

The Civil Rights Quarterly

PERSPECTIVES

FALL 1982

Plugging Minority Students Into the Computer Age

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Starting Over: ERA Marshals
Momentum for Another Marathon

Death Claims Native
Americans Too Soon

Claude Pepper: Seasoned
Warrior Against Ageism



Guest Editorial

Look to Our Nation's Neighborhoods, Not Our Nation's Capital

by John A. Kromkowski

In the current political context of policy reassessment and diminishing public resources, civil rights advocates face an ever present threat of being divided and conquered by "the opposition." But there are moments in history when advocates for the public good succeed, like Pogo, in doing themselves in.

The rise of single-issue advocacy groups has, at best, strained the coalition building process. Debates about measuring and remedying discrimination have become twisted into divisive contentions about the reality or relative intensity of racial, ethnic, religious, and sexual inequality. Cost/benefit calculations of age and handicapped equality have even further fragmented the original thrust for liberty and justice. Contradictory findings from many social sciences are used to buttress conflicting claims for remedies and results. Allowing ourselves to be goaded into such a morass of narrow and exotic pleas demeans all claims for social and civil justice.

Moreover, it is time to acknowledge that our civil rights can hardly be guaranteed if their protection is dependent solely on efforts of concerned government agencies. It is past time for the civil rights establishment to address an urgent task: Americans must be helped to understand the latent power community-based institutions have to secure civil rights in their own communities and how that power can be leveraged beyond their own localities and regions.

My modest proposal is that persons concerned with civil rights take the lead in designing a new agenda to understand, to protect and to encourage American community-based institutions which can create a sense of human scale, individual efficacy and common citizenship. There is abundant evidence here and abroad for the claim that community-based institutions have created wholesome and helpful bonds between individuals, as well as between people and large-scale governmental and corporate institutions.

A society of unconnected and autonomous persons in perpetual litigation, engaged in never-ending struggles for limited resources, hardly engenders the virtues and goals sought through our civil rights laws. On the contrary, such strains may well lead to the kind of disintegration which could prompt extraordinary and tyrannical corporate and government remedies. The importance of *nongovernmental* institutions as the seed-bed of human dignity and civil rights in this society cannot continue to be ignored. Advocacy for enforcement of civil rights laws is no longer sufficient. It's time to refocus the vision of justice which guides people concerned with civil rights. In today's political context assuring attention to community-based institutions is a necessary step toward reconstructing the nation. ♦

John A. Kromkowski is President of the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs.

The Civil Rights Quarterly
PERSPECTIVES

FALL 1982

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Study and collect information concerning legal developments constituting a denial of equal protection of the laws under the Constitution because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin, or in the administration of justice.

Appraise Federal laws and policies with respect to the denial of equal protection of the laws because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin, and Submit reports, findings, and recommendations to the President and Congress

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Letters

Other Truths About Puerto Ricans

I found the article "Puerto Ricans on the Mainland" (1982 Winter issue) interesting. Unfortunately, the *Perspectives* article tended to emphasize the negative truths concerning Puerto Ricans. This is not to say that negative factors should be ignored, but rather that it is also important to look at those truths which give a people pride, enhance their self-image, and give them hope for the future.

What Puerto Rican leaders must learn is that it is not enough to lay all our frustrations at the door of racial discrimination and expect it to result in unity. True, racism has united blacks and Chicanos, but only after 200 years of the most violent, life-threatening forms of racial discrimination. Since the general Puerto Rican population has never experienced these extreme forms of racial discrimination, a different approach is needed for Puerto Rican unity to become a reality. This will require that Puerto Ricans on the island and the mainland come to the realization that we are *one* people. When this happens, a major battle will have been won in the 500-year-old Anglo-Hispanic War in the new world.

Ernest Acosta, Jr.

President
Puerto Rican-American
Research Institute
Gaithersburg, Maryland



Police Brutality: A New Level of Interest

Your article on police brutality ("Police Abuse: The Most Volatile Issue," in the Winter 1982 issue of *Perspectives*) needs updating.

In October, the La Raza Legal Alli-



ance held its national convention at the University of Texas Law School in Houston. Attended by 150 students, lawyers and community leaders, the highlight of the conference was the Police Brutality Workshop. Four speakers, scheduled to address the audience for 90 minutes, were held over for an additional 90 minutes by the high level of interest expressed by the audience.

From the questions asked of the panelists, I can only conclude that many Hispanics are not aware of the seriousness of the offenses against the community, nor of the legal resources available to them for challenging abuses of authority. However, I am encouraged by the attention the law students gave to learning as much as possible from the speakers.

Without a doubt, Hispanics will maintain a keen interest in obtaining fair and just administration of justice. Furthermore, I am convinced that this new gen-

Letters

eration of community leaders will exceed the achievements of MALDEF and other national civil rights organizations.

Please continue to address such important civil rights issues in *Perspectives*.

Norma V. Solis

Staff Attorney

Mexican-American Legal Defense
and Education Fund

San Antonio, Texas



The Press and Hispanics

Your two-part series on "Hispanics Meet the Press" (see Winter 1982 and Spring 1982 issues of *Perspectives*) documented well the difficulties which we Latinos are having in gaining access to, and fair treatment from, the establishment press.

Anyone expecting the industry to change without pressure doesn't understand the system.

The solution: Latino journalists must organize nationally.

Jorge Sandoval

President

San Francisco Chapter of
CAFE de California, Inc.



I'm glad Charles Ericksen mentioned the Washington *Post's* disregard for Hispanic Americans in his series about the employment and news treatment of Hispanics by U.S. newspapers and magazines. Here are some more examples of the *Post's* "Hispanic blackout" (taken from articles published in November where reporters were free to select examples to make a point):

(1) *Interviews with nine lobbyists*—Young, old, black, white, male and female lobbyists were pictured with each describing his or her routine and feel-

ings. In spite of the highly visible and productive efforts of people such as Antonia Hernandez (Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund) and Arnold Torres (League for United Latin American Citizens), no Hispanics were included. ("Making Things Happen," by Leslie Berger, Nov. 7, 1982.)

(2) *Interviews with four older Americans*—No Hispanics were depicted in the full-page spread on "Aging Well: A Secret Scientists Are Now Trying to Crack." (By Lawrence Meyer, Nov. 4, 1982.)

(3) *Interviews with 11 Vietnam veterans*—Black, white, female and male veterans were included in a two-page spread as part of the *Post's* coverage of the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. ("Voices from a War," Nov. 13, 1982.) Not one Hispanic veteran made it into this feature.

There's no excuse for not providing a balance which reflects the composition of America's people in stories where reporters (and their editors) have full authority and power to choose their examples. Based on this sample, *Post* readers could conclude that U.S. Hispanics aren't Vietnam veterans or lobbyists and don't grow old. In short, the attitude at the *Post* seems to be "they don't exist and should not be considered in our national thinking."

Ruben Treviso

Staff Coordinator

Forum of National Hispanic

Organizations
Washington, D.C.



Enjoyment X 10

I thoroughly enjoy your publications *Civil Rights Update* and *Perspectives* and feel they should be required reading



in all equal opportunity offices. It is for this reason that I am requesting that my counterparts in the 10 Social Security Administration regions be included on your mailing list.

M.D. Frangieh

Hispanic Program Manager
Office of Hearings and Appeals
Social Security Administration
Washington, D.C.



Correction

On page 12 of the Summer 1982 issue of *Perspectives* it was incorrectly stated that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, banned discrimination by employers with more than 100 workers. Those laws ban discrimination by employers with more than 15 workers.

What Do You Think?

Reader response to *Perspectives* articles is welcome. Address letters to: Editor, *Perspectives*, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1121 Vermont Ave., N.W. (Room 505), Washington, D.C. 20425.

Up Front

Edited by F. Peter Model

A Case of Reader's Indigestion

With a worldwide circulation of 31 million in 17 different languages and 41 editions, the *Reader's Digest* currently sells 17.9 million copies of its U.S. edition each month. But Tony Bonilla of Corpus Christi, Texas, president of LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens)—the nation's largest Hispanic organization—has come down with a bad case of Reader's indigestion. He is upset by the way the Pleasantville, New York-based magazine covers (or doesn't cover) the country's 14.6 million Hispanic Americans.

What troubles Bonilla is not the medium but the message. He remembers growing up poor in the central Texas town of Calvert, scrambling with his family over who'd get first crack at the *Digest* each month. "It was our guidebook...it introduced me to America's leaders, its rich and compassionate families. It increased my word power. It provided us with role models. With distinct, clear lines, it separated the world's good people from the corrupt, barbaric and slovenly. Above all," he wrote this summer in a nationwide newspaper column syndicated by Hispanic Link News Service, "it taught me to spot the world's political and criminal menaces and to relate to the joys and humor of 'Life in These United States,' things which weren't always easy to identify in a town where the barber wouldn't cut our hair because we were 'Mexican.'"

What impressed the boy would soon distress the man. The fact that it was the *Reader's Digest* that "made the judgments and laid down the rules on who qualified as Americans" was some-

F. Peter Model, a New York publicist and freelance writer, has been covering the civil rights field for 20 years.

thing that didn't hit home till later, *much* later, when "I realized the insidious impact it was having on me" and possibly thousands of other Hispanic Americans.

And so, Tony Bonilla, representing LULAC, got together with Robert Gnaizda, head of a San Francisco public interest law firm, and the two hired a researcher to go back over the *Digest's* 61-year history—to look for patterns of discrimination. "More than any other general circulation magazine," notes Bonilla, "the *Digest* influences our attitudes and views as a people. If it ignores [us] millions may assume we don't exist; if it says we're bad for America, a lot of other Americans will accept that."

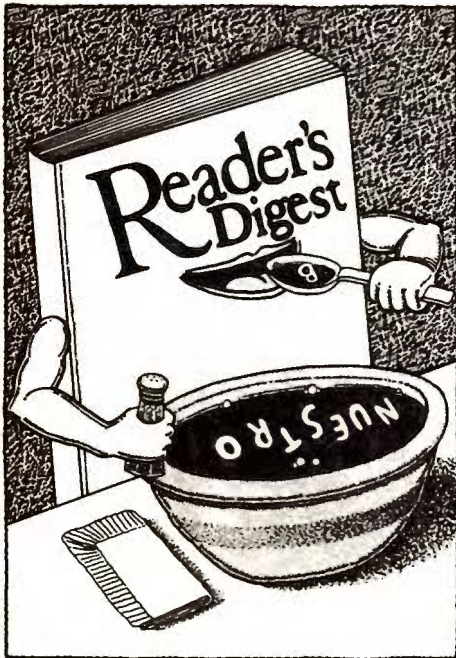
Here are some of LULAC's findings:

- Over the past 12 years, the *Digest* has run over 3,300 articles, only *one* of which had anything positive to say about the Hispanic community ("New Dawn for America: Latins"—Feb. 1979). Only one other took up the affirmative accomplishments of a Hispanic leader ("Chi Chi Rodriguez: Golf's Ace with a Heart"—June 1982.)

- During this same 12 year period, six articles ran showing Latinos as deeply involved in crime or as sapping the economy through the introduction of undocumented workers ("America's Newest Crime Syndicate: The 'Mexican Mafia'"—Nov. 1977 and "Illegal Aliens: Time to Call a Halt"—Oct. 1976).

- *Never* has the *Digest* digested an article that may have originally appeared in such mass-circulation magazines as *La Luz*, *Temas*, *Nuestro*, *Latino*, etc. None of its original articles have ever carried a U.S. Hispanic byline. Nor, based on looking at its editorial masthead, has the *Digest* ever been able to find a qualified Hispanic American to join the other 147 writers, researchers and "roving editors."

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LULAC requested a meeting with the editorial board of the *Digest* to see if the indigestion could be cleared up.

With these distinctly unpleasant findings in hand, Bonilla, Gnaizda and Charles Ericksen, President of Hispanic Link News Service, trekked to Pleasantville last August for a meeting with some of the *Digest's* editorial brass, including Executive Editor Fulton Oursler, Jr. and Managing Editor Roy Herbert. According to Bonilla, it was immediately apparent to everybody that the LULAC delegation was better armed with facts and figures. While the *Digest* people admitted no editorial wrong-doing, they were visibly distressed with both the data and its implications.

And so, the *Digest* agreed to:

- "Substantial and early efforts" to identify and review articles in current Hispanic magazines for possible use in the *Digest*;

- Place some of its roving editors on the lookout for possible Hispanic-oriented copy ideas;

- Re-examine its employment policies and practices to assure Hispanic representation at various levels of the *Digest* hierarchy;

- Send two of their top editors to the first National Hispanic Media Conference in December (1982) in San Diego; and

- Meet with LULAC again this Spring to assess the results of changes that will have been made.

Bonilla is "pleased but not ecstatic" with these preliminary results. Still to be determined is whether the Pleasantville dialogues will provide him with longer-lasting relief.

Buy, Buy American π

Suppose, instead of having been professors when they came here as political refugees from Europe in the late 1930s, atomic scientists Albert Einstein, Leo Szilard, Enrico Fermi, Edward Teller, Hans Bethe, John von Neumann, Lise Meitner et. al., had been *students*? Imagine where the U.S. would be today had the people in charge of reforming the immigration laws of the time insisted that all foreign students return to their native countries for at least two years after completing their studies here so as not to flood the Depression-wracked job market?

According to the *Washington Post*, the Simpson immigration bill (which passed the Senate but died when its counterpart in the House—the Mazzoli immigration bill—failed to muster support during the 97th Congress) caused grief and consternation up and down Northern California's legendary "Silicon Valley," bastion of America's hi-tech industry. In an effort to screen out "undocumented" (illegal) aliens looking for work here, the Senate

version of the bill included a two-year "go-back" provision for foreign students (which was eliminated in the House bill). Not only does such a "buy American" approach to stockpiling human inventory smack of institutionalizing discrimination, but—suggests the *Post*—it could have adverse effects on maintaining national security. It's as easy to understand as Pi—*American Pi*. Despite soaring unemployment in most other industries, there do not seem to be enough qualified American graduates to meet the manpower needs on the San Francisco Peninsula. If required to turn away qualified *foreigners*, these companies might just fail to compete with hi-tech companies overseas. The *Post* quotes Ken Houghton, dean of Santa Clara University's School of Engineering, as saying he's got trouble filling several important faculty openings in computer sciences. Of some 25 applicants, only four are Americans and they "aren't among the best qualified." Until Congress makes a firm decision one way or the other on the "go-back" provision, however, he can't commit to the better candidates—from Egypt, India, Austria, Greece, Poland, Iran and Brazil.

(As it stands right now, according to the National Science Foundation, 25 percent of all "junior engineering faculty" in U.S. colleges are foreigners. And with private industry luring away those Americans who are qualified teachers and professors, adds an official of the American Council on Education, there are as many as 2,000 unfilled faculty slots in the nation's various engineering schools).

Compounding the problem facing many of the high-growth entrepreneurs down on the San Francisco Peninsula (and probably along Boston's Route 128 as well) is the hard and fast rule that

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defense contractors *must* hire *only* American citizens. So without a pool of qualified foreign scientists and engineers to fill the slack, "we're going to be up the proverbial creek," says one company president.

It's a Wonder Marco Polo Wasn't Depicted as a Gangster

Speaking of myopia, two more studies have come to light since the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released its *Window Dressing on the Set: An Update*, a 1979 report on minorities in radio and television, that suggest stereotyping in both programs and commercials is still an industry practice—consciously or otherwise. Drs. S. Robert and Linda Lichter—he of George Washington University and she of Columbia—recently wrapped up a study for The Commission for Social Justice, a two-year old Italian American anti-defamation group. What they discovered, after sitting through nearly 270 dramatic TV episodes, was that most Italian Americans were depicted as uneducated, incapable of speaking intelligibly, and holding low-status jobs. The Lichters found that negative portrayals outnumber positive ones by two to one and that one in six Italian Americans seen on your TV are portrayed as the ultimate of negative characters—criminals. Only one in six Italian American characters was a woman.

Then there's the Procter & Gamble sponsored and much-promoted *Marco Polo* mini/maxi series last spring which dealt with an Italian trafficking to (and with) many of the cultures that came to make up part of the U.S. ethnic-racial mix. It's interesting to learn that during 70 minutes of commercial time, spanning four consecutive nights of broadcasting, only 12 of the 103 commercials featured "minority" talent.

We are indebted for this information to Philip H. Dougherty, the often acerbic advertising columnist for the *New York Times*, who watched the entire series and afterwards asked P&G about the noticeable absence of black, brown and yellow faces in the commercials bracketing a scenario chock full of people of color. Procter & Gamble, which is the country's biggest commercial user of television, spends over half a billion dollars in TV (out of a total advertising budget of over \$650 million). And while it also spends a great deal on researching the effectiveness of the commercials churned out by its ten ad agencies, it seems it never tried to find out what sort of impact commercials featuring minorities had on sales. At least, not until Dougherty raised the tantalizing question. Now it might.

More Higher Education Hijinks

In Cambridge, Massachusetts last May, Muhammed Kenyatta, head of the Harvard chapter of the National Black American Law Students Association (BALSA) called on his fellow blacks to boycott a two-credit minicourse on race discrimination scheduled for January 1983. The reason, according to the way the media played the story, was that Kenyatta, *et. al.*, didn't like the looks of one of the course's teachers, 57-year old Jack Greenberg. A 33-year veteran of the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund who succeeded Thurgood Marshall as the Fund's director in 1961, Greenberg is a white man.

On the face of it, the boycott call seemed without merit considering (a) that Greenberg would be sharing his teaching duties with J. LeVonne Chambers, a black lawyer from North Carolina who is President of the Fund; and (b) that Greenberg's credentials are impeccable.

He played a pivotal role, as Marshall's deputy, in winning *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, and went on to shape remedial legislation in voting and employment rights as well as capital punishment. Syndicated black columnist (and former U.S. Ambassador to Finland) Carl T. Rowan wrote that "any black youngster who doesn't understand that Greenberg has fought for racial justice should not be at Harvard—or any other university." And *Time* magazine joined in, suggesting that, according to Kenyatta's logic, only a person found certifiably insane would teach a law course on insanity defense.

But that was before the national membership of BALSA voted to sustain their Harvard brethren—and before the *real*



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story emerged. It seems the boycott wasn't so much directed at Greenberg as it was at the Harvard law faculty, which has been dragging its collective heels in effecting at least a modicum of racial balance in its own ranks. Derrick Bell, since 1981 dean of the University of Oregon's Law School, had been Harvard's first tenured black law professor. When he departed, in December 1980, this left only one black in a law faculty of 65. "In the Spring of 1981," writes Christopher Edley Jr. in the *Washington Post*, "the faculty's continuing but desultory hiring process actually produced offers to three young blacks," of whom Edley was one. The other two never materialized, leaving the two blacks to cover some of the course material on race, racism and the law left untaught since Bell's departure.

Repeated calls for affirmative action seemed unheeded, Edley recalls, and to add perceived insult to injury, the law faculty came up with its three week "cram" course that would force students to meet every day for three weeks, instead of on a more leisurely basis, as originally scheduled. Chambers, in his own right a "legendary figure among civil rights attorneys of this or any other generation" (according to Edley), told law school Dean James Vorenberg his schedule was so tight he could not singlehandedly take on the course—hence his invitation to Greenberg.

The black law students were furious: instead of a full-time black law professor they were told to make do with a "temp" and he, in turn, brought in a white instructor whom Balsa called "especially inappropriate." Unfortunately, in its anger, the local chapter took a cheap shot at Greenberg, citing his "adamant refusal to relinquish the directorship" of the LDEF to a black lawyer—

which played right into the hands of the liberals on the law faculty. It went public, invoking the spectre of a bunch of militants barring someone superbly qualified to teach a course simply on account of the man's color.

Perhaps next year, the law curricula will include a course on Protest Tactics & Strategy.

SAE What?

Speaking of misguided expressionism, there's the case of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, the 127-year old national social fraternity with 187 undergraduate campus chapters all over the U.S., and boasting of an alumni roster topping 150,000.

The largest SAE chapter is the one at the University of Cincinnati. For the time being, make that past tense, since SAE/Cinci is under a two-year suspension by University president Henry Winkler—no relation to "the Fonz."

SAE/Cinci's boisterous boys took it upon themselves in January, 1982, to "celebrate" the birthday of the late Rev. Martin Luther King by tossing a racially-demeaning "trash party." They sent out garishly festooned flyers (with KKK caricatures and a photo of convicted assassin James Earl Ray) inviting one and all to a beer bust, reminding the revelers to "bring such things as a canceled welfare check, your father (if you know who he is) and a radio bigger than your head..."

Suffice to say, few outside SAE were amused. The university happens to be located in Cincinnati's inner city, and of its student population of nearly 39,000, some 3,700 happen to be black.

The apology written by the SAE student president to Winkler was rejected with the advice to apologize, instead, to the community at large. Unlike the above episode at Harvard, where the na-

tional rushed to the defense of its local, there was only embarrassed handwringing and silence coming out of Sigma Alpha Epsilon's national office.

SAE Responds

Editor's Note: In accordance with Commission policy, Sigma Alpha Epsilon was given an opportunity to respond to the above Up Front item. Its edited response follows:

Besides embarrassed handwringing, the National Office of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity reprimanded the Cincinnati chapter and put it on an indefinite probation. Few outsiders or insiders were amused by the incident, including many members of the chapter and their alumni who found out about the incident after it occurred.

I spent five days in Cincinnati immediately after the incident and members of our staff have made numerous return visits. Conditions of the probation centered around the chapter's designing a program to educate its members to respect the rights and feelings of all people. The chapter has worked hard on such a program and had good direction from their alumni. Members of the University administration have worked diligently with the chapter on this matter as have many members of the community, including the executive secretary of the Cincinnati branch of the NAACP.

The chapter put on a program for our National Leadership School last summer in order to educate our members from chapters around the country. We have had articles on the incident in our publications and we issued an official statement denouncing the event.

Many individuals have cooperated on this program in order to help our young people understand the need for harmony among people of all races, creeds and

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religions. It is our hope that relations among black and white students will be better as an aftermath of this horrible incident.

Kenneth D. Tracey
Executive Director
Sigma Alpha Epsilon
Evanston, Illinois

Luce Lips

"Backwards ran sentences till reeled the mind," wrote the late Wolcott Gibbs in *The New Yorker* years ago, in a devastating parody of Henry R. Luce, founder of Time-Life and practitioner of the inverted sentence.

Now his widow, Clare Boothe Luce, in an interview in last September's issue of *GEO* magazine, reels the mind with an astonishing display of backward thinking that is beyond parody. The 79-year-old former Renaissance woman (Connecticut state representative, playwright, U.S. Ambassador to Italy, presidential advisor, and more) worries out loud about this country becoming a nation of immigrants:

"Soon there will probably be as many Mexicans in Texas, New Mexico, lower California and Arizona—and as many Cubans and Latin Americans in Florida—as there are natives. They are also pouring in from Haiti. Now, a vast majority of these are illegal. They're coming over the border, and they're coming in with wives and sisters and nieces who get pregnant immediately because they can then become American citizens and go on relief. I do not know how much more we can absorb...."

But it's not the number that troubles

Mrs. Luce as much as color. She acknowledges that this country was created by exiles—40 million of them in the 19th Century alone—"but the vast majority of them were of a fundamental culture, and they were all white. They were not black or brown or yellow...."

Mrs. Luce goes on to deride the "curious idea that we must tolerate to the maximum all the diversities." She worries that the U.S. is fast going the way of ancient Rome, "which in its later days had far fewer Romans than immigrants from all the conquered provinces...[and] became a city of pollution and noise and foreigners and [then] collapsed under the weight of the barbarians."

It wasn't loose living that destroyed Rome, according to Mrs. Luce—who obviously did not have at her disposal the frenetic "fact checkers" of Time-Life's research department—but, as Washington *Post* columnist William Raspberry interprets her interview, *excessive tolerance*.

Mrs. Luce a bigot? One who thinks so is Raul Yzaguirre, President of the National Council of La Raza. He calls the *GEO* magazine comments "a grave insult to all immigrants of color" and demanded in a September 8th letter to President Reagan that Mrs. Luce be removed from the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and as special advisor to the President's national security advisor, William Clark.

"Perhaps if Luce had taken time to put some historical perspective behind her remarks, she might have recalled just who is 'native' to the parts of the country she mentions," Yzaguirre said. "Texas, New Mexico, California, Arizona, and Florida were all originally settled by the Spanish. And of course we are all aware of just who the original Native Americans were."



Anybody Here Know Mr. Goodwrench's First Name?

Back in 1976, Cynthia King, then a 19-year-old stenographer for General Motors, dropped an idea on equality for women into the company suggestion box. Since all male executives were addressed as "mister" by the women in her office, why shouldn't the courtesy be reciprocated?

The answer came swiftly from the male hierarchy: two weeks later, Ms. King was fired, ostensibly because her "work performance was unsatisfactory."

King sued GM for sex discrimination, and convinced the Wayne County (Michigan) jury that awarded her a whopping \$119,985 in damages and back pay last August. At press time, General Motors had not yet decided whether it would appeal the award.

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"Frankly, My Dear, I Don't Give A Damn..."

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Tara is alive and well in Peachtree State. Some 3,000 executives were invited by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to a September 21 "strategy seminar for managing today's white-collar woman." To quote the entire dispatch:

The session includes what to do when "female clerical employees barge in noisily" with grievances. Employers are urged to attend the session "to prepare for, or avoid entirely, confrontations with militant feminist organizing groups," says the invitation.

The session aroused a storm of protest from working women and women's groups. "One of the stupidest things I've ever seen," said an Atlanta female executive. Others vowed to cancel their memberships and the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce issued a press release disavowing the seminar.

With 150 persons organized by women's and other civil rights groups picketing the seminar, the 80 Georgia executives who attended should have discovered that the best road towards a productive office is to work *with* today's white collar woman—not to figure out how to manipulate them.

The Georgia Chamber Responds

Editor's Note: In accordance with Commission policy, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce was given an opportunity to respond to the above Up Front item. Its edited response follows:

Thank you for allowing us to comment on your article about the seminar we

sponsored last September. If members of the press had contacted us for comment prior to writing their stories, perhaps the sensationalism that resulted could have been avoided.

The Georgia Chamber of Commerce's Working Women program, as part of an ongoing series of seminars, was geared towards assisting management to understand the problems facing today's workforce and offering ideas on implementing positive personnel packages. Many of the personnel officers with whom we work are women, and any plan to work against them would have been silly, if contemplated. The seminar in question was not an attempt to instruct managers on how to keep tight reins on unruly female employees. It is most unfortunate that a poorly worded letter would have given this impression and as a result received such notoriety.

The Georgia Chamber held a well-attended seminar in May on the subject of sexual harassment. The thrust of that conference was "This is what constitutes sexual harassment. Identify it. Eliminate it." The same approach was taken with Today's Working Women Seminar. "These are the problems facing the female workforce today. Identify these problems and eliminate them." So despite (and maybe because of) the adverse publicity, we still saw the necessity of going ahead with the seminar.

"The Willmar 8," an award winning documentary depicting a true story of how sex discrimination and denial of equal employment opportunity led to unionization and labor conflicts in a Minnesota bank, was used as a springboard for ideas and issues throughout the Seminar. Various experts discussed specific issues concerning white-collar women today, the history and objectives of the women's labor movement, the le-

gal framework, employer obligations established by law, correcting bad management practices, resolving conflict in this area and planning for the future.

Most of the points being raised by women's groups are elements of good personnel policy without regard for sex of the workforce. These points and more were the very ones brought out in the Today's Working Women Seminar. (The Atlanta 9 to 5 group was asked to participate in the panel discussion, but declined. However, the President of the Atlanta Chapter, Vicki Hyde, did attend and was quoted as saying, "Overall the Seminar was a good one.")

Though the demonstrators and the press coverage gave the day something of the atmosphere of a high school carnival, the seminar was well attended (85 members) and comments thus far from our attendees have been most favorable. I hope that our position and the purpose of the seminar are clarified.

Ernest B. Davis
Executive Vice President
Georgia Chamber of Commerce
Atlanta, Georgia

A Great Wall of Language Barriers

Here's a letter from the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers to the editor of the Philadelphia *Daily News* that was sent to us:

The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers protests against the pejorative language of your headline on page 17 of the *Daily News* of September 14, 1982, "China Say, Confucius OK..." The continued use of this ill-conceived, deliberate grammatical error to convey the false message that people of a particular origin are *ipso facto* incapable of learning standard

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English, increases the difficulty of teaching the democratic way of life to all of our people, young and old, regardless of birthplace or ancestry, as a firm basis for the entire educational process.

We appeal to you to instruct your staff that there is nothing humorous about ethnic differences, that any attempt to ridicule a person or group because of cultural variations is an assault upon liberty, and that freedom from fear of insult is something everyone should expect and obtain from the mass media, all the time.

The Daily News Responds

Editor's Note: In accordance with Commission policy, The Philadelphia Daily News was given an opportunity to respond to the above Up Front item. Its edited response follows:

Thank you for inviting me to respond to criticism over a headline in the Daily News which said "China Say, Confucius OK."

My response. I feel the headline was innocent and I can think of far more significant reasons to criticize this newspaper and others. I think the children of Philadelphia will somehow manage to survive our Confucius headline.

F. Gilman Spencer
Editor
Philadelphia Daily News

Fun & Games on the Little Big Horn

Stuart Kesten, a 41-year-old former marketing executive for Sterling Drug Inc., makers of Bayer Aspirin, must be reaching for something stronger these days to relieve a self-induced headache brought on by alienating the entire Sioux Nation, American Indian Movement, the

National Congress of American Indians, history buffs partial to the 7th U.S. Cavalry, the National Organization for Women, Women Against Pornography and last—but hardly least—Atari Inc. of Sunnyvale, California.

Kesten did it by inventing and marketing an X-rated video game he calls "Custer's Revenge," and Atari, whose current best-seller goes by the name of "Yar's Revenge," is not amused. Nor are any of the other aforementioned parties, none of whom have the remotest fiduciary interest in the \$1.7 billion video game cassette market that is dominated by Atari.

In "Custer's Revenge," the late George Armstrong Custer gets even with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, who killed Custer along with 276 others under his command at the Little Big Horn back in 1876. Not by blasting at attacking Indian braves (appearing as myriad asteroids) but by repeatedly raping—with only his hat, neckerchief and boots on—a solitary Indian woman amid a torrent of Indian arrows. As the bugle sounds, Custer racks up points. And for every sale of "Custer's Revenge" at \$49.95 a cassette, so does Kesten and his company, American Multiple Industries of Northridge, Calif. Appropriate and also tawdry is the sleazy game's slogan, "When you score, you score." And score AMI will, since Kesten expected to have 500,000 such cassettes in stores by last Christmas.

Kesten reportedly sees himself as a small businessman unfairly maligned by the likes of NOW, which brands him a pornographer. He describes the game as "a fun sequence where the woman is enjoying a sexual act willingly."

In spite of the attention on the game's exploitation of women, the fact that it's an *Indian* maiden on whom this un-

speakable number is being performed is too easily overlooked.

In the final analysis, the only response that really seems to matter is that of Chief Atari himself. Michael Moone, President of Atari's Consumer Electronics Division is about to drag Kesten into court—not for doing sexual/surrogate violence to women, or Indians, or to good taste, but to the corporate image of Warner Communications, Atari's parent. What particularly irks Moone is the legend on the box, "For Use With the Atari Video Game System."

"We've spent hundreds of millions to build a business on family entertainment," fumes Moone, "and we want those games off the market." Easier said than done. In fact American Multiple says it will soon introduce 23 other X-rated video game cassettes. Neither Kesten nor his partner, Joel Martin, seem to be the least bit disturbed by the ruckus they've caused.

They should be. Not only are the various Indian rights groups outraged (The National Tribal Chairman's Association suggested Kesten name the game after *his* grandfather and replace the Indian woman in the game with someone from his own family), but also up in arms are members of the Texas-based Custer Society. Instead of just making noise, such groups are appealing directly to local community boards and governments to ban this noxious game—and they might very well succeed. Already, one Long Island community has voted for decency by banning sale of the game.

American Multiple Industries Responds

Editor's Note: In accordance with Commission policy, American Multiple Industries was given an opportunity to respond to the above Up Front item. Its

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response follows:

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to respond to your article about our company's *Mystique* adult video games. Unfortunately, the article overstates and exaggerates many of the factors behind the turmoil one of our games has caused.

"Custer's Revenge" is one of three adult video games our company introduced in November, 1982, and that particular game has been the focus of many protests. However, better than 90 percent of those protesting this game have *never* seen what they're protesting, for if they had they would clearly see for themselves that our game does *not* have any rape sequence within it, as it has been unjustly accused of. Further, to state that our games promote sexual violence is like stating that "Donkey Kong" promotes abductions, or that "Pac Man" promotes cannibalism.

Absurd!

It should be pointed out that our *Mystique* games are *not* sold to minors, and our packaging clearly states that. Also, they are *not* games for use in arcades. Simply, our product is for adults, to be played with in the privacy of their own homes.

Perspectives magazine is about civil rights, and in the past few months our company's rights have often been overlooked by many alleged responsible parties. At the same time the rights of those who might wish to purchase our products have been threatened.

To now, our company has kept relatively silent about many of the statements made by our detractors, even though most have been blatantly irresponsible and ignorant of many of the facts.

We find it unfortunate that we have been branded as "pornographers." How-

ever, this is further evidence of the irresponsibility of those that have protested our products. The fact is that the management team of our company is comprised of people from the cosmetics and toy industries.

Atari, Inc. brought suit against our company for alleged trademark infringement. While our attorneys and their attorneys have discussed a positive resolve to this matter, Atari's management have spoken many times in the media about us in a negative light. We have refrained from responding to their irresponsible statements and their sophomoric pot shots at us, to this time. However, suffice to state that they, too, have infringed on our rights, and that matter will be resolved in another forum at another time.

The Long Island community your article referred to is Suffolk County (New York). There, too, our rights (as well as yours) were violated when their legislature proposed to enact legislation to ban our product. Early in December our company brought suit against Suffolk County.

Clearly, our company and our recently introduced line of adult video games have caused a stir across the country. Upon examination, we wonder why.

Stuart Kesten
President
Mystique Division of
American Multiple Industries, Inc.

Claude Pepper

An Octogenarian For All Seasons

by Mary Hager



When Rep. Claude Pepper talks to his “natural” constituents, the nation’s 25 million older Americans, he is apt to quote from Tennyson. “Death closes all; but something ere the end, Some work of noble note may yet be done,” he recites. “Tis not too late to seek a newer world....”

Though couched in poetic terms, the message is strong and clear. Pepper does not want his constituents to give up, to be pushed aside and left unused. “I try to encourage the elderly [to] be a people with a future as well as a past,” he explains. “The elderly are the greatest unused resource there is in this country.” But Pepper knows that resource is wasted unless the elderly do take an affirmative view toward life. After

all, the 82-year-old congressman reminds, “life is like riding a bicycle. You don’t fall off unless you stop peddling.”

Pepper, whose age makes him a legitimate member of the group he is so concerned about, is not about to stop peddling or to fall off. The spritely Florida congressman, who first went to Washington as a senator in 1936, still has a full agenda that he tackles with energy and enthusiasm. “I’m trying to break new ground and do things that need to be done,” he explains. “I’ve got a whole lot of things I want to do.”

At the top of his list is removing the discrimination that poses such formidable barriers to his constituents, barring them from the active life he considers crucial to their physical and mental well-being. “Ageism is just as obnoxious as racism and sexism,” asserts Pepper. “We’ve pretty much outlawed two of

them, and we’re making progress on the third” but he still finds traces of “a long sort of illness.”

His biggest foe in the battle against ageism is attitude, the pervasive notion that people are over the hill once they hit 65. “In the minds of some people, if you reach a certain age you are irreparably presumed to be disabled,” he explains. And the attitude is hard to fight because for some people, it is true. People age at such different rates, Pepper points out. Some are “disabled” in their 40s and 50s; many never slow down.

Pepper, himself, is anything but disabled. Equipped with a pacemaker and two hearing aids, he sets a furious pace that leaves younger people in his wake. To those who want to share his secret formula for longevity, he advises they keep doing what they have been doing, though maybe at a slower pace. But Pepper himself shows no signs of having slowed down. He boasts proudly that he outwalks most companions and regularly plays a “presentable” round of golf. He puts in thousands of miles on the campaign trail, traveling alone and toting his own luggage, speaking to senior citizens in state after state on behalf of younger colleagues.

The venerable Pepper has been part of the Washington political scene for nearly half a century. At the age of 14, the native Alabaman promised his teacher, “Someday I’m going to be a United States Senator.” Twenty-two years later—after graduating from the the University of Alabama and Harvard Law School, teaching at the University of Arkansas, setting up a law practice and serving a brief term in the Florida State Legislature—he made good on his promise.

In 1936, Claude Pepper, Democrat from Florida, was elected to finish an

Mary Hager is in Newsweek magazine's Washington bureau.

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unfilled term in the United States Senate. A staunch supporter of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, he quickly made his mark in his maiden speech by taking his colleagues to task for deserting the programs of the New Deal. He came to Washington favoring old-age pensions and Federal aid to education and became an early advocate of Social Security, minimum wage and hour laws and national health insurance.

Social programs were not his only interest. In 1940 he proposed a national military draft and was hanged in effigy on the Capitol grounds. He led the support for Lend-Lease aid to the beleaguered European allied powers and, after we entered the war, went to Europe on a Senate fact finding trip where he met with Churchill, Eisenhower and Stalin. At the war's end, he praised our wartime ally Stalin and advocated Marshall Plan-type aid to the Soviet Union.

Though the target of isolationists and conservatives, Pepper was re-elected in

1944 by a slim 10,000 vote margin. By 1950, in the heyday of McCarthyism, it was a different story. Pepper's aggressive liberalism and wartime contact with Joseph Stalin made him a ripe target (he was tarred as "Red Pepper") and he was unseated by George Smathers in what many still remember as one of the bitterest, but most colorful primaries in American history.

After his defeat, Pepper moved back to Miami and set up law practice. Florida was growing rapidly and twelve years later, when a new seat was created in populous Dade County, he ran for the House of Representatives. He won handily and has served ever since, representing the retirees, blue and white collar workers, Hispanics and refugees, blacks and former New Yorkers who make up the district, as he continues his fight for civil rights and other causes he has always believed in.

Though interested in old people since childhood, when he knew all four grandparents—two lived to their 80s—it was never more than what he calls "ordinary human interest" until he was named Chairman of the House Select Committee on Aging six years ago. In that role, he emerged as the nation's foremost champion of the elderly. Nowhere was his power more evident than at last year's White House Conference on Aging. There he used his forum aggressively protesting proposed cuts in Social Security, preaching "the right to live and the freedom to work," garnering massed followers and standing ovations, and even eclipsing the media attention given another prominent member of the aging constituency, Ronald Reagan.

Though the Committee on Aging can initiate no legislation, Pepper has more than made up for the deficiency by issuing reports and chairing a continuing se-

ries of hearings to pinpoint and document problems facing the elderly. A practiced politician, he hammers away at issues to educate the public and his colleagues. When the issues lead to legislative proposals, he's sure to be on hand testifying before appropriate committees. With an unerring sense of timing, he wields his own formidable powers of persuasion both behind the scenes and through the media, on behalf of issues affecting the elderly.

Pepper, the Select Committee and its allies have won important victories producing such programs as Meals-on-Wheels, crime protection for the elderly and reduced fares on Amtrak. But to Pepper, the outstanding achievement of the Committee under his leadership was laying the groundwork for the 1978 legislation that eliminated mandatory retirement at any age for anyone working for the Federal government and raised the age to 70 for those working in private industry. The law also provides procedural protections against forced retirement, including the right to a trial by jury.

Now Pepper is working to erase the last remnants of discrimination in employment. He seeks to end mandatory retirement entirely. He has backed legislation, in the form of the Prohibition of Mandatory Retirement and Employment Rights Act of 1982, which is pending in Congress. To Pepper, the proposal is "an important step forward toward ending the remaining vestiges of age discrimination." He has a powerful ally in the White House: President Reagan has supported the move, stating "when it comes to retirement the criterion should be fitness for work, not year of birth.... We know that many individuals have valuable contributions to make well beyond 70 years of age and they should have the opportunity to do so if they desire."

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Pepper and the Committee on Aging laid the foundation for the proposal by documenting the inequities of age discrimination in employment and the problems that ensue. In a recent committee report, *Age Discrimination in Employment*, Pepper wrote: "Age discrimination in employment is an all-pervasive problem. It stems in part from negative stereotyping of aging and is fueled by a 'youth cult' mentality that runs rampant through much of America's workforce. The public believes the problem is widespread; so do employers."

In another report that documented the changes resulting from the 1978 law, Pepper wrote: "Older workers are caught in the jaws of a vise in which mandatory retirement policies, work disincentives in pension plans and pressures to get out of the workforce early exert force in one direction, while inflation and threatened retirement benefit reductions exert pressure in the other." The report disclosed that, even though the law protects 28 million workers between the ages of 40 and 70, 51 percent of all workers still face an employer-imposed mandatory retirement age; 42 percent of those covered by pensions get minimal, if any, benefits for work performed after the age of 65; and one-third of college professors still face mandatory retirement at their 65th birthday, as do 20 percent of the nation's top executives and 85 percent of those in large firms.

In congressional testimony, Pepper takes pains to explode what he calls the "myths" about the "catastrophic impact" of keeping older people in the workforce. Eliminating mandatory retirement will not disrupt corporate personnel systems, nor will the use of stricter performance criteria harm older workers, he points out, citing Labor Department stud-

ies and the fact that 38 percent of Fortune 500 companies have no mandatory retirement age. Rather than creating unemployment for women and minorities, it would increase their opportunities since they, too, grow older, he explains. "It would be ironic if after years of struggling to gain their employment rights, minorities and women were to be denied these rights by the mere fact that they survive to old age," says Pepper.

Projections show that keeping older workers would not seriously affect promotion of younger workers, delaying it by half a year at higher ranks, by a matter of weeks at the lower. Further, says Pepper, industry would benefit. Studies show that older workers are more dependable, stay at jobs longer and do work of similar or superior quality.

Committee reports and Pepper's own testimony, however, have limited audiences. It is the committee hearings, carefully geared to attract media coverage, that focus public attention on the issues.

In one hearing, a nurse about to be retired on her birthday, told the committee, "I won't be any less healthy or less motivated to work on my birthday, nor will I be any less productive. Nonetheless, I will be treated as though I have suddenly become useless." The irony, she complained, is that "mandatory retirement wastes one of the most valuable resources we have in the nation: experience."

A corporate executive, "involuntarily terminated" just one year after receiving a 39 percent salary increase, told Pepper's Committee about a succession of tactics used by companies to get rid of older workers without firing them: demotions, token raises, transfers to high-stress, sure-fail jobs. The same witness also reported that a former colleague

with 33 years of experience was paid less than a man, age 30, with only one month of experience doing the same job. Testimony showed most workers take displacement in silence. Said one witness, "As age increases, job mobility decreases and this factor is an invitation to decelerate, crop and deny increases simply because the employee has lost his job mobility. The employee can't or won't leave."

As Pepper battles age discrimination, his special concern is the elderly, but the cause benefits everyone. "I'm interested in anything that will make life better for the people of this country," he states. "We wanted the older people to have a chance to keep on working for their health and their continued well-being, also for their continued contribution to Social Security and for the valuable contribution they can make to society." He is quick to point out that the bitter reality of age discrimination in employment does not affect only the elderly; it reaches down to those in their 50s and 40s as well. Pepper is convinced change is inevitable. People now implementing the policies to fire workers in their 40s and 50s are going to age, too, and "get caught in the same net," he believes.

He finds change even in the attitude that has been such a barrier. "I think public opinion is more and more coming to realize the fairness of providing equal opportunity for older people and to recognize that it should be done," he says, citing a Lou Harris poll that shows support for Social Security running about 90 percent. Backing came not just from the elderly, but from the middle aged and young as well.

Pepper is convinced anything that stands between the elderly and the active, participatory life he espouses

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smacks of discrimination. He worries, for instance, that, despite Medicare, many elderly people don't have the money they need for medical care and become easy targets for unscrupulous people selling insurance. To Pepper, who has backed the idea of national health benefits since it was first proposed in the late 1930s, the fact that so many Americans don't have access to proper medical attention is blatant discrimination. "I hope I will live long enough to see the day when every man, woman and child in America will be able to get the medical care he or she needs," he vows.

He has fought to prevent cutbacks in social programs that benefit the elderly and the poor and has not minced words in his criticisms. "What the passion to stop spending really meant was to stop social programs," he charges. "That's a strange sentiment," he says, recalling the groundswell of support for these programs dating back to the 30s.

He has emerged as the champion of Social Security, a program he has backed since the start. He was an outspoken and effective critic of an early Reagan Administration proposal to hold the system in check. Critics charge that Pepper, with his staunch opposition to cutbacks, has effectively thwarted efforts for necessary change. Pepper doesn't see it that way at all. He wants to protect benefits that the disabled and elderly receive, now and in the future. Because of his pivotal role in the Social Security debate, he was appointed to serve on a Presidential commission charged with finding a bipartisan solution to the financial problems facing the system.

His concern about the future of Social Security led Pepper to make what must have been one of the toughest decisions of his long career. Following the 1982

congressional elections, he decided to trade the chairmanship of the Aging Committee that has served him so well for that of the powerful Rules Committee.

But he is not abandoning the elderly. They were a key factor in his decision. As head of Rules, Pepper will be in a position to decide what legislation reaches the floor of the House. As a member of the Presidential commission, he has argued that the way to save the system is to raise revenues, not trim benefits, as Republicans have urged. In his new role, it is a safe bet that any Social Security bill will have his blessing. Nor is he leaving the Aging Committee, for he intends to remain as chairman of the important Health and Long Term Care subcommittee. "I would never have taken the rules job if I hadn't been able to maintain contact with the elderly," he explains.

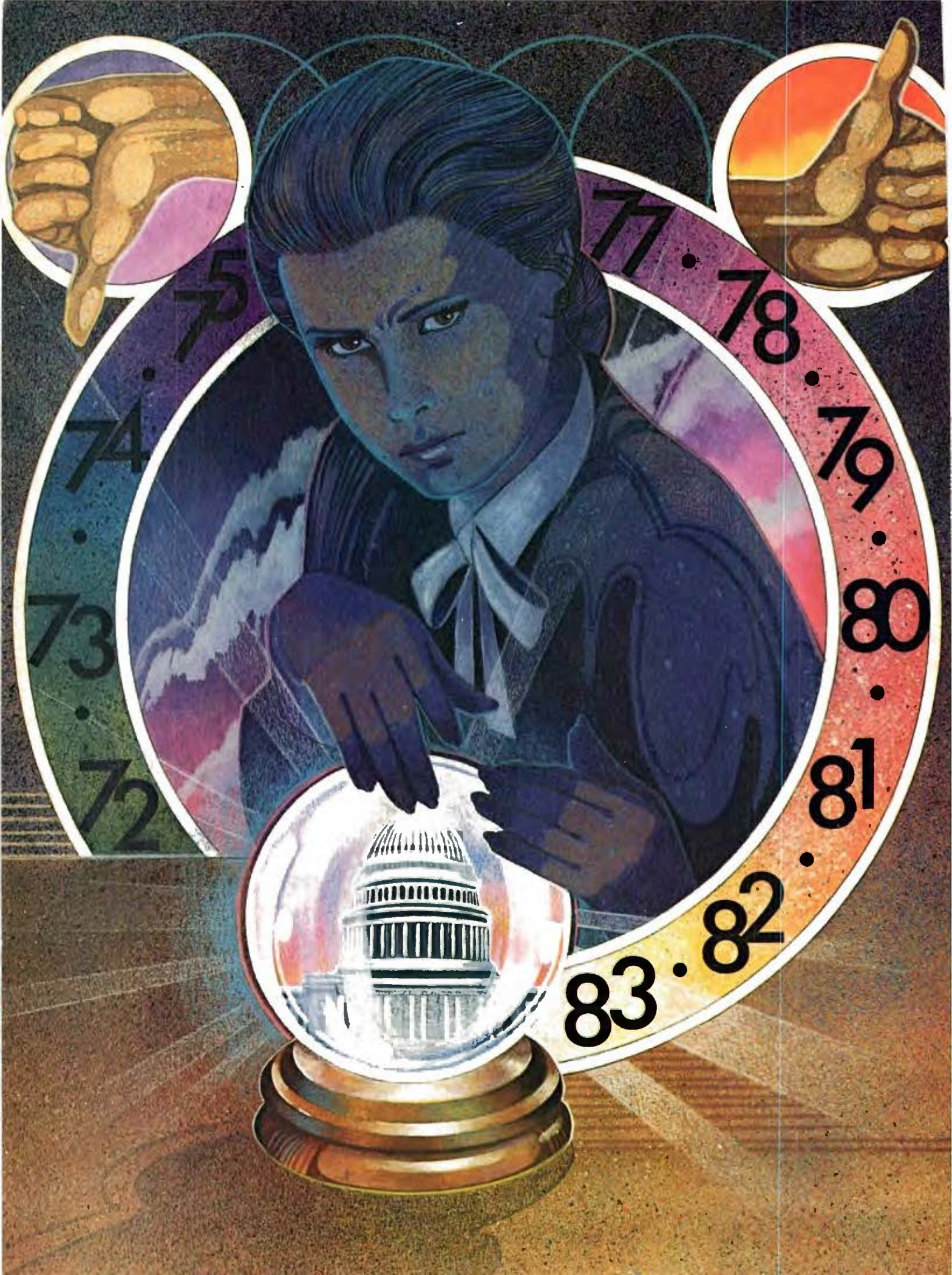
Yet another wall standing between the elderly and the full, active life may crumble under Pepper's determination. "Loneliness is the bane of so many people if they don't find a field of activity that's gratifying to them," he explains. "Lots of times they just lie in bed." He would like to see the flowering of community programs like those in Scandinavia where activity centers tied to housing projects cater to all, "giving almost every interest an opportunity for expression. In this country, we're barely scratching the surface," he maintains. "There ought to be wonderful programs reaching from those elderly people who are able to swim the English Channel and lift weights and run races, on down to those who can't take part in such vigorous activity." He wants centers where senior citizens can congregate, and ways to get them there. "If you want to, you ought to be able to get on a bus in front of your

house and go to a recreation center, have a grand time, get on a bus and come safely home," he says. "That's a common right."

As someone who has always been self-employed, Pepper has never directly faced the kinds of discrimination that concern him, though he admits he has heard "rumblings" that maybe he should retire and turn his job over to someone younger. The mere thought makes Pepper bridle. "Why should I give the job to someone else," he counters. "It's just that they've got that prejudice against age ingrained in their thinking. I work long hours and I work hard, and I think I'm able to turn out a good bit of work," he retorts. "If anyone were going to stereotype me, they'd say 'Well, you're 82-years-old and you can't do very much. You're just doddering around.' I think I'm a little better than that."

In fact, he has no intention of quitting. His advanced years, his vast experience and his "living legend" status give him a perspective younger colleagues don't have—and he knows it. So do the elderly. He is proud of headlines that describe him as "Going Like 90 at 80"—or 82, as is now the case—or proclaim "Claude Pepper Intends to Serve Forever." He has put the limit at the year 2000, but acknowledges even that is open to reconsideration.

"I don't know when my end will come," he says. "I hope not soon. I've got a lot of things I want to do." Fortunately for Pepper, the voters keep giving him the chance to stay active and do those things, and he intends to take full advantage of the opportunity. And, if he has anything to say about it, one day all older Americans will have the same opportunity. "They are entitled to it," Pepper explains. "Anything other than that is gross and unfair discrimination." ♦



After the ERA: What Next?

by Jane O'Reilly

In January, 1982, the Oklahoma state senate debated its opportunity to become one of the last three states needed to secure ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Senator Norman Lamb, a 47-year-old lawyer and part-time football referee, took the floor to speak in opposition. He warned, "The ERA is not a simple matter ... it's not men versus women, it's states rights versus a very unpredictable Congress, a very, very unpredictable U.S. Supreme Court. It's not automatic. It's a guessing game." To illustrate the unpredictable results of constitutional amendments, he inexplicably used the 14th Amendment which guarantees the right to vote and to equal protection of the laws: "We have from that one man, one vote. We have from that simple harmless language a ban on prayer in the schools...the abolition almost in toto of the death penalty...we have forced busing." (In fact, the Supreme Court's school prayer decision was based on the 1st Amendment and its death penalty decision was based on the 8th Amendment.) He concluded by praying that "women, ladies and girls will not be drug down to the level of men by passage of the 25th Amendment." (Actually, the ERA would have been the 27th.)

The Oklahoma senate, despite the full support of its Democratic leadership, defeated the ERA 27 to 21. (Senator Lamb, too, was defeated when he faced Oklahoma's voters in November as the Republican candidate for Lt. Governor.)

Thirty-five states, comprising seventy-two percent of the country's population, ratified the ERA. By the deadline, June 30th, the polls showed a majority of about the same percent of the country supporting passage. Nevertheless, it failed, repeatedly defeated in the last crucial states by a stubborn handful of legislators. Had it passed, objections such as Senator Lamb's could have been dismissed as a bewildered grumble against the steady, if difficult, realization of the principles of democracy.

But the ERA, the focus of one of the greatest civil rights struggles of this century, did not pass. It failed because of a

lingering distrust of the idea of equal women. It failed because the majority in support was not evenly distributed geographically and, more significantly, remained complacently hopeful, instead of becoming politically insistent. And it failed because the opposition was better organized. Senator Lamb expressed, as well as anyone, the chilling aversion to change which gave strength to that organization.

The opposition cannot be dismissed. Not only did it win, it won by expressing a deep distrust of both women and of democracy itself. Ten years ago that opposition seemed based on such unlikely and irrelevant themes as imagined Biblical injunctions against unisex toilets. Over the years more pernicious themes emerged: a loss of optimism, a fear of the courts, a distrust of the system, ignorance of the Constitution, a revulsion against the "Other."

The struggle for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment finally became a referendum on the future of this democratic society. The result reflected neither majority opinion nor practical necessity nor future probability. But it did reflect a meanspirited disinclination to progress which should be deeply sobering to all those concerned with civil rights.

On July 14th, 52 Senators and 215 Members of Congress reintroduced the Equal Rights Amendment. They made long speeches expressing astonishment that such a logical proposition should have failed, listing the increasingly clear statistical evidence why an ERA is still necessary, and expressing complete faith that in the long run it would pass. The general estimate seemed to be that passage would take about fifteen years, which would bring the time required since it was first introduced in 1923 to seventy-four years. In the short run, nobody expects much action.

The problem for women is what to do in the short run. The defeat of the ERA was not exactly the high spot of our summer of '82. Organized women's groups rallied bravely under banners reading "A New Day: Beyond the ERA," threatened extinction of opponents via the polling booths, and vowed to carry on. But the individual women in those groups, and the far greater number of women who spent the last ten years wondering vaguely why an ERA was needed, were profoundly shocked. Their rude awakening will, in the long run, be politically strengthening. But right

Jane O'Reilly is the author of The Girl I Left Behind, recently published in paperback by Bantam.

now it is diminishing, discouraging, and depressing to live in a country which has vividly denied us equal standing under the law. The ERA's defeat, in a way, confirmed our worst fears—not only that we are not considered full participants in the society, but that it is somehow our fault. We felt a strong inclination to go home and hide under the covers.

I find it useful to remember that the idea of extending equal rights to women was simple and elegant, but also revolutionary. As former Congresswoman Bella Abzug said, "The ERA is a tremendous threat to our distorted financial and political structures. The ERA would dismantle discriminatory pension, tax, insurance, wage and Social Security practices—that would cost billions—as well as the male domination of political and corporate life in this country. It should surprise us it encountered opposition?" Women need not spend any more time worrying about what we could have done to pass the ERA. I believe we did all we could—at the time.

Happily, both for the cause of equality and for maintenance of our Gross National Product, we cannot go home and hide. Fifty-two percent of us work, and 65 percent will be working by 1995. According to Department of Labor statistics, we are paid, *no matter in what job*, less than men. Nevertheless, the economic and social structure of the United States has changed so that we not only have to work, but are no longer willing to work for less, a fact that ERA opponents acknowledge with maddening irony. For example, a few weeks after the June 30th deadline, Elaine Donnelly, National Media Chair of Eagle Forum, dismissed the recognized women's movement. "That was the women's movement of the seventies," she said. "We are the women's movement of the eighties. We are going to press for enforcement of those laws you pretended women didn't have just so you could try to pass the ERA—laws like equal pay and equal credit." Never mind that Phyllis Schlafly fought those laws at the time they were passed. If she has in fact reversed herself on the desirability of equality, she will find out soon enough that consistent, meaningful nationwide enforcement depends on a constitutional guarantee of equal rights for women that is still lacking.

In the last few months, reporters have asked every well-known feminist "What are the tactics to achieve equality now?" The common refrain: slog on. The tactics and tools remain the same—enforcing existing laws, challenging discrimination in the courts, organizing politically to throw the rascals out. But the people have changed. Women are now better trained, better educated, have more money, and are far less likely to believe discrimination is our own fault. We have transformed such long-ignored private agonies as domestic violence and sexual abuse into legitimate civil rights issues. We have gathered the statistics that, by demonstrating the stark reality of discrimination against women, make it more indefensible.

The laws most often cited as perhaps being sufficient to cure women's economic disabilities are Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,

which prohibits sex discrimination in federally-assisted educational institutions, the Equal Pay Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Economic Equity Act (which currently languishes in Congress unpassed), and Executive Order 11246 which deals with affirmative action by Federal contractors. Certainly those laws have helped women gain their minuscule advances in wages, their entrance into non-traditional jobs, and their almost imperceptible rise in academic hierarchies. But the gains would have been greater had the laws been enforced adequately. That the laws are both insufficient and unenthusiastically enforced is best exemplified by the fact that the United States Congress remains exempt from Title VII. Congress can, and does, discriminate against women employees.

In the state of Vermont, to take only one example of women's half-realized goals, Marianne Miller, formerly manager of the Project Against Family Violence for the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, took on a vocational research project for the Commission. Alerted by a League of Women Voters newsletter, she discovered that the Vermont Office for Civil Rights Surveys simply does not collect data by sex or by race as mandated by the 1976 amendments to the Vocational Education Act. Nor, on another issue, has the state, which is mandated by Federal regulations to spend at least \$50,000 for sex equity programs, yet done so. Only this year is Vermont getting ready to fund its first displaced homemaker program at a total cost of \$12,000.

The defeat of ERA reflected a meanspirited disinclination to progress which should be deeply sobering to all those concerned with civil rights.

Given actions by the current Administration and the 97th Congress, the prospect that existing laws protecting women's rights will be vigorously enforced are discouraging. Regulations prohibiting discrimination against women have been suspended or withdrawn and funding for programs important to women (from the Women's Educational Equity Act to Aid for Families with Dependent Children) has been cut. President Reagan's own 50 States Project and the Task Force on Legal Equity for Women have been dismissed, not unfairly, by Judy Goldsmith, then vice president of the National Organization for Women, as "poor second-class rehashes of work that has been done before and done better."

Women who follow President Reagan's general advice and place their faith in the states will find that only five or six states offer even a relatively hospitable climate to those seeking equality. True, sixteen states have included Equal Rights Amendments in their constitutions: Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming. In none of those states has unisex toilets proved to be a problem, but neither has full equality prevailed. Pennsylvania has moved the furthest, followed by Maryland, Massachu-



setts, and Washington, and, farther behind, by Alaska, Connecticut, Illinois and New Mexico. Forget about Utah and Virginia where the State Supreme Courts—without the impetus of a Federal ERA—have maintained the *status quo*. As for states without an ERA, well, in Georgia a wife's rights are legally subordinate to her husband's. In Oklahoma, a woman's legal domicile must be her husband's. In Vermont, only a husband can sue for loss of consortium. A solution for many a woman in those states would be simply not to marry. But if she made that choice in Louisiana she still could not support herself with a job in a place selling liquor. And so on, and so on.

The battle for equality will no doubt move more intensely into the courts. "What we need to do, in the absence of a national mandate and clear policy statement," says Phyllis N. Segal, a Bunting Fellow at Radcliffe College and former legal director of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, "is to apply and defend the progress that has been made and to develop tools to take the profit and habit out of sex discrimination." Women's legal advocates have had important successes on a wide range of issues, from establishing the notion of comparable worth in employment to attacking discriminatory insurance rate structures. But the enormously increased number of women graduating from law schools these days are the first to protest the suggestion that the 14th Amendment, which extends equal protection under the law, also provides for women's equal rights. It could be so interpreted, but it never has been. As Mr. Justice Lewis Powell wrote, "The court has never viewed sex as

inherently suspect or as comparable to racial or ethnic classification for the purposes of equal protection status."

In both the long and the short run the ERA, and the entire enormous agenda of which the ERA is both a metaphor and the principal tool, will be achieved by political means. During the ten years of fighting for ratification, women have come to realize that complacency is less politically effective than a precinct list and a phone bank. We have politicized our organizations and created new ones, funded political action committees, learned to deliver the volunteers and the voters, and learned to run for office ourselves. We now have the satisfaction of seeing pundits refer reverently to "the gender gap." It seems that women incline toward peace and fulfilling human needs, as well as toward such issues as equal pay for equal work, and are willing to vote as we incline. Women, after all, are less satisfied with the present, and, having imagined a more equitable future, are determined to create and protect it.

The future, in fact, is already upon us. Women under 25 tend to accept such equality as our struggles were able to provide as a matter of course. More importantly, they expect full opportunity. But soon they will also expect to have children. And they will find that only they are told to balance a career and a family. And they will discover that the places which accommodate careers do not accommodate children—or those who care for them. And then, as Senator Dixon of Illinois so felicitously warned his colleagues, "The demand for equal rights will not be stopped—any more than a prairie twister can be stopped." ♦

CAN COMPUTERS CLOSE THE EDUCATIONAL EQUITY GAP?

by James P. Johnson

To illuminate the blackness of his invisibility," the protagonist in Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man* ripped off whitey's Monopolated Light and Power Co. By tapping the power line he used bootleg electricity to run the phonograph and 1,369 bulbs in his basement hide-away—a kind of electric cavern—on the edge of Harlem.

Ellison created this powerful image in 1947. No longer invisible, blacks and other minorities in America have begun to join the mainstream. In 1982, Ellison's Invisible Man has moved out of his electric cavern. But can he afford to move into an "electronic cottage" wired with the marvels of the new technology?

"Probably not," says Alvin Toffler in an article in the Summer 1982 issue of *Perspectives*. "As home computers proliferate,...white middle class children will start out, once more, with an edge that the less affluent lack."

That computers are revolutionizing America, there is no doubt. Miniaturization has made possible the home computer, even the \$100 computer. Americans have bought over a million computers. Nearly every American home has a TV, and "someday soon," one Dallas computer salesman said, "every home will have a computer. It will be as standard as a toilet."

"To take a simple analogy," says

Georgia Congressman Newt Gingrich, "if the automobile industry had changed as much as the computer industry, you could buy a Cadillac for \$2.95, it would get three million miles to the gallon, and you could put seven of them in your briefcase."

Whether we like it or not, we are being catapulted kicking and screaming into a computerized world. There's a computer in the microwave oven, in the stereo system, and under the dashboards of many automobiles. New lines of watches and hand calculators contain tiny computers.

While there is some dispute as to exactly how computer literacy will pay off for today's students when they enter the job market, the U.S. Labor and Commerce Departments and IBM predict that by the end of the decade, 50 to 75 percent of jobs will be computer-related. In offices, where most new jobs will be located, word processors, computerized filing systems and desk top computers are already bringing dramatic changes in work patterns and productivity. In factories, hospitals and other labor-intensive sectors of the economy, robots are expected to take over many more of the risky or repetitive chores now performed by humans.

Some fear the impact of robotization on the labor market and working conditions. A survey in Japan, which is ahead of the U.S. in the use of robots, found that 97 percent of in-house unions and 79 percent of management think robotization will lead to increased unemployment. Not surpris-

ingly, such studies have received careful attention by union leadership here. Clearly, the job applicants most qualified to perform the growing number of high-technology jobs that are appearing on the horizon are likely to be the ones with the highest degree of computer literacy. The unskilled jobs historically filled by new immigrants and those at the bottom of the economic and education ladder, especially those on factory assembly lines, are fast dwindling and will all but disappear. To compete for tomorrow's jobs, kids must become familiar with computers today.

To be sure, kids can't acquire quarters fast enough for Donkey Kong, Asteroids, or Pac Man. Now instead of having a "Big Mac attack," students have "Donkey Kong attacks" and duck into the nearest arcade. Computer games, the amusement industry spinoff of the information revolution, teach the players just enough to keep the quarters dropping. Computer literacy, however, won't be acquired in video game arcades. It will be developed at home and in schools.

CBS and AT&T have launched a joint effort called "Venture One" that will link up computers in homes in Ridgewood, New Jersey, an affluent suburb, with a data bank so that owners can do their shopping, banking, and other chores by computer. Merchants will advertise over the network. A similar program in a wealthy suburb of Columbus, Ohio, has been in place for several years. The "electronic cot-

James P. Johnson, a freelance writer, lives in Westfield, N.J.

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tage" has arrived.

Why did AT&T and CBS pick Ridgewood? "Ridgewood," responded James Bauer, director of business development for CBS, "would seem to be perfect. The residents there are upscale, have a high median income and they're computer literate. The kids take computer education in kindergarten."

Computer literacy won't be acquired in video games arcades. It will be developed at home and in schools.

Does CBS's choice of a rich suburb mean that the computer revolution will bypass minority children? Not necessarily. Federal assistance to school districts with disadvantaged students under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or through the block grant funding begun in 1981 means that inner city kids may find computers in their classrooms. Those in charge of public education in New York City, for example, are proud of their recent strides in computer-assisted education. Irving Kaufman, director of mathematics for the New York City Public Schools, ticked off the list of heavily minority city districts where computers are now part of the curriculum. "We want our kids," he said emphatically, "to know as much about computers as the wealthiest kids in the country. In the near future every school in the city could have one computer."

Dr. Carl Soloman, Title I evaluator for funded programs in District 16, which encompasses the elementary and junior high schools in Brooklyn's Bedford Stuyvesant section, pointed proudly to his district's courses in computer literacy and its computer-assisted instruction. "Our entire district," he said with mock dismay, "has been inundated with computer salesmen." But, he noted, "we're not getting the money we need. And those districts with money are going to be ahead of us."

The problems for low income, high minority enrollment school districts go

beyond the affordability of classroom computers. Indeed, all school districts are facing a host of computer literacy issues that defy easy solution. Congress' Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) reported last September that the U.S. is faced with a shortage of public school science and math teachers, those most likely to lead the way in computer-based education, because they can nearly double their salaries working in the private sector. OTA also complained about the quality of today's computerized lessons ("software"), the shortage of qualified people to prepare the lessons, and the lack of understanding of the long-term educational and psychological effects of substituting technology for traditional teaching methods. Further, there is a growing worry that computers could touch off our next generation gap. A recent Atari advertisement unwittingly contributes this possibility: "Are the kids getting a jump on the grown-ups? We may in a few years see...a generation of men and women shut off from a fundamental part of their children's lives."

Still, while schools must add a complex of issues concerning computer learning to such long-standing problems as the need to improve basic skills, reduce the blight of drugs, violence and truancy in the schools and cope with vexing fluctuations in the school-aged population, the affordability of classroom computers today constitutes a major problem. School budgets are being squeezed by local property tax-revolts, as well as by significant state and Federal budget cuts for education. And, as usual, schools with the largest number of minority students are faring the worst. Dr. Beverly Cole of the educational division of the NAACP echoed Soloman's comment about money. "Inner city schools in general," she said, "just aren't developing computer education as fast as wealthier districts."

Compare, for example, Newark, New Jersey, with suburban Westfield, some fifteen miles distant. In Newark, where riots erupted in 1967, inner city students have been working with computers for over 15 years. Many elementary school students use computers to drill in English and math. The large

high school in the system has 16 computers. Eager beavers can take special computer programs at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

But even this computer commitment does not begin to match that of Westfield, where a high school similar in size to the largest in Newark has twice as many terminals, batteries of courses in computer science and data processing, word processors in the business education department—and a computer to assist students in selecting a college. In 1982-83, Westfield will teach computer literacy to all sixth grade students.

In affluent Ridgewood, N.J., the kids take computer education in kindergarten.

Westfield is not an isolated example. Affluent Montgomery County, Maryland outside of Washington, D.C. has set a four-year goal that will require every high school student to have access to 120 minutes of computer time per week, every junior high student for 90 minutes and every elementary student for 50 minutes. But the state of Minnesota may be on a fast-break to the future. It has mandated computer training for teachers and has equipped nearly all of its schools with classroom computers.

In many districts, concerned parents form the vanguard leading the rush to computerize neighborhood schools. A report by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology says that PTAs are buying close to 20 percent of computers for schools. Yet, the best hope for preventing a classroom computer gap from becoming a serious national problem may lie with Capitol Hill. Congress is now considering legislation to greatly expand tax breaks for computer manufacturers who donate equipment to elementary and secondary schools.

Steven Jobs, 27-year-old chairman of Apple Computer Company and brainchild of what has been dubbed the "Apple Bill," testified in congressional hearings that it was essential to the national welfare that students begin



acquiring computer training long before they get to college, and that a tax credit would make the equipment available to schools that otherwise could not afford it. "Leaving this to the colleges in today's environment," he said, "is equivalent to leaving the teaching of English grammar and arithmetic to colleges." With the right tax break, Jobs plans to donate a computer to each of 80,000 public schools in the country. In this scheme, the profits would be reaped when schools purchase programs and other equipment compatible with their computer, and when students persuade their parents to buy Apple personal computers for use at home.

Among the critics of the "Apple Bill" are microcomputer manufacturers who point out that the contemplated tax write-off for donated equipment would only partly offset monumental logistical costs and headaches involved in assuring that units get from warehouses into the hands of teachers and students prepared to use rather than abuse them. Nevertheless, the bill was approved by the House 321 to 61 and cleared by the Senate Finance Committee in the 97th Congress.

Even if the Apple bill passes in the 98th Congress, poor school districts would still find it difficult to provide adequate computer-assisted instruction. According to Ross Corson writing in *The Progressive*, "The reality is likely to be a society of computer literates and illiterates — the haves and have nots of the new age." A survey by Market Data Retrieval Inc., seems to buttress that worry. It found that 80 percent of the country's 2,000 largest and richest public high schools now have at least one microcomputer, while 60 percent of the 2,000 poorest schools have none.

Understandably, civil rights activists have focussed on improving the education of minorities in basic skills rather than ruminate on the impact of computers on civil rights. The NAACP, said Dr. Cole, had yet to examine the impact of "Third Wave" technology.

Lucius Walker, dean of Howard University's School of Engineering, has thought about the civil rights aspects of the computer revolution and proudly explained Howard's pre-college



programs in technical subjects for minority students. But, Walker found, the more technical the subject, the fewer minority students enrolled.

"Blacks," Bebe Moore Campbell wrote recently in *Black Enterprise* magazine, "are seven times less likely to become scientists and twelve times less likely to become engineers than whites."

"There is," says Walker, "a mystique associated with technical and abstract subjects. Some of us feel we can't do math and science or succeed in quantitative fields." He calls the phenomenon "math phobia."

"Computers represent a mystique that frightens many blacks," agrees Robert Towns, who runs Fortune Computer Group, the only black-owned

computerized patient billing and accounts receivable service in California.

We could become a society of computer literates and illiterates—the haves and have nots of the new age.

To date, weakness in math has been crippling minority children. The National Assessment of Educational Progress studies show that at ages 9, 13, and 17, whites outscore both blacks and Hispanics in knowledge and skill application in mathematics by 13 to 20 percentage points.

"If blacks are not literate in technol-

ogy," warns Massey, "they will not be able to get into the mainstream and will simply fall further behind than they are now." Dr. Cole agreed that "being conversant with computers will be the difference between being employed or unemployed." "If," Dean Walker added in computerese, "blacks cannot interface with computers, they cannot function in a complex world."

The same applies to women. In her book, *Overcoming Math Anxiety*, Sheila Tobias shows that female students shy away from math and science courses at a much higher rate than males. At one private school, 60 percent of the boys take extra courses in both math and science, but only 25 percent of the girls do so. Tobias attri-

butes this difference in interest almost entirely to what she calls society's "ideology of sex differences,"—the parents, peers and teachers who forgive a girl when she does badly in math at school.

Schools not only teach about computers, they use computers to teach. "The computer," believes Professor Mary Alice White, director of the Electronic Learning Laboratory at Columbia University's Teachers College, "is as revolutionary as the printing press. Learning and teaching will never be the same." Students, Professor White finds, pay more attention to the computer than the teacher, ask it more questions, work cooperatively to solve problems on it, and make no more errors in learning to program a computer than adults do. "Kids like the computer," says science fiction writer Isaac Asimov, "because it plays back. You can play with it, but it is completely under your control, it's a pal, a friend, but it doesn't break the rules." There are 130,000 computers installed in U.S. classrooms at the moment, and there may be as many as 650,000 in 1985.

The Educational Testing Service recently studied computer-assisted education for elementary school students. In mathematics, computer-assisted instruction proved as effective as having a tutor. The more computer time students received, the more basic math they learned. Formerly a nonbeliever in computer-assisted education, Marjorie Radosta, director of the study, now says, "This is the way to go, especially for Title I students or others having problems."

Yet, as Stanford University Professor Michael Kirst wisely points out, "Improved technical education can only be built on a solid base for the overall school program. It is impossible to provide 'literacy' in technical subjects without 'literacy' in language and other skills."

With many teachers using computers only as electronic flashcards for simple drill and practice, many education experts say the educational potential of school computers has been barely tapped, says Allen A. Boraiko writing in *National Geographic*. Just

around the corner are learning modules that can boost analytic skills in specific subject areas or make children truly computer literate—able to run and program computers and grasp their impact on society.

"I think we're going to see a world of innovation come out of young kids, high school kids, and pre-teens of all kinds, who are just given access to technology, with creative minds and no constraints," says Dr. Robert E. Kahn of the Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency.

If blacks and women cannot interface with computers, they cannot function in a complex world.

It may well be that the flexibility inherent in current computer technology, enabling users to develop their own learning modules or adapt commercial programs to meet special group or individual needs, represents the greatest long-term benefit for minority, female and physically handicapped children. Enough studies have documented the fact that such students are much less likely than white males to experience sustained contact with positive role models in school classrooms—whether vicariously through textbook illustrations and prose or in the person of science and math teachers—that could stir their aspirations for careers in science, engineering and other math-related high technology fields.

According to *Background Report on Silicon Valley* prepared for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights last September, "If present trends continue, women and minorities will be left behind in the push to upgrade technical and scientific education. Except for an over-representation of Asian American men, most engineering and science [college] graduates are still white males."

Students and skilled teachers, working independently and in tandem, can create computer programs that contain positive examples of families, neighborhoods, workplaces and professional role models with which children, female or male and of varying racial or ethnic

backgrounds, can identify. And this can be done without sacrificing skills and knowledge learning objectives—indeed, in a way that enhances those objectives.

But the computer is already remaking classroom instruction. Many educators now believe that students with access to a microcomputer spend more time studying and solving problems, and that those who write at their keyboards compose more freely and revise their work more thoroughly. "It's a new way of thinking. The kids who don't get indoctrinated to computers by seventh grade are not going to develop the same proficiency," says Andrew Molnar, computer specialist at the National Science Foundation.

While OTA warns that "caution should be exercised in undertaking any major national effort, whether federally inspired or not, to introduce these new technologies into education," today's consensus is expressed by Peter Schwartz, former head of Future Studies at SRI International, a California think tank, when he says "The [computer] chip is remaking this into a world where information is literally wealth."

Neutrality and fairness are integral to computers. The public policies which determine who has easy access to computers and the information wealth they represent may not be. The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) recently completed a study of the impact of the information revolution on American education. It directs Congress to consider developing Federal policies for manpower retraining in a computer age, for programs to insure that minorities are not left out, and for helping local educational leaders cope with computer technology. Unless action is taken now, concluded the OTA, "A significant social, economic and political gap could develop between those who do and those who do not have access to, and the ability to use, information systems."

To illuminate his life, the protagonist in *The Invisible Man* once figured out how to tap his city's power line.

To guarantee their livelihood, his children now must gain access to the power potential of the computer. ♦

Speaking Out

The Dead End of Compensatory Policies: Thinking the Unthinkable

by Haskell G. Ward

Einstein once said that “The world that we have made as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far creates problems that we cannot solve at the same level we created them at.” Nowhere is this insight more meaningful than when applied to the various theories, strategies and programs designed to create equity for blacks in the United States. If we are to move beyond the current impasse over what should be the next appropriate steps in forging a national social policy, a new level of thinking will be necessary. But first we must recall the past, both recent and more distant.

It is now apparent that the social philosophy which prevailed in the sixties characterizing blacks as victims entitled to special treatment may well have created many higher-level problems. Since blacks and other minorities were subjected to centuries of discriminatory treatment in America, a persuasive case was made which ultimately evolved into a national consensus in support of social welfare policies to redress past injuries to blacks. Civil rights leaders, almost without exception, promoted this philosophy as a sound theory and strategy for social policy. The enactment of a variety of laws specifically benefitting blacks and other minorities served to confirm the cogency of this philosophy for black leaders.

The national consensus which spawned such programs as affirmative

Haskell G. Ward, president of Haskell G. Ward Associates, a management consulting firm, was a participant in the Atlanta sit-ins during the 1960s. He has served as New York City's Deputy Mayor, as an African Specialist with the Ford Foundation and with the Policy Planning Office of the State Department.

action, however, has all but vanished. It is gone because the architects of compensatory treatment seriously threatened a preeminent American value: individualism. Fundamentally, that value embraces the idea that each individual is free to pursue life goals solely on the basis of personal choice. Going hand in hand with this freedom, however, is the acceptance of the premise that every individual is responsible for his or her life choices and fate. The canonization of, and connection between, individual liberty and individual responsibility is basic to an understanding of the texture of American democracy. The social contract in America is unique among nation-states in the degree to which it is the individual, not the state, who is responsible for basic decisions about life. This idea lies at the core of the American concept of freedom.

The goals of the movement shifted from a context of you *and* me to one of you *or* me.

A second basic tenet of American democracy is the principle of equality. Americans interpret the framers of the Declaration of Independence quite literally when they stated that “We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.” It is also not accidental that the drafters of the Constitution codified these liberties into a Bill of Rights as that document's first amendments. The linchpin of the system, then, is *individual liberty*, with the flip side of the coin being *individual responsibility*. “Equal justice under the laws” is also a

basic feature of the American system, since it insures that competition among individuals in the country would be fair and unfettered.

For the greater part of American history, however, blacks were excluded from the country's social contract. The doctrine stating that “all men are created equal” was written during the very time that black people were enslaved. Black movements in American history, up to and including the civil rights movement, have derived much of their power and moral force from simply highlighting this contradiction. In order for it to be true to its own creed, the nation had to acknowledge that it could not tolerate *de jure* discriminatory distinctions among its citizens.

The civil rights movement of the sixties achieved its basic goal of eliminating most of the remnants of the *de jure* distinctions which served to discriminate against blacks. The movement went a step further, however, and argued that it was insufficient to simply eliminate barriers to equality of opportunity; it was also necessary to establish mechanisms or programs to compensate for damage suffered in the past. Civil rights leaders argued, moreover, that the remedy should be applied to blacks as a *group*. Inasmuch as all blacks had suffered and been victims of discrimination, all blacks, these leaders argued, were entitled to some form of reparation.

This line of thought contained the seeds of the destruction of the consensual mantle which had provided moral force and support for the movement. Within a generation, from the early sixties to the late seventies, the goals of the civil rights movement shifted from a context of you *and* me to one of you *or* me; from a positive-sum game to a zero-sum game. For blacks to win, someone

Speaking Out

else would have to lose. Civil rights leaders were openly advocating social policies which would produce black gains at the expense of whites, and which were often advocated under either implied or explicit threat of civil disturbances should their demands not be met. It is during this period, I believe, that the movement lost much of its moral force as well as both white and black adherents.

Millions of qualified and talented blacks reject the inference that they cannot or could not make it on their own. The concept of special treatment is racist on its face.

The American body politic has trouble digesting the notion that the country owes a particular group something, regardless of the apparent persuasiveness of the case. The case is even more difficult to make when, as now, the nation is experiencing double-digit unemployment and when many middle class families, regardless of race, are having difficulties making ends meet. It would be difficult to design a better strategy to serve the interests of racists and skillful demagogues than one which postulates that blacks require and deserve special, even preferential, treatment. Millions of qualified and talented blacks, youth and experienced professionals alike, reject the inference that they cannot or could not make it on their own without a special helping hand. The concept, to many, is racist on its face.

To be sure, large percentages of blacks do suffer disproportionately dur-

ing periods of severe economic decline. It is also true that many blacks live in conditions of depression-level poverty even in good times. These facts are not in dispute. Equally true, however, is the fact that blacks are not the only ones who suffer.

It is quite clear to me that the black leadership's preoccupation with so-called "black problems" during a period of intense general economic difficulty (which some attribute to the government's unsound policies designed for the benefit of blacks) has alienated Americans who place the general welfare above the concerns of any one ethnic or racial group. Blacks, it seems to them, are incapable of lifting their horizons beyond their own selfish interests.

The issue is no longer one of accepting black demands; it is, rather, one of how black and other minority interests may be accommodated within a larger set of government tax and spending decisions which aim at achieving the greatest good for the greatest number. That goal can be more readily addressed when the economy prospers. In these times of scarcity, national policy choices become excruciatingly difficult, requiring, as Einstein suggested, a level of thinking quite beyond that which created the problems in the first place. Still, the essential basis of our nation's social contract—anchored to the values of individual freedom and responsibility—requires that economic and social policies benefit everyone, with no one excluded and no one preferred.

During the course of a speaking tour of Japan last spring, I was asked to describe my vision of the future of America. I said then that in spite of a declining level of worker productivity and an overall decline in our economy in recent years, our future was promising. Al-

though we are beginning to experience the chronic unemployment problems prevalent in many other countries in the world, this development means that we will have to engage in the search for a solution to these rather basic problems with the rest of humanity. In the process, I could foresee us becoming more sensitive to needs of the rest of the world. The resiliency, inventiveness and pragmatism of the American people constitute essential reasons for us to be optimistic. Our most precious asset has always been, and remains, the diversity of our population.

I believe that the recommitment by blacks to an individualism backed by equal opportunity, however difficult, will bring positive results. I also believe that America's sense of responsibility and tradition of compassion will reassert itself in time to aid those who are most vulnerable—the children, the disabled, the physically and mentally handicapped and the truly needy.

The most hopeful signals I detect, however, are those indicating that blacks as a group do not want handouts or special treatment. The damage to black self-esteem has led to a reevaluation of the theory and strategy of compensatory treatment. Black dignity may well have been the biggest loser when this country's ethic of individualism was threatened. The restoration of that dignity will surely be the greatest dividend this reevaluation could bring to blacks and to the nation. ♦



DYING TOO YOUNG

by Tim Giago and Sharon Illoway

"Words will not give my people health or save my people's lives."

—Chief Joseph of the Nez-Perce Tribe

"The Indian is the most misunderstood, and least understood, of all Americans."

—John F. Kennedy

Just as it has done with many sovereign nations, the United States signed treaties with Native American tribes pledging a new alliance. In exchange for the vast rich lands controlled by Indians, the Federal government solemnly promised, among other things, to provide health care and hospitals for Native American people. Yet Native Americans in the United States today are on average dying younger than any other population group in the country—20 years younger in the case of the Navajo people.

What is behind this tragedy? Is the Federal government living up to its end of the treaty agreements?

To be sure, some steps were taken to improve the health of Native Americans over the last 25 years, and a number of deadly diseases were successfully conquered. Yet, with an Indian health index still trailing far behind that of the general population in the U.S., America's commitment to Native American health programs is fast disappearing. Just as programs started in the '70s begin taking root on reservations and Indian people start to benefit from them, announcements from Washington now make clear that the Administration does not plan to re-fund them for the coming year. Some examples:

- In 1978, after only 30 percent of Indian children in four tribes in northern Idaho had been immunized for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, an Improved Child Health Project was started. Clinics were set up in rural areas where there had been no health care. In one year, the rate of immunization jumped to 90 percent. Yet this child health project, and nine others like it across the

Tim Giago is a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. He is the editor and publisher of the Lakota Times, the weekly newspaper that serves the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations of South Dakota.

Sharon Illoway, a washicu (white), is a correspondent for the Lakota Times. She has been an investigative reporter for 12 years, receiving her training in journalism at the City News Bureau of Chicago and U.S. News and World Report magazine.

country, were funded for only four years. The Administration's budget included no plans to continue them.

- In 1978, 41 health clinics were set up in cities to serve the more than 680,000 (of the estimated 1.4 million) Native Americans in this country who live in urban areas. Funding for these clinics has been eliminated in the Administration's budget.

- For over a decade, trained medical aides have visited the homes of Indians who live in isolated rural areas of their reservations. These Community Health Representatives (CHR's) served 5,000 people a month on one reservation alone in South Dakota. Elderly men and women, especially, rely on these aides to get to the hospital for critically needed heart and diabetes medicine. The blunt fact is that "There are going to be a lot of people who are going to die if they can't get in to get their medicine," according to the director of one CHR program. Yet, no money is planned to continue this program.

- Only 18 doctors out of 682 in the Indian Health Service (IHS) program are Native Americans. To start rectifying this situation, a scholarship program was set up to train Indian doctors, nurses and technicians. In 1981, 105 Indians from various tribes were able to study through the program. This program, too, is destined to be phased out.*

Such a Federal withdrawal of support for Indian health services is, at best, unenlightened. True, Indians were finding hope in a declining infant mortality rate and a rising rate of life expectancy for their people.

But that optimism has to be tempered by a host of remaining health barriers that threaten to wipe out these gains. In spite of the significant drop in infant death rates on U.S. reservations, for example, the death rate of Navajo babies over 18 weeks old is *two and a half times* that of the overall population, according to Dr. Taylor McKenzie, hospital administrator in Window Rock, Arizona. White Americans would no doubt find that statistic and the factors contributing to it intolerable in their own communities.

Pneumonia and diarrhea are the two main problems for Navajo babies this age. These problems start after the baby stops coming to the "well-baby" clinic, the Navajo doctor said. The fact is that too many Navajo parents lack the means to drive the distances back and forth to these clinics for their baby's checkups. "I would say it's a nutritional problem—tied in with the low standard of living. Families

**Most of the programs listed in these examples were eventually funded by Congress for Fiscal Year 1983.*

just don't have the financial means to provide a healthful diet or living situation."

An inadequate water supply or poor sewage control also increase the chance of disease. When this situation occurs, the weakest in the family have the greater chance of becoming ill—that means the very young or the very old. Yet, according to Dr. Thomas Lowe, a health care administrator with the Navajo, 40 percent of Navajo families have no piped-in water. And despite these almost life and death aspects of water and sewage systems, Federal plans for 10,800 units of housing include no sanitary or water facilities. How could the government plan to put up housing—and simply leave out water and sanitary facilities? Dr. Lowe wasn't surprised. "Government doesn't always do things with forethought. Things just get overlooked in appropriations."

A supreme irony confronting Indians today is that, with all of the deserved attention being given to the lengthening life spans of Americans, death still comes at an early age for Native Americans. Across the country, the average life span of the U.S. non-Indian population is 65.1 years. Yet, the average life for the Navajo people ends more than 22 years earlier at age 42.4.

One IHS statistician argues that because the Indian birth rate is higher than the national rate, this figure does not give a fair picture of Indian health. There are more people at risk age because of the high birth rate, he says. New life expectancy figures, which are projected for people being born now, are more accurate, he maintains. Navajo Indians born today are expected to live 64.9 years, Indians in general 65.1 years, and the rest of the U.S. population 70.9 years—a gap of some six years.

But others argue that the average age of death, which is startlingly low for the Navajo, is more accurate—since it is based on actual cases, rather than projected figures. In either case, the rates show that Indians are dying younger than any other population group in the country.

The IHS network of hospitals has managed to reduce the rate of deadly diseases, like tuberculosis, from 55.1 deaths per 100,000 in 1955 to 7.7 deaths per 100,000 in 1975. But there are other diseases with rising rates which are killing Native Americans at far higher rates than for others in the U.S.

Twice as many 25 to 34 year old Indians die from diabetes, for example. Deaths from cirrhosis of the liver soared 217 percent from 1955 to 1975 for Indian men and women. Once again, it is the 25 to 34 year olds, the people who should be the backbone of their tribes, who suffer the most. Cirrhosis of the liver hits them 14.5 times as often as the 4.2 death rate for all other U.S. races in this age group.

Problems of alcohol addiction among Indians are not well understood by most Americans, observes Dr. Lowe. "The Anglo-Saxon population in this country has tended to blame the Indian for drinking. That becomes an excuse for not dealing with the situation, or for dealing only with the symptoms, rather than the root causes," he notes.

According to one theory, Dr. Lowe said, there may be a factor, like an enzyme, that is genetically lacking in Indians. If this is the case, as it seems to be for several Asian

groups who are genetically related in various degrees to Native Americans, the ability to clear alcohol from the system would be greatly reduced. That would reduce tolerance for alcohol and make it easier to become physically dependent on it, he explains.

Sugar is a factor in both diabetes and alcohol addiction. Most Indians who drink heavily get addicted to a very sweet Muscatel wine nicknamed "Green Lizard." Few Americans are aware that a high preponderance of Indians cannot metabolize lactose from milk. Ironically, those who are not genetically allergic to milk often lack access to stores selling it. Both of these factors contribute to the early and concentrated use of sugar-laden soft drinks. The step from sweet soda to sweet port or tokay is not a large one in Indian country.

The death rate of Navajo babies over 18 weeks old is two and a half times that of the overall population.

Experts are beginning to look into the drastic change of diet Indians went through in moving from independence to dependence on white society, a "dietary bottleneck" through which not all could pass. The Plains Indians, for example, changed from a very high protein diet (meat, wild turnips, chokecherries) to a diet loaded with starch and sugar. The monthly dole of "commodities" given out by the Federal government, which includes a high number of starches, would make any person committed to a balanced daily diet flinch in horror. It contains flour, macaroni, spaghetti, sugar, rice, beans, canned vegetables, canned fruit juices, canned meat stew (nicknamed "Alpo" by some reservation wisecrackers), canned pork, powdered milk, butter and one five-pound box of fresh cheese. The milk, butter and cheese often become food for the animals in Navajo country because of their lactose intolerance.

Despite the extreme gravity of alcohol addiction, there are very few detoxification programs on U.S. reservations. And some of the small efforts at combatting it are being cut back. "We need a full-blown alcoholism program, starting with detoxification," says Leonard Little Finger, assistant administrator at the Pine Ridge IHS hospital. "But we are not able to receive funding for new programs."

And in nearby Rosebud, Pat Eagle Elk, the director of the tribe's alcoholism programs, recently warned that the local Little Hoop Treatment Lodge may have to close down for lack of funds. Eagle Elk calls alcoholism the "most devastating disease" on the Rosebud Reservation, urging that the treatment lodge remain open to try to deal with it.

Cirrhosis of the liver is not the only killer that is tied to alcohol addiction. High motor vehicle accident rates and high suicide rates, two of the major causes of death for Native Americans, are both connected with drinking in a majority of cases. Newborn babies, as well, can suffer from "fetal alcohol syndrome" if their mothers drink even moderately during pregnancy.

"Of mothers (of all population groups) who drink heavily during pregnancy, about 44 percent give birth to babies with birth defects," warns David Rooks in an article in the *Lakota Times*, the Pine Ridge Reservation newspaper. These babies are born with brain damage, heart defects, or weak muscle, bone and skin development. Rooks pointed out they also have difficulty forming emotional bonds with their mothers at birth, and with other people later on. Birth defects can have other causes as well, including poor nutrition for the mother while she is carrying the child.

Reports from the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia show there are a large number of birth defects in babies born on the Pine Ridge Reservation, home of the Oglala Sioux. A controversy started over this two years ago, when Women of All Red Nations (WARN), an organization with members from many tribes, publicly raised the issue over whether high radiation levels in the water were a major cause of birth defects. The Disease Control Center maintained radiation levels were not too high for safety, disagreeing with WARN's tests which declared they were unsafe. WARN is unconvinced.

Pregnancy complications, accidents, respiratory diseases and digestive diseases are the four most prevalent reasons for hospitalization for Native Americans in this country. The fifth most frequent cause may surprise some people. It is mental illness.

This certainly belies the romanticized image many people hold about the Native American. According to this image, mainly ground out in Hollywood, the Indian is calm and unruffled—a being with a strong profile and steady nerves.

Suicide rates for Native Americans have increased, not declined, since the '50s. While there are differences between the tribes and nations with regard to rates and incidence of alcoholism and suicide, a study in the '70s showed the overall suicide rate for Native Americans 15 to 24 years old was four times as high as the national rate for the same age group of other races. Dr. Philip A. May, now at the University of New Mexico, lived on the Pine Ridge Oglala Sioux Reservation for three years. He noted that, in one very severe year on this reservation, there was a suicide attempt once every four days. Many of the people who tried to kill themselves were drinking at the time. And some of those who tried to kill themselves were as young as seventh, eighth, and tenth grade children.

Dr. May emphasizes that this horrifying loss of life is not going to stop until overall economic and social conditions on the reservation change. "There is a large segment of the society," he stressed, "virtually denied access to the few steady jobs or roles available. Individuals then become casualties with feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and fatalism."

When life becomes purposeless and painful, when there is no way to find gainful employment despite repeated attempts, the next step is often escape. Dr. May notes this by saying that a large number of people "escape from reality—through drinking, carelessness and accidents, suicide attempts and suicide." Moreover, "A negative self-image of American Indians portrayed vividly to them in the sur-

rounding border towns and through the media" only increases low self-esteem and feelings of lack of direction and purpose, he explains. Males are especially affected since their role as provider is under attack while females have continuity in their lives as mothers and they experience less drug and alcohol dependency.

Francis Montileaux, a psychiatric social worker who directs human services at Pine Ridge Hospital and is himself a Sioux, observes, "We see a lot of people come in frustrated because they have no work, no training. They're not able to provide for their families.

"This can easily lead to family tension, with the wife throwing it up in her husband's face that he's not a good provider. Then he'll often go out and get drunk to forget." The problem has become much more pronounced in the last two or three years, since a number of the few jobs available on the reservation were eliminated by decisions in Washington, he said.

The average life span of the U.S. non-Indian population is 65 years. For the Navajo people it is 42 years.

"There's also a lot of stress from overcrowding in the homes," said another counselor. "People have to move in with another family because they don't have housing of their own." Forty-six percent of Indian families at Pine Ridge live in one or two room houses. That compares with only five percent of non-Indians who have to live in homes that small.

One 27-year-old woman with three children had to move in with her parents after her husband died. Her sister, who also had children, also shared the house. So she watched her sister's children along with her own, and drove her mother to Rapid City several times a week for medical care for a kidney disease. What this woman really wanted was a home and job of her own. Neither was available. One evening, after an argument with her brother, "something snapped"—and she ran into the bathroom, grabbed a razor blade and slashed her wrists. This young woman survived the suicide attempt. But there are others who will not.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) estimates that the Pine Ridge Reservation, where this young woman lives, has a 75 percent unemployment rate (local estimates are higher). But the bleak outlook for finding jobs does not affect Pine Ridge alone. Both the Yankton Sioux and the Standing Rock Sioux Reservations in the Dakotas have unemployment rates of 79 percent. The BIA's conservative statistics show 53 percent unemployment for the Shoshone Tribe in Idaho and the Blackfoot in Montana. Indeed, the only state in the country that seems to show a high *employment* rate for Indian Tribes is Oklahoma, where renewed oil development is creating a very different situation than that experienced by other Indian peoples.

"Only a long-term economic development program can eliminate some of the basic causes of poor physical health,"



concludes the report, *That These People May Live*, prepared in 1970 by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Eileen Maynard and Gayla Twiss, authors of the report, show that the rate of health problems among Indians is twice as high as among non-Indians living in the same geographical area. But, they add, public health service alone cannot change this. The health problems are too interwoven with the total socio-economic situation.

"Congressmen who live near Indians tend to understand their problems and be supportive. But the people back east who never see Indians don't have a lot of understanding about what's going on," observes Dr. Lowe in Arizona. "I don't think it's malice [that causes the under-funding], I think it's lack of understanding."

The hospital in Pine Ridge had positions for seven doctors and 32 nurses 12 years ago, in 1970. "Since then our patients have doubled—and our doctors and nurses remain the same," says administrator Terry Pourier. "Out here, when someone's dying, you go 100 miles an hour to get to the hospital 100 miles away—and hope to get there on time!" commented one member of the tribe. The National Congress of American Indians has been urging Congress to allocate a mere \$45,000 for a clinic in Kyle, at the opposite end of the reservation, as well as funds for clinics on South Dakota and Montana reservations.

Suicide rates for Native Americans are on the rise. Some as young as 7th and 8th graders have tried to kill themselves.

There are some serious misapprehensions about Indians held by non-Indians. One of these is the feeling that Native Americans receive huge sums of Federal money—more than anyone else. Congressman Morris Udall's research showed that, in fact, the opposite is the case. Average per capita government spending for all U.S. citizens was \$3,688 in 1980. The total amount of aid going to Indians the same year was \$2,948. Concluded Udall, "The Indian people, whom all people generally concede are the most impoverished in this country, have been receiving 20 percent *less* in governmental services than the national population."

Most Americans may also be unaware of the fact that 10,000 Navajo and Hopi people are slated for "relocation" in the next several years. They are to be moved, by congressional decision, from rural homes where they live quietly traditional lives herding sheep and cattle, and put in the middle of border towns—with all the concomitant noise, red tape, gadgets and complicated loan and payment systems. The few already moved have become confused and disoriented, with some experiencing physical illness from the drastic change.

This ruthless treatment of people, with no consideration of their feelings and lifeways, is bound to result in severe health problems in the future. One cannot expect doctors and nurses to rush in and "cure" people with bandages where deep psychic wounds have been made. Instead, the

government should reconsider such drastic and inhuman programs, and avert problems before they start. Just how ill-conceived the plans for this relocation are can be measured in the words of Relocation Commissioner Hawley Atkinson: "They'd better be out by July, 1986," he declared. "Or else we'll go in with guns and Federal marshals—just as we did with stock reduction."

Urban Indians, as well, are largely overlooked by fellow city residents who may not even be aware they have Apache, Navajo, or Cherokee neighbors. In New York City, for example, there are almost 12,000 Indians of different tribes in the five boroughs. A tiny clinic at 842 Broadway serves this population. Unless funds are voted this winter, this clinic will have to close. The Public Health Service Hospital on Staten Island, where many Indians went for medical care, closed last year.

Those living off the reservation (which means most Native Americans at one time or another in their lives) run into other kinds of discrimination. The widow of Kenneth Porcupine brought suit against a hospital in Scottsbluff, Nebraska for denying medical care to her husband. They sent him to Pine Ridge Hospital, 140 miles away, even though that facility had no neurosurgeon, and no "CAT-scanner" to check for blood clots or hematoma. The deathly sick man arrived at Pine Ridge, where staff had to immediately send him off again to Rapid City where hospitals had the same equipment he could have been treated with in Scottsbluff. He died before reaching Rapid City.

One staff member working in Washington for the BIA summarizes the overall situation wryly: "Health professionals and Native Americans poured into this city to give testimony to the House and Senate back in '78. They documented the fact, thoroughly, that health care to the Indian is the lowest of any segment of the population." But that has not done much to raise the level of funding, he adds, noting that it's easy to play with statistics to make things look better than they are. For example, "You need \$100, and someone gives you \$20. The next year you need \$200, and they give you \$40, saying well, we've doubled your budget."

"That's the way it's been with Indian health programs. They were under-funded right from the beginning. So people may say money was increased every year, but if the base was low in the beginning, it doesn't mean anything." He chuckled ironically. "I've watched this since I was a child, growing up on a reservation myself. It's not really funny. It's pathetic."

As Americans reach for the last of the popcorn while watching those recurring movie images of a Sioux chief with a gloriously feathered bonnet riding into the sunset, they are oblivious to the fact that the great great grandchild of that same chief may be enduring multiple traumas on the reservation. The maddening part of it all is that many of the conditions causing that plight *can* be addressed—if enough Americans only knew more about the actual lives America's first people are leading today and insisted on honoring long-standing Federal government pledges to Native Americans. ♦



RESTORING

by Harvard Sitkoff

Little more than a dozen years ago, images of hostage deans, campus barricades, liberated buildings and student cadres carrying rifles, bandoliers and homemade spears dominated the news of American higher education. Demanding that education hold relevance to their lives, black and feminist college students throughout the nation demonstrated for the right to study systematically the black and female experiences as legitimate educational endeavors. They were often aided by sympathetic faculty and community activists. Although American Studies, East Asian Studies and International Studies interdisciplinary programs offered clear precedents for college-level black and women's studies, mostly white-male faculties responded to these student "non-negotiable" demands with rage or ridicule. Confrontation

Harvard Sitkoff is the author of The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954 to 1980 (1981, Hill and Wang) and A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights As a National Issue: The Depression Decade (1971, Oxford University Press). He teaches history at the University of New Hampshire.

followed, leading to expulsions, violence and casualties on campuses from San Francisco State to the City College of New York, from Howard to Harvard, Brown and Cornell. To buy peace, scores of universities suddenly established women's studies and black studies programs, at least on paper.

Born in strife, few such programs escaped a conflict-filled infancy. The shrill rhetoric of militant activists fueled faculty fears, further polarizing the university. Disagreements on staffing and funding, on issues of autonomy and control over organizational structures and governance, and, especially, on questions of male or white participation in the programs, erupted in bitter campus skirmishes. Academics who supported black studies and women's studies as valid means of promoting scholarship and disseminating knowledge recoiled at the notion that the purpose of such programs was preparation for a feminist or black revolution, as students at Cornell insisted in their demand for Physical Education 300 c: "Theory and practice in the use of small arms and hand to hand combat. Discussion sessions in the proper use of force."

BLACKS AND WOMEN TO AMERICA'S PAST

As such antics subsided, and tensions gradually ebbed in the 1970s, black studies and women's studies made important advances throughout academia. The number of black studies programs zoomed to a peak of 500. Although nearly half expired as a consequence of budget cutbacks, inadequate staffing, hostility from administrators and faculty, and their own internal disputes, most of those that remain have evolved into respectable academic entities commanding the support of students and scholars. The women's studies movement, still expanding, counted 357 college programs in 1982, including two dozen graduate programs and some two hundred colleges granting majors or minors in the field. Course catalogues now routinely list such offerings as "The Literature of Black Women," "Women in Medieval History," "Blacks in the Economy," and "Psychology of Women." Indeed, estimates of the total number of courses in black and women's studies in 1982 ran upwards of twenty-five thousand. Moreover, in the 1970s both fields spawned countless conferences, scholarly journals, newsletters, summer institutes and research centers.

The 1970s saw an unsurpassed outpouring of historical scholarship on race and gender.

The continuing presence of courses in black and women's history in college curricula, and the increasing status and visibility of women and black historians, has resulted largely from the prodding of the Women's Committee of the Organization of American Historians, the American Historical Association's Committee on Women Historians, the Coordinating Committee on Women in the Historical Profession and the dozens of regional and local associations it sparked, as well as by a whole similar network of caucuses and commissions created by black historians to promote black history such as the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and

History and the National Council for Black Women. Because of their efforts, significant gains have been tallied in recent years for women and blacks in terms of the percentage of new history Ph.D.'s, historians hired, participants in the major annual meetings and membership on the prestigious association's standing committees. The elections of John Hope Franklin and Gerda Lerner to the presidency of the Organization of American Historians symbolizes these gains, as does their selection for highly endowed professorships and the many honors bestowed upon them.

Further evidence of this new acceptance of women's and black history comes from the involvement of the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford, Mellon and Rockefeller Foundations, and the National Endowment for the Humanities in the major task of reversing a century of neglect and bias in history instruction. They have spent millions of dollars, in conjunction with the professional historians' groups, to publish stacks of new course materials in black and women's history; to convene numerous conferences devoted to the teaching of courses in these fields; and to re-educate existing faculty to transform the entire history curriculum so that it reflects honestly the experiences of women and blacks.

The possibility of a history that depicts the ways in which blacks and women helped to shape our past and present has also been immeasurably aided by a changing conception of history. The steady expansion of the "new social history" meant fewer scholars adhering to F.A. Freeman's dictum that "History is past politics," and more and more students of what Carroll Smith-Rosenberg called "private places," such as households, kinship systems and voluntary associations. As never before, historical attention is now directed to the analysis of social structures, mobility, ethnicity, and the inarticulate and the powerless. In addition, the discipline has been growing increasingly sensitive to such matters as egalitarianism and pluralism. The totems of detachment, neutrality, of value-free inquiry are being toppled by advocates of "history

as a moral science." As Gordon Wright exclaimed in his 1975 presidential address to the AHA: "Our search for truth ought to be quite consciously suffused by a commitment to some deeply held humane values."

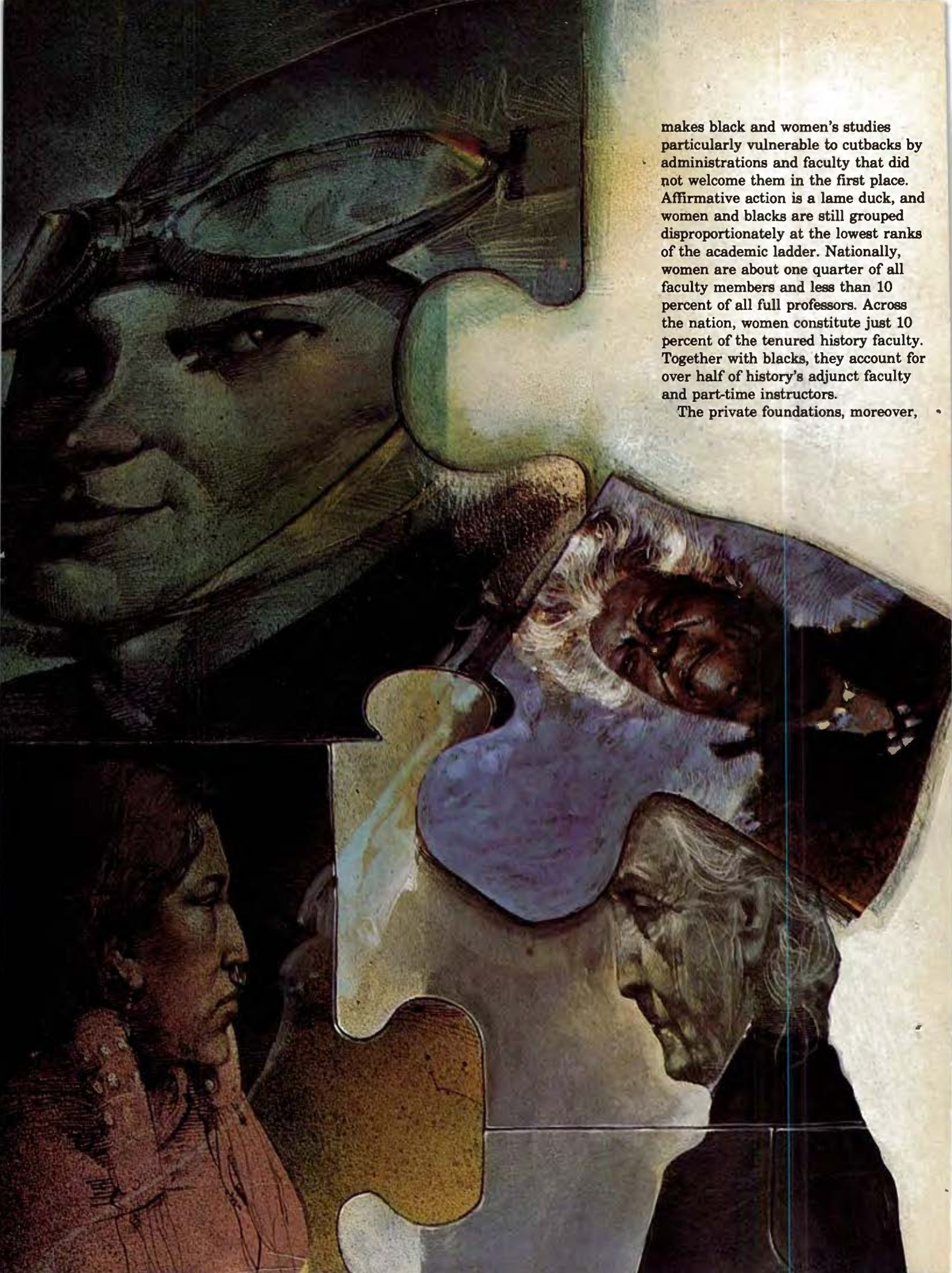
Black and women's studies are particularly vulnerable to cutbacks by administrations and faculty that did not welcome them in the first place.

This commitment and methodological change resulted in the 1970s in an outpouring of historical scholarship on race and gender as yet unsurpassed in quantity and quality. As Jay Saunders Redding summed up his recent analysis of blacks as both scholars and subject: "American history has never been in a better state." The same holds true for women. As subjects of major monographs, both are no longer slighted or scorned, no longer depicted merely as passive objects, no longer viewed just as victims of oppression. During this period, the work of many young black and women scholars has produced a body of knowledge to support an advanced and sophisticated curriculum in black and women's history.

Nevertheless, the future remains clouded. Many women's studies programs are still wracked by divisions and controversies over matters of class, race, sex and sexual preference. Black studies, says John Warfield, director of the African and Afro-American Studies and Research Center at the University of Texas, is "in a benign-neglect situation." The question now, adds historian Lerone Bennett, is "How do we, in a mood of political and fiscal conservatism, hold on to what we have achieved?"

The answer will not be easy. Both black and women's studies faculties are caught in the conflict between their own values and those of the wider university community. Both are plagued by inadequate and unstable funding and staffing. The financial exigencies faced by most colleges today





makes black and women's studies particularly vulnerable to cutbacks by administrations and faculty that did not welcome them in the first place. Affirmative action is a lame duck, and women and blacks are still grouped disproportionately at the lowest ranks of the academic ladder. Nationally, women are about one quarter of all faculty members and less than 10 percent of all full professors. Across the nation, women constitute just 10 percent of the tenured history faculty. Together with blacks, they account for over half of history's adjunct faculty and part-time instructors.

The private foundations, moreover,

once so generous in their support of black and women's studies, have drastically reduced their budgets in this realm. In the era of Reaganomics, the new philanthropic stress is on charity for the needy, not educational change. No longer able to count on the financial backing of the Ford and Danforth Foundations, the Southern Fellowships Fund announced its demise last year. One of higher education's premier affirmative action programs, the SFF had awarded more than 3,000 annual scholarships to black graduate students since 1965 in its campaign to increase the number of black scholars. Without such assistance, it is hard to imagine the proportion of blacks receiving Ph.D.'s rising above the current three percent.

Equally gloomy, the new knowledge and viewpoints in black and women's history are reaching few students—despite the huge number of specialized upper-level courses. Ten percent of all undergraduate majors were in history in 1950. Today it is two percent. Enrollment in black and women's studies programs has similarly plummeted as students turn to job-oriented courses. Less than 300 undergraduates are majoring in black studies this year, compared to several thousand in the early 1970s. Most of the teaching of women's and black history manages to reach less than 10 percent of the student body.

The current reading list of Columbia University's humanities sequence does not contain a single book by or about women.

From their inception, black and women's studies proponents claimed as their goals both the development of interdisciplinary academic programs, with distinctive curricula, scholarship and teaching methodologies, and the transformation of traditional course content into a truly non-racist, non-sexist curriculum. That latter aim may well be chimerical. In 1975, Florence Howe, one of the pioneers of the women's studies movement and editor

of the *Women's Studies Journal*, declared: "If by 1980, the number of courses and programmes has doubled or trebled, and if in freshman English the students are still reading male writers on male lives, and in United States history the students are still studying male cultural heroes, wars, and male political documents, then we shall have failed our mission." Sadly, the current reading list of Columbia University's humanities sequence does not contain a single book by or about women. The most widely adopted textbooks for American history survey courses are still primarily chronicles of the wars, achievements and presidential administrations of great white fathers.

A study done at the start of the 1970s indicated that the 27 leading textbooks in American history, accounting for nearly 99 percent of the total market, devoted less than two percent of content to women and blacks. If the study were repeated today, the results would not be markedly different. The few textbooks that expound black and women's perspectives have not been widely adopted. Most publishers, operating under severe financial constraints, have stalled on making major revisions in their standard texts or on producing significantly new ones. And the bulk of white, male historians appear content with the old chestnuts steeped in their traditional assumptions about what is important. Little has changed save for the addition of short biographical inserts on singular black and women achievers such as Jane Addams and Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ralph Bunche and Booker T. Washington. The great majority of American history textbooks avoid Nat Turner and Marcus Garvey as much as Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Margaret Sanger, ignore the origins of racism as much as the development of patriarchy, and fail to incorporate the new scholarship of blacks as much as to raise new questions relevant to women.

The unfortunate truth about United States history survey textbooks largely holds for those who teach the course. Whether due to laziness, indifference or opposition, relatively few instructors

incorporate the new scholarship on gender and race into their teaching or present current perspectives reflecting the concerns of women and blacks. Real reform of the history curriculum—not merely adding an obligatory lecture or two on women's suffrage or collateral reading on Deadeye Dick and the black cowboys—requires revising the traditional selection of events for study as well as the categories and periodization of history. Affirmative action in the curriculum and classroom will occur when we devote as much effort to studying the pathology of the ghetto and the role of history in shaping group characteristics as we do to squabbles over the tariff and wars of conquests; when we recognize that the Renaissance meant greater constraints and restrictions on women as well as increased freedom and opportunity for men; and when we admit that the Progressive Period was as much a nadir for blacks as it was an era of reform for whites.

Whether due to laziness, indifference or opposition, few instructors incorporate the new scholarship on gender and race into their teaching.

Clio, the muse of history, is hardly liberated or darker in hue. We have not yet seen the real impact of black studies and women's studies on the history studied by most college students. Yet who would have imagined the effect that a dramatic increase in black and women's studies specialists would have on historical scholarship and the creation of many advanced college courses? Addressing a conference on how to integrate women's studies into the traditional liberal arts curriculum, Gerda Lerner explained the importance of viewing the larger aims of feminist scholarship in historical perspective. "How old is this discipline—12 years old?" she queried. "We have to undo 6,000 years of cultural conditioning. Twelve years is nothing." ♦

Accentuating the American in Japanese American

by Bill Hosokawa

You are on an elevator in a high-rise building in New York, but it could just as well be Chicago, Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco or Denver. The elevator stops its descent, the door slides open and two men step aboard. A casual glance at them takes in Asian features, black hair, light bronze skin. Both are neatly dressed, well-groomed. One is substantially taller and somewhat heavier than the other. But they look enough alike to be brothers, maybe cousins. Japanese, you say to yourself.

Right?

Only partly.

Yes, one of the men is a Japanese representative of one of Japan's largest trading companies. He is a graduate of a top Tokyo university, intelligent, well-informed, polished.

But the other, the taller one, is an American.

Three, perhaps four generations of his family have been Americans. He, too, is a college graduate. He may be an attorney, an engineer, an architect, a chemist, teacher, computer programmer or writer. English is his native tongue. Chances are that's the only language he speaks.

No, your eyes did not deceive you. He—the taller one—indeed looks Japanese. He should, because he shares a common racial heritage with the businessman from Japan. But by birth, education, psychology, interests, outlook and citizenship, he's American. He just happens to be a small and still somewhat unfamiliar ingredient in the racial and cultural mix that is America.

Americans take that mix for

granted. English, Germans and French, Italians and Poles and Scandinavians, Russians and Dutch and Swiss, Scots and Irish all have merged relatively quickly into the U.S. cultural landscape when they became Americans. But other immigrants like the Japanese have found their Americanizing experience more difficult than that of white European immigrants, and quite distinct from that of blacks, Hispanics or Native Americans. Today we still tend to see Asian minorities whose families may have been here for generations not simply as Americans of a different color, but in this case as Japanese—as *foreigners*.

For this segment of America, only 700,000 according to the 1980 census, this poses difficult problems at a time when relations between the United States and Japan have become strained by economic competition. What Japan does or does not do reflects, often unfairly, on these Americans whose roots reach back to Japan.

Today's Japanese Americans are as much "Japanese" as descendants of the Pilgrims are Englishmen. Yet, distinctive physical characteristics—remember the two men in the elevator?—set them apart from the Caucasian majority. This has resulted in serio-comic and sometimes racially offensive situations. Japanese Americans who never have been outside the United States are still asked questions like these:

- "Mr. Suzuki, where did you learn to speak our language so well?"
- "How long have you been in our country, Mrs. Yamada?"
- "Tell me the secret of your country's remarkable recovery after World War II, Mr. Yamamoto, and how you've learned to make such fine cars and television sets."

Bill Hosokawa is editorial page editor of The Denver Post.

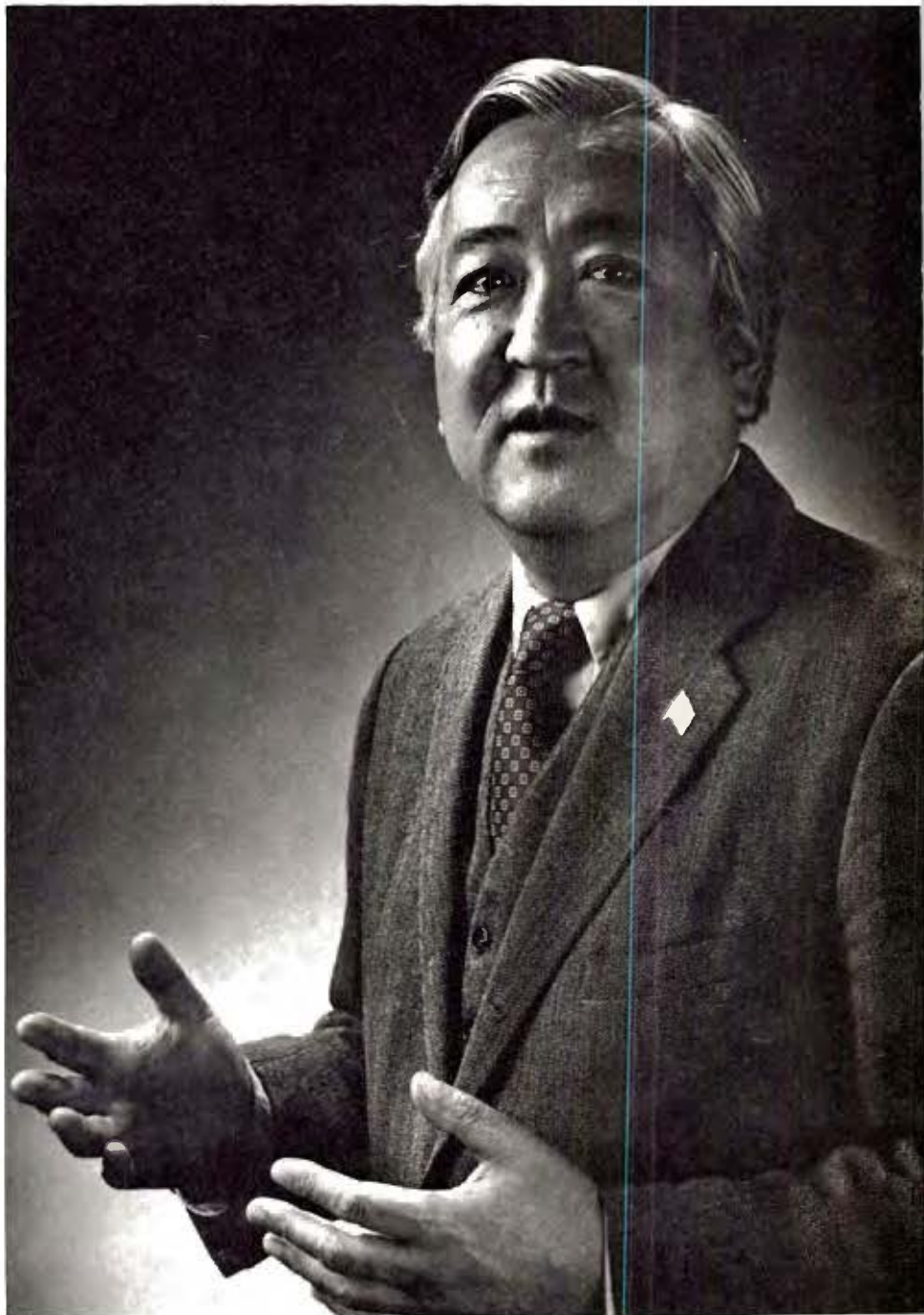


When conservationists directed their ire against Japanese whale hunters (but oddly, not against the Russians), some Japanese American kindergartners were ostracized by their peers with taunts that "you're bad, you people kill whales."

Much of this would be laughable except that American zeal sometimes develops into demands for economic boycotts which, inevitably, affect Japanese American merchants who may handle nothing but made-in-U.S.A. products.

Mike M. Masaoka, war hero, long-time Washington representative of the Japanese American Citizens League and now a consultant for Japanese firms, recently asked a politician friend what Japan could do to ease the friction. He was told: "Mike, you know that whatever Japan does at this moment, there will still be many politicians who will continue to attack Japan. We need a scapegoat. And Japan was the most convenient one because Japan tricked us at Pearl Harbor and waged war against us."

Memories of Pearl Harbor continue to haunt Japanese Americans. When they seek to assert their rights in public forums, it's not uncommon to hear someone else raise the specter of the sneak attack, as if the Japanese Americans were to blame. At a recent hearing in Washington, John J. McCloy, distinguished advisor to seven U.S. Presidents, suggested that the public's hostility toward Japanese Americans was "retribution" for Pearl Harbor. When challenged, he apologized and withdrew the word. Many are unaware that Japanese Americans were among the civilian casualties of that December 7 raid; that Japanese American soldiers patrolled Hawaii's beaches to repel the expected invasion; and that Japanese Americans everywhere were



outraged by the nature of the attack on their country.

Even in Congress, whose members reasonably can be expected to be more enlightened than the average citizen, there is lack of perception of Nisei as Americans. Two of the four Japanese Americans in Congress, Representatives Norman Mineta and Robert Matsui, California Democrats, report being told in committee discussions, "You must open your markets," as though they were Japanese officials rather than Americans sent to Congress by their multi-ethnic constituencies.

Says Congressman Mineta: "Unfortunately, many Americans cannot and do not distinguish between Japanese nationals and American citizens of Japanese ancestry despite the fact that we have achieved more than the average as an ethnic group in contributing toward American society."

Mineta was referring to major contributions Japanese Americans have made to this country not only in times of peace, but in perilous times as well. During World War II when 110,000 Japanese Americans were told that it was a "military necessity" that they abandon their West Coast homes and enter war relocation camps, they cooperated with their government at great personal sacrifice. Later, the Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, made up of volunteers, fought with great distinction in Italy and France. Nearly 6,000 other Japanese Americans were trained as intelligence specialists and Japanese language translators and interrogators. They were the "eyes and ears" of the Allied forces in the Pacific. Their efforts are credited with saving tens of thousands of American lives and shortening the war by months.

While the U.S. is racing to catch up

with Japanese quality and productivity in everything from steel to microprocessors, much of the current resentment against Japan is centered in our beleaguered automobile industry. "When I was in Detroit last year," Congressman Mineta said recently, "I heard stories of Japanese Americans who are afraid to drive imported cars in Michigan. Parking lots have signs saying 'No Japanese cars allowed.' I heard of a Japanese American driving a Datsun whose windshield was broken by a pickup truck driver wielding a baseball bat." Whether the batter was a displaced automobile welder, demoted manager or disgruntled stockholder, this was a classic case of misplaced hostility.

We still tend to see Asian Americans whose families have been here for generations as foreigners.

So far, such violence seems to be the exception, with harassment of Japanese Americans being limited to insults shouted by super-patriots of the mentality of those who in another time sought to avenge Pearl Harbor by smashing windows of Japanese American homes. But even when Americans distinguish between Japanese and Japanese Americans, racism of the "yellow peril" variety is clearly resurfacing. The *Washington Post* reported last May that Rep. John D. Dingell, D-Mich., who represents part of Detroit, was quoted by an industry newsletter, *Coal Outlook*, as referring to Japanese as "little yellow people." The reference was made in a closed-door discussion of legislative remedies for Japanese competition in the auto-

mobile industry.

The *Post* went on to report that a spokesman for Dingell said the remark was taken out of context and that the Congressman had apologized publicly to anyone who might have taken offense. "When I confronted him," Mineta says, "the Congressman said to me, 'Well, I wasn't talking about you, Norm.' Who did he think he was talking about," Mineta asks. "What makes an important public official say such things?"

Mineta, who was evacuated from his native San Jose, California, as a teenager to the Heart Mountain relocation camp, later served overseas with the United States Army and holds a reserve commission. He was elected mayor of San Jose before running for Congress and is deeply aware of the feeling that has existed against Japanese Americans. According to Mineta,

Racism and prejudice are something that many of us have seen all our lives in subtle ways. My concern now is that it is moving into more overt acts than we are used to.

For example, I receive nasty and bigoted phone calls and letters every time there is a major news story about the trade deficit. I even received an angry letter after New York City decided to buy Japanese subway cars. The writer warned he would be 'watching' me, to make sure I did not personally destroy the U.S. economy in order to advance Japanese interests. The idea that somehow I am personally responsible for the Kawasaki subway car purchase is ludicrous. But there are people who feel that way. I understand that as a public official I hear about more of these incidents than

others might. But my experience is not unique.

Congressman Matsui has another perspective. "Japanese Americans have a unique problem with regard to the negative feelings that some Americans have for countries whose exports seem to be destroying jobs for Americans. Italian Americans or German Americans don't suffer because of the imports of Fiats and BMWs, but because of our special visibility due to physical appearance, we fall victim to the attitudes towards the Japanese nation."

Japanese Americans in Congress report being addressed as though they are Japanese officials rather than Americans.

But the outlook is not all dark. Sabina P. Golding, legislative assistant to Senator Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii, says the problem is potentially serious but "no specific incidents of increased discrimination against Japanese Americans have been brought to the attention of this office." Indeed, a Louis Harris poll conducted last April for the *Asahi* newspapers of Japan showed that crude stereotypes about the Japanese are fading. In 1971, when asked to associate a word or phrase with the name Japan, 16 percent of those polled volunteered "they are small, slant-eyed people." In 1982 only three percent offered that statement. When asked in 1971 what they didn't like about Japan or the Japanese, 11 percent said "they are sneaky, tricky people who can't be trusted." This year only three percent made such a statement.

But each time some progress seems to have been made, unfair stereotypes raise their heads, sometimes from unexpected places. *Fortune* Magazine last May, under a "Yellow Power" headline, said that Oriental Americans are faring better than white Americans, are better educated, have a substantially higher median income, and that it was "disconcerting" that they continue to qualify for affirmative action programs. The cartoon illustrating the item depicted an Asian holding a scroll with Japanese calligraphy that read, "We're Number One." *Fortune* was guilty of two stereotypes. It assumed all Oriental Americans are better off than whites, whereas many of them continue to face discrimination and are as deserving of aid as other minorities. Second, it didn't seem to have occurred to *Fortune* that the cartoon confused Japanese Americans with the Japanese. Or that Japanese is just as alien a language to the vast majority of Japanese Americans as it is to white Americans.

This continuing misperception of an American racial and cultural minority, and the problem it poses for Japanese Americans, was recognized recently by a high Japanese official. Consul General Hiroshi Kitamura, on the eve of his departure from San Francisco for an important Foreign Ministry post in Tokyo, told a gathering of Japanese Americans:

I have become acutely aware that anything done by Japanese, any action taken by the Japanese government or Japanese business whether it is positively or adversely received in the United States—any such actions affect Japanese Americans. When relations between Japan and

the United States become tense, the people in Japan have little idea how the negative attitudes of some Americans will spill over onto the Japanese American community. Because most Japanese people think of Japanese Americans as Americans, which indeed you are, they do not realize well enough that there is a tendency in this country to associate anything Japanese with Americans of Japanese descent.

I am returning to Japan determined to do all I can to alleviate this situation. I would like to explain that the Japanese should be very careful not to allow situations to develop that might inflict this kind of suffering on Japanese Americans.

Despite Kitamura's concerns, it should be obvious that securing fair treatment for Japanese Americans is an American responsibility. It is to that end that Congressman Mineta offers this hopeful note:

Most of the people in this country truly believe in the principles of equality, fairness and justice. But they cannot stand alongside us in our struggle if they do not know about the problem. If we cry foul when our rights are threatened, the nation will respond. Not just our own rights are at stake. If our rights are threatened, then every citizen is in jeopardy. If we are discriminated against, then the whole of society suffers.

And, it might be added, if thoughtless discrimination against any segment of America is rooted out, all society benefits. ♦

The Media

Beyond a Black Readership: Expanding the Role of the Urban Black Newspaper

by Phyl Garland

The basic idea, bold in conception, remote from realization, was set forth by William H. Lee, a successful California publisher of a black newspaper: "I...see [the black press]...becoming the urban newspapers of the future."

He came up with this arresting vision despite the endangered state today of the nation's black press. "Our cities have become increasingly black, and white newspapers have been unable or unwilling to reach this audience," said Lee. "Some have brought blacks in and tried to incorporate them into the operation, but this still can't give them the kind of credibility we can have. Our papers can fulfill the function of providing urban news and showing people how to cope with the urban environment, a role that white newspapers ultimately may give up. That can be our future."

Though Lee's vision might seem, at first, little more than a pipe dream, there is evidence to suggest that he has perceived a need that is just waiting to be addressed. His own *Sacramento Observer*, started in 1962, has become the most honored contemporary black newspaper. He has accomplished this by combining imaginative graphics with quickly digested capsules of national news and in-depth treatment of local issues, ranging from education and housing to evaluation of candidates for public office. In the process, he has translated editorial excellence into commercial viability with a circulation of 44,000 in Sacramento County where census figures

show there are 59,000 blacks in a general population of 800,000. He has three spin-off publications now established in California. His success, however, stands in contrast to the current plight of most of the nation's 200 black newspapers.

During the years since 1827 when the first black periodical, *Freedom's Journal*, was founded in New York City, the black press led the fight for equal rights, from slavery and emancipation to countless protest movements. During the first half of this century, a few black newspapers established circulations ranging up to more than 300,000. But today, in the modern era of integration, these same papers struggle to survive against the overwhelming odds of dwindling advertising revenues, shrinking readership and a brain drain that has seen the best black talent skimmed off by the mainstream press where the pay is better and wider recognition is possible.

Based on these trends, it would seem that merely staying alive, rather than becoming the urban press of the future, should dominate the thoughts of black publishers. Yet, events taking place today could provide just the springboard needed for them to leap into the potentially rich urban pool. Ironically, the demise of major urban daily newspapers, now dying at an alarming rate, is a key element in this calculation. In mid-1981, the 128-year-old *Washington Star* ceased publication in the wake of economic losses, leaving the nation's capital with but one daily, the *Washington Post*. It was the most publicized victim in a trend that had seen the demise of the *Washington Daily News* and the *Newark Evening News*, both of which folded in 1972, and the *Chicago Daily News*, which ceased publication in 1978. All were firmly established and respected. In early 1982 we witnessed the death of

Phyl Garland is an associate professor at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. Former New York Editor of Ebony magazine, she is a frequent contributor to periodicals.

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the 134-year-old Philadelphia *Bulletin*, followed by the 103-year-old Cleveland *Press* in June and the 148-year-old Buffalo *Courier-Express* in September. New York's *Daily News*, the nation's most widely circulated city newspaper, narrowly avoided extinction.

Why did these papers die and why do so many others continue to face crushing problems? Often they were or are second papers in cities where the leading publication garnered a disproportionate share of advertising revenue in relationship to circulation—a prevailing follow-the-biggest-dollar doctrine in the ad business. Much of the blame is placed on the fact that most were afternoon papers, difficult to distribute on time in the snarl of rush-hour traffic and ill-prepared to compete with late-breaking evening news provided by television. However, it has not been noted that these papers were perhaps so intent on reaching the more affluent crowds, fleeing toward the suburbs at day's end, that they neglected the needs, tastes and opinions of those who remain in the cities as full-time residents.

This isn't surprising. Advertisers, who perhaps more than any other force determine whether a paper will live or die, concentrate on courting those who have the most money to spend. They are not much interested in reaching the poor, and publishers follow suit. Moreover, those who hold the power on daily newspapers cannot be expected to recognize the concerns of minorities who are slimly represented on their staffs and rarely at the levels where editorial decisions are made. So these papers have become chroniclers of metropolitan events and opinions but too often ignore their urban centers where much of the populace marches to a different—and darker—drummer.

Black newspapers struggle to survive against dwindling revenues, shrinking readership and a brain drain where the best black talent is skimmed off.

The composition of the cities has changed remarkably since the days before the turn of the century when so many dailies were founded, a time when the news was hawked on corners by hoarse but enterprising boys. Though the white flight to the suburbs of the '60s and '70s seems to be ebbing under pressure from the reverse wave of "gentrification," blacks have become an increasing proportion of the urban population. By 1975, they constituted 28 percent of those living in metropolitan areas of more than one million, up from 19 percent in 1960 and 25 percent in 1970. Although conclusive figures from the 1980 census have been slow to filter down to us, reports to date indicate that blacks have increased both their numbers and percentage in most cities of more than 50,000 people. While some middle-class blacks in areas outside the South also have joined in a flight to the suburbs, blacks still constitute 71 percent of the population of Washington, D.C., and are a majority in such cities as Birmingham, Wilmington, Atlanta, New Orleans, Baltimore, Detroit, Newark, Richmond, Va., and Gary, Ind. Half of the nation's 26.5 million blacks live in the inner cities of metropolitan areas.

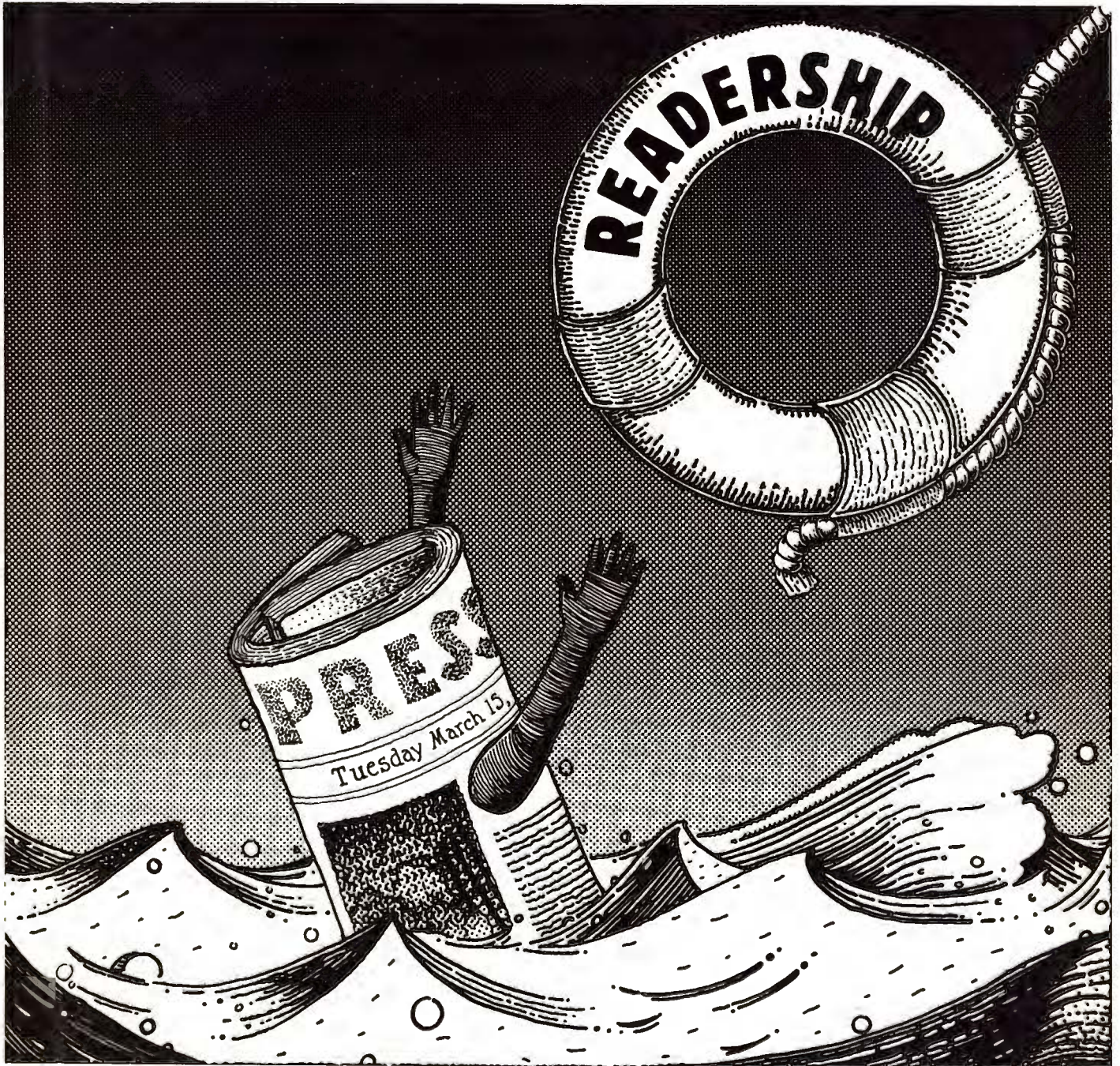
These figures assume a particular importance for newspaper editors when you consider that blacks frequently hold markedly different opinions on current issues than whites. The results of an analysis of New York *Times*/CBS News

Polls, published in the *Times* in August 1981, documented the extent of this opinion gap. The polling data was averaged over five years. Not surprisingly, the greatest disparity was in matters related to race. For example, 43 percent of whites said high black unemployment rates were due to laziness or the unwillingness of blacks to work while only 7 percent of blacks held this view. Other differences also were notable. Only 13 percent of blacks approved of the way President Reagan was handling his job when 66 percent of whites approved. Three-fourths of all blacks—twice the percentage of whites—thought they would be personally hurt by the Reagan administration's budget cuts. They were almost twice as likely as whites (60 vs. 35 percent) to believe the Social Security system is running out of money, and they favored Federal loans to New York City while a majority of whites disapproved. Blacks generally were more skeptical of politicians than whites but had greater faith in the Federal government than the population as a whole.

Thus it can be seen that editorial interpretation of contemporary affairs might be problematical for those whose background and perceptions might place them at odds with those who live in the cities covered by their papers.

While newspaper editors and publishers might do well to acknowledge the black urban presence, they also should consider that matters currently generating deep concern within this racial group—unemployment, inflation, a lack of decent housing, limited health care, substandard education and rampant crime—also affect other minorities whose numbers are swelling in the cities. Hispanics, now the nation's fastest-growing ethnic group, number 14.6 million, with at least half of them living in

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the central cities of metropolitan areas. The greatest concentrations of Hispanics are in Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Chicago and San Antonio, but 17 other metropolitan areas also have Hispanic populations ranging from 100,000 to more than 400,000. While Hispanics have been moving to the suburbs at a more rapid pace than blacks, they are still heavily represented in the central cities. In the awesome urban sprawl of 20 million people extending in an arc from southern Connecticut around to northern New Jersey, 86 percent of that region's nearly two million Hispanic residents live in New York City.

In addition to blacks and Hispanics, large numbers of the elderly and the poor of all races continue to populate the cities. It is apparent that these various groups constitute the *real* urban majority and that they have little or no voice in the daily press.

An attempt to address these groups could prove profitable while also serving the public good. Although city dailies doggedly follow the dollar to the suburbs, there's still plenty of gold left in those city streets. Johnson Publishing Company, publisher of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines and the largest black publishing firm in history, smartly has capitalized on the buying power of blacks to build strong advertising revenues. Sanford Sims, a vice-president of the firm and advertising director for the New York area, says, "We are quick to remind advertisers that blacks earn more than \$140 billion annually. Collectively, black Americans would be the ninth largest economic nation in the world."

While Hispanics, like blacks, are disproportionately represented at the lower end of the economic scale, they also have money to spend with a gross annual income of \$52 billion. Advertisers

have just begun to be aware of them.

Clearly, the potential is there for some enterprising and imaginative publisher to tap. But the transition from being a black newspaper to a more general urban publication would be a tricky one, for the idea is not entirely new. A previous experiment failed.

Many mainstream dailies ignore their urban center population, most of whom march to a different—and darker—drummer.

Back in 1959, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, which had set an all-time circulation record for black newspapers in 1947 with more than 350,000 copies being distributed weekly through 23 editions covering all parts of the country, found itself faced with a shrinking readership and assorted economic woes. The *Courier* management decided that the paper should broaden its base by ceasing to be a black publication and altering its editorial thrust in an attempt to attract white readers. As a staff reporter on the *Courier* at the time, I can recall that the community response was negative. Blacks complained that the paper had retreated from its previously gutsy stance on racial issues. They said it was not militant enough. On the other hand, whites did not buy the paper, for it always had been directed to blacks and that identification stuck. Whites did not believe that it was meant for them. Furthermore, the concept of a truly integrated newspaper had not been clearly defined. What sort of stories should be covered and how should they be played?

In the 23 years since the *Courier* experiment, no one has been able to make

the idea work. Currently, the Chicago *Defender*, another declining giant of the black press, is attempting to become a more generalized urban paper, but so far with little success as its circulation hovers in the 35,000–40,000 range.

In light of these experiences, what will it take to succeed? To attract not only more black readers but also those of other races with similar concerns, a publication would have to provide superior coverage of events and issues currently neglected by the mainstream press. While reporters rank low in pay among professionals, good ones come high and investigative reporters have become an expensive commodity. Black papers do not have the funds to hire them.

One solution would be to encourage more contributions from non-staff journalists. Several of my colleagues who work for mainstream dailies or magazines are frustrated by the lack of opportunities to cover stories of minority interest as extensively as they wish. Some have indicated that they would be willing to feed stories to black papers attempting to broaden their range and that they would do so for minimal pay.

While there are infinite wrinkles that would have to be ironed out, including a revamping of the approach to advertisers and extensive promotion to convey a new image to the public, it just might be possible. Black newspapers are not strangers to challenge. Raymond H. Boone, former editor of the Baltimore *Afro-American*, has said, "Black newspapers are a miracle in themselves because they have managed to survive on money so minimal that white publishers wouldn't even consider existing on that level."

If they are "miracle papers," they just might be able to make Bill Lee's dream come true. ♦

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