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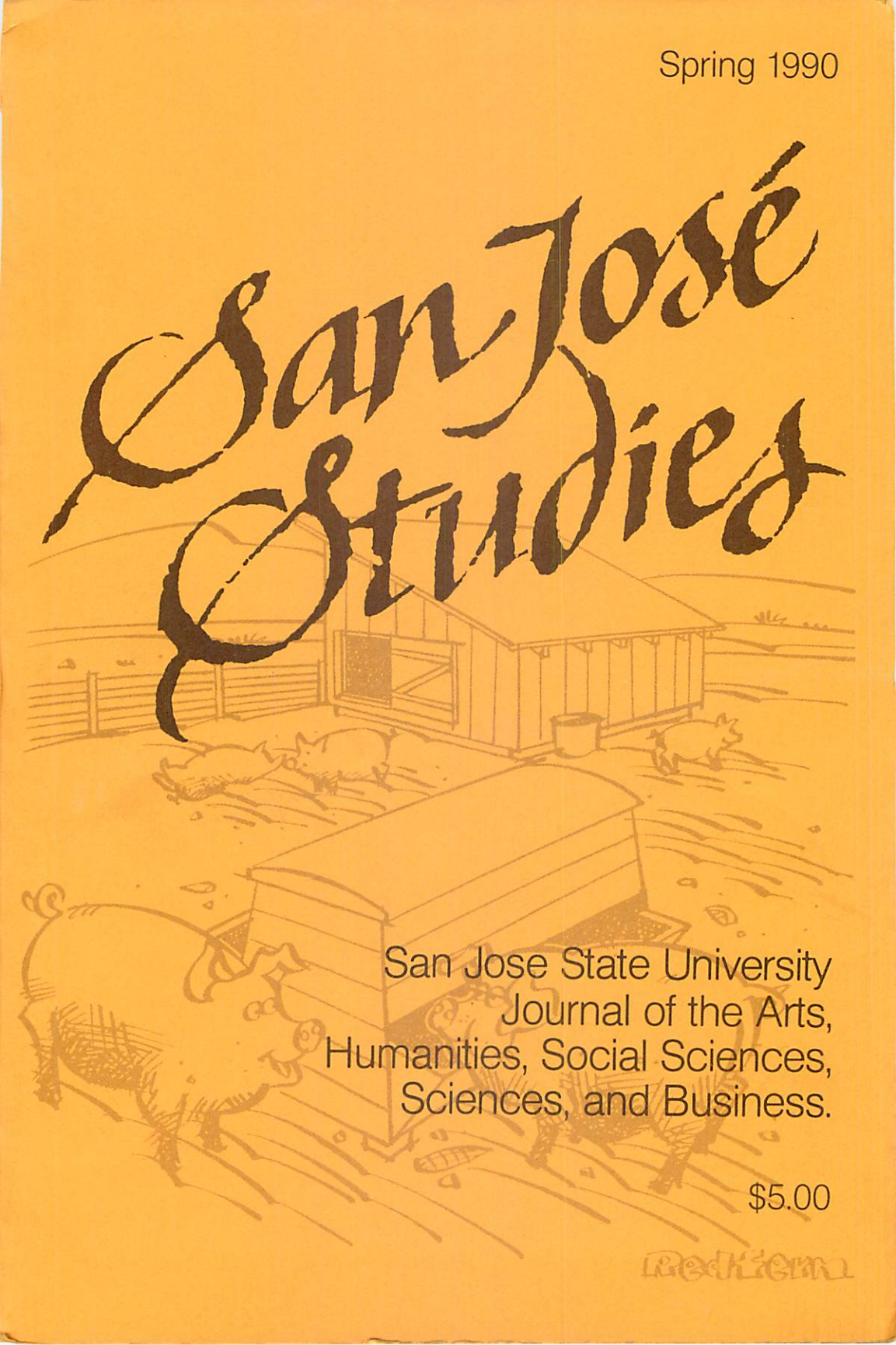

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The Bill Casey Award

The Bill Casey Memorial Fund annually awards $100 to the author of the best article, story, or poem appearing in each volume of *San José Studies.* Friends and relatives of Bill Casey, a faculty member at San Jose State University from 1962 to 1966, established the fund at his death to encourage creative writing and scholarship. The recipient of each award is selected by the Committee of Trustees of *San José Studies.*

The Bill Casey Award in Letters for 1989

has been presented to

Lucinda H. Coffman

for her story in the spring issue:
"Waldeane Goes to the Big Apple."

The Committee of Trustees also awarded a one-year subscription to *San José Studies* to the author of the best work (exclusive of the Bill Casey award) published in the categories of (1) poetry, (2) fiction, and (3) articles. The 1989 recipients of these awards are:

Poetry	**William Burns** for his seven poems in the winter issue.
Fiction	**Richard Flanagan** for his story, "So She Danced . . . Dreams in Motion," in the spring issue.
Essay	**Robert Wexelblatt** for his article, "Professors at Play," in the spring issue.

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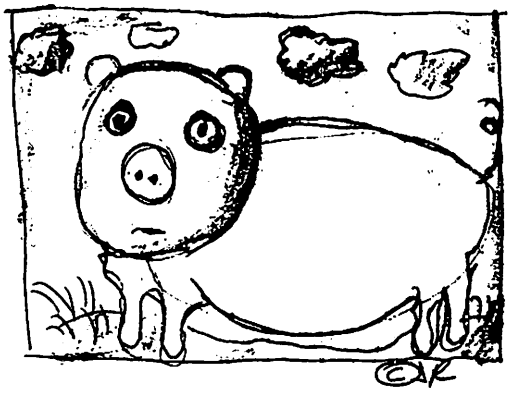

Pig and Proletariat: *Animal Farm* as History

Bernard Grofman

THIS essay has a very simple aim: to rescue *Animal Farm* from the often repeated claim that it is merely a children's story and to demonstrate how closely its events are tied to the events of Soviet political history.[1] In the process I hope to demonstrate that *Animal Farm* works at several levels, as a charming story about "humanized" animals, as an allegory about the human condition, and, most importantly, as a thinly disguised and biting political satire about Soviet totalitarianism. No reader can fully enjoy the book without knowing, for example, that the pig Snowball represents Trotsky and the pig Napoleon represents Stalin.

I. Literary Roots

The work to which *Animal Farm* is most often compared is *Gulliver's Travels* (see, e.g., 1946 reviews by Edward Weeks in *The Atlantic* and Edmund Wilson in *The New Yorker*), although comparisons with *Candide* are also common. It is true that for *Animal Farm* Orwell draws inspiration

from many satirists, including, of course, Voltaire (whom Orwell greatly admired) and Swift (on whom he wrote a lengthy and penetrating essay in 1946: "Politics Versus Literature: An Examination of *Gulliver's Travels*," in *CEJL*, Vol. 4). But it is to the moralizing beast fable that *Animal Farm* owes its form.

The beast fable is an ancient and apparently culturally universal satiric technique, as illustrated by such examples as Aristophanes's plays *The Birds* and *The Wasps; The Panchatantra,* a collection of fables from India; Aesop's *Fables; Reynard the Fox,* 1481 in the English version; and *Uncle Remus,* 1880, Harris's reworking of traditional African folk tales into an American idiom and setting. Orwell was familiar with such tales of humanized animals, having read, among others, Beatrix Potter and Rudyard Kipling. In fact, one literary critic rather snidely says of *Animal Farm:*

> This particular form of the nursery story has been borrowed from that cosy world prior to the first world war upon which... Orwell was so ready to dwell. *Animal Farm* specifically reminds us of Kipling's stories for children. The laws of the revolution that are painted on the wall of the cowshed and chanted by the animals clearly owe something to "The Law of the Jungle" in Kipling's *Second Jungle Book.* Indeed, the central device of *Animal Farm,* the convention of humanized animals, may also derive immediately from Kipling's *Jungle Book.* And Orwell's narrative tone is obviously modelled on that of the *Just So Stories.* (Alldritt, 1969; 149)[2]

If, however, one is going to seek the inspiration for *Animal Farm* in Orwell's childhood reading, one could with at least as much justice turn to Beatrix Potter's *Tales of Pigling Bland.* According to Orwell's childhood friend, Jacintha Buddicom (1974:3a):

> the genealogical tree of *Animal Farm* has its roots in *Pigling Bland*... Eric and I were far too old for it, but we adored it all the same. I remember his reading it to me twice over from the beginning to end, to cheer me up one time when I had a cold. And we used to call each other Pigling Bland and Pigling in moments of frivolity.

One other work that provides a direct model for *Animal Farm* has been neglected, quite strangely, by the critics, perhaps because its author is currently out of literary favor.[3] I have yet to find a critic who mentions Anatole France's *Penguin Island* as possible inspiration for Orwell. Yet his familiarity with this work is shown in "As I Please," June 23, 1944 (in *CEJL,*

Vol. 3, pp. 172–175), in which Orwell praises Anatole France for his "passion for liberty and intellectual honesty," calls " 'Crainquebille' one of the best short stories I have ever read," and refers to the author's "comic history of France." Moreover, France's thinly disguised historical pastiche of the Frenchman as penguin, "a scathing satire of the entire course of French history" (Caute, 1968:v), offers striking parallels to *Animal Farm* in style and tone.

The two works share a pessimistic tone, an acerbic wit, and a wide-ranging historical scope. There are, of course, important differences between the two works: e.g., the beast fable element of *Penguin Island* is quickly dropped; its pessimism is less leavened by humor than that of *Animal Farm;* and its satire is often more in the nature of diatribe. Nonetheless, it seems obvious that *Animal Farm* owes at least as much to Anatole France as to Rudyard Kipling and that, as novelists and essayists, France and Orwell have much in common. Consider Orwell's comparison of Mark Twain and Anatole France in his essay on Twain. One could simply substitute Orwell's name for that of France with little loss of accuracy.

> Both men were the spiritual children of Voltaire, both had an ironic, skeptical view of life, and a native pessimism overlaid by gaiety; both knew that the existing social order is a swindle and its cherished beliefs mostly delusions. Both were bigoted atheists and convinced . . . of the unbearable cruelty of the universe. But there the resemblance ends. Not only is the Frenchman enormously more learned, more civilized, more alive aesthetically, but he is also more courageous. He does attack the things he disbelieves in; he does not, like Mark Twain, always take refuge behind the amiable mask of the "public figure" and the licensed jester. He is ready to risk the anger of the Church and to take the unpopular side in a controversy. . . . ("Mark Twain: The Licensed Jester." In *CEJL*, Vol. 2:327)

II. *Animal Farm* as Literature and Didactic

Animal Farm is the first work by Orwell which is other than grittily naturalistic. (See esp. *DOPL, CD, RWP* and *HC.*) Even *Burmese Days,*

despite frequent lapses into purple prose, has descriptions of British colonial life which are carefully detailed and brutally precise. *Animal Farm* is subtitled "A Fairy Story," which has misled some critics, for "we are accustomed to think of the fairy story as the escapist form of literature par excellence."[4] (Woodcock, 1966:7) Indeed, *Animal Farm* is written so simply and entertainingly that in many libraries it will be found in the juvenile section as well as (if not instead of) the adult section. (cf. Blount, 1974:66–68)

There are two common mistakes in reading *Animal Farm*. The first is to confuse simplicity of form with simplicity of idea; the second is to fail to understand the importance of the events in *Animal Farm* as a form of political history. One persistent oversimplification of *Animal Farm* is typified by Laurence Brander's claim (1954:171, cited in Greenblatt, 1974:106) that *Animal Farm* was written by Orwell in a state where "the gaiety of his nature had completely taken charge . . . writing about animals whom he loved." There are two errors here. The first is to overestimate the importance of the animal nature of the protagonists in *Animal Farm*. The second is to view the fable as in any way a happy one.

That Orwell was an animal lover there is no doubt. "Most of the good things in my childhood and up to the age of about twenty are in some way connected with animals." (*SSWJ;* cf. "Shooting an Elephant" in *SE*) However, although *Animal Farm* rests on an analogy between animals and the exploited underclass (echoed elsewhere by Orwell in his comparisons of the proles in *1984* to the beasts and of the plongeurs in *Down and Out in Paris and London* to imprisoned animals), it is quite absurd to attach undue importance to Orwell's love of animals as a key to *Animal Farm.*[5] "What is essential to the success of the satirical beast fable," as Ellen Douglas Leyburn observes, "is the author's power to keep his reader conscious simultaneously of the human traits satirized and of the animals as animals." (Leyburn, 1962:215, cited in Greenblatt, 1974:106) I am in flat disagreement with Christopher Hollis's assertion that

> The animal fable, if it is to succeed at all ought clearly to carry with it a gay and light-hearted message. It must be full of comedy and laughter. The form is too far removed from reality to tolerate sustained bitterness. (Hollis, 1962:226)

Animal Farm contradicts Hollis's literary dictum that the animal fable cannot successfully encompass tragedy. Greenblatt is correct (1974:106–107) that Orwell uses the apparently frivolous form of the animal tale to convey a profoundly bitter message.

> *Animal Farm* does indeed contain much gaiety and humor, but even in the most comic moments there is a disturbing current

> of cruelty or fear. . . . While Snowball . . . is organizing the Egg Production Committee for the hens, the Clean Tails Committee for the Cows, the Wild Comrade's Re-education Committee . . . , the Whiter Wool Movement for the Sheep, Napoleon . . . is carefully indoctrinating the dogs for his own evil purposes. Similarly, the "confessions" forced from the animals in Napoleon's great pages are very funny, but when the dogs tear the throats out of the "guilty" parties and leave a pile of corpses at the tyrant's feet, the scene ceases to amuse.

Keith Alldritt, one of several critics to commit the error of viewing *Animal Farm* as an unsophisticated work, writes that "the allegorical form in which *Animal Farm* is couched is a means for turning away from the disturbing complexities of experience rather than for confronting them." (Alldritt, 1969:149) Likening Orwell to Kipling—and a Kipling suitable only for the nursery at that—Alldritt belittles both the seriousness of purpose and the literary achievement of *Animal Farm,* dismissing it as written in a fashion which "allows only simple ideal, easy responses, and obvious conclusions." (Alldritt, 1969:149)

Alldritt gives as an example of Orwell's juvenile oversimplifying, "the emotional climax of the book, which comes when Boxer, the loyal and hard-working but unintelligent workhorse, emblematic of the 'common people,' is sold to knackers by the pig-commissars when he becomes too ill to work any more." Alldritt then asserts that

> The feelings of simple compassion and absolutely righteous indignation which this incident is calculated to evoke may be tolerable in a nursery tale that has no pretensions to being anything other than a nursery tale. But in one which lays claim to offer the adult intelligence some feeling for the realities of modern social and political life, they cannot, because of their crudity and sentimentality, merit serious attention . . .

He adds that "Whatever we may think of the Russian revolution or, for that matter of any revolution, we cannot but be aware that the crises of a society are much more complex than Orwell is here able to suggest." (Alldritt, 1969:148–149)

Alldritt's charges are misleading. As a story, *Animal Farm* is straightforward, engrossing, witty, and memorable. As a political fable, it is insightful and frighteningly accurate in its broad historical overview. Any description of events, whether it be literary or historical, excerpts from the minutiae of existence some key elements. On these the narrative is hung. Selectivity is inescapable. A work is judged at least in part by its success in capturing the "essentials." Furthermore, the fate of one individual animal (e.g., a Boxer or a Rubashov) may be more sympathetically

portrayed than the most realistic picture of the deaths of thousands of "old Bolsheviks" or millions of Kulaks in the mass.*6*

In "Why I Write" (1947, in *CJEL*), Orwell says that "what I have most wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. When I sit down to write a book I do not say to myself 'I am going to produce a work of art.' I write it because there is some lie I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention. . . ." Orwell, a harsh critic, particularly of his own work, goes on to say "*Animal Farm* was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole." In this, he achieved remarkable success.

The book generates that "willing suspension of disbelief" which allows full entrance into the world Orwell had created without a doubt of the animals's ability to communicate with each other or their ability to successfully rebel against humanity. (cf. Hollis, 1962:226) None of the animals ever acts in a way which seems, within the context of our suspension of disbelief, to be at variance with its animal nature. The characterizations: Boxer, the loyal Stakhanovite; Molly, the bourgeois luxury lover; the chickens, as Kulaks, unhappy with collectivization; the silly geese who confess to Trotskyite-inspired crimes of a preposterous nature are among those to ring delightfully true.

Orwell's choice of pigs as the "brain-worker" elite is biologically well-founded. Pigs are among the most intelligent of domestic animals. That pigs are also the villains of *Animal Farm* is consonant with common folk beliefs about the pig as a dirty, selfish, sluggish, brutish, refuse-eating animal. The terms "pig" and "swine" symbolize degradation in Christian parables (cf. "The Moral Pigsty" in Small, 1975: Chapter 4) and derivatives from these terms (e.g., "roadhog," "male chauvinist pig," "pig-headed") are invariably terms of abuse in western culture.*7*

One of the great virtues of *Animal Farm* is the unforced nature of both its prose and its narratives. Although we can recognize the actual sequence of historical events, the story in *Animal Farm* has a life of its own which does not seem dictated by purposes external to it; further, the story is comprehensible without stepping out of the context of the fable and ascending to a higher order of understanding.

Alldritt, while erring in his judgment of *Animal Farm*'s literary merit, is accurate in identifying the historical realities underlying the allegory:

> We may identify old Major, the aged porker who has the dream and who provides the ideological impulse to the revolution, as Karl Marx, and we may recognize the quarrel between Napoleon and Snowball as representing the rift between Stalin and Trotsky. And we may like to find the allegorical counterparts of the treason trials, the emergence of

> the Soviet secret police, the drive for technological achievement, the perversion of the ideals of the revolution and the misuse of propaganda. (Alldritt, 1969:148)

Other critics, some perhaps because pro-Soviet attitudes blinded them to Orwell's thrust or because of a literary penchant for the "work-in-itself" or most simply because of unfamiliarity with Soviet history, read *Animal Farm* as a general satire on "plus c⅓a change plus c'est la me⅞me chose," or on "the rule of the many by the few." (cf. Beresford, 1945:3; Blount, 1968:66–681) This view misses the point, which is well stated by Leonard Woodcock, a writer of anarchist persuasion who became a close friend of Orwell in the 1940s:

> There was no doubt in Orwell's mind about his intentions in writing *Animal Farm.* He felt that the English in 1943 were allowing their admiration for the military heroism of the Russians to blind them to the faults of the Communist regime, and he also believed that the Communists were using their position as unofficial representatives of Russia in England to prevent the truth from being known, as they had done in Spain. *Animal Farm* was meant to set his compatriots thinking again. (Woodcock, 1966:193)

More generally, there is Orwell's statement in "Why I Write" (1947, in *CJEL*):

> The Spanish War and other events in 1936-37 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly, or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism and *for* democratic socialism, as I understand it.... [T]he more one is conscious of one's political bias, the more chance one has of acting politically without sacrificing one's esthetic and intellectual integrity.

But the clearest statement of Orwell's purpose in writing *Animal Farm* and his inspirations for it is his preface to the 1947 Ukrainian Edition. Because the original English test of this edition was lost, it was not till it was retranslated from the Ukrainian in 1968 that it became readily available. (In *CEJL,* Vol. 3, pp. 402–406.) No one who reads this preface can doubt that *Animal Farm* was intended as an expose⅜ of Soviet Communism or that it is based quite explicitly on incidents in Soviet history. Writes Orwell,

> On my return from Spain, I thought of exposing the Soviet myth in a story that could be easily understood by almost

> anyone and which could be easily translated into other languages . . . Although the various episodes are taken from the actual history of the Russian Revolution, they are dealt with schematically and their chronological order is changed; this was necessary for the symmetry of the story. . . . I included some events, for example the Teheran Conference, which were taking place when I was writing.

Having strongly warned against the folly of reading *Animal Farm* as if Stalin, the banishment of Trotsky, the Moscow Purge trials, etc. are irrelevant to its understanding, I will now sound a cautious note by endorsing, at least in part, the views of B. T. Oxley on reading *Animal Farm* as allegory:

> This book is not an allegory in which everything has to stand for something else. To read it this way reduces it to the level of a sophisticated crossword puzzle. Thus, there is no figure corresponding to Lenin (Major dies before the rising takes place); and the farm does take on a life of its own. The friendship between Clover and Boxer, or the cynicism of Benjamin do not need to be explained in terms of actual history. (Oxley, 1967:81)

So far so good, but I part company with Oxley when he continues:

> It may be that, for those who know their history, the rebellion of the hens seems parallel to the rebellion of the Russian sailors at Kronstadt in 1921, or that the two farmers Frederick and Pilkington represent Germany and England. But it is not really necessary to an understanding of the book (and may lead to incorrect history) to work at this level of detail. (Oxley, 1967:81)

It is crucial to an understanding of *Animal Farm* to realize that Orwell was concerned not only with the internal dynamics of Soviet Communism but also with the hypocrisy underlying relations between states of purportedly antipathetic ideologies. To fail to draw the connections between, on the one hand, the timber sale to Frederick, Frederick's payment in counterfeit notes, and the subsequent attack on Animal Farm leading to the destruction of the windmill and, on the other hand, the zigs and zags in German-Soviet and Anglo-Soviet relations from the Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939 to Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, is to miss the full irony of this section. So when another critic (Kubal, 1972:127) asserts, "The historical relevance, the fact that the author was

satirizing the Soviet revolution is . . . of comparatively minor importance," he is, in my view, quite wrong. Of course, Oxley *is* right when he claims that "Napoleon is presumably not given that name by accident, and the Russian Revolution is not the only one to have ended in dictatorship." (Oxley, 1967:81) But *Animal Farm* is not about the French Revolution and its aftermath or the rise to power of Hitler or, for that matter, the rise to power of Genghis Khan. As Orwell himself has made explicit: however many lessons of universal applicability it may contain, *Animal Farm* is about the Soviet Union 1917–1943.

Few genres are as fleeting as satire, because satire so heavily rests on topicality and immediate relevance. Most satire written before 1920, and most satire not originally meant for an English-speaking audience, is in fact incomprehensible to us without such detailed annotation as to make reading it an exercise in pedantry not pleasure. (Here, I call your attention to the content of, say, Johnson [1945]—which was inflicted on undergraduates for a number of decades.) Works of satire that last must be capable of being read on several different levels and of being enjoyed even by those oblivious to historical or literary allusions. Even when the allusions are lost, a large part of the bite must remain. *Animal Farm* fully meets these tests.*8*

That *Animal Farm* recapitulates in condensed and symbolic form the history of the Soviet revolution does not prevent its being seized on as a general weapon in any antidictatorial or antitotalitarian cause; and, Orwell's ghost would no doubt chortle with glee at such uses.*9* Orwell was never an "anti-Communist" (as we currently use that phrase, often to describe a rabid zealot of the right); he was that rarer and quite different creature, an "anti-totalitarian." The sole reason that Orwell concentrated the bulk of his fire on totalitarianism of a left-wing variety was that he thought that England (and English intellectuals in particular) had more to fear from the seductiveness of the communist illusion than from its fascist counterpart—a view borne out by the political history of intellectuals in the 30s and 40s in Great Britain (and the U.S.).

However history-laden the details of *Animal Farm* may be, the antitotalitarian lessons it conveys are universal. In a mixed review of *1984* ("Although George Orwell's *1984* is a brilliant and fascinating novel, the nature of its fantasy is so absolutely final and relentless that I can recommend it only with a certain reservation.") Diana Trilling (1949:716–717) perceptively evaluates Orwell's broader themes in *Animal Farm:*

> Even where, as in his last novel, *Animal Farm,* Mr. Orwell seemed to be concerned only with unmasking the Soviet Union for its dreamy admirers, he was urged on by something larger than sectarianism. What he was telling us is that all along the path the Soviet revolution has followed to the

> destruction of all the decent human values, there have stood the best ideals of modern social enlightenment.... In the name of a higher loyalty, treacheries beyond imagination have been committed; in the name of Socialist equality, privilege has ruled unbridled; in the name of democracy and freedom, the individual has lived without public voice or private peace.... [We] are being warned against the extremes to which the contemporary totalitarian spirit can carry us, not only so that we will be warned against Russia, but so that we will understand the ultimate dangers involved whenever power moves under the guise of order and rationality.

One last point: It is a grave error to see Snowball as the hero in *Animal Farm,* as does Laurence Brander, author of a full-length study of Orwell (Brander, 1954), who sees Snowball as "a symbol of altruism, the essential social virtue" and sees Snowball's expulsion as the defeat of "his altruistic laws for giving warmth, food and comfort to all the animals." (Brander, 1954:175 cited in Greenblatt, 1974:109) But as Greenblatt points out, "This is very touching, but unfortunately there is no indication that Snowball is any less corrupt or power-mad than Napoleon." (Greenblatt, 1974:109) As Orwell himself wrote, "Trotsky, in exile, denounces the Russian dictatorsip, but he is probably as much responsible for it as any man now living." (*CEJL,* Vol. 1:38; cited in Williams, 1971:63)

III. *Animal Farm's* Critical Debut

For a time it appeared as if the fate of *Animal Farm* would parallel that of *Homage to Catalonia,* in being rejected by Orwell's regular publisher and, upon publication, vilified by the Left. *Homage* at first sold only 900 copies and was eventually remaindered. Orwell attributed this reception largely to the left intellectuals's Russophile views which blinded them to the truth about the Communist party's role in the Spanish Civil War and led them to seek to suppress evidence unfavorable to the communists. He wrote:

> I had discovered that it was almost impossible to get any publicity in the English press for a truthful account of what had been going on in Catalonia in May–June 1937 (mass

> imprisonments without trial, assassinations by the secret police, etc.). A number of people had said to me with varying degrees of frankness, that one must not tell the truth about what was happening in Spain, and the part played by the Communist Party, because to do so would be to prejudice public opinion against the Spanish government and so aid (the dictator) Franco. I do not agree with this view, because I hold the outmoded opinion that it does not pay to tell lies. ("Letter to Editor of *Time and Tide*," February 5, 1938, in *CEJL*, Vol. 1:297–298)

One influential figure, Kingsley Martin, editor of *The New Statesman*, epitomized for Orwell the person who acted on the point of view that "truth must bow to expediency and the Soviet Union can do no wrong":

> As soon as I got out of Spain I wired from France asking if they [*The New Statesman*] would like an article and of course they said yes, but when they saw that my article was on the suppression of the POUM they said they couldn't print it. To sugar the pill they sent me to review a very good book which appeared recently, *The Spanish Cockpit*, which blows the gaff pretty well on what has been happening. But once again when they saw my review they couldn't print it, as it was against editorial policy. (cited in Pryce-Jones, 1971:144)

Victor Gollancz, publisher for the Left Book Club, and Orwell's regular publisher, had refused Orwell a book advance before he went to Spain, in anticipation of a probable rejection of Orwell's manuscript. Orwell's previous book for the Left Book Club, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, which had been commissioned by them, stirred a great deal of controversy upon its receipt. His outspoken views on the futility of intellectuals seeking to recruit workers to socialism by haranguing them with unintelligible and prolix Marxist rhetoric were not well received.

> According to Philip Toynbee (*Encounter*, August 1959), *The Road to Wigan Pier* had been received "with considerable obloquy by Communists and fellow-travelers, but with enthusiasm by many".... In *The Daily Worker* (which twice had reviewed earlier Orwell books quite favorably) Harry Pollitt discovered in Orwell "a disillusioned little middle-class boy" who had only to hear what Left Book circles would say about his work before resolving never to write again on any subject that he did not understand. From then on, it became standard practice on the far left to make some play about the

> Blair/Orwell change of name, and a mention of Eton and the Indian Imperial Police was almost obligatory. (Pryce-Jones, 1971:145)

The Daily Worker, not surprisingly, was even less pleased with *Homage to Catalonia.* It referred rather nastily to

> books produced by individuals who have splashed their eyes for a few months with Spanish blood.... The value of the book is that it gives an honest picture of the sort of mentality that toys with revolutionary romanticism but shies violently at revolutionary discipline. It should be read as a warning. (cited in Pryce-Jones, 1971:146)

Although Gollancz had published Orwell's novel *Coming Up for Air* in 1939, he rejected the manuscript of *Animal Farm.* For him "the war-time alliance put the Russians beyond criticism." (Pryce-Jones, 1971:146)

> Three English and some twenty American publishers followed Gollancz's lead and turned the book down for fear of upsetting a military ally, although some thought it was too short at 30,000 words to make a book at all. T. S. Eliot, editorial director of Faber and Faber, was among those who rejected it, and for some months Orwell was gloomy about the book's prospects. (Pryce-Jones, 1971:148)

Only one publisher, Secket and Warburg, was willing to accept *Animal Farm,* and even that publisher "dared not bring it out till the war was over." ("Letter to Frank Barker," September 3, 1945, in *CELJ,* Vol. 3:402) Thus the publication of *Animal Farm* was delayed for one year, to a point when in fact the Cold War had already begun and Russophile sentiments were muted or reversed. Until the publication of *Animal Farm,* Orwell had never been able to live on what he earned from writing alone; and indeed his literary earnings had been scant. After *Animal Farm,* Orwell was comfortably prosperous. The publisher with the wisdom to accept *Animal Farm* sold half a million copies within three years. (Pryce-Jones, 1971:148)

Reviews in the U.S. were largely favorable and in most cases enthusiastically so, judging by the abstracts in the 1949 volume of the *Book Review Digest,* which includes virtually all American political and literary journals of any circulation. The reviewers who liked it said things like: "*Animal Farm* is a wise, compassionate and illuminating fable for our times (A. M. Schlesinger, *New York Times,* August 25, 1946:1); *Animal Farm* is a neat little book. The writing is neat, too, as lucid as glass and quite as sharp" (Edward Weeks, *Atlantic,* Vol. 178, September, 1946); and "It is

absolutely first-rate" (Edmund Wilson, *The New Yorker,* Vol. 22, September 7, 1946).

But there were negatives, too. The critics of a strong anti-communist bent said things like: "[T]he book saddened and puzzled me. It seemed on the whole dull. The allegory turned out to be a creaking machine for saying in a clumsy way things that have been said better directly." (George Soule, *The New Republic,* Vol. 115, September 2, 1946). "*Animal Farm* should have been written years ago; coming as it does in the wake of the event, it can only be called a backward work." (Isaac Rosenfeld, *The Nation,* Vol. 163, September 7, 1946) Some reviewers of a communist bent wrote for esoteric small circulation journals with pens dipped in venom: "To write *Animal Farm,* attacking the Soviet Union at the moment that the defenders of Stalingrad struck one of the decisive blows which won the war for the United Nations was for Blair/Orwell an act of integrity. Only incidentally did it bring him a fortune from reactionaries in this country and the U.S.A." (Arthur Calder Marshall, *Reynolds News,* 1949; cited in Pryce-Jones, 1971:149) "For Orwell, life is a dunghill." (Samuel Sillen, "Maggot-of-the-Month," *Masses and Mainstream,* Vol. 2, August 1949; reprinted in Howe, 1963:210)

Kingsley Martin,*10* previously mentioned as *The New Statesman*'s editor, also came up with reasons for discounting *Animal Farm.* He admitted that the story had its truth and that the "shafts strike home." But the logic of Orwell's satire, he believed, is ultimate cynicism, and that could not be permitted. Orwell, he thought, "has not quite the courage to see that he has lost faith, not in Russia, but in mankind." (Pryce-Jones, 1971:150). To Martin's charge, Pryce-Jones rebuts:

> It was beside the point that Orwell had never had faith in Russia or in mankind, whatever faith in mankind may mean. The argument enabled the Socialist left to go in for a bit of doublethink: to accept that Orwell was a truthful, admirable, and perhaps great writer, but simultaneously to discount him because he was a pessimist . . . offering neither hope nor solutions. (Pryce-Jones, 1971:150)

This overview of the initial critical reception of *Animal Farm* will close with citation of the view of K. T. Willis in the *Library Journal* (Vol. 71, August 1946): "Stimulating reading but not imperative for all libraries."

The whole story of *Animal Farm* and its delayed publication is filled with ironies of a sort that are humorous only in retrospect. For example, in 1947, Orwell gave permission for Ukrainian refugees in the American Zone in Germany and Belgium to translate *Animal Farm* into Ukrainian, charging them no fee. Of the 3500 copies of this edition, 1500 were confiscated by American authorities in Munich and handed over to Soviet

officials. ("Letter to Arthur Koestler," September 20, 1947, in *CEJL*, Vol. 4:379) Furthermore, the English language version of Orwell's preface to this translation, which provides a Rosetta stone to the events in *Animal Farm*, was lost until some two decades later. Had that preface been better known, it is inconceivable that any critic would have dared to claim that *Animal Farm* was not an allegoric account of events in Soviet history.*11* However, the central irony surrounding *Animal Farm* is that "a book written against the grain of prevailing public opinion should have appeared, eighteen months later, at a time when the political situation had changed and it could be used, eagerly, in what was becoming the Cold War." (Williams, 1971:69) Williams (1971:69) continues:

> For a long time the book was inseparable from that ironic political context. Orwell was described on the left as having run "shrieking into the arms of the capitalist publishers" (*Marxist Quarterly*, January 1956) which was certainly not how it felt to him at the time ("I am having hell and all to find a publisher for it here though normally I have no difficulty in publishing my stuff."). At the same time, the book was undoubtedly used by people with whom Orwell had no sympathy and when followed by *1984* which was even more extensively used, it fixed a vision of Orwell which he, at least, would have considered misleading.

IV. *Animal Farm* as History

The story of *Animal Farm* is so well-known that I shall assume the reader is familiar with it in basic outline. The annotations provided in Table 1 and in the footnotes thereto are based on statements in Orwell's own writings (particularly those in *CEJL*); comments made by various Orwell scholars (especially Atkins, 1954; and Oxley, 1967); the discussion in several books on Soviet history and international relations (e.g., Wren, 1968, Kennan, 1960, Laqueur, 1965); but rest primarily on two books, Dallin (1944) and Fischer (1952), which are critical of the Soviet Union. According to Atkins (1954:223), "Orwell had read both these books and he received one." If so, he must have read the Fischer book in a preliminary manuscript form, since this book was not published till 1952 and refers to events in 1951 which took place after Orwell's death. In any

case, both review Soviet history in terms which, I believe, Orwell would find familiar and not too distant from his own views (although, especially in the case of Fischer, probably too simplistically anti-communist for his taste).

To attempt to treat events in *Animal Farm* as literal history is, of course, absurd. *Animal Farm* is a fable and the correspondence between fable and reality involves metaphoric transformations, not one-to-one and onto mappings. Furthermore, as Orwell himself notes (see "Preface to Ukrainian Edition of *Animal Farm*," in *CEJL*, Vol. 4), in *Animal Farm*, he has taken liberties with chronology, and certain important details (e.g., the slave labor camps) are missing completely. Moreover, it is impossible to match in a simpleminded way all the characters in *Animal Farm* with their historical equivalents since many (e.g., Molly, Boxer, the sheep, etc.) stand not for particular individuals but for types (e.g., Squealer is the spineless propagandist who parrots the party line in *Pravda* no matter how much it may zig or zag); and characters may also combine traits (e.g., Boxer is a Stakhanovite worker, but he is also a simple peasant who becomes a loyal-to-the-death convert to Animalism's revolutionary and utopian vision).

Nonetheless, to belabor a point already made in the discussion above, *Animal Farm* is based on Soviet history 1917–1943; and tracing the exact correspondences provides important insights into the irony, the wit, and the tremendous presence of the apt metaphor which underpin what, in my view, is Orwell's greatest work. Furthermore, it is foolish to assume that the post-revolution history of the Soviet Union is known even in broad compass (much less in detail) to most Americans, even those with a college education. Atkins remarked in 1954 that the average British "public library borrower does know whom Snowball, Squealer, and Boxer represent." (Atkins, 1954:223) My own experience in teaching *Animal Farm* to college students in both New York and California is that the majority of students who read the book in high school were not taught that it is about Soviet history and that only a handful were clever enough or knowledgeable enough to make that connection on their own.

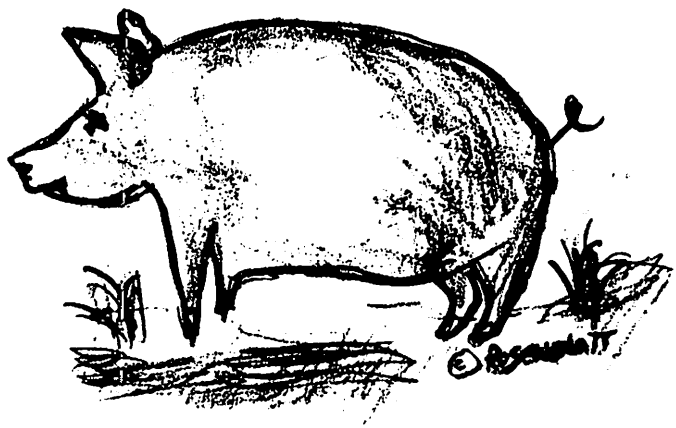

TABLE A: CHARACTERS AND EVENTS IN *ANIMAL FARM* AND THEIR HISTORICAL COUNTERPARTS

(The capital letters refer to the end notes to this table, which are not reproduced. They are available upon request from the author.)

page references to New American Library (pbk. ed.)	Character or event	Historical counterpart
15, 28	Mr. Jones, owner of Manor Farm: "Too drunk to remember to shut the bungholes." "A capable farmer, although a hard master, but of late he had fallen on evil days... disheartened after losing money in a lawsuit, he had taken to drinking more than was good for him."	The Tsar (A)
15	Manor Farm	Russia
16	Major, the boar: "so highly regarded on the farm that everyone was quite ready to lose an hour's sleep in order to hear what he had to say."	Marx (B)
16, 37	Boxer, the horse: "not of first rate intelligence, but... universally respected for his steadiness of character and tremendous powers of work." "His personal motto, 'I will work harder!' "	Stakhanovite worker (C)
16, 21	Bluebell, Jessie, and Pincher; dogs: voted against the resolution to declare the rats comrades.	Workers
16	Clover, the mare: "a stout motherly mare approaching middle life."	

16, 59	The sheep	The pliant masses of the party (D)
16	The cows	Workers
16	Muriel, the white goat	
16, 44	The pigeons: "sent to mingle with the animals on the neighboring farms, tell them the story of the rebellion, and teach them the tune of 'Beasts of England.' "	The Comintern (E)
17	"comrades": a term introduced by Major to refer to the brotherhood of all animals.	"Comrade" (F)
16–17	Benjamin, the donkey: "the oldest animal on the farm and the worst tempered . . . cynical . . . alone among the animals he never laughed. Nevertheless, without openly admitting it, he was devoted to Boxer."	The realist, the pragmatic survivor who adapts himself to new conditions without giving up his integrity (G)
16, 38	the pigs: "who settled down in the straw immediately in front of the platform." "the pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised the others."	The Communist Party, the "new elite" (H)
17, 26, 52	Mollie, the mare: "The foolish, pretty white mare who drew Mr. Jones's trap." "After the rebellion, the first question she asked Snowball was: 'will there be sugar?' "	The comfort-loving bourgeoisie who flee the Revolution (I)
17	Ducklings: "which had lost their mother"	(J)
17, 21	The cat: "purred contentedly throughout Major's speech without listening to a word of what he was saying." Voted on both sides of the motion to declare the rats comrades.	The shirker, the individualist (K)
17, 27	Moses, the tame raven: "a spy and a tale bearer, but . . . also a clever talker." "Jones's especial pet . . . hated . . . because he told tales and did no work."	Religion (the Russian Orthodox church) (L)

19	Man: "the only real enemy [the animals] have . . . the only creature that consumes without producing . . . lord of all the animals"	The capitalist exploiting class (M)
21	The rats: "it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that rats were comrades."	? (N)
22–23, 46	Beasts of England: "a stirring tune, something between 'Clementine' and 'La Cucaracha,' whose "words were sung by the animals of long ago and have been lost to memory for generations."	The Internationale (O)
24	Jones shoots into the darkness: "the pellets buried themselves in the wall of the barn and the meeting broke up hurriedly."	Pre-revolutionary suppression of Marxist propaganda by Tsarist officials; suppression which was not well directed but still was often effective.
25	Snowball: "more vivacious pig than Napoleon, quicker in speech and more inventive, but not considered to have the same depth of character."	Trotsky (P)
25	Napoleon: "rather fierce looking pig . . . not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way."	Stalin (Q)
26	Squealer the pig: "a brilliant talker . . . the others said of Squealer that he could turn black into white."	*Pravda* (R)
26, 33	Animalism: old Major's teachings later elaborated into a complete system of thought by Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer, the Seven Commandments of Animalism.	Marxism-Leninism (S)
27	Sugarcandy Mountain: "to which all animals went when they died . . . up in the sky . . . In Sugarcandy Mountain it	The lure of the hereafter to still revolutionary sentiments in the here and now (T)

	was Sunday seven days a week, clover was in season all year, and lump sugar and linseed cake grew on the hedges."	
28	Animals underfed	Wartime starvation in the cities: 1914–1917 (U)
28	The Rebellion: "this sudden uprising of creatures whom they were used to thrashing and maltreating just as they chose, frightened them (Jones and his men) almost out of their wits. After only a moment or two they gave up trying to defend themselves and took to their heels . . . Almost before they (the animals) knew what was happening, the Rebellion had been successfully carried through."	Revolution: October 1917 (V)
32	Animal Farm	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (W)
38	The green hoof and horn flag: "The flag was green, Snowball explained, to represent the green fields, while the hoof and horn signified the future Republic of the Animals which would arise when the human rule had been finally overthrown."	The Soviet flag: red, with a hammer and sickle emblazoned on it (X)
38, 53	The feud between Napoleon and Snowball	The Stalin-Trotsky struggle to succeed Lenin and the manuevers that precede Lenin's death (Y)
39	Animal committees: organized by Snowball. "He was indefatigable at this. He formed the Egg Production Committee for the hens, the Clean Tails League for the cows . . . the Whiter Wool Movement for the sheep, and various others.	Trotsky's mobilization of labor battalions organized on military principles (Z)
40	Four legs good, two legs bad: "the essential principle of Animalism."	Workers of the world, unite. (AA)

41–42 (see also 33–34)	The pigs arrogate for themselves alone the milk and apples: "Comrades!" he (Squealer) cried. "You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege? Many of us actually dislike milk and apples... Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health. Milk and apples (this has been proved by science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig. We pigs are brain-workers... Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for *your* sake that we drink that milk and eat these apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back!"	Party member enjoy greater material comforts than other citizens (H)
44–45	Mr. Pilkington of Foxwood	England (BB)
46	Mr. Frederick of Pinchfield	Germany (CC)
45	Pilkington and Frederick refuse to use the name Animal Farm	European powers refuse to recognize legitimacy of new Soviet government (DD)
46–49	Battle of the Cowshed: a date to be commemorated along with the anniversary of the Rebellion.	Bolsheviks hold back White Army, 1921 (EE)
49–50	Order of Animal Hero, First and Second Class	Order of the Red Banner (FF)
54	The windmill	Industrialization (GG)
57	Snowball's eloquence carries the day: "By the time he had finished speaking, there may be no doubt as to which way the vote would go."	Trotsky is named Lenin's heir in the will written shortly before Lenin's death December 22, 1924. (HH)

41, 57	The dogs raised by Snowball	The GPU (Secret Police) (II)
57	Snowball is driven from *Animal Farm.*	Trotsky is exiled (January 1928) to Turkestan after first being defeated (784–0) in his bid to succeed Lenin at the May 1924 Party Congress. (JJ)
59	Four pigs protest—but are quickly cowed into silence by the dogs and the bleating of the sheep.	November 7, 1927. Trotsky's sympathizers are arrested by the GPU, and Trotsky's attempt to address the crowd is booed down. (KK)
58–59	Napoleon assumes changed *Animal Farm* as head of a special committee of pigs.	Stalin-Kamenev-Zinoviev troika takes power, with Stalin as primus inter pares on seven-member Politburo. (LL)
60, 66–67, 69–70, 79	Snowball's role in "Battle of Cowshed" discounted by Squealer is shown then ultimately reversed as Snowball by Jones' secret agent. Animalist prohibitions against trade and money prove, according to Squealer, to be nonexistent; Animalist 4th Commandment rewritten to read "No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets," etc.	Stalinist rewriting of history; New Economic Policy (NEP), 1921–1928 (MM)
60	Boxer adopts maxim "Napoleon is always right."	Stalin's supremacy unchallenged. (NN)
60	Major's skull: "now clean of flesh . . . set up on a stump at the foot of the flagstaff."	Lenin's mummification, contrary to wishes expressed by his widow (OO)
61	Minimus: "had a remarkable gift for composing songs and poems, sat on the front of the raised platform" with Napoleon and Squealer.	Maxim Gorki (PP)
61–62	Napoleon now endorses windmill and claims Snowball had stolen idea from him.	First Five Year Plan (1928) (QQ)

66	Resumption of trade with other farms	Soviet Union's re-emergence into international economy (RR)
67–68	Mr. Whymper: "a sly-talking man with side whiskers, a solicitor in a very small way."	Capitalist go-between (SS)
68	Humans begin to call *Animal Farm* by its proper name: "They had also dropped their championship of Jones, who had given up hope of getting his farm back and gone to live in another part of the country."	Diplomatic recognition of Soviet Union by European powers; while Royalist pretensions to regain power seen as futile (TT)
68–69	Constant rumors that Napoleon was about to enter into a definite business agreement with either Mr. Pilkington of Foxwood or with Mr. Frederick of Pinchfield "but never was it noticed, with both simultaneously."	Soviet flirtation with capitalist countries (UU)
69	Napoleon takes title of "leader."	Stalin begins "cult of the personality." (VV)
69–70	Pigs move into farmhouse, sleep in beds, get up an hour later than the other animals.	Growth of "New Class' mentality: end to Spartanism of early period. (H)
71	Windmill in ruins	First Five-Year Plan a failure (WW)
72, 78	Snowball blamed for collapse of the windmill, labeled a traitor suspected of collaboration with Mr. Pilkington; death sentence pronounced on him	Trotsky sympathizers blamed for subverting the Revolution; accused of collaborating with enemy agents (XX)
74	To prevent second collapse of the windmill, "it had been decided to build the walls three feet thick this time, instead of eighteen inches as before, which meant collecting much larger quantities of stone."	Launching of second and even more ambitious Five-Year Plan (1933) (YY)

75–76	Whymper fooled into thinking that there was no food shortage at *Animal Farm*	"Show tours" of the Soviet Union for prominent European intellectuals (ZZ)
76–77	Revolt of the hens	Forced collectivization of the Kulaks (AAA)
79	Snowball rumored to be hiding on one of the neighboring farms, either Foxwood or Pinchfield: "It was noticed that whenever he seemed to be on the point of coming to an agreement with Frederick, Snowball was declared to be in hiding at Foxwood, while, when he inclined toward Pilkinton, Snowball was said to be at Pinchfield."	Trotsky's place of exile shifts; zigs and zags in Stalin's attempts to woo England and Germany (BBB)
80, 88	Squealer asserts that it was Napoleon (not Snowball), who sank his teeth in Jones's leg at the "Battle of the Cowshed" and rallied the animals around him; Napoleon awards himself Animal Hero, First Class and Animal Hero, Second Class.	Further rewriting of Soviet history (MM)
82–83	Threats of self-confessed "traitors" turn out by dogs (four pigs, three hens, a goose and three sheep)	The Blood Purges of the Old Bolsheviks (1934–38) (CCC)
84–85	Clover's disillusionment	Disillusion of Communist cadres following the purge trials (DDD)
86–87	Singing of "Beasts of England" banned and replaced with new song dedicated to *Animal Farm* ("Animal Farm, Animal Farm, Never through me shalt thou come to harm!")	"Internationale" abolished as official hymn, reserved for use by party members and replaced with a new patriotic hymn to Russia ("Great Russia has cemented forever the inviolate union of free republics . . . we will lead the Fatherland to glory.") (EEE)
89–105	On Sunday mornings, Squealer would read out loud to them long lists of figures proving that the production of every class of foodstuff had increased by two hundred per	Statistics given as a percentage of a base figure which was unknown were a standard part of Soviet reporting of economic progress during the 30s and

	cent, three hundred per cent, or five hundred per cent, as the case might be: "The animals saw no reason to disbelieve him, especially as they could no longer remember very clearly what life had been like before the Rebellion."	40s. (FFF)
90–91	Napoleon's birthday becomes one of three days on which the gun would be fired annually (the other two being the dates of the "Rebellion" and of the "Battle of the Cowshed"); Napoleon is given titles by other pigs such as Father of All Animals, Terror of Mankind, Protector of the Sheep-Fold, Ducklings' Friend, and the like... It had become usual to give Napoleon the credit for every successful achievement and every stroke of good fortune." "Minimus composed a poem in his honor entitled 'Comrade Napoleon.' "	Stalin's birthday becomes occasion for mass demonstrations and parades. The cult of Stalin worship grows. A verse from one song dedicated to Stalin conveys the feeling quite well: "Stronger than steel is thy name, Brighter than sun is thy glory, Sweeter than honey is thy word, Live forever, beloved Leader." (GGG)
91	Three hens confess to a Snowball-inspired plot to murder Napoleon.	?
91–93	"Napoleon was engaged in complicated negotiations with Frederick and Pilkington... The animals distrusted Pilkington, as a human being, but greatly preferred him to Frederick whom they both feared and hated. Terrible stories were leaking out from Pinchfield about the cruelties that Frederick practices upon his animals: "The rumors of an impending attack by Frederick grew stronger and stronger... But Squealer counseled them to avoid rash actions and trust in Comrade Napoleon's strategy."	Soviet Union and other European countries engage in pre-WWII jockeying for alliances. (HHH)
93	Napoleon disclaims any intention of ever selling the pile of timber to Frederick or having ever contemplated such a course of action: " 'Death to Frederick' becomes the new	In anticipation of German invasion, pre-WWII Soviet anti-Nazi propaganda at its peak; communist propaganda in Great Britain and Allied countries muted as

	rallying cry of the pigeons." "The pigeons who were still sent out to spread tidings of the Rebellion were forbidden to set out anymore to Foxwood."	part of Soviet anti-Fascist "popular front" strategy. (III)
93	Wheat crop full of weeds: plot attributed to Snowball: "A gardener who had been privy to the plot had confessed his guilt to Squealer and immediately committed suicide."	Stalin's attacks on wreckers and saboteurs (JJJ)
93	Snowball's Animal Hero, First Class award is shown by Squealer to be a lie, "a legend . . . spread some time after the battle of the Cowshed by Snowball himself . . . So far from being decorated, he had been censured for showing cowardice in the battle."	Further rewriting of Soviet Revolutionary history (KKK)
94–95	Napoleon reverses himself and announces sale of timber to Frederick: "All relations with Foxwood had been broken off; . . . the pigeons had been told to avoid Pinchfield Farm and to alter their slogan from 'Death to Frederick' to 'Death to Pilkington' . . . Napoleon assured the animals that the stories of an impending attack on Animal Farm were completely untrue, and that the tales about Frederick's cruelty to his own animals had been greatly exaggerated."	Hitler-Stalin Pact (August, 1939) (LLL)
96–97	Frederick found to have paid for the timber with forged notes; Frederick and his followers attack Animal Farm	Hitler invades Russia (June 1941)
97	Animals are driven back, taking refuge in the farm buildings and peeping curiously out from chinks and knotholes: "The whole of the big pasture, including the windmill, was in the hands of the enemy."	German attack initially successful (1941–42); a large amount of foreign territory captured, but battle of Moscow (October, December 1941) ended with a German retreat. (MMM)
97	Wistful glances were sent in the direction of Foxwood. If	Stalin clamors for "second front"; Allies refuse

	Pilkington and his men were to help them the day might yet be won. Pilkington replies, "serves you right."	(NNN)
97–98	The windmill destroyed by dynamite . . . there was a deafening roar . . . The pigeons swirled in the air and all the animals except Napoleon flung themselves flat on their bellies and hid their faces."	Stalin remains in Moscow; most other party officials evacuate the city. (OOO)
98	Battle of the Windmill	Battle of Stalingrad (August 1942–January 1943); German army besieging the city surrenders; "Stalingrad," Stalin declared, "was the sunset of the German army." (cited in Fischer, 1952:192) (PPP)
99	"It was as though the windmill had never been."	War severe setback to Soviet industrialization, forcing return virtually to pre-Revolutionary level (OOO)
101	Order of the Green Banner, conferred by Napoleon upon himself.	Orders of Kutuzov and Suvorov created by Stalin shortly before the war begins (RRR)
101–103	An Animalism tenet is found to have been incorrectly remembered. Instead of "No animal shall drink alcohol," it is "No animal shall drink alcohol to excess."	
106	Young pigs, piebald like Napoleon, were given their instruction by him.	Indoctrination of the young (SSS)
106–107	"About this time it was laid down as a rule that when a pig and any other animal met on the path, the other animal must stand aside: and also, that all pigs, of whatever degree, were to have the privilege of wearing green ribbons on their tails on Sundays." Rations were reduced for the	Costume and medals distinguish party Commissar from other workers. Status inequality grows as does access to food and consumer goods. (TTT)

	animals and then reduced again, "But the pigs seemed comfortable enough." "All barley was reserved for the pigs."	
108	Animal Farm declared a Republic and Napoleon elected President unanimously. He is the only candidate.	New Soviet Constitution adopted. First elections under this constitution have a single slate of candidates. (UUU)
109	"It now appeared that Snowball had not, as the animals previously imagined, merely attempted to lose the Battle of the Cowshed by means of a strategem, but had been openly fighting on Jones's side. In fact, it was he who had actually been the leader of the human forces . . . The wounds on Snowball's back, which a few of the animals still remembered . . . had been inflicted by Napoleon's teeth."	Still further rewriting of history
109	Moses the raven reappears on the farm after an absence of several years.	To rally the peasants and to use the authority of the Church to support the war activities, "the government (1941–1944) made one concession after another to the church." (Dallin, 1944:62) (VVV)
111–116, 117	Boxer taken to the Knackers; "no animal had ever actually retired. The talk of setting aside a corner of the pasture for superannuated animals had long since passed."	The Revolutionary spirit is betrayed. What was predicted for Boxer under capitalism becomes his fate under communism.
118–119	"The farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer—except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs."	The "New Class" comes close to being the functional equivalent of the old capitalists: producing nothing by their own labor yet enjoying high status and consuming disproportionate to their numbers. (WWW)
121–122	"Four legs good, two legs better," becomes the new slogan	

	bleated by the sheep, as the pigs take to walking on their hind legs.	
123	The sole commandment of Animalism is now "Animals Are Equal, But Some Animals Are More Equal than Others." The pigs take to carrying whips in their trotters.	"These people think that socialism requires equality, equality in the needs and personal life of the members of society . . . These are petty bourgeois views of our left-wing scatterbrains." (Stalin, January 1934; in Dallin, 1944:92). (WWW)
123–126	A deputation of neighboring farmers is invited to make a tour of *Animal Farm*. Gathered around the table are pigs and humans. Mr. Pilkington proposes a toast but first proclaims that "the lower animals on *Animal Farm* did more work and received less food than any animals in the country. Indeed, he and his fellow visitors today had observed many features which they intended to introduce."	Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference (October 1943) (XXX)
126	According to Napoleon, the term "comrade," would no longer be used, the hoof and horn was to be removed from the flag, and *Animal Farm* would henceforth once again be called *Manor Farm*.	The dissolution of the Comintern (YYY)
128	"A violent quarrel was in progress on: Napoleon and Mr. Pilkington had each played the Ace of Spades."	Teheran (Big Three) Conference (November 1943); the foreshadowings of the Cold War (ZZZ)
128	"Twelve voices were shouting in anger and they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which."	

TABLE B: MAJOR EVENTS IN RUSSIAN HISTORY (1904—THE DEATH OF STALIN)

1904–05	Russo-Japanese War—Japan wins and gains land from Russia.
1905	Peasantry Revolts—Mir (rural community of one or more villages that owned *community* land) legitimized to appease peasant demands. Narodniks believed Mir to be a basis for rural communism.
1906	Stolypin, Tsarist minister, saw Mir as a dangerous force. Instituted land reform to break up Mir.
1912	Mensheviks (minority) and Bolsheviks (majority), two factions in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, split.
1914–17	WWI—Tsarist Russia handled the war poorly; Germans advanced deep into Russia. Starvation exists among Russians and, as a result, Bread Riots occur.
1917	Tsar abdicates.
Feb.	Duma (legislature) is set up—the Provisional Government, headed by Kerensky, rules Russia. Kerensky, with urging from Allies, continues the war effort.
1917 Summer	Russian Counteroffensive fails.
1917 Oct.	Bolshevik revolution—not much force necessary. A weak Provisional Government has no allies—Lenin rules Russia.
1917 Dec.	Russia makes peace with Germany.
1918 Mar.	Treaty of Brest-Litvosk, Russia gives Germany territory.
1918–21 June	Civil War in Russia.
1918–21	War Communism—take food from peasants and give to city.
1919	Politburo formed.
1921	New Economic Policy instituted:
March	1. Food from the peasants would no longer be confiscated. 2. State Capitalism—mixed economy (market economy supervised by state).
1921	Factionalism within Bolshevik party is banned.
1922	Stalin appointed to the General Secretariat of the Communist Party.
1924	Lenin dies—battle for power ensues.
1925	Stalin ousts Trotsky.
1926	Stalin ousts Kamenev and Zinoviev.
1928–40	Five year plans instituted. Forced industrialization. Collectivization of agriculture.
1931	Entire countryside collectivized, suppression of the Kulaks (independent farmers).

1934–38	Blood Purges—use of Secret Police.
1939 Aug.	Hitler-Stalin Pact.
1940	Trotsky is assassinated.
1941 May	Stalin becomes head of government.
1941 June	Germany attacks Russia.
1943	Teheran Conference.
1944	Yalta Conference.
1945	Potsdam Conference.
1945	End of WWII.
1948 June	Berlin Blockade and "formalization" of the Cold War.
1953	Stalin Dies.

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RWP: *The Road to Wigan Pier;* London, 1937.
HC: *Homage to Catalonia;* London, 1938.
CUA: *Coming Up for Air;* London, 1939.
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Notes

[1] This paper would have been impossible without the extraordinary assistance of my secretary Helen Wildman and that of Lillian White, Kathy Alberti, Nancy Kain, and other staff members of UCI's Word Processing Center in translating my handwritten scribbles into finished copy, and without the extensive library research performed by my research assistants Nancy Black and Beth McFadden at Irvine and by students in my course in "Political Propaganda" at the State University of New York, Stony Brook.

To the extent that this article proves a contribution to Orwell scholarship it will be because I, a political scientist, have simply performed the somewhat tedious labor of inventorying events and individuals in *Animal Farm* and mapping them onto their historical counterparts. Not being an expert in Soviet history, I particularly welcome emendations to my classifications from historians and Sovietologists.

[2] Kipling fell into what Orwell called the "good-bad" category, author of works which "reek of sentimentality . . . , yet . . . are capable of giving true pleasure to people who can see clearly what is wrong with them." ("Rudyard Kipling" in *CEJL,* Vol. 2) For Orwell, likening his work to that of Kipling would not have been the ultimate insult it apparently is for Alldritt. Furthermore, the biblical "Ten Commandments" and the observed-only-in-the-breach clauses of the much-heralded Soviet Constitution of 1936 are much more direct sources for the "Laws of Animalism" than is Kipling's "Law of the Jungle."

[3] Once an extremely celebrated author, France's work has been dènigrated since before his death in 1924. In his essay on France, Orwell attributes the author's fall from grace partly to political motives, asserting:

> He may or may not have been a great writer, but he was one of the symbolic figures in the politico-literary dogfight which has been going on for a hundred years or more. . . . Anatole France had championed Dreyfus, which needed considerable courage; he had debunked Joan of Arc; he had written a comic history of France; above all, he had lost no opportunity of poking fun at the Church. ("As I Please," in *CEJL,* Vol. 3:173)

As Orwell catalogues France's traits, it is clear that, for him, this is a litany of virtues. A similar litany would be easy to generate for Orwell. It would be easy enough, too, to imagine events which would lead to the same virtually universal

downgrading of Orwell's literary reputation as happened to France. Had Orwell lived somewhat longer, he might have made himself almost as unpopular with the Right who mistook him (on the basis of a misreading of *Animal Farm* and *1984*) for an anti-communist of the same breed as they, and with the Labor Party hacks who still don't know what to make of someone who equated socialism with "honesty" and "decency," and with the liberals who dislike being reminded that, if they really acted on their own professed beliefs, they wouldn't be having strawberries with cream while other human beings starve, as he still is with the dogmatic Left.

[4] Critics have variously interpreted Orwell's intent in using the phrase "fairy story" as a subtitle for *Animal Farm*. According to the most plausible hypothesis, offered by Oxley (1967:80; emphasis ours), Orwell subtitled his book "A Fairy Story" to call attention to the Soviet Revolution as something which "had proved to be a *disappointing illusion*. This to many people in the West was what one of the potentially greatest experiments in political engineering ever undertaken had turned into, as the Russia of the 1917 Revolution became the Stalinist Russia of the thirties and forties." This interpretation of the intended meaning of "Fairy Story" is buttressed by Orwell's own statement in the preface to the Ukranian edition of *Animal Farm* (*CEJL* Vol. 3:405):

> Nothing has contributed so much to the corruption of the original idea of Socialism as the belief that Russia is a Socialist country and that every act of its rulers must be excused, if not imitated. And so for the past ten years I have been convinced that the destruction of the Soviet myth was essential if we wanted a revival of the Socialist movement. On my return from Spain I thought of exposing the Soviet myth in a story that could be easily understood by almost anyone and which could be easily translated into other languages.

[5] The analogy at the heart of *Animal Farm* arose from an incident witnessed by Orwell of "a little boy, perhaps ten years old, driving a huge cart-horse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the proletariat." (*CEJL:* 406)

[6] A number of scholars have claimed that surpassing evil is not an appropriate target of satire; e.g., Highet (1962:23) writes:

> If Leibniz's theory of optimism had not been merely a superficial and silly hypothesis which could lead to nothing more than folly and eventual disillusionment, Voltaire could not have written a satire (*Candide*) about it. . . . No one could write a successful satire on Attila or Genghis Khan or Hulagu with his pyramids of skulls. No one could satirize leprosy or cancer . . . Some villains are too awful for us to despise. We can only shudder at them and in horror turn away—or try to write a tragedy. Against such crimes, satire is almost impotent. Against lesser crimes and against all follies it is a powerful weapon.

Animal Farm in large part belies this proscription. By focussing on the fates of individuals who are themselves clearly representative "types," Orwell reduces the magnitude of evil to a scale which permits the relief of laughter, while at the same time continuing to engender horror and disgust.

[7] We might parenthetically note that the pig is much maligned. "Contrary to general opinion, the pig is a clean animal if given sanitary surroundings. Many pigs are forced to live in an unsanitary environment." (*Encyclopedia Brittanica*, Vol. 17, 1968, "Pig": p. 1070)

[8] For example, John Gay's *Beggars' Opera* is an attack on the 18th century prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, depicted as the highwayman MacHeath: but we don't need to know this to enjoy Gay's wit (or its 20th century incarnation as Bertolt Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*). Swift's Gulliver begins with a belief that men and women are reasonably honest and wise, but "finds stage by stage, that they are ridiculous midgets, disgusting giants, eccentric lunatics, and apelike anthropods." Of course, "Gulliver is not really voyaging to different countries, but looking at his society through distorting lenses." (Highet, 1962:159) *Gulliver's Travels* involves what were at the time thinly disguised, though to latter-day readers unversed in 18th century history, quite opaque allusions to personages in the royal courts of several European countries of Swift's day. For example, Flimnap, the Royal Treasurer (in Book I) is almost certainly the much satirized Prime Minister Walpole; but Swift's description of Flimnap's skill as a tightrope walker (a prerequisite for office in the Land of the Lilliputs) is barbed wit whoever its target may be—and its sting will be felt as long as there are politicians to be mocked (which is to say, forever) (Cf. Oxley, 1967:82.)

I don't wish to argue that the only satire that is worthwhile is that whose message is all on the surface. While *Gulliver's Travels* can be enjoyed without annotation, subtleties and even not-so-subtle points are lost through an inability to comprehend the author's intent. However enjoyable a satire may be when we read its surface meaning, it is difficult to appreciate irony when we aren't in on the joke; knowing the context helps us to appreciate the satirist's skills. An adult should not expect to read a *Gulliver's Travels* or an *Animal Farm* at the same level of understanding or, indeed, with the same innocent pleasure, as when first read as a young adult or child. For the adult rereading a classic work of satire, what was once merely comic may now be perceived as pathos or even tragedy.

[9] Oxley (1967:82) points out that "*Animal Farm* was apparently serialized some years ago in an opposition newspaper in Ghana under the Nkrumah regime, and for its readers then, Napoleon presumably took on another, more local meaning."

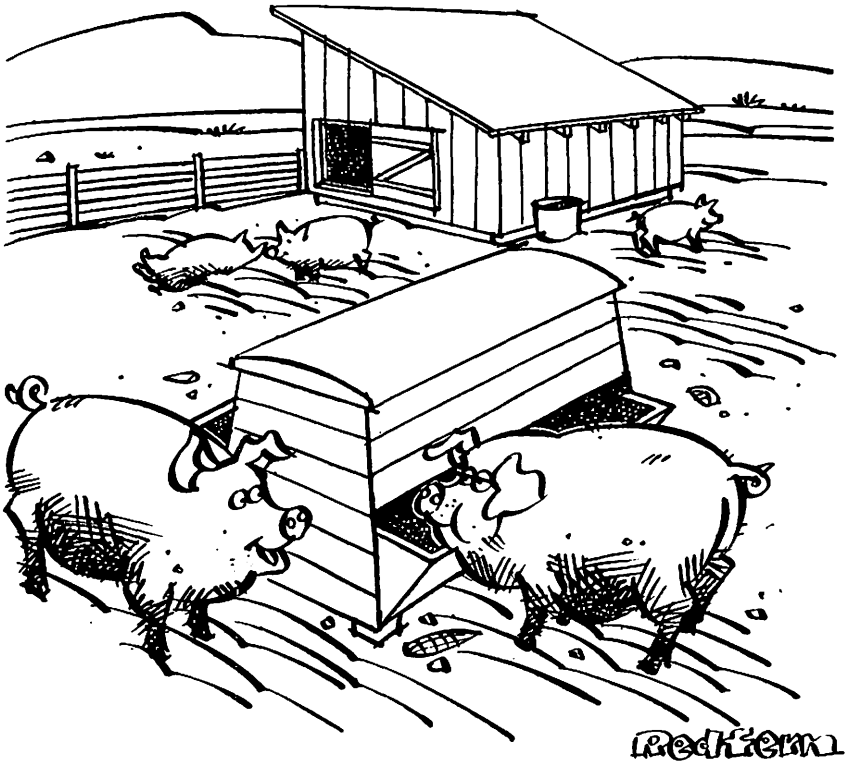
[10] Edward Hyams, the author of *The New Statesman*'s official history, writes that Orwell came back to Britain with a blistering series of articles attacking the Spanish government and that Martin did not disbelieve them. But "*The New Statesman* had become a committed paper while recognizing that, Fascism defeated, we might then have to fight for our principles against the worst elements in Communism." Deciding that *The New Statesman* had "the mentality of a whore," Orwell as an alternative published his views on Spain in *The New English Weekly* where his *Homage to Catalonia* would also receive one of its most perceptive reviews, from Philip Mairet: "It shows us the heart of innocence that lies in revolution; also the miasma of lying that, far more than the cruelty, takes the heart

out of it."

[11] One of the ironies concerning *Animal Farm*, which as far as I'm aware has not previously been pointed out, is that concerning a too facile equation of Orwell and Swift. Consider Orwell's judgment of Swift, "Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of *Gulliver's Travels*" (*CEJL*, Vol. 4:207; with some sentence reordering):

> Politically, Swift was one of those people who are driven into a sort of perverse Toryism by the follies of the progressive party of the moment. Part I of *Gulliver's Travels*, ostensibly a satire on human greatness, can be seen if one looks a little deeper, to be simply an attack on England, on the dominant Whig Party, and on the war with France, which—however bad the motives of the Allies may have been—did save Europe from being tyrannised over by a single reactionary power... [N]o one would deny that *Gulliver's Travels* is a rancorous as well as a pessimistic book, and that... it often descends into political partisanship of a narrow kind.

Substitute Russia for England, Communist for Whig, and Germany for France, Orwell for Swift, and *Animal Farm* for *Gulliver's Travels*, and this could be a Left polemic against Orwell and *Animal Farm!*



You the "Single, attractive, sensitive swine who loves to slop, swill, and wallow"?

Freeing Political Parties for Democracy

Kay Lawson

IN the Spring of 1989 the final act was written in a profound political drama that had begun nearly a decade before. The United States Supreme Court ruled, 8-0, that several parts of the California Elections Code were invalid because in conflict with the First Amendment. The Court's words were that the California regulations "burden the First Amendment rights of political parties and their members without serving a compelling interest."[1]

The significance of that decision was that from the moment of its proclamation, California's political parties were free to do what had been forbidden to them; they could now endorse candidates in primary election races and set their own rules about their internal structure and operations. But why had these rights been denied? And how were they restored?

Survey after survey shows that political parties do not get high marks on lists of trusted institutions. Americans are traditionally proud of the "two-party system" but contemptuous of the actual parties they have. Parties are criticized because they are seen as controlled by narrow elites and unresponsive to the needs of the wider electorate. Anti-party sentiment has been especially strong in California, where citizens have been quick to turn to alternative organizations and especially to a wide range of single-interest pressure groups. In a nation of weak parties, California's parties have stood out as among the weakest.

However, as political scientists never tire of pointing out, it is difficult if not impossible to maintain a democracy without political parties. Democracy requires citizens to make judgments across a wide range of issue domains and to find some way to make their opinions known and felt. Citizens must articulate their opinions. They must find ground for compromise with some of their fellow citizens in order to propose a coherent program that will attract wide support. They must select and

support candidates for public office who favor that program and hold anyone who wins elected office with their votes responsible for that program. These are the tasks of democratic citizenship, but no one can accomplish them alone. Belonging to a single-issue group and voting in periodic elections takes the isolated citizen only part way. Citizens need help, and the only organization that can give them the help they need to make democracy work is a political party.

Frustrated by parties that have never performed as parties should—and as they often do perform in other states and other nations—Californians have vented their wrath in a number of remarkably unperspicacious ways. When the parties fell under the control of special interests at the end of the 19th century, and in particular under the sway of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, the citizen response was not to reclaim the parties they so badly needed for their own purposes but to do all they could to destroy parties altogether.

The Progressive reforms of the 1910s and subsequent judicial rulings interpreting those reforms placed the parties under the control of the legislature and robbed them of the power to name their own candidates or even to say out loud, via endorsements, who they thought those candidates should be. The initiative and the referendum were brought in as instruments of direct democracy. Few seemed to understand the need for an organization in which people could meet and hammer out their differences; few seemed capable of predicting the take-over of the initiative process by special interests; few foresaw that candidates who had been controlled by special interests via party would now be controlled directly by those interests—and that legal campaign contributions would work as well as illegal bribes to establish that control.

By the 1980s no one seriously believed that direct democracy was working well, but at the same time almost no one believed that the answer was to give popular control of the parties back to the people. Instead, the grip of the legislature over the parties had been allowed to tighten steadily. The parties were denied the right to issue endorsements in either primary elections or non-partisan races. The Electoral Code spelled out when and where the major parties must meet, how long the terms of office of their leaders could be, how high the dues could be, who was eligible to serve on the parties' state central committees (mostly legislators or their appointees); and the code even mandated that party chairs be selected alternatively from the northern and southern parts of the state. The rules for the Republicans did not match the rules for the Democrats, since Republican legislators had different views on the matter from Democratic legislators, and the representatives of the parties in the legislature cooperated with one another in writing party law. And minor parties were given slightly different rules. Although the Libertarians made vehement protests, they had no legislator to speak up for them and

were forced to accept the same rules as those of the Peace and Freedom Party.

Interest in freeing the parties was almost non-existent. Parties were seen as corrupt. The fact that California's parties were puny and insignificant was either a point of pride or a reason for ignoring them: why do anything for such contemptible weaklings? Few seemed able to see what now appears so obvious: the parties were weak because the law made them weak; corruption is not an innate characteristic of parties but a malady that occasionally afflicts them and that can be cured without killing the patient; a democratic people needs a strong and responsible party system.

There was, however, a small group of people who began to discuss what might be done to unshackle California's political parties. Formed in the fall of 1980, the California Committee for Party Renewal brought together political scientists (Roy Christman, Edmund Costantini, James Fay, Bernard Hennessy, Kay Lawson, Walt Layson, Dick Kelley, Susan Rouder, and Roy E. Young) and practicing politicians and activists (Jane Bergen, Bert Coffee, Mary Gingell, Robert Girard, Herbert Hawkins, Mary King, Linda Post, Bill Thurston, Mary Vail and Richard Winger). Fay, Girard, and Hawkins were lawyers as well; some of the political scientists were also activists. What they all had in common was an understanding that California's democracy was suffering from the weakness of her parties.

It took this group more than a year to work out the importance of the legal restraints in determining the weak condition of the parties. It took another year to decide that the answer must be to fight law with law and to find a law firm—Morrison and Foerster—willing to take the case pro bono. It took still another year to put the case together, bringing in major county committees as co-litigants who would have sufficient "standing" in the eyes of the court (hence the use of the San Francisco County Central Committee as lead co-litigant) and getting affidavits from distinguished political scientists across the nation.

The plaintiffs decided to sue for removal of three restrictions: those on primary endorsements, those on non-partisan endorsements, and those interfering with the parties's internal affairs, including the rules governing the composition of the state central committees and limiting the terms of the party chairs. The legal grounds were simple and clear: such rules violate the protection that the First Amendment provides to political parties to speak out and to associate for the advancement of commonly held political beliefs. The brief was prepared in the Summer and Fall of 1983 and filed in November of that year.

Fewer than five months later, United States District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel issued a summary judgement in favor of the plaintiffs, striking down the offensive statutes as unconstitutional. Victory was sweet but

incomplete. Judge Patel abstained on the ban on nonpartisan endorsements, because that issue was then before the California Supreme Court. The case continued with only two counts from that time forward. After a complicated, see-sawing history in other cases, it now appears possible that the ban on nonpartisan endorsements will also be nullified, although not via the *Eu* case.

Victory was also delayed. The state of California filed an appeal, heard by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in May, 1984. That court took two full years to anguish over the matter, then issued a strong and unequivocal judgment in favor of the plaintiffs. Undaunted, the state appealed again, this time to the United States Supreme Court. In January, 1987, that Court sent the case back to the Court of Appeals, asking it to reconsider the case in the light of a recent Supreme Court ruling, *Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut,* in which the court had ruled by only a 5 to 4 vote that the Connecticut Republican Party could permit independents to vote in its primary. Since the *Tashjian* case went strongly in the direction of allowing parties to do what they wanted to do and since the Court of Appeals had gone that way, too, this request for reconsideration was surprising but, of course, obeyed. In August, 1987, the Appeals Court reaffirmed its own judgment. The Supreme Court then agreed to hear the case and did so on December 5, 1989. A record of past hostility between an attorney involved in the case and himself caused Chief Justice William Rehnquist to recuse. Eight justices heard the case, and in a decision issued February 22, 1989, all eight ruled for the litigants.

Does this decision mean California's parties are now free and strong? Yes and no. Free, yes; strong, not yet. Freedom is a condition in which action may be taken. California's citizens must now take up the challenge put before them. They are free to make their parties into powerful instruments of democracy, liberated from the grip of legislators too long held unaccountable to other than the most generous contributors to their campaigns. Will Californians rise to the challenge? Attend the next meeting of your party in your city or county and find out.

Note

[1] Eu, Secretary of State of California, et al., v. San Francisco County Democratic Central Committee et al., 87-1269 U.S. Superior Court syllabus, p. i. In preparing this article, I have drawn from the March, 1989, issue of *Party Times,* the newsletter of the California Committee for Party Renewal that was devoted to coverage of the case, and from my own piece, "Eu, Secretary of State of California, et al. v. San Francisco County Democratic Central Committee et al.," *Comparative State Politics Newsletter,* Vol. 10, No. 3 (June, 1989), pp. 19–20.

Robert Owen and Spiritualism

Richard A. Voeltz

IN whatever enterprise Robert Owen engaged—whether successful cotton manufacturer, social reformer, trade union leader, millennial prophet, or spiritualist, he indefatigably pursued his goal of a rational reorganization of society. To him, when the human mind was "released from its state of darkness,"[1] humankind could at last enter a fully rational state of existence, in which there would be the freedom to build a harmonious and integrated society centered around Owenite villages of unity and cooperation. Any attempt to understand Owen's social vision as a response to social changes must reconcile the visionary and millennial strain that pervaded both his writings and the entire Owenite movement—culminating in Owen's personal conversion to spiritualism—with his strict rationalism-utilitarianism and deism. The two traditions, rationalism and millennialism, were closely linked in Owen's vision of total social change. He came to reject completely not only the institutions of existing society, but many of its social and religious values as well, as he dreamed of society's transformation into a world where harmony would pervade all that exists upon the earth.

Some earlier scholars, obsessed with the idea of forcing Owen to fit a niche in the history of the working class, have neglected the significance of millennialism and visionary enthusiasm in his thought. For example, G. D. H. Cole, the great British labor historian, hard-pressed to explain Owen's millennialist rhetoric and spiritualism, for which he had no sympathy, simply stated that, "Owen went a little mad in 1817, and he went on getting madder to the end of his days."[2] While historians are now clearly aware of both the diversity and complexity of the thought of Owen and his followers, there still remains a need for a close examination of the personal beliefs that allowed Owen to view spiritualism as the natural companion and successor to his rationalism.[3]

Owen's simple rationalism can be easily traced to 18th century

Enlightenment doctrine. Owen merely became a popularizer of ideas that had been discussed for a generation. For example, his fundamental maxim that the character of man is formed for, and not by, him is basically a restatement of the optimistic progressive doctrine of such Enlightenment thinkers as Helvetius, Jeremy Bentham, and William Godwin.[4] Thus there was nothing really new in Owen's formation-of-character maxim. Furthermore, all three men, like Owen, sought a "general delineation of the principles of rational society," to use Godwin's words.[5] This moral Newtonianism represented a mechanistic approach to society, and Owen was especially prone to think in terms of the construction of a new and scientific machine of society running on his rational principles. Owen always remained somewhat technocratic and mechanical in his thought—a characteristic that earned him the title of the "reasoning machine."[6]

When Owen felt that he had discovered the great truth that "character is formed for and not by the individual," he said that his "mind became simple in the arrangement of ideas" and "in consequence, gradually became calm and serene, and anger and ill-will died within." He envisioned for existing society a peaceful transformation for happiness by enclosing humanity in superior surroundings. He also believed in the creation of a "new moral world" in which "to produce happiness will be the only religion of man" and

> the worship of God will consist in the practice of useful industry, in the acquisition of Knowledge, in uniformly speaking the language of truth, and in the expression of the joyful feeling which a life in accordance with nature and truth is sure to produce.[7]

But this image of Owen as a rational child of the *philosophes* searching for a true science of society must be reconciled with the millennial form and rhetoric that marked even his earliest writings. The traditional, religious millenarian expects imminent, total, and irrevocable change. And so did Robert Owen. Throughout his long life he never failed to proclaim the imminence of the commencement of the millennium, the time when "The rubicon between the old Immoral and the New Moral World is finally passed . . ."[8]

In any discussion of Owen's millennialism, the figure of him as a prophet or messiah leading the world to redemption looms large, indeed. To begin with, Owen had to confront the perceived inconsistency between his doctrine that circumstances moulded character and that he alone, almost like an intellectual immaculate conception, had come to know the truth in the midst of the old immoral world. "Causes," he said, "over which I could have no control, removed in my early days the ban-

dage which covered my mental sight."[9] And as Owen became increasingly convinced that only he possessed the truth, while the rest of the world lived in baneful ignorance, an autocratic attitude often marked his relationships with both the nascent labor movement and his communitarian endeavors. In his old age he frequently referred to himself as an "impelled agent" leading the world to social redemption.[10] Yet he also emphasized that the great transformation would occur "without merit or demerit of any kind" on his part. He believed in the manner of the 18th century visionary Ann Lee, who proclaimed, "It is not I that speak, it is Christ who dwells in me." Owen said, "It is not I that speak, it is the Truth that dwells in me."[11] Owen had assumed the tone of a secular messiah. And the revelation itself took place in the London Tavern on August 21, 1817, when Owen, in denouncing all existing religions as responsible for humanity's bondage of error, crime, and misery, announced, "On this day! in this hour! even now! shall those bonds be burst asunder, never more to reunite while the world lasts!"[12]

Owen's millennialism was basically a secular and reconstructed version of the Christian myth; he sprinkled distinct biblical references throughout his writings:

> The nations of the earth will be astonished! Their . . . sacred institutions—their . . . political arrangements and their domestic manners, habits, and languages—will no longer be esteemed among men—Old things shall pass away, and all shall become new.[13]

In later life Owen wrote of a "double creation" doctrine strikingly similar to the Christian concepts of original sin and baptism.[14] His mission in life then consisted in preparing the world to understand the vast importance of the "second creation of humanity." His "New Dispensation" would return human nature to its original purity, ending the reign of ignorance and oppression that had so warped human nature. And this great change would emerge miraculously from a revolution based solely on the principles of truth, charity, and kindness.[15] After this mystical change, humankind would at last enter the millennium. Owen's new society presented the picture of an equalitarian, propertyless, almost anarchistic utopia, closely resembling the projected society of William Godwin.[16] People will now have "as much enjoyment in producing as in . . . consuming wealth." The present chaotic state of existence based on social classes will be changed for the rational state, that of age. And a form of free love will prevail, based on unions of pure affection only.[17]

While extolling the virtues of the machine for producing wealth, a strong strain of ruralism and arcadian bliss was present in Owen's vision as well, founded on his yearning for a return to the happy, simple life of

the agricultural peasant, which he believed had existed in the pre-industrial English village.[18] But fundamentally his millennium meant a psychological and spiritual change for mankind:

> In this New World, the inhabitants will attain a state of existence, in which a spirit of charity and affection will pervade the whole human race; man will become spiritualized, and happy amidst a race of superior beings.[19]

Near the end of his life, Owen wrote that under his "New Dispensation" the earth would become a "paradise and its inhabitants angels."[20]

In 1853 when Owen took up company with table-rappers and mediums, some of his contemporaries felt that he had forsaken his rationalism. They dismissed his spiritualism as the ravings of an almost completely deaf, eighty-two year old man, whom they considered senile. And some historians have generally reaffirmed this judgment, as they speak of Owen's "final decline into spiritualism."[21] But given his visionary and millennial frame of mind, his conversion to spiritualism was not at all surprising; in fact, it was quite compatible with his earlier writings. Owen never believed that he had forsaken his rationalism when he engaged in communication with the dead. Rather, his notion of rationalism embraced spiritual communications. In 1829, Owen said,

> The particles which compose my body are eternal. They had no beginning and can have no end. I shall be decomposed, and lose my consciousness in death, to be recomposed, and to reappear in new forms of life and enjoyment.[22]

When converted to spiritualism, Owen acknowledged that he was

> compelled by the evidence of his senses to know that spirits occupy spaces, by them called spheres; and that they communicate with their friends here on earth, in their natural character, except that they are not visible as when living.[23]

Simple mechanical and materialistic notions allowed Owen to regard as a science the contacts with what he termed the "refined material world," not as a religion. Therefore, the practice of a science in no way contradicted his view of himself as a rationalist. His spiritual communications with such worthies as Thomas Jefferson and the Duke of Kent, like his millennialism, assured Owen of the correctness of his path to the always imminent new moral world.[24] Spiritualism provided Owen with that religious leap of faith that he regarded as science.

To Owen, his spiritualism also represented manifestations of the great

and mysterious power of the universe. He thought the spirits would help him regenerate society, that he was acting in accordance with the unseen power that ensured the preservation and order of the universe. Owen's interest in spiritual communications centered on the messages themselves, rather than the physical manifestations of raps and floating objects, for which some followers of spiritualism showed an extraordinary credulity. Indeed, some popular magazines of the time went beyond calling spiritualism just a delusion by making charges that in fact it was a criminal activity.[25] Spiritualists in general conceived of the spirits's home as a world of orderly and continuous progression. Accordingly, any signs from such a world were all the more valuable for Owen in his quest for harmony on earth. Such an image of after-life shocked many of the clergy, who denounced spiritualism as

> eschewing all received ideas of a fall of angels and man from original holiness, of total depravity, atonement, regeneration, and . . . in the last analysis . . . disguising under the name of spirit a subtle but genuine materialism.[26]

To Owen, spiritualism represented a rational and scientific alternative to religion and exerted a strong attraction for a man of his temperament. But was his brief span of conversations with the dead, like so much of his life, merely a self-serving delusion in his search for some sort of cosmic harmony?

Robert Owen and his followers provided an alternative vision of industrialization, but Owen himself simply did not think in terms of a political or even economic change. Rather, he conceived of a fundamental spiritual change in the human being, rendering meaningless the social and economic questions that had existed in the irrational part. He had embarked on a journey toward a moral and ethical, indeed religious, change, so profoundly radical that it transcended his rationalism. For a great contradiction in this thought consisted of his belief that material development and the fulfillment of all desires necessarily lead to the spiritual perfection of the human race.

Owen accepted many of the effects wrought by the Industrial Revolution. He glorified the new production potential for what he thought it meant for the happiness of the human race: "The introduction of the steam engine and the spinning machine added in an extraordinary manner to the power of human nature."[27] Yet he rejected modern industrial society, calling it "no true civilization" and a "lunatic asylum," and sought an ethical or spiritual rebirth.[28] His rationalistic and materialistic disposition prevented him from responding to an intractable social reality in romantic or archaic modes of thought and feeling. But his conception of rationalism contained a vision of societal reforma-

tion that made it easy for him to accept spiritualism.

Robert Owen's system of thought, then, considered as a totality, was what he called rationalism or the Rational State of Human Existence or the Moral Science of Man, where distinctions between his millennialism, spiritualism, and rationalism did not exist. He appeared as a moral scientist defining the principles of a rational society; at the same time he acted like a messiah proclaiming his revelation to an unbelieving, but soon to be convinced, world. His self-delusion consisted in believing that everything revealed to him formed a science based on the discovery of something he called Natural or Divine Law, even including his spiritualism, which he considered not other-worldly but scientific. Under the influence of this self-delusion, he personally saw his great mission in life to prepare "the population of the world for the reign of charity in accordance with the natural laws of humanity,—or, in other words, in accordance with all facts and common sense or consistent reason."[29]

Owen thus saw his conversion to spiritualism as a natural outgrowth of his beliefs; this conversion also marked the last battle in his long and arduous struggle against what he termed the powers of darkness in the world. Because of his influence, many members of the working class became adherents of spiritualism, who believed now that any improvement in the individual or society would come in the afterlife. In this particular case, spiritualism became the 19th century successor to 18th century rationalism with its ideas of human perfection and happiness.

Notes

[1] Robert Owen, *An Address Delivered to the Inhabitants of New Lanark, on the First of January 1816, at the Opening of the Institution Established for the Formation of Character*, 3rd Ed., London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817, p. 488.

[2] G. D. H. Cole, *Robert Owen*, 3rd Ed., New York: Archon Books, 1966, p. 197.

[3] See in particular the classic study by J. F. C. Harrison, *Quest for the New Moral World*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969, which relates Owen and the Owenite movement to diverse social and intellectual movements, including millenialism, within the general context of reactions to social change. Gregory Claeys, *Machinery, Money and the Millennium, from Moral Economy to Socialism, 1815–1860*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987, presents a reappraisal of the economic thinking of Owen and other Owenite writers, demonstrating that their ideas were much more complex than previously believed. Claeys does not emphasize the visionary side of Owen but he does recognize how important a part of Owen it was by concluding his book with the following statement: ". . . even the most secular, practical and commercial emanations of Owenism never completely lost sight of the millennium first glimpsed by Owen at New Lanark." p. 195.

[4] Helvetius wrote that, "Education makes us what we are." Helvetius, *A Treatise on Man, Vol. II,* London: J. Cundee, 1810, p. 405. Jeremy Bentham, the great utilitarian, who at one time was one of Owen's business partners, held that the wise legislator "might fashion people to his will, like a sculptor with a block of marble." Bentham quoted in E. Halevy, *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism,* Boston: The Beacon's Press, 1955, p. 503. William Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice,* Ed., F. E. L. Priestly, Vol. I, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946, pp. 26–27.

[5] Godwin, p. 183. Robert Owen stated his principles of character formation *ad infinitum* in his main writings. The following appeared in his *New View of Society* and is the one most often quoted by historians:

> Any general character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any community, even to the world at large by the application of proper means; which means are to a great extent at the command and under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men.

Robert Owen, *A New View of Society,* London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817, p. ix.

[6] Frank Podmore, *Robert Owen,* London: Hutchinson and Co., 1906, p. 495. Podmore was a former spiritualist who had lost his convictions and in 1902 published a critical history of the movement, *Modern Spiritualism,* 2 Vols., London: Hutchinson and Co.

[7] *The Life of Robert Owen Written by Himself,* London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1820, pp. x, 41–42, 85.

[8] Podmore, *Robert Owen,* pp. 462–463.

[9] Owen, *An Address Delivered to the Inhabitants of New Lanark . . .* , p. 30.

[10] *Life of Robert Owen,* p. xii. See Ralph Miliband, "The Politics of Robert Owen," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 15, No. 2, April, 1954, and Claeys, chapter six, for Owen's attitude toward politics and the labor movement. Also, R. G. Garnett, "Robert Owen and Community Experiments" in *Robert Owen—Prophet of the Poor,* S. Pollard and John Salt, Editors, Lewisburg, Pa: Bucknell University Press, 1971. Garnett concludes that "Owen was not really interested in community development, nor was he at heart capable of co-operation." p. 60.

[11] *Life of Robert Owen,* p. 222, Ann Lee quoted in Harrison, p. 99.

[12] *Life of Robert Owen,* p. 286. W. H. Oliver, "Owen in 1817: The Millennialist Moment," in Pollard and Salt, p. 168.

[13] G. D. H. Cole, Editor, *A New View of Society and Other Writings,* London: Everyman, 1949, pp. 241, 244.

[14] *Life of Robert Owen,* pp. x–xi.

[15] *Ibid.,* p. xiii, Owen, *Book of the New Moral World,* p. xii.

[16] Halevy, p. 224.

[17] Owen, *Book of the New Moral World,* pp. 99, 100, Podmore, pp. 493, 487.

[18] Robert Owen, *Observations of the Effect of the Manufacturing System,* London; Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817, p. 5.

[19] W. L. Sargant, *Robert Owen and His Social Philosophy,* London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1860, pp. 335.

[20] Podmore, *Robert Owen,* p. 604.

[21] J. E. Derry, *The Radical Tradition,* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967, p. 153. For a wide-ranging study of spiritualism in the 19th century see Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850–1914,* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Her central theme is that people turned to spiritualism and other psychical movements in an effort to recapture "some incontrovertible reassurance of fundamental cosmic order and purpose, especially reassurance that life on earth was not the totality of human existence," (p. 2). With the conversion of Robert Owen, spiritualism came to the working class. For a discussion of his conversion and its influence on plebeian spiritualism see pp. 40, 47–8.

[22] Sargant, p. 333.

[23] Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism, Vol. I,* p. 301.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Oppenheim, pp. 7–10.

[26] Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism, Vol. I,* p. 302.

[27] Owen, *Book of the New Moral World,* p. 93.

[28] Podmore, *Robert Owen,* p. 649.

[29] *Life of Robert Owen,* p. 262.

Expatriate Malaise in China

Nathaniel Wallace

I

WHO chooses to work in China—and why? Who among the many arrivals is happy with what he or she sees, and who is not? From 1981 to 1985, while I lectured in the English section of foreign languages department of various universities in the People's Republic of China, I had frequent occasion to consider such questions. My scrutiny in the following discussion is upon the "foreign experts," the group of teachers, technicians, editors, and journalists employed by China to serve its national goals for periods ranging from a few weeks to many years. Excluded for rhetorical convenience are the businessmen, students, diplomats, and journalists of the foreign press, all of whose views often differ little from those of the "experts." I further simplify by dealing primarily with individuals living in Beijing, where several hundred have been employed during some periods. In addition, I carefully survey the Friendship Hotel, where most of us in Beijing were settled during my residence in that city.

Since my departure from China, a number of universities and other "work units" have completed construction of special guesthouses for foreign professionals, so that most "experts" have been transferred out of the Friendship, which has now been renovated so that its pleasantly dumpy and "global-village" aura is gone. Thus, elements of the subgenre of human comedy alluded to below may no longer exist, but many of the modalities of expatriate life have changed little in China—even in spite of the cataclysm of June, 1989, and its aftermath—, from what some recent returnees from the Middle Kingdom have told me. What ensues, therefore, is meant to convey an historical, personal, and actual present as I reflect upon my experiences in the Orient. What perhaps emerges is the expatriate malaise of anticipation, alienation, and engagement as an enduring state.

II

Many of us adjust to China happily or moderately well. It would be almost true to say that all of us adjust well at the beginning, but a few people are miserable—at least it would so appear from their statements about China—from day one of their stay. Of course, some complaints arise because one can abstract more easily here; one wouldn't say that such and such a problem at home is because of England or America, but one might say a similar problem in Beijing is because of China.

Yet potential causes of irritation are many, so it is not surprising that the euphoria of early autumn, when large numbers of new foreigners begin work, is greatly diminished by Thanksgiving. As the vacation spirit dissipates, one begins to read or misread China in some way, and the mind may fix itself on one or more of the undeniable disadvantages of China: a life that is passed largely within the confine of one's hotel or guesthouse and place of work, living quarters that range from shabby to mediocre, grumpy attendants, pervasive fibbing, a bureaucracy that is unwilling to perform, the danger of food poisoning in the foreign residents's restaurant, the threat of infectious diseases—some of them, such as meningitis and encephalitis, quite dangerous—, restrictions on dealings with ordinary Chinese people, a dearth of nighttime diversions, a scarcity of ordinary news and information, xenophobia that awakens intermittently and abruptly, few chances to practice speaking Chinese, the limited quantity and variety of merchandise, and inequitable pricing. In a period of capitalist experimentation, the "foreign expert," who is paid in local Chinese currency, often finds himself pestered for not having the prized Foreign Exchange Certificates, which supposedly have the same value as ordinary currency, but which symbolize non-Chinese and probably better money. Some stores have a system of dual pricing, with the price for payment in ordinary currency substantially higher than that in F.E.C.s.

If one teaches in a college or university, a special set of difficulties arises. Textbooks as such are almost non-existent, and assigned readings must be typed out and duplicated page by page by the departmental typing pool. Libraries are inadequate and often in a shambles. Chinese colleagues are usually elusive to the point of being unmeetable. Research of any kind, whether by Chinese students or colleagues or by the foreign faculty member himself, is nearly impossible to carry out. Departmental administrators, who include a number of Communist Party members, may prove indifferent at best toward one's efforts to impart some form of education. Classrooms are frigid in winter. Because of their skimpy diet, students are their most attentive between eight and ten in the morning; late morning or afternoon classes may limp along. Many students are almost totally passive, while a few are astonishingly pleased with them-

selves and wish to answer every question. Assigned papers often are uninsightful or take a superficially Marxist approach. Plagiarism can be frequent.

With such a wealth of inconveniences, the most ardent of vacationers will fast become an eloquent cynic if he or she does not, at an early stage, become appreciative of some of the advantages of working in China. These advantages, often ignored by the people who benefit from them, include lodgings, which if unenticing, are free of charge, as are medical benefits. Competent physicians, if one is able to locate them, are as astute as any in the West. Most of the time, the medical care received is at least adequate. Occasionally, there are free banquets, and on October 1, 1984, the "experts" in Beijing were allotted prime viewing space for the extravagant parade celebrating communist China's 35th anniversary.

Salaries, though modest, are adequate to meet basic needs. Thus one is both unblessed by luxury and relieved of worry. A vacation supplement once a year enables travel to some of the world's most historic and attractive locations. And whether on vacation or not, the "expert" gains an acquaintance with a distinctive people and their culture. Despite the coolness with which the government regards contacts between its citizens and outsiders, almost every foreigner manages to meet a few exceptional and unforgettable Chinese people. Also, teachers have generally found that their classes contain a number of very intelligent, energetic, and inquisitive students.

Many single foreigners have benefitted from meeting a compatible Chinese person of the opposite sex, with a marriage resulting. And the birth of many a half- or non-Chinese baby has been financed by a "foreign expert's" socialized medical coverage. A number of basic needs, such as food preparation, are taken care of at one's place of residence. Although opportunities for the usual recreational activities to which the foreigner might have been accustomed are now sharply reduced, the new resident is given a considerable amount of vacant time, unless his work unit is one of those few that demands excessive output from its employees. This unexpected leisure quickly becomes a blessing or curse, for some individuals begin programs of study and research (using, of course, material brought from a personal library at home in America or elsewhere), while others collapse into boredom or spend hours in hotel coffee shops. Still other dissatisfied individuals become compulsive athletes and spend every afternoon jogging, bicycling, or playing tennis. A number of us, with the aid of tutors supplied, usually free of charge, by our work units, have acquired a fair proficiency in Chinese, while a greater number remain almost as ignorant of the language at the end of their stay as at the beginning.

Many a foreigner has filled his or her empty time by initiating a liaison with another foreigner of the opposite sex. Romance has been active in

the bedrooms of the Friendship Hotel. I know a short Frenchman who escaped his miserable marriage at home and found at least temporary happiness with a Canadian divorcee nearly twice his height. A pretty blonde German woman fled her dull professor husband to find love in the form of a stocky American. Homosexuality there is as well. One spring, Beijing was the setting for a most flourishing romance between a balding New Zealand bachelor and his cherubic American buddy. On the other hand, a few gays have been very unhappy in China, perhaps because of the unavailability of Chinese lovers.

III

Whether pleased by China or not, one is subject to the effects of the system. And curiously, even an individual who does not in the least assent to this system begins to become a citizen of a communist country from the day of arrival onward. The limited assimilation China allows foreigners starts to manifest itself, although the new arrival might be entirely unwilling to be assimilated. For instance, one must begin spending hours applying for a travel pass or shopping for a simple item that is out of stock almost everywhere. At lunch or dinner, conversation turns to the same topics again and again: the inappropriate preparation of the food, the black-market trading of money, or Beijing dust. As we would sit around a dining table at the Friendship Hotel, complaining about China and with numbered tags, sewn in by the hotel laundry staff, sticking out of our shirts, we would appear thoroughly institutionalized. Foreigners in China cannot remain fully detached. We are swept along by economic reforms and political confusion. We wonder what is happening, as does everyone else, even if we disapprove or disagree.

Our range of topics narrows, and when we turn to international affairs, we all have only the same two or three items to discuss, because we have all read the brief articles in the only available newspaper or have listened to the condensed accounts on the Voice of America morning broadcast. If we choose to pay what is for us a high price for a foreign newspaper or magazine, then our range of thought becomes a little broader. Yet all in all, our mental content diminishes as we settle into China, and we become hardly more informed of everyday events than is the average Chinese.

The likes and not-likes begin to segregate themselves from one another shortly after arrival, and the foreigner who has been in China for several months soon realizes that there are some people in the latest bunch of new recruits with whom he can become friendly, and some with whom he cannot. Sometimes at lunch with a new acquaintance, he suddenly senses a tension that wasn't there before, and the two companions are now disagreeing on all issues, most of which pertain to China. September and February are times of turnover, and relationships

are especially in flux during these periods. One is often struck, even disturbed, by the changes in temperament to be detected in the individuals who are associates on a daily basis. At times it seems that almost everyone else is a chameleon (a traditional Chinese symbol of change), and the reflective person may suspect that he has become a bit of a chameleon himself.

It seems reasonable that friendships would be most common among those who remain in China for more than a year, the usual contract period. Such individuals would be united by their interest in their work and in China. Yet experience does not support this logical statement. Somehow, relationships tend to run amok among those who stay for extended periods. We drift in our own eddies of industry or frustration. We find that we don't agree on China after all, and it is annoying to be with a person who complains about China much less or more than we do, especially after such an individual has been in China long enough to see things our way. Many foreigners early acquire a strong faith in their ability to see China as it is. This confidence in the acuity of our own perceptions makes experience impossible to share. We cannot advise the just-arrived who are sure they see China as clearly as we do, nor can we easily accept the views of a long-established resident. Each individual tends to believe that he or she is best at knowing how to be a foreigner in China.

Thus, after a few years of maneuvering to maintain or improve their positions within China, and perhaps failing to obtain other jobs outside of the country, a number of foreigners settle into a chrysalis of relative isolation within the foreign community, seeking and encouraging little in the way of friendships with the newly-arrived, and not having very much to do with most of the other long-time residents. For some of those whose stays have been of the longest duration, imprisonment during the Cultural Revolution is an obvious factor complicating their views of China and fostering a reluctance to interact in more than a shallow way with the society around them. Thus, I have been unable to meet some of the foreigners of the most venerable vintage, whom I have occasionally seen floating around Beijing with their state-appointed nannies. In short, the behavior and attitudes of a number of long-term foreign residents come to resemble those of many Chinese, with their indirectness of communication and their ability to appear friendly yet remain distant.

IV

The foreigners who arrived while Mao was the central influence in national political life did so because they more or less shared his premises about society and sympathized with his efforts to rebuild the country in a certain fashion. From the close of World War II to the beginning of the

Cultural Revolution, they came one by one, along with a stream of optimistic Chinese expatriates. (I am of course excluding the thousands of Russians who served as "foreign experts" during the period of Sino-Soviet cooperation.) With the partial opening of the country under Deng's reforms, a politically, socially, and ethnically variegated group appeared.

The Marxists still arrive, but in small number. Usually, very little is heard about their Marxist views after a month or so. Many of us consider ourselves politically liberal or moderately left, but it helps to be a bit apolitical, whatever one's orientation, if one is going to have a chance of enjoying China. Many of us come simply because we want a job or are somehow curious about the country.

The "experts" tend to be either young or old; they are either in their late 20s to mid-30s with at least a minimal qualification of previous professional experience, or alternatively, they are approaching or past retirement and are coasting on their—usually moderate—accumulations of income and expertise. The middle years are dotted with those on exchanges, a classification that spans all age groups, or with individuals whose—usually academic—careers came to demise in their native lands. The young, who are in the greatest number, thus seek credentials by working in China; the old have them, while the middle group has given up hope of obtaining them.

Almost everyone considers his or her stay temporary and hopes to get something out of it. I might say that a desire, sometimes vague and free-floating, to obtain something from China has traditionally been perhaps the most basic shared characteristic of foreigners in that country. In addition to the idea of gaining professional credibility that will prove useful in acquiring a better job in the future, several categories of desire are invoked frequently as people mention what they intend to extract from their sojourns. Of course, there is the wish to gain a glimpse of another culture. Many have worked in China simply because it was there to come to. An offer of a job suddenly appeared, and one accepted without knowing what to expect, yet sensing that there was something to possess, some dream to fulfill. Once we are here, our desires become articulate. Almost every foreigner wants to learn Chinese, indulge in lavish banquets, become a China hand, purchase a bicycle, travel to exotic cities and regions, pick up a few paintings, buy woolen or silk carpets, and have close Chinese friends—in the professions or arts if possible. I met a childless American couple who wanted to adopt a Chinese baby; theirs was a distinctive way of wishing to possess China. Many foreigners mention planning to write a book about China, but I don't know how many have put pen to paper.

These desires are realized with ease or difficulty. Satisfaction alternating with dissatisfaction obviously contributes much to the profound

ambivalence that underlies many responses to China. The bicycle and the rug come easily enough, although purchasing the latter often requires a fair amount of shopping around and saving from our low salaries, unless there is money from home. The banquets usually bring encores of praise for China, while the doldrums of everyday food lead to censure of the government and its policies; during periods when these policies have been relatively moderate, we can stomach the system as long as the bean curd is tasty. Few are disappointed with the sights as we pack off, usually by train, for weekend trips or longer vacations to view temples, mountains, grasslands, or ethnic minorities. Not every attraction succeeds in satisfying everyone, however; and long train rides, nasty personnel in the employ of the China International Travel Service, indigestible meals, or other inconveniences prompt some "experts" to quit travelling within the country long before their assignments have ended. Good paintings have sometimes turned out to be nearly unavailable because of restrictions on artists selling their own work. Contemporary paintings for sale in hotels or special shops for foreigners have often been mass-produced by marginally trained craftsmen.

The bicycle seems a likely means of promoting friendship between foreigners and Chinese, because of the universality of the vehicle, and in some ways it does so serve. Most foreigners buy a bicycle upon arrival, and nearly every Chinese has one. Yet a difference in perspective emerges. The Chinese, it is charged, ride their bikes lackadaisically and don't seem to be moving anywhere. Their expressionless faces show their unhappiness. Yet the Chinese view the bicycle simply as a means of transport, whereas Americans or other foreigners are likely to use it for recreation and to express their individuality. Speeding by a convoy of slower-moving Chinese cyclists, foreigners may not remember that they don't expect enthusiasm from a line of motorists in commuting-hour traffic.

V

The isolation created directly or indirectly by the government's arrangement of foreigners's lives is often compounded in an unexpected way. Once we arrive in China, most friends and relatives seem to forget about us. One "expert" stated that his mother had not contacted him once during his year in Manchuria. Letters home may receive no reply, and if they do, any questions one has asked in a previous letter are likely to remain unanswered. People who have promised to do something for us if we need some small favor fail to respond when we take them up on their offer. It is as if we have reached the moon and not China. An example is that of an academic friend with whom I had been close for several years. His wife and he had both volunteered to write and send books or photocopies of literature and critical essays if I needed them. After filling

my first request, my friend sent no more photocopies and hardly ever wrote. Then, as if to compensate somehow, his wife sent me a copy of a literary journal and, later, a photocopied article—both of which items had originated in China.

Whether our friends unconsciously resent our departures as a kind of betrayal and desertion, or whether they see us as being so distant as to be past help, the result is that our relationships generally do not evolve from physical presence to epistolary communication. Similarly, when a new friend or coworker leaves China, that is typically the last we hear. And those who state that they will look into something for us on their return to the States or wherever usually don't do so. Few friendships manage to cross the International Date Line. Also, those who might be expected to be most understanding of our situations turn out not to be. A Marxist literary critic and his wife, who lectured in Beijing one autumn, promised to send copies of some of their publications upon their return home to England. I received nothing. Fortunately, most of us find that there are one or two reliable people who will write with some regularity and even upon request send some needed item.

By far the greatest expectation foreigners have, even if they don't talk about it inordinately, is that their work in China will lead to a more satisfactory job later on, preferably in one's native land. Unfortunately, this expectation, which becomes an assumption, is not often born into reality. I have noticed a perverse pattern. If one has travelled to China under the auspices of one's university or company, then there is some chance of promotion upon return. But if one is strictly on one's own, then chances of recognition are dim. I don't hear many stories of success from or about former associates and colleagues, a number of whom were unhappy about conditions in China. Two high-school teachers, who wanted to use their university teaching experience in China as a bridge to some other form of teaching in America, eventually found jobs as secondary-school teachers once more. A bright young woman who was sick of teaching in a university here was accepted into a doctoral program in a very good graduate school, only to find that she didn't like graduate school. A bored librarian taught in Beijing for two years, only to return to her unhappy work. A journalist left a full-time job here and had difficulty finding part-time work on returning to San Francisco. A Canadian university instructor, on his own in China, learned that his post in British Columbia had been abolished during his absence.

So the examples might continue, but the cycle was not always like this. Working abroad has traditionally been a way for the unproven to acquire money and recognition. Herbert Hoover worked in Tangshan, a town later famous for its earthquake, decades ago and advanced to startling achievements at home. Yet the old pattern has been broken, at least in China. Today's adventurers as often as not return to their respective

economic or emotional Hoovervilles.

One consequence of this cycle of exit from and return to discontent at home is that a number of people further complicate their lives by returning to China. There are some who stay for a year or two, more or less enjoy their work here, then return to China after a few years for another round. I'm thinking, on the other hand, of those who become sick of China, depart, and return anyway. I know a young Canadian Ph.D. who was angered at the bureaucratic snags he encountered in transferring from one job to another at the end of his first year in China. He vowed to return to Canada during summer vacation and abandon the new job. Yet he was back in Beijing in the fall. A Frenchman who had become a resident of Canada worked here for a few years, during which time he became disenchanted with China, but he also managed to lose his Canadian residency permit. Having nothing to return to in France, he arranged a marriage of convenience with a cooperative French-Canadian so that he could resume life in Canada. After formally leaving China, he was back in a few months, for the marriage deal had fallen through.

The cycle of entry, exit, and re-entry reminds me of another cycle I have observed among the foreigners in China. Most of us, including those who complain the loudest, think of ourselves as firmly affiliated with our native lands, whether America, Britain, or wherever. Yet in many cases, I wonder how established our nationalities are. On the one hand, perhaps surprisingly, relatively few have had much international living experience. For many, as for my wife, the journey to China was a first trip abroad. For others, it was a first trip to a third-world country. (I had only visited England before travelling to China.) Often, those who have previously lived in another third-world country appreciate China and tolerate its deficiencies. All the same, the individuals in this third category are in a clear minority.

Cutting across all three categories and offering matter for reflection is the fact that a large group of us are second- or third-generation Americans, Canadians, or whatever. It is as if the imperative for movement that spurred our forebears has reawakened in us after a generation of dormancy. Perhaps an ambivalence toward our own cultures is reflected in our profound ambivalence toward China. In any case, I sometimes think that the faint promise of a new life has lured us to what appeared in our minds as the far edge of the world. The actual glimpse of this possible new life almost always frightens more than it attracts. Just as a close ancestor dared to cross some earlier ocean, perhaps out of desperation, the present generation of China hands seems to echo in its uneasiness a desire for a transformation of life's dimensions. Neither visitors nor immigrants nor settlers in China, we are nonetheless a bit of all three during our period of residency. When my associates talk of Italian-American grandparents, a Canadian-Jewish father, a Ukrainian-

American grandmother, or a Japanese-American father, then I suspect that a process of identification with a role-model has been undertaken and that a chapter of family history has been reinscribed.

VI

In summary, several manifest causes combine with our refracted experience to create an existential enclosure that very often evokes expressions of displeasure and disapproval. Frustrations with China are frequently real and criticisms well deserved. Yet there is a China syndrome among foreigners, a special sense of estrangement between the self and the environment. Hiding from ourselves as we save China from itself, we overlook the unreality of our bastardized community spawned by an unresponding society. There have been too many dislocations of time and place. We honor our thoughts and opinions with an intense seriousness. We are unwilling to place them in brackets or under erasure; they are our things, our objective world.

One catches the nearly fictional quality of expatriate life at odd moments. At an all-foreigners party in Beijing one September, a partially intoxicated group began singing lines from a song by Paul Simon:

They've got a wall in China.
It's a thousand miles long.
To keep out the foreigners they made it strong.

And one spring, a group of Americans re-enacted the Kentucky Derby; some celebrants dressed up as horses and ran several times around one of the courtyards of the Friendship Hotel, while others watched and cheered. The rhetoric of our insularity also becomes evident in the remark of a suburban Marylander that "Beijing does have some things. You can buy peanut butter here." So artificial and transitory is our little society that I was barely surprised when a resident of a few months found it astounding that I had already spent four years in China. To him, I was an old-timer. Yet what would four years in Pittsburgh or Atlanta qualify me for? It is an irony, elicited by a complex of conditions, that merely living in the world's oldest continuous culture becomes an eccentricity.

Contempt for China is hardly confined to the period since 1949. Indeed, anti-Chinese attitudes have existed for centuries and have undergone any number of chameleon-like transformations as they have worked their way up to the present. I was made vividly aware of this statement when I was teaching British literature in Manchuria and went searching for a copy of *Robinson Crusoe* from which to cull selections to be laboriously typed and mimeographed by the departmental typing pool for the students in my lecture course. The copy I found was an instance of

hybrid publishing that made Robinson Crusoe emblematic of expatriate life. Printed in Moscow in a Soviet series of English classics, this copy now appeared on a shelf of the Jilin University library in Changchun, the former capital of the Japanese occupation government. As I reviewed Defoe's narrative, I realized that Crusoe represents all of us who move in an alien culture, especially one like that of China today. We recreate as much of our native culture as we can in order to survive, but the enclosures in which we find ourselves limit our vision as much as they protect. Especially interesting was a passage in the infrequently read and literarily inferior second part of *Robinson Crusoe,* in which the wanderer journeys to China. The Middle Kingdom is depicted as totally dismal, a nation of menials and paupers fully deserving a despotic government. The traveller's narrations that Defoe was following revealed prejudices that have survived to the present.

What offends as much as anything is the marginal quality of life in China. Many observers find it unsettling to view so many who have so little materially, for whom life is so obviously contingent, and who scurry along on the margins of human existence. Yet this nation of scurriers moves with such self-assurance and composes such a grand segment of the globe's inhabitants. In the abstract, it is impossible to see how this too numerous assemblage might have the upper hand in some cosmic argument, yet the overriding irony is that any foreign observer is on the margin of this marginal but nearly uncountable array of humanity's forces.

Sweet Moments

Molly Giles

BRUCE sat in the front seat with his arms crossed and talked about the farmers all the way to the fairgrounds; he said they took three times the water they needed and continued to plant cotton even though the government repeatedly told them not to. Annie, who had offered to drive so that Bruce could nurse his stiff knee, was confused. Cotton, she thought. Cotton was good. Soft, natural, lets your skin breathe. She was wearing a cotton skirt and blouse herself on this warm September afternoon. And as for the government—well, who would do what the government "repeatedly" told them to? Bruce wouldn't. Bruce had gone to Canada in the 70s to get out of the draft, and he still spent a lot of time figuring out how to avoid paying taxes. "I thought," she said, squinting in the bright light, "we liked the farmers."

"How do you mean?" Bruce turned to her. His eyes still surprised her, such a dark blue.

Annie waved one hand toward the dry fields with their FOR SALE signs on either side of the roadway. She had taken the back route, hoping to please him. Last week, when they'd gone to the wine country, she'd taken the freeway, and Bruce had been prompted to speak out on overpopulation, pollution, and holes in the ozone. Her hand drifted off toward a few black and white cows, an unpainted barn. "The farmers around here," she said, "aren't getting rich."

"I'm not talking about around here," Bruce said. "I'm talking about the whole country."

"Oh. Well." Annie dropped her hand back in her lap. "I don't know anything about the whole country."

"Most of the mid-west, for instance, used to be desert. Then the farmers came in and irrigated it all to hell."

"But," she was confused again, "isn't that good?"

"I don't know what you mean, *good*."

This has been going on a lot lately, Annie thought. It was exactly the sort of semi-deliberate nit-picking her ex-husband Carl and she used to get into, and she knew how it would end, it would end in a fight. She did

not want to fight again, ever, at least not over anything petty. She hunched over the wheel as a pick-up truck passed them in a cloud of alfalfa and dust. Bruce was talking now about the saline content in irrigation canals, and she tried to listen, to pay attention, to learn. But it seemed the more she heard, the more oppressed and hopeless she felt. Bruce had taught her a lot about what was wrong with the world, but he had never come up with any solutions she could see to fix it. Not that he could, that any one person could. She was just being simplistic. Again. And critical. Again. Carl always said she had the soul of a hanging judge.

Bruce reached in a paper bag on the floor and pulled out an apple. "It's discouraging, isn't it," he said.

"Yes," Annie nodded, "it is." She waited, wondering if Bruce would offer an apple to her, and was not surprised when he did not. It was an organic apple—Bruce had recently decided to eat only organic fruits and vegetables—and it was pitted with holes and bruised in big places. It didn't look tempting. Annie smiled at Bruce, and he, surprised, smiled back.

"You were eating an apple the first time I met you," she reminded him.

He nodded, uncertain. He wasn't sentimental and probably didn't remember, but Annie did; she had total recall, which was sometimes a blessing, more often a curse. Bruce had come to her support group ten months before because someone had told him it would help with his anger, and he had, he told them all, a lot of anger. He was angry at his ex-wife, who had recently moved to the East Coast, taking his two sons, and he was angry at his ex-girl friend, who had just walked out on him, and he was angry at his father, who had sold the family business. "I'd like to line them all up and shoot them," he'd said, and then, before anyone could say anything, he'd reached in his jacket pocket and pulled out an apple and started to eat. Annie remembered thinking: Well, at least he knows what he wants. And the contrast between this intense, outspoken, blue-eyed stranger and Carl—who just went to bed when he got depressed, and never raised his voice, and denied even having a temper—was enough to make her slip into the booth beside him that night when the group went out for coffee, and when his knee touched hers, she did not move away, and when their hands touched, she felt startled into an alert surge of interest. They did not make love that week, or the week after, but they did the week after that. "Welcome home," Bruce had said, smiling down at her in the bed, and that's what it had felt like, an overdue reunion, a family of two, and they had slept that night and almost every weekend night since curled as close to each other as twins in a crib. There were problems, of course. He was not consistent about calling her during the week. He dropped out of the group, took a seminar in transformational breathing, dropped out of that, took up aikido. He dissolved his business, started

another, dissolved that. He was, as she got to know him, more like Carl than she had suspected: a loner, like Carl, and a crank. Her father had been the same type. It was a type she knew—she did not need the group to remind her—that she ought to run from, fast. Still, there was something about Bruce that stirred her and kept her. His idealism perhaps, or his energy. Even the quick bites he took out of his apple moved her, somehow. She listened as he wiped his lips and dropped the core in her ashtray. She would smell it tomorrow as she drove off to work, and it would fill her with regret, that she hadn't used the weekend well, that she had let her own resentments and irritations cloud the day.

"Better take the next exit," Bruce said. "You could probably drive a little faster too; everyone's passing us."

They were going to the county fairgrounds for the annual Scottish Gathering and Games. Both were Scottish, or had Scots in their ancestry, but neither had been to the Games before. The paper they had spread that morning on the sunny floor of her apartment had been full of things to do. Annie had proposed an art exhibit, the symphony, a picnic at the beach; Bruce had countered with suggestions for a political rally, a documentary on the Greenhouse Effect, a guided tour of a communal farm run by Zen Buddhists. In the end they had reached a compromise—the Games, they agreed, would be the best choice for this soft and balmy day.

"You could probably park anywhere," Bruce said, as she pulled into the fairgrounds. "Except here," he added, as she obediently turned toward the official parking lot. "I meant anywhere along the street. You don't want to pay, do you?"

"It's only a few dollars."

"Well. Whatever. It's your money."

My money, my car, and my gas, Annie thought. She kept her lips pressed tight and her face deliberately blank as she parked and paid the attendant. Carl, she reminded herself, paid for everything, but then Carl never went anywhere. Bruce waited for her at the entrance, and the smile he turned as she hurried up was so warm and approving she felt a flush, and, despite herself, began to smile back.

Everyone in the big dark barnlike structure they entered seemed dressed in costume; there were kilts and cocked hats and knee socks everywhere. There was a smell of tea and vinegar in the air and harp music played from speakers set in the walls. Low tables ran the length of the building, piled with woolen yardage and coronation mugs and fur purses and handknit sweaters. "It's like walking into a 19th century department store," Annie marvelled, but Bruce was already halfway down the hall, bent over a display of knives and embossed leather sheaths; he loved shopping and looking for bargains. Annie moved toward a display of lead soldiers and picked one up in her hand. It was heavy, and she wondered if a set of these would make a nice present for

Bruce's two sons. Probably not. The boys were already teenagers, into computer games and motorcycles. The one time she had met them they had been so rough and secretive that she had found it hard to talk to them. She looked at the fierce grey man in her hand and remembered the old fairy tale about the tin soldier who melted with love for a toy ballerina. This soldier, she decided, looked too militant to melt for anyone. She set it down, careful to point its bayonet safely away from its little lead fellows.

"Thirsty?" Bruce asked, coming up to her. "There's a booth selling Watney's over there. I think I'll go get one."

One, Annie thought. "I'll meet you in a second then," she said, her voice stiff. The Scots, she reminded herself, as she wandered past the displays of pipes and flutes and titanium jewelry and tea pots, were supposed to be stingy. Her own father had watched every penny. It was a national characteristic of some sort. She, Annie, was more like her mother's family, more French, that is, more sensual and reckless. But that wasn't true either. If she were sensual and reckless she'd be having a better time. She touched the padded quilt of a tea cozy and smiled bleakly at the saleswoman. Some weavers called out to her and she stood and watched them for awhile, then she turned and watched four red-haired children dancing in a ring. No one, she thought, looked particularly happy; they all looked as intent, reserved, and remote as she felt. But then the Scots were supposed to be dour. Her dad had been dour—bitter, really. His parents had been missionaries in China, and their parents before them. Annie thought of Grandmother McLeod, her straight back and steel glasses. "There are only two ways to do things," Grandmother McLeod had taught Annie. "The hard way. Or the wrong way." She looked up as Bruce's hand fell on her shoulder.

"You sure go into a trance sometimes," he said.

"I was thinking about my grandmother. She would have liked it here."

Bruce nodded. He had a paper cup of beer in one hand and a big sausage roll in the other; he was chewing noisily and there was grease on his chin. "I suppose that's completely organic," Annie said, then caught her breath, horrified. That was how she used to talk to Carl. But Bruce did not seem to notice.

"My grandmother had stuff like this, too," he said. "Lace doilies. Toby mugs. Artificial flowers. I don't know about you, but it makes me feel claustrophobic. I may have to break something soon."

Annie looked at him, relieved. In that, as, really, in so many ways, she and Bruce were alike.

"Let's go outside where we can breathe."

Outside it was hot and bright and busy, with people in costumes everywhere. Annie looked for someone she knew, but no one looked familiar

to her; everyone looked Scottish. A small band of pipers was tuning up on the grass and her attention was caught by one young girl who was preparing to play a drum in the band. She had bristly copper hair and a face like a little fox, pale and pointed. She was dressed like the others, in heavy woolens, and her lips were half-parted in the heat. She seemed unsure of when she should start, and stood absolutely still, watching the drummer beside her. Oh, I wish I were her, Annie thought: new, and just learning, and no mistakes made yet. The drummer beside the girl looked like her brother Kevin, with his blonde hair and big chin, and the man beside him looked like her Grandfather McLeod, black-haired and wiry, with the same sharp look in his focused gray eyes. The music, starting, made her move closer to Bruce; it was so loud—clean, sour, warlike music that roared right through her. "Fightin' music," Bruce said, as the band marched off over the grass. "Makes me want to go storm some barricades." He gave a little kick.

"How's your leg?" Annie asked. She had tried not to notice—had not been able not to notice—that his limp had been gone for some time.

"You know? It feels better. I don't know what I did to it in that aikido class last week, but it's better today. Maybe it's the heat."

Annie pursed her lips. She remembered Bruce's bad ankle last month, and his bad back the month before. A lot of Bruce's ailments seemed to disappear when he didn't think about them, but that was true for everyone, surely—look at her. All I have to do, she thought, repeating the credo she was trying to live by, is forget the past, trust the future, and take each day as it comes. Bruce and I have sweet moments together, and they're all that count. Sometime we may have a whole day of sweet moments and then another and then a week, a month, a life. It could happen. It was possible.

This thought, as it always did, lightened her, and she lifted her head and looked around. It was easy to feel light and free with the sun shining down on them and pipe music blowing and little children in costumes running past, and—"Look at that!"—she pointed and laughed—a huge white sheepdog, all brushed and beribboned, being chauffeured around in a decorated golf cart. The important thing was to accept simple silly pleasures, like the sheep dog, and enjoy them, and get out of this slump she was in, this divorce depression, or whatever it was. Just because one relationship had failed did not mean she was doomed to fail, again and again. She felt the familiar infusion of self-pity and blinked the tears back in the sunshine.

Bruce led her through the crowds to a place by the cyclone fence where they could watch the competition in the playing field. "They're starting the caber toss," he told her. His voice sounded muffled and Annie glanced up. He was feeding himself again—a wedge of shortbread this time. Her stomach rumbled in hunger as his free hand pressed slowly,

competently, into the small of her back. "Can you believe these monsters?" His sugared breath was close to her ear. "They have got to be on some serious steroids."

Annie followed his gaze toward a group of overweight men who were standing around on a dusty patch of trampled grass. One of them was trying to pick up what looked like a telephone pole. He lifted it, straining, and somehow even managed to balance it for a second or two in his arms. The crowd hushed but the huge pole fell with a crash to the dust before he could throw it.

"Everyone near the fence please stand back."

The voice over the microphone startled her, it sounded so close, and she stepped back automatically, her eyes still fixed on the contestant. The name on the back of his shirt was DeMaestri. "That's not very ethnic," she smiled, but she was alone, for Bruce was still standing at the fence.

"Would everyone at the fence stand back. Everyone. Please."

"Bruce?" Annie called. He stood, hands in pockets, not answering, the lone figure left at the fence in full sun. Oh God, she thought, this is his idea of fighting the system.

"One last time, you with the grey hair."

Bruce turned, astonished, to stare straight above Annie's head and into the stands where the voice seemed to come from, and Annie squirmed a little for him. Of course he doesn't see himself as "you with the grey hair," she thought. She crooked her finger. "C'mere," she said, and, kindly, "Don't be such a rebel."

"I don't see what's 'rebellious' about wanting to see," Bruce said, as he walked toward her.

"I don't either," Annie said, loyal. "They're just worried about their insurance or something, I guess." She waited while Bruce stopped to talk to some other men who had also been asked to move from the fence. "They won't even let us into the grandstands," one of the men complained. "You have to have reservations to sit up there."

"You mean they charge you twice, once at the gate and once inside?" Bruce's voice was outraged.

Annie stared down at her sandal, drawing circles in the dirt. She wondered where Carl was right at this moment. In bed, probably; he'd liked to spend all day Sundays in bed, with the drapes drawn, watching golf matches on TV. She remembered the hushed voices of the announcers talking to each other, the only voices in the whole house, and she remembered too the sense she'd had, of being locked in an underground cave while the world spun on without her.

"Come on, Annie. We're going to sit up in the grandstands," Bruce said. He waited until the attendant checking reservations turned his back, then quickly slipped up the first flight of stairs. Annie hesitated, then ducked her head and followed. It was crowded on the first landing, but they

found seats on the second tier, and Annie sat down at once where Bruce motioned. He was still unsmiling, but after a second he said, "Idiots," in a quiet voice and pulled out a package of gum. Annie watched him extract a piece and start chewing. She took a deep breath. "Bruce," she said, "I'd like a piece too."

"Sure," Bruce said. "Here."

Easy as that. Not a relationship problem after all, nothing that couldn't be solved. Just a simple matter of communication: I ask, he answers. Annie stared at the paper-wrapped stick in her hand, unwrapped it, and placed it on her tongue. First the faint dusting of powder, then the familiar burst of artificial sugars, then the almost sexual, very satisfying transformation of the brittle bits into a sleek, elastic mass. "I like it that you can be so brutal to gum," Annie mused, and Bruce nodded. He didn't ignore her, like her father had, or say, "What are you babbling about now?" the way Carl had; he listened to her, and the things she said.

"It's a great way to release aggression," he said. "I know I'd be lost if I didn't have something to bite now and then." He grinned, his apology, and squeezed her around the waist, and after a second Annie nestled against him. They watched another man struggle with the caber in the playing field below. The pole rose, arced, and flew—but it must have fallen short, for the crowd only murmured and did not burst into the applause Annie had expected.

"This next one will make it," Bruce predicted, and sure enough the next contestant, a man with a pony tail, did manage to throw the caber so it stood on end before falling with a long loud thud. The man, whose name over the loud-speaker appeared to be Goldfarb, made fists of his hands and pranced around, and Bruce laughed out loud for the first time that day. Annie laughed too. The afternoon seemed to have taken a turn for the better, and the phrase "sweet moments" echoed in time to her chewing. She looked around at other people in the grandstands—an older couple fanning themselves with sections of the Sunday paper, some teenagers passing a bottle of wine back and forth. None, she thought, looked so content as Bruce and she.

The caber toss came to an end and half-a-dozen gaily costumed marching bands lined up on the playing field for the grande finale. "This is going to be loud," Bruce warned, and Annie nodded, bracing herself for the pleasure she knew the music would bring her. She heard the first shrill chords and sat forward, to take it all in. She could see the copper-haired girl clearly, even up here. A high school girl, she decided, who still lived at home, in a farm house perhaps, like one of the ones they had passed on their way here. She could imagine the girl surrounded by brothers and sisters as bristly haired and fox-like as she; she could see the whole family sitting around a long plank table, talking to each other as they ate and laughed. I'd like to live like that, Annie thought. With

simplicity, and trust, and good will. She glanced at Bruce shyly. We could live like that together, she thought. Find an old house, fix it up, plant a garden out back. He could still go to law school; he wasn't too old; she could support him; she'd be glad to support him. What a lawyer he'd make. He could really do something for the farmers then! No. Against the farmers. Whatever. For the people. For the world. Bruce's eyes caught hers, and he smiled.

"Had enough?" he said. "Come on, let's check out the rest of it before we head back. Maybe we'll even beat the traffic home for once."

She followed him down the two flights of stairs to the stadium floor. The gum had gone flat in her mouth and she looked around for a receptacle. There was a large black can by the exit. She noticed that Bruce had already reached into his mouth for his gum, and she was about to suggest a contest, like the caber toss, to see who could throw whose gum into the container from the farthest distance, when she saw him drop it, just drop it, on the ground. It fell from his hand so casually, and, at the same time, so deliberately, that she stopped to stare down. A little gun-grey gleaming lump, like a lead heart, melted down.

"Bruce?" she said. "Your gum?"

He turned, relaxed, smiling. "What about my gum?"

"You dropped it."

"Yeah. I see. What do you want me to do? Pick it up?"

"No. It's just. I mean all day you've been going on about ecology and the environment and how people should be treated in places like this, and then you . . ."

She stopped, she had to, how could she go on? Words pounded loud in her head: Hypocrite! Cheapskate! Coward! Fool! These were not the same words she had unleashed on Carl, but they had the same meaning, and they would bring, she knew, the same result.

Bruce waited, arms crossed. "And then I . . . ?" he prompted. "Go ahead, Annie, say it. You've been dying to pick a fight all day anyway."

There was a silence, both of them staring past each other at the openings framed by the stadium overhang. Annie could see dry hills, a grove of live oaks, the first pillars of new freeway construction. I could leave, she reminded herself. I have the car. I could leave him here like his ex-wife did, and all his ex-girl friends. But she didn't move. And Bruce didn't either. After a second he said, his voice tight, "And then—go ahead, say it—I *littered*." He watched her. "Right?"

"Right," Annie muttered.

"And you want to nail me for that."

"I don't want to *nail* you," Annie began, but Bruce raised his hands like a man under arrest.

"Is littering the worst charge you can levy against me?"

She brought her eyes to his face. How tired he looked. Tired and old

and scared and alone. And how blue his eyes were, even here, the darkest blue she'd ever seen. "Yes," she lied.

"And that's not so bad, is it?"

"No," she lied.

"So let's just say I owe you one. All right?"

"All right." Annie touched the cold hand he held out and matched her steps to his as they turned toward the exit. As they stepped into the sun she felt herself seized with a small fit of ecstasy. We made it, she thought. We had a fight and we survived. We didn't say anything unforgivable to each other. I didn't have to launch into a detailed analysis of his character defects; he didn't have to push me so far I took off forever. We changed, she thought. We overcame our pasts. We grew. The bagpipes playing from the field made her want to skip into a march herself. Then she noticed that Bruce, who was limping again, had crossed his arms.

"One thing about the Scots," he said. "They brought that damn weed with them."

"What weed?"

"Scotch broom. Do you know that Scotch broom has successfully crowded out almost every single native California grass and that it is slowly choking the entire foothill range of the Sierras?"

That yellow flower? Annie frowned. She used to see it bloom in the hills on those solitary Sunday walks she took when she was married to Carl. Sometimes she'd bring armfuls back and Carl would lie in bed and sneeze. "It's just a simple wildflower," she said. "Isn't it?"

"Simple?" Bruce repeated. "I'd like to know what's simple about botanical genocide."

Annie turned to laugh out loud. But Bruce was serious. Bruce was always serious. That's one of the things I like about him, she reminded herself. She sighed and bit down hard on her own gum, which was still in her mouth. She spit it into the piece of foil she'd saved in her pocket, wrapped it tight the way Grandmother McLeod had taught her years ago, and dropped it into a zippered part of her purse. "Why," she said, "is everything so hard?"

Bruce shook his head. "I don't have the answer to that one," he said.

Charms

Jonathan London

HOT. Hot enough to kill. One good thing, though, about this heat: it draws out the pine scent, the resins, the sap like blood from a wound.

But the dust! We careen through a ball of it, blind as bats, sweat running down our dust-caked bodies.

We've spent the day on the river: south fork of the Yuba, foothills of the Sierras. All day cool plunges to slake the body's thirst for reprieve. From the heat. The sun's hammer pounding through the river willow's shade. The crystal pools growing murky from our mad churnings to douse the fires smoldering inside us.

Now the sun's completing its wide arc and the heat's showing signs of tapering, and what we need now more than anything is to eat. Shrouded in dust, we drive up steep pot-holed dirt roads in the backcountry with our seven-month-old boy strapped in the back wailing bloody murder, his four-year-old brother whining "I'm *hungry*" and my own belly's burbling like bad plumbing and my wife's saying, "This certainly isn't my idea of a nice, relaxing vacation away from everything."

Feeling uneasy, fearing our campsite in this crowded season might have been invaded and occupied, we crunch past the sign at the entrance to the campground. We follow the figure eight, and make the sharp turn to the left up the rutted drive to our spot.

Christ. There's a man there. I *knew* it. I yank on the hand brake, leaving the motor idling. Sprawled atop our picnic table, hand clutching a beer can, is a scraggy man whose sunken cheeks and eyes and ratty hair spark the image of another man who'd invaded our space. (Years ago, we'd left our house in the care of a house-sitter for three weeks. A student at the California School of Herbal Studies, she'd been living in a teepee and had been recommended by an old friend. But upon our return, we were greeted not just by the sitter, but by a pack of kids and her estranged husband—a man who in looks and aspect could have been the double of the man now seated before us.)

"What are you doing here?" I ask, my voice sharpened with hunger,

outrage, my sun-burnt elbow jutting out my window. *The house was a shambles. The garden and house plants dead or dying. Grease coated the frying pan on the kitchen stove, just as scum coated the bathroom sink.*

"Hey, ho! Juz-second, man, this my place here—"

"The hell it is! Don't ya see our tent over there, our stuff everywhere?" *His hair clogged the bathtub drain.*

"Hey man, hold on now, I ain't blind. I seen your tent, but, I been here for two days, man. Left my stuff here, come back and it's gone." He lifts the can to his lips and swallows, his pointy Adam's apple jerking up and down.

Sure, I'm thinking. "What kind of stuff?" I say. "There was nothing here when we got here this morning."

"Big blue ice chest. Left it right here on this here picnic table. About six this mornin', took off for the day, come back and it ain't here. Someone musta swiped it. You haven't seen a big blue ice chest now have you?"

The guy's so see-through I could scream. I rev my engine, I say, "Look. We got here and there was nothing here and now we want our campsite so we can cook some dinner and eat. Don't you see we've got a crying baby here?" *I rounded him and his scabby family up and ushered them to their van, a big old rusty job just like the one parked behind this joker now.*

He still hasn't budged. He just sits there, all sinewy muscles and veins snaking all over him, wild hair and wild eyes, scraggly Fu-Manchu and patchy black beard, bad teeth and undoubtedly bad breath. Looks like a burnt-out biker. No ape hangers to hang onto, just an empty beer can crumpling in his fist. He shrugs and stares back at me. I can't tell in this growing gloom of long pine shadows if he's grinning or leering or what. It's a Mexican stand-off.

"I hear where you're at, bro', and hell, I mean, sure, I ain't kicking you out; there's room for us all—"

"Hell there is! Now I want you out of here. I got kids here and we still got to chop wood and make a fire and cook some dinner and it's almost dark. We came up here all this way to get away, not to share our space with others." *Before they could leave, I gathered the three huge black plastic bags overflowing with garbage—their garbage—and heaped them on their laps. I felt a little sorry for their oldest daughter—a sweet-seeming girl of maybe ten, lost behind big brown eyes and a tangle of hair. Almost pretty in her long hippie dress and dirty-faced purity. She had said she loved our dogs and was going to miss them.*

The engine's still purring and Shane's still squalling and Marie's got her hand on my leg but she's still said nothing, except to Josh, agitating in the backseat but otherwise uncharacteristically quiet, witnessing this—what must be to him—strange confrontation between his daddy and a stranger.

"Yeah I hear where you're coming from, man, but the BLM busted me before for juz crashing in my van longside the road, so I juz need a place

to park and sleep and I won't be no trouble at all."

I shake my head and point my finger at him. "You're leaving *now*," I tell him. I'm a little afraid of those eyes of his I can't really see, sunk deep in those holes, and though his voice is friendly enough that knife sheathed at his hip might be used for more than whittling and peeling apples. "There was another campsite—number 4 I think it was, wasn't it, Marie?—When we got here. Whatever. You got wheels and you're on your own and I'm sure you'll make out just fine." *When their van full of kids and garbage pulled out I turned to my wife and said, "The debris of the 60s," and shook my head, as if for the first time disappointed with the results of that experiment of a generation of which I'd been a part.*

He stares at me and the tip of his tongue jabs out, flicks his lip. Then he tosses his crushed can through his van window, slaps the tops of his thighs—dust poofing up—tips forward, slouches off the table, and climbs into his van. "Right," he says, muttering something I can't catch. Slams his door and fires up his old heap of rust and eases down the cut through the pine and manzanita into the dark. It could be he waved, or flipped me the bird, I can't tell which. *And it wasn't till later that we discovered all our best clothes had been ripped off—Marie's alpaca shawl and my alpaca sweater from Puno, on Lake Titicaca. Josh's beautiful, handwoven red cap from Afghanistan. A couple of dresses, other things. Neighbors told us all kinds of ragtag folk had been in and out of our house, crashing there, throwing parties, cleaning out our cupboards and generally wreaking havoc. And the bills run up on the telephone! Calls from Colorado billed to our number. And he'd been living out there. His voice false denying it, later, when I caught up with him, demanding the 35 bucks he owed. False, like this character and his "blue ice chest". "It's cool." That's all he could say when I'd placed the garbage on his lap, as if enacting a symbolic gesture. "It's cool." Saying it, but saying it with a menacing smile.*

I turn the key in the ignition and our gas-rich carb shudders into silence. Shane has stopped his wailing and we just sit there, listening to nothing, to everything.

Out the window I notice a Miller can doubled over beneath the picnic bench, like a man gut-punched, his breath knocked out.

I turn and see that Shane's fast asleep, held from toppling forward by the buckle in his car-seat, his fuzzy head dangling like a dead man's. Marie starts to say something but I'm already out the door and marching up the narrow path to the neighboring campsite. I'm going to get me a little outside confirmation here.

"Howdy," I say, coming up to a tall, skinny, freckled woman with silky brown hair clear to her ass. From a distance attractive, close-up you could see how frazzled she is. She's putting something on the picnic table for her little ones, who are all sitting around waiting with spoons and forks in their fists. No man around, just tents—three of them, two pup tents and a family-sized dome, and lots of trikes and bikes and toys and stuff. Looks

like she's pitched camp here for the duration. Clothes hung up on lines. Pots and pans everywhere.

She just looks at me, then ladles out watery stew into yellow plastic bowls.

"I'm your new neighbor down there, and this character—" I clear my throat, embarrassed, seeing as how all those kids are watching me. "This guy down there *claimed* it was his campsite—'course I don't believe it for a minute . . ."

"Yeah, he's been there two, three days now," she tells me in a very mellow voice. "Always left a big blue ice chest to let people know the place was taken. Says someone stole it today. Poor guy, it was all he had."

Back at our campsite, I feel like shit. But hell, what could I have done? What would you have done? Night falling and two screaming kids. Starving. Our tent already set up and sleeping bags rolled out. We'd 'a' had to strike camp and drive off into the dark and find another campground and *then* make a fire and cook some dinner. It would have been midnight before we filled our bellies and got tucked in.

But still.

I've unlashed from the car-top carrier the stash of deadfall madrone and pine limbs I'd scored on the roadside, and kindled a good fire. Potatoes wrapped in tinfoil are snug deep among the coals, up against the hot stones. Corn wrapped in tinfoil sizzling in butter and chips of fresh garlic. Steaks splattering juice on the grill, balanced precariously on stones, grill lines striping the succulent meat. Josh is out searching for sticks to roast marshmallows afterwards. I can see him out there flashing light, hear him singing in the dark—"Oh-h-h I'm so hungry I could eat a tree of fire, I could eat a giant . . . " Marie slides her short-legged lounge chair up to the fire, sits down, and slips her left tit out. Shane, cradled in her arm, is fastened to it in no time flat, sucking rapturously, his eyes rolling back in ecstasy, his tiny hands gripping and releasing like cat paws, his fat little baby foot kicking.

I reach for the wine, pull the protruding cork with my teeth, drink. "Ah zin," I say, smacking my lips. "Want some?" I hold out the bottle of red wine, like an offering.

"Not now. Later, thanks." She's gazing down at our baby, stroking his hair, which stands straight up, like a punk's.

"You were a bit aggressive," she says, not looking up.

"Nazi pig, huh? Yeah, well, I was being one firm daddy—"

"Hard. You were like a reformed alcoholic. I think you saw yourself—your past—in him."

Her words hit some nail in me, make me ring with panic. Just a moment of panic, confusion. Recognition. I want to deny it and agree with her at the same instant. Can't get a word out.

"When I met you you were living like him. No, you had less than him. Just a pack on your back." (I'd been on the road almost two years, bumming aimlessly around the country, down through Mexico and Central America, up to Canada, where we'd met, stuck on the same on-ramp in the rain, heading East. We hooked up, and when we arrived at her door in Montreal, she said, "Hi, mama. I've brought a friend home.") "Ever since Suella had left you, you'd depended on friends, and strangers, for food. A place to sleep. You had a way of showing up on people's doorsteps just in time for supper."

"I never lied," I say—I don't know why.

"He wasn't lying."

"No."

"You've changed."

"I guess."

"Of course, you had your charms."

"I had luck and good looks."

"Luck, yes."

"Charms."

Makes me feel like a goddamn yuppie. No, not quite. I can't afford to be a yuppie. Perhaps that's just another name for people who have feelings that can't be named.

I poke the fire and wonder about him, out there in the night. Maybe no money. Maybe no place to go. Homeless. Some sparks flit and rise up and get lost in the stars.

After a hot day, there's a chill coming on. I crouch closer to the fire for warmth.

"I found one!" Josh shouts, running up, kicking dust and pine cones, panting. I fish out my Swiss Army knife from my hip pocket and whittle the tip of his stick to a sharp point for spearing marshmallows. Shane, his mouth dribbling milk, lifts his head and peeks at me, a smile blooming his face like a radiant flower. Marie, fire glowing in her dark brown eyes, reaches out toward me, and the wine, and says, "Hon, I'm ready now."

I pass her the bottle and listen, turning my head toward the dark. There's a car out there, or a van. I can hear it. Seems to be coming our way. Its high beams sweep the sugar pines overhead, igniting the branches for a moment, the needles shining. My heart stops, my breath. Then the lights, with the low roar behind them, move on, drilling twin holes into the dark.

Marie hands me the bottle. I grasp it, averting my eyes, still listening, and take a deep slug.

I just want to be able to feel good about myself.

Some Sheep, Some Wool

Laurie Kaplan

IN the wind, the hand-painted sign flapped white and orange, white and orange, insistent brassy scrawls daring him to look. Francis slowed his pickup truck to inspect the curving, sinuous letters: FOR SALE, he read, SOME SHEEP, SOME WOOL. Or, he thought, that's what I think I read. I've never in my life seen such a damn stupid sign. SOME SHEEP, SOME WOOL, he scoffed. Christ.

Francis glanced into his rearview mirror and assessed the grey fieldstone house wrapped in vines. That wisteria will eat out the mortar between the stones and that old boxwood needs trimming, but by the time he made those judgments he was already a mile down the road. When he rounded the next curve, the composite impression of sheep and wool, mortar and boxwood recalled what he had driven out to forget.

Suddenly inexpressibly angry, Francis squinted into the sun. It was a trick he had developed as a child: when he was angry or frightened—when, in fact, he thought he might lose control and cry—he squinted into the light and tried to block out the dark images. He felt that loss of control more often these days, generally set off by something as insignificant and stupid as the incompetent FOR SALE sign.

As he drove along the back roads, the white light of spring threw enormous plum-colored shadows in front of his truck. The silence, punctuated by the cries of birds, soothed him. Birds and wind, he thought, birds and wind. The words were poetry to him. But Elsa, his wife, despised the isolation of country life; she hated the rolling Maryland hills, the early hard freezes, the early deceptive thaws. Bird seed draws rats, she complained; the bare cornfields look dirty. Two years into the marriage the net had closed in and choked them off irretrievably from each other. Francis had wondered for a quarter of a century why they had ever married each other, and what, other than the outmoded but inescapable laws of their religion, kept them together to torment each

other in their big, tidy house. Like two old nuns, they hardly ever touched, and they never embraced.

Francis rubbed the back of his fist across his eyes. Sometimes, in a blinding instant when his fields glowed with the russets and coppers of the harvest or when the green of the grass was too intense, he realized that the life he loved was sterile and wrong. He felt as though his heart were bound by a tight band that crushed out all feeling for other people. Like a shy child, he had withdrawn too far into himself to speak casually or conversationally.

The problem was, and at 54 he was only beginning to face it, he just didn't care any more. The knowledge that they had in some way warped each other's lives didn't generate pity or disgust. Life would go on. There wasn't anything else to it. Francis piled up the clichés and pretended he had mastered himself.

Most days, he chose to stay away in the fields and orchards. He planted rare herbs and miniature vegetables and hybrid tea roses, knowing that they would need his constant attention; he raised delicate breeds of animals, attending them through long nights of foaling and lambing and whelping and weaning. His gardens and barns gave him an excuse to nurture something of his own, to focus on life instead of on the dead mess of his marriage. In his heart he felt beyond hate. Every day was simply dreary disillusionment.

Sometimes, he would argue with her—he knew he was doing it and just couldn't stop himself—about the possibility of rain, the dates the calves were due, the price of melons. He didn't even care if he were right or wrong.

Melons, Francis remembered, that was what had set them off so early: squabbling over how much to pay for the damn melons. And what words we have wasted, he thought, when we have enough money to buy all the melons the hothouse in Steventon can produce. It was when she said that he shouldn't *dare* to pay—, well, he knew that for peace he should just leave it alone, but then she had to go and say "don't you dare." Dammit, he never told her she shouldn't dare to do something she proposed to do.

Francis pulled his truck into the market square and signaled for his two golden retrievers, his two best dogs, to stay where they were in the back. He walked off toward the striped awnings. Some of the farmers had gathered at the bakery, and Francis stood among them, humming softly and looking around at the buyers and sellers. That was another trick Francis had perfected: he absent-mindedly hummed snatches of big band tunes, appearing at the same time self-contained, almost mute, almost stupid.

"Morning, Tom," he said, interrupting his tunes only briefly. "Morning, John."

"Morning, Frank," they answered in unison. They drank coffee com-

panionably, not bothering to chat, to say the obvious. Abruptly, Francis wondered if they were talkers or listeners in their own homes. He had simply assumed that most married lives weren't much different from his own with Elsa. Now, looking closely at them, Francis felt the headachy nausea of sudden panic. These men, too, had married early, but they both had children, and grandchildren by now. There must have been more to their lives, he concluded with dismay. Francis stopped humming and stared at the sun. He set his face in such rigid lines that his flesh seemed cut of stone, and then he went quickly to the stalls in the square.

He bought bread, cheeses, three huge golden melons, and a ham for the next day's dinner with his wife's brothers and sisters and their children. Deliberately, painfully mindful of his wife's last injunction, he went to look over the animals that had been brought to market for sale. "And don't come home with any more animals," she had sneered. "You look like a darn fool around here, with all those cats and dogs rubbing against your legs and shedding on the furniture. Don't you dare come home with any more dogs."

While he stood at the sheep pen staring at the blur of the frightened animals, he heard through the bleating his wife's voice saying over and over, "Don't you dare, don't you dare."

Francis stored the ham and cheeses in his cooler, and then he whistled his dogs into the front seat. As he headed out of town on the same back-road that brought him in, he looked over the great patches of farmland, deeply furrowed and deadly dark checkered with the pale sweep of sprouting alfalfa. He loved the order of the seasons and the certainty of their coming—as long as one was patient enough not to despair when it snowed in September or April or when the December sun drew the tips of bulbs out of the frozen ground; he loved the order of the land, too, the inevitability of the blossoms-to-leaves-to-fruit patterns of the orchards.

Francis wondered how he could have allowed his own life to become so disorderly, but such thinking made him restless. He rolled down his window to cool his face in the rush of air. In the wind, just down the road ahead of him, the orange and white sign fluttered, messy and violent against the subtle landscape. The sign was so amateurish, so childish—he felt another wave of irritation. SOME SHEEP, SOME WOOL. He drove on contemptuously.

At the next bend, he turned his truck around. He had to see for himself.

The gates gaped open. White crossbars were set in a frame of sky blue, and the paint scheme was repeated around the windows of the house and the out-buildings—a fanciful scheme, he thought, more work than most of the farmers around here would bargain for. As the wheels of the truck crunched over the stones of the drive, Francis grudgingly admired how the forsythia and ivy had twined into intricate patterns over the low walls

of the kitchen garden, and how carefully the daffodils, irises, and tulips had been staked up in clusters. The boxwood he had judged too bushy was, in fact, shapely; the drooping wisteria vines, splendid with frilly cones of pale, lavender flowers against glossy leaves, clung to the west side of the house, simultaneously fragile and unyielding. Around a sundial, a formal herb garden mapped itself out in widening concentric circles. When he got out of the truck Francis could smell lily-of-the-valley, and hyacinths, and paperwhite narcissi, fresh, sweet fragrances, intermingled with something acrid and nasty—marigolds, he thought, but it wasn't their season.

In the garden, with her back toward Francis, stood a woman dressed in jeans and a fawn-colored turtleneck sweater which hung down over her hips and reached about mid-thigh. She was tall and slight, and stood so still that she seemed poised, like some wild creature, for flight. She kept her back to him, but Francis felt that she knew he was there, so he waited, a mirror image of her stillness.

When at last the woman turned, Francis saw that her face was contorted and blotchy from weeping. As she looked at him, tears streamed down her cheeks and she did nothing to wipe them away.

Instinctively, Francis took a step backward. He wasn't sure he had ever seen Elsa weep, and here was this strange woman crying openly, silently, in front of him. He saw that she was, perhaps, 35 or 40—he really couldn't tell people's ages—that her auburn hair was brushed with grey, and that her eyes were grey, too, grey as smoke and smudged, almost, when she finally pulled the back of her hand across her face.

Francis, embarrassed, said very quietly, "Is there something I can do?"

She shrugged her shoulders and shook her head, but then she wrapped her arms around her slim body and tugged almost convulsively at her loose sweater, wringing herself in a punishing grip. Her sleeves were pushed up on her arms, and Francis could see irregular traces of garish orange dye and green and indigo circling her wrists like braided bracelets of multicolored ribbons. Her hands and fingers were spotted and streaked like camouflage coloring gone awry.

She's the weaver, he remembered suddenly. He had heard about her—an outsider, a foreigner or something—Canadian, that was it, with a husband who went off every day to work in Baltimore—computers or stocks or something. Nobody saw much of him, what with his long drive into the city and back. He remembered that Elsa had said something about "the weaver" doing some kind of difficult repairs for textile museums, but he hadn't really listened to any of the rest of her gossip.

"I can't help it," she said. "I cannot stop crying."

Nervously, Francis picked some fuzzy strands of sheep's wool from the lichen on the wall and looked off into one of the pastures. He would cry

too if she didn't stop.

"I came about the sheep. The sale sign," he explained. " 'Some sheep,' " he quoted ironically.

As he spoke she began to sob, and he saw she was shivering.

"Okay," he said, and he strode toward her. Awkwardly, like picking up a foal for the first time, he put his arm around her shoulders and leaned her body into his. She felt stiff in his grasp, her stained hands and arms cold to his touch.

"We'll go into the kitchen," he said, and, holding her, he guided her along the path towards the house. Francis saw the dogs in the truck with their faces hanging out the window. He saw them wagging their tails, and for some reason he felt reassured.

"This house must be two centuries old," he chatted as he sat her down at a long bleached pine table. He was astounded to find himself talking. She dropped her head onto her arms and sat motionless while he moved about the kitchen filling the kettle, looking through the cupboards and cannisters for tea, setting out cups and saucers.

Humming quietly to himself, Francis went through the low archway into the living room to look for a blanket or sweater to wrap around her shoulders. Light streaming in through uncurtained French windows broke into shards of color on a massive loom, the weft running in creamy linen and the warp lying like polychrome mosaics on sand. From the beamed ceiling hung skeins of colors, red and blue and black and white wool looped and knotted in figure eights. Francis saw a geometrically patterned rose and amber Oriental carpet tacked in place on her work table, a hole the size of a grapefruit picked clean and ready for repair. The room glowed with deep ruby and cobalt and vulgar, bright orange—he thought of the scrawled FOR SALE sign that had signalled him to stop—and saffron and "black sheep" grey.

Aware of a pungent odor in the room, Francis realized that he *was* smelling marigolds, that the bitter, stinging fumes were rising from the golden yards of yarn drying out on an open rack. From the work table near a couple of ceramic bowls, he picked up a basket of bottles and read the exotic labels: ocher, massicot, cochineal, scarlet madder, chrome yellow. When he put the basket down, he saw that particles of ultramarine had rubbed bruises of blue on his hands.

The few pieces of furniture, two wing chairs and a cushioned settee, were upholstered with the doublewoven textures of wool and linen. He grasped the back of one the chairs, realizing that she had woven the vivid flamestitch materials herself. Slung over the arm of the settee was a summer-and-winter coverlet in earth tones—greens and browns and pale yellows, the same colors he had admired in the fields that morning. Hesitantly, he touched the soft, silky woolen fabric, and then he held it to his face.

Francis thought she might have fallen asleep, for she had not moved since he sat her at the table. He gently tucked the cover around her and finished making the tea. Turning around, he saw that she was watching him. She had stopped crying, but her eyes were puffy and dazed. From the fields beyond the house he could hear the clanking of small metal bells and the desperate sounds of sheep bleating, so close, he thought, and so terribly sad.

"I'm Francis Connelly, from Cavendish Farm, just down the road." She nodded at him, her head still resting on her arms. He was relieved when she sat up and took the hot cup from him. When she raised the cup to her lips, he noticed the thick gold wedding band circling her mottled finger.

"Marina Bennett." She choked slightly when she spoke.

Francis got up to look for some bread and butter. He left the door open while he went out to his truck to get the cheese he had bought that morning at the market. On an impulse he whistled for the dogs to follow him back into the house, and they sniffed around her and wagged their tails and nudged her to pet them. Slowly, she cupped her hands on their heads, stroking each of them in turn.

"The male is Cornflake—Corny, and the bitch is Bluebelle—Belle," he said, apologetically. "Not very creative, I know."

The dogs sat with her and put their paws in her lap. Francis gave her some bread and cheese, and together, in silence, they ate. When they finished, he gathered up the plates and cups and took them to the sink.

"Are you married?" she asked flatly, as though she didn't really want to know.

Francis put the cups down onto the draining board. His back to her, he gazed out through the window. In a pasture now, near the stream, he could see a small herd of long-haired sheep—purebred Romneys, he guessed, ungainly in their heavy winter coats.

"Yes." He wanted to say to her, It depends on what you mean, but he simply repeated, "Yes."

He turned to her. She stared into his eyes for a moment and then let her glance drop. Spreading her hands out towards the sun, she rubbed at a vein of scarlet that ran around her right wrist.

"My husband just left me," she said carefully, as if the words were part of a new language. "Last evening he came in from work much earlier than usual and announced, 'I'm off. You'll hear from my lawyers.' "

Francis stared at the random patterns of dye on her arms.

"That's all. Lawyers. The last word he said to me." She sat wide-eyed, her face smooth with wonder. "At least it's over—the waiting, I mean. Fifteen years of marriage." She spoke in fragments. "Something has been wrong for a long time now. Thank God it's over." She repeated this with a sudden energy, and she stood up. "It's over and he's out. For what? It's

probably a very young woman with long legs and a flat belly."

Francis was just slightly shocked. "I suppose that's why you were crying when I pulled up."

"No!" Her face almost in his face, her voice shrill and ugly, she snapped at him. "No. Never."

Her words stung him. "I would never cry for him," she said angrily. "It's not the first time he's walked out, but it is the last. I knew it would be like this if I wanted to stay stuck out here in Nowhere—that's what he called all this." She waved her arm in a wide arc, indicating the house, the land, the sheep. Francis's gaze followed the sweep of her arm.

"You see, and this is really crass," she hesitated, seeming to sort out exactly what she wanted to say. "I just don't care anymore. I mean, about him. I stayed up all night in agony because—because I found out that I don't care." Then she laughed sharply. "God damn bloody lawyers." She pushed her way past him out of the house.

Francis found her kneeling in the middle of a long herbaceous border still ragged with tufts of dry stalks. The light had changed, and in the shadows the wind was cold. While he stood watching her, she jabbed savagely at the soil and ripped at the roots of a withered, rustling foxglove.

"Don't do that," Francis blurted out at her. Then he modified his tone. "If you dig at the plants like that, you're going to damage the root systems. You won't have flowers this year."

The trowel stopped mutilating the stalks, and she knelt in the dirt, stiff and bowed.

"If you want something to do," he suggested, "go and shear those sheep." He pointed to the pasture where the six or seven animals tottered their bulky bodies on skinny black legs. As he spoke, she plunged her trowel viciously deep into the soil and scooped out a clod of the dirt. With an cry, she heaved the trowel at the wall.

"What did I say?" The question seemed wrenched from his throat. "I don't understand."

Marina spread her hands out flat on the ground and tried to jam lumps of soil into the holes.

"It's my fault," she moaned. "It's all my fault." Francis reached down and pulled her up from the garden.

"I don't understand," he repeated. "You said you didn't care about him anymore." He was almost frightened of her.

"Control," she sneered. "I thought I had myself under control after staying up all night telling myself it didn't matter. 'I'm off,' he said. I was terribly angry at the bastard's way of letting me know, as though I were a plant or a tree. 'I'm off.' But I laughed when I wondered what his lawyers were going to do to me. Take away my loom? My spinning wheel? My swift? My dye pots?" She paused and took a deep breath that made her

shudder and stutter.

Francis stood by helplessly.

"So, I got up out of bed very early this morning, before it was light," she enunciated clearly, as though she were giving directions to a young child, "and I fed the animals—the, the sheep—a great big hearty breakfast, and I was going to show him and his lawyers that I was just fine. So, I got the clippers and the ties, and I corralled the sheep in the pen near the barn, and I went into the pen and got out Fluffy—"

She was talking so slowly that Francis seemed mesmerized by her voice. Oh no, he said to himself.

"—because she is my favorite pet and I always clip her first." She turned to him politely and said, in a very rational tone, "I give my pets silly names, too." She didn't bother to wipe away her tears.

"Fluffy, however, tried to get away from me, you see. She bolted and I yelled, I am in charge here, old girl, and I grabbed her and I tied her and I began to work on her coat as quickly and as fiercely as I could and—"

"You shouldn't have fed her first. You shouldn't—"

"I know," she screamed at him. "I know."

"And she choked while you worked on her."

"Yes," she sobbed. "I forgot. Oh God. I wouldn't wait. I wouldn't listen."

Francis pulled her roughly to him and crushed her face into his shoulder. "Marina, Marina." He gently stroked her head and murmured into her hair. Francis tried staring into the sun, but nothing helped him blot out the image of the animal struggling to swallow, to breathe. He struggled, too, surrendering to more emotion than he had felt in too many years to remember, but he could only repeat over and over the most mundane words. "It's all right," he told her. "It's okay."

Francis felt the horror of what she had done through her own rage. He had known, no, he knew—had fought off—the bitterness and anger that could generate such carelessness, and slowly he began to perceive the pattern of things.

"But she's dead in the barn, and I can't bear it." Marina forced her words out. "You've got to take the rest of them away. I can't even look at them. I'll get rid of the farm. I'm not fit to take care of anything any more."

"It's all right," he repeated.

But they both knew that what had happened wasn't all right, and that was the bond that allowed them to hold each other in an embrace.

* * *

Francis put her to sleep in her bed, with Corny and Belle loose in the house to keep her company. He found a big mixing bowl and filled it with water for the dogs, and then he looked in the Welsh dresser for an extra

set of house keys, in case she should be asleep still when he returned. He cut the sign down, and then he made sure the sheep had all the food they would need for the rest of the day.

Fearing what he would discover, Francis checked the out-buildings and the barn until he found the dead animal, its fleece only partly cut from its body. Methodically, he trimmed off the rest of the long-haired silky coat. He rolled the unbroken fleece inside out and wrapped it in his jacket. Then, he dragged the shorn, stiff body beyond the barn, past the stream, out of sight of the house, and buried it in a deep pit so that scavengers couldn't get at it in the night.

When he knelt beside the stream and began to wash the dirt and wisps of fuzzy wool from his hands, the cold water, which hurt his bones, stung tears into his eyes. As he held his hands beneath the surface, he could suddenly see the intricate lines in his palms magnified out of proportion, so he plunged his hands in up to his elbows. The icy water, rushing over his flesh, numbed his fingers, his hands, his arms, but for once he could see the things and events in his life clearly.

Francis saw, for example, that he could not go home and say to Elsa, "I'm off." He saw that the dramas of the young, with their talk of lawyers and their ability to walk away from their land, to sacrifice their animals, everything that meant anything, would kill him. He saw that he really was too set to wipe out all those years, to start over somewhere else. Elsa, he felt, was nothing to him, but he could not walk out on his farm, on his animals, on all that he had built up outside while his marriage had been torn apart from within.

Yet, and Francis saw this very clearly too, Marina must not give up her sheep, her life as she loved it, her land. As he scrubbed at his hands, he stared at the entwining vines and the flowers notched into the garden walls. He thought of the room where she had her loom, an open, airy place, spare and strong, full of space and color and light. If she sought silence in her work and peace in her gardens, he would help her have what had been blasted out of his own life. He was boxed in by his own wasted marriage, but this woman was free now, and he could help her stay free—like a deer, he thought, or like a bird in the wind.

Shaking his wet hands dry in the air and seeing in his gesture the rainbow of colors that spread over Marina's wrists, Francis calculated how long his chores at home would take. With his back to the sun, he decided to return in time to make sure Marina got some supper, and he would see if she wanted to keep the dogs as company for awhile.

Tomorrow, Sunday, he thought, he would come early in the morning, bringing his things—his own clippers and shears. Those sheep, weighed down by the bulk of their own bodies, demanded his attention, and everything else would have to wait.

Mrs. Mellors

Robert Moulthrop

THEY ate earlier now, then moved to the den to watch the seven o'clock news, two bodies in two chairs in the dark. The wood panelling still bounced around the light from the flickering pictures, but the words no longer collected in the room; now they seeped away through the membrane of books, drapes, and carpet. But the river of sound and the changing light were sometimes quite soothing to Helen.

She heard Allen now, muttering at the television. "Facts, where are your facts? You opinion boys. Opinion . . ." He trailed off. She tried to remember. "It is round," she heard herself think. "Round and silver, something shining at least." She watched the screen for a clue, but there were only men walking on a road. "Opinion," she thought. "What a nice sound." After the news he changed the channel, then adjusted the afghan more securely across her lap. "I'll just be downstairs," he said. "Just there."

Helen's eyes focussed on the flickering light. There was something dim beyond the deep, nibbling at the edge of remembrance. She looked down at her bad hand, picked it up with the good one, and moved it. She saw the vein and remembered the royal purple dress she had worn to the class concert. How rich the color had felt across her shoulders. She willed the memory, so complete, to stay, yearning for it as it slipped away, trying to hold it even as she wondered why she felt a yearning.

In mid-March she had bent over a cluster of yellow crocuses, strongly pointing out their snow bravery to her excited fifth graders. The star that burst so suddenly in her brain made her blue eyes go wide with surprise. She moved gracefully to her knees in the snow as the children watched. She was always full of unexpected drama, and they were a willing audience. She fell, quite slowly, sideways in the snow, and only after some seconds did one tiny dark-haired girl begin to cry. Finally, the two biggest boys ran in stride across the schoolyard to find someone, while the rest of the class stood guard. Now it was cold again. By an effort of will she forced her arm under the blanket laid across her lap and closed her eyes.

Allen's other equipment had been pushed off to the side and his work-

bench now held spools of copper wire, solder, diodes, computer chips, and several neatly folded diagrams and instructions. He soothed his evenings with reading, understanding, doing. He had no notion of where the radio would be, how it would fit into his life when it was finished. He had always pictured his futures, his days, wrapped in thick white paper resting neatly on cool, dry shelves. Unopened, still, quiet, none would reveal any uncomfortable surprise. Each would provide the small satisfactions of order and solutions.

Later, when he paused midway up the stairs, it was not so much to catch his breath as to assess once more the day's progress: five circuits done and four laid out. He closed the cellar door and pulled the neatly folded letter from his pocket. From across the darkened room he was again amazed at the angles her body now chose for sleep; her previous self had always been so composed. Now she was all askew, aslant. "Skew-gee," his sister Bert had called it on her brief visit North. "It's different is all I mean," she had said, patting his arm.

He fingered her letter, then moved the straight-backed chair across from Helen and sat for a moment with his hands folded, watching her. He was about to reach out and touch her gently on her good arm, when she opened her eyes and looked at him in gradually fading terror. He wondered where she had been in sleep and helped her adjust her body.

"We got a letter from Bert today," he said, sitting back down. She frowned, then smiled, remembering Bert, remembering that endless laughing evening at the Oyster House when the waitress had delivered the great Corn and Bunion Saga with every order of steamers. Articulated joy, she thought, described that evening best. She wished she could share the remembrance with Allen, but knew her speech could not be found. And then the entire thought left, and she began to weep into the void.

"It's a nice letter," he said, looking down at it. "They had some snow last week, and . . ." he found the place, " '. . . two deer came through the snow, right at lunchtime, and just ate up all my parsley. I got so mad I just ran outside in my slippers through the snow and shooed them both away. I must have been a sight.' " He stopped. "Can't you just picture it?" he said, smiling. Her face looked back expectantly. "Isn't that Bert something?" he asked. The question hung between them, an unmeant accusation, impossible to retrieve. He folded up the letter and put the chair back against the wall. "Time for bed now," he said. "Now it's time for bed."

The January thaw continued the next day. Mrs. Robbins once more parked the wheelchair in the sunny kitchen facing out the window toward the bird feeder. "I wonder if that cardinal will be back," she said with a smile, bustling off to heat the soup. But today there were two jays. "They zoom so quick. See that?" she said. She sat down in front of Mrs. Mellors with the spoon and napkin. When the phone rang Mrs. Robbins

was focussed on the passage of spoon to mouth. It broke her concentration and the vegetables and broth spilled on the table. She dabbed up the tiny mess on her way to the phone.

It was Mr. Mellors, calling to remind them of the afternoon's visitor. "Mrs. Mellors had him last year in fifth grade," he said. Mrs. Robbins watched the jay cracking sunflower seeds. "He's walking over after school. I mentioned it to you yesterday, remember?" He paused and thought of coming home early. "It will be all right," he said, to himself and to her. "He'll just come and chat and go."

By three o'clock Mrs. Mellors was comfortable in the living room, seated warmly in the gray chair. Mrs. Robbins finished fastening the pearls around her neck and helped her fold her hands in her lap. When the doorbell rang, she stopped once more to smile at the beautiful face. "You remember George McGrath," she said again, slowly and delicately. She stood beside her, a hostess making introductions in a delicate situation. "You always talked about him last year, so funny and bright. Now he's here to see you. A big sixth grader." And she gently moved an errant strand of hair off the pale ivory cheek.

George stood bravely on the porch at the end of a promise whispered in the snow. He stuffed his gloves deeper into his pockets, then came in and took off his orange knapsack and his coat. His glasses had steamed up and he pulled his shirttail out of his pants to clean the glasses. The beautiful face was blurry in the distance until he quickly slipped his glasses on.

"You just go in and talk," said Mrs. Robbins. "She hears everything and she might even say a word or two. I know she's glad you've come." George quickly tucked his shirt back into his pants and tip-toed into the living room.

"Hi, Mrs. Mellors," he said, sitting in a chair across from her. "It's still a 'beautiful day for learning new things,' " he quoted at her across the months and days. "Tracy gave me something for you. It's a new word, like you used to surprise us with." He looked in her eyes and thought he saw a smile deep inside. "Some of us still get new words. Tracy's is 'con-san-guin-u-ity.' " He pronounced it carefully. "It's about being related by blood, or like a secret pact where you swear a blood oath and you're connected for life." He stopped. "We like the way it sounds." The house clicked and settled in the afternoon.

"Here," he said, and placed a hand-made card in her lap. "We got everyone from last year to sign. Even Helga." He watched her hand come slowly up and down, up and down on the card. He was sure it was a sign; he wished he knew what it meant. The heat came on, first as a rumble from the basement, then warm air pushing softly through the room. George shifted in his chair and swung his feet. "Maryellen and I thought it might cheer you up if I did the main bones for you," he said at last. He

couldn't tell whether or not she moved, so he just stood up in front of her, a thin sturdy ten-year-old in pale blue dungarees and a flannel shirt.

He used both hands, the way she had taught them, pointing liquid fingers on flexible wrists at each bone on himself, using the words themselves to make a chanting, lyrical song. The light from the window fell across his shoulders, striking her smooth pale skin and deep blue eyes. His hands started by pointing to his temples and moved softly down his body in time to the words. His clear treble filled the room:

"*Cra*-nium, *man*-dible, *cla*-vicle, *ster*-num; *hum*-erus, *ra*-duis, *ul*-na. *Car*-pels, meta*car*-pels, *pha-lan-ges.*" Here the special finger wave to show the finger bones, like geese passing each other in flight. "*Fe*-mur, pa-*tel*-la," he chanted, touching his thighs and knees. Bent over he looked up and caught the sunlight reflecting off her eyes before she slowly blinked. "*Fib*-ula, *tib*-ia," he continued, touching shin and ankle. Then, hunkering down the way she had showed them, down, "down like an amphibious toad," he put his hands flat on his feet and toes and concluded, "*Tar*-sals, meta*tar*-sals, *pha-lan-ges.*"

He saw his shadow, long across the carpet, touch her feet, and her slippers made him sad. He straightened up and smiled as best he could. "I have to go now," he said. "Thank you for the nice time." On a sudden impulse he reached out and picked up her good hand and held it in his palm. "You have nice phalanges," he said. She smiled deeply as he placed her hand back in her lap. "Well, so long," he said, backing out of the room.

Mrs. Mellors watched the sunlight move across the carpet. With her good hand she smoothed the dress across her knees. Somehow, she couldn't remember why, the afternoon had been wonderful. "Cra-nium," she said aloud. It must be something smooth and golden, she thought.

The Pennsylvania Hermit

James Boylan

MARY Kennedy, a tour guide at Indian Echo Caverns, sits in the reference room of the Lancaster public library reading the life story of Amos Wilson. Her enormous pocketbook rests on a chair positioned between herself and a man with a purple fez who may or may not be Egyptian. Mary crunches a bit too loudly on a breath mint, which causes the Egyptian to look at her with eyes that, without any hesitation, release a bitter, unspeakable curse.

The title page of *The Pennsylvania Hermit* features a woodcut showing a young woman being hanged by the neck. An unruly crowd stands jeering. In the background a man upon a horse approaches, bearing a scroll labelled: A PARDON. Beneath the title are the words "Being a Narrative of the Extraordinary Life of Amos Wilson Who Expired in a Cave in the Neighborhood of Harrisburgh After Having Therein Lived in Solitary Retirement for the Space of Nineteen Years, in Consequence of the Ignominious Death of His Sister." The man with the fez switches the tassel to the other side, gets out a magnifying glass and starts to examine some flowing runes. "Annexed Is the Writings of Wilson while a Recluse, and his Reasons for Preferring a State of Solitude to that of the Society of his Fellow Human Beings." The bottom of the page bears the imprint: New York, Smith and Carpenters, Publishers. 1838.

She has to remember to go to the Seven Eleven when she's done. Ink, chocolate, vacuum cleaner bags, and something else. There were four things. Ink, chocolate, vacuum cleaner bags, and sponges. No, there were five things. Ink, chocolate, vacuum cleaner bags, sponges, and Drano. There's a clog.

There's this mole she's got that looks a little funny but it's probably nothing. The body has a mind of its own sometimes. One day you've got a funny lump in your neck and the next day it's larger and you can't remember if you're swallowing correctly, not that you aren't swallowing, but it's

a complex process, takes something like 47 different muscles per swallow and maybe you're not using all of them or maybe in the wrong order. There's a whole Institute on it at Jefferson. The Institute for Swallowing. You think maybe you should go there because you're swallowing in this new way all the time now, even when you aren't eating anything, you have to swallow once a minute, maybe more, then the next day the lump in your neck is gone and a week later you've forgotten there was any problem and you find the telephone number of the Swallowing Institute written on the back of some shirt cardboard and you don't remember what it was for. The mole she has is probably like this.

"Amos Wilson, whose eccentricity and seclusion from human society has excited so much curiosity in the western part of the state, was born in Lebanon, Dauphin county, Pennsylvania, in 1774. His parents were honest and respectable. Amos was their only son, who, at the age of 16, they apprenticed to the stone-cutting business. His countenance was of meek and modest expression and perfectly characteristic of a mild affectionate temper, and indeed his life bid fair until a most distressing circumstance not only forever destroyed his peace of mind but rendered him apparently the most unhappy of human beings."

Cinnamon. That's the seventh thing. There's a barbecue at the caverns on Sunday and she wants to make some shoo-fly pie. It's not hard to make. The hard part is getting the stuff that goes in it. Mary's brother John died of melanoma in 1981, but you don't get skin cancer from shoo-fly. Not that it's good for you, but it won't kill you. Also maybe some cassette tapes for the answering machine. "I'm not home right now but if you'll leave your message when you hear the tone, I'll be sure to get right back." She hates the sound of her own voice. She does not sound like herself.

"Wilson had an only sister, but two years younger than himself, of whom he was affectionately fond. At the age of 19, however, she was deceived and shamefully seduced by a wretch, who had, with protestations of love and promise of marriage, succeeded in depriving her of all that could render her respectable in the eyes of the world. With hopes of concealing her shame, she, in an unreflecting moment, committed a crime, which by the laws of our land is punishable with death! and for which she was condemned and publicly executed."

They keep Amos's corner clean. They call it the Hermit's Chamber. It's the last stop on the tour of Indian Echo, right after the Bottomless Pit and the Pipe Organ. Mrs. Kennedy didn't like caves when she started but she's more partial now. The Hermit's Chamber is what did it to her. The stalagtites are still black from his campfires. It's sad.

Looking up, Mary realizes she has left the lights on in the Frozen Waterfall. It's because of that kid. The parents were from some place like Arkansas. They had come all the way just to look at Indian Echo Caverns. Cave nuts.

"Where did the Hermit go when he died?" the kid said. He was wearing plaid shorts. His father had plaid trousers and the mother a plaid skirt. Bums wear plaid. Bums wear plaid because sane people throw anything they have that's plaid in the garbage. And bums go through the garbage for food and that's how they get plaid.

"Heaven," she said.

"Amos managed to establish a plea for mercy for his sister, and, successful in his mission, hastened with the pardon towards home. But Providence now caused an unpropitious rain, which had fallen that day, to swell the streams of a river which he was obliged to ford on his return to a degree as to render it impassable! For many hours he was compelled to pace the bank with bursting brain, and gaze upon the rushing waters that threatened to defeat his fond expectations! At the earliest moment that a ford was practicable he dashed through, and arrived at the place of execution just in time to—see the last struggles of his unfortunate sister! He was a witness but for a moment of the heart-piercing spectacle, when, in a state of insensibility, he fell from his horse, in which condition he was conveyed by his friends to the habitation of his distressed parents."

"No," the kid in plaid said, "where was he buried?" She didn't know. She said she didn't know, and then the parents just stared at her and suddenly she recognized their faces from the newspaper. The mother was embarrassed and pulled the son along, out the cave exit, but the father remained, staring at the spot as the rest of the tour went by. Mary said stay as long as you like sir, and the father nodded and stayed behind. She wondered if they recognized her, but supposed they didn't because her photo hadn't been in the news like theirs had.

"It then became the determination of Amos Wilson to spend the remainder of his days in seclusion from human society. In an unfrequented forest, twelve miles from Harrisburgh, he found a cave suitable for his purpose, which he selected as the place of his future abode. In this lonely and solitary retreat alone he dwelt for the space of 19 years, and was seldom visited by any one but the writer of these few particulars of his life, whom he selected as his confidential friend, and who occasionally supplied him with such necessaries as his situation required."

The daughter of the people in plaid had come through Indian Echo on her honeymoon. Mary didn't remember them from the tour. The newspaper said they were at the Cocoa Motel. It was the last one of the day and she had been tired. She hadn't counted the number of people. You wouldn't think people would let themselves get separated from the tour, but they did, snuck off to kiss beside the Hidden Lake. It had looked like the place was empty. Mary turned off the generator for the night and locked up, leaving them in the darkness. Somewhere in the night, stumbling around below the earth, the girl had found the Bottomless Pit.

In the morning when they opened up they found the husband there, sitting alone by the Hidden Seashore.

"The body of Harriot's newborn infant was found secreted in a neighboring grove."

One of Mrs. Kennedy's high school friends has a doctor for a son. She should ask him if he would look at the mole she's got. Not that there's anything wrong with it, but you can never be too careful. If Mary's brother had been more careful he would have lived and maybe it would be her nephew who was looking at the mole now, the one that isn't really anything.

"The death of Amos Wilson must have been very sudden, as he was left the evening before in tolerable health, by the writer. In a corner of his cave was found a bunch of manuscripts, among which was that of which the contents of these pages is an exact copy, and which he requested particularly might be published, and in conformity to which we present here to the public."

She had gone down to the Hidden Lake after her last tour, stood there looking into the cold waters. After a good rain the lake is 15 feet deep. Sometimes they drain it in order to collect the coins people throw in. She looked at her own reflection. How changed I am, she thought.

Then, out of nowhere, the lights snapped out. It had happened again, only this time she was the one who had been forgotten, buried alive. She knew better than to go stumbling around near the Bottomless Pit, though. The darkest black there is is the black inside a cave, and it's dangerous too, what with the stalagmites or stalagtites—she's still not sure which is which—all over the place. So she stood her ground.

Until now there had never been anyone who would haunt her. The only person was her brother, and he had been too kind. Death couldn't change you that much. A pilot during the war, he had won the purple heart. Wounded in the line of duty.

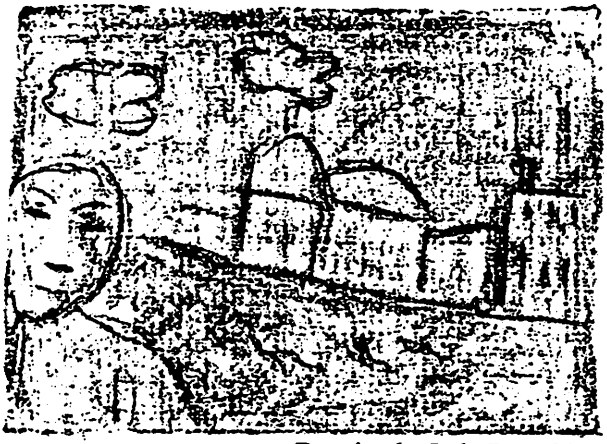
When she opened her eyes instead of ghosts there had been nothing. It was so dark she could not tell the difference between having her eyes closed and her eyes open. She thought the ghost would glow or something. As a common courtesy. But there was nothing.

Certainly someone should have been there. Standing by the Giant Ear of Corn, or floating above the Frozen Waterfall. That was the worst. Not that she was alone in the hermit's chamber with the ghost of the young woman who had lost her husband. Or even with the ghost of the man who had lost his sister. She was trapped a mile below the surface of the earth with no one. That was what being haunted was like.

Mary looked up. The man with the fez was gone. Soon they would be closing the library and she would have to go back to the apartment. See if there were any messages on the machine. She swallowed.

Flowers. To send to the girl's parents. That was the fourth thing.

Lyn Lifshin



Drawing by Judy Rosenblatt

The Mad Girl Is Stunned by the Bright Blue Early Monday Light, Then Sees It Go Grey

as an 800 number
bleating, keeping
you on hold. Or
rabbits carrying
a fertilized cow's
ovum over the
Atlantic. Voices
are caught in
mud on the boat
the plunges down
so fast light
twists fast as
ants on a peach
counter Raid zaps,
leaves twitching

The Mad Girl Feels the Past Knocking up against Her

like someone on
the subway with
a hardon this first
April night windows
stay open. Blue
eyes, blue silky
slacks with rose
buds on it, the one
time since high
school she got on
a bike, felt the
seat push where
the man with blue
eyes would later.
Blue light before
7. Blues, the
what can't stay.
Thursdays she'd
dip in candle wax
to keep or let amber
coat those blue
eyes, a drug main
lines in his blue
sheets, "honey"
caught, a blade
under her skin
she'll cut arteries
tearing the wrong
way too hard on
that will unfold and
change like maple
clusters that
always stun most
just as they are
about to

The Mad Girl Can't Hold on to, Shakes at What Could Slither from Her Touch

fast as maples
the spray unfolding,
She'd stop April
to keep his fingers
under her hair,
let the blue sheets
go one dimensional.
Maples go from
chartreuse and
rose to jade she
wants to stop his
lips. 1997 is a
stone she can't
imagine herself
swimming thru
the ice of, waves
close to the lace
and pearl of his
"honey" dissolving
in vinegar, the
last jewels she wears

The Mad Girl Feels What She's Dying To Hold on to Slip From Her

slices of dream
she tells someone
12 colors, the
details of, by
Monday it's gone
as downstate lips,
not even a bruise
blue flower,
outline of where
his arms held
all the rain
night. What is
goes, maple petals
twisting from
rose to jade
fast as ants come
back while she
dreams his phone's
changed to an 800
number muzak bleats
out of after the
47th ring beeping
"we are over
loaded with phone
calls, try us in
some midnight in
a couple more years"

Deborah Ford

About Nana

She smelled of garlic and Tudor ale and
tried to mask it by sucking on swirls
of peppermint candy
before getting on the bus to go home.
I always walked her to her stop,
never talking much
just happy to be near.

Hers were old world ways.
Feeding chunks of coal to the stove
while stirring, testing the aloopki sauce,
she watched me as I sat dreamily on the fire escape
inspecting the bulbous plant.

Her big-bosomed apron beckoned me
with pockets full of treats. I was
entranced, asking about her journey over.
She spoke of time in its flight, a voyage
when young and old crouched on deck
clutching string-tied parcels,
trying to eat unpeeled bananas.

At night we would sit
each at a windowsill,
cushioned by down pillows under our arms.
The brownstone stoops were crowded with neighbors
watching children playing ringolevio in the street.
We saw it all, sharing the scene in silence.

I see her yet, bent over
rolling and knotting her stockings
above the knees, pinning her hair net in place.
I would run to sit on her lap and be held.
And when it was time for bed,
fluff and feathered,
she would bring me close
and whisper love.

The New York Run from Lorenzo's to Kossar's

Jewish eyebrows furrow at the luminous sea bass,
the russet skate and the bracelet-sized prawns
while lusty, red-lipped shiksas hondle over the price.
We are food shopping for a weekend at the dunes in Amagansett,

and, while not pushy, are as vociferous and charming
as the Fulton fish market merchants.

At Moishe's, we summer weekend guests forage
for morsels to please even the most sophisticated gourmand.
There's seven-layered halvah if you know someone who thinks
it doesn't taste like glutened bird seed. (I've been known
to inhale the stuff with gusto.) The pursuit of the perfect
food gift for our weekend hosts has us urbanites
scrambling from Lorenzo's, with the young Hispanic
behind the counter wearing every piece of gold that
the Home Shopping Network has ever offered, to Kossar's,
with the robust Nina from Odessa calling fifty-year old
customers "boychick." The Union Square Market is a last
resort.

No need to note that food is the fixation
from the Fire Island pines to the porches of Cape May.
In Amagansett, we stare into our hostess's fridge
as if it were harboring Guernica.
Too bad the whips at Russ & Daughters
are only licorice. Hordes of house guests
could be otherwise entertained.

Some Pigs Died Here 100 Years Ago

A local hypnotist with the Cincinnati Historical Society
shows me documents that recall the era with pride.
River ways and steamboat stacks are other symbols
of Cincinnati's history, but the slaughter of hogs
enlivens debate hereabouts regarding
the enshrining of swine.

There was a time, in the 1800's, when
a quarter of a million hogs a year
were knocked unconscious with a sledgehammer
and suspended from a moving hook.
The butchering, rendering, and salting processes
were performed later, but with equal efficiency.

Four legs stretched out
and tails frozen in perfect corkscrews,
these pink creatures disturb the consciousness
and continue the controversy amongst Cincinnatians.
There are great traditions in history in this proud city
that seem to have been overshadowed by a sculptural
extravagance,
the centerpiece of the city's new 22-acre park
and recreation center. Andrew Leicester's
flying pigs, genus Sus Scrofa, bristle
the sensibilities of Cincinnati's society.

Long snouted, long touted as filthy,
these airborn sows and swine have somehow
come to symbolize the city. There's no mistaking
Cincinnati for Cleveland or Columbus.

Lora K. Reiter

Medea Redux

Oh! Oh!

See this woman
Standing naked
Over her twisted children,
Sons,
His generations,
Bathed now not in light
But blood.

Who can speak of her,
How she raised the knife,
Raised the knife,
Raised the knife,
Like some island tigress
Whose relentless claws
Were loosed among the homeland flock?

Who can bear to hear the desperate voices:
Mother! Mother! Mother!

How shall we believe that she,
Who smiled at tea,
Whose hair and house were mirrors,
Is a woman guled by cauldron fires,
Enraged past civility
To scorn the law which banished them from her?
To suffer this for his eternal pain?

How shall we stop our ears to her moan
As she rubs the blade across her flank,
Over her womb,
Marking with a thin red line of savaged children
Where, shrieking in his arms,
She willingly conceived them?

Indian Burial

It's gay, that box.
Small,
White with blue flowers,
It's like a toy chest,
A child's treasure chest.
It is a clean, precise angle
Moving against the desert.
It must smell of new paint.
The flowers spray across the side,
Perhaps across the top.
I cannot see that from my car
Because the man carries it on his shoulder,
The first man.
The second walks behind,
A large, black-bound book
Open before him.

In their parents' tombs
A day away
At Monte Alban's heart,
Priests chant
In long processions for the dead.
Dancers whirl,
Faces flushed;
Quetzal plumes ride
The violent air
Indigo over their heads.
Jaguars join
In ritual ballets
For grinning gods
Who must be bribed
To keep that soul from death,
Watching white and hungry-eyed
Across the way.

The men move slowly.
It must be difficult to walk
Among the cactus and the stones.
I cannot tell if either man wears shoes.
The coffin tilts against the first man's cheek.
He steadies it with his left hand,
His arm around the side.
It contains his child.
His right arm swings out, then back.
It moves like a bird's tail.

William J. Vernon

Keeping Time in the Same Place

No one laughs at me stumbling
around the first lap. I start adjusting,
increasing my pace and forgetting
the heavy, ball-bearing smooth rollers,
the faces lit along the ringing
arena. They are nothing but flowers

painted on walls. By now I'm
accepting the gift of the rhythm.
The loudspeaking system is beating
my ears with percussions. "Free me!"
it screams, and knowing what it means,
I do it, grabbing restraints, clinging

to the sound, humming with the song
blast and catching the cadence that
all of the skaters are taut with.
Our bodies dance with the sure grace
of zealots set on fire by their faith.
There is real want aroused in stag
numbers, for the women rimming us chant,
"Whoo! Whoo! Whoo!" imitating a train,

heating us up, helping the strobe lights
reveal an odd vision of pain
and joy, humans bared by sudden bright
actions, then lost. Struggling, I see

all of us have the same purpose—to keep
balanced while moving. We are freed
and trapped together in rushing,
seeking control, seldom smashing.

The Street People

Oh, yes, there is majesty left
in this world. In the silken touch
of the finest rayon. In the glittering
jewels that litter glass
counters at K Mart. In the widening
vistas that the tube depicts in
commercials. How can despair

strike so many? What can
the homeless be thinking?
collapsed on concrete walks and benches,
entrenched in the darkness
of historic facades, attached to
the outside of cavernous buildings
put up for the public's welfare?

These homeless could pull themselves up
if they had any boot straps.
Yes, there is majesty
surrounding them—streets paved
with pecuniary opportunities. Far off
horizons that they could reach
if they only had such an impulse

to do so. God, I have to love the depth
of that sky, telescoped up there between
these high rises. God, yes, the depth
of that smog-stained sky,
yellowing now in the twilight.

Uneven Things

February growls, downpouring so
that the river escapes up the levees
and prowls, flooding the trail on
the banks where I normally go.
I detour south into trees
where the darkening ridges bite down
on the valley, making the waters back
up, caught in that narrow gate
of old glacial deposits. Here,

I jog up the hills on a track
of tar streets, discover the weight
of gravity bends and makes me stare
up at my path. It is a forest, here
in my city! The inclines remind
me to look for the beauty of
uneven things, like this gift, sheer
joy of release at the tops, a kind

plunge from the summits—like love
in the forces of nature. They hold
and then push me on. So down I run
faster than cascading creeks, descending
as surely as rainfall. The cold
winter leaves me. I'm growing green
as skunk cabbage, reeking with spring.

Unwed Mother

Watching her swell through thirty weeks
of gestation, I wondered why,
when she'd rise, her sacks full of weeds,
flowers would bloom on her skin bright

as a mirror. Her teeth would flash in
greeting. Her hands, accepting news
papers from me, would reach open,
stained brown with dirt above the blue

veins of her wrists. We spoke very
little. Once, on her steps, she sat
in halter and shorts, bared belly
basking. Later, she suckled her boy at

her breasts, rocking before the front
window, nodding at me when I'd come.

Contributors

James Boylan has taught at Colby College and Johns Hopkins University. His collection of short stories, *Remind Me To Murder You Later,* was published by Johns Hopkins in 1988. He was an assistant editor at Viking Penquin, Inc., and at E. P. Dutton and managing editor of *American Bystander* magazine.

Deborah Ford is a commoditites broker, marathon runner, and part-time instructor at Highline Community College, Seattle. Her poems have been published in *Hobo Stew Review, American Poetry Anthology, Gryphon,* and *Athena Incognito.* For eight years, she was a high school teacher in New York city.

Molly Giles, who teaches at San Francisco State University and the University of San Francisco, received the Flannery O'Connor Award for short fiction for her *Rough Translations,* published by the University of Georgia Press. Her book reviews appear monthly in the *San Jose Mercury News.*

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Lyn Lifshin's poetry has appeared in a variety of magazines, including *American Poetry Review, Ploughshares, Chicago Review, Ms.,* and *Rolling Stone.* More than 70 of her books and chapbooks have been published, and she has been poet-in-residence at the University of Rochester (1986) and the Antioch Writer's Conference (1987).

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