucy hounds him to let her inspire him to be a great musician; Charlie Brown annoys him by attempting duets with him on a cigar box banjo and by misunderstanding his great discovery of perfect pitch as a baseball term. The crowds of his world clamor for him to play simple, popular music ("Three Blind Mice" or "Jingle Bells").

How Schroeder holds out against the popularisers who see in him a threat to their own being is important for us to watch. The artists among us will be pulling for him. Schroeder has brought the judgment of art into this little world. Charlie Brown brought the first hint of it by making a modern snow man along abstract curves. But it took Schroeder to introduce these standards fully. His impatience with a world in which a radio announcer will substitute an accordion solo for Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 29 is shared by any honest artist.

Just as Schroeder was finding his orientation, another character appeared, even more intricate and more exasperating. Lucy, scientist, empirical philosopher, and fuss-budget par excellence. With her latest invention, stereophonic fussing, she lies on the threshold of controlling her world, and the prospects are highly terrifying. Lucy, aside from Charlie Brown, is the most involved character symbol, for she combines most of the major sociological factors that have shaped our time.

Science is her major interest: she counts the stars not to keep track or to come to a synthesis, but simply to count them. She begins her life disgraced by expulsion from nursery school, and is driven by this early trauma to assert herself loudly and to become a self-educated, self-made fuss-budget. Lucille Van Pelt, self-made fuss-budget, zooms to frightening pinnacles of success, Miss Fuss-Budget of 1952, and by 1955 holds a trophy as "World's Number-One Fuss-Budget." As she says, "You don't win something like that by being sentimental, Charlie Brown!"

Lucy calculates her fussing and her actions; she is the career woman with one driving goal to achieve fame and to be acclaimed for that achievement. She aims to master her universe so that everyone may give her homage. She shatters Charlie Brown by the twisted logic by which she wins all arguments. Yet she is not happy, even though the *Power of Positive Fuss-Budgeting* is her text. She has a kind of frantic security and a frightened boredom, too stubborn to face any truth outside itself. She is almost a cynical Machiavelli, except that we know her also as a little girl trying to find a home in this world. We have seen her clambering for her father to lift her out of her crib, pulling herself out all the time, and then astonished when she discovers that she is out. All her later attempts have the same "look at me" character and she is still astonished when we do and when she must then look at herself.

If Lucy hasn't yet driven Charlie Brown to a nervous breakdown, she has certainly given her baby brother Linus an insecurity complex. Her domineering has driven him both to introspection and to dependence on his blanket and his thumb stuck in his mouth. Linus may possibly move from this to become a profound philosopher. So far he is only self-conscious and timid toward the external world in which his sister boasts of her security. Linus doesn't seem to be aware that she boasts of it in order to bolster it. But he continues to keep "one yard of flannel" between himself and a nervous breakdown.

Only one character may be more rejected than Linus—Pigpen. We know little more about him than that we see him through the layers of historical dirt and we have his profound justification of the *status quo:* "Who am I to disturb the dirt of centuries?" One more character, Charlotte Braun, didn't stay in the neighborhood long enough for us to get to know her.

But we have so far slighted Snoopy and he resents being slighted. For he is important in commenting on the whole human scene with the practical realism of his perspective in the animal world.

(*Continued on page 30*)

(*fig. 1*) *Jackson Pollock,* Cathedral, *1947. Courtesy, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts.*

the

METHODS of communication are so highly developed that they channel information to people everywhere. At every level, from blurbs the illiterate can grasp easily, to complicated technical symbolism of science or philosophy which deals in theoretical abstract essences, communication conveys only the superficial meanings of our real situation. This material vision of things falls short of seeing the significance implicit in what is being transmitted.

The meaning of information, news, events, is "covered over." But ultimately we cannot get along without considering the meaning events have for us. In order for man to receive, not only the *knowledge* of the events around him but their *meaning* for his situation, the very methods of communication must in some way provide for radical revelation and insight; the covering must be removed so that the ordinary happenings of the day may be seen for what they are and stimulate us to ask what they mean.

Students of the Bible, of philosophy or the arts know this is true, and many other disciplines claim that communication includes this "taking off the cover" over the meaning of things; that communication is more than just transmission of occurrences and facts. It is not only reporting, but proclamation.

Painters and sculptors proclaim that there is reality beneath the surface of reported events and situations expe-

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Here man's finitude in the universe is expressed by Pollock's method of painting. Lost in the midst, the unknown spaces where his past traditions and knowledge are useless to him, man must search out the meaning of his life, not according to old patterns, but as a unique individual.

message of the **artist** for today

by MARGARET RIGG

rienced. Theirs is the ability to show us something in a portrait or landscape which we otherwise would not see, or would see only as a collection of colors and lines without significance. Theologian Paul Tillich, speaking of Pablo Picasso's great painting, *Guernica*, says, ". . . if Protestantism means that, first of all, we do not have to cover up anything, but have to look at the human situation in its depths of estrangement and despair, then this is one of the most powerful religious pictures." [1]

Our human situation in this twentieth century of science is moving away from immediate involvement and concern with realities which lie at the depths of our existence, toward peripheral, physical comforts and services. As automation comes, bringing exterior changes, more free time, a lighter work load, does the meaning of existence change also, into something more facile? Artists of the *avant-garde* are busy exploring beneath the surfaces and into the depths of reality. By taking away the covering from the surface, by its concern to represent ultimate matters, art is filling a prophetic function in our time.

REGARDLESS of the scientific progress made, the Utopias it proposes to provide, the comforts it offers, the painter warns that this can prove to be dangerous insulation against reality if we go no deeper. Anything less than honesty about one's ultimate spiritual condition makes of life a surface existence from event to event—an existence with "no exit."

This existence with *no exit* (which is the description Jean Paul Sartre gives of hell) is the life in which the spiritual dimension is missing. The people go through motions without meaning, to each other they are facades which cannot be understood nor penetrated. When Ranier Marie Rilke wrote, ". . . only someone who is ready for everything, who excludes nothing, not even the most enigmatical, will live the relation to another as something alive. . . ." [2] he was referring to the fact that man has to live within spiritual dimensions, courageously discontent to live life on its surfaces.

This courageous discontent is felt in the work of Jackson Pollock (figures 1 and 2). Pollock wanted to reveal the solitude and the loneliness of man, not negatively but affirmatively, because this is a part of man's basic nature. He deliberately unpeoples his pictures. The stark emptiness of his canvass gives way to masses of lines, sweeping with rhythm and gesture which suggest a lyric unity with the gigantic swirling galaxies of space. Pollock had the courage to accept man's finiteness. He said he wanted to show ". . . the limits of the modern individual's rational powers. . . ." Rational and physical powers provide for life in only two dimensions. But we sometimes find ourselves moving in the third dimension, that of the spiritual. Without the third dimension communication crumbles into incoherence. Then, threatened with nonbeing, we cry out, "nothingness!" and, like the hollow men in T. S. Eliot's poem, we end, "Not with a bang but a whimper."

THE *avant-garde* artists do not seek to provide us with great statements of faith but at least their messages do not echo with whimpers. Their communication is through the language of vision. Their message is not meant to spell out our salvation. These artists do not reveal the answers, only the questions. They pull back the cover, strip off the surface veneer of life and the insistent, timeless questions are laid bare. No wonder we often do not "like" art today! Proclamations and questions make up only a *part* of communication. We have not only to listen and to hear, but to *answer*.

Only when the answer has been stammered out has the meaning of the event of communication been found, only then has communication been attained. The rest is monologue. It is monologue we are looking for when we search a piece of art and condemn it because it does not "say" anything to us. The TV, radio, and movies as means of "mass communication" are monologue monopolies. But response, reply, participation are necessary if monologue is to ripen into dialogue and into communication.

The *answer* in communication must be understood not as that sort which comes either from the egoist or the genius. But rather answers that come courageously when there is, ". . . shyness before any sort of new, unforseeable experience with which one does not think oneself able to cope." [3] In art communication takes place when our *answer* has in it the courage to let the cover be removed, the eagerness to learn the vocabulary of the new language, and the desire to break the ground of a new experience.

[1] *Christianity and the Existentialists*, edited by Carl Michalson, "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art," by Paul Tillich, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1956.

[2] *Rilke, Man and Poet*, by Nora Wydenbruck, John Lehman, Ltd., London, 1949.

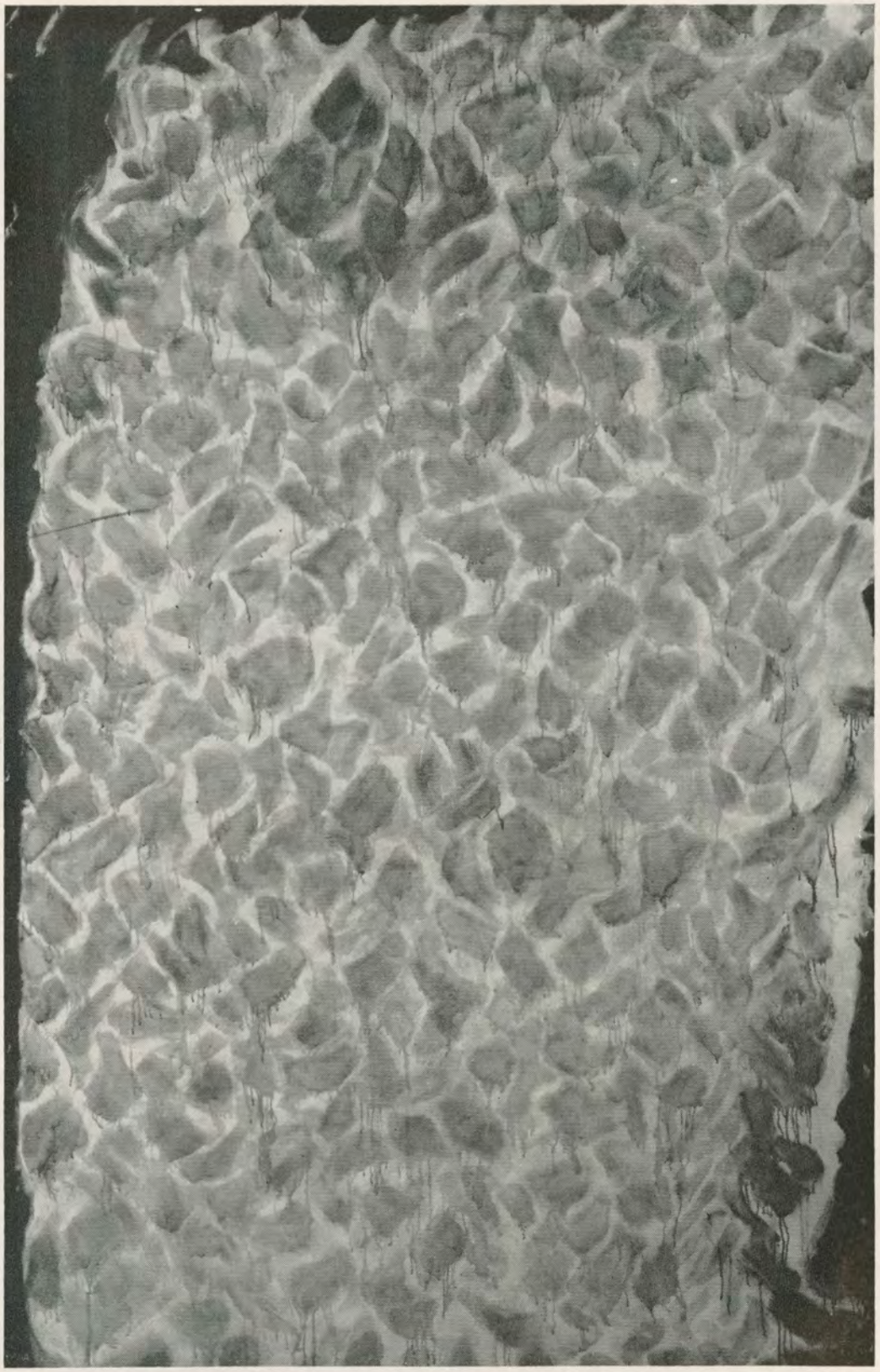
[3] *Rilke, Ibid.*

(*fig. 2*) *Jackson Pollock,* Portrait and a Dream, *1953. Collection of Lee Krasner Pollock.*

Pollock's message was such, that for him the old conventions of painting had to be smashed. His break from the traditional methods gave him freedom to express what he felt was the most necessary thing for him to say today.

(*fig. 4*) *James Brooks,* Altoon, *1956. Courtesy, Nelson Rockefeller; photo, courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.*

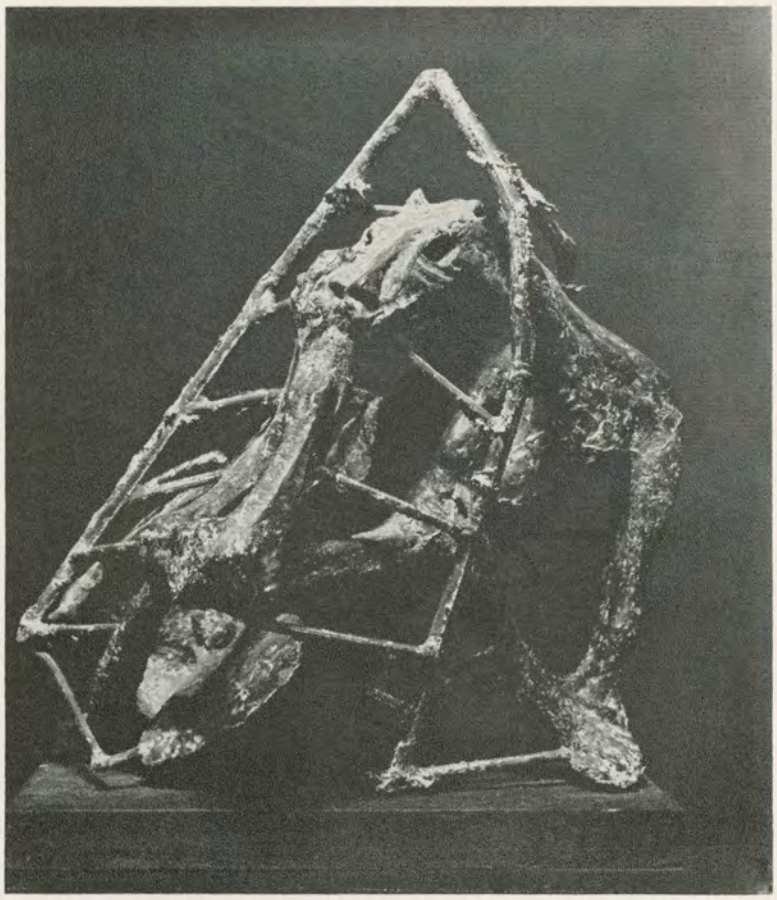
Brooks said of his work, "I
to those occupied with o
ripheral aspects, so interes
and write about. Its meanin
in its relationship. . . ." T
they transmit through the
its spirit, image, and mean



(*fig. 3*) *Sam Francis,* Gray, *1955. Courtesy, Martha Jackson Gallery. Photo, courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.*

Francis overwhelms the beholder with the immense size of his pieces. It is as if he, too, is trying to convey the vastness of what man has not yet learned to meet. He suggests the fragmentation of modern man's situation, yet his work, as a whole, is a courageous "yes" to life.

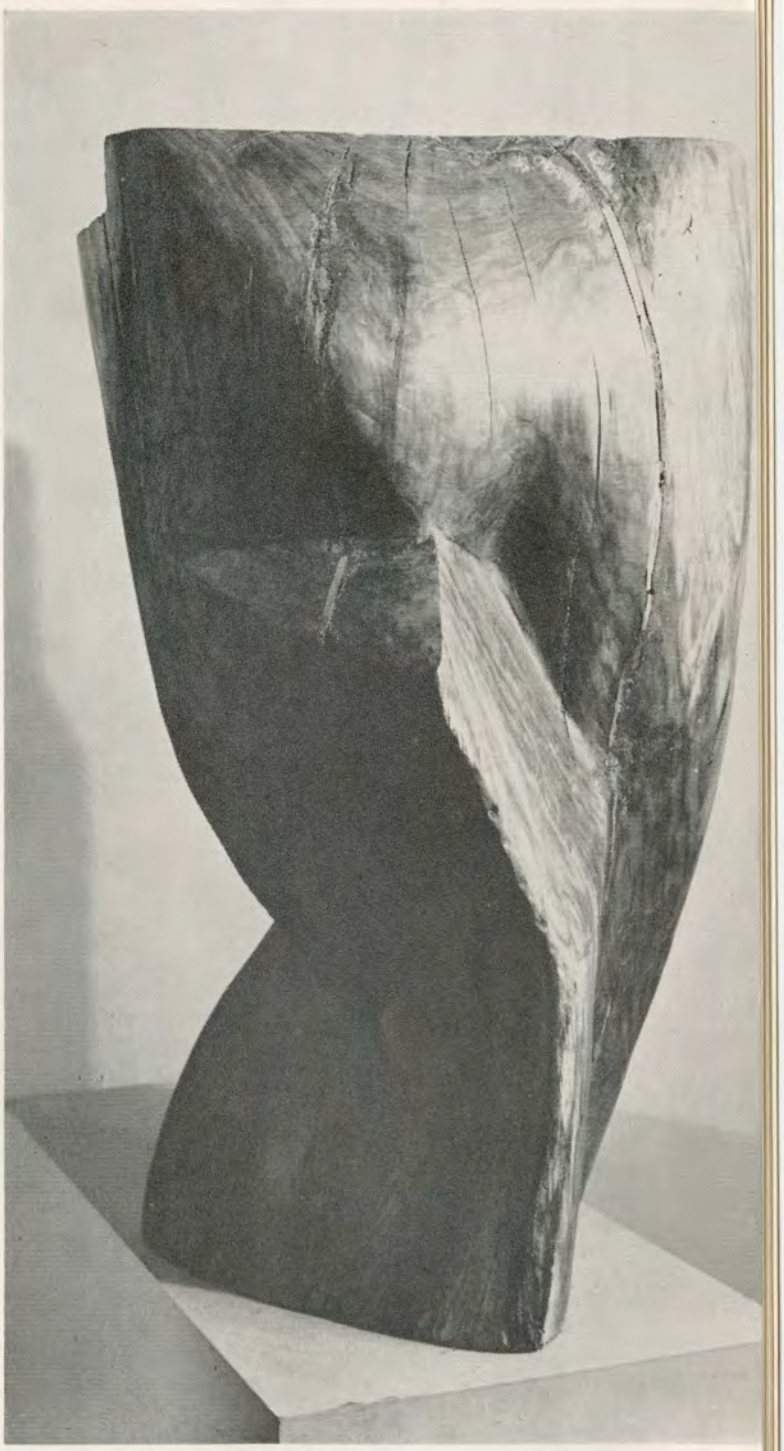
(*fig. 5*) *Pierre Soulages,* January 10, *1951. Courtesy, Museum of Modern Art, N. Y., Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.*



(*fig. 6*) *Luciano Minguzzi:* Dog Among Reeds, *1951. Courtesy, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Aristide Maillol Fund.*

Soulages is concerned with the representation of meaning, of the experience of relationship transformed by what we bring to life. These dark forms he chose precisely because he felt drawn to them and because they have a way of becoming the symbolic language of his message.

There is a natural struggle in life. It demands, not intellectual sophistication, but direct application of abilities. Modern man tends to devalue the simple problems and snares of life.



(*fig. 8*) *Right, Raoul Hague,* Sawkill Walnut, *1955. Courtesy, Raoul Hague. Photo, courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.*

These shapes have strength and moving unity. Yet they seem to be more important because out of the nature of a tree, from its vague essence, the sculptor has made a specific statement. Each shape refers to something human and alive and is Hague's way of affirming the meaning of life even when, as Thomas Hess says in a statement about Hague, "this is the work . . . of an age that cannot deal in certainties."

(*fig. 7*) *Above, Philip Guston,* Painting, *1954. Courtesy, Museum of Modern Art.*

The matter of work and of life is such that it resists the will. Everything moves and changes and it is up to us to grasp what is significant and permanent. Guston is a painter always struck with the transcient mystery of existence. His canvasses catch the moment prior to transition which most of us fail to notice.

THE LIGHT OF MEN

THE ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

by John W. Dixon

The conditions of man in his relationship to God are reflected in the arts: the arts of creation, the image, the fall. The arts have a further role to play in God's work of mending broken lines of communication. The following article is from the soon-to-be-published MSM study book, title not yet selected, but dealing with the Gospel, communication and the arts.

What is man? What is his humanness and how does he maintain it? Does he, in the jungle of the world, find himself only in defiance, standing solitary and alone against the chaos of life; or in submission to the will of God?

Naked and alone we came into exile. In her dark womb we did not know our mother's face; from the prison of her flesh have we come into the unspeakable and uncommunicable prison of this earth. Which of us has known his brother? Which of us has looked into his father's heart? Which of us has not remained forever prison pent? Which of us is not forever a stranger and alone?

—Thomas Wolfe

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men.

—John 1:1-4

In his will is our peace.

—Dante

MAN deprived of food wastes away and quickly dies. Man deprived of water shrivels in all his tissues and dies. Man deprived of oxygen fails quickly in all his organs and dies in a few moments. Man exposed too much to heat or cold or even wet cannot long survive. Yet man with food and water and air and shelter can grow sleek and fat, living for long years.

Is man then only another form of beast that his life should be determined by the supplying of his physical needs like an animal in a zoo?

There are a few clues. There are several cases in medical history of children left or lost in the forest who were raised by the animals. Food, water, air and shelter were supplied; not, it is true, in abundance but to the measure of man's animal needs.

These children, later rescued and placed in schools, cared for and even loved, managed only to learn a few words and a few acts. Eventually they sickened and died.

Why? Because they had lost (and apparently once lost it cannot be regained) the power of relating themselves to human life. There is a gulf that separates them from human beings and across that gulf they cannot sustain life.

Another example. Babies kept in a nursery for months with only their physical needs cared for, sicken with all sorts of symptoms, which disappear when they are given affection and play, the normal human relation for a baby. Human life depends on relation.

The argument goes further. Helen Keller, receiving normal love and care but lacking both sight and hearing was wild like an animal, uncontrolled, given to unrestrained and capricious acts. After weeks of work, her teacher one day wrote the word "water" in the palm of the child's hand while water ran over the other hand. Like the connecting of the wires of a telephone the child realized the relation between the act and the thing, the word and the object. This was the beginning of language for the child and a great life for the woman who could then grow from the child.

Language is relation. Language is the linking of person to person. The relation of person to person is essential to life. "Our life and death are with our neighbor." (Charles Williams)

The essence of this relation is communication and the essence of communcation is relation. "All life is meeting" (Martin Buber), and communication is the meaning of meeting.

Not words only. Of all the instruments of communication words are the most flexible, the most subtle and varied. But they are not the only instruments of communication. Without words the other means of communication would not be so clear. But the words may not even be primary. Communication is of the stuff of life itself and it is in all sorts of things.

Close friends often know the other's thoughts without words. Lovers communicate in other ways than words. The traffic signal, the policeman's gesture, expressions, motions all are communication.

Churches which emphasize the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a sacrament —as a means of God's grace coming to man, of God relating himself to man in meaningful relation—call the worshipers communicants and the taking of the elements—drinking a bit of wine and eating a bit of bread—communicating.

The affection shown to a baby, the word, the wordless communication of friends and lovers, the sign, the gesture, the act of worship all are part of communication.

There is still more: the flag that stands for the country, and the buildings which not only contain its business but embody its conception of itself are communication. The dictator who wishes to establish his authority uses works of art and the fall of a dictator is followed by the destruction of his art. The great cathedral and the village chapel communicate the faith of their builders.

Is communication only at this public level? No. A college student wants an automobile, not as a useful object (he seldom needs it), but as a means of release and freedom and a symbol of prestige. It communicates to others, "I am something more than you are." In a community of cars, the exotic foreign car, which may be less useful, becomes necessary to this kind of communication. Chryslers and Cadillacs are advertised less as superlative pieces of engineering craftsmanship than as emblems of position and wealth.

The boy who spends hours building up his muscles and the girl in the too tight dress are gratifying private urges but also communicating things which they dimly recognize but would not dare to put into words.

If communication depends on language then to communicate one must first learn the language. Before learning the language of art one must learn in what way an art is a language. Going a little further back, he must avoid the temptation to think of art as he thinks of verbal language and the elements of it as

though they were words. This means a reconsideration of verbal language itself and the manner in which it works in communication.

A specific responsibility rests on the Christian at this point. If he be faithful to God he must be faithful to God's creation. This fidelity means that he stands in humility before creation to learn of it the ordered laws which make it what it is.

The study of language, however, points to an ambiguous loyalty. Man is created and is part of creation and appointed to be keeper in it. Thus, much of what he is and does is part of the natural order, growing as natural life grows. The study of language and the whole of man's communicating is, in part, the faithful observation of what is and what has been, discerning its structure and natural development, the internal relations that make all language what it is.

Yet man is not just another part of creation. He is created in the image of God, appointed in creation to have dominion over it, to fill the earth and subdue it. His language is an instrument of his dominion. Yet, if he is faithful to the Creator, he does not attempt to subdue creation to be an instrument of his lust for domination and his natural powers. Thus his language is an instrument for bringing creation to its full purpose, for making things more what they are in their nature, rather than exploiting them for his own selfishness. If all real life is meeting, his faithful language is the means for establishing the true communication which is relation. It is the means for this knowledge and understanding and its loyalty is to truth, the nature of things as they are.

Yet again, man is not just the image of God. He is rebelling against God's will and God's grace. Not content with the dominion over creation assigned to him, man sought (proper understanding of the book of Genesis makes the verb "seeks") to be as God and to have all knowledge and power over creation. His language, then, is corrupted by his sin and becomes an instrument of power rather than a means of relation. Communication becomes distorted or is broken entirely. Relation, remaining unavoidable, is corrupted and instead of being a source of life and meaning, it becomes a source of anguish and despair.

All these conditions manifest themselves in the arts and in the language of art, to be described in categories that could be called the arts of creation, the arts of man in the image of God, the arts of the fall, and the arts of redemption. This could include all arts.

In the arts of creation, a singular kind of natural, grace-full life seems to flow through the work. It is the joy of the Garden before the fall, life immediately under the grace of God. This is the peace and serenity, the harmony that appears when the order and structure of God's creation constitute man's peace. It is a rare thing in the arts.

In the arts of the image, man is self-conscious about creation and his place in it. He probes and tests. He seeks to understand the structure and meaning of things. He is less content with the morning freshness of things as they might have been at the dawn of creation and seeks to find their inner laws. For the sake of the deeper order of things he controls severely the external appearance. He imposes on the world and the work the order of his mind, which is, in turn, determined by his apprehension of the order of things in their essential being.

The arts of the fall manifest the brokenness of the world and the rebellion of man. They celebrate disorder or false order, the twisting of things to purposes not rightfully their own.

At this point it will be necessary to mention an important distinction. It is the distinction between the subject of the art work, the artist and the work itself. The art might itself manifest creation, the image or the fall. It might also

take these for the subject and seek to present these states of life for what they are, or to analyze and understand them and communicate what is thereby understood.

This considerably complicates the process of criticism and interpretation for in any human product elements such as these are never clear but are mixed in various ways. And out of this mixing there appears the final category and the hardest to speak about: the arts of redemption.

Only God is the redeemer and the artist who sets himself the task of an art of redemption (as some have done) only manifest further the arts of the fall, the setting up of false gods as idols. Yet the artist can stand in humility before God's redemptive acts, and search its meaning and manifest this meaning to others, thereby aiding and participating in the redemption of the life of men.

God has appointed his word and his sacraments as the channel for his communication with man. Yet the art work, too, can serve. The artist can show forth the glory of creation and man's place in it, he can search into the anxiety, the despair, the brokenness and all the evil state into which man's sin has taken him and he can show forth the nature and meaning of the redemptive act. Then if it please his holy will God might use the work of the artist to touch the hearts of men with his redeeming grace.

This article is the prologue to Dixon's new volume published for study next fall by the Methodist Student Movement.

Contributors

HENDRIK KRAEMER of the theological faculty of Leiden University (Netherlands) has directed the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, and in 1955 was a visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York City. CARL MICHALSON teaches in the theological seminary of Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, and edited the recently published volume, *Christianity and the Existentialists.* F. W. DILLISTONE is Dean of the Cathedral, Liverpool, England. Scribner's will shortly publish his new volume titled *Christianity and Communication.* GARDNER COWLES heads the vast publishing empire which includes *Look* magazine and *The Des Moines Register.* The article is drawn from an address to the Christian Liberal Arts Festival at Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa. ROBERT J. GOLTER, a graduate of Southern Methodist's Perkins School of Theology, is completing his doctoral work in communications at the University of Southern California. MALCOLM BOYD is owed a special debt for his advice and help in planning this special communications number of *motive.* After a successful career in advertising, he was general manager and partner with Mary Pickford and Buddy Rogers in a TV producing firm. He decided to enter the clergy and is now a priest of the Episcopal Church. JOHN W. DIXON, on leave of absence from Emory University, is the executive secretary of the Faculty Christian Fellowship. The "O.P." following the name of C. J. DUMONT stands for *Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum* (Friars Preachers; Order of St. Dominic). Located at Istina, in Paris, France, a Roman Catholic study center run by the Dominicans, he edits a publication called, *Istina.* KENDRICK GROBEL of the faculty of the Vanderbilt Divinity School is noted as the translator of the works of Bultmann. EDGAR DALE, a specialist in communications, teaches at Ohio State University. JAMES C. CARTY, JR., is a reporter with the *Nashville Tennessean.* He spent last summer in Africa working with the NCCC literacy program. JAMES MILLER is a graduate student at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. Oops! WILLIAM W. REID is *not* retired as we stated in February; and Miss Eddie Lee McCall's name should have been added as compiler of the summer service directory.

BY MALCOLM BOYD

DEMONIC EXPLOITATION... OR CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATION?

WE do not seek, in claiming TV or the press or any medium of mass communication for Christ, simply to "use" them for him. We have corrupted "use" so that it often means "exploit"; often the mass media are "used" so that we may thereby exploit other persons. Surely we as Christians seek an expression of what is essentially our deep *involvement* in, and *relation* to, TV and the press and the other mass media.

Let us realize, for example, when we consider TV: that fantastic little wooden box in the living room which flashes fascinating pictures and emits strange sounds; which transforms the perhaps drab room into a glittering theater for a couple of hours; which is wonderfully linked to millions of other little wooden boxes and to a maze of connected equipment and to a producer's mind and to the labor of many technicians: *even and also in regard to this*, God has created and has a purpose, Jesus Christ died upon the cross and God the Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier.

Again: we do not seek to "exploit" the TV industry or the press or any mass medium for Christ. We seek to help TV to be TV, the press to be the press, in terms of the will of God for each. His will being always mysterious, we shall be enabled to know it only by faith. Only in this sense do we "claim" these media for Christ: because they are his, and he is their Lord (both institutionally and in terms of the individuals working for them) as he is ours.

At the outset, it must be understood that there are not basically new forces in the world, even in our age of publicity and anxiety. Rather, there is an accentuation of the influence and power of basic forces which have always been at work in the world. Man himself remains the same, as having been created in the *imago dei*, as having "fallen" and as a sinner. There is primordial sin in his veins. To exploit is an easier thing for him to do than to love. He has always, since the mythical fall, sinned and exploited. He has reigned supreme in a fake kind of majesty at the core of his egocentric being. He has gloried, whatever the historical period, in usurping the functions of divinity, in "playing God." Today the technological process has crazily afforded man new and absurdly powerful push buttons to play with, new machines which appear to annihilate distances of miles and souls, new techniques which enable man to draw his brother so closely to himself that, unless man changes as quickly as the techniques and machines he uses, he may destroy his brother as a unique "person."

WE live in a technical society. Encased within our culture are institutions which nourish and control media of mass communication. These institutions require our sharp awareness and studied action. Of themselves, the mass media are neutral. Harnessed, however, to serve man and to fulfill our self-centered, exploitation-directed will for them, these media possess potential for great harm. Needless to say, they possess also potential for great good. Television or the film or the press is, in this regard, similar to nuclear energy, church-building projects or our own minds and bodies. By the misuse of the media of mass communication, however, some of us have sharpened and refined the machinery of exploitation.

Much of mass communication within an entertainment category is powerfully molding our thoughts and actions more than any overtly "educational" media. Herein one sees the development gradually of a new kind of tyranny. This is a tyranny which is paradoxical and, indeed, cannot effectively be labeled merely as tyranny; a tyranny which does not deprive us of necessities (unless a time to be quiet, to reflect, to analyze, is a necessity) but instead gluts us with luxuries; a tyranny which presents us incessantly with the clown on stage who so distracts our minds that we fail to think of where else we should be, and of what else we should be doing, on this clear afternoon.

The result is that there exists, by virtue of technological media, virtually a "captive audience" in a mass composed of many individuals who are islands, and psychologically isolated from one another, while physically being forced ever closer together. The average man or woman in large centers of population seems to be trying to make sense out of life in an age which is in many ways crushing him or her as a "person." He rides to work jammed into a bus or subway, or in a car which is jammed into a long line on a freeway or super-highway. His behavior patterns are molded by forces pushing at him all the time. He works and plays with others in his particular peer-group, who keep him safely in line most of the time. He wants, less to get ahead, than to get along . . . or, simply, to belong. In the midst of such a strident otherdirectedness as we find in our mass culture, it is tragically ironical that, as T. S. Eliot has forcefully put it, the desert is in the heart of our brother. David Riesman might have said that the desert is in the heart of one's peer-group.

EXPLOITATION is a demonic distortion of communication. It is not communication in the Holy Spirit, but is antithetical to communication in the Holy Spirit. Exploitation may take place for a

"cause": to elect somebody to a political office, to erect a building (even a church building), to put through some kind of system which will ("it really will, eventually") make people better off and happier and better fed and better clothed. Yet isn't war, as we know it, the accumulation of many, many kinds of "sincere" exploitation? Collective sin as evidenced in a war is made up of many sins, such as pride, envy and hate, and of basic sin, which is always alienation from God. One of the worst forms of sin in exploitation is that form of pride which says: "I will exploit you for your own good." What, exactly, *is* this? Who can be objective enough to know what is this absolute kind of "good"? This can be influencing other persons to buy the most modern car, to eat the most scientifically produced breakfast food, to use the most foolproof new toothpowder, to elect the most foolproof politician, to adopt the most foolproof religion in order to be happy and rid of tensions in this life and to worship the most foolproof god.

Both the communicator and the person responding to the communicator stand under divine judgment. In the context of mass media, there are questions which might be directed to each, calling for a personal answer: Am I taking part in an immoral action? If there is a demonic element here, am I applying labels, naming devils? What is my Christian vocation, as a communicator, or as a listener, a viewer, a reader?

There are questions to be answered by the communicator: Am I exploiting my neighbor by studying his needs and desires, and by stimulating these in terms of new tastes; then, of new needs and desires? What is the dignity of man? Am I exploiting my neighbor for his own good (what does that mean?), or to set myself ahead in terms of money, position and power?

There are questions to be answered by the viewer, the listener and the reader, responding to communication: Am I being exploited? If so, exactly what does that mean? Am I powerless to do anything about it? Do I belong to myself or to God? May I, as a Christian, permit myself to be exploited in this way? If not, what may I do about it?

We must quite frankly explore the nature of the question: are we showing love for our neighbor when we give him "bread and circuses?" Is it possible that we may give our neighbor so much sugar-coated bread and so many wonderful circuses, that we may make him sick in body and mind? Why are we giving our neighbor bread and circuses? Because we love him? (And, if so, who told us to love him?) Or, is it because we want to get a purchase, a vote, a reaction, out of him? Will that be good for him?

GOD speaks to each man in the world. God calls each man in the sense of vocation. This call can be a very uncomfortable thing, a disquieting and even a nerve-wracking thing. When answered honestly by man, this call destroys man's pride. (P. T. Forsyth asked the question: how much self-respect do you think Paul had left in him when he went into Damascus?) Do we love our neighbor so much that we will lay on the good, sweet, sensuous things until he may even be lulled away from, and numbed to, this disquieting call of God, which requires a decision and will shatter his peaceful presuppositions? Is it possible that our neighbor, avoiding God, may forget completely his having been created in the very image of God, if we penetrate deeply enough with enchantment, and add volume and increase the size and the motion of the moving distraction?

Mass media are bringing us closer together, yet we are (as would be expected) experiencing difficulty in becoming close in closeness, together in togetherness. In human encounter two egotisms come together. Garcin cries out, in Sartre's *Huis Clos:* "Hell is . . . other people!" Gabriel Marcel affords a Christian answer in Rose's statement, in *Le Coeur des autres:* "There is only one suffering: to be alone." Mass media are being employed to treat members of the mass audience as "objects" and not as "persons" who are known in "relationship" or "meeting." Empathy is achieving a bastardized kind of "personal" communication for general purposes of exploitation. In other words, "personal" communication is not necessarily Christian communication simply by the fact that it is personal. "Personal" communication does not necessarily issue in what we call "meeting" between two "persons." We must distinguish between a demonic distortion of "personal" communication and Christian "personal" communication. The latter is grounded in the faith that the two "persons" communicating are doing so in the mutual experience and power of God the Holy Spirit, and as sons of God, equal in his sight, and as having been redeemed by the saving action of Jesus Christ. For a newspaperman, a film executive, an advertising copy writer, a clergyman making use as a personality of a mass medium of communication, what is the purpose of "closeness" and are the recipients of communication in the category of "thou" or "it"?

IN England and Europe I studied at first hand last year several experiments in Christian communication, which are

rooted in the power of God the Holy Spirit. These experiments stand in sharp contrast to the demonic perversion of communication. The "house-church" in Halton, Leeds, in northern and industrial England, strives to relate "persons" to God and to each other. The industrial mission in Sheffield, England, works to communicate the Christian faith clearly to men laboring on the shop floors of steel mills. Zoe and its affiliated movements, in Greece, seek to relate Sunday to Monday, worship to work and play. The same can be said of the Iona Community in Scotland. Pastor Fischer of France has this to say about one aspect of the radical ongoing evangelical effort in his country:

> *The press has projected a false light on the priest-workers and the pastor-workers. The work is not great adventure and heroism. It is simply an obedience to the Lord, sacrifice which is not of the day but every day. The disciple accepts to be crucified with his Lord, knowing that the Lord will show the power of His resurrection. The only power of communication is the Holy Spirit. When there is communication in Christ and following of Christ, then the Holy Spirit is present, the message is truly communicated.*

Our ordinary encounters with other human beings lack the kind of drama one finds, for example, in some of the communications experiments cited above. Yet we ride on subways and buses, we walk along streets, we sit at drugstore and luncheon counters, we sit in crowded theaters in ink-black solitariness . . . *alongside persons.* Who are they? Can we possibly hope to determine, behind an empty smile, the degree in another human being of loneliness, spiritual fatigue, fear, rejection or despair? At our physical "point of contact," ano-

(*Continued on page 32*)

Communication, according to the theology of the Roman Catholic Church, has a dimension in salvation itself. This French Catholic writer illuminates the doctrine of the Holy Ghost (Spirit) as communicator rather than raising problems as in the case of Protestant theologian Hendrik Kraemer (see article on "The Problem of Communication").

THE HOLY GHOST *as communicator*

THE whole mystery of the relations between God and man can be summed up in these words: The transcendent God, the Creator, out of love incarnated himself in order to reconcile sinful man to himself. The center of this mystery is the person of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. It was in him that this mystery was revealed to us and it is through him that we have access to it: access not only by the knowledge of it which has been given us but through the actual participation in it which we can and should have. The consequence of redemption is that what Christ is by nature we become by grace. Adopted by God as his sons, we enter into mysterious participation in the gift of an intrinsically divine life bestowed upon that human nature which was assumed by the only begotten Son at his incarnation: "partakers of the divine Nature" (II Pet. 1:4).

Certainly, we possess this divine life neither with the same right as he nor in the same manner; nevertheless it is in very fact communicated to us—in the sense that it empowers us to have friendly intercourse with God, knowing him in the intimacy of his being, moving toward final possession of him in the Kingdom with an invincible hope, already attaining him personally by the fervor of our love.

By revealing to men his loving purpose toward them, both revealing and carrying it out in and through Jesus Christ, and also indicating what relations he wished to have with them, God also revealed to us in this same Jesus Christ something of the mystery of his own inner life; namely, that he is One and Three—one by the uniqueness of his nature, three in his persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Concerning the indescribable interchanges of these three persons in the unity of their common deity, we can do nothing but stammer. But we are scarcely less embarrassed when the divine revelation confronts us with this other aspect of the double mystery that we have just mentioned: when we partake of the life divine by grace it is with each of the three Persons that we enter into relation. In the work of salvation each one of them appears to us as playing its own role.

Undoubtedly we must never lose sight of the fact that in everything that he effects outside himself God always acts in the uniqueness and unity of his being. There can be no thought of separating the action of the Persons, which furthermore, are distinguished from each other only by the eternal relations which they have among themselves. But it conforms to the usage of Scripture, imitated by the official prayers of the Church, to attribute to each of the three Persons a particular efficacy of its own in the economy of salvation. From the Father, the absolute Origin, comes all that is given us by God: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17).

THE Word alone, nevertheless, incarnated himself, assuming a human nature which ever since has in and by him its unique subsistence, thus constituting the God-Man Jesus Christ, who, coming into this world, suffering the agony of the Cross, rising again and ascending to heaven, accomplished our redemption. According to Christ's promise the Father sent his Spirit in Christ's Name, not only spectacularly on the day of Pentecost but also down through the church's life and into the souls of each of us. Saved by the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ, it is to this sacrifice that we owe both our justification in baptismal faith and the sanctification by which we are to grow into an ever more perfect likeness to our Savior. But it is through his Holy Ghost that Jesus Christ henceforth effects this work of justification and sanctification. The Holy Ghost is the Communicator *par excellence* of the great gift of God.

THEOLOGICAL LIFE

It is in faith that we receive the gift of divine grace which transforms us by justifying us. This transformation takes place in the depth of our being, creating there a permanent disposition of which we have no consciousness except by the effects it produces in us. Here again, moreover, it is thanks to the momentary aid of the Holy Ghost that we are able to bring forth these very effects, the diverse manifestations of our spiritual activity. It is the Spirit of God who moves our spirit to obey and understand *faith*. It is he also who animates our *hope*. It is he again who feeds the fervor of our *love*. Our Christian life, when it is true to its own nature, is in its essence made up of these acts in which God makes himself the object, the beginning and the end, of our spiritual activity.

MORAL LIFE

But it is self-evident that this intimate intercourse with God cannot fail, if we are faithful to it, to unfold in our relations with men, our brothers, amid all the realities of this world. And again it is the help of the Holy Ghost which permits us —in spite of many a fall perhaps—to hold out, to re-establish ourselves and to grow in the uprightness of a moral life in conformity with the precepts of the Gospel. It is by virtue of the Holy Ghost's presence and action within us that we are able to live as true and worthy "sons of God" in the likeness of the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. This presence means for us an inner light which guides us in the proper discernment of the morally good deeds which we have to resolve to do. It is a power which, once the concrete good that is to be done has been discerned, enables us to carry it out in spite of the resistances of our evil nature. It is the sense of right and wrong in our conduct toward other men. It is the sense of moderation in the use of all this world's goods which flatters and tempts our sensuality.

MYSTICAL LIFE

But it may also happen that in the complexity of situations our conscience does not arrive at the point of putting into effect the moral discernment which this inner sense imposes, or that it does not feel able to move forward in the understanding of faith; in a word: that it does not find itself able to face the multiple and complex duties which the ideal of the Gospel imposes upon it. Then the Holy Ghost again comes to the aid of our distress or weakness by the operation of what are more properly called "the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost": the gift of understanding, of wisdom, of knowledge, of counsel, of power, of filial respect, and of reverent fear of God. When we exercise the moral virtues mentioned above, although assisted by God, we still feel ourselves to be the authors of our own acts; yet under the influence of the "gifts of the Holy Ghost" we are conscious that Another within us is inspiring and leading us. This is why Roman Catholic theology quite generally sees in the operation of these gifts the distinguishing characteristic of a deeper inward and spiritual life and one in which God more obviously takes the initiative. This is what is called the *mystical* life, of which the saints were the great beneficiaries and of which they have left us such magnificent examples. Think of such a one as Saint Theresa of Avila or Saint John of the Cross or—nearer our own day—Saint Theresa of Lisieux. Of this mystical life, once more, it is the Holy Ghost who is the source and author.

VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS

From the preceding one readily understands the place which the Church's official prayers accord to this divine Spirit in her ceremonies of worship and why she suggests to her faithful that they invoke him in a very special manner in order to benefit from the gifts which he bestows upon us. The most characteristic prayer on this subject is the one inserted into the liturgy of the mass for the *Festival of Pentecost;* an English version gives it as follows:*

* *So rendered in "Breviary Offices from Lauds to Compline inclusive, translated and arranged for use from the Sarum Book," 2nd ed., London, 1880.*

by C. J. DUMONT, O.P.

TRANSLATED BY KENDRICK GROBEL

Come, Thou holy Paraclete,
And from Thy celestial seat
Send Thy light and brilliancy:

Father of the poor, draw near,
Giver of all gifts, be here;
Come, the soul's true radiancy:

Come, of Comforters the best,
Of the soul the sweetest guest,
Come in toil refreshingly:

Thou in labour rest most sweet,
Thou art shadow from the heat,
Comfort in adversity.

O Thou Light, most pure and blest,
Shine within the inmost breast
Of Thy faithful company.

Where Thou art not, man hath nought;
Every holy deed and thought
Comes from Thy divinity.

What is soiled, make Thou pure;
What is wounded, work its cure;
What is parched, fructify;

What is rigid, gently bend;
What is frozen, warmly tend;
Strengthen what goes erringly.

Fill Thy faithful who confide
In Thy power to guard and guide,
With Thy sevenfold mystery.

Here Thy grace and virtue send;
Grant salvation in the end,
And in heaven felicity. Amen.

THE CHURCH

Nevertheless it would be only a most incomplete notion of the Communicator-role of the Holy Ghost if one were to limit it to his intervention in our individual lives. The mystery of God's great gift to humanity is accomplished by his building up and animating the Body of Christ which is the Church. Because the Church is Christ's presence mysteriously continued among us, for she is "Jesus Christ dispersed and imparted to men" (Bossuet), the Holy Ghost is her soul. It is through the Spirit that the Church—in spite of the shortcomings of her members—can present herself as faithful depositary of the *faith* and of the *sacraments.*

THE FAITH

To the consecrated hierarchy, which is her bony framework, as it were—jointly and severally inheriting the responsibilities and prerogatives of the college of apostles under the continued primacy of Peter—was entrusted the deposit of divine revelation, and to it was given the command to pass it on from generation to generation in its full and authentic content. It is the Holy Ghost to whom the Church attributes the assistance that was assured her and which guarantees her from erring in interpreting the teaching received from the apostles, the teaching which was not solely consigned to the writings they left us but also perpetuates itself in her as a living tradition. Nor does she hesitate, following the example of the apostles themselves—"it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15:28)—to place upon the Holy Ghost himself the responsibility for the decisions which in the course of the centuries she takes in regard to doctrine and administration in the solemn sessions of court which her ecumenical Councils are, or in the other interventions of her highest Magistracy.

It is apparent, therefore, that in our effort personally to appropriate divine revelation, on the base furnished us by the Word of God we must let ourselves be guided by a double action of the Holy Ghost: the rule of faith (=the Creed), authentic possession of which he assures to the Church which is charged with holding it before us, and an inner light which causes it to become in us a concrete knowledge which guides and inspires our lives.

THE SACRAMENTS

In the sacraments, too, the role of the Holy Ghost as Communicator of God's gifts, is manifested. If, through the perceptible elements which constitute them, the sacraments render tangible so to speak the sacred humanity of Christ to which they owe their efficacy, it is by the invisible presence of the Holy Ghost that, under the veil of symbols, the gift of grace which they confer upon us takes place. So it is in the case of *Baptism,* as the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus made manifest when he had been baptized in the Jordan. Likewise, more clearly still, in the rite of *Confirmation* which completes the Christian initiation fulfilled at baptism and which more particularly bears witness to the gift of the Holy Ghost which is conferred upon us. So too with the sacrament of Penance: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them" (Jn. 20:22 f.). The sacrament of the *Holy Supper,* it is true, presents a very special case, since it, under the perceptible characteristics of the bread and wine, makes possible the real presence of the glorified humanity of the Savior. But the liturgy of the Eastern Church in the prayer called *Epiklesis* (Invocation, or Summons) has pointed up the role of the Holy Ghost in bringing about this presence and also in producing the effects of that presence in the souls of those who worthily and with faith partake of the Savior's Body and Blood: "We call on Thee (O Lord) . . . (to) send down Thy Holy Ghost upon us and upon these gifts here present and (to) make this bread the precious Body of Thy Christ, and that which is in this chalice the precious Blood of Thy Christ, changing them by thy Holy Ghost, that they may be to those who participate unto the cleansing of their souls, unto forgiveness of sins, communion of thy Holy Ghost, fulfillment of the Kingdom of Heaven, confidence towards Thee, and not unto judgment nor condemnation" (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom).

Beyond question, however, one must place foremost the primordial role of the Holy Ghost in the sacrament of *Ordination,* since it is by virtue of this sacrament that the Church, Christ's Body, achieves her hierarchic structure. She is empowered in the person of her bishops (and of the presbyters and deacons who assist them in their functions) to exercise vicariously on earth the three messianic functions of Christ himself: that of King (governmental function), that of Prophet or Teacher (didactic function), and that of Priest (sanctificatory function)—vicariously, we emphasize, because when they exercise these holy functions in Christ's name, it is Christ himself who is acting through them—and her. For it is the gift of the Spirit transmitted by the laying on of hands which confers upon the bishops these powers inherited from the apostles.

CONCLUSION

Such, in a much too concise summary, is the Communicator-role filled by the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation according to Roman Catholic theology. In order to be complete it would be necessary to emphasize that each one of these divine, Spirit-mediated communications (which each time unite us more intimately to God and make our lives partake of his) also disposes us more and more to share them with other men, our brothers, on the level of this shared divine life and in all our moral life. Let it suffice to recall that the love of God which "is shed in our hearts by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 5:5), is this same love which leads us to love and serve our neighbor. Or remember that the sacrament of Holy Communion which grants us participation in the Body and Blood of the Savior, by that very fact ever more intimately unites us to the other members of that Body.

To conclude these reflections we perhaps could do nothing more appropriate than to address to those who may be willing to read these lines the greeting of the Apostle Paul to the believers at Corinth (II Cor. 13:14): "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

how to evaluate mass media

by Edgar Dale

HOW do you evaluate the mass media? Basic standards for evaluating films, books, and television are like those used in evaluating other aspects of life. Here, as with other experiences, we may evaluate the means or we may evaluate the ends. When we evaluate the means we are talking about style, aesthetic effects, professional skill in conveying ideas. When we talk about ends we are talking about the values which we think make a difference.

What values can we use to judge the people portrayed in movies or television? They are the same values that we use when we judge literature and drama. The styles are different; the ends are pretty much the same.

William James once said that the aim of philosophy is to help you know a good man when you see one. When we evaluate any mass medium we are talking about its treatment of man. How does Edward R. Murrow conceive of man in his broadcasts, as contrasted with some of the movies or live dramas seen on television? The writer Mickey Spillane sees man as basically brutal, so superior to other men that he can take the law in his own hands and dispense "justice" by killing or maiming.

We ask then: "What view of man is the author trying to portray? Is he trying to say that men are in the grip of forces outside their control, demonic or godlike? Or are men in charge of their own lives, able to exercise option and disciplined choice? What is the author saying about the desirable role of a person in conforming, not conforming, or transforming?"

Some able critics, for example, have unfavorably judged the trial scene in *The Caine Mutiny,* suggesting that Herman Wouk held a lower view of man than he should. Wouk said, in effect, when you are carrying on a war, you should conform in high degree. Some critics do not agree with Wouk's picture of the desirable role a man should play in a crisis, and one's agreement or disagreement is tied up with his image of man.

AN article by Paul N. Siegel in *College English* for March, 1956, compares the role of King Lear with that of Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman.* The article states:

The cause of the catastrophe of the king of ancient Briton and that of the salesman of today is the same: each does not know himself and the world in which he is living. *Lear has, as Reagan says, "ever but slenderly known himself." . . . Willy thinks that he and his sons will reach the top because they are well liked. What shatters his life and Biff's is not merely an accidental discovery of a casual deception. It is the revelation of the falsehood that is Willy's existence. Lonely and insecure in his world of impersonal relationships governed by the market, Willy must deceive himself if he is to live by his gospel of popularity.*

GEORGE AXELROD in a recent *New York Times* article said that the dramatist gets the man up a tree in the first act, throws stones at him in the second act, and gets him down in the third act. But most important of all, it seems to me, is to give good reasons as to why he climbed the tree in the first place. Too often as we judge or evaluate a film or television drama, we see that it contains unbelievable men and women in cliché situations which sensibly could be resolved in ten minutes.

Another way to evaluate the mass media is to note the standard of success which they set up. Usually in popular books and films a man wins the girl, or the vice-presidency, or the leading role in a play. On the legitimate stage the hero both wins and loses. This does not mean that a happy ending is a bad thing or a good thing. The issue is: Is it reasonable? We have occasional films, books, and television programs which question our typical concept of success, for example, "Patterns," "Marty," "Executive Suite." The life of the station-wagon set in Stamford, Winnetka, or Beverly Hills apparently is not all it is cracked up to be.

It seems reasonable to set up the basic standard of reality in order to judge the "serious" material presented through the mass media. We ask then, "To what extent is this TV presentation or film a reasonably accurate and insightful picture of the world?"

Anyone who evaluates the mass media must also develop a point of view concerning the role or meaning of violence. In my study of violence in Hollywood films I noted in 1935 that in 115 films, 84 per cent depicted one or more criminal acts, there being an over-all total of 449 crimes and acts of violence, 3.9 per film. Fifteen years later Gordon Mirams, Chief Government Censor and Registrar of Films in New Zealand, made a similar study of 100 features, 70 United States films and 30 non-American. He found exactly double the amount of violence, 7.8 acts of violence per film as contrasted with my 3.9. According to Mirams, the murder rate as shown in my study was roughly two per film, but only about one film in three then had anything to do with murder, whereas he found murder in one film out of two. Miram's findings are reported in "Drop That Gun!" in the *Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television.*

HOW judge violence in the mass media? First, if it is an accurate portrayal of life, a case can be made for it. But even if it were accurate, is all this violence appropriate screen fare for the immature? Some producers of the mass media have the curious belief that if no proof of harm can be offered, the content under discussion is suitable. Harm, however, has varied disguises. A culture can be drowned in a sea of triviality. A society can prolong into adulthood the film and TV classification of men as either discernibly "good" or "bad."

Second, whether there is actual catharsis or purging of emotions, actual allaying of hostility by vicarious viewing, is debated by experts. Aristotle's theory of catharsis was the purging of the emotions with pity. One purified his own motives and views through identification with the tragedy he saw portrayed. But this purging of the emotions, this suffusion of pity, was a product of understanding. Is it likely that the violence in current films, TV programs, or books will help the viewer or reader understand why people are reacting as they do? Will it help us understand why modern society "needs" this huge dose of violence in the mass media?

Third, to defend excessive violence in TV or movies on the ground that Shakespeare had plenty of violence in his plays and that there is violence in *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn* is building on a shaky foundation. Some critics, notably A. C. Bradley, in his *Shakespearean Tragedy,* believe that there is too much unmotivated violence in some of Shakespeare's plays.

Note further that the violence in *Huck Finn* (for example, the feud murder of Huck's pal) provides illuminating insight. The effect, it seems to me, on Huck and the reader is to communicate the futility, the tragedy of taking the law into one's own hands. It is to purge with pity, with understanding.

THE typical violent film or TV program or portrayal of violence by a hack writer should not be compared with the use of violence by a great dramatist. I am not now suggestiong that Shakespeare can get by with something that Mickey Spillane cannot. I simply ask: "Does the violence shown illuminate the wellsprings of conduct, help us better

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MOUNTAINSIDE TALKS TO A HOSTILE PEOPLE

by James C. Carty, Jr.

Through the experience of an African literacy project, newspaperman James Carty had to rethink his craft—that of communicating to others by the use of words. He discovered that the nonverbal, emotional content of words may be their most important aspect.

A Meru tribesman grabbed Britisher Horace Mason by the throat as they stood on a pathway up a mountain range in northern Tanganyika, in East Africa.

The African asked Mason, the senior social development officer for the government: "Have you come to throttle us?"

Mason shook his head. "I've come to help," he said.

But before he could continue his explanation, the tribesman drifted away and disappeared in the thick banana groves from which he had come unexpectedly moments before.

Most other tribespeople ignored Mason. Some peered stonily at him from their places in half-hidden banana groves. But all moved hurriedly away whenever he moved toward them to start a conversation.

They were hostile because Mason represented officialdom, which had taken their land away—not particularly good land on this Meru mountain range, but "their land."

The government, acting to smooth out boundaries and prevent friction and possible war among nomadic people of a few of the nation's 120 tribes who were moving into each other's area, had tried to relocate the Meru.

But on the day they were scheduled to be moved, the Meru disappeared back up near the tree belt of their mountain. The government feared violence might erupt. Conceivably, it could spread to the Masai and the Bara-Baig, two of the fierce warlike tribes in that British-administered, UN trust territory.

Then the social development commissioner sent in his ace trouble shooter, Mason, who was to live at a government rest house halfway up the 14,000-foot mountain.

The Meru were sufficiently hostile that when Mason and his wife, Enid, first drove along the rugged dirt pathway in their land rover jeep, a tribesman whacked her on her arm.

The Meru were also mad enough that they gave the silent treatment to the Mason family for six months. Not even the African pastors and teachers dared speak to the white intruders.

After other attempts failed to establish rapport, Mason began showing open-air motion pictures, the first the Meru ever had seen.

AT first the tribal men and women promised each other they would not attend. But they slipped away from their homes under cover of darkness, and came to join the excitement.

The Chinese communists, soon after winning their nation from the nationalists, found that extensive use of movies and other audio-visuals won millions to their cause.

So also did Mason find that the movies in Tanganyika, which is just four degrees below the dark continent which stretches 6,000 miles from Cairo to Capetown, opened up pathways into the people's hearts.

Before showing each picture, Mason gave a synopsis of it. He speaks Swahili, the trade language of East Africa, so well that Africans explained to me they can close their eyes and can't tell whether he is white or black. They said this is not true of some missionaries in the field, who after one or two decades, still speak a vernacular badly.

After the Meru had heard Mason preview a few movies, they noted the sympathetic overtones to his voice. They felt more friendly toward him.

They began to come around to talk with him during the daytime. The conversation at first was about the movies (educational in nature but entertaining to them), and then about other matters.

They poured out their anger and resentment of the government's action over land and other policy matters. By listening, Mason showed respect for their opinions.

The release from talking proved a cathartic. Once they got rid of their tensions, they were ready to be helped.

Then Mason helped get much of their land back for them, organized women's clubs and started adult education programs for them, got schools doubled, and got appropriations for developing roads up the rugged terrain. Health measures were advanced.

Now the Meru love Mason and call him "Swana Maendeleo"—Mr. Progress.

He had established rapport by the attitudes of respect and compassion reflected in his listening.

The most significant contacts between people of different races, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and religions often are established at the nonverbal levels.

A smile, a frown, the way people shake hands, acts of kindness or disgust, attitudes of fear and anxiety, examples of working, playing and eating together—these are the nonverbal forms which cement friendship between differing peoples.

In Egypt, a white Christian was introduced to a Moslem. The white person had an open sore on his right hand, and fearing that he might contact germs and a disease from the unknown man, extended his left hand. The American was unaware of customs—that in much of Asia and Africa, the left hand is con-

sidered unclean and defiled. His act proved an insult.

Another American tourist never learned to pronounce the name of an African education worker in Tanganyika, Teophilo Makala. It should be pronounced Te-off-i-lo, but was mispronounced Telo-folo. The African always responded with a polite smile, but would complain to missionaries: "doesn't he care enough about us to learn to say our names correctly?"

MANY missionaries who take time to palaver a long time, such as the Rev. Ruben Pedersen of Kinampanda, win the deep friendship and admiration of Africans.

One former African schoolteacher had been dropped from his job, because of being a drunkard. Pedersen hired the man as a laborer. After they worked together many days putting a new roof on a mission schoolhouse, the African won back his respect. He stopped drinking.

He was reinstalled as a teacher at the mission. The latest reports are that he has not taken up drinking again.

Pedersen is a "missionary's missionary" and an "African's missionary."

One aged African farmer, Musa, came to him, and ask Pedersen to make him a sturdy traveling suitcase. Pedersen took time to do it and Musa (Moses) was grateful.

When foreigners don't take time to chat at length with the nationals on the dark continent, the former may get the wrong impressions about the individuals and general conditions. The foreigners may hear only what they want to learn.

An African farmer came up to a missionary and me. The farmer, asked by us how he was, replied, "Fine."

After we had talked about a half hour, the African got around to say what he intended: that his wife was seriously ill, and his cattle were dying.

Had we hastily brushed him off, we never would have learned what was in his mind. We got his wife to the missions hospital, where she was cared for and recovered. We got a veterinary to help with the cattle.

In Liberia, an African chief brought a rifle around to the home of Dr. Wesley Sadler, noted linguist-missionary, and Mrs. Sadler, his artist wife who is the daughter of a construction engineer.

The chief said, "My rifle's broke, but I want to go hunting."

Dr. Sadler said, "Mine is, too. And I don't know how to fix either one."

The chief said, "I know you don't. But Mrs. Sadler could fix them."

She did and the men went hunting. The chief appreciated the help he got from Mrs. Sadler.

When the Sadlers first went to Wozi, their little village of 100 huts among the Loma people in the high forests of Liberia, the tribal people would tie string around the adobe houses. This act was done to ward off evil spirits.

The Sadlers wouldn't do it, so the Loma tied string around the Sadlers' home to protect their friends. But the tribal people soon found that the Sadlers cut the rope. The Loma also found that nothing bad happened to the Sadlers and started disbelieving the superstition and discontinued their practice. The example had paid off better than any sermon.

WE were shopping at a duka or small shop. The Arab owner brought out his half-caste wife, four children, and four other relatives. He said a relative of theirs had died, and wondered if we could take them to the neighboring village where the dead was.

We took them (Mason and I) in his small jeep, which was overloaded, to our mission station, halfway to the Arab's destination. Mason was unable to complete the trip, because he had an appointment with a government official at a village in another direction.

But an Australian missionary had a new, large pick-up truck and was heading on to the village where the Arab-Moslems wanted to go.

She had plenty of room in the back of the truck (much larger than Mason's jeep), but said she could only take two. The Arabs couldn't understand. They had to return to the duka, without getting to go console the bereaved family of the dead relative.

Many missionaries are aware of customs and try to keep from offending Africans, and in ways that are not compromises with their Christian convictions.

I started to cut across a field, which was half rubble and half in fine condition. It was being made into a soccer field by an African headmaster for his students.

The missionary, accompanying me, said, "That would offend him. Let's walk around the field and show we respect his efforts. If he looks out the school window and sees us walking around and taking more time, he will know we appreciate his efforts."

The inconsistency of nonverbal actions sometimes confuses Africans. Whites may underpay and exploit their African help, and then, as a gesture to make up for this, let the house boys and girls continually steal great amounts of sugar from the kitchen. Sermons on honesty coupled with the winking of the eyes of whites at dishonest acts of stealing sugar seem strange mixtures.

I started to put a drum in an African chief's hands (he was one of the few members of his race to be in the national legislative council, heavily weighted with whites in Tanganyika).

A missionary cautioned me, "Ask him politely if he minds his picture being taken with the drum. If we seem patronizing, we may hurt his feelings and undo years of hard work."

He was asked if he minded. He said he was glad to pose for the picture, requesting only that I return him a print.

The laughter of the Americans communicates itself more perhaps than anything else and is a great advantage in gaining respect from Africans.

One high African government official, who has studied in both America and England, said that he and many other Africans of different tribes noted quite a difference in the attitudes of Americans and the British to African house help and co-workers.

This government person said that Americans laughed and joked and kidded and fellowshiped with Africans, but that the British were more formal and rarely permitted that type of personal relations and ease of conversation, especially in informal contacts in homes at work.

When I was in Deir Abu Hinnis, a primitive village 200 miles south of Cairo and near the banks of the Nile River, I observed an ongoing village literacy project.

About 1,600 adults in the village of 5,210 were taking part in this literature program, which was headed by an American missionary and an Egyptian woman. The program had opened up new avenues; the village people cooperatively had bought a thoroughbred American bull to breed their cattle and raise milk output, so that the health of these undernourished people could be raised.

They named their bull Shacklock (after Dr. Floyd Shacklock, head of Lit-Lit) to show their appreciation for insights gained from literacy and literature.

They were so happy at the help they had received that when I visited the same village, one Egyptian took my suitcase and said, "We like and appreci-

ate you Americans. I would carry not only your bag but you on my head.

I visited a leprosarium at Mkalama in Tanganyika. Those suffering from Hansen's disease had been learning to read and had advanced through simple, graded materials to the New Testament.

Ordinarily, people think of leprosy as a shame there. One villager, suspected of having it and asked by a missionary to drop by the hospital for an examination the next day, hanged himself on the road near our mission station.

But at the leprosarium, the patients had a dignity and bearing about them. Literacy had given them, they felt, a distinction above other Africans: they could read and gain new knowledge about the world. They had become proud and happy again.

By reading, they had entered another world and found themselves in fellowship with many peoples throughout the world.

Literacy opens doors to fellowship.

But always the most significant rapport is established through nonverbal means of showing fellowship.

Africans can teach us modern American sophisticates a lesson that we knew long ago but have forgotten: words have emotional as well as intellectual content. We should not take everything at face value, but react intuitively to what a person feels when he talks to us. We would speak the concrete words—our American and African and Asia friends want to hear—and not abstract concepts.

There would be less breakdown of communications if individuals and groups would concentrate more on what a person means than what he says. There would be more face-to-face primary relationships and more solutions of individual and group problems.

Communicating the Gospel

(*Continued from page 5*)

with destiny beyond the deadline for resolution.

Finally, the Gospel to which Christians witness is official news. It is as venerable as the apostolic witness. The meaning of this for Christian communication is simply that Christians are called upon to witness not to their particular experience of the Gospel, and least of all to their private opinions about what constitutes the truth. They are called upon to mingle their voices with the prophets and apostles.

THAT is not to say that some translation is not involved. Simply to repeat the phrases of the apostles could be the best way to falsify their witness. Language which is true in one context can be false in another. Is it not possible to say of the propositions of Christian communication what Aristotle says of prayers? They are neither true nor false. They have rather the intention of moving one from one dimension of reality to another; in the case of the Christian witness, from falsehood to truth, from an inauthentic life to the covenant with God in Christ.

It is true that Jesus did not have a very high estimate of tradition. He called it "the work of men," and discouraged it (Mark 7:8). But the tradition to which Jesus was referring was a tradition from which all the vitality of prophetism had been squeezed. But when Jesus became himself the Word, and when the followers of Jesus sensed his resurrection from the dead, they knew that their words about him were animated by the vitality of his own triumphant spirit. Hence, the apostle Paul could say of tradition, it is that which is "received from the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Thess. 2:13). The early apostles experienced the vitality of tradition at Pentecost. It was when they recollected the holy event of the life of Jesus that the spirit descended. And when they witnessed to hostile hearers beyond the circle of the apostolic fellowship, their prayer of invocation became a highly compressed doctrine of Christian communication: "And now, Lord, . . . grant to thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, *while thou stretchest out thy hand*" (Acts 4:29-30).

The responsibility of Christian witness, therefore, is not designed for one who always wants to get into the act. For the principal actor in Christian communication is not the witness who enunciates the word of truth, but the Holy Spirit who animates the word with life and meaning. If this were not the case, the little story which Kierkegaard tells would have the last word. There was once a circus which caught fire. The director of the circus sent his clown to tell the crowd about the fire. The people, hearing the report from the lips of a clown, believed he was just telling one of his jokes. So they simply sat there, pretty burned up about their inability to tell a prophet from a clown.

PART of the mystery of the Gospel is that God always seems to choose some clown to bear witness to it. God, however, unlike the director of the circus, does not leave us clowns to go it alone. He has pledged to make himself heard through the standardized poverty of our vocabularies. When Jeremiah resisted God's call to be a witness, God caused an almond tree to spring up before him. The witness like the tree is rooted in vital forces that exceed his own inherent capacity. When Ezekiel was on the verge of saying "No" to God's invitation to a life of witness, God caused him to see wheels within wheels. A technological impossibility! But with God nothing is impossible. It seems paradoxical that God makes his Word known through human words. But that paradox is a paradigm of the power of the Spirit.

How to Evaluate Mass Media

(*Continued from page 26*)

understand why people act the way they do?" Should bullets, guns, stabbing, kicking, abduction be the daily imagery of childhood? Should we nurture a delight in death?

Let's suppose that the happy day has arrived when all the children, all the young people, all the adults have an opportunity for easy choice of excellence in films, TV, reading material. Is this enough? No, it isn't. We still need able critics. We need wise analysts who can judge excellence. We need perceptive and sensitive book, film, and television critics. Unfortunately, we have few such critics in this country.

The problems that lie ahead in the creation of a good society are increasingly those of consumption. How can we help people become better consumers of the media of communication? Certainly every man must become a critic of the mass media, be his own censor, learn to choose for himself. This does not mean that he will not need the thoughtful judgments of other persons whom he trusts. This is what good critics are for. But the disciplined individual is one who thinks clearly about the consequences of his own choices.

We must, therefore, become critical listeners, critical viewers, critical readers. The word *critical* is not used in the sense of picky, antagonistic, negative, but rather in the sense of thoughtful, sustained judgment. In short, we need to bring our intelligence to bear upon the kinds of choices which we are making, to be critical-minded, not sponge-minded. The increased teaching of discrimination of the radio, movies, TV, and press in high schools, helping youngsters choose their fare more wisely, is a hopeful sign.

But isn't this cirtical approach to what seems like a leisure activity likely to destroy its relaxing spirit, its spirit (one might say) of escape? I don't think so, unless it is too mechanically done. We have found that the *primary* enjoyment of a film or TV program is enhanced by thoughtful viewing, thus adding secondary enjoyment.

THE mass media must help us to meet the central issue of the day, the development of the free individual in a free society. Man is not a machine nor is he an interchangeable part of a machine. Man is a feeling, thinking person who must grow and be fulfilled *normally*, or he will get his satisfaction abnormally through hate and violence.

The mass media are communication devices, ways of relating men to each other, putting them in touch with each other. We want both common and uncommon men, conformers and nonconformers, similarities and differences, fused in a delicate balance. The effect we are trying to produce is a man who is free to grow toward perfection.

—from *The News Letter*

Steersman, God and You

(*Continued from page 11*)

statistical operations on that which can be quantified. It is here that information theory enters the picture to offer its contributions to the communication of religion. We do not yet know what is quantifiable and what is not. Meaning, attitudes, values—these will, more than likely, be the next areas to receive the attention of the communication theorists. It is not difficult to project the relevance of their findings to religion.

We have not yet spoken of the advantages which may accrue to the church from research in communication. The church is not so much the many church organizations, many denominations, as it is individuals striving to realize their organismic function as members of the Body of Christ. Noise, randomness, entropy are everywhere apparent. Yet, wherever two or more are gathered together and through Christ, optimum communication is achieved, there is the church. Mammoth organizations with multitudes of projects and myriads of decisions do not find communication so easy. Constant and delicate adjustments must be made on the basis of information, both from within and without the organization.

The mere transmission of information gives rise to a large group of problems. The sender can transmit only the information which the recipient can receive and the channel can carry. What information does each person need to have in order to function effectively in his capacity? How much time, what form of transmission, and what preparation on the part of the recipient are needed for the best-possible absorption of the information? Valuable techniques for control by forecast are being developed by industry, and, in time, these may well be adapted by the church.

THE communication of policies so that they may best be carried out is another area where scientific research may have something to offer. Inasmuch as policies apply to people in situations, it is necessary that people be able to recognize the situations before they can relate them to the policies. If a healthy communication system is not maintained with adequate feedback and circular causal process, the church organization will inevitably degenerate to formulae and formalism.

Perhaps most complex and challenging of all are the processes of decision leading to action. Whether it be prospective members deciding to join the church or old members deciding to build a new church, or policy makers deciding on a quadrennial emphasis, information has to be collected and evaluated, opinions and attitudes have to be reconciled, leadership has to be asserted, and identification achieved. Communication science has made available many problem-solving and decision-making techniques, tested and proved by industry and government; all of these are equally available to the church. The fields are yet virgin, however, and all the trees have not yet been cleared. Someday, perhaps, the church will bring to bear the accrued wisdom of her centuries in communicating. Then, surely, the harvest will be many free men.

Demythologizing Peanuts

(*Continued from page 13*)

Not to say that he is free from complexes. He may be even more fraught with them than any of the rest. For whoever heard of a dog with weed claustrophobia or delusions of grandeur that he was a lion or "one of those snakes that squeeze people." Snoopy has both, as well as a growing taste for music.

But the common state of each of these characters and of us all is shared by Snoopy. Each "wants what it cannot have, not universal love, but to be loved alone." [1] This is why Charlie Brown has so much meaning for us.

Charlie Brown is the plain ol' average man, the all-around fellow, who seems to have everything but is ridiculed because his head is like a basketball, an orange, a grape, etc. He loses at checkers and goes bankrupt at the marble game. He feels that he is "not even part of the orchestra." He is not the center of things and feels that he is not even a part of them. If on Christmas, he doesn't receive a single card we know his feeling of not belonging and we love him. And we love him also because he is a magnificent failure in manipulating group adjustments.

Remarkably, it is true that the others, who are thrown up against him and cause him misery, love him too. For those involved in the situation, it is misery and suffering. From our transcendent perspective we can find solutions and the whole struggle seems amusing.

Yet we are also filled with pity. Charles M. Schulz seems to have given us a gentle humor of the tragic sense of life and we laugh at the comic strip.

Maybe if we laugh long enough we may find ourselves laughing at those barriers that are real in our world, at those present myths which separate and make community impossible especially those that would make us think it is automatic and given in the conforming to the group. But for that we would need a transcendent stance, which brings us back to theology again. Meanwhile we will read *Peanuts* because it's nice to know someone like plain ol' Charlie Brown.

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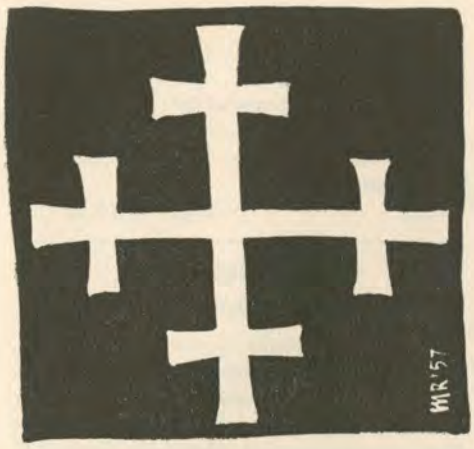
[1] W. H. Auden, "September 1, 1939."



a litany for Christian communication

by Malcolm Boyd

O God the Father, who at sundry times and in divers manners hast spoken in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and who hast spoken unto us by thy Son;

Have mercy upon us.

O God the Son, the Word of God, thou who wast made flesh and didst dwell among us, and whose glory we have beheld, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father;

Have mercy upon us.

O God the Holy Spirit, who filled the apostles on the day of Pentecost so that they began to speak with other tongues as thou didst give them utterance, and so that the multitude didst hear them speak in many tongues the wonderful works of God;

Have mercy upon us.

Remember not the words of worship we have prayed to false gods and have uttered unto thee with our lips but not with our heart's consent; remember not the words of hatred and malice we have spoken to our neighbor, nor our withholding of words of understanding and love from him;

Spare us, good Lord.

From our failure to become close in closeness, together in togetherness; from changing communication into exploitation and thereby making it an immoral action; from much speaking but little listening; from speaking to our neighbor in monologue rather than in dialogue; from utter isolation and the end of communication;

Good Lord, deliver us.

We beseech thee to hear us that thou wilt enable us to speak thy Word, intelligibly and in integrity and by all the means which thou hast given us, to persons whom we encounter in all the market places and on all the frontiers of life;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou, who art love, wilt enable us to be thine instruments so that we may obey thy command to communicate thy Word to all the world;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt turn us from our accusations and counteraccusations, our rationalizations, and our lack of repentance, enabling us to penetrate with thy Word the concrete barriers of our self-interest and self-assertion;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt guide us out of the Christian ghetto into the mainstream and into the front lines of life, and enable our tongues to proclaim there the scandal of thy Gospel;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt show us the human loneliness and rejection hidden by the empty smile . . . and, in our human encounters of anonymity at the elbow of anonymity . . . enable us to enter into relationship with other persons as subjects to love and not as objects to use, surrendering our flag of self-interest and our sword of resentment;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt look with pity upon us who are closer together than ever before in our technologically induced togetherness, yet are farther apart from one another in charity, compassion, a sense of mutual responsibility and an understanding of one another's efforts at communications;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt gird us for the battle we must do against indifference, speaking through our actions and lives when issues are no longer intelligibly discussed and words have lost their meaning, giving us light to penetrate our prejudices and delusions;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt edify our thinking which has been penetrated by pagan symbols of success, and clear the blurred focus with which we look at the cross;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt guide us in our Christian use of the media of mass communication so that we only claim them for thee, O Lord, because they are thine; guide us so that we may not be guilty of the blasphemy of exploitation of these media in thy Name and in the name of thy Church;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That we may be enabled to find thy Word in all words, to proclaim the Christian truth of deep significance which is present always in all creative work;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That we may proclaim the Gospel story of the manger and the cross, of the resurrection, the ascension and Pentecost;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That thou wilt use us in thy speaking to all men and each man, that our communication may be sacramental in proclaiming vocation, pronouncing thy Truth, changing the course of lives and events; that we may communicate Christian tension in the midst of unchristian peace, and communicate that peace which passeth all understanding in the midst of the Christian's war;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honor.

O God, be thou our love; O Christ, be thou our word; O Holy Spirit, be thou our power.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

"A litany for Christian communication" is also printed in Boyd's new book, just published by Doubleday, CRISIS IN COMMUNICATION. **See comments on page 32.**

BOOKS

EXISTENCE AND COMMUNICATION

The fundamental fact of existence as human beings is communication.

The Christian is especially required to be a communicator. The Church has one basic obligation: to communicate Christ.

This single obligation has two prongs: 1) communication between men and 2) communication *of* the Gospel. It is a unity with these two facets, not two separate fields of communication.

Our day is one in which communication has disintegrated. Thereby interest in communication has mounted. The so-called sciences of human relations such as sociology have arisen coterminously with the decay in communication. The amazing techniques of modern "communication" have flourished along with the realization that we are climbing higher and higher on a contemporary Tower of Babel. The cutting edge of science brings us to the edge of the new and exciting age of communication at the moment we are struck with a structural quiver related to our inability to show ourselves to ourselves and to each other as contrasted with our immersion in words that seem to signify nothing.

Two important volumes, whose authors are represented elsewhere in the pages of this issue of *motive*, help us to estimate the size of the problem, its meaning in the Christian perspective, and they have worked hard at suggesting some clues by which we may work at it: ***Malcolm Boyd, Crisis in Communication*** *(Doubleday and Co., Inc., $2.95)* and ***Hendrik Kraemer, The Communication of the Christian Faith*** *(The Westminster Press, $2.50)*.

Hendrik Kraemer, as one would expect of a good Dutch theological lecturer, orients the case by first discussing communication in the biblical perspective. This slant emphasizes that man does not know himself except in the light of Jesus Christ. He was made, however, to have communication (dialogue) with God. This communion has been broken, and it is the task of the Church, working on God's initiative, to be the place and sphere of the re-creation of communication. This communication is more than words, it is an involvement of all.

The important aspect of the biblical perspective is that the communication of the Gospel is neither primarily nor ultimately dependent upon our human ability to communicate. It has a quality all its own, on a level quite different from that of communication as generally understood. Nor is there any guarantee of success even in the best of communication—only the injunction of faithful interpretive communication.

Boyd throws open, with immediate pertinency, the dilemmas in which the Church finds itself involved as it attempts to communicate the word about Christ in the "age of publicity." It cannot avoid using the gimmicks of communication in this age, but it is always tempted by the hypnotism of the gadgets, and more subtle and dangerous, it often succumbs to success standards of the profession. It finds itself making use of that which is being used against itself. In selling Christ like soap, the Church finds itself exploiting and manipulating persons and rejoicing in the results with much of the fervor with which similar success symbols are idolized in our age.

Ultimately communication requires pushing back—for discrimination must be used in the Christian's relationships to the mass media of communication. That is, for the Christian, communication is ultimately a theological matter. How is the Gospel to be made relevant in the situations of alienation in our society, in our relations with one another and in our relations with God? The Christian must work in the media, soil his hands as it were, and just as important, bring to bear his theological insight into the wrestlings with good and evil that are going on in the deeper strata of our culture.

At this point Boyd does a superb job of indicating direction of religious witness in the nonreligious, or negative, films and dramas. The theological interest among many thoughtful laymen today has been brought about by a nonreligious communication where the "religious" dramas and films would but have stiffened their indifference, resentment and opposition. If it is true, that many people today really confront real persons in situations which speak to their condition only in the theater, then the church had better begin to deal with films that really communicate and are not simply yea-saying propaganda vehicles for its ecclesiastical structure.

Kraemer provides a solid theological framework for a criticism of communication. Boyd meets us more directly on the level of existence and involvement. Somehow or other Kraemer seems too objective, too detached, too reflective on the whole matter. Boyd is immersed, so deeply at times he seems to bubble instead of communicating himself, but he retains a passion and an intensity that make *Crisis in Communication* an important book. Appropriately enough, his prognosis is in terms of what is happening at various places he has visited in Britain and Europe.

—*Roger Ortmayer*

Demonic Exploitation

(Continued from page 23)

nymity at the elbow of anonymity, is any communication established? Is it a demonic communication of exploitation and overlapping dialogues, or is it Christian communication between "persons" who recognize their kinship in Christ?

In the media of mass communication one finds the identical communication problem one finds in human encounters at the theater, on the bus, at the luncheon counter or on the street. Human problems of anxiety, fear, rejection and loneliness remain the same, whether a person is sitting at home in front of a TV set, or standing on a crowded subway.

Karl Barth maintains that the Holy Spirit stands in need of no "point of contact" but that which he creates. True. Therefore, the Holy Spirit creates the "point of contact" established by us in relation with other "persons" when we are permitting ourselves to be used as channels of the grace of God. Consequently, we shall wait for no merely mechanical grace; we shall not delay the factor of action until we receive a "sign"; rather, we shall seek to be caught up in the dynamic power of God the Holy Spirit, to surrender to him. And, then, we shall certainly endeavor to use our minds to the fullest, we shall establish "point of contact" to the best of our ability with fellow human beings in all kinds of situations. For we shall seek no credit for the "point of contact" established in this way, but shall offer thanks to the Holy Spirit for his having created it, using us as channels.

It is in the indwelling power of the Triune God that our efforts to communicate with our fellow men are lifted up from the perversions of exploitation to the stature of Christian communication in the Holy Spirit. Karl Barth has written in a moving way of this:

> *A man may be of value to another man, not because he wishes to be important, not because he possesses some inner wealth of soul, not because of something he is, but because of what he is—not. His importance may consist in his poverty, in his hopes and fears, in his waiting and hurrying, in the direction of his whole being toward what lies beyond his horizon and beyond his power. The importance of an apostle is negative rather than positive. In him a void becomes visible. And for this reason he is something to others: he is able to share grace with them, to focus their attention, and to establish them in waiting and in adoration. The Spirit gives grace through him.*

is communication ?

A COMMON CONFUSION

A COMMON experience, resulting in a common confusion. As has to transact important business with B in H. He goes to H for a preliminary interview, accomplishes the journey there in ten minutes, and the journey back in the same time, and on returning boasts to his family of his expedition. Next day he goes again to H, this time to settle his business finally. As that by all appearances will require several hours, A leaves very early in the morning. But although all the accessory circumstances, at least in A's estimation, are exactly the same as the day before, it takes him ten hours this time to reach H. When he arrives there quite exhausted in the evening he is informed that B, annoyed at his absence, had left half an hour before to go to A's village, and that they must have passed each other on the road. A is advised to wait. But in his anxiety about his business he sets off at once and hurries home.

This time he achieves the journey, without paying any particular attention to the fact, exactly in a second. At home he learns that B had arrived quite early, immediately after A's departure, indeed that he had met A on the threshold and reminded him of his business; but A had replied that he had no time to spare, he must go at once.

In spite of this incomprehensible behavior of A, however, B had stayed on to wait for A's return. It is true, he had asked several times whether A was not back yet, but he was still sitting up in A's room. Overjoyed at the opportunity of seeing B at once and explaining everything to him, A rushes upstairs. He is almost at the top, when he stumbles, twists a sinew, and almost fainting with the pain, incapable even of uttering a cry, only able to moan faintly in the darkness, he hears B—impossible to tell whether at a great distance or quite near him—stamping down the stairs in a violent rage and vanishing for good.

ON PARABLES

Many complain that the words of the wise are always merely parables and of no use in daily life, which is the only life we have. When the sage says: "Go over," he does not mean that we should cross to some actual place, which we could do anyhow if the labour were worth it; he means some fabulous yonder, something unknown to us, something too that he cannot designate more precisely, and therefore cannot help us here in the very least. All these parables really set out to say merely that the incomprehensible is incomprehensible, and we know that already. But the cares we have to struggle with every day: that is a different matter.

Concerning this a man once said: Why such reluctance? If you only followed the parables you yourselves would become parables and with that rid of all your daily cares.

Another said: I bet that is also a parable.

The first said: You have won.

The second said: But unfortunately only in parable.

The first said: No, in reality: in parable you have lost.

THE BOX

The A.B.Zip Co., specialists in hearing aids, once had a young researcher named March. One day he disappeared, not to be heard from since. Some people have wondered about what happened to him, some expressed a modicum of sorrow. Since he was a bachelor, however, none worried overlong.

March was peculiarly suited for working on hearing-aids research. In childhood he had injured his ear and it was required of him to use the gadgets upon which he worked.

He had a pet theory regarding communication. It did not seem sufficiently scientific to many of his colleagues and therefore was not taken seriously by them. When he talked about his theory he would use words such as Paradise and Judgment. He said he had to use such symbols because the mathematical equations could not probe where he wanted to go. Naturally, his co-workers considered such notions as prescientific nonsense.

One evening he stayed late in the electronics laboratory. During the day he had been exasperated by the ridicule of some articulate laboratory companions. They were talking about entropy and feedback and he had tossed in the Fall and Revelation. Their comments had been so sarcastic that he had taken refuge from their teasing by turning off his hearing aid.

After the others had left he unconsciously turned his aid back on, although no one was left with whom to converse. His mind, however, was still on the theories of communication which had initiated the trouble. *Is it because we don't know what time is that we cannot understand one another? Do the Moslems talk about Paradise, the communists of Utopia and the Christians about the Judgment Day because of a defect in communication? Have they tried to annul a situation by talking about it rather than living with it? Is there any communication except the communication of life?*

As these questions popped around in his mind he fussed with the details of a research experiment, connecting some circuits into a peculiar kind of box. Suddenly, "When are you going to open the box?"

"What box?"

"The one you are using."

"This is no box to open up. It's an experiment."

"It's the same box I found at Epimetheus' home."

March now realized he was conversing, but no one else was in the laboratory. He tinkered with his hearing aid to see if it might have picked up some errant radio program. But the words continued, "I'm an expert at opening up boxes."

"Who are you, anyway?" March queried.

"Pandora."

"Pandora!"

"Yes, Pandora. Come now, let's open the box."

"Oh, no. I know all the trouble you caused before."

"That was not trouble. It was just that I helped people see things as they are."

"That's trouble."

"But," Pandora insisted, "Don't you think it time for more of that kind of trouble?"

"Huh?"

"You know how difficult it is to get the others to understand."

"What has trouble to do with communication?"

"You yourself keep talking about the Fall and Redemption."

"Well. . . ."

"Come on, let's open it up. Let everybody know."

"But what will happen?"

"Who knows what happens when we know. . . . But as before, Hope remains."

March started to do her bidding, "I don't know about this. . . ."

"Here, let me help."

Without himself willing it, March unscrewed the cap of his box. Incalculable energy exploded in a mass of shattered color.

The next day March failed to report for work. In fact, nothing was ever heard of him again. A janitor did find his hearing aid by a counter in the laboratory, the same day he swept out a scrap of plastic on which had been scratched the word —HOPE.

(Ortmayer)