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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Yes, But What Do You REALLY Do?

by William C. Levin

Though I love what I do for a living, I regret that I must report a small occupational glitch. It's just that non-sociologists, who greatly outnumber us lucky folks, don't seem to know what sociology is, and don't seem to care that they don't. I understand that those who have not studied sociology may find it vaguely defined at best. But put yourself in my position. Telling a new acquaintance that I am a sociologist is a sure-fire conversation stopper. It's almost as bad as having to admit you're a poet.

I have decided, therefore, to try to do something about this. So, given the luxury of writing in this space pretty much what I please, I plan to plug my field, without turning current readers into "formers." To accomplish this, I will simply hitch my explanation of sociology to the discipline of physics which, though not normally understood by the general public any better than sociology, never has its legitimacy questioned.

The physical forces that operate in our world are normally invisible. You can't see gravity, though you can observe its influence on objects. Apples fall (bless them for their consistency in doing so) and the rate of their descent to earth can be measured. From such events the existence of a physical force was inferred by Isaac Newton several hundred years ago. A person who denies the existence of gravity, merely because it cannot be directly observed, does so at his or her own peril. Although our understanding of how physical forces influence everyday events, such as flying on jet planes or boiling water, is typically vague, our respect for physics is assured by our faith that such forces exist.

Sociology should be understood in the same way. Just as there are physical forces that influence the behavior of objects, there are social forces that influence the way we deal with one another. Like gravity, social forces cannot be directly observed. Their existence must be inferred from the behavior of people toward one another, which is just what Emile Durkheim recognized in the Nineteenth Century.

Just as surely as Newton discovered gravity, Durkheim (and others) discovered social forces. Much of our behavior toward one another is due to our membership in groups, with their rigid, boring routines, not only killing the creativity and responsibility in individuals, they also provide otherwise pleasant people with good reason to be nasty. Once she leaves work, that Motor Vehicle clerk probably goes bowling and drinks beer to the greater glory of Fred's Automotive, or bakes peach cobbler for the needy.

We Americans traditionally put such emphasis on individual responsibility for success and failure that every behavior we observe is accounted for by individual qualities like cleverness, hard work, luck, confidence, aggressiveness and so on. But sociologists have shown that human behavior is often shaped by forces much more powerful than individual characteristics. Nasty behavior may have much more to do with a nasty social situation than with a nasty personality.

For a second example, take the all-too familiar case of divorce. Typically, Americans attribute the failure of a marriage to the failures of the individuals involved. Was he too demanding, or she too materialistic? But even a cursory look beyond individuals reveals that there are social forces at work here. Our culture stresses individual achievement, self-improvement, personal "space." Inflation has made it increasingly necessary for both partners in a marriage to work. The growing cultural norm for sexual equality has changed our ideas about what a marriage should be, and some people are caught with outdated beliefs.

We are no more divorce-prone as individuals today in comparison with Americans of twenty years ago. We simply live in a time in which the social forces make for higher divorce rates. When we consult marriage counselors who are trained in psychology, and the overwhelming majority of counselors are, we inevitably focus our attention and energies on a very limited range of ways to explain and deal with divorce. We need additionally to understand the powerful social forces which are the sociologist's special area of expertise.

I admit that in this space I can only provide a sketchy explanation for why I find sociology compelling. Then again if you only had this much space to learn about physics you wouldn't get beyond the story of falling apples. I'm afraid you will have to take my word for the fact that attention to social forces can provide powerful and absorbing explanations for everyday human behavior. It is a greatly underutilized resource.

Etching by Ilidko Vincze

Class of 1980

You have just stood in line at the Motor Vehicle Bureau for two hours only to find that you lack one measly form to complete your registration. The lady behind the counter seems almost gleeful to be given the chance to inform you of this fact. Most Americans would say she was a rotten person. They would point to her individual qualities, such as they are.

The sociological view, however, focuses on the situation in which she works. Bureau clerks are, to what we are like as individuals. Let me give two examples.
Guest Opinion

Why Our Business Leaders Need the Liberal Arts

by Richard Sawyer

The exemplary partnership between business and education in Massachusetts was emphasized earlier this year by the one-day conference, “Striving for Excellence,” co-sponsored by Senator Paul Tsongas and the New England Council.

Many forward-looking professionals from both sectors expressed their concern about the need for further improving the current business-educational relationship to meet the domestic and international challenges of the next twenty years.

Speakers and panelists made many sincere remarks about business education, computer training and literacy, finance and accounting knowledge and the physical sciences. However, there was precious little mention -- despite addresses by Governor Dukakis and other notables -- of the liberal arts, the social sciences and the tradition that humanities plays in developing clear thinking, ethical judgment, expository writing skills, evaluation, the discipline of inductive and deductive reasoning, creative problem-solving, and the ability to take disparate elements from many apparently isolated administrative and technical specialties and relate them to one another.

There was also seldom any mention of the part that the humanities, liberal arts and social sciences can play in the international sector, where so much of our business acumen and profitability in the next twenty years will count. As Harvard President Derek Bok has noted, “the critical problems lie in how business can accommodate itself to larger public concerns expressed by legislatures, government agencies and community groups” -- including international constituencies.

Today’s leaders -- and more importantly, the leaders of tomorrow -- will profit greatly from acquiring and improving international negotiating skills, human relations and communication skills, and the ability to foster creative problem-solving and entrepreneurship. But, with so many of these skills currently lacking or needing improvement, we must ask ourselves where this training will come from. Ideally, such training has come from our colleges and universities -- and increasingly our state university systems must play the major role here.

Today, however, we have in the Commonwealth, as in many other states, what can be called the aging of the professions. A Fortune Magazine cover story recently noted that MBA graduates are in trouble. They’re searching for jobs and opportunities that don’t exist. They know that their professional forbearers, now in their mid-30s and 40s, have taken their place on the career ladder and unless they decide to go into business for themselves will seldom vacate the posts they worked so hard to acquire.

This means that we must motivate millions of new, young, potentially enthusiastic employees facing the rigors of a new age with demographic statistics against them. Today’s pressures to get a good job, study for grades and not the love of learning, choose careers not out of committed interest but for practical reasons, all tend to limit the focus of our students, limit risk-taking and generally impoverish the pool of exceptional talent we need to revitalize business.

The business schools have just now begun to include more liberal arts courses in their curricula because of complaints from companies about MBA performances. Essentially, though, the liberal arts have been devalued to the point that attrition among the professional teaching ranks in these areas will take ten to twenty years to bolster. Unfortunately, we need leaders today to solve the problems of remaining competitive tomorrow.

If you look at our own state school system, you find that in many of these colleges and universities there has scarcely been a new hire in the liberal arts areas of history, philosophy, English, languages and the arts for a decade or more. At Lowell University, for example, the youngest professor in the English Department is about forty years old. If we can no longer offer the tradition where knowledge can be passed with continuity to the next generation, our ability to compete will increasingly erode.

Although many managers and business leaders can define objectives and command employees, it is the unusual and gifted manager who can be called truly visionary -- especially where motivating today’s young professionals is concerned. Because we are living, as Peter F. Drucker says, in “turbulent times,” it is precisely the skilled, visionary leader we need to assure the costs of doing business tomorrow. Such leaders have an instinctual ability to see the big picture to plan strategically, to coordinate, to network new arrangements in a changing world -- to be, in a word, innovative; technically, organizationally, cross-culturally. But instinct alone cannot help us weather the storm. Older managers need new training. Young managers need experience. Prospective managers need both. If we fail to reeducate our current supply of good managers, and fail to provide both education and a continuity of professional experience for our younger managers and aspiring leaders, our international influence will falter.

We are at a watershed in our educational history. President Reagan’s bi-partisan commission report on education, A Nation At Risk, and a dozen other similar studies have shown that. What we choose to implement today for the next twenty years -- because of our “can-do” attitude -- will determine to a great degree nationally, and more importantly internationally, our success in an increasingly hostile, confusing and complex world.

At this critical juncture, before setting an inflexible policy that excludes the liberal arts, business, government and educational leaders need to re-evaluate how the liberal arts tradition can significantly contribute to a strengthened economy.

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Novels and reminiscences written by Vietnam combat veterans are being published with increasing frequency. Dust jackets and end papers proclaim that each new narrative is for Vietnam what *All Quiet on the Western Front* was for World War I and *The Naked and the Dead* or *Catch 22* were for World War II. Unfortunately, if it can be said that generals fight current wars using the tactics of earlier wars, so Vietnam War authors structure their narratives using the frameworks of earlier writers. Too many—Winston Groom’s *Better Times Than These* or Steven Phillips Smith’s *American Boys* are typical—place contemporary soldiers on the battlefields of an earlier literature where young men encounter ironies, absurdities, and paradoxes. Most attempts to write about what young men experienced in Vietnam reveal that the conventions of war fiction, as we have come to know them, cannot adequately shape the experience of that war. Authors have not yet found a narrative form articulating the Vietnam combat experience.

Articulation has always been the major problem in America’s experience with Vietnam. During the war, our leaders, from the President on down, were unable to articulate precisely what it was America hoped to accomplish by fighting communism in a small, poor, agricultural country. Protesters verbal as many of them were, could not articulate through reasoned argument what about the war was morally, politically, and militarily wrong. Many words, too many words, were written and spoken on each side. They revealed, in their accumulation, a nation’s infected will.

Until recently, the men who fought the war have remained virtually silent. America has wanted it that way; the military has wanted it that way; and the men themselves— it seems— have not wanted to add to the irrelevance, inaccuracy, and untruthfulness that characterize too much of what has been written about the fighting in Vietnam. Their attitude was (and may to an extent still be) that of the soldier described in Fred Reed’s “A Veteran Writes:” “Once, after GIs had left Saigon, I came out of a bar on Cach Mang and saw a veteran with a sign on his jacket: VIETNAM: IF YOU HAVEN’T BEEN THERE: SHUT THE FUCK UP. Maybe, just maybe, he had something.” Unlike the more articulate, most veterans did not render their Vietnam experience in sophisticated literary tropes and motifs that previous generations had appropriated to describe their war experience. Unlike the British soldiers in the Flanders’ trenches whom Paul Fussell depicted in *The Great War and Modern Memory*, American

*Who Owns The Night?*  
*Vietnam: Personal and Fictional Narratives*  
By Charles F. Angell
soldiers in the rice paddies did not feel they had come through battle to be reborn or that the myth of their destiny lay in trial by fire.

Their destinies are perhaps suggested by the images retained of Vietnam. Vietnam's legacy is remembered pictures of screaming children burned and disfigured by napalm, an anguished Kent State coed bent over the body of her college classmate, Buddhist monks immolated before horrified onlookers. In his essay, "Photographs of Agony," John Berger writes: "Confrontation with a photographed moment of agony can mask a far more extensive and urgent confrontation." Berger tells us that the most honest response we can have to the horror of agony is to understand how we have been transformed and to continue a conscious transformation of ourselves.

The American soldiers who landed in Vietnam had previously confronted war only through a succession and accumulation of movie and television images. In A Rumor of War, Philip Caputo recalls the briefing given prior to his Marine company's departure for Danang and remembers the commanding officer saying: "I don't want anyone going in there thinking he's going to play John Wayne." Despite the admonition, a reader of the Vietnam narratives discovers real and fictional soldiers alike entering combat with images of themselves as John Wayne, Sergeant Rock, and The High Plains Drifter. And yet, if initially they viewed themselves as the traditional American hero, the more perceptive began to recognize an inevitable transformation. One soldier (interviewed by Mark Baker for NAM) writes of his actions: "calmly and methodically, but disconnected, like you're watching yourself do it -- Clint Eastwood would have been proud of me -- I moved my M-16 so that eventually the muzzle flashes from the graveyard lined up through my sight." The heroic albeit innocent soldier becomes a killer -- detached, methodical, and fascinated by an image of himself. Another soldier (also interviewed by Baker) carries this fascination further: "I loved to just sit in the ditch and watch people die. As bad as that sounds, I just like to watch no matter what happened, sitting back with a homemade cup of hot chocolate. It was like a big movie." War becomes spectacle which, no matter how agonizing to others, one can sit back and enjoy. Curiously, when these soldiers came home, the transformation of images of war into war came full circle.

But Deer Hunter was a different story . . . . I'm in Vietnam again, I said to myself. I'm back in Vietnam. All of a sudden they are in a firefight on the screen and if I had had a gun on me I would have started shooting. Can you imagine if I had really opened up on a crowd in a theater? . . . I'm serious, I came apart. I crouched down behind the seat and crawled up the aisle of the theater and out into the light on my hands and knees. I didn't know that it was a movie anymore. I was back in the war and that was what I had to do. (Baker, NAM)

The military was aware from the start of this interplay between war and images of war in the minds of the teenagers it recruited to fight the North Vietnamese soldiers. "They told us in training," Mike Beamon recalls in Al Santoli's Everything We Had, "that you could become a master of illusion if you believe enough in the illusion. And it works. I couldn't believe it. Also, the power of your eyes, not to look directly at something but to look off to the side of it. You wouldn't concentrate your focus because if you look at something too long, it'll look back at you, and you don't want them to turn around and see you there."

Illusion and reality became further intermingled as the recruit penetrated deeper into his military experience. Most of the young men who served in Vietnam (their average age was twenty-three) had formed no strong concept of self-identity; their confusion of movie wars and soldiers with real soldiering implied that much. Most of them had not observed firsthand the sort of all encompassing violence they were to witness in Vietnam. The army and the marines were aware of the young recruit's ambivalence toward violence and were partially aware of the degree to which exposure to cinematic and fictional presentations of violence underlay the ambivalence. In novel after novel, soldiers-turned-authors describe their basic training experiences in identical terms; the characters are the same; the racial and ethnic insults are the same; the outcome is the same. Older, combat experienced soldiers would warn trainees or buck privates and lieutenants to avoid the John Wayne postures, yet they developed a training process that compelled boys to prove their willingness to risk injury or death in order to be considered fighting men. Told at one moment they would encounter unimaginable violence, at the next they were trained to inflict violence precisely as they'd imagined it. The soldiers quoted earlier reveal the training's effectiveness in ways both anticipated and unanticipated by the military.

When finally confronted with the battlefield and its horrors, most soldiers could only exclaim -- and novel after novel echoes the outburst: "Jesus Christ, this is for real!"

Listen to Ron Kovic describe men being wounded in Born on the Fourth of July:

Men are screaming all around me. Oh God get me out of here! 'Please help!' they scream. Oh Jesus, like little children now, not like marines, not like the posters, not like that day in the high school, this is for real . . .

But even real horror had to be transformed as the dimmest 'grunts' grew aware of the discontinuity between the movie and recruiting posters and the real thing. Here is a soldier's recollection (again from Santoli's Everything We Had) of the aftermath from a nightlong firefight at Fire Base Burt:

General Westmoreland flew in. All the news outfits and everything. It was the most hilarious thing. As these sons of bitches came out there, the GI's started lying. The newsmen
would walk up to just anybody and say, "What did you do?" "I singlehandedly killed three hundred thousand with my Bowie knife." And man, they'd write it up.

The horror becomes transformed into tall-tale swagger for those at home watching the nightly news images of war. But there came a point for those who had been bloodied when there was no language adequate to tell the tale because there was no audience adequate to understand it. Michael Herr, in an oft-quoted passage from Dispatches, suggests to what narrative terms fighting in Vietnam reduced itself:

But what a story he told me, as one-pointed and resonant as any war story I ever heard, it took me a year to understand it:

"Patrol went up the mountain. One man came back. He died before he could tell us what happened."

I waited for the rest, but it seemed not to be that kind of story; when I asked him what had happened he looked like he felt sorry for me... What was the lasting effect of all this? In NAM, Mark Baker quotes a veteran who (like numerous others) admits:

I miss the sound of the nights in Vietnam, with the choppers landing and the outgoing -- not the incoming fire. Although, even the incoming was exciting. The sounds are particularly vivid. The force after a large gun fires or a round lands, the feel of the gas from it on your face. Thinking about Vietnam once in a while, in a crazy kind of way, I just wish for an hour I could be there. And then be transported back. Maybe just to be there so I'd wish I was back here again.

The American soldiers who landed in Vietnam had previously confronted war only through a succession and accumulation of movie and television images

The answer I am suggesting is that American soldiers went to Vietnam to fight the sort of war they had already conceived in their minds.

I keep thinking (Herr writes in Dispatches) about all the kids who get wiped out by seventeen years of war movies before coming to Vietnam to get wiped out for good. You don't know what a media freak is until you've seen the way a few of those grunts would run around during a fight when they knew that there was a television crew nearby; they were actually making war movies in their heads, doing little guts-and-glory Leatherneck tap dances under fire, getting their pimples shot off for the networks. They were insane, but the war hadn't done that to them.

If one can claim that this is so of the teenage "grupts" who did the fighting, one can also say it is so of the generals who conducted the fighting. While General Westmoreland's strategy for winning the war was undoubtedly shaped by diplomatic and political concerns, it also was shaped by an Americanized conception of the enemy. "During the invasion of Cambodia in 1970," Frances Fitzgerald notes in Fire in the Lake, "American officials spoke of plans to capture the enemy's command headquarters for the south as if there existed a reverse Pentagon in the jungle complete with Marine guards, generals, and green baize tables." Stanley Karnow's recent history of the Vietnam War reports that early in the war General Westmoreland and his staff undertook to discover and capture this
jungle command center which they viewed as a network of tunnels and bunkers deep in the Vietnamese mountains. This strategy, based on a conception of the enemy as a reflected image of oneself, had disastrous results, though General Westmoreland continued to insist that with a few more men, a bit more material and somewhat more time, he would be able to see “the light at the end of the tunnel.”

To be sure, the troops found tunnels and bunkers, occasionally extensive complexes, which discoveries validated the command's certainty that an even more extensive network must exist. Every narrative includes at least one account of finding and destroying tunnel complexes. Individual soldiers speak of their fear, even terror, at having to search tunnels for weapons and supplies. Too frequently the tunnels are booby-trapped or occupied by Viet Cong prepared to kill a few Americans before they in turn are killed. Frequently enough, the tunnels are hiding places for village women and children whom the terrified soldiers shoot. Consequently the tunnels come to possess for the soldiers a double horror of the tomb and the slaughterhouse, of butcher and butchered. Many of the novels employ the tunnels solely for suspense and horror. The cumulative effect of these novels finds the tunnels holding an ambivalent position in the soldier's mind. They become places where he might become either the victim or the perpetrator of an atrocity. Crawling into the tunnels and bunkers, the soldier was compelled to confront the terror and violence Vietnam had imposed on his life.

Two of the best Vietnam novels use the tunnels as central motif. John DelVecchio’s *The Thirteenth Valley* and Tim O’Brien’s *Going After Cacciato* both accept the military’s premise that the tunnels and bunkers represented an important strategic objective. Both novels carry the premise to its extreme conclusion, DelVecchio through apparent realism, O’Brien through fantasy. DelVecchio’s troopers are required to operate in a harsh jungle terrain of ridges and valleys searching for an NVA command center. The novel provides the reader with detailed maps and frequent official situation reports which, much like Melville’s *Moby Dick* chapters on whaling, provide a realistic foundation for an increasingly symbolic action. As they move from valley to valley, the soldiers discover tunnels and bunkers, some well-lit and equipped, others leading deep into unknown regions. Though none are occupied, they provide concrete evidence of the enemy’s comfortable underground existence. This jungle comfort contrasts with the miserable heat, humidity, insects and vegetation the American soldiers must endure. Moreover, the tunnels appear to have purpose and direction which will become apparent to the Americans if only they can unearth the command headquarters. The Americans see evidence of a society, but they are blind to its structure; they see tunnels and bunkers without perceiving their place in the overall scheme. The soldiers become increasingly aware of their own torment and of the fact that their survival depends on whim. In DelVecchio’s novel, Lieutenant Brook composes notes for an academic monograph on the inter-relatedness of military and personal conflict while the action around him forces questions about the inter-relatedness of anything. The soldiers finally force their way into the 13th valley where suddenly the enemy emerges in strength, organized and determined, appearing as it were out of the ground. The Americans are defeated; the principal characters shot down performing individual, though futile, acts of heroism.

O’Brien carries the idea of the tunnels further. His *Going After Cacciato* deliberately fashions the tunnel motif in cinematic terms familiar to most readers. Cacciato goes AWOL and a platoon, which includes the novel’s narrator Paul Berlin, is ordered to find him and bring him back. Cacciato has headed out of Vietnam in a direction whose terminus is ultimately Paris. His pursuers eventually discover and enter “a tunnel complex lighted by torches every fifty meters, an interlocking series of passageways” which “curved, widened, and emptied into a large lighted chamber.” In the chamber they find . . .
Men who traveled to Vietnam to fight political insurgency have come to live in a society that treats them as potential insurgents.

along the far wall, his back to them, sat a small man, dressed in a green uniform and sandals, a pith hat on his head. He was peering into a giant chrome telescope mounted on a console equipped with meters and dials and blinking lights.

O'Brien skillfully plays this underground Oz (and its wizard) off against the surface landscape. The small man, Li Van Hgoc (Leeuwenhoek, inventor of the microscope?), tells the Americans that the underground "was a literal summary of the land, and of mysteries contained in it; a statement of greater truth could not be made" and adds some pages later "So you see," said Li Van Hgoc as he brought down the periscope and locked it with a silver key, "things may be viewed from many angles. From down below, or from inside out, you often discover entirely new understandings.

Finally, when asked by the Lieutenant heading the search party "Which way out?" Li Van Hgoc answers: "Don't you see that's the whole point? No way out. That is the puzzle. We are prisoners, all of us. POW's."

The novel continues, pursuer and pursued, hunters and hunted, joined in a combat neither can escape. They follow a path that moves back and forth between the real and the imagined until the narrative enters a landscape of complete ambiguity where nothing is certain. "What about Cacciato?" Lieutenant repeating "Yes .... Maybe so."

one soldier's story of going into the airport lounge for a drink:

"Home on leave, are you," the guy says to me.

"Nope, just got discharged."

"You just got back from where," one of the kids says.

"Vietnam."

"How do you feel about killing all those innocent people?" the women asks me out of nowhere.

I didn't know what to say. The bartender got a little uptight. But I didn't say anything. They told me when I got discharged that I was going to get this shit. But, I didn't believe them.

"Excuse me," I called the bartender over.

"Could I buy them all a drink?" I felt guilty. I didn't buy a drink. I tried to make amends somehow.

"We don't accept any drinks from killers," the girl says to me...

Veterans provided evidence that real men were committing the violence shown on TV. The American public treated the veteran much as the soldiers had treated the Vietnamese. They were invisible. What Frances Fitzgerald wrote about the Americans in Vietnam could as easily be applied to the veteran back in America:

The effort of trying to hold reality and the official version of reality finally took its toll on the Americans in Vietnam. When added to the other strains of the war, it produced an almost intolerable tension that expressed itself not in a criticism of American policy so much as in a fierce resentment against the Vietnamese. The logic of that answer was a simple one, combined of guilt and illusions destroyed.

One has only to substitute the American public for the military and the veteran for the Vietnamese to see that a perilously similar condition existed and has continued to exist in the United States regarding the veteran. Men who traveled to Vietnam to fight political insurgency have come to live in a society that treats them as potential insurgents.

Today, we have at least agreed to see the veteran, though our politicians insist on imagining him in irrelevant terms. John Kerry was quoted last May in Newsweek as saying:"People have confused the war with the warriors. I'm proud of having been a warrior. As a whole, this country should not be proud of what we did as a nation. We have never adequately distinguished between the two."

Very few veterans, in their

Charles Angell has taught in Bridgewater's English Department since 1969. He earned a doctorate in English Literature from the University of Massachusetts. His interest in Vietnam fiction developed from a concern about the war's place in current thought. Angell has never served in the military.
Caring For The Sick Poor
The State Almshouse At Bridgewater
1854-1887

The number of helpless poor in Massachusetts increased during the period of the 1840s, and the problem was greatly magnified by Irish immigration to the United States. Too large a problem to be solved on the local level, the Board of Commissioners of Alien Passengers recommended, in 1852, that the State establish three almshouses. Accordingly, the institutions were established at Bridgewater, Monson to the west, and Tewksbury to the north of Boston, and were opened in May 1854. By the end of the first year the number of inmates far exceeded expectations.

The Commonwealth took over care and treatment of all State paupers. “State paupers” were persons without a legal residence in Massachusetts and those whose place of settlement was unknown. Formerly, dependent persons in Massachusetts who were residents of towns and cities had claim upon local authorities and were locally supported; the State repaid their expenses to the towns. With an increase in the number of dependents without a local residence, claim could only be made upon the State. Hence, new institutions were created to accommodate new needs. Upon opening of the almshouses, all outdoor relief provided by the Commonwealth (for the poor in their homes) ended. It was expected that poverty would decline as a result of the new system, but the number of poor increased over the years.

Inmates went to the Bridgewater Almshouse when they were assigned either by local or Boston Overseers of the Poor, by their own application, or by transfer from another State institution. For example, when Tewksbury Almshouse became overcrowded, twenty-five to one hundred persons at a time were often transferred to Bridgewater. Foreign-born paupers were taken from the ships on which they arrived and sent to the almshouse by the Overseers (see Table 1). Inmates also came from surrounding towns and more distant places in Massachusetts: Taunton, Braintree, Roxbury, Fall River, Quincy, New Bedford, Middleboro, Boston, and occasionally from other states.

Upon entering the almshouse, inmates were classified as sick, drunk, insane, healthy, “bad,” “P.t.” (pregnant), lame, feeble, consumptive, syphilitic, with “sore eyes,” blind, aged, or paralyzed (see Table 2). Some of the sick poor spent the balance of their lives at the almshouse. While today there are separate institutions for the mentally ill, the mentally retarded, and homeless children, in the mid-nineteenth century these groups constituted a large part of the almshouse population.

Approximately one-third of those who entered the almshouse during the first ten years of its existence were children (see Table 3). If a child had the misfortune to enter an almshouse, his chance for survival was poor. Those with the greatest incidence of deaths were children and infants (see Table 4). The elderly were feeble and needed care and nursing. Of the 500 to 600 inmates entering the almshouse every year, 150 were insane. The almshouse, then, functioned as an orphan asylum, a school for children, a mental institution, a home for the elderly, and a hospital. Levi Goodspeed, the first superintendent at Bridgewater, presented a comprehensive description of the job to be done in his 1857 annual report to the Board of Trustees for the institution. He wrote, “Human efforts are not always found equal to the task of raising the depressed, healing the broken-hearted, relieving the distressed victims of disease, when driven by misfortune, poverty, and sin to seek a final refuge within our doors.”

TABLE I
The State Almshouse at Bridgewater, 1854-1887
BIRTHPLACE OF INMATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Almshouse at Bridgewater, Record of Admission and Discharge, Vols. I and II. Massachusetts Correctional Institution Archives, Bridgewater, MA. Data compiled from a sample (every fifteenth name) in the record book.
In response to urging by the superintendents of the State almshouses, a State Law of 1865 created the Special Agent for the Sick Poor. These officials were concerned about the number of sick persons brought to the institutions who were unfit to be moved, the many who were in the last stages of disease, and the exhausted who died in the carriages which brought them, all of which led to a high mortality rate (see Table 5). The new law required local authorities to care for the sick poor at home with provision for reimbursement by the State. Only those who fell sick and had no known residence in Massachusetts could be sent to the almshouse. Nevertheless, the number of sick persons in the almshouse remained high, requiring the institution to provide continuing medical care.

This need for medical treatment required the development of medical services with a hospital, a resident physician, consulting and assistant physicians, nurses, and an apothecary. From medical care rendered to the poor, the hospital with its attendant needs, supervised the nurses in their duties, provided medical care. The almshouse was incorporated as one of the first facilities to offer the opportunity for clinical training for medical students and young physicians. These free hospitals, established in other states as well (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Baltimore, Maryland), as part of the almshouse complex, provided medical care. The almshouse was the poor man's hospital; the well-to-do received medical care at home, away from diseased persons and drunkards at the hospital.

Suitable hospital accommodations were provided for patients, with nurses and attending physicians. Sick children in the hospital were placed under the care of their mothers, if present, and if not, then nurses took care of them. Besides male and female hospital wards, there were separate rooms and a yard for the large number of insane who were set apart from the other inmates; and lastly, there was an infant department. The hospital department of the almshouse was comparatively large, with patients comprised mainly of chronic cases, some of them occupying the wards from the time the house opened. The resident physician attended to medical needs, supervised the nurses in their duties, and made rounds of the wards. Medical attention for the sick poor was available with public support, but not available for the poor outside the almshouse. Hospitals represented one aspect of the State plan to rehabilitate the poor -- through poor relief and medical care.

Almshouses were the first public hospitals and one of the first facilities to offer the opportunity for clinical training for medical students and young physicians. These free hospitals, established in other states as well (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Baltimore, Maryland), as part of the almshouse complex, provided medical care. The almshouse was the poor man's hospital; the well-to-do received medical care at home, away from diseased persons and drunkards at the hospital.

TABLE 2
The State Almshouse at Bridgewater, 1854-1887

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Number of Females</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number of Males</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeble</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intemperate</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venereal Disease</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insane</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Eyes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lame</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Almshouse at Bridgewater, Record of Admission and Discharge, 1854 to 1887, Massachusetts Correctional Institution Archives, Bridgewater, MA. Data compiled from a sample (every fifteenth name) in the record books.
TABLE 3

The State Almshouse at Bridgewater, 1854-1887

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE OF INMATES WHEN ADMITTED</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-95</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Almshouse at Bridgewater, Record of Admission and Discharge, Vols. I and II, Massachusetts Correctional Institution Archives, Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Data compiled from a sample (every fifteenth name) in the record books.

Just until acquiring the experience needed; and the assistant physician on the almshouse staff was a trainee who was paid $400 annually. At mid-century, the existence of a hospital made medical school education more attractive to students, and some of the early almshouses became teaching hospitals.

In 1871, management of the Bridgewater Almshouse passed to Nahum Léonard, Jr., who made many improvements in the institution, far more than did Levi Goodspeed, his predecessor, particularly in the hospital department. His report for 1871 included a recommendation for enlarging the hospital facility because its accommodations were too limited just until acquiring the experience needed; the hospital and dispensary had expanded.

Besides providing health care, the almshouse served the needs of indigent children, who were described as ignorant and friendless. Levi Goodspeed's goal was to make them "useful and respectable members of society." Newly-admitted children were given a new suit of clothes, taken to the playground for exercise and recreation and to the school which was staffed with two teachers. Older children were "bound out" (indentured) to prepare for future jobs. Goodspeed hoped they would be prepared for a better life than would otherwise be possible.

By an Act of the State Legislature, the almshouse at Monson became the State Primary School where the children of paupers would be educated and trained "to habits of industry and have instilled into their minds religious and moral lessons to be carried with them to their homes in good families." Many of the children admitted to the Bridgewater Almshouse were sent on to Monson. However, during the time when there were 75 to 100 children annually at the Bridgewater schools (one for boys, another for girls), those who were old enough attended school for eight months of the year. The resident teacher was paid $240 annually; in 1861 another was hired for $200. There were far fewer children by 1867 and the schoolhouse was abandoned. The Board of State Charities later described the schools at Bridgewater as small and inadequate, but this was the result of sending children and money to Monson.

The children's major medical problem was ophthalmia. Eye diseases and poverty were related, one physician noted. Children were also victims of repeated incidence of contagious diseases. In December of 1857, scarlet fever killed eighteen children who were under three years of age. Two months later, whooping cough as well as scarlet fever took its toll. During 1872-1874, debility, cholera infantum, convulsions, bronchitis, and the lack of suitable nutrition were among the leading causes of infant mortality. A smallpox epidemic was the chief cause of death during 1872-1873. Frequently, healthy children in the almshouse caught a contagious disease and perished.

For the foundlings and orphans sent to Bridgewater, life was bleak. Some had been found abandoned in the streets. Many were seriously ill and near death when they arrived at the almshouse. It was almost impossible to bring up a child in the institution, as the tables show. For those who died, the cause was traced to their feebleness at birth; they might have lasted longer had everything been favorable but, it was claimed, they were illegitimate and had inherited a disease from one or both of their parents. A number of these babies died of asphyxia, as reported by Dr. George B. Cogswell in 1858.

Another almshouse responsibility was caring for youngsters, mainly infants, whose mothers were sentenced to the workhouse. These children were placed in the almshouse until their mothers were released. In 1867, there were forty births in the workhouse, thirty-eight of them illegitimate. Sometimes the mothers died in the workhouse and the children stayed in the almshouse. In the 1870s, the number of children in the almshouse increased, very likely because their mothers were in the workhouse.
Part of the reform movement of the mid-nineteenth century was concerned with care of the mentally ill as well as prison reform, abolition, temperance, and suffrage extension. Dorothea Dix, in particular, led a national crusade for establishment of mental hospitals and separation of the insane from criminals in prisons. The Board of State Charities raised the question of how the pauper insane should be treated, and where they should be placed. The State responded by establishing a model public mental hospital in Worcester and later two more, in Northampton and Taunton. The hospitals, or lunatic asylums, tried to provide therapy, or moral treatment, with an emphasis upon a therapeutic environment, psychologically and socially, featuring gentleness, occupational therapy, and faith in curability. The incurable insane presented an obvious problem—they occupied places in State hospitals and limited available space for the curable unless they were removed to almshouses. Paupers were ordinarily considered incurable and treatment and cure was not available to them. And so the almshouses became the lunatic asylums for the insane poor.

Cure depended upon class, with the well-to-do at private institutions like the Hartford Retreat or McLean Asylum where quality treatment was available; the poor and curable insane at the State hospitals; and “incurable” State paupers at the almshouses where custodial care was provided, but not the opportunity for treatment, improvement, and recovery. Custodial care included a shelter where the insane poor occupied beds, were restrained, if necessary, kept alive, and encouraged to work on the State farm if they were able. Massachusetts established public mental hospitals, but used the almshouses for the indigent cases of chronic mental illness, particularly Tewksbury Almshouse, which quickly became overcrowded.

Dr. Edward Jarvis’ 1855 report on the insane in the State pointed to the large number of cases of insanity which constituted a great and growing problem. Jarvis showed that there was a great incidence of insanity among the poor and the paupers, and among the Irish, as well. His concern was that the vast majority of the institutionalized were foreign born and supported by the State, and the increase in Irish immigration produced a corresponding increase in cases of insanity. This development affected the almshouse adversely.

During its first year there were fifteen insane persons at Bridgewater. But by its second year, many insane were transferred from State hospitals and sent to the almshouses; there were 100 insane persons at Bridgewater by 1855. Beginning in mid-1856, Taunton and Worcester Hospitals sent about ten inmates to Bridgewater every month. The problem was exacerbated when hospital superintendents transferred terminally-ill patients to other institutions, including Bridgewater.

In the years that followed, Goodspeed repeatedly requested of the State a separate building for the insane. He cited the response of paupers to the insane among them at the almshouse. The mentally ill were teased, taunted and provoked, increasing their excitability. Nevertheless, the incurable insane continued to be sent to Bridgewater for custodial care through 1887. In that year, Taunton, Worcester, Northampton, and the Overseers of the Poor from surrounding towns, transferred all insane men, 120 of them, to Bridgewater. The superintendent of Taunton Hospital explained that for the good of the greatest number, it was essential to remove a portion of the harmless and incurable to provide room for those with a chance for recovery, considering that State accommodations for the insane were limited. Therefore, the number of insane persons at Bridgewater was always high, with 100 or more present at one time. Many of these incurable insane frequently died of consumption after about a year. Levi Goodspeed protested, every year, that his institution could not adequately provide for these inmates. He stated that they were “helpless, insane, demented, idiotic, and of course unable to labor.” He thought they should be sent to one institution, Tewksbury, which had been designated the State receptacle for care and custody of this “class of insane.”

In 1871, the superintendents of the three State Lunatic Hospitals wrote to the Board of State Charities about the need for a hospital or institution for the custody and care of insane convicts, citing the example of New York State which used the State Asylum for Insane Convicts in Auburn, rather than the New York State Lunatic Hospital at Utica. Ultimately, by an Act of the State Legislature, the old Bridgewater Almshouse was converted into a facility for the criminally

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**TABLE 4**

The State Almshouse at Bridgewater, 1854-1898

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-85</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-98</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Almshouse at Bridgewater, Record of Deaths. Massachusetts Correctional Institution Archives, Bridgewater, MA. Though the primary function of the Institution was no longer care for the poor, small numbers of paupers were admitted to 1898. The figures shown above reflect all persons who died at the Almshouse.
### TABLE 5
The State Almshouse at Bridgewater, 1854-1898

#### CAUSE OF DEATH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>Typhoid</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marasmus</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>Cholera Infantis</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phthisis</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>Meningitis</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Age</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Senile Debility</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debility</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Erysipilas</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrofula</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Lung Fever</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralysis</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Delirium Tremens</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Whooping Cough</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Hydrocephalus</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronchitis</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Softening of the Brain</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convulsion</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Infantile Debility</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Brain Disease</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet Fever</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Rubella</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inanition</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Gangrene</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apoplectic</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Congestion of the Lungs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropsy</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Croup</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysentery</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Varioloid</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Pulmonary TB</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Small Pox</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congenital Syphilis</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Bright’s Disease</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Cerebral Hemorrhage</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: State Almshouse at Bridgewater, Record of Deaths, Massachusetts Correctional Institution Archives, Bridgewater, MA. "Other," above, refers to those causes that resulted in fewer deaths.*

Insane in 1895, and other insane persons were no longer sent there from State hospitals. Inmates could be transferred from State prisons, the Massachusetts Reformatory, and from jails. This act eliminated all non-criminals from transfer to this institution for the future. The hospital and almshouse departments of the State Farm (so named in 1887) remained. By 1898, the State’s concern for the insane was reflected in the creation of the State Board of Insanity.

The State provided access for all persons to its public institutions. A number of blacks were admitted to the Bridgewater Almshouse every year. They were identified in record books by placement of “Col.” after their names. A “colored” person was a Cape Verdean, a Kanaka, or a black American. The Kanakas were natives of the Sandwich Islands who worked on New Bedford whaling ships. After months spent on board the ships, the Kanakas arrived in port sick with consumption and close to death. These young men, in their early and mid-twenties, died in the almshouse, too close to death when they entered for medical attention to have altered their fate. During Reconstruction, many Southern blacks who travelled to Massachusetts lacked a permanent residence, were poor, jobless, and were sent to the almshouse by the courts in Boston. Almshouse records show that a number of black Americans, both men and women, lived on into their eighties and nineties, somehow surviving institutional conditions over several decades.

The State Almshouse at Bridgewater did not achieve what was originally intended—the reform and transformation of the poor and the end of poverty. State legislators had not anticipated precisely who the almshouse inmates would be. They were helpless people: the insane, the aged, the sick, the orphan, and the immigrant. The almshouse was the only place where help was provided. The institution admitted more than 12,000 paupers between 1854 and 1887.

A number of institutions and practices emerged from the many services provided at the State almshouses: the hospital, dispensary, orphan asylum, foundling home, clinical training for medical students and nurses, welfare and poor relief, prisons for the criminally insane, schools for the mentally retarded and the handicapped, expansion of mental institutions, and immigrant aid agencies. The almshouse declined as its services were assumed by specialized institutions. The poor came to be helped by public relief, the welfare system, public hospitals, and unemployment insurance.

The Commonwealth had responded to a pressing social problem and took care of those not able to care for themselves. From the State almshouses established in the mid-nineteenth century, a beginning of public health service emerged. The history of the almshouse is an important chapter in American social and medical history.

Dr. Lucille O’Connell is Professor of History at Bridgewater State College and a Research Associate at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. She holds a BA from Brooklyn College and a Ph.D. in American Civilization from New York University. She is the author of several articles on women in American history and on Ukrainian, Polish, and Irish immigrants in America.
Artificial intelligence - the name conjures images of mechanical monsters, the Golem, Dr. Frankenstein's creation and the rebellious computer Hal. We have always been fascinated by the possibility of creating a machine in our image, but this fascination is often accompanied by apprehension. We fear losing control of our creation and suspect that it might turn against us. It is this duality, this conflict between the desire to create and the fear of the consequences of the creation, that has been so successfully exploited by writers. It is also, in part, this fascination that has recently brought the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into public view.

Some recent developments with far-reaching practical applications have shown the enormous potential of AI. If we look beyond the spectacular and leave behind our apprehensions, illusions, and fantasies, we may sense the real and lasting significance of AI. To help dispel some of these myths, I will describe briefly the goals and the major subdivisions of AI.

The first myth is that AI is concerned with the question of whether machines can think - it is not. The question may be an excellent topic of conversation at parties but is of no interest to practitioners of AI. Probably the best way to describe Artificial Intelligence is to specify its goals. There are two major goals of AI: to make computers more useful, and to understand what intelligence is and what makes it possible. These two goals define, to a great extent, the different branches of AI. The primary goal of expert systems, natural language processing, vision, and robotics is to make computers more useful. By contrast, cognitive modeling and machine learning are primarily concerned with understanding the possibilities of intelligence.

**Expert Systems**

The most spectacular successes of AI have occurred in the field of expert systems. An expert system is a computer program that simulates the expertise of a specialist in some field. One of the best known of the expert systems is INTERNIST/CADUCEUS at the University of Pittsburgh. It covers more than eighty percent of all internal medicine and diagnoses at the level of a medical expert. Another program, MYCIN, at Stanford University diagnoses and recommends treatment for infectious blood diseases. When a panel of human experts evaluated and compared the performance of medical experts, interns, and MYCIN, the computer program's performance was judged as good or superior to all the others.

PUFF is a computer program to diagnose pulmonary diseases. It is now routinely used as a consultant at the Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco. These and other medical diagnostic programs have shown that expert systems are feasible and perform at or above the level of a human expert.

Currently these are very large programs requiring the huge capacities of large computers called main frames. It is, however, realistic to think that in the near future similar programs will be available for microcomputers. When this becomes reality all those regions of the world where medical care is either non-existent or minimal may have easy access to the best diagnostic facilities.

Another famous expert system, and one of the earliest ones, is DENDRAL. This system, at Stanford University, has been evolving for over sixteen years. It analyzes mass spectrographic and other chemical experimental data to infer the plausible structure of an unknown compound. DENDRAL by now surpasses all humans at its task. This system is also of interest because it typifies the kind of cooperative efforts required for the creation of expert systems.

DENDRAL was started when Edward Feigenbaum, a computer scientist, met Joshua Lederberg, a Nobel laureate in genetics. Together they formulated the idea of a computer program to infer molecular structure from chemical data. Together with Carl Djerassi, a physical chemist, they created DENDRAL. It has been growing in sophistication and scope ever since, and is now used at university and industrial chemical labs throughout the world.

In biology there is a program called MOLGEN (MOlecular GENetics) that acts as a consultant in genetic engineering and analyzing DNA sequence data. Computer manufacturing also benefits from expert systems. Digital Equipment Corporation uses an expert system to design how the
Similarly, since it is important to facilitate the difficult task of obtaining the necessary communication between the expert and the user, there is a need for an objective is to make computers more useful. The hardest thing to simulate is everyday reasoning! Another important by-product of the study of expert systems is the recognition that the hardest part of translating a human expert's knowledge into a computer program is obtaining the needed knowledge from the human expert. This realization, and the accumulated experience of twenty years of study of expert systems, has given rise to a new discipline: knowledge engineering. Expert systems, because of their spectacular successes and obvious applications, have stimulated activity in other branches of AI. For example, given the time consuming and difficult task of obtaining the necessary knowledge from human experts, it would be very desirable to have the system learn the needed knowledge from books or human teachers. This desire has stimulated research in the field of machine learning. Similarly, since it is important to facilitate the communication between the expert system and the user, there is a need for natural language processing.

**Robotics**

This is another field whose primary objective is to make computers more useful. Currently the main use of robots is as manipulators to perform industrial tasks such as assembly, welding, painting, and other repetitive or hazardous tasks. No robots do not look like R2D2! Most of them are mechanical arms such as the arm in the space shuttle. At this time most industrial robots have a limited capacity to perceive or to respond to their environment. A robot must "know" where it is in relation to the objects it is to manipulate. However, in university and industrial labs, prototypes already exist that are somewhat autonomous in their interaction with their environment. Although several companies are already marketing home robots, the time for their widespread use has not yet arrived. Most robots are being used for industrial applications, for tasks such as material handling including loading and unloading, moving parts, assembly tasks, spot and arc welding, and painting. Several factories have already been fully automated by robots and many others are now partially mechanized. The rate of expansion of robot use in industry may be measured by the amount of robot sales. In 1976 robot sales were $15 million. By 1979 it was $45 million. In 1983 sales reached $250 million, and it is predicted that by 1990 it will reach $2 billion. This rapid automation may produce problems not too dissimilar from those of the industrial revolution. Much more attention needs to be given to the social consequences of the widespread use of robots. Such automation, if it is carried out at a rapid rate and without adequate planning, may bring about widespread unemployment and the need for large retraining programs. Even in the best of all possible situations such dislocation of jobs will increase the leisure time of most people and this, in turn, will require careful planning so as to avoid alienation, boredom, and other individual and social ills.

Robotics research encompasses many different fields. Aside from all the engineering aspects of robotics, research is being carried out by mathematicians, computer scientists, and neurophysiologists. For example, the motion of robot manipulators requires sophisticated mathematical techniques. Let us look at a typical problem, motion planning. Suppose that the geometry of a robot's environment is totally known. That is, we know not only the geometry of the manipulator itself, but the shape and location of all the objects in its working space. If we are given an initial position for the manipulator and a desired final position, how do we plan a continuous motion that will take the manipulator from its starting to its final position avoiding any obstacles along the way? Even if we succeed in solving this problem abstractly, how do we translate it into a sequence of executable motions? How do we control the actual motion of the arm? How can we adjust for errors due to mechanical limitations? These are only some of the very difficult questions that workers in manipulator motion are
conclusions reached have led to the design of a "tuned track" where runners can compete. Gasoline-powered, hydraulically actuated, with fewer risks of injury and faster times. The six-legged walking machine that can carry a man. One paper quantifies the gaits of two and four-legged animals and concludes that the gaits of animals seem designed to minimize unwanted movements and energy costs. Another describes a one-legged hopping machine constructed at the robotics institute of Carnegie-Mellon University. Another article studies the tactics used by locusts for movement on rough terrain. Such basic issues of physics, biochemistry and other allied sciences must be understood if robots are to be successfully programmed to work in varied environments.

Another important area of research is the study of the manipulator "hand." The problems being considered include determining the optimal number of fingers for a given task and the desirable number of joints per-finger for stable grasping of objects. Perhaps the most active area of research in robotics deals with perception. Computer vision, for example, is now an important field in its own. Very deep understanding of the computational problems involved in both human and machine vision have been achieved by the late David Marr and his group at MIT. Their research has not only provided a theoretical foundation for the study of vision but illustrates how fruitful the collaborations between computer scientists, mathematicians, and neurophysiologists can be. There are presently several sophisticated vision systems being used by robots for tasks such as quality control of manufactured parts, analysis of printed circuits, and recognition of parts in assembly operations. Other perception studies involve tactile sensors being developed for manipulations and those which deal with how the senses of hearing and smell are used by humans and animals and what comparable mechanisms might be useful for robots.

One paper studies the mechanics of human walking and running. The conclusions reached have led to the design of a "tuned track" where runners can compete with fewer risks of injury and faster times. Another article describes a 1600 lb., gasoline-powered, hydraulically actuated, six-legged walking machine that can carry a man. One paper quantifies the gaits of two and four-legged animals and concludes that the gaits of animals seem designed to minimize unwanted movements and energy costs. Another describes a one-legged hopping machine constructed at the robotics institute of Carnegie-Mellon University. Another article studies the tactics used by locusts for movement on rough terrain. Such basic issues of physics, biochemistry and other allied sciences must be understood if robots are to be successfully programmed to work in varied environments.

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The hardest thing to simulate is everyday reasoning!

One problem of great importance for industrial applications of robotics is the development of programming languages for robots, that is, languages specifically tailored for the programming of tasks such as motion planning and locomotion. Finally, one other problem has come to light because of the use of robots. It was discovered as soon as robots began to be used industrially that the assembly line, in particular, and the factory, in general, were designed for humans, and that considerable changes were required in order to make them efficient for robots. The automated factory is very different from the non-automated one; it requires a totally different design. This is yet another field of investigation.

Natural Language Processing

One of the earliest goals of AI was to have the communication between humans and computers in a natural language such as English. To date, this goal has not yet been reached but great progress has been made and important difficulties have been identified. Several systems currently exist that process natural language in specialized areas. Some of these are used in conjunction with expert systems to facilitate the use and the growth of these systems. Another early goal was to have machines translate from one natural language to another. Progress in this field has been disappointing. The difficulties encountered were much greater than originally expected. A classic example of the inadequacies of machine translation is the following: after translating the sentence "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak," into Russian, the computer then translated...
the Russian back into English as “The vodka is good but the meat is rotten.” Although natural language processing might be one of the most difficult of the problems tackled by AI, it probably will provide more insights into the nature of intelligence than any other. This brings us to the second goal of AI – the understanding of the possibilities of intelligence.

Cognitive Modeling

Recently, linguists, psychologists, neuroscientists, and computer scientists have joined forces in an interdisciplinary effort. It was realized that by bringing to this collective effort the insight and techniques of the different specialties more than the sum of the parts could be achieved. The catalyst was the emergence of Artificial Intelligence as a serious science. The ultimate goal of this new breed of scientists is to explain, using computer programs as models, every aspect of cognition. The common assumption underlying this enterprise is that human beings and computers are examples of physical systems that hold and transform symbols. This new science is known as cognitive modeling. What makes cognitive modeling different from each of its constituent disciplines is the use of a computer program to model the theory. As anyone who has written even the simplest program knows, it is necessary to fully understand what one wants the program to do to be able to write it. The old truism that to determine whether you fully understand something you should try teaching it to someone else can now be considerably strengthened by making the test instead of trying teaching it to a computer, that is, to write a program to carry it out. By designing a computer program to simulate a particular cognitive function it becomes more apparent what the limitations of that function are. That is, what it can and what it cannot carry out. As David Marr wrote, “The best way of finding out the difficulties of doing something is to try to do it.”

It is in this respect that I see the great potential of AI. The type of phenomenon that sciences such as physics and chemistry study are, somewhat, stable. Even though our understanding of physics has changed considerably since the time of Newton the physical universe that Newton was interested in has not changed much, at least not on a local scale. A chemical experiment carried out today can be reproduced tomorrow. Because of this stability mathematics is the vehicle for the formulation of theories of the physical sciences. For example in physics, the most mathematical of the sciences, E = mc² is itself the embodiment of the theory. It is the statement of a physical reality that cannot be stated better any other way. Thus a science is mathematical if its truths can be embodied in mathematical facts. This has not been possible for the behavioral sciences. It is my belief that the reason that these sciences have not been able to use the language of mathematics, is that mathematics is not suitable to express their truths. However, I believe that AI is the vehicle that will do for the behavioral and social sciences what mathematics did for the physical sciences. It is computer programs of this type being developed by the cognitive scientists working in AI that will help model the truths of psychology. Indeed it is interesting to note that individuals such as Roger Schank at Yale and John Anderson at Carnegie-Mellon who are pioneering this type of work in cognitive modeling are psychologists as well as AI scientists.

Machine Learning

Another very active field of AI is the design of programs that learn. The efforts in this direction have not only led to interesting successes but have continually provided deep insights into the human learning processes. I will mention only a few such programs. AM is a program written by Douglas Lenat at Stanford University. This program started by assuming a few basic concepts of set theory as well as some way to measure what might be mathematically interesting. It then proceeded to discover most of the facts of elementary arithmetic. It began by discovering the concept of number and from there it came up with the arithmetical operations. It discovered prime numbers. It conjectured the fundamental theorem of arithmetic and rediscovered a famous mathematical hypothesis that has so far, defied verification or disproval.

Another learning program called BACON discovers empirical laws by detecting regularities in data supplied to it. It has rediscovered most of the early physical and chemical laws. Some of these include Ohm's law for electric circuits, Archimede's law of displacement, Gay-Lussac's combining volumes, Cannizzaro's determination of the relative atomic weights, and Proust's law of definite proportions.

ACT is a program developed by John Anderson to prove theorems in high school geometry. This program exemplifies what I mentioned earlier about the use of AI as the tool of cognitive science, it represents and tests Anderson's theory of learning as applied to the learning of geometry.

I have mentioned only some of the major areas of AI. Some of the techniques that AI scientists have developed have far-reaching consequences. For example, there is a new programming language PROLOG which may change our thinking about programming. PROLOG is an acronym for PROgramming in LOGic. This language, unlike all preceding ones, does not require the programmer to spell out in detail each of the instructions the computer is to carry out. Instead it requires that the assumptions and the desired conclusion be very specifically stated and leaves the way of logically deriving the conclusion from the assumptions to the computer.

This relatively new field of AI will surely bring about many new ways in which to think about thinking. It is natural that AI scientists should be excited by their achievements and revolutionary goals. However, it is important that we do not confuse excitement with immediate realization and that we prepare for the social impact of the successes of this most challenging and intellectually stimulating science.

Professor Hugo D'Alarcao holds a Ph.D. in mathematics from the Pennsylvania State University (1966). For the past five years he has been active in helping design and implement the computer science program at Bridgewater State College. His current research interests are in robotics and computer vision and he is in the process of developing a robotics laboratory at B.S.C.
BOOK REVIEWS

"Subtle is the Lord" … The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein

by

Abraham Pais
Oxford University Press, 1982

A headline on page 12 of the London Times for November 7, 1919 announced: "Revolution in Science/New Theory of the Universe/Newtonian Ideas Overthrown." The article described the announcement, at a joint meeting of the Royal and Astronomical Societies, of the results of measurements made by British observers during the total solar eclipse of May 29. These observations, they believed, were decisive in verifying the predictions of the scientist Albert Einstein. The president of the Royal Society described the pronouncement as "one of the most momentous, if not the most momentous pronouncement of human thought." The president, already famous Dr. Einstein now became a legend.

The major contributions of Dr. Einstein began about fourteen years earlier. Volume 17 of the Annalen der Physik contains three papers submitted by Einstein in 1905. The first of these papers, entitled "Heuristic Viewpoint concerning the Generation and Transformation of Light," suggested the particle nature of light. This work was an essential building block in the development of quantum theory. The second paper, "Motion of Particles Suspended in a Stationary Fluid, as Demanded by the Molecular Kinetic Theory of Heat," was instrumental in proving that molecules exist. His third and most famous paper, "Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies," introduced his Special Theory of Relativity. Any of these works alone would have assured him a secure place in the history of science.

The accomplishments of Dr. Einstein have been described in several biographies, including the most recent one by Abraham Pais, an accomplished physicist in his own right. What sets this book apart from any previous biography is its detailed, scholarly emphasis on Einstein's scientific thoughts and theories. The mathematical sophistication of the book equals the mathematical sophistication of Einstein's work. In addition, Pais has lucidly woven throughout the book a personal and non-scientific biography of Einstein. The reader need not, however, wade through a maze of mathematical details to find this biographical material, because Pais has identified the non-scientific material in the table of contents with italic type. About twenty percent of the book is biographical; the remainder is technical.

Dr. Pais' qualifications for writing this book are impressive. An accomplished physicist, he was an associate of Einstein at the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. His recollection of conversations with Einstein and his collaborators and his use of the many letters and manuscripts of the Einstein Archives are of great value.

"Subtle is the Lord" is divided into eight parts, five of which are devoted to the general areas of physics in which Einstein made major contributions: Statistical Mechanics, the Special Theory of Relativity, the General Theory of Relativity, the Unified Field Theory, and Quantum Theory. In each section Pais provides the background of Einstein's ideas, the ideas themselves, and the contributions of other scientists. For example, in the section devoted to the special theory of relativity, Dr. Pais gives the reader the nineteenth century concept of the ether and the attempts to detect it. Special emphasis is placed on the Michelson-Morley experiment, with commentary on why Einstein was reluctant to acknowledge its influence on his thought. Pais also describes the ideas and theories of other contributors to relativity, in particular those of Lorentz and Poincare. Comparing the work of Lorentz and Poincare with that of Einstein, he explains why Einstein succeeded while others did not.

Throughout the book, Pais raises perceptive and fascinating questions about Einstein's views on the direction that the development of physics was taking. For example, why did Einstein, who contributed substantially to both relativity and quantum theory, not combine the two theories into a relativistic quantum theory as was accomplished by Dirac? Einstein certainly had the ability to do this. Why did Einstein in his later years devote his time and energy to the unification of the electromagnetic and gravitational fields rather than contribute to the development of quantum field theory and particle physics? Pais detailed and lucid commentaries on many questions such as these provide the reader with a stimulating and informative experience.

Pais has a captivating style and the remarkable ability to present a technical subject within a charming and pleasant narrative. An example is his presentation of Einstein's long and tortuous path from the special to the general theory of relativity. He quotes Einstein's own description of his 'happiest thought,' an insight that allowed him to extend his theory of relativity to include gravitation during a lecture in Kyoto, Japan:

I was sitting in a chair in the patent office at Bern when all of a sudden a thought occurred to me: "If a person falls freely he will not feel his own weight." I was startled. This simple thought made a deep impression on me. It impelled me toward a theory of gravitation.

Last but not least is a series of appendices, which include thumbnail biographies of many of Einstein's collaborators and an Einstein Chronology, summarizing the major events of his life. Of special interest is the appendix containing the curious story behind the awarding of the Nobel Prize to Einstein. Dr. Pais has provided the reader with a stimulating and enjoyable excursion through the life and thought of this century's greatest scientist. The detailed presentation of the development of the ideas of Einstein and his contemporaries make this a valuable contribution to the history of science.

Richard F. Calssidom
Professor of Physics
ELENI
by
Nicholas Gage
Random House, 1983

Nicholas Gage is an American of Greek ancestry, born in the Epirotic village of Leia, in the district of Thesprotia. In the autumn of 1947 the village was occupied by the “Democratic Army” of the Greek communist guerilla movement. Rumors abounded that the children of the village would be taken to the socialist countries, away from the dangers of war. Concerned villagers began to look for avenues -- or rather paths -- of escape for their children. But Nicholas’ father was in America, and the decisions about the family had to be made by Nicholas’ mother, who did not wish to have her children carried into the Iron Curtain. After long deliberation, she contrived the escape of three of her girls and her boy Nicholas. Her plan succeeded, but she herself was betrayed, captured by the communists, tortured and finally executed.

Eleni was her first name and Eleni is the title of the book written about her by her son Nicholas, following six years of painstaking and exhaustive investigation. Nicholas had to leave his job as a N.Y. Times correspondent in order to fulfill his life’s ambition: to find the man responsible for his mother’s death. He wanted to explore the depth of his family’s tragedy -- to write about the love of a mother for her children and to describe the village milieu in which he grew up.

Nicholas interviewed upwards of four hundred persons who might have known something about Eleni’s last days, traveling to the Eastern Block countries to gather whatever information he could from former guerrillas who had survived the civil war. Finally Nicholas located the “judge” who had sent Eleni to her death, in a small Epirotic town; by now he was old and toothless. Equipped with a gun, Nicholas walked into the judge’s house, determined to kill him. But faced with a miserable remnant of a human being, Nicholas suddenly remembered the love of his mother who had

P.S. for August

The cat left the carcass of a rabbit on the porch early this morning. Its bloodless hind-paws rigid as waxed leaves.

Forget-me-nots still glint bright blue at the ledge. Once I stencilled the borders of our room, stippled paint until my knuckles bled — the color of your eyes impossible to replicate.

Through the overhang of chokecherry a spider’s wire down. We don’t talk anymore. I won’t forget the sound of a rabbit’s light bones sliding from my trowel, a quenched field, wordless ends.

by Nancy Donegan

A resident of Brockton, Nancy Donegan taught English at Brockton High School before enrolling in the graduate school at Brown University, where she received the Master of Fine Arts degree in writing in 1984. Her first volume of poems is ready for publication.
sacrificed herself in order to save her children and his love of his own children; he stood before the judge for a few minutes, spat upon him, and left.

Leia is located on a rugged but beautiful mountain dominated by an ancient fortress, dated about 300 B.C. Beyond its natural beauty, the village has very little to offer its sturdy inhabitants. Consequently, many of them became immigrants; Nicholas' father, Christos, emigrated to America in 1908 where he settled in Worcester, Mass., becoming a fruit peddler. He left Greece with a Turkish passport, since Leia was still under Turkish control in 1908. But he frequently returned to his native town after it became Greek again, if only to stay for a short time. During one of these trips he married Eleni.

As was customary for many emigrants at that time, Christos Gage left his wife behind in the village in the conviction that she would be safe there. He sent money regularly for her support, and every two or three years he returned to visit his bride and to father a child or two. Some day, he believed, he would amass enough money to go back to his village permanently. In the meantime, Christos Gage became the father of four girls, and a boy.

In 1940 the village contained twelve hundred inhabitants. After Greece was occupied by Germany in 1941, Leia became a center of resistance activities, sometimes carried out by the pro-Western group EDES and at other times by the pro-communist EAM. One day in 1944 the Germans marched into the village and set it on fire, thereby taking revenge for the insurgents’ activities. This burning was among the last German actions in Greece, for soon thereafter the Germans were forced to evacuate. But this was not the end of the suffering for the inhabitants of the Greek villages; the departure of the Germans was followed by an interminable war, in many ways costlier and more brutal than the German occupation.

In 1947 the inhabitants of Leia heard that communist guerrillas were about to occupy their area. To avoid conscription by the communists many of the men left their homes. The village was indeed occupied by the 8th Battalion of the “Democratic Army.” All sorts of whispers fluttered about the village regarding communist plans; one such rumor was that the guerrillas intended to move the children into the Iron Curtain countries. This possibility worried Eleni most, and she organized her children’s flight before it was too late. Luckily, under the protection of night, the children managed to get past the communist guards.

Though she was away from the village, working in the fields at the time of her children’s escape, Eleni was condemned to death not only because she had arranged their escape, but because she was the “American” and as such was disliked by some of the communist sympathizers in the village. Many villagers stood up on her behalf at her trial, and, defying the communist danger, told the “judge” that Eleni had done nothing reprehensible, but their defense was to no avail: Eleni was condemned to death. Sixteen days after her execution, the guerrillas were disbanded by the national army, and those who survived fled to the communist countries.

Nicholas, nine years old, heard the news of his mother’s death in the area of Igoumenitsa, a town on the Ionian coast where there was a camp for refugees. From there Nicholas, along with three of his sisters, traveled to Worcester, Mass., to join their father. Nicholas grew up in Worcester, attended high school there, and went on to Boston University and Columbia School of Journalism. After working for the Associated Press, he joined the New York Times as an investigative reporter, a job he eventually resigned in order to search for his mother’s murderers and write about her tragic death.

Peter Karafitis
Associate Professor of History

Woman and the Demon:
The Life of a Victorian Myth

by

Nina Auerbach
Harvard University Press: 1982

Woman and the Demon serves as a bold alternative to the conventional feminist thought regarding the damage that Victorianism had done to women. Feminists argue that the Victorians were the principal architects of modern sexism, and that women are still struggling to liberate themselves from a set of repressive prescriptions that the Victorians inflicted upon them. The ideal Victorian woman, as defined by modern feminists, was a poor excuse for a human being: she was desexed, denied the power of reason and judgement, and consigned to the home, where she became “the angel in the house,” having no identity beyond the roles of daughter, wife and mother.

Nina Auerbach ingeniously counters this traditional reading of Victorianism as she develops her thesis that “the taboos that encased the Victorian woman contained buried tributes to her disruptive power.” The Victorian cultural imagination enshrined women in the popular stereotypes of victim, angel, old maid and fallen woman. Auerbach suggests that the awful truth which the Victorians tried to repress was that these images actually embodied the power to become their opposite:

As angel, she is militant rather than nurturing, displacing the God she pretends to serve. As angelic demon, she becomes the source of all shaping and creative power, dropping the mask of humility as she forecasts apocalyptic new orders. As old maid, she simulates meekness while proclaiming that the world is all before her new dispensation. As fallen woman, she spurns meekness for the glory of her own apotheosis.

In other words, woman is demonic, polymorphous, vital, dangerous, and transcendent, and has the superhuman power to transform herself and to dominate the life that supposedly confines her. The book devotes a chapter to each of these “subversive paradigms.” Admitting that her selection of examples is “representative, not exhaustive,” Auerbach cogently pursues her theme in detailed analyses of popular and serious fiction, painting, poetry, biographies, essays and psychological studies in her attempt to show that the true Victorian myth of womanhood was the exact opposite of the woman represented in official Victorian ideology. At the heart of the Victorian experience, Auerbach says, is “a myth crowning a disobedient woman in her many guises as heir of the ages and demonic savior of the race.”

In her chapter on the myth of woman as victim (“prone womanhood”), Auerbach examines two popular romances, Bram Stoker’s Dracula and George du Maurier’s Trilby, and “the romantic beginnings of modern science,” Freud’s Studies on Hysteria. All three works are usually read as accounts of the male master mesmerizer in total control of the paralyzed female. Auerbach, however, convincingly demonstrates the powers that are actually granted to the women, magical powers of regeneration that empower them to turn on their supposed masters and paralyze them instead. She calls this “the self-transforming power surging beneath apparent vic­timization,” and maintains that the
subjection of women is a defensive response to this power on the part of Victorian men. Victorian efforts to convert women into angels similarly reflect this need to counteract the perceived danger of women’s demonic and superhuman powers. Through the use of numerous examples, Auerbach convincingly shows how Victorian iconography abounds with tributes to woman’s demonic essence. Her argument is especially persuasive in her reading of the Pre-Raphaelite paintings of Ford Madox Brown, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Holman Hunt. She beautifully illuminates the contradiction between the actual force of the images and their official messages. An example of this kind of illumination is her brief comment on Edward Burne-Jones’ “Head of a Mermaid” (the cover illustration). We of the twentieth century might patronizingly view the mermaid as merely pretty and romantic; but Auerbach shows how the mermaid’s face is dangerously alive and seductive, and explains how the motif of the mermaid, or serpent-woman, is a powerful recurring Victorian motif.

Auerbach proposes that the Victorian perception of the old maid as a grotesque figure of ridicule was due to two central cultural fears: fear of the female hero, and “the starker, still less rapidly confronted spectacle of the defeat of the family and the mutation of the race . . . “ She demonstrates how the fearsome idea of a new race of old maids assuming power over the future seeps into some of the best-loved Victorian fiction. To counter this perception of the old maid, Auerbach offers much evidence from little-known sources of Victorian women’s biography, autobiography, and fiction that gives us glimpses of the myth that worked beneath the surface of the Victorian age, in which the old maid is an authentic hero, an audacious woman of independence and self-realization. She is often pictured as being superior in both heart and soul to her married sisters, an exalted figure, set apart from the mass of common, married humanity. Wilkie Collins’ The Woman in White is credited by Auerbach as being the most explicit exaltation of the old maid as a criticism of traditional wifehood. Among the many sources drawn upon that share this iconoclastic vision of woman alone and in command, are Charlotte Bonte’s autobiographical novel Villette and her letters to her spinster friend Mary Taylor, and the lives of Christina Rossetti, George Eliot, Queen Victoria, and Florence Nightingale.

Like the old maid, the fallen woman is really a magically empowered creature whose fall transfigures her and gives her the freedom to grow. Her will to rise carries her beyond the bonds that confine her married sisters, and transforms her into a dangerous and potent force. With characteristic skills, Auerbach scours many sources from art and literature to support her thesis, among which are certain paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, George Eliot’s Adam Bede, Thomas Hardy’s Tess of the D’Urbervilles, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Scarlet Letter, and Lewis Carroll’s Alice In Wonderland.

Auerbach never suggests in her book that Victorian women literally had the power that her myth figuratively expresses. What she does suggest is a fullness of life for Victorian women, a fullness often ignored. Although the reader at times may quarrel with occasional interpretations, the total effect of her impressive accumulation of sources (and her interpretation of them) convinces the reader of the veracity of her thesis of Victorian man’s apprehension of the awesome powers of woman. Woman and The Demon is intellectually stimulating and complex, often outrageous, and certainly worthy of being considered a major contribution to feminist criticism.

Mary Myers
Periodicals Librarian

Pictographs

Snow fell for days, the long white albs of trees, and saplings ice locked to earth.

Some of us took axes, shovels, to chink our way through, assuring ourselves the road was as far as we would go.

After we cleared the barn the old ones called us back. We waved our arms and smiled.

There were fans of light beyond the snow blocked woods.

When we look behind, nightfires belong to strangers . . .

We don’t talk of home, snow blind and bitten we keep digging.

No one remembers when the words ran out.

by Nancy Donegan
Every spring, as my office is inundated by the annual wave of publisher's examination copies of new textbooks, I am rent by ambivalent feelings: guilt at my inability to examine each new text adequately, along with gratitude for being the recipient of a gift whose market value approaches twenty-five dollars. Why am I not happier? Why do I not find more joy in the process of shopping for a textbook? With so many to choose from, there certainly should be something to satisfy every taste. Yet in point of fact, there is very little to choose from. Despite the illusion of variety, textbooks in psychology are no more different from each other than competing brands of soap powders, cigarettes or beers. The textbook has become a product to be marketed like any other product by creating the illusion of great variety (and hence of free choice) by producing what David Reisman referred to in The Lonely Crowd as "marginally differentiated" items. Textbooks in psychology, and especially in introductory psychology (from which the majority of students will derive their most lasting impression of the discipline), are characterized by a monotonous and increasingly monolithic sameness. There exists in effect a canon in psychology—a set of books all professing the one true faith. The assertion that a canon exists today in psychology is supported by four phenomena in textbook publishing: dogmatism, suppression of controversy, silencing of critics, and catechizing.

The typical introductory psychology textbook leaves students with the impression that there are many facts of psychology. There is little attempt to impress upon the reader that most of these "facts" are provisional and tentative, and that in the last analysis there is precious little that psychology knows for certain. That these "facts" are mental constructions founded upon arbitrarily chosen philosophical assumptions is something that is rarely even hinted at. In short, the orthodox ideology is dogmatically presented. The opening sentence in the preface to the introductory text I am now using is typical. It reads: "Although psychology is a relatively new science, it has developed a standard body of knowledge that all students need to master." (Morris, 1982, p.xi).

The many areas of ignorance in psychology are almost never acknowledged. On those rare occasions when they are acknowledged, an exercise in prophecy invariably follows -- the textbook author-turned-prophet assures reader that there is nothing not known today that will not be made known in the future through the inevitable progress of psychological research.

Controversies are papered over; disagreements are harmonized. The result is homogenization; psychology is presented as a faith, orthodox and catholic.

Introductory texts that do not dogmatically present an orthodoxy party line from which all serious controversies have been censored just do not get published. Perhaps they do not even get written. Probably the publishers are right in contending that they would not sell. Whatever the reason, the extensive to which the degree of unanimity presented in introductory texts exceeds that which actually exists within the field demonstrates that criticism of the established canon is effectively silenced. Within the hallowed walls of your classroom you are free in principle to use uncanonical books; but try to find some if you can!

One final clue that psychology is becoming an ideology with an established canon is the fact that students are required (for purposes of the ubiquitous multiple choice exam) to learn the contents of the textbook. They are not encouraged to consider it, to question it, or to criticize it; they are to learn it. "Take this textbook and commit it to memory," I sheepishly confess is what I tell my own students. But you and I know that that is not education, that is catechism. Multiple choice exams and student guides are the apparatus of catechism, they are not the trappings of a discipline that values free and open inquiry. Yet how many professors can resist the pressures to consider for adoption only those texts that are accompanied by an instructor's manual with test item file?

The dogmatic tone of introductory psychology texts, their suppression of controversy, the sameness of the most popular texts, and their encouragement of the use of methods of indoctrination, all point to the establishment of a canon in psychology.
To make the situation more disturbing, this canon is established not by psychologists but by editors in publishing houses that respond to forces in the marketplace. The result is that the canon serves not psychology but the market system. Publishing college textbooks is big business today, and few markets are more lucrative than introductory psychology. Ever since the 1960s, when the student population swelled so rapidly, profit-seekers have been more and more attracted to textbook publishing. Publishing houses, once the province of true amateurs of books, have been bought up one after another by multinational corporations whose overriding concern is to return a profit on their investment.

The establishment of a canon is thus the consequence of the domination of textbook publishing today by a few giant companies. Editors award contracts for those manuscripts which, on the basis of their market analysis, they are confident will sell well. The ensuing advertising blitz serves to make editorial choice an exercise in self-fulfilling prophecy. They publish what sells, and they sell what they publish. When one of them hits the jackpot with a bestseller, the rest scramble desperately to market as quickly as possible a product so similar as to be marginally distinguishable yet barely avoid suits for copyright infringement. The obsession with finding the formula that will click is no less prevalent among textbook editors than among recording artists or motion picture producers.

Another result of the domination of the textbook market by those few large companies who have the resources to respond instantly to new fads, to produce a glossy product, and to launch a formidable advertising blitz, is that most professors gullibly accept the implication that anything published by other than a major house must be inferior. Can anything good come out of Cottage Industries Press? Did the author not send his manuscript to Harper and Row, Prentice-Hall, or Holt, Rinehart? If it were any good, would they not have grabbed it?

So the obsession with finding the formula that will click is no less prevalent among textbook editors than among recording artists or motion picture producers.

But it may be argued, since the publishers are responding so sensitively to forces in the marketplace, does this not guarantee that psychologists are getting exactly the kind of textbooks that they want? All professors receive dozens of surveys from publishing houses entreating them to tell in wearisome detail precisely what they would like in a textbook for some specific course. Every complimentary copy of a new textbook includes a postcard on which they are invited to voice their opinion of the new product.

Such an attempt to affix blame or to assign responsibility can only serve to distract us from the fundamental issue. I do not know who is to blame. I only know that the system as it operates serves to establish and fix ever more firmly a canon in psychology. The question whether psychology determines what gets published in introductory psychology textbooks is analogous to the question of whether the public gets what it wants in commercial television programming. The same sameness is evident in both. A product designed to sell to the widest possible market, whether it be television viewers or psychology professors, must be all things to all people; and above all it must risk offending no one. The profit-motivated system that produces psychology textbooks today may actually be delivering the product desired by the majority of American psychologists, or by some composite average psychology professor fabricated out of market survey data. But at the same time the system automatically fosters ideological orthodoxy because the forces of the market discourage criticism, controversy, and any variety beyond the limits of marginal differentiation. It is the market system that is creating a canon in psychology. Editors are not to blame. Psychology is not to blame. There is no conspiracy. Quite without anyone's intending it the "invisible hand" of the marketplace, as Adam Smith called it, has taken the scriptures of our discipline, canonized those that pay tribute to them, and cast the rest into the oblivion of non-publication or ineffectual distribution.

Not only is there a canon then in psychology, but the canon is not under the control of psychology. When the Church established a scriptural canon, they were wise enough to keep it under their own control. If new books were to be admitted, the Church would decide. If some books were to be declared apocryphal or even heretical, and thus suppressed, that prerogative was exclusively the Church's. Not so with the canon in psychology! It is becoming established, and our role in that process is hardly more than that of spectators.

Worse still, the canon that is being established in psychology does not serve psychology, it serves the market. The Church's canon serves the Church because the Church controlled it. Psychology's canon serves the market because the market controls it.

The establishment of a canon in psychology serves the market in many ways. First of all, our most popular psychology texts teach students to be good little consumers. They present information that is pre-digested. No laborious chewing is required before swallowing it. Like breakfast cereal it is attractively packaged and sugar-coated. Even the vocabulary is carefully screened to filter out any indigestible lumps. Student study guides and multiple choice exams confirm the impression that this is information to be consumed. That students have learned their role as consumers of textbooks (and in fact of education in general) is evident in the observation that whereas students in the 1960s typically asked the question: "Is it relevant?" today's students want to know: "Will it be on the next exam?" The teaching methods encouraged by today's psychology textbooks do not reward uniqueness and creativity, they reinforce those students who passively yet eagerly consume what is fed to them. Our economic system must have a steady supply of voracious consumers if it is not to collapse. Psychology is unwittingly doing its part to fill that demand. By aiding and abetting the creation in our students of a character structure that Erich Fromm refers to as homo consumens, the eternal suckling, textbooks in psychology serve the market system. But if there is any truth in Fromm's analysis -- and I believe that there is -- by the very same token it exacerbates the pervasive alienation in our society among those who cannot penetrate the paradox that the more we consume the less satisfied we feel.

Secondly, the market is served by psychology's almost unanimous endorsement of self-interest as the ultimate instigator of all conduct. Whether it is Freudian theory with its pleasure principle, behavioral theory with its bribes dignified by being called reinforcements, or some social psychological theory such as exchange...
CULTURAL COMMENTARY

The American Arts and Crafts Movement (c. 1880-1920):
Its Promise For A Better Life In The New Twentieth Century

by Roger T. Dunn
Associate Professor of Art

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century there developed in Europe and America a new style in the decorative arts known as the Arts and Crafts movement. It rejected the excesses, pretense and formality of Victorian style homes and furnishings. It also found fault with mass-produced objects in which the design and application of machine-made furnishings showed little regard for function, sturdy construction, pleasing proportions, the natural beauty of materials or the skills of hand-craftsmanship.

The new style, fathered by William Morris in England, was concerned with the social issues of industrial life, and sought to improve the lifestyle of the average family living in the burgeoning urban environment. Increasingly, people served in factories, but were little served in return by factory-made objects or factory life. Morris and other leaders of the movement felt that the traditional virtues of self-esteem, pride in work, family and community values could be re-established by surrounding the average person with objects and an environment that expressed integrity, honesty, and purposefulness in design and function.

In America the leading exponents of Arts and Crafts design and social philosophy were Elbert Hubbard, who founded the Roycroft Community of craft workshops in East Aurora, New York, and Gustav Stickley, who established a furniture firm and architectural enterprise near Syracuse, New York. They preached an approach to design that was followed by many others, including Stickley’s five brothers who also set up their own companies. The ideas and designs of Hubbard and Stickley were promulgated by their respective magazines, The Philistine and The Craftsman, as well as in other widely circulated publications.

That philosophy and lifestyle remain so much a part of our present world that we scarcely think of associating them with the now historic objects of the Arts and Crafts period. For example, the movement promoted the idea of suburban living to allow city workers to stay in contact with the land and enjoy the healthier country environment. Throughout the nation, suburban homes and neighborhoods still bear witness to their origins in the realization of this ideal as well as in the design aesthetic of the

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THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

Oval-Top Table, circa 1912
Charles P. Lambert Co., Grand Rapids and Holland Michigan
Oak - height, 29"; width, 48"; depth, 19½" - Private Collection

Vase, circa 1905
Adelaide Alsop Robineau, Syracuse, New York
Pottery, yellow with blue crystalline glaze - height 4½"
Collection by Robert Toke and Roger Wilson

Settle, circa 1910
L. & J.G. Stickley Furniture Company, Fayetteville, N.Y.
Oak with leather cushions; height, 34"; width, 76"; depth, 31" - Collection of Dennis Mitchell and Ann Sweet
Server, 1901 — Gustav Stickley, Craftsman Workshops, Eastwood (Syracuse), N.Y.
Oak; height, 37"; width, 60"; depth, 16½" Collection of Paul Fiore, Backyard Gallery

Desk, circa 1905
Roycroft Shops, East Aurora, New York
Mahogany; height, 40½"; width, 40"; depth, 26½"
Collection of Robert L. Conant Williams, - Craftsmen Gallery, Inc.

"American Beauty" Vase, circa 1911
Roycroft Copper Shop, East Aurora, N.Y.
Copper; height, 12½"; diameter, 6"
Collection of Roger L. Conant Williams
Craftsmen Gallery, Inc.
movement. Further, it was believed that each family should own its own home — a situation that would contribute to the development of self-esteem, responsibility and various other desirable character traits.

Houses were designed to meet the needs of families without extravagant space and ornamentation; simplicity, economy, comfort, and "hygiene" (cleanliness achieved through ease of maintenance) were important. Innovations in house plans featured kitchens located close to dining areas, and the latter sometimes combined with the open space of the living room. In turn, the living room, with the fireplace as its focus, was the center of family activity. The Victorian parlor, associated with a stuffy formality and crusty appointments of little necessity (but voracious collectors of dust), vanished along with carved woodwork and high ceilings. Intimacy, comfort, and informal living shaped the plans of the Arts and Crafts homes, where subdued earth colors and the natural hues and textures of materials replaced the heavy ornamentation and busy patterns of wallpapers, upholsteries, and draperies of the earlier styles.

Native materials were used because they were available, inexpensive, and sturdy. American oak was preferred for the furniture. Upholstery was normally leather in black or brown, or linen in its natural color. Both were used for table coverings. Chair seats were also done in rush. Linen, both canvas and sheer or net, was found at the windows as well, usually bordered with needlework, applique and stenciled patterns of abstract or stylized motifs. These materials replaced the exotic woods, marble tops and mantles, and fabrics of damask, brocade and lace that were still popular elsewhere. Similarly, crystal and gilt lighting fixtures gave way to those made of copper, brass or even bronze, whose natural warm tones were seen to particularly complement the oak — a wood often used in the simple woodwork and floors as well as the furnishings. Copper especially was liberally used for hardware and accessories of all kinds, including smoking sets, bookends, candlesticks, and the like.

A select display of pottery by such firms as Rookwood, Marblehead or Grueby, or ceramic tiles incorporated into room decoration, particularly around the fireplace were the only reminders of the extravagant displays of diverse objects of the typical Victorian interior. Walls, usually painted in subdued or greyed hues, were often partly wainscoted and further elaborated with various kinds of built-ins, including bookcases, inglenooks, window seats, and china cabinets. Rarely wallpapered, pattern was often introduced on walls with a stenciled border near the ceiling.

The Arts and Crafts home consciously looked ahead to twentieth century living. It was clearly understood, for example, that the modern home should be designed for a household in which servants were rare, but in which the wife and mother should not become a slave to domestic chores such as dusting an assortment of useless bric-a-brac, or polishing the extravagant curlicues of furniture or metalwork. It was even recognized at times that she might have responsibilities outside of the home. In any case it is notable that the improvement of the woman's role within the home was a concern of various architects, craftsmen and writers associated with the Arts and Crafts movement who sought ways to reduce her work load and make her working environment more pleasant, lighter, and closer to family activity.

With its aim of improving the lifestyle of the ordinary individual, it is no surprise to discover that the Arts and Crafts movement considered itself a "democratic art", a label which takes on more meaning when it is realized that art and taste were viewed as the exclusive domains of the monied classes at the turn of the century. The socialist William Morris first expounded the need for a democratic art in 1877, and the Arts and Crafts movement developed to serve the middle class. Similarly, Gustav Stickley "realized that the twentieth century, then a few years distant, was to be, like the thirteenth, distinctively an Age of the People." His perception of who would dominate the new century affected his concept of what he called the Craftsman home, just as he hoped the Craftsman home would help to shape and reinforce the values and tastes of its inhabitants:

But they in whose interest I make my plea for a democratic household art, constitute the majority of our American people. They are the busy workers, "troubled about many things": professional people; men and women of business; toilers who reach out after objects of beauty and refinement, as if they were the flowers of a "Paradise Lost." They are the real Americans, deserving the dignity of this new name, since they must always provide the brawn and sinew of the nation. They are the middle classes possessed of moderate culture and moderate material resources, modest in scheme and action, average in all but virtues called upon to meet stern issues, they have remaining little leisure in which to study problems of other and milder nature. But as offering such great and constant service, these same middle classes should be the object of solicitude in all that makes for their comfort, their pleasure and mental development. For them art should not be allowed to remain as an
object of consideration for critics. It should be brought to their homes and become for them a part and parcel of their daily lives. A simple, democratic art should provide them with the material surroundings conducive to plain living and high thinking, to the development of the sense of order, symmetry and proportion. (The Craftsman, Vol. VII, No. 2, October 1904)

Stickley’s Craftsman home was the paragon of the Arts and Crafts house. Simultaneously, Frank Lloyd Wright along with other architects of the Prairie School, and various Southern California architects led by Charles and Henry Greene, were creating a residential architecture with these same characteristics, on the highest level of architectural expression and interior design.

Meanwhile, the ideal of the Arts and Crafts home was adapted and popularized in the “bungalow” by such men as Henry L. Wilson of Chicago, who wrote The Bungalow Book: A Short Sketch of the Evolution of the Bungalow from its Primitive Crudeness to its Present State of Artistic Beauty and Cozy Convenience, Illustrated with Drawings of Exteriors, Floor Plans, Interiors, and Cozy Corners of Bungalows Which have been built from Original Design. This book met with such success that it was in its fifth edition within three years after its publication in 1910. The bungalow was the forerunner of the modern ranch house. It share many features including a widespread role in American life. Like today’s ranch house, the bungalow was usually one-story with a low-pitched roof. Its two-story counterpart was called a “Foursquare.” Sears and Roebuck alone sold tens of thousands of both types of houses by mail-order from 1909 to 1937 under the name of “Honor Bilt.” All materials necessary for construction -- including lumber, millwork, roofing, plumbing, heating systems, lighting, paints and varnishes, roofing, hardware, and (if so ordered) even the furniture and rugs -- were shipped by railroad with thorough instructions for building. The bungalow and foursquare expressed the Arts and Crafts style in its simple, honest use of materials which, on the exterior, consisted of some combination of stucco, shingles, clapboard and fieldstones, and the prominent features of broad porches and overhanging roofs. Affordable and easily constructed, they succeeded in realizing the Arts and Crafts goal of providing well-built, comfortable homes of honest design to the average American family.

The Arts and Crafts movement became popularized in many areas beyond house design. This was especially true toward the end of the stylistic period in the 1910s and 1920s. Virtually every furniture manufacturer began to offer their own lines of “mission” furniture, styled in the manner of Gustav Stickley’s Craftsman furniture, or that of Roycroft or other pioneers of the style. The democratic and educative tendencies of the movement resulted in the liberal dissemination of ideas, designs and technical information for virtually every area of Arts and Crafts activity: architecture, furniture construction, lamp making, fabric or leather decoration, metalwork, etc. Designs were published in The Craftsman, Popular Mechanics, and other magazines or books, or they could be purchased from some of the manufacturers. Since the designs were often simple—many were specifically created for the amateur—it was possible for a person to build and furnish his own home, or at least take on a project or two during spare time. Such handcraftsmanship was fostered within the Arts and Crafts philosophy as leading to an appreciation of good design through hands-on experience with materials and craft skills.

Moreover, the work ethic prevailed, and manual labor was regarded as wholesome for the development and well-being of an individual. Most important in the spread of Arts and Crafts knowledge and skills were the local arts and crafts societies, schools, summer camps, and similar organizations, which provided training programs and sponsored lectures on many topics, including craft techniques and design. The Chautauqua Institutions’ Summer Assemblies form a prime example of a program developed along Arts and Crafts lines, concerned as it was with social issues, education and manual training.

In the final analysis, one of the greatest legacies of the Arts and Crafts movement was the way it contributed to breaking down the barriers that restricted art and taste.

... one of the greatest legacies of the Arts and Crafts movement was the way it contributed to breaking down the barriers that restricted art and taste.

The fundamental theories and design approach of the Arts and Crafts style were continued in the design philosophy articulated and put into practice by the influential German Bauhaus and its disciples, with important impact on American design. Indeed, though the Bauhaus is generally credited with the development and dissemination of what is regarded as a characteristically twentieth century approach to design, its principles are to be found in the earlier Arts and Crafts movement. Both believed in the honest expression of the natural beauty of materials, and in products that emphasize function over form, but in which form is carefully considered and treated in simple, well-proportioned designs without applied ornament. Above all, both advocated a coordinated approach to the decorative arts and architecture to create environments aimed at promoting a “modern” lifestyle of uncluttered efficiency, cleanliness, and beauty through design integrity. The Arts and Crafts movement shared an interchange of ideas—and at times overlapped—with the contemporaneous movements of the Vienna Secession, German Jugendstil, and the Art Nouveau of France, Belgium and Britain (including the Glasgow School). These in turn were instrumental in the realization of the Bauhaus style. Thus, with the Arts and Crafts movement we find the formulation and first expression of the modern design philosophy that has prevailed throughout the twentieth century. And today, no less than a century since their origins, these principles are more influential than ever in determining the look of our environments and furnishings, shaping our tastes, and thus determining the values we maintain and the very way we live.
I have always considered my home to be my castle, but with 200 million privately owned guns in the United States it appears that a vast number of people consider their home to be their fortress.

These people will contend that they have guns primarily for recreational purposes but that does not remove the possibility of the home owner using his "recreational" gun to protect his home, his property, and his loved ones.

For any unannounced visitor, the sign over the back door of many American homes should no longer be "My Home is My Castle." In its place should be a sign stating "My Home is My Fortress." Enter, then, at your own risk.

I own no guns. And as much as anything else, I have tried to teach my children about the evils of gun ownership. So I have a special curiosity for the rationale of those who do keep guns in their homes. Not withstanding the sporting uses, these gun owners point to the alarming number of armed robberies in homes.

I am obviously affected by such data because I can count ten kwikset locks on the five doors of my house. They are all latched each night and also when the family is away in order to secure our home. My nightly locking ritual could be considered paranoic or it could be justified. My late father never locked any door at anytime in his home. But that was years ago.

So, then, why do I choose to secure my home with locks while my friend chooses to secure his with weapons? After many discussions with him, I have finally forced him to reveal his rationale for the possession of his Smith and Wesson .22 caliber pistol and his Lugar.

He believes in a fire-arms deterrent policy similar to our nation's philosophy of nuclear arms deterrence. He contends that if all homes were armed fortresses then all our individual little domiciles would be safe from attack. Invaders would know this in advance so none would cross our domestic boundaries.

This otherwise kind and gentle friend of mine informs me that his home is a fortress because there is a need for a balance of terror in order to prevent crime and to ensure his family's safety. Sounding a little like Winston Churchill, he assures me that his homespun mutually assured destruction policy has protected his home and the homes of others from invasion.

This microcosmic application of the world arms buildup reminds me of Thoreau's essay examination of an ant war in WALDEN. The point of Thoreau's essay is the futility of war motivated by jingoism. My friend's jingoistic approach "ban outlaws don't outlaw guns" -- reminds me of "My country right or wrong" and "Life Free or Die" -- both of which were invoked to justify armament, war, and killing.

Slogans sound so neat and clear until the moment of conflict arises. Imagine the petty thief on my friend's living room floor after a shoot out -- "his own breast . . . all torn away exposing what vitals he had" and the protector looking down at his "ghastly trophy."

I question him by pointing to some of the foibles of his home security strategy. First, an intruder who is determined to invade a home to rob it of some valuable resources will not be deterred. He will simply apply greater stealth to his misdeed and will become, perhaps, more jittery and dangerous in the process.

Secondly, what if an otherwise unarmed intruder, knowing that he is about to enter an armed fortress decides to employ "first-strike" tactics and, armed-to-the-teeth, enters my friend's home? The terms of confrontation have escalated, and my friend is not guaranteed that he will be able to deploy his weapons system in time. If my buddy thinks about this long enough he may get jumpy and trigger happy. Now the prospect of shooting an innocent visitor or some well-intentioned neighbor becomes great.

Despite my pointing this out to him, my fellow human continues to stockpile weapons in his home, and he supports passing laws which would mandate that every dwelling be protected by firearms on the premises. My frustration builds. I begin to equate the industrial weapons manufacturers pushing increased defense spending with the American Rifle Association's suspected lobbying for laws mandating a gun in every home. Paranoia sets in. I think of my home, my castle; my father's home, his castle; and my friend's home, his fortress. I return to my backyard garden and, like Thoreau, contemplate the great ant wars.

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Special Education
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by Margaret Souza

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