- Same-sex Families: Struggling for Recognition
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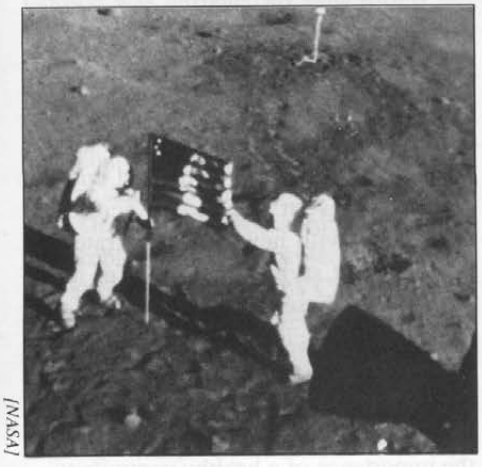

[NASA]

Front cover: Latvian girl. [*The Baltic Observer*]; Inset: Gay Pride Day, June 1994, Toronto. [Danny Ogilvie]
Back cover: Statue garden in Latvia. [K. Soutar]

ORIGINS
Current Events in Historical Perspective

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"Generation X" Takes Control

Youth-operated Social Service Organizations

At a time when economic uncertainty and decreasing government revenues have placed the welfare state in crisis, many young people are founding non-profit organizations. Based on public-private partnerships, these initiatives are increasingly characterizing social services in the 1990s.

by Erin Wright

The impact of the state of the economy on the prospects for today's youth has been deliberated *ad nauseam*. And contrary to popular Generation X stereotyping—that people in their twenties are self-absorbed, directionless and lack a work ethic because of a childhood polluted with technology and material excess—there are many young adults who are refusing to accept passively the dismal economic picture. Despite the fact that Canadian youth continue to face economic uncertainty, many young people have chosen community service and aiding others as a unique and entrepreneurial way of helping themselves.

> *"Citizenship has responsibilities as well as rights"*
> *Socrates*

Nineties-style social welfare

The idealism which surrounded Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's 1960s social policy initiatives and popular faith in the welfare state has virtually disappeared. Although Trudeau's initiatives won mass appeal at the time, it is clear that his social spending scheme was over-ambitious.

During the past few decades, Canadians have become accustomed to an extensive government social safety net which helps to ensure that basic needs are met. The recession, however, is forcing many social welfare services to look for alternate funding methods as the government's purse strings draw tighter.

In the 1990s, the combination of an aging population relying on an inadequate tax base has forced Canadians to confront the reality of over-extended services—such as health care—no longer able to meet demand. A flailing economy and high unemployment means that fewer people are paying into the system while more people are withdrawing from it. With a growing number of service organizations forced to look for alternatives, the trend towards privatization to compensate for these cutbacks has been almost inevitable.

Youth-initiated non-profit organizations

Recently, youth-operated social service organizations have proliferated and are meeting present social and economic challenges with new funding strategies, management styles, and youthful idealism. While these initiatives can be seen merely as vehicles for self-employment or personal achievement, these organizations are nevertheless having a positive impact on young people's attitudes about the importance of a healthy community.

Forced out of traditional industries

Erin Wright received her B.A. in Political Studies from Queen's University. She is currently working in television drama at the CBC and plans to attend journalism school.

because of dwindling jobs, many young people are creating their own opportunities by focusing on social development. While differing in approach, all organizations refer to their youth, energy and ingenuity as being instrumental to their success. These same Gen X-ers, burdened with the image of having a poor work ethic and no direction, may just be the ones repairing the national psyche and regenerating a lost sense of community. Perhaps, then, they embody the ultimate Gen X raison d'être: following one's heart to meaningful work, rather than just "getting a job."

Serve Canada

"Serve Canada combines private funding and youthful energy to meet local community needs."

Just over one year old, Toronto-based Serve Canada was inspired by City Year in the the U.S. City Year, a type of urban youth corps, began in Boston and now operates in over ten cities across the United States, and was a model for President Clinton's national youth service program. Whereas City Year operates as a three-way partnership with government, community agencies, and private sources to support the project, Serve Canada does not have any government assistance (although the organizers envision a model similar to the City Year partnership eventually).

Cynthia Godsoe, a 23-year-old from Toronto who recently completed a degree in Social Studies at Harvard University, founded Serve Canada along with fellow-Canadian and Harvard colleague Hugh Silk, 26, and social-work student Maria Muir, 24. Godsoe was intrigued by how different the social service environment is in the U.S.: whereas Canadians are used to government services, corporations in the U.S. are accustomed to contributing to the community to compensate for the relative lack of state welfare.

Although Godsoe admits that there are problems with the American system, she says that because of Canada's cutbacks partnerships between government, private interests, and other community agencies are the most realistic approach. Godsoe also believes that having private funding "makes organizations more efficient because they are forced to prove themselves year after year."

Serve Canada's program responds to the problems of homelessness, drug abuse, gang violence, and youth delinquency in Toronto. According to Statistics Canada, only 11 percent of all social service done in Canada is performed by those under the age of 25. Serve Canada's goal is to harness the energy and enthusiasm of the city's youth—from high school drop-outs to university graduates—in order to confront these challenges.

"Setting examples through action": tree planting with the Evergreen Foundation. [Evergreen Foundation]

A primary function of the organization is fulfilled by teams of eight members and two leaders who work in various service projects around Toronto for eight months of the year, with one day a week dedicated to education and career planning. For example, team members may work either in elementary schools as teacher's aids and running after-school programs, at the Daily Bread Food Bank sorting food, or conducting visits through the Ontario Paraplegic Association to assist people in their homes.

Godsoe says she wanted to start the program "to show that it could be done. I was sick of the Gen X stereotype depicting our generation as lazy and despondent."

Serve Canada, like many other private social service organizations, was initiated by people who benefit from a degree of financial security. Godsoe attributes the surge of youth initiated non-profits to people with affluent upbringings wanting to give something back. "The people who have the most privilege also have the most responsibility...it's time for individuals to realize what their responsibility is..."

The Evergreen Foundation

On a different track from Serve Canada, the Evergreen Foundation is "dedicated to preserving and restoring natural areas in the urban environment through education and action projects."

Kevin McLaughlin, 27, is one principle organizer of the Evergreen Foundation, a three-and-a-half-year old organization which initiates tree planting projects around Toronto, coordinates school ground naturalization schemes, and produces educational material.

"People of older generations are not at all living up to their responsibility...(T)hey advocate teaching younger generations about the environment, meanwhile they are doing all the consuming," says McLaughlin. Although he remains outspoken about issues which concern him, McLaughlin asserts that he is no longer cynical about the system in general. "I'm more worried about things I'm directly involved in...cynicism is self-defeating after a while." Instead, he believes in improving society by "setting examples through action."

McLaughlin says the main reason for the surge of youth initiated non-profit groups is the availability of one key resource—labor. Furthermore, he feels that many young people are unsure of what they want to do. Starting up a non-profit requires a certain "entrepreneurial element" which also satisfies young people's desire to make their mark in society.

Discussing his own funding difficulties, McLaughlin explains that because Serve Canada is a support organization—providing volunteers which assist service groups in fulfilling their mandates—they are in a good position to market them-

A Generation 2000 theatrical production encouraging young people to become involved in national and local issues. [Generation 2000]

selves to potential financiers. Funders want to feel they are part of a team of supporters: "'partnerships' is a buzz word in this business today." Particularly frustrating is the fact that many funding sources are wary of new organizations, and "want organizations which are created to support existing needs, existing programs."

McLaughlin, who graduated in 1989 with a degree in commerce from Ontario's Queen's University, says his motivation came from recent examples of "idealism" in business. He refers to *The Body Shop*, which began by not testing its products on animals and now supports numerous social causes, and *Ben and Jerry's* ice cream, who promotes environmental causes, as models of businesses "with a social component to them."

Like many soul-searching Gen X-ers, McLaughlin refers to the "emptiness" in many careers, making him question the energy people put into a job and what they get out of it personally. "Everybody wants to change the world," says McLaughlin, who also suggests that perhaps his generation is experiencing "'throw back' idealism of the 1960s," because, like the youth of that generation, "we grew up being allowed to dream."

McLaughlin also concurs that he has had tremendous opportunities in life: he and his partners Lindsey Taylor and Geoff Cape had to invest in Evergreen themselves by working for free and living with their parents. He mimicked the words of Peter Dawglish, founder of the Toronto-based development organization Street Kids International, who questions "if people from privileged backgrounds aren't going to change the world or at least be willing to try, then who is?"

Generation 2000

The future can only get better "if you create a strong generation of young people now," says 27-year-old Robert Barnard, founder of Generation 2000. He explains that Generation 2000's goal is to encourage young people to strive actively to make their communities better places to live. In a sense, Barnard believes in taking a bottom-up approach to solving social ills: problems of violence, substance abuse, suicide, jobs, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, and the environment are manifestations of root causes such as boredom, alienation, powerlessness, and fear of the future. "If someone feels powerless, why should they wear a condom?" Barnard asks. Instead, he advocates spending more time helping young people with esteem and control.

Making a difference where you can: kids participate in an Evergreen school grounds naturalization scheme. [Evergreen Foundation]

Generation 2000's main event is a cross-Canada tour, with participants from a diverse cross-section of society. They each provide a portion of their travelling expenses; the rest comes from Generation 2000's fund raising efforts and some government assistance. The participants are placed into groups who lead workshops in schools and community centers across the country to inspire youth to take a more proactive social role. The "action teams" which emerge are hooked into a national Action Network which is facilitated by Generation 2000 and provides information and advice on planning and acting out an idea. They advise groups to use the resources in their community, seek professional advice and involve parents.

A conservation established in Northern Manitoba is the product of one such group, aided by Generation 2000, "that wanted to do something." Barnard believes that among youth today "the big issue is boredom...they want to be contributing and TV isn't doing it any more."

When Barnard embarked on Generation 2000, he had no idea he was starting up a charity organization. Barnard calls it a "benefit" that they did not know how to do anything: the more you know, the less flexible you are willing to be. "The premise was to create an amazing generation—everything else filtered down."

A new generation: building "we" from "me"?

While "state responsibility" is the essence of Canada's welfare concept, current trends towards public-private partnerships are establishing new notions of "individual responsibility." Ironically, privatization seems to be encouraging a renewed sense of community by forcing organizations to make their services more accountable to financiers and encouraging people to donate their time rather than money.

Although there are fewer jobs available in the marketplace for young adults, there is no lack of work to be done, as youth non-profit organizations are quick to demonstrate. Working in community development can be personally rewarding. It also allows young people to be productive and help others, while acquiring skills and work experience.

Privileged enough to be able to dream, in a sense these Gen X-ers represent the ultimate stereotype of the romantic seeking personal fulfillment rather than a large salary. However, as such youth organizations grow in number, scope and accomplishment, it is difficult not to share their mood of pride and optimism for the possibilities of the future.●

Out of the Closet and Into the Family Room

Same-sex Families Fight for Recognition

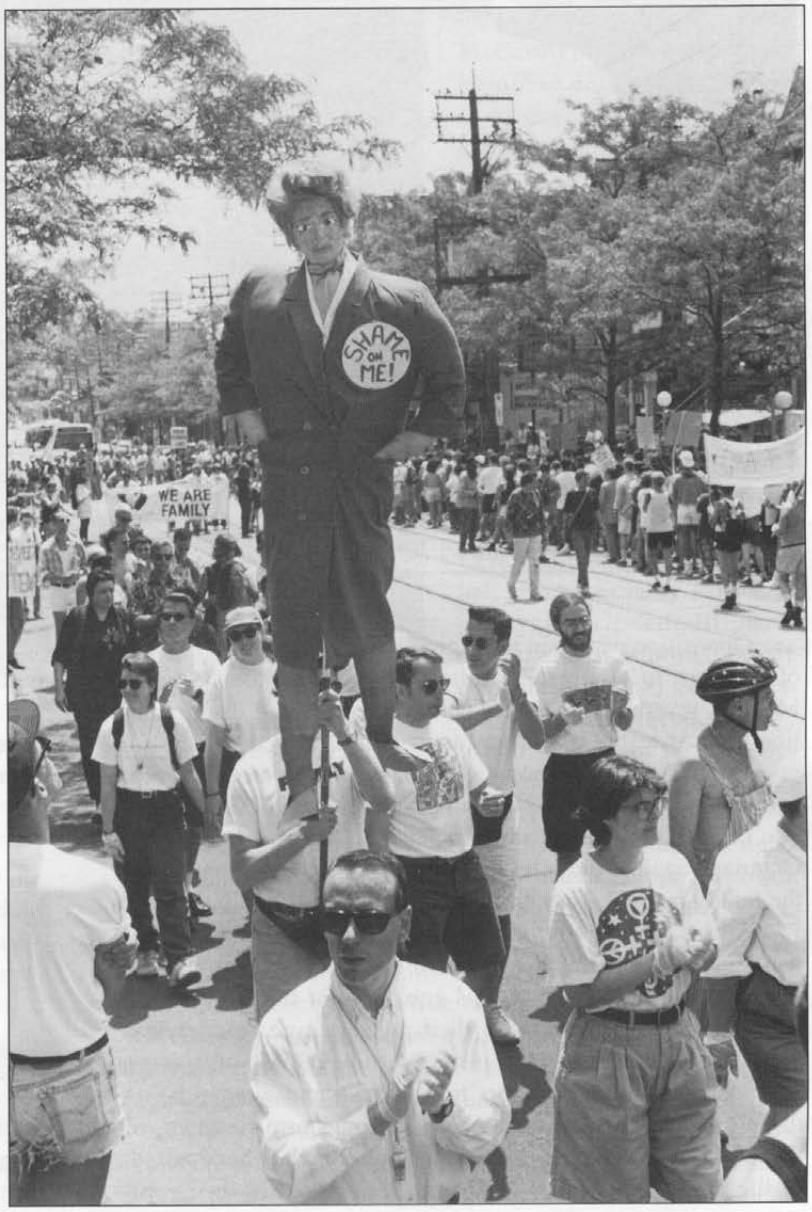
Debate over the recognition of homosexual families rages around the globe, as activists demand that such unions be regarded equally in law. In Ontario, an effort to legislate a progressive package of same-sex spousal benefits was recently defeated. Coinciding with the International Year of the Family, the debate over homosexual households is not solely about gay rights; it also calls into question traditional notions of the family and who can be considered one.

by Nicole Nolan

As evening falls on the gay district in downtown Toronto, they come in hundreds with their lovers and their placards. It is June 3. In six days, members of the Ontario provincial legislature will vote on the most extensive legal rights package for same-sex couples ever introduced in North America. Tonight, lesbians, gay men and their supporters gather in a show of political power.

If passed, Ontario's Bill 167 would amend the definition of "spouse" to include same-sex couples in 57 different statutes. Notable, the result would:

- require employers currently providing benefits to the partners of heterosexual employees to extend them to partners of homosexual employees;
- allow same-sex partners to change their names, enter into domestic contracts that grant the same property rights in the event of a breakup as heterosexual couples, and claim inheritance rights if the deceased partner has not written a will;
- change current adoption laws to allow gay men and lesbians both to adopt the children of their partners, and adopt unrelated children together.



Bill 167 defeated: demonstrators carry an effigy of Lyn McLeod who refused to support the legislation. [Danny Ogilvie]

Round one: leading up to the vote

Bill 167 was introduced in the Ontario legislature in May, 1994. After it passed the first reading, battle lines were quickly drawn in newspapers and on television sets. It proved to be one of the most passionate debates the province has witnessed in years.

Nicole Nolan was News Editor of The Varsity, the University of Toronto's bi-weekly newspaper last year. She will begin graduate studies in English at Rutgers University in the September, 1994.

On May 29, Toronto Archbishop Aloysius Ambrozic wrote a letter—read by parish priests to one million Catholic churchgoers—which condemned the bill and urged congregations to write letters to their provincial members of parliament. (Priests were instructed to provide paper and pens.)

Police protection: Bill 167 proponent Reverend Brent Hawkes is removed from Ontario Legislature by a latex-gloved officer. [Danny Ogilvie]

Opposition parties in the legislature made political hay out of the issue. In a dramatic flip-flop, Ontario Liberal leader Lyn McLeod reversed her earlier commitment to end discrimination against lesbians and gay men. She declared: "This bill goes beyond what the people of Ontario are prepared to accept and it goes beyond what I am personally prepared to accept..."

In letters to editors of newspapers all over the province, Ontarians against the bill pointed to the Bible, the sanctity of the family, and the innocence of children.

At the June 3 rally, demonstrators carried signs with slogans such as "Equal Taxes Deserve Equal Rights," to indicate the solid citizenship—and thus equality—of the homosexual community. They countered their conservative counterparts with banners that read "Hate is not a family value."

At the podium, speakers told of men and women being turned away from the death beds of long-term partners, of those who have no legal rights to the children they have raised, of life-long partners who receive no recognition of their commitment.

The day before the vote, in an eleventh-hour attempt to garner enough support from the opposition to pass the bill through parliament, the government removed the controversial clause regarding the rights of lesbians and gay men to adopt children.

On June 9, Bill 167 was defeated in the provincial legislature by a 68 to 59 vote. Several hundred gay advocates had gathered in the foyer of the parliament to hear the result. When it was announced, protesters called out "shame, shame." They were pushed out of the building by security guards wearing latex gloves.

Round two: the fight for "family" continues

While the political battle in the legislature was lost, gay activists say the war is just beginning. Although Bill 167 failed to become law, it was crucial in giving the same-sex benefits issue a high political profile in Canada and in galvanizing support around legal rights for gay men and lesbians. The Campaign for Equal Families—an Ontario-wide coalition of individuals and groups seeking equity across Ontario formed in response to Bill 167—has no intention of breaking up and is busily preparing to assail same-sex family rights issues in the courts.

Groups connected to the Campaign for Equal Families have sprung up in small towns across Ontario which, before the introduction of Bill 167, had no organized voice representing homosexuals. And Liberal leader Lyn McLeod is paying a high price for her turnaround on gay rights. Hecklers follow her around the province, accusing her of hypocrisy and political opportunism.

At a post-vote rally on June 23, Tom Warner of the Campaign for Equal Families told a cheering crowd of 700: "We have a message for all those people, those so-called proponents of family values. We're never going back." That night, the Campaign raised $7,000 for a legal defense fund to take same-sex cases to court.

"There's a phenomenal amount of momentum in Ontario," says Bob Gallagher, Toronto coordinator for the Campaign for Equal Families. "I can't think of an issue outside of AIDS

Senator Joseph McCarthy believed homosexuals to be risks to national security.

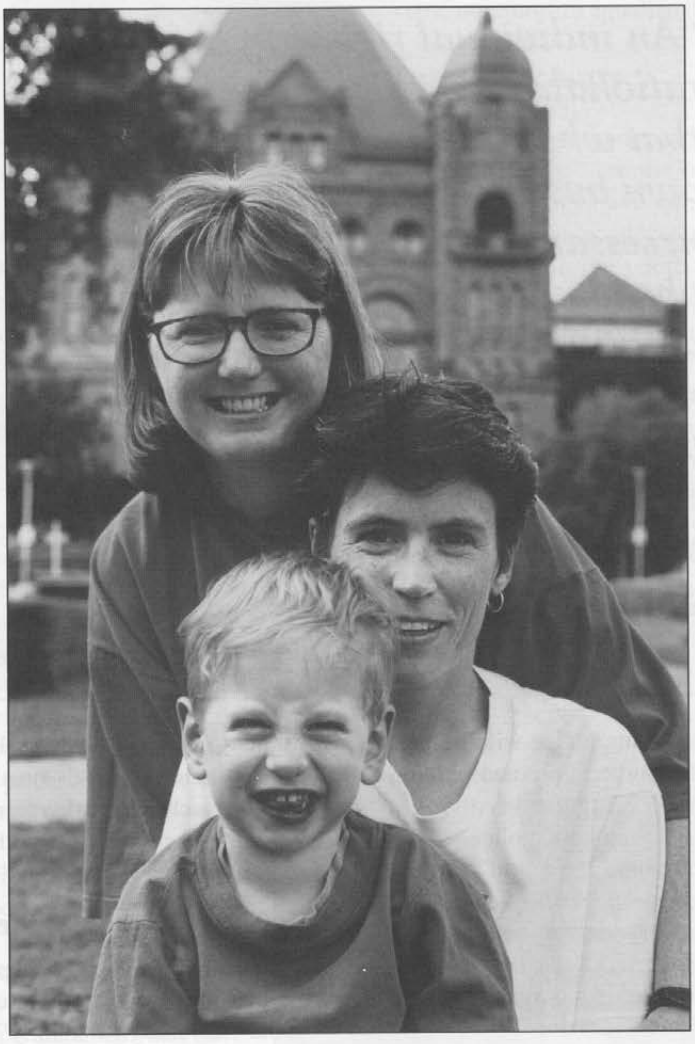
that's had such support and endorsement."

Advocates say the simple fact that family rights eventually effect all lesbian and gay male partnerships has enabled the movement to garner widespread support. For Gallagher personally, Ontario's lack of recognition of same-sex relationships was brought home last year when he was denied leave from work to attend the funeral of his partner of many years.

Lisa Jeffs, office manager at the Campaign, was denied Unemployment Insurance when she gave up her job in London, Ontario to live with her lover in Toronto.

"Luckily I have a job, but I ended up being on welfare for two months because of that. If my partner was a man, even if we weren't married I would have got Unemployment Insurance." Jeffs appealed her case to an Unemployment Insurance tribunal and won. However, the government is currently contesting the tribunal's decision.

Jeffs says the current state of laws on same-sex partnerships affects not only her employment benefits, but also her plans for a family in the future.



"Fighting to be a family": Chris Phibbs (middle) seeks to adopt Zak, biological son of long-time partner Chris Higgins. [Danny Ogilvie]

"My parents are strident right-wing conservatives. If I were to have a child and if something were to happen to me they would fight tooth and nail in the courts to keep the child and they would win. That prospect is terrifying to me. It's certainly a good enough reason for me not to have children, knowing my partner would have no rights."

Barricading bedroom doors from the state

The fact that same-sex benefits are being discussed at all is in itself revolutionary. Just thirty years ago, homosexual rights groups were so small and low profile that when the first American all-lesbian group, Daughters of Blitis, was formed in the mid-1950s, its members were not even aware that a similar gay rights group had been founded in 1950.

During the 1950s, a decade of the "traditional family" structure, homosexuals were for the most part invisible. The model family unit was composed of a married heterosexual couple—a working father and a mothering mother—and a few children.

Perhaps in an attempt to regain stability once the World War II dead had been buried, governments in North America and Western Europe enforced this societal norm. Homosexuality, considered a deviation from national ideals, was offered no place in society, and fell under particular scrutiny and persecution.

In the United States between 1947 and 1950, 4,954 men and women were dismissed from the armed forces and civilian agencies on charges of homosexuality. In 1950, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, under the influence of Senator Joseph McCarthy, recommended that homosexuals be dismissed from government jobs on the grounds that they were poor security risks because of their vulnerability to blackmail. In Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) mirrored the McCarthy era witch hunts, and sought out homosexuals also on the basis of their being security risks.

Throughout the 1950s federal agencies used lie detectors on men and women in government jobs to determine if they were communists or homosexuals. Homosexuality existed as a psychiatric condition, a crime, and as a police target. Even the American Civil Liberties Union declared in 1957 that it would not fight battles on behalf of homosexuals.

By the end of the 1960s—a decade of radical counter-culture social protest and civil rights movements—many governments in Western Europe and North America were liberalizing their rigid laws on such issues as abortion, obscenity and contraception. At this time, societal restrictions on homosexuality began slowly to be loosened. In 1967, after a decade of debate about issues of public and private morality, Britain decriminalized homosexual acts between adults. Throughout the decade, various states in the U.S. also began decriminalizing homosexual acts.

In 1969, Canada amended its Criminal Code to disallow prosecution of private sexual activity between two consenting adults. Then-Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau succinctly summarized the changing morality of the day, declaring that the "state has no place in the bedrooms of the nation." Though such legal turnarounds were considered revolutionary at the time, activists today argue that to tolerate acts as long as they remain invisible is a far cry from what should be full integration of homosexuals into society.

The shot heard around the world

Though protests sparked by police raids and officially sanctioned harassment of homosexuals were by no means

unknown, a new chapter of the gay liberation movement opened in the wake of the Stonewall riots in New York city in 1969.

During a New York mayoral campaign in June, 1969, police carried out a series of raids on gay bars in Greenwich Village. (Raids on gay bars were often used by incumbents during campaigns as an easy way to boost their public morality records.) On June 28, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a bar frequented by a working-class clientele of Puerto Rican drag queens and a few lesbians. But instead of quietly submitting as they had done in the past, the patrons of the bar staged a riot in the street, assailing police with bottles, cobblestone bricks, garbage, pennies and an uprooted parking meter. The riots lasted two nights, eventually involving a crowd of approximately 2,000 protesters and 400 police.

Stonewall was "the shot heard around the world" for gay men and lesbians, symbolizing an end to their silent endurance of discrimination by mainstream society and the beginning of an outspoken movement. This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark event, and it has recently been commemorated for its violent role in galvanizing a previously marginalized community.

By the beginning of the 1970s, organizations of gay men and lesbians had sprung up in cities and campuses across North America and Western Europe, and they began to make their demands known to governments. In a 1971 march in Ottawa, the homosexual community demanded some of the very rights which are being fought for today: the right to serve in the armed forces, a uniform age of consent for both heterosexuals and homosexuals, and equal rights for same-sex couples.

"An individual right can be rationalized partially on the grounds that what one does in private is one's own business...A relational right is necessarily a more public phenomenon and it involves family definitions. For all that the family in real life has changed, and not many people actually live in what people think of as the traditional family, people hold on to it as a symbol of some sort of golden age."

David Rayside

In Canada, discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is not specifically forbidden by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (adopted in 1982). However, homosexuals have generally been included under Section 15 of the Charter which covers groups not otherwise named. In Ontario, an amendment to the provincial Human Rights Code took place in 1986 which includes specific non-discrimination clauses on the basis of sexual orientation in matters such as employment, accommodation and services. What the Code does not address is the issue of same-sex partnerships or the definition of "spouse."

Defining "family": the buck stops here

It is perhaps this issue of "spouse" and the corresponding need for politicians and society to re-examine the legal—and emotional—meaning of "family" that has proven to be the biggest stumbling block to the furthering of equal rights for same-sex couples.

In the 25 years since Stonewall, demands for same-sex family rights have grown up alongside a variety of other gay rights issues, including movements to repeal sodomy laws and to incorporate sexual orientation in human-rights codes and non-discrimination statutes. However, gains in family rights have proven much more difficult to achieve than other individual rights issues.

David Rayside, a political scientist at the University of Toronto, believes family rights attract more opposition because they tap into public fears of homosexuality more than individual rights do.

"It's a more public thing. An individual right can be rationalized partially on the grounds that what one does in private is one's own business and one shouldn't be discriminated against on that basis. A relational right is necessarily a more public phenomenon and it involves family definitions. For all that the family in real life has changed, and not many people actually live in what people think of as the traditional family, people hold onto it as a symbol of some sort of golden age."

In addressing the rights of homosexuals, it seems, the buck stops with the establishment of legally recognized families. North American society refuses to equate a union of two people of the same gender with

"We're not going away": 1994 Gay Pride Day, Toronto. [Danny Ogilvie]

that between two of the opposite. Not unlike the decades-old concessions to tolerate homosexual acts as long as they remained private, equality for gays stops short of the threshold of the family home.

At a time when divorce, the single-parent family, step-parents, common-law living arrangements, the realities of domestic violence and other incursions into the world of the white picket fence are on the rise, a bold reevaluation of this "golden age" is necessary to keep up with changing times. The traditional family unit is no longer an exclusive or accurate description of the way most people live. An increasingly common suggestion is that we have reached a time when this notion of "family" should be defined along lines of love, commitment and caring, rather than by the inclusion of certain pre-ordained components.

International precedents

Homosexuals' demands for rights and recognition are not limited to North America. Brazil, Argentina, Japan, and China are among the growing number of nations who have gay rights organizations. South Africa recently became the first country in the world to incorporate a provision in its constitution barring discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Nonetheless, most battles for equal *family* status are being pitched in legislatures and courtrooms in the United States and Europe—with varying degrees of success.

The most significant legal recognition of homosexual relationships in Europe occurred in Denmark with the passage of the Partnership Law in 1989. Pushed into parliament by the highly organized Danish homosexual organization (LBL), the law gives same-sex couples the option of entering into "domestic partnerships" that have the same legal effect as heterosexual marriage. In the first two years after the Partnership Law passed, nearly 2,000 such partnerships were registered in Denmark. However, the Partnership Law is far from legislating complete equality. For example, Danish lesbian and gay male partners cannot adopt children, and a church wedding remains off-limits.

The Danish law has inspired similar attempts at partnership legislation in Scandinavian countries and has sparked interest in other European Community countries where homosexual groups are carrying out their own campaigns for equal families. In August of 1992 over 250 lesbian and gay male couples in Germany submitted marriage applications in a mass protest of exclusive marriage laws. (All of the applications were turned down.)

In the United States, an increasing number of businesses and city governments are allowing employees to claim benefits for their same-sex partners. "In the last five years there's been an explosion of activity at the level of private employers and municipalities," says Evan Wolfson, a senior staff attorney at Lambda, a U.S. legal defense fund for gays and lesbians. "Most of the action has been with private employers doing it voluntarily in response to workplace organizing. In the last couple of years there's been legislative action where various cities and now one state [Vermont] have adopted some measures to equalize the benefits [for state workers]."

Enter the courts

At the moment, same-sex benefits—such as pensions or health coverage—are the only area of gay family rights that most legislators have been willing to approve. However, issues of marriage, adoption, and same-sex parental rights are being treated in the courts. Since politicians, and the voters they aim to please, are unwilling to enact legislation, the courts remain the only solution. What many view as a fundamental human right will be fought out case by case.

Wolfson says judges are frequently more willing to make decisions in favor of same-sex rights than representatives with next-election jitters who run for the woods at the first sight of controversial legislation. "Almost certainly, equal marriage rights are going to come through the courts and not through the legislatures. That's because the discrimination is

A day in the park: official family picnic sponsored by the Campaign For Equal Families. [Danny Ogilvie]

so deep."

Lawmakers in Hawaii got a shock last year when the state's highest court ruled that a ban on same-sex marriages may well violate Hawaii's prohibition against sex discrimination. Ruling on a suit brought by three same-sex couples, the state supreme court did not strike down the ban outright. But they did send it back for review to a trial court and instructed the government to provide a "compelling state interest" that justifies the ban. If the case is lost in trial court, Hawaii will be set to become the first U.S. state to recognize same-sex marriages.

Courts in other states are also beginning to recognize lesbian and gay male couples as families. In a highly publicized case in Minnesota in 1991, a woman won an eight-year battle to become the legal guardian of her severely disabled lover. Karen Thompson and Sharon Kowalski had lived together four years when a car accident in 1983 rendered Kowalski quadriplegic. Thompson's application to become Kowalski's legal guardian was blocked by Kowalski's parents, who denied

[Kirk Anderson]

she was a lesbian. Kowalski's parents moved her to a nursing home in Northern Minnesota, far from her partner.

Although Kowalski was able to indicate she loved Thompson, her parents, supported by the courts, refused to allow Kowalski and Thompson to see each other. For years, Kowalski was denied rehabilitation treatment (unavailable at the northern Minnesota nursing home) and separated from her partner. Finally, in December of 1991, a Minnesota appeals court granted Thompson custody of her partner.

In 1989, New York state's highest court recognized same-sex couples as family for the purposes of rent control. Currently, a variety of adoption, marriage and custody cases are before U.S. courts. However, in a nation where homosexuality is still a criminal act in 26 of 50 states, and only eight states provide civil rights protection for gay men and lesbians, the process of gaining recognition for same-sex families is slow. "It's still very much a state-by-state, court-by-court battle," remarks Lambda's Wolfson.

With no comprehensive federal legislation in place to grant equal status to same-sex unions, homosexual rights advocates are not always winning in the courts. In Colorado, for example, in 1992 the state took action to preempt any guarantees of civil rights for lesbians and gays.

One step forward...

Advocates in Canada and the U.S. say that cases decided in favor of same-sex couples in the courts will act as a wedge to force elected representatives into changing the law. In Canada, where the Campaign for Equal Families hopes to pave the road to the legislature with court victories, response to same-sex rights cases in the courts has been mixed. Despite laws forbidding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in eight out of ten provinces, Canadian courts have often ruled against same-sex recognition.

In 1988, the courts struck down a Toronto library worker's appeal for provincial health insurance coverage of her partner and her partner's child. In 1989, the Canadian Human Rights Commission ruled in favor of Brian Mossop, when his employer refused to give him leave to attend the funeral of his lover's father. However, a Federal Court of Appeal struck down the ruling in 1990.

Currently, the Ontario Campaign for Equal Families is attempting to fill in a deficiency in Canadian court cases on adoption by aiding a court appeal by a lesbian to adopt the natural son of her partner. Chris Higgins and Chris Phibbs have been together for nearly ten years. Recently, Phibbs filed a request to adopt Zak, Higgins' biological son. The court battle to follow is like the struggle which will be undertaken by many who are "families" only by their own definition.

Says Gallagher, "In terms of any major legislation, it's going to be some time before we see something on the level of Bill 167 again, so in the near future our focus will be on court battles. We need to build up another load of court cases to force the legislature into action."

Despite considerable opposition, lesbian and gay advocates say they're certain that it's only a matter of time before same-sex families can claim treatment equal to those composed of a man and a woman.

"Most of us have a sense that this is going to be a lifelong battle," says Wolfson. "There's going to be enormous gains within our lifetime just as there have been in the last few years. But with every gain there's a huge backlash, so we'll probably be fighting over these issues for the rest of our lives...I think we have to see it as a long term historical battle." ●

Suggestions for Further Reading

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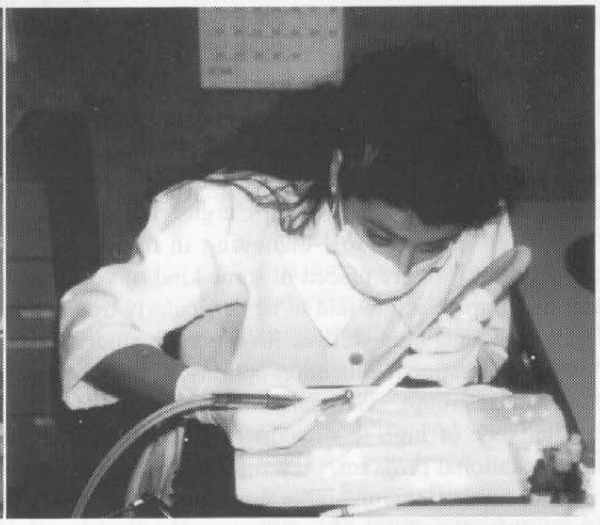
Bridging the School-to-Work Divide



[Metro Toronto School Board]

America's Vocational Education Reform

With the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993, the United States embarked upon another chapter in a century-long movement to prepare young people for a smooth transition from education to employment. Ambitious though the program is, critics question whether the legislation will be sufficient to solve youth unemployment problems in a rapidly changing workplace.

by Meredith Honig

Johnny Lane can take apart the engine of his Chevy truck and put it back together again. Though in high school he earned a 'C' average in his mostly vocational education classes, after graduation he achieved a Skills Certificate with distinction from a local automotive training program. At 18, Lane can now claim many inventions to his name, including a motorized skateboard. He has meticulously recorded his work in pictures and would captivate even the most short-tempered with his detailed explanations of how the parts assembled on drop cloths in one photograph became the engine of a paddle boat in another—a boat which he is now waterproofing for a test run on Rhode Island's Seekonk River.

With such early achievements, the question naturally arises: is there anything Lane cannot do? Ask him and he will be the first to tell you. He cannot find a job.

Lane is not alone among his American peers in his inability to find work: neither can over 70 percent of black teenagers and almost 40 percent of white teenagers, both those who have graduated from high school and those who have not. There is a growing fear across the political spectrum that this new generation of American workers—unable to find jobs or keep them for a significant period of time—will become a class of people permanently alienated from the United States' workforce.

There is no shortage of blame for the problem. Analysts assert that the growing diversity of America's young people has outpaced the ability of communities and social institutions to deal with their varying needs and prepare them for the working world. Young people are faulted for their lack of interest and motivation. The economy is blamed for the shrinking number of jobs available to young workers. The service-oriented, high technology workplace of the 1990s is charged with requiring adaptable workers capable of filling high-skill jobs, but not providing training, support or re-education to new and current employees.

Whatever the alleged cause of youth unemployment and high school drop-out rates, a consensus has emerged among education analysts and politicians that U.S. education and training institutions are ill-equipped to produce workers with the skills and flexibility necessary for the labor market of the twenty-first century. Numerous recent studies point in particular to the failure of public schools to ease the transition from school to work.

While agreement reigns over the existence of a problem, what to do to solve it remains fiercely debated. Questions of how best to prepare young people to become productive workers, to define the content and purpose of work-oriented education, and to decide which students should participate, are over a century old and have been the subject of many decades of programs and reform. Recent discussions have often centered around renovation of America's existing vocational education programs.

In its broadest sense "vocational education" can be under-

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stood as an educational program that prepares a student, directly and/or indirectly, for work of any sort. Yet, the term has come generally to be understood in a much more narrow sense, referring to specific manual skills training. Today, "voc. ed." includes a patchwork of education courses, programs, and schools operating with little coordination or collaboration for program development and without a coherent system of viable work-preparation options for youth.

Critics describe existing "vocational" programs as "warehouses" for students who perform poorly in academic subjects and which train these students on outdated equipment for disappearing, low-skills jobs. They argue that students who are considered bored or low-achieving in traditional academic classes opt for or are placed in some kind of vocational education program. Such is said to be particularly true for black and Latino teenagers, as well as low income students, who have "chosen" vocational education options in greater numbers than other social groups. Generally, "voc. ed." students receive little guidance or high quality instruction. Upon completion of their vocational program, they find it difficult to secure enrollment in institutions of higher education or to find work with possibilities for advancement.

Learning the skills of the new industrial economy, c. 1910.

School-to-Work '93

The most recent installment of efforts to bridge the school-work divide—the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993—became law in June, 1994. The Act, sponsored by the Clinton administration, promises to help states develop a statewide plan for the coordination and improvement of vocational education courses and programs. The Act's proponents hope that in the next decade all states will have developed such a comprehensive system to prepare students for tomorrow's workplace.

The plan is simple. Students like Johnny Lane would choose to participate in a school-to-work program as part of their regular high school coursework. They would receive both high-quality on-the-job training and school-based academic instruction. Benefits include workplace mentoring, possible paid work experience, and other support services. Most significantly, the plan requires that programs provide both high-quality academic training and a strong overall structure so that all graduating students will meet the standards required for a portable skills certificate, a high school diploma, and, where appropriate, a post-secondary credential. With documented work and academic achievement to help them, graduates would then enter the work force, participate in a work training program or attend college.

The question remains: what will this new system of school-to-work transition offer a young person like Johnny Lane that he does not already have? He is a highly skilled worker able to apply his knowledge to a variety of related work settings. Lane has both an academic and a work credential and a clear sense of his professional goals. Could such a program have made his transition from school to work easier? And what of those with lesser skill and interest?

What is most striking about the Act is that it has emerged under conditions not dissimilar to past school-to-work legislation and has resulted in familiar education reforms. Indeed, substitute "blacksmithing" for "automotive training" and Johnny Lane is a young man in turn of the century America caught in another period of rapid social and economic change. As the present problems underscore, developments over this century have been consistently unsuccessful in improving what is now known as vocational education.

The campaign to vocationalize America's schools

The institutionalization of vocational education—and the arrival of the very term itself—did not occur until the beginning of the twentieth century. Since then, pedagogical and political battles have been waged over the specific content and structure of school-to-work programs.

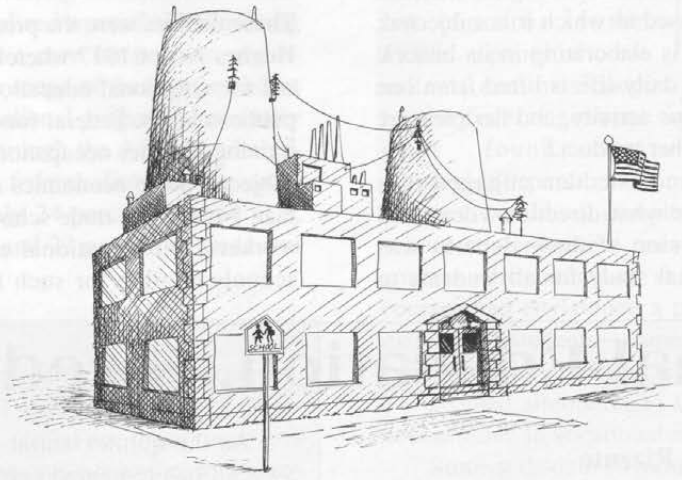
When the campaign to "vocationalize" America's schools began at the turn of the century, the circumstances under which it emerged were not unlike the social changes driving the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993. It was a time of drastic change in the demographics of school-age populations. Public schools were attended by greater numbers of students and by more diverse student populations. Between 1900 and 1920 the percentage of 14 to 18 year-old boys at work decreased from 43 to 23 percent and to 12 percent in 1930. For 14 to 18 year-old girls, the percentage decreased from 18 to 11 to five percent during the same intervals.

Much as they continue to be today, school and work were considered separate and distinct, one being the main alternative to the other. Trends in the labor market reflected corresponding changes in school populations: high school enrollments of 14 to 17 year olds increased from approximately eight percent in 1900 to over 44 percent in 1930. How could schools be managed to handle this influx of new and diverse generation of young people?

At the same time, industry was undergoing a dramatic

shift. A typical mid-nineteenth-century firm operated in a limited geographic area, engaged in a single economic activity (i.e. production but not distribution), and dealt with a single production line. In the 1850s, most workers were employed in shops with fewer than ten employees. Factories with over 100 employees were considered manufacturing giants. In contrast, by the early 1900s factories such as the Ford plant at Highland Park Michigan—admittedly an exceptional example—employed over 30,000 workers. Industrial output quadrupled between 1870 and 1900 and doubled between 1900 and 1920. By that year the largest five percent of all industries earned 70 percent of total corporate net income.

With such economic shifts came the rise of corporate capitalism, characterized by an expanding number and variety of white-collar workers, managers and firms. Taylorism, a new form of production which differentiated tasks and workers for maximum factory output, was gaining a strong hold on the organization of businesses of all sizes. Economic expansion and corporate development led business leaders of necessity to question how best to train workers for the new mechanized workplaces of the young century. How could the growing numbers of diverse employees be socialized to their new roles in this modern workplace?



[David Wysotski]

Business, government and educators debate the school-work nexus

The first business and industrial interests to advocate job training in public schools, such as the National Association of Manufacturers, wanted students educated in specific trades. Besides promoting industrial needs vital to the United States' economy, they argued that education was most efficient when it taught an individual only those precise skills and knowledge which she/he would need to know for the specific work of their adult lives.

Industry-minded educators also promoted such "social efficiency" as a rationale for changes to the way that students prepared for work. John Franklin Bobbit, an instructor of School Administration at the University of Chicago, perhaps best represented the new movement of efficiency-driven education. In 1910, Bobbit described four principles on which an efficient school would be based. Three of these dealt with school administration, but the fourth promoted his theory of "education according to need."

According to this idea, school curriculum was to be carefully adapted to categories of individuals. Schools were to teach each group of students only those things they required in their future roles in society. Such "necessary knowledge" consisted of the actual skills they would be called upon to perform in their future workplace. Courses were to be classified as either "academic" or "vocational." Educators would employ a process of scientific measurement to predict future roles and place young people in appropriate school classes. This overtly included the separation of girls and boys along gender-specific vocational tracks. In practice, this often covertly included the segregation of racial, economic, and ethnic groups by job types of unequal value.

Building on these ideas, others within educational sociology proposed a dual system of education for social efficiency. Chief among these was Columbia University professor David Snedden who was appointed Commissioner of Education for the State of Massachusetts during the early 1900s. Snedden rejected the notion that knowledge could reduce human inequality. Rather, he believed that human educational potential existed within biologically determined constraints. Implied in such views was a primary role for educators in measuring student ability and selecting out students with lesser intellectual ability for specific skills training. The latter would grow to fill manual jobs; academically talented students would fill professional and white-collar positions.

Each branch of this dual system, it should be noted, had vocational implications in the broader sense: to prepare students for a specific type of career. Nonetheless, both Bobbit and Snedden used the term "vocational education" to designate job-specific skills training for the non-college-bound. This distinction was fueled by support from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). As an expression of concern for their children's economic future, the AFL supported the definition of vocational education as separate, specific skills training. If their children were to remain workers, then practical skills training could lead to higher pay.

The AFL did fear that a stratified system of vocational education would curtail the upward mobility of their children. But they were more concerned that private business interests might gain control of a separate vocational education system. They worked primarily to ensure that vocational programs would remain within the jurisdiction of public education regulated by the state.

The philosopher John Dewey raised the loudest objection to this narrow definition of vocational education. Dewey, like the AFL, feared a stratified system. Unlike the AFL he did so not on grounds of school governance but out of his concern for how students learn best. For Dewey, vocational education was a pedagogical and curricular method which required that students be taught through hands-on activities tied to real-world responsibilities and roles. In order to study science and math, for example, students might plant a garden or construct a building.

Dewey used such skills and tasks as tools to help students develop their higher-order thinking and provide students with a context for expanding their knowledge. They would learn to become adults by engaging in adult activities with the guid-

ance and support of teachers, schools and their peers. In this way students would develop a strong sense of responsibility to become productive members of their communities combined with the capacity to fill many roles in society and the workplace. Thus, Dewey saw vocational, experience-based education as appropriate for all young people, regardless of their future occupation.

Jane Addams, a close friend of Dewey and founder of the Hull (settlement) House in Chicago supported vocational education on similar grounds. As she wrote in *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets* (1909): "If a child goes into a sewing factory with a knowledge of the work she is doing in relation to the finished product; if she is informed concerning the material she is manipulating and the processed to which it is subjected; if she understands the design she is elaborating in its historic relation to art and decoration, her daily life is lifted from one of drudgery to one of self-conscious activity, and her pleasure and intelligence (are) registered in her product."

Throughout 1915, Dewey and Snedden engaged in a debate in *The New Republic* over what direction vocational education should take. The division of these debates was clear: Dewey argued for vocational study for all students to lead to broad educational ends; Snedden promoted education in job skills for certain students to lead to specific vocational goals.

In the end, the movement for federal support of vocational education, initiated by business interests, was passed as an issue of national development and security. The purpose was to tie schooling more closely to business and industry. "Vocational education" became not a teaching tool but the end product: direct skills training for students who would not attend college. Snedden's vision became predominant and the fate of vocational schooling in America was narrowly prescribed.

Federal funding begins

These debates were the precursors to the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 whereby the federal government provided aid for vocational education programs separate from existing public schools. Federal funds were allocated for specific skills training in strict occupational categories—trade and industrial subjects, home economics and agriculture—for students older than 14. All-day trade schools, continuation schools for young workers, and vocational evening classes were the types of schools eligible for such federal assistance; public schools

Vocational Education, Swedish Style

by Marisa Rizzuto

"Don't guarantee them income; guarantee them a job" is a theme which dominates Sweden's economic, political and social life. And it has translated itself into a vocational education system—very different from the North American variety—which strives, with notable success, to guarantee employment to Sweden's children as they look towards the next century.

Work stands firmly at the center of Swedish life. Swedes equate employment with the well-being not only of the individual but of society as a whole. Tied in with comprehensive employment policies, social services and socially involved business interests, education is viewed as both the means to ensure ample work and a prerequisite to good citizenship.

In order to prepare children for the competitive labor market, the Swedish government has recognized the importance of a smooth transition between school and the world of work. In fact, the boundaries between school and work are far less clear in Sweden than they are in North America. At all levels of schooling, Swedes are rarely far removed from the workplace.

Children first encounter *Arbetsliv*—the Worklife—in first grade, at the age of seven. From primary school on, students spend a few weeks each year experiencing *Arbetsliv* in commercial, manufacturing and public workplaces. In the standardized system of upper secondary school the relationship between school and work is strengthened.

The majority of university students work full-time, arriving on campus only to attend lectures. Notably, universities all but require students to have work experience before they will be accepted. Working adults find a vast array of study circles, on-the-job training, job retraining and other recurrent education options available to upgrade themselves and their skills.

As the quintessential post-World War II welfare state, Sweden has remained committed to human investment as a basic economic principle. From the 1940s on, successive Social Democratic governments have striven to democratize all aspects of Swedish life. In the process, they have built one of the most comprehensive and universal sets of social supports known in the Western world.

Education has formed a key component of such social equalization. A 1944 School Commission report asserted that school instruction must "satisfy the demands of modern society and its labor market and that the individual student be given the education best suited to his ability... (I)t is the duty of society and therefore the school to help him get such education." Specific legislation towards these ends was being shaped through the 1960s as the outlines of today's system slowly came into place.

In the late 1970s, Sweden experienced both a population surge and a recession. As Swedish youth are only required to attend school until the age of 16, many found themselves both out of school and out of work upon graduating. New jobs were high-skilled labor jobs for which the nation's youth was untrained and unskilled. Youth unemployment figures rose dramatically. In tandem with an extensive reform of their employment policies—including mandatory job retraining, workfare and labor-market programs—the government responded to the problem by encouraging young Swedes to stay in school and acquire the skills needed for high-skilled labor, often through government-sponsored youth apprenticeships.

By the end of the decade, as the Swedish economy improved, the implementation of an integrated basic and vocational educational system for 16 to 18-year-olds known as upper secondary school was completed. Students enter upper secondary school upon completing compulsory school and

were not included.

Despite the government's effort to separate vocational education from regular public schooling, "vocational education" courses had already been introduced into American high schools early in the twentieth century by local authorities. A 1910 study of public schools conducted by the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education found that 29 states already had some form of vocational education in the educational categories indicated by the Smith-Hughes Act.

Although they were part of the public school system, these courses and programs were not dissimilar to those supported by Smith-Hughes. They reflected a clear bias against white-collar work and reinforced the prevailing definition of "vocational education": to provide specialized manual skills training for non-college bound students as a cure for poverty, unemployment, and national decline.The scope of these independent and unconnected public school vocational programs financially dwarfed Smith-Hughes. Funding through the Act was relatively marginal. By 1925-26, the total federal allotment for vocational education accounted for only 24 percent of total U.S. vocational education expenditures and 23 percent of trade and industrial education.

may enter university after it.

The upper secondary school system combines academic study (Swedish, Math and English) with practical study, training and "worklife" experiences in one of six disciplines: arts and social sciences, the care professions, economics and commerce, technology and science, technology and industry and agriculture, horticulture and forestry. In their final year, part-time internships allow students to work in their chosen profession.

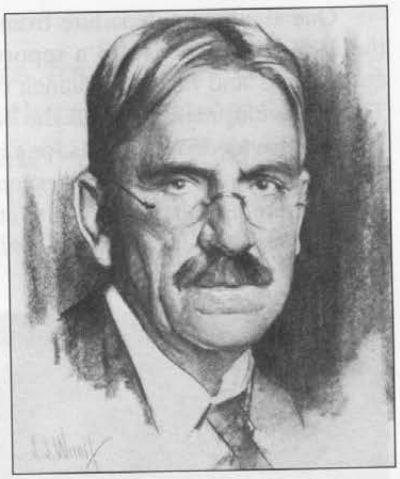
While successful, Sweden's vocational education school structure is by no means flawless. It is a conformist system. And young Swedes who refuse to cave into the pressures of regimentation and standardized education fall through cracks, leaving them alienated and unemployed. (However, it is estimated that a full 90 per cent of Swedish youth attend upper secondary school). Cognizant of the flaw, Swedish parliament passed the "Youth Guarantee" in 1980 making municipalities legally responsible for finding work and education for every 16 to 18-year-old in their municipality not attending upper secondary school.

Youth Centers, designed to recognize and encourage differences among individuals, were set up across the country to help disadvantaged and disaffected youth join the labor market. Each year approximately 15,000 Swedish youth receive guidance and training from Centers.

In the 1990s, rising debt and a stalled economy have further challenged Sweden's social service net, along with the educational structure. With unemployment as high as 14 percent over the past few years—considered a national catastrophe—many leaders are questioning past methods of ensuring the full employment so vital to Sweden's collective psyche.

Nonetheless, Sweden, a nation of 8.5 million inhabitants, boasts a youth unemployment rate of only five percent. Its commitment to its citizens of tomorrow has secured a place for this northern European nation in the ever-expanding global economy. ●

Not living up to expectations



Educator John Dewey (1859-1952): Learning through experience.

Despite the spread of vocational education both with and without federal support, it became clear by the 1930s that fewer students were choosing vocational education than had been anticipated—the cause of growing concern. In the 1950s, a panel of consultants commissioned by the federal government found that although 80 percent of all youth would not complete college, only 18 percent of high school students were enrolled in predominantly vocational courses. Proponents of skills-specific vocational education courses had envisioned a public school system in which the majority of students—namely those who would not attend college—would be enrolled in vocational training. This was to be a welcomed alternative to such students. Why then were they not enrolling in vocational education classes?

Student disdain stemmed from the relative social value of options available to them. In the early 1900s, as today, there was no mistaking that longer stays in public school and participation in predominantly academic coursework lead to higher-status professional jobs than did work in vocational courses and schools. It was in academics that students found the training in literacy and math skills necessary to any profession. And it was this track that held the greatest promise for advancement—upper level managers came from academic tracks while front-line workers arose from vocational education.

Moreover, separate tracks had been created in schools to meet vocational ends despite the widespread (albeit quiet) acknowledgment that basic public schooling already served vocational ends. For all intents and purposes, schools have always prepared young people for work both implicitly and explicitly—for example, by teaching reading and writing that will later be used in clerical positions. During the nineteenth century, although work skills were generally taught on the job site, schools had long aimed to teach such habits as steady work, punctuality, competition, and respect for manual labor—important lessons at the core of the new industrial economy.

Efforts to change these enrollment trends focused on improving the separate vocational education courses, not on the basic academic programs in which most students were engaged. The call was to fix the separate system of skills-based training called "vocational education" in order to increase opportunity, address manpower needs, and accommodate "average" and "low-achieving" students. These efforts did little to revalue vocational education, particularly as it became more closely associated with poor academic skills. Vocational education had fast become "remedial education."

One significant departure from "remedialization" came in the 1950s in response to a report on vocational education enrollments and the 1957 launch of Sputnik by the U.S.S.R. These developments fueled the National Education Act of 1958 to provide federal funds for a high-level math and science curriculum. Unlike 1917, the response was not a call for better worker training but for the cultivation of intellectuals: scientists, mathematicians, and engineers.

Learning skills for the next century.
[Metro Toronto School Board]

Indeed, international and domestic events of the 1950s fueled education reform of the most technical subjects and the most talented students—meaning further differentiation within schools. A new kind of work-oriented education developed and broke away from what had come to be considered vocational education. "Technical education" emphasized high skills and attracted the highest achieving students for its intellectual rigor and its link with prestigious jobs. The distance was furthered between vocational education and the more valued academic education.

Re-evaluating vocational ed. today

The passage of the Perkins Amendments in 1990—amendments to the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917—were the first federal attempt to address recent reports that today's students will not be prepared to enter the high-skilled workforce of the twenty-first century, least of all the 75 percent of all students who do not receive college degrees. The amendments called for four major changes in the direction of vocational education. Most significantly, Perkins marked a shift away from defining "vocational education" as narrow job-skills training and emphasized that all students should learn academics. Teachers would use workplace experiences and job-related curriculum as vehicles to help students develop reading, writing, math and problem-solving skills necessary to today's workplace—much as Dewey urged 85 years ago.

Under Perkins, students would be trained in "all aspects of the industry" they were preparing to enter—education in planning, finances, technology and production skills, labor and union issues, and health, safety and environmental issues. Such efforts were to be encouraged as a leverage for overall school reform. States were to provide greater leadership in stimulating innovation and develop performance assessments for measuring how well teachers and students were faring in the attainment of high performance goals. In general, federal funding was to be targeted to programs which integrated vocational and academic education through a coherent sequence of courses and work experiences. However, early returns on this effort have revealed little progress.

In the context of further redefining vocational education comes the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993. Essentially, this program is based on the main principles of Perkins and has been designed to support states better as they create systems of vocational training based on these principles.

Perhaps this renewed federal effort and redefinition of vocational education is once again a reflection of business and industry power in directing schools to address manpower needs—needs that now require high-skilled, flexible workers with strong literacy, math, and reasoning skills. Perhaps it is due to expanded and strengthened capacity to develop and assess such coordinated statewide systems.

Equally likely is that over the past century our understanding of effective teaching and expedient social policy-making has revealed that narrow, skills-based training leads to neither academic nor work skills for students. Redefinition in the 1993 Act has meant the improvement of the vocational aspect of basic schooling for all children: i.e. not providing students with vocational alternatives to college but rather with an educational setting that better facilitates academic education and the expansion of options both in the workplace and in higher education. It is a realization that if we want more students to receive high quality vocational training, "vocational education" needs to be redefined both in content and in the social meaning and value ascribed to it. ●

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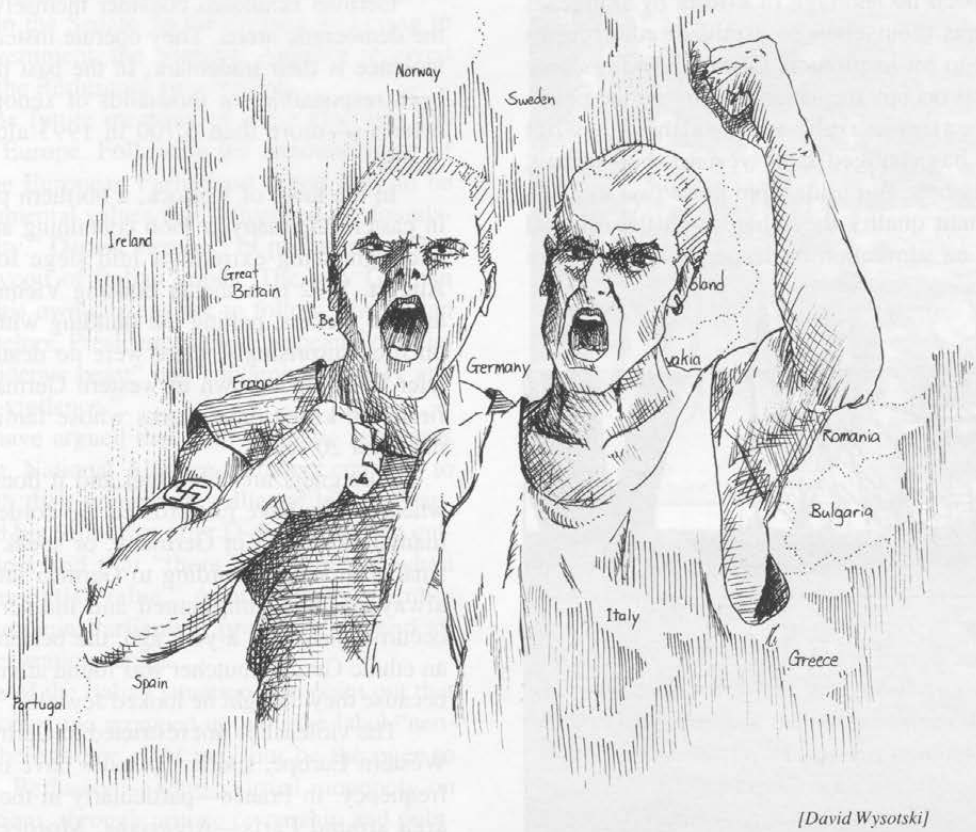
As part of a Western European movement towards right-wing politics, for the past five years neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi movements have become more visible both on the streets and in political seats. While comparisons with their namesakes of the inter-war period may be overstated, their presence in contemporary European society points to a new mood in which a series of issues—immigration, citizenship and economic policy among them—must soon be addressed.

Neo-Nazism and Neo-Fascism



[David Wysotski]

The Rise of the Extreme Right in Western Europe

by Erik Schatzker

Commemorations surrounding the fiftieth anniversary of the Allied D-day landings in June of this year have acted as a reminder that the horrors of World War II are not so far removed from today—that the past remains inextricably intertwined with the present and holds distinctive meanings for different peoples.

They have also drawn attention to the increased popularity and visibility of politically and socially right-wing movements in Europe. There is the rise of skinhead violence, particularly in Germany, in which disaffected young men are looking to the Nazi past for role models. And, with five members of Italy's National Alliance in the new cabinet of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, a political party claiming at least some ties to a fascist ideology now shares the reigns of power in Italy for the first time since Benito Mussolini.

More and more, the actions of modern right-wing extremists are being scrutinized, not only because they are disruptive and harmful, but because they invite historical comparisons with the violent outcome of the last wave of European extremism from the 1920s through the 1940s.

The terms most often used to describe skinheads and

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extreme right-wing politicians alike are neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi. These adjectives are used interchangeably by some. For others, Fascist is used to label any action or belief perceived as aggressively authoritarian or markedly right-wing, while Nazi is used when xenophobia and racism are thrown in.

Today's linguistic usage—and tendency to historical comparison—may very well be too loose. While much can be gleaned from the past, many historians argue that Fascism and Nazism are best understood as historical terms referring to specific events of the first half of the twentieth century. In reality, little direct link can be made between the Fascist and Nazi parties of old and the neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi parties operating in Western Europe today.

Still, there has been no shortage of efforts by skinheads and rightist politicians themselves to establish connections with a past they look to for inspiration. Certainly, today's neo-Fascists and neo-Nazis occupy the same territory on the political spectrum: the extreme right-wing (although what "right-wing" means has changed from yesterday to today). Many are also rabid racists. But aside from those two similarities, the only consistent quality they share with the original Fascists and Nazis is an admiration for leaders who died more than four decades ago.

Voicing dissent in Frankfurt.
[Ingrid Schenk]

From the streets...

Ausländer Raus is a German slogan that means "foreigners get out." Since the unification of West and East Germany in 1990, it can be heard shouted, day and night, along with racist slurs and the occasional *Heil Hitler*. The people doing most of the shouting are male youths between fifteen and thirty each wearing an identical costume: military surplus bomber jacket, black combat boots, and shaved head.

These skinheads (they too use the English word) represent a grassroots nationalist movement that strives to identify with Germany's Nazi past—a past they do not necessarily understand. Precious little is known about them because of their seeming lack of institutional framework and isolationist culture. Nonetheless, it is clear that these skinheads seek to rid the country of its foreign inhabitants, whether legal immigrants, guest workers, or asylum-seekers.

Many observers believe that the movement—although fragmented and lacking formal political cohesion—is rapidly becoming stronger, if for no other reason than its growing size. Neo-Nazi gang bosses are said to roam the German countryside recruiting young, disillusioned men out of beer halls and amusement parlors. Estimates of the number belonging to their groups exceed 65,000. Officially, the German government counts 82 right-wing extremist organizations with combined membership of 41,900, including over 6,000 skinheads.

German skinheads consider themselves radicals and shun the democratic arena. They operate instead in the street where violence is their trademark. In the past three years, they have been responsible for thousands of xenophobically motivated offenses—more than 6,700 in 1993 alone—and at least 28 deaths.

In the town of Rostock, a northern port on the Baltic Sea in eastern Germany, a mob containing at least 500 skinheads and right-wing extremists laid siege for five nights in late August, 1992 to a shelter housing Vietnamese and Romanian asylum seekers, pelting the building with rocks and setting it on fire. Surprisingly, there were no deaths. But three months later in Mölln, a town in western Germany near Hamburg, a firebomb killed three Turks whose family had lived in Germany for 20 years.

Foreigners are the target and it does not seem to matter whether they have just crossed the border, have lived in Germany, were born in Germany, or speak fluent German. The smaller attacks, according to German intelligence, are almost always random, unplanned and indiscriminate. In one that occurred just over a year ago, the beaten and burned body of an ethnic German butcher was found after skinheads killed him because they thought he looked Jewish.

The violence is not restricted to German soil. Elsewhere in Western Europe, similar episodes have occurred with relative frequency. In France—particularly in the southeast and in the area around Paris—Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians, and other Maghrebi (North Africans) are often the target of racial attacks. Between 1986 and 1991, 20 foreigners were murdered in France. Nineteen of the victims were Maghrebi and more than half the incidents have been attributed to violent racism.

Blacks and asylum-seekers from Eastern Europe generally are subject to the worst treatment in Italy. Racial intolerance there received international attention in 1991, when foreign news cameras filmed Italians harassing, assaulting and pelting stones at Albanian refugees fleeing from overcrowded boats. In Belgium, in the Netherlands, in Switzerland, in Denmark—in virtually every country of western Europe—stories of thuggery and abuse are not dissimilar.

...to the seats

Today, national political parties of the far right operate all over Europe. The proportional-representation structure of many European electoral systems helps foster political extremism—allowing even the most marginal viewpoints a forum. Seats in European, federal, regional, and municipal elections are often contested by dozens of parties, many of them radical. Coalition

governments are frequently the rule.

In recent elections the popularity of the European political right has increased. Over the past decade parties of the extreme right have won as much as ten percent of the popular vote. The largest and most successful parties of such groups include: the German Republican Party, the National Democratic Party, and the People's Union List-D; the National Front of France; the Freedom Party of Austria; the British National Party; the Italian National Alliance; the Swiss Democrats; and the Central Democrats and Centre Party '86, of the Netherlands.

In the most recent round of Italian federal elections, held in March, 1994, the "post-Fascist" *Alleanza Nazionale*, or National alliance, filled 105 out of 630 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (one by Mussolini's granddaughter Alessandra), and 43 out of 315 seats in the Senate. In the ensuing jockeying to form a coalition government, the National Alliance received five cabinet posts in the Berlusconi government.

Concern over the future meaning of these elections has been widespread in Europe. Following the announcement of the cabinet posts, the European Parliament urged Italy to be "faithful to the fundamental values that influenced the foundation of the Community." Danish members of parliament called for an economic boycott of Italian goods. The new German president cautioned his own citizens not to follow "the Italian example." Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission raged that "a hideous beast" had contaminated Italy and exhorted "concerned vigilance."

Commentators have argued that such dramatic responses are unwarranted. Yet, National Alliance members continue to fuel controversy with their comments. Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini expressed his belief that after D-day, European cultural identity was lost and that "there are moments when freedom is not an essential value." Another party member standing for the European Parliament promised to send all homosexuals to concentration camps.

Political analysts of the Italian situation also point out that it is dangerous to become too wrapped up with the label "neo-Fascist." Those of the extreme right may not be the ones to worry about. Rather, Berlusconi—whose virtual monopoly on Italian television stations, through private ownership and political power, has left him with great controlling potential—may well prove to be the wolf in sheep's clothing.

Although few official ties exist between right-wing politicians and skinhead gangs, national political figures have helped to legitimize extreme nationalism and xenophobia. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the French ex-President, has more than once referred to the threat of an immigrant "invasion" and has demanded that France close its borders to new settlers and embrace *ius sanguinis*, the principle of strict blood-citizenship. His opinions have been reinforced by another former French President, Jacques Chirac, as well as by Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the rightist and nationalist Front Nationale. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has run hot and cold over the issue of immigration, which he called Europe's "central challenge" in May.

During an Austrian provincial parliamentary debate in June, 1991, Jörg Haider, head of the Freedom Party, praised the Third Reich for implementing "a competent employment policy." He was subsequently forced to resign from his post as *Landeshauptmann*, or governor, of Corinthia, but stayed on as leader of the party and saw its popularity soar over the next six months.

Defining Fascism and Nazism

Seventy years ago, in Italy and Germany, Fascism and Nazism each found support within a desperate populace. For Italy, World War I was catastrophic. The country lost an entire generation of young men—400,000 in one battle alone—and was riven with grief and anger. By 1921, civil war appeared imminent, with rioting in Bologna, Florence, and Milan. Mussolini,

First European fascist leader: Italy's Benito Mussolini (1883-1945)

a former journalist, was able to capitalize on Italian frustration, the industrial strife that gripped Italy in the early 1920s, and the ineffectiveness of the parliamentary system.

In 1922, King Victor Emmanuel III conceded to the demands of Mussolini's Fascists and invited him to become Prime Minister—if for no other reason than to avoid a revolution. After heading a coalition government of Fascists and nationalists, Mussolini consolidated his hold on Italy in 1926, seven years before Adolf Hitler, as leader of the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers Party, or Nazi), became Chancellor of Germany.

During the 1920s, a constellation of forces came together to make Germany's post-war Weimar Republic increasingly unstable. The order for reparations payments written into the Versailles peace treaty (1919) paralyzed the German economy. Staggering unemployment and inflation prompted Germans to gravitate towards political extremes.

Psychologically, Germans considered the signing of the Versailles Treaty a "stab in the back" since they did not believe that they had lost the war in the first place—no foreign troops had touched German soil before the signing of the armistice. The Weimar government received the brunt of the frustration, anger and blame over the settlement.

For many veterans, World War I may have been a horrible experience but one that nonetheless marked a time of great national unity, when soldiers and citizens had felt a great sense

of belonging and comraderie. In the aftermath years, this romantic sense of connection was lost in bitter factional politics and economic competition. Many Germans sought to retrieve their nation's wholeness.

While their substance and style were certainly singular, Nazism and Fascism were not entirely dissimilar. Both existed as "anti" movements, defined less by an ideology or coherent set of beliefs than by a nationalistic anti-ideology, a negative reaction to communism, socialism, international finance, Western capitalism, and the League of Nations. These were all symbols of the modern world and the perceived isolation of the individual in it. Professor Thomas Childers of the University of Pennsylvania has called the Nazis "a catch-all party of protest."

Both sought to establish a strict authoritarian state based on a new arrangement of economic life (known as Corporatism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany) whereby government, business and workers would act as one unit dedicated to maximizing productive output while providing the highest possible standard of living to society.

Most significantly, both movements were simultaneously directed and personified by their leader: Hitler, *der Führer*, and Mussolini, *il Duce*. The prominent characteristics of Fascism and Nazism—the populist following, the imperialist drive, the military style, the emphasis on masculine authority, and the affinity with violence and conflict—were all affixed to the single, charismatic leader of the party, the mesmerizing orator. This was a secular religion in which society would act in unity through the leader.

Historian Robert Wistrich captured the remarkable nature of this leader figure while commenting in *The Longest Hatred*, a documentary film about the history of Jewish persecution. "In National Socialism...Adolf Hitler is presented as a kind of messianic Christ figure, only of a German kind, with a sword in his hand, who has come to purify and cleanse the world of an original sin." With his bombastic oratory style and penchant for posturing whenever in public, Mussolini too orchestrated a divine status for himself.

Military style, masculine authority: boy blackshirts emulate Il Duce's posture.

Historians are deeply split today over the role of ideology and the leader, theoretically so important, in the reality of Fascist and Nazi rule. The German historian Hans Mommsen has called Hitler a "weak dictator" who maintained far less control over the direction of policy than traditionally been thought because of the *Fuhrer's* tendency not to take a side in decision-making debates.

During the inter-war period, a number of other right-wing extremist parties flourished, particularly in Spain and France. Indeed, France, with three such parties in the political mainstream, teetered on the brink of a "fascist" revolution in February 1934. In Spain, the fascist Nationalists under the leadership of Francisco Franco emerged victorious from a bloody civil war in 1939 and established a dictatorship that lasted until Franco's death in 1975. And in Great Britain, Sir Oswald Mosley organized the "blackshirts" and touted his political vision in the salons of the aristocracy. As radical parties of the extreme right, the Spanish Falange and the French Faisceau, Action Française, and Croix de Feu shared certain—though by no means all—qualities with the Italian Fascists and German Nazis. In its specifics, Fascism was unique to each country.

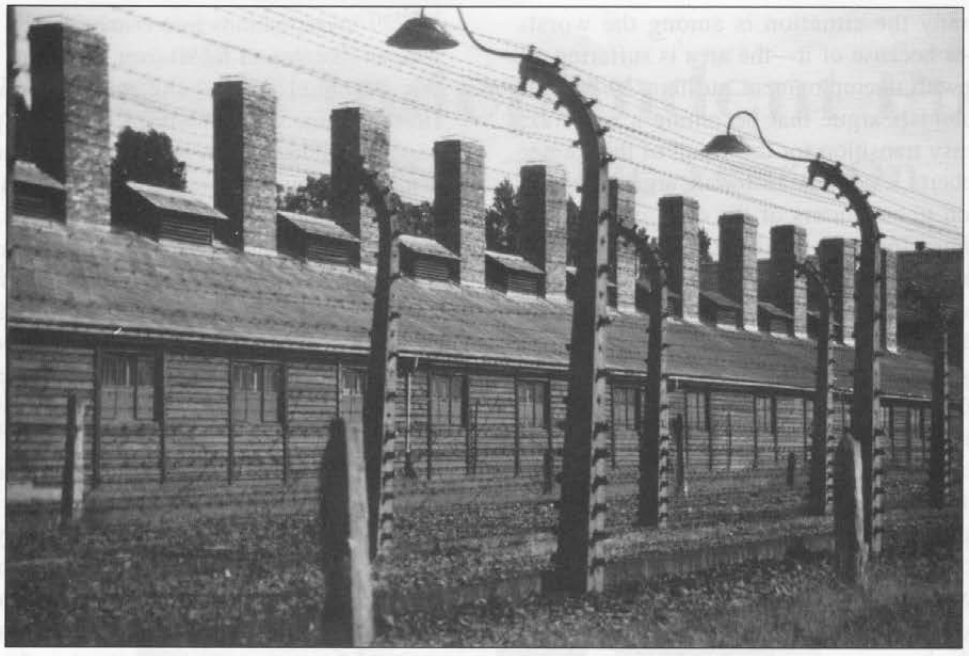
The monstrosity of its rule

Neither Mussolini nor Hitler was ever internally defeated once installed in power. Rather, both were the architects of their own demise. As Juan J. Linz explains, "Fascism was displaced from the political scene, not only by its failure to satisfy the expectations of many of its supporters but by the monstrosity of its rule, particularly in the case of Nazism, and ultimately by its involvement in the war and its defeat in 1945."

Until 1934 *il Duce* was the sole fascist national leader, and model, for Europe. Soon after the March 5, 1933 elections, Hitler, buoyed by the success of his political maneuvering, began to incorporate racism into the dictatorial style of leadership he borrowed from Mussolini. Gradually, Mussolini deferred to the *Führer* and the Nazi system of rule, mimicking in Italy its style of propaganda, its emphasis on mass mobilization, and its increasingly anti-Semitic policies.

By 1939, Nazism had left a striking mark, first on Germany, and then on Western Europe. Nazi Germany produced a miraculous five-year turnaround in the national economy: massive industrial redevelopment, near-full employment (from 6 million unemployed in 1933) and military rearmament. Hitler also redefined German society according to the Nazi ideal which emphasized adherence to authority, Aryan superiority, subordination of women to men and the importance of German unity.

His party introduced a series of laws that excluded and repressed those who did not conform to the ideal, either racially or politically. For example, in April, 1933 Jews were barred from government service, universities, and professions. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws stripped them of virtually all remaining civil rights. Then, in order to create a great German (*GrossDeutsch*) state, Hitler began the series of invasions that would lead him into Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, France, the Soviet Union and others.



The Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz: an ever-present reminder of the need for vigilance. [Aldis Purs]

Three decades of silence

Hitler's suicide on April 30, 1945 combined with Mussolini's execution only days before, effectively buried the extreme right in post-war European politics. With Allied occupation forces stationed throughout Europe, there was little room for any Nazi or Fascist holdovers to organize—especially true once the horrors of the Nazi regime were made public.

In Western Europe, the Allies opted to rebuild, not punish Germany as they had—to disastrous effect—after the First World War. From 1948 to 1952 the Organization for European Economic Cooperation administered $17 billion worth of American Marshall Plan aid earmarked for European industrial redevelopment. Over the next 15 years it produced phenomenal economic results, notably in the three countries where the extreme right flourished during the inter-war period: in Germany, a 6.8 percent average annual rate of growth of output per capita between 1948 and 1962; in Italy, 5.6 percent; and in France, 3.4 percent. The demands for production became so acute that some countries had to import guest workers.

During the Cold War, Western Europeans enjoyed relative political peace. American influence and military presence buoyed democracy, and the extreme right found few opportunities to organize. Mainstream politics co-opted anti-communism, thereby removing what had been a prime mobilizing factor for Fascism and Nazism. In West Germany, where democracy grew strong and where a new constitution guarded against a return to Nazism, membership in extreme right-wing organizations dropped from 76,000 to 17,300 between 1954 and 1979.

In Germany, while political aspects appeared purged, the Nazi past continued to have an impact on post-war politics, identities, attitudes and actions. Living with the guilt and trauma of a lost war—one in which the very notion of a "crime against humanity" was created—posed cultural dilemmas. "Were Germans inherently violent and warlike, or was the Nazi era an aberration?" was a question that, while not always discussed, was at the front of German's minds. The West German public were *betroffen*, which Ian Buruma, in his *Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, translates: "to be reduced to silence by a feeling of guilt—to be made speechless."

East Germans did not have to face the repercussions of the Nazi past in the same manner as their Western compatriots. They lived instead with official proclamations asserting that, as communists, East Germans were heroic resistors to Nazism while their Western neighbors had been its primary perpetrators.

From the 1980s to the 1990s

During the 1980s widespread nationalism and xenophobia began to reappear across Western Europe—partly in response to a worsening economy, to the arrival of a new generation and to the break-up of the Soviet Union. Since then, right-wing extremism has outpaced communism to become the most popular radical political alternative, especially since the landmark fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

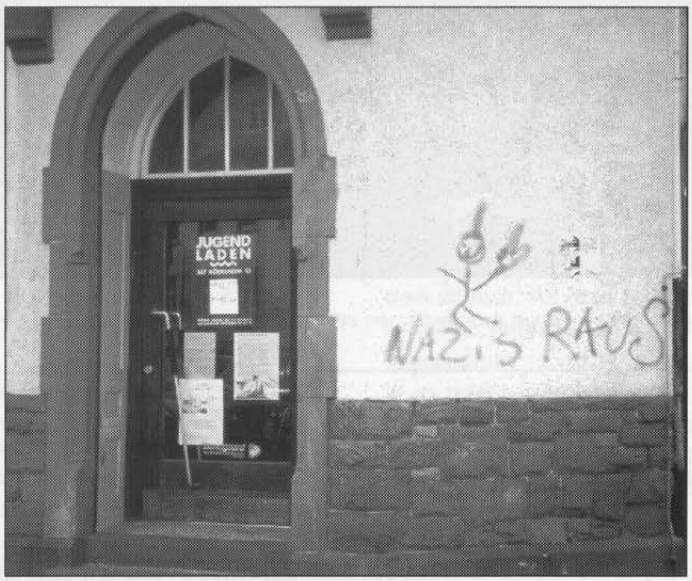
Europe is still feeling the effects of the collapse of Soviet communism. Western Europe has also experienced a massive population immigration. In France and Germany, for example, the influx of millions of refugees is straining social services and local economies. As well, Eastern European governments, such as Ukraine and Russia, have begun to rely on Eastern aid as key to basic survival.

Combined, the global recession and the eastern burden have had a serious impact on economies: standards of living have dropped and unemployment has increased dramatically. Across the continent, asylum-seekers and guest workers have become a largely unwelcome commodity. At the same time, plans to construct the European Community have created fears of homogeneity and loss of national pride and culture.

The insecurity that so many Europeans feel about their identities, their jobs, and their future has fueled the rise of the extreme right. Local and national parties hold public rallies to stir fear and make promises: to end immigration, to send all guest workers and unwelcome foreigners "home," to nationalize businesses currently under foreign control, and to crush the liberal opposition.

In eastern Germany the situation is among the worst. Despite unification—or because of it—the area is suffering an economic depression with unemployment pushing 30 percent in many areas. Sociologists argue that becoming a neo-Nazi skinhead may be an easy transition for the youth of the former DDR. Geoffrey K. Roberts, a political historian, argues that the characteristics common to supporters of the extreme right are almost identical to those fostered by the former communist regime: gang members pledge allegiance to authority, claim to possess an absolute truth and clear ideological distinctions between friend and foe, and desire a homogeneous populace.

With unification, residents of the DDR were guaranteed all the benefits that German citizenship gave residents of West Germany. But along with the comforts of social security came the demands of an open border. When the German constitution was drafted under Allied supervision in 1949, Article 16, section two stated that "persons persecuted for political reasons enjoy the right of asylum." Because the right is constitutional, it was extended to the eastern *Länder*, or provinces, with unification. Yet, the German government paid little heed to warnings that the East was incapable of providing asylum and failed to realistically assess the ability of local Eastern authorities to protect foreigners. Asylum seekers were attacked regularly. Under pressure from political conservatives and right-wing extremists, Germany amended Article 16 in 1993, a move that prompted widespread international criticism.



"Nazis Get Out": Graffiti on a center for teen counselling, Frankfurt. [Ingrid Schenk]

In Germany today, neo-Nazis contrast the socio-economic instability of the new *Deutschland* with the "order" and "stability" of the Third Reich. For their efforts, right-wing extremist parties find themselves winning more German votes municipally, provincially, and federally. In doing so, they are also succeeding, not necessarily fatally, in drawing mainstream German politics to the right.

Confronting neo-Fascists and neo-Nazis

German opposition to the right-wing radicals is strong. Over the past few years numerous marches commemorating the Holocaust have been held and protests against neo-Nazism have been frequently staged—many of them attended by the President himself. Also, studies seem to indicate that Germans have growing faith in a democratic system. In 1982, 81 percent of people aged 18 to 21 felt that voting was an effective political measure, while in 1950, only 44 percent of men and only 40 percent of women in the same age group felt the same way.

Nevertheless, the German government has only lately begun to attend to the problems of xenophobic nationalism and neo-Nazi violence. Between January and September, 1993, German Public Prosecution Offices and Courts launched 18,729 investigations into crimes linked to right-wing extremism, an increase of 6,690 over the entire 1992 year. In December, Michael Peters, the man responsible for the Mölln firebombing, was sentenced to life in prison, the first such penalty handed out in response to a hate murder. In January, after a wheelchair-bound girl from Halle, an eastern town, alleged that three skinheads had carved a swastika in her cheek the authorities mounted a manhunt that employed over one hundred law enforcement officers and lasted for days.

Criminal proceedings against German right-wing extremists do not always result in conviction, but the rate has been rising. Through the first three quarters of 1993 there were 1,561 such convictions, of which 88 imposed a prison sentence or youth custody of two years or more. Harsh sentences could become more common if the Federal Ministry of Justice succeeds in passing a bill that would provide the German legal system with additional legislative measures to prosecute anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi violence.

To stem the rise of neo-Fascism and neo-Nazism, other countries will have to follow the German example and invest their courts with the power to meet the extreme right-wing on legal grounds—that is, if their citizens want them to. In Germany, Franz Schönhuber's right-wing Republican Party already has 23,000 members who will oppose the new legislation. And with the recent success of the *Alleanza Nazionale* in Italy and the perennial popularity of Le Pen's Front Nationale in France, voters in Western Europe may not be blindly marking ballots for neo-Fascist and neo-Nazi parties. The votes may be cast in protest. They may also be cast with conviction. In either case, Europeans must begin an economic, political, social and psychological soul-searching if they are successfully to confront the root causes of such extremism.●

Suggestions for Further Reading

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Towards an Independent Future

The Baltic States Three Years On

In 1991, the Baltic States—Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia— regained their independence after half a century of Soviet rule. Although each country has a unique history and culture, they have woven parallel courses through the centuries as small nations struggling to assert themselves between expansionist neighbors. Paying particular attention to Latvia, Aldis Purs examines the challenges faced by the Baltics as they attempt to rebuild their nations economically and politically.

by Aldis Purs

In the chaotic days during and after the failed attempt by hard-line Communists to reassert central Soviet authority and oust Mikhail Gorbachev in August, 1991, the three Baltic Soviet Republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia seized the opportunity to reestablish their sovereignty. Western powers wasted no time in recognizing their independence and Boris Yeltsin—then President of the Russian Republic and emerging as a popular hero—quickly followed suit.

Months later, in December, 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was officially dissolved. In just a few short years since Gorbachev initiated his programs of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness)—opening the floodgates of hitherto buried national aspirations—the Baltic States were finally able to plot their own course for the future.

Nestled on the shores of the Baltic Sea, the destinies of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia have inevitably lain within the larger geopolitical context of the strategic region they inhabit. Throughout history, expansionist neighboring powers—Germans, Poles, Swedes and, most recently, Russians—have decided their fate. Today, forging ahead as independent states, they are struggling also to overcome the legacy of Soviet rule.

Early history: serfdom at home

Germanic Teutonic Knights conquered the early Baltic pagan tribes of modern-day Latvia and Estonia during the twelfth century. This knightly order established a feudal society throughout the region with German lords and clergy ruling over the native peasantry.

In the mid-sixteenth century, Russia attempted its first expansion into the Baltic region in Ivan the Terrible's Livonian War (Livonia was essentially comprised of Latvia and Estonia). This campaign was disastrous for Russia, and provided the opportunity for Sweden and Poland to partition much of the Baltic region between them. However, both lacked the means to administer the Baltics effectively, and relied instead on local German gentry already there.

Lithuania developed as a separate unit from its Baltic neighbors and merged with Poland at the end of the fourteenth century. Over time, it became a junior partner in the political union as Polish power increased. Eventually, Lithuanians were

At long last: a Latvian woman reads the Declaration of Independence, August, 1991. [The Baltic Observer]

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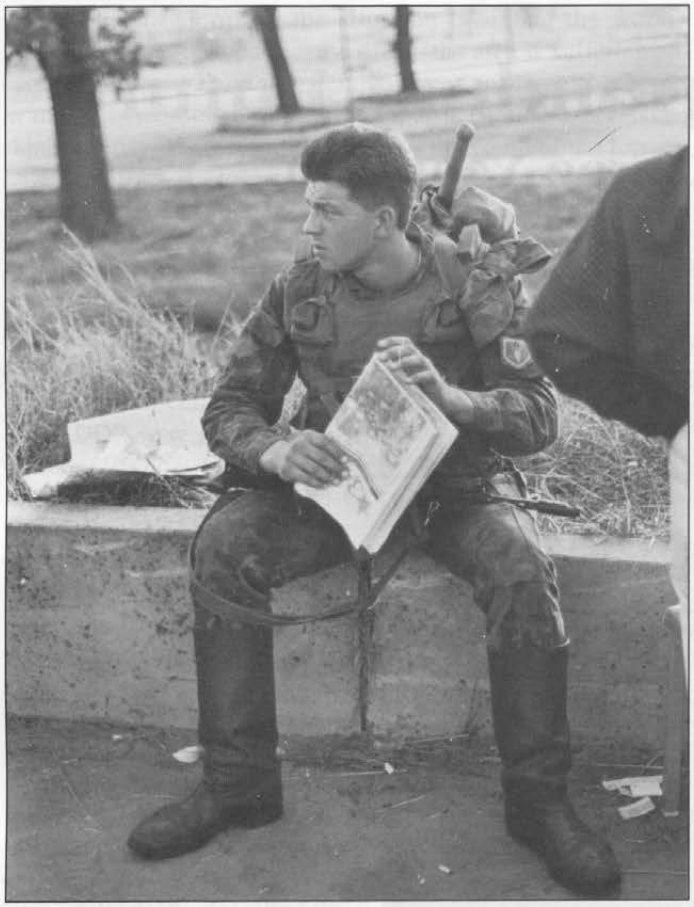


Preparing to leave: controversy surrounds the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Baltics. [The Baltic Observer]

subordinated to Polish lords—not unlike Latvians and Estonians under German gentry.

By the end of the eighteenth century, between the reigns of Russian rulers Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, the entire Baltic region (including the Lithuanian area which was taken from Poland) was annexed and integrated into tsarist Russia. The German gentry pledged loyalty to Russia in exchange for their continued role as domestic masters of the Baltics. German remained the language of administration, education and religion. In Lithuania, the ruling elite remained Polish.

The nineteenth century was a turning point in Baltic history, as fundamental economic changes created the conditions for the emergence of Baltic nationalism. Baltic serfs were freed in the early 1800s, but initially on terms beneficial only to the elite. It was not until the middle of the century that the peasantry was granted the right to purchase land and move freely, allowing for the gradual establishment of semi-prosperous small landholders, and for urban migration to alleviate landlessness.

National awakenings

The Latvian and Estonian sense of nationality was poorly defined prior to the mid-nineteenth century. Educated Germans studied the peasantry's folk traditions and language at the turn of the nineteenth century, but more as a fashionable exercise in anthropology, than serious study of the nations they inhabited. Baltic peasants were simply one of the many peasant nations of East Europe; nations "without history", which had no indigenous nobility or previous state entities. The few Baltic peasants who acquired an education germanicized themselves, adopted Germanic surnames, and immersed themselves in German culture and society (or, in the case of Lithuania, assumed Polish identities). Identity was not defined by ethnic blood, but rather by social standing.

In the 1800s, slowly but surely, educated Balts began to challenge the invisibility of their national identity. By the 1860s, Latvian students at the German University of Dorpat (in present day Estonia) had absorbed many of the ideas of romantic German philosophers about the nationalities of East Europe. These early nationalists defended Latvian customs and the Latvian language, and began to study Latvian history. Had it not been for a series of dramatic economic and demographic changes that reshaped Baltic society, this initial handful of poets, writers and ethnologists would have faced perhaps an insurmountable obstacle to national awakening in a society dominated by powerful German elites.

At the end of the nineteenth century the tsarist government in Russia pursued rapid industrialization that enormously benefitted the Baltic region. Riga became one of the busiest ports and an important industrial center in the empire. As thousands of landless Baltic peasants streamed into Riga and other Baltic towns, they found employment in the growing industrial sector. These sizeable concentrations of workers, coupled with the emerging rhetoric of national identity, swamped the centuries old system of gradual assimilation and Germanization.

Two solitudes: socialism and nationalism

The growing working class toiled in horrible conditions common to early industrialization, and identified with the rising socialist movement in Russia. By the 1890s many Balts had seemingly turned away from specifically nationalist aspirations to embrace Social Democracy. As the twentieth century approached, the debate between a socialist and nationalist future emerged as a dominant theme in the Baltic provinces—one that was to recur well into the twentieth century.

From the 1870s to 1905, a dizzying array of ethnic, economic and political alliances paraded through Baltic politics. Russian administration and influence seemed distant and remote, and early nationalists hoped to replace the German domination with a Baltic elite.

With economic modernization of the empire, however, strong centralizing forces increased Russian presence in daily life. Baltic nationalists, alarmed at undertones of russification, began to question the common cause they had made with Russians to end German control and started instead to idealize Baltic autonomy. However, Baltic social democrats viewed nationalism as a bourgeois concept, and allied themselves with the Russian Social Democratic movement against tsarism.

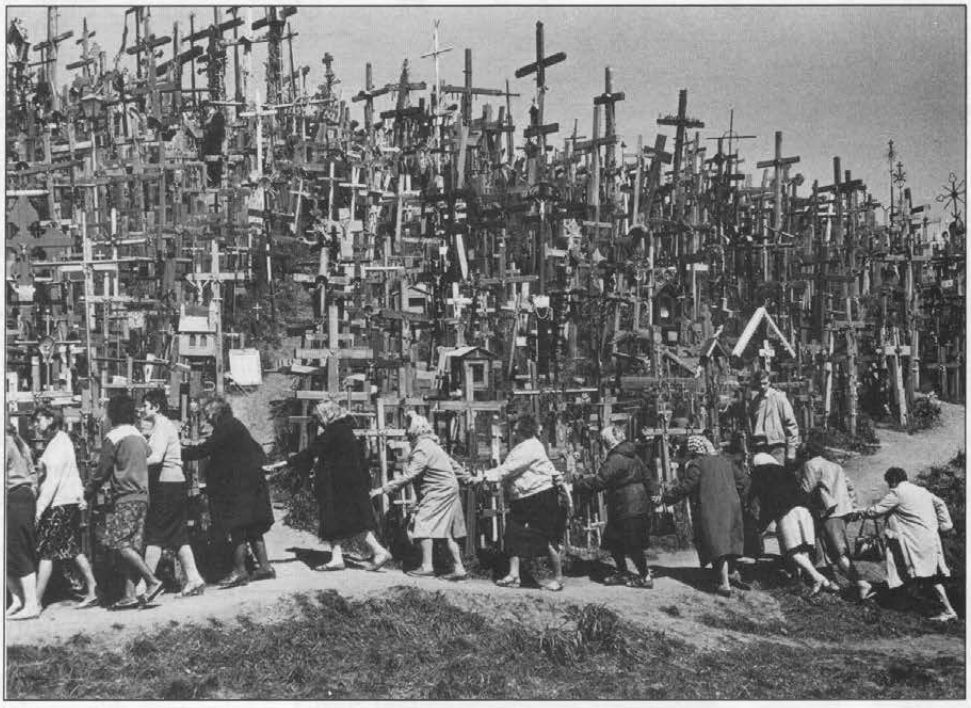
The Russian Revolution of 1905 brought the socialist/nationalist differences to the foreground. As the revolution swept the countryside, peasants confiscated and redistributed the German landowners' estates. The socialists, however, opposed private property on ideological grounds and proposed communal ownership. As ruthless Russian punitive expeditions "pacified" the rebellious Baltic provinces, the rift over land remained. Peasants that had prospered since the mid-nineteenth century turned to the nationalist program and its

endorsement of private property. Those that were landless and destitute supported communal property and rural socialism.

A similar division unfolded in Riga and other urban centers. Middle-class Balts coveted the Germans' role in politics and supported a nationalist program aimed at replacing the German elite with an upper stratum of Balts. The Balt worker, in contrast, blamed the failure of 1905 in part on the reluctance of the middle class to support radical goals. They moved closer to Social Democracy, particularly the radical and militant Bolshevik faction.

Following World War I and the establishment in Russia of a new Soviet socialist order, in 1917, the Baltic area was a maelstrom of civil war. Known as the wars for independence, the struggles were fought largely between nationalists—who wanted no part of the strengthening Russian Soviet neighbor—and socialists—who allied themselves with the Russian Red Army in their struggle to implement a socialist ideal.

Initially, the socialist program was victorious, and the Soviet Republics of Latvia and Estonia were founded with indigenous support in urban areas. The socialist experiment, however, disillusioned many. Starvation and disease in the city demoralized the population. The program of communal land ownership alienated rural support. Growing discontent and military victories by the nationalists finally defeated the abortive Soviet Republics, as the Baltic populations ultimately opted for national autonomy as their future guiding principle.



Lithuanian memorial: the hill of crosses. [Draugas, Chicago]

Yet, the formal status of the Baltic peoples was mostly decided by geopolitical forces. The victorious allies at Versailles patched together a quilt of independent states to fill the void of the collapsed empires in east and central Europe, and ultimately supported independent Baltic Republics. In 1918, the three Baltic States celebrated their independence.

The first era of independence

Latvia's inter-war years are in many ways typical of the Baltic Republics' experience. Although a Latvian nation-state was established, a wholly nationalist government was not unanimously elected. Socialists held the most seats in Latvia's parliament, the *Saeima*, and controlled the Constituent Assembly. The constitution was a model of liberalism and minority rights, but there was no clause limiting small parties from sending single deputies to the *Saeima*. Parliamentary politics were plagued with fragile coalitions and political instability.

The viability of parliamentary democracy came increasingly under scrutiny following the Great Depression of the 1930s. Members of the right consistently called for constitutional reform along corporatist lines, while the left blocked any such attempts.

Ultimately, all three Baltic parliaments fell to right-wing coup d'états. Historians have described the governments as benevolent, yet all political discussion and public involvement in policy ended. The record of these administrations is mixed. Economically, the final years were relatively prosperous. In Latvia, culture flourished, but toleration and protection of minority and women's rights began to falter.

In the late 1930s, Baltic control over their destinies was once again snatched from them as the cloud of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin's expansionist goals darkened over Europe.

Subjugation again: World War II and Soviet takeover

The refusal of the Western powers to guarantee the territorial integrity of East European nations made possible the expansionist goals of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. In 1939, after the signing of the Soviet/Nazi Non-Aggression Pact, the Baltic Republics agreed, under duress, to allow Soviet troops to be stationed on Baltic soil. In June, 1940, the Soviet Union presented the Baltic States with an ultimatum: Soviet occupation or invasion. All three reluctantly complied, knowing the alternative was annihilation.

Soviet troops carried out mass executions and deportations of Baltic populations with the intention of bringing the nations to their knees. At the time of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June of 1941, hundreds of thousands of Balts had died or been shipped off to the Soviet gulag in Siberia.

After experiencing Soviet terror, many Balts initially greeted German armies as liberators, but brutal repression continued under the Nazis. Sizable Jewish communities in both Lithuania and Latvia were exterminated, often with individual Balt collaboration. Following the 1945 defeat of Nazi Germany, the Baltic Republics were completely incorporated into

the Soviet Union. Under the continued brutality of Stalin's rule, mass repression, deportation, executions and collectivization continued into the 1950s to break both passive and guerrilla resistance to Soviet rule.

The legacy of the Soviet years is enormous. Under Soviet central planning, agricultural productivity and development were seriously neglected while large scale industrialization was promoted. Industrial enterprises were weaved into the larger Soviet economic infrastructure so that raw materials were imported from distant Soviet regions, and finished products were exported to the Soviet market.

The enormous scale of construction and industrial enterprise required huge labor forces that were imported into the Baltic Republics. Coupled with the mass deportations of Baltic peoples, this flood of primarily Russian workers altered the ethnic map of the Baltic Republics.

Renewed independence

In the mid-1980s, using environmental issues as a protective umbrella, Baltic organizations protested future industrial plans, and spoke out against government excess and inefficiency. Fueled by Gorbachev's program of *glasnost*, the movements became bolder and pushed towards questions of greater national autonomy, and eventual secession.

A split within the Baltic Communist parties developed, with one faction supporting the hard-line from Moscow, while others followed the trend of reform-minded East European communists. In Latvia and Estonia these nationalist ex-communists assumed control of the movements and led the Baltic Republics towards national independence. Their closeness to the old system enabled them to move within communist circles and negotiate behind the scenes. It also, however, dulled the progressive edge of the popular movements, and entrenched much of the old ruling elite into new positions of wealth and authority. In Lithuania, nationalist dissidents, supported by the ex-communists, led the movement through a more confrontational agenda with Moscow.

In a high-stakes chess game, the Baltic Republics and Moscow maneuvered through referendums on self-determination, as politicians attempted to exact more and more concessions on autonomy from Gorbachev. The latter, though he saw the need for reform of the Soviet system, had no plans for its ultimate dismemberment.

In the beginning of 1991, armed Soviet force was used in an effort to derail the independence movement. Despite the killing of dozens of Lithuanians and Latvians, the movements grew stronger and more determined. In the aftermath of the coup attempt against Gorbachev in August, 1991, the three Baltic States received international *de jure* recognition of their independence.

Picking up the pieces

The greatest long-term problem for the Baltic States is the economic transformation of society. The very economic foundation of the countries, previously part of the grand Soviet machine, has collapsed. Economic problems run the entire gamut from agricultural to industrial to entrepreneurial.

Industry: The raison d'être of the Baltic industrial complex ceased to exist almost overnight, causing internal chaos. Today, without the larger Soviet industrial plan, enterprises are forced to re-orient themselves. Factories are cut off from previously heavily subsidized raw materials, and markets are lost as better quality, shrewdly marketed Western and Asian products enter the Baltics.

As debts accrue at an enormous rate, Baltic industries lose their last marketable advantage: cheaper overhead. A few lucky enterprises have escaped this malaise by adapting to Western markets, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Most industries are faced with decreased productivity, partial employment, and looming bankruptcy

This industrial dilemma has a precedent in inter-war Latvia. Latvia then, as now, was cut off from its industrial roots. Without the larger tsarist economic plan much of Latvia's industrial economy suffered. Latvian society was faced with the dilemma of reinvigorating the industrial base of the nation, or developing agriculturally. Only one government, the socialist coalition of 1927-1928, pursued a comprehensive industrial plan closely tied to the Soviet Union. The political ramifications divided the country, and ultimately the program was abandoned.

Now the Baltic States face a similar dilemma: whether to remain within the economic and industrial orbit of their larger Russian neighbor, to adjust to western industrial standards, or to abandon industrial pursuits altogether.

Agriculture: Inter-war Baltic agricultural products competed successfully on a European scale. Now, with problems of land privatization, indigenous agriculture's ability to compete even within the local market is in doubt. Already, better quality, more attractive Western agricultural products are replacing home-grown.

State infrastructure: Education, health care, and culture are not able to compete with basic energy needs for the few

dollars in state treasuries. As a result, the mainstays of daily life from child care to guaranteed security for pensioners are vanishing. Infrastructural reconstruction from overhauling ports, replacing telecommunications systems, and creating a legal system, all demand desperate attention.

However, the Baltics have established strong currencies, independent postal systems, working parliaments, and local governments.

Private enterprise: Consumerism and consumption have provided a large market for Western goods, from coffee makers to BMWs. Few Balts, however, can yet afford Western prices.

The slow pace of privatization, coupled with the lack of property ownership laws and the still nonexistent real estate market is seriously hampering sustained corporate investment. However, some types of investment are flooding into the Baltic countries in the form of extractive enterprises that guarantee real returns outside of the Baltics, or into tourist and consumer related trade.

An exemplary case of the problems faced by investors is Kelloggs' sporadic development of a cereal factory outside of Riga. Kelloggs has long been eager to establish a foothold in a potentially lucrative greater Baltic market, but constant legal wrangling over foreign ownership, profit sharing, and the imposing problems of factory construction and operation in a developing country have continuously disrupted the workings of the enterprise.

Corruption: Equally damaging to the development of the economy is the problem of graft, corruption, and the Mafia. The Mafia extorts money from almost all enterprises, and controls entire industries. Particularly attractive is the lucrative international trade (frequently illegal) of metals, atomic materials, weapons and luxury items. Estimates vary, but protection payments to the Mafia amount to roughly from ten percent to 25 percent of returns, an outlay crippling to young enterprises.

Beyond this, all dealings with governmental offices (national, local or regional) require greasing palms to speed processing through a maze of non-systematized rules and regulations.

The environment: This monumental problem facing the Baltic States is one that has proved easier and cheaper to ignore. Ironically, economic collapse has given the environment some reprieve as farms can no longer afford large scale pesticide and fertilizer use, and bankrupt factories no longer dump waste into the environment. The governments, however, realize that the few enterprises that are staying afloat and/or recovering could not possibly afford stringent environmental standards and have therefore turned a blind eye.

The ethnic question

The problem of ethnic minorities is a potentially serious stumbling block for the future of the Baltic States. The proposed solutions range from effectively forcing non-assimilating, non-Balts out of the Baltics (extreme Baltic nationalists) to establishing a multi-ethnic state (extreme Russian nationalists).

During the years of struggle for national renewal in the Gorbachev era, the great majority of non-Balts firmly supported Baltic independence. The expectation was that citizenship would be granted to all permanent residents with independence. Lithuania, comfortable with a secure Lithuanian majority, adopted this zero option.

Latvian and Estonian politicians, however, feared several consequences. The zero option would grant citizenship to retired and active Soviet army personnel, and their families, and the creation of a multi-ethnic state could endanger Latvian and Estonian identity—concerted years of Soviet russification policies had left a knot difficult to untangle.

Today's Republics are viewed as renewals of the pre-war States and citizenship was immediately conferred to citizens of the old Republics and their descendants, regardless of nationality (thereby giving citizenship to emigrés). In Estonia, non-citizens must apply and register for work and residency permits, an issue that remains unresolved and a sticking point for Russians.

In Latvia, residents that entered Latvian territory after the Soviet occupation are not citizens. The law on naturalization of these residents has become the center of a political tug of war. Originally, the requirements for naturalization centered around years of residency and degrees of a language requirement, but the requirements have become more stringent and the idea of a quota system has emerged.

Lithuanians take to the street: a more confrontational agenda for independence. [Draugas]

This would naturalize Baltic nationals, spouses of Latvian citizens and residents born in Latvia relatively easily if they can prove competency in the Latvian language. Individuals who acted against the Latvian state, such as former KGB agents and retired foreign military officers, will not be eligible for citizenship. Residents who were not born in Latvia will begin to be naturalized as of the year 2000, but then at a slow

Baltic Ethnic Makeup

Lithuanian Population by ethnicity (in percentages)

	1923	1959	1970	1989
Lithuanians	69.2	79.3	80	79.6
Poles	15.3	8.5	7.7	7.0
Russians	2.5	8.5	8.6	9.4
Jews	8.3	0.9	0.8	0.3
Others	4.4	2.8	2.8	3.7

Latvian Population by ethnicity (in percentages)

	1897	1920	1939	1959	1979	1989
Latvians	68.3	74.4	75.5	62.0	53.7	52.0
Russians	12.0	10.2	10.6	26.6	32.8	34.0*
Germans	6.2	3.8	3.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Jews	-	-	4.8	1.8	1.1	0.9
Poles	-	-	2.5	2.9	2.5	2.3
Ukrainians	-	-	1.4	4.3	7.2	8.0
Lithuanians	-	-	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.3

Estonian Population by ethnicity (in percentages)

	1897	1934	1959	1970	1989
Estonians	88.8	88.2	74.6	68.2	61.5
Germans & Swedes	5.4	2.2	---	---	---
Russians	5.1	8.2	20.1	24.7	30.3
Ukrainians	-	-	3.0	3.7	4.9

Source: Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*. (Yale University Press, 1993)

* Statistics from 1993 suggest that from 1990, over 94,000 people have emigrated out of Latvia, primarily Russians returning to Russia.

rate that will effectively deny citizenship to some.

How the citizenship law will affect the non-citizen population of the country is unclear. Legislation regarding this matter has yet to be drafted, but if non-citizens are guaranteed full civil rights, the importance of the issue may be defused. If, however, absence of citizenship relegates permanent residents to the status of second class citizens, the problem will remain.

Looking ahead

What does the future hold for the Baltics? The doomsayers see Vladimir Zhirinovsky as the reincarnation of Russian expansion. They believe that with time he will come to power in Russia and either reconquer the Baltic countries or place them under greater Russian influence. Although Zhirinovsky is a threat, the prophecies in his rhetoric can be overstated. Even with more political power, Zhirinovsky would have to deal with powerful forces within Russia who oppose expansion, especially in view of greater international involvement in East Europe and the Baltics. Zhirinovsky is not a paper tiger, but he is also not Stalin.

Optimistic nationalists see a return to the pastoral paradise of inter-war independence, an equally unrealistic scenario. Although impressive economic progress occurred in the inter-war years, the democratic experiment was aborted before it could develop. The inter-war years must be better understood in order to encourage the positive aspects, but also to avoid repeating the same mistakes.

A grim appraisal of East Europe as a whole sees the Baltics as remaining distant poor cousins to western Europe.

Ultimately, all three scenarios contain elements of truth. The geopolitical picture of the region cannot be forgotten: if democracy and market economics prosper in Russia, the Baltics will prosper as a conduit for trade between East and West. A chaos-ridden Russia will always de-stabilize the Baltics regardless of their internal developments. The threat of 'Sudeten Russians' (a term used to draw a parallel to Sudeten Germans living outside of the Reich that was used as a pretext for Nazi expansion) is very real.

Yet, there is tremendous promise. Already, the Baltic Republics have been rated the most attractive of the Soviet successor states for investment, and as the legal rules and regulations governing trade and commerce are established, the economies will continue to respond. Tourism continues to fuel much-needed currency into Baltic economies.

The small size of the Baltic region is an advantage: problems will be manageable. Modernization of the infrastructure for example is much less daunting than across the expanses of Russia, and investment can affect a larger percentage of the population. A venture that employs 1,000 in Russia would be a drop in the barrel, but in the Baltics it would be a significant contribution to a community.

The Baltic States will be success stories relative to the former Soviet Union, and parts of East Europe, but significant problems and inequities will repeatedly resurface and demand resolution. Still, these countries historically deprived of their nationhood at least have the long-awaited chance at independence. ●

Suggestions for Further Reading

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Healing Mother Nature

Environmentalism in Search of the Big Picture

"So you want to save the planet?" As we approach the next millennium, answers to this question involve everyone—from eco-activists to the average weekly recycler. The environmentally conscious are increasingly looking to big picture solutions that integrate local and global concerns, and embrace the Earth's complexity. In the first of an occasional series of articles on the environment, Geoffrey Oxnam provides an overview of the approaches and challenges of the environmental movement.

by Geoffrey Oxnam

Save the whales! Reduce, Reuse, Recycle! Protect the Rain Forests! Don't wear fur! Carpool! Don't eat meat! Think globally, act locally!

For the past three decades, we have been surrounded by slogans from an ever-increasing number of organizations and individuals aiming to save the planet. But with so many different groups offering advice and pointing to their particular cause as the most important, individual citizens often find the quest for appropriate environmental consciousness a bit dizzying. To add to the confusion, the vast array of environmental causes is complicated by the intricate connections between environmental concerns and economic, political, social, cultural and religious issues.

Consensus continues to grow that the environment deserves increased attention. Yet, no one has arrived at a definitive answer to three key questions: What exactly is wrong with the planet? What needs to be done to fix it? How should the implementation of solutions be prioritized? A fourth, and perhaps even more tricky problem also remains: Who should decide?

The roots of global environmentalism

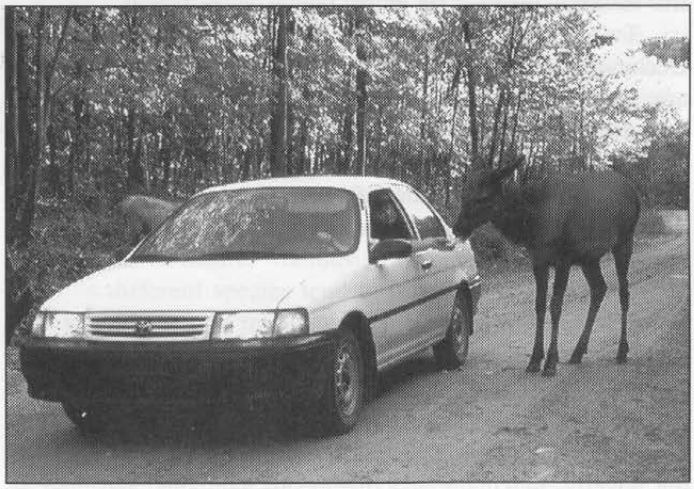
In the two centuries since the onset of the industrial revolution, the combination of industrialization, urbanization, population growth and changing consumption habits have altered planetary conditions at an ever-accelerating pace. Early environmental efforts were by no means absent: most pre-"modern" societies held—and continue to hold—an innate environmentalism as part of their understanding of the workings of the universe. At the turn of the century, naturalists, hunters and fishermen banded together to create organizations such as America's Audubon Society to preserve natural habitats and animal populations. Nevertheless, today's environmental movement took its particular shape only in the decades following World War II.

Geoffrey Oxnam is an award-winning journalist in New York, who has covered politics, sports and the environment in the United States and Japan.

The 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* fundamentally changed the path of the environmental movement in the United States. A biologist with a gift for prose, Carson exposed the dangers of the pesticide DDT. The sensation accompanying her work brought environmental questions into the limelight, and North American environmental focus shifted from local issues to national and global problems.

In 1972, the United Nations sponsored the Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. There, many of the world's leaders came in contact with their first "big picture" explanation of global environmental hazards. The conference produced a seminal book of the environmental movement. Titled *Our Common Future*, it was most important for its inauguration and discussion of the concept of "sustainable development," now a cornerstone of long-term environmental policy. For the first time, the idea was stressed to policy-makers that environmental problems are not issues separate to humanity, but are tied to population and economic growth.

Our Common Future defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs...A process of change in which exploitation of resources,



Learning to live together?
[Aztech New Media Corp.]

the direction of investments, the reorientation of technology development and institutional change are all in harmony."

In the spirit of *Our Common Future*, several international environmental organizations developed the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) in 1980. WCS offered a single line of attack on global environmental problems based on three principles: maintain species populations so that they do not fall to levels where they can no longer reproduce; conserve the climate, water cycles and soils which sustain all life; and maintain genetic diversity.

[Kirk Anderson]

Blame it on Rio

The United Nations reinforced the messages of Stockholm and the WCS with its Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June of 1992. Representatives of governments, non-government organizations, tribes, trade associations and a mass of journalists came together in the hopes of arriving at a single statement about what was wrong with the planet and what needed to be done. The Earth Summit, as it is otherwise known, was the first international meeting to garner substantial popular awareness and support. And it was the first in which developed nations took a proactive stance in broad-scale global policy development.

Two key documents came out of the summit: The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. The Declaration emphasized that any environmental issue has economic ramifications and that developed nations should commit to help developing economies improve their environmental standards. However, the document neither made reference to concrete problems nor offered specific measures, and was an agreement in theory rather than in practice.

Agenda 21

Agenda 21 was a different story. This 900-page document meticulously detailed many of the most pressing global environmental problems and addressed ways to resolve them along six lines: 1) Improving the quality of life on Earth by eradicating poverty, making sound livelihoods available, and altering patterns of consumption; 2) Using Earth's natural resources effectively; 3) Protecting the global commons (atmosphere and oceans); 4) Managing human settlements; 5) Controlling the use of chemicals and managing waste; and 6) Promoting sustainable economic development. The agreement's suggested price tag for the implementation of policies to achieve these goals amounted to several hundred billion dollars.

While the Earth Summit symbolized a continued and concerted effort to address seriously global environmental issues, it did not build the momentum for which some had hoped. On the U.S. side, the Bush administration voiced reservations about both the Declaration and Agenda 21 and failed to back some of the gutsier measures, including a treaty protecting biodiversity (the variety of different animal and plant species on the planet), and a forest protection agreement.

However, Rio's legacy remains to be seen. The new administration in Washington is already far more active in promoting environmental issues than its predecessor. President Bill Clinton ratified the biodiversity treaty. Moreover, Vice President Al Gore has written one of the more recent lucid texts on the environment, *Earth in the Balance* (1993).

Searching for the big picture

Despite years of research and libraries of books written about environmental concerns, most people are still unsure which problems need most immediate attention. Unless we wade through reams of documents and read dozens of books, it is hard to distinguish the forest from the trees.

Consensus at recent conferences points to a general, four-stage process to delimit the environmental big picture:

Step 1: Understand that environmental studies are a combination of many disciplines, including science, economics, engineering, anthropology, sociology and political science. Any environmental problem has causes and effects in one or more of these areas.

Step 2: Like doctors, environmentalists must understand the patient. The Earth itself is increasingly seen by scientists as a living, self-sustaining organism—usually termed Gaia. Like any living creature, the Earth depends on a variety of internal systems each composed of a complex and mutually-interacting web of organisms and inorganic matter. All of these systems (with the exception of sunlight, an outside input) are self-contained; i.e. a limited supply of elements circulate within. Everything comes from somewhere, goes elsewhere and then returns. "Recycling"—the use, degradation, and reuse of resources—is the way of the planet. The key question for environmentalists is how much of a resource we can use before it can no longer be replenished.

Step 3: Triage. Doctors in an emergency room are trained to make a thorough check of their patients during triage in order to determine what is wrong with, and how to save, them. While a full understanding of how the planet works is still incomplete, many environmental organizations have begun the same process with Earth. Yet, with so many "doctors" there is a host of opinions. And since environmental problems are intertwined with social, political, economic and religious issues, it is hard for anyone to clearly delineate which of Earth's ills is most severe and deserves immediate attention.

Step 4: Operate to save the patient.

Complicating the steps

Deforestation—both in the tropical rainforests of the southern

hemisphere as well as in the temperate ones to the north—is an apt and well-publicized example of the complex and complicating factors surrounding an environmental issue. Forests serve as habitat for a multitude of species, help regulate global temperatures and weather patterns, control greenhouse gasses by converting carbon dioxide to oxygen, and impact the world's fisheries. Trees of the tropics regulate the flow of water in a rain forest. They act as sponges to soak up rain and then slowly release it. Tropical forest soil is generally nutrient poor and suitable only for those trees.

"Civic responsibility," not environmental necessity? [BNB Photography]

Local farmers, hoping to make quick money selling cattle to meat-hungry North America often slash and burn the trees to open up grazing land. But without the tree roots to hold the nutrients in the soil, and without the trees to regulate the flow of water, nutrients quickly wash off. Two and half centimeters of topsoil can take anywhere from 100 to 2,500 years to develop or rejuvenate. However, the same 2.5 centimeters can become unusable in less than a decade, even for grazing grasses. The farmer is out of land and out of luck unless more forest is removed. At the same time, run-off topsoil from cleared forest areas chokes waterways, adversely affecting fish populations at the mouths of the river. Another source of income disappears quickly.

Northern countries point fingers at the slash-and-burn farmer, but rarely leave him/her an alternative. Large agro-business companies can under-price the local farmer in most crops. Significantly, only 11 percent of the earth's soil is suitable for growing food crops, and most of this arable land is located in the economically developed northern hemisphere. Local farmers chafe at the restrictions which well-off countries wish to impose on their livelihood and economic development. This is especially true as cash-crop farmers tend to be responding directly to market forces.

> ***"What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of the spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts soon happens to man."***
>
> *Chief Seattle, 1854*

Comprehensive solutions

To confront the intricacies of environmental problems, we are starting to see environmental measures—often in the form of "comprehensive management plans"—designed to tackle all the hazards afflicting a single ecosystem. The Long Island Sound Study, a plan to clean up the oxygen-poor and polluted waters of the United States' most populous estuary, typifies such big picture environmentalism. Rather than attacking a single polluter, the Sound Study maps out the myriad problems plaguing the entire ecosystem, takes into account the human needs of factories and local inhabitants and then seeks long and short-term solutions to clean and protect the area.

While water contamination and flotable debris mar Long Island Sound's appearance, the waterway's most serious ecological problem has been hypoxia. This condition, where levels of dissolved oxygen become too low to sustain marine life, results from massive blooms of algae prompted by excessive nitrogen in the water. Point sources like sewage treatment plants and factories have contributed to nitrogen pollution. However, non-point sources, such as storm drain run-off of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers from lawns, gardens, golf courses and real estate development—often as far as 20 miles inland—have proved the most damaging and difficult to tackle. (Point source pollution is contamination that can be traced to a single origin; non-point source cannot be so traced.)

The management plan has put caps, albeit voluntary, on the amount of nitrogen point sources can emit. Communities in the Long Island Sound watershed are banding together to regulate development and fertilizer use to prevent further harm. Although the Comprehensive Management Plan awaits final ratification, elements have already been enacted and the Sound is enjoying rejuvenated water quality and higher fish stocks. The success of this comprehensive approach leaves hope for other environmental hotspots where big picture solutions will be required.

Population: Roger Madon, an attorney with Green Cross International, labels recycling programs and similar measures as "civic responsibility," not environmental necessity. Certainly, the expansion of garbage, and the related question of finding places to put it, are problematic. Yet, like a growing consensus of environmentalists, he believes that they are symptoms of the world's most severe environmental crisis—the proliferation of humankind.

One common misperception about the environment is that it is somehow separate from people. Yet people do form an integral part of the environment—they use its resources and contribute both to its sustenance and degradation. And never have more people inhabited the planet than do today.

In 1798, Thomas Malthus described the interrelation of populations in nature. Malthusian theory argues that populations of different species tend to hold one another in check. Hawks will prey on rabbits until they have eaten most of the available rabbits up. With no rabbits left to eat, the hawks start to starve. With fewer predators, rabbits can replenish their numbers without the threat of getting eaten. The populations of most species tend to fluctuate along a curved line in direct opposition to their most prevalent predator.

Humans have striven to prove Malthus wrong. It took humankind almost 500,000 years to reach a population of one

billion in 1830. But, with advances in medical technology, living conditions and food quantity and quality, human population had doubled one hundred years later. Forty-five years after that, it doubled again. Currently the Earth's population is somewhere in the five billion range and is likely to pass six billion by the turn of the century.

While advances in technology have allowed the planet to keep yielding enough resources to feed and house these people, the planet's ability to sustain this rate is limited. Ironically, the world produces enough food to feed another 1.5 billion people annually, and yet 40 million are starving. In the United States, notes Norman Meyers in *GAIA: An Atlas of Planet Management*, 33 percent of people over age 40 are classified as obese.

But checking population growth is a dicey issue. It runs into political opposition from countries who do not want to be told how to live. As China has discovered with its one-child-per-family experiment, it can have profound social repercussions as female infanticide rates soared when parents did not want their only child to be a girl. It also touches on religious issues. Recently, in preparation for the United Nations Convention on Population in Cairo, September 5-13, 1994, U.S. President Bill Clinton met with Pope John Paul II to discuss the population question and the Catholic Church's objection to abortion and birth control.

Resource depletion: With so many people going about the business of living, the planet is reaching a state where some environmentalists fear it can no longer provide for daily activities. "Carrying capacity," another key environmental buzzword, describes the ability of resources in an area to sustain the population of that area.

Resources are often grouped into two categories: renewable and non-renewable. Renewable resources are those which can be replenished in a relatively short period of time (like reservoirs). Non-renewable resources are those which often take millions of years to be replenished (i.e. oil or coal).

Key to sustainable development goals will be the managed use of renewable resources. For instance, this means carefully cataloging fish stocks and making sure that they are not driven to extinction; harvesting crops and trees without destroying the soil; and using freshwater at rates where reservoirs can refill themselves before they dry up. Non-renewable resources must be used at a rate where they will not be tapped too quickly. Eventually they will run out. But in terms of energy, for example, it is the hope of environmentalists that alternative sources can be found to replace fossil fuels.

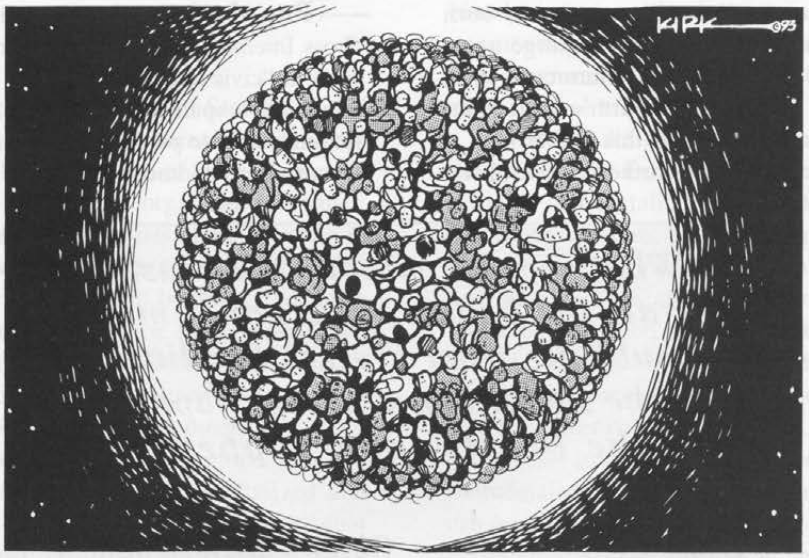
Ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect: The ozone layer shields the planet from much of the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. In the past decade, a hole of varying, but ever-increasing, size has been discovered above Antarctica. Fifteen percent of the Antarctic ozone is now gone. Bands of thinning ozone have spread from both poles over the hemispheres.

A variety of chemicals (including chloroflorocarbons from air conditioners and aerosol sprays, halons, carbon tetrachlorides and methyl chloroform used as flame retardants) have contributed to the depletion. The results have been increased incidence of skin diseases, cataracts and damage to agriculture and certain aquatic life. The thinning of the ozone layer may also contribute to substantive changes in global weather patterns.

The greenhouse effect is the gradual warming of the planet as the amount of insulating carbon dioxide increases in the atmosphere. It results from rising population (and the amount of carbon dioxide they exhale) and industrial output. The burning of fossil fuels is believed to account for two thirds of our carbon dioxide emissions. Canada contributes 1.7 percent of the world's greenhouse emissions, according to the *Environmental Almanac*, and the United States adds 18.4 percent.

The planet has increased in average temperature by more than half a degree Celsius over the past 40 years, and estimates say that the increased warming effects may alter weather patterns. Already the 1980s have experienced more hotter years than any other decade in recorded history. While we cannot attribute this all to global warming, it is a preeminent concern.

Deforestation: The global population uses 50 percent more wood today than in 1965, and has cut down a portion of the world's tropical rainforests the size of Washington State. While many people are pointing fingers at the South American and Asian nations for this deforestation, Canada and the United States have carved out larger percentages of their own natural hardwood forests than any other country.



[Kirk Anderson]

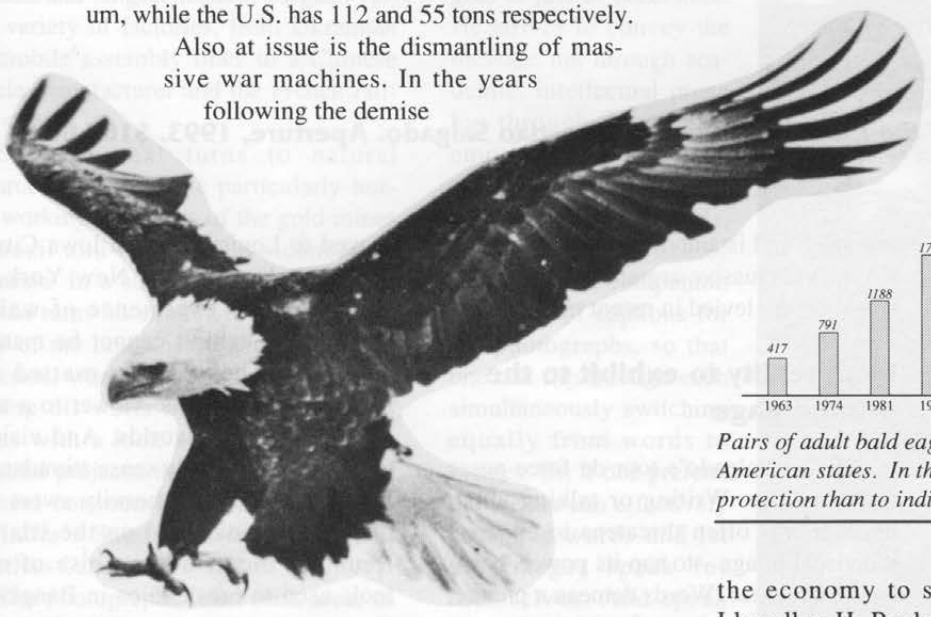
Air pollution: Acid rain was one of the first major environmental issues to capture the North American imagination in the 1970s. While much has been done to clean up factory and transportation emissions, more work is left. Innovative taxation schemes and smokestack "scrubbers" (whose efficiency many call dubious) are being developed to curb air pollution.

Endangered species: One of the most dangerous losses of non-renewable resources is in biodiversity. Species are disappearing, some estimate, at a rate of one per day. Each of these species, many of which we have yet to catalogue, is a potential medical cure or a source of insight into life's complexities. To sustain themselves, ecosystems require a variety of different organisms who compete for similar food sources

and perform different functions in the food web.

Perhaps the first broad-scale effort to address endangered species came in the late 1960s with Greenpeace's Save the Whales effort. Worldwide, a host of other organisms have been categorized as endangered species. In the U.S., they are protected under the 1972 Endangered Species Act. Many have enjoyed comebacks, such as the American bald eagle. Others have disappeared. The Endangered Species Act is up for renewal this year.

Post-Cold War waste: A nuclear threat still remains in the form of the disposal of spent weapon-grade nuclear fuel. Roughly speaking, the states of the former Soviet Union have 125 tons of Plutonium and 720 tons of Highly Enriched Uranium, while the U.S. has 112 and 55 tons respectively. Also at issue is the dismantling of massive war machines. In the years following the demise of the Soviet Union, foreign observers have had their first look at Soviet fleets scuttled in their harbors. The rusting hulks spew a host of toxic substances into fragile ecosystems. In the United States, the public has become increasingly aware of scores of toxic waste sites created by the U.S. government.



Human waste: In consumption-oriented societies, environmental concern focuses increasingly less on waste reuse, and more on new waste production. Currently, humans generate waste at a rate greater than recycling efforts. And we are running out of places to put it all. The United States, for example, has mandated municipal programs to cut the waste stream back to pre-1990 levels. Innovative techniques of composting and separation, as well as radical changes in assessing costs to haul garbage, will also help cut down on land used for waste dumps and will save energy and financial costs. Reduction in the amount of unnecessary packaging being used in consumer products remains a goal. Even Japan, one of the world's worst overpackagers, is tackling this tough issue.

Towards an environmental future

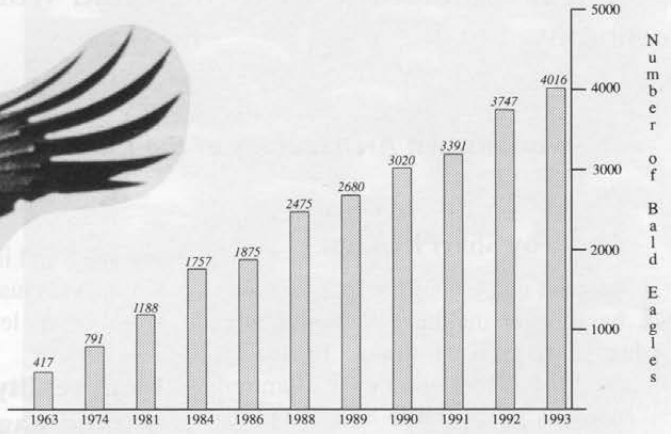
"A one thousand mile journey begins with one step," reads an old Chinese saying. Too often, those who are concerned about improving their environment, try to begin the journey many steps down the road. We pitch millions of dollars into various environmental organizations without knowing what their programs are doing to solve the most immediate difficulties.

With an understanding of the big picture, tackling environmental issues becomes much clearer. And by understanding how the various systems of the planet work, both on a global and a local scale, it is far easier to plan activities (from recreation to industry) which will keep from further damaging the planet.

But even the most moderate environmental policies do have their opponents who are quick to point out the potential effects on our accustomed standard of living.

"Taken to its logical end, environmentalism would bring the economy to standstill, and then reverse it," wrote Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr. in an article for *Insight Magazine*. "Environmental regulations are why it costs so much to get your air conditioner repaired, why your car can't pass emissions inspection even though it's only a few years old, why you are forced to collect old newspapers so the city can recycle them at tremendous expense, and charge you for it. That trees are a crop, like asparagus, and can be grown again and again, is inadmissible. There's no science or logic to the bulk of their claims, whether it's global warming, holes in the ozone layer, acid rain, or any of the other Mother Green fairy tales."

THE RESURGENCE OF THE BALD EAGLE



Pairs of adult bald eagles in nesting areas in the 48 contiguous American states. In the future, more attention will be paid to habitat protection than to individual species. [U.S. Dept. of the Interior]

But for many of the world's policy-makers, the concept of sustainable development has become an important guiding principle in economic development and international relations. And, they are coming to realize that the time to take substantive action is here. As the population continues to expand, Mother Nature's clock is ticking faster and faster. ●

Suggestions for Further Reading

Lester Brown et al., *State of the World 1994*. (Worldwatch Institute, 1994).

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1962).

Al Gore, *Earth in the Balance*. (Plume, 1993).

Norman Meyers, ed. *GAIA: An Atlas of Planet Management*.

World Resources Institute, *The 1994 Information Please Environmental Almanac*.

Salgado's Workers

A Photographic Manifesto

With exceptional power and beauty, Sebastiao Salgado offers in photographs an "homage, tribute and farewell" to the workers of the world. His collection of images stands as a stark and potent testimonial to those men and women who form the backbone of the international economy.

Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age **by Sebastiao Salgado. Aperture, 1993. $100.00.**

by Shari Rudavsky

The great analysts of the industrial age have never included photographers. Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Freidrich Engels, Max Weber and Lewis Mumford all relied on words rather than images to argue their cases and reach their immense audiences. In this sense Sebastiao Salgado is a rare breed. A Brazilian-born photographer, he is a political theorist who relies exclusively on visual images to convey his unique perspective on the waning technological revolution. In his masterful collection of photographs, *Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age*, we see the underbelly of the industrial era exposed in black and white.

In the book's dedication, Salgado reveals the explicit message of his work: "This book is an homage to workers, a farewell to the world of manual labor that is slowly disappearing and a tribute to those men and women who still work as they have for centuries." Salgado spent five years photographing workers around the world whose labor constitutes the foundation of the international economy. The result is a collection of more than 200 photographs, and is among the most provocative and persuasive arguments for a "new world order" levied in recent memory.

From reality to exhibit to the printed page

Reviewing Salgado's tour de force poses a conundrum. Writing or talking about photographs often threatens to cheapen the visual image—to sap its power, beauty and expertise. Words demean a picture, and remove the gloss of subtlety from its sharply defined lines. Ultimately, photos speak most eloquently for themselves.

Coal mine at Dhanbad, India, 1989. [Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum Photos]

Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age opened as a touring exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, moved to Louisville, then Iowa City and will travel to Dallas, New York, and Chicago. The experience of walking through the exhibit cannot be matched. The large, beautifully matted photographs transport the viewer to a multitude of different worlds. And vision is certainly not the only sense stimulated by the rich images: the heavily sweet scent of perfumes distilled on the island of Reunion, the grinding noise of metal tools used to break ships in Bangladesh, the coarse smoothness of freshly woven cloth in Kazakhstan—each, in turn, envelope the intrepid viewer.

Those deprived of the exhibition can find a taste of the work in the exhibit catalog—replete with the grace hidden in the squalor, suffering, and humanity expressed in the exhibition. The book preserves more permanently what Salgado sees as a dying breed: the manual laborer. In a short introduction, he attempts to prepare the viewer for what is to come (in the exhibit a nearly identical text greets the visitor). "Concepts of production and efficiency are changing, and, with them, the nature of work. The highly industrialized world is racing ahead and stumbling over the future. In reality, this telescoping of time is the work of people throughout the world, although in practice it may benefit few."

Shari Rudavsky is a Ph.D. candidate in the History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania.

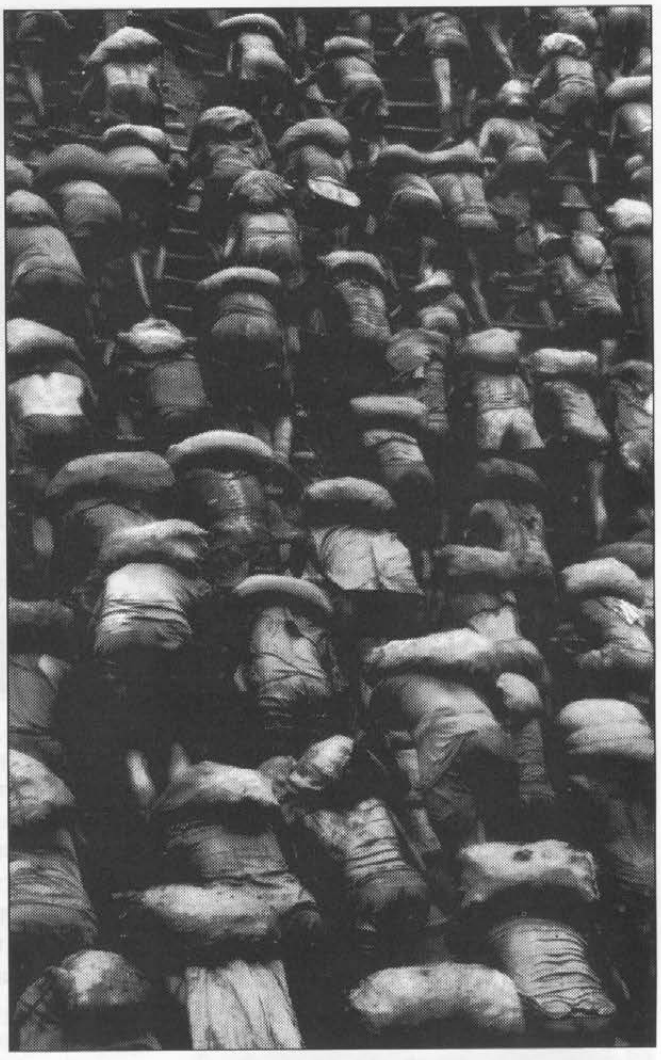
Salgado's seven wonders

Salgado, who often spent months at a time engaged in photographing a particular area, divides the book into seven sections, ranging from the most basic of industries to the most technologically complex. The first concentrates on plants: from the tea fields of Rwanda to the cocoa trees of Brazil. Harvesting of animals follows, with tuna boats in Sicily and slaughterhouses in South Dakota. In the third and longest section, Salgado visits a variety of factories, from Ukrainian automobile assembly lines to a Chinese bicycle manufacturer and the French railroad system.

Salgado next turns to natural resources, depicting the particularly horrific working situations of the gold mines of Brazil and the sulfur volcanoes of Indonesia. In a subsection of this theme, Salgado turns his camera to oil, capturing many of the best known shots from this collection: workers struggling to tame the burning oil wells of Kuwait. He concludes with a look at three large-scale industrial projects: the construction of the Chunnel between England and France, and India's Sandar Sarovar Dam and Rajasthan Canal.

The photographs from each area, as Salgado's dedication pledges, pay homage to the total exploitation of the workers. People dominate Salgado's bleak industry-scape. They stare unapologetically at the camera, glare down their technological nemeses, and battle against poor working conditions. Few of these workers actually smile, and indeed they seem to have little to smile about.

But while Salgado's admitted short-term agenda is to portray the plight of the worker, his deeper goal is just as accessible. He strives to convey the message not through academic, intellectual prose but through the painful emotions only pictures can evoke. Once the photos begin, the text ends. Included in the back of the book is a companion pamphlet of captions for the photographs, so that one can flip through each simultaneously switching equally from words to images. Or, if one prefers, the viewer can effectively mute the words and let the images speak for themselves. And speak these images do, quietly but persistently indicting the industrialism that created them.



Gold mine of Serra Pelada, Brazil, 1986. 50,000 men form this "human chain of scrapers." [Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum Photos]

Coal miners, Dhanbad, India, 1989. [Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum Photos]

Perhaps the most disturbing of the collection's images comes from the gold mines of Brazil. There, fifty thousand men hoping to find their fortunes spend their days precariously balanced on ladders stacked against the pueblo-esque contours of the mine.

Salgado introduces his work on this section from above the Serra Pelada gold mine, a cavity in the ground the size of a football field. The men, each clustered over their "own" 65-foot-square plot of land, cling like worker bees to a hive. In the next pictures, Salgado moves in closer, showing the strength of their leg muscles, sharply contoured from days standing on the ladders. Finally, the photo shows their faces, locked in consternation, each hoping that with the next scrape or shovel they will find a glint of gold ore hidden in the mire; a glint that will make possible all their dreams.

These joyless men, who Salgado tells

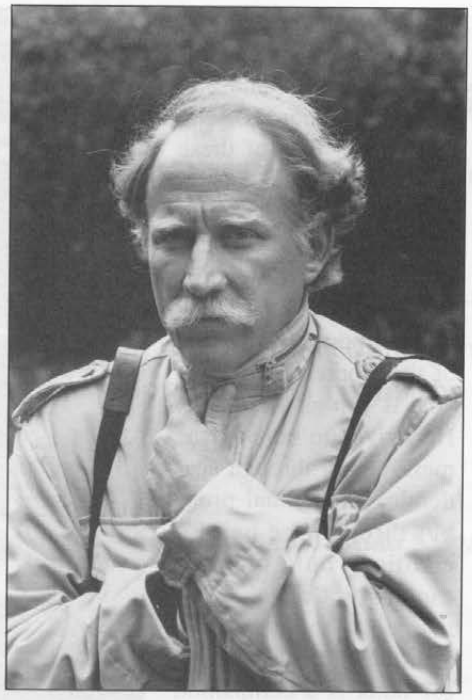
us in the captions are nicknamed "mud hogs," are rigorously watched by a bevy of armed guards. Salgado includes without explanation a photograph of a group of anguished men struggling to gain control of a pistol—the final arbiter in a fight over gold.

Multi-dimensional visions

Salgado's photographs project a constantly mutating, kaleidoscopic effect. Overall, they provoke you to rue the dark side of the industrial age. Yet, if you view them from different angles or out of order, you will see something new. Look at them through an environmentalist's eyes and you see sumptuous, sweeping landscapes the world over destroyed by the demands of industry.

See them through a medical microscope, and the air in almost all of the industries he documents is visually clogged with particles waiting to infest lungs and wreak havoc on the respiratory system. This effect is most apparent in his sulfur mining photographs, which are all coated with a delicate fog of sulfur so noxious that workers must cover their mouths with cloth in order to work with the resource.

Consider yourself an expert in international development and frown on the signs of underdevelopment so incidental but yet essential to Salgado's catalog: everywhere are workers who toil for minimal wages, engaged in the most



Sebastiao Salgado, Paris, 1989. [Bruno Barbey/Magnum Photos]

menial and taxing of labor, struggling to produce, produce, produce for consumers—for us.

A paean to the worker rather than the consumer, Salgado's book contains few examples of these products in use. One such shot looks down onto a rain-swept street showing a horde of ponchoed Chinese hurrying along on their bicycles. The photo stands alone after a series depicting the bicycle makers at work. Another, even more telling two-page spread displays the promotional imagery of a Kazakhstan boulevard lined with photographs of workers who have boasted the highest productivity for that month.

For the most part, however, the workers in Salgado's world exist in symbiotic relations with machines that rarely benefit them. Large-scale technology frequently dwarfs the humans who run it, and this relation is deftly captured. At times one cannot tell whether Salgado views humans as machines with eyes, or machines as humans without eyes.

An alien world close to home

Readers may find the catalogue's layout frustrating. It prints many pictures across two pages, creating an artificial crease in the middle of the photograph. I found this technique less jarring in the landscape shots than many of the close-ups of people. One image particularly ruined by being reproduced in this way is a neck-down shot of a female cigar worker rolling a cigar between her fingers. Because this was early on in the book, the viewer is loath to break the binding too much, and therefore keeps it half-folded, ruining the sensual, almost sexual, effect this image had in exhibit. If seen while flat, the worker's cleavage swells out of her lowcut blouse, while her deft fingers twist the cigar shut. Scrunched together in the book, the photo seems oddly off kilter, the cigar disappears into the fold and the woman's absent head becomes distracting.

But the breathless beauty and incomparable scope of this book overrides these objections. Salgado augments his mass of stunning images with contact-sheet-esque collages that present in miniature some of the work left out of the exhibit and catalog. Upon leaving the exhibit, upon shutting the book, one feels as though one has left behind a bizarre and alien world. And then the realization dawns that this is the world in which we all dwell. Our demands for perfume, tea, natural resources, bicycles, automobiles, and railroads all necessitate the struggle that Salgado has captured with his camera lens. Trained as an economist, Salgado has constructed a provocative, hypnotic and highly theoretical critique–albeit wordless–of international economic conditions. ●

Gdansk Naval Shipyards, Poland, 1990. Here "trade union leader Lech Walesa began his rise toward the presidency." [Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum Photos]

"Autism is Not Me"

Donna Williams' Courageous Search for "Self"

After reading Donna Williams' two books about her life as an autistic, Elaine Vanstone stands in awe of this woman who has pulled herself from the depths of painful, misunderstood isolation. Based on her years spent working with autistic children, Vanstone doubted that a true autistic could reach such a level of achievement. Now, she believes that Williams is not only autistic, but also a savant—someone who possesses unique brilliance or genius. We stand to learn much from Williams both about autism itself and humanity as a whole.

***Nobody Nowhere* and *Somebody Somewhere* by Donna Williams. Doubleday, 1992 and 1993. $26.95.**

by Elaine Vanstone

Until her mid-twenties, Donna Williams thought she was crazy. At the end of her rope, she decided to write down her life story in a diary and took it to a psychiatrist to diagnose what kind of madness she was suffering from. It was then she discovered that she was autistic.

That diary took her four weeks to write and eventually became her first book, *Nobody Nowhere*. The narrative begins with her earliest childhood memories and recounts her life to the time when she was 25 years old. Williams' second book, *Somebody Somewhere*, covers the next four years of her life.

A misunderstood syndrome

Autism is a life-long information-processing disability which affects approximately four in 10,000. Four out of five autistics are male. Caused by an unknown abnormality in brain development which occurs either before birth or in early childhood, autism does not necessarily mean mentally handicapped.

Much has yet to be learned about autism. Though autistic people do not interact with the world around them as "normal" people do, they possess an internal logic and rationale for all that they do, feel or express. Though autistic people may differ greatly from one another in the symptoms they exhibit and in the severity of their expression, there are three constant disorders which are found in nearly all cases.

First, autistics experience severe communication problems, affecting their ability to interpret and use words, gestures and facial expressions. Abstract phrases are especially confusing, as autistics tend to understand words literally. Many autistics do not acquire verbal language and may never speak. With those who are verbal, echolalia (the repetition of words heard from others) is a common speech trait.

Difficulties in developing social relationships is another barrier commonly faced by autistics. Often in childhood, this symptom manifests itself as a lack of interest in the attention paid to the child and unresponsiveness to people around them. Some autistics may retreat into a solitary world, while others appear overly outgoing with strangers and family alike.

Finally, autism is usually associated with ritualistic or compulsive behavior. Often this involves a strong preoccupation or obsession with a particular object, action or routine. Repetitive movements such as rocking are also common.

Other characteristics of autistic people may include detachment, fear of physical touch, self-injurious behavior, and unusual anxieties or fears.

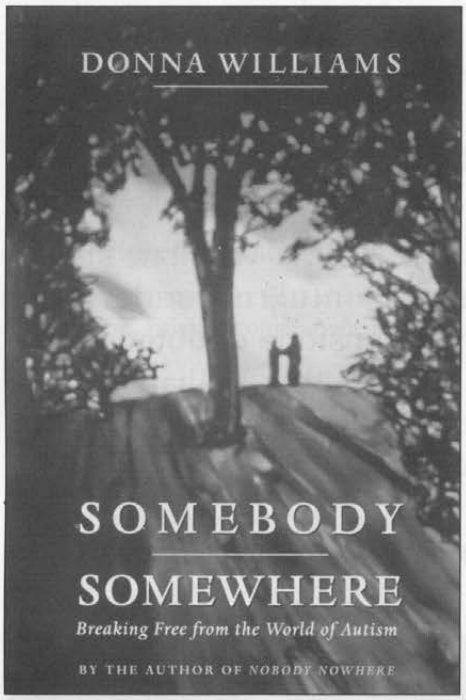
***Both books should be read by educators, caregivers and people who are related to autistics. But most of all, these books should be read by everyone* else.**

Donna Williams: shattering the myths of autism and rising above its challenges.

Reclaiming her "sanity"

Although Williams was diagnosed as being autistic at the age of two, she was never told what her condition was. Instead, she was mistreated. Her mother had no idea of how to cope with a child who had special needs, and so turned to verbal and physical abuse to deal with her daughter.

Williams' stories tumble from the pages at great speed—perhaps mirroring the frantic pace at which she originally recorded them. *Nobody Nowhere* sucked me into her vortex of confusion, and



forced me to experience her world firsthand. Through the telling of childhood events, Williams defies the misconception that autistic people are mad and conveys the inherent rationality of their actions—actions that usually elude the empathy of those around them.

For instance, Williams provides insight into why echolalic speech is common among autistic people. She says she immediately repeated everything that her mother said because she did not understand what was being stated in the first place. She only gave back what she had been offered, and would be further confused when these dialogues would lead to her being berated or beaten. I had been taught that echolalia was just something autistics do; now I have a fresh perspective through Williams' eyes.

She also tells other stories of how she was punished for swatting at "nothing" in the air. As with many autistics, Williams was hypersensitive to her surroundings and was trying to catch the dust particles that were visible in the rays of sunlight. Again, what many shy away from as abnormal antics are reasonable when explained in context.

Elaine Vanstone is a mother of four children, one of whom is mentally challenged. She worked for ten years with the Vancouver School Board with children displaying behavioral problems—many of them autistic—and says they taught her a tremendous amount about life.

Nobody Nowhere ends where Williams' new life began: with the confirmed diagnosis of autism. The doctor who read the diary was amazed that the world of an autistic could be communicated so clearly. He showed the diary to colleagues, and because of the uniqueness of Williams' story of survival and her ability to relate it to others, numerous publishing houses were eager to buy the rights to the diary.

Joining the "real" world

Somebody Somewhere begins with her brave decision to attend university in order to obtain a teaching degree. In return for her courage, she endured open ridicule from her classmates and subjected herself to situations that were more frightening than we can imagine.

For Williams, attending classes at a regular university would be for us like teetering on the edge of a steep cliff. In a classroom, the ultraviolet lights aggravated her eyes. Her hypersensitive hearing made the noise of her classmates almost deafening. She had difficulty taking in the instructor's information because autistics like to listen to low-level monotone speech. The enclosed area and lack of windows in many of the lecture halls made her feel suffocated, and the entire situation would become intolerable if one of her classmates touched her in any way.

It is a truly remarkable moment in her life when one is reminded that Williams has not recovered from this syndrome—and never will. She struggles only to control it.

The senses and feelings involved in the daily activities of most people are beyond the capabilities of autistics. Williams still lacks an understanding of basic human emotions. For instance, she feels no anger toward her mother who constantly abused her. Instead, she objectively says her mother simply lacked the skills necessary to raise an autistic child. Williams does not like to be touched; she has no interest in sex. She cannot carry on a normal conversation with people.

To obtain an interview with Williams, one must send her all the questions in advance. The actual meeting must take place in an open area that is quiet; preferably the interview is conducted while walking; and she is not to be looked at in the eye.

The tenacity of the human spirit runs deeply through the pages of Williams' heart-rending autobiographies. She vividly describes her struggle to leave her inner world—"my sanctuary and my pain"—to become an active part of the "real world," with all of its relationships and emotional connections.

Relying on her extraordinary strength and courage, Williams subjects herself to intensive therapy sessions in an ongoing ordeal to "become real." She has been able to leave behind her alternate personalities: Carol, a smiling, social imp "who could hide the child who should be put to death" and Willie, with "his hateful glaring eyes, pinched up mouth, clenched fists and corpse-like stance." Williams marches on alone and finds she is not "mad or bad," but rather, is afflicted with one of the most misunderstood syndromes.

Bridging a great void

Williams' unique ability to reach through the barriers of autism is apparent in her practical teaching experience. One autistic boy she worked with was more intent on using his hands to tap his chest than on feeding himself. Williams started tapping his shoulder in the same pattern the boy was using on his chest. He then started to feed himself while Williams continued rhythmically tapping him.

Williams is not currently teaching and is living quietly in England. I am sure we will hear from her again. The medical world would be foolish not to learn as much as they can from her. She represents an invaluable bridge to the inner world of autism.

Both books should be read by educators, caregivers and people who are related to an autistic person. But most of all, these books should be read by everyone *else*. Who has not walked down the street and been intimidated or annoyed by someone who appears abnormal? These books give a better understanding of the person inside the body that does not conform.

Williams' honesty in recounting her daily—and lifelong—struggle is inspirational to us all. By sharing her innermost thoughts with us, Williams has opened the door a little wider on our understanding of autism and its different way of ordering the universe. We come away from her books better equipped to extend the boundaries of how we perceive "normal" and "rational" human behavior. Donna Williams is more than somebody somewhere. ●

Elizabeth walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave.

There was Prince Ronald.

He looked at her and said, "Elizabeth, you are a mess! You smell like ashes, your hair is all tangled and you are wearing a dirty old paper bag. Come back when you are dressed like a real princess."

"Ronald," said Elizabeth, "your clothes are really pretty and your hair is very neat. You look like a real prince, but you are a bum."

They didn't get married after all.

The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch, art by Michael Martchenko (Annick Press, 1980).

Older and Wiser

Children's Publishing Grows Up

As the Canadian children's publishing industry comes of age, the content of the books it produces is evolving to reflect today's diverse, changing society.

by Valerie Applebee

"Children's books play a major role in the literature of culturally mature countries. In these countries, the creation of children's books is seen as one of the most important and challenging areas of publishing." This is the opening sentence of a report from the Association of Canadian Publishers in 1978. For Canada, the 1970s represent the birth of a "kids-lit" industry. Following a human-like cycle, children's publishing came of age and blossomed in the 1980s.

And now, in 1994, settling into its twenty-somethings, it has been forced to take a serious look at economic realities, and plot its course for the future. The chosen path of children's authors today seems to have branched out to include a growing, healthy respect for children from all different kinds of backgrounds. This path seeks to understand today's children better, while preparing them for the realities of an increasingly diverse society.

Valerie Applebee is a firm believer that growing up too much, or too soon, can be hazardous to your health. She is still suffering the after-shock of having completed a B.A. in Communication Studies from Concordia, and a Certificate in Publishing from Ryerson.

1970-1989: From the sublime to the ridiculous

When Egg and I sit down to tea
He never eats as much as me.
And so, to help him out I take
A double share of chocolate cake.

"The Friends," *Alligator Pie*
(Macmillan Canada, 1974)
Dennis Lee, art by Frank Newfeld

Before the 1970s, Canadian booksellers relied mostly on children's books produced in the United States or in Britain. Then came a new breed of publishing houses that dealt exclusively in "kids-lit": Annick, Groundwood, Kids Can, and Tundra. The doors were opening for authors and illustrators forging ahead in this rapidly expanding literary genre. Government grants specifically for children's publishing became available for the first time, and children's book centers and stores began to spring up everywhere.

Dennis Lee's collection of poems, *Alligator Pie*, was the first children's book to receive widespread media attention and make it into the book review pages. It established the Canadian children's book as an industry of its own, rather than just a subsidiary of adult publishing.

In 1975 less than 50 kids' books were being published in Canada. By the mid-1980s that figure was up to 300. By 1989 the market was in danger of being swamped. And with the recession settling in, there was concern that children's publishing would be destroyed by its own success. In 1989 *Quill and Quire*—Canada's Magazine of Book News and Reviews—warned that the wave of children's publishing that had started in the 1970s was now "threatening to become a deluge." By 1993, they declared that the bloom was off the boom.

Surviving in the kids' book business

Although the weather report had called for a calm day, the wind was out in force. Leon hadn't taken three steps,

when a really nasty gust of air blew his hat off. That really bothered him.

Follow That Hat, (Annick Press)
Pierre Pratt

Publishing often becomes a game preoccupied with crunching numbers. A new children's book with a retail price of $12.95 will probably have cost the publisher about $14.50 to produce. Assuming that every copy actually sold, a print run of 4,000 would leave the publisher with a "profit" of negative $6,200! The trick is to create a book which will have demand for a second print run (and hopefully a third, fourth, etc.). Then, with production costs down, publishers can actually start turning loss into gain.

Children's books in particular depend on slow but steady sales. A lot of the books published decades ago are still being printed and sold today. This is where publishers in the 1990s started to run into problems, as new titles were competing with backlisted ones. Essentially the market reached a saturation point. The American industry fell about 12 percent. But in Canada, with its significantly smaller market, the number of books printed only dipped slightly.

Expanding horizons: multiculturalism and the changing family unit

The sun shone. Later the rain came and the corn
grew tall. The beans wound around their stalks to
reach the sun. The chili bushes flowered.

A Handful of Seeds,
(Lester Publishing, 1993)
Monica Hughes, art by Luis Garay

As social ideals and practices evolve, so does the content of the books a society produces. Conversely, as the message and ideals of books change, so too will society. Children's books today reflect the way North American society has progressed—ideally, anyway—to embrace all cultures of the world as they come together in a rich cultural mosaic. Shopping around at children's book stores I saw a proliferation of fabulous stories, all of which involve children with different cultural heritages living in Canada.

In *Marisol and the Yellow Messenger* (Emilie Smith-Ayala, art by Sami Suomalainen, Annick Press 1994), a little girl from Central America moves to Canada after the death of her father and is forced to adjust to the strangeness of a new climate and culture. She does not end up "converting" to Canadianism—but rather, brings the two cultures together, validating the richness of living in a multicultural society.

Every publisher I spoke to warned emphatically against books driven by a cause. The only way to encourage kids to be life-long readers is by feeding them good books. And stories motivated by a moral, rather than by inspiration, are often transparent and not very interesting. Children's fiction should be measured by the quality of the writing, the appeal of the story. And sometimes a great story will come along in spite of the issue. *Marisol* weaves a beautiful tale around vibrant illustrations without ever telling children what to think: it remains a captivating story that depicts immigrants without ever writing about them.

"She imagined herself back in her grandparents house."
[Marisol by Emilie Smith-Ayala, art by Sami Suomalainen]

In other books, illustrations often depict characters from a variety of cultural and racial backgrounds regardless of whether or not this has anything to do with the story. For example, in Robert Munsch's *Show and Tell* (Annick Press, 1991) the drawings by Michael Martchenko depict an Asian boy, a black teacher, and a woman doctor. These portrayals are not in themselves central to the story, which is about a boy who brings his baby sister to school for Show and Tell. Children absorb the pictures on a sub-conscious level, accepting different cultures without having to "learn" to accept them.

Another change in modern children's books is the redefinition of the family unit. From more obvious books about divorced parents to very subtle references in other stories, the nuclear family has lost its exclusivity. I noticed one reference while reading Kathy Stinson's *Teddy Rabbit* (art by Stéphane Poulin, Annick Press, 1988). I had read this story close to a million times (holding tightly to my teddy-piglet) before I noticed the line: "On Saturday, Tony's dad came to take him to Centre Island." Tony's father, I realized for the first time, does not live at home. And again it was not important to the story: it was simply an accepted fact about the protagonist that his parents did not live together.

One book which stands out more in its depiction of changing realities is *Tiger Flowers* (Patricia Quinn, art by Janet Wilson, Lester Publishing 1994). It is about a boy learning to cope with the death of his uncle. The uncle was homosexual and has died of AIDS. This tragedy, however, is not the central issue of the story. The story is about love and loss, and the uncle's acceptance in the family is never even questioned.

Happily ever after?

The Princes soon became tiring to everyone. They were always rescuing damsels in distress, even when the damsels weren't in distress.

Frogs, (Harper Collins, 1993)
Andrea Wayne-von Königslöw,
art by Michael Martchenko

A new category of books is showing up on the bookstore shelves: the anti-fairy tale. What better way to update traditional stories preoccupied with helpless, passive women, evil step-parents and the white-washed world of marital bliss than by turning them on their heads? Traditional fairy tales in their timeless beauty are not attacked by this new genre, yet books today are offering up alternatives which call into question some of the rigid values the classics seem to enshrine.

Recall, for example, *The Frog Prince.* The classic story features a princess who is crying because she dropped her ball in

the well. A frog comes to her rescue on the condition that she kiss him and take him into her home. Reluctantly she does it and—poof—the frog becomes a prince who rescues the princess from her tragic, lonely, princeless life.

In *The Frog Prince Continued* by Jon Scieszka (Viking, 1991) the royal couple do not live happily ever after. But in their quarreling they learn to accept each other—warts and all. They also achieve a certain freedom in their misery: the princess doesn't have to embrace the saccharin bliss of the typical fairy tale, and the prince no longer has to embody the "perfect man." He retains the freedom to be a bit of a toad.

In *Frogs*, a city becomes overrun with frog-princes (one of whom, with big ears and rosy cheeks, bears a suspicious resemblance to Prince Charles). But no one is impressed with the royal mob, who spend their days rescuing irritated people who do not need rescuing. As it turns out, the princes aren't too happy either. Because they have been turned from frogs to humans, they order flies in restaurants, stare longingly at lily-pads and hop sadly by the pond, until a young girl comes up with a plan to turn them back into frogs. This story proves that the heroine can rescue the prince sometimes. It may also teach kids to accept themselves for who they are: the princes, forced into the unwelcome occupation of perpetual gallantry, are apparently happier being frogs.

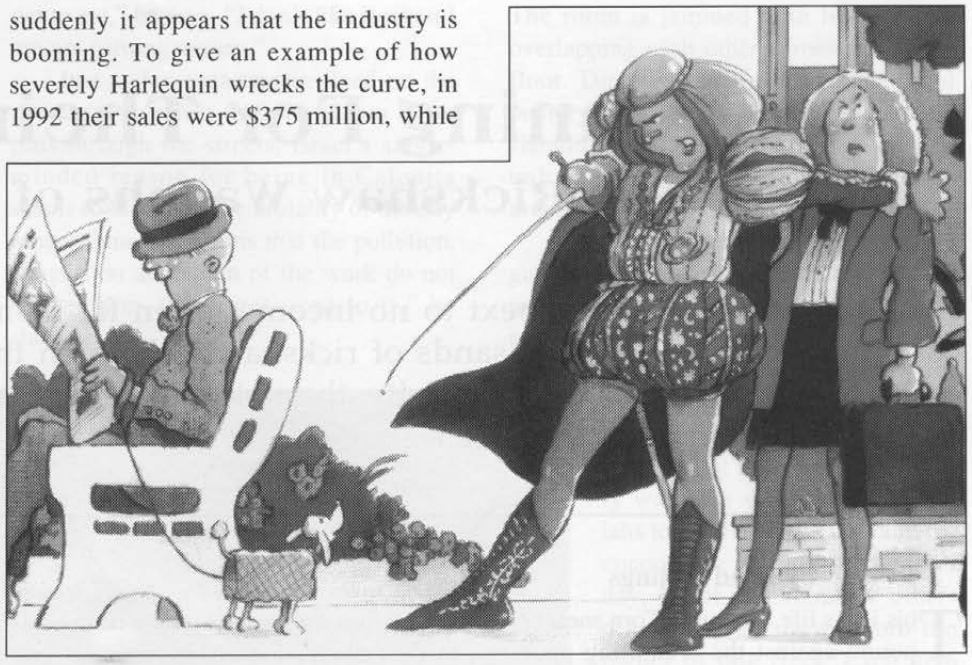
The Robert Munsch factor

So he gave Gah-Ning one hundred balloons, two hundred balloons, three hundred balloons and Gah-Ning started to float right up into the sky. The clown said, "You'd better look out. You are going to fly all the way to Kapuskasing." "I know," said Gah-Ning, "isn't it great?"

Where is Gah-Ning?, (Annick Press, 1994)
Robert Munsch, art by Hélène Desputeaux

Some people are born storytellers. Bob Munsch is one of these. All of his stories (some 25 of them now) possess a certain spark that lifts them into a higher realm—not to mention a higher profitability.

In Canadian publishing there is something known as "the Harlequin factor." All other publishers can combine their sales figures and the projection for the industry still looks grim. Then along comes Harlequin with *their* figures, and suddenly it appears that the industry is booming. To give an example of how severely Harlequin wrecks the curve, in 1992 their sales were $375 million, while University of Toronto Press came in a distant second with $45 million.



Making the world safe from poodles: a nineties damsel no longer in distress.
[Frogs by Andrea Wayne-von Königslöw, art by Michael Martchenko]

At Annick Press they affectionately refer to "the Munsch factor." The sales and profits of a Munsch book essentially have to be treated as an entirely separate entity. An average book will have a print run of 5,000. Munsch's latest *Where is Gah-Ning?* has a first print run of 362,000!

Although Munsch is arguably the best selling author in the country, three of his books have been subject to harsh criticism.

Love You Forever (art by Sheila McGraw, Firefly, 1986), is a sentimental story about the bond between a mother and her son which traces their relationship from his infancy and his mother's care, to her inevitable aging and the grown man's care of her. It was criticized by publishers and reviewers as syrupy sap. Call it what you will—it has sold 10 million copies.

Giant or Waiting for the Thursday Boat (art by Gilles Tibo, Annick Press, 1989) and *Good Families Don't* (art by Alan Daniel, Doubleday, 1990) have ventured beyond criticism and have brushed with censorship. The former was accused of depicting "violence against God." In it, a giant, angry at St. Patrick for driving the elves and giants from Ireland, threatens to pound God "till he looks like applesauce." God, it turns out, was pleased that she—yes, she—had created a perfect giant for giants are meant to be big and brutish.

Good Families Don't, originally titled *The Fart Book*, has been labelled "vulgar." In this saga, a huge fart overtakes a household despite the parents' protests that good families do not have farts. Munsch, responding to the controversy surrounding critics' protests that the book contains material unsuitable for children, maintains that adults are out of touch with what kids find funny. Perhaps censors were seemingly assuaged by the end, in which a little girl saves the day by shoving a rose up the fart's nose.

The emancipation of the child

I am small.
But I think big.

I am Small, (Doubleday, 1994)
Sheree Fitch, art by Kim LeFave

If there is one common theme among modern children's books it is the emancipation of the child. No longer does the princess sit and let everyone from evil siblings to fairy godmothers control her destiny. The characters are active—actually creating the story and resolving the issues. Traditional authority figures, such as parents, doctors, or teachers mostly bumble around until the kid comes along and straightens them out.

On a day-to-day basis not too many kids have the chance to overpower the adult figures in their lives. By making this fantasy come to life in a storybook it encourages kids to grow up confident in their own abilities. And that is the true mark of a successful children's book. ●

Running For Their Lives

The Rickshaw Wallahs of Calcutta

Gruelling physical labor, next to no income, often far from family and home—these are conditions endured by thousands of rickshaw pullers on the streets of Calcutta. A telling embodiment of India's poor majority, the rickshaw has endured in a country struggling to become a modern, prosperous state.

by Brad Gillings

This is his life. Running. Torn sneakers pound against the crumbling pavement of a busy city street. His chest heaves in search of air as the suffocating stench of ripe garbage and open sewage overwhelms the nostrils. He battles trucks, bicycles, buses and taxis for space and survival as they slalom through the weaving maze of cows, goats and pedestrians.

The motorized scream of a bus threatens the runner from behind. Then, as though he was invisible, the vehicle overtakes him, spewing a cloud of black exhaust into his face. Appearing undisturbed, the runner drives forward, clutching the two narrow wooden bars that connect him to a simple metal carriage.

The man is a rickshaw puller, locally known as a *wallah*. His job: to taxi people to their destinations. This particular customer, a middle-aged woman draped in purple silk, is being ferried to market. When the two-mile journey comes to an end, he pulls the carriage to the side of the road and lowers it carefully, helping his passenger climb out. Reaching into a small purse she hands him five rupees (15 cents) and walks off without a word.

Over one million served daily

Mohamad Israel, rickshaw wallah, spends his days on the streets of Calcutta, India's largest city. Calcutta's rickshaws continue to increase in number. There are now an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 rickshaws plying the city streets—far exceeding the limit of 6,000 the city would ideally like to enforce—and up to 100,000 pullers employed. Every day these wallahs carry "more than one million passengers and cover more miles than Indian Airlines, 30 Boeings and Airbuses," according to Rob Gallagher's book *The Rickshaws of Bangladesh.*

The strong demand for rickshaws exists largely because of their efficiency on streets where extreme congestion makes even walking difficult. Children and the elderly are especially dependent on this form of transportation. Rickshaws are cheaper than motorized taxis and take up less space on the road. During monsoons, they are capable of navigating the flooded streets that force other vehicles out of service. They are especially valuable during such times for emergency transportation, carrying the sick and injured to hospitals.

The design of the rickshaw has not changed since it was introduced to Calcutta by the Chinese at the turn of the century. The wheels are solid wood, and the center of gravity is too high. The wallah is forced to balance the vehicle at an uncomfortable angle, while passengers run the risk of being dumped backward into the traffic. Aware of the potential hazard, a runner must also consider that he has no brakes save his legs. Step after step on the pavement, his sore shins absorb the force of loads which may weigh up to 500 pounds.

The vast supply of rickshaw wallahs is consistently fed by an overabundance of poor who eagerly accept this harsh

A rickshaw wallah struggles to keep his place amidst heavy early morning traffic. [Al Schaben/JD&A]

Brad Gillings works for Nebraska-based JD&A, an agency specializing in social documentary journalism.

existence. The exertion drastically shortens the wallah's life-span to below the average 60 years for Indian males. Today, the wallahs' industry has been virtually taken over by migrant laborers, most of whom are from rural areas of neighboring states. Illiterate, unskilled and landless, they have no other means of survival.

Far from the fields of home

Mohamad Israel's story is not unique. Like a majority of Calcutta's rickshaw wallahs, he migrated to the city from the neighboring state of Bihar.

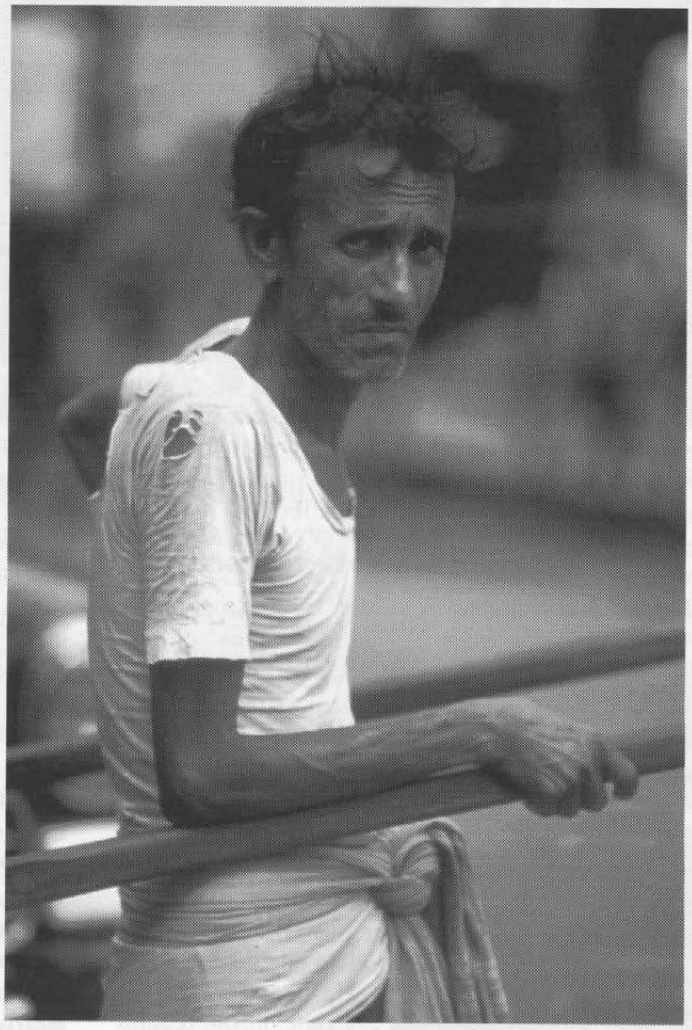
Ten years ago, at the age of 35, Israel left his family and the fields of Bihar in desperation. His ancestors had been subsistence farmers as far back as anyone could remember. Large landowners, however, had slowly bought up most of the property. Like many others, Israel was left with nothing. He had only been able to find seasonal work a few months each year, laboring on the larger farms. The rest of the time he worked as a household servant, but still could not support his wife and four children. Scraping up enough money for one train ticket, he said goodbye to his family and set out for a city he had never seen.

Calcutta was a place Rudyard Kipling called the "City of Dreadful Night." A young Winston Churchill, writing home to his mother, said that "he was pleased he had seen it because he would not have to see it again." According to its major daily newspaper, *The Statesman*, Calcutta "continues to show a resigned acceptance of unending misery." And here, Israel joined the ranks of thousands as yet another rickshaw wallah.

The job allows him to better support his family, but he can return to visit only twice a year. He sends home what he can manage to save of his average daily salary of 35 rupees ($1.15).

When speaking of his family, Israel sighs and looks away. It is the closest he has come to revealing any emotion. Generally stern and businesslike, he has one sole purpose for being here. "I like it because I earn money and my children get to eat," he says. "I don't like it when I am not earning money."

Just as his eyes remain fixed on the pavement five feet in front of him as he runs through the streets, Israel's single-minded reason for being in Calcutta seems to block out the brutality of the city around him. He claims that the pollution, congestion and strain of the work do not bother him. "You get used to it," he shrugs.



Many rickshaw wallahs die before they are 40 years old. [Al Schaben/JD&A]

Stone pillows, concrete beds

The place Israel and his colleagues now call home is a narrow side street in central Calcutta. Each morning before dawn, rickshaws are lined up in a row along the curb. Scattered next to them, like a box of children's crayons dumped on a sidewalk, the wallahs lie sleeping, wrapped from head to toe in colorful blankets. Since it poured rain last night, some of the men took cover in a nearby cellar. The room is jammed with limp bodies overlapping each other across a concrete floor. Directly above them a canopy of laundry is suspended from a low ceiling. Hanging heavily in the air is the odor of unbathed flesh, making it difficult to breathe.

Outside, garbage swims from the gutters into puddles in the street. Its smell mixes with that of urine and smog. The rain, however, has refreshingly dampened the stench enough to allow for the pleasure of a deep breath without choking. The reprieve will not last long, and the steadily warming sun urges the wallahs to crawl out of their rainbow cocoons to prepare for another day. Israel and about 60 others rent their rickshaws from the owner of one fleet. Each man pays the owner 13 rupees (39 cents) a day.

From a corner of the cellar the light of a small flame breaks into the darkness. Crouched on a stool, a wiry man with white hair and a solemn face is preparing tea. He serves it along with plain white bread to the early risers. Soon he is surrounded by a huddle of wallahs anxious for breakfast.

Outside, a chorus of chatter fills the air as a circus of morning rituals breaks out in the street. Water gushes from a well in the sidewalk where a group of men crowd around to bathe. As they splash water over their bodies most of it flows into a stream of sewage carrying human waste past them and into a drain five yards away.

Israel joins the group. He uses a long twig for a toothbrush, rubbing it vigorously back and forth along his gums. He scoops up some brownish water in a metal can and splashes some on his face before drinking the rest. He then wipes down his rickshaw.

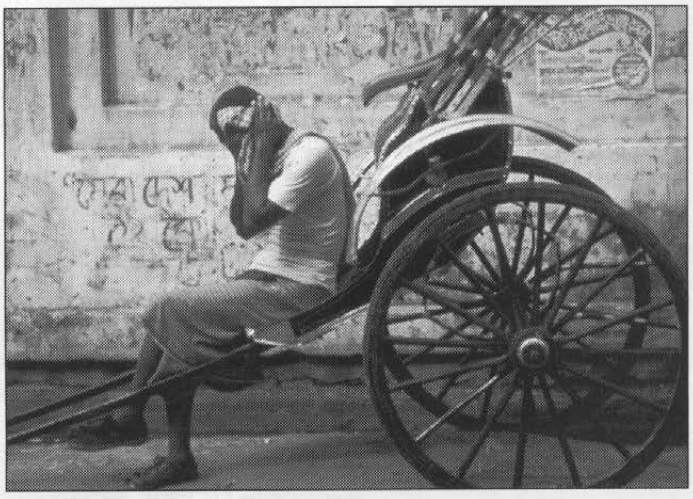
Israel is meticulous. He removes the two large wagon wheels, each more than three feet in diameter, and greases the axles. The unmistakable pride with which Israel maintains his rickshaw should come as no surprise: rickshaw number 5525 is his only livelihood, and now it too is prepared for another day. One by

one, the other wallahs pick up their vehicles and trot onto the streets.

A day in the life

Israel's first customer is a regular. An 80-year-old school principal whose roots go back to the British colonial era, she is a living remnant of the "Raj." Israel carefully helps her hunched form into the carriage and they begin their journey to school. They roll on, through a maze of small private shops selling everything and offering all services imaginable. Like moving down the dial of a radio, the high-pitched screech of Hindu music deafens and fades at various points along the way. Laughs and cries of children blend with the squawking of chickens, the whining of goats and shouts from vendors advertising their merchandise.

With each stride Israel's lean calf muscles pulse from below the line of his green *dhoti*—a large piece of cloth wrapped around the waste like a towel and tied up between the legs. He keeps his money tied in a knot at the end of a blue cloth around his waste which he tucks under a once-white shirt. Over his shoulder, he constantly totes a red and white checkered cloth to wipe away the sweat. His black hair, sprinkled with white, is cropped to less than half an inch. Most wallahs keep it short, otherwise lice would be difficult to avoid.



Mohamad Israel wipes his face after a long day on the streets of Calcutta. [Al Schaben/JD&A]

After about a mile and a half they reach the school. Crawling out of the buggy, the old woman hands him four rupees (12 cents). "He is a very honest and sincere man," she says of Israel. "The work is very hard, but what else can they do?"

Israel has only one other regular client. The rest of the time he spends sitting in the same spot, waiting. Day after day, for hours on end he and five or six other wallahs sit on the same corner, a patch of gravel next to a mound of garbage where a small side road turns onto a busy street.

"It's a good spot for customers," Israel explains. Still, unlike the hot sun, which beats down on this unprotected spot without mercy, work is inconsistent. One day Israel may have 20 to 25 passengers. The next, only two or three will come his way. The wallahs pass the time chatting idly, and are constantly occupied with *khani*, a soft stick that smells like dried manure that they crush and use like chewing tobacco.

Opposite their corner, four shabby tea houses line up in a row; this is where Israel takes most of his meals. His staple is *polygram*, a yellow grain mixed with water and sugar. Tea, rice, and white, flat bread called *chapate* rounds out almost his entire diet. At seven rupees (21 cents) a meal, it is all he can afford.

Nagging symbols of misery

On the street, a motorcycle stopping at the wallahs' corner has bumped into the back of a car. A shouting match ensues and nearly erupts into a fist fight. To avoid trouble, Israel moves his rickshaw well out of the way. His behavior is linked to his social status, for Israel stands on the bottom rung of a society still preoccupied with a rigid, albeit officially abolished, caste structure. The safest course of action is to maintain a low profile.

Rickshaw wallahs share their lowly position with Indians working on the docks, in factories and in the fields. Save perhaps for the street beggars, none are as visible as the Calcutta rickshaw pullers. Their ancient chariots remain a nagging symbol of the social problems that plague India—a nation struggling to enter the twenty-first century as a developed country.

India boasts of being one of the world's industrial giants. It possesses atomic power, a space satellite program, and engages in huge public-works programs. At the same time, half of the population lives below the poverty line in conditions little better than those endured by their ancestors. The city streets overflow with slums and beggars.

"We will get nowhere if we stop to consider the poor all the time," said a businessman in Trevor Fishlock's book *India File*. "The Americans did not wait for the poor to catch up when their country was developing, nor should we. India will only improve if we forge ahead on all fronts."

Taking the hand-pulled rickshaws off the streets of Calcutta has been a constant public concern since the end of World War II. In the 1970s, authorities launched an aggressive campaign to abolish them, and thousands of rickshaws were confiscated and burned. One police official in Calcutta's traffic department claimed that the hand-pulled rickshaw is on its way out. "This is a very crude method of transportation," he said. "It is going to be abolished. I think that after five or six years, there will be no more rickshaws here."

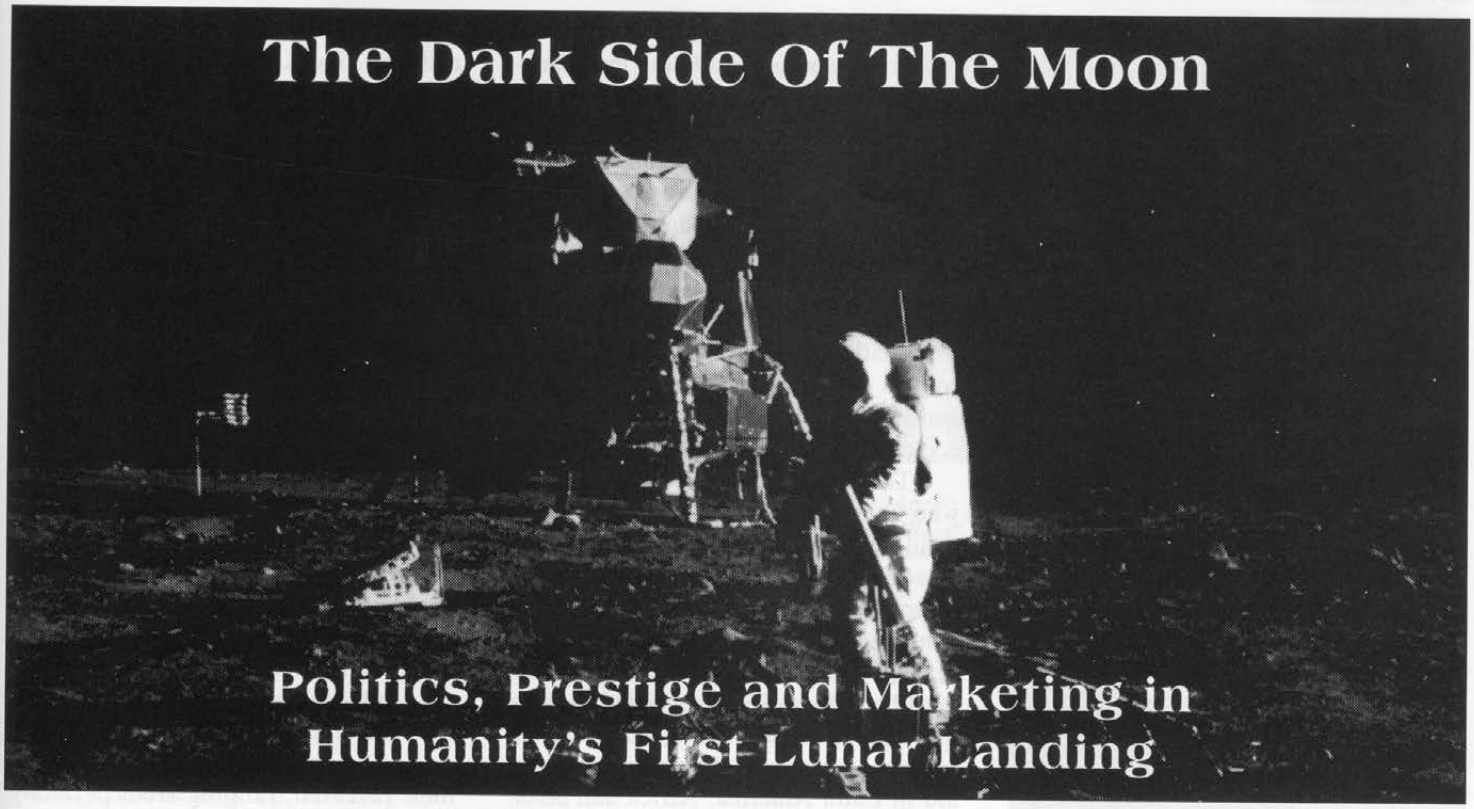
Perhaps this would indeed hide the depth of social misery, end the harsh lifestyle of the wallahs, and may even aid India in rolling more smoothly into modernity and greater prosperity for a small elite.

Despite all, the rickshaw has survived. A labor union organization has fought vigorously since 1932 to maintain the only means of livelihood available to the wallahs. They have been successful, clearly, but how long they will be able to stop "progress" is uncertain.

Yet, no alternative has been planned for the impact that abolishing this form of transportation would have on those who depend on rickshaws and those who pull them. Calcutta's economic woes are too overwhelming to be able to absorb more than 100,000 unemployed, unskilled, illiterate wallahs—akin to removing a scar, while opening up the wound.

There is no simple solution. Take the hand-pulled rickshaw from a man such as Israel, and he would be left with no way to support his family. What would he have? This is his life. ●

The Dark Side Of The Moon



[NASA]

Politics, Prestige and Marketing in Humanity's First Lunar Landing

On July 20, 1969, the United States became the first nation to land humans on the moon. While the Apollo 11 mission met with an euphoric public reaction then, the "moon-shot" had a less romantic side where national pride, economic profit and short-term political gains in Cold War competition played the leading roles.

by Dave Coleman

"That's one small step for man—one giant leap for mankind." On July 20, 1969, the world held its breath as Neil Armstrong spoke these immortal words from where the "Eagle"—the first manned probe to set down on another heavenly body—had landed on the moon's Sea of Tranquility.

A man on the moon was a feat that most spectators never expected to see in their lifetime—the stuff of comic books and science fiction. The world, and especially Americans, stood awestruck at the sheer triumph of human science and management. Indeed, a culmination of eight years of determined American research and financing, the "moon-shot" was the single largest project ever undertaken in peacetime America.

Never again could humans view Earth in the same way. Writer Archibald MacLeish summarized the feelings of many: "To see the Earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the Earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold—brothers who know now that they are truly brothers."

But in the 25 years that have passed since that epochal moment, the gleam of achievement has become tarnished. Critical voices of this lofty American dream have questioned the necessity of the enormous expenditure—in dollars, resources and human-hours—and the speed at which the project was completed. They challenge the motivations in which scientific exploration appears to have played only a supporting role. (Soil and rock samples were collected).

Instead, political factors took inspirational pride of place: Cold-War competition with the Soviet Union, the search for international prestige and validation, and the need for a distraction from the accelerated unravelling of American society in the 1960s.

Economic considerations, including spin-off discoveries and subsequent contracts, stood a distant second. In hindsight, commentators increasingly describe America's lunar leap as a great public spectacle, flaunting the super-tech wares of post-war America and self-righteously affirming the ascendence of the capitalist lifestyle.

A race for human advancement—or for America?

A crucial factor in the race to the moon was the Cold War. The 1956 Soviet suppression of a Hungarian rebellion; 1961 division of Berlin by the Wall and failed U.S. invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs; and 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis combined to fuel American paranoia of Soviet Communism. On one hand fearing invasion, the U.S. government was also keen to maintain an exceptionally positive American image both at home and abroad. With nuclear weapons deterring face-to-face conflict, superpower competition took on other forms.

In the late 1950s, a manned Soviet bathysphere descended 45,000 feet below the waves of the Atlantic Ocean, passing

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the American depth record by 7,000 feet. The Senate Committee on Un-Prestigious Activities chafed about the "implications of the new Soviet breakthrough for the United States' image abroad."

Members of the Senate, the Pentagon and Naval think-tanks steeled themselves for the race to the bottom of the ocean, with a deadline of 1970. A White House statement, aimed at rallying popular support, asserted that "in a very real sense, it will not be just one man going to the bottom of the ocean...it will be an entire nation."

In a 1961 speech, President John F. Kennedy mimicked these words to emotionalize the space race: "But in a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon—we make this judgment affirmatively—it will be an entire nation." With the higher prestige potential of space exploration, the United States government shifted its priorities from the deep sea to near space.

Stogies, stars and stripes: mission control as the "Eagle has landed." [NASA]

"Ask not what your country can do for you..."

President John F. Kennedy has often been given credit for the forceful zeal that fueled the space program. In May, 1961, Kennedy made his famed proclamation that the U.S. "should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out of landing a man on the moon."

After his assassination, proponents of the project spoke of fulfilling the charismatic leader's wish. However, Kennedy was by no means a keen supporter of unilateral space exploration. In his first State of the Union address to Congress in 1960, he argued: "today this country is ahead in the science and technology of space, while the Soviet Union is ahead in the capacity to lift large vehicles into orbit. Both nations would help themselves as well as other nations by removing these endeavors from the bitter and wasteful competition of the 'Cold War.'"

There is little wonder that a leader who knew the cost of the moon project would encourage shared technology and financing. In the mid-1960s, cost estimates ranged from a conservative $20 billion to a far-flung $100-150 billion.

Space race critic Amitai Etzioni, in his 1964 book *Moon Doggle*, pointed out how this higher estimate was equivalent to the sum required to end the need for foreign aid in Latin America, Africa and Asia. David Baker, an aerospace consultant who worked for more than a decade at NASA, estimates the entire cost of the Apollo project to be $25 billion: $95 billion in today's currency.

Although Kennedy proposed cooperation, his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, held a different perspective. Johnson had been a part of the initial study group that advocated the space race, and from 1960-63 had headed up the National Aeronautics and Space Council. With members of NASA numbering amongst his closest aides, Johnson steamrolled forward with the race to the moon.

For the glory of the red, white and blue

The more intangible value of national pride was also central to the forcefulness of the lunar mission. In *Project Apollo*, a book written in 1969 with cooperation from NASA, one finds this guarded comment: "The Apollo Project represents the visible peak of the most advanced technological challenge that the world has experienced so far and, of course, part of the value to the U.S. from the enterprise can be measured in prestige."

The "prestige race" to the moon represented a national denial of the Soviet Union as a significant world force—"that the communist system would not, could not work."

With the Soviet success of Sputnik 1, the first satellite to reach orbit in 1957, and Yuri Gagarin becoming the first man in space in 1961, "the United States grew more and more insecure," a critic wrote, "until one day the government decided that we must out-spectacular the Russians on any front."

Charles Pellegrin, former head of strategic planning for NASA, stated flatly: "Apollo was motivated by a desire to show the belligerent countries of the world what our military capabilities were in a way that was more benign than dropping a bomb on them."

More bang for the lunar buck

In the web of causative factors, economics lay at the core. The science-equals-growth formula, an economic model which linked technological advancement to fiscal success, was enthusiastically embraced in the mid-1960s.

NASA bubbled with the potential spin-off discoveries made possible from their research, ranging from perfectly shaped ball bearings to super alloys, from rapid growth crystals to medical miracles. All of these would lead not only to fantastic profits for American companies, but also validate and broadcast U.S. technological preeminance.

The civil service has estimated that the government received close to seven dollars in subsequent contracts, tourism and export orders for every one dollar spent on the lunar landing.

However, critics have questioned the connection between Research and Development and profits. Economist Robert A. Solo noted "after 1953, while expenditures for R & D skyrocket, the rate of increase in output per hour slumps." Etzioni argues that aerospace and electronics received one-quarter of R & D expenditures in the early 1960s but only produced 3.5 percent of Gross National Product.

Space *race?*

To what degree was the "space race" indeed a race? Until very recently the Soviet Union had claimed no interest in landing cosmonauts on the moon. In the month prior to the landing of the Apollo 11 team in 1969, a Soviet robot probe cruised a scant few miles above the lunar surface. But American intelligence found few indications of any true Soviet attempts to lay the first footprints in the dust.

Findings due to Glasnost have surprised movers in the space business. As

the story goes, in 1990 a U.S. scientific team was inspecting a Soviet facility, touring through a warehouse of space hardware. Upon viewing an unfamiliar piece, they were non-chalantly informed that it was the prototype of a lunar lander.

In fact, the Soviets were prepared to launch a lander in 1968, a full year before the Americans, but failures and explosions repeatedly delayed their missions. Their moon project was finally cancelled in 1974 due to political in-fighting.

Marketing the moon

Americans made all attempts to market the successful moon landing for maximum world attention. In the lead-up to the lunar voyage, NASA had teams of lecturers touring the world with vibrant displays, answering questions which ranged from how the rocket lifts off to how an astronaut goes to the toilet in zero gravity.

The International Telecommunications Satellite Organization set up the first global satellite link-up, to relay live images of the landing to 500 million people worldwide. American retailers reported a massive television buying spree, a sales record that still stands.

Television coverage and live imagery were crucial to the Apollo missions, with hundreds of millions vicariously experiencing the thrill of walking on the moon. In *Project Apollo*, the authors gush at the impact of their images. "One of the most remarkable aspects of this mission was the TV coverage," the authors wrote. "Both black and white and color pictures were received as clear on millions of homes' screens as local broadcasts."

NASA installed a camera on the outside of the lunar lander, so as to have an image of Armstrong as he made the historic first steps. In the transcript of the correspondence between the "Eagle" and Houston base, the greatest concern focussed on whether the camera was properly positioned to record the image.

The moonstruck summer of 1969

No matter how transfixed the world may have been at this historic juncture, life did not come to a stand-still. As the "Eagle" was making its final descent to the Sea of Tranquility, Massachusetts police divers were dragging Mary Jo Kopechne's body from the car Senator Edward M. Kennedy had driven off a bridge on Chappaquidick Island.

Newspapers were advertising a music festival named Woodstock, where weekend passes would cost $13.

Editorials in the *New York Times* focussed with concern on the fate of the nation as the war in Vietnam deteriorated, racial conflict intensified and urban problems grew boundlessly. "The moon is an escape from our earthly responsibility," said one editor "and like other escapes it leaves a troubled conscience."

Lyndon B. Johnson, when questioned on the speed at which the moon mission was accomplished, responded "if we can do that in such a short time, I wonder why we can't put the same effort into peace for all time."

Where are they now?

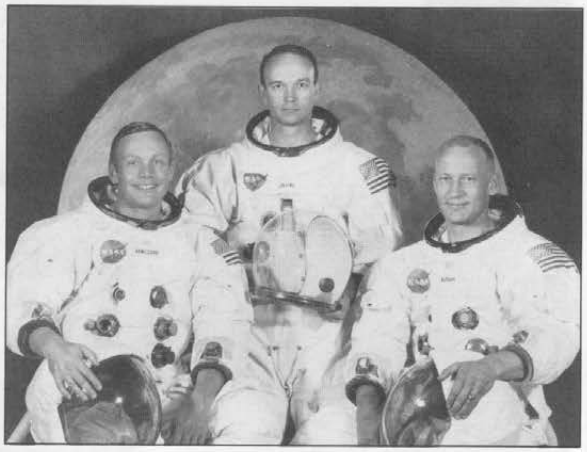
Since December 1972, when Apollo 17 made the fifth and final lunar descent, moon fever has abated. NASA quickly had to learn that the charmed years leading up to the moon landing would never be repeated. As the political and economic constellations changed, space issues no longer received special treatment.

The private sector has moved into the vacuum left by government and public disinterest in NASA. The Space Studies Institute (SSI), a private non-profit research venture based in Princeton, New Jersey, has set its sights on serious scientific research of the Earth's only natural satellite.

SSI had planned to launch a robot called a Lunar Prospector in 1992 for a one-year orbiting mission. Although this deadline has come and gone, SSI still aims to proceed with the eventual goal of moon mining sometime in the next century.

International Space Enterprises, an organization of American and Soviet entrepreneurs, boasts that they can land people and goods on the moon for a tenth of what it costs NASA. Part of their corner-cutting comes from using old Russian equipment that is currently gathering dust at the Russian Lavochkin Association.

The group envisions huge returns on astronomical advertising. Michael Simon, one of the American investors, envisions great profits from lens manufacturers in return for their company name emblazoned on moon-based telescopes.

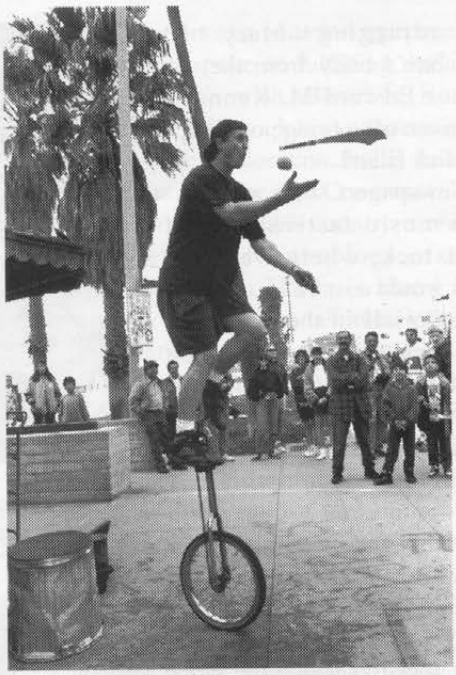


Apollo 11 crew: Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and "Buzz" Aldrin. [NASA]

[Kirk Anderson]

Was it worth it?

Many question the true value of the moon race. Rather than reaching the moon with international cooperation, or learning as much as possible from the mission, it was a push to get there first and snatch all the glory. A *New York Times* editorial phrases boldly: "Perhaps we begin to suspect that we are twentieth century Vikings, driven, conquering without humanizing qualities. We would know the stars, but we do not know ourselves." ●



Postcards from Venice Beach

Salutations from California! What a thrill to be walking along the shores of Venice Beach again after all these years! The history envelopes me. A '60s bohemian hang-out of eclectic proportions, a girl I knew used to call it "beach Berkeley." Muscle guys lined the shore in an attention-grabbing competition of bulk—chests bare, shorts tight, arms flexed and oiled, with barbells gripped tightly in hand. Along the boulevard rollerskaters danced through the flowing notes of street musicians. And the dope-smokin' counter-culture was there to save the world.

No doubt, it's not the same place it once was. I got lost in a sea of tourists. Not many locals around here anymore, except at night when the gangs control the streets.

But still, if you listen really carefully, breathe the air ever so slowly and close your eyes, the spirit of bohemian days past still hangs in the wind. A little Michael Jackson strutted his moon-walking stuff. And Chad Taylor showed me a couple of apple-eating techniques I hadn't tried before. Guess I'll have to get me one of them unicycles. (If he ever makes Letterman, I'll be able to say I knew him when.) Of course, they're still trying to save the animals and Yhudi's healin' herbs sure do help the agin' bones.

Wish you were here. Come soon before the fault gives way.

photos by Tracy Gitnick

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I've fallen and I can't get up