Comment

Calvin's "New Evangelicalism"

In these pages a year ago, Dialogue editor Robert Strikwerda noted a trend at Calvin away from the rebelliousness and activism of the late sixties, into a vague sort of quietism, which he interpreted as a symptom of Calvin's failure to adapt its institutions to the changing character of its campus and its students. He challenged the college to develop an atmosphere which would stimulate its students to a life of responsible commitment.

Since that time, this undefined quietism has developed in several different directions, one of which might appropriately be characterized as the "new evangelicalism." The phenomenon has been with us long enough now to merit analysis and evaluation. There are dangers, of course, in making generalizations about the mood of the campus; one may over-generalize on the basis of insufficient evidence, for example, or read his own preconceived conclusions into the data. With these cautions in mind, however, I will attempt to trace the development of this new mood, and to assess its strengths and its potential weaknesses.

One explanation for Calvin's new evangelicalism is the decline of the student activism which was once a drain on the energy of highly committed students. The disappearance of the fragmented New Left from the political and academic scene, the general sense of fatigue over the VietNam war, and the amelioration of obvious inequities on campus (compulsory chapel, women's dorm hours) have combined to remove many of the obvious and attractive channels for student energies.

A wave of revival and renewal movements has recently passed, leaving its mark at Calvin. The Jesus Freaks, Campus Crusade, Explo '72, Evangelism Thrust, the charismatic renewal movement have all deeply affected Calvin students and the atmosphere on the campus. This is manifested especially in the resurgence of prayer groups and Bible studies in dormitories, the well attended, student-organized sharing chapels in Heritage Hall, the initial success of Evangelism Thrust on campus, and the renewed participation of students in organized churches and Christian communities.

The new evangelicalism is also reflected in the willingness of Chimes to devote a larger proportion of its space to reporting and analysing such organizations and programs as Thrust, Campus Crusade, the Young Calvinist Federation, or the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship.

Student Senate recently recognized the increasing volume of business done by the "religious" committees on campus by creating yet another body, the Student Religious Co-ordinating Council, to oversee the rapidly proliferating committees: the Knollcrest Worship Committee, the Sunday Night Entertainment Committee, the Chapel Committee, the religious committees of the various dormitories, and the Student Religious Activities Committee all fall under its aegis. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the apparent death of the "secular" Senate concert series mainly from lack of student support, while the new "sacred" Sunday Night Entertainment series plays monthly to overflow crowds.

Obviously, each of these manifestations of the evangelical spirit has its own strengths and weaknesses. The forces of time and circumstance have a way of revealing these more effectively than passionate analysis; but a few tentative evaluations may be helpful, and are given here as a stimulus to further thought and discussion on the subject.

What is happening here at Calvin is potentially very healthy for the growth of the college as an educational institution "under the Word." It may be an indication that the reign of dry and cerebral orthodoxy is indeed gone, that the old dogmatism has been replaced by a new and more virile faith unafraid of emotions and unembarrassed by miracles. It may also be a sign of awakening interest in living a life of commitment on the part of many students who formerly had not concerned themselves with their commitment.

Also, the breakdown of the orthodox secular radicalism once prevalent in some quarters need not be mourned a great deal. The doctrines which led us to believe in more naive days that we could tell the President how to run a war while our own lives were an undisciplined shambles might advantageously be replaced by a more disciplined and biblically sensitive political witness.

The renewal of evangelical zeal at Calvin has also led many to follow the leading of the Spirit into new forms of Christian praise, witness, and community. For the invaluable contributions which these experiments may make to the life of the college, we can only be grateful.

Yet, a balanced view of the new evangelicalism
will also acknowledge that in such an atmosphere certain dangers must be avoided. One of these dangers is the growth of a self-asserting elitism among leaders of highly committed groups, the tendency to use a movement as a vehicle for the exercise of personal influence. Another is the re-introduction of dogmatism through the hardening of categories of judgement within a group, especially judgement of the thinking and life-style of fellow-Christians who differ from the norm of the group. A peculiar problem of movements is their dependence to an excessive degree on enthusiasm or exclusion of others, thus tending either to fizzle out once the excitement departs, or to narrow their base of support to a vanishing point.

These considerations are mentioned, not necessarily because I see these dangers instantiated in renewal groups and structures at Calvin, but because they are dangers to which small groups united by a common enthusiasm are vulnerable. But they are also avoidable, and one can only pray that renewal groups at Calvin will have the grace and wisdom to avoid them.

Another hazard to avoid is the making of false distinctions between the “secular” and “sacred” categories of our experience. *Chimes* has given leadership in avoiding this trap by demonstrating that growth in Christian commitment does not entail an obsession with explicitly religious topics and viewpoints, to the exclusion of those less explicitly religious. The commitment of organizations or institutions to religious goals does not entail the humorless ideological approach which at least occasionally typifies publications from sister institutions.

One last problem remains to be mentioned: the temptation to replace secular activism with sacred quietism, to make a virtue out of an apolitical life-style; to be more concerned, in other words, for the St. Mary’s prayer meeting than for Mary Free Bed Hospital. But we may hope that the element of extroversion that has been so strongly present in our tradition—of turning to the world with a ministry to every facet of life and culture—will transform such quietism into gentle boldness for the sake of the gospel.

All of us at Calvin have much yet to learn about living the life of commitment, and about molding our institutions in such a way as to foster and encourage this life. The purpose of these remarks has not been to present a complete and objective analysis, but to suggest areas where caution is needed and where further discussion and reflection are desirable in order that we as a community may “determine what is the perfect will of God.”

David Timmer
The Sabbath

Saturday night, another week gone. Jake Vander Wood leaned back in his yellow oak swivel chair. A hot bath, a visit to the barber shop, and a little shopping—a fine afternoon. He propped his grey-cotton-stockinged feet on the kitchen window sill and pulled a huge drag from a tailor-made Marvel cigarette. Saturdays at 3:00 P.M. Jake always tossed his Bull Durham sack and cigarette papers into the lumber truck’s glove compartment. Work stopped. He was on his own time.

He had almost a half day with Sunday still coming. But Sunday, that was different—late from bed to a long tough doctrinal sermon and an afternoon nap on the parlor floor—not at all like Saturday when there were things to do. Late on Saturday night, drinking fresh and almost too-hot coffee, he thumbed through the back pages of the *Prairie Farmer* and circled the best farms for sale. The W I S National Barn Dance kept sleep away with slow sad ballads—“Old Shep,” “Sweet William”—or with a rousing square dance. His wife Aggie had gone dog-tired to bed, but her kitchen warmth hung on from baking bread in the still smouldering coal-fired range. His boys were long ago in sleep when Jake sank comfortably into the private Saturday hours to circle old dreams in the *Prairie Farmer*.

Every week, especially in winter, he traced his shiny calloused finger down the narrow-column print. Most often the good farms were too much money or too far away. A cheap eighty-acre farm in Illinois or Wisconsin popped up less than once a month, and this winter Jake had found only one worth writing after—a dairy farm in Wisconsin with twenty milk cows and eighty acres. Just about right, he’d thought, for a man and two growing boys. He could almost smell the sweet warmth of a winter barn: steaming silage, wet-nosed cows, and soft warm udders. But Aggie had put her foot down on that one. “Too far. And what’s more,” she’d said, “my family is here and Pa is sickly.”

A farmer at heart, Jake had never planned to work for a lumber yard. His people had always been farmers, and somehow Jake knew that he ought to be doing the same thing. Leaving the farm had not been *his* choice. Hard times came, and after that the family farm was hardly able to support Jake’s father and younger brothers. Then, when his second child came, he had to make his own way, and he took what he could get.

He remembered walking around the lumber yard three times before opening the yard office door. It didn’t seem right to ask a man for a job, and Jake wasn’t even sure he could do lumber yard work. But walking around the fence didn’t tell him much. The high red pickets hid almost everything but the black and brown roof tops of a dozen long sheds opening to the lumber yard’s inside.

Vink’s lumber and coal yard filled a full square block with fences and gates on all sides. It was the biggest business in North Prairie. Through the back fence a Chicago and Eastern Illinois rail spur passed into the yard under a wide padlocked gate, while from the open front gate Jake saw a long narrow grey house surrounded by storage sheds of the same color.

Finally, when he entered the office, he was almost ashamed of himself. And then he asked to see Mr Vink so quietly that the office girl made him say it three times. Vink came from a separate room to look him over, and said that he knew about Jake from a farmer who had been in to pick up some rolled roofing. A big man next to most, Vink stood an inch short of Jake’s bony chin. Still, Vink’s sharp eyes made Jake feel like a school kid in trouble.

Actually, he never asked for a job. Vink hired him and then rented him the grey house on the yard for half his pay. For being able to rent the house, Jake agreed to watch the lumber yard at night, and he got free coal and electricity in the bargain. It took ten minutes to arrange Jake’s life. It was all so easy. His family had a roof over their heads, and he had work. He was grateful and never forgot. But, just the same, on Saturday night in Vink’s grey house, Jake was his own boss. He could dream old dreams.

The *Prairie Farmer*, February 18, 1944, advertised a farm in Bensonville, Illinois. Jake circled it. At first he noticed only the location, but when he read the ad again the acreage and then the variety of crops seemed especially good.


“Forty-nine thousand. Plenty money. But two houses. What’s a guy going to do with two?” Jake talked aloud to himself.

The W L S Barn Dance went off the air at midnight with Paul and Bob’s blended harmonizing of “God Be With You Till We Meet Again,” but Jake kept on thinking about the two houses. “If I could only get a partner—but who?”

He ran through a list of names—brothers, friends, anyone who knew something about farming. Aggie’s family was from the city—Roseland—
no luck there. At last he folded the paper, keeping the circled advertisement on top, and he slid it into the Bible on the window sill so Aggie wouldn’t use it to start the cook stove. One long final and thoughtful drag on his cigarette and Jake was ready for bed. Sleep came quickly.

As he’d learned to enjoy it, Sunday came and went along in a strolling gait—not a boring day, but a reliable day. He knew what to expect. Sure enough, on time as usual, Aggie’s brother Pete Kok came for coffee while their kids went to Sunday School after church. Pete had moved to North Prairie from Roseland but worked in a suburban defense plant. He’d owned a trucking business until the depression wiped him out.

Pete and Alyce came in the side door stomping snow on the Pulman throw tug. “Hope you got good coffee!” Pete shouted.

“Well,” Jake answered, “You should know. You drink more of it than I do.” Waving toward the living room he said to Alyce, “Aggie’s in there—waiting for you,” and then to Pete, “Sit down.”

Jake leaned back and twisted his swivel chair to reach the Prairie Farmer tucked in the Bible. “Look at this once,” he said, sliding the paper across the smooth linoleum table top.

Pete unfolded the paper, “You still get this thing? When you gonna give up those nutty farm notions. Besides, you’ll never get my sister in a barn yard again.”

He scanned the paper and found Jake’s circle. “This the one?” he asked pointing to the circle. Jake nodded.

Pete commented as he read the advertisement, “Good location. Truck farming. Good for the Chicago market. Two houses? What you need two for? Forty-nine thousand! Man-a-living! I always said you had dough. But forty-nine big smackers. If you got that much working for old Vink, you better stay put.”

Jake grinned broadly, “Ah, shut up, Pete. You know I ain’t got that kind of dough. But—see. It says terms. If I had a rich partner like you for that other house, I could swing it.”

“Me?” Pete laughed, “I’m no farmer. Besides, I’m poor as a peddler.”

“Poor? You? Just last week you were talking about houses. You wanna quit renting? There’s a new house on that farm. I’ll take the old one. Talk about money. You must have four, maybe five thousand. I got that much. Between us, we got maybe . . . ten thousand. We could swing it.”

Pete leaned forward and stared into his half-empty coffee cup, “More coffee?”

Jake motioned to the cook stove. Pete reached the white enamel percolator and filled Jake’s cup first.

More seriously he said, “Gotta say this Jake.
Good location—Bensonville. Just a little off route twenty. Can’t be more than thirty miles from the South Water street market. You can take route twenty to Cicero Ave and go south to Randolph. Randolph will take you straight into the market. Or, you could go south on Halsted and deliver direct to the wholesalers in Roseland. You could even make direct deliveries to the Jewel stores, maybe even the A & P if you know the buyers. I used to know ’em. Didn’t even check me when I unloaded. I’d tell ’em, ‘Twenty crates of oranges’ or ‘Forty barrels of spuds,’ They’d say, ‘Okay, Pete.’"

Jake was surprised. Pete seldom talked of the old days or of the trucking business. They were both silent over coffee for a long moment.


Jake leaned back and reached for a cigarette. He struck a wooden match across the cook stove with a sweeping motion and watched Pete’s face. Pete was thinking it over.

Finally Pete said, “You gonna write?” Maybe we oughta ride out there. Take a look.”

“We could go today. Look around and go to church out there.”

Jake was ready but then remembered that Aggie’s sister was coming to visit after church that night.

“We could go together. Be back before church,” Pete said.

“I don’t know,” Jake said after a short pause, “Wouldn’t look good on Sunday—you and me riding off alone like that.”

“But then we have to wait a whole week. Can’t get off work till Saturday,” Pete warned.

They were thoughtfully silent until Pete said, “Let’s call the women. Maybe Aggie can call off the company tonight. She sees them all the time anyway.”

Jake didn’t answer. He poured more coffee.

Pete grabbed the Prairie Farmer and read over the advertisement again. He rubbed his closed eyes and pinched the bridge of his nose with one hand. Finally he said, “Don’t know Jake. Looks good from here. But you know I got bumped good once before. War’s almost over. Could bring hard times again. Could lose everything.”

“I know. I know.” Jake said. “But even in hard times farmers eat. They got eggs and milk.”

“Yeah, but the payments. You gotta have cash, Jake. I coulda paid ’em—in apples or anything. But—they took everything. They’re tough. But who knows? We might make it together.”

Jake took Pete seriously when it came to money and debts. In the lumber yard he had little pay, but he had regular work and no debts. Still, the Bensonville thing looked good. He stirred his coffee slowly while looking closely at Pete. “Okay. Let’s call the women.”

Pete nodded.

“Aggie! Alyce! Come here once! We wanna talk!”

The women came quickly and Aggie said, “I suppose you drank all the coffee.”

“Aaw come on,” Jake answered. “The pot’s half full. Get your coffee. We gotta talk. You know that farm I told you about?”

“From inside the pantry, where she was moving dishes to find two good cups and saucers, Aggie said, “Now Jake. You’re not serious about that.”

Jake turned to Alyce. “Sit. Relax. Aggie knows about this. I’ll tell you. Pete and me, we’ve been talking about a good farm in Bensonville. A partnership. He can go to market. I can do the farming. It’s got two houses.”

Alyce laughed nervously and looked at Pete, but her face changed when she saw that Pete meant business.

From her chair near the cook stove Aggie passed coffee to Alyce in rose-colored china.

Jake began again. “Now this farm. Pete wants to ride out and see it. We can go today, except we got company tonight. Can you call it off, Aggie?”

“Jake. On Sunday. You oughta be ashamed. What about the kids? The neighbors? What’ll they think?”

“We can go to church in Bensonville. Might even see someone who knows about this farm.”

“Don’t have one of our churches out there,” Aggie said. “I know, I looked in the church book. No church of ours there.”

Pete was scowling and said, “For cat’s sake, Aggie. When you get so pious? Weren’t so narrow-minded at home. I know that.”

“Pete! Shush! We got kids now. We have to be an example. What would they think? On Sunday. All the way to Bensonville. And then no real church.”

Alyce was nodding agreement.

Jake stared at his hands, “Well,” he said at last, “then Pete and me are going this afternoon. “What!” Alyce and Aggie responded in one voice.

Aggie was angry. “You will not! I’m not going to sit here and tell my kids that you’re out shopping for farms on Sunday. Never!”

“Well, come on now.” Jake was getting disgusted, “You can say we’re visiting Grampa Kok. He’s been sick off and on.”

“Now, that’s it. That’s it.” Aggie’s face turned white; she could hardly talk. “You. You. You’re gonna lie about my father to your own kids. Using him for an excuse. I won’t have it. Lies. And on Sunday—driving around. You’ll be punished. You will. You’ll see.”

“That’s no lie. He is sick,” Pete snapped. “And besides, we got time to stop there. It’s on the way.”
“It’s still a lie if you do it that way,” Aggie screamed. “Anyway, what’s got got into you, Pete? Our family is here, and Bensonville is half way to Wisconsin.”

“It ain’t,” Pete said. “It’s close to Cicero, and we got churches there. Besides, I’m family. Ain’t I?”

Aggie’s eyes grew narrow and dark. Her breath came in short quick gasps. Alyce dabbed a tear from the side of her nose.

“Hey—Hey—Hey.” Jake interrupted, “We only wanted—”

But Aggie broke in. “Pete! You got your nerve—getting Jake all riled up about farms again. When you know—you know my sisters are here and Pa is sick.”

Jake looked at Pete. His head was down. They were beat and Jake knew it. After all, Aggie was right about the lie.

From the kitchen window, Jake saw the kids coming through the lumber yard gate. Aggie went to the pantry and mumbled, “Better get some cookies,” Then she poked her head out and said sternly, “Now stop this talk!”

While she spread a handful of windmill cookies over a plate, Jake tried to ease the tension a little. “Well, you know, Pete, you’re right about the war ending. Maybe we’ll have hard times again.”

The kids were banging the back porch door, but before they could overhear Pete leaned forward and urged, “Write the guy anyhow, Jake. Maybe he’ll come down a little. It’s not going to sell very fast with a price like that.”

“Yeah,” Pete said, “Maybe tonight, after the company leaves.”

Soon the kids were all over the kitchen, grabbing cookies and lofting used Sunday school papers folded into paper airplanes. Only half playfully Jake smacked his oldest son on the rump with the Prairie Farmer. “Settle down!” he warned. Then turning to Peter and Alyce, “Let’s sit in the parlor. Can’t talk with these kids around.” Jake got up to lead the way and tossed the Prairie Farmer on the kitchen table.

The kids were noisy and boisterous. Someone knocked a chair down, and later, when a glass of milk splashed over the kitchen table, Pete and Alyce decided it was time to leave.

Jake changed into comfortable clothes and tossed a bedroom pillow into the parlor. He stretched out on the floor while Aggie put the kids to work cleaning up the kitchen. They gathered up all the loose papers and stuffed them into the cooking range.

The house grew quiet and Jake dozed comfortably while, in the kitchen range, the milk-sopped Prairie Farmer smouldered slowly among the burning Sunday school papers.
Video Medium: Paradox and Prospect

Corporate interests have the tube tied up; citizen action can make a vast difference

by Robert Ottenhoff

I believe television is going to be the test of the modern world, and that in this new opportunity to see beyond the range of our vision we shall discover either a new and unbearable disturbance of the general peace or a saving radiance in the sky. We shall stand or fall by television—of that I am quite certain.

E B White 1939

If anything, E B White underestimated television. In the three decades or so since commercial television began broadcasting, it has overwhelmed society. It is estimated now that over 90 percent of American homes have at least one television set. The average television set is on over six hours every day. But for the most part, the effects of television on society, and the power of television on political and cultural life, have been ignored or largely misunderstood.

There's no doubt television has made an impact on our society. Top-rated shows draw an instant viewing audience of sixty million people. Television advertising has influenced buying patterns and created new consumer demands. Television has offered an exposure to new and different values and experiences. Sports viewers, for example, can watch not only their favorite local team, but also see sports being played in New York, Munich and Moscow.

Some contend television has not only influenced society, but created a new society. Marshall McLuhan, the chief guru of mass media, likes to call this new society a "global village." According to him, television, regardless of what is shown, is the message. The ancient importance of distance is diminished, geography no longer matters, and the primary functions of cities are obsolete. Television has also created a generation gap, alienating the previous "print" generations (with their own ways of perceiving and acting) from the new television generation.

Although McLuhan's analysis of the generation gap may be a bit overstated, there seems to be little doubt that television has affected the family structure. Children, for example, now spend more time in front of a television set than they do interacting with their parents. More children are cared for and entertained by television sets than by their babysitters and relatives. Children probably spend more time watching cartoons on Saturday than they do playing with their friends. The issue of wasted time would be frightening enough if it were not for the content of what they are watching.

The relationship of programming to children is mainly an unanswered question. What are the effects of five hours every Saturday of inane cartoons? What does a steady diet of violence do to the development of a small child's mind? What does a bombardment of cereal and toy commercials do to a child's value structure? The majority of these questions lie unanswered and for the most part ignored by society. The U S Surgeon General, Jesse L Steinfeld, however, has expressed ideas on the issue of violence and television, and a recently released study says in part that television may be harmful.

As matters now stand, the weight of the experimental evidence from the present series of studies, as well as from prior research, suggests that viewing filmed violence has an observable effect on some children in the direction of increasing their aggressive behavior.

The point, again, is that we have accepted television to the limit where it controls our lives and have not questioned its values or purpose.

The News Business

Television has turned Americans into information junkies. People are hooked on the six o'clock news. They need the extra surge of the eleven o'clock news and the jolt of the news special. They need to stay tuned for the latest breaking development. Like most habits television news viewing is counterproductive.

Anyone who depends on television news as his only news source will be woefully uninformed. Television news deals in fragments, quick bits and pieces of primarily visual information; it is at best a headline performance. In a regular news show of thirty minutes, at least eight go for commercials. When the introduction and closings are counted, the human interest stories, the local sports and weather added, we find usually less than five minutes goes to hard, important news information.

Since television is primarily an entertainment
and money-making venture, news also must take on the job of performing. The latest rage of "happy-talk" news and the torrent of jokes, quips and banter is not meant to offer additional news information. It is meant to attract higher ratings and produce something different than the opposition. News directors and producers work for the winning combination of action film and big name "talent" to increase viewer numbers. News is big business. NBC News for example supposedly makes 30 million dollars a year in profit for its network.

Stories are more often rated on their visuals—their ability to produce exciting film—than on their ability to provide the viewing public with an interesting and informative news event. And because of the limitations of time, equipment, and money, television reporters can rarely offer more than a superficial overview of a situation. Since television news is dependent on visuals—any visuals—a television reporter must produce his two or three stories, regardless of quality or quantity. If there is no real news story, the reporter must make it appear there is one, either by rewording news releases offered by public relation departments or by manufacturing an issue.

The function of time and money create another problem for television reporters. Since they must cover three or four stories within a short period, and obtain film from each story, they rarely have time to do even the most superficial background work on a story. Research is out of the question. They are dependent on their assignment editor's hurried description of the event and their own ingenuity. That means when they get to an event they want to find someone who can give them a quick, articulate synopsis of what is happening. Hence, the search for and the total dependence on the Spokesman or Leader. Reporters demand an organized group with a visual spokesman to report the facts. Reporters can't deal with a group of people collectively because they don't know anything about them or what they stand for. They need a quick, easy explanation from a spokesman; thus they create a hierarchy when one might not be there or need to exist.

Another characteristic of the news therefore is that the information broadcasted is easily obtained information. Because of the severe limitations, reporters and assignment editors are dependent primarily on handouts, public relations information and easily filmed demonstrations and public meetings.

Few television news stories are exclusives because of the way news is gathered. In fact, rarely
To say that advertising influences television is not only naive but ignorant. Advertising is television.

will a television station have something different than its competitors in any hard news situation.

Groups and politicians who know how to handle the media, with a well-placed phone call or news release, will receive favorable coverage; groups or politicians that don't make contact will receive little or no coverage. For example, Spiro Agnew's attacks on the media have been part of a well-calculated scheme to attract news coverage. He has become an expert at giving a quotable quote that receives nationwide coverage.

It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that television news has the prestige it now enjoys. It is rarely innovative, rarely provides well researched work, and often distorts news events because of the way it must present materials. Besides, it has unbounded power as an image-maker and is a major influence on the political scene. Still, most Americans list television as their primary source of news and, if anything, popularity and prestige are increasing. Despite its shortcomings, television news will stay what it is as long as it is part of commercial television.

Programming

Even with all of its faults, television news is the best programming offered on commercial television. The majority of what goes on the tube—almost ninety percent of it—is a conglomeration of entertainment; quiz shows, soap operas, and situation comedies abound. When was the last time you heard someone admit they had a good time watching television? In fact, when was the last time you heard someone admit they even watched television? The strange phenomenon in the United States is that most everyone complains about television (or is it just the critics?), few people admit to watching it, yet ratings show audiences sometimes hitting fifty or sixty million people.

Part of the problem is that commercial television has been captured by entertainment programming that allows for little else to be shown. That's all people expect to see now: if you have only junk to watch, you must watch junk or nothing at all. And as long as no one complains to the networks, junk is all that will continue to be sent over.

As this mediocrity, which on the short term is economically profitable, fills the air, it creates appetites; it styles the nation's taste, just as advertising influences what we eat, smoke and drive. The stock answer of network apologists for the current television schedule is, "We give the people what they want," but what has actually happened is that those viewers who have been brainwashed select their own brand of popcorn, while those of more discerning tastes simply give up watching or listening.

Why is television in the United States so bad? Why can other countries provide interesting and informative programming? I think there are two main causes: the source of revenue, ie, advertising, and the corporate structure.

Advertising is big money. Television advertising mounts to over three billion dollars a year. Before cigarette commercials were banned, that industry spend over 220 million dollars a year. Proctor and Gamble spends over 150 million dollars alone. Advertising is the source of revenue for the television industry and without advertising a lot of people would be looking for new jobs.

To say then that advertising influences television is not only naive but ignorant. Advertising

To say then that advertising influences television is not only naive but ignorant. Advertising is television. Once this is known, some of the questions about programming begin to fall into place.

A good program schedule is not a critic's schedule but a salesman's—one that will sell rapidly at the prices asked.

The product of television, commercial television, is the audience. Television delivers people to an advertiser. That's its function... The show acts as bait to bring people to the medium.

A nice, innocuous show, then, can draw a large audience and attract advertisers. The criterion for a good program is not content or quality but numbers. It goes without saying, too, that censorship will be used frequently to ensure entertainment that is inoffensive and within the tastes of the advertiser.

Like oil and water, quality programming and advertising just don't mix. There is a basic contradiction between the essentially social nature of television as a public medium and its ownership as an economic interest.

The ratings game, therefore, is no more nefarious than the whole system itself. Ratings are only a way to produce more audience and eventually more money. Those twelve hundred Audimeters and twenty-two hundred diaries people write in each week represent the viewing patterns of over two hundred million Americans. They also represent money and profits.

The Corporation

Television is no longer an industry in itself, it is part of a large corporation. Broadcasting is one of its profitable sidelights.

In 1965 the three networks and their fifteen owned and operated stations had profits of $161,600,000.
before taxes, or very slightly over a 100 percent of return on broadcasting property, and 165 percent on the undepreciated part of tangible broadcasting property. For example, WCBS in New York is said to make over $10 million in profits a year. Even a small midmarket station (like those in Grand Rapids) earns over $2 million. Overall, the industry brings in something like two billion dollars annually.

Let's take a look at corporate structure. RCA (Radio Corporation of America) is the parent company of NBC, the National Broadcasting Company. RCA owns companies like Arnold Palmer Enterprises and Banquet Foods and Hertz Rent-A-Car. RCA received almost a half a million dollars in Pentagon contracts in 1970. It has a satellite communications station in Thailand and investments in a TV station in Hong Kong. It owns the Random House, Knopf, Pantheon and Modern Library publishing houses.

Columbia Broadcasting Systems, Incorporated, lists television as one of its subsidiaries. It also owns TV production centers in Argentina, Venezuela, and Peru. It has facilities for production and distribution and marketing and servicing in a hundred countries. It owns the New York Yankees, Columbia and Epic record companies and Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publishing Co. Its vice-president, Frank Stanton, is chairman of the board of trustees of RAND Corporation, on the board of Pan Am, and a top adviser to the U.S. Information Agency.

The implications of such connections are incredible. Have Pentagon contracts affected the coverage of the Vietnam war? Do network officials call off news coverage because of conflict of interest? Is potentially harmful information about a subsidiary hidden? How do advertisers influence programming. Those are powerful questions that demand an answer. Such connections must surely affect television news coverage. They most surely create potentially complicated conflicts of interest. And as for the public interest, how much service can there be left after the profits, conflicts of interests, and corporate politics have been drained out? And at this point, Spiro's charges of radicalism in the news media seem quite unfounded.

Since television is only a subsidiary of a large corporation, it must be treated as part of the corporate world. And that means each subsidiary making as much money as it can. Corporation economics, therefore, rule programming. In other words, large corporations rule the public airwaves for their own profits.

Fred Friendly was the president of CBS News for two years and a producer for many years before that with the famous Edward R. Murrow. Back in 1966, Congress was holding a very special batch of hearings on the Vietnam War and like any good newsmen Friendly wanted to televise the hearings in full. That is where he met the corporation head on.

Friendly succeeded the first time he televised the debate that erupted in the hearings. But he describes the trauma he had to go through, as the hearings cancelled a day of programming.

Not running 'I Love Lucy' at 10 AM would mean the loss of about $5,000 and 'The McCoys' at 10:30 meant about the same, but cancellation of the 'The Dick VanDyke Daytime Show,' another rerun scheduled for 11:30 AM, would cost the network about $25,000 or $30,000. Broadcasting the hearings that day, Friendly was told later, had cost the network about $175,000.

The next week, the committee called George Kennan, the foreign affairs specialist to the hearings and Friendly asked his network for time to televise the hearings. This time the network said no—they couldn't afford a second time. And while the fifth rerun of "I Love Lucy" and the eighth rerun of "The McCoys" was shown on CBS, Kennan spoke in Washington and Friendly drew up his resignation and quit the CBS Network.

In retrospect, Friendly says the problem is that a "vending-machine bureaucracy, controlled by its
...By the end of 1965 the 'proper balance' between revenues and public service had permitted the net income, like the company's growth, nearly to double, to $2.47 a share. Too many unscheduled news programs could drive those figures down, could make Wall Street change its optimistic evaluation of CBS as a high-growth stock, could impel those mutual funds, foundations and universities to invest in something else. 

With corporations owning and controlling television, there is no hope for programming. Stockholders are not concerned about what kind of programming their network presents, they're concerned about making the stockholders happy. It would be nice if we could just leave the stockholders and the management to battle it out and ignore them. But we can't. They are controlling our airwaves. They are making millions of dollars a year off the public's airwaves and giving them junk in return. I want my airwaves back. I don't care if a share of stock goes down, I want my airwaves back! I don't care if the stockholders get mad, I want my airwaves back! I don't care if the corporation has invested a lot of money, they've made a lot of money already! I don't believe television has to be for the elite, train more people. Give us our airwaves back! It is time we fought back. Even Spiro Agnew, whose motives in his famous "Des Moines speech" remain clouded, demanded accountability from the networks:

As with other American institutions, perhaps it is time that the networks were made more responsive to the views of the nation and more responsible to the people they serve. Now, a virtual monopoly of a whole medium of communication is not something that democratic people should widely ignore. And we are not going to cut off our television sets and listen to the phonograph just because the airways belong to the networks. They don't. They belong to the people. The great networks have dominated America's airwaves for decades. The people are entitled to a full accounting of their stewardship.

Public Broadcasting

Because of the nature of commercial television—its need to attract large numbers of people in order to attract advertising dollars—and because of a corporate structure that demands profits over all, commercial television is inherently incapable of offering anything more than banality. The American airwaves and the potential for quality programming have been lost. They will be probably lost forever unless radical changes are made. And as long as there are networks and a Federal Communications Commission in its present form chances are slim.

In recent years one alternative offered by many people as an antidote to commercial television has been that of Public Television. The thought is that since commercial TV is inherently a slave to advertising and business interest, an alternative, non-commercial television network, ought to be established. Public television, as the theory goes, could provide quality programming and not have to worry about costs and ratings. It could bring to the American public "all the enlightenment and engagement, all the immediacy and freedom of experience which are inherent in the extraordinary medium...." And so, late in the 1960's with a generous annual grant from the Ford Foundation and a budget from the Federal Government, the Corporation for Public Television was formed with the Public Broadcasting System as its distributing agency. The PBS now sends out programming to a loosely knit network of over two hundred stations, including educational stations, state broadcasting authorities, and universities.

In its short lifetime, PBS has probably offered more quality programming than the networks have in twenty-five years. It has provided the much-heralded Sesame Street and its sequel the Electric Company, new dramas and plays, good news analysis, and shown most of the British-produced Masterpiece Theater performances. In some cities, where educational television is especially strong, stations have instituted a strong relationship with neighboring schools, providing seminars on how to use media in school situations, and offered special educational programming. Many educational stations broadcast each day programs that are a regular part of classroom teaching sessions.

PBS has provided broadcasting television with the best and most interesting programs it has ever seen. It has done so with no commercials. Most of its money continues to come from government subsidy, grants and donations. And yet, for all of its successes the PBS system has been a great disappointment.

Public broadcasting has become the fourth network. It has developed a snarl of red tape and bureaucracy any corporation president could be
Proud of. It has developed a top-heavy administration that centralizes decision-making in a few offices.

PBS is still much too inflexible with its programs. Although it has produced some of the most innovative programming ever, PBS is not programming very far out of the usual broadcast spectrum.

Cost is a major factor. Most PBS programming still costs around $200,000 to $300,000 a show. It requires a full set, thousands of dollars of equipment and tens of employees. Therefore, for anyone to produce a show that PBS will accept, they must have the permission and approval of the management in order to use the facilities and receive a budget. The other alternative is to be independently wealthy. Not much of a choice.

Public broadcasting for the most part has failed to become truly public television. By becoming big business and developing a large bureaucracy it has limited access to broadcasting to all but a very few elite. By accepting most of the broadcasting tenets of the commercial television stations, it has failed to develop a clearly different alternative. Public Broadcasting may have changed the rules a little, but it is still in the same ballpark.

Cable TV

Nicholas Johnson, the rebel Federal Communication Commission member, has a wonderfully titled book out called How To Talk Back To Your Television Set. In it he describes ways to make television more responsive. He suggests, for example, that more people take an active role in challenging the renewal of broadcasting licenses. (Each station's license must be renewed every three years by the FCC. Until recent years such a renewal was a foregone conclusion; stations are now beginning to be challenged more frequently, but rarely successfully.) Johnson shows how to make an influential challenge and whom to write for more help.

He also suggests viewers start complaining more about the level of programming. And finally he urges a more powerful and responsible FCC. More stringent regulations by government, he says, would force better television.

There's no doubt about it that people like Nicholas Johnson have improved broadcasting television. But I'm not so sure his approach will ever make any major changes. Broadcasting corporations are not about to give up millions of dollars without a fight. And usually big business can beat a government agency, especially when the government is on its side. It seems to me that any change in television is going to have to be made through some radical innovations that will either complete-

ly take over television or completely ignore it.

One step that has been taken to change the broadcasting system and open it up to the public has already been taken with the Public Broadcasting System. A far bigger step has been made with the growth of cable television.

According to the cable television industry, about 14 million viewers, seven percent of the U.S. television audience, are serviced by cable television systems. Cable systems operate in about over 4200 communities.13

Cable television is the next wave of communications. By 1980, experts say over 30 million people will be using cable systems. The principle behind the cable television system is simple: because of bad reception or distance from major markets, huge antennas are constructed to receive the distant broadcasting television signals. This big antenna is connected to nearby homes for a slight fee, via a coaxial cable. (Hence the name community antenna television or CATV—a common acronym for cable television systems.) This huge antenna picks up the signals at a quality better than any home could ever do. In addition, it usually picks up most of the stations in a wide area of over one hundred miles. Some cable systems in eastern Pennsylvania (where cable originated) give their subscribers all of the VHF and UHF stations in New York and Philadelphia, plus a few assorted ones in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. Quite a switch from the one or two stations they could only fuzzily receive before. For these reasons most of the growth in cable television so far has been in rural and small town areas—areas outside the major markets.

The over-the-air broadcasters have reacted to cable television with mixed emotions. On the one hand it has increased their viewing audience by the millions. Persons who were before unable to receive some of the networks—or who could receive only very poorly—can now be exposed to a full gamut of television. And to the networks more viewers means more advertising dollars.

On the other hand, broadcasters, businessmen that they are, are a little upset at the thought of others making money off of them—especially without any compensation to the networks. It is not fair, the networks claim, for us to pay the high costs of developing programming and have the cable systems reap the benefits. It is not fair, they go on, to have us pay the exorbitant fees for first run movies or big name entertainers and have cable television make a profit from that. They are also a little upset about the possibilities of more competition. The FCC, always ready to please the broadcasters, is still studying the complaints. They have already made some decisions limiting cable systems...
in some large market areas. More decisions on copyrights and other legal procedures will surely be coming soon.

The benefits of cable, however, do not lie with retransmitting over-the-air broadcasting. Cable television is going to succeed on the basis of what it can provide beyond ordinary television. The potential is there. It's too early to say if cable will live up to its potential better than television did.

Because of new technical improvements and the lack of concern for signals “mixing” (as there is in over-the-air), cable systems now have the potential to carry up to forty channels, although few have that many yet. Over-the-air stations can take up a maximum of ten or fifteen of these channels. That leaves a lot of open space for other activities. Some of the channels can be used to provide subscription and special services. For example, the cable system might be able to buy a sports package of sports activities usually not available to the viewer. Special-interest channels could provide, for example, theater productions or first-run movies. Other channels might be designed for a special group of people: lawyers, doctors, college students. Still others might be leased to groups who can show special types of programs. All of these types of special interest channels would greatly enhance the usefulness of television. People would then be able to watch what they wanted to watch. Programs would no longer need to be determined on their mass needs—and their ability to draw the largest number of viewers. There would no longer be the concern for producing mass audiences. Although there still might be some demand for general entertainment shows, they would not have to be the fare of every viewer.

Cable television, because of its subscription system, is not dependent on advertising revenues. Viewers, instead, with their monthly fee (usually around five dollars), pay the revenues for the cable system. Cable systems must therefore worry more about what their viewers say than their advertisers. Without viewers cable can't make money. Without providing attractive and innovative programming, cable can't attract new subscribers. Viewers finally have some power.

The greatest benefit of cable television lies in the concept of access. Access to communications means power. In a system like over-the-air broadcasting, power lies in the hands of a few men. In cable, however, with so many channels available, access can be provided to local groups. Cable television means local access. It is not a system totally dependent on a decision from New York.

For example, one channel might be used solely for the local government. City council meetings or important Board of Education meetings could be televised. In case of emergencies, government officials could relay information to the citizenry quickly and efficiently.

Local news shows could be initiated. Cable could afford to have news shows for small cities or even neighborhoods. (New York City’s cable system, for example, has news shows for three sections of Manhattan alone each night.) Neighborhoods would be able to hear the news for their area. They would be able to learn about important events that might concern them. They would also be able to publicly debate issues that were involving the neighborhood.

Cable television can also provide local origination of programming. Not all programs need be syndicated from New York or Hollywood. (Nor should they be.) A channel could be devoted to programming developed in that city or area by the local cable system. The programming would be about events or ideas that were of a special interest to local residents. For example, programs could show the pro’s and con’s of a planned housing development, the effects of a new highway, a new garbage disposal system, and so on. These would be programs designed for needs and interests of the area, not a general story meant for sixty million viewers.

One of cable’s best characteristics is local access channels. Cable can offer one solution to the problem of access power: offering a channel to the people. This would be a channel for no one in particular, with no stringent controls. It would not be a channel only for the rich and influential. It would be a channel for who ever wanted to use it.

Any individual or group with an idea or complaint would be able to speak. Programs would be made by residents. A neighborhood with a special problem might want to make a tape that expressed their problem. Other people just might

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want to make a fun tape about what they enjoy most: gardening, dancing, people. Any tape, by any person, would be allowed to be shown.

Local access is possible. In fact, under FCC regulations designed last year, every cable system must have at least one local access channel. In New York, where there are two local access channels, the channel is full most of the time with tapes made by ordinary citizens. Scheduling is on a first come, first serve basis.

It is possible technically as well. Relatively low-cost portable video tape recording units can be used by virtually anyone after a few easy lessons. (I've seen nursing home residents and seven year old kids make tapes.) Editing is a process in which station personnel could give aid. Equipment could be purchased by the cable company for use by the public.

Cable television systems provide at least some of the answers to the perplexities of broadcasting television. It is relatively de-centralized; systems usually average under 2,000 subscribers and systems can run profitably with fewer than that. It is local; cable systems can provide local interest programming. It provides access; local access channels give everyone an opportunity to participate. It is specific because of the multiple channels; not every program need be directed towards a mass audience.

The Future of Cable

Cable television, like broadcasting television thirty years ago, is on the verge of transforming society. And like broadcasting television many years ago, cable is in the developing stage that will determine its future as a service or a menace. Two major characteristics of cable television will determine that course: franchises and ownership.

Every cable system must be awarded a franchise before it may operate. Unlike television, where stations are in effect granted a three-year lease of the airwaves by the Federal Communications Commission, cable companies usually pay the municipality a fee (sometimes one or two-hundred thousand dollars) in order to receive a franchise to serve the community. The franchise gives the company an exclusive right to sell its cable subscriptions in the city, or in some instances a section of the city. The power, then, for determining what type of system a community will receive, rests in the hands of the city government.

In the past, many cities have given out franchises that did not protect the public interest. City commissioners knew little about cable television and had no idea of its vast implications, and so often fell victim to the arguments of fast-talking cable operators. Other commissioners had their votes and minds changed by taking money under the table from companies eager to obtain a franchise. People in the community were also not alert to the important issues and failed to protect their own interests.

It is of paramount importance that every community and city commissioner know what he is getting and giving away in the awarding of a franchise. The franchise will basically determine what kind of cable system develops. Although each community must determine its own needs and wants, a few commonly recognized basic characteristics can be listed.

1. The awarding of a franchise should be a public process involving the whole community. The community should be made aware of the interests and implications of cable television through a vast educational project. The franchise should be developed as a result of community needs and interests and the completed franchise should be circulated throughout the community for feedback. Public hearings should be held to determine the pulse of the community. A public committee should be appointed to act as an advisory and regulatory body to aid the mayor and city government before and after the franchise is awarded. This committee would also act as a community “watchdog” to make sure the cable company lives up to the franchise.

2. Franchises should be for the shortest time possible. In the past, cities often agreed to twenty year leases, thereby negating any power they might have to influence the cable system and the system’s service to the community. Franchises should be renegotiated at least every five years in order to insure responsibility from the company and to better service the changing needs and interests of the community.

3. Rates for installation and subscription.

FOOTNOTES
3 Friendly, op cit, p 273-4.
6 Friendly, op cit, p 279.
8 Friendly, op cit, p. 221.
10 Ibid. p 184.
12 Friendly, op cit, p 313.
14 United Church of Christ, Office of Communications, A Short Course on Cable, pp 6-7.
Cable is on the brink of being controlled by an oligarchy of gigantic corporations.

should be set as low as possible. Rates must be such that every citizen in the community has an opportunity to partake of the system. Under-representation of certain groups would hinder the full potential of the cable systems.

4. All sections of the city should be serviced by cable. Dividing up a city in terms of rich or poor, or black or white can only damage the city and hinder community relations. In large cities, different cable districts can be developed in order to better serve a community's special interest. But it is imperative that the whole city be serviced.

5. Completion of the wiring of the city and the initiation of programming should be done as soon as possible. The franchise should demand a system large enough to meet the present and future needs of the community.

6. The cable system should be required to provide assistance and financial aid to the public access channel. Equipment should be provided, editing and studio facilities be available, and further technical advice should be offered.

7. The cable operator should be obligated to offer a certain number of hours each week of locally originated programming.

Cable television is regulated in part by the Federal Communications Commission and sometimes by state regulatory bodies. But the majority of the decision making regarding cable happens at the local levels—by city governments and the individuals and groups that influence government. The people hold the power to cable through the awarding of franchises. An alert citizenry must make sure they don't lose it.

Ownership

A last point should be made about cable system ownership. We have seen how corporate ownership has affected television. The same is about to capture cable television. Giant syndicates already own large percentages of the cable systems. Howard Hughes already owns half of the two principal cable franchises in New York and Los Angeles; Time-Life Incorporated and Cox Communications, two of the largest companies in the print media, already control huge cable interests. In fact, over forty percent of cable systems are owned by media-related corporations. Cable is on the brink of being controlled by an oligarchy of gigantic corporations. The ownership of cable television should be regulated. A few alternatives to profit-making companies have been proposed.

1. Non-profit community organizations. Profits would be plowed back into the operations to reduce rates and provide better service. Such a community group would probably welcome more community involvement than a profit-making system.

2. The prime advantage to municipally owned systems is that money can be borrowed at lower rates than private investors can receive. A munici-

pality could expect even to make a small profit while it also reduced subscription rates and provided generous amounts of local public programming.

3. A community association or a coalition of community groups is a third alternative. Community ownership is especially important to minority groups that have been completely blocked from participation in broadcasting television. Cable television provides the last frontier for minority involvement in the communications media. A community owned franchise could also provide new jobs and opportunities for minority groups.

In summary, the best alternative as I see it is to keep franchises in the hands of local citizens or locally controlled companies. In this way better responsibility to the community can be insured, programming can be locally-oriented and the powers remain in the hands of the people.

Cable television is at a crossroads now. It can offer new services and unlimited potential or it can go the way of broadcasting television and make profits for a very few and service even fewer. In hundreds of cities and villages across the nation that battle is going on right now.
he says
goin off to be a writer huh?
yup
he says

out in the cow barn his father chuckles
to think of it his fat boy in jeans incompetent
to the simplest task he
sent him out to turn the lights out
once two months ago & after an hour came
out to find him reading
shelley aloud

the epistle to the Druzhiniki

fella name of percy got to have
somethin queer about him no son of mine
gonna hang out with all them limp wrists

& in the barnyard he finds
beautiful women to love in the shape
of chickens

& late at night he swears in his sleep getting
the line just correct before falling to sleep & forgetting
& he sleeps late & does not eat
& drinks a lot & gets worse & worse until
nobody can stand him anymore

& for sure
every father in town knows he has
lain with his daughter & if not yet then certainly
it's coming & there's no stopping it &
no one can quite figure out how
he manages it & how
his fancy words dazzle them in the cornfields &
in the back seats embarrass them after school how
every vile deed done is imputed to his name & he has not died of their
commission & it doesn't appear likely he will in the foreseeable future

& he dreams sometimes of armies of chickens hacking
each other to bits only
they are not chickens when he sees them but men & warriors
& he is in the middle of it calling out
the colors of the blood & flying dust
calling out to them to kill & not to be afraid leading
his army of chickens he is always victorious &
when he comes home covered with feathers blood
& chicken shit they
worry about him &
his mother almost asks him if everythings
all right but thinks better of it &
no one says anything but they look at him
with wide eyes for a week not
knowing what next to expect they think
it is the words flashing inside his head & the devil
somehow had a part in it & he's crazy for sure &
it worries them sometimes especially
as often he neglects to wash up after war & in the morning
the whole house stinks
Spring
Photography by
John Daverman
What's New in the Social Sciences?

The Fall 1972 faculty colloquium was devoted to new developments in the social sciences. Of five papers presented from the departments of history, political science, sociology, economics, and psychology, two are presented here. The remaining three will appear in later issues.

HISTORY
by Edwin VanKley

Some of you—I can tell from your smiles—think the title of my talk is a contradiction in terms. You're thinking, I suppose, that history is the study of what is old; so nothing is ever new in history. We smile condescendingly at your confusion. In one sense—a sense different, I'm sure, from the way you understand it—it's almost true that nothing is new in history. The history of historiography is such an old discipline among us that a determined historian can almost always find an earlier parallel or antecedent to what appears on the surface to be a new trend in the discipline. But if we ignore the question of earlier parallels and antecedents, I could describe several obvious new trends in the historical profession. I could report, for example, that there is currently a somewhat soft demand for the services of professional historians; but I gather that this trend is too much a part of the larger academic scene to merit particular comment. I should in passing reassure you, however, that most historians are as convinced as ever that they are indispensable to our society and to civilization generally; they merely assert it in somewhat more muted tones these days. I could also report to you that the movement of "radical history" has apparently passed its apogee. The demands of the radicals in our professional organizations are less stridently made than they were a few years ago, and the written work of radical historians seems to be becoming more disciplined and professional. No doubt this too is related to the current job market. I will, however, try to say something about recent emphases in historical research. Relax! I am not going to talk about the fascinating and important new work being done toward an assessment of Asian influences in seventeenth-century European culture, although an increasing concern for non-western cultures and their comparison with the west is surely one of the current trends.

When Dr. Walhout first suggested the topic to me, I was appalled at his inclusion of history in the social sciences. Apparently he doesn't know that historians customarily refer to those disciplines as "sciences auxiliary to history." I have always believed that history was sui generis: that it could not be subsumed under any larger category. Consequently I suggested to him as tactfully as I could that it might be better to talk about the social
sciences this year, the natural sciences next year,
and then two or three years from now devote a
whole faculty-board conference to "What's New in
History." I don't think I got through to him. At
least I didn't get out of the assignment. After
catching up on journal reading and bibliography,
however, I became convinced that the most ob­
vvious single recent trend in history is precisely its
increasing inclusion in the social sciences and its
acceptance of many of the methods and assump­
tions of the social sciences. This is not to say that I
am enthusiastic about the trend or that the ma­
jority of historians are part of it; but this is, none­
theless, what's new.

For example, an increasingly large number of
books and articles currently being published fall
into the category of social history. In one fashion
or another they deal with the history of the
masses, of ordinary people and of their institu­
tions, social organizations, economic endeavors and
accomplishments. The history of the family is en­
joying considerable interest. The growing impor­
tance of social history does not merely indicate
that historians have found new subjects for investi­
gation. It has profound methodological and philo­
sophical implications as well. If, for example, an
historian decides to study peasant families in eight­
eenth-century Austria rather than the ruling Haps­
burg family, he is confronted with totally different
sorts of source material. Peasant families left no
memoirs or letters to friends subsequently pre­
served in family libraries. It is in fact impossible to
write the history of a single peasant family. Con­
sequently our historian must collect statistics; he
wants to know how many peasants owned land,
how many people lived in a typical peasant's
house, at what age did most peasants marry, how
many children did they typically have, what per­
centage of them were baptized, what the inheri­
tance laws and customs were, how landless peas­
ants supported themselves, what price they re­
cieved for the products they raised, what taxes
they paid, etc. To do this sort of research the
historian must develop some reliable ways of han­
dering statistics. In fact, of course, economists,
sociologists, and political scientists have already
done that. But our historian must now learn how
to use these statistical methods. He begins to read
and study as much economics and sociology as
history. Perhaps he even begins to study computer
programming.

The new methods also carry some philosophic
assumptions with them. Statistics are usually com­
plied to support generalizations. An economist or
sociologist, for example, collects unemployment
statistics in the black and white neighborhoods of
Grand Rapids in order to support his generalization
that unemployment is higher among blacks than
among whites. To return to our Austrian peasant
families, the historian collects statistics to show
that the so-called modern nuclear family antedates
the industrial revolution and is not, as formerly
believed, one of the consequences of industrializa­
tion. The researcher has moved away from the
illumination of the particular as his major task to
the formulation of generalizations about large
groups of people. He has, in short, become more
scientific. He may also find that the generalization
he has made about Austrian peasant families be­
comes still more interesting to him if he compares
them with Indian peasant families or with Chinese
peasant families. Now he is involved in compara­
tive history. We could follow the example much
further, but I think most of the important con­
sequences of such social history are already appar­
rent: It involves the historical use of methods bor­
rrowed from the other social sciences, thereby
breaking down or at least reducing the distinctions
between these disciplines. It makes the social his­
torian much more scientific than the traditional
historian in that he is actually collecting raw statis­

Sweet darling Olenka,
stop looking in the mirror on the wall
and come to me
to learn the nature of the manhunt;

my tigress,
don your glass slippers
and twinkling
follow, fairest
pumpkin,
into the easy
land of symbiotism,
the promised land
where your milk and honey
may flow unceasingly.

Come, choose your weapons,
carefully;
Canaan's forests
grow most delicious
snow white apples.
Your strategy,
tical data in search of a scientific generalization. The complexity of the tools and procedures for such research forces its practitioners to pay much more attention to techniques and methods than traditional historians usually do. Some, in fact, have become so entranced with the methods that they seem to have lost sight of the goal. Both the non-political subject and the desirability of cross-cultural comparisons tend to reduce the importance of national history or the history of single civilizations. Finally, such a social historian finds it difficult to think of his task as the preservation of the past for the edification of his fellow-citizens in anything like the old humanist sense, and he will most likely write up his findings for fellow experts rather than for the general educated public. This last consideration has had predictable effects on his literary style.

Even more recent and more faddish has been the new interest in psychological techniques for historical research. Its enthusiasts contend that since biography has always been important to historians they should try to use the insights of psychologists and psychoanalysts to help understand historical personalities. Human behavior and motivation are very complex, they say, and the biographer who merely illumines the surface or public life of a man like Napoleon, Bismark, or Hitler has not served his readers very well. He should also search for symptoms of known personality types or identifiable psychological problems to help us really understand the great men of history. In fact, some psycho-historians have observed that all biographers make psychological judgments and inferences about their subjects, but that they usually do so without first getting the psychology straight. Historians should, they contend, make conscious rather than unconscious psychological judgments, and they should become knowledgeable about current psychological theory before they try to make any at all.

Psycho-history too tends to blur the distinction between historians and the social scientists—in this case between historians and psychologists. On the surface, unlike social history, it seems to focus attention on the particular rather than on the scientific generalization. In practice, however, it tends to categorize the individual subject once the researcher has found evidence for a known personality type or an identifiably psychological malady. The individual then becomes another instance of the general type—a manic-depressive, for instance. Perhaps the most dangerous thing about psycho-history is the tendency to start with the generalization—with the personality type or psychological aberration—and to assume the presence in the subject of all the characteristics of such a general type once some of those characteristics have been found.

As you might expect there is opposition to these new styles of history from more traditional practitioners. Jacques Barzun, for example, known to many non-historians for his scathing condemnation of Webster's Third New International Dictionary, carefully studied the merits of psycho-history with his usual impartiality and charity. Reluctantly, no doubt—but hardly to our surprise—he found that the behavioral techniques contributed no valuable new historical insights. Furthermore he observed that they contributed greatly to the reprobate tendency to use jargon in historical writing. Other critics have revived the old argument about whether history is an art or a science. Should historians, they ask, work for scientific generalizations at all? Isn't the historian's task primarily the reconstruction and illumination of the unique, of the particular? Doesn't history militate against generalizations by its very nature? Still others have expressed concern that the humanistic purposes for writing history are being neglected. The hyphenated historians are no longer concerned with put-

{sly Joshuess should draw upon the battles of those gone before (God rest their souls) the ambush from your magic little corner works quite well if the maneuver is completed before midnight. so does the snaky innocent approach (work well) to lure the game into your sticky trap.

Remember, always believe in me, your fairy godmother and even the biggest Philistine cannot resist your temptation. Have faith and you will receive your just reward:

the unnecessity to know both good and evil.

Joan Malda
ling present society in touch with its past. Their works are written not for the general public but for fellow specialists. In fact they are increasingly unreadable by the general public. Articles on social history are often replete with graphs, charts and tables, and the works employing psychological techniques tend to be heavily jargon-ridden. It is indeed discouraging for a rather old-fashioned historian like myself to stumble over phrases like "the evocation of a proxy," "aggressive and regressive behavior," "phallic-narcissistic character," or "reaction formation" in a journal article about the most political of all creatures, Otto von Bismarck. Put in other words, if historians indeed become social scientists will they not inevitably lose the old humanist keeper-of-the-traditions role?

More significant than the negative reactions to socio-history and psycho-history has been the willingness of many older, established historians to take the claims of the new hyphenated types of history seriously and to simply plead for a responsible use of the new techniques. Do not, they warn, write quantitative history until you are knowledgeable about the use and limitations of statistics as the sociologists, economists, and political scientists are. Do not attempt psycho-history until you are up to date on all the various current psychological theories and are sure that you are not merely adding psychological jargon to common sense observations. In fact some of the older established historians are trying their hand at it. The psychological phrases I repeated a few minutes ago came from a recent article by Otto Pflanze, called "Toward a Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Bismarck." It's enough to blow my mind.

Where will it all lead? Perhaps the old academic divisions in the social sciences are becoming obsolete. There may be a time coming when we will no longer be able to categorize a man as a political scientist, economist, sociologist or historian. To some extent it's already happening. Is Arthur Schlesinger Jr, for example, best described as an historian, a political scientist, or a politician? Which label best fits Henry Kissinger or George McGovern? Is Eric Erikson an historian or a psychoanalyst? Perhaps we are seeing in the social sciences something parallel to what has been going on in the physical sciences—the breakdown of the traditional compartments. No doubt in some ways this would be good. The names I mentioned a minute ago at least suggest that questions about the relevance of history will fade as the divisions between it and the social sciences erode. In that great day we will no doubt all live in amity, and historians will no longer refer to the other social sciences as "sciences auxiliary to history." One quantitative historian predicts exactly such a consequence:

The leading historians of more recent vintage are "historians' historians." It must be mentioned that we are only beginning work in quantitative history and in the use of the computer for historical research. If one asks, therefore, what the future holds the answer I think must be that the present tendencies will continue and perhaps accelerate. The results of research will emerge in the form of an internal dialogue among scholars. The gap between the products of historical scholarship and the educated public will widen. History will undergo a development from which it was believed to be exempt, the same development that has taken place in most other fields of knowledge.

But I for one still have immense sympathy for the notion that history is to serve present society as its cultural memory, and that this can best be done by carefully reconstructing past epochs or events in their full variety and complexity, by artistically telling the stories, and by writing it all in ordinary, jargon-free language for the general reading public. It is in this context that I can best understand my task as a Christian historian teaching Christian students. If history in the future is to become less distinguishable from the social sciences I can only hope that the new social sciences will accept enough of the traditional task and method of history so that this function will still be performed.

On the other hand, I have confined by observations to what is new; I have not talked about what is most common. My impression is that the very great majority of books and articles written by historians is still fairly traditional stuff. Much of it, in fact, is still political history. All of which makes it possible that the current trends may be reversed,
or, what is more likely, that the new varieties of quantitative and behavioral history may become useful subdivisions of history, integrated into the discipline without threatening its traditional identity and purpose.

POLITICAL SCIENCE
by James DeBorst

It is only proper that this discussion of political science follows the presentation of what's new in history because many view political science as only an enfeebled step-child of history. The explanation for this identification with history can best be made in terms of a brief review of the emergence of political science as an academic discipline. This came very late in the development of human thought. For two thousand years, from the time of Plato and Aristotle until the Renaissance, all of knowledge was regarded as forming a unitary whole. Although in the Middle Ages, law, theology, and medicine became separate academic disciplines, all the rest of human knowledge was included under the heading of philosophy. It was not until the 17th century that a division into natural philosophy and moral philosophy took place. Only in the 19th century did economics and sociology and anthropology appear, with political science as the very last of the social sciences to make even a modest claim to independent status.

The reason for the laggard status of political science among the social sciences is a simple one. Like a pampered younger brother, it didn’t have to make any particular effort to survive. The other social sciences had more or less invented themselves, so that merely to justify their existence, a vigorous display of creative effort was necessary. Political science, in contrast, rested comfortably within the highly respected and ancient craft of history.

In its own right, of course, one area of political science, political philosophy, had maintained an active role in intellectual development from the time of Plato, but for the rest, after Aristotle’s brilliant inauguration of the study of comparative politics on an empirical basis, political science went into eclipse for centuries. Even in the 19th century when political science began to make its first tentative gestures toward independent existence, its Siamese-twin relationship with history was not only accepted, but gloried in. Axiomatic in the outlook of pre-World War II political scientists was the admonition of the distinguished British political scientist, Sir John Seeley, that “History without political science has no fruits; political science without history has no roots.”

In terms of method, the result of this relationship with history was the consistent and virtually universal acceptance of historical concepts as a basis for the organization of material. This historical influence goes far to explain several other characteristics of what is now called “Traditional Political Science,” particularly the acceptance of the idea that if enough facts were accumulated, they would speak for themselves without any interpretation being necessary. Historical influence, with its strong reliance on documentary sources, was also an important factor in the emphasis given to institutions, and the general lack of interest in actual behavior.

Briefly then, until after world War II the approach of the discipline has been labelled traditional and its general characteristics were as follows:

1. It was primarily historical and chronological.
2. It lacked either a general theory of politics or a methodology of its own.
3. Its focus was principally on political and governmental institutions in an isolated and legalistic sense.
4. It was largely indifferent to the realities of political behavior within the institutional structures.
5. It was deeply concerned with policy and the ideal ends of government. Or as Edward S. Corwin put it, “Our proper task is criticism and education regarding the true ends of the state and how best they may be achieved.”

One other aspect of the discipline must be noted before we examine the more recent developments within political science. In spite of present criticism, not all traditional political scientists confine themselves to the quest for factual knowledge. One sub-field was, and in places still is, a vital part of the whole enterprise. It is usually labeled Political Theory. In Political Theory the concern is for the search for moral knowledge. Now for most present day social scientists the word “theory” connotes a form of thought in which a systematic attempt is made to explain diverse phenomena that have been, or can be observed. In this usage the theoretical enterprise involves simply the development of explanations for as wide a number of data as possible. Viewed this way, political theory is neither prescriptive nor oriented toward action. Rather it is explanatory and oriented toward understanding. It does not imply a set of values nor
a set of facts, but is a process by which sense is made out of facts by relating and ordering them.

This conception of theory is much narrower and more precise than the one with which the field of Political Theory entered the post-war period. For a variety of historical reasons the field has traditionally included other forms of thought besides explanatory theory. Most notably, philosophical and ideological thought were subsumed by Political Theory. Following the lead of the discipline of philosophy, Political Theory continued to give great emphasis to the moral dimension of governance and politics. In addition, while the commitment of political scientists to scholarly objectivity has generally precluded them from being producers of ideologies, normative analysis and criticism of ideological thought were nonetheless major preoccupations of Political Theory in the post-war period. More recently, interest in this form of political thought has declined as political scientists become more enamored with the scientific method. The concern of Political Theory with ideology has diminished correspondingly.

One answer, therefore, as to what is new in political science is the rapid post-war decline of the field within the discipline that was primarily concerned with studying the great philosophical, theoretical, and ideological works about government and politics, starting with Plato and coming down to the recent past. Many universities no longer require of their political science majors a course in Political Theory. We in our department, for a number of reasons, have reduced the requirement from two to one course. All of this I deeply regret. Political Theory, as traditionally taught, dealt with value questions and action programs as much as with empirically testable propositions, often fusing them. Thus it examined beliefs about how political life and communities ought to be organized as much as conceptions of how men were likely to behave and organize themselves, politically.

This conception of Political Theory, however, was not consistent with the one that was generated and reinforced by the next major development in political science—the post World War II Behavioral Revolution that was to deeply divide the discipline.

In the period prior to World War II social scientists increasingly attempted to apply the scientific method to the problems of their respective disciplines. There were three aspects to this new trend:

1. Keen interest in the development of empirical theory, reducible to testable propositions.
2. An attempt to discover dependable units of analysis.
3. A push toward the creation of a unified science concerned with all aspects of man's role in society.

For political science, the impact of the behavioral approach coincided with the first serious full-scale efforts to apply the scientific method to the problems of the discipline.

By the mid-1960's the behavioral approach had almost completely swept over the discipline of political science. The aims of the behavioral movement are:

1. Make political science, as far as possible, capable of prediction and explanation in the realm of political events.
2. Employ research based on a theoretical framework.
3. Test all theoretical propositions by the collection and analysis of factual material.
4. Be concerned with only those theoretical propositions which lend themselves to this scientific method.
5. Make use of all available mechanical facilities and advanced techniques, such as computers, statistical analysis, polling, and the like, that facilitate this process.

One of the major results of this change within the discipline is that with the theoretical enterprise being carried on in all the subject matter fields, values and ideologies are treated merely as empirical phenomena to be explained. Thus as we have become more and more narrowly empirical, we have abandoned our philosophical and normative concerns to departments of philosophy or treat them as appendages, somewhat in the manner that the History of Economic Thought is handled in most economics departments.

My personal concern is that some behaviorists, as well as some traditionalists, claim that their approach and method is the only proper one for the study of politics. I believe that the scientific method can be most effectively used to describe, explain and understand some political phenomena and that the behavioral approach has made its contribution to the discipline. I do not believe, however, that this is the only responsibility of political science.

Properly understood, political science includes consideration of the form of government, the principles upon which government rests, the extent of governmental intervention in public and private affairs, the character of laws in relation to community and individual, and the intercourse of citizens as members of a community. Also, it comprehends ideas of order, justice, and freedom. I do not believe that the behavioral methodology can suffice for all of these profound matters. Historical experience, prescription, jurisprudence, precept,
and a nation's constitutional usage must remain a part of the approach to the study of politics.

As pragmatism is the negation of philosophy, so behaviorism, if erected as the exclusive approach within political science, will result in the denial of political rationality. If the estrangement of many political scientists from normative theory, history, and prescription endures long enough, the influence of the discipline upon the living community will dwindle—with alarming consequences for the commonwealth.

This decline of influence has resulted in the most recent development in political science, a challenge to behavioral orthodoxy. David Easton, in his presidential address to the American Political Science Association in September 1969, called this development the Post-Behavioral Revolution. According to Easton, the essence of the post-behavioral revolution is not hard to identify. It consists of a deep dissatisfaction with political research and teaching, especially of the kind that is striving to convert the study of politics into a more rigorously scientific discipline modeled on the methods of the natural sciences. Its battle cries are RELEVANCE AND ACTION. Easton describes the tenets of the post-behavioral credo this way.

1. SUBSTANCE MUST PRECEDE TECHNIQUE.

If one must be sacrificed for the other—it is more important to be relevant and meaningful for contemporary urgent social problems than to be sophisticated in the tools of investigation.

2. BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH HAS LOST TOUCH WITH REALITY.

Because the heart of behavioral inquiry is abstraction and analysis, this serves to conceal the brute realities of politics, whereas the present task of the discipline is to reach out to the real needs of mankind in a time of crisis.

3. RESEARCH ABOUT, AND CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF VALUES ARE INEXTINGUISHABLE PARTS OF THE STUDY OF POLITICS.

Science cannot be and never has been evaluatively neutral despite protestations to the contrary. Therefore, to understand the limits of our knowledge we need to be aware of the value premises on which it stands and the alternatives for which this knowledge could be used.

4. TO KNOW IS TO BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTING, AND TO ACT IS TO ENGAGE IN RESHAPING SOCIETY.

5. POLITICIATION OF THE PROFESSION IS INESCAPABLE AS WELL AS DESIRABLE.

If the intellectual has the obligation to implement his knowledge, the profession and the universities themselves cannot stand apart from the struggles of the day.

In summary, in the face of the agony of the present social crisis, this post-behavioral revolution in political science pleads for more relevant research. It pleads for an orientation to the world that will encourage political scientists, even in their professional capacity, to prescribe and to act so as to improve political life according to some basic, perhaps humane, criteria.

This, however, is in tension with the normal commitment of behavioral political science to exclude value specifications as beyond the competence of science. Generally, though certainly not all behaviorists have treated with indifference the questions of transcendent knowledge and of moral beliefs. But the present post-behavioral predilection for molding society, often into a thoroughly democratic, egalitarian, strifeless unity, NECESSARILY bring them face to face with religious and moral influences upon politics, however disconcerting this may be. Behaviorists who attempt to disavow all “value judgments” are cast back upon personal prejudices, popular slogans, and self-interest as models for a better society.

If the post-behavioral revolution in political science is to make a real contribution, it must accept the fact that religious convictions and their political consequences can no more be left out of a sound political scientist’s reckoning than bedrock can be omitted from the calculations of a bridge builder.

The “great tradition” of politics—to employ Leo Strauss’ phrase—has been normative; that is, the political philosopher has sought what T S Eliot called “the enduring things,” the standards for order and justice and freedom. And these political norms have been rooted in transcendent insights—in religious belief. Henry Zylstra stated it this way: “To be human is to be scientific, yes, and practical, and rational, and moral, and social, and artistic, but to be human further is to be religious also. And this religious in man is not just another facet of himself, just another side to his nature, just another part of the whole. It is the condition of all the rest and the justification of all the rest. This is inevitably and inescapably so for all men. No man is religiously neutral in his knowledge of and his appropriation of reality.”
Trees and Water

I.

In the forest during the day
there is a hush that grows
through the limbs of trees forever.
There is a stillness you
can touch buried
among the roots.

I fit in well here
with thick boots, nylon pack,
leather jacket and knife.
I feel ready for anything
scrambling over logs, brush,
twisted wet roots.
I walk for hours hoping I am lost,
wishing to change colors and fade
like the leaves or to grow wings
like the hawk and fly
where none can touch me
ever again.

II.

In the forest one sees less
but more clearly.
A string of light
balancing between two trees.
Bits of knotted wood
sticking heads of bark
above the mud, the bones
of flowers that died years ago
and arrowheads that outlived
the Indians.

At night,
after hot chocolate and biscuits
I wash the small pan
until it shines and reflects
my face deep into the woods
where owls wait.
I sleep near a tree,
its bark like a hundred black elbows,
its branches thick as machine.

III.

The morning is sunless,
cold and tired.
I set out freezing
but am soon warmed
by places with strange names.
Places like rabbit, snake,
bear, elk, and wolf.
I follow a place called deer
to the river and follow
the river to the lake
that is almost an ocean.

This lake I love and hate
in equal measure as I do
all things. Lake with a state's name
I have forgotten.

IV.

The water is slowly turning
to ice. Everything so cold and hard
in this season of memories
and curses.

I think if I try one more time,
if I open my eyes wide enough
the sun will rise behind them.
I think if I would stretch
my hand out and across this water
I could finally reach you.
I shout your name as loud as possible
across the water and hear ice cracking
on the opposite shore where you stand,
pregnant with broken promises
and bad faith.
Lake that is grey and senseless, 
full of changes. 
Why is it I must always go with you 
and feel these bodies moving and swimming 
inside me like blood. 
Why is it even when we are ice 
and very cold they stand on my skin 
and say, “Here we are safe. 
He will not break.”

V.

Elm, birch, oak, maple. 
I touch them all. They 
are hard and wet and a 
hundred years old.

On the last day out 
I stop again near the waves 
and look around 
for anything that resembles 
a way out.

But here there is nothing, 
not even in the woods. 
Here no questions are answered. 
Here no ashes rekindle, no black wood 
snaps back into fire. 
No ice cracks open to reveal faces. 
No animals creep from hibernation.

Here there is only myself 
and this one dark tree 
and a type of regeneration 
like a small moon pounding 
deep inside my chest.

And finally, here are the tears. 
They mix with the water to form 
words that speak. 
Child, faith, sorrow, blood. 
And here the words gather 
to form all of the messages 
you never read in the waters 
you never understood.

David den Boer
Abijah’s Graveyard

The graves are not visible from the road. They are hidden by a receding bank, which is overrun with trees and underbrush. From the road the only visible sign of their location is a foot wide path, a tiny crack broken in the bank. The path climbs, meanders to the right, and fades into the little clearing on the crest of the hill.

There are eleven graves on the hill, but not all of them are in the clearing. Two are hidden beneath a nearby box elder tree, which is walled with blackberry bushes and bleached grape vines. Mr Peasley’s stone stands alone in a dark circle of lilacs. Nearby, the headstone of the J E Atkin’s children leans on the trunk of a small tree.

No fence surrounds the graves. As far back as anyone can remember, the place has never been cared for. And because there is something especially alluring about the old, forsaken graveyard teenagers have haunted the place for years. Most come at night for a few nervous giggles or screams, but some have marred the face of the graveyard. Two stones have been tipped off their bases. Two more are chipped and broken in pieces, and three or four others have been rolled down the hill to be buried in the underbrush. Perhaps the stones once stood on the hill in orderly rows. But now any semblance of order is gone—the markers are splattered at random among the weeds.

The pilgrims who visit the shrine call it Abijah’s Graveyard. No doubt the title was inspired by this verse inscribed on Abijah Edson’s tombstone:

Stop and read as you pass by,
As you are now so once was I,
As I am now so you must be,
Prepare for death and follow me.

Abijah passed away in 1873. His wife Cynthia, whose stone lies four feet away, followed in 1874.

On the other side of Abijah’s grave lies a blackened, illegible stone. A red ant walks across its face, dipping in and out of the worn depressions that no one can read. By the child’s grave, a cricket whirs. The stone is broken in four pieces and the only legible characters are, “1 yr 10 mos.”

One grave stands out. Marked by a crude wooden cross, it is the easiest one to spot in the weeds. The tombstone consists of two white bricks holding down an eight-inch piece of plywood. Perhaps the cross marks the grave of someone’s pet—a turtle or canary. But perhaps the only thing buried here is the fat white grub that curls beneath the ply wood in the rich soil.

Today a strong west wind blows the hill alive. It knuckles the small young sumacs that fringe the clearing and ruffles the drying weeds. It scrapes and rattles brown leaves across the sky and bends the heavy heads of milkweed pods. The mouth of the wind is open too wide to whistle—its noise is an unfenced rush of sound. The sound penetrates even the dark room under the box elder tree where the two stones hide. One dead and bonesike branch squeaks slowly back and forth above the graves.

But wind and giggling teenagers are not the graveyard’s only intruders. Behind the graves, just visible through a grove of white pines, stands a new A-frame house. Further up the gravel road, new ranch, colonial, and tri-level houses squat on their green lawns. And behind the houses, where the hill dips to meet another rise, a new expressway is being built. Growling yellow caterpillars have inched a wide, brown gash between the hills. They spin destruction around them as they go. It is past five. The machines have stopped for the day. They crouch in a silent row, waiting.

One hundred years are collected in the graveyard. They are piled in the hill like soft cobwebs in the corners of an old barn. Abijah and the others spin the day into a cocoon around them, waiting.

Melody Takken