

Liberty

"Liberty is a Glorious Feast." –Robert Burns

Rebel Without a Clue: Lessons From the Mecham Experience

by Matt Kesler

Confessions of an Intractable Individualist

by Jerome Tuccille

Nicaragua: An End to Intervention

by William Kelsey

Rand-Bashing: Enough is Enough

by Ross Overbeek

Plus: *The Liberty Poll*; Also: Articles and Reviews by
Stephen Cox, Tibor R. Machan, William P. Moulton,
Murray N. Rothbard, David Ramsay Steele and others;
and an interview with *L. Neil Smith*

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Letters

Anti-Anti-Objectivism

I enjoy reading your excellent publication, but I am disturbed by what appears to be a commonly held belief among quite a few of your writers: the notion that all Objectivists are pea-brained zealots who fulminate at anyone who challenges their beliefs. While I acknowledge that there are Objectivists who fit this description, it is simply not an accurate generalization.

To me, to be an Objectivist is not to accept Ayn Rand's beliefs and opinions as gospel; one who accepts the philosophy places value on individual thought and achievement. To judge an entire philosophy by the actions of a few idiots who turned it into a pseudo-religion is wrong. And as for the libertarians who criticize some of the remarks made by certain prominent Objectivists, I hope they can realize that not everyone who calls himself an Objectivist necessarily agrees with these statements, just as not all Libertarians necessarily agree with all the statements made by another Libertarian. Also, if a person is to judge the beliefs of people he considers to be dimwitted and robotic, he should be careful not to resort to dimwitted and robotic tactics himself by making cheap shots and indiscriminate attacks.

No matter what one thinks of Ayn Rand personally, one should not automatically assume that everyone who values her work is stupid. Yes, I am an Objectivist, but I hope you can under-

stand me when I say that *both* sides of the Objectivist/Libertarian conflict could do with a little more objectivity, in the truest sense of the word, and a lot less forejudgment and intolerance.

Lisa M. Jones
Bethany, Okla.

The Matter of Rand

The organism which denotes itself as David Ramsay Steele makes a few accurate observations in its "appraisal" of Ayn Rand's personality and achievement ("Alice in Wonderland," *Liberty*, May 1988). Unfortunately, it shows little true care in its understanding of Rand. To understand another individual requires an honest attempt to treat that individual, as much as possible, in his or her own terms. I see no such fairmindedness in Steele.

From about the time of the Rand-Branden split in the late '60s, it became obvious to any individual who valued psychological independence (which is actually a proper offshoot of Objectivism) that there was big trouble in Galt's Gulch. Many Objectivists were young and in one way or another struck out on their own. Arguments for free-market anarchy were developed then. One also saw beginnings of the human potential movement, life-extension, space colonization and a host of other ideas/lifestyles which would leave all doctrinaire people from commies to Randians on their butts in the dust. That's just the way it happened.

But one must be careful of terms here. A doctrinaire person is someone who substitutes another's thinking for his own. Contrary to Steele's assertions, most admirers of Rand and Objectivism think quite freely and expect infallibility of neither. That Rand could be authoritarian and vindictive has been well established; that she could be brilliantly original and inspiring is more generally the case.

David Brown's perspective is fair. David Steele's article not only teeters on the brink of hysteria, it is also cruel. Rand advocated reason, egoism and liberty. She be friend. Her arguments were extensive, impressive, heartfelt, honest and unique. Any kindred libertarian soul who would cavalierly brush off these arguments and assassinate the entire personality of their author sacrifices the spirit of rational enquiry and raises questions as to his own base motives. This goes for David Ramsay Steele as much as it goes for Alice Rosenbaum.

Brian Wright
West Bloomfield, Mich.

Brighter Than Aristotle

David Steele's polemic was fairly shallow but long and funny. David Brown ("Barbara Branden and Her Critics," *Liberty*, May 1988) was right on the mark.

I think we can now see that Ayn Rand's choice of fiction to promulgate her new philosophy of the individual, totally from outside the intellectual job shop of America, was a brilliant stroke. Unfortunately she had to pay the costs that all geniuses who mix it up with the public have to pay. She valiantly tried to avoid the syndromes of the cult (and succeeded to a large extent) and maintain control of her work, but it wasn't possible. Ultimately she had to trust other fallible humans, and some betrayed her—but her magnificent accomplishments far overshadow the costs.

In the centuries ahead she will be recognized as one of the seminal thinkers of the Western world, possibly even shining brighter than her beloved Aristotle. I feel fortunate to have lived in her time.

Scott Pearson
El Paso, Tex.

Protecting the Iconoclast

I don't know where David Ramsay Steele was coming from in his article about Ayn Rand. It is full of half-truths, misinformation and malevolence. I had several conversations with Miss Rand over the years, read most of what she wrote, and heard her lecture several

Publisher's Note

This issue is a milestone of sorts for *Liberty*: it marks the end of our first year's publication. During this time *Liberty* has shown considerable growth and progress. This issue has 80 pages, making it our biggest issue ever, almost twice the length of our first issue. And it will be read by more than 2500 paid subscribers—an increase of almost 20% in the last three months.

Our charter subscriptions expire with this issue. This is a critical time for new publications like *Liberty*, a time when they learn just how much their subscribers really value them. Happily, the results of our renewal mailing have been encouraging—not only are subscribers renewing at a rate that magazine experts tell us is outstanding, but almost 40% have chosen to renew for 2 years or more.

This issue also includes a special research project that we have been working on for more than six months—The Liberty Poll, which surveys our readers about their lives, their beliefs, their heroes and their values. We report the results in a special 17 page section beginning on page 37.

We also introduce a new feature in this issue. *Reflections* are lively, brief comments by our Editors on the passing scene. It begins on page 9.

—R. W. Bradford

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American Libertarian

California Party Elects New Leadership



An Eyewitness Account
Jim Lewis on Trial

By Jim Lewis

Jim Lewis, former vice president of the Libertarian Party, is on trial in the federal court in San Francisco. He is charged with the murder of a young woman, a charge which he denies. The trial is expected to last several weeks.

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More Letters

times. As a great iconoclast she had and still has much to offer a society that is superstitious, mediocre and self-destructive to the core.

MacDonald Eaton
New York City

Acknowledging a Skyscraper

The article "Alice in Wonderland" by David Ramsay Steele in your May issue was neither an evaluation nor a valid criticism of Ayn Rand and her works, but a smear job. For example, Steele writes, "The organism which was later to denote itself as 'Ayn Rand' was born in St Petersburg . . ." Note that use of the word "organism" instead of "person," "woman," or "individual," etc.

There is more, but it is only necessary to comment that anyone who uses such tactics has removed himself from the realm of intelligent discussion.

The author has two deficiencies: (1) he does not understand the ideas of Ayn Rand, and (2) he misinterprets his false conceptions as proof of Rand's ignorance rather than his own.

Steele asserts that Rand did not achieve success through her own efforts but was altruistically helped by others. Now, did anyone help Ayn Rand write *The Fountainhead*, or *Atlas Shrugged*? Did anyone offer her encouragement through years of suffering and grinding poverty? The fact that someone invites you to dinner or gives you bus fare to work is not a valid claim on one's achievements.

Steele's charge that Rand had a poor sense of humor is a confession of his own preferences. Some people laugh every time a four-letter word is said, as an evening at the movies will easily reveal. Rand believed that humor should be used as a spice—to enhance the flavor of what one hears, not serve as the main course.

The achievement of Ayn Rand may be compared to a skyscraper built in the midst of a primitive village of mud-thatched huts. Some people never look up to see that it is there, others refuse to acknowledge its presence or do so with scorn because it is a contrast to their own living conditions, while others gaze in astonishment and wonder that such is humanly possible to man. Or woman.

Wallace Hoffman
Sunnyvale, Calif.

continued on page 8

Vacuous Venom

This letter aims at dispelling some of the misimpressions that may be created by taking David Ramsay Steele's opinions of Ayn Rand's philosophical abilities too seriously. I have shown Rand's philosophical creativity elsewhere ("Ayn Rand: A Contemporary Heretic," *The Occasional Review*, No. 4, Winter 1976). And the paper written by Douglas Den Uyl and Douglas Rasmussen, "Nozick on the Randian Argument," in Jeffrey Paul, ed., *Reading Nozick* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), should further help to demonstrate that Rand's ideas are not what Steele claims they are, "one pompous vacuity after another."

If we used Steele's method of dismissing someone's ideas as nonsense—a method Rand, too, unfortunately employed now and then—we could do in Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hobbes, Hume and a great many more thinkers without much trouble. After all, Socrates claimed one cannot do what one believes to be wrong, which, on its face, seems nonsense. With Steele, we could just assert, "This is false." And so with many others, including Hume, who discredited the objectivity of causality only to invoke it in the very alternative he gave to that account, namely, in his theory of the human mind. What about Russell's crazy notions about ultimate simples that last a moment or so and then disappear into thin air? What about that brilliant 20th century philosopher, Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose ideas, while extremely stimulating and great stuff for graduate school exercises, changed from year to year, but who was every bit the monster that Rand was?

In short, Steele gives us his opinion of Rand without any hint as to what standard he is using, other than his distaste, by which to judge her philosophical contribution. I have tried to stack up Rand against all the major historical and contemporary figures and my own assessment has been very different from Steele's. Of course, this does not prove anything conclusively, but then there is little argument in Steele's essay to pick on.

He simply asserts, for example, that "thinking is involuntary," an idea that would certainly make shambles of the notion of scientific objectivity, but gives only the most pitiful reason for why this should be so—"try stop thinking for a few seconds." The sense in which thinking is volitional is complicated, and Rand was aware of this—as was Kant, incidentally,

who also held the view and whom Steele presumably regards as a fine thinker.

What about "existence exists"? Sure, this is not something that is plainly clear to everyone and one can obfuscate it by being entirely unsympathetic toward the task that Rand was trying to accomplish with it. But what of C. I. Lewis's view that there is something called "qualia" that underlies everything? Or Hume's hopelessly muddled view about sense impressions, or Russell's or Ayer's or anyone else's attempt to find some ground for choosing between truth and falsity? I am sure that Steele would regard all these other efforts to be quite respectable, yet they are certainly as vulnerable to ridicule as is Rand, and perhaps more so. ("Existence exists" can be understood easily enough if one is not embarking on a torpedo mission of Rand's reputation. Certainly it is not that different from "being qua being" as a topic for analysis, or even "cogito ergo sum." But philosophical exchanges have always presupposed a bit of good will, even in the face of some of the more repugnant traits of those who took part in them. Consider Paul Feyerabend, reputedly the highest paid philosopher in the world, who claims that there are no standards of rationality or, rather, that those standards are mere biases, and calls some of those who disagree with him fascists. Yet he is respectfully discussed throughout the philosophical community!)

Rand was someone who did lay out very general ideas—somewhat as an architect might, giving some initial direction to those who find his or her design promising. Steele discounts the merits of such a procedure by noting that "surprising refutations often spring from fine details." But what of this? Sometimes they don't and then we praise the person for his or her genius! Indeed, it is supposed to be the mark of such a person that he or she can take it in all at once. There are risks with this. Yet in all disciplines there are those who give a quick initial sketch of a grand vision and later it is shown that this vision makes good sense or runs aground some place.

Well, Mr. Steele has had his venom published and I am sure a great many libertarians will find this a joy. But those who want to know whether Rand's philosophical ideas have merit will find little help in the clever debunking Mr. Steele has produced.

Tibor Machan
Auburn University
Auburn, Ala.

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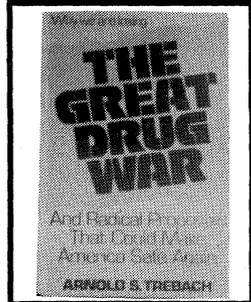
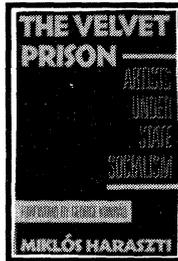


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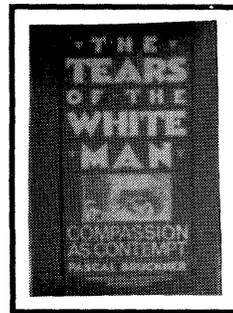
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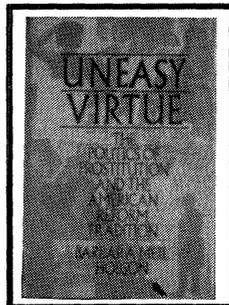


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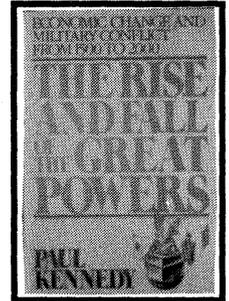
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The Right Questions

David Ramsay Steele's evaluation of the "orthodox objectivism" of Peikoff and Schwartz hits the nail on the head. Those who prefer to accept the judgment of Ayn Rand on every issue, in lieu of making their own judgments are the real lice, trying to live by Rand's thinking, rather than thinking for themselves. It is ironic that her most fervent followers fail to grasp her most important principle, namely, that one should accept no authority over one's own judgment.

But Mr Steele's criticism of Rand is unsound.

Rand asked all the right questions at a time when the questions needed to be asked. She not only asked the questions but attempted to answer them, while continuing to scream the questions at professional philosophers. Ms Rand may not be the only writer of the 1940s, 50s and 60s to challenge consistently the philosophical premises of our culture in a radical way, but I believe she was the only writer with an enormous audience to do so.

J. David Pittman
Santa Ana, Calif.

Divisive Attacks

In the March Viewpoint by John Dentinger and the Counterpoint by Murray Rothbard ("Strange Bedfellows," by John Dentinger and "Freedom is for Everyone," by Murray N. Rothbard, *Liberty*, March 1988) there was more of the continuing attacks on Ron Paul and Russell Means. I'm getting awfully tired of these needless attacks that serve only to split the LP.

I'm an anarchocapitalist with a Goldwater-YAF-WASP background so I believe I understand where Paul has been and where I hope he is going. Not many of us were born libertarian or joined the LP 100% pure. As for the attack on Means, I wish Rothbard would read *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee*, and for added emphasis, *Black Elk Speaks* and *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions*. Maybe then he would understand why the LP is a natural home for Indians and other minorities, and why Means is who he is.

There was no perfect candidate for the LP nomination for president. Recent converts can often be the most passionate members so let's take advantage of that. We need some passion rather than relying on the same party activists that are burning out. The purpose of the campaign is not to

win the election but to educate the masses and expand the party base.

Shame on you Dentinger. You made some good points but you are a sore loser. Shame on you Rothbard. You made some good points but you are a sore winner. Let's hang together or be hanged (taxed to death) separately.

Dick Crow
Woodland Park, Colo.

Strange Libfellows

I find it easy to sympathize with John Dentinger's frustration over the conservative-libertarian connection as he expressed it in his article "Strange Bedfellows." Despite my persistent explanations to the contrary, my liberal friends continue to view libertarianism as conservatism run amok. Although I felt lower vote totals would be the result, I secretly hoped for a Russell Means nomination, in order to, as Mr. Dentinger says, "pose a puzzle" that my liberal friends would have to abandon their misconceptions in order to solve.

However, for reasons Mr. Dentinger takes a stab at, yet remain not entirely understood, conservatives are much more likely than liberals to fall from grace and land in the lap of libertarianism. This does not and should not disqualify them from being welcome converts or, for that matter, presidential candidates. At this point in the life of our movement, no matter how ugly are the faces of both liberal and conservative, if they are willing to renounce the initiation of the use of force and follow this principle's logical political conclusions, I wouldn't kick either out of bed.

J. Powers Potter
Oneonta, N.Y.

Play Murray For Me

What happened to Murray Rothbard between page 43 of the March 1988 issue and page 60? On page 43 he began his usual attack upon a libertarian with a different perspective on the movement ("Freedom is for Everyone"). On page 60 he wrote one of the most entertaining and humorous pieces I've ever read in a libertarian publication ("Me and the Eiger").

The description of his fellow Jewish-ethnic at a conference made me wonder if he was talking about me, and I'd somehow forgotten being there! And, just knowing Murray enjoys Clint Eastwood movies makes me see him in a whole new light.

Steve Buckstein
Portland, Ore.

Smug Intolerance

As a mid-forties individual who has worked his way through a life-long menu with Eisenhower as appetizer, John Birch as entree, Ayn Rand as dessert, and now Max Stirner as sweet mint, I commiserate intensely with the personal disillusionment that John Dentinger seems to have experienced after the loss of so many philosophical soul-mates. It is indeed difficult to consider that the world is, in the end, full of people just going their way as best they see fit, and that their fit way changes with the certainty of time and circumstance.

It's just a shame that Murray Rothbard doesn't have a little more patience with Mr. Dentinger's present circumstance. But then I am coming to understand that Mr. Rothbard has little patience for anyone not sharing his particular enthusiasm for philosophical play (cf. "Me and the Eiger," March 1988). He is a very clear example of the sort of person Max Stirner described who could speak comfortably of Man, but uncomfortably of John, Sally or Jim. For example, Mr. Rothbard seems philanthropic enough when talking of the Christians, the Old-Right, and the Jews, but he is most unphilanthropic with John Dentinger the person or any of those several individual WASPs at the "Eiger" conference. I wouldn't have enjoyed that conference either, from the sound of it, but I don't think I would have appeared quite so comfortable putting down individuals on page 60 when I had preached tolerance and hoped for broadly-based political support on page 43.

Mind you, I am not trying to lay fault on Mr. Rothbard for his correction of Mr. Dentinger's being so fast and loose with facts; and I am not even suggesting that rigor is not useful in philosophical analysis. If John Dentinger was sloppy and inaccurate, I'm glad someone is around with the vigilance to notice. But there is an awfully smug attitude lurking in most of Murray Rothbard's journalistic writing, and it is very unbecoming—especially for a libertarian. How can there be a convincing case for liberty of individuals without a sincere consideration for actual individuals?

It is an irony of politics that even libertarians start thinking of groups and issues instead of individuals and personal views whenever it comes to winning elections. And if the mental expedience of groups and issues is required for running

continued on page 74

Reflections

No flag burning please—Every week it appears that somewhere, somehow, the Reagan administration is trying to get us in a war. The eye is now on Central America. Apparently there is a little known clause in the Constitution which enables the State Department to select the ruling generals in each banana republic. Call it the Elliot Abrams Doctrine, after the Gipper's chief apologist for U. S. interventionism in that region.

During the recent war scare (in March) when U. S. paratroops were dropping down to make Honduras safe for the current military junta, there were protests in several major cities across the country.

One which particularly caught my eye was held in Minneapolis. Most of these anti-intervention demonstrations were sponsored by the usual wimpy gang of leftists and Sandinista apologists, but the demonstration in the Twin Cities had something else. Right there, in a wire service photo, was a demonstrator holding a burning flag. That's right, Stars and Stripes flambé.

There are many reasons why I felt anger and sadness at this photo, but I note only one of the more practical here: no half-way rational, intelligent American could possibly think that burning an American flag could in any way positively influence anyone—politician, citizen, business leader, or apathetic Joe Six Pack—to believe that non-intervention in Central America is a proper U.S. foreign policy. Most Americans, regardless of their political beliefs, consider burning the American flag a grievous insult. It is a gesture that serves only to convince others that the flag burners are advancing an un-American, unpatriotic, undoubtedly subversive and probably pro-communist cause.

Sorry if this sounds like something out of *National Review*. But as the odds for convenient little wars increase, sooner or later we as libertarians may be involved in non-interventionist agitation. And we'll likely run into flag burners. It would be a real tragedy if this time, God forbid, the non-interventionist forces become polluted by anti-Americanism and pro-communist idiocy, or, as in the 1960s, get overrun with various brands of Trotskyites seeking to "lead" the opposition.

With the image of the burning flag still in mind, I wonder why any of the good citizens of Minneapolis would burn the flag to protest a bad policy. Who are these guys? FBI or CIA agents provocateur? Incredibly stupid leftists? Smart aleck punks?

Non-interventionism is as American as apple pie. Maybe more. Holding hands with flag burners will do the cause of liberty no good. In the 60s, libertarians were few and far between and we had to make do with others of similar viewpoints regarding U.S. foreign policy. This time, we can lead, not follow.

We should remember that opposing a bad U.S. policy doesn't imply we have to support left or right wing dictators in return. Libertarians have principled reason for their actions. Flag burners we can do without. —MH

Conservative & libertarian monsters—It has been said before, but bears repeating: libertarians and conservatives are different, and that difference is marked even in the one area where they have the most in common—opposition to "big government." While conservatives talk (or used to talk) of "trimming the fat off the government," libertarians take a much more radical approach: we do not merely want to "trim" government "fat," but muscle and bone, too.

The metaphor of the State as an Obese Servant in Need of Diet is much too benign. Government is not merely overweight, it is a *Monster*. It has altogether *too many* arms (or Tentacles) with which it constricts, holds down, or otherwise strangles people. Of course, it does provide some necessary services, but it always manages to provide some unnecessary *disservices* in the bargain.

If we are to look to literature for a model for this monster, we should probably avoid *Beowulf's* Grendel, and consider, instead, *Frankenstein's* creation—except that our present situation is not the product of one single person, but of many people, whose motives range from stark egoism to robust altruism; the result is beyond anyone's intention. Perhaps there are science fiction writers more modern than Mary Shelley who can provide us with the perfect archetype.

In any case, the monster of the State must be put through a major operation, at the very least. And it seems to me that we cannot expect conservatives to do this, at least so long as they regard the government as if it was a lovable, if unhealthy, servant. Libertarians must persuade the public at large of the *real* situation. —TWW

The Libertarian family and entrepreneurship

—In the letter column of *Liberty* (May 1988), Dagny Sharon threatens (albeit somewhat ironically) to leave the libertarian movement. Now, certainly everyone has the moral right to leave the movement, and I'm sure that most of us, in moments of despair or disgust, have been tempted to do the same. But I am interested in her stated reasons, which I think are typical of many who have suffered from similar "burnout." The trigger was a gently ironic review by Mike Holmes of her *Free Market Yellow Pages* ("Libertarianism," *Liberty*, Dec 1987), which actually pulled the punches of the criticisms he might have levelled at the publication. But apparently the very fact that criticism of Ms. Sharon was made was almost enough to send her reeling "out of the movement."

Ms. Sharon revealingly states that the reason for her distress is that she joined the libertarian movement and moved to California in the expectation that she would find in it the "family" to replace the biological family which had failed to give her moral support. Not surprisingly, she was disappointed when her expectations in the libertarian movement were dashed.

I think the problem with Ms. Sharon, and with many other

activists, is the nature of their goal. The libertarian movement is a political and ideological movement, period; it is neither a "family" nor an encounter or therapy group. One hopes that within the movement, because of common interests and principles, we can find lifelong friends and soul-mates; but to expect or demand this result from everyone is sheer folly. Perhaps among family or close friends or therapy groups one can expect or give "unconditional love" and emotional support, but it is absurd to seek such a result from libertarians in general.

In the movement, as in the "real world," each of us is free and responsible for his or her own actions, and we must expect to be held accountable for those actions according to the general principles and standards we adopt in the rest of society; just

Libertarianism is a political and ideological movement, period; it is neither a "family" nor an encounter or therapy group.

as our libertarian colleagues must expect the same sort of accountability from us. To be exempt from ordinary standards and accountability, is to foster incompetence on a grand scale, and to exempt virtually everyone from criticism. In fact, for many libertarians, the only ground on which to criticize anyone is that the person is critical, divisive, and disruptive of the organic harmony of the libertarian movement.

There is another, related syndrome evident in Ms. Sharon's letter. She proudly lists the record of three years of libertarian activism, as if she deserved unstinted praise for this resumé of the activities themselves. Perhaps so; but there is a labor-theory-of-value attitude here, that people somehow deserve praise for the number of labor-hours put into the activity, with no discussion of the output. Were the conferences valuable? Did they make or lose money, etc.? It was precisely Mike Holmes' attempt to evaluate one of those products—the *Free Market Yellow Pages*—that has ostensibly driven her out of the movement.

I myself would have been much tougher on the *Yellow Pages*, for this reason. It makes the fatal mistake of assuming that if one has a job to get done (say, plumbing, or gardening, or dentistry) that one is impelled to seek out fellow libertarians to hire or employ. In my decades in the libertarian movement, I have seen no positive correlation whatever between honesty or ability in business and the degree of a person's commitment to libertarian doctrine. To the contrary, the facts cut the other way, and in general, in seeking out business or consumer services, I would tend to go out of my way to *avoid* libertarian dentists, plumbers, carpenters, etc. My experience, and it is not unique, is that the proportion of incompetents, moochers, hustlers, and quasi-crooks in the libertarian movement is far higher than in the general business population. The only use, therefore, I personally would have for the *Free Market Yellow Pages* is to find out whom to avoid. If you operate as a consumer or in business by assuming that every libertarian is a member of your "family," you are going to get fleeced.

A final general observation, which may or may not be applicable to Ms. Sharon. I find that all too many libertarians are seduced by the glamor of being an "entrepreneur," as though being an entrepreneur is a valuable good in itself. One difference between our movement and the real world is, that if you ask a real world businessman about his occupation, he or she

will say: "I am a shoe manufacturer," or, "I am a commodity broker." In the libertarian movement the response is, "I am an entrepreneur." What most libertarians fail to realize is that the purpose of entrepreneurship is not to "be an entrepreneur" but to make profits, and that making profits is not at all easy. To be a *real* entrepreneur you have to know a lot about specific areas and markets of the real world (e.g. shoes or commodity markets), you have to work hard, you have to be competent, and you have to be able to forecast successfully demands and costs in the area of your business. None of this makes for an easy life. The great bulk of entrepreneurs in the world lose money rather than make profits. To be a successful entrepreneur requires just as much talent, in its way, as it does to be a nuclear physicist. In short, there is in life a division of labor, and only a relatively small number of people are cut out to be successful (that is, profitable) entrepreneurs. But that means that only a small number of people are cut out to be entrepreneurs period. If libertarian entrepreneurs suffer a consistent string of business losses, they should not expect support, admiration, or subsidy from the ranks of the libertarian movement. It would be far better for themselves and for the rest of us if they faced reality, realized that they are no more cut out to be entrepreneurs than they are to be nuclear physicists, and rejoined the rest of us in the ranks of the proletariat. —MNR

Good News for the faithful—Although the official residue of the Ayn Rand movement, as typified by Rand's intellectual and financial heir Leonard Peikoff, has refused even to read Barbara Branden's *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, one "true believer" Randian has taken the trouble of reading *Passion* and written an impassioned defense of Rand against what she considers to be Barbara Branden's deceitful portrait of her.

Virginia L. L. Hamel's *In Defense of Ayn Rand* is, so far as I know, the only criticism of the Branden book by a dyed-in-the-wool Objectivist, and it is an interesting document. It concludes, "Barbara Branden is an admitted liar, concealer and deceiver. This book indicates she has not changed a bit. She appealed her case to the court of public opinion with new information, but the verdict remains the same. She is, therefore, self-condemned for life to the posturing world of the pretentious, the anxious world of the unethical, the pedantic world of the mediocre and the meaningless world of the flatterers. Court is adjourned on Barbara Branden."

If this sort of writing appeals to you, you can receive the full essay by writing Hamel at "The Foundation for the New Freeman," 1909 Beacon St, Brookline, MA 02146. (Maybe you shouldn't mention that you read about it in *Liberty*, though. Hamel testily canceled her subscription to *Liberty* after receiving a single issue, advising us, "Your magazine turns out to be just another Rand-exploiting, Rand-bashing Libertarian publication with nothing of value to those of us who are Objectivists, non-cultist variety.")

Incidentally, although I hope this won't cause Ms Hamel to be "condemned in the court of public opinion," she makes one error of fact in her defense of Rand. She writes that Branden's book "has emboldened other old enemies to come forth and publish their own verbal kicks (e.g. Murray Rothbard's 'The Sociology of the Ayn Rand Cult')." In point of fact, Rothbard's essay was not published by *Liberty* at Rothbard's instigation; he agreed to allow *Liberty* to publish it at *my* instigation. And I can assure you that neither I nor Rothbard was "emboldened" by publication of Branden's book. —RWB

Silly out of season—Traditionally, the dog days of August are supposed to be the “silly season,” but libertarians have an unchallenged capacity for extending that season through the entire year.

Thus: Jim Peron, in his Gay and Lesbian Caucus newsletter, writes a lengthy attack on Ron Paul’s AIDS position as set forth in the *Ron Paul Political Report*. The position is unimpeachably libertarian, but also tough on AIDS. In his philippic, Peron states that he has heard from “his sources” that I am the author of Ron’s statement. One of Peron’s arguments is that since I am clearly not a certified physician, my views on the medical status of AIDS should be disregarded. Carried away on the wings of his rhetoric, however, Peron overlooks two ironic points. One is that he, too, is not a certified physician, so why should anyone listen to *him*? Even more delicious is the second irony: that if *anyone* is a certified medical authority in this debate, it is most assuredly Dr. Ron Paul, a medical doctor of long standing, and the *actual* author of the article in question.

Another wacko example: Carol Moore, of Southern California, has apparently made it her life’s work to attack Ron Paul—on any and all grounds, hoping against hope that something will stick. Recently, she quoted from a statement critical of Israel and America’s devotion to that state in the *Ron Paul Political Report*. Although she herself pioneered in criticism of Israel in the libertarian movement, and even repeats that criticism, she maintains that Ron only keeps “harping” on Israel for anti-Semitic reasons. In other words, she knows in her heart that *her* motives for criticizing Israel are pure, whereas anyone else’s (or is it just Ron’s?) must be *a priori* suspect. It is typical of Ms. Moore’s astute sense of timing that she levels the charge of picking on Israel precisely at the time when the media, and even much of the American Jewish community, are reacting in horror at the barbarous treatment of the Palestinian natives by the Israeli occupation troops. Leave it to libertarians to jump on the wrong horse at the wrong time.

In general, the Meansians and other critics of Ron Paul are busily poring over every statement or press release of Ron’s trying desperately to find *something* anti-libertarian. They have not been able to do so. What they are complaining about, and vociferously, is the *tone* of his campaign statements. “Yes, the *content* is libertarian all right, but the tone . . . it’s so . . . Old Right.” Precisely. We of the Paul campaign laid it on the line before Seattle. If Ron is nominated he will of course be purely libertarian, we said, but the stress, the emphasis, the tone, will

be geared to attract the millions of quasi-libertarian Old Rightists who have been cast in the shade for three decades by the theocratic, warmongering post-*National Review* right-wing. The stress, we proposed, would be outreach to the average Old Right middle-class American. Why is the Paul campaign being dumped on for doing *precisely* what we said we were going to do? —MNR

No time for celebration—Many conservatives and classical liberals are pleased that the Democratic Party is down to two men of the far left: Jesse Jackson and Michael Dukakis. The Democratic Party will probably succeed in electing a Republican president and a Republican Senate; it may succeed in producing a lot of votes for the Libertarian Party. But this is no time for libertarians to rejoice. There is not a more terrible event in electoral politics than the intellectual dissolu-

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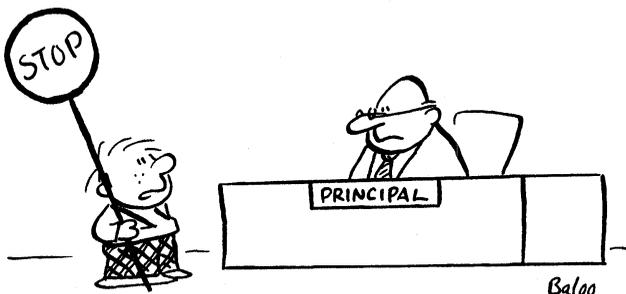
tion of a major party.

The party may discredit itself in the eyes of thinking people, but non-thinking people may happen to be a more numerous group, and even a severe electoral loss may not remove the offending ideologues from the positions of power from which they can set the terms of public debate. McGovern’s severe loss in 1972 did not succeed in discrediting his followers, who now command the most influential positions in his party (although they are, perhaps, preparing to yield them to even sillier people).

Supporters of the Libertarian Party should not become euphoric over the votes they may gain from the Democratic debacle, imagining that the election will put them one step closer to electoral victory. The Libertarian Party will never win a significant election, because politics is a business that politicians run, and the Libertarian Party is not made up of politicians. Its role is educational. More votes mean more impact and more respectability for libertarian ideas, so I hope that the Party picks up some votes. If it does so, however, I hope that these will be (as the old saying goes) votes that cheer yet not inebriate. Friends of liberty should spend this lamentable election year soberly pointing out the adverse consequences of the major parties’ ideas, and thereby making it more likely that those parties will come to their senses. —SC

Postal rumination—As I walked briskly to the post office clutching my income tax returns, I reflected on the *manner* in which I was walking. Usually when I walk this particular route I take my time, sauntering. But April 15 was an exception.

I thought again about my favorite essay of Henry David Thoreau, “Walking.” In that elegant work he celebrates not civilization but “wildness.” He opens with a discussion of the



“I could do this job a lot better if you’d authorize me some cash to pay informers.”

meaning of the word "saunter." He considers whether it came from the the French *sans terre*—without a homeland—or from a "Sainte-Terrer" [saunterer]—a wanderer who collects alms under the pretense of going to the "Holy Land," and he implies that the only *real* way to saunter is to walk in the wilderness. I disagree. I saunter all the time, but it has been years since I have had access, on a regular basis, to anything approaching "wilderness."

Usually when I walk around the quaint city of Port Townsend, Washington, I take my time, watch (and watch out for) the seagulls, gaze across the bay and at Marrowstone Island, do *not* think about the nuclear bombs on nearby Indian Island, and repeatedly glance up at the snowcapped mountains. This is *sauntering* pure and simple. And, on April 15, rushing to meet the requirement of the State, I came up with the perfect definition:

saunter *v.* To walk as if the State did not exist, and as if civilization were merely a trifle.

I think even Thoreau, a tough judge of words and actions, would have approved. —TWW

Dancing with Joy in Saigon and Washington—

Michael Townshend comes forth with a brand new principle for the libertarian movement: an attack on "glee," or what we might call *killjoyism* (Letters, *Liberty*, May 1988). Mr Townshend strongly objects to my enthusiasm at envisioning a "smashing defeat" for the Republican Party in November, and darkly likens it to my "glee" at the collapse of the South Vietnamese government in 1975, in both cases allegedly forgetting the evils that came after: the establishment of a Communist Vietnam and the putative ascendancy of Michael Dukakis to the American throne.

Much as I admire the diligence with which clearly Mr Townshend has pored over my writing, and hoping against hope that he really does *not* mean to liken Mike Dukakis to Ho Chi

It is far more odious to spout libertarian rhetoric in order to bamboozle the public than it is to be a statist without sham or pretense. At least, political life is clearer, and the air is not befouled by repellent mendacity. Far better an open statist than a mendacious and fake libertarian!

Minh, I take strong exception to the new Puritanism with which he wishes to infect the libertarian movement. Now that sex, alcohol, smoking, tasty food, drugs and pornography have been systematically excised from our society, Mr Townshend proposes to rob us of the last form of enjoyment left: delight in the defeat of our enemies. God knows that libertarians have little enough to crow about in today's state-ridden world, so why can't we delight in our occasional triumphs and in our enemies' defeats?

In 1975, I wrote "The Death of a State," which has given the

Right Wing of our movement heartburn ever since. I expressed jubilation, *not* at the victory of the Communists in Vietnam, but in various other aspects of that notable event. There was, first the resounding final defeat administered to a long, bloody campaign of mass murder waged by U.S. imperialists in Vietnam. But above all, and this is what I was celebrating in the article, there was the glorious epiphany of the sudden death of a State. How often, in our lifetimes, are we privileged to experience the actual death of a State? It is truly a rare event, and one to be savored, regardless of what kind of State it was and what kind of State followed. For a brief, resplendent moment, a state crumbled; executives or legislatures met in a room, issued decrees, and *no one paid any attention*. As the State's infrastructure crumbled, this mighty force, only a few days before absolute ruler of its territory, became a chaos of scattered men, issuing edicts into the wind. To me, steeped in the history of the American Revolution, this was reminiscent of early British-dominated colonial legislatures (as in Pennsylvania) passing august laws but learning that no one cared, and finding themselves just a bunch of guys beating the air. For quasi-governmental authority had devolved, by general social action, onto alternative institutions outside the legal structure of government. To libertarians, in short, there can be nothing quite so rare or inspiring as the sudden collapse of a State apparatus.

What about the possibility of a Republican defeat this November? It is a consummation that I devoutly wish. I say flatly that if there were no Libertarian Party in the field, I would vote Democratic, not out of a great love for the Democratic Party, but out of bitter hostility to the Republicans.

In the first place, to fend off Mr Townshend's spectre of Dukakis, I can see no effective and substantial difference between Bush and Dukakis, and certainly nothing to motivate any libertarian to rush to the polls to save George Bush. But more profoundly, I see several clear reasons to prefer Dukakis over Bush in November. First, on the overriding question of war and peace, the Republicans in general and Bush in particular are significantly more warmongering than the Democrats, even though the latter are hardly doves of peace. On Nicaragua and the Contras, missile brandishing against the Russians, on the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and virtually every other trouble spot, the hawks and the war ultras are almost all in the Republican ranks—this even though the Democrats have gone along with U.S. aggression against Grenada, Libya, Iran and now Panama. (The bipartisan argument that the U.S. must swiftly overthrow Noriega because he is a dictator and a drug-runner, founders on the basic fact that almost every *other* government shares the same features. So why the hysteria against poor Noriega, who only wants his cut of the action?)

Secondly, if the pro-Republicans retort that their favorite party employs far more libertarian rhetoric than the Democrats, my response is that that is precisely why we must revile the Republicans. For it is far more odious to spout libertarian rhetoric merely to bamboozle the public than it is to be a statist without sham or pretense. At least, political life is clearer, and the air is not befouled by repellent mendacity. Far better an open statist than a mendacious and fake libertarian!

And thirdly, and far from least, whatever happened to the good old tradition of "throw the rascals out"? Instead of focussing on the bad guys in the wings, how about punishing and getting rid of the bad guys who have been deceiving and looting us for eight long years? Kick them out! Specifically, by doing so you destroy an entrenched Republican machine, and it will take time for the Democrates to reconstruct a machine of

their own. And more importantly, the "ins" must be *punished*. When do libertarians ever get a chance to punish state-crimes, and levy justice upon the state-criminals? The only thing we can do to punish the rascals, the only thing that is legal and will not get us into deep trouble, is to defeat the SOB's at the polls, to throw them out. Let us exercise and *enjoy* the only power to punish that we have.

As an added esthetic note coming under the rubric of the second and third reasons discussed above, we should kick out the Republicans in order to rid ourselves of those leeches, those slimy opportunists, those con-men, those former and so-called "libertarians" who rush to shed their principles and join the Reagan Administration, wriggling happily along the corridors of power. What joy it will be to throw these bums out, to stop them, at least for four years, from feeding their allegedly libertarian selves at the public trough! Wow!

"Glee," Mr Townshend? You're damn tootin'! And since I seem to be pioneering adding German terms to our political lexicon, I would offer a wonderful word for this experience: *Shadenfreude* ("shameful joy")—except there should be no shame or guilt in this elation, but unalloyed enthusiasm in getting rid of a pack of repellent poltroons, and returning them forcibly to the bracing air of the private sector.

There is one final arrow in Mr Townshend's quiver: the currently fashionable "I" word with which he tars me: "insensitive." "Insensitivity" has been the favorite word used to silence all critics of sham, cant and hypocrisy, and to get right down to it, of the rulers of the social order. Stuff it, Mr Townshend, and all the Townshends of this world! Mencken once wrote that he was dramatic and provocative because he engaged in heaving dead cats into the temples of social idolatry, thereby demonstrating to the benumbed citizens that he had not been struck dead by lightning on the spot. —MNR

The political circus—1. First prize for Political Tactics of the Year goes to the George Bush team: head honcho Lee Atwater and media maven Roger Ailes. Atwater & Co. had only one week after Iowa to save Bush's bacon in New Hampshire. Things looked bleak. Atwater and team started moving on all cylinders. They had two tasks. The first was to "humanize" George Bush. And so they stuck him onto 18-wheelers, put him into a farmer's hat, and had him photographed by TV cameras wolfing down MacDonald's hamburgers *as if he enjoyed them*. The brilliant Reaganaut speech writer, Mrs. Peggy Noonan, was brought out of retirement for one week and whisked up to New Hampshire, where she wrote excellent speeches giving Bush "warmth." The second task was to desanctify Bob Dole. And so the great Ailes whipped together a dynamite TV commercial exposing Dole's high-tax record, and sprung it in the last 48 hours of the New Hampshire campaign, just when Dole, advised by the revered Bill Brock, was sitting back and being "presidential." If there is one thing New Hampshire Republicans don't like, it's high taxes, so the TV commercial worked like a charm.

2. Second prize goes to the same Bush team for understanding that, in politics, Governors beat Senators. In the crucial pre-Super Tuesday states of New Hampshire and South Carolina, Bush relied on the governors: John Sununu and Carroll Campbell, Jr. In Illinois he relied on Governor Big Jim Thompson. Thus, in South Carolina, Dole might have had the support of his Senate colleague, the venerable and beloved Strom Thurmond, but it was Governor Campbell who had the organiza-

tion and got out the votes. The equally beloved Jeanne Kirkpatrick got Dole no votes either.

3. Why did Kemp never catch on as leader of the conservative *ultras*? For two reasons, I think. One is image. The American masses don't like to vote for a President with a squeaky, rheumy voice. He also has the muscle-bound look of the prototypical jock. Now Americans like jocks, of course, but the jock look is not "presidential" enough to place in an office that Americans take very—in fact, much too—seriously. The press complained that Kemp "talked too much." That's not quite it,

Pat Robertson self-destructed when his paranoia was let loose in a series of whoppers that he alone saw nothing wrong with. Of course, when God sends us Armageddon, Pat will be redeemed, but one hopes not until then.

since *all* politicians talk too much. Kemp failed to talk pithily, in the famous 30-second "bites" that are needed for TV summary. He droned on.

But second, and most important, was the *content* of the Kempian message. Conservatives are bitter, frustrated; they feel that they have lost control of the Reagan presidency, and power is slipping away from them. To them, it is no longer "morning in America" but twilight. Yet Kemp had only the sunny Reaganite soft-soap to hand out: cheery optimism. To make things worse, Kemp talked constantly of "compassion," and of "reaching out" to all oppressed groups, promising care and subsidy and no reduction in welfare state spending. Conservatives don't *want* the soft-soap; besides, Kemp does not have the creamy Gipper voice and beloved Gipper smile to carry it off. Moreover, conservatives are sick and tired of compassion and of reaching out to the "oppressed." Conservatives want some good old-fashioned bitterness and hate, some reaching *in* to the middle-class and to reducing at least the welfare end of the welfare-warfare State. So why Kemp when everyone else is offering the "compassionate" package?

4. On the other hand, Pat Robertson self-destructed when his paranoia was let loose in a series of whoppers that he alone (with his hard-core followers) saw nothing wrong with. Of course, when God sends us Armageddon, Pat will be redeemed, but one hopes not until then. In addition, Pat's moral standing was not improved by the well-publicized fact that Pete McCloskey got the goods on his Korean peccadilloes. Why did Pat sue? Maybe he jumped the gun on Armageddon.

5. Libertarians of course take heart at the demise of all the Democratic and Republican turkeys, but we should add an extra heartfelt cheer at the departure of Dick Gephardt. If you like all-out protectionism and 2000% farm price support programs, Dick is your man. Third tactical prize of the year goes to whoever in the Dukakis camp thought up that great last minute New Hampshire commercial that called the phony "populism" that Gephardt had been pushing in Iowa. As the scroll of one big corporate contributor to Gephardt after another went rolling, a dry-voiced commentator declared: "Dick Gephardt says he's one of *us*. But this looks like he's one of *theirs*."

Beautiful: caught him at his own game.

—MNR

AFTER REAGAN, THEN WHAT?

THE POST-REAGAN MANDATE WILL BE TO BRING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS.

WHAT'LL WE CALL IT? "DE-REAGANIZING"? "RE-GOVERNMENTALIZING"?

WE'RE CALLING IT "RE-REGULATION". WE NEED A SLOGAN ABOUT ORDER, PREDICTABILITY, UNIFORMITY, REGULARITY,...

I'VE GOT IT! "RE-REGULATION: A RETURN TO REGULARITY".

SOUNDS LIKE AN AD FOR A LAXATIVE.

I SUPPOSE THERE ARE SOME PARALLELS.

POST-REAGAN PLANNING

RE-REGULATION TASK FORCE

RE-REGULATION RETURNS YOUR FREEDOM FROM CHOICE

SAM WANTS YOU — SOBER & STRAIGHT

THE ARMY IS NOW TESTING ALL NEW RECRUITS FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.

GREAT, BUT HOW ABOUT TOBACCO?

TOBACCO? WHY ON EARTH WOULD THE ARMY WANT TO CHECK RECRUITS FOR TOBACCO USE?

TOBACCO USE RESULTS IN 10 TIMES AS MANY DEATHS AS ALCOHOL AND ALL OTHER DRUGS COMBINED.

BUT NOBODY DIES OF TOBACCO USE UNTIL THEY'RE TOO OLD FOR THE ARMY.

HEY, THAT'S RIGHT.

UNITED STATES ARMY

U.S. ARMY NO DRUNKS OR HEADS NEED APPLY

"GET STARTED IN THE ARMY"

BURONIC EPISODES

A speculation on the source of headlines by Bob Ortin

"BOSS" "BONG"

GOV. FINANCING ELECTIONS

R.R. SUBMITTED HIS RE-ELECTION BUDGET.

R.R.'S NOT RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION!

NO, BUT A LOT OF OTHER REPUBLICANS ARE.

OF COURSE. WHAT'S THE BUDGET?

\$1,100,000,000,000

REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN H.Q.

HE'LL NEVER GET THAT MUCH PAST THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS COMMISSION.

SURE HE WILL. IT'S THE FEDERAL BUDGET, WITH SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE — A DIRECT APPEAL TO THE VOTERS.

"TALK FRUGAL. THEN FRUGAL THE TAXPAYERS"

HEY, AN END-RUN AROUND THE F.E.C.!

RIGHT.

"A PLUM IN TIME RE-ELECTS NINE"

AND, ON THE DRUG WAR FRONT...

TWO MORE DRUG AGENTS WERE SHOT BY DRUG TRAFFICKERS.

THEY FIRED BACK WHEN WE AMBUSHED THEM?

NO, THEY AMBUSHED US.

OH MY GOD! THEY'RE LAUNCHING A COUNTEROFFENSIVE!

WE'RE LOSING THE CONVENTIONAL WAR ON DRUGS. IT'S TIME FOR US TO USE UNCONVENTIONAL MEANS.

YOU DON'T MEAN NUKE 'EM?!!

HEY, OUR BACKS ARE TO THE WALL.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

WAR ON DRUGS SUPREME ALLIED COMMAND H.Q.

"WHEN DRUG TRAFFICKING IS OUTLAWED..."

"... ONLY OUTLAWS WILL TRAFFIC IN DRUGS"

Rebel Without a Clue

Lessons from the Mecham Experience

by Matt Kesler

He is the most famous Pontiac dealer in America.

"Doonesbury" spent a week attacking him. *The Wall Street Journal* devoted an editorial to his defense. Ted Koppel ran long to talk to him. Jesse Jackson mispronounced his name.

Evan Mecham is the most famous governor in the history of Arizona. He was the most radical governor since Arizona's admission to the Union in 1912; as of April fourth, he is also the first to be impeached and removed from office by the state legislature.

And his election and aborted term in office may be the most intensive course in political reality offered for the education of American political radicals since the socialist adventure early this century.

The political events in Arizona over the last two years rival anything in the annals of American politics. The complexity and unpredictability of events, the variety and absurdity of the personalities, and above all the hostility of the leaders of the major factions toward each other almost defy description. A complete recounting of the events would read like the most intricately-plotted Ludlum novel; a rounded depiction of the characters would be a feat fit for Dickens.

Evan Mecham had already lost four races for governor when he ran again in 1986. His 1986 campaign hinged on honesty in government and conservative ethics. His ideology was primitive conservatism: low taxes and state spending, opposition to drugs and pornography, loyalty to God and country. He promised to "make Arizona drug-free" in his first term.

Once elected, Mecham made good his ideological commitment. His only year in office was the first year in almost a decade during which state taxes were not increased. Personal use of state vehicles by public employees was curbed. Mecham worked with the legislature to fund an anti-drug program. He lobbied successfully for an increase in the speed limit on interstate highways.

Early in 1987, Mecham became na-

tionally famous for his rescission of the state holiday honoring Martin Luther King. His awkward defense of the action prompted the founding of a campaign to recall him from office, and numerous gaffes fueled the political fire. By late 1987 over 200,000 Arizonans had signed petitions calling for his removal, and a new election was set for May of 1988.

Later in 1987, Mecham had been charged with the failure to report correctly a \$350,000 loan to his campaign. Legislative leaders initiated an investigation which resulted in two additional charges: that Mecham had instructed the head of the state police not to investigate an alleged death threat by one Mecham appointee against another, and that he had authorized the loan of \$80,000 from an inaugural ball ticket-sales fund to his auto dealership.

In February 1988, Mecham was impeached on all three charges. The vote in the Republican-dominated legislature was overwhelming. Just days later, Mecham and his campaign finance chairman, his brother Willard, were indicted on a charge of willful failure to report the \$350,000 campaign loan. (The indictment was achieved only after a state grand jury failed to return an indictment and a second grand jury was empaneled by Mecham opponent and

Attorney General Bob Corbin. Corbin has been charged with "grand jury shopping" and is now the subject of a recall attempt.)

Upon Mecham's conviction of two impeachment charges by the Arizona Senate on April fourth, Secretary of State Rose Mofford, a Democrat, succeeded to the office. On April sixth, Mecham was declared ineligible to run in the May 17 recall election. A court challenge was anticipated. Meanwhile, Mofford is the heavy favorite in the six-candidate non-partisan field.

But, you ask, what's the point? Why should anyone outside Arizona care?

Because of the lessons the Mecham episode provides us.

History's great political fiascos are often the foundation for the folk wisdom of ensuing decades. The Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, and Watergate are cited weekly in *Newsweek* and on "Meet the Press," and the conclusions drawn—correctly or not—from the popular memory of these relatively recent events form the backdrop for discussions of analogous current events.

Any libertarian worth his salt is better at this game than the statist next door. We can laugh when the Depression is used as an excuse for today's welfare state, or roll our eyes when the Watergate scandal is used to

justify taxpayer financing of election campaigns. So the present shenanigans in Arizona politics are a challenge. These unique events provide information never before available regarding the response of the political system to new types of behavior by a candidate and an elected executive. Radicals of all stripes will do well to learn the lessons being taught in this very special classroom.

In an attempt to begin this process, I present some of my own tentative conclusions.

Lesson One: Taxpayers Vote.

In the September 1986 Republican gubernatorial primary, Mecham was opposed by veteran legislative leader Burton Barr. Barr, the ultimate Arizona insider, was best known for his support of a "temporary" increase in the state sales tax; when the one-half per cent increase was due to expire in early 1986, Barr orchestrated an unlimited extension.

Barr had excellent name recognition, was supported by the state's major newspapers, and had the endorsement of President Reagan. Polls showed Barr a ten to twenty per cent favorite in the week prior to balloting.

Surprising virtually everyone, Mecham won a narrow victory. Exit polls suggested that distrust for Barr and heavy turnout among tax-conscious retirees were important factors.

Subsequent events have confirmed this hypothesis. A November 1987 bond election in Maricopa County, home to half the state's voters, would have raised taxes to fund development of riverbeds. Polls showed public support exceeded seventy per cent. The proposal was supported by the Republican daily papers and the leftist weekly *New Times*. Every one. Evan Mecham opposed the bond, which failed two-to-one. His opposition probably didn't influence the vote significantly, but it demonstrated that he alone shared with most Arizona voters an intellectual but consistent opposition to tax increases.

The conclusion: anyone can respond to a poll, but people who pay taxes are more likely to show up on election day.

Lesson Two: Control the Medium.

Not the "media." Perhaps a talented

political radical can charm the local broadcasters and newspapermen, but that's not how Evan Mecham did it. He chose a single medium that he could completely control: direct mail. He used it heavily, he used it repeatedly, and he used it effectively.

About a week before the primary, over eighty per cent of Arizona's Republican voters received a tabloid outlining Mecham's positions and experience and sharply attacking opponent Barr. The tabloid received more publicity than any other event of the campaign. When asked about the publication's charge that he had promised the tax increase would be temporary, Barr replied simply, "I lied." Reporters present laughed, but the state's taxpayers didn't get the joke.

Mecham's tabloid campaign was repressed prior to the general election. By using inexpensive newsprint, Mecham was able to reach virtually every voting household in the state; he didn't need an abnormally large budget. His name recognition was improved, and his message reached voters without the "filter" of interpretation by television and broadcast reporters.

Rules are tools—tools that can be used as weapons. And supporters of the status quo know the rules and are willing to use them to defend themselves against a political insurrection.

Mecham had controlled the medium; his message got through.

Lesson Three: Choose Your Race Carefully.

Or get lucky. Either will do.

In 1986, Arizona Democrats nominated Carolyn Warner, the incumbent Superintendent of Public Instruction, for governor. She was aesthetically and politically unattractive, and fellow Democrat Bill Schultz entered the general election race as an Independent, diluting Democratic voting strength. Mecham won with forty-two percent.

Subsequent polling has failed to definitively determine who would have won a two-candidate race between Mecham and Warner. It is, however, quite evident that most Mecham supporters were strong Mecham support-

ers; that is, Mecham's vote total would have been relatively unaffected by the number or appeal of his opponents. It is quite clear that a single attractive, moderate Democratic candidate would almost certainly have defeated Mecham.

The three-candidate race was tailor-made for a maverick.

Lesson Four: The Voters May Choose the Government, But They Don't Run It.

Mecham won despite his failure to gain endorsement of a single daily newspaper in the state. Some prominent Republicans reluctantly supported him after the primary. But his lack of experience in government and his repeated charges that the legislature was "corrupt" and controlled by "organized crime" made him *persona non grata* at the capitol.

After his inauguration, he showed neither the ability nor the inclination to make peace with legislators and the press. The press quoted his statements out of context. Legislators leaked private communications. The Senate delayed confirmation of appointees. When the new Governor threatened to cut the

budget of the state Attorney General, Bob Corbin, he was subjected to punitive investigations and, eventually, criminal charges.

Former Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Sam Steiger, himself a top Mecham aide until October 1987, summed it

up by pointing out that Mecham was elected without the support of the local news media, but never realized he needed the help of the media to govern effectively.

Lesson Five: Communicate or Die.

Mecham eventually committed political suicide by repeatedly firing an uncontrolled weapon: his mouth. A conservative in arguably the most conservative state in the union, Mecham is an extreme contrast to his counterpart at the federal level; Ronald Reagan, labelled an "archconservative" and an "extremist" by the media in 1980, succeeded by communicating directly and effectively to the voting public. Evan Mecham, by contrast, may be the weakest communicator in modern political history.

With the exception of the use of

campaign tabloids, Mecham failed to find any successful means of communication. He barely survived a televised debate prior to the general election, he fumbled badly in press conferences, and his appearances on televised interview programs were awkward and embarrassing; some were actually introduced as evidence by the prosecution in his impeachment trial.

Shortly after his inauguration, Mecham made good on a campaign pledge and rescinded the executive order by which his predecessor, Democrat Bruce Babbitt, had proclaimed a state holiday in honor of Martin Luther King. Mecham's supporters were not surprised when the local media attacked his action. What amazed many was the revelation, over a year later, that Republican Attorney General Corbin had informed all the candidates prior to the 1986 election that Babbitt's executive order had been illegal, and that any future governor who failed to rescind it might be held personally liable for the wages paid to state employees on the King holiday.

In other words, Mecham was *obligated* to rescind the holiday. Corbin had been responsible for the controversy surrounding Mecham's action, but for over a year Mecham failed to explain the situation effectively. It took a team of defense lawyers to pull the information out of him when he took the witness stand in his impeachment trial.

Mecham didn't withhold that information out of loyalty to Corbin, a longtime opponent. He didn't forget it, and he wasn't the victim of a media conspiracy designed to block his access to the airwaves. He had spoken about the King holiday issue many times and in several venues. He simply lacked the communications skills necessary to formulate his position and state it in a way that the public could understand.

This pathetic inability to communicate in plain English was illustrated by his first words to the state House of Representatives impeachment committee. The chair's first question was the obligatory oath beginning, "Do you, Evan Mecham, swear to tell the truth, . . .?" Mecham's response: "That is correct." He was unable to connect the phrase "Do you . . .?" with the obvious corresponding response, "I do."

From then on, it was all downhill. His testimony before the House committee, and subsequently before the state Senate sitting as a Court of

Impeachment, bordered on the ludicrous. The charges were simple, the testimony of other witnesses surprisingly consistent, and applicable law quite clear. Both houses were dominated by Republicans, albeit not Mecham supporters. The prosecution clearly showed that Mecham's judgment had sometimes been faulty, but evidence of the violation of law was tenuous, and criminal intent on his part was alleged but not proved. Prosecution witnesses clearly had ulterior motives.

But Mecham's complete inability to express himself in simple declaratory sentences convinced many that he was obfuscating—or lying outright. Despite the lack of contradictory evidence, his testimony was believed by only his most ardent supporters.

In short, Mecham needed to do three things in order to make his tenure in office, if not successful, at least uneventful. First, he needed to show at least a minimal level of concern for the fuzzy opinions and self-serving politics of the ninety poorly-paid and under-educated members of the state legislature. Second, he needed to find a way to use the massive machine of the state's executive branch to achieve his ends. Third,

and probably most important, he needed to maintain a level of popular support at least as high as the lowest enjoyed by any of his predecessors.

That is, he needed to be taken seriously. When he became a joke, he became fair game. To the legislature, it was fair to oppose his personnel appointments for reasons which would have been considered trivial in another administration. To the Attorney General, it was fair to convene not just one grand jury to investigate allegations of impropriety, but a second grand jury when the first failed to return any indictments. And to the public at large, it was fair to sign petitions to recall the governor from office in response, not to his policies, but to his verbal gaffes.

To ascribe all Evan Mecham's political problems to poor communications would be an exaggeration. But only a slight one.

Lesson Six:

Follow the Damned Rules.

Political radicals generally have a deep-seated contempt for many of the rules, written and unwritten, which govern the political process. Anyone who runs for political office in order to

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advance a radical ideological agenda is likely to view campaign-finance laws, state personnel codes, and legislative protocol with little respect when they threaten the achievement of that agenda. A radical candidate who lets a piece of paper stop him from bringing his concept of freedom—or justice, or morality—to his constituents might seem a failure and a wimp.

But rules are tools—tools that can be used as weapons. And supporters of the status quo know the rules and are willing to use them to defend themselves against a political insurrection. Radicals assaulting the status quo, with the intention of using the political system to achieve their ends, had better be ready to play the game by the rules as established. After power has been gained and consolidated, a savvy radical (that is, a leader) may effect change in the rules in order to maintain power and establish a legacy.

Mecham and company knew little and, presumably, cared less about the rules. A campaign finance reporting requirement was not met, resulting in one count of impeachment and the indictment of Mecham and his campaign finance committee chairman, his brother Willard (giving birth to a new catchphrase: when accused of a mistake or a rule violation, Arizonans now shrug and claim, "Willard did it"). Lax observation of customary personnel practices led to a second impeachment charge. Failure to follow unwritten rules of propriety led to a third impeachment charge. At Mecham's impeachment trial, at least two of the impeachment charges were based not on evidence of illegality but on impressions of impropriety resulting from the failure to pay obeisance to established procedures which have little ideological substance.

Mecham's ideological agenda was more important to him than the rules. He didn't respect the rules, he didn't care about them, and he didn't take the time to become familiar with them.

And each time he broke a rule he put a weapon in the hands of his political opponents.

Lesson Seven:
*Choose Your Candidates Carefully.
They Might Win.*

On the witness stand, Governor

Mecham was an embarrassment to his few intelligent supporters. His grammar testified to his ignorance, his countenance testified to his insincerity, and the contradictory substance of his answers upon cross-examination testified to his lack of respect for the truth. Whether guilty or not, he seemed guilty, and he continues to inspire loyalty only from the indiscriminating. His reputation with the general public has sunk very low indeed.

And so it is that the low-tax message is left without a champion. At this point, Mecham's continued presence on the scene will provide a whipping-boy

Mecham needed to show at least a minimal level of concern for the fuzzy opinions and self-serving politics of the ninety poorly-paid and under-educated members of the state legislature.

for the advocates of increased taxes and state spending. His departure would leave the state without a prominent advocate of free enterprise.

Principled opponents of statism, like former congressman and 1982 Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Sam Steiger, supported Mecham because he was the only game in town. But the man they followed was unworthy of leadership. When Mecham was attacked, they were unable to portray him as an individual worthy of respect and were reduced to the use of the type of ideological arguments that rarely sway a crowd.

The failure to field a candidate in the 1986 election would have cost radical conservatives a chance to win that election. The selection of an unworthy individual may have cost them much more.

In this election year, numerous radical candidates will enter contested races. The above lessons can be applied to arrive at some suggestions for strategies and tactics.

Lesson One suggests that economic issues be targeted. It suggests the use of slogans of the form: "Smith for Congress—Because Taxes are Too Damned High."

Lesson Two suggests that telegenic candidates concentrate on free or paid television, that candidates with effec-

tive voices concentrate on free or paid radio, and that candidates with a strong message use signs or bumper stickers. Newsprint tabloids should be recognized as an inexpensive, efficient means of communicating directly to the voters.

Lesson Three suggests that radical candidates, like Mecham, can benefit from the selection of multi-candidate races and races against unattractive candidates.

Lesson Four suggests that a radical candidate who is actually elected to office has two choices on the morning after the election: prepare for political martyrdom, or get on the phone and start mending fences.

Lesson Five suggests that the ability to communicate is an essential characteristic for radical candidates. I believe this is by far the most important principle demonstrated by the Mecham fiasco. This principle, incidently, is vio-

lated by at least ninety per cent of Libertarian Party campaigns.

For obvious reasons, Lesson Six may be the hardest for some radicals to learn. If you tickle a rattlesnake you had better be ready to jump. Assaults on the political status quo will be opposed by those familiar with the laws, rules, and customs that govern political behavior. An aspiring political leader will hoist, if not a sword, at least a shield.

Lesson Seven suggests a requirement for an effective campaign: a good candidate. The proper ideology is not enough. Communication skills, the appearance of class, and a bankroll may make for a good candidate, but surviving the inevitable post-election assault from the status quo requires management and negotiation skills, an attention to strategy and tactics, and an ability to inspire good will among the press and the public.

Political radicals of all stripes owe a debt to Evan Mecham. He achieved electoral success through the use of innovative tactics, from which we can learn positive lessons. And he made errors that radicals are susceptible to making as they approach political success.

If we're smart, we'll learn from his mistakes. If we don't, we will delay the day when the libertarian movement achieves its ends through the use of the political system. □

Confessions of an Intractable Individualist

by Jerome Tuccille

Sometime in the early part of 1975 I began to wonder if there were any sane libertarians left in the country. This was no small concern of mine since I was convinced I had lost my own sanity somewhere along the campaign trail in 1974.

The New York gubernatorial campaign of 1974 started off promisingly enough. At that point I had three books to my credit—*Radical Libertarianism, It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand*, and *Here Comes Immortality*—and I was enticed to enter the race for governor by several New York libertarians who shattered the libertarian stereotype in that they (a) worked for a living, and (b) had something to show for it. Until this time, the so-called libertarian movement consisted of champions of capitalism with no visible means of support; self-styled anarchists whose conventions smelled like an acre of unwashed laundry; Randian Objectivists whose dogma was as rigid as the Church of Rome's and as humorless as Joseph Stalin's; and assorted advocates of individualism and freedom who had yet to master the mysteries of the knife and fork.

And then, all of a sudden, in the late spring of 1974 there materialized before my eyes a group of businessmen with money who looked and acted like everyone else, and who also called themselves libertarians. Needless to say, I was instantly overcome with a euphoric seizure. Not only would I get a chance to run for Governor of New York, but I would have a real campaign staff and war chest to back me up.

The goal from the beginning was the attainment of 50,000 votes which would have given the Free Libertarian Party of New York a permanent berth on the ballot along with the Republican, Democratic, Conservative, and Liberal

parties. We were warned from the start by a Republican Party operative, who claimed to have libertarian sympathies, that if we wanted to get 50,000 votes we would have to raise \$300,000.

"It costs six dollars a vote," he said.

Such naked cynicism was dismissed at once by me and the campaign. (In the end we raised \$75,000, \$60,000 of which went into the campaign, and we rang up 12,000 votes which works out to five dollars a vote; the son of a bitch lied to us, but not by much.) We started out by doing all the normal things a political candidate does: we mailed out press releases and position papers, which were ignored by the media; we called press conferences that nobody came to; we racked our brains, in short, for some way to get our message out and let the world know our campaign existed. We were almost reduced to taking the most expensive route of all: paying for air time with advertising dollars, a tactic that would have wiped out our campaign chest in short order.

And then somebody came up with a brilliant idea. "The media loves events," this person said. "We've got to stage media events that get the message across. Then maybe they'll pay attention to us."

Well, why not? Let's try one at least and see if it works. So, on a balmy afternoon in early summer, yours truly went "fishing" for votes—literally fishing,

complete with a rod and reel—on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan. This "event" was staged in front of President Chester A. Arthur's house to honor the heroic leader who was accused, in his time, of spending more time fishing than he did governing the country.

God bless Chester A. Arthur!

Lo and behold, the strategy worked. A reporter from the *New York Times* was the first one on the scene, followed quickly by journalists from the other New York dailies, as well as camera crews and reporters from the networks. The "Fishing for Votes" event earned us a feature story in the *Times* and other newspapers, complete with pictures, plus coverage on the evening television news—a first for the campaign.

We followed this up with a "Lady Godiva Demonstration" along Central Park South on a Sunday afternoon to dramatize the libertarian position on taxation. We rented a real live horse and adorned the lucky beast with a gorgeous brunette decked out in a flesh-colored body stocking, and led the unlikely twosome past the Plaza Hotel while the cameras clicked away and reporters scribbled in their notebooks. This event resulted in full-page coverage in *Newsweek*, and thousands of dollars worth of free newspaper and television coverage. The campaign also picked up the endorsements of Nicholas von Hoffman, a voice from the New

Left, and George Will, who was not such a prickly Tory in those days. Other events were staged with varying degrees of success throughout the campaign, most of which resulted in precious print and media coverage that would have bankrupted us in no time had we been obliged to pay for it.

It appeared as though the Tuccille for Governor campaign was finally rolling along smoothly, building its own momentum—until, inexplicably, we were halted in our tracks by a barrage of criticism. In a twinkling of an eye, as it were, a new word was grafted onto the English language:

stuntism.

Tuccille was trivializing the libertarian philosophy, cheapening its precepts and premises with *stuntism*, the critics complained. Where was most of the invective coming from? Largely from the would-be king-makers of the national LP, apparently, who were concerned from the beginning that the New York effort would divert money and interest from other libertarian campaigns across the country. To be fair about it, this much was true. Other campaigns *did* go begging for money as well as warm-blooded workers who were needed to stuff envelopes and collect signatures on petitions because of the attention focused on New York. But none of this would have mattered had we succeeded in accomplishing our main goal: the attainment of 50,000 votes in November.

In the end we failed, and we failed badly, coming up short by nearly 40,000 votes. So it came to pass that all the pent-up anger and resentment was vented and a suitable scapegoat created over the issue of *stuntism*. The fact that the campaign was suffering the fate of most third-party efforts—terminal obscurity—beforehand, seemed not to matter. *Stuntism* was the villain, pure and simple. Trivialization of the issues. Whatever you wanted to call it. It had a nice ring to it.

This was frustrating enough to deal with, but hypocrisy reared its ugly head when all the magazine and news articles, all the free publicity that had been generated by evil *stuntism* in the New York arena in 1974 were used by the national LP for its own purposes afterward—without any mention of the campaign that created it. While I could

understand the fury of party leaders who had seen money and labor funneled into an admittedly eccentric and quirky campaign that failed to achieve its main objective, I was dismayed by their expropriation of our media successes and their simultaneous denunciation of the strategy that made them possible.

If you needed a scapegoat for the failure of Campaign 1974 in New York, you should have placed the blame where it really belonged: you didn't send me *enough* money! Didn't you know it cost five or six dollars a vote in

"Can't you do anything with him?" a campaign aide asked my wife. "He doesn't smile enough. Sometimes he almost snarls at people."

New York?

Also, I was a reluctant candidate for public office to begin with and an indifferent campaigner at best—a fact I can accept now with a great deal of pride. I had very little desire to push through shopping mall crowds on Saturday afternoons, smiling and shaking hands and otherwise being agreeable to people suffering from advanced stages of brain rot. I once passed Senator Jacob Javits doing just that somewhere in Westchester County, and I stood aside in awe of the man. The ease with which he oiled his way among the throngs with a plastic smile on his lips, shaking one hand after another, dispensing an inanity here and another one there without ever really *saying* anything was truly impressive. The fact that he was so successful doing it was nothing less than horrifying.

The talents of a Jacob Javits epitomized more than words ever could the frailties of western-style democracy. I had no desire to emulate him in any way.

"Can't you *do* anything with him?" a campaign aide once asked my wife. "He doesn't smile enough. Sometimes he almost snarls at people."

My wife, who had lived with me for nine years at that point, shrugged her shoulders. She had seen me in *really* bad moods and tried to explain that this was good behavior for me.

In any event, my one attempt at

public politicking is history now. It cost me dearly both personally and financially, although like most of life's experiences it was an adventure I would not be without today. I learned a lot from it. What I think I learned most is that I don't want to do it again.

All my life I have been driven by two major goals: becoming a successful and creative writer and achieving personal freedom and its corollary of living my life in a free society. My writing career during the past fourteen years since

Campaign 1974 has continued apace. Today I have fourteen books behind me including a recent novel and a biography of Donald Trump. I am happy with what I have accomplished so far and I fully expect to create even better work in the future.

My other goal of personal freedom within a free and just society is less clearly realized. Freedom to me means many things. Certainly, freedom to write and publish as I please is paramount on the list. Without First Amendment guarantees there can be no true freedom. Economic freedom is crucial, as is philosophical freedom including religious and spiritual freedom. My life has been a fight against orthodoxy, the orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Church into which I was born, and even the orthodoxy of certain "libertarian credos" which alarmed me eighteen years ago. I continue to be struck by the ease with which some libertarians can shuck off one constraining orthodoxy, let's say a particularly nasty strain of organized religion, only to adopt so readily another one purporting to champion the freedom of individual thought.

As I look around me today, I see a greater threat to the First Amendment than this country has witnessed in decades. Thanks to Ronald Reagan's legal henchman, Ed Meese, writers and publishers throughout the country have begun to worry about just what they can and cannot get away with in their books. How much explicit sex is acceptable? Is it only juvenile sex that's being targeted, or all "prurient sex?" If only juvenile sex is involved, at what age does a juvenile become an adult from the censor's viewpoint?

Ed Meese can't go to jail fast enough to suit me. In jail he'll find out what prurient sex is all about.

Aside from Ed Meese and the other disasters of the Reagan years, the presidential campaign of 1988 does not offer any hope for libertarians. As I am writing this in the spring before the election, the prospect of deciding among George Bush, Robert Dole, Michael Dukakis, Jesse Jackson, or possibly even Mario Cuomo or Bill Bradley is too depressing to contemplate. It's hard to remember when a crop of candidates from both major parties has inspired such all-consuming surges of bleakness and despair. I would hope that George Bush gets indicted along with Oliver North and John Poindexter over his role in the Iran-Contra scandal if Robert Dole weren't waiting in the wings to fill in the void. Or Jack Kemp, God help us, with his despicable cozying-up to Pat Robertson and the so-called Moral Majority on social issues.

Having said all this, why am I not out there vocally supporting libertarian candidates and writing position papers for libertarian publications? In 1976 I was accused of having turned back into a conservative because I wrote an article for *National Review*. I don't know how many times I pointed out that I also wrote articles for *The Nation* and the *New York Times*—but that didn't make me a liberal; and I have since been published by the *New York Post*, *Woman*, and other periodicals without anyone questioning my political orientation. It's true that I did criticize the foreign policy perspective of some libertarians in my *National Review* piece, but I also disagree with many libertarians on such issues as abortion (I'm in favor of it); psychic phenomena (I think they are real); reincarnation (I believe in it); religion (I think we're doomed if we fail to understand our spiritual nature); astrology (I've always had an open mind on the subject); and probably a dozen more subjects I could enumerate.

In fact I strenuously object to any libertarian orthodoxy that claims you can't be a libertarian unless you: reject altruism (what's wrong with helping one's neighbors voluntarily or donating blood to the Red Cross?); worship at the altar of gold (those who did so blindly missed the greatest bull market in stock market history between 1982 and 1987; now I think it's over and gold may indeed be the best investment during the inflationary times ahead); subscribe to

the notion that Russian communism is less of a threat to world peace than the CIA (I don't have much regard for either institution); read science fiction with fanatical devotion (neither Ayn Rand nor Robert Heinlein at their best can measure up to Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities* in my estimation). I'm sure this will raise the hackles of some diehard fans, but so be it. I don't like libertarians—or any other people for that matter—who are intolerant of contrary

opinions.

The truth is, my philosophy and ideas have not changed substantively in twenty years. I am no more conservative today than I was in 1969 or 1970. If you can convince William Buckley that someone who believes the Reagan administration has been a near disaster for this country, that drugs ought to be decriminalized and abortion remain legal, that Ed Meese belongs in jail and all attempts at censorship must be resisted—

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if you can convince him and George Will and Pat Buchanan that someone holding these views is a conservative, then I will accept the label.

The reason why I dropped out of the libertarian world I was so much a part of during the early and mid-1970s is that I found as much orthodoxy and intolerance among advocates of "individual freedom" as I had among the religious bigots of my youth. The Objectivists were intolerant of anarchists who were intolerant of classical liberals who were intolerant of converts from the New Left. Followers of von Mises were intolerant of Friedman and his Chicago School economists. Everybody professed to believe in freedom

of thought and expression, but nobody was willing to grant it to anyone who disagreed with his particular clique.

I was denounced as a "heretic" by the dean of Manhattan College (a Catholic institution) when I was twenty years old; I didn't need to be damned as a "deviationist" or a "stuntist" by an ungainly collection of squabbling "individualists."

Today, I'm afraid, I cannot work up any degree of enthusiasm for the presidential campaign of Ron Paul. He may be the most decent and broad-minded fellow in the world; I have no idea. I don't know whether he's an Objectivist, a Galambosian, a LeFevrian, a Friedmanite, a gold bug, or an Episcopalian. As long as he believes in a very small amount of government at most and a whole lot of freedom for everybody, that's good enough for me. I'd vote for him in a minute if I thought it would do any good, and I may vote for him anyway when I step into the polling booth in November, 1988.

Then again, I may not. I may not vote at all.

I would be more inclined to vote for Libertarian Party candidates if we had a parliamentary system in the United States. If we did and it were possible for third (and fourth and fifth) parties to gain some sort of proportional representation in our congress the way the Free Democrats have in West Germany, the whole political process would make more sense to me. As it is today with

two-party rule, and not all that much difference between the major parties, the exercise seems futile and pointless.

As far as intellectual activism is concerned, I admire tremendously the strides that have been made by people like Robert Poole and the Reason Foundation, the Institute for Humane Studies, the Hoover Institute, and a few other "think tanks" with libertarian leanings. They seem to be having an

The ease with which Jacob Javits oiled his way among the throngs with a plastic smile on his lips, shaking one hand after another, dispensing an inanity here and another one there without ever really saying anything was truly impressive.

impact and to be reaching an audience that extends beyond the already converted.

Aside from an occasional book review for *Reason*, I have not contributed to libertarian publications during the past thirteen years or so because most of my writing efforts have gone into books. The ideas I get seem to run about 80,000 words, too long for any periodical I know of. I also confess to a certain reluctance to be drawn back into the old squabbling, the old philosophical nit-picking that characterized libertarian activities through the mid-1970s, and still does today as far as I can determine. I simply don't have time for it. I'm too busy trying to make a living as a writer and create new books that are better each time than the ones preceding them. I don't really care anymore whether free market anarchism or a strictly limited government is the morally correct political system. I'm more concerned about keeping Ed Meese from confiscating my word processor. *Any reduction at all* in the size of government would be a miracle given today's political climate.

There are many things I miss about the libertarian world I helped create during the early 1970s. I miss seeing people like Karl Hess who was then and remains today one of the most decent and good-hearted human beings I've ever met. So what if I disagreed with some of his rose-colored views of the New Left?

I also miss the friendship of Murray Rothbard and his wife Joey. Murray and I had our differences in the past, over foreign policy mostly, but I'm not interested in stirring up old disputes. Murray was one of the few libertarians with whom I could discuss books and movies, and I remember the great laugh I enjoyed when he told me that Ayn Rand had once proclaimed tap dancing to be the only rational dance form.

And I think fondly of others like Leonard Liggio, Walter Block, and Joe Peden. Leonard in particular tried hard to indoctrinate me in his theories of revisionist history which I could never swallow whole. Sorry about that, but I still relish those evening

we spent around heaping platters of mooshoo pork.

Others come to mind: Lee Schubert, Howie and Andrea Rich, Fran Youngstein who was a far better political candidate than I (though I'm not sure that's a compliment), Gary Greenburg, Tibor Machan, Marty Zupan, and dozens more who were truly open-minded individualists who understood that Christians, Jews, and Buddhists had as much right to call themselves libertarians as atheists did.

Libertarianism would be a far more palatable alternative to the prevailing mores if people like these constituted the majority of those wearing the mantle of libertarianism. Unfortunately, they were too few and far between. The movement attracted too many people with a vested interest in remaining on the fringe, too many super-intellectualized underachievers whose weirdness and asocial behavior somehow compensated (in their own minds) for their apparent failures. The "freak show" atmosphere that characterized so many libertarian gatherings detracted considerably from the validity of the underlying philosophy and repelled many who were otherwise sympathetic to the principles of freedom.

Too bad. It's really almost tragic.

I'm not sure what the answer is. I think I'm still enough of an optimist to believe that reason and sanity and justice prevail in the long run—but I wouldn't stake my life on it. □

Interview

L. Neil Smith on Science Fiction: The State of the (Anti-Statist) Art

by D. R. Blackmon

L. Neil Smith is one of the best known—and most prolific—contemporary libertarian authors of science fiction. In this conversation with Mr. Blackmon, he discusses the nature of libertarian science-fiction, why it is important, what is being written, and who is writing it. . . .

Liberty: Libertarian science fiction has evolved from a book most people call straight fiction—*Atlas Shrugged*—would you agree?

Smith: I think *Atlas Shrugged* meets the criteria for science fiction in every respect. In fact, if it weren't for Rand wobbling in and out of science fiction, I doubt if I'd have become a libertarian. I picked up *Anthem*, definitely science fiction of the dystopian type, which led me, with a little detour to *The Fountainhead*, to *Atlas Shrugged*.

Liberty: There are lots of SF props in *Atlas Shrugged*. How come people see it as just fiction?

Smith: Well, it performs a mainstream mission. And I noticed a long time ago that when "serious" writers want to say "important" things, or "important" writers want to say "serious" things, even if they've never written science fiction before, that's where they turn. Look at 1984 or *Brave New World*.

Norman Mailer's work contains science fiction elements, and there's always Kurt Vonnegut.

Liberty: What about H. Beam Piper? Scuttlebutt has it that he shot himself just as an agent was coming to his door with a check. He died thinking he was a failure, while right on the verge of popularity.

Smith: Actually, it was another decade before Piper became as popular as he is, and that's a long time in the life of a writer. I think it's important to say that libertarian science fiction rests on the shoulders of two giants—Ayn Rand and Robert Heinlein. Each was indispensable: Rand gave us the philosophical rigor, and Heinlein gave us the humanity. He's more human, and has a sense of humor. If we lacked either of those elements, I don't think there'd be a libertarian school of science fiction. In addition, there are what I think of as proto-libertarian writers. Certainly, foremost of those is H. Beam Piper.

Liberty: So what's the truth about his death?

Smith: Like all of us, he had a tough time with publishers,

getting paid promptly and so forth, which contributed to his death by his own hand in 1965. I don't know about the timing, someone almost showing up with a check—I'm inclined to doubt it. *How* he did it says a lot about his character. He'd been shooting pigeons from his window with an air rifle in order to eat. Welfare was unthinkable, and he didn't want to be a burden to his friends. The alternative, if he really believed in reincarnation as some of his stories imply, wasn't quite as drastic to him as it may seem to us. When he decided to shoot himself, he hung canvas along one wall of his apartment so he wouldn't leave a mess behind. Let's follow his example: next question?

Liberty: Okay, what can libertarian science fiction do for readers that no other form of fiction, or for that matter, non-fiction, can do?

Smith: Concretizing what was formerly abstract.

Liberty: In other words, presenting alternative worlds that a reader can actually live in. A *de facto* libertarian society that he or she can explore.

Smith: *De facto*. You have the North American Confederacy, in *The Probability Broach*, which I created and am still exploring, F. Paul Wilson's worlds, J. Neil Schulman's, Vic Koman's and others. A reader can go anywhere he wants, explore any social or economic set-up, simply by picking different writers. More importantly, libertarian science fiction is positive, rather than negative. By that I mean a non-fiction writer can discuss the effects of the minimum wage or what's wrong with the FDA, but that's merely pointing out flaws in a statist system. A science fiction writer can show the positive results in a society where those things have been abolished or never existed.

Liberty: Why the blossoming of so many libertarian science fiction writers now?

Smith: For years, in addition to floundering and foundering on the important issues, the Libertarian Party failed, in my estimation, to make the kind of promises only it was entitled to

make—promises that had to do with people keeping their own wealth and being left unmolested. I *specifically* began writing to fill that gap—to make those promises. And it's interesting to me that now, many other writers are trying to do it, too.

Liberty: How many are there?

Smith: Presently, by my count, there are an even dozen science fiction novelists, including yours truly, whom I know, firsthand, to be self-conscious libertarians. Half a dozen more are on the way, about to be published. The worst thing about an interview like this is that I'm probably short-changing others I *don't* know about, people I've missed somehow, or who stick with short stories. I don't read any SF magazines. If that's true, I hope they forgive me, and let me know who and where they are. It's kind of fun, keeping track of what I think of as the "Raffles Club," a libertarian counterpart to the left-liberal group of writers who met at New York's Algonquin Hotel in the 20s and 30s. The Hotel Raffles, of course, is on the moon, and it was put there by Robert Heinlein. We can't meet there now, but tomorrow. . . .

Liberty: Let's talk about some of them. Specifically, the radicals. In addition to yourself, certainly Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson qualify.

Smith: The "two Bobs" are the best example I can think of regarding the need for Heinleinian humanity *and* Randian rigor. Both Bobs are decent guys, fiendishly good writers, and unquestionable libertarians. They're a bit older than the rest of us who grew up in the movement, however, and lack the benefit of certain things it had to teach us. For example, both have doubts about the free market system, and seem unable to distinguish it from the mercantile fascism we presently labor under. Bob Shea has even written that freedom is an issue separate from property considerations. If he'd give five minutes thought to the way books get produced, he'd see that he's dead wrong. *There*. I've needed to get that off my chest for quite a while. On the other appendage, the *Illuminatus!* trilogy may be the most therapeutic work ever written. My life would certainly be sadder and scarier without it. It's an achievement fully comparable with *Atlas Shrugged*, and I owe Shea and Wilson the same unpayable debt for having written it that I owe Rand and Heinlein.

Liberty: What about Vic Koman? *The Jehovah Contract* is in a class by itself, isn't it?

Smith: Unclassifiable, eclectic—by which I mean there's something there to offend everyone. . . .

Liberty: You praised the book. . . .

Smith: You can't help but praise it. Any reader who shares certain values we all do must praise it. Books that are adventurous and funny, serious—even gloomy—and cheerful at the same time are hard to come by.

Liberty: Vic broke some rules didn't he?

Smith: Vic also has the distinction of being the author of the world's first libertarian-science-fiction-porno novel, *Starship Women*. His working title was *Saucer Sluts*. It had a press-run of three or four thousand copies by Hustler Press, then disap-

peared. Everybody, including Vic, keeps promising to find me a copy, but. . . .

Liberty: You're also excited about Brian Daley.

Smith: Brian began shortly before I did with the *Coramonde* novels, not specifically libertarian, but containing one element essential to good libertarian science fiction—the ethical warrior. Brian's books all contain a hard, unmistakable core of what you might call gut-level libertarianism. He and I are members of the *Fraternity of the "Falcon,"* since my three Lando Calrissian books followed his three Han Solo books.

Liberty: What about F. Paul Wilson?

Smith: *Wheels Within Wheels* won the first Prometheus Award for best libertarian science fiction. He also wrote a novella, *The Tery*, that's worth trying to find, and has done many good, extremely libertarian short stories. Since I was introduced to his

work, I've read everything he's written. I only wish he'd write a non-horror novel which might be called *Repairman Jack: The Early Years*. Jack was the hero of *The Tomb*. Wilson also had a movie made from *The Keep*, for which I envy him.

Liberty: What about Melinda Snodgrass with *Circuit* and *Circuit Breaker*?

Smith: I picked up *Circuit* in the grocery store because the jacket-blurb made it sound libertarian, took it home and found it was dedicated to Vic Milan, author of *The Cybernetic Samurai*. . . .

Liberty: . . . a Prometheus Award winner.

Smith: Right. *Circuit* was a delightful book, and it turned out that Melinda and I had the same editor at Ace, Ginger Buchanan, who told me, "If you like *Circuit*, you'll love *Circuit Breaker*." She sent me the manuscript. Now, I'm eagerly looking forward to Melinda's third book, *Final Circuit*.

Liberty: Since Vic Milan's name has come up, let's talk about *Cybernetic Samurai*.

Smith: I was impressed with *Cybernetic Samurai*. Arbor sent me bound galleys to comment on. I usually hate that, because if the book is no good, what the hell am I going to say? But *Samurai* knocked me out. . . .

Liberty: Vic used to write westerns. Is he still doing that?

Smith: I don't know. They were collaborations, as is *Runespear*, with Melinda Snodgrass—a great adventure-fantasy with some very different points and twists. I recommend it highly. If you read it and think it resembles Indiana Jones, you'll be interested to learn it took a while to sell, and predates the movie. One more thing about Vic, he gives great weapon.

Liberty: Coming from the original interplanetary commando, that's quite a compliment. What do you think of *Moon of Ice* by Brad Linaweaver?

Smith: I read it in short-story form and Brad sent me notes toward its expansion to novel length. In some ways, I think he's chosen the most difficult task of all, writing about the re-discovery of freedom once the world's lost it—something like Ira Levin in *This Perfect Day*. He's gotten away with it too, magnificently.

continued on page 26

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Liberty: Okay . . . We haven't talked about J. Neil Schulman yet, but *Alongside Night* and *The Rainbow Cadenza* were pretty successful books.

Smith: Neil is a very good writer. *Alongside Night* is a terrific book and *The Rainbow Cadenza* offers some really fresh and bizarre ideas. Neil has the same problem as Vic Koman, in that publishers who are supposedly familiar with the innovative nature of science fiction are actually conservatives at heart and at a loss to know what to do with either of them. Also, Neil writes everything in a "white-heat" and exhausts himself, so that he has to wait a long time before he can tackle the next project. If he can ever learn to pace himself, I'll have a lot more good reading to look forward to.

Liberty: Let's talk about Neil Smith for a while. Your first book, *The Probability Broach*, won a Prometheus Award. It looks like you were thinking more of Raymond Chandler than Ayn Rand.

Smith: Definitely. And following behind Chandler, Rex Stout. But even more than Chandler's beautiful writing, his character Phillip Marlow has principles. You may not agree with them, but you've got to admire the way he follows through. Also, Chandler was full of good advice for writers. I have several of his quotes above my desk. One says, "When in doubt, bring a man with a gun through the door." In one of my Lando books I was so badly stuck I brought a man named Jandler through the door with a gun in his hand.

Liberty: But you've gone way beyond that. Each book in the North American Confederacy series stands alone. For example, *Tom Paine Maru* concerns a band of libertarians hell-bent on freeing enslaved planets. *The Nagasaki Vector* is a comedic soap-opera, with its bumbling hero in love with his time machine. *The Gallatin Divergence* takes us back to the Whiskey Rebellion in an attempt to tidy up a few historical problems, and in the meantime, produces a new Declaration of Independence. Raymond Chandler didn't do that.

Smith: I'm convinced that self-styled critics don't—or can't—read. If they could, they'd find I've tried hard to make each book different and fresh. My readers don't have any problem seeing that, and each of my books, such as *The Venus Belt*, *The Wardove* and *The Crystal Empire*, have their own very vocal partisans.

Libertarian Science Fiction

A partial list that is bound to cause disagreement and cries that valuable writers and works were excluded.

(P) Prometheus Award Winner (PHF) Prometheus Hall of Fame winner

Proto

- Poul Anderson—*The Star Fox, Orbit Unlimited, Shield, Trader to the Stars* (PHF)
Alfred Bester—*The Stars My Destination*
Ray Bradbury—*Fahrenheit 451* (PHF)
Algis Budrys—*The Falling Torch*
A. Bertram Chandler—Any of the John Grimes series.
Glen Cook—*A Matter of Time*
Phillip K. Dick—*Radio Free Abelmuth, The Man in the High Castle*
Gordon R. Dickson—The *Dorsai* books
Randall Garrett—*Too Many Magicians, Anything You Can Do*
Donna Henderson—*Pilgrimage, No Different Flesh*
Frank Herbert—The *Dune* cycle taken as a whole.
Aldous Huxley—*Brave New World*
C. M. Kornbluth—*The Syndic* (PHF)
Ira Levin—*This Perfect Day*
George Orwell—1984 (PHF), *Animal Farm*
H. Beam Piper—*Federation, Fuzzy Sapiens, A Planet for Texans, Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen, Last Enemy, Space Vikings, The Cosmic Computer*
Eric Frank Russell—W.A.S.P., *Three to Conquer, Metamorphosite, The Great Explosion* (PHF)

Early

- Robert Heinlein—*The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* (PHF), *Double Star, Mistress, Stranger in a Strange Land* (PHF), *The Juvies, Assignment in Eternity, Between Planets, Beyond This Horizon, Citizen of the Galaxy, The Door Into Summer, Time Enough for Love, The Man Who Sold the Moon, The Day After Tomorrow* (sometimes printed as *Sixth Column*), *Glory Road, Tunnel in the Sky*
Ayn Rand—*Anthem*(PHF), *Atlas Shrugged* (PHF)

Modern

- Brian Daley—*Requiem for a Ruler of Worlds, Jinx on a Terran Inheritance, Fall of the White Ship Avatar*, 2 *Coramonde* novels, *A Tapestry of Magic*, the Han Solo Trilogy
James P. Hogan—*Voyage From Yesteryear* (P), *Inherit the Stars, Gentle Giants of Gany-meade, The Code of the Lifemaker*
Victor Koman—*The Jehovah Contract, Starship Women*
Brad Linaweaver—*Moon of Ice*
Vic Milan—*The Cybernetic Samurai* (P), also co-author of *Runespear* with Melinda Snodgrass.
J. Neil Schulman—*Alongside Night* (P), *The Rainbow Cadenza*
Robert Shea & Robert Anton Wilson—*Illuminatus!* (PHF) Both have written other books. Shea's include *All Things Are Light* and the two volume Japanese *Shike* epic. Wilson has written *The Earth Will Shake, Right Where You Are Sitting Now*, and others.
L. Neil Smith—*The Probability Broach* (P), *The Nagasaki Vector, The Venus Belt, Their Majesties' Bucketeers, Tom Paine Maru, The Gallatin Divergence, The Mindharp of Sharu, The Flamewind of Oseon, The Starcave of Thomboka, The Wardove, The Crystal Empire, Brightsuit MacBear, Henry Martyn, Taflak Lysandra*
Melinda Snodgrass—*Circuit, Circuit Breaker, Final Circuit*, and collaborated with Vic Milan on *Runespear*.
Vernor Vinge—*True Names, The Peace War, Marooned in Realtime* (P)
F. Paul Wilson—*Healer, Wheels Within Wheels* (P), *An Enemy of the State. Horror: The Keep, The Tomb, The Touch*.

Historical Analysis

Ivan the Terrible

Political Culture and Individual Evil

by William P. Moulton

A short time ago I was viewing one of my favorite movies, *Ivan the Terrible*. This somber, brooding masterpiece is rightly regarded by many students of the cinema as one of the greatest films ever produced. With its wild and haunting music, its stark scenes which look as if they might have been animated from a Doré canvas, its gothic plot of murder, betrayal, cruelty and vengeance, and its superhuman portrayal of Ivan by the great Nikolai Cherkassov, it is not a film one soon forgets.

The work does have its detractors. Some critics find the acting style histrionic, and there are substantial historical inaccuracies in the story line. Produced in two parts in the Soviet Union between 1942 and 1946, it reflects Josef Stalin's view of Ivan as the heroic mold-er of the Russian state and of himself as the all but literal reincarnation of the famous Tsar—although the director, Sergei Eisenstein, was roundly abused by Stalin for not getting Ivan's characterization quite "right" in the first few scenes. In an unusual display of tolerance, Stalin allowed Eisenstein—who by being Jewish already had two strikes against him—not only to live but also to continue with the production of the movie. After his initial intervention, however, the Father of Peoples exercised such a tight control over the film—often having the day's rushes taken directly to him for editing—as to become in effect the co-director.

Whatever else might be said of the movie that emerged from this strange collaboration, there is no doubt that an American-made film on the same subject would have been an entirely different, and perhaps inferior, product. In *Ivan the Terrible*, horror and drama are unrelenting, and the portrayal of emotions is savage and remorseless. Watching it is somewhat akin to watching *Macbeth* (with the porter's scene left out) fol-

lowed directly by *King Lear*. Of course the particular genius of Eisenstein as a director—he also was responsible for *Battleship Potemkin* and *Alexander Nevsky*—is a major cause of the film's significance. But there is more to it than this. The movie is distinctively Russian in a way that goes beyond the obvious. Only a country that had experienced the reign of an actual Ivan the Terrible could have produced such a movie.

Russian Political Culture

The reign of the historical Ivan was made possible by the existence of a certain type of political culture. The persistence of this culture made it more likely that in good time a Lenin and a Stalin would have the opportunity to inflict their madness upon the country. And this is the reason why *Ivan the Terrible* has never been very popular in America, even among people favorably inclined toward it for Sovietophilic reasons. It is the product of a political culture different from ours.

The phrase "political culture" appears from time to time in the position papers of political activists as some inef-fable quality that must be changed before one can really "get something done." Beyond such conventional usages there is a tendency to avoid the topic and allow it to recede beyond the horizon of political discourse. Some analysts avoid it out of optimism—out of a belief that the political culture of their country is so favorable to the development of the best possible institutions that one

need only plant a few seeds and prepare to reap the harvest. Others avoid it because they are profoundly pessimistic about their nation's heritage and tend to imagine their ideals as capable of introduction only in small increments and by Machiavellian stratagems.

Americans often have problems analyzing "political culture" because they imagine that other peoples are basically just Americans who dress funny and don't speak quite right. A classic expression of this belief was the ludicrous performance of Woodrow Wilson during the First World War and the succeeding peace conference. Totally ignorant of European affairs, and secure in his simple-minded belief that everyone in the world wanted the abolition of monarchy and the establishment of American-style democracy, convinced that war is merely the result of machinations of wicked rulers, Wilson was eaten alive by the Europeans, who represented culture more cynical and more knowledgeable, though not necessarily any wiser, than his own.

The reign of Ivan was a paradigm of the relationship between political culture and political possibility. He was born in 1530, the son of Vassily III, Grand Duke of Muscovy, the most important component of the area known as "Rus." Since the early 1300s the princes of this state had been expanding their domain by various means, and by the time of Ivan's birth Muscovy, with Moscow as its capital, ruled about half of what is now European Russia. When

his father died in 1533, Ivan ascended the throne as Ivan IV. After a dangerous intrigue-filled childhood, at the age of sixteen he began to rule in his own right. He took the title Tsar (the Russian word for Caesar). This title, borne by all subsequent Russian monarchs, meant that Ivan was now an Emperor. It symbolized the growing Russian belief that Moscow was destined to be the Third Rome (the second being Constantinople). During the remainder of his reign, which lasted until his death from natural causes in 1584, Muscovy continued its military expansion, especially in the east, where for the first time Russians ventured into the mostly empty vastness of Siberia. By his later years his realm was generally called, not Muscovy, but Russia. By that time, also, he was generally known as Ivan Grozny, "The Terrible."

These aspects of his life would, in themselves, make Ivan a relatively important figure in European history, though less important than, for example, Peter the Great or Metternich, to say nothing of Napoleon or Marx. It is not his status as the first Tsar, however, or as the creator of the modern Russian state, that has guaranteed Ivan's fame. Rather, it is his reputation as one of the most evil men in history. He is the Platonic image, the *vera icona*, of the "wicked prince." Indeed, the very conception of personal evil, as it applies to a monarch or other chief of state, has been heavily influenced by the memory of Ivan's reign. It is only in the twentieth century, with the coming of mass propaganda and of the modern totalitarian type of despot, that his image as the ultimate *ty-pus* of evil tyrant has begun to fade.

The Nature of Ivan's Evil

Ivan was a member of that (fortunately rather small) subset of political chieftains who have treated power mainly as an opportunity to murder people. The most productive way of looking at Ivan is as a psychotic mass murderer who happened to be absolute monarch of a large and important country. There can be no real doubt of this fact. Although he naturally had to deal with some of the normal business of the state, and he gave some thought to the direction of military operations in the

endless wars involving Russia, Livonia, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey, his real enjoyment of power was manifest in the forty-year orgy of torture, murder and desolation which he visited upon the Russian people. Unlike modern technocrats of death such as Stalin and Hitler, Ivan took a personal interest and delight in the annihilation of his victims. He possessed a sensual fascination, not just with murder, but with the actual physical process of death, and especially with death by fiendish torture. He loved the sight and sound and smell of it. On countless occasions he would personally assist in these grisly matters. His search for new and interesting victims was endless—he liked variety in all things. Thus the destruction of human lives went on. Year after year those whose names wound up on Ivan's list—and those added on the spur of the moment—were roasted, hanged, shot, impaled, boiled, beheaded, drowned, speared, burned alive, strangled, trampled, flayed, torn apart by dogs. When the killing of individuals palled, he had whole families butchered, then districts, then towns and cities. The ancient commercial city of Novgorod, possibly the wealthiest community in Ivan's empire, was destroyed, its inhabitants exterminated, for disloyalty, a crime which, as far as we can judge, existed only in the

For a parallel one would have to fantasize an American president who routinely invited congressmen to the White House to murder them and whose normal entertainment for foreign ambassadors was to have a cabinet secretary tortured to death during a state dinner.

diseased mind of the sovereign.

The names of even his most prominent victims would not be recognized in the West except by a specialist in Russian history. Suffice it to say that there is nothing in the English-speaking world—and only a few reigns in world history prior to the twentieth century—that can even remotely be compared to his butchery. For a parallel one would have to fantasize an American president who routinely invited congressmen to the White House to murder them, often with his own hands, who killed everyone who had in any way helped him to attain office, and whose normal enter-

tainment for foreign ambassadors was to have a cabinet secretary tortured to death during a state dinner.

Put in this way, the usual response will be, "But this is ridiculous. Nothing like that could happen in this country." That is true. It is also true that such things could not have happened during Ivan's time in, for example, England or France. Elizabeth I was a strong-willed and powerful queen, sometimes imperious and unjust. But can anyone with even the most superficial knowledge of history imagine the great queen inviting the Duke of Westminster to St. James to partake of a feast while they watched the Archbishop of Canterbury being roasted to death on a spit? Of course not. The idea is absurd. My point is not that Ivan was mad and cruel and Elizabeth basically wise and good, though this is surely the case. The much more important point is that there were in England institutions and attitudes and a consensus about what is permissible which made such things utterly impossible. A monarch who attempted to rule as a demented murderer would be made to desist or, more likely, be removed from the throne. (Several Western monarchies had had kings who were deposed for misconduct substantially less grievous than Ivan's.)

It is useless to attempt an analysis of the personal psychology of Ivan the Terrible. One assumes he was a psychopath, but obviously that is not the whole story. The concept of "sadist" is certainly applicable, but seems to fall short of an explanation. As mentioned above, Ivan's love of torture and death, of screams and torment and

despair, was erotic and sensuous. In his daily routine he went from scenes of torture and execution to the bedroom and back again. The link between sex and murder was for him unbreakable.

The inner demons that drove Ivan are probably incomprehensible to a sane person. The only real clue he left posterity was his frequent statement to his courtiers (unlike some tyrants, he loved to talk) that there were degrees of torment and anguish beyond which no dignity was possible. He would muse to his audience, "Remember old Bishop so-and-so who was here yesterday, with his beautiful robes and long white

beard. How elegant do you suppose he would look if he were being flayed alive with chains?" The reality would quickly follow the reflection. With the passage of time and the remoteness of the civilization involved, the mad Tsar's motives have become shadowy and fiction-like, resembling those of an evil character in a mediocre fantasy novel. What is more relevant to our purpose is an examination of several lessons that can be learned from a study of this bizarre reign. In Russia there were no powerful countervailing institutions to the throne. The church was subservient, and became more so during Ivan's reign. Landowners held their estates at the pleasure of the Tsar, and he frequently switched people and landholders around. There was no liberal concept of landholding, except to a very small degree in the cities. Merchants were considered necessary, but were held in low esteem. If it were decided, say, that Yaroslavl needed more saddlemakers and fewer silversmiths, the former would be moved from Moscow or Smolensk

while silversmiths would be marched off to Kazan or Pskov. The notion that the persons involved might have a claim on their own lives and careers was not formally rejected—it simply did not exist in that political culture. The relation of the Russian populace to the Tsar was one of submission and silence.

Role of the Individual in History

Although extra-personal factors determine the limits of what is possible, the nature of Ivan's reign was determined by the Tsar himself, and the motive force was his own personality. There is not the remotest sense in which Ivan's crimes were the result of the material productive forces of society. To apply this nostrum to Ivan would be an obscene insult to the memory of his countless victims. But apart from the extreme Marxist view just mentioned, it is not even correct to say that Ivan was part of a historical trend. Russia was backward and ignorant in many ways. It was definitely not a liberal society. But it did not have a tradition of cruel rulers. Despite attempts since the mid-nineteenth century to rewrite history as merely the working and clashing of impersonal forces, the fact remains that ac-

tual people are the ones who make decisions, and some have literally changed the course of history by doing so. Individuals in different political cultures from our own are not necessarily amenable to those personal influences that we might consider likely to condition them.

Education and Intelligence Do Not Guarantee Decency and Mercy

Ivan the Terrible was not a barbarian or a witless primitive. He was intelligent and had displayed genuine intellectual curiosity from an early age. Although his education was unsystematic it was thorough by sixteenth-century standards, and he remained a

Year after year, those whose names wound up on Ivan's list were roasted, hanged, shot, impaled, boiled, beheaded, drowned, speared, burned alive, strangled, trampled, flayed, torn apart by dogs. . . .

voracious reader throughout his life. While not a Westernizer in the sense that Peter the Great was, he desired to absorb those portions of Western learning that would be of use to him. He was especially fascinated with England, which he regarded as a miraculous and exotic land filled with clever people and inventions. He was always writing letters to Elizabeth, and even preposterously suggested marriage. He imported large numbers of books from western Europe, and read as many as possible himself. He established the first printing press in Russia. In all probability he was the best-read man in his empire. Did this learning moderate his brutality or distract him from his crimes? Not in the least.

Neither Does Religion . . .

It no doubt pains conservatives to contemplate the fact, but history provides no evidence whatever for the idea that a religiously-minded ruler is more likely to be moral or humane or decent than a non-religious one. Nor does the particular religion involved seem to bear on such matters. Nor does the extent of religious observance among the populace. The humanity and honesty of a society, or lack thereof, are rooted in a

great number of habits and attitudes, of which religious belief is only one among many, and seldom dominant.

That Ivan the Terrible was sincerely religious, a devout communicant of the Russian Orthodox Church, is beyond doubt. He was, in fact, a religion junkie. His various domiciles were awash with icons. On even the shortest trip he would stop at every monastery, church and shrine. It is reliably attested that he developed a callus on his forehead from constant *proskynesis* before icons. His every project, and especially those of a military nature, was blessed by bishop or metropolitan in a solemn ceremony. Even his dread murder squad, the *oprichniki*, were dragged constantly to church by their Godfearing master. Ivan

seemed genuinely to enjoy Orthodox services, and would sometimes stand for hours chanting responses and then kneel for more hours in prayer before an icon of some favorite saint. He took theology seriously enough to make a personal study of Lutheranism, inviting German scholars to Moscow for the purpose of

questioning them concerning the Augsburg Confession. Although he ultimately rejected the arguments of the Lutherans, he allowed them to build a church in his capital city so he would have someone to ask if he came up with more questions.

Did this excessive, hothouse religiosity have a salutary effect on Ivan's personal morality? Not in the slightest. He went from church to torture chamber to orgy to brutal execution and back to church, week in and week out. Of course this was related to his notion of himself as a sort of partner of God, and more precisely of the vengeful God of the Old Testament.

People and Civilizations Don't Always Act in the Way We Assume We Would Act If In the Same Position

This point may seem obvious. After all, who has ever maintained that an Arabian sheik is going to have the same ambitions and values as the governor of Ohio? And yet there is a tendency on the part of Americans to assume that other regimes will at least function according to basic rules of common sense. As I hope this article has demonstrated, such is not necessarily the case. The

"common sense" thing for Hitler to have done around 1942 would have been to put his racial and anti-Semitic fantasies on the back burner, adopt a merely defensive posture toward the Western allies, and proclaim a war of anti-Bolshevik liberation in the East. Had he done these things, he might have won World War II. He doesn't seem to have even considered them. The "common sense" thing for Stalin to have done around 1938 would have been to strengthen the Red Army by downplaying political criteria for advancement, ending the morale-destroying system of dual authority (with a military and a political officer in each post) and moderating the atmosphere of denunciation, hysteria and treason-hunting that put everyone in a position of paranoid defensiveness. Instead, he fell on his armed forces like a wolf on the fold, destroying almost the entire officer corps—in effect saying to his country's enemies "attack when ready!"

In the first case, one has to assume either that Hitler was simply stupid—which he was not—or that his prime goal by 1942 was to exterminate the Jews of Europe regardless of the military consequences. This doesn't mean that he didn't want to win the war also. It just wasn't his first priority, although it seems to us that it "should" have been. Similarly, Stalin was willing greatly to weaken the Soviet Union, and risk his own position as absolute master of that country, in order to satisfy his paranoid lust for vengeance against his mostly imaginary enemies. No doubt he "should" have acted differently. But what of it? The famous miser Hetty

Green "should" have enjoyed her vast fortune instead of living in squalor, sleeping in the basements of buildings she owned, and rationing herself to a little oatmeal each morning. But of course she *was* enjoying her fortune, by holding onto it and contemplating its growth. What we really mean is that *we* would spend her money, if we suddenly had it, on all sorts of fun things. Again, what of it? People don't act the way we would, or think as we would.

It is also true that cultures filter artistic and historical perceptions in different ways. Values, a sense of continuity (or its

The values of societies and the motives of individuals are complex and sometimes mysterious things. Though it may be possible to unlock their mysteries, it takes time, and there is no master key.

lack), and appeals to mythic symbols—all these form a sort of conceptual shorthand that facilitate appreciation and criticism in both the academic and the vulgar sense. And emotional responses change over both time and distance.

When the actual Duncan III of Scotland was killed by his cousin Macbeth in 1040, probably few people were actually outraged. Duncan was only an exalted clan chieftain, and the office frequently changed hands (usually with violence) among the warrior chiefs of the ruling clique. By the time Shakespeare presented the deed on the stage in 1604, the concept of the divine right of kings was in full flower, and the murder of a monarch was

seen as a hellish crime, an obscenity and blasphemy against God and the entire social order.

Similarly, there is an inevitable gap between the ways in which a Russian and an American audience view *Ivan the Terrible*. For us the film is a sort of exotic and brutal fairy tale, though based on actual events. For the Russians, the film is much closer to the wellsprings of life, nation, and the individual soul.

What conclusion should be drawn from contrasts between cultures and between people? Certainly I'm not claiming that there is any biological obstacle to the adoption by someone, or even a whole society, of values and folkways that originate in another civilization. After all, it has happened. Although the change or adaptation may not be as total as it might seem at first glance, Japan is far more westernized now than at the time of its opening to the outside world in 1854. But is it more Western than it is Japanese? Probably not.

The point is *not* that we should become pessimistic about promoting whatever change we desire in non-western nations, or that we should be intimidated by the presence of cultural traditions that seem hostile to our goals. After all, not all of our own traditions are friendly, nor are all foreign ones inimical. What I am saying is that we need a certain patience and a sense of perspective and of the possible. The values of societies, and the motives of individuals, are complex and sometimes mysterious things. It may be possible to unlock the mysteries, but it takes time, and there is no master key. □

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Perspective

Nicaragua: The Case for Non-Intervention

by William Kelsey

In the May *Liberty*, Gary Alexander reported on his visit to war-torn Nicaragua and argued for libertarian support for the *Contras*. Bill Kelsey also visited Nicaragua, but came away with a very different conclusion.

In the fall of 1984, I went to Nicaragua, to see what I could for myself. I travelled for two weeks under the auspices of Witness for Peace, a religious pacifist organization dedicated to educating the American public on the situation there. Its stated goal is to work for a cutoff of aid to the *Contras* and to allow Nicaragua to rebuild from war and earthquake without the threat of foreign intervention. Knowing that I'd be confronted with, "But they showed you what they wanted you to see . . ." I stayed an extra two weeks on my own.

During the two weeks with WFP I spent time in Managua, Leon, and Somotillo with excursions to various small villages. I visited politicians of the Sandinista FSLN and the opposition Liberal Independent Party (PLI), attended services in Baptist and Catholic churches, and spent a fair amount of time on my own mixing with the local people. During my extra two weeks I travelled—hitch-hiking and by bus—to San Juan del Sur, then to Costa Rica and back to Managua and down to Corinto during the MIG crisis. I had the opportunity to participate with a journalist in interviews with Archbishop Obando y Bravo and Arturo Cruz, the presidential candidate who was boycotting the election process, and with a number of individuals both supportive and opposed to the Sandinista regime.

First, let's deal with the problem of "seeing only what they want you to see." In a sense, this is always a problem: No host shows a visitor what that host doesn't want the visitor to see. A more relevant issue is, "Were you prevented from seeing something you wanted to see?"

As a practical matter for getting around in a foreign country, it is helpful to have a host who will handle logistics in order to get one to the greatest possible number of interviews and appointments in a particular amount of time. But whoever that host might be—the government, Witness for Peace, the opposition Coordinadora, the Catholic hierarchy, or Pentecostal missionaries, one will see and hear roughly what the host wants to have seen or heard. I labor this point to shed some light on why it is possible for visitors to return from Nicaragua with vastly differing conclusions.

A Persian folk tale tells of a wise old Sufi who while travelling met a man who asked about the people in the town ahead of him. "What were the people like in the town from which you came?" asked the Sufi.

"They were hostile, rude, and inhospitable," replied the man.

"The town ahead of you is full of the same kind of people," said the Sufi. A short while later the wise man met another traveller who asked the same question. Again, he responded with the question, "What were the people like in the town from which you came?"

"They were generous, friendly, and hospitable," he replied.

Again came the answer, "The town

ahead is full of the same kind of people."

The moral of this little tale holds true in varying degrees wherever one travels. When one is on a political fact-finding tour the facts uncovered will usually reinforce the investigator's world view. Visitors unconsciously give off signals that reveal what their views might be. Those who do not support those views tend to avoid prolonged discussion with the visitor, except for a few who might enjoy argument. Those in general agreement with the visitor will come forward, engage in long conversations, invite him or her to meet others with similar views, and so on. As if led by an invisible hand, prejudices are confirmed.

The phenomenon is further developed in dependent Third World countries where hosts stand a chance of receiving a subsequent contribution from the visitor. There is an understandable reluctance to offend the rich tourist with facts that might disturb his sensibilities, thus tightening the purse-strings. (North Yemeni politicians, for example, have become skilled at knowing what American and Soviet diplomats like to hear, and regularly swindle them both).

A traveller dependent on local translators should expect this effect to be in-

tensified. A translator may pick out respondents who will do the fact-finder the "favor" of producing the desired information, appropriate anecdotes, or worthy quotes. In this case the "invisible hand" is hardly invisible at all.

Finally, the mind is a self-reinforcing mechanism. It is possible for the mind to disregard small sights, sounds, and hints that would disturb a preconceived notion. Larger dissonant sights and sounds can be dealt with by the process of denial. A researcher will be understandably less diligent in going out of the way to discover facts that would shoot holes in a carefully prepared construct. In this matter, a valid question would be: "Did you want to see enough?"

Doing my best to be on guard against such self-deception I was able to come up with anecdotal evidence to support any number of views on Nicaragua. This may be a perplexing situation, but it is not a conclusion.

Any conclusion made must take into account these—and other— inherent limitations on knowledge. Travelling in a country for one month with an intermediate fluency in the language does not qualify anyone as an expert. When I lived in the Middle East, I was constantly amused to witness the number of visitors who felt themselves equipped to write articles or even books after spending a few weeks in the area.

I have spent significant portions of my life in war zones, in military service, and in amateur and academic research into the causes of war and the motivations of those who participate. Having acknowledged a certain lack of expertise on Nicaragua itself, I will submit that I am nevertheless justified in advocating non-intervention *for reasons of ignorance* alone. Individuals with similar—or even superior—levels of knowledge and experience who claim to have figured out exactly who deserves to die and who should do the killing are threats to themselves and to others.

Think of it as Democracy in Action

Our group was fortunate enough to be present at preparations for and observation of actual voting in the Nicaraguan elections. We met with the leadership of the electoral commission for an explanation of the electoral process and of the myriad details necessary to ensure fairness. Six parties were on

the ballot besides the Sandinista FSLN—three Communist parties on the left and three free-market oriented parties on the right. A bewildering set of re-criminations and accusations were made regarding the fact that Arturo Cruz and his Coordinadora group were not on the ballot. Cruz had withdrawn after initially supporting registration for the vote. Additionally Virgil Godoy of PLI withdrew from the race after a visit to the U.S. Ambassador. But ballots had already been printed with a space for PLI and when it won a few seats in the National Assembly, PLI reversed its position and accepted them.

The situation in Nicaragua was the reverse of that here in the United States. While Democrats and Republicans do their best to keep small parties off the ballot, the Sandinistas were doing their best to persuade opposition parties to join. Efforts were made to ensure that each party received air time and advertising space in the newspapers. On one day a newspaper simultaneously carried an ad by the Communist Party promising to topple the "bourgeois capitalist Sandinistas" and another by the Conservative Democratic Party promising to bring down the "communistic Sandinista dictatorship." I found out more about the opposition parties and their candidates from the mass media and their own literature than Americans here learn about Libertarians.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Embassy did its best to persuade opposition parties to boycott the election on the grounds that it was a sham. When Arturo Cruz withdrew, his withdrawal was presented by Reagan as proof that it was indeed a sham. I had the opportunity to speak personally to Cruz about the matter. Again the accusations were complex, but I came away wishing that we Libertarians had the same ballot access problems he did. It appears that both he and the U.S. Embassy recognized that he would receive about 5% of the vote and thus forfeit his claim to be the main contender for power. After the elections Cruz left for Miami and Washington for a brief career with the Contra leadership. When he resigned from the Contra Directorate after a power struggle, his erstwhile supporters, Elliot Abrams and Jeanne Kirkpatrick, both dismissed him as irrelevant to the Nicaraguan scene. In a recent television interview he said that it was a mistake for him to have boycotted the elections.

The electoral system combines an

American presidential system with a European parliamentary system. Seats in the 99 person Assembly are apportioned according to the percentage of votes received by the respective parties. Additionally, every losing presidential candidate is guaranteed a seat. If the United States had the Nicaraguan electoral system, David Bergland and several other Libertarians would have seats in Congress today.

The election and the ballot counting was watched by a flood of non-Communist observers, both friendly and hostile, from around the world. The consensus was that it was fair, honest, and open. Reagan and his allies have continued, like broken records, to denounce the elections as a sham, without ever really explaining what made them so. Meanwhile, back in Texas, we had Republicans and Democrats on the ballot, but no Libertarians. Anyone anxious to criticize Nicaragua's election would do well to take a closer look at our own.

On Targets

Nicaragua is a war zone, and visitors to war zones inevitably encounter orphans, the bereaved, and the maimed. Civilian casualties are the consequences of war technology in the hands of fallible human beings. It is impossible to target artillery or mortars with precision, and it is impossible to predict who might actually drive over a mine set for a tank. People make mistakes when typing, when driving, and when repairing cars. Combat is no exception. Mistakes are made and the innocent die. But in war, killing is the rule, not the exception, and the death of innocent people is multiplied far beyond the errors evident in risky activities during peace-time.

Friends of the Contras have written much of Sandinista atrocities while managing to ignore the Contra record on the matter. Deliberate executions are not only documented by foreign observers, but defended by Contras and their backers on the grounds that the victims are Sandinistas or their sympathizers. A U.S. Embassy spokesman justified this policy in Managua in 1984. When I asked him about the recent disembowling of a schoolteacher in front of her students in Ocotal, he answered that since she was an FSLN party member she was a legitimate target.

In 1985 the Contras were advised by the State Department to define their targets more discriminately. The legitimate targets were to include FSLN party

members, members of unions sympathetic to the Sandinistas, all government workers—including teachers, postal workers, and health workers, peasants who had organized into Sandinista-sponsored cooperatives, and so on—for a total of what would be half the population of the country.

Supporters of the Contras should be aware of this; if they agree with this policy, I think they owe us an explanation. The insistence of Reagan, the TV evangelists, and the reactionary right that these atrocities are committed by disguised Sandinistas is the most fantastic case of denial since the 1930s when American Communists refused to believe that Stalin was executing his opponents.

It would be a mistake to draw the conclusion, as some on the left do, that these atrocities provide good reason for a more thorough prosecution of the war against the Contras. No doubt supporters of the Contras can visit camps in Honduras and record reports of atrocities by the Nicaraguan army. They likewise might feel tempted to use these events to justify further armed struggle against the Sandinistas. But at fault is the war itself: any encouragement of that war will produce further horror.

Making Comparisons

The situation in nearby Guatemala offers a striking contrast. While in Nicaragua it is possible—even likely—for two people to visit the same city and come away with diametrically opposed views, in Guatemala the lessons do not appear to be so clear. There the damning evidence and the dissident testimony are suppressed: those who say the wrong things die. So an investigator with a right-wing outlook will likely miss hearing about the thousands of Indians slaughtered by the troops of General Rios Montt in Guatemala, but can visit Nicaragua and talk openly to Mis- kitos about their grievances against the Sandinistas, none of which approach the magnitude of the horror in Guatemala. His impression would be skewed beyond recognition.

I believe that Nicaragua has more openness and freedom of speech and expression than most Third World countries I have visited or lived in and certainly more than any other country engaged in a civil war. Although it is

not honest to justify one society's shortcomings by comparing it to a worse one, it is still worth noting that Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Jordan—all countries in which I have experience, and all U. S. allies—do not allow the expression of opposition one finds in Nicaragua. Those who have positive feelings towards Reagan say so—in restaurants in front of waiters. Politicians who do not like the Sandinistas hold court in Managua's Interconti-

Those who would like to see a free market develop in Nicaragua would do well to introduce the concept by some means other than a protracted and bloody civil war.

ental Hotel, denouncing their government to the foreign media. Whatever the grievances of dissidents, a lack of freedom of expression is not one of them. Consequently, it is especially easy for a North American to fly into Managua and to meet up with members of COSEP or the Coordinadora, be driven to homes and offices where particular points of view will be heard, and return to the United States with an impression of a Nicaragua in rebellion and repression.

Critics of the Sandinistas have made much of the fact that there are political prisoners in Managua. Among those in jail are prisoners of war and captured agents of the Contras. A few are what we would consider prisoners of conscience—folks who have been locked up for saying the wrong thing. I do not have a breakdown of what numbers of prisoners are in each category. As for the total number, Contra sympathizers in the United States bandy about a figure of 10,000, while the Contras themselves, in the most recent negotiations, are giving a figure of 3,000. Whatever the figures, they represent *prisoners who are alive*. We hope they will all be free someday. But what we should remember—and what Contra advocates tend to forget—is that in El Salvador such dissidents die. They can be found in dumps and at roadsides, with thumbs tied together and heads missing. I have the videos—fresh bodies, decomposed bodies, and dog-chewed bodies. The president of that sad coun-

try visits the White House and kisses the American flag. Those who diligently list the sins of the Sandinistas, the virtues of the Contras ("founding fathers," no less!) and attempt to rally support for a crusade against the Soviet Empire while turning a blind eye to events in Guatemala or El Salvador are either naive or have a suspect agenda, to say the least.

Americans who travel to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace, on the other hand, generally return more convinced than ever to work against aid to the Contras and express varying degrees of moral support for the "process," as it is called. This is not surprising. But it should be noted that their moral support of the Sandinistas does not extend to the military draft. Nor are they comfortable with the Nicaraguan military. WFP vehicles do not give rides to anyone in the army or to anyone carrying a weapon. WFP lobbies the American government against aid to the Contras and they lobby the Sandinistas against the draft and militarism. They do not share the Contra fan's enthusiasm for armed struggle.

Witness for Peace did take us to visit opposition politicians. We also had time to talk to the people in the streets, although I did observe occasional lapses into the deceptive mechanisms described. I have not determined the extent to which I might have misled myself in the process, though clearly I reinforced my view that one finds what one looks for. The long-term members of WFP, all of whom were Americans or Canadians fluent in Spanish, stayed in the country for terms of six months to several years, researching and documenting the war and political developments. Politically they ranged from liberal Democrats to Catholic Worker anarchists, and there was at least one "small l" libertarian. They seemed to be honest and thorough in their research. With the exception of economic matters they do not hesitate to investigate and record human-rights violations on the part of the Sandinistas. Much of my current information comes from their newsletters. *

A source of my own frustration with Witness for Peace is the inability of most of its members to discuss econom-

* To receive this newsletter, write: Witness for Peace Newsletter, PO Box 567 Durham, NC 27702.

ic issues intelligently—if at all. Economic failures are blamed on the war and little effort goes into analysis beyond that. Naturally, a black market exists in Nicaragua which WFP does not patronize—to the great disadvantage of its staff. We had to agree not to change our dollars on the black market, lest we harm the economy of the country further. I did my best to make the case that the desires of people who wanted the dollars should take precedence over the desire of the government to have the same dollars at a much lower cost. As foreigners from a country hostile to Nicaragua, it was of course pragmatic for WFP members to try to avoid breaking local laws. However, it seemed to me that most of them believed in the controls. They were unable to perceive crackdowns on the free market as violations of human rights. Confiscations of merchandise from “speculators” were not recognized as theft.

Perhaps they feel that economics is a pedantic matter, in contrast to the powerful and emotionally draining evidence of atrocities they gather in the field. On February 6 of this year, Erik Nicholson, a long term member, travelled to Quilali to investigate a massacre which had taken place when three Claymore mines blasted a civilian truck, instantly killing sixteen individuals and injuring another nineteen, of whom three later died. No sooner had he recorded the eyewitness accounts and attended the funerals than a U.S.-made hand grenade was thrown into a crowd of 200 who were protesting the mining incident. Six of the ten dead and twenty-one of the thirty-two injured were under sixteen years of age. In case anyone should wonder, he did gather pieces of the grenade to investigate its origin. After attending the burials of victims of the second incident I suspect he was not in a mood to discuss free market economics. The subject would be better addressed in a less violent atmosphere.

The Health of the State

The most obvious failure of the Sandinistas, and the source of our greatest difference with them, lies in their efforts to socialize their economy. They have made a well-publicized mess of it. The Nicaraguan attempt at socialism is a reason for scrupulously avoiding armed

conflict with the Sandinistas—not an excuse for developing one.

Those who would like to see a free market develop in Nicaragua would do well to introduce the concept by some means other than a protracted and bloody civil war. Socialist societies at peace have been recognizing their failures and liberalizing their economies as quickly as they can get away with it. War, on the other hand, provides socialists with a great excuse: in a society at war it is difficult to determine the extent to which, say, a gasoline shortage is due to government mismanagement or to

Just what is the society envisioned by the Contras? Have they come up with a Bill of Rights, a statement of principles, a Magna Carta, a proposed Constitution, or even a poem?

enemy destruction of fuel storage tanks. Precisely because the Nicaraguan government can blame economic failures on the Contras it will never be clear to what degree socialist controls are at fault. War is the health of the state, as Randolph Bourne pointed out. And war is particularly the health of socialist states.

Libertarians who stand for free enterprise should scrupulously avoid any action on which Sandinistas could blame their failures. A true libertarian does not call for sabotage—government or private—against a competitor’s enterprise; a *savvy* libertarian does not take action in the political “market” that actually reinforces his opponents. How ironic it is that in this situation it is socialist Nicaragua that desires free trade with the United States and supposedly capitalist Reagan who forbids such trade.

The idea that a prosperous nation of 230 million should feel threatened by a dirt-poor socialist nation of three million shows a puzzling lack of self-confidence on the part of conservatives in America. It is even more baffling that some libertarians share this insecurity.

The Logic of Violence

The horrors of the long Somoza dynasty and the degree to which his family controlled the land and the wealth is well known and well documented. It is a common expression to refer to a dicta-

tor selling the blood of his people, but in Nicaragua it was no metaphor: the Somoza family owned a company named Plasmafereria that sold Nicaraguan blood to North America. His National Guard Officers owned brothels where kidnapped young girls were held against their will. In 1952 an “agrarian reform” program subsidized by the American taxpayer had thousands of peasants evicted from their land at bayonet point. The lands were consolidated into cotton plantations, and controlled by Guardia officers. U.S. Aid funds sent after the 1972 earthquake for housing reconstruction were used to build large luxury villas for Guardia officers. (These villas came into possession of the Sandinistas after the insurrection and have been used as guest houses for foreign dignitaries and journalists. Some of these guests, such as *New Republic’s* Leiken, ever intent on finding facts to fit preconceived notions, have written that the villas were a sign of Sandinista decadence.)

The history of Nicaragua for the past century has been one of U.S. intervention, occupation, and manipulation. Highlights include the destruction of Greytown in 1854 by the USS Cyane after an American diplomat was roughed up in town; the aerial terror bombing of Ocotol by Marines on June 16, 1927, at a cost of 300 civilian lives—eleven years before the Nazis did the same to Guernica, Spain; the Marine occupation from 1912 to 1933; the murder in 1934 of nationalist hero Sandino during truce talks at the order of U.S. Ambassador Arthur Bliss Lane; the installation and support of the Somoza dynasty from 1936 to 1979; and now—since 1980—the Contra war.

Somoza committed his crimes against the Nicaraguan people in the name of capitalism. Never mind that his definition of the word was different from ours—the young teenagers who took to the hills and the streets to overthrow him can be forgiven for not realizing that. But we must recognize that U. S. complicity in the Somoza regime further reinforced this impression. This suggests important lessons for those who seek to spread freedom throughout the world. More importantly, it says something about the limitations of violence in leading to successful reform.

These lessons can also be learned by studying the Sandinista revolution. It may be that the greatest historical error on the part of the Sandinista revolution was the choice to use armed force. As with all people who resort to armed struggle, there is convincing argument that they had no other choice. Once the choice was made, however, the tragedy unfolded.

Armed conflict does not train its participants for future peaceful resolution of conflict. Those who rise to leadership tend to be those most skilled in combat and least prepared for future conciliation: military organization is almost of necessity *authoritarian* organization. Furthermore, when there are winners there are losers and the losers may seek revenge (and have the common sentiments of "justice" to back them up). The more often internal contradictions are met with by coercive measures, the greater the potential for violent reaction—and so the cycle continues.

After the American Revolution, we threw out the Tories, purged Tom

Paine, kept blacks in actual slavery, and pursued a policy of genocide against the Indians. And we congratulate ourselves on our revolution; we hold it up as a model of how revolutions can succeed. The question we should ask ourselves is: what would have happened to the young republic or the Bill of Rights if a foreign power, noting the extensive "human rights violations," had decided to subsidize the Tory exiles in a campaign of violence and mayhem?

The historical error of the Sandinistas is also the error of the Contras and their backers. In the improbable event of a Contra victory there would be Sandinista losers. Dare we ask what their fate would be in a Contra Nicaragua? Would they have the rights Contras claim are denied them? Would that victory produce a society of which Contra backers would be proud? Just what is the society envisioned by the Contras? Have they come up with a Bill of Rights, a statement of principles, a Magna Carta, a proposed Constitution, or even a poem?

Many Americans have internalized

the lessons of Western movies: problems will disappear if shot at. Few have had the experience of being in combat or living in a war zone. It is no accident that the leading opponents of America's wars abroad are veterans of past wars; while prominent among those who have pushed the Contra case are folks like Ronald Reagan, Newt Gingrich, Elliot Abrams, Pat Robertson, and Pat Buchanan who compulsively urge others to risk their lives in combat, although they never risked their own lives. Apparently they do not feel strongly enough about their adopted cause to encourage other North Americans to volunteer—the blood of Latin *campesinos* will do.

It requires a tremendous leap of faith and imagination to believe that either the government or private citizens of America are in a moral position to participate in violent intervention with Nicaragua's destiny. Problems if shot at do not disappear, they multiply. Whatever society develops must come as a result of the internal processes of Nicaragua itself. The best thing

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"The *contra* cause as defined in Washington," Chamorro writes, "has been an effort aimed at convincing Americans to believe in a fantasy which has very little to do with Nicaragua. My story will, I hope, demonstrate the vast reaches of this disinformation and propaganda effort, by a behind-the-scenes account of its inception."

Since 1982 the merchandising, or "packaging," of the *contras* has been central to the Reagan administration's success in securing the appropriation of hundreds of millions of dollars to support the *contra* war, according to Chamorro.

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foreigners can do is to provide the example and share the knowledge of the art of peace.

The Logic of Sympathy

Tens of thousands of Americans have travelled to Nicaragua in various capacities. Of those who speak Spanish and have lived with the people for any length of time, the overwhelming majority are outraged by the perpetuation of the war. Many are refusing to pay Federal taxes. Many are engaged in non-violent rebellion against the Federal government. Some have even lain in front of ammunition trains; Vietnam veteran Brian Willson lost his legs during one such protest. These dissidents have raised more than \$100 million in voluntary contributions—not for guns and mines, but for schools, health projects, and reconstruction programs in Nicaragua. Most such projects are privately undertaken and administered.

The constituency of North Americans emotionally bonded to Nicaragua is open to hearing about a political movement that respects voluntarism, believes in free trade with all, opposes foreign intervention, and respects tax resistance. These folk would be attracted to a movement that did not advocate the continued killing of their Nicaraguan friends and repelled by one which did. It would be a tragedy if the opportunity to reach these admirable people were lost because libertarians were perceived as being in collusion with an unpopular CIA agenda or as sharing the senile obsessions of Ronald Reagan.

Peace in Nicaragua: A Possible Dream

The great danger when discussing "foreign entanglements" is to fall into dualistic hyperbole: to say that any force opposing an evil institution must itself be just. English writers who objected to British participation in the Crimean War felt it necessary to praise the virtues of the Tsar. Opponents of the war in Vietnam often endorsed the Vietnamese Communists. This rhetorical strategy is dangerous. It was no more necessary to prove the goodness of the NLF in order to denounce an imperial technology gone berserk against the people, land, foliage, and wildlife of the unfortunate country of Vietnam

than it was to apologise for the Tsar in order to oppose the disastrous war in Crimea.

This dualistic trap is in place regarding the Nicaragua controversy. Opponents of aid to the Contras often find it necessary to paint a positive picture of the Sandinistas; those opposing the Sandinistas find themselves supporting either public or private aid to the Contras. It is essential to take an honest look at what both the Sandinistas and Contras are and what they are not. More importantly, it is imperative that we have a profound understanding of what the

The question is whether libertarians should be principled non-interventionists or whether we should act as a cheering section for various armed factions in the Third World.

war is, what it does, and what it is likely to do in the future.

A traveller in search of Truth, in search of Decency, long betrayed by states, by military forces, organizations and the frailties of leaders, finds in libertarianism a movement that will not choose his enemies or compel him to participate in the killing of his friends. The Libertarian Party will not espouse intervention by the state in foreign conflicts which might violate the conscience and sensibilities of any citizen. While politicians of other parties fall all over each other making excuses for favored foreign nations (such as Israel), libertarians will only call for a total, complete, and unconditional cessation of government aid.

Under libertarian policy, those enmored of any particular state remain free to contribute to it out of their own pockets, of course. Most libertarians believe in the right of an individual to fight in a foreign army, or to donate funds to a foreign government or to a foreign fighting organization. There is good reason, however, for us to avoid the temptation to identify our cause with—or to endorse private contributions to—any armed forces abroad. The tendency in some libertarian circles to make propaganda and raise money for the Nicaraguan Contras is a case in point.

When one writes about matters involving life and death one should be very sure that one is right. No one will

likely die as a result of a bad analysis of a local municipal issue. When proven wrong by events, one can acknowledge them, apologize, write another article, and go on with life. In the case of warfare we cannot resurrect the dead who are lost as a consequence of our mistakes. Nor is it fair to slink quietly away from a position after discovering that we were wrong and that many have died as a result of following our advice or accepting our support. Americans will send or not send money to the Contras based on what they read and hear. Contras will kill and die based on what

funds and weaponry they receive. It cannot be emphasized enough that those who write on the subject be sure of the implications and consequences of their statements and be prepared to take historical responsibility.

As I write these words, the news reports that a truce has been signed between the

Nicaraguan government and the Contras. If the breakthrough turns out to be real and long-lasting, this essay may only seem relevant to the history of the debate on the issue. We may be able to put the Nicaragua/Contra argument behind us. But the question of whether libertarians should be principled non-interventionists or whether we should act as a cheering section for various armed factions in the Third World will be with us for some time.

Let us wish all Nicaraguans well and hope for a lasting ceasefire, a release of prisoners, amnesty, and a quick demilitarization of all the parties involved. Meanwhile, we must continue to exercise caution and judgment when approaching similar situations abroad—now and in the future.

This world is filled with people at war, and all factions have more than enough supporters. Our homes should be open to deserters and draft dodgers from any and all armed forces in the world. A rewarding experience for my family over the years has been the opportunity to house or employ political exiles, draft dodgers, torture victims, former soldiers, and former guerrillas from Palestine, Eritrea, Guatemala, the United States, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Chile. I encourage all libertarians to consider doing likewise. War will end when men refuse to fight. Our duty is to make it easy for them to do so. □

The Liberty Poll: Who We Are and What We Think

Liberty surveyed its readers in an attempt to learn what libertarians think about life, government, God, sex, heroes... and how they would solve some serious moral problems. A fascinating profile of the Libertarian movement emerged.

At a *Liberty* editorial meeting last August, the conversation turned to *The Sociology of Libertarians*, a survey conducted by two non-libertarian social scientists that we published in the October 1987 issue of *Liberty*. While the results were quite fascinating, we agreed the poll lacked something. While it faithfully surveyed libertarian backgrounds and beliefs, we felt that it failed to address some of the issues that vex libertarians. This is not surprising, since many such issues are rather esoteric and obscure to non-libertarians.

The Libertarian Party's national convention was at hand, so we decided to poll those attending. We sought to design a poll that would address some of the "hard" issues.

Four editors of *Liberty* (Stephen Cox, Mike Holmes, R. W. Bradford and Timothy Virkkala) helped write the poll. In addition to a variety of personal data, subjects would be asked questions about their intellectual development and their values and beliefs. A group of moral dilemmas that had been formulated in bull sessions and compiled by another editor, Ross Overbeek, were incorporated into the poll.

During the convention, we distributed approximately 350 polls to those attending. About 90 were filled in and returned to us.

Although the results were quite interesting there were problems. For one thing, the Polls were distributed only to those who visited our exhibit at the convention, and thus were not random. In addition, we wanted to add a few questions.

So we made some minor revisions and sent it in November to 200 subscribers of *Liberty* chosen entirely at random. No incentive to return the poll was provided, aside from a postage

paid envelope. A total of 62 were returned to us. Respondents were invited to "answer whichever questions you wish," and "to attach a sheet of paper and expand or explain any answers."

The results of the poll follow.

Beliefs

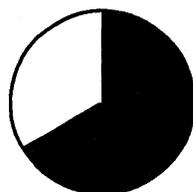
Respondents were presented with a list of propositions and instructed, "Please check the following statements if you believe them to be true, or express your own values or opinions."

Below we list the propositions, the percentage agreeing with each proposition, and a pie chart illustrating that percentage. For convenience sake, the propositions are arranged into categories; in the poll itself, the propositions were in no particular order.

Political Theory

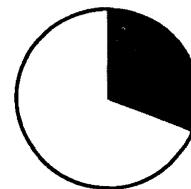
We offered two propositions of fundamental importance to political theory. One is the limited governmentist answer to the question, "What is the proper role of government?"; the other is the anarchist answer.

"The proper role of government is finite, but much smaller than at present."



Agree: 66%

Government should be eliminated altogether.

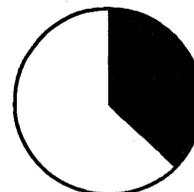


Agree: 31%

Comment: The "anarchism vs. limited government" controversy is one of libertarianism's oldest. Despite the attempts of one side or the other to declare victory in the controversy, it is apparent that the disagreement persists.

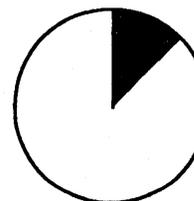
Moral Opinions

Abortion is wrong.



Agree: 37%

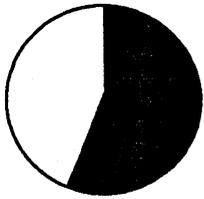
Abortion should be made illegal.



Agree: 13%

A person should have a legal obligation to support

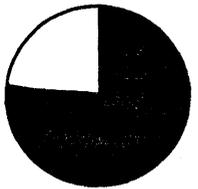
his or her offspring.



Agree: 56%

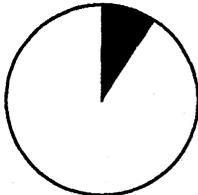
Comment: These last three propositions indicate considerable disagreement on the subject of abortion. A surprisingly large minority believe that abortions are wrong, though relatively few of those (about 1/3) believe abortions should be made illegal. And most libertarians agree that persons have an obligation to support their offspring, which can be construed to support an anti-abortion position, and creates a positive right that contradicts the conventional libertarian understanding of the right to liberty.

Political action is an appropriate method of advancing liberty.



Agree: 77%

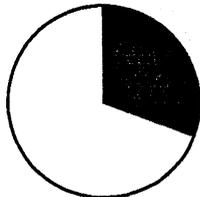
People have a responsibility to vote.



Agree: 10%

Comment: On the subject of voting and political action there was some consensus: most agreed that political action is appropriate but that no one has an obligation to vote. Significant minorities (24% and 10% respectively) disagree.

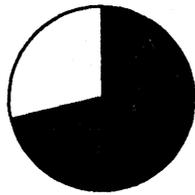
An employee of the state is a receiver of stolen goods and therefore is committing an improper act.



Agree: 31%

One can accept government services (food stamps, sub-

sidized housing, use of roads, etc.) without committing an immoral act.

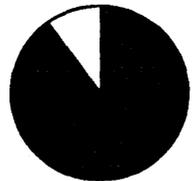


Agree: 71%

Comment: These last two propositions relate to the issue of accepting the benefits of government intervention. Most respondents believe that it is proper under certain conditions to accept government benefits, but there is considerable support for the alternate proposition.

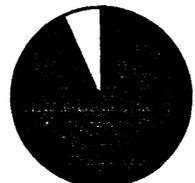
Human Rights

No person has the right to initiate physical force against another human being.



Agree: 90%

All men by their nature have a right to life.



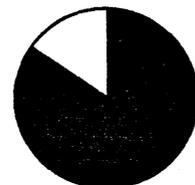
Agree: 94%

All men by their nature have a right to liberty.



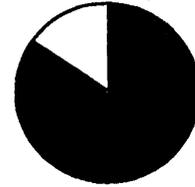
Agree: 94%

All men by their nature have a right to property.



Agree: 87%

All men by their nature have a right to the pursuit of happiness.

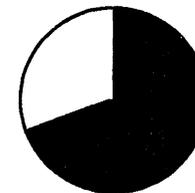


Agree: 87%

Comment: Respondents showed a remarkable degree of agreement on the matter of rights, at least as posited in these propositions. Based on some of the responses to the questions about "Moral Problems" (see p. 39), we suspect that there is considerable disagreement about the meaning of rights, and that if the propositions had been posed differently this apparent consensus would not have emerged.

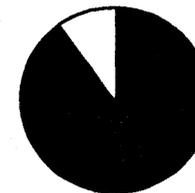
Public Policy

The U.S. should remove all restrictions on immigration.



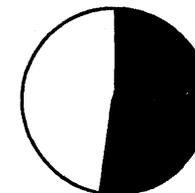
Agree: 69%

The U.S. should remove all tariffs immediately.



Agree: 90%

A proper government would have an absolutely isolationist foreign policy.

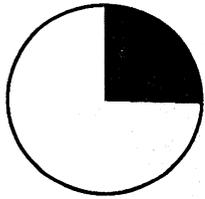


Agree: 53%

Comment: Although respondents agreed that borders should be open to the flow of goods, a considerable number did not agree that borders should be open to the flow of people. And respondents were widely split on the issue of isolationism.

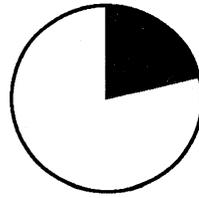
Miscellaneous

There is a god.



Agree: 26%

Communism is the greatest threat to human liberty.



Agree: 21%

Comment: Apparently the common perception that libertarians are almost all atheistic is no more accurate than the perception that libertarians are nearly all anarchists. Libertarians are evidently not as concerned about communism as most American right wingers.

Moral Problems

Given the universal moral character of some libertarian precepts, it is not surprising that many are concerned about their implications for human behavior.

The Liberty Poll posed six moral problems addressing the issue of whether there are circumstances in which it is morally proper to use force against innocent individuals, which would apparently violate such widely accepted libertarian principles like, "no person has the right to initiate the use of physical force against another human being" or "one should always respect the rights and property of others."

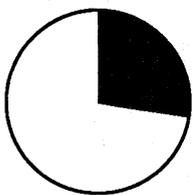
Problem 1: The Terrorist in the Mall

The problem:

"Suppose that you are a security guard for a large shopping mall. A terrorist has threatened to drop a bomb from a balcony into a crowd. He is moving toward the balcony's railing carrying an object that you believe to be a bomb. You have a gun. He has a hostage between himself and you (he knows that you have identified him). You have only a few seconds to react.

"Which of the following most accurately reflects the action you consider appropriate?"

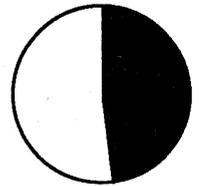
You should fire a gun at the terrorist only if you are certain that you will miss the hostage.



27%

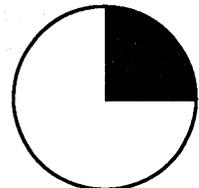
You should fire at the terrorist if there is a reasonable chance

that you will miss the hostage.



47%

You should fire through the hostage, if necessary.



25%

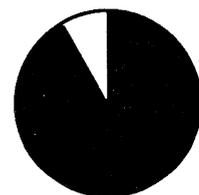
Comment: Only 27% of respondents chose to refrain from firing if it endangered the hostage—the position that seems implicit in libertarian moral thinking. Nearly as many (25%) were willing to kill the innocent hostage if necessary to prevent the much greater loss of life. The remaining 48% would fire only if they had a "reasonable chance" of missing the hostage—apparently willing to allow the deaths of hundreds of people rather than risking violation of their moral principles.

Problem 2: How much is that baby in the window?

The problem:

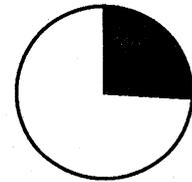
"Suppose that a parent of a new-born baby places it in front of a picture window and sells tickets to anyone wishing to observe the child starve to death. He makes it clear that the child is free to leave at any time, but that anyone crossing his lawn will be viewed as trespassing.

"Would you cross the lawn and help the child?"



Yes: 89%
No: 11%

"Would helping the child violate the parent's rights?"



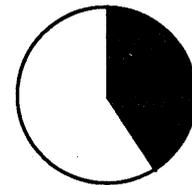
Yes: 26%
No: 74%

Comment: Nearly all respondents chose to do the decent thing: cross the lawn and help the child, although 26% believe that entering the parent's property against their wishes violates the parent's rights.

Problem 3: Starving Baby, the Sequel

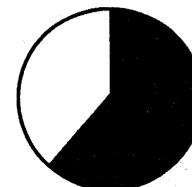
"Suppose that a parent decides to experiment with a radical new diet for his new-born child.

"Should you prevent the parent from trying the diet, if you had good evidence that it would endanger the child's health?"



Yes: 41%
No: 59%

"Suppose that you had good evidence that the diet would endanger the child's life?"



Yes: 62%
No: 38%

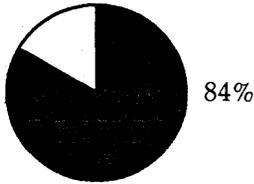
Comment: On both these issues respondents were split, with most willing to interfere with a parentally imposed diet if they saw a risk to the child's life, but not if they saw only a risk to the child's health.

Problem 4: Trespass or Die!

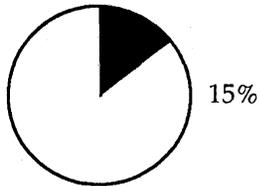
"Suppose that you are on a friend's balcony on the 50th floor of a condominium complex. You trip, stumble and fall over the edge. You catch a flagpole on the next floor down. The owner opens his window and demands you stop trespassing.

"Which of the following statements reflects your beliefs?"

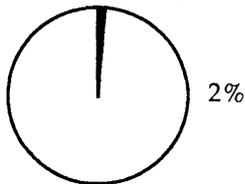
You should enter the owner's residence against the owner's wishes.



You should hang on to the flagpole until a rope can be thrown down from above.



You should drop.



Comment: The issue in this problem is simple: would you be willing to trespass on another person's property if that were the only means of saving your own life? Only one person (2%) chose certain death. But 14% preferred clinging to the flagpole, still trespassing against the explicit wishes of the owner, in hopes a rope might be dropped.

Even so, 84% would violate the owner's rights to save their own life.

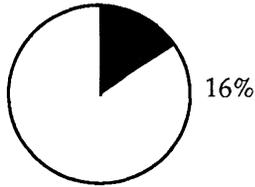
Problem 5: The Unexpected Blizzard

"Suppose that your car breaks down in an unpredicted blizzard. You are trapped and may well freeze before help can get to you. You know that there is only one house within hiking distance. You hike to

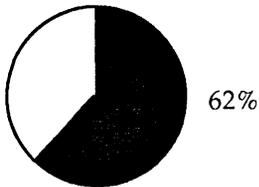
it. The owner, a frightened woman whose husband is absent, refuses to admit you (she has no phone, so asking her to telephone for help is pointless).

"Which of the following statements reflects your beliefs?"

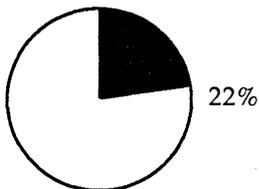
You should force entrance, but in this case it would not constitute an act of aggression.



You should force entrance, even though it would be an act of aggression.



You should not attempt to enter the house.



Comment: This problem is identical in essential respects to problem 4 ("Trespass or Die"), except that the refusal of the property owner to allow you egress is less capricious and the death of the person denied egress is less immediately certain.

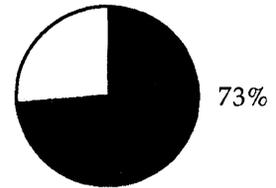
Perhaps for these reasons, the response was different: far more (22%) were unwilling to force entrance. In addition, 16% believed that forcing entrance under these circumstances would not constitute "aggression."

Problem 6: The Nuclear Blackmailer

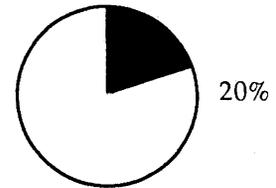
"Suppose that you live in a large city. Your neighbor constructs an atomic weapon. He assures you that he would detonate it only as an act of defense. You believe that he intends to commit an act of extortion ("The city must pay \$1 million, or I will detonate it.")

"What statement most clearly reflects your beliefs?"

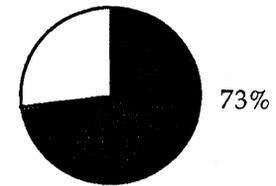
You (and your neighbors) should prevent the construction of the device.



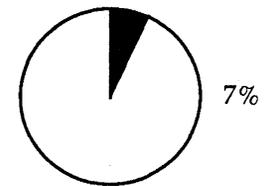
You should put up your house for sale and move. You should not interfere with his actions.



You would feel obligated to tell prospective buyers about the situation. (This question was given only to those who chose to move in response to the problem.)



You should do nothing, since such a situation is unthinkable and, therefore, is not happening.



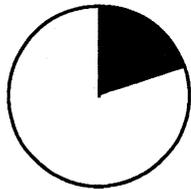
Comment: This problem is about gun control with bigger guns. When the ante is raised from the risk of "Saturday night specials" to the risk of nuclear annihilation, most (73%) respondents abandoned their opposition to gun control. Another 20% would move away. 7% chose the final alternative, which is glibberish, apparently in an attempt to evade the issue or perhaps out of an appreciation of its silliness.

Would you buy a house from a libertarian? 27% of those who preferred to move away would not feel obligated to tell prospective buyers about the nuclear bomb in the basement next door.

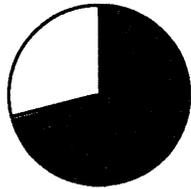
Intellectual Development

Just how did libertarians get that way? What thinkers influenced them? What do they base their beliefs on? The Liberty Poll asked a variety of questions intended to explore these issues.

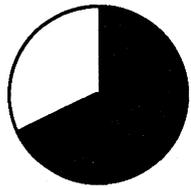
"What are your political beliefs based on?"



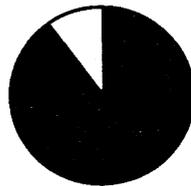
my religious beliefs: 19%



my life experiences: 71%



my understanding of history: 68%



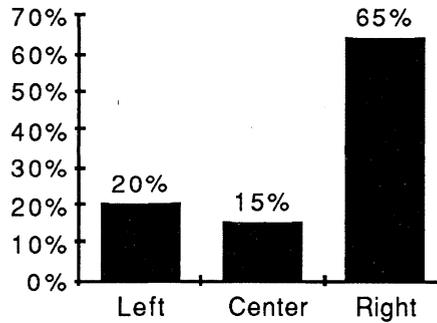
my understanding of economics: 89%

rational, philosophical analysis: 90%

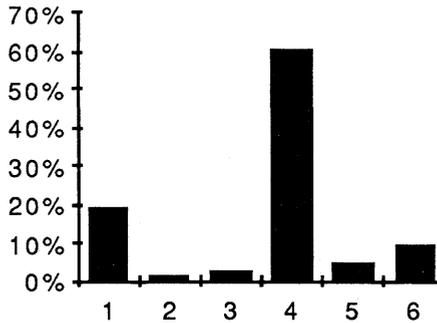
Comment: Respondents were invited to select as many of the five responses as they felt appropriate.

The most widespread basis claimed for political belief was "rational, philosophical analysis," perhaps as a result of Ayn Rand's influence. But economics was a very close second, and history and life experience were also very important.

"Before becoming a libertarian, how would you characterize your political beliefs?"



"Who introduced you to libertarian ideas?"



1: friend 20%
 2: parent 2%
 3: teacher 3%
 4: writer 61%
 5: advertiser 3%
 6: other 10%

Who Influences Libertarians' Thought?

In an effort to discover who has most influenced libertarians' political thinking, we asked readers to rate the influence of a number of thinkers:

"Please rank on a scale of 1 to 5 the degree to which the following thinkers influenced your intellectual development. (5 = substantial importance . . . 1 = little or no importance.)

"We are *not* asking you to report the degree you agree with these individuals' thought— what we seek to know is how important each figure was in the growth of your thinking, especially with regard to social and political matters."

This was followed with a list of names in alphabetical order, along with numbered boxes, and two lines for write-in names.

The names were chosen during the editorial meeting attended by Cox, Bradford, Holmes and Virkkala. An attempt was made to include on the list the most important contributors to libertarian thought, as well as figures believed by the editors to be influential among libertarians, and some individuals about whose influence that the editors were simply curious.

The table below lists the names of the individuals whose influence we asked our readers to evaluate, along with their average ratings.

Aristotle	1.93
Frederic Bastiat	2.28
David Friedman	1.91
Milton Friedman	2.95
Barry Goldwater	2.39
F. A. Hayek	3.02
Robert A. Heinlein	2.11
Karl Hess	2.23
Thomas Hobbes	1.33
John Hospers	1.85
Thomas Jefferson	3.10
Immanuel Kant	1.48
Samuel Konkin III	1.22
Robert LeFevre	1.78
John Locke	2.32
H. L. Mencken	2.49
John Stuart Mill	2.05
Ludwig von Mises	3.65
Albert J. Nock	2.19
Robert Nozick	1.79
Ayn Rand	4.02
Murray Rothbard	3.93
Herbert Spencer	2.09
Lysander Spooner	2.34
William G. Sumner	1.49
Morris & Linda Tannehill	1.75
Benjamin Tucker	1.29

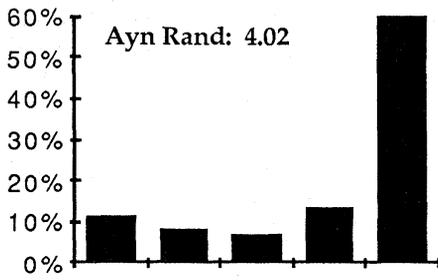
A total of 68 write-ins were added by readers, including nine individuals named by two or more respondents. Given the frequency and high ratings of some of the write-in names, it is apparent that some important names were omitted from the list. Henry Hazlitt was written in by five different respondents; Friedrich Nietzsche and Robert Ringer by four. If their names had been included and all the remaining subjects had given him the lowest rating possible Hazlitt and Nietzsche would have finished ahead of both Tucker and Konkin; Ringer and Branden would have also finished higher than Konkin.

On the following page we list the individuals whose names were written in by more than one respondent, along with the ratings:

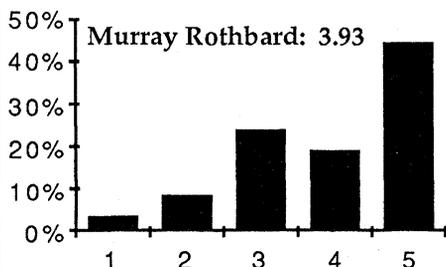
Henry Hazlitt	34555
Friedrich Nietzsche	4555
Robert Ringer	3345
Nathaniel Branden	555
Thomas Szasz	255
Harry Browne	345
Leonard E. Read	55
Gordon Tullock	55
Thomas Sowell	34

The average ratings in the table on the previous page reveal only a part of the picture. The pattern of influence varies considerably. Consider the two front-runners: Ayn Rand and Murray Rothbard. Although their average scores are very similar, Rand received far more "little or no importance" ratings than Rothbard (12% vs 3%) as well as far more "substantial importance" (60% vs 44%).

Therefore we list below each individual, in order of influence, along with his mean rating and a chart showing the distribution of his rating.



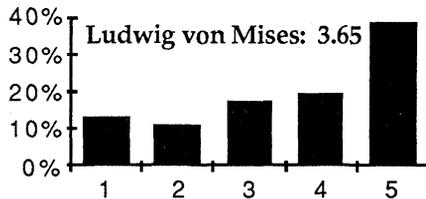
The thinker who most influenced our respondents' intellectual development was Ayn Rand (1905–1982), the novelist-philosopher, author of *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Fountainhead*, *For the New Intellectual*, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, *Capitalism the Unknown Ideal* and other works. Rand advocated a political philosophy based on the absolutism of individual rights, but eschewed anarchism.



Murray Rothbard (1926–) ranks a close second behind Rand, and is the most influential living figure among our respondents. Rothbard is an economist, historian and social philosopher. His works include *Man, Economy and State*; *Power and Market*; *The Ethics of*

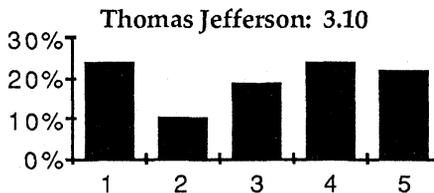
Liberty; and *For a New Liberty*. Dr. Rothbard is also a prolific journalist and an active figure in Libertarian Party politics. He also is an editor of *Liberty*.

Rothbard advocates an anarchistic society based on the absolutism of individual rights.

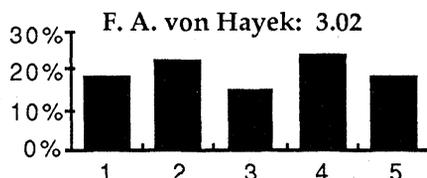


Ludwig von Mises (1880–1972) was a leading social philosopher and economist of the Austrian School, most famous for his development of praxeology, an approach to economics based on *a priori*, deductive reasoning from certain fundamental axioms. *Human Action*, his *magnum opus*, is his best known work. He also wrote numerous other books and articles, including *Liberalism*, *Socialism*, *Theory of Money and Credit*, and *Epistemological Problems of Economics*.

Although a rigorous advocate of *laissez faire* capitalism, Mises saw a role for government. His political thinking was based on utilitarian concepts.

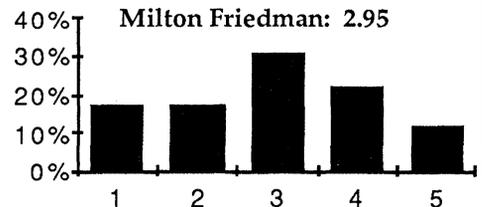


Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was the third president of the United States and author of the Declaration of Independence of the United States. He is most admired by libertarians for the advocacy of a natural rights philosophy and the right of revolution that is expressed in that declaration.



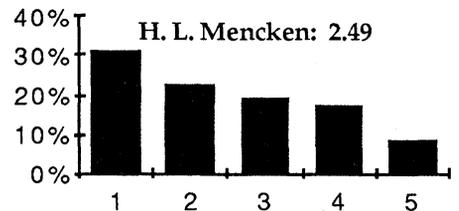
F. A. von Hayek (1899–) is a social philosopher and Nobel Prize winning economist. His book *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) challenged orthodox statist thinking and helped stimulate the post-World War II resurgence of libertarian ideas. He is the author of many works, including *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, *The Counter-Revolution of Science*, and others.

Like Mises, Hayek avoids the language of "natural law and natural rights," but Hayek is less narrowly utilitarian in approach. He rests much of his case for a free society on a complicated "evolutionary ethics" that emphasizes the "natural selection" of rules and societies. Hayek emphasizes the importance of tradition more than most other libertarian thinkers.



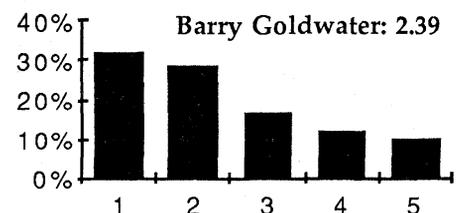
Milton Friedman (1912–) is the leading exponent of the Chicago School of Economics and winner of the 1976 Nobel Prize in Economics. His writings in defense of capitalism and the free society—*Capitalism and Freedom* and *Free to Choose*, for example—have been very influential, which is evident from our reader's response to our poll.

Friedman is less radical than many libertarians, however, and his advocacy of "monetarism" rather than the gold standard or Hayek's controversial notion of "denationalized money" has been a source of many heated debates in the libertarian movement.



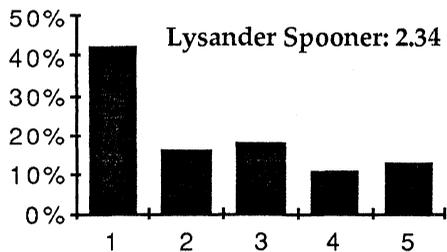
H. L. Mencken (1880–1956) was the author of many books and countless articles. He is best known for his literary and social criticism—and for his brilliant, witty style.

He was an early proponent of Nietzsche in America, and although he wrote frequently on political topics, Mencken's political thinking was not rigorous. He might best be termed a classical liberal in the tradition of Sumner or Mill.

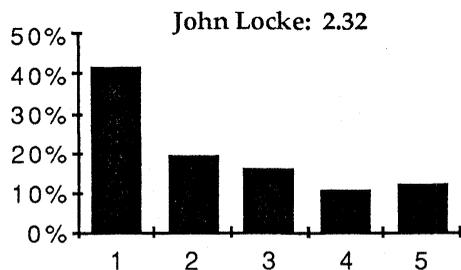


Barry M. Goldwater (1909–) was a

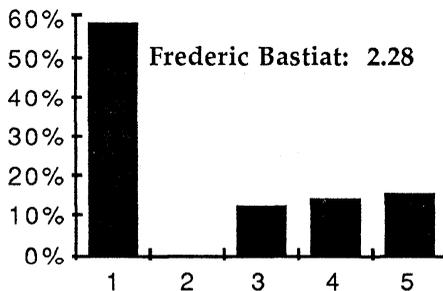
member of the U.S. Senate from 1953 to 1964 and again from 1968 to 1987. In the late 1950s he became a spokesman for political conservatism. He espoused his rather libertarian version of conservatism in several books and numerous newspaper columns and speeches. Although an advocate of a rather belligerent foreign policy, Goldwater strongly supported the notion of human liberty.



Lysander Spooner (1808–1887) was a writer and pamphleteer and perhaps the most eloquent 19th century American anarchist. His fully developed political philosophy is best summed up in his brilliant pamphlet *No Treason, The Constitution of No Authority*. Writing from within the natural law tradition and with an extensive knowledge of the common law, Spooner argued not only that the Constitution of the United States was binding on no one, but that all government, taxation, laws, etc. were inherently unjust.

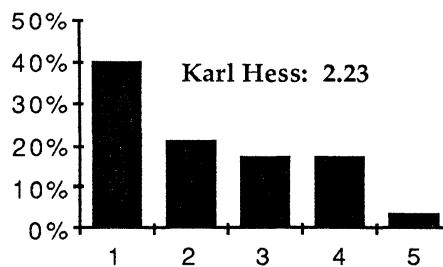


John Locke (1632–1704) is widely regarded as one of the most influential British philosophers. Though his *Second Treatise on Civil Government* has been subject to contradictory interpretations, libertarians have followed a long line of classical liberal and anarchist thinkers in taking from it a methodologically individualistic understanding of society and a powerful conception of natural rights. His writing was particularly influential on America's founding fathers, especially Jefferson, which probably accounts for his high rating in this poll. Given the obscurity and length of his major works, we doubt that very many respondents have actually read much Locke.



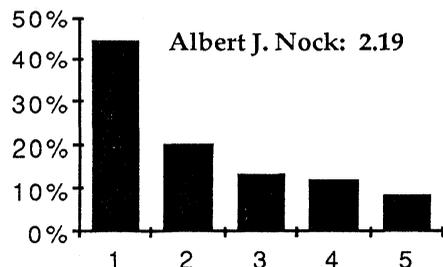
Frederic Bastiat (1801–1850) was one of the most accomplished stylists who has ever argued for liberty. Though he was more a popularizer than an original thinker, his importance should not be underestimated: his ranking over many contemporary libertarian writers in this poll serves as reminder of this fact.

He is best remembered for his brilliant attacks on the fallacies of state intervention in the economy (his *Economic Sophisms* was the model for Hazlitt's *Economics in One Lesson*) and his powerful defense of natural rights and limited government in his pamphlet, *The Law*.



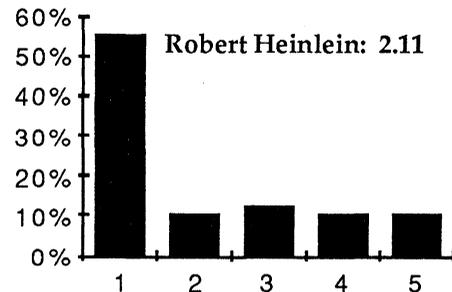
Karl Hess (1923–) was a speech writer for Barry Goldwater who became an anarchist in the late '60s. He is now the editor of the *Libertarian Party News* and associate editor of *Liberty*.

Hess has been most influential as a proponent of the importance of community life and a "back to nature" simplicity. Though he is the author of several books, he is best known among libertarians as a speaker. His political thinking is discursive and lyrical; he explicitly eschews ideology.



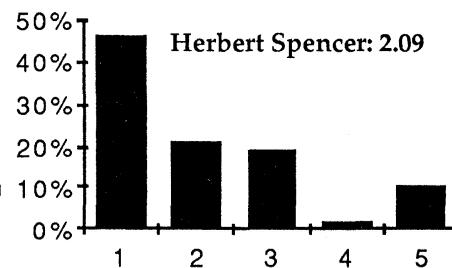
Albert J. Nock (1870–1945) was one of the most important writers to have been influenced by the economic the-

ories of Henry George, and his own anti-statist views developed into something very close to anarchism. His classic work in political thought is *Our Enemy, the State*.

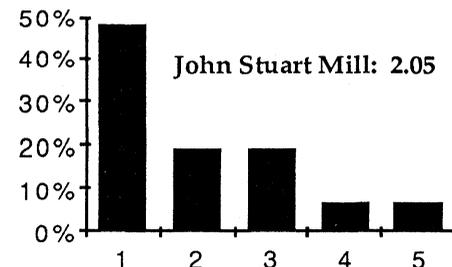


Robert Heinlein (1916–) is one of the most influential science fiction writers of all time. Both his life and his writings exemplify the ideal of the "competent man," and a lively streak of rugged individualism runs through all his writings.

Libertarians are especially fond of his several attempts to deal with political revolution, most notably in his fascinating account of a colonial revolt in *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*.

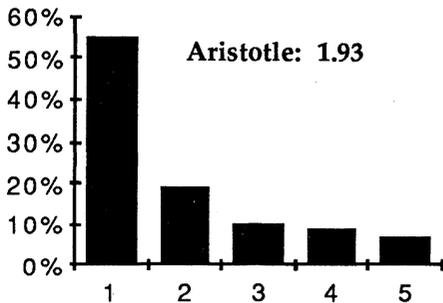


Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) was an ambitious philosophical systemizer who advocated extremely limited government. He described his own ethical philosophy as utilitarian "in a broad sense," but it is not easy to classify. Many of his arguments against political intervention in society bear remarkable resemblance to Hayek's use of the notion of the limitations of human knowledge. His most familiar work today is probably *Man vs. the State*.

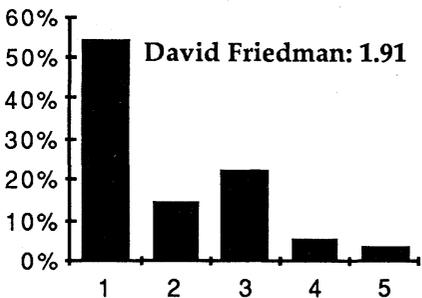


John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), the leading British philosopher and economist of his time, wrote many influential

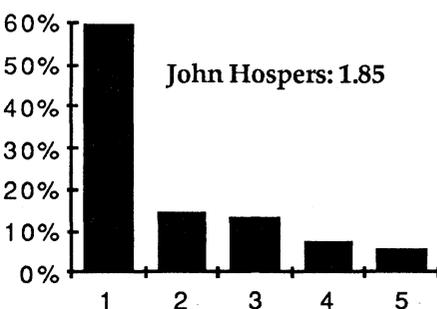
works, including *On Liberty* and *Utilitarianism*. His utilitarian moral philosophy has been widely discussed and subjected to a great variety of interpretations, as has his defense of individual liberty. *On Liberty* was about the only nineteenth century work of classical liberalism to maintain a "good press" throughout the ideologically dark years of the twentieth century.



Aristotle (384-322 B. C.) was not a libertarian in any way, but he was a powerful advocate of human reason. We suspect his popularity and respect is largely due to the influence of Ayn Rand, who considered Aristotle one of the world's greatest minds (right up there with herself).

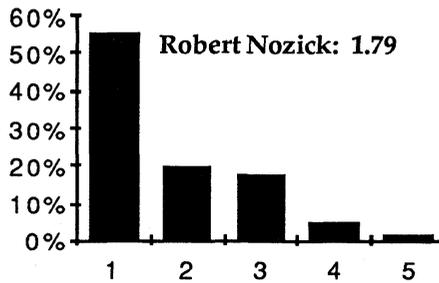


David Friedman (1945-) argued his case for "a radical capitalism" with force and vigor in *The Machinery of Freedom*. Though he has claimed to be an upholder of a doctrine of natural law and natural rights, in this his only book on libertarian theory he seems more a "pragmatist" (that is, he does not discuss moral theory, limiting his arguments to practical and economic considerations), and so has had little impact on this tradition.

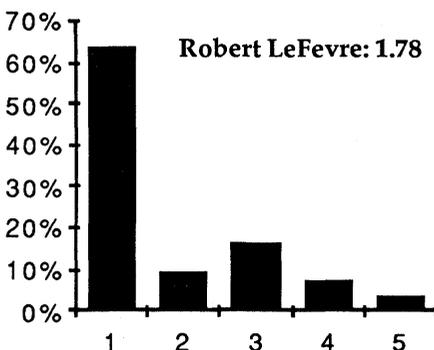


John Hospers (1918-) is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles. Though his academic reputation largely rests on his work as an editor and in the field of aesthetics, he has also contributed to libertarian thought with many articles and his book *Libertarianism*, which advocated a more-or-less Randian political theory, though his thinking has developed considerably since.

He was the Libertarian Party's first presidential candidate and wrote the party's "Statement of Principles."

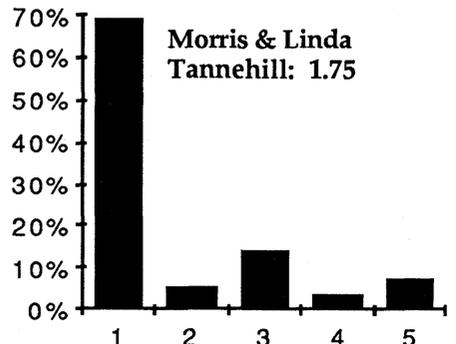


Robert Nozick (1938-) is a Professor of Philosophy at Harvard and the author of the National Book Award winning treatise in libertarian political philosophy, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, which gained academic attention to libertarian ideas like no book before or since. Nozick used Lockean state-of-nature theory and a Lockean conception of moral rights as the foundation for an argument that purports to show how a State could arise out of an anarchistic society without violating anyone's rights; that this minimal state is the most extensive state that can be justified; and that this conception of a minimal state is inspiring as well morally proper. Though the classic work on minarchist theory, it is generally considered more successful at discussing its many, brilliant secondary points than at demonstrating the validity of its main thesis.



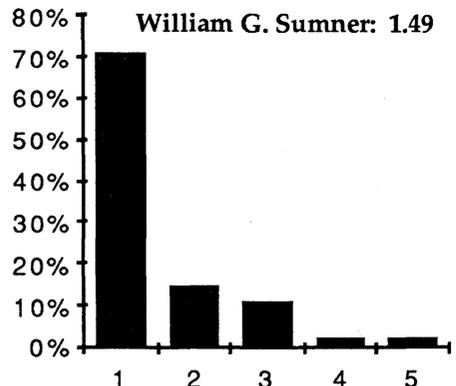
Robert LeFevre (1911-1986) was a writer and teacher who inspired and instructed a whole generation of libertarians. He wrote numerous books in-

cluding *This Bread is Mine*, *The Philosophy of Ownership*, and *The Nature of Man and His Government*. He was what is now (once again) called a *voluntaryist*, a libertarian who refuses to practice politics, and was an anarchist in everything but name (he strenuously objected to the term, preferring his own understanding of "autarchy"). His relatively low showing in our poll is surprising to us, considering his reputation in the 1960s and 70s.



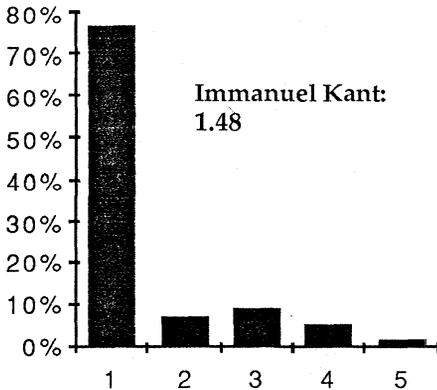
Morris and Linda Tannehill (1926-, 1939-) collaborated to write *The Market for Liberty*, a powerful defense of natural rights-based anarchism which was influential among libertarians in the 1970s.

Libertarianism was only one stop in the ideological odyssey of the Tannehills, who earlier were associated (in chronological order) with the Minutemen, the American Nazi Party, and the Foundation for Economic Education, and have since managed a psychotherapeutic cult.



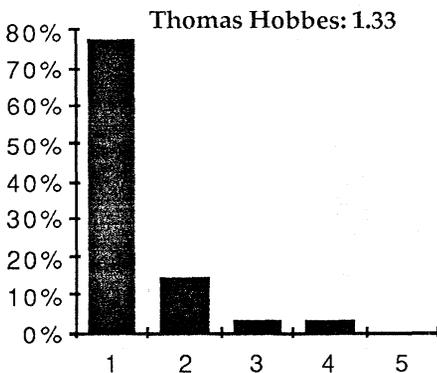
William Graham Sumner (1840-1910) was one of the leading American sociologists of the 19th century and also one of the more vigorous advocates of *laissez faire*. Today known chiefly as a Social Darwinist and as the author of the sociological masterpiece *Folkways*, in his time he was respected for his polished essays and his dedication as a teacher. Probably his best known work to contemporary

libertarians is his essay *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*.



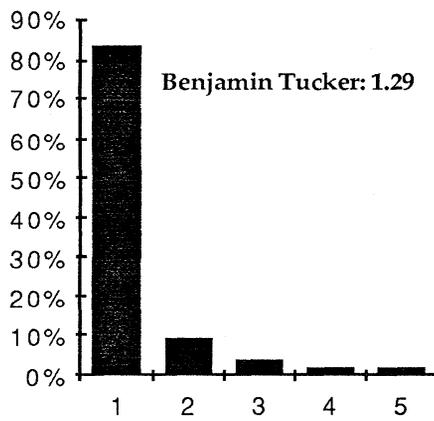
Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was not only one of the most important German philosophers, he is widely considered to be the one of the greatest philosophers ever. He wrote numerous works, including *The Critique of Pure Reason*, *The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, and *Religion Within the Bounds of Reason Alone*.

Though he is probably best known among libertarians as—according to Ayn Rand—the chief source of evil in modern times, he was actually a classical liberal. A number of libertarian philosophers have recently written about the advantages of a “Kantian reconstruction of Utilitarianism,” and both Mises and Hayek were neo-Kantians in fundamental philosophy.

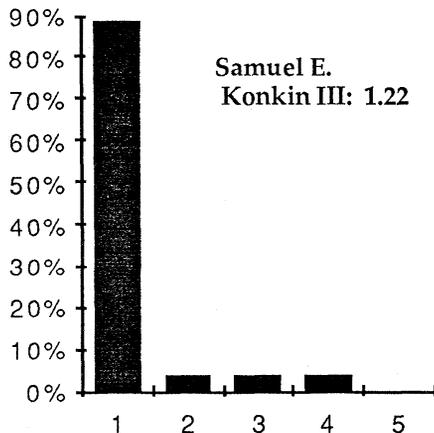


Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was the first British political philosopher of repute, and is still considered one of the major figures in the history of political philosophy. Hobbes' *Leviathan* is a pioneer work in social contract theory.

Though most classical liberals and libertarians—beginning with Locke—have used Hobbes mainly as a jumping off point and as a target, there is a strong *realpolitik* strain in some libertarians' social philosophy that bears remarkable resemblance to Hobbes. His weak showing in this poll is no surprise, however.



Benjamin Tucker (1854-1939) edited *Liberty*, the 19th century anarchist newspaper. Though not an original thinker, he was a fine stylist and an expert synthesizer of other's thinking. He articulated what was later called “anarchocapitalism,” but what he called “individualist anarchism.” Though a favorite subject of contemporary libertarian scholars, his effect upon contemporary libertarianism is apparently slight.

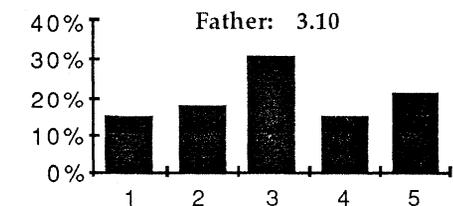
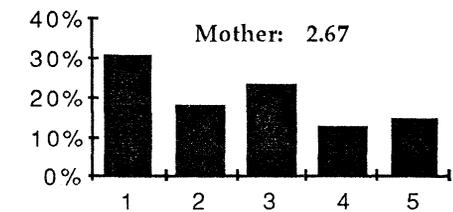
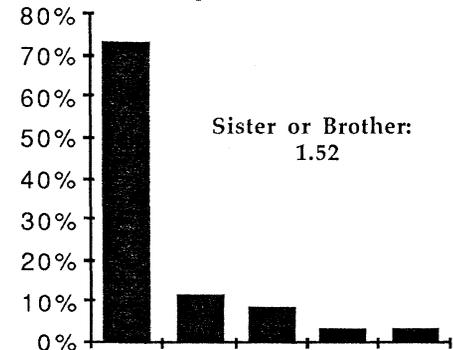


Samuel E. Konkin III (1947–), the youngest person whose influence readers were asked to report, is a prolific

writer and publisher. He strongly defends natural rights anarchism, though he prefers to call his particular form of anti-statism *agorism* (he is all for the term “anarchism”—he flaunts the word—but uses the term “agorism” to distinguish his own, anti-political approach to activism).

He did poorly among both groups of libertarians who took our poll (LP Conventioneers and *Liberty* readers). More than one respondent wrote in the margin “Who the Hell is Sam Konkin?”

We also asked readers to report the influence their family had on their intellectual development:



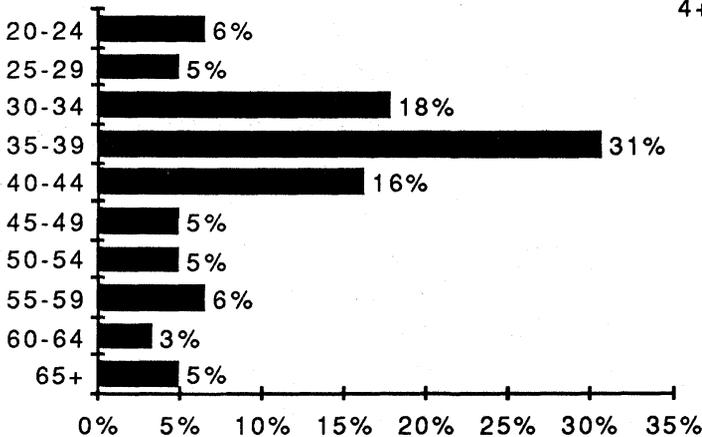
“They’re in force whether you ratify them or not!”

Personal

The Liberty Poll also asked a variety of personal questions. We learned that libertarians are overwhelmingly male, overwhelmingly white, well educated individuals with fairly high levels of both income and education. We also learned that libertarians are likely to be first-born, were likely raised in a religious context, but are not likely to be practicing any religion today. Most libertarians are heterosexual monogamists whose spouses do not share their enthusiasm for libertarianism. Although they are employed in a wide variety of occupations, they are much more likely than others either to own their own small business or be employed in computer science.

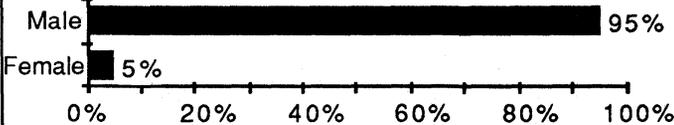
Here are the questions we asked, along with the responses:

What is your age?

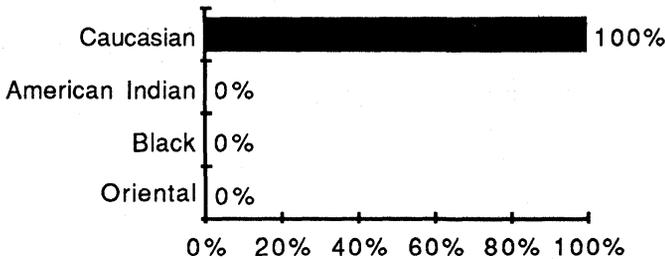


Ages of respondents range from 23 to 87. The mean age is 40.37 years.

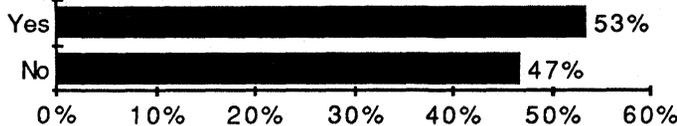
Are you male or female?



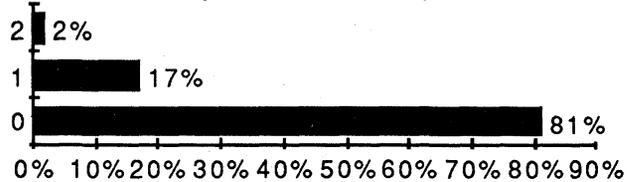
What is your race?



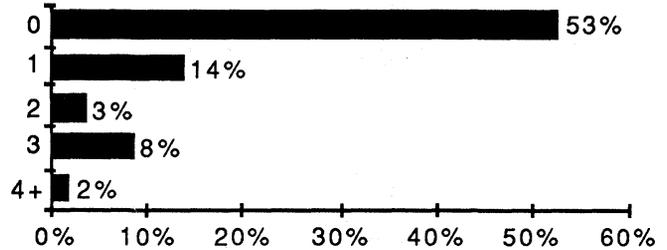
Are You Married?



How many divorces have you had?

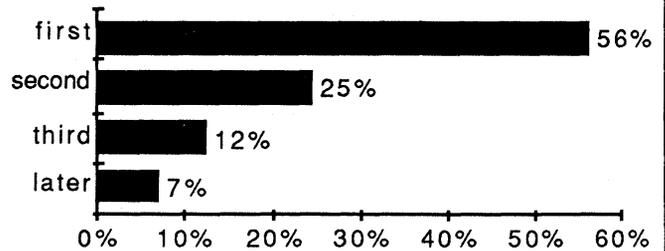


How many children have you had?



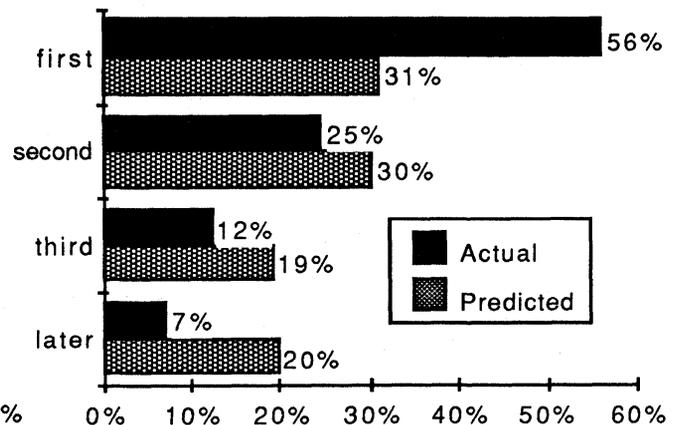
Responses ranged from 0 to 5. The mean number of offspring is .90. Given the age distribution (59% aged below 40 years), it is likely that the numbers here will increase.

Are you first born in your family, second born, third born, or later?

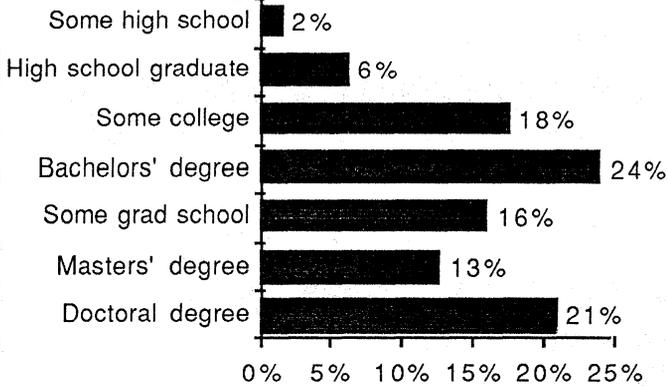


This is one area where respondents varied considerably from the normal. If the respondents had been chosen at random from families of the same sizes as the families from which the respondents came (average: 3.35 siblings), approximately 31% would have been first born. In actual fact, 56% were first born—a variation of more than 80%.

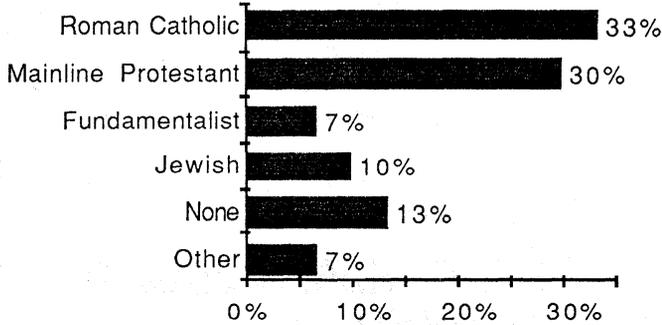
Here is the actual distribution of birth rank compared with the distribution that would be predicted by a random sampling of a group of families of the same size:



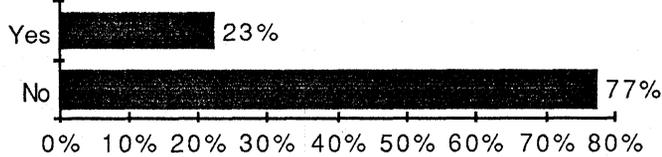
What is the highest level of schooling you have completed?



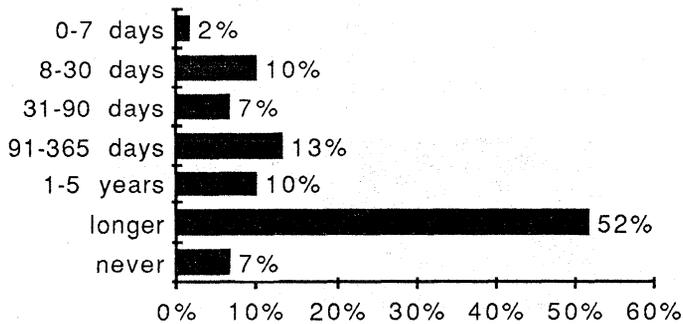
Which of the following best describes your religious training as a child?



Do you consider yourself a follower of any religion today?

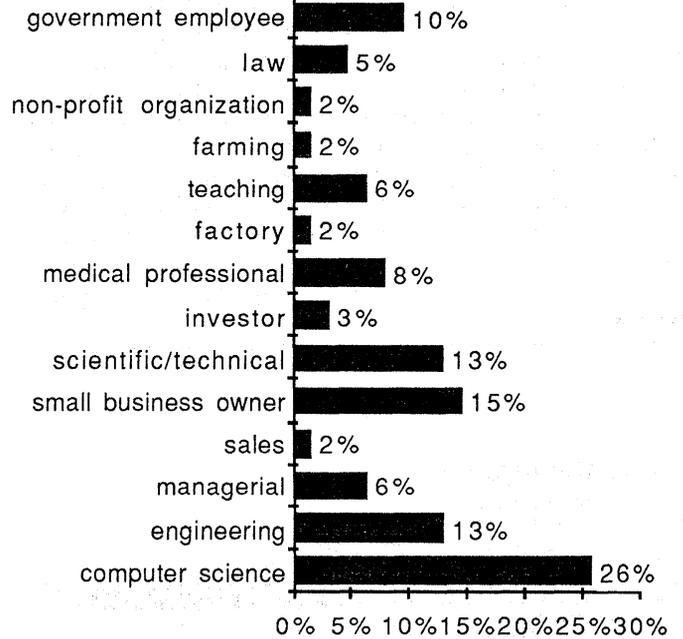


How long ago did you most recently attend a church or other form of worship?

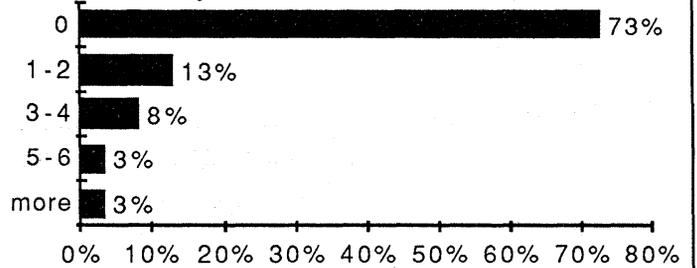


Comment: Note that more respondents (26% [see "Moral Opinions" above]) believe there is a god than consider themselves to be religious. Whichever figure better reflects the religiosity of respondents, it is apparently a mistake to assume, as is often done, that libertarians are non-believers. Even so, it is interesting to note that most libertarians have not attended a form of worship in more than 5 years.

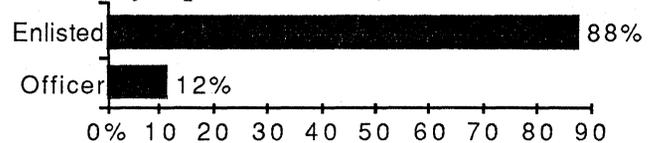
What is your occupation? (Check as many as apply.)



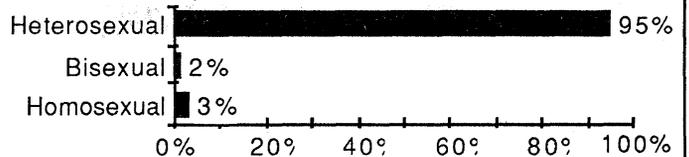
How many years (if any) were you in the military?



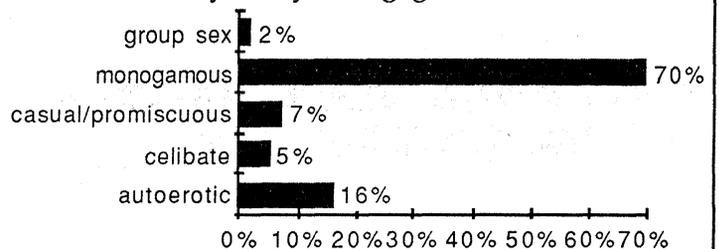
Was your highest rank enlisted or officer? (question only asked to those with military experience.)



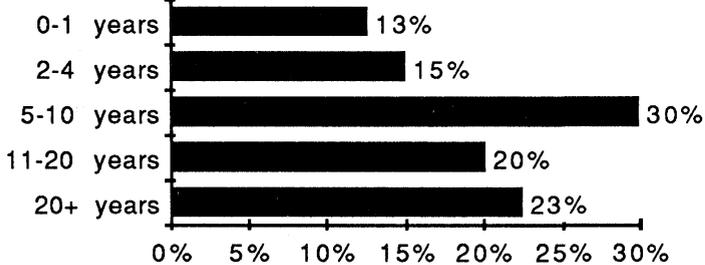
What is your sexual orientation?



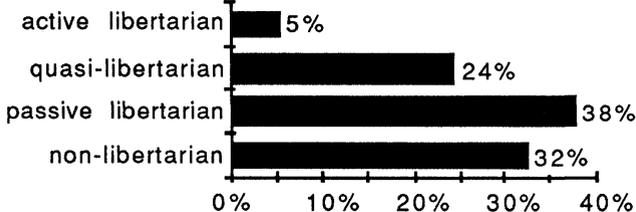
What is the predominant form of sexual activity that you engage in?



If monogamous, how long have you been with your current partner?

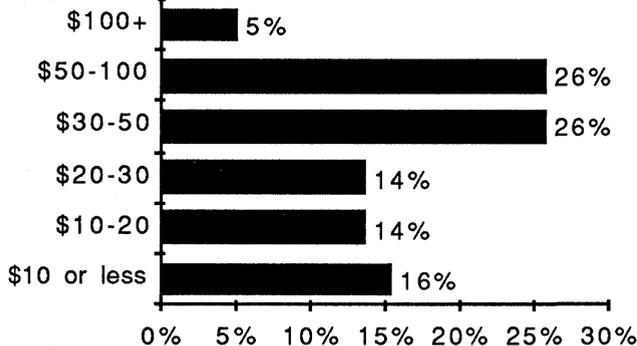


What are the political beliefs of your current partner?



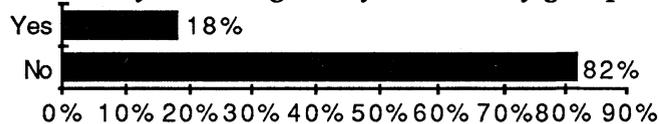
What is your annual income?

(thousands)

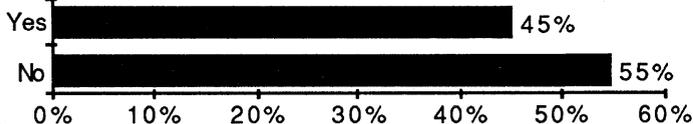


Activism

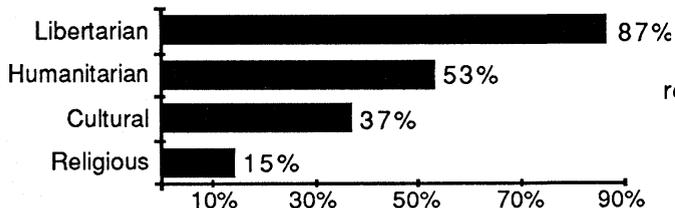
Do you belong to any community groups?



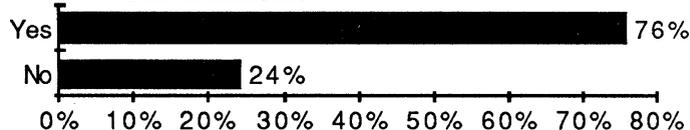
Do you belong to any political organizations?



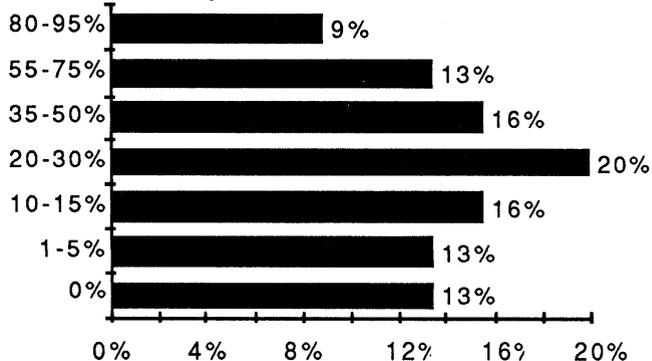
Do you give money to libertarian causes? Humanitarian causes? Cultural causes? Religious organizations?



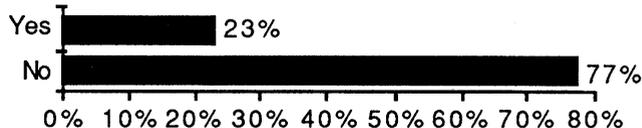
Do you talk to acquaintances about libertarianism?



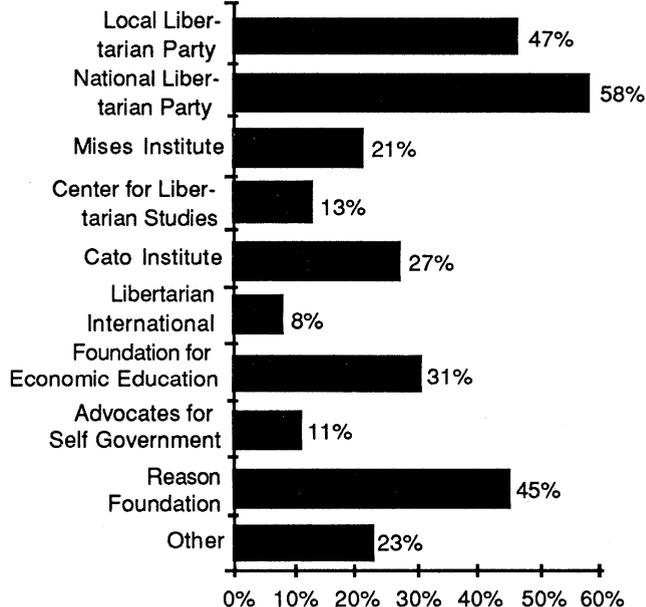
What percentage, if any, respond favorably?



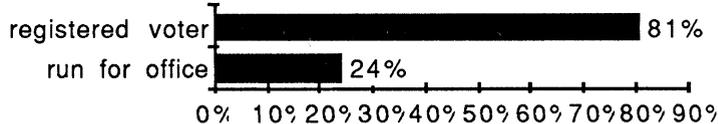
Do you speak in public about libertarian ideas?



Have you given money to any of the following libertarian organizations?



Are you a registered voter? Have you ever run for political office?



The Meaning of the Liberty Poll

Editors Holmes, Bradford, Cox, Waters, Richman, Overbeek and Rothbard have read the results of the *Liberty Poll*. Not surprisingly, they disagree about its significance . . .

Who Are These Nuts?

by Mike Holmes

I found the poll results interesting and worthwhile, although I harbor reservations about how widely reflective they are of general libertarian sentiments. First, because of the relatively small sample size (one respondent can amount to 2%) and also because *Liberty* readers may differ in some important ways from the general libertarian audience (roughly 20,000 or so hard core). Of course the main difference is that *Liberty* readers are willing to shell out \$18.00 per year or so for in-depth articles of theory and analysis, whereas the typical libertarian is perhaps more intuitive, less intellectual, perhaps less absorbed in details of philosophy or less concerned about sometimes troubling theoretical distinctions.

That said, I found relatively little surprising in the section entitled "Moral Opinions." Perhaps it makes sense to say, as the comment in the article does, that the high percentage of people (56%) who believe that parents should have a legal obligation to support their offspring implies that it "can be construed to support an anti-abortion position." But to me, if anything, the opposite is true: if you have an obligation to sup-

Who are these so-called libertarians, breeding like flies and abandoning offspring like turtles heading out to sea?

port your offspring you had better take care about whether or not you are creating such dependents in the first place; strong belief in parental responsibility also implies a belief in the need for full choice regarding matters of pro-

ducing offspring.

As to the 44% who believe there is no parental responsibility, who are these nuts? It's a feeling I kept having as I ran down various categories and questions in which the commonsense or intuitive answer was rejected by a significant percentage of respondents. Who are these so-called libertarians, breeding like flies and abandoning offspring like turtles heading out to sea? Haven't they heard of individual responsibility? This reinforces the commonsense view that libertarians should be good neighbors (as Karl Hess reminds us). For one reason or another, many libertarians may not be good neighbors to have. Don't dump your progeny on me!

The fact that some commonly held libertarian beliefs were rejected by a fair number of respondents ("all men . . . have a right to life") indicates that some respondents (and hence *Liberty* readers) probably aren't libertarians at all in the conventionally understood sense of the term.

The small affirmative response to the questions about God and the danger of communism (God is feared by 5% more than the Reds, a small comfort perhaps) is undoubtedly an indication of how markedly different libertarians are from "normal" people, among whom the Almighty and Karl Marx have proven to be more popular and unpopular respectively.

In the Moral Problems section, the Nuts are clearly visible. Letting babies starve (11%) or become seriously endangered for transparently foolish reasons (38%) is disturbing, to say the least. It would be interesting to determine if any of these nutty proprietarians are parents, or more likely, are socially underdeveloped single males for whom issues of parenting and children are usually taken more casually than by the rest of hu-

manity. The 2% who would drop from the balcony or the 22% who would starve in the cold may be nutty, stupid or just cute (it's easy to be a smart aleck on a blind questionnaire) but if they practice what they preach, their ranks will surely dwindle in the face of the cruel realities of life, such as gravity.

The nuclear weapon question had about one-fifth "nut" response (e.g., neighbor owning a home nuke is no problem). Yecch. Maybe this is why the

Maybe Libertarians are better lifeboat companions than neighbors, since if you owned the lifeboat, about 20% would jump overboard when ordered out for trespassing.

Ft. Collins project (i.e., getting libertarians to all move to Ft. Collins, Colorado) is so slow to catch on. Who wants to live around a bunch of nutty libertarians?

The problem, of course, is that "lifeboat ethics" are difficult to judge abstractly ("hard cases make bad law"), and it is difficult to generalize from extremes. On the other hand, maybe libertarians are better lifeboat companions than neighbors, since if you owned the lifeboat about 20% would jump overboard when ordered out for trespassing. Good riddance to the nut faction. . . .

Not a lot was surprising in the Influence section or Personal Data section. Unfortunately, all too many of us are white (100% in the survey, not quite that extreme in fact), male, single, childless, unbelievers and in general unrepresentative of the population at large. Lack of family and perceived moral obligations may partially explain some of the nutty answers. Libertarians appear to be far better read and educated than the norm, above average in income (al-

though 16% live near or at poverty levels). Few belong to "community groups," but most apparently feel free to bore their mates and friends with their libertarian opinions, despite the relatively small percentage of friends who respond favorably (only 38% report a success rate of over 35% in such endeavors).

The relatively high percentages who belong to political groups (45%), have run for office (24%) are registered to vote (81%) and who donate money to libertarian organizations (85%) and to the Libertarian Party (58% national, 47% local) are also atypical of the general public and belie the notion that libertarians are overwhelmingly anti-political or anti-LP in nature.

The poll has done libertarians a service. We know now that roughly one out of five of us holds nutty views on at least one subject, perhaps more, though given other data, perhaps this needn't be taken too seriously. One word of warning: beware of any "ism," libertarian or otherwise, which requires its adherents to abandon common sense and intuitive logic about daily living choices or dramatic moral behavior. The sign of a truly dangerous movement or idea is one in which normal human values are drummed out of believers on the basis of artificial abstractions.

We are all old enough to know that there are plenty of gray areas in libertarian theory. Let us not give safe harbor to those who advocate foolish ideas. Or, put another way, let us not seriously consider throwing out the baby with the bathwater, no matter whose baby it is, or who paid for the soap.

Who The "Nuts" Are

by R. W. Bradford

Mike Holmes wonders if there are any parents among the "nutty proprietarians" who would let "babies starve (11%) or become seriously endangered (39%) for transparently foolish reasons." He hypothesizes that such people were "more likely socially underdeveloped single males . . ."

To check out Holmes' hypothesis, I divided the respondents into two groups: those who met his working definition of a "nut" (i.e. those who would let a baby starve or die of malnutrition rather than violate the property rights of parents) and those who did not. Out of 62 respondents to the Poll, 21 (34%) qualify as "nuts" by Holmes' defini-

tions. Here are the results:

Question:	"nut"	"non-nut"
Are you married?	59%	47%
Do you have children?	59%	41%
How many? (mean)	1.19	0.90

Holmes' hypothesis was wrong: the "nuts" on these children's issues are 21% more likely to be married and 44% more likely to have children than those who gave "non-nutty" responses. This is exactly the opposite of Holmes' expectations, and of mine. I have no explanation for it, except that perhaps our expectations of the stereotypical "socially underdeveloped single males" of the libertarian movement are wrong.

My curiosity aroused, I wondered what other differences might exist be-

The "nuts," by Holmes' definition, are more likely to be married men with children, more likely anarchist, and more likely heavily influenced by Ayn Rand than other libertarians.

tween the two groups. What about their intellectual backgrounds? I checked the respondents' ratings of four major influences on libertarian thought, Rand, Rothbard, Mises and Hayek, selecting these four because they ranked high in our poll and because two of them (Rand and Rothbard) are within the natural rights (my colleague Ethan O. Waters would say the "moralistic") tradition and two (Mises and Hayek) are within the utilitarian (Waters would say "consequentialist") tradition. Here are the results:

Influence	"nut"	"non-nut"
Rand	4.43	3.79
Rothbard	3.80	3.97
Mises	3.83	3.53
Hayek	3.33	2.88

The "nuts" were influenced 17% more by Rand, 8% more by Mises, and 16% more by Hayek than were the "non-nuts." But "nuts" are influenced 4% less by Rothbard. I can't see any pattern here, at least in terms of the rights vs utilitarianism issue, although I can think of two explanations why I could find no correlation: (1) the issue of natural rights vs utilitarianism is not relevant to the the starving baby problems; or (2) the respondents were influenced by the Rand, Rothbard, Mises and Hayek in ways that do not reflect the

natural rights vs utilitarianism issue.

Are the "nuts" more likely come to libertarianism from one particular political milieu? Here is the breakdown: "nuts" are 20% left, 70% right and 10% center; "non-nuts" are 20% left, 62% right, and 18% center. The "nuts" were slightly less likely to come from a centrist background and slightly more likely to have a rightwing background. But the breakdowns are so similar that there is probably no significance here.

How do the "nuts" and "non-nuts" characterize the roots of their political thinking? The Poll asked respondents to select as many as they wished of five ways to complete the sentence, "My political beliefs are based on . . ."

Response	"nut"	"non-nut"
my religious beliefs	10%	28%
my understanding of history	67%	69%
my life experience	70%	72%
rational, philosophical analysis	93%	84%
my understanding of economics	80%	94%

Here we see some significant differences: the "nuts" are much less influenced by religion but more by rational, philosophical analysis. They are, however, less influenced by economics. This may explain why the "nuts" ranked the influence of philosopher Rand higher than that of economist Rothbard, even though both are natural rights theorists.

Finally, there is that great libertarian controversy, anarchism vs limited government. Respondents who agreed with the proposition "Government should be eliminated altogether" I classified as "anarchists"; those who agreed with the proposition "The proper role of government is finite, but much smaller than present" I classified as "limited governmentalsists." Here is the breakdown:

Category	"nut"	"non-nut"
limited government	55%	77%
anarchist	45%	23%

Here at last we have a clear difference between Holmes' "nuts" and "non-nuts": the "nuts" are much more likely to be anarchists.

As we go to press, we are arranging the data into an elaborate database which will allow us to make queries of these sorts more easily. We plan to explore the data further. If we find anything that is really interesting, we will report it in a future issue of *Liberty*.

Poll Observations

by Stephen Cox

When I received the results of our survey, my eye fell on our readers' response to the proposition, "Communism is the greatest threat to human liberty." Only 21% agreed. My initial reaction was, If they don't think communism is the greatest threat, what in the world do they think is? My second reaction was, We should have asked that question another way. Perhaps our readers draw a distinction between the *fiercest* and most *extreme* threat (communism?), and the most *proximate* threat, the one most *likely to do us in* (McGovern liberalism? Bush conservatism?). Our "greatest threat" formulation leaves too much to the imagination.

Libertarians make their own decisions about ideology, basing them on reading and not on social suasion. Early Christians were people of the book par excellence, but libertarians greatly outperform them in this area. Does this mean that we libertarians do not preach as effectively to our friends as the early Christians did to theirs?

Apparently, one doesn't understand the questions one has asked until one sees the results of one's survey.

More second thoughts arose concerning the responses to "There is a god" (26% agreed). When I suggested this formulation (while I was sitting on a rickety balcony overlooking Puget Sound, drinking a beer, and thinking perhaps more about the view and the beer than about scientific accuracy), it didn't occur to me that everyone who felt hesitant about roundly affirming that "There is a god" would probably answer in the negative. People in theological doubt could, of course, just as easily have responded in the affirmative, but what often seems to be the prevailing climate of libertarian opinion might tilt their hand toward the "No" column. In any event, we left no room for agnostics, of whom to my certain knowledge there are many in the libertarian movement.

The poll that we took at the Libertarian Party National Convention

in late 1987 returned about the same proportion of religious feeling as the current poll of subscribers, but the percentage of non-white respondents was higher in the convention poll, and the percentage of non-heterosexual respondents was much higher. Are gays and members of "racial" minority groups less likely to return survey-forms through the mail than in person, or are our subscribers more heterosexual and more Caucasian than delegates and guests of the Libertarian Party—though not more or less religious?

Perhaps the most interesting datum for me was the response to "Who introduced you to libertarian ideas?" 61% said "a writer" had introduced them; only 20% said "a friend." Since I was introduced to libertarianism by a friend (who is, in fact, a fellow-editor of this journal), the datum initially made me feel alienated from my fellow-libertarians who prize the written word so much more highly than the spoken. But then I considered that I myself as a college professor have invested heavily in the written word, and I became unalienated. It is remarkable, however, that libertarians exemplify what they preach: they make their own decisions about ideology, basing them on reading (the most individual of activities) and not on social suasion. It is said that early Christians were people of the book par excellence, but libertarians greatly outperform them in this area. Or does this mean that most libertarians do not preach as effectively to their friends as the early Christians did to theirs?

Controversies Persist

by R. W. Bradford

The main conclusion that I draw from the Poll is that libertarianism is much less a doctrine than an ideological tendency. The great controversies of libertarianism (limited government vs anarchy, isolationism vs national defense, absolutism of rights vs tempering of rights by utilitarian considerations) remain controversial.

The widespread belief that libertarians eschew altruism seems dubious: at least 87% of respondents give money to charity and fully 24% have contributed time to run for public office.

It comes as no surprise that Rand exerts more influence on libertarian thought than anyone else and that she is followed closely by Rothbard. But even in ranking intellectual influences liber-

tarians are eclectic: While three of the top six influences (Rand, Rothbard and Jefferson) are advocates of natural rights, the other three (Mises, Hayek and Friedman) are better characterized as utilitarians. I was surprised at the relatively low rankings of LeFevre, Tucker and Konkin.

Aside from the high proportion of libertarians who are first-born, I see little surprising in the "personal" section. Anyone who has ever attended a libertarian meeting knows that libertarians are overwhelmingly well educated, male and Caucasian.

Is there a Libertarian Doctrine?

by Ross Overbeek

There have been several attempts within the libertarian movement to forge a precise, well-articulated philosophy; the best known examples are Objectivism (directed by Rand and Branden) and anarcho-capitalism. However, the current movement is far from a single philosophical position. Many current members have attempted to retain the more central notions, while openly admitting deviation (or just plain confusion) on many critical details.

This a desirable and proper state of affairs. There was a time when the central dogma of the libertarian movement would have explicitly excluded almost all of the more interesting thinkers who have contributed to modern libertarian literature. Remember:

- Mises described himself as a determinist;
- Leonard Read defended the draft;
- Robert Heinlein is not an isolationist;
- Henry Hazlitt is an explicit utilitarian; and
- Hayek has defended public education.

The libertarian movement can most usefully be viewed as a growing body of people exploring the meaning and utility of freedom, not as a group adhering to a single well-understood doctrine.

No Conclusions

by Sheldon Richman

With only 31 percent—and a small absolute number, at that—responding to the survey, we can draw no serious conclusions. I would warn against relying on the results for anything important.

Another problem is that the respon-

dents were not asked how long they have considered themselves libertarians. This might have shed some light on the answer about intellectual influences. The profile of the average libertarian in the period 1969–1972 is bound to be different from that of 1973–1980 and from 1981 to date. Many things have changed over the last twenty years. For example, the campaign of Ed Clark brought people into the movement who, unlike earlier movement people, were not originally “conservatives” who discovered Rand and then Rothbard.

The height of the anarchist-minarchist debate was some time ago, so it is understandable that newer libertarians are not up on it. Most libertarians do not start as anarchists, and many will not take up the issue if they do not come across it in the course of an active debate. If the debate is not going on, in a magazine, for example, many will not come across it. The results on the anarchist issue do suggest that *Liberty* could profitably publish articles in this area, perhaps a head-to-head debate.

I would draw no conclusions from the “problems” section of the poll. By their very nature and by the narrowness of their focus, they do not lend themselves to yes-no answers. Two people giving the same answer to a question could have very different things to say about the problem. I am not convinced that such questions are worthwhile in a survey of libertarians.

Rights Issues Unresolved

by Ethan O. Waters

To me, the most salient finding of the Poll is that libertarian moral thinking is not very rigorous. How else can one understand the fact that 11% believe a parent should be allowed to starve his kid to death, but 39% believe a parent should be allowed to kill his kid by malnutrition? Or explain why only 2% would face death by dropping from the 49th story of a building rather than violate property rights, but fully 22% would face freezing to death in a situation identical in other respects?

Although nearly all libertarians (89%) agree with the non-aggression axiom, a great many are willing to dispense with it when convenient: 47% will risk killing an innocent hostage to save a greater number of people in an emergency, and another 25% will kill the hostage outright if necessary; 89% will trespass to prevent a parent from starving his child for the fun of it; 98% would

rather trespass than die in the flagpole question, including 14% who would restrict their trespassing to his flagpole and 84% who would go so far as to enter another’s residence; 78% would force their way into an occupied building rather than face freezing to death; 73% would interfere with a neighbor’s right to keep and bear arms if those arms were powerful enough.

It is apparent that many of those willing to dispense with the non-aggression axiom have no clear or consistent criterion for deciding when to dispense with it.

The Poll’s Validity

by R. W. Bradford

One vexing aspect of the Liberty Poll is the issue of whether its results are valid, and who the results are valid about.

The Poll randomly surveyed *Liberty*’s subscribers. Are these subscribers typical libertarians? Put another way: in what ways are *Liberty*’s readers atypical? *Liberty*’s advertising has sought readers interested in “essays that challenge and expand libertarian thinking, lively book reviews, articles analyzing current trends in political and social thought, essays exploring the sort of society that libertarianism entails, discussions of the strategy and tactics of social change . . .” Presumably, such advertising has little appeal to people who are not libertarian and to libertarians who are not interested in the rather intellectual bill-of-fare we offer. And of course, such advertising does not appeal to those unwilling to pay \$18 for a year’s worth of such material.

Just how typical is this subset of libertarians? Libertarian is a rather abstract intellectual proposition, so most libertarians are presumably quite interested in the sorts of writing that *Liberty* publishes, so I suspect that *Liberty* appeals to most libertarians. At \$18 per year, *Liberty* costs about the same as a large pizza or two tickets to the movies, with a soda and popcorn, which makes *Liberty* something of a luxury good. Even so, the Poll indicated that 16% of respondents live below the poverty level yet managed to throw down \$18 for *Liberty*.

What about the validity of the sample? Is it reasonable to generalize from a 62 responses, constituting 31% of those polled?

Alas, I do not know. None of *Liberty*’s editors has a background in statistics or polling and we did not want

to hire outside experts. We decided to do the Poll after reading the study of libertarians by social scientists John C. Green and James L. Guth. A higher percentage of those who were sent the Green-Guth poll responded than did those who were sent our poll. (Green-Guth had a 67% response rate vs a 31% response rate for the Liberty Poll). I suspect this reflects the greater ideological fervor of those studied by Green and Guth: their study surveyed people who had made gifts of \$100 or more to the Libertarian Party according to Federal Election Commission records; ours surveyed people who had purchased a subscription to *Liberty* at a cost of \$18. The Liberty Poll had almost the same response in absolute terms as the Green-Guth study: 62 responses to the Liberty Poll vs 67 responses to the Green-Guth study.

One thing seems clear: since the Liberty Poll’s database is about the same absolute size as the Green-Guth survey’s database, it likely has comparable validity.

Libertarians and Minorities

by Ross Overbeek

The respondents make it appear that the libertarian movement consists of middle-class, middle-aged, heterosexual, male Caucasians. While the movement does include articulate members of minorities, it certainly does not appear to be a movement of the disenfranchised. While I am aware of the arguments supporting the position that increases in liberty advance the welfare of all members of society, it seems likely that members of minorities are not “buying this pitch.” Why not? I believe that intelligent members of these minorities would argue that libertarian positions are being used as tools of oppression. We might do well to listen carefully.

What’s Wrong with the Liberty Poll; or, How I Became a Libertarian

by Murray N. Rothbard

Less and less do I have any use for questionnaires, and unfortunately the *Liberty* Poll is no exception. By squeezing the complexities of thought into multiple choice and quantitative scales they provide distortion instead of illumination. Hence, I found it impossible to answer all too many of the questions.

Just two examples illustrate what I mean.

How in hell could I hope to squeeze into multiple choice the process by which I became a libertarian? My father? A writer? Which one, on a scale from one to five? What impudence! My becoming a libertarian was a lengthy process, beginning perhaps when I reacted badly against the dimwits and hooligans amongst whom I found myself in public school (and this was long before the New York City school system became the open sewer it is now!) I found surcease and happiness in private school. Did I make the full connection then, in the fourth grade? Of course not, but I was on my way. Growing up in the 1930s in New York, I was surrounded by friends, relatives and neighbors ranging from left-liberals to fellow travellers and full-fledged members of the Communist Party. The big moral and spiritual dilemma in those days was: should I or should I not make the full commitment and join the Communist Party? In this atmosphere, I became a free-market conservative very early, strongly influenced, no doubt, by my father's instinctive libertarianism. In the eighth grade, as a middle-class scholarship student, I became the only champion of free enterprise in a private school of affluent Park Avenue left-liberals.

I argued against the New Deal's vicious introduction of a capital gains tax in the eighth grade, and from then on was the school's sole conservative. In family gatherings whooping it up for the Communist side in the Spanish Civil War (spearheaded by two sets of Communist Party aunts and uncles), I piped up from the peanut gallery wondering what was so terrible about Franco (the answer was stunned silence).

At Columbia College, it was more of the same. Amidst the great fight between Stalinists and Trotskyists on cam-

My becoming a libertarian was a lengthy process, beginning perhaps when I reacted badly against the dimwits and hooligans amongst whom I found myself in public school.

pus, I was one of only two Republicans on the entire campus, and the other guy was a literary type with whom I had little in common. Engaging in debates, formal and informal, with professors and students, I moved inexorably to the

right, becoming a free-market economist, though not a very consistent one.

After years of a steady shift rightward, I encountered the fledgling Foundation on Economic Education (FEE) when I was in graduate school. Inspired by consistent and radical thinkers and writers I discovered through FEE (notably Frank Chodorov, Albert Jay Nock, and H.L. Mencken) I very rapidly moved toward a pure, consistent minarchist position. Although I had never thought about foreign policy, blindly adopting New York Times internationalism, I now quickly saw that individual liberty and ultra-minimal government implied an anti-militarist and non-interventionist foreign policy. So, discovering FEE in the winter of 1946-47, I was a 100% minarchist and non-interventionist within a year or so. But I'll be damned if I can remember the exact sequence or the precise weight of influence by different persons or writers. I do know that in 1946 I was writing issue papers attacking price control for the Young Republican Club and in 1948 was the only non-Southern member of the minuscule Students for Thurmond at Columbia University, an object of great puzzlement on the part of Henry Wallace intellectuals as they saw me delivering an impassioned stump speech on behalf of "states' rights."

The next two great conversions completing my journey to pure libertarianism—Misesian economics and anarcho-capitalism—were sudden epiphanies, based, however, on years, even decades of slow preparation.

Even though I was a devoted free-market person, I was unhappy with such problems as monopoly, antitrust, unemployment, and business cycles. Hearing about Ludwig von Mises's seminar at New York University, I began attending in the fall of 1949, coincidentally just at the point when his monumental *Human Action* was published. *Human Action* was my great conversion experience in economics. All the problems I had had with economic theory—e.g. the fact that each school of thought seemed vulnerable to the criticisms of its rivals—were speedily cleared up. I read this massive tome at fever pitch; all of a sudden, all of economics made sense, and fit together into a mighty and coherent system, all leading to individualism and human liberty.

My second great conversion experience happened only a few months later, in the winter of 1949-50. I had one of a

series of nearly all-night sessions of friendly argument with a few left-liberal friends in graduate school, concerning my bizarre views. In the course of the argument, I didn't think that anything significant was going on; it seemed like the same old controversy over *laissez-faire*. But after they had left, at about

I realized that there were only two logical possibilities: socialism or anarchism. Since it was out of the question for me to become a socialist, I found myself, pushed by the irresistible logic of the case, a private property anarchist.

3:00 AM, I realized that something very significant had occurred that night. As I remembered, my friends had put the case to me this way: "You favor private enterprise and competition in every area, yet you favor government police. Right?"

"Yes," I replied.

"On what basis do you favor government police and courts?"

I began to fumble. I had never really considered this question in depth. "Well," I said, "the people get together and voluntarily decide to delegate their power to protect themselves to a government."

"But then," they said triumphantly, "if the people can get together to decide *that*, why can't they *also* get together and decide to build steel plants, dams, etc.?"

I honestly don't remember, and didn't even remember that night at 3:00 AM, what I answered. But I realized that, whatever it was, it was not enough: that if the people could get together to decide on a government police force, they could similarly get together to establish *any other* government operation, that my whole position was inconsistent, and that there were only two logical possibilities: socialism, or anarchism. Since it was out of the question for me to become a socialist, I found myself, pushed by the irresistible logic of the case, a private property anarchist, or, as I would later dub it, an "anarcho-capitalist." Having become an anarchist, I decided to read up as much as

continued on page 55

What if it's Publish and Perish?

by Tibor R. Machan

Most people know of the standard charge leveled against commercial newspapers and magazines. If they accept advertising, how could they ever be objective in their reporting and discussion of the business community? But do we fully realize that non-commercial—educational, scholarly, scientific—enterprises are just as vulnerable to a similar problem: If they accept subsidies how can they report objectively and critically on matters relating to them?

Journalistic ethics normally requires that one report objectively on matters of significance to members of the community one has chosen to serve. Anything else would seem to be an evasion of professional responsibilities. Scholarship faces a similar task. Of course, there are obvious cases in which the journalistic posture is mere sham, as in trade publications, e.g., the education profession's *Chronicles of Higher Education*, IBM's *Think* inhouse magazine, etc. But these publications are so obviously partisan that no one expects adherence to the normal standards of journalism. Nor do we usually think of government publications—even those of the United States Information Agency, which is supposedly dedicated to informing the deceived of the truth about America—as paragons of objectivity.

But most journalistic media are owned by corporations and financed by advertisers. For this reason, people defending censorship in various countries—in the Soviet Union, Israel, Mozambique, etc.—usually claim that the idea of a free Western press is a myth, since corporate ownership and support subverts journalistic objectivity.

Yet nonprofit publications face the possibility of similar conflicts of interest. Consider that many such publications rely on the support of foundations, among which are well established and influential organizations. (When these

are government bodies such as the Navy or the National Endowment for the Humanities, ethical problems multiply.) The Ford, Rockefeller, Earhart, Olin or Carnegie Foundation is not some neutral body. It is presided over by prominent individuals whose ideological and business commitments are far-reaching.

A news item or topic of concern can easily emerge involving some foundation vital to the support of a magazine or broadcast project. *Firing Line* is sponsored by several major corporations; Mr. Buckley could well find himself with a guest whose book is a sustained, serious, and telling attack on one of these. *Ms.* magazine is the recipient of foundation support. Various progressive, libertarian, conservative and other publications, programs, or projects are in the same position. And virtually all those little centers or institutes preoccupied with the study of professional ethics, business ethics, values and society, or what-not receive support not just from foundations and corporations but also, very often, from the government. Innumerable scholarly papers devote their first footnote to thanking the Lilly Fund, the Rand Corporation, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, or some other private or government body for research funds. In these instances it might be problematic, unsettling, or even devastating if the scholar were to focus his or her attention upon the source of the support. Not surprisingly, it is rare to find anything along those lines.

Of course there is a clear distinction between obtaining private funding and obtaining support from the government, mainly because the presumption in the former case is that the support is voluntarily given and was not stolen from anyone, while the presumption in the latter

is just the opposite. But even private support can create ethically insurmountable problems in the shape of conflicts of interest.

The main response to this charge has two parts. First, as far as the consumer of publishing—in journalism or in scholarship—is concerned, the most important thing for him or her is the existence of a free, competitive market. There is no doubt that the practitioners of these professions will often refuse to cut their own necks just to scrutinize and perhaps expose the misdeeds of their funders. So the consumer has to rely on the existence of an open market that will multiply perspectives. It is true, as the rationalizers of government censorship argue, that the Western style free press is not altogether at liberty to do just anything, if it wishes to stay alive. I can imagine that even that impeccable organ, *The Wall Street Journal*, would have some trouble directly attacking Dow Jones, even if the editors felt it journalistically justified. A former employee of the *Journal* reports that the publication is required to print all of the parent company's news releases—verbatim! One might have thought that with such eminent and secure publications there is little likelihood of acquiescence to pressure of that kind. In any case, however, the consumer is best off in a free, capitalist society because competition ensures a variety of sources. The main danger to the consumer is monopoly or oligopoly. As anyone not wholly ignorant of economics knows, those are more likely within an economy that enjoys extensive government intervention than in free markets.

Second, professional ethics is certainly not on the same level of fundamentality as are the basic ethical principles that everyone should invoke in life. A principle of professional ethics is not anything on the order of an absolute moral principle. Rather, it is contingent on adherence to other moral principles. This may be illustrated with business ethics, in which it is a moral responsibility of an executive to further the economic well-being of the firm. But since the executive may also be a citizen, a friend, a parent, a spouse, etc., other moral responsibilities will also guide his or her conduct. Total devotion to work will appear irresponsible, since other relationships require attention.

In journalism or scholarship, one

may find an interesting story about some major supporter, but because it would be suicidal to run it, choose some other topic. If the story is vital, however, it may be wise to point it out to some competitor. Total silence could be immoral, especially if the story itself involves immorality—if, for instance, the funder is violating some ethical precept or breaking a just law. And there is a point at which one may have to forego the benefits of financial support—if, for instance, the funder is stealing the funds contributed or is making demands on journalists or scholars that would require betraying professional ethics.

As with most ethical problems, the difficulties one faces in a conflict of interest situation can only be hinted at in abstract discussions. They must ultimately be dealt with in concrete situations. One needs to consider the details. The principles involved are not the very general ones that a sound ethical theory will propose for virtually every situation faced by human beings. Rather these are hypotheticals: If you face such-and-such situation, then act in such-and-

such a way. Principles of journalistic ethics are not similar to the prohibition against murder or theft but more like edicts about therapist-client or doctor-patient relations. In too many cases, outside the most basic and simple ones, the right thing to do will have to be determined from a very rich context of background information. But it is wrong to argue that because there is the potential

The idea that martyrdom is noble belongs to a very dubious ethical system, one that certainly was not developed with an eye to making people successful at living human lives.

of conflict of interest, there is something inherently problematic in the practice of the profession itself. Unfortunately, this is precisely the argument made by some reckless idealists whenever economic interests are involved in some undertaking—that is, in virtually any aspect of human life.

Conflict of interest situations may be handled in a variety of ways, including simply shelving them or passing the problem on to those who can discuss it

more effectively, with less risk of severe costs. The idea that martyrdom is noble belongs to a very dubious ethical system, one that certainly was not developed with an eye to making people successful at living human lives. The point was, rather, to attain success in another world. From a saner ethical viewpoint, it would be wrong to seek out actions for oneself that lead to the destruction of one's values and projects, unless there is something very fundamental at stake. In this case one is still preserving what counts most for oneself: integrity.

Journalistic or scholarly ethics requires no suicide. Courage, of course, requires taking some risks, weighing values, choosing sides when conflicts occur. But courage is not the only virtue—honesty, prudence, and moderation are also virtues. Each must be attended to, and being reasonable in this task is the ultimate virtue. This reasonableness is the primary ethical responsibility of every human being, one that is prior to the more specialized ethical responsibilities related to one's profession, including journalism. □

Continued from page 53, Rothbard

possible, and quickly devoured Spooner, Tucker, Auberon Herbert et. al. It was a busy and remarkably fruitful winter. In the fall of 1949 I was a free-market minarchist of no particular school of thought; by the spring of 1950 I was a hard-core Misesian and anarcho-capitalist, as well as an "isolationist." The first "Rothbardian" had been born. Now I ask you: how the hell could I squeeze all this into the compass of that narrow questionnaire?

The arcane and esoteric problems in libertarian theory mainly miss the boat, and I say this as someone who cut his eyeteeth in the movement debating even more recondite puzzles.

Take for example the question of the shopping center guard. A criminal takes someone as a hostage, uses him or her as a shield, and brandishes a gun, threatening the rest of the public. Does a guard, employed by the shopping cen-

ter, have the right to plug the hostage (assuming, of course, that he has no clear shot at the kidnapper?) The confusion comes from forgetting the rights of the innocent hostage. The question should be countered by another: namely, assume another bodyguard, hired by

Everyone's rights are absolute, pragmatism is inconsistent as well as pernicious, and everyone is obligated to defend every innocent person's rights.

the hostage for defense. Assume, once again, that the hostage's bodyguard has no clear shot at the kidnapper. The bodyguard looks around and sees the shopping center guard take aim and be about to shoot the hostage. The bodyguard, pledged above all to defend the person and property of the hostage, has only one justifiable course of action: to

shoot the shopping center guard, who constitutes the most direct and immediate threat to the person and life of the hostage. By putting the case in terms of someone employed by the shopping center, the framers of the question have silently pushed the rights and defense of the hostage out of public view.

The moral of this story is not that all rights are relative, and that no firm position can be taken. The moral of this story is that everyone's rights are absolute, that pragmatism is inconsistent as well as pernicious, and that everyone is obligated to defend every innocent person's rights: in short, that no aggression may ever be waged against an innocent victim regardless of excuse or alibi. And that the putative shopping center guard who shot and killed the hostage was a murderer, and should be treated accordingly. □

Reappraisal

Rand-Bashing: Enough is Enough

by Ross Overbeek

First we were treated to Murray Rothbard arguing that the “guiding spirit of the Randian movement was not individual liberty — as it seemed to many young members— but rather personal power for Ayn Rand and her leading disciples.”¹ Now David Ramsay Steele, in an attempt to purge his soul of his early error of actually being “dazzled” by Rand’s writing, feels compelled to pen a tirade that goes well beyond anything remotely resembling a search for the truth.²

Parts of this story get lost in the telling.

Was Rand a Bad Novelist?

There are two types of attacks on Ayn Rand’s reputation as a writer. The first type emanates from people who, having developed within the culture of the left, simply fail to comprehend the appeal of Rand. The second is the work of those who experienced strong emotional reactions to Rand’s novels, looked to her for guidance or intellectual support, and were finally disillusioned. The criticisms of the first type—typified by Granville Hicks’ review of *Atlas Shrugged* in the *New York Times*, or, for that matter Whittaker Chambers’ review in *National Review*—are much less interesting than those of the second.

The most bitter attacks on Rand have been initiated by individuals who were fairly deeply involved in the Objectivist experience. Some were familiar with Austrian economics, classical liberalism, and intellectual conservatism before they encountered Rand. They were thoughtful people who struggled with difficult issues and were already forming basic sentiments of them. When they encountered Rand, they experienced ecstasy. They stayed up all night just walking the streets thinking about what she had written. Later, they talked with others, but initially it was a very private, very intense experience. Eventually, as such people

got deeper into the Objectivist movement, they came to feel betrayed. They grew disenchanted with certain aspects of Rand’s philosophy, and they objected to being pressured to conform to these positions. But their bitterness has led them to make flawed judgments about the quality of Rand’s novels.

Typical first reactions to Rand’s novels make a *prima facie* case for her skill. How many novels does one read that stimulate such pronounced responses of interest, curiosity, and enthusiasm? Although some people experienced deep disappointment on a second or third reading, most libertarians initially felt a deeply positive sympathy with Rand’s heroes. It is hard for me to reconcile that powerful reaction with claims that her characters are merely “wooden,” “posturing,” “cardboard cut-outs.” It is one thing to question the ideas they embody, it is quite another to deny the skill and power with which she presents them.

Disagreement with specific doctrines of Objectivism can result in an incredible lack of fairness. Let me illustrate with just two examples from Steele’s criticism:

1. “Potentially, [Barbara Branden] seems to have been a better writer than Rand, but she gave that up for the sake of her submission before the cult,” writes David Ramsay Steele. This is ludicrous. It is no more meaningful than the speculation that I might potentially have been a better scientist than Einstein: had I from an early age com-

mitted all my energies to science, I might have achieved superior competence.

2. “By sticking to fiction, [Rand] could have become a sort of minor right-wing Jack London. As it was she didn’t write much fiction, and most of it is not outstanding,” Steele writes. I am a fan of Jack London, but I believe that anyone who takes the time to read his major “ideological” works (e.g., *The Iron Heel*, *Martin Eden*, or *The People of the Abyss*) will find them quite inferior to Rand’s. Although London’s novels are well worth reading, the idea that Rand never measured up to London is ludicrous.

Did Rand Retard the Libertarian Movement?

A recent poll taken by *Liberty*³ asked questions about the influence of a variety of thinkers. It revealed that Rand has been the most important intellectual influence on an entire generation of libertarians. Of course, one can quite properly point out that many of her ideas were articulated by earlier writers. But that really doesn’t matter; Rand made the ideas popular. It was her power as a novelist that brought the ideas to a wide audience. It was not the Libertarian Party’s TV advertising, the Cato Institute, the Foundation for Economic Education, or any other individual or institution.

Had Rand not published her novels, and had the Nathaniel Branden Institute failed to spread her ideas sys-

tematically, I consider it quite likely that no modern libertarian movement would exist. The impetus created by Goldwater Republicanism would have pulled many current members directly into mainstream politics, leaving an intellectual few holding seminars on hard money and Austrian economics. Rand was the main stimulus that produced the movement, including the elements that most successfully launched attacks on her doctrines.

On the face of it, the assertion that Rand has arrested the growth of libertarianism is silly: Rand is the single greatest stimulus to libertarian thinking ever.

Some might argue that although Rand presented her ideas forcefully and seductively, many of the elements of her thinking were simply incorrect, leaving her followers with beliefs that could not be defended. Rand promised too much. Faced with a growing number of questions from her inquisitive followers, Rand created a highly restricted intellectual atmosphere. This exacerbated the feelings of betrayal among those who criticized aspects of her philosophy and led to charges that Rand had "blighted" the existence of her followers. Precisely because she was such a powerful personality and writer, her attacks on various individuals and organizations (such as the Libertarian Party) had dramatic consequences. She expressed too much certainty in support of questionable theses, and responded to criticisms by trying to force her followers to adhere to her ideas.

But from my perspective, the following events occurred:

1. Rand became aware of some significant philosophical themes. She integrated these themes into what became Objectivism. This was a strikingly original performance.

2. Convinced that she was correct, Rand used her substantial abilities as a novelist to articulate her philosophy. Her powerful fictional manifestoes gained the interest of other intellectuals.

3. Many of these people accepted the emerging set of ideas as fundamentally sound. Compared with the popular wisdom of the time (think back to the fifties and sixties), Rand's platform inspired numerous bright young people to try to live up to her values and spread the word about them.

Such a pattern has occurred over and over again in the history of ideas and I can find nothing objectionable in it. Indeed, one significant reward of sus-

On the face of it, the assertion that Rand has arrested the growth of the libertarian movement is silly: Rand is the single greatest stimulus to libertarian thinking ever.

tained intellectual effort is enthusiasm. Mistakes may be made, but mistakes are likely to occur in any difficult, challenging intellectual task. Getting excited about successes and overstating what has actually been accomplished seem to me almost inevitable in pioneering efforts.

The charge that Rand misled followers is distinct from the charge that Rand failed to respond to criticism appropriately. The libertarian movement is in no position to attack leaders who have advanced highly questionable positions with vigor. Of the movement's major figures, only those who have explicitly sidestepped the truly difficult issues associated with ethics have avoided damaging criticism.

Rothbard, for example, takes some very advanced positions in *The Ethics of Liberty*. If some of these turn out to be flawed, shall we charge him with mis-

leading his followers? Then why make such charges about Rand simply out of disappointment with her imperfect reactions to criticism?

Was NBI Merely a Cult?

Perhaps the most damaging attacks against Rand are those charging that the intellectual environment cultivated by the leadership of the Rand movement was weirdly restrictive, that this environment was carefully created and maintained at NBI in a way totally inappropriate to any attempt at educating young Howard Roarks. This atmosphere, it is said, reflected the actual beliefs of Rand, Branden, and the other leaders of the Objectivist movement. In short, Objectivist leaders were a bunch of power-hungry manipulators.

Let's examine the process by which a "culture" like that exhibited by NBI arises. Rothbard attempted such an examination in "The Sociology of the Ayn Rand Cult," but his outlook reflects too vividly his own personal experiences. While many of his comments seem reasonable, there are aspects of the story that I believe deserve a more dispassionate analysis.

A movement based solidly on principles of individualism clearly requires an atmosphere in which people can explore ideas, conflicts among positions are tolerated, and the common goal is the pursuit of truth. NBI and the Objectivist movement failed to meet these requirements. It does not follow, however, that their failure resulted from a conscious desire to build a cult, with the associated personal benefits. Minor errors in decision-making may have produced a distinctly undesirable cumulative effect.

One way to illustrate this is to compare the activities of the Objectivists working through NBI with the activities of the Cato Institute in the 1970s. Though the two efforts were very different, both in the personalities of the central players and in the tactics they employed, there are, nevertheless, several important parallels. Like the Objectivists, the libertarians in the Cato Institute had agreed upon a central, core doctrine, and one major goal was to disseminate that doctrine. While the core doctrine was explicit within the Rand movement, within Cato far less energy was expended in maintaining ideologi-

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cal purity. True, Rothbard had dropped his "plumb line," but the limits placed on disagreement were far more flexible at Cato than in the Rand movement. Even so, Cato's goals included spreading their core ideas, and the desire to spread those ideas led to a variety of strange incidents.

Having gradually come to reject most aspects of the natural rights defense of liberty, I tried to consult the four or five leading libertarian intellectuals at a Cato Institute Seminar in 1980.

All but one reacted with an NBI-like rigidity. Either they referred me to an obscure Thomistic work, with which they were so unfamiliar that they were unable even to present its essential arguments, or they said they would have to talk to other speakers and get back to me. They all

obviously dreaded any open questioning of the core doctrine or contradiction of the central figure laying down that official doctrine. (The one person who expressed himself honestly and openly on the topic was, ironically, also this central figure, Murray Rothbard.)

The seminar participants wrote essays, from which the best few would be selected by representatives of Cato. A few of the participants (including me) began to view themselves as well-meaning dissidents, but since we all admired the accomplishments of the speakers (men like Rothbard, Ligio, Childs and Grinder), there was a tremendous desire to "behave." A document written by Rothbard was circulated arguing the need for a cadre of trusted members of the inner circle. Not surprisingly, many participants began to feel that, "I am bright and talented, and it would sure be interesting to be included in the ruling cadre." The outcome of all of these essentially unobjectionable actions by the organizers was to produce an atmosphere in which there were strong incentives for people to try to predict what the leaders wanted and to try to give it to them.

One evening at a party at the Cato seminar, I got into a discussion with one of the Institute's leading lights. Recalling that Henry Hazlitt⁴ and Ludwig von Mises⁵ based their advocacy of libertarian ideas on utilitarianism, I expressed concern that the "official" Cato doctrine seemed to attack utilitari-

anism as if it were anathema to liberty and suggested that perhaps libertarians should at least consider utilitarian arguments. The leading light responded that "utilitarianism vitiates the cause of liberty," as if vitiation or enhancement of the libertarian cause were somehow relevant to the truth or falsity of an idea.

A short time later this same speaker tipped a glass of liquor off the railing on the mezzanine in the plush hotel where we were gathered. Almost immediately,

The failure of Objectivists to create an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of truth does not make Rand a bad novelist, nor does it diminish her contributions to libertarian theory and the growth of the libertarian movement.

we heard an outburst below from a woman who got hit with the contents. The next thing I knew, the avid moral defender of property rights was denying to a representative of the hotel that he had caused the disturbance.

Neither this personal act of cowardice nor the development of an atmosphere of conformity reflects on the Cato Institute's ideas, any more than the occasional intimidating actions by Rand's leading disciples reflect on Rand's philosophy.

My reflections upon this Cato experience have led me to suspect that any attempt to organize a movement to promulgate an ideology and systematically influence public opinion has inherent tendencies to lead to these sorts of problems. You end up hearing leaders declare that there are fundamental conflicts between the core position (e.g., libertarian ideals justified through natural rights) and other philosophical positions (e.g., libertarian ideals justi-

fied through utilitarianism), and, hence, that people advocating such positions are (at best) misguided proponents of liberty. And no one laughs.

As far as I can see, these tendencies grew vicious in the Objectivist setting because the Objectivists were successful in creating a focused movement that maintained forward momentum. Should the Libertarian Party ever achieve even a modicum of actual success and power, similar incidents will be commonplace. They would be objectionable, and even avoidable, but they would occur.

Rand and Branden did not set out to create a cult that emphasized their personal positions of power. They set out to build a movement to spread ideas. Analysis of these ideas led to the creation of a tightly

managed doctrine and careful control over those representing the movement. This gradually produced competition for acceptance by the ruling cadre, with all of the concomitant ugliness. There can be no excuse for some of the bizarre pettiness that occurred, but as groups "circle the wagons" under increasing attack, they tend to introduce excessive control and punish questioning within the ranks. Heroes should have avoided the pitfalls. The fact that they didn't justifies a good round of criticism. It does not justify deprecation of their actual, substantial accomplishments.

The inability of NBI and the Objectivist movement to create an atmosphere conducive to the exploration of ideas in the pursuit of truth is certainly a failure. But that, rather obviously, does not make Rand a bad novelist. And it does not diminish her important contributions to libertarian theory and to the growth of the libertarian movement. □

Endnotes

1. Murray N. Rothbard, "The Sociology of the Ayn Rand Cult" (Port Townsend, Wash.: Liberty Publishing, 1987), p. 11.
2. David Ramsay Steele, "Alice In Wonderland," *Liberty* (May 1988). This article was reprinted from *Free Life, Journal of the Libertarian Alliance*, Vol 5, Nos. 1-2.
3. Analyzed in "The Liberty Poll: Who We Are and What We Think," pp. 37-53 in this issue.
4. Cf. *The Foundations of Morality* (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing, 1972, Second Printing).
5. Cf. *Human Action* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1966, 3rd rev. ed.), pp. 175-6; *The Ultimate Foundation of Economic Science* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1962) p. 105, *Theory and History* (Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 55-61, *Omnipotent Government* (Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 50-51.

Reviews

Freedom's Child
Walter Polovchak with Kevin Klose, Random House, 1988, 246 pp., \$17.95

Free At Last

Stephen Cox

In 1980, Walter Polovchak, aged 12, arrived in Chicago with his family—his father, Michael, his mother, Anna, his sister, Natalie, aged 17, and his brother Michael Jr., aged 5. They were Ukrainian emigrants from the Soviet Union. Michael Polovchak got a job cleaning things up in a valve factory, Anna Polovchak got a job cleaning things up in a hospital. Within six months, Michael had grown so tired of his job and the other aspects of his new life in Chicago that he decided to return to the USSR and to take his family with him. He found, to his dismay and disgust, that his two older children had no intention of allowing themselves to be removed from the United States.

Walter and Natalie sought refuge in the home of a cousin who had come to America some years before. Michael realized that Natalie was too old to be successfully coerced, but he sent the police after Walter. Walter's cousin called in legal help from the local Ukrainian community; the Illinois American Civil Liberties Union intervened on the father's side. Walter's lawyer won the first round, blocking attempts to return the boy to his father's custody. The ACLU won most of the later rounds; it did not, however, achieve a final resolution of the case, which continued to creep through the courts. Long after Michael had taken himself and the compliant Anna back to the socialist paradise, they were still attempting, with the help of the Civil Liberties Union, to secure control of their disobedient son. In 1985 the calendar emerged victorious: Walter turned 18

and was immediately granted citizenship. Safe at last.

That's what happened to Walter Polovchak, and it's a good story: it has drama, suspense, human interest, and—from Walter's point of view—a very happy ending. But this vivid and absorbing book is more than a Sunday-supplement account of a nice kid who struggles against the odds and finally gets his wish. The "human interest" that it generates is more than an interest in what finally becomes of Walter. Its subject is many people, not just one. Walter and his assistant Kevin Klose (formerly Moscow bureau chief of the *Washington Post*) are careful to allow the other actors in the drama to have their say. Some of the book is narrated by Walter, but the rest is given over to the narrations, explanations, declarations, and self-exculpations of Walter's large and various family, the lawyers on both sides of the case, the social workers, cops, and reporters dragged in at one time or another—an extraordinarily wide spectrum of character and opinion to be represented in a "first-person" book of an inescapably polemical nature. The narrative method helps us to understand the reasons why each person decided to help or hurt Walter's cause, and in the process to study a cross-section of contemporary values and contemporary ways of responding to a moral emergency.

That so many people recognized Walter's situation as a moral emergency is in itself significant; *Freedom's Child* demonstrates that moral sensitivity has not leaked completely out of American life. This does not mean, however, that "moral sensitivity" is omnipresent—or that it always takes a healthy form.

On the one hand, the story reveals the continued existence of a reservoir of spontaneous libertarian feeling in this country. It shows that Americans are interested in freedom, that the struggle for freedom seems highly newsworthy to them. The moment that Walter's resistance to his parents became known, he was surrounded by representatives of the media. He was a hot story, and the story would not be allowed to play itself out in the shadows. His case would not be lost for want of public interest. But public interest is too large and vague to *win* anyone's battle; the cause is lost if public interest fails to transform itself into the interest of individual minds and pocket-books. Walter Polovchak, a child who could barely speak English, could never have kept his case in court and his residence in America without the help immediately and unswervingly offered to him by others—not just by relatives but by officials of the State Department and the Immigration Service and by people like Erika and Henry Mark Holzer, lawyers and activists for liberty who heard of his plight and volunteered their services. Often libertarian sentiments remain just that—libertarian *sentiments*. They are expressed in conversation, in print, or—once in four years—at the ballot box. They are purely intellectual convictions, sources of personal identity or self-esteem. Walter Polovchak's friends were able to transform the sentiment of individualism into the reality of freedom for one individual.

On the other hand, however, the Polovchak story demonstrates that enthusiasm for liberty is far from universally felt, and that the mere concept of individual liberty is far from clearly understood, even by many of its professional advocates and protectors. Walter's well-publicized case obtained little support from America's intellectual elite, so willing to help in more questionable campaigns for "freedom." Henry Mark Holzer observes that "no lawyer in this nation of lawyers ever offered to help" (p. 201). This reflection must have caused Holzer a good deal of bitterness while he was considering how, if things got really

rough, he could hide Walter from the government and the ACLU (p. 201). Of course, a number of lawyers helped out on the *other* side, and they apparently did so with alacrity. It is remarkable that the Illinois ACLU never seems to have hesitated about enlisting itself in an effort that might be expected to make any civil libertarian hesitate, if not leap backward. Jay Miller, the Illinois ACLU's Executive Director, says that "for us, it was an easy case to consider taking. We had no problem with the policy on this" (p. 129).

The ACLU set itself to vindicate every particle of the right of Polovchak *père* to exercise custody of Polovchak *filis*, and it regarded legal attempts to prevent Walter's forcible repatriation to the land of the total state as an unwarrantable extension of state power. The ACLU even convinced itself that if Walter were not returned to his parents, then "Walter's rights [would be] violated as much as the family's"; more credulously still, it convinced itself that the issue of whether a violently anti-Communist youth should be forced to live in a Communist dictatorship is "not an issue of welfare or safety of the child" (pp. 159, 161). One reads these arguments and stares: is this what one would expect from an organization that prides itself on protecting children's rights, that prides itself, for instance, on protecting a child's right to have an abortion without the consent of her parents?

Please don't write to me and complain. I'm not attacking abortion. I'm not even attacking the ACLU, as an idea or as a national institution. I am sympathetic to the argument made by William P. Moulton in the last issue of *Liberty*: the historic services that the ACLU has rendered to freedom may well overbalance the organization's attacks on freedom in the Polovchak case and others. And the ACLU is not a homogeneous group. It is to be noted (Polovchak, p. 212), that the New Jersey ACLU wrote to Walter's lawyers dissenting from the position taken by the Illinois ACLU.

Nothing is more common, however, than for organizations that support freedom to lose their grip on the principles they support—and it is this phenomenon that interests me at the moment. The grip on principle may be lost because the membership confuses support for liberty with antipathy toward certain political tendencies, whether left-wing or right-

wing. Confusion may run especially deep in organizations that define themselves as "non-political," since the assumption of their own non-partisanship may lead them to see every position they dislike as basely "political." The representatives of the non-political ACLU believed that Walter's case was animated by *political* considerations—i.e., by a dislike of communism and the Soviet Union. This notion probably manifests a typical left-wing anti-anti-communism, a desire to see the USSR as something other than a

The story reveals the continued existence of a reservoir of spontaneous libertarian feeling in this country. It shows that Americans are interested in freedom, that the struggle for freedom seems highly newsworthy to them.

country that systematically deprives its citizens of rights, and an antipathy toward people who take a more pessimistic view of it.

The double standard seems obvious. The ACLU does not regard itself as politicizing legal issues when it protests violations of right in the United States, but when someone protests against communism, with its constant, inherent, structural violations of right, the objection is dismissed as political. Does not the ACLU defend the right of El Salvadoran refugees—refugees from a democratic country (albeit shakily democratic)—to political asylum in this country? But even the Salvadoran issue finds its place in the self-justifications of ACLU officials:

Here you had two federal agencies, State and Immigration, participating for political reasons in a conspiracy to deprive people of their rights. The political reasons were that the parents were Soviet citizens and they weren't happy here. . . . Yet here is our government forcing Salvadorans to go back home who come to ask for political asylum, who claim that they might be killed if they are sent back.

And now, to drain nonsense to its dregs:

Originally, when folks said Walter would be hurt if he returned, that was pretty silly. It's true that after [Walter's case] went on for some months, it was not likely the Soviets would give him favored

citizen status. His application to join the Communist Party, if he wanted to join, would not have been looked on with great favor and he would not have gone to Moscow State University, but Walter couldn't have gone into Moscow State University anyway, no matter what, just as he would not have the score to get into a top American university (Miller in Polovchak, pp. 131-32).

Well, how about Lvov Tech? Could he get into there?

This is a strange spectacle, is it not? An official of the organization that (thank God!) contests Alabama's right to force school children to pray in their classrooms cracks little jokes to himself about a Ukrainian boy's ability even to get into a classroom. The tone reeks of elitism, of a consciousness of

superiority that left-wing political opinion is perhaps unlikely to generate all by itself. Elitism of this sort results, perhaps, less from politics than from a curious kind of professionalism—from the awareness of how many clever arguments can be made on any side of a case, and a pride in one's ability to make them. The ACLU people who opposed Walter's case were and are very well aware of the reasoning that might from a libertarian perspective be brought against them—and they have their rebuttals well prepared. In reply, for instance, to the don't-you-support-a-child's-right-to-an-abortion argument, the ACLU's Miller notes that a decision about the custody of Walter Polovchak would affect many areas of his life for many years, but that abortion is "a relatively minor surgical procedure, an act that, depending on circumstances, is likely to involve a very short period of time—a matter of days—in the life of a child" (pp. 129-30).

One might ask, If the wishes of parents can be overridden in the case of so *minor* an issue as abortion, why may they not be overridden in the case of so major an issue as total deprivation of freedom for the rest of one's life? But my point is that libertarian principles may be lost in the midst of intellectual game-playing. In his essay "Of the Original Contract," David Hume wisely remarks that "there is no virtue or moral duty, but what may, with facility, be refined away, if we indulge a false philosophy, in sifting and scrutinizing it, by every captious rule of

logic, in every light or position, in which it may be placed."

But by dwelling so long on the complexities of the ACLU, by dwelling so long, indeed, on Walter's legal problems, and on who helped him and who did not, I am neglecting another aspect of this book, and this may be the most interesting of all. Walter's book provides a vista on America in the 1980's. But it also provides a vista on the twentieth century as a whole. The history of the Polovchak family is a history of the "common man" in this era, an era shadowed, as none other, by tyranny and deprivation, and enlightened, as none other, by the hope of freedom and abundance.

During World War I, Walter Polovchak's grandfather served in the Austro-Hungarian army. This was fortunate, because when Hitler invaded the Ukraine and survival became a desperate gamble in the no-man's land between two rapacious empires, the German language that the grandfather had brought home with him from the first war enabled part of the family to survive. An uncle vanished. An aunt was taken away to work as a slave laborer—and after Hitler's defeat, made her way to America. The relatives who remained back home inhabited a country pillaged by war and crippled by totalitarianism. They lived hard and colorless lives. Grandmother tended her garden and her orchard, and maintained the Christian faith for her offspring. Michael, the father, lived well, comparatively speaking, on earnings from the sale of goods shipped to him by relatives in the West. Knowing absurdly little about life beyond the borders, but hearing that things were better there, Michael plotted to move. After many hazy adventures he obtained the necessary permissions. But so naive was he that he didn't bother to learn English before getting on the plane to make a new life in America. Certainly he was unprepared for what he found in a West where, as Walter says, the restaurants actually don't mind having customers (p. 102). Michael Polovchak was chiefly unprepared for the idea that he would have to work for a living. Capitalism quickly lost its charms. His wife found adjustments easier, and probably would have preferred to stay in America rather than go back to Russia with her embittered husband; yet she never managed to assimilate the new idea of *women's* right to self-determination. Doomed by her old country upbringing, convinced that she must hang on to her husband even at the loss

of her children, she returned to the USSR.

Natalie and Walter, however, enacted another role, one that the twentieth century, for all its horrors, has permitted millions of other people to enact. Seeing that the accidents of history had given them the chance to choose their fate, they chose to make themselves, not the

children of dictatorship and deprivation, but the children of progressive capitalism—adaptive, ingenuous, rebellious, none too historically minded, but determined to make the best of their opportunity to escape from an immediate past with which they were grimly familiar. May that opportunity come to all the children of the twentieth century. □

Natural Law, or, Don't Put a Rubber on Your Willy
by Robert Anton Wilson, Loompanics Unlimited, 1986, 74pp., \$4.95

Certain Uncertainties

David Ramsay Steele

This little book by Robert Anton Wilson is the latest blow in a vigorous polemic for and against Natural Law and Natural Rights, which has been going on, mainly in the pages of *New Libertarian*, for the past three years. The Natural Lawyers have been represented by Murray N. Rothbard, George H. Smith, and Samuel Edward Konkin III. The Natural Outlaws include Robert Anton Wilson and L.A. Rollins, whose pamphlet, *The Myth of Natural Rights*, sparked off the debate.

Both sides seem to have become enraged with the failure of the other side to agree with them. In his contribution to the debate (*New Libertarian* 4:13, April 1985), Rothbard did not present any arguments against the Rollins-Wilson position, but instead contended warmly that Rollins and Wilson ought to "shut up" about their criticisms of Natural Law, and *pretend* to believe in it, apparently because, whether or not it's correct, it's good for the libertarian movement.

In this book, Wilson waxes morally indignant against Konkin for printing Wilson's earlier contribution to the debate with numerous critical footnotes added. Wilson calls this behavior by editor Konkin "heckling."

I sympathize with both sides, for they are each right to conclude that the other side is muddled and unfair. However, there is no need for either of them to be so touchy, and they both need to rethink

their somewhat simple-minded positions.

On the key point, the fact that no one has produced a good argument to demonstrate the existence of Natural (Moral) Law or Natural Rights, as these are conceived by Rothbard, Smith, Machan, and their ilk, the Outlaws are right and the Lawyers are wrong. Rothbard, for example, has carelessly, or perhaps carefully, ignored the fact that in *The Myth of Natural Rights* Rollins presented a refutation of Rothbard's argument for Natural Rights. That refutation is sound, and Rothbard is without a serviceable argument for his main tenet. So he really ought to "shut up" until he can produce a replacement (for the argument or the tenet).

Unfortunately, Rollins spoiled his case by arguing not only against Natural Law, but against all morality, calling his own position "amoralist," even though he moralizes quite a bit. I exposed Rollins's confusion on that score in my review of *The Myth of Natural Rights* (*Free Life* 4:4).

Turning now to *Natural Law, or, Don't Put a Rubber on Your Willy*, does Wilson share Rollins's bogus-amoralist position? At first he indeed seems to. Some passages, like the middle paragraph on page 42, seem to dismiss all morality out of hand, and incidentally to associate all morality with religion. But elsewhere Wilson comes out strongly in favor of morality. He contends that "because morality appears to be a human in-

vention, we should esteem it as we esteem such inventions as language, art, and science" (p. 52).

Is morality a human invention? This issue exercises both Natural Outlaws and Natural Lawyers. Konkin gives his opinion that "if morality is a human invention, *some human will be enslaved to others*. And that heresy is what we rightly fear." Wilson quotes this (p. 49) and comments that he "cannot understand a word of it." Presumably Konkin means that without a supra-human morality to prevent it, slavery is irresistible, like the Lorelei.

Wilson takes for granted that "language, art, and science" are inventions, but that doesn't seem to be the best word for them. Language, art, science, and morality evolved. These processes of cultural evolution encompassed numerous inventions, but it doesn't seem quite accurate to call the whole process an invention (though G. A. Wells does exactly that in his recent, extremely persuasive book on *The Origin of Language*).

Although Wilson heatedly insists that

morality is an invention like science, he seems to have overlooked that, if the truth or falsity of morality is on a par with that of scientific laws, then he concedes his opponents' case. But the argument between Lawyers and Outlaws seems to be like some other domestic fights: you pick up whatever's lying

of morality, somehow like scientific laws. It seems that they cannot offer us anything like this, so questions such as whether scientific laws ultimately presuppose causality, or are never more than probabilities, are not relevant to the dispute.

Wilson makes very heavy weather of the fact that Natural Law doesn't, as scientific laws do, merely attempt to explain what actually occurs. Konkin is the only one who possibly seems to have got this wrong. Presumably, Rothbard, Smith, and others do realize that Natural Law doesn't describe what happens in nature, but

The idea of Natural Law seems to be that what we ought to do is what conforms to some tendencies in nature (but not to others). The over-riding tendency in nature seems to be Entropy, which suggests the moral rule: Always act so as to increase disorganization.

around to throw at the other person. It's difficult to be sure whether Wilson thinks that scientific law is utterly different to ethics, because more objective, or whether he thinks that science is utterly relativistic, subjective, and lawless too, as some of his remarks imply. Wilson's espousal of such metaphysical doctrines as the Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics is really beside the point. The question is whether Natural Law theorists can offer us anything, in the realm

prescribes what ought to happen. In a scientific sense, something that contravenes Natural Law is just as "natural" as something that conforms to Natural Law. Robbery and murder are no less natural than respecting people's rights. The idea of Natural Law seems to be that what we ought to do is what conforms to some tendencies in nature (but not to others). The over-riding tendency in nature seems to be Entropy, which suggests the moral rule: Always act so as

The Dogs of Capitalism, by Mitchell Jones, extols the virtues of the unconventional person

A "normal" person is a person who "fits in"—a person whose beliefs, in all important respects, conform to the cultural mainstream in his society. When the cultural mainstream is irrational, one must abandon reason if one is to fit in. In such societies, to be normal is to be *evil*. In Nazi Germany, normal people believed in Aryan superiority and participated in violent acts against the Jews. In Russia under Stalin, they believed in the collectivization of agriculture, and supported the mass starvation of the kulaks. In medieval Spain, they believed that heretics ought to be tortured until they confessed and then be burned at the stake.

The good man stubbornly clings to reason, even at the risk of his life. He relentlessly culls out beliefs which are contradicted by facts, even if those beliefs are central to the mainstream culture in his society. If he must abandon reason in order to fit in, he chooses to become a "social deviant." Such a man will despise Nazism even while living in Germany under Hitler. He will despise Communism, even while living in Russia under Stalin. And he will despise the Inquisition, even while living in Spain during the time of Torquemada.

The Dogs of Capitalism views human history in moral terms —i.e., as a war between good and evil. It is history with all the elements of drama: important values at stake, heroes and villains, struggle and crisis, victory and defeat.

Is such history interesting? Read *The Dogs of Capitalism* and find out.

* * *

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to increase disorganization. Doesn't appeal to me.

Rothbard, Konkin, and Smith, like most libertarians who talk a lot about Natural Rights or Natural Law, believe that fundamental moral propositions are factual propositions, objectively true or false. They therefore insist that it is possible to validly deduce an "ought" from an "is," though they have not yet actually been able to accomplish this feat. This position of theirs makes their doctrine unlike those of some historically important "Natural Law" philosophers such as Pufendorf or Locke, whose arguments, or modifications thereof, may still stand up. There is nothing to indicate that Wilson (or Rollins, despite his "amoralist" pose) has to be against all elements of this older Natural Law tradition.

It is hopeless to expect, by analyzing ethics, ever to be able to demonstrate that any fundamental moral rule or judgment is right. But you can find out what follows from the decision to apply certain fundamental moral rules, and this may be interesting. If Natural Law meant no more than the critical discussion of suitable fundamental rules and the investigation of what objectively followed from them, than I would have no objection to it, and I don't suppose that Wilson would have any objection either.

Wilson sometimes falls into the habit of writing as if laws can only come from states. Stateless societies always have laws too. We can't do without law, any more than we can do without language.

Wilson's own philosophical standpoint is slippery and jumbled. In some places he speaks favorably of "Logical Positivism" and berates all "Metaphysics." However, it was in part recognition of the fact that we cannot get along without metaphysics that led all philosophers to abandon logical positivism before 1950. He refers to "Wittgenstein, P. W. Bridgman, and Karl Popper" (p. 11) in support of his view that theological propositions are meaningless, when in fact Wittgenstein abandoned that view in the 1920s, and Popper has always attacked it. Wilson refers favorably to "pragmatism," but you mustn't think he means anything whatever to do with Pierce, James, or Dewey, and he obviously doesn't know that pragmatism is quite incompatible with logical positivism. It's easy to make a career out of blinding people with science; blinding people with philosophy is more tricky.

At times Wilson comes across as a sort of commonsense or naive realist. He talks about "sensory-sensual 'reality' or ordinary experience, which is the only 'reality' that most of us know anything about" (pp. 17-18). He doesn't seem to appreciate how distant from this ordinary reality is the reality of scientific theories, and toward the end of the book he starts attacking this ordinary reality by advancing the theory that most people are hypnotized most of the time. If this is true, then how can we trust anyone's experience?

Wilson, who makes such a show of hard-headed skepticism about some things, is highly credulous in other departments. Apart from the theory that we're all in a hypnotic trance most of the time, which he got from his namesake, that high priest of credulity, Colin Wilson, he endorses General Semantics, Transactional Analysis, and, as mentioned, Copenhagen subjectivism. Wilson is unshakeably convinced that nothing is certain, and when he comes across any doctrine which lends support to that opinion, he instantly swallows it whole.

Aside from his sins of commission, Wilson is guilty of one major sin of omission—I use the theological metaphor only for the sheer pleasure of annoying him. He offers no reply to the natural Lawyers' favorite ploy: "Whether or not we can produce any good argument for what we call Natural Law (and as a matter of fact, ahem, we have been totally, miserably, and wretchedly unable to produce the faintest glimmering of such an argument, but don't assume that we never will!), we need Natural Law in order to promote libertarianism. Whether it's true or not, Natural Law is a vitally necessary sales pitch."

There are three important counter-arguments. 1. Some of us are incorrigibly interested in what's true, regardless of whether it suits our purposes. 2. Very few people believe in Natural Law, so, as well as convincing people of Libertarianism, we are taking on the additional task of convincing people of Natural Law, which is particularly difficult because no one has ever managed to find a good argument in its favor. 3. Most of the time, the Natural Law libertarians, just like the rest of us, argue that libertarianism will lead to peace and prosperity, will satisfy people's aspirations for a good life more effectively than any alternative strategy of social reform. What's the matter? Don't they really believe this? □

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The "CUP OF HEMLOCK" is out! Today, such work is secretly hire-out-to-the bureau's physical assassins psychologically referred to with a grotesque sense of humor -- as "intelligence agencies"! Is that a fair appraisal of the modern efficient Police State? #382.

Have we been "PRINGLIZED"? Few or none of us dare step to the beat of a different drummer? Treated and taxed, Taxed and Treated, as cradle-to-grave automatons in service to our rulers? ----- #386.

IS YOUR INSURANCE AGENT, your bank, your landlord, working hand-in-hand with "the bureau" to make sure you "Do as you are told"? ----- #387.

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IS WITSGENIN YOURS a Police State? Your perception? When any entity must utilize violent methods to subordinate individuals to strict control of all aspects of life by coercion, is that a clear signal that that system is running out-of-control? ----- #399.

1913:1984 - DID THE FRAMERS of the 16th Amendment (Income tax) "see" what same would do to America? One might argue, politically, that the Amendment effectively metamorphosed the American political State into something foreign, for, surely, the intent of the Founding Fathers of the Constitution was to create justice and freedom, not a Police State. #404.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA began life as a REPUBLIC. Today, our rulers style our "experiment," a Democracy. Why has "Republic" now fallen into disrespect & dishonor? ----- circle-- #412.

NOTE: See 1929 U. S. Army Manual for definition of "Democracy."

WITHOUT JUSTICE, THERE IS NO FREEDOM

A Crank's Case Against the Fed

Jeffrey A. Tucker

"Fed is Expected To Ease Its Grasp on Credit Slightly," said the lead front page headline in the January 30th edition of the *Washington Post*. Unnamed sources within the Federal Reserve had leaked that the Fed "will probably act to loosen credit slightly so that interest rates continue to fall." The *Post* said that the Fed is trying to avoid a recession in 1988, even though Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Fed, doesn't want to be accused of trying to insure a Republican victory in November.

By the old standards, the *Post's* op-ed article would not have been newsworthy, except to a few Wall Street Fed watchers. A year ago, the article would have appeared on page 2 or 3 of the *Post's* usually-scrawny business section. But reporters and editors have rearranged their priorities. The actions of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve—and especially those of its Chairman—have begun to take on new importance, equal to the latest Administration scandal.

This may be temporary, but it illustrates how Washington journalism has changed after the release of William Greider's 800 page tome *Secrets of the Temple*. His in-depth analysis of Fed actions and politics—the most comprehensive in the Fed's seventy-four years—is credible to the mainstream news media. It was written by a respected Washington journalist, not by a member of a small sect of dissident "extremists" talking about a conspiracy of bankers or a return to the gold standard. *Secrets* may help to restore the "money question" to popular debate, and because of this we should be grateful to Greider.

The Fed is the most influential policy-making institution in America—and

maybe the world. Greider sets out to show that it is unaccountable to the electorate (which he does) and that it is undemocratic (which he does). Though his thesis may sound radical, Greider manages to blunt its sharp edge with an incredible array of economic blunders and topsy-turvy logic.

Greider is a "monetary crank," someone who thinks endless prosperity and perfect justice can be created through the printing press. He is also a die-hard Keynesian and a reactionary in the real sense: a true believer in the various faiths of the welfare state, price controls, State interventionism, economic regulation, and egalitarianism.

The book's framework is conflict analysis, primarily between the forces of democracy and capitalism, and secondarily between the rich and the poor. The force of democracy represents the chance for the masses to participate on an equal footing with the rich and powerful in the affairs of state. The other force is that of capitalism, consisting of private capital and high concentrations of wealth (as in: "at the top were the 10 percent of American families that owned 86 percent of the net financial . . ." etc.).

It is between the cracks of capitalism and democracy that Greider places the Federal Reserve System: "an uncomfortable contradiction," an "odd arrangement of public supervision and private interest," a "crucial anomaly at the very core of representative democracy."

Most of the book is a simply written account of how the Fed does its job of increasing and decreasing the money supply. Greider is mainly concerned with the period between the inflation of the late 1970s and the stock market crash of October 1987. He writes fascinating accounts of two Fed bailouts, provides some evidence that Fed chairman Arthur

Burns helped put Nixon in the White House, and presents excerpts from the hundreds of interviews he conducted with former and present Fed and administration officials. He elicits interesting statements from Fed Governors about their policies, and shows how Paul Volcker deflected criticism with a masterful use of the art of obfuscation.

Greider explains the Fed through the eyes of his ideological predecessors, Veblen, Freud, and Keynes, whom he cites *ad nauseam*, in their original prose. The definitive account of cultural corruption, Greider thinks, is in Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class*; nothing can be added to the economic revelation contained in Keynes' *General Theory*; and the whole of psychology is in *The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. With Freud comes the nausea of "ad nauseam"; in ten loathsome pages, Greider regurgitates Freud's anal-erotic analysis of money. That Freud viewed "interest as excrement" and connected "gold with feces" qualifies as "pioneering research" in Greider's mind.

The Purpose of the Fed

On the founding of the Fed in 1913, Greider takes the wholly naive view that the Federal Reserve Act was a compromise between three factions: a populist movement that wanted higher prices and no banking panics, the government which was trying to satisfy the voters, and members of the banking industry who "were still not reconciled to the abandonment of laissez-faire economics."

Though no subject is better suited toward power-elite analysis than the Fed, Greider avoids a rigorous treatment along these lines. He seems unaware of Gabriel Kolko's extraordinary 1963 study of the progressive years, *The Triumph of Conservatism*. In that work Kolko related how a small group of powerful bankers lobbied intensely for the Fed with the intention of using the government as a tool for cartelization and the gaining of profits through inflation. The bankers' rhetoric was a cover for a power-grab. Other historians—from left, right, and libertarian points of view—have confirmed Kolko's account.

In this sense, the banks who fought for the Fed were not unlike the railroads and other industries during the Progressive Era: they were taking advantage of an ideology that justified the granting of special monopoly privileges. Though the Progressive era has been heralded for institutionalizing "cooperation"

between private and "public" interests, all this really meant is that certain private interests gained a towering advantage over the public.

The best framework for an exposé of the Fed would take count of these power elite questions and ask: how does the Fed benefit the government and the banking industry at the expense of the rest of the public through the policy of inflation?

Greider, on the other hand, follows a long line of social-credit theorists and populists, arguing that the Fed *resists* inflating the money supply because it wants to promote sound money and monetary deregulation. Thus when he recounts the monetary experience of the early eighties, he finds that the Fed successfully accomplished "what it took to be its highest purpose, the virtual elimination of dollar inflation."

Contrary to what Greider thinks, the Fed's purpose is not to "control the overall expansion of credit." Nowhere does it operate with the "singular objective of 'hard money.'" These assertions run contrary to the mountains of empirical evidence and logical explanations demonstrating that it is not sound money but inflation which benefits the banks. The Fed is like the counterfeiter who discreetly prints as much money as possible, always being on guard not to get caught.

Greider's thesis is not a new one, but, as Ludwig von Mises wrote in *Human Action*, "it is a fable that governments interfered with banking in order to restrict the issue of fiduciary media and to prevent credit expansion. The idea that guided government was, on the contrary, the lust for inflation and credit expansion."

It is perhaps ironic that Greider has unwittingly adopted his own theory of money from the social credit populists, whom he ridicules for their "febrile anti-Semitism" and their "demented" conspiracy theories about the Fed's goal of "world domination." The populists—Wickliffe B. Vennrd, Major Douglas, Father Charles Coughlin, the *Spotlight*, etc.—have wanted to nationalize the banking industry, put it into the hands of Congress, abolish interest, and have unlimited monetary inflation. Greider too wants to have Congress take over the Fed, he attacks usury as "self-devouring" and a "sin," and he wants a "return to inflation."

Greider embraces populism's crack-pot economics but throws out its power elite analysis.

Crack-Pot Economics

Greider doesn't take into account the effect that inflationary expectations have on interest rates and the incentives to save and invest. Interest rates are not "the price of money," as Greider says many times. No one borrows money in order to hoard it; consumers take out loans in order to purchase specific goods and services. Because they choose to borrow instead of save, the interest rates reflect the degree to which individuals

The Fed has been defiling the dollar for seventy years, and that's not because we, the victims of the system, want it that way. It has remained secure because we are powerless to do anything about it.

prefer goods and services sooner rather than later. And if interest rates reflect time preferences, they are subject to individual's expectations of the future.

The book contains one completely erroneous chapter on the "money illusion." The money illusion occurs during inflationary times when workers' wages increase along with consumer prices, thus making illusory the apparent increase in purchasing power. Keynesians celebrate this effect because they believe that declining labor costs will lead businesses to expand outputs. Austrian economists point out that inflation-induced investment cannot pan out in the long run because it is based on truly illusory expectations: when people catch on to the illusion, the investments based on it fall to ruin. Greider, however, is completely outside the loop, saying the money illusion occurs when "the mind confers real value and elaborate power on these mere scraps of paper." That's an interesting point, but it has nothing to do with the money illusion. It has to do with Mises's regression theorem, but Greider is a long way from that.

Greider's head is so deeply buried in the *General Theory* that he can't understand how the money supply and interest rates can go up at the same time. And he fails to mention how new injections of credit distort interest rates, hinder economic calculation, elicit malinvestments,

rearrange the structure of production, and produce economic booms and busts. The 1970s seems to have taught everyone but Greider that high inflation isn't good. He says, for example:

A social philosopher, searching for a progressive theory of justice, might contemplate the underlying consequences of inflation and conclude that this system was a promising model for social equity. Inflation, after all, discreetly redistributed wealth from creditors to debtors, from those who had an excess to those who had none.

But there is a subtlety in this argument that should not be missed. Greider argues that specific groups benefit from inflation, primarily the poor and elderly. They do so because "government benefit programs for low-income families" shelter the "poor from rising costs" through "Medicaid and public housing." Similarly, the "elderly" are "partially protected" because Social Security is "indexed to the inflation rate, automatically increasing the monthly checks periodically to catch up with prices."

Thus Greider argues that inflation's beneficiaries are not the poor and elderly in general, but only those whose incomes are statutorily indexed to increase with prices or are given free housing. The argument would then presumably apply to union workers, and of course politicians, bureaucrats, and central bankers. Greider's argument can therefore be restated: it is only the State-connected who get a boon from inflation. The ordinary taxpayer loses through diminution of his savings, a debased currency, and higher taxes required to pay for more government benefits.

(It should be noted, however, that it is precisely this aspect of inflation—the Cost of Living Adjustments—that keeps the poor from leaving their state of dependence on the government and working toward one of independence. Even if a poor person wanted to drop welfare, he is not very likely to leave a system that protects him from the ravages of inflation to one where inflation ravages him.)

If the inflationary bias of the book infected only its policy conclusions, we could ignore it. But it permeates the entire book, so that Fed governors become good

guys when they vote for super-loose money and selfish when they only want a moderate amount. The inflation of 1978-80 is granted only a few pages but the recession of 1981-1983 gets 250 detailed pages.

The reader of *Secrets* is led to believe that Volcker is the king of tight money and root canal economics, but the opposite is true. He presided over enormous monetary inflation during Reagan's presidency. The money supply, as measured by M-2, grew an average of 11.4% from 1981-86 (compared with 9% from 1975-1980). And while much of it occurred after 1982, the Fed pumped money into the economy at a pace of 9% per year from 1979 to 1981. No tight money here. Good grief, Mr. Greider, why didn't you mention this in your book?

In typical Keynesian fashion, the book lumps together complex individual economic relationships into huge piles. For example, he says "the fundamental weakness of the 1920's prosperity . . . was not that Americans were profligate, spending too much and saving too little, but the opposite." Updating this phony analysis, he says "the fundamental disorder of the 1980s was essentially the same one that Keynes and the New Deal liberals had identified—there was already too much supply and not enough demand."

This kind of thinking leads to New Deal schemes in which the government spends more money to increase "aggregate demand." And even worse, it leads

to central planning. Perhaps that's why Greider calls the World War II economy a "model of the possible," and laments that "no one, including the most ardent Keynesian planners, has ever figured out how to re-create a comparable combination of creative sacrifices in peacetime or how to sell it to a free society."

This analysis is hopelessly wrong and destructive. Economic problems can only be understood and solved when we understand that economics means ana-

Greider is a "monetary crank," someone who thinks endless prosperity and perfect justice can be created through the printing press. He is also a reactionary in the real sense: a true believer in the various faiths of the welfare state, price controls, State interventionism, economic regulation, and egalitarianism.

lyzing the actions of individuals in the market, not huge and phony agglomerations.

The Solution

Since its founding, says Greider, the Fed's "basic design probably changed less than any other important operating arm of the federal government." That's because "it somehow 'worked'—that is, the Federal Reserve seemed to provide what the American system wanted. Otherwise, surely, it would have been changed." The Fed has been defiling the dollar for seventy years, and that's not because we, the victims of the system, want it that way. It has remained secure because we are powerless to do anything about it. Milton Friedman was right: "the

U.S. would have been far better off if the Federal Reserve System had never been established."

Greider's solution—having Congress print unlimited amounts of money—would be as bad, or worse, as having the Fed Cartel do it. Under both conditions, the government controls the lifeblood of the economy. The point is to break up the State's money monopoly which means abolishing central banking and fiat money, and erecting a wall of separation between money and the State. Money should be put back into the hands of the free market, which was responsible for its development in the first place.

Greider argues that this can't be done because the market has a fundamental flaw: there is "no natural stop valve to control its appetites." Nothing in the market allows for people to distinguish between the "normal desire for profit and the destructiveness of greed."

On the contrary, one desirable aspect of the market is that it directs the greed of a capitalist toward the service of others in society. To feed his greed, the capitalist must provide goods and services others want and need.

Of course, no social order can insure that men always strive for virtue. But only capitalism can turn an unintrusive vice into a net social benefit. The government has no such built-in check on vice, yet Greider is counting on it to correct the market's shortcomings. Success in the government—its agencies run by interest-seeking individuals—is best won through the cunning use of the very vices Greider derides. Contrary to Greider, there is no natural valve to control the State's appetite when it has a monopoly on money and credit.

Secrets of the Temple has brought attention to the Fed, and attention is just what the central bankers try so hard to avoid. The Fed governors have good reason to fear the public eye, considering the damage they have wrought on the American economy.

Let's hope this new interest in monetary policy leads not only to the abolition of Fed, but also to the abandonment of the politics of inflation—which is just the opposite of Greider's intention. □



"You don't understand now, son, but you will when you're absolutely corrupt."

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Booknotes

Forty-Eight Minutes

A Night in the Life of the N.B.A.

by Bob Ryan and Terry Pluto
Macmillan, 1987, \$16.95

At first glance, basketball and libertarianism might seem totally unrelated. Professional basketball, for instance, is played by extremely tall black men paid more than the average Fortune 500 CEO, to the thunderous cheers of packed houses. The libertarian movement, on the other hand, is heavily populated with medium sized white people, mostly male, making considerably less money for their labors, and usually nothing for their political/intellectual crusading.

However, of all major pro sports, basketball may be the most "libertarian." In contrast to baseball and football, most teams are profitable and play in non-government owned facilities. The rarified world of the 200+ plus NBA players is full of true entrepreneurs, who are paid top dollar according to their individual talents and contributions. They recently dissolved their own union when it seemed it was getting in the way of business. Basketball also boasts what is surely the most libertarian moniker of any pro sports player, the Houston Rockets' World B. Free, (né Lloyd Free), who puts even James Libertarian Burns to shame.

Finally, and most importantly, several of *Liberty's* editors are big fans of the game, which surely must say something for its importance.

And they won't be disappointed with *Forty-Eight Minutes*, co-written by sportswriters for the *Boston Globe* and *Akron Beacon*. In an easy to read treatment, the authors detail a basket-by-basket account of an action packed game played on January 16, 1987 between the young and vigorous Cleveland Cavaliers and the venerable champs of the sport, the Boston Celtics. The authors provide considerable background and insight into not only this single game (which was played at historical Boston Garden into overtime) but the entire sport of basketball.

Key coaching decisions are analyzed, suspicions about referees confirmed, and players and coaches profiled. A snapshot of one night in the life of two NBA teams is provided in an entertaining, crisply done narrative. —MH

Jury Nullification

Volume 1

compiled by Mike Timko
Libertarian Press, 1987, \$9.00

Jury nullification, for those unfamiliar with the term, is the notion that trial juries can and should decide issue of law as well as fact. Jury nullification is discouraged and officially forbidden in most jurisdictions in the U. S., although a few states do recognize its validity. But once understood and practiced by individual citizens, it is virtually impossible to prevent. It is one way government-manufactured injustice can be peacefully stopped by ordinary citizens in the performance of their civic duties. It is also a hot topic in the tax protest movement, whose challenges on constitutional grounds have met with countless courtroom defeats.

Mike Timko's self-published book has three major sections: an essay by Timko on "Jury Nullification Through the Initiative Process"; a reprint, from the sociological journal *Social Problems*, of Steven Barkan's article "Jury Nullification in Political Trials"; and a reprint of Lysander Spooner's classic work on the subject, "An Essay on the Trial by Jury."

Timko's own essay suggests an intriguing political tactic: petitioning for a statewide initiative in favor of explicit recognition for the right of jurors to decide the law. Even if such initiatives don't succeed, he argues, at least the educational process will be advanced. He even suggests petitioning on the courthouse steps, in front of prospective jurors, which is a clever idea all on its own.

Barkan's 1983 essay, which includes an extensive bibliography, is alone worth the price of the book. Although

Barkan is sympathetic to jury nullification, he points out its pitfalls as well as its benefits. Suppose juries fail to enforce good laws because they want to protect evil-doers, express racial prejudice, or enforce political bias. Barkan also provides a history of nullification, tracing its roots in English and American common law, and early Supreme Court decisions. His own political leaning is evident in his sympathy for the use of nullification during protest trials over the Vietnam War, and in a section of his essay that is stuffed with jargon and Marxist sociological analysis. This seems forced and is mercifully brief. It doesn't greatly mar the essay.

By far the largest portion of the book is occupied by the Spooner essay, directly reprinted (in small, dark archaic type-style) from the original 1852 booklet. Spooner's work is largely based upon British common law and his own legal philosophy.

While Spooner's style is occasionally pedantic, his pedantry leads him to provide enough citations to make this essay the point of departure for modern libertarian jury nullification advocates. —MH

City of Nets

A Portrait of Hollywood in the 1940s

Otto Friedrich

Harper & Row, 1986, \$10.95

In 1926, former *New Yorker* theater critic Herman Mankiewicz wired his friend Ben Hecht suggesting that Hecht move to Hollywood to write for the movies: "Millions are to be grabbed out here, and your only competition is idiots!" Hecht came, and so did others. Mankiewicz was right: before long, Hecht was demanding \$1,000 a day, in cash payable at the end of each day's work.

By the late 1930s, Hollywood money had drawn a remarkable number of writers and other members of the intelligentsia to the California Babylon: F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Thomas Mann, Bertold Brecht, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Shoenberg . . . So Hollywood became not only the center of the world's most prosperous industry but also something of an intellectual hub.

In *City of Nets*, Otto Friedrich tries to weave into some sort of coherent fabric the cultural and historic threads that came together in Hollywood during the 1940s. As in *Before the Deluge*, his book about Weimar Berlin, Friedrich is not altogether successful, but that may be more because of the grandiosity of his ambition

than any lack of skill as a history writer.

For he accomplishes much: in the course of about 500 pages he manages to chronicle the rise of the film industry to its pinnacle in the war years to its ruin during the early days of television, all the time integrating the ephemeral world of the movies into the political world of fascism, Stalinism, and war and the broader intellectual and artistic worlds. His discussion of Ayn Rand's Hollywood years and of the rise and fall of communist influence in films will be of special interest to libertarians. —RWB

Cultural Conservatism

Toward a New National Agenda

Institute for Cultural Conservatism
Free Congress Research and Education
Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1987

Capitol Hill conservatives are finally at peace with Washington's permanent government. For raising funds outside the beltway, though, they still sell government bashing and free market rhetoric. Distributed on the Hill as a political tract, *Cultural Conservatism* unwittingly exposes their esoteric creed, and that's why Capitol Hill conservatives may be sorry it was ever written. The book argues that conservatives should quit talking about trimming the size of government; instead they should take it over and use its coercive power to implement "values." They intend to "revive one of the central tenets of President Roosevelt's New Deal: experimentalism" with an "activist government."

Paul Weyrich—who runs the Institute for Cultural Conservatism and Free Congress and a zillion other conservative organizations—is the most influential conservative activist on the Hill. But the blatant statism of this 146 page book embarrassed even the *Washington Times*. "Sometimes they sound like socialists," the right-wing paper said.

The welfare state shouldn't be cut. "Instead of leading the fight against welfare, conservatives will help lead the fight for it," says Weyrich's Institute. "We will make cultural welfare our top priority in the competition for Federal funds, equal in our view to defense." The government should implement pro-family policies, like giving special breaks to "traditional" families, encouraging businesses to pay a "family wage," and outlawing no-fault divorce. And the Institute wants to "expand the current, broad-based 'Say no' campaign, now focused on drug use, to include premarital sex." Cultural Conservatives should also support tariffs,

new government retirement benefits, and "government funds" that are "available only to provide homes for families." On and on it goes.

In one ridiculous proposal, they suggest reforming bureaucracies so the employees will have the right "values" and "believe" in what they are doing. Of course, nobody thinks this plan will actually work. More likely, *Cultural Conservatism* is the cover for a jobs program for right-wingers worried about their post-Reagan careers. What could be more secure than a government job?

If this book does reach the grass roots level, one can only hope that the pro-freedom masses will realize that the New Right is not the Old Right and has no relation to the principled individualism of Felix Morley, Frank Chodorov, and Robert Taft. Then the masses will unify under the banner of "Get Weyrich Off Our Back." —JAT

The Secret Kingdom

Pat Robertson

Nelson, 1983 [Bantam 1984] \$3.50

Answers to 200

of Life's Most Probing Questions

Pat Robertson

Nelson, 1984 [Bantam 1987] \$3.95

Libertarians may disagree with Pat Robertson's social and foreign policy, but doesn't Pat believe in free markets? Not if we can judge from what he has written. Capitalism is okay and profits aren't evil, he says, but to correct capitalism's "abuses" the government should follow Biblical principles. That means the government should redistribute all "wealth," "means of production," and "money" after every seventh sabbatical year. And usury, i.e. charging interest, should be outlawed.

These are some of the surprises that can be found in two books written before he started his failed bid for the presidency. In *Answers* we also find Robertson's views on industrial organization: "the unfettered laissez-faire concept of Adam Smith led to the free-booting robber barons of the nineteenth century." The story of these "monopolists" is "not a pretty one."

Why didn't the media follow up on Robertson's proposal for a Federal Sunday School program? He writes that under his "ideal taxation system . . . 10 percent of everyone's income would go toward religious instruction, teaching, and worship so that the whole population could be instructed in the Word of

God. Then, another 10 percent could go for welfare, roads, harbors, various social projects, old age relief, and any other social needs."

In *Answers* you will find out how the world will end and why Pat believes that Israel was created to be a sign that the Last Days are on schedule (in theological terminology, Robertson is a post-tribulation premillennialist). You will also find out whether or not you should learn to speak in tongues (the answer is yes), and how to lose weight (eat right, exercise, and pray).

The Secret Kingdom is not quite so down-to-earth as *Answers*. It is directed toward convincing Pat's cadre that miracles can happen and that God has a plan for their lives, if they would only follow His laws. But like *Answers*, it contains the recommendation that all wealth be redistributed and all debts canceled every fifty years. He must mean it.

Both books are fascinating reading, and both serve as wonderful cultural studies. There is, of course, no reason to be intolerant of someone's religious views. That goes for views that are theologically rigorous as well as for Robertson's pop apologetics. But Robertson's ideas take on new significance when we realize that this guy wants to rule us. —JAT

Before the Revolution

A View of Russia Under the Last Tsar

Kyрил FitzLyon and Tatiana Browning

Overlook Press, 1978, \$19.95

This book, which was originally published a decade ago, is now showing up on remainder tables, often at a great deal less than \$19.95. It's worth a great deal more. The first 50 pages contain a tightly condensed but learned and informative account of the Tsarist political, social, and cultural order. After these pages comes the book's reason for being—photographs, more than 300 photographs, at least 100 of which are magically compelling views of a world so far removed from our own as to seem almost extra-planetary, yet so close to our own (only a few miles, only a few years) as to inspire an intense sympathy and nostalgia.

Sympathy and nostalgia may be felt even when approval is not. In this book the ugliness, restrictiveness, and mere silliness of Tsarist society are plainly evident: who could approve of it? Sympathy and nostalgia need not originate in regret for some tragic loss. The Tsarist instinct for self-destruction was tragic enough in

its stupid way, but the loss of Tsarism itself was hardly tragic. Sympathy may arise merely from the impression of other people (somewhat like ourselves, we imagine) doing the best they can in a tough situation. It may arise from a picture of two peasants in a little horse-cart struggling through a sea of mud toward a tiny village lost in infinite rolling fields. Sympathy may arise from a picture of crew-cut students in the Emperor's corps of pages grinning at each other as they form couples for a dancing lesson. It is 1894: how many of these 16-year-olds will die in the pointless conflict of 1914? These people, too, lost in an overpowering landscape—not endless fertile fields, this time, but a vast cold ballroom dominated by gargantuan portraits of dictators Nicholas I and Nicholas II. It is the landscape of

history.

Nostalgia may arise merely from an inspection of landscapes that are understandable to us but forever inaccessible. Here on p. 145 is a view of the last Tsar's coronation procession entering Moscow through (heavy irony) the Triumphal Gate. The next two pages present a panorama of the Moscow river as it flows past a medieval wall and a dozen churches of fantastic shapes, while over the river and along the quays pass hundreds of human beings (all long dead), and in the foreground a tree just struggles into leaf beside a pile of wood neatly stacked for burning. Of that time and place, only some momentary shafts of light endure, preserved by the camera. But from them any willing imagination can recreate a world. —SC

jerk egoist entertainment. The situation and the characters are treated with an extraordinarily well-developed moral imagination, and the situation and the choices the girl makes are recognized as complex (and irrevocable). The film's moral perspective is appropriately ambiguous. I doubt if many viewers will come away from the film with the feeling that they have been preached at—or dragged through a morass of immorality.

—TWV

PRC Forum: Barbara Branden
\$14.95, Video-Sig *

The anonymous interviewer who questions Barbara Branden in this videotaped interview does more than just ask the simple questions that we expect. He asks her about her life B.R. (before Rand), about her intellectual development and about the rump Objectivist movement that operates in Rand's name today.

What would Rand have thought of Branden's biography *The Passion of Ayn Rand*? "I believe she would not have liked my book," Branden tell us, though she doubts that Rand would have reacted by denouncing the book in the fashion of her more slavish followers. "Ayn would not have denounced a book that she hadn't read."

What does Branden think of the Ayn Rand Institute? "It is a very small group of people, who mostly talk to each other, which appears to me to have taken Ayn's sense of being in a hostile universe to an incredible extreme and seem determined to prove . . . that they are lonely martyrs fighting for a lost cause."

In this videotape, the camera never moves from Barbara Branden. The interviewer is never seen or credited, which is too bad: it is his questions that put this interview a cut above the other recordings of Branden available today. The video quality is reasonably good, and the intellectual quality exceeds expectations for this sort of thing.

—RWB

PRC Forum: Ed Crane
\$14.95, Video-Sig *

Those who are curious about what Ed Crane is up to, now that he has left his high-visibility position as Libertarian Party boss and confined his energies to the Cato Institute, "a two million dollar think tank, a small think tank" that he heads, might want to monitor this video

* For information, write: Video-Sig, 1030 East Duane Ave., Suite C, Sunnyvale, CA 94086

Videonotes

**The Little Girl
Who Lived Down the Lane**
released on videotape by
Vestron Video

This film is often labeled Horror or Suspense in the video stores, though it is certainly *not* the former, and barely qualifies as the latter. In truth, it is a unique film, comparable only to Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt*, which it resembles chiefly for being a story of a girl's rite of passage into adulthood, under somewhat macabre circumstances.

The girl of the title (played brilliantly by Jodie Foster) lives alone in a house that her father leased for her before he died. Her father (who died before the action of the film takes place) also prepared her for more than just the average hassles of life. A poet, he knew good and well how little respect she would get as a 13 year-old "child." He knew that the only way she could succeed in her independent life was by subterfuge: by making her neighbors (and the police) believe that her father is still alive. The element of suspense in the film results from the ever-present possibility of her being found out by her meddling, sometimes threatening,

neighbors.

Her landlord's son (Martin Sheen) is her chief threat: a ne'er-do-well child molester, he won't take no—"no, my father is not home," and "no, you can't get in touch with him"—for an answer. But her life is not totally devoid of human companionship, as she befriends (and takes as a lover and co-conspirator) a clever, but physically handicapped neighborhood boy (Scott Jacoby).

This film was recommended to me by an Objectivist, which is not surprising. It is about individual autonomy, or self-government, and the struggle young people have in obtaining sanction from the community for acting freely and responsibly. It is also about taking the ultimate step in self-government: self-protection—even to the point of killing to maintain independence. Partisans of alienation can only delight in an exploration of this theme.

Though I suppose the film can be viewed as a subtle revenge thriller, I think it is much too sophisticated to be pigeon-holed as *merely* this sort of knee-

interview with him.

When Crane advises that Cato's proposal for a semi-voluntary, semi-private alternative to Social Security was its finest hour, it doesn't sound quite consistent with his earlier admonition "Never trust anybody who was even elected to his high school student council." This advice may be laudable, but one wonders how well such frankness equips one to lobby politicians.

"The great achievement of Ronald Reagan was to bring back some interest in political philosophy. He was able to articulate a vision of getting the government off our backs, a respect for rights, the efficacy of the free market, that America should be proud of its history and its social institutions. That is a major achievement, because he did it in a context of a series of presidents from Carter to Ford to Nixon to Johnson—people who were not interested in political philosophy. It had got to the point where it was considered somewhat naive to raise the issues that Reagan raised. It turned out that people responded very, very enthusiastically to these ideas."

What went wrong with the Reagan presidency? "The problem with Reagan, in my view, is that he turned out to be not a very good administrator . . . What we need is a combination of Reagan's vision—the basic idea of the goodness of our society, of respect for individual rights, and a minimal role for government—with a more hardnosed, sophisticated approach dealing with the entrenched bureaucracy and the nature of politics."

Crane comes across as an articulate advocate of his brand of "real world" libertarianism. Although many libertarians retain a hostility toward Crane's abandonment of the Libertarian Party after his candidate failed to obtain the 1984 nomination and toward what they perceive as Crane's if-I-can't-run-the-movement-it-can-go-to-hell attitude, it is plain that Crane and Cato remain in the libertarian camp, even if they live in Washington, D.C., and expend their energy trying to influence public policy.

As in the Barbara Branden interview reviewed above, the camera never moves from its subject. This interview is a "talking head" video in the most literal sense. —RWB

Into the Homeland

HBO Pictures, 1988

starring Powers Boothe, C. Thomas Howell, Paul LeMat, Lesli Linda Glatter, Cindy Pickett, Ayre Gross

This made-for-cable-TV movie is up to the usual made-for-television standards. In other words, it's not very good. While the acting ranges from fair to pretty good, and the premise involving an Aryan-Nation type neo-Nazi cult should be rich territory, this effort fails to overcome a confused and messy plotline that is riddled with more holes than the dogma spouted by the "American Libertarian Movement" bully boys who serve as the villains.

Powers Boothe puts in a likeable and strong performance as the ex-cop turned surfboard manufacturer looking for a missing daughter who may have been snatched up for reasons unknown by the sinister ALM in the middle of Wyoming (see what I mean about the plot?), but his talents are not enough to overcome the continual implausibilities put forth by the scriptwriters. More than once the story appears to be heading off into some semi-reasonable territory, especially during the first half of the film. Eventually, however, it falls victim to a "let's get this thing over

with quick and under budget" mentality that ruins any substance or coherence the movie might have had.

There are real right-wing loonies out there who really look and act like some of the jokers in the film, with their populist messages and militant organization preying on the gullible and desperate. An interesting film could be done. But this isn't it.

These movie Nazis look more clean cut and wholesome than most of my suburban neighbors, but are conveniently so stupid and weak minded that the only danger they seem to pose is shooting each other with their barns full of M-16s. The heir apparent Führer is de-programmed instantly when he learns that the kidnapped daughter, a/k/a his girlfriend, is half Hispanic.

The daughter gets rescued (although why she was kidnapped and what happened to her are scarcely explained) and the bad guys mostly get killed (by the feds, who mysteriously arrive just in time for a full assault). By the end, even Boothe seems hard put to believe his own lines.

Into the Homeland rates 1/2 star as HBO's contribution to the "terrorist threat of the week" offerings. —MH

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Liberty 71

A Taxing Woman. A Juzo Itami film.
Starring Nobuko Miyamoto as Kyoko Itakura
and Tsutomu Yamazaki as Hideki Gondo. 1987. 127 minutes. English subtitles.

Compelling Payment, Compelling Film

David Hudson

A Taxing Woman is a Japanese film intended for Japanese audiences, but its importance goes beyond Japanese context. Its theme, the modern State's compulsion to extract tax revenues forcibly from the self-employed and the small businessman, is one that American popular culture—novels, movies and TV shows—almost completely ignores.

Most books about taxes are the work of people protesting the income tax, technical guides intended primarily for lawyers and accountants, or popular guides that tell the layman what deductions he may take and still be in "compliance" with the whims of the IRS. The only novel on this theme I know about is *Heiland*,* by tax resister Franklin Sanders (1986). This novel has an excellent premise, a strong and convincing main character and a beginning that is worthy of Orwell's *1984*. Alas, the secondary characters are poorly developed, and the appeal of the book is severely limited by its constant references to and quotations from the Bible.

The only American movie I am aware of on the tax issue is the disappointing *Harry's War* (1981), in which the Casper Milquetoast Harry suddenly and uncharacteristically becomes an anti-tax tiger when the IRS mercilessly harasses his aunt (Geraldine Page) for a wholly unreasonable assessment on her antique store, driving her to an early grave. This movie features weak characters, and degenerates into a formula chase and shoot-em-up ending, where nobody really gets hurt.

Why is this? I suspect the creative community is simply afraid of the IRS. Authors and publishers, producers and directors are just as subject to audit as anyone else. Who would be a more inviting target than one who dared to tweak

the bill of the most feared and despised agency of the American government? Even the flagship libertarian publication, *Reason*, soft-pedals the tax issue. Their tax columnist, Warren Solomon, is a compliance junkie who would fit right in as a speechwriter for Mike Dukakis, who wants to balance the Federal budget by increasing tax compliance.

So, we must look abroad for a serious cinematic study of the issue of the micro-economic effect of taxation on the individual tax slave. Fortunately, director Juzo Itami gives us one, in a movie that at least should get a showing in repertory theaters in larger urban areas.

Kyoko Itakura is a Tokyo-based auditor for the Japanese IRS. *A Taxing Woman* introduces her having lunch with a rookie tax auditor in a restaurant where all the tabs are not rung up on the cash register. Ryoko—her nickname to her colleagues in the auditor's office—soon moves on to a small grocery store operated by an elderly couple.

The couple is "diverting" ¥80,000 worth of inventory per month for their personal use. Ryoko explains to the couple that, since their store is incorporated, they must pay the store this amount, which of course is additional taxable income to the business. She is "lenient." Since the business has only been operating for eight months, she multiplies ¥80,000 times eight, for an additional ¥640,000 on which tax must be paid. "You act so polite, but you're just a bloodsucker," the wife rages at Ryoko.

Lest we become too sympathetic with these "taxpayers," we are next introduced to the owner of a video game arcade who is skimming from each day's receipts. Ryoko discovers his transgression when she orders him to empty the contents of an airline flight bag. There she finds over ¥330,000 in cash, including a marked ¥10,000 note she had spend there the previous day. In the twinkling of an eye, assisted only by a pocket calculator, Ryoko computes a potential tax liability

for the hapless businessman in excess of ¥4 million over the preceding five years. The arcade owner gets no sympathy or help from his accountant, who is present at the interview. "Anything you hid is taxable," this faithless retainer tells his client. The arcade owner goes berserk.

But Ryoko is a crack auditor after bigger fish than these. She is soon assigned to audit Hideki Gondo, the 46-year old owner of a string of five "love motels," and a real estate speculator. When we are introduced to Gondo, we are told in no uncertain terms that he is a real no-goodnik.

A "love motel" is a no-questions-asked motel where Japanese men take their mistresses or prostitutes for a few hours of pleasure. There are no check-in procedures, and all payments are in cash. The rates are high and overhead is low. Profits are 60–65% of gross receipts. All in all, this is an ideal set-up for tax evasion. With tax rates as high as 56–65% if you include local taxes—there's no wonder the Japanese government wants to be fully cut in as Gondo's "partner" in these enterprises.

Gondo is a widower with a common-law wife and a mistress on the side. He is chauffeured around Tokyo in a white Rolls-Royce. He has secret bank accounts, hidden safe deposit boxes and a floor-to-ceiling, walk-in safe in his luxurious Tokyo home that is literally crammed full of gold bars and neatly-bound stacks of ¥10,000 banknotes. In an early scene, Gondo mutters to himself as he locks his safe for the night, "To hell with the taxman. Catch me if you can."

Ryoko gives Gondo a thorough going-over. She audits his books and records, the records of his suppliers, and his bank accounts. She is suspicious but finds no evidence of wrong-doing, and the case is closed—but not for long.

After closing out her audit of Gondo, Ryoko is promoted to the elite investigative staff of the Tokyo Metropolitan Tax Investigation Office, the shock troops of the Japanese IRS. They show no mercy to anyone. In a series of raids on suspected tax evaders, tax inspectors dig up flowerbeds, ransack homes and offices, confiscate books and records, paw through carrying cases, women's purses, a schoolboy's knapsack, and even conduct strip searches of women, all in the search for undeclared cash and incriminating records. And they always find it—Director Juzo Itami never shows these Japanese KGB making a mistake.

The tax inspectors treat all third-party

* Excerpted in *Liberty*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Dec 1987), under the title "Going Home."

records and taxpayer records as extensions of their own files, as Gondo finds out to his dismay. A former mistress—cruelly cast aside by Gondo early in the film—makes an anonymous call to the tax inspectors, and tips them off to the fact that Gondo's daily records from his hotels are torn up and put out with the garbage each morning. The case is reopened, and assigned to Ryoko.

This tip is all Ryoko needs. With a colleague, she stakes out Gondo's home, and follows the garbage truck that picks up his trash to the dump. There, our heroine and her sidekick paw through the day's refuse, until they find the incriminating records. Taped together and examined by the green-

eyeshade boys back at the office, the tax inspector's office determines that Gondo has undeclared income of ¥250 million per year, or ¥1.25 billion over the preceding five years. That's just under \$10 million at today's exchange rates (\$1.00 = ¥128.00).

A task force of 100 agents is assembled to raid Gondo's home, five hotels, bank, suppliers, his mistress' apartment—33 locations in all. The raid is carried off with clockwork precision, and almost everything is discovered—Gondo's secret safe, his hidden safe deposit boxes, his secret bank account and the "real" records of his love hotels. Gondo's accountant and book-keeper try to "hide" in one of the hotel rooms with the records, but this does not stop the tax collectors. They just barge in on unsuspecting couples until they corner their prey.

Six months go by, with Gondo interrogated in court almost every day. The movie ends as Ryoko confronts Gondo after a long court session. Give it up, she counsels. Gondo counters by asking Ryoko to give up "this tax business" and move in with him. She slowly shakes her head no, and then Gondo gives up. He writes, in his own blood from a cut he makes on his index finger, the number of the safe deposit box containing his last ¥300 million. Then he walks off into the grim Tokyo evening, thoroughly beaten.

This film treats the tax collector—not the tax slave—as the hero. The villain is portrayed as a sleazy owner of a disreputable business; if Ryoko and her pals

went only after elderly owners of grocery stores it would be a lot harder to portray the tax collectors in a sympathetic manner.

The tax officials are portrayed as grim, efficient and honest; none more so than Kyoko Itakura herself. Ryoko is a divorced single parent of a 5-year old son whom she neglects so she can better pursue her career. She is one of the best and

ly unacceptable there than here.

What is surprising is that Gondo is treated in a fairly sympathetic manner, given the enormity of his "crime." We are told, through the actions of his troubled teen-aged son, that his unacceptable actions towards the tax collector stem from the trauma following the death of his wife, many years earlier. Ryoko clearly demonstrates that she empathizes with Gondo's problems as a father, and even defends Gondo to his son, as she and her colleagues are rooting through Gondo's home.

A *Taxing Woman* is a breath-taking triumph. Nobuko Miyamoto as Ryoko and Tsutomu Yamazaki as Gondo give brilliant, Oscar-caliber performances. But the real strength of

the film is in Director Itami's pacing. Scene follows scene in a logical manner, the main characters and secondary characters are fully developed, and the photography, especially the outdoor scenes of Tokyo, is exquisite without dominating the story line or acting.

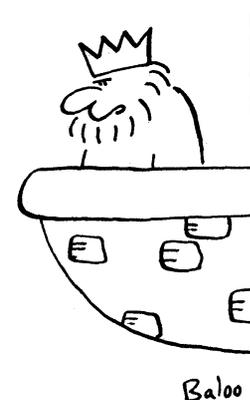
Ultimately, the film succeeds because of its brutally realistic treatment of the tax collector at her work. No trick or degradation of their victims is beneath their "dignity." Long hours and lost weekends are routine; Ryoko has no personal life whatever. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is more important than making Gondo and other tax cheats pay their "fair share."

This film, alas, is one that all too many American small businessmen will be able to fundamentally relate to their lives; it is a tragedy precisely because it is so true. □

Japan, much more than the United States, is the home of the "salaryman," whose taxes are withheld at the source and has no opportunity to defend himself from the foragings of his government. Japanese, we are told, have a higher degree of civic responsibility than Americans, including a more "positive" attitude towards paying taxes.

the brightest, seeking approval from her peers and superiors above all else. Her success comes as much from her dedication to her job and capacity for hard work as from her native ability. Her targets are all knowingly guilty, none-too-clever liars despite their best efforts, and are always undone in the end.

It should not be surprising that a mainstream Japanese director portrayed the tax collector as the hero in a film whose theme is taxation. Japan, much more than the United States, is the home of the "salaryman," whose taxes are withheld at the source and has no opportunity to defend himself from the foragings of his government. Japanese, we are told, have a higher degree of civic responsibility than Americans, including a more "positive" attitude towards paying taxes. Thus tax "cheating" is much more social-



"If you're so worried about taxes, just remember—every time somebody takes a shot at me, my insurance rates go up!"

continued from page 8

a campaign—as I agree it is—what sort of expedience would follow a victory? It no longer surprises me that so many sincere people don't trust the anti-government promises of even a Libertarian politician, but instead look only to themselves for consistent individualism and personal protection.

James B. Smith
Shrewsbury, Mass.

No Tolerance for the Intolerant

Although both Dentinger and Rothbard make good points in their articles, they both show conspicuous signs of intolerance for members of our movement: Dentinger for the conservative leaning members and Rothbard toward the more uninhibited members of our movement. Intolerance has no place in the libertarian movement. The Party of non-intervention was conceived with the idea of live and let live.

Jerome T. Shockley
Cusseta, Ala.

Shouting Match

In "The Majority vs The Majoritarian: Robert Bork on Trial" (*Liberty*, March 1988), Sheldon Richman writes that "Bork stands as the latest illustration of what a weak reed utilitarianism is for libertarianism. Without a commitment to rights and the justice of individual liberty, one should not expect a long-term commitment to a free society." He seems to be saying that liberty is contrary to self-interest, and that only self-sacrifice to an ideology can achieve freedom.

Natural-rights ideology is insufficient to change other peoples' commitment to the anti-freedom ideologies they already hold. The resulting ideological debate is a shouting match in which each side essentially keeps asserting over and over, "You're evil and I'm right!"

Fortunately, libertarians don't always go into this dead end. Libertarians frequently rely on utilitarian arguments to promote freedom. Richman's own successful Institute for Humane Studies program overwhelmingly relies on articles that make a practical case for freedom.

Hans G. Schroeder
Publisher, *The Pragmatist*

The Forgotten 10th

Sheldon Richman's essay on Robert Bork refers to the forgotten 9th Amendment, but doesn't mention the even more forgotten 10th Amendment. A pity, because the 10th is the ideal entry point for a

libertarian who wants to understand the Constitution.

Twice Richman states: "the national government could do only what it was specifically allowed to do in the Constitution," but gives the impression that this "strict construction" rule is only the opinion of the Federalists or of James Madison. It's much more than that. It's the law. That, in fact, is the gist of the 10th Amendment, which states that the federal government may do *only* what the Constitution specifically allows, but State governments may do *anything* that the Federal Constitution does not specifically prohibit.

Unfortunately, no one, it seems, is reading or paying any attention to the 10th Amendment these days. We libertarians at least should be familiar with the 10th because, if it was enforced, it would take us a long way toward the libertarian society of our dreams, since it absolutely outlaws the biggest part of what the Federal Government is now doing.

Jim Stumm
Buffalo, N.Y.

The Unknown Consequentialist

I find myself wanting to respond to at least a third of your articles, but obviously one cannot flood your mailroom with so many letters!

I do wish to make a brief comment and one query. First, Franklin Sanders' article ("I Go To Jail," *Liberty* May 1988) has the resonance of history being made, and moved me to tears. It goes beyond mere reporting to enter the domain of literature. Secondly, who is/was "Donisthorpe" (cited by Ethan O. Waters in his article in the same issue)? I have, of course, heard of Mises, Hayek, Rand, et. al., but never of this person. What am I missing?

W. Luther Jett
Buckeystown, Md.

Wordsworth Donsithorpe was a "critical" disciple of Herbert Spencer, with whom he differed chiefly by rejecting all use of the language of ethical naturalism (natural law and natural rights). He wrote several interesting works, including *Law in a Free State*, *Individualism*, and *Principles of Plutology*. —EOW

Anti-Libertarianism Without Foundations

Ethan Waters has made me think more than any other libertarian in the last five years. May I suggest a possible synthesis of the "two libertarianisms" (utilitarian vs. moralistic) he has identified?

Perhaps the problem with finding a coherent defense of rights has been in trying to find a defense in the first place: let's go on the offense and ask the statist, What have you got *against* the whole idea of human rights? Their answer is "You can't force other people to do stuff for you or act right if you respect their rights." In fact, the only time the question of rights comes up is when two human beings are disagreeing over whether one of them (or which of them) should be treated as expendable in the service of the other's desires, rather than as a valuable human being.

Borrowing from Kant, every human being is a moral end in him or herself, and that is the real basis for respecting human rights. (My apologies to the offended ghost of Ayn Rand, who probably still believes she was the very first to make this point, and will now haunt me for my hubris. . . . I wonder if the ghost of Ayn Rand believes in ghosts? Probably not. . . .)

Looking at it from a moral standpoint, human rights simply codify and explicate the real-world implications of and rules for treating human beings as ends in themselves. Rights violations are simply real-world instances of treating others as objects of only utilitarian value or lack thereof.

Looking at it from a utilitarian standpoint, why should each and every one of us treat each and every other of us as ends in ourselves? No reason, unless we wish to live as neighbors rather than as enemies.

In a world without rights, the natural state of human beings is necessarily one of enmity—"the war of all against all." It is absurd to prefer a natural state of war to a natural state of peace.

So, we have a righteously defensible moral principle (people are ends in themselves) with an unshakeable utilitarian defense (peace is better than war). As Jackson Browne says, "If you want peace, work for justice." And whether you start from peace or you start from justice, you end up with human rights. As Ayn might say, it's a package deal.

Michael Lee
Salt Lake City, Utah

S/N

In the May 1988 *Liberty* Ethan Waters presents yet another intriguing look at libertarianism. While reading it, however, it occurred to me that there may be one additional option beyond the traditional moralist approach and the consequentialist approach: the information theory approach.

We know that there are two basic forces at work in the universe: entropy and information. Entropy is always attempting to increase our supply of chaos while information is always at work to provide more structure. What if libertarianism was defined as the system that provided the most structure to our environment?

Note that "structure" does not mean rules and regulations. Rather, structure as used in this context refers more closely to syntax. To give a simple example, no English speaking person would be very likely to utter the sentence "Map poetic furniture read handy fragile ouch," not because the words themselves are strange or wrong but because the syntax is. Given all the words in the English language there are billions of possible sentences. Syntax—the rules that govern the assembly of those words—reduces the actual number of possible sentences to a much smaller number, yet without restricting the expression of new and original thoughts through new and original sentences. In fact, it can be seen that syntax enhances freedom by allowing the expression of new thoughts in a

form that is guaranteed to have an audience of others familiar with the syntax and thus ready and able to understand (if not accept) the new thought.

Looking at conventional political processes in this light, we see a lot of the ad hoc decisions that are made as having a poor signal-to-noise (s/n) ratio. They may provide some structure, but not enough for them to be applicable in other situations (whether similar or not). Examples of this include our support of Israel at the expense of the Arabs, and our actions in Korea, Vietnam, and Nicaragua.

An information-based solution would be one that is applicable to the widest number of cases, whether the actual application of that solution be moralistic, consequentialistic, contractual, or legal in execution. This, to me, describes what I perceive as the goal of libertarianism: to provide an objective, structured system against which stimuli and responses can be measured, freeing us from much of the ad hoc thrashing about that we as a nation currently enjoy in our decision-making processes.

This is a brand new concept for me, so excuse me for thinking out loud, but I can see all kinds of possibilities in an information-theory approach. Looking at market economics, for instance, we see that any rigid system of regulation cannot possibly take into account the millions of variables. The libertarian solution—free markets—provides a syntax within which all these transactions can take place quickly and efficiently. Government ownership of property turns out to have a low signal-to-noise ratio, as does governmental control of everything from airports to business licenses. Foreign policy would become more equitable and military adventurism eliminated. Without going too deeply into it, I also feel that this approach works on a personal level.

For whatever it is worth, this approach is a polar opposite to anarchy, which some libertarians find attractive.

Alas, it does have one flaw that it shares with consequential libertarianism, and that is a certain lack of emotionalism. Ah, well.

Greg Raven
Los Angeles, Calif.

What a Country

I'm not sure that Gary Alexander visited the same country that my wife and I did last fall. Our two-week tour through western Nicaragua did not reveal the bleak "socialist worker's paradise" conjured up in his article.

The tour included the requisite visits to governmental and quasi-governmental agencies, a representative of an opposition political party (the Popular Social Christian Party), a literacy campaign museum, a state-run fruit juice bottling plant (using loud, aging American equipment), a small, privately-owned farm cooperative of about twenty families, a farm co-op of Salvadoran refugees, and many privately-owned restaurants with excellent food and slow service. But there was also ample time to wander on our own, talking to Nicaraguans on the street, in shops, and in their houses, from San Juan del Sur in the south to Matagalpa in the north. These conversations, predominantly with my Peruvian-born wife, and often with American pop music playing over Radio Sandino in the background, showed a weary but friendly, hopeful, and determined people who surprisingly bore no grudge against American citizens. In several discussions, women commented on the new rights and opportunities they

now enjoyed. As regards the Contras, we heard not praise, but condemnation for "los hijos de Reagan" and their atrocities.

To be sure, there were plenty of complaints about the state of the economy, as might be expected with continued shortages of basic goods, the unavailability of North American luxury items, machines and their replacement parts, and with 20% a month inflation. Many government measures, such as extensive wage and price controls applying even to the private sector and strictly enforced artificial exchange rates, would make any libertarian cringe. While one could choose to blame government mismanagement for Nicaragua's present dire straits, we really don't know what policies would have been adopted or how well the economy would be functioning in the absence of a full court press of trade embargo and low-intensity warfare from "El Norte." The Nicaraguan government's official policy is that of a "mixed" economy, and at present about 60%-70% is in private hands. Some fifty-four trans-national companies with names like Phillips, Siemens, Toyota, and Coca-Cola are presently doing business in Nicaragua. It may not be Hong-Kong, but it's certainly not Albania.

Stephen D. Julstrom
Chicago, Ill.

Et Tu, Hank & Erika?

Erika and Henry Mark Holzer ("Et Tu, ABA," *Liberty*, May 1988) attack the American Bar Association for its continued official links with the Association of Soviet Lawyers, and they do so by drawing an explicit analogy between Gorbachev's U.S.S.R. and Hitler's Germany. If this is a fair comparison, their attack is certainly justified, but for those who doubt its cogency I would like to suggest a different analogy.

Imagine that the 1944 Bomb Plot against Hitler had been successful, that the Nazis had been overthrown and a moderate government installed in Germany. Such a government would still have left much to be desired: it would probably not have prosecuted the Nazi criminals, it would be unlikely to have granted civil rights to the Jews, it may have tried to keep some of Hitler's territorial conquests. But it would at least have halted the extermination program, restored the rule of law, and been prepared to negotiate for an end to the war.

Suppose now that such a government had wanted to open trade and professional contacts with the West. Would we have welcomed such an opportunity, as a means of leading Germany further along the road to democracy and freedom? Or would we have been purists like the Holzers, and refused to recognize any

difference between the new government and the Nazis?

Surely it would be obvious that despite its imperfections it was the *change* represented by the new government that was the important thing, and that our involvement would be a way to continue and accelerate that change. The alternative view, which the Holzers embrace, implies that every government is responsible for the crimes of its predecessors—but isn't this just the sort of statist presumption that libertarians should oppose?

None of us can foretell the future, so I cannot claim that my analogy is the correct one. It seems to me that Gorbachev is closer to von Stauffenberg than to Bormann, but I could be wrong. But shouldn't we treat this as a legitimate difference of opinion, rather than the good libertarians versus the immoral collaborators in the ABA?

Charles Richardson
New Brunswick, N.J.

Vaster Than Empires, And More Quick

As an engineer employed in the factory automation field, I agreed with most of Ross Overbeek's observations in "Can Computers Save the World?" (*Liberty*, March 1988). But I think he focused too much on the gee-whiz aspects of the ongoing high-tech revolution and glossed over the vast amounts of software development needed to take us from here to there.

New products aren't developed just because the technology exists to implement them. The economy is driven by consumers and bounded by the allocation of scarce resources. Predictions of a high-tech future that fail to consider the scarcity of human talent will likely be wrong.

In my experience with automating "factories of the future" the problem isn't the lack of computational resources available for the task. The problem is figuring out how to implement such a large system. There are a tremendous number of design problems that need to be solved, and no amount of computing can shorten the process because it's not a computational problem.

Consider the task of designing a skyscraper. All the computing resources in the world save some time in the design, but an awful lot of time would still be spent finding out what was wanted and figuring out how to build it: time and information will always remain scarce resources (in this universe at least).

In the final analysis, all that we'll ever get out of computational abundance is a larger and more sophisticated set of tools

that can be used to solve the entrepreneurial problem of building the "better mousetrap."

Jim Voris
Hunt Valley, Md.

Corrections from the House of Corrections

I was amused to see that even though I am safely locked away from society I still find a way to be involved in controversy—in this case, in the two articles by John Dentinger and Murray Rothbard (*Liberty*, March 1988). As the articles relate to me, I would like to refute the inaccuracies each contained.

Dentinger writes that my campaign was in 1984. Actually, it was in 1986. I have serious doubts about his argument that if Rose Bird had not been removed from the California Supreme Court by the voters I might not have been sent to prison. Even though she "consistently ruled that judges have discretion under so called mandatory sentencing laws," I doubt she would have ruled in my favor. Rose Bird was ardently supported by liberal State Senator David Roberti (D-Hollywood), who sponsored the repressive pandering laws under which I was prosecuted.

Senator Roberti has been the prime moving force behind several appallingly anti-civil rights laws regarding prostitution. Thanks to his efforts, California ranks number one in laws and sentencing capabilities against private consenting adult acts.

Knowing human nature as I think I do, I am afraid Ms. Bird would not have bitten the hand that fed her (Roberti was the major source of her campaign fund raising effort during her battle to retain her seat).

I am afraid the conservatives are no better either, and until we have a state and U. S. Supreme Court filled with libertarian minded jurists, personal liberty issues will never be satisfactorily addressed by either the conservative closet johns (most of my clientele were conservative) or the closet conservative (on personal freedom) liberals.

Mr. Rothbard writes, "Dentinger's reference to 'substantial heated opposition' to Norma Jean Almodovar's candidacy for Lt. Governor willfully ignores the fact that Norma Jean had no opposition in the LP primary . . ."

That surprises the heck out of me! I first learned of the opposition during a lengthy telephone conversation with Harry Pendaray, a northern California physi-

cian who had planned to run for Governor. Mr. Pendaray strongly discouraged my candidacy, arguing that it was "not within the goal of the Libertarian Party to wave a pair of red panties underneath the American Flag." Mr. Pendaray could not dissuade me, and he withdrew from the race (as he could not run with a whore), and ran for Congress instead.

At the convention, I was confronted by strong opposition. Alicia Clark talked to me, presumably on a "woman to woman" basis, suggesting I would not be a suitable candidate for office, although she did not offer any reasons why not. Susan Bell announced her intentions to run in opposition to my campaign. (I had never met the woman, nor she me.) Eventually, she dropped out of the race, but not before endorsing a "none of the above candidacy" instead of me.

"None of the Above" was also endorsed by Mike Hall, Laurel Fest (who gave it a tear-jerking speech at the nominating convention), and a few very vocal others. The delegates asked for a secret ballot. I won the nomination by a wide margin, although the exact vote count now escapes me (perhaps I have been too long incarcerated).

Even though I was a novice candidate, and knew nothing about party infighting between the liberal faction and the conservative faction (in my naive mind we were all libertarians, and all believed in freedom . . . didn't we?), I was well aware that my candidacy was not popular with some libertarians until they were convinced that I was not a gum chewing airhead who would damage the credibility of the Libertarian Party and its principles.

Thanks to my many public appearances on radio and TV (exposure gained, ironically, because I was a prostitute) I was able to convince most of my opponents that I meant business, and that my issue was freedom, not just prostitution.

News of my fight against the state has been widely publicized in the libertarian movement, and I am deeply grateful for the support and concern I have received from libertarians all over the world. This support has given me great consolation during my confinement as a political prisoner.

I'll tell John Dentinger personally of the error of his reasoning on the issue of Rose Bird when he comes to visit me in prison. I'd tell Mr. Rothbard of his error, too, if he ever came to visit me. . . .

Norma Jean Almodovar
Norco, Calif.

Notes on Contributors

"Baloo" is the *nom de plume* of Rex F. May, whose cartoons appear in numerous magazines, including *The Wall Street Journal* and *National Review*. Mr May is the editor of *The Trout in the Milk*.

D. R. Blackmon is a free-lance writer and syndicated columnist. He has had other interviews and profiles published in *Oasis* magazine.

R. W. Bradford is publisher of *Liberty*.

Stephen Cox, an associate editor of *Liberty*, is Associate Professor of Literature, University of California, San Diego.

Mike Holmes, a contributing editor of *Liberty*, is also the editor of *American Libertarian*, a monthly newspaper of the libertarian movement.

David Hudson is a free-lance writer and teacher of contract bridge. In 1982 he dropped out of the rat race in Washington, D.C. and moved to Hilo, Hawaii, where he has found true love and lives happily ever after.

William Kelsey spent his childhood in Jordan and Lebanon, and lived and worked in the Far and the Middle East for three years, 1977-1980. He has settled in Texas, where he ran for U.S. Congress on the Libertarian ticket in 1982.

Matt Kesler is a physicist and founder of the Haines Solar Energy Corporation, a manufacturer of solar battery chargers. He is presently working to further develop his theory that Jesse Jackson has invented a new dialect.

Tibor Machan teaches philosophy at Auburn University, Alabama, and is Senior Editor of *Reason*.

William P. Moulton, a contributing editor of *Liberty*, lives in northern Michigan, and is a collector of trilobites.

Bob Ortin has a degree in applied mathematics and physics from the University of Wisconsin. He lives in southern Oregon where his political cartoons are regularly featured in a local newspaper.

Ross Overbeek, an associate editor of *Liberty*, is a computer scientist at the Argonne National Laboratory.

Sheldon Richman is director of public affairs at the Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University.

Murray N. Rothbard, an associate editor of *Liberty*, is S.J. Hall Distinguished Professor of Economics at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas and Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Ludwig von Mises Institute.

David Ramsay Steele is Editorial Director of the General Books Division of Open Court Publishing Co.

Jerome Tuccille is author of many books, including: *Trump, It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand*, *Wall Street Blues, Kingdom*, and others. He taught a course on anarchism at the New School in New York City during the early-1970s. He lives with his family in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he runs an investment firm.

Jeffrey A. Tucker lives in Washington, D.C., is a graduate student in economics at George Mason University, and is managing editor of *The Free Market*, the monthly publication of the Ludwig von Mises Institute.

Timothy Virkkala is assistant editor of *Liberty*. In his spare time, he composes pandiatonic music.

Ethan O. Waters is a writer who lives in Southern California.

Coming in the September Liberty:

"Rights as a Praxeological Imperative" Prof. Hans-Hermann Hoppe challenges the claim that the notion of rights must be imported from ethics into discussion of political theory, thus positing an alternative to natural rights theory and utilitarianism. In what Murray Rothbard calls "an extraordinary breakthrough," Hoppe derives human rights from what he calls "argumentation ethics"; he argues that the mere fact that an individual argues presupposes that he owns himself and has a right to his own life and property.

"My Dinner with Gus" One day in 1972, William Moulton heard American Communist Party leader Gus Hall was coming to town, and decided it would be fun to meet him. So he crashed a Communist Party bash and introduced himself to the Party chieftain. He isn't sure what he learned about communism, but he did find out there is nothing more inhibited or less fun than a Party party. And before the evening was over, Gus Hall had taken Moulton out to dinner . . .

"Young Money" Karl Hess compares the stereotype of kids who earn money and real kids who earn real money. He finds that real kid entrepreneurs are a long way from Alex Keaton.

"Taking Liberty Seriously" Murray Rothbard surveys contemporary political philosophical writing in Britain and America and wonders: why is it that British philosophers take liberty so much more seriously than do American philosophers?

Terra Incognita

Washington D.C.

How the Bureau of National Affairs promotes a drug-free workplace (or is it a free-drug workplace?), according to a dispatch in the *Wall St Journal*:

The Bureau will celebrate its new publication "Drug Free Workplace" by serving champagne and high tea at a book-signing party.

Germany

A new perspective on *glasnost* for Petra Kelly, head of West Germany's Green Party, as reported by Ms Kelly in the leftist *New Perspectives Quarterly*:

"Perhaps the most shocking thing is the planned joint venture between the Soviet Union and McDonald's to build a hamburger stand on Red Square. When I heard about this I thought, 'Are people going to eat Big Macs and sip Coca-Cola in front of Lenin's tomb?' For years, we Greens have fought against the spread of that kind of cheap food chain in Germany.

But when I expressed my disgust with the plan to a Soviet friend, she said, 'For us, it is a sign of change in the quality of life.'"

Washington, D.C.

Evidence of the dedication of the freedom-loving allies of Lt Col Oliver North, from the concluding statement of "Oliver North's Fight for Freedom," a television documentary prepared by the American Freedom Caucus:

"Your gift will help broadcast this program in other cities across the country. We need to let people know the truth, so please call now. If the lines are busy, write this number down and keep trying. We will still be here even after this program ends.

"In fact, with your help and continued support, we will be here until Lt Col Oliver North helps raise the flag of freedom over free men and women, boys and girls, in nation after nation around the world."

Atlanta, Georgia

A setback in the battle against drugs is a never-ending one, as reported in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, *Press*:

As part of a nationwide campaign against drugs, Georgia State Police stopped a car from South Florida because it was engaging in suspicious behavior: namely, it was "scrupulously obeying all traffic laws."

Alfredo Lopez, the driver of the car, refused a request that he allow officers to search the trunk of his car and was taken to a Sheriff's office, where a police dog nosed around his car and barked. On this evidence, the police obtained a warrant to search the trunk of Lopez' car.

The search of the car did not find any illegal drugs. Instead it discovered a videotape of the driver and another man carefully vacuuming out the trunk of the rental car to remove any possible residue of drugs from a past renter and explaining that they were investigating how police arbitrarily stop and harass cars with Florida plates driven by Latin American appearing men.

In settlement of the lawsuit brought by Lopez, the Georgia State Police released copies of the confidential drug dealer profile prepared by the Reagan Administration's Drug Enforcement Agency. The profile urged local police to watch for "rental cars, particularly those from south Florida," and to be especially suspicious if the cars are being driven in "scrupulous obedience to traffic laws," or the driver is a member of an "ethnic group associated with the drug trade," or is "wearing lots of gold."

South Bend, Indiana

The Leader of the Free World stirs men's souls, in a dramatic announcement at the dedication of the postage stamp commemorating Knute Rockne, the famous football coach at Notre Dame University, as reported in the *Los Angeles Times*:

"Reagan's association with Notre Dame dates back to his 1940 movie role as the Gipper, the young football player George Gipp whose death from pneumonia is the dramatic centerpiece of the film *Knute Rockne—All American*.

"In a field house packed with students and local residents, Reagan said that Americans must stand firm, even when it is uncomfortable to do so. Lowering his voice to a throaty whisper as he recited Gipp's deathbed lines from the movie: 'sometime when the team is up against it and the breaks are beating the boys, tell them to go out there with all they got and win just one for the Gipper. I don't know where I'll be then, but I'll know about it, and I'll be happy.'"

"But, apparently misreading the text from the Teleprompter, Reagan said, 'Win just one for the Gippet.'"

New York

In a "no holds barred" interview with Barbar Walters on ABC-TV's *20/20*, presidential aspirant Jackson answers the question, "Do you have a philosophy by which you live? What is it?"

"I am driven by, I appreciate, the power of the love ethic. We as human beings, no matter what policies have been, we must forgive each other, redeem each other and move on. That drives me as a philosophy."

Salt Lake City, Utah

How the security forces at airports are effectively employed in the fight for a drug-free America, as reported in the *Detroit News*:

Dennis Barney of Denver was stopped by authorities at Denver's Stapleton airport because he met the criteria of the Drug Enforcement Agency's "typical suspect profile"; that is, he was traveling with little baggage, had a full beard and shoulder-length hair, and dressed casually. He agreed to a search by authorities, he says, because "I felt intimidated. I felt if I said 'no,' they would search anyway."

The search revealed \$4,000 in cash. Mr Barney was carrying the cash because he intended to buy a motorcycle in Salt Lake City. He also carried little baggage because of the limited baggage capacity of the motorcycle, which he intended to drive home.

At last report, Mr Barney is suing for the return of his \$4,000.

Stockholm

Evidence of the self-sacrificing nature of the public servants attracted to the zoo keeping profession in this Scandinavian country, as reported in the *San Francisco Examiner*:

When zoo officials failed to find another home for Molly the bear cub, one of last year's biggest attractions, they butchered the cute little creature and raffled off the meat among the zoo's staff.

Washington, DC.

Presidential hopeful Jesse Jackson explained his thinking on the economy, as quoted by Fred Barnes in the *New Republic*:

"Right now Congress can merge and then purge workers and then submerge the economy. A process called merging, purging and submerging. Merge corporations, leveraged buy-outs, paper wealth, purge workers, and submerge our economy. This must shift."

(Readers are invited to forward newspaper clippings or other documents for publication in *Terra Incognita*.)

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- The O.P. Alford, III, Center for Advanced Studies in Austrian Economics.

- Public policy work in Washington, D.C., on the free market and gold standard.

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