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SEVEN

Edited by

Carlton Severance
David Sills

St. John's College
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Amanda Fowler
James Morrow Hall
Hugo Hamilton
Sigrid Nielsen
Steven Shore

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Cover by Hugo Hamilton

Staff: Sharon Ahern, Sheila Bobbs, Paul Bustion, Jan
Goodman, Earl Hamby.

OBSERVATIONS

Formality frees us from care about how to get through our day, yet how many of us seem to despise formality! How many of us demand a freedom we can never have at the expense of a freedom we must have if we are to call ourselves free. How many of us do everything in our power to violate the very formality that makes us civilized! How many of us try to be clever at the expense of a formality which, though admittedly dry and unoriginal, is nonetheless an aesthetic delight to the civilized person. But was America ever really civilized? This college is certainly a part of America, and the question applies with equal force to this college. -css

It will be noted that we have in this issue printed two pages of poetry. This represents a minor change in policy: from now on we will be pleased to review any poetical submissions for inclusion in the magazine as well as for broadsides. The space for this venture will necessarily be restricted, but perhaps, if there is enough interest, a poetry issue will be possible some time in the future. -jmh

One may wonder if, in our interest in the development of the cinematic art, we have not lost sight of one of the primary aims of the movie industry; i.e., to provide entertainment. Certainly a great deal can be argued in favor of our First of Their Kind film series, but must we be limited to the stark and often primitive use of the camera to portray "Life as it Really Is"? It seems plausible that something may be learned about Life and the Cinematic Art in somewhat less depressing flicks. -asf

Mortimer J. Adler has just published a new book with the improbable title The Difference of Man and the Difference it Makes (Holt, Reinhart & Winston; 395 pages, \$7.95). In a lengthy review of the book in the Saturday Review (November 18, 1967), Sir Herbert Read states that "not since Aquinas has a question been so completely stated, the answers to it so fairly presented and then so adequately tested." I'm sure that there are some here to whom this is interesting. -jmh

A few words in appreciation of the informal concert in the Dining Hall on Thursday, January 18th. Mr. Stark and Miss Harlan's performance of Handel's Suite in C Major was not only enjoyable, but might serve as a good example for

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further sharing of talents, whether musical, artistic, or literary. -asf

Sumter

Old Ruffan rages at the parapet;
The fort hangs in the fog-filled air;
The world watches from its weary rooftop;
Muffled war mulls its murder scare.

The air clears now; the rivers run on to meet their sea.
Yet time holds fast; slave and master remain.
White and black blacken the bled-white world.
All people punish their God with pain.

The old man stares at the cannon.
Health's cannula, history's canon, his candent
Hatred for Yankee higglers forge the war.
But all stands still at Mar's door.

He lights the fuse; sizzles the sprig of peace,
A ptarmigan peace of reboant rant.
Its end is reached; fructed war balls at the old fort door.
And time moves on.

-ss

NEW LEFT NOTES

New Left followers, now is the time to make a stand. It is time to decide whether you are right and therefore have the moral right to implement your ideas by whatever means you please, whether the country is willing or not. Now you must decide whether you believe in free speech or merely in your own free speech. You must either condemn or condone both the administration of a college barring Bettina Aptheker from speaking and the one percent of the student body of that college who bar other students from gaining information and interviews from Dow Chemical. You must decide whether you believe it is the job of the police to uphold the laws or merely to uphold those laws with which you agree. Now you must decide whether you condemn dictatorship both by President Johnson and by S.N.C.C. leader Foreman. You must decide whether you believe in peaceful change no matter how long it takes or in violent change if it is quicker; whether you believe in moral force, or only in that moral force which is more effective than violence; whether you believe in non-violence as a tactic or as an end in itself as well as a tactic. You must above all decide now whether you believe in the concept of right and wrong, or whether this concept applies only to those actions with which you disagree.

Communism in America, in China and in Vietnam, defines moral good as that which furthers its aims. Is this concept agreeable to you? Or do you see right and wrong as something completely divorced from the mere attainment of your own aims? Is there such a thing as right and wrong? Or are these merely relative to your own point of view?

If you are to be consistent, then if you condone sit-ins in the office of an interviewer for Dow or for C.I.A., then you must also condone sit-ins by the local Conservative club or by a local fascist organization in the office of the S.D.S., or at the local welfare board, or at the integrated school. If you condone disruptive tactics at meetings of the "enemy," you must condone them in your own meetings also. If you condone brick throwing on the part of demonstrators you must also condone clubbing on the part of the police. And if you believe right and wrong to be relative, then when police use tear gas, clubs and kicks to make their point, you can't complain, for if you thought they would be effective you too would use these tactics.

The question is whether you wish to be civilized or not. Regardless of what your enemy chooses, you must make this personal moral decision. This country has several basic customs, one of which is peaceful means of change, the idea that speech, not force, should be used to make one's point. Although we have a basic idea that speech should be free, how many New Left organizations are willing to allow administration "liars" this right? Although we have an idea that separate but equal schools aren't right, how many Black Power organizations support or even agree with this principle? How many of them would advocate "separate but better for Blacks," if they thought they could get it? How many of them still maintain the aim of an integrated society? ("The Civil Rights movement is dead and thank God!" --Rapp Brown.)

Ghandi stood up, not because he wanted to disrupt the British government, or because he wanted to create disorder, but because he sincerely wanted to correct moral wrongs. And he was not going to do this through means of other moral wrongs. He knew the British were wrong, and he insisted on being morally better than they were, not on being more powerful, but on being morally right!

When New Lefters talk of revolution they don't really talk of changing the war system, but of changing the war rulers. They claim to object to the system, yet they are ready to use every trick the system has developed to further their own aims. What they mean by change is not using the power of love, but rather removing odious people. When Rapp Brown tells Negroes to tear down their town, he is not repudiating hatred, bigotry or human degradation; instead he is saying that the rulers of this country are correct in their opinion that the only way to achieve one's aims is by brute force. He is returning this country to bestiality. Ghandi condemned all violence; the New left condemns violence only when it is used against it.

What is the true purpose of demonstrations? Is it to confuse the government? To disrupt its activities? To show it our lack of respect? To break its laws with the impunity of the masses? Or is it to say that we are normally right in our position and it is wrong? Mike Goldfield, writing in the S.D.S. publication "New Left Notes," seems about ready to cry because the military used its power against the demonstrators at the Pentagon on October 21st. He calls for "dramatic disruptions," "creative disorders," and "resistance." He condemns all "Ghandi-style civil disobedience" because "too many heads were busted for us to put ourselves in so vulnerable a position again." How many heads were busted in India? How many people died in the twenty years of Indian "Ghandi-style civil disobedience?" Mr. Goldfield doesn't

realize or doesn't believe that his position is as strong as the moral force or satyagraha behind it. He speaks disparagingly of arrests as "a quantitative measure of moral witness." He would say 'to hell with moral witness as long as we win.' Isn't it time for the New Left to decide where it stands?

The New Left does not pit the morality of its position against the immorality of the administration; it puts the force of its fanaticism against the force of the administration. Then it complains bitterly of "police brutality" because the police are so much more powerful than they are. It confronts or attempts to confront the government not with truth but with force. If demonstrators have the right to throw bricks, to use abusive language, to attack police lines, to surround reporters, to disrupt meetings, and to use whatever means they have to force their views on others, then likewise the Johnson administration has the right to use napalm, massive bombings, crop-destruction, and however many men are necessary to force its beliefs on the people of Vietnam.

If the New Left is truly sincere in what it aims to be its basic beliefs it must live by the love it wishes to instill into this country. It must begin to support people for what they say and do, not for which side they are on. It must be hypocritical to proclaim love while hating, peace while fighting, democracy while wishing to dictate.

If it acts like a child, it will be treated like a child; if it acts like a man who is doing the right thing and who is willing to suffer the consequences of being just, it will be treated like a moral leader. But as of now the Infantile Left is too often a more appropriate name for it than the New Left.

-Mark Bernstein

NEW RIGHT NOTES

The war in Vietnam is a direct result of the Great Society. We are failing in the Asian jungles for the same reason that we are failing in the Northeast slums. We use money as a substitute for understanding. We try to administer from without instead of trying to listen from within. We wage war on the problems of others without bothering to learn what solutions they want for their own problems.

The War on Poverty assumes that the federal government can conquer the poverty problem. We imagine that supreme court decisions, federal laws, compulsory integration and white volunteers serving in Negro neighborhoods can win this war. The question of whether the Negro will ever become an integral part of our society will be answered only by sincere accommodation by both Negro and white in each tense neighborhood; unless private citizens can achieve this accommodation, the whole federal will can do nothing. Now the federal government is making little effort to listen to the poor, to let them help themselves in order to solve their own problems. Although many poverty workers try to do this, their efforts are often blocked by a government hoping to use the poor to its own advantage. Obviously the full participation of the poor in our society will have radical results; but these are for a complete electorate to decide and not for the bureaucratic generals who organize 'wars' for their own convenience to choose.

Similarly we are fighting against 'Communism' in Vietnam because we assume that the South Vietnamese do not know what government is best for themselves. We refused to permit the free elections scheduled for South Vietnam in 1956, and decided to aid, train and indoctrinate the South Vietnamese until they would be able to vote freely as we wanted them to. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, hoping to convince the North Vietnamese to forget the idea of union with their southern countrymen. We chose to make this an American war because we believed that the deserting South Vietnamese soldiers were too immature to serve their own cause. As in the War on Poverty, we created a war where the true participants could have solved their own problems had we left them alone. Of course the South Vietnamese might not have solved their problems as we wanted them to, but the only alternative to allowing self-determination in Southeast Asia is American rule which makes the Communist rule of their northern coun-

trymen seem preferable.

Therefore both in Asia and in our own cities, the federal government has failed. It has claimed to have the authority and the power to solve the problems of the Asian peasant and of the urban poor without bothering to learn them. In normal American history federal help was only called for when local and state help was ineffectual; now it is being used when the people it insists on helping would prefer to help themselves. If we are still interested in establishing national security and domestic tranquillity, we might assume that those people confronted with specific problems know best how to solve them. Perhaps they do.

-Steven Shore

JAMES AGEE:

A Brief Memoir and an Appreciation*

James Agee was a man I knew for a period of about two years in New York. He wrote at night and used to like to take a break about midnight to have a drink in a bar just up the street from his apartment on Macdougall Street. Sometimes in the summer you could walk by his house and see him, the window open, seated at his desk, writing, and hail him for that drink.

He always took a whiskey, I, a beer, and he would talk. He was a story-teller, an enthusiast, a very lovable man. Those of us who loved and appreciated Jim would gather around him when he entered our bar, which was usually full of young people, most of us in the arts--poets, dancers, composers, actors, singers, painters. Jim seemed to feel at home with us. Sometimes he would just listen, with obvious pleasure; other

*James Agee (1909-1955) was the author of Permit Me Voyage, a collection of his poems; Let Us Now Praise Famous Men with Walker Evans; The Morning Watch; and a posthumous Pulitzer-prize-winning novel, A Death in the Family, which became a successful Broadway play.

He was born in Knoxville, Tennessee. He went to St. Andrew's School, which was the background for The Morning Watch. After his family moved to Maine, he continued his studies at Exeter. While at Harvard, he was editor of the Advocate.

James Agee was passionately interested in motion pictures and was long one of America's most distinguished and sympathetic film critics. The two-volume, Agee on Film, is a collection of his film scripts, articles, reviews and comments.

He wrote the scenario for one of the first of the documentary films that burgeoned in the Forties and Fifties, "The Quiet One", a study of the life of a Negro boy in Harlem. Later he wrote one of Hollywood's great films, "The African Queen", starring Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart. He was a close collaborator with John Huston and Charles Laughton.

His film biography, "Mr. Lincoln", was repeated three times on the famous Omnibus program over A.B.C. television.

times he would talk with relish, elegance and gusto about his latest enthusiasm--whether it be a movie, a play, a book, or a person. He loved words and chose them respectfully with precision and taste.

One evening he burst into our bar, obviously wanting to share his latest discovery. I was the only one there he knew and he descended on me. He had been listening to a Beethoven symphony, and when Jim listened, he listened. He was full of passionate admiration. Unabashedly (Beethoven was, at that time, very unfashionable), he extolled Beethoven as a composer, analyzed the score in detail, conducted the whole damn symphony right there in the bar, and left. I was, frankly, exhausted after a couple of hours of his uninterrupted enthusiasm.

Another time when we were sitting, just the two of us, in a booth, he began talking of Henry Luce. Jim had been doing articles for Fortune. To each of those articles he brought his own particular integrity and passion. (Probably no one in this country will ever know as much about orchids, for example, as Jim did. He really researched his articles.) This conscientiousness was, apparently, both intriguing and somehow or other disturbing to Mr. Luce. So one day, Jim was summoned to the publisher's office. They chatted about a number of things, and then Mr. Luce began, "Jim, I've had my eye on you for some time now. You're one of the bright young men around here, and I'd like to do something for you. This is what I've decided to do. We're going to send you to the Harvard Business School, all expenses paid. Now what do you think about that?" Jim stood up and answered, "Thank you, Mr. Luce, but no thanks." He walked out of the Fortune offices and never went back.

Jim Agee was a great hulk of a man with a tortured face. He suffered the pains of the world and took too many burdens on his own shoulders. He probably drank too much. He was, for some reason, perhaps even destroying himself. Some of this comes out, painfully and touchingly, in the published Letters of James Agee to Father Flye. Father Flye was the Anglican priest who had been Jim's teacher at St. Andrew's School and who became his lifelong friend and confidant. I cannot read these letters without weeping, without being torn by their naked honesty and moved by the tenderness of the love between these two friends. Father and Mrs. Flye made their home Jim's, particularly in his days of distress.

His three marriages brought Jim both great happiness and great trouble. His last wife, Mia, was a handsome, statuesque woman of considerable dignity, who seemed to understand that her husband was not an ordinary man. He loved his

four children deeply and spoke of them with the compassion and helplessness of a father who knows and fears what they will have to face in the world. With his great heart, he saw and forgave, or at least understood in some way, everything; perhaps this is what made him the extraordinary artist he clearly was.

I loved and respected Jim Agee, quite simply because he was Jim Agee, a lovable man, worthy of respect. Our young friendship was cut short, and that was very sad.

One evening I was at a fashionable party in a New York apartment after the opening night of one of the plays in which I was acting. (Jim Agee had once played a part with our company, a part that had intrigued him, that of a radio announcer during World War II in W. H. Auden's The Age of Anxiety.) Since, that evening, our play had been well received, everyone was in good spirits. We were waiting for Jim when the telephone rang. It was for Judith, Jim's lady friend. The wine was flowing, and the room was full of gaiety. Judith came back from the library and sat down next to me. She took my hand and then huddled in my arms. She was trembling. I waited and then asked quietly, "What happened?" She sobbed, "Jim just died of a heart attack. . ."

There was no one like James Agee. He was perhaps the most sensitive man I have ever met. He died at the age of forty-five.

Father Flye describes the end of his friend's life in this way:

"Toward sunset in Wichita, Monday, May 16, 1955, there was a telephone call for me from New York. It was pleasant to be greeted by the voice of a friend, David McDowell--and then I heard four words, 'Jim died this afternoon.'

"I took the night plane, and in the dawn of a May morning was in New York.

"Thursday, at ten o'clock, in St. Luke's Chapel, not very far from where he had lived, we held his funeral: the Burial Office and a simple Requiem; after which a little group of us--the immediate family and just a few others--drove up to his place in the country a few miles from Hillsdale which he had loved so much; and there, on a knoll looking out over the wooded valley and the hills beyond, a place of great peace, we committed his body to the earth, with the words from that Book of Common Prayer whose pure English he loved, "In sure and certain hope. . ."

-George Miller

PERNICIOUS ANEMIA

I. A Story

If one is lucky enough to have had a "good course in poetry", in high school, he probably remembers it as much like this:

From the outset he is told that poetry is beautiful and that every man should have an acquaintance with it. When this point is sufficiently instilled, his teacher plunges into a description of the structure of poetry. Our student learns that not all poetry rhymes, and he is taught the different forms of metre. If the class is truly a good one, he learns the meanings of such terms as "bucolic diaeresis", "alliteration" and "principal caesura". He thus learns how to dissect each line of a poem and thus to classify it. "Iambic pentametre," he crows, and his teacher proudly smiles.

After he has memorized snatches of poems as examples of these various types of structure ("the whispering pines and the hemlocks", etc.), he is informed that poets have a peculiar habit of not saying what they really mean. Before he can panic, however, his teacher quickly assures him that this is not an insurmountable difficulty. "We have many keys with which we can unlock the doors and find out what the Poet really meant," she says knowingly. She goes on to tell him about imagery and allusion. He masters the subtleties of metaphor, analogy, allegory, parable and simile (for the duration of the course, at least), as his teacher repeatedly finds by having him write or recite their definitions. To her infinite delight she sees him learning all about poetry.

"We are ready now, I think, to analyze some poems," she states breathlessly. "For tomorrow please memorize Ars Poetica by Archibald Macleish."

"Tomorrow is Saturday," one of her dears informs her.

"How thoughtless of me," she replies, reinstilling his belief in reality. "I meant 'for Monday', of course."

Most of the students forget the assignment, well aware that they will get a "C" if they merely struggle through the poem in class. But the student of whom we speak is more conscientious. (He gets a silver dollar for every "A" that he brings

home.) He goes home that night and opens his textbook (The Importance of Poetry by Parkheiler, Squire and Posencrantz; American Textbook Co., New York, 1942.).

He reads through the poem once, and if he doesn't quit at this point he will probably say to himself, "Hmm. There's a lot of imagery and allusion here," thereby justifying himself as he turns his attention to the (relatively) more interesting explanations of the myriad allusions.

He learns (from P, S & R--recognized authorities, to be sure) that this poem is noted for being as concise a statement of the goals of poetry as has ever been written. ('concise statement of goals,' he writes in his notes.) The title is Latin, he sees, and means :the art of poetry". He finds that Macleish was once Librarian of Congress and that he was influenced by Ezra Pound, T.S. Elliot, St.-J. Perse and the Writers of Proletarian Sympathies. A footnote on the latter directs him to sections entitled PROLETARIAN LITERATURE and MARXISM IN LITERATURE. He doesn't look them up, however; he also does well in his government class. ('was a communist,' he writes.)

Much of the imagery is explained in the commentary which follows. For example, the lines:

"Dumb

As old medallions to the thumb"

mean that poetry should be of lasting value to all times (just as medallions are lasting things). Macleish is saying, he reads, that "medallions are far from dumb insofar as they have true and definite meaning."

"That explains that," he exclaims, and scribbles furiously.

He finds more of the answers in class the next day. His teacher fills in the gaps left by the textbook and adds various details--all things which she remembers from that formidable institution where final answers are finally obtained, the University. She strives to leave no stone unturned in her analysis so that her students will have minimum room for false conceptions and interpretation. She often succeeds in this endeavor.

What better preparation for the student's entrance into the Real World? Years later, when he is up for promotion in his job, our hero finds himself speaking to the Boss at a cocktail party about (of all things) poetry.

"I find Macleish's Ars Poetica an amazingly concise statement of the very goals of Poetry," he states profoundly. The Boss is obviously impressed. "How does that line go?" he

continues. "Ah, yes:" he recites with his hands clasped behind his back:

"For all the history of grief
an empty doorway and a maple leaf.'
How beautiful! And how true!"

"You know," says the Boss coyly, "the head of your department is leaving. I wonder if you would consider..."

That night after dinner, as he sits reading Newsweek to find out what is going on in the world, he thinks back to his poetry teacher back at good old Harrison High and smiles warmly.

II. The Disease

The preceding rather innocuous story represents to me one manifestation of a malaise which afflicts man in all that he does. Let me leave sarcasm for a moment and try to be objective:

The extreme complacency of the characters in the story is obviously the target of the sarcasm. The question that arises, then, is this: does complacency exist to such a degree, and if so, why?

I contend that it all too often does exist, and that the cause is a too-ready acceptance of answers. For example, the student in the story will have left the course with the opinion that he has been told the gross facts about poetry. His training was based on the premise that poetry is beautiful, and he will have discovered that it is also extremely cryptic. He will probably reconcile these two aspects (subconsciously, no doubt) either by thinking of poetry as a game with incredibly rigid rules, or with the thought that beauty is necessarily cryptic. This type of reconciliatory thought is an attempt to answer the "why" of such an art, but it is seldom asked aloud because of the disease. When it is asked it is usually met with impatience and lack of understanding. The person who asks too many of these questions is labeled as a "rebel" or as "precocious". This is, I feel, primarily the fault of contemporary education.

When we wish to know something we look to respected authority; those above us in knowledge. This is a fact necessary for survival. It is the inherent property of communication that it cannot convey meaning, but only, through symbols, the parts of meaning. We are never taught this, however, and we are therefore only too eager to accept the answers in symbols that those whom we respect are only too eager to give. We are constantly encouraged to ask questions about, but not to

question. If we do question, we are dutifully pushed back to the grindstone of detail. The implicit answer is "once you know all about it you will know what it is," which is, of course, no answer at all. As T.S. Eliot put it:

"Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'

Let us go and make our visit."

or much later:

"Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind

Cannot bear very much reality."

We go on complacently, assuming from childhood that the parts are equal to the whole.

Poetry is the most subjective of all arts. We are, however, quite capable of ignoring this fact and assuming that the mind always works according to the grammar of thought which is constantly impressed upon us; i.e., logic. We assume that anything subjective must be made objective before we can understand it. ("Just the facts, ma'am.") We never question whether this is possible. ("If I don't understand it, it's nonsense.") This leads quickly and directly to the loss of differentiation between truth and opinion, and it leads the way to the point, such as in the story, where we can readily accept subjective interpretation of subjective expression as objective truth.

Poetry is not the only subject which is treated in this manner. Indeed, everything is taught in this way; our whole concept of reality is based upon thinking this way. The blame for this condition is often placed at the feet of "galloping technology", but this, I think, is insufficient. Technology wasn't galloping in third-century Athens, but the same condition existed. Socrates was the wisest man because he alone knew that he knew nothing.

In today's society, most people feel that they can get the answers to any questions they might have, merely by going to the proper sources. Most of these sources are human, and the feeling is that they can supply the truth. The real distinction between sufficient opinion (which is all any knowledge, as we speak of it, has ever been) and real truth is lost. This is, it seems, one of the primary causes of the decline of religion in this era; if one can get the truth from other men, what need will he have of God?

Man seems, then, to have superseded the idea of an all-knowing god with one of an all-knowing mankind; he has put himself in God's place. Most of the Greek tragedies seemed to me to deal with this phenomenon of man's delusions of divinity. Their message I take to be that man cannot exist under such delusions. Xerxes sat above his army and mourned of their impending slaughter. His view was from the very

mountain from which Zeus watched the battle of Troy. Here he placed his ivory throne and wailed, "Of all this multitude, who shall say how many will return?" Who indeed? The message of the book of Job seems to be that man is under a being whose actions and motives cannot be fully comprehended. Milton justified God's ways to man, but he could only do so in myth. And indeed, the story of the creation is a myth; a fact that a great number of diseased people cannot accept because it is beyond their understanding and experience.

Such human beings who have lost the distinction between truth and opinion and who look only to other human beings for both are intrinsically susceptible to control by those to whom they turn. By habitually keeping their noses to the grindstone and their minds engaged in picking nits they strengthen, invite and procreate such control. Happily, though it may be too late to stop when it becomes noticable, such control does become more blatant as it grows. We can see far too many examples of this "mass mind directing" in our contemporary society, but this is only the carcinogenesis of an incredible amount of blind and ignorant perpetuation which, though guised in the robes of responsible subjective synthesis, is merely recapitulation of twisted pseudo-objectivity. Nevertheless, it itself is taken as truth by the many who recognize the existence of nothing else but untruth.

I used the phrase "ignorant perpetuation", but I find that I cannot push myself to call it "innocent". Admittedly one who does not recognize his own subjective emotions will have them easily directed (as long as they are not openly influenced). But I call that lack of recognition into question; it seems to me to be a conscious suppression that requires continual reassurance. The fact that we do not ask "what is it?" is a direct result of our fear that we may find an answer that we do not want to hear, or worse, no answer at all. This fear is conscious (although less in many than in others), and to the extent that it is, the effort not to look in that direction is also conscious. And when we get to the place where we want to be going (mythologically, at least, this is away from God), there will be no one to blame but ourselves.

-James Morrow Hall

INTERLUDE

How beautiful is the world when the heart weeps
from the pain of too much love.

Do you see this flower? It is something far beyond wonder
in its fragile beauty. To comprehend truly, James Agee
suggested, would be to die. Then if this prism that breaks
light into rainbows, that mirrors the sun on the floor
of a house; if this prism is a miracle for all eternity,
what then is man?

And how can we say that one should live in the public
world, communicating, helping, open, responsive? Is not
the vision of the private world being lost? Should not
each be made to discover his private world? But what is
this world and how can it be respected, and how far held
in highest reverence? For, paradoxically, though endowing
man with humanity, isn't it possible that the private world
is ultimately destructive both to the individual and to
society? No! Rather it is the source of all holiness, the
out-pourings of an anguished spirit. The hostility of the
outer world closes off poetic endeavor. Only in the depths
of one's own being does the possibility of creative expression
remain alive. But the thirst for expression demands
satisfaction, and so requires crystallization and exposition
of amorphous and submerged thought. But self-revelation
is often painful...

How I wish there was time
to breathe in the fragrance of a cool morning
to watch a sunset
to listen to a symphony
to sit in silence under the stars
to talk leisurely over a glass of wine
to dance slowly in the dusk to soft music
to take a walk in the rain
to love a child

Leisure--slow time--sweetly savored and sipped--that is,
consciously experienced time, human life.

Why must we always "get things done"? What is this mad
compulsion to accomplish something? We are always busy;
but not living. We could bifurcate our worlds--so many
hours for work, so many for living; but that would solve

nothing. Somehow, we must learn to integrate our lives, to unify the scattered fragments of shattered and unstable psyches...

Enervated I lie dry and empty, a deserted chalky shell awaiting the returning tide...

Listening to the quiet of the night I am filled with a strange excitement. A thrill shudders through me, so vibrant I can't sleep though I'm exhausted...I want to surrender, to give myself up completely...to a dream... Suddenly the world has become beautiful again--drenched in silvery moonlight, in golden rose of dawn or pale dusk of eve.

If only I could feel poignantly--could sing the musky nights of stars, could write the pain, could feel the love, smell the scent of pine on wind, could feel the warmth of flesh and taste the salt of sweat, lie face down in the dark earth, put my hand into the wound in his side to have it covered with the sticky heat of black blood, and then if I could see! My God, if I could see! The breath would leave me, sucked out of my lungs in horror at the fragile miracle enduring only as a puff of smoke on a windy day: the crashing paralyzing eternal beauty that is lost completely in the mundane routine, in the unnamed fears masked by smiles...

The world is again so fantastically fragilely sacred that any violence will cause blood to run from trees. The moon turns green, the grass and all plants will wither to brown dust, and the universe itself, convulsed with the flashes of brilliant color, explodes into fragments of purple cob-web that slowly float off into the dark chasms of eternity.

...Thought divorced from action is perhaps as empty as action divorced from thought...

- Allison Karlake

A VERITABLE NEW SCIENCE CONCERNING COMPARATIVES

AXIOMS:

1. This is really bad, but something must be worse.
2. Everything is better, and the part is worse.

THEOREMS:

1. Something is always worse.

The proof:

The proof is evident from the axioms.

Corollary: You can always tell when it's worse, for then it's really something.

2. Nothing is neither better nor worse.

The proof:

Nothing cannot be worse, for if nothing were worse, then it would really be something. As it was demonstrated above, something is always worse. Now on the other hand, some hold to the opinion that nothing can be better, but this is not true. For if nothing can be better, something else can never be worse. But it always is.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

3. Everything is always the same.

The proof:

If everything were better, then nothing could be worse, and this is already disproved. If everything were worse, then it would be something, but it is not; therefore it is not. Hence it follows from the second proposition that if nothing is neither better nor worse, everything is the same.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

4. The same is always better and the other is worse.

The proof:

Everything is the same, and nothing is any good; therefore, the same is better. But the other is something else again; therefore, it is worse, for something is always worse.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

5. Anyhow, somewhere is worse.

The proof:

Somehow somewhere is a part. The part is always worse, for it is really something, and something is worse. But if

something is worse, then anything else is worse than that, for it is something. Hence if anything is worse, it follows that somewhere is worse anyhow.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

Corollary: It is evident then that if somewhere is worse, elsewhere is better.

6. Nowhere is somehow neither better nor worse any which way.

The proof:

The proof of this proposition is a reduction to absurdity analogous to proposition two, or any other for that matter.

7. Everywhere is the same.

8. Someone is worse.

The proof:

The original axioms suggest the truth of this proposition, but empirical evidence is sufficient.

Corollary: If someone is worse, then anyone is better. Hence it follows that no one is better or worse nohow, and everyone is the same anyway.

9. Everyone has got to be somewhere.

The proof:

Someone is somewhere, for they are both worse. And anyone is then elsewhere, being better. But everyone is the same anyway; therefore, everyone is somewhere.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

10. Everyone always runs out of time.

The proof:

Everyone always runs out of time, for if not, they would run in time. Hence no one could get anywhere. And this is absurd, for everyone has got to be somewhere.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

11. The whole is not the sum of its parts.

The proof:

The parts are all worse, that is, the same. But everything is the whole, and the same everywhere, that is, better. Then the parts are the same, and the whole is the same. But this is absurd, for the parts are worse, and the whole is better, and the same is the same with the same, which it cannot be.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

12. Nothing is new under the sun.

The proof:

Nothing is new under the sun, for if there were something new, it would be worse. And if everything were new, then it would be better. On the contrary, everything is the same, and nothing is neither better nor worse. Thus nothing is new

under the sun.

Therefore, etc. Q.E.D.

The authors will not deprive the reader of the multifarious pleasures of demonstrating the following original theorems:

1. The sun also rises. (N.B. for if it did not it would really be something etc. etc. See also Theorem twelve.)
2. You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool ^{*}all of the people all of the time.
3. A point is that which has no part.
4. You cannot get there from here. (N.B. Here is a part of There, etc.)
5. Many a little makes a mickle.
6. A wet bird never flies at night.
7. Frog is no good.
8. Well, it sure is a big dog.
9. Although the moon is smaller than the Earth, it is very far away.

-David Sackton
-Bruce Baldwin

*Eds. Note: "You can fool too many of the people too much of the time." -James Thurber.

WHAT'S WATTS

Watts, the black ghetto which exploded into revolt a few years ago is a world unto itself. Geographically Watts itself is a postal district in southeast Los Angeles, but the ghetto extends into Central L. A. and is larger than Santa Fe. The housing is far below standard--many houses are not much more than shells.

The music one hears walking down the street is either real "soul"--Rhythm and Blues--or jazz, and the people who listen to it have a different set of ideals. The white high school population looks forward to a college education and thinks that poverty of the mind is worse than physical poverty, while the average Negro can't look forward to college and figures material gains are most important.

There are two types of businesses which flourish there: churches and liquor stores. Other stores are rather sparse and the owners virtually rob the neighborhood by selling mediocre goods at outrageous prices.

And, of course, the police are barbarous, and no one believes that they are there to protect the people. Three summers ago a policeman arrested and struck a man for speeding. Out of this small incident mushroomed one of the largest riots in the history of the United States. No "outside agitators" were involved--none had to be. All the ingredients were already there. The stores which were looted had been helping themselves to the money in the neighborhood with a clear conscience. The unemployment rate was (and is) about three times that of the rest of Los Angeles, and respect for law and order are virtually nil because law and order don't respect the people.

Black Power has become the respected ideology. Basically, what this term implies is that people realize that they must get themselves together to get anything accomplished. Instead of waiting patiently for a hundred more years for something which is theirs to begin with, they have decided to actively try to get it. They know that "what the good Lord (the white power structure) giveth, he taketh away." But if one demands his share, it will not be so easily taken away. Another outgrowth is that Negroes realize that what is white is not necessarily right, and are becoming proud of themselves as people.

Since the riot, the power structure has started many programs to improve (and pacify) the population. These include teen posts, Neighborhood Youth Corps, concentrated employment projects and many other programs. However, these reach only a minute portion of the community. For instance, I was in a federally-funded advanced placement English class, but out of the 4000 students at my high school, only five of us benefited from the program--less than .2%!

I don't claim to know how the many problems of the ghetto, which are really our problems, can be solved, but I think its best course will be to follow the advice of such leaders as Stokely Carmichael. (See Black Power by Carmichael and Harrison for these views.)

-Jan Goodman

POETRY

THE DANCE

not love
 pass now into abstraction
 not the breathless ideal

but only
 figures and figures
 in time -- the dance

of people,
 satyrs, and angels
 in the joyous circle

touching hands
 that stretch
 for hands.

THE TASTE

understanding
 the nectarine's taste
 for the first time

she smiles
 freely,

holding the fruit
 gently between
 her fingertips

a small fire
 at her wet lips
 in the dawn light.

-jonathan brewer

LOS ALAMOS FROM THE SANGRE DE CHRISTOS

No better place than a secret city in the aspens
 For puzzling the gentle alchemist's rune
 And brewing suns from his equation.

Lofted beyond the peaceful ocean,
 two suns proved good for cleansing,
 And we never after questioned the mycologic spume
 Spread across Life's centerfold in colorful persuasion.

But here in the mountains, the mountains of Christ's streaming,
 The juniper and pinon stir to an older and more careful rhyme;
 Some heretic wizard might even call these breezes keening,
 Or cipher from the skewed and fractured continental spine
 A word to homo faber, sleeping in his suns' protection,
 That earthbreaks never crack in only one direction

-Dennis Higgins

SOCRATES

Tell me, O Socrates, did the sun shine
 The day you were brought to trial,
 And was there wood-smoke in the air?
 Did your nostrils swell with the scent of olive,
 And did your old, worn-out sandals
 Raise little spirals of dust
 As you plodded your weary way
 To that crowded, angry courtroom?
 Tell me, O Socrates, was it
 In the morning or the afternoon of Athens,
 And what were your thoughts along the way?
 You were old, and you were going to die!
 Did you really pause and smile at the faint sound
 Of little children playing in the street?

-Michael Landry

REVIEWS

M K GHANDI--NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE (SATYAGRAHA)

"In the long run men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, though they should fail immediately, they had better aim at something high."

- Thoreau -

This book is a collection of excerpts from Gandhi's writings, speeches, and testimonies, collected in order to provide his "findings in his own words and in as comprehensive a form as possible." As such it is neither an analysis nor a manifesto. The selections, all averaging two or three pages, are arranged under eleven sections without respect to chronological order. They range from discussion to strategy to exhortation and back, revealing glimpses of the historical struggle that produced them while catching the spirit, in direct and practical terms, of the eternal struggle to which Satyagraha is directed.

"Satyagraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force. It excluded the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish...It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak." These first words which begin the book contain within them all of the commentary which makes up the remaining four hundred pages. It is the greatest single affirmation of the man of God since for Gandhi Truth is "the only correct and fully significant name for God."

The comprehensiveness of Satyagraha is in its application to all aspects of the life struggle, principally through suffering and sacrifice. Since one cannot properly do evil to an evil doer, for instance, one must bring the evil upon oneself to show him what he is doing, all the while meaning no harm or hatred to the man, wishing only to destroy the evil act. The choice is free for both. That it be free for both is essential. To be otherwise would be only to substitute one wrong for another.

Ghandi understood this soul-force as being applicable to all areas of human life, from domestic quarrels to dealing with law breakers, and of course, to dealing with governments. His major endeavor is to dissociate violence from

our actions, to purify them of everything but truth itself so that their force could be tapped. "Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistake."

The strength required of an individual to cling thus to truth is not easily come by. Vows, therefore, have a central place in the discipline necessary to become a satyagrahi. These are meant to be followed not merely with respect to oppressive British colonialism but throughout daily lives. It is only on this personal and individual level that Truth can be realized. To realize an admixture is to realize Truth not at all; "...there is no sense in saying that one would observe truth 'as far as possible.'" The vows which Ghandi put forward are eleven: Truth, non-violence, chastity, non-possession, fearlessness, control of palate, non-stealing, bread-labor, equality of religions, anti-untouchability, and swadeshi (the principle of using goods made locally). The first four are dealt with in this book and they are by far the most difficult to attain.

Truth and non-violence are united as the end and the means towards it, Truth being unattainable without a life of non-violence or ahimsa; "All observances are deducible from Truth and are meant to subserve it." Thus of chastity: "Ahimsa means Universal love. If a man gives his love to one woman, or a woman to one man, what is there left for all the world besides?" Of non-possession: "If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor...From the standpoint of pure truth, the body too is a possession... non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts, as well as things. A man who fills his brain with useless knowledge violates that inestimable principle." The difficulty of such vows is not overestimated. Ghandi himself did not claim complete attainment and remarked that it was not possible in this life. Yet, under his presentation there is no alternate route to understanding and peace among men. This does not mean that everyone must agree about some truth to cling to. "What may appear as truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appear to be different truths are like the countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree."

The book continues with passages directed towards non-cooperators in prisons, various campaigns in the struggle for independence, and questions, all of which direct the application of Satyagraha to particular struggles and are perhaps better teachers by way of example than any of the more general ideas which stand under such action. It is a matter of action and intention mirroring and leading one another. Satyagraha is a principle of action and exists only through action. It is not particularly new or original; the questions Ghandi asks us are not new and perhaps not even unexpected. In almost every time someone has asked them and they cannot go unanswered.

-David Mischel

NOTICES

With this issue David Sills is ending his work on the magazine. SEVEN wishes to thank and commend him for the time he has given.

Jonathan Brewer is joining the editorial staff.

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