THE SOCIAL REALITY

Dr Robert Manis

St. Petersburg Times

U.S. forces track down and kill Osama bin Laden in Pakistan and then take control of his remains.

@copyright 2013 - Robert Manis, Ph.D. Downloadable for enrolled students only
THE SOCIAL REALITY -- Table of Contents

Chapter One – The Social Reality
The Social Reality.................................................................1

Chapter Two – Society and Culture
MadCow Burgers or God......................................................7

Chapter Three – Groups and Socialization
An Organizational Tragedy..................................................13

Chapter Four – Crime and the Criminal System
Crime Pays..........................................................................17

Chapter Five – Family
What It Takes.......................................................................23

America’s Family Time Famine – William Mattox..............27

Chapter Six – Stratification
History of the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills.....................33

Chapter Seven – Race and Racism
The Long Slow Death of Ethnocentrism..............................41

Chapter Eight – Gender
Gender Wars.......................................................................47

What if Heather had Two Mommies? – Linda Foreman.......49

Chapter Nine – The Economy
Criminal Corporations – Jerome G. Manis.........................57

Note on Corporate Welfare mothers, pornographers and Tax Dodgers...64

Chapter Ten – Politics
The Government We Deserve.............................................67

Chapter Eleven – Media
What Makes Mainstream Media Mainstream – Noam Chomsky..73
Note on Copyright Laws

All rights reserved by the author. No reproduction permitted without expressed written consent of the various authors.

Title 17 of Copyright Law Sec. 107. Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include

(1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes; ..etc.

Published by: Manis and Hall Communications, 848 N. Rainbow Blvd #2443, Las Vegas, NV 89107

Phone:702-651-4849 Fax:815-846-4018
Chapter One

Conspiracy or Coincidence?

In May 2011, headlines screamed that Bin Laden was dead. But within a few days, right-wing and Moslem sites claimed it was fake. Their proof? Bin Laden was buried at sea. An obvious coverup.

Crazy, huh?

But an August 2004 poll by Zogby International found that half of all New York City residents believed that the US government "knew in advance that [the 9-11] attacks were planned... and that they consciously failed to act" (NY Times, Aug 31, 2004). After the failure of the war on Iraq to produce the weapons of mass destruction that were the official reason for the war, as well as the reluctance and repeated delays by the US Government in holding hearings to investigate the worst attack on America, their skepticism can be understood. But was their skepticism justified? Let's look closer.

Consider just a few facts: The names of the hijackers were released within 48 hours despite the deaths of all aboard. How did they know their names? Many of those names in fact didn't appear on passenger rosters when they were released in the summer of 2004. The hijackers left rental cars with copies of the Koran and videotapes of how to fly jetliners in the airport parking lots, despite the fact that all previous terrorist attacks had been solved by rental car records, and despite the Al Qaeda regulation (found later in a handbook in a safe house in Kabul) that Korans were not to be carried by operatives on a mission. Colleen Rawley, FBI whistleblower testified before Congress that the Minnesota FBI had 19th hijacker Moussaui’s laptop which contained information about the attacks a month earlier, but were forbidden to open the laptop by headquarters in Washington for so long that Minnesota office concluded that headquarters was being run by “Al Qaeda moles” (Sidney Morning Herald, May 28, 2002). All materials from the World Trade Center collapse were carted away and recycled while investigators were denied access to the rubble (Committee on Science, U.S. House of Representatives, 2002).

Was all this evidence of conspiracy, or just a series of coincidences? It’s a good question. In fact, a website www.RigorousIntuition.Blogspot.com has made a list of all the coincidences (with references) one would have to believe. Look it up and decide for yourself. It may seem farfetched to you, but it strikes to an important question, how do we know what we think we know?

In fact, how do you know you are reading this and not simply dreaming that you are reading? You could pinch yourself, but maybe you would be dreaming you were pinching yourself. Usually people don’t realize they were dreaming until they wake up. Maybe one day you will wake up and realize this entire life was a dream. Row, row, row your boat...

Speculations like these have occupied philosophers for centuries, but even though they seem esoteric, but they have a practical side, too. How do you know what your lover, friends, family, TV, textbooks, etc tell you is true? If it's your lover, maybe you could hire a private detective, but that’s expensive. Most of us don’t believe the media much these days. But how do you find out what really happened? In general we have to be content with relying on second-hand information. But that doesn’t mean we have to accept it uncritically.
Here’s some more examples: We’ve heard that President Obama was born in Kenya, a secret Muslim, etc. But these have all been disproved. On the other hand, we know that the previous President was from Crawford, TX, a “compassionate conservative,” a Christian, a recovered alcoholic. How did we know? Because he told us. That doesn’t seem very convincing. Of course, we also saw him hugging children and praying and of course we haven’t seen him drinking. But weren’t the first two just Photo Ops? We really don’t know what he (or any other politician) does in private. Hence, there’s room for speculation.

In fact, consider the first fact, about Bush’s home. According to an article that came out in summer 2001:

By showcasing the Crawford ranch, the Bush spinmeisters hope to show voters that Bush had a life, an identity, and a home before he entered the White House. But the third point, at least, is certainly untrue. The Crawford ranch does not precede Bush’s life on the national stage; it is a product of it. When Bush was just governor of Texas, he didn’t have the ranch—it was bought two years ago, with his presidential campaign at full steam. Before then, he lived in the governor’s mansion and spent vacations at a home he owned at a members-only lakeside retreat in East Texas called the Rainbo Club, which caters to the Dallas elite. His other holiday destinations were the Bush family compound in Kennebunkport, Maine, which did so much to identify his father as an aloof prep, and the Gasparilla Inn, a luxurious Florida hideaway owned by an heir to the DuPonts, where the Bush family went after the Florida recount. As one Texas newspaper noted back when Bush purchased his ranch, ”Mr. Bush has no roots in the area.” But after seven trips there as president, Bush has most of the national press convinced that he was practically born and bred in Crawford. It’s a great political feat. (The New Republic, August 27, 2001)


But are these just the ravings of half-mad conspiracy theorists? And what about those recent theories about our current President: That he was born in Kenya, a secret Muslim or Socialist? It’s up to you to decide. The theories are all available on the Internet. The temptation is to throw them all away, believe them all or just believe those that confirm your prejudices. But none of those is satisfactory. Even if you read the sources, how will you know for sure? I’ve been waiting for you to ask. In fact, that’s what this chapter is about.

**Knowing the Social Reality** Sociology is supposed to be a science. That means it is public, demonstrable knowledge. It is not revelation, opinion or conjecture. Sociologists use experiments, surveys and observations in order to understand what people do. For social data to be accepted as science it must be reproducible by others using similar methods. But unlike with physics and the other so-called hard sciences, Sociology has not resulted in being able to engineer predictable social results. That is because, social reality is far more complex than physical reality. Scientists can observe molecules’ behavior in a vacuum. But there is no social vacuum. Each person is influenced
by literally thousands of others in the course of a lifetime. Human beings also differ from molecules in other ways. Have you gotten self-conscious and acted differently when others were watching? Imagine the problems for physicists if hydrogen and oxygen got embarrassed about turning into water. Humans also change their behavior for other reasons and sometimes for no apparent reason at all. Worst of all, humans are the only part of creation who can lie. All of these factors make social sciences extremely difficult.

Social science itself is a political football. When sociologists find that controlling guns and reducing media violence could lower murder rates, or providing condoms could lower teenage pregnancy, their results (and methods) are attacked by those whose positions would be threatened. People create their own studies to come up with different results. How do you sort through all of this?

Logical Fallacies And Propaganda Techniques

We need to know when others’ arguments are weak or deliberately misleading. These are some of the main things to look for:

Scientific Method: Arguments should include all of the following:

1. Documented facts, not interpretation or speculation or beliefs
2. Adequate number of cases (or examples)
3. Eliminating all other explanations
4. Avoidance of bias

At the same time, we must watch out that they are not based too heavily on:

Propaganda techniques:

1. Name calling: Either ‘bad” names or “glad” names: Terrorist -freedom fighter; convicted felon -reformed; Fat -plump; mean -tough; politician -statesman; Communist -progressive; fanatic-deeply religious.

2. Testimonials: Recommendation by a celebrity or other person who knows nothing about the subject: Kobe Bryant prefers Wheaties

3. Bandwagon: If everybody else is doing something, they must know something you don’t. “Twenty million Americans drive Chevrolets”


5. Stacked Deck: presenting only information that favors your view. “The richest 2% of American paid over 90% of US taxes.” (But they actually paid a lower percentage than middle class taxpayers)
6. **The Big Lie**: Saying something so outrageous “no one would make it up if it weren’t true”. “The Holocaust was made up by the Jews.”

**Logical Fallacies:**

1. **Dramatic instance**: A single case that is dramatic is used assert a more general phenomenon. “Child pornographers are everywhere. One was arrested in our neighborhood and he had thousands of pictures!”

2. **Retrospective determinism**: the assumption that things had to work in the way they did. “It was inevitable that Microsoft dominate the computer industry,”

3. **Misplaced concreteness**: mistaking a concept for reality. “Society made me do it.” “Survival meant I had to kill him.”

4. **Personal Attack (Ad hominem)**: Attacking the messenger, not the message. “The author is immoral and was convicted for income tax evasion!”

5. **Appeal to prejudice**: using popular beliefs or prejudices instead of facts. “Healthcare reform is just socialized medicine designed to help bureaucrats and homeless bums overthrow the free enterprise system.”

6. **Circular reasoning**: A proves B, and B proves A. “Murders are sick people. Why? You’d have to be sick to kill someone.”

7. **The ecological fallacy**: What is true for the whole is true for its parts. “One out of four people is Chinese, therefore one person in your family must be Chinese.”

8. **Non sequitur**: One thing may not necessarily follow from another. “Nevada has the highest crime rate in the West, therefore we must spend more money on schools.”

**Two Types of Errors and a Reason to Believe**

After reading all this you might decide to develop a healthy skepticism. When I was a kid I used to hear the saying, “Believe half of what you read and none of what you hear.” It’s a good start. However, even skepticism is far from an infallible guide away from error. That is because scientists have discovered that there are two major types of errors, what they prosaically call *Type I* and *Type II* errors. These errors correspond to what is called in medicine *False Negatives* and *False Positives*. Suppose you went for cancer screening and were told you were well, only to find out you were dying. On the other hand, suppose you were told you were ill, only to find out later you were not. Both circumstances are upsetting, but at least the second has a happy ending. That’s why medical testing has a deliberate bias towards tests that are not too strict. Medical and other science however, has the opposite bias. They prefer, if anything tests that may be overly strict. The reason is scientists want to be especially careful not to accept falsehood into scientific canon. Still, this approach leaves them open
to criticism for being slow to accept what everyone else believes, such as the efficacy of vitamins and alternative medicine, for example. So all in all there are no easy answers, only more and more sophisticated questions. Understanding reality, particularly social reality takes courage, wisdom and perseverance. The ancient Hindu sage Patanjali is reputed to have said, “The truth is a razor’s edge, and more difficult to tread.” It is truly like that. But the rewards are great.

Bottom line is this: When I wrote the first edition of this book, I ended with “The next time they start a war, you might want to be able to answer for yourself whether it is ‘making the world safe for democracy’ or just for Chevron Oil. Students asked me what that was supposed to mean. Thirty days later we were at war in Afghanistan. Six months later work began on an Afghan pipeline. A year later was the invasion of Iraq. Most people know what I mean now.

**DEFINING TERMS**

Science

Propaganda

Bias
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What kinds of bias face anyone who tries to observe society?

2. Sociology is supposed to be a science, but what makes it different from the so-called hard sciences?

3. Can one ever know the truth? If so, how, If not why not?
Chapter Two  -- Society:  MadCow Burgers or God: Benjamin Barber's Dark Vision

Ever since my first James Bond movie, I had wanted to visit Istanbul. In that movie, *From Russia with Love*, Bond snuck through the ancient Roman tunnels beneath the City of Mosques, partied with Gypsies, traveled the Orient Express and romanced a Russian spy. The Byzantine and Ottoman empires, and the famous Straits of the Bosporus also fired my imagination. Istanbul was forever linked with mystery and intrigue for me.

So when in 1993 I found I had enough frequent flier miles to visit Europe, Istanbul was the place I wanted to go. Actually, the city is bisected by the Bosporus, with one foot in Europe and the other in Asia Minor, but that only added to the allure.

My first contacts were reassuringly modern enough. After studying a guidebook, I phoned direct a small hotel located within the ancient walled section known as the Sultanakmet, or Sultan's Quarter. The proprietor spoke English fluently and faxed me back my reservations and a map. It wasn't until my actual trip that I began to understand the strange contrasts that make up modern Istanbul and Turkey.

After the plane made a stopover in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, I found I was the only remaining passenger. A stewardess informed me that the Istanbul leg had only been recently added to pick up Kurdish refugees from the civil war. She invited me up to the first class cabin, and I spent the remainder of the flight sipping cocktails with the flight crew. Upon deplaning, I easily made my way through customs, and found my way to my hotel. Jetlagged after my twelve hour flight I promptly fell asleep. I awoke just after dawn, and decide to start my adventure with a walk along the harbor side. The harbor side drive was modernly enough named Kennedy way, after JFK, but after only a few minutes of walking I was stopped by a decrepit black Fiat, whose two occupants, evidently secret police, harangued me. "Are you buying drugs?" They demanded my passport. "Are you talking to bad people?"

That was my only bad experience of my trip. But as the days went on I became more and more aware of a fundamental tension that lay beneath the surface of modern Istanbul. Modern Turkey was founded by Kemal Ataturk as the Ottoman Empire crumbled in the aftermath of World War One. Envisioned as a secular democracy in the emerging western style, it has consistently sought links with Europe and America, developed industry and capitalism, separated church and state, given women equal rights, promoted literacy and education. It is a member of NATO, and has sought entry into the European Economic Community. But in the 1990s, a fundamentalist Islamic party has dominated Turkish politics, and religiously mandated head scarves and veils now commonly appear on the streets. In early 1999, a woman parliamentarian provoked a crisis by wearing a head scarf into the National Assembly, an act forbidden for eighty years by secular law.
During my visit, I spoke with the hotel owner about the struggle for the soul of Turkey. He was university educated, and his son produced game shows for Turkish television. He interrupted our conversation to pray silently as the muezzin called the faithful from the minaret of the nearest mosque. Yet he was critical of the new wave of fundamentalism in this most Western of Moslem countries. "They are villagers. They know nothing of the world or modern ways." Yet increasingly even university graduates are being drawn back to the haven of fundamentalist Islam as Turkey struggles with the failures of the world economy to live up to its glamorous promises.

That was why I was drawn to the analysis of Benjamin Barber's *Jihad vs. McWorld*, which first appeared in the Atlantic Monthly in 1993, and was expanded into a full length book in 1995. Less noticed than Samuel Huntington's widely read *Clash of Civilizations*, which was widely cited as an explanation for the 9-11 attacks and subsequent "War Against Terror", I believe it more accurately portrays the struggle within the many countries that are trying to adapt to globalization or what was once called "The New World Order."

Huntington has described the "fault lines" of the new order as being the boundaries of larger cultural civilizations based on religion and shared ethical values, that have begun to emerge as globalization erodes the power of the nation -state. He points to trade tensions between the US and Japan, conflicts in Balkans and Israel and the like as the inevitable contradictions that emerge at the meeting points of different civilizations. He sees the major civilizations as Judaeo-Christian, Islamic and Confucian (China and Japan). Huntington has been criticized, rightly I believe, for overgeneralizing from the conflict between Islamic and Western cultures to see conflict between each major religious culture. If Huntington is correct, why then does China export arms to Islamic countries like Pakistan and Iran? Why did the US and Europe support Moslem Bosnians and Albanians against Christian Serbs? And why did they get no credit among Moslems for doing so?

The answer according to Benjamin Barber, is that the conflict is not over Western religion, but the rest of modern Western culture --a pervasive, globalizing commercialism which threatens values not only in the Islamic world, but among God-fearing, as well as black -helicopter spotting opponents of the New World order in Jewish, Christian and Hindu countries as well. Barber does not take sides in this conflict. In fact, he sees both sides as inherently hostile to democracy.

Just beyond the horizon of current events lie two possible political figures-both bleak, neither democratic. The first is a retribalization of large swaths of humankind by war and bloodshed: a threatened Lebanonization of national states in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe-a Jihad in the name of a hundred narrowly conceived faiths against every kind of interdependence, every kind of artificial social cooperation and civic mutuality.

The second is being borne in on us by the onrush of economic and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food-with MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's, pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network: one McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications, and commerce. The planet is falling precipitantly apart and coming reluctantly together at the very same moment. [BB,1993]
According to Barber, the forces of Jihad and of McWorld work with "equal strength in opposite directions, one driven by parochial hatreds and the other by universalizing markets" undermining nations by fragmenting them ethnically, or by rendering their borders porous to global influences.

Barber shows how several dynamics make globalization inevitable:

1. **The Market.** Analysts since before Marx have shown production must continually expand to maintain profits, eventually expanding beyond national borders. The world of the modern multi-national corporation [MNC] includes other globalizing effects such as international banks, trade associations and agreements. They press for common currencies (as in the European Union) and common language (English). Barber's suspicion that globalization was inherently undemocratic was vindicated in 1998, when nations began ratifying the Multi-lateral Agreement on International trade [MAI] which suspended the right of individual nations to impose environmental and trade restrictions in excess of international agreement. This is why I titled this piece "MadCow Burgers..." etc. US restrictions on British beef may be one of the first things to go. (Authors Note: In 2001, corporations have sued the state of California for banning the toxic gas additive MTBE)

2. **Resources.** "Every nation needs something another nation has; some nations have almost nothing they need." The world is increasingly interdependent. But some countries are more able to impose their needs on others.

3. **Information.** Science and technology are inherently universalizing. They entail a "quest for descriptive principles of general application," objectivity, and impartiality. Satellites and faxes, phone lines and movies undermine national boundaries and create a global culture of consumerism, produced in Hollywood. But the benefits of information are also not equally distributed.

4. **Ecology.** Smog and acid rain know no boundaries. Jungles are deforested to make toothpicks, and rain forest polluted for a week's more oil for the global economy. But as the environmental impacts become more known, the developed world's response is to try to shut the door. As Barber says, "The world cannot afford your modernization; our's has wrung it dry."

On the other side are the forces of Jihad, fundamentalisms that decry the loss of traditional values, traditional structures and traditional identities. Jihad, is the Arabic word meaning "striving" often translated as "holy war". Fundamentalists around the world have declared war against McWorld, impugning it as anti-Christian, anti-Islamic, anti-Hindu. The hatred some Iranians felt for the 'Great Satan" America was described to one interviewer as being about "women bathing naked on beaches."

Values of deferred gratification no longer have meaning in consumerist society, they impede sales. To traditionalists of all cultures, global consumerism preaches permissiveness and license. Modern science competes with religious explanations. The idea of choosing "lifestyles" erodes identity based on family, religion, and ethnicity.

As nation-states are weakened by globalism, regionalism and ethnicity come to the forefront. Increasingly, wars are not being fought : between nations, but within them. Barber noted thirty wars in progress at the time of writing, the majority ethnic, religious, tribal or racial. People kill their neighbors because they are Catholic, Hutu, Albanian, black or white.
According to Barber, Jihad offers these virtues to believers:

Jihad delivers a different set of virtues: a vibrant local identity, a sense of community, solidarity among kinsmen, neighbors, and countrymen, narrowly conceived. But it also guarantees parochialism and is grounded in exclusion. Solidarity is secured through war against outsiders. And solidarity often means obedience to a hierarchy in governance, fanaticism in beliefs, and the obliteration of individual selves in the name of the group. Deference to leaders and intolerance toward outsiders (and toward "enemies within") are hallmarks of tribalism-hardly the attitudes required for the cultivation of new democratic women and men capable of governing themselves. (Ibid)

What are the implications of these forces for the future of democracy? As stated earlier, they are troubling.

To the extent that either McWorld or Jihad has a natural politics, it has turned out to be more of an antipolitics. For McWorld, it is the antipolitics of globalism: bureaucratic, technocratic, and meritocratic, focused (as Marx predicted it would be) on the administration of things-with people, however, among the chief things to be administered. In its politico-economic imperatives McWorld has been guided by laissez-faire market principles that privilege efficiency, productivitiy, and beneficence at the expense of civic liberty and self-government.

Or to quote one concerned friend: "Who does one vote for to vote against a Multinational corporation? And where does one demonstrate to protest the World Bank?"

It is no better with Jihad:

For Jihad, the antipolitics of tribalization has been explicitly antidemocratic: one-party dictatorship, government by military junta, theocratic fundamentalism --often associated with a version of the Fuhrerprinzip that empowers an individual to rule on behalf of a people.

For some critics of Bernard Barber, the war on Iraq signified a counter trend to globalization. The U.S. defied global consensus, from NATO and the UN to the late Pope John Paul II, that the war was unnecessary and Saddam Hussein not a military threat. These critics pointed to a trend starting early in the Bush Administration of breaking multinational accords from the Kyoto environmental treaties, to the Geneva Conventions in pursuit of its perceived national interests. For them de-globalization seems to be at least the short term trend, and the real threat a new American Empire. While there is something to be said about those concerns, primarily the fact that US military expenditures exceed the next 21 countries combined, I believe that is not a realistic concern.

The reason is simple and it is economic. The United States, impoverished by the Cold War, the War on Terror and the arguably superfluous War on Iraq, has over the last 2 decades, become the world’s largest debtor nation. A March 25, 2005 article in Nation, *Continental Drift* by D.D. Guttenplan makes that point. While in previous decades the United States enjoyed the highest standard of living and the fastest growth in the world, it has been left behind by Europe, and perhaps once day
by China and India as well. From monorail trains, to high speed hydrofoil ships, a visitor to Europe sees increasingly the future, not the past. Sooner or later, the United States will have to relinquish its Imperial pretensions and join the rest of the world.

So what is to be done? Barber's solution is something he calls "the confederal option". To be honest, after rereading him several times, I am not sure on precisely his meaning. He quotes the old Green Party adage "Think globally, act locally," which I do understand, and urges we link with prodemocratic forces in other nations. I'm not sure who the "we" is referring to. If it simply "we the people" or even the oft idealized "non-governmental organizations" like Greenpeace and the Red Cross, I am not sure if it will work. I do know that changes that happen now will be easier to create than those when a world system are already in place. We have perhaps one generation to act. The world society of the next millennium is forming.

We must be wary however of any attempts to resist this order on the basis of Jihad. As Barber points out, though McWorld is essentially indifferent to democracy, Jihad is inherently hostile. Any view that divides the world into black and white, us and them, ultimately seeks to dehumanize and destroy its enemies. The road to heaven all to often leads through the hell of war and genocide, Jihad or Crusade.

**DEFINING TERMS**

Culture

Society

Globalization

Values
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What are major threats to world peace and prosperity in the new century?

2. Why do non-Western countries feel threatened by American culture?

3. How well does this article explain groups like Al Qaida and the Taliban?
Chapter Three Groups and Socialization

An Organizational Tragedy

On a February 1, 2003, people across America woke up to hear the news that the Space Shuttle Columbia had crashed. For many Americans the tragedy was heightened by the memory of another February morning just seventeen years before.

On that morning, tens of thousands of spectators gathered along Florida beaches and highways to view the historic launch of the Challenger space shuttle. In lawn chairs and tailgates, the event was like a giant picnic. Millions more viewed the event on TV. But something went wrong, just seconds after the launch a groan of horror rippled through the crowd, as the shuttle booster began to veer off, exploded and started to fall. The shuttle occupants, including Christa McAuliffe who had received wide publicity among the nation’s schoolchildren as “The teacher in space”, were all killed.

In August 2003, the Columbia investigation board issued a report faulting the foam inside the left wing. But the board also found echoes of the 1986 Challenger disaster during its investigation of the Columbia accident. Time and time again, investigators were struck by similarities and parallels between the two disasters, though 17 years apart.

"For both accidents there were moments when management definitions of risk might have been reversed were it not for the many missing signals --an absence of trend analysis, imagery data not obtained, concerns not voiced, information overlooked or dropped from briefings," the report says.

Board members also found that lessons NASA learned in the aftermath of the Challenger disaster have to a large degree been forgotten or ignored during the years since. (Brian Berger, Columbia Report Faults NASA Culture, Government Oversight, Space.com, August 2003)

In 1986, a congressional investigation determined that the cause of the tragedy was a defective O-ring, large gasket-like device, a fact that was known to many of the NASA-contracted engineers and a few of their managers. In an article in the Washington Monthly, authors Russell Baker and Charles Peters concluded,

In any reasonably large government organization, there exists an elaborate system of information cutoffs, comparable to that by which city water systems shut off large water-main breaks, closing down, first small feeder pipes, then larger and larger valves. The object is to prevent information, particularly of an unpleasant character, from rising to the top of the agency, where it may produce results unpleasant to the lower ranks. Thus, the executive at or near the top lives in constant danger of not knowing, until he reads it on Page One some morning, that his department is hip-deep in disaster. (“Why the Bad News Doesn’t Travel Up”, April 1986)
How could a deadly disaster reoccur within the same organization, less than twenty years apart? If you know anything about groups and organizations, problems like this are no surprise.

**Groups, primary groups and socialization**

You have probably heard the old bromide that “Man is a social animal.” Personally, I always thought women were more social, but leaving aside the sexist language, there is a fundamental truth here, that in many important ways, for human beings, the group both precedes and supercedes the individual. That is, the group pre-exists before the individual, and the group can often over-ride the individual.

You were born into a family, a small group. You were educated in a school, a highly structured type of group called an organization. Families and schools are major instruments of socialization, the process of learning the ways of being and thinking and doing in a society. Later in your childhood, you also learned much of the “ways of the world” from your friends, your peer group.

It should seem obvious that the socialization process is intimately connected with people’s experience of groups, as they learn how to fit in, how to “play the game” and interact with other people in the various groups they live in.

Without human contact, children raised in isolation do not become fully human. Without group contact, they are still measurably diminished. Suicide rates are highest among those individuals who lack group contacts. That and not gambling is the reason why Nevada leads the nation in suicides, with the rural counties leading the way.

The seminal sociologist Charles Horton Cooley, described small or primary groups this way:

“By primary groups I mean those characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation. They are primary in several senses, but chiefly in that they are fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual. The result of intimate association, psychologically, is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole, so that one's very self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group. Perhaps the simplest way of describing this wholeness is by saying that it is a ‘we’; it involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which ‘we’ is the natural expression. One lives in the feeling of the whole and finds the chief aims of his will in that feeling...

What else can human nature be than a trait of primary groups? Surely not an attribute of the separate individual --supposing there were any such thing --since its typical characteristics, such as affection, ambition, vanity, and resentment, are inconceivable apart from society.” ([Primary Groups](#)), 1906

**Secondary Groups**

Although we spend our childhoods in the primary group known as the family, we spend much or our adult lives in larger, more impersonal groups and organizations that are collectively known as secondary groups. In addition to their larger size, they are distinguished by a goal-orientation, impersonality, and a narrower form of interaction based on the specific role each person performs.
Examples of secondary groups you probably belong to are groups like this school, the company you work for, the bank where you have your checking account and so on. In a modern society, nearly all societal needs, such as providing food and housing, governing, education, even religion are accomplished by secondary groups.

That’s what makes modern society of the last two hundred years different from all the societies that preceded them for thousands of years. What are some of the effects of this difference? Secondary groups are not as good as producing the same sense of “we-ness” or group identity, as primary groups. Think about those horrible pep rallies in high school. No family would ever have to go to that depth to produce “family spirit”. That is one reason why modern societies have higher levels of deviance, from crime, drug use, suicide to independent thinking than traditional societies. They also have greater levels of depression. Human beings seem to need closeness. Primary groups will develop, a little like molds, within the cracks of secondary organizations. That’s why office romances and other friendships within the ranks will always develop despite secondary group rules to the contrary.

**Why Bad News Doesn’t Travel Up**

Although primary groups are more emotionally based, and secondary groups are more based on rationality, a large degree of irrationality does seep into secondary organizations. Perversely, it is often due to the pursuit of “rational” self-interest on the part of organization members. No one wants to look bad, particularly when doing so can result in loss of promotion, prestige or the job itself. If it is too late or too expensive to fix a mistake, or if the person at fault is concerned about the consequences of being blamed, he or she may choose to cover it up. For similar reasons, the manager of the person at fault may also try to hush up problems. Studies of organizational information have shown that there is a direct negative correlation between the amount of negative information transmitted and a manager’s likelihood of promotion. We often “kill the messenger” rather than learn from them. This is why “whistle-blowers” are often fired. Everything from the Challenger disaster to the two hundred plus Firestone Tire deaths are the result.

**DEFINING TERMS**

- Group
- Primary
- Group
- Organization
Socialization

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What are the characteristics of primary v. secondary groups?

2. Modern society has been described as a transition away from primary groups to more impersonal organizations. How will that effect society and individuals?

3. What steps can be taken to assure that bad news can “travel” up?
CHAPTER FOUR -- CRIME AND THE CRIMINAL SYSTEM

Crime Pays

A Hate Crime

When 49 year old James Byrd Jr. was dragged to his death behind a pickup truck in East Texas in 1998, it was a graphic illustration of racist hatred at its worst. The three men responsible for his death pretended to befriend him, and offered to give him a ride home. Once outside they subdued him after an intense struggle and chained him to the back of the truck. In the words of inmate Bobby Ray Hopkins, regarding the trial of John William King

At his trial, prosecutors re-enacted the actual events as they went to the very narrow secluded country road where the dragging started and videotaped how they feel it occurred. In doing that, they visualised how Mr. James Byrd Jr’s body was thrown from side to side as he was being led down the road tied to the back of the pickup truck. Body parts being ripped from his body, limbs flying all over the place and being left behind as evidence against them. Then finally, three miles down the road, his head hitting a culvert and being ripped off his shoulders as his torso lay headless and limbless down a long deserted country road.

(http://ccadp.org/bobbyrayhopkins.html)

Although it was a grotesque and horrible reminder of the depths of racial hatred, the trial was significant for another reason. The father of the accused, Ronald King claimed that John William King was not a racist before serving time in the Texas prison system. If this is true, the Byrd murder might be a textbook case not only of cold-blooded racist murder, but of another far more widespread phenomenon, the desensitization, brutalization and launching into society of now-hardened criminals -a process sociologist Donald Clemmer once called “prisonization”.

Prisonization

According to King’s father, John William was just an average kid until a minor run-in with the law sent him to the Texas penal system for two years. When he came out his arms were covered with racist tatoos and his mind was filled with hate, he said. In order to be safe inmates have little choice but seek the protection of race-based, racist gangs whether the Aryan Brotherhood or the black or Hispanic alternatives. Not that safety is really to be found between the race wars, random violence, extortion, gang conflicts and guard abuse omnipresent in the prisons. Sexual abuse and rape may be even greater factors. Although the US government refuses to track figures on prison sexual abuse/violence, in 1996, advocacy groups estimate as many as 1 in 4 inmates are raped every year, or approximately 364,000/year roughly equivalent to the entire number of rapes in the rest of the country total. (Mother Jones,
In short, prisons are essentially what researchers have described variously as “schools” or “factories” for crime, a fact that may explain why despite the explosion in the prison population, crime rates have not changed all that much.

The Prison-Industrial Complex

In the twenty five year period from 1976 to 2001, the total number of people incarcerated in the United States has increased from just over 500,000 to over two million, doubling within the nineties alone. The United States, with less than 5% of the world’s population now has nearly 25% per cent of the world’s prisoners and imprisons people at a higher rate than even totalitarian countries like China and the former Soviet Union.

The obvious question is “why?” The United States has a lower crime rate than many countries, and indeed has sentenced half the inmates currently in prison during a decade when crime rates were stagnant or dropping. Perhaps you are surprised to hear this, but perhaps that surprise is part of the answer.

According Joel Dyer, author of *The Perpetual Prisoner Machine* (Westview Press, 2000), it is because crime pays, not to the perpetrator, but to many who benefit from his crimes, from politicians, the media, private prison companies and large corporations who secure lucrative prison contracts that put old defense department boondoggles like $200 toilet seats to shame. (One example, MCI, which advertises $.05/minute rates to the public, charges $1.20/ minute for prisoner calls. Dyer notes that prison contracts are often not awarded to the lowest bidder, but the highest because they kickback more fees to the prison.)

As of February 1999, the most recent statistics on criminal justice Dyer found were from 1992. In that year the combined tab for law enforcement, corrections and courts at the state, local and federal levels was $94 billion, up from only $6 billion in 1980. Since 1990, the United States has been constructing enough prison facilities to hold 92,000 more beds each year, (Dyer p.12) at a cost ranging from $29,000/bed for minimum security to $70,000/bed maximum security. The size of the “crime market” can be estimated by adding the 2 million prisoners, to 1.5 million law enforcement and corrections officers as well as the 2 million private security guards, a total larger than the entire populations of Chicago, San Diego and Philadelphia combined. This market is too large to ignore, and indeed is hasn’t been. As a 1996 USA Today article “Everybody’s doing the Jailhouse Stock” pointed out, nearly all the 2000+ mutual funds now in existence (owned by 44% of American households) hold stocks in companies that derive at least some proportion of their income from crime. Many companies, too, benefit from prison labor which typically pays $.50/hr to produce everything from baseballs to down jackets. War is good for the economy, goes the old saying, and the war against crime is no exception.
The Social Reality

It is not a conspiracy, so much as a conspiracy of silence that allows this to occur.

From the politicians who fear being labeled “soft on crime”, to the media who promote cheap crime news as an alternative to expensive investigative reporting (Think about Amy Fisher, Susan Smith, Tonya Harding, Lorena Bobbitt, the Menendez brothers, the various school shootings) they have collaborated in fostering a sense of fear and danger the belies the reality that our streets are actually safer (Dyer, p180) than they were twenty years ago.

But you may ask, if the streets are safer where are they getting all these new criminals that are filling our jails? In fact, fully 71% of the prisoners sentenced to federal prisons between 1985 and 1994 were non-violent drug offenders. These drug offenders serve sentences on the average now nearly two years longer than violent offenders. (P. 182)

And if the streets are safer why do we see so much crime? Because, according a 1999 study by Vincent Schiraldi of the Justice Policy Institute, TV crime reporting has increased by 721% in the last decade. Consider the most recent example the Chandra Levy -Gary Condit affair, which dominated the news for months despite lack of a body or a suspect – so much so the CBS news was criticized for omitting the story on a day when there was simply no new news.

Truth in Sentencing?

Another reason for the prison explosion is that people are serving more time than ever before. Sentences in the United States are generally three to four times greater than for equivalent crimes in Europe, according to UN studies. These harsh sentences have been exacerbated by innovations like mandatory sentencing, three-strikes laws, and “truth in sentencing” laws, which remove any latitude in sentencing and any time off for good behavior. A side-effect of these new laws in the removal of the one non-violent tool for behavior control in prison, the potential of earning an earlier release. Without it, prison officials have no alternative but sheer force to control prisoners, further brutalizing the prison environment.

The Hidden Costs of Crime Profits

The struggle against crime has become in a real sense a war against the uneducated and minorities. Consider these few facts: 65% of all prisoners never completed high school. 64% of prisoners made less than $5000 in the year prior to their arrest. Or about racial bias: African-Americans make up about 13% of frequent drug users, a number slightly high than their proportion in the general population of 10%. Yet they make up 35% of drug arrests, 55% of drug convictions, and 74% of prison sentences for drugs (Dyer p.182). These sentences are often longer, too. One reason is that crack sentences are fully 100 times greater than for equivalent amounts of powdered cocaine, which are favored by wealthier whites.
Another cost of the prison boom is its effect on the nation’s health. According to Mother Jones Magazine:

That prisoners can infect the public at large is not in question. Russia's overcrowded prisons have bred new drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis that have proliferated virulently among the general public. An outbreak of meningitis in Los Angeles' city jail spread into nearby neighborhoods in the early 1990s.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention even has an office devoted to the issue. Last March in Atlanta, its director, John Miles, told a hotel ballroom full of prison doctors and nurses that nearly 600,000 inmates are released every year --many of them riddled with disease. According to the most recent numbers from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 24,000 inmates nationwide were HIV positive in 1996; a more recent study by the nonprofit National Commission on Correctional Health Care put the number with HIV as high as 47,000 --10 times the rate in the general population. Tuberculosis, a potentially lethal lung disease that spreads rapidly through the air in enclosed spaces, infects 1 in 4 people in some prisons, compared to fewer than 1 in 10,000 in the general population. Hepatitis C, an often-lethal liver disease spread by blood exchange, infects an estimated 41 percent of inmates just in California prisons, compared to less than 2 percent of the population at large. (Special Report, 2001)

Civil Liberties

The fights against crime and drugs in particular has had a hidden cost that affects all of us, a decrease in our privacy and civil liberties, as increased surveillance of varying kinds and court decisions expanding police powers have chipped away at our constitutional rights. Some examples:

* Surveillance cameras at every intersection in most large cities, ostensibly to catch red-light runners.

* A Supreme Court decision in 2001, that allows police to incarcerate individuals for minor traffic offenses.

* Mandatory drug testing in many occupations, despite no reason to suspect those workers of drug use or any danger to the public from employee drug use.

* A number of court decisions allowing employers to read employees’ emails, and track their Internet use.
*Forfeiture of property to authorities when drugs are found, regardless of whether the owner was the possessor.

* Expansion of police powers of stopping and searching for weapons beyond probable cause.

* Racial profiling targeting any members of a particular group.

You may think, “Well, it’s not so bad, after all, I have nothing to hide.” This attitude would be short-sighted. One side-effect of the struggles against crime and drugs, and of expansion of police powers in particular, is increased abuse of police powers, as demonstrated in the Ramparts precinct cases in Los Angeles, where police were found to have fabricated evidence, and the police brutality cases in New York. Civil liberties safeguard the innocent as well as the guilty. Furthermore, who is to say that the surveillance systems set up now in the fights against crime and drugs will never be used to track and stifle political protest?

The war on terror and the Patriot Act has contributed to the decline of civil liberties as well. A November 4, 2003 article “Patriot Act aided feds in probe” in the Las Vegas Sun detailed how the FBI used the Patriot Act to investigate strip club owner Michael Galardi. Was he suspected of terrorism? No, but the new law allowed them easy access to his financial records.

Suspected “dirty bomber” Jose Padilla was incarcerated for nearly two years without being able to contact his family or attorney, despite that fact that he possessed neither materials nor blueprints for making a dirty bomb. In fact, the only evidence presented in the three years since his arrest in 2002 was that the Justice Department’s own statement that he intended to build one. Does this amount to a “thought crime”? Critics believe that the timing of his indictment was suspicious. On the day of FBI whistle-blower Colleen Rawley statement to the news media about FBI incompetence in failing to prevent 9-11, then-Attorney John Ashcroft interrupted a trip to France to state that he had detained Padilla in Chicago over three weeks before. What if Padilla was just a dupe to distract the media? A NY Times article revealed that over 400 antiwar protestors in a single rally at the Republican Convention had been arrested illegally, the police testimony contradicted by their own videos and the handheld videos of participants and observers. (NY Times, “Videos Challenge Accounts of Convention Unrest” April 12, 2005)

In all, the wars on crimes, drugs and now terror raise many troubling questions, not the least of which is the so-called “land of the free” now a nation imprisoned?
**DEFINING TERMS**
Incarceration

Surveillance

Rehabilitation

Prisonization

Civil Liberties

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**
1. What are the harm to society of crime itself? Of drug use?

2. What are the costs of the *wars* on crime and drugs?

3. How can we balance these issues?
Chapter Five -- Family

What it Takes: Why happy families aren't all alike

A couple of Christmases ago, my siblings and I were visiting our parents, complete with aunts, uncles, cousins, husbands, wives, significant others, children by past marriages, and all the accoutrements of modern family life, when my father, then nearing eighty and the patriarch of the clan, surveyed the scene and the sunset and offered a toast: "To the best family anyone ever had." Not that we're probably that much different than many families across the country. But not that we're like what anyone of us thought families should be. Neither my sister or I ever had children. Two of my cousins never married, despite being in their late 40's. Two of my cousins married three times. Another had a couple children out of wedlock. One cousin died of AIDS. Another had problems with drug addiction.

In short, we've had practically every problem any American family that lived through WWII, Happy Days, Hippie Days, Boogie Nights and all the way to the 90's could've had. What makes families into good families, despite whatever happens through the "vicissitudes of life?" Is it love, money or simply keeping the family unit intact? I started asking friends, family, and students a number of questions to try to find some answers. Here's what I did and didn't find out:

Every semester I ask students in my Marriage and Family class how many of them come from divorced families, and nearly every semester the answer is just the same: about half. I then ask how many wished their parents were still together, nearly all the forest of hands drops. I ask why, and they answer, "We weren't happy," or "We're happier now." Clearly, the answer isn't just keeping families together come Hell or high water like the Moral Minority like to insist. But what is it? I've strung together some of the stories that I've heard. It may not be scientific, but I'll wager it's valid. Let me know what you think.

Les Coperes. (& Comeres)

Carol and Dale have a son named Mike. So do John and Annie. In fact, it's the same Mike. Like the French movie "Les Coperes" (The Co-fathers), more recently made into the Hollywood pic "Father's Day" with Robin Williams and Billy Crystal, Mike has two fathers. But he also has two mothers. Mike now 16, has lived with John and Annie most of the last six years, before that he lived with Carol and Dale. During summers, he lived with the other couple. When he lives with one couple he often spends weekends with the opposite one. Nothing is too formalized, the couples regularly confer to see what each has planned. How does it work?
"Great," says Carol, and adds only half-jokingly, "I want to lead workshops on the positive side of divorce."

"When John and I divorced, I took Michael. It was a lot of work. But with John married to Annie and me with Dale, it's a quarter as much, and half as much as when we were married.

"When John had other girlfriends after the divorce it was often uncomfortable when we met up," she continues. "But Annie and I already knew each other before she met John. She made a real effort to stay friends, and now we're all incredibly close."

She and Dale have no plans to get married, despite being together nearly ten years.

"Been there, done that," she says. She also has kept her married name.

"I like it better than my maiden name, and I got pretty used to it during eight years of marriage. Dale doesn't mind not being married, either."

"It doesn't change a thing," he comments.

John and Annie are also happy. John and Annie have been together over a decade and have been married for five years. Annie's approaching forty and is thinking about having one of her own children.

"I've been too busy to think about it, but now's the time. It's tough to think about all the work without Carol and Dale being there to help out so much. I guess I'm spoiled."

Annie attributes the two couples closeness to communication and respect.

"I've made every effort to communicate and to listen to Carol. Even though we knew each other, it would've been easy to let things come between us, at one time or another."

John concurs: "Annie is very into communication, and she really made it happen. It was also very good that we're all reasonable people and no one has that bad a temper," he laughs.

In another year and a half, Mike will be going to college. "I hope we always live near each other," Carol says. "We're such good friends."

The Immigrants

Isabella came from Mexico at age thirteen. "When my brothers and I were very young, we didn't have much of anything. We lived in an adobe hut that my grandparent's let my parents borrow. My mom used to make us clothes out of old cloth that people would give to her. We each had a pair of shoes to wear, but those were just for Sundays when we went to Church. The rest of the week we would go barefoot, not that we minded.

"We also had very little things to eat. Sometimes we would go for weeks on tortillas, beans, eggs and soup."

Everybody helped with the work. Her father and brothers would get up early to work in the orchards or go looking for work. Mother and sisters would clean, sew and when the men came back in the afternoons, prepare fruit and take it to sell in the plaza.
"But one thing was for sure, even though we didn't have much to eat, we would all have breakfast and dinner together, even if it was the same thing for days: eggs and beans." Then everyone would go to the parents room and play games that her mother made up.

"Even though we didn't have many things, we were very happy because we had each other. Especially, we had the love of our family which made us stronger."

At thirteen, Isabella's family moved to Los Angeles. Her father worked in construction and they began to afford more things. They have a house with one room for each person. Almost each one has their own car, clothes of their own, and a job.

"Now all of us work and have different days off and different shifts. It's hard to sit down and have a meal together. But we still try have a dinner together once a week.

"I believe we are a happy family. We have our problems but we always find a way to work them out."

Gay Dads

Lori's parents divorced when she was eight, nearly twenty five years ago. "I didn't really know why because they never fought. Friends of mine whose parents divorced said their parents always fought. I didn't know my father was gay until I was 16, when I wanted to move in with him.

"When I look back, I must have been really thick-headed or else it didn't matter because I never thought about his sexuality one way or another. I even had a friend ask if he was gay, and that still didn't get me thinking about it."

Lori lived with her father and his partner until she was nineteen. Then she moved out on her own. To her, her two dads were a lot like any other couple. They had their ups and downs, their fights and good times.

"When I compare my home life with that of other people there is either not a lot of difference or else it's like night and day. What I mean is that every family, no matter what its composition, goes through its growing pains just like every other family. The only ones that are any different are the ones that are completely dysfunctional."

Lori is married now and has a daughter. Because her parents handled their divorce without bitterness, she doesn't feel it affected her view of marriage.

"My parents divorced because my father finally came to the realization that the heterosexual lifestyle was not for him. There weren't any fights my brother and I were aware of, and no one playing child against parent. They handled everything maturely and away from us, and were both always there for us. If anything it affects my husband more because he's afraid I'm not as stable in my upbringing as he was."

When her father died, Lori traveled hundreds of miles to be at his bedside. She talked to him, told him she loved him and forgave him for any time he had hurt her, and told him she hoped he forgave her.

"I had been afraid to touch him because of all the tubes and monitors, but before I left I grabbed his hand and gave it a squeeze and said my final farewell. Even though he couldn't speak I knew he could hear every word I said."
Best Friends

Jan's mom and dad divorced when she was nine years old. Her father moved away and didn't help out at all with the finances, so her mom had to work as much as two full time jobs and a part-time one to support them both. "My mom always did the best she could considering the circumstances. There were many times when we would go without a movie or a dinner out, but I always had my favorite food as a kid, macaroni and cheese.

Despite all the jobs, Jan and her mom had quality time together. "She would make sure we had at least one day a week to go to the park or take a drive to see my grandparents. We had plenty of weekend trips to baseball games or Magic Mountain. She always was there for me anytime I needed her for advice or just to talk."

The big wake up was when Jan was twelve. "Little did I know what mom had in store for me. One day I woke up, and mom told me she had saved all she could for a vacation at Disney World in Florida. Just the two of us. We had the best time. For one whole week, it was just her and I, by the pool or eating ice cream. I never wanted for anything when it was just us."

Although there were times when Jan wished her mom could've been home a bit more, she has no regrets. "I just hope when I have children, I can give them the love and security, she gave me.

"A family is love and trust. My mom was and is everything I couldn't get from anyone else. I believe that as long as show love and affection to the children and really let them know they are doing their best for them, the 'ideal' family is whatever you make of it."

Adding It Up

So what does it take to have a happy family? Like I said, it doesn't have to be a conventional Leave it to Beaver or Ozzie & Harriet Family. While it's true that it's easier to have a simple two-parent & children family, it doesn't by any means guarantee happiness. Nor does being different preclude it. According to psychologist Wilfred Leslie, "A two-parent family with kids is like a body with all its arms and legs. Just because you lose a leg doesn't mean you'll be unhappy or unhealthy, it just means you'll have to work harder."

Love, trust and respect are important elements, according to students I've talked to. So is flexibility, according to a psychologist in Roberta Israeloff's "Happy families are not alike," an article which set off my speculations. Happy families may not be alike in their external appearances, but they do seem to be alike in how they feel. Communication features strongly in most student responses, as does open display of affection. Most of all, a willingness to work things out is mentioned time and again. Every time a family is able to work out a problem, it strengthens the confidence it can survive. Even divorce does not have to end the bonds, if everybody is willing. That may seem strange to many, but the truth is that when children are involved, relationships do continue. It may be true that many ended marriages, at least among those not plagued by serious problems like abuse or alcoholism, could benefit by the understanding shown by the couples depicted here.
America's Family Time Famine

William R. Mattox Jr.

Many parents in America today are out of time. Out of gas. Running on empty. "On the fast track of two-career families in the go-go society of modern life, the most rationed commodity in the home is time," observes syndicated columnist Suzanne Fields. And the children of today's overextended parents are starving from a lack of parental time, attention and affection.

Parents today spend 40 percent less time with their children than did parents in 1965, according to data collected from personal time diaries by sociologist John Robinson of the University of Maryland. In 1965, parents spent approximately 30 hours a week with their kids. By 1985, parent-child interaction had dropped to just 17 hours a week.

These changes are presenting significant challenges to American family life. Parents today employ a variety of time management strategies to meet their work and family responsibilities. In roughly one-third of all two-income families today (one-half of those with preschoolers) spouses work complementary shifts to maximize the amount of time children are cared for by at least one parent. The most common "tag-team" arrangement is one in which the father works a standard 9-to-5 job and the mother works part-time in the evenings or on weekends.

Other two-income households work concurrent shifts. Families in which the youngest child is of school age often choose this strategy to minimize the amount of time parents are unavailable to children during non-school hours. Same-shift arrangements are also common among families in which both parents have a high attachment to their careers and in those in which limited employment opportunities leave few alternatives.

Whether couples adopt a tag-team arrangement or a same-shift strategy, two income households spend considerably less time with their children than do breadwinner-homemaker households. (Although there are certainly some traditional families that suffer from father absence due to the time-demanding nature of the sole breadwinner's work.) This discrepancy is most pronounced in maternal time with children. In fact, research by University of Virginia sociologists Steven Nock and Paul William Kingston shows that employed mothers of preschool children on average spend less than half as much time with their children as full-time mothers at home. Moreover, Nock and Kingston show that employed mothers do not compensate for this shortage in quantity of time by devoting a higher proportion of the time they do spend with children to "high quality" child-centered activities such as playing with dolls, going to the park, or reading.

Time pressures can be especially daunting for single parents and especially harmful to their children. Children in single-parent homes usually receive less parental attention and supervision than other children. Not only is one parent absent from the home (and research by sociologist Frank Furstenberg shows that three-fourths of all children of divorce have contact with their fathers less than two days a month), but the other parent is overloaded with money-making and household tasks. Indeed, Robinson's data show that, on average, single mothers spend 33 percent less time each week than married mothers in primary child-care activities such as dressing, feeding, chauffeuring, talking, playing, or helping with homework.
Moreover, children in single-parent families often have very irregular schedules. One study found that preschool children of single mothers sleep two fewer hours a night on average than their counterparts in two-parent homes, in part because harried mothers find it difficult to maintain a consistent bedtime routine.

**Sibling Revelry**

Kids aren't just missing out on time with their parents. Thanks to the 'birth dearth,' they are also missing out on interaction with siblings.

In 1975, 62 percent of all women aged 40-44 had given birth to three or more children over the course of their lifetimes. In 1988, only 38 percent had done so. The percentage of those giving birth to just one child rose from 9 to 15 percent during this same time period.

Some regard the decline in family size as a positive development because it means children today receive more individualized attention from their parents than did children a generation ago.

Even if this were true and sociologist Harriet Presser reports "not only are Americans having fewer children than ever before, they are spending less time with the children they have" it can hardly be argued that a one-child family generally has as rich a family experience as a larger family. Even if an only child receives more individualized parental attention, he still misses out on the intimate joys of having brothers and sisters playing wiffle ball in the backyard, exchanging gifts at Christmas time, double teaming Dad in a wrestling match on the family room floor, attending a sibling's ballet recital, and (later in life) reminiscing about old times at family reunions.

Today's fast-paced family life is also eroding the development of other aspects of what sociologist David Popenoe of Rutgers University says "is arguably the ideal child-rearing environment": a relatively large family that does a lot of things together, has many routines and traditions, and provides a great deal of quality contact time between adults and children; regular contact with relatives, active neighboring in a supportive neighborhood, and contact with the world of work; little concern on the part of children that their parents will break up; and the coming together of all these ingredients in the development of a rich family subculture that has lasting meaning and strongly promulgates such family values as cooperation and sharing.

Eating dinner together is one time honored family tradition some believe is on its way out. "The family meal is dead," columnist Jonathan Yardley has written. "Except on the rarest occasions Christmas, Thanksgiving, certain religious holidays when we reach down to the innermost depths of the tribal memory and summon up turkeys and pies, roasts and casseroles, we have given up on what was once a central element in American domestic life."

Research on the prevalence of regular family mealtimes is mixed. Some reports claim as many as 75 percent of all families regularly dine together, while others suggest less than 35 percent do so.
Whatever the case, polls taken by the Roper organization show that the proportion of families that dine together regularly declined 10 percent between 1976 and 1986. This helps explain why heat-and-eat microwavable dinners for children to prepare alone are "the hottest new category in food products," according to a food industry spokesperson.

Whatever the virtues of microwavable meals and other convenience foods, there is reason to be concerned about children routinely feeding themselves. As Suzanne Fields observes, "The child who grazes, standing in front of a microwave eating his fried chicken, biscuits, or refried beans, won't starve, but he may suffer from an emotional hunger that would be better satisfied if only Mom and Dad were there to yell at him for every pea he slips onto the knife."

**So Many Bills, So Little Time**

So how did American families run out of time? Growing economic pressures have a lot to do with the American family time crisis.

One of the supreme ironies of recent economic developments is that while America has experienced steady growth in its gross national product, the economic pressures on families with children have risen significantly. How can it be that at the same time we hear so much about the longest peacetime economic expansion in our nation's history, we also hear talk that economic pressures have grown so much that many families today must have two incomes?

Wage stagnation is one big reason. During the 1970s and '80s, constant dollar earnings of American husbands grew at less than 1 percent per year compared to a real growth rate of 3 percent per year in the 1950s and '60s. Moreover, for some occupational and demographic groups particularly non-supervisory workers and males under age 25 real wages have actually fallen since 1973.

While wages have stagnated, taxes have risen dramatically. In 1950, a median-income family of four paid 2 percent of its annual gross earnings to the federal government in income and payroll taxes. Today, it pays 24 percent. In addition, state and local taxes, on average, take another 8 percent from the family's gross income.

Moreover, the erosion in the value of the personal exemption (the tax code's chief mechanism for adjusting tax liability to reflect differences in family size) has shifted more of the federal income tax burden onto the backs of families with dependents. Had the exemption kept pace with inflation since 1950, it would now be worth close to $7,000. Instead, it stands at $2,050.

On top of this, families are finding their take-home pay does not go as far as it once did. As economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett puts it, families today are "like hamsters on a wheel,' running hard just to keep up.

Over the past 25 years, increases in the cost of several major family expenses housing, health care, transportation, and higher education have significantly outpaced the general inflation rate. For example, Joseph Minarik of the Congressional Joint Economic Committee has calculated that the typical 30-year-old man could get a mortgage on a median-priced home in 1973 with 21 percent of his income. By 1987, a median-priced home mortgage would take 40 percent of a typical 30-year-old's gross income.

The cost of housing, which is typically a family's single greatest expense, is tied directly to crime rates and school districts. As crime rates have risen and school performance has declined, an under-supply of housing in good school districts with low crime rates has driven the price of housing in such neighborhoods way up. Thus, parents who value safety, education, and time with children must either live in areas with poorer schools and higher crime or divert time from children to market their labor in order to purchase a home in a safe neighborhood with good schools. That is a quintessential
Hobson's choice.

**Perrier and Teddy Bears**

Growing economic pressures aren't the only reason families have less time together. A number of cultural factors have also played a major role.

"Unbridled careerism" is partly responsible for the decline in family time, says Karl Zinsmeister of the American Enterprise Institute. "For years, one of the most cogent criticisms of American sex roles and economic arrangements has been the argument that many fathers get so wrapped up in earning and doing at the workplace that they become dehumanized, losing interest in the intimate joys of family life and failing to participate fairly in domestic responsibilities," he writes. "Now it appears workaholism and family dereliction have become equal opportunity diseases, striking mothers as much as fathers."

The devaluation of motherhood stands behind such trends. As Zinsmeister notes, "Today, women are more likely to be admired and appreciated for launching a catchy new ad campaign for toothpaste than they are for nurturing and shaping an original personality." Ironically, this has a detrimental impact on fatherhood as well. So long as childrearing is viewed as a low calling for women, it is unlikely that it will take on increased significance for men.

Apart from unbridled careerism, some of the reduction in family time has been driven by a rampant materialism that places a higher premium on obtaining or retaining a 'Perrier and Rolex lifestyle' than on investing time in a larger kin group.

"Increasingly, Americans are pursuing a selfish individualism that is inconsistent with strong families and strong communities," writes University of North Carolina sociologist Peter Uhlenberg. "This movement is fueled by the media, most especially television (both in its programming and advertising), which suggests that personal happiness is the highest good and that it can be achieved by pursuing pleasure and material goods."

Indeed, it has become all too common for parents to buy material goods for their children in an attempt to compensate for their frequent absence from the home. Harvard University child psychiatrist Robert Coles calls this the "teddy bear syndrome":

Some of the frenzied need of children to have possessions isn't "only a function of the ads they see on TV. It's a function of their hunger for what they aren't getting their parents' time. The biggest change I have seen in 30 years of interviewing families is that children are no longer being cared for by their parents the way they once were. Parents are too busy spending their most precious capital their time and their energy struggling to keep up with MasterCard payments. They're depleted. They work long hours to barely keep up, and when they get home at the end of the day they're tired. And their kids are left with a Nintendo or a pair of Nikes or some other piece of crap. Big deal.

**Swimming Upstream**

Of course, not all parents are trying to "buy off" their children with Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles gear or overpriced sneakers. Many are struggling to raise responsible children and to transmit family values such as sharing, responsibility, commitment, and self-control. But these families are finding themselves swimming upstream against an increasingly unfriendly culture that instead promotes casual sex, instant gratification and selfish individualism.
Whereas once institutions outside the family, such as schools, churches, the mass media, and businesses, formerly reinforced the inculcation of traditional values, today they are often indifferent or downright hostile to family values and the rights of parents to pass on such values to their children. Many parents sense that they are being undercut by larger institutional forces. And they recognize that children who lack the self-esteem that comes from parental attention and affection are especially vulnerable to negative peer and cultural influences.

**Doing things together...**

Some opinion leaders in government, academia, and the mass media view initiatives designed to increase family time especially those that recognize the legitimacy and strengths of the breadwinner-homemaker family model as an attempt to "turn back the clock" rather than "facing the realities" of modern family life. These leaders overlook the fact that concerns about family time are not limited to those who believe the traditional family model is ideal.

A 1989 Cornell University study found that two-thirds of all mothers employed full-time would like to work fewer hours so that they could devote more time to their families. And when respondents to a 1989 survey commissioned by the Mass Mutual Insurance Company were asked to identify "extremely effective" ways to strengthen the family, nearly twice as many opted for "spending more time together" than listed "full-time parent raising kids."

Moreover, most Americans do not sneer at the past the way elitists do. As Whitehead observes:

> In the official debate (on family issues), the remembered past is almost always considered a suspect, even unhealthy, guide for the present or future....

But for the parents I met, the remembered past is not a dusty artifact of the good old days; it is an important and vital social resource. Parents take instruction from their own family's past, rummaging through it for usable truths and adopting or modifying or occasionally rejecting its values. In the official language, the family isn't getting weaker, it's just "changing." Most parents I met believe otherwise.

Americans believe "parents having less time to spend with their families" is the most important reason for the family's decline in our society, according to a recent survey. And most parents would like to see the work-family pendulum swing back in the direction of home.

To be sure, most children would not object to spending more unhurried time with their parents. Indeed, when 1,500 schoolchildren were asked, "What do you think makes a happy family?" social scientists Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain report that children "did not list money, cars, fine homes, or televisions." Instead the answer most frequently offered was "doing things together." --used with permission
DEFINING TERMS

Nuclear family

Dual-Career family

Individualism

Careerism

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. In what ways were the “good ol’ days” that good in American families? In what ways might they have been not so good?

1. Would you trade your family situation for a “50’s” family? Why or why not?

2. How have economic changes caused stress in modern families?
CHAPTER SIX -- Stratification

The History of the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills

In the 80s, when I looked for apartments in L.A, having taken a year off from school to work, I noticed that a number of them were listed as “Beverly Hills adjacent.” That meant that they were almost in Beverly Hills. Of course, apartments that were actually in Beverly Hills, if there are any, would be terrifically expensive, but these ones were affordable. So I called one, and ended up moving in, becoming a resident of what a movie later called The Slums of Beverly Hills. Well actually, the slums of almost Beverly Hills.

A question comes to mind as I write this: why the great American fascination with wealth and privilege as exemplified in the desire for a Beverly Hills address, the many movies with the name Beverly Hills in it, such as Beverly Hills Cop, Troop Beverly Hills, Down and Out in Beverly Hills, and the one mentioned above (actually even the title of this article is based on a title of an art film.)

But maybe a better question is this one: At a time when the gap between rich and poor in America is the greatest and when the middle class is smallest in over 50 years and among all industrial nations, why do most Americans persist in believing they are middle class?

Before I attempt to answer that, I think I should probably lay out the facts.

Between 1979 and 1995, the median income worker (the one smack in the 50% mark) lost 4.6% of his or her inflation-adjusted income, the equivalent of over $1200/ year. In a similar period, the richest 5% of Americans gained 29% and the richest 1% gained nearly 78% (a gain of $20,000/ month)! Even the boom years of the late 1990's didn’t help much. According to a recent NY Times article, “Most of the incredible wealth gained in 1990's boom went to the richest of the rich.” The article went on to state that 47% of the wealth gained went to the top 1%, while the bottom 80% shared only 12% of the gain in wealth according to a study by economist Edward Wolff. (Alexander Stille, Grounded by an Income Gap, Dec. 15, 2001)

Yet in the yearly studies by the National Opinion Research Center, 95% of Americans believe they are middle class.
Why is there so much inequality in the US, and why are Americans so uninformed about it? I believe the answers are related.

**Why is inequality growing?**

The NY Times article mentioned above begins in this way:

> For 30 years the gap between the richest Americans and everyone else has been growing so much that the level of inequality is higher than in any other industrialized nation.

> What no one can quite figure out, though, is why.... (Ibid)

I believe that is untrue. Consider the next paragraph:

> Why there has been increasing inequality in this country has been one of the big puzzles in our field and has absorbed a lot of intellectual effort," said Martin Feldstein, a professor of economics at Harvard University and the chairman of President Ronald Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers. "But if you ask me whether we should worry about the fact that some people on Wall Street and basketball players are making a lot of money, I say no. (Ibid.)

The reference to basketball players is a canard. Their few high salaries may slightly affect the overall average but does not affect statistics like medians (midpoints). Note also that the economist cited was an advisor to President Reagan, hardly an unbiased source. The article then goes on to explain:

> These [income] changes have persisted through Democratic and Republican administrations and began at the same time in Britain, even before Margaret Thatcher's market-oriented policies, Mr. Wolff said, indicating that they are not simply the product of economic policy but reflect deep structural changes in the economy. The leading hypotheses are technological advances, increases in trade and imports, growing immigration and declining union membership. (Ibid.)

This is only partly true. As the article itself pointed out, changes in America are greater than in any other industrialized country. Surely, all the factors cited except perhaps the last are going on in all these countries. What is different is the economic policies. In fact, the differences between countries have probably been minimized by the at least partial imitation in the 80s and early 90s world-wide of policies once known as Thatcherite or Reaganomic. But only in the US and Great Britain have the policies gone quite as far. These policies include deregulation of industry, tax cuts, slowing minimum wage growth, and declining investment in infrastructure including education.

The fact that changes persist through both Democratic and Republican administrations, while true is misleading. The greatest increase in the gap occurred between 1979 and 1989, the years coinciding mostly with the Reagan administration. The last year of the Clinton administration, 2000, was the first year in two decades in which the bottom 20% of the population outpaced the top in income growth (at least in percentage terms).
How might these policies affect inequality?

Deregulation of industry, among other things, allows increased corporate takeovers. These takeovers usually cause layoffs, as redundant staff are eliminated. People who lose their jobs, especially after years of service, often find it hard to find equally well-paying replacements thus depressing wage growth. Take, for example, Dan, an employee of Kerr Glass that made Mason jars in L.A. He worked hard and worked his way up in the company making nearly $15/hr within a few years. But in 1984, Kerr had to spend millions fighting off a corporate takeover. The corporate raider and his allies walked off with tens of millions. But Kerr Glass had to lay off hundreds of employees to pay off its debts. Dan’s next job paid $5/hr. It took him until 1991 to make $15/hr again, just in time for the Gulf war recession, when he got laid off again. In 2001, he had a good job in a unionized casino making $50K a year, but you’ll never guess what happened. 9-11 and he got laid off a third time. It took him over a year to find a decent job, this time in a non-unionized casino with poorer wages and benefits.

The declining level (adjusted for inflation) of the minimum wage, also has an effect. The minimum wage was raised to $5.15/hr in 1996. Nine years later, it hadn’t risen a penny. Clearly, those making the minimum wage have seen their inflation-adjusted income decline. Labor economists have shown that increases in minimum wage push all wages up, though obviously in varying amounts.

With the exception of the minimum wage, wages are largely set by the market. People with skills in growing industries like computers or medicine generally make more than those who are unskilled or in stagnant industries. However, as classical economists like Ricardo and Marx pointed out, competition of large numbers of the unemployed will otherwise tend to push wages to subsistence levels. Here the policies of the Federal Reserve Bank have tended to depress wages. The Federal Reserve is a quasi-governmental organization whose head is named by the President, whose job is to try to control the economy by influencing the money supply. When inflation threatens, the Fed (as it is called) raises interest rates, make loans to individuals and businesses more expensive. This chokes off credit, and decreases the money in circulation. When deflation threatens, the Fed lowers interest rates and makes loans less expensive. More people and businesses borrow, and more money enters the system.

Whenever wages (as a whole) start to rise, the Federal Reserve (fearing inflation) raises interest rates, depleting corporations and individuals of funds. Purchasing decreases and the economy slows, forcing companies to lay off workers. The threat of unemployment succeeds in reducing the pressure of wages, thus keeping them low. The effect of the Federal Reserve policy in keeping wages low cannot be overemphasized.
Declining investment in infrastructure affects the income of the population because it decreases the public goods and services that benefit the whole population. Decreased public transportation makes it harder for lower income workers to find and hold jobs. Lower spending on education makes it harder for schools to prepare children for skilled jobs. Failure to provide funds for job training or child care keeps people out of the workforce. In addition, public works can provide high wage union jobs for a large number of individuals.

Tax cuts, while usually not directly affecting income, tend to exacerbate the effects of growing inequality. Nearly all the tax cuts passed in the last twenty years have benefitted the wealthy far more than the middle class. The capital gains tax cut of 1996 cut taxes on investments by nearly one-third. There was no equivalent reduction of taxes on income. The 2001 tax cut, reduced taxes for most Americans by $300-600, but reduced taxes on the wealthiest 1% by an average of $54,000, according to economist Paul Krugman. In addition, tax cuts deplete the public treasury, reducing the ability for government to invest. If the tax cuts produce deficits, the money borrowed by the government drives up interest rates causing the middle class to pay more for loans and eventually causing inflation.

What may have the greatest effect on the income gap is something that is cited in the article as a structural change, but in fact is only partially so, the decline in the power of unions. Unions push up wages in the companies organized, but also create a ripple effect throughout the economy increasing competition among employers to retain their employees. The period when the labor force was most unionized, during 50s and 60s coincided with the lowest level of economic inequality. Since the 60's, though, union membership has declined from some 35% of the workforce to barely 10% of the workforce today.

There are a number of reasons for the decline of the unions, but surely one important one is government policy. The unions would never have became successful in the first place, had it not been for President Roosevelt's decision to ban the use of federal troops to break strikes back in the 1930s. The Taft-Hartley bill passed in 1948, however, limited the ability of unions to strike and to organize just as they were beginning to reach their greatest strength. In fact, the United States has the harshest labor laws of any industrial country. Of course, enforcement of law is as important as the laws themselves. During the Reagan years, enforcement of the right to organize reached its lowest level, as the Labor Department and the National Labor Relations Board adopted a policy of minimum enforcement. Again, this corresponded with the period of the greatest growth in inequality.

Why has the government been able to promote policies which have enriched the few at the expense of the many? The answer is because we have let them get away with it. We have let them because we are uninformed.

The Myth of the Middle Class

Commentators as far back as de Tocqueville and Matthew Arnold have seen America as a middle class nation. This was because unlike Europe, the US never developed a landed nobility. In Europe, the middle class or bourgeoisie, in other words the capitalist class, inhabited the space between great
wealth, the nobility and great poverty, the masses. In the United States that upper crust was lacking. It is true that millionaires quickly developed in the US, but lacking the hereditary ability to tax the peasants, richness became an opportunity (at least in theory) for everyone. This ideology coupled with a weak federal government, a rapidly growing population, and free land in the West enabled America to become, at least in part “a nation of shopkeepers”. Of course, these shopkeepers were hardly the capitalists of Marx, rather he referred to them as the petite bourgeoisie. An even greater number were small farmers, but nevertheless they shared the experience of property ownership and dreams of wealth.

As the nation industrialized, this notion of middle-classness was paradoxically saved by the unions. In the 1950s and 1960s unionized workers often made nearly as much as professionals and small business people. And throughout that period, economic growth was the same for the bottom and middle parts of the population as it was for the top.

As the American Dream began to collapse in the 70s and 80s, the fantasy was replaced by what can only be called a delusion.

The Green Machine and the Dream Machine

Two normally antagonistic groups have perpetuated the delusion of the middle class in the last twenty years, the media companies and conservative politicians.

Conservative politicians for the last twenty years sought to blunt anything that would benefit the lower half of the population by raising the spectre of “class war”. This included opposition to pointing out inequities of tax cuts, to opposing the federalization of airport employees (which they opposed as “creating a new group of unionised workers”) to opposing raising the minimum wage. Of course, in reality class war would be a serious thing. Millions did die in the Russian and Chinese revolutions. Conservatives have for two hundred years sought to replace the horizontal rifts of class with vertical distinctions like religion, race, nationality or even (as in Japan) corporations. But the ethnic and religious conflicts of the world in the last 50 years show these divisions to be potentially even deadlier than class. Still, conservatives have found that they can win elections if they can silence the class issue, but lose if they cannot.

A fundamental principle of Marx’s social analysis is that it is in the interest of the ruling class to minimize the extent of class awareness among members of the subordinate classes. This is accomplished chiefly by the promotion of what is called false consciousness, the assertion that class is unimportant in the everyday operation of a society.

According to James Henslin,

Conspiracy-minded observers some-times wonder whether media presentations that clearly promote falseconsciousness might not be deliberately developed and disseminated by theagents of the dominant class, but there is no need to assume that such messages could only emanate from a conscious cabal. It is very much in the financial interest of the creators of newspaper and magazine articles, television programs and Hollywood films to gain the sponsorship of corporate elites, and it requires little reflection for them to realize that class-conscious themes are unlikely to meet with the
approval of these elites. (Sociology Handbook, 1992)

Benjamin DeMott, professor of humanities at Amherst College and author of The Imperial Middle: Why Americans Can't Think Straight about Class, has developed some incisive observations regarding the extent to which contemporary U.S. mass media downplay the importance, or even the existence of, class differences in this country.

Consider these examples he gives from popular TV sitcoms of the 80s and 90s: "On 'The Cosby Show,' black Princeton grads win admission to the law and medical schools of their choice then chuck it all, preferring to start at the bottom as busboys and waitresses. On 'Designing Women,' expensively coiffed Southern businesswomen talk for a second or two with striking curtain factory employees and at once become partisans of the strike: 'We are all labor!' the ladies cry.

Similarly, DeMott points out that many recent movies perpetuate the notion that "...individual episodes of upward mobility obviate grappling with the hardening socioeconomic differences in our midst." Thus in "Working Girl," an ambitious secretary achieves top executive status quickly and easily on the basis of little more than the desire for upward mobility. In "Driving Miss Daisy," the enormous class and racial chasm between a black chauffeur and his wealthy white employer fades away and only their improbable friendship lingers in the mind.

Characters in films who have the audacity to point out the reality of class differences are almost always shown to be wrong. Examples include the secretary's skeptical coworkers in "Working Girl" or the snobbish salespeople on Rodeo Drive who turn their noses up at soon-to-be upwardly mobile hooker Julia Roberts in "Pretty Woman."

A final observation from DeMott: "In John Hughes' 'Some Kind of Wonderful' and 'Pretty in Pink,' working-class heroes or heroines become romantically interested in classmates who rank above them, in terms of money and status, in the school society. As the attachments develop, the poor students commence to display gifts and talents that prove them equal or intrinsically superior to the arrogant, insensitive characters in whom they've become interested."

Yet social class is a paramount indicator of social behavior and life events. We may laugh at their foibles in the movies, but the snobs get the last laugh and they laugh their way all the way to the bank. You will recall that convicts have an average income of about $6000/year. Not only are they more likely to be forced to turn to crime, they are less likely to be able to hire a Johnny Cochrane to get away with it.

Of course, we all know that “money isn’t everything, what is most important is your health.” But even here, the effect of social class rears its ugly head. According to Erica Goode:

Doctors usually evaluate patient's vulnerability to serious disease by inquiring about risk factors like cigarette smoking, obesity, hypertension and high cholesterol. But they might be better off asking how much money they make... Scientists have known for decades that poverty translates into higher rates of illness and mortality. But an explosion of research is demonstrating that social class – as
measured not just by income, but also by education and other markers of status – is one of the most powerful predictors of health, more powerful than genetics, exposure to carcinogens, even smoking ("For Good Health, It helps to be Rich and Important" NY Times, June 1, 1999)

So all in all, the mythology of classlessness might be said not to be a harmless fantasy, but a delusion that is harmful to your health (and wealth).

**DEFINING TERMS**

Stratification

False Consciousness

Bourgeoisie

*WHAT DO YOU THINK?*

1. Why is the Middle Class vanishing?

2. Why do all Americans think they are middle class?

3. Does the decline of the middle class have an effect on the politics of the US? If so, how? If not, why not?
CHAPTER SEVEN – Racism and Prejudice

The Long Slow Death of Ethnocentrism

You know the world is going crazy when the best rapper is a white guy, the best golfer is a black guy, the tallest guy in the NBA is Chinese... Chris Rock -2003.

It’s new world, but it may not be so crazy, after all. Shouldn’t the best of everything simply be the person who’s the best?

As I watched the TV for long hours in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan I was struck repeatedly by a silver lining in the tragic events. It might seem strange, in the light of a terrorist attack, to say this but I believe the war against terrorists signifies yet another step in the long demise of racism, tribalism and ethnocentrism. It is probably even stranger when one remembers that in the 20th century some 50 -100 million people died in wars based largely or in part on racist hate or that throughout the 1990s some 30 wars raged nearly every day, nearly all of them within single countries, based on some form of ethnic conflict. It is not because I think that in destroying terrorism, if that is possible, we will destroy the hatred that produces it, but rather because in by inch, slowly but surely ethnocentrism is becoming obsolete.

How can I say that? Not only were the tens of millions who died in WWII largely the victims of the racist ideologies of Germany and Japan, but in the 90s, who can forget the genocidal slaughtering of Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, Croatians and Kosovars in Yugoslavia?

It is because even though the current war has been called a jihad by Osama Bin Laden, and a crusade by President Bush, its adversaries have to a large degree transcended race and nationality. Al Qaida was made up of fourteen different nationalities and three races, and President Bush’s cabinet included as top advisors two African-Americans, Colin Powell and Condoleeza Rice. Both factors would have been inconceivable just a generation or two ago. Perhaps religion will be the last of the barriers to divide us before we discover finally the words of John F Kennedy that we are one humanity. The increasingly tight net of globalization with its trade and media contact will force us to confront that fact.

Ethnocentrism is as old as history and has its roots perhaps in the biological instincts that bind us to our families. The oldest forms of social organization are the clan and the tribe and these are both based on blood relationship and descent. It is quite possible that a biologically ingrained love for family and distrust of strangers is at the root of ethnocentrism. Many tribes around the world name themselves with names that translate as “the people” or “the human beings”, with the obvious implication that outsiders were actually less human. In later days, the very words for “foreigner” used by the Chinese as well as the Persian Empire meant “barbarian”. Or consider these examples from our Bible:
So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south and of the vale and of the springs. He left none remaining but utterly destroyed all that breathed as the LORD commanded. (Joshua 11:40)

“O daughter of Babylon... happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against a stone.” (Psalm 137).

I quote these, not out of disrespect, but to show the prevailing view of the times. Every member of these tribes and nations were considered the enemy and in need of extermination, no matter what their personal beliefs or whether they were man, woman or child.

Interestingly, it was religion that first began the move away from tribalism toward universalism. The great world religions that arose in the long millennium between about 600 BC and 600 BC, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam were the first to go beyond blood to beliefs as the basis for their identifications. Probably because of the development of written language, these religions were spread by conversion not by simple population growth. Of course, they were also spread by conquest as well particularly in the case of Christianity and Islam. At least the conquered were offered the choice of conversion or death, one small step upwards.

Nevertheless, there were the beginnings of ideals of equality between nationalities in Christianity and Islam, at least before God and among the community of believers.

Another factor dooming ethnocentrism was the rise of capitalism. Karl Marx saw it as a powerful force leveling the differences between races, nationalities and the sexes. There is little difference between people in the ability to work mindless factory jobs. Workers of the world unite!

The development of mass media starting with the printing press also has had a big effect. Although mass media can and has been used for dissemination of propaganda and hate, it can also be used to inform people and broaden people’s experiences. Certainly, through the media of photography, movies and television we have a better picture of what life is like in other cultures than ever before in history.

Transportation technology has had a similar effect. In the days when it took Marco Polo a decade to travel to China and back, few had the time or money to attempt such a journey. These days millions of travelers a year fly across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, learning for themselves what life in other nations is like.

Most of us know that the early democracies in Greece and Rome were largely limited to property owning males of the cities, as was the fledgling democracy established by the colonists limited to white, property owning males in America. African slaves were established by law to be with 3/5 of a white person. However, the logic of democracy proved to difficult to limit as the franchise to vote and other aspects of citizenship were gradually extended.

In *The Next American Nation*, Michael Lind has argued that the original vision of American of the founding fathers was limited to Anglo-American culture, people and values. Even the most progressive such as Thomas Jefferson, were highly pessimistic of the notion of a multiracial society. His famous
The Social Reality

quotation, now inscribed within the Jefferson Memorial, “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever.” (Notes on the State of Virginia, query 18, 1784). refers to his fear of a racial war in America. He pondered much of his life on a solution, and ended up not freeing his slaves until his own death.

According to Lind, Jefferson saw America essentially as the colony of an Anglo-Saxon tribe, and his vision, shared by most of the founding fathers, was not essentially challenged until the great waves of immigration hit our shores in the period between 1880 and the First World War. These immigrants, first the Irish in the 1840s, followed by some 14 millions of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russia --Jews and Eastern Europeans, provoked strong reactions among the elites including anti-catholicism and anti-semitism and the establishment of immigration quotas favoring whites over non-whites, and northern Europeans over southern Europeans in 1912.

By the 1950s, however, European ethnic groups had become well-established as had an assimilationist ideology, that of “the melting pot.” Different ethnicities were to be tempered in the American cauldron until their separate identities melted away and everyone became “Americans.” This new synthesis Lind called the “Second American Nation” or “Euro-America.”

However, the next decades were to call for a further extension of inclusion, as African-Americans, Chicanos and Native Americans lobbied for equal opportunities and acceptance. Women did as well. The Third American Nation or Multi-cultural America was established with as much conflict and resistance as the previous ones.

In 1992, Andrew Hacker, a professor at Cornell University published Two Nations: Separate, Hostile and Unequal. In essence, he argued that the multi-cultural synthesis had been incomplete. While mainstream America had largely come to accept Asians and Hispanics, the divide between black and white Americans was not narrowing, as demonstrated by statistics on intermarriage, housing patterns and a number of other factors.

He also described the following experiment: Imagine you were told that your birth was a mistake, and that at midnight your skin would turn black and your features would turn African American. Everything else about you would remain the same. How much would you ask as damages for that mistake? Hacker reported that white students commonly asked for about $50 million dollars in damages. Such is the perceived financial and psychological cost of being black in America.

One example of Hacker’s makes this especially clear. Most people believe they should have the right to reside wherever they wish and can afford. However, for African Americans in most cities this is not the case.

Successive surveys have shown that, on average, only about one in eight say they prefer a neighborhood that is all or mostly black, which is the condition most presently confront. The vast majority-some 85 percent-state they would like an equal mixture of black and white neighbors. Unfortunately, this degree of racial balance has virtually no chance of being realized. The reason, very simply, is that hardly any whites will live in a neighborhood or community where half the residents are black. So directly or indirectly, white Americans have the power to decide the racial composition of communities and neighborhoods. Most egregious have been instances where acts of arson or vandalism force black families to leave.
But such methods are exceptional. There are other, less blatant, ways to prevent residential integration from passing a certain "tipping" point. Here we have no shortage of studies. By and large, this research on agrees that white residents will stay-and some new ones may move in-if black arrivals do not exceed 8 percent. But once the black proportion passes that point, whites begin to leave the neighborhood and no new ones will move in. The vacated houses or apartments will be bought or rented by blacks, and the area will be on its way to becoming all black.

What makes integration difficult if not impossible is that so few whites will accept even a racial composition reflecting the overall national proportion of 12 or 13 percent. In this regard, one or two attempts have been made to impose ceilings on the number of black residents in housing projects and developments, so as not to frighten away whites. Starrett City in New York has used this strategy, as has Atrium Village in Chicago. According to some legal readings these procedures are unconstitutional, since they treat racial groups differently. Those administering such "benign quotas" have found they must maintain two sets of waiting lists. This has been necessary to ensure that the next families chosen for vacant apartments will serve the prevailing racial ratio. Given the preference of most blacks for integrated housing, quite a few tend to apply, and they invariably outnumber the whites on the list. The result is that black applicants have to wait longer, and are less likely to get their first choice of accommodation. Whites and blacks who want to achieve and maintain interracial housing-itself a rarity-find they are forced to defend "benign quotas" that are biased against some blacks, since there are fewer "black" places. Racial quotas also tend to put blacks on the spot. On the one hand, few are willing to publicly support a ceiling for people of their race. Even so, most of the black householders already in residence would prefer that the racial ratio remain stabilized. After all, they where themselves underwent a wait because they wanted to live in a racially integrated setting. Yet preserving the equation pits them against other blacks impatient to get in. (p. 35-36)

Despite all this, and although the gap between black and white in clearly the greatest between any of the races, I believe it too is narrowing, albeit in a much slower manner. Certainly, the tremendous impact of hip-hop music over the last decade has spawned greater numbers of imitators of black culture than ever before and greater exposure to black culture (though admittedly a narrow and stereotypical version of it).

William Junius Wilson argued in The Declining Significance of Race that

now the life chances of individual blacks have more to do with their economic position than their day-to day encounters with whites... However determinative those experiences were [in the past]...and however significant they were in the formation of poverty stricken ghettos and a vast underclass...they do not provide a meaningful explanation of life chances of black Americans today. (1987, p. 1)

In other words, white Americans have no trouble accepting black Americans so long as they are middle class or higher. This accounts for the great popularity of African Americans like Colin Powell, Tiger Woods and Michael Jordan who are seen as "safe." Nevertheless, this indicates to me at least, that racism is on the decline. It also means that for African Americans, education is clearly the way out. Individually, if they can overcome the barriers of inferior schools and the like, they are welcome to take their place in middle America. Collectively, as Hacker has pointed out, it may take longer. But certainly once African-Americans are proportionately as "middle class" as the rest of America even the de-facto segregation barrier will fall. Now with the election of Barack Obama we have seen one outcome of that barrier fall. But ask yourself, if a more “black-speaking” African-American could have been elected in 2008.

I said in the beginning of this article that religion may be the last barrier to fall. This perhaps is
unfair. By mid-twentieth century, most of the major religions in America had reached an accommodation. Secularization of society and acceptance of universalistic standards, have shown to mainstream congregations that while the content of each religion differs to some extent, the basic moral principles and spiritual experiences underlying each religion are relatively similar. It is really only in the extreme fundamentalist sects of all religions, where absolute insistence on literal interpretations of scripture are predominant that no rapprochement seems possible. Yet here too, the war on terrorism has a silver lining. For how can we defend an absolutist interpretation of the Bible against a absolutist interpretation of the Koran or vice versa. Clearly, to any thinking person it is simply a matter of opinion or belief. Sooner or later, whether is through personal contact, media exposure, or long hard struggle we will be able to see one another’s point of view.

**DEFINING TERMS:** Racism -- Ethnocentrism -- De Facto Segregation –
WHAT DO YOU THINK?  What were the contradictory effects of religion on ethnocentrism?

1. Why are whites apparently less accepting of blacks than other minorities?

2. Is it possible that ethnocentrism will be defeated? If so how, if not why not?
Chapter Eight Gender

Gender Wars

A number of feminists experienced decidedly mixed emotions in 2001 when First Lady Laura Bush stepped forward in the wake of the US invasion of Aghanistan to denounce the Taliban’s treatment of women. Although it was a cause that many of them had championed for years, it was probably disconcerting to have it promoted by Mrs. Bush, a woman whose chief political asset was that she was no Hillary Clinton, and who never spoke for women before or since.

I believe the cases of Laura Bush and the Taliban are two good illustrations of the historical conflict between the sexes, and how it plays out in traditionalist and modern societies.

All societies develop gender roles, which are the sets of behaviors expected for the two sexes. These roles serve two purposes: first, to insure that all the important activities necessary for the survival of the society are performed (division of labor), and second, to reduce conflict providing guidelines for behavior (norms).

In the most “primitive” societies, the division of labor is simple: men do the hunting and warfare and women do the gathering and child care. However, as everyone knows conflicts can arise out of a multiplicity of sources and that is true even in these simple societies. One way to resolve conflicts between men and women is to build the solution into the role. For example, the men are always right and women should obey them. If that sounds bizarre, remember that that is the basis for resolving conflicts between parents and children.

This particular social arrangement, which is called patriarchy, has the added advantage of being reinforced by the size differential between males and females. If she refuses to follow the behavior expected of her, he can beat her.

This is still the predominant pattern worldwide, according to Lori Heise. Even in societies where women had to walk for four hours to gather wood for fuel, or where children died from preventable illnesses, or where survival itself hung in the balance, women’s greatest concern was often the fear of beatings by their husbands. (“The Global War against Women”, Washington Post, April 9, 1989)

Bad though the Taliban’s behavior might have been, it is probably not the worst example of men behaving badly on a societal scale. Two other situations probably outweigh the Taliban’s bad behavior.

In India, what is called “bride burning” has become a national epidemic. Marriages in India require dowry from the bride’s family. If that dowry fails to materialize, or some other serious problem occurs, the husband may resort to dousing her with kerosene and setting her afire. He then claims it was a “kitchen accident”. In 1994, Indian police recorded over 5100 dowry deaths in India, (Source: National
In the Palestinian Authority, a frequent cause of women’s deaths are what’s called “honor killings.” If a women is suspected of promiscuity, it is her brothers duty to hunt her down and kill her to protect their family’s “honor”. During the summer of 1997, Khaled Al-Qudra, then Attorney General in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), told *Sout Al-Nissa* (Women's Voices)... that he suspects that 70 percent of all murders in Gaza and the West Bank are honor killings (Suzanne Ruggi, “Honor Killings in Palestine,” *Middle East Research and Information Report*, 2001). It should be pointed out that honor killings may be attempted even if the woman was innocent or was raped.

In modern societies, even though women have obtained far greater rights, conflicts and violence still occur. In fact, it is likely that the overall level of conflict is greater between the sexes in modern societies because of the breakdown in traditional roles, a factor that may contribute to today’s high divorce rates. Conflict can occur over who washes the dishes, who minds the kids, who makes the decisions. The controversy over former First Lady, now senator, Hillary Clinton is a larger scale example of that. To many, simply speaking, she was “a bitch.” To others, she was a positive example of a woman trying to exercise her power for what she believed. Laura Bush, by contrast, is comforting to those who believe in traditional values, but to others she is un-self-actualized. Perhaps her teenage daughters Jenna and Barbara’s extravagant “party animal” behavior reflect a rebellion against such passiveness.

Men, too, are victims of gender roles, in both traditional and modern societies. If we can assume that there are a full range of emotions and behaviors available to all humans, then the cookie cutter of gender roles amputates some from men as well. Men are cut off from behaviors seen as feminine such as caring, feeling and communicating. This serves them poorly when they enter into relationships and marriages. It also may account for the far, far higher rates of accidents, suicides, crimes, heart disease and alcoholism among men, sometimes as much as nine or ten times greater than for women.

In short, the evolution of gender roles from traditional to modern, far from providing a solution to social problems, have simply “engendered” new problems as societies continue to attempt to work out the differences between the sexes.
What if Heather had Two Mommies?

Linda Foreman, Professor of Sociology,
Community College of Southern Nevada

You Can’t fly Here

In October 2000, Regina Quattrochi, Priscilla Lenes and their two children arrived at Newark International Airport, with tickets and valid proof of United States citizenship for each family member, prepared to begin a vacation in Mexico; they were not prepared for airline agents demanding permission from a non-existent father before they could board their flight. Continental Airline employees persistently and publicly interrogated the two women, responding with disbelief and uncooperativeness as the couple repeatedly explained that their lesbian-headed two-parent family does not include a father. This family was “subjected to an extended, rude, threatening and invasive interrogation by Continental personnel,” Harlow informed Brenneman, who has yet to respond to Lambda’s September 28 letter, despite a request for a reply within seven days.

To convince the check-in personnel that the children had no father, Quattrochi had to explain that they were conceived with donated sperm. Rather than assisting the family in complying with any travel requirements, the Continental agents repeatedly said that they all would be sent back by Mexican authorities and the airline fined, if they were to board the plane. This long exchange took place in front of not only other passengers waiting to check-in, but also the couple’s two children, ages 10 and 5.

Finally, an agent allowed the women to fill out a form that the airline uses to verify birth and residence information if a passenger does not have proper travel documents. Continental then charged the family $10 for notarizing the form, a document they had no idea they might need until confronted at check-in. With that in hand, they were allowed to board the plane. For the duration of the four-hour flight, the children needed reassurance that they were not going to end up in a Mexican jail and the women worried whether they would be sent back.”Continental treated us with disrespect and was clearly unprepared to provide its services to diverse families,” said Quattrochi, adding, “The worst part was having to constantly reassure the kids that they had done nothing wrong, and that we weren’t going to be arrested when the plane landed. No parent should have to go through that.”

Gender in Stratification and Values

Americans like to believe two things about themselves: that they are “individuals” and the causes of their own destinies. Both are incorrect, at least to some degree. In fact, social factors from family to social class, have a dramatic influence over our behavior and the outcomes of our lives.

Social class placement is the most fundamental division according to many researchers, influencing health, longevity, income and occupation. However, people are alienated from this reality and are often ill informed in matters of class. It seems most folks identify as middle class, blinded by the complexities of this notion. A conversation among three eight year olds illustrates the point: Rachel lives in an affluent suburb in Green Valley with her mother, step father and younger brother, materially she is quite privileged, Alex lived in the city in an mid-scale older community and is the daughter of lesbian parents, Nidya lived in the Hispanic barrio in a snug one bedroom apartment with her mother and father. Nidya’s
father recently became a U.S. citizen and her mother was waiting her turn. The girls were making pizza in the urban kitchen and Alex says to Rachel “you are rich” Rachel responds, “I am not, I am middle”, Alex says, “Oh, no, I am middle” Nidya says, “I am middle too” to which Alex said, ”Middle is pretty big”. If the middle makes up about 90% of U.S. citizens, that is pretty big.

Gender stratification may be even more profound than social class as a predictor of the elements in one’s life course. Gender plays out differently dependent upon social class, as does race, sexual orientation and religious creed. All societies separate people based on their perceived sexual characteristics at birth. These biological traits of male and female have been used as the basis for the what is called the social construction of gender. Gender differences may have arisen out of biology, but the gender stratification today has little to do with biology and much to do with social construction.

Perhaps the clearest example of the value conflict wrought by feminism and alternative family movements is the changing definition of family. Leslea Newman, author of “Heather Has Two Mommies”, told of Christian conservatives calling her “the most dangerous woman in America”. According to the American Library Association, books showing positive alternative lifestyles are banned or challenged frequently. Hearing Newman tell this tale sparked interest to ponder what was so dangerous about literature for children that depicts healthy alternative families. What about Lesbian Parenting made this book so dangerous? The answer seemed clear to me -that the threads of gender authority patterns were assaulted. Any attempt to be positive undermined the status quo.

Who is in and who is out of family systems and who decides, has been defined in many ways across time and across societal boundaries. It is this author’s contention that families should be valued not for their structure but for the quality of community they provide the members and this view too is dangerous to the existing social order.

**Gay and Patriarchal Families**

The model dominant in the United States today is the patriarchal family. It is but a microcosm of the concept known as the state. The authority of the state is institutionalized within the family. This male authority has been seen by our society as divinely driven and biologically dictated. Gender roles are highly differentiated in this model. Not only are the expectations separate, the rewards of wealth power and prestige are differentially given as well. Feminism confronts this model, as does gay and lesbian parenting.
In 1997 it was estimated that up to 6 to 10 million lesbian and gay parents were in the United States. As many as 6 to 14 million children had active gay parents. Many of these children were born when their parents were in a heterosexual relationship. The last decade and a half has seen a sharp rise among gay people planning and forming families through adoption, foster care, donor insemination, and other reproductive technologies. Some have described the current period as a lesbian and gay "baby boom" or "gaby boom." Alternative families face many social and legal obstacles.

Today a growing segment of American society has recognized that sexual orientation has no bearing on the ability to be a loving and successful parent. As more empirical evidence becomes available that debunks the myths about gay parents, and as more lesbians and gay men fight for their children, those obstacles will continue to fall.

What the research tells us about lesbian parenting is that the children are not any worse or better off than children raised in a heterosexual partnership. The qualities of good parenting seem evenly distributed. What the studies do indicate however is that children of gays and lesbians are more open the range of human experience.

According to Chan and Patterson, “There is now a considerable social science research literature comparing children of lesbian and gay parents with those who have heterosexual parents. A recent example is the 1998 study, "Psychosocial adjustment among children conceived via donor insemination by lesbian and heterosexual mothers," by R. W. Chan, B. Raboy and C. J. Patterson, in Volume 69 of Child Development. An overview of the research can be found their 2000 study, "Sexual orientation and family life: A decade review," in Volume 62 of the Journal of Marriage and the Family. The studies all support the hypothesis that children do fine in a variety of family settings. One important result from social science research is that parental sexual orientation does not appear to be a very important factor in children's psychosocial development. Researchers have found that children of lesbian mothers are as likely to develop normally as are children of heterosexual parents. Based on the research findings that are available to us today, the qualities of relationships and parent-child interactions within the family appear to be much more important influences on children's development than parental sexual orientation. Patterson is a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and a leading expert on the development of children of lesbian mothers. The one common thread shows that homophobia can be the biggest obstacle to recognize as a member of an alternative family minority.

Alex Has two Mommies

Woven throughout this story is one woman’s telling of a child of the lesbian/pagan community. Alex is a woman child being raised by lesbian activist parents. Her “Comadre” has three grown children who are active in her life. The father is a known donor who visits on occasion and includes his wife and Alex’s half sister in the visits. Her biological mother is twenty years younger than her Comadre. The women share 23 years together. Alex liked Amsterdam when she learned they would allow her moms to marry. Alex is comfortable in the community of women and has some close male allies too. Alex experienced a few Women’s Music Festivals and celebrates pagan traditions seasonally. The child is surrounded in a community of adults who are committed to feminism. Yet, she lives in the urban center, in a town strict on the roles for women, Las Vegas. Alex has been exposed to several different cultures
through travel and parental influence. She has a fair grasp of the Spanish language having attended bilingual class settings from k-3rd grade and has always made high marks.

Attempts at gender socialization are obvious as one strolls through the local toy store. Toys are our tools and very clear messages are sent to boys and girls. The “boy” toys send the message boys are movers, builders, and protector. The “girl” toys feature beauty, domestics and pro-natalism. It is profitable to perpetuate gender stereotyping as Americans spend 2 out of 3 dollars on boy toys and if girls are seen on the package, sales go down. When Alex was five a classmate told her that “hot wheels are boy toys”, to which Alex, said ”It is not a boy toy if I am playing with it”. Gender roles influence our positions in society in profound ways. It is clear to me that by focusing on the roles component, one easily dismisses the institutional prerogatives that these roles provide the glue for.

Institutional patterns need to be unearthed if sexism is to be reduced. By focusing on individual roles, the structures go unattended. A challenge to the patriarchal model is occurring globally, views toward family have shifted in areas such out of wedlock births being favorably accepted by 48% of United States Citizens according to Gallup Polls. Among societies to expand legal protections to all families are Canada, the Netherlands, the states of Vermont and California. They all have granted civil rights to domestic partners. Even South Africa includes sexual orientation in constitution.

The patriarchal model of authority institutionalized by the state, is confronted by the gay and lesbian parenting movement and this is why the idea of two mommies is viewed as insidious. Conflict does result when the traditional ways are challenged, as so much no longer rests on assumptions and more must be negotiated.

Eventually the institutions will reflect back the rainbow of family alternatives that do exist. For example, approximately sixty percent of children in the United States live in family units that are not their biological parents. Laws therefore have been adapted to adjust to the blended family.

The 2000 U.S. Census found gay and lesbian families residing in 99.3 percent of all counties across America. The numbers are significant because they challenge widely held myths and show that these families are a vital part of American society. Laws vary widely regulating the status of these families. "The census figures will change the debate for many Americans — from an abstract controversy read about in newspapers or seen in noisy debates on television to a discussion about real families, real people and real lives," said David M. Smith, HRC's communications director. "These facts will help us dispel stereotypes and present a fuller, more accurate picture of the gay and lesbian family in America." The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.
Sexism is the social oppression that exists against women. Homophobia (the fear and hatred of homosexuality) is in part the social oppression of sexual minorities. In order to understand this concept of social oppression one needs to see the larger picture. C. W. Mills talked about developing a “Sociological Imagination” which I find to be useful framework for analysis. One must look at the political and economic structures to explain inequality. The other institutions reflect similar patterns.

One model of social oppression demonstrates that once difference is located between groups of people that inequality emerges. The model is really simple, yet it involves complexities at every level.

The equation is: Prejudice plus Social Power equals Social Oppression.

Basically, power exists in all social relationships. Groups vie for supremacy over other groups and once they get power they tend to use their power to keep it. Institutional power is maintained in socialization, education, media, legal system and religious teachings. It is maintained in societies norms, values and statuses. Those in the dominant group usually come out in the value system as the “better people”. Ethnocentrism, the need to belong to a group and the tendency to judge one’s own group as superior, influences this value hierarchy and these notions then are also intertwined throughout the social structures of society. Stereotypes target members of a group for lack of individuality and contribute to the headset of oppression. Religious justification is then the final glue of prejudiced ideology. In a nutshell, prejudice is the head set of social oppression as differences between groups or ranked in a value system that stereotypes the members and then provides religious justification.

Minorities often have had their history hidden, ignored, lost, or twisted in unspeakable ways. What do you know about Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Margaret Sanger, Sojourner Truth or the Grimke Sisters? I challenge the reader to learn about these remarkable women. Lesbian and gays and other minorities see distorted images as a rule.

Important to understand in this model is that this is a group dynamic. Dominant group members are given certain privileges as a birthright, minority members find these privileges to be erratically given and harder to earn.

Audre Lorde’s 1979 case study “Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist’s Response” sheds light on many issues of race, gender and sexual orientation. The feminist’s response to raising children in patriarchy in 1979. Raising children, especially a son in the lesbian/Black/Feminist community is the framework for the case study. Lorde stated, “Raising Black Children-female and male-in the mouth of a racist, sexist, suicidal Dragon is perilous and chancy”. I think this statement is true for many children such as Alex and her peers in 2002 Las Vegas.
Gay Family in Las Vegas

Las Vegas is a unique city. In some respects it resembles the traditional all-American city. Gender roles are stressed and the Whore/Madonna dichotomy is alive and well. Alex queries her mother on such things as why the cab has a sign with bare butted women and what naked girls have to do with the library. There are more churches per capita than in other American cities, the Mormon Church is strong, as is the Catholic Church. Children of the gaby boom are at odds in this environment. The grade schools proudly continue their Boy Scout programs in spite of the sexist and heterosexist policies. Alex comes home from second grade saying, “the boys go camping, and the girls pick up trash during lunch hour”. The boy scouts are the official youth programs of the Mormon Church. The Mormon Church is a major player in town and has a history of promoting anti-feminism and anti-gay legislation. Alex is in a running debate with a boy who asserts that “men do the important work and women only follow”. She maintains the “women can be the nice leaders”.

Authority found in religious systems attempt to cement gender stratification and are institutionalized in a variety of ways that control the place of men and women. The Boy Scouts are a reflection of that reality. Separating the boys and girls and kicking out the pagan and gays, the elements of social oppression have been evoked in the Boy Scouts.

When Alex was eight she said, “The boys scouts are the worst, they call girls by their boobs”. An organizational spokesperson gave Supreme Court testimony asserting that the primary purpose of the Boy Scouts is to promote heterosexuality among the boys, it seems to be working. One local businessman reported that he would never hire someone who was not an Eagle Scout, to which one thinks, then he won’t be hiring women or gays.

A petition drive, and ballot initiative brought the full weight of oppression upon Alex’s household. Throughout the neighborhood signs emerged, urging voters to define marriage exclusively as a man and a woman. Just in case someone might marry and attempt to transfer such rights to Nevada, homophobic citizens became visible. The yard sign at Alex’s house stood noticeably alone in her neighborhood. The attempt to counter the bigotry and was vandalized one evening. A nicely dressed, elderly church couple knocked on Alex’s door bidding her parents signature. They were kindly told to get off the porch. The action is reminiscent of my childhood. Mother stood at the door of our family home refusing to sign a petition to remove a Black family from the neighborhood. I was about Alex’s age and the year was 1963. Our family was ostracized for asking the petitioners to leave, and I was proud.

I hope that Alex was proud of her mother as she explained to the petition handlers that they were a gay family and had done nothing to harm them and it was best if they got off the property. More than 80 percent of Nevada voters approved of the action. In 2002, they will vote again, if the trend continues, the defense of marriage nonsense will become a part of the Nevada constitution. The failure of heterosexual marriages has little to do with loving homosexual unions. The failure to validate alternative families undermines them.
Another arrow hit Alex when she was four. It was at a day care facility in the neighborhood. An attendant told Alex that she could not have two mommies when she spoke of both her mommies picking her up. Denial of family connection to children is simply out of line. Fortunately, Alex concluded that the woman must have been just plain stupid to think such a thing. Alex did not return to that setting and the staff had training on how to address children who have alternative family arrangements, after a parental phone call had been made. It seems odd that this should even be needed, but the assumption of the patriarchal family is institutionalized. Shortly after Alex was denied her reality of having two mommies at day care, the family was on holiday at the Howard Johnson’s in Key West Florida. Alex was 5 years old. She was swimming in the pool; her mother sat in eye and heard shot of the child.

A woman and small child befriended Alex and conversation ensued. When asked whom she was with, the five year old said, “I’m gay” to which the visitor asked, “Do you mean that your parents are gay”? Alex sighed and said “yes”. The woman said, “this is Key West, there are many gay families here”. The child smiled proudly. Another story occurred when in the second grade someone was remarking about fags and Alex’s peer, stood up and said, “Alex’s mothers are gay and my mother is gay, and that is not nice to say”. The second grade teacher retold the story to the child’s mother who was also a teacher in the school and not gay.

It was around this same season the Jerry Falwell expressed concerns about the purple teletubbie being a gay role model. Alex thought about that and said ”gay kids need role models too, it is just a teletubbie”. This same year the children expressed jealousy because Alex was allowed to make two mother’s day gifts.

Alex who is now nine says the words used on the playground often refer to fags in a negative light. To counter this kind of negativity it is important to locate other alternative families and participate in pride events. Alex co-founded a club that has a core group of 8 kids called Progressive Children’s Alliance. The purpose was to socialize and support kids respect for diversity of family life. The kids do service for the community at large, for example they generated 1500 books and distributed them to kids who needed them. The group consists of boys and girls aged 7 to 15 now. These are the children and grand children of Lesbian Parents and their Straight friends.

Alternative families can find community support in a variety of settings. It is essential that they do. The Metropolitan Community Church is one supportive religious community. In Las Vegas about forty children from alternative households attend services. Other sources of religious community are found at places like the Unitarian Church, they welcome most everyone. Many Christian churches and The Reformed Jews have supported human rights, while other faiths can be virulent towards alternative families. This link is stellar for commonly asked questions regarding homosexuality and society. An excellent resource is at: [http://www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org).

Many lesbians and gay men are the parents of children born to them when they were in a heterosexual relationship or marriage. In some instances, when a child's non-gay parent discovers that the other parent has come out, he or she may attempt to limit the parenting role of the lesbian mother or gay father; challenges have also been brought by other relatives or government agencies. In these cases, the sexual orientation of the lesbian or gay parent is often used to incite prejudice -to suggest the myths and stereotypes about gay parents in order to provoke a denial of visitation or custody. Lambda keeps a
good database for these issues. http://www.lambdalegal.org/

Alex and her life is an example of how individuals have troubles that are often linked to social or institutional factors. I believe it will take about eighty years before the gay family issue will no longer be an issue at all. Alex will be ninety then. As far as women’s equality, the Equal Rights Amendment may eventually pass if people come to realize that the notion that one nation is after all worthwhile.

**Defining Terms:**

Minority
Subjugation
Feminism
Humanism
Values
Prejudice
Oppression
Gender
Family
Social change
Value conflict
Institution
Chapter Nine -- The Economy

Criminal Corporations

Jerome G. Manis

The 70 largest corporations in the United States were found guilty of a total of 980 law violations. That was an average of 14 violations for each corporation. Two of those large corporations had accumulated 50 law violations apiece. 69 of the 70 corporations were guilty of two or more law violations. All 69 could be described as recidivist law violators --criminal corporations.

That information was compiled by a noted criminologist Edwin Sutherland for the very important *White Collar Crime* published in 1949. Because he had included the names of those 70 corporations, his publisher refused to include them. It was published then, minus names.

Not until 1983 did several of his former students produce an uncut edition with detailed information about the criminal corporations. Since then, some studies of corporate crimes in a number of industries have enriched our knowledge of that subject matter. But there has been no update about the number or frequency of today’s criminal corporations.

Still, you won’t find discussions of criminal corporations in your daily paper or on television news programs. Corporations found guilty of many law violations receive little attention in books on crime. Although crimes by corporations are far more serious than those committed by individuals, studies of crime deal largely with individual offenders.

According to *Power, Politics, and Crime* (William Chambliss, 1999): "Corporate crimes are more costly, more dangerous, and more violent than the robberies, burglaries, assaults, and murders reported by the FBI in the Uniform Crime Reports." Like other reports, it devotes only a few pages to corporate crimes and hardly mentions corporate recidivism.

Critics of Sutherland’s findings pointed out that many of the tallied law violations did not involve criminal laws. They were the result of actions by regulatory commissions or agencies, involving restraint of trade, safe food, misrepresentation of advertising, patent infringements, unfair labor practices, and similar acts. From a legalistic view of crime, only convictions in criminal courts should be labeled as crimes. Others insisted that focusing on law violations was important and necessary.
Since the 1980s, a number of important books have been published about corporate criminality. Especially informative are: Corporate Crime in the Pharmaceutical Industry (John Braithwaite, 1984); Toxic Capitalism: Corporate Crime and the Chemical Industry (Frank Pearce and Steve Tombs, 1998); Corporate Corruption (Marshall Clinard, 1990). Yet, we do not know if Sutherland's finding that over 98% of the largest corporations in the United States continue to be recidivist law violators. Nor is there consensus over Sutherland's conception of corporate crimes.

To understand that issue, we need to examine its background—a 19th century long neglect of laws governing corporations. As a result of their misdeeds, a number of presidents, beginning with Thomas Jefferson, inveighed against the powers and harmful acts of corporations. Abraham Lincoln asserted in 1864 that:

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country...corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is concentrated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed."

A decade later, President Rutherford B. Hayes asserted that: "This is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people no longer. It is a government of corporations, by corporations, and for corporations"

There were important reasons for criticism of corporations during the 19th century. Then, corporations had virtually unlimited powers which grew out of English law. Lacking a formal constitution like the United States, English courts rely on precedent—the decisions of prior courts.

Not until the 18th century were these court precedents brought together by Sir William Blackstone. Included in his famed legal commentary is the following:"...a corporation cannot commit treason, felony, or other crime in its corporate capacity; though its members may in their own distinct individual capacity."

English corporations had been formed under charters granted by their kings. Since the Constitution of the United States made no chartering provision for corporations, they were established by the various states. These state charters varied in many ways. But commonly they placed little limits on the actions of their chartered corporations.

By the close of the 19th century, the legal immunity of corporations began to be reconsidered by President Theodore Roosevelt. As rapidly growing corporations began to monopolize production and distribution, restrain trade, fix prices, and eliminate competition, he was able to bring about an anti-trust policy and enforcement agency.

The 20th century has seen a rapid increase of multi-billion dollar corporations. There also has been an increase of regulatory agencies and commissions to deal with problems stemming from harmfulcorporatepowers, among themovertradeforhealthsafety, and theenvironment. They include the Federal Drug Administration, the Federal Trade Commission, the Bureau of Mines, the Environmental
Given the number and variety of federal agencies and commissions, as well as the 50 state regulatory offices, no one can be sure of the number of corporate law violators. Moreover, no official department is responsible for enumerating and collating those illegalities. All that can be said, at present, is that their number appears to be very large. Only media reported cases of corporate law violations, agency prosecutions, and penalties are available to investigators, sometimes with great difficulty.

The creation of these agencies has resulted in the existence of a regulatory justice system quite different from the criminal justice system. Comparing them in *Understanding Social Deviance* (2000), John Curra has asserted that, "Regulatory agencies do not have the power or personnel to be really effective in their charge to control corporate deviance and they often find themselves under extreme pressure not (his italics)to enforce the laws they are supposed to enforce."

According to Ben Bagdikian’s 1997 *The Media Monopoly*, when corporations are indicted for multiple law violations, their cases often have been extended for years and the penalties are minimal. In the case of 29 electrical companies charged with violations of conspiracy laws, the individual cases had gone on from 10 to 25 years. The penalty for Firestone Tire’s filing deliberately false tax returns amounting to $12 million was $10,000. Yet, hundreds of individual tax evaders are jailed annually.

A recent action of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) also illustrates the limitations of the regulatory process. According to Reuters (May 16, 2001), the SEC has revealed a case of financial fraud that cost investors billions of dollars. The alleged perpetrator of this enormous fraud is the Sunbeam Corporation. While individuals charged with fraud face criminal courts and imprisonment, the SEC civil lawsuit is said to seek only financial penalties.

A month earlier, Sunbeam’s outside auditing firm Arthur Anderson LLP agreed to make a $110 million settlement payment. That was done in response to allegations of fraudulent reporting and accounting but did not involve admissions of fault or liability. The possibility that either corporation will face criminal charges seems quite unlikely. Nor will the action likely be recorded as crime or other illegality.

Over 100 documents showed that Brown and Williamson Tobacco Co. and other tobacco manufacturers knew about its health hazards for many years (Philip Hilts, *Smokescreen*, 1996). After their executive officers had denied those effects under oath before Congress in 1994, a congressman said that "the tobacco companies lied to us...it is a criminal offense to try to mislead Congress." Those alleged crimes remain ignored.

A study of Fortune 500 companies over only a five-year period showed that 242 had been named in federal antitrust cases. *The Organization of Corporate Crime* (Katherine Jamieson, 1994) showed that 166 companies were named only once, 42 were named twice, 13 were three times, and 8 had four or more violations. The average duration of all the alleged conspiracies was over three years. The number of these law violations (and unexamined other law violations) over this brief period suggests that many
of the companies might be viewed as criminal corporations.

In a recent article in The Nation (2001), Kellen Carey reported that the giant aluminum corporation Alcoa has been cited 47 times for environment violations since 1987. These recidivist actions include:

"...an aluminum smelter in Massena, New York, which in 1991 was fined the then largest criminal penalty ($3.75 million) for hazardous waste violations. Last March [2000] Alcoa agreed to a $8.8 million settlement over dumping inadequately treated waste into the Ohio River between 1994 and 1999."

Less than a year later, the chief executive officer of Alcoa, Paul O'Neill became the Treasury Secretary of the United States.

The index of Clinard’s 1990 book offers information about the illegal actions of major corporations who may well be labeled corporate crime recidivists. For example, this index for General Dynamics lists: bribery of government officials, defective armaments, defense contract fraud, kickbacks, tax evasion, and work safety.

His listing for General Electric includes: advertising deception, bribery of foreign officials, defective armaments, defense contract fraud, domestic bribery, environmental pollution, monopolistic practices, and toxic waste dumping.

Among the other corporations with multiple law violations listed in the index by Clinard were: Exxon, General Motors, McDonnell Douglas, and United Technologies. Numerous other corporations had two or more listings of law violations. Although the data is limited, assessing the hypothesis that these corporations merit the criminal designation would appear justifiable.

The persistence of corporate law violations is apparent in "The Archer Daniels Midland Antitrust Case of 1996." According to this 2001 article by Simpson and Piquero, the "supermarket to the world" was fined $100 million in 1996 for conspiracy to restrain trade. Not only had ADM pleaded no contest in prior cases, but testimony revealed the frequency of prior conversations about the conspiracy between corporate officials.

A major barrier to the enforcement of corporate law violations has been described in Corporation Nation (Derber, 1998) is "...the business judgment rule, a common law development that is the equivalent of the Magna Charta for the CEO...Judges use the rule to immunize corporations against shareholders or public suits on both criminal and civil matters." It has also been called "judicial protection policy" by judges who refuse to involve themselves in corporate decision making.

Along with judicial and regulatory protection are the profits to be gained by corporate law-violations. In the final pages of Sutherland's landmark contribution, he noted that: "A corporation does not search for opportunities to violate any law whatever. Rather it is carrying on certain activities for the purpose of profits and finds itself impeded by a specific law and it violates that law." Having profited from the law violation, corporations continue the illegalities with little fear of penalties.
While some types of corporate enterprises have been found guilty of more crimes than others, few specific commercial or industrial corporations appear to have been completely free of multiple law violations. A reasonable hypothesis at present could be that most large American corporations could be considered recidivist or multiple criminal offenders. Until some comprehensive study of criminal corporations, that hypothesis will continue to be untested.

Moreover, new forms of corporations are being established in numerous "offshore" locales. Subject to no controls or laws, they permit all kinds of enterprises to engage in money laundering, embezzlement, corrupt payments, and other fraudulent practices. Connections between legitimate and illegitimate enterprises frequently are involved in these offshore corporations. Banking and other financial entities work with corrupt government leaders and organized gangs for mutual benefits beyond law and punishment.

Clinard pointed out in 1990: "As the nation state was the primary entity at the dawn of the modern age, so the giant corporations are all-powerful in the twentieth century world." Will these "all-powerful" corporations be similar to the overwhelmingly recidivist law violators revealed in 1949 by Edwin Sutherland? Or will there not be any global laws controlling their potentially harmful actions?

--copyright September 2001, Jerome G. Manis, used with permission.
A Note on Corporate Welfare Mothers, Pornographers and Tax Dodgers:

In addition to being repeat offenders, many large corporations are tax dodgers, pornographers and welfare mothers to boot. Last year, General Motors, while reporting a multibillion dollar profit, paid no taxes. And according to Ralph Nader, Microsoft’s failure to pay a single dividend to its stockholders for fifteen years despite record profitability and $36 billion in cash reserves, amounts to “an illegal tax shelter for large stockholders including Bill Gates,” (Reuters, “Microsoft should pay dividends or taxes” Jan 7, 2002). General Motors “now sells more graphic sex films every year than does Larry Flynt, owner of the Hustler empire,” according to the Wall Street Journal (“Wall Street buys into Pornography,” Oct 23, 2000). What’s worse is they got handouts from the government (our taxpayer dollars) as well. According to Dollars and Sense Magazine:

In 1992 rancher J.R. Simplot of Grandview, Idaho paid the U.S. government $87,000 for grazing rights on federal lands, about one-quarter the rate charged by private landowners. Simplot's implicit subsidy from U.S. taxpayers, $261,000, would have covered the welfare costs of about 60 poor families. With a net worth exceeding $500 million, it's hard to argue that Simplot needed the money.

Since 1987, American Barrick Resources Corporation has pocketed $8.75 billion by extracting gold from a Nevada mine owned by the U.S. government. But Barrick has paid only minimal rent to the Department of the Interior. In 1992 Barrick's founder was rewarded for his business acumen with a $32 million annual subsidy.

Such discounts are only one form of corporate welfare, dubbed "wealthfare" by some activists, that U.S. taxpayers fund. (Chuck Collins, “Aid to Dependant Corporations,”, May/June 1995)

A few of the many subsidies received by the wealthy are:

--The Mansion Subsidy. Home mortage interest is deductible up to $1 million per yer. Reducing the limit to $250,000 would the government $10 billion year.

--The Accelerated Depreciation Subsidy. Companies get to depreciate their equipment much faster than it wears out. The cost: $32 billion a year.

--The Advertising Subsidy. Corporations fully deduct the cost of their advertising. If only one-fifth of advertising expenses were considered a capital cost of building brand name recognition, and so deductible gradually over time, taxpayers would save $3.5 billion year.

--McSubsidies. $110 million a year goes directly to companies that advertise their products abroad. Beneficiaries include Sunkist, McDonalds, and M&M/Mars.

--Weathfare for Mining Companies. The U.S. lets big mining companies pay peanuts for the use of federally owned land -our land. An 8% royalty would earn $200 million a year.

--Corporate AgriBusiness Subsidy. The federal government gives $200 million/year to corporate farms that each have incomes over $5 million year. –Source: Chuck Collins (op cit.)
DEFINING TERMS

Corporation
Subsidy
Regulation
Wealthfare

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What role do corporations play in the economy?

2. How does society justify give-aways to its richest members?

3. If corporations were subjected to the same rules as individuals, what would be the consequences?
Chapter Ten Government and Politics

The Government We Deserve

In years since the 9-11 attack, despite all the flags we put briefly on our cars, despite the banners proclaiming “United We Stand,” we have a problem resurfacing in our country, one that has lurked beneath the surface for decade or more, since before the first Gulf war-occasionally erupting into public awareness, but more often festering below. One could say there is an enemy within. But it is not terrorist “sleeper cells”, nor dissent by those who didn’t “support the troops.”

In the words of Paul Taylor:

What if they held an election and nobody came? This fall an estimated 110 million to 120 million Americans, nearly two-thirds of the electorate, will not vote-the largest group of nonvoters in U.S. history.

What if they took a census and nobody stood up to be counted? This spring, 33 million American households have not sent back their forms. The 63 percent mail-back rate is a dozen points lower than government officials had expected. A preliminary review suggests that most of the problem is not in poor communities, where the Census Bureau had conducted an intensive promotional campaign, but in middle-class communities, where it had not thought promotion was necessary.

What if they sent out tax forms and nobody paid? This year, for every $5 in federal taxes owed, $1 is being evaded- mostly by sole proprietors and small businesses. The annual tax gap is expected to exceed $100 billion for the first time ever, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

The voting booth, the census form and the tax return are among the few civic venues where the federal government asks its citizens to take part in the ongoing enterprise of public life. And now, more than ever, Americans are declining the invitation. At a time when democracy is flourishing around the globe, it is losing market share here. (“A National Morale Problem,” Washington Post Monthly, May 14, 1991)

Though recent polls say we trust our government now more than we have in some points in the past, numbers are dropping close to pre 9-11 levels -and actions -like the ones cited above -speak far louder than words. It is instructive to compare what Paul Taylor wrote a decade and a half ago to what has happened since.

Before I do so, I would like to explain the stakes in all this. Former President Jimmy Carter is quoted as saying, “You get the government you deserve.” As a world-wide observer and guarantor of free elections, he presumably knows what he’s talking about. And as a humanitarian, he presumably cares. What he means is, that to the degree people are involved and care about, and are active in their government, they will have a responsible one. It is neither blind distrust of government as was so popular in much of the 90s, nor a blind faith in it, as was asked for by former Attorney General Ashcroft, at the same time as he rescinded civil liberties in the fight against terrorism.
If we blindly resist our government we risk creating a government that cannot work, a self-fulfilling prophecy if there ever was one. If we blindly accept it, we risk a tyranny. We know that power corrupts, and our founding fathers set up a system of checks and balances to protect against it. If we, however, neglect our civic duties to participate, that equation cannot work. And some day, too late, we will wonder how it all got away from us.

"I get so embarrassed when I see elections in Central America where you can get shot by either the left or the right for voting, and yet they vote at twice the rate we do in this country," says Republican Rep. Bill Frenzel of Minnesota. "I think that as a society we're going through a scattering of what used to be called national purpose. At one time this country had a manifest destiny. Nowadays, everyone is chasing a different butterfly."

"Clearly we have something of great interest going on here, and it sounds to me like what we've got is a collective national morale problem," says Walter Dean Burnham, a professor of government at the University of Texas.

"For a lot of Americans, there is no longer a moral distinction between those who choose to be involved and those who don't," says Geoffrey Garin, a Democratic pollster who has done extensive research on citizenship. "People don't feel any sense of ownership over the federal government. It isn't theirs, and it isn't theirs." (Ibid.)

Paul Taylor and the analysts he quoted were clearly prescient here. Within a couple of years, antigovernment sentiment began to boil over. What I would like to do is take a look at root causes, to see whether underneath the veneer of patriotism, the same alienation still breeds. Taylor looked at a broad swath of explanations, cutting across sociology, history and political science. Here are his explanations followed by my own update and commentary.

It is a byproduct of a long season in which anti-government populism has been the reigning political idea. This is a favorite theory of liberals, and it implicates former president Ronald Reagan as the villain. Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts says Reagan used the Oval Office to issue a "summons to selfishness" and Garin says his message was that "you can love your country but hate your government." (Ibid.)

Since then, Reagan’s views seem quite mild compared to invective used by congressional Republican leaders from Newt Gingrich to Dick Armey and Tom Delay. Even “compassionate conservative” George W. Bush told Al Gore in 2000, “You trust the government, but I trust the people.” It seemed a bit disingenuous for him to ask us to trust the government once that he was in office.

It is the result of the long-term weakening of the political parties. In virtually every other democracy around the world, political parties still play the vital role in delivering political information and mobilizing citizen participation. "In this country, our parties can no longer punch their way out of a paper sack," says Frenzel, who will retire next year after 20 years in Congress. "When I was first elected, the most powerful political forces in my state were the Democrats and the Republicans. Now, they are the Minnesotans for Life, the AFL-C10 and the National Education Association. They have legitimate claims on the process, but all of them operate under a much smaller umbrella than the parties." (Ibid.)

This trend too, has continued over the last two decades. The large majority of volunteers for both parties are elderly. Young people are too busy or too apathetic to get involved. In the old days, political parties acted as advocates for citizens, organized community events, and got out the vote. Nowadays, they throw $1000-a-place fund-raisers to raise money for multimillion dollar media campaigns. The
parties get out the vote effort, too, has turned out to be only another form of telemarketing that occurs in the weeks before an election.

I believe that financial hijacking of politics by monied interests is one of the greatest obstacles to greater participation. Students I have talked to repeatedly complain that it's all about money. With political campaigns costing in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for even local elections and in the millions or tens of millions for senatorial campaigns they are probably right. Former California governor, and mayor of Oakland, CA, Jerry Brown has said that running for election is no longer campaigning as much as telemarketing, in other words “Dialing for Dollars.”

Although campaign contributions are now limited to $2300 per person, each family member may contribute $2300, even the children. Of course, for the average person even a $100 contribution may be a financial stretch, so they were essentially out of the picture. In addition, individuals or corporations may donate unlimited amounts of so-called “soft money” originally to the political parties or political action committees (PACs) and now to “527” groups like Moveon.org and Swift Boat Veterans for Truth. Well, at least Moveon raised its millions from the Internet while the Swift boaters raised theirs from rich donors like Texas construction billionaire Bob Perry (CNN, August 5, 2004). According to Charles Lewis, author of The Selling of the President: 2000, one per cent of the population gave 77% of the campaign donations for Congress in 2000. Even worse, he further stated that both the Democratic and Republican parties get 70% of their total money from corporations. In 2008, however, a counter-trend emerged, where Barack Obama raised $745 million mostly from small donors. Still, the very size of the amount raised has to be intimidating to the potential outsider.

Now back to Taylor:

It is the result of wholesale failures of government for the past quarter-century. The list is familiar: Vietnam, Watergate, inflation, standard-of-living stagnation, gas lines, budget and trade deficits. These setbacks have been magnified by media that are both more adversarial and, as a result of television, more pervasive than ever before. "If the message [people] get is that politics is all about tactics and corruption and hypocrisy, it should be no surprise that they are going to develop a 'voting-just-encourages-em' sort of cynicism," says Garry Orren, a professor of public policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. (Ibid.)

Since that was written we have had the Whitewater affair, which led to the Monica Lewinsky investigation, and Gary Condit. Then came Enron, Halliburton, and the bogus Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction, and most recent myriad influence peddling scandals of House Republican leader Tom Delay. The only effects of all this were to confirm in people’s minds “they are all corrupt”.

It is a result of Americans' loss of faith in the future. Nations turn inward when they lose their self-confidence. Our economic position, relative to the rest of the world's, has been declining for a generation. Our political structure seems ossified, in hock to special interests and unable to balance a budget, much less confront the larger problems. Burnham calls it a "revolution of declining expectations" - the less people demand from their government, the less they get, the more they drop out. (Ibid)

Since that time, our country experienced a substantial economic rebound. What was interesting was that our faith in ourselves and our future also rebounded. What will be interesting to see will be if
our confidence slides again as we slip again into economic recession.

Interestingly, economics also seem to play a role in another way, according to Taylor:

Liberals also blame laissez-faire economic policies for making the poor poorer and less tethered to the civic order. They note that the drop-off in voting over the last three decades has occurred disproportionately among these least well-off Americans. "I would think there is something to the proposition that we have had this enormous pig-out atmosphere in the past decade and it has created a morale problem for everyone not invited to the barbecue," says Burnham. (Ibid)

On the other hand:

It is the result of happy apathy, and it is a far healthier development than the naysayers suggest. This is a favorite theory of conservatives, who note that while participation may have atrophied at the federal level, it is vibrant and growing at the local level, where volunteerism, charitable giving and neighborhood associations are on the rise. "It's only people inside the Beltway who think government and politics is the most important way to participate in America," says Burton Yale Pines, executive vice president of the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. "I see it as an inverse indicator. When people are upset, they get involved. When they're not upset, they drop out to a degree. As a conservative, I'm much more interested in parents going to PTA meetings. That's citizenship." (Ibid).

Taylor believes that the liberals are right on the economic issue, but wrong to blame it on Reagan et al, who were after all, as much an effect as a cause. People in the highest income quintile are twice as likely to vote as in the lowest. They are also more likely to be the ones involved in community activities.

I believe that it is economics connected with a further issue that Taylor mentions that is most to blame. Taylor states:

It is the result of the atomization of the popular culture—the segmenting of the population by forces of modern marketing and technology into demographic ghettos, each with its own cable channel, prime-time television show, shopping mall and consumer magazine, and none with a felt need to connect up to the broader community. (Ibid)

In my belief, it is not so much marketing per se, as the overwhelming influence of television that has caused a general decline in civic life. This is a central thesis of Neal Postman’s book “Amusing Ourselves to Death,” and in Robert Putnam’s more recent book “Bowling Alone: The Decline in American Community.” It is not a coincidence that television viewing is highest among the lowest income groups who cannot afford other means of recreation. For all working Americans, TV is a low energy activity that can compete successfully with going out for civic activities or even recreation at the end of a long day. It may also contribute to a sense of spectatorship in life rather than participation.

Taylor had something interesting to say in 1991 about then-President George Bush I:

... President Bush paid much more attention to the idea of civic participation than did his predecessor. His inaugural address was an elegant exhortation to Americans turn away from material self-interest. "From now on in America, any definition of a successful life must include serving others," he said last year as he set up a "points of light” initiative that encourages volunteerism at the local level.
But Bush's critics think this is the equivalent of "cheap grace," in the phrase of [former] New York Democratic Gov. Mario M. Cuomo. "It creates a very peculiar dynamic when the leaders we elect to perform the public tasks that are too large for us to do by ourselves tell us that these tasks are worthy but that we should accomplish them by our own altruism," says Benjamin Barber, a professor of political science at Rutgers University. "Altruism isn't enough when the problems are structural and will only respond to structural solutions. Altruism isn't citizenship, and there is some harm when we confuse the two."

In the long run, Barber adds, the danger is that as the ties that bind a big and pluralistic nation corrode, we will lack the sense of common purpose to respond to great challenges. (Ibid)

After the great challenge of the war against terror, and the coming economic challenges by China and India, we will see who is right.

**DEFINING TERMS**

- Special Interests
- Lobbying
- Citizenship

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

1. What effects does all this money have on the operation of government and the morale of the population?

1. What other factors affect the popular morale?

2. How could more citizen participation be motivated?
Chapter Eleven -- The Media

What Makes Mainstream Media Mainstream

*From a talk at Z Media Institute June 1997*
Noam Chomsky

Those are three major sources of information about the nature of the media. You want to study them the way, say, a scientist would study some complex molecule or something. You take a look at the structure and then make some hypothesis based on the structure as to what the media product is likely to look like. Then you investigate the media product and see how well it conforms to the hypotheses. Virtually all work in media analysis is this last part-trying to study carefully just what the media product is and whether it conforms to obvious assumptions about the nature and structure of the media.

Well, what do you find? First of all, you find that there are different media which do different things, like the entertainment/Hollywood, soap operas, and so on, or even most of the newspapers in the country (the overwhelming majority of them). They are directing the mass audience.

There is another sector of the media, the elite media, sometimes called the *agenda-setting* media because they are the ones with the big resources, they set the framework in which everyone else operates. The New York Times and CBS, that kind of thing. Their audience is mostly privileged people. The people who read the New York Times-people who are wealthy or part of what is sometimes called the political class-they are actually involved in the political system in an ongoing fashion. They are basically managers of one sort or another. They can be political managers, business managers (like corporate executives or that sort of thing), doctoral managers (like university professors), or other journalists who are involved in organizing the way people think and look at things.

The elite media set a framework within which others operate. If you are watching the Associated Press, who grind out a constant flow of news, in the mid-afternoon it breaks and there is something that comes along every day that says "Notice to Editors: Tomorrow's New York Times is going to have the following stories on the front page." The point of that is, if you're an editor of a newspaper in Dayton, Ohio and you don't have the resources to figure out what the news is, or you don't want to think about it anyway, this tells you what the news is. These are the stories for the quarter page that you are going to devote to something other than local affairs or diverting your audience. These are the stories that you put there because that's what the New York Times tells us is what you're supposed to care about tomorrow. If you are an editor in Dayton, Ohio, you would sort of have to do that, because you don't have much else in the way of resources. If you get off line, if you're producing stories that the big press doesn't like, you'll hear about it pretty soon. In fact, what just happened at San Jose Mercury News *(editors’s note: In 1996, the Mercury News was nationally condemned for running a series by journalist Gary Webb alleging CIA involvement in smuggling cocaine into the US. Webb was eventually fired for writing the piece. But in 1999, the CIA retracted its denial of involvement.)* is a dramatic example of this. So there are a lot of ways in which power plays can drive you right back into line if you move out.
If you try to break the mold, you're not going to last long. That framework works pretty well, and it is understandable that it is just a reflection of obvious power structures.

The real mass media are basically trying to divert people. Let them do something else, but don't bother us (us being the people who run the show). Let them get interested in professional sports, for example. Let everybody be crazed about professional sports or sex scandals or the personalities and their problems or something like that. Anything, as long as it isn't serious. Of course, the serious stuff is for the big guys. "We" take care of that.

What are the elite media, the agenda-setting ones? The New York Times and CBS, for example. Well, first of all, they are major, very profitable, corporations. Furthermore, most of them are either linked to, or outright owned by, much bigger corporations, like General Electric, Westinghouse, and so on. They are way up at the top of the power structure of the private economy which is a very tyrannical structure. Corporations are basically tyrannies, hierarchic, controled from above. If you don't like what they are doing you get out. The major media are just part of that system.

What about their institutional setting? Well, that's more or less the same. What they interact with and relate to is other major power centers—the government, other corporations, or the universities. Because the media are a doctrinal system they interact closely with the universities. Say you are a reporter writing a story on Southeast Asia or Africa, or something like that. You're supposed to go over to the big university and find an expert who will tell you what to write, or else go to one of the foundations, like Brookings Institute or American Enterprise Institute and they will give you the words to say. These outside institutions are very similar to the media.

The universities, for example, are not independent institutions. There maybe independent people scattered around in them but that is true of the media as well. And it's generally true of corporations. It's true of Fascist states, for that matter. But the institution itself is parasitic. It's dependent on outside sources of support and those sources of support, such as private wealth, big corporations with grants, and the government (which is so closely interlinked with corporate power you can barely distinguish them), they are essentially what the universities are in the middle of. People within them, who don't adjust to that structure, who don't accept it and internalize it (you can't really work with it unless you internalize it, and believe it); people who don't do that are likely to be weeded out along the way, starting from kindergarten, all the way up. There are all sorts of filtering devices to get rid of people who are a pain in the neck and think independently. Those of you who have been through college know that the educational system is very highly geared to rewarding conformity and obedience; if you don't do that, you are a troublemaker. So, it is kind of a filtering device which ends up with people who really honestly (they aren't lying) internalize the framework of belief and attitudes of the surrounding power system in the society. The elite institutions like, say, Harvard and Princeton and the small upscale colleges, for example, are very much geared to socialization. If you go through a place like Harvard, most of what goes on there is teaching manners; how to behave like a member of the upper classes, how to think the right thoughts, and so on.

If you've read George Orwell's Animal Farm which he wrote in the mid-1940s, it was a satire on the Soviet Union, a totalitarian state. It was a big hit. Everybody loved it. Turns out he wrote an
introduction to *Animal Farm* which was suppressed. It only appeared 30 years later. Someone had found it in his papers. The introduction to *Animal Farm* was about "Literary Censorship in England" and what it says is that obviously this book is ridiculing the Soviet Union and its totalitarian structure. But he said England is not all that different. We don't have the KGB on our neck, but the end result comes out pretty much the same. People who have independent ideas or who think the wrong kind of thoughts are cut out.

He talks a little, only two sentences, about the institutional structure. He asks, why does this happen? Well, one, because the press is owned by wealthy people who only want certain things to reach the public. The other thing he says is that when you go through the elite education system, when you go through the proper schools in Oxford, you learn that there are certain things it's not proper to say and there are certain thoughts that are not proper to have. That is the socialization role of elite institutions and if you don't adapt to that, you're usually out. Those two sentences more or less tell the story.

When you critique the media and you say, look, here is what Anthony Lewis or somebody else is writing, they get very angry. They say, quite correctly, "nobody ever tells me what to write. I write anything I like. All this business about pressures and constraints is nonsense because I'm never under any pressure." Which is completely true, but the point is that they wouldn't be there unless they had already demonstrated that nobody has to tell them what to write because they are going say the right thing. If they had started off at the Metro desk, or something, and had pursued the wrong kind of stories, they never would have made it to the positions where they can now say anything they like. The same is mostly true of university faculty in the more ideological disciplines. They have been through the socialization system.

Okay, you look at the structure of that whole system. What do you expect the news to be like? Well, it's pretty obvious. Take the New York Times. It's a corporation and sells a product. The product is audiences. They don't make money when you buy the newspaper. They are happy to put it on the worldwide web for free. They actually lose money when you buy the newspaper. But the audience is the product. The product is privileged people, just like the people who are writing the newspapers, you know, top-level decision-making people in society. You have to sell a product to a market, and the market is, of course, advertisers (that is, other businesses). Whether it is television or newspapers, or whatever, they are selling audiences. Corporations sell audiences to other corporations. In the case of the elite media, it's big businesses.

Well, what do you expect to happen? What would you predict about the nature of the media product, given that set of circumstances? What would be the null hypothesis, the kind of conjecture that you'd make assuming nothing further. The obvious assumption is that the product of the media, what appears, what doesn't appear, the way it is slanted, will reflect the interest of the buyers and sellers, the institutions, and the power systems that are around them. If that wouldn't happen, it would be kind of a miracle.

Okay, then comes the hard work. You ask, does it work the way you predict? Well, you can judge for yourselves. There's lots of material on this obvious hypothesis, which has been subjected to the hardest tests anybody can think of, and still stands up remarkably well. You virtually never find
anything in the social sciences that so strongly supports any conclusion, which is not a big surprise, because it would be miraculous if it didn't hold up given the way the forces are operating.

The next thing you discover is that this whole topic is completely taboo. If you go to the Kennedy School of Government or Stanford, or somewhere, and you study journalism and communications or academic political science, and so on, these questions are not likely to appear. That is, the hypothesis that anyone would come across without even knowing anything that is not allowed to be expressed, and the evidence bearing on it cannot be discussed. Well, you predict that too. If you look at the institutional structure, you would say, yeah, sure, that's got to happen because why should these guys want to be exposed? Why should they allow critical analysis of what they are up to take place? The answer is, there is no reason why they should allow that and, in fact, they don't. Again, it is not purposeful censorship. It is just that you don't make it to those positions. That includes the left (what is called the left), as well as the right. Unless you have been adequately socialized and trained so that there are some thoughts you just don't have, because if you did have them, you wouldn't be there. So you have a second order of prediction which is that the first order of prediction is not allowed into the discussion.

The last thing to look at is the doctrinal framework in which this proceeds. Do people at high levels in the information system, including the media and advertising and academic political science and so on, do these people have a picture of what ought to happen when they are writing for each other (not when they are making graduation speeches)? When you make a commencement speech, it is pretty words and stuff. But when they are writing for one another, what do people say about it?

There are basically three currents to look at. One is the public relations industry, you know, the main business propaganda industry. So what are the leaders of the PR industry saying? Second place to look is at what are called public intellectuals, big thinkers, people who write the "op eds" and that sort of thing. What do they say? The people who write impressive books about the nature of democracy and that sort of business. The third thing you look at is the academic stream, particularly that part of political science which is concerned with communications and information and that stuff which has been a branch of political science for the last 70 or 80 years.

So, look at those three things and see what they say, and look at the leading figures who have written about this. They all say (I'm partly quoting), the general population is "ignorant and meddlesome outsiders." We have to keep them out of the public arena because they are too stupid and if they get involved they will just make trouble. Their job is to be "spectators," not "participants."

They are allowed to vote every once in a while, pick out one of us smart guys. But then they are supposed to go home and do something else like watch football or whatever it may be. But the "ignorant and meddlesome outsiders" have to be observers not participants. The participants are what are called the "responsible men" and, of course, the writer is always one of them. You never ask the question, why am I a "responsible man" and somebody else is in jail? The answer is pretty obvious. It's because you are obedient and subordinate to power and that other person may be independent, and so on. But you don't ask, of course. So there are the smart guys who are supposed to run the show and the rest of them are supposed to be out, and we should not succumb to (I'm quoting from an academic article) "democratic dogmatisms about men being the best judges of their own interest." They are not. They are
terrible judges of their own interests so we have do it for them for their own benefit.

Actually, it is very similar to Leninism. We do things for you and we are doing it in the interest of everyone, and so on. I suspect that's part of the reason why it's been so easy historically for people to shift up and back from being, sort of enthusiastic Stalinists to being big supporters of U.S. power. People switch very quickly from one position to the other, and my suspicion is that it's because basically it is the same position. You're not making much of a switch. You're just making a different estimate of where power lies. One point you think it's here, another point you think it's there. You take the same position.

How did all this evolve? It has an interesting history. A lot of it comes out of the first World War, which is a big turning point. It changed the position of the United States in the world considerably. In the 18th century the U.S. was already the richest place in the world. The quality of life, health, and longevity was not achieved by the upper classes in Britain until the early 20th century, let alone anybody else in the world. The U.S. was extraordinarily wealthy, with huge advantages, and, by the end of the 19th century, it had by far the biggest economy in the world. But it was not a big player on the world scene. U.S. power extended to the Caribbean Islands, parts of the Pacific, but not much farther.

During the first World War, the relations changed. And they changed more dramatically during the second World War. After the second World War the U.S. more or less took over the world. But after first World War there was already a change and the U.S. shifted from being a debtor to a creditor nation. It wasn't huge, like Britain, but it became a substantial actor in the world for the first time. That was one change, but there were other changes.

The first World War was the first time there was highly organized state propaganda. The British had a Ministry of Information, and they really needed it because they had to get the U.S. into the war or else they were in bad trouble. The Ministry of Information was mainly geared to sending propaganda, including huge fabrications about "Hun" atrocities, and so on. They were targeting American intellectuals on the reasonable assumption that these are the people who are most gullible and most likely to believe propaganda. They are also the ones that disseminate it through their own system. So it was mostly geared to American intellectuals and it worked very well. The British Ministry of Information documents (a lot have been released) show their goal was, as they put it, to control the thought of the entire world, a minor goal, but mainly the U.S. They didn't care much what people thought in India. This Ministry of Information was extremely successful in deluding hot shot American intellectuals into accepting British propaganda fabrications. They were very proud of that. Properly so, it saved their lives. They would have lost the first World War otherwise.

In the U.S., there was a counterpart. Woodrow Wilson was elected in 1916 on an anti-war platform. The U.S. was a very pacifist country. It has always been. People don't want to go fight foreign wars. The country was very much opposed to the first World War and Wilson was, in fact, elected on an anti-war position. "Peace without victory" was the slogan. But he was intending to go to war. So the question was, how do you get the pacifist population to become raving anti-German lunatics so they want to go kill all the Germans? That requires propaganda. So they set up the first and really only major state propaganda agency in U.S. history. The Committee on Public Information it was called (nice Orwellian title), called also the Creel Commission. The guy who ran it was named Creel. The task of
this commission was to propagandize the population into a jingoist hysteria. It worked incredibly well. Within a few months there was a raving war hysteria and the U.S. was able to go to war.

A lot of people were impressed by these achievements. One person impressed, and this had some implications for the future, was Hitler. If you read *Mein Kampf*, he concludes, with some justification, that Germany lost the first World War because it lost the propaganda battle. They could not begin to compete with British and American propaganda which absolutely overwhelmed them. He pledges that next time around they’ll have their own propaganda system, which they did during the second World War. More important for us, the American business community was also very impressed with the propaganda effort. They had a problem at that time. The country was becoming formally more democratic. A lot more people were able to vote and that sort of thing. The country was becoming wealthier and more people could participate and a lot of new immigrants were coming in, and so on.

So what do you do? It's going to be harder to run things as a private club. Therefore, obviously, you have to control what people think. There had been public relation specialists but there was never a public relations industry. There was a guy hired to make Rockefeller's image look prettier and that sort of thing. But this huge public relations industry, which is a U.S. invention and a monstrous industry, came out of the first World War. The leading figures were people in the Creel Commission. In fact, the main one, Edward Bernays, comes right out of the Creel Commission. He has a book that came out right afterwards called *Propaganda*. The term "propaganda," incidentally, did not have negative connotations in those days. It was during the second World War that the term became taboo because it was connected with Germany, and all those bad things. But in this period, the term propaganda just meant information or something like that. So he wrote a book called Propaganda around 1925, and it starts off by saying he is applying the lessons of the first World War. The propaganda system of the first World War and this commission that he was part of showed, he says, it is possible to "regiment the public mind every bit as much as an army regiments their bodies." These new techniques of regimentation of minds, he said, had to be used by the intelligent minorities in order to make sure that the slobs stay on the right course. We can do it now because we have these new techniques.

This is the main manual of the public relations industry. Bernays is kind of the guru. He was an authentic Roosevelt/Kennedy liberal. He also engineered the public relations effort behind the U.S.-backed coup which overthrew the democratic government of Guatemala.

His major coup, the one that really propelled him into fame in the late 1920s, was getting women to smoke. Women didn't smoke in those days and he ran huge campaigns for Chesterfield. You know all the techniques-models and movie stars with cigarettes coming out of their mouths and that kind of thing. He got enormous praise for that. So he became a leading figure of the industry, and his book was the real manual.

Another member of the Creel Commission was Walter Lippmann, the most respected figure in American journalism for about half a century (I mean serious American journalism, serious think pieces). He also wrote what are called progressive essays on democracy, regarded as progressive back in the 1920s. He was, again, applying the lessons of the work on propaganda very explicitly. He says there is a new art in democracy called “manufacture of consent”. That is his phrase. Edward Herman and I
borrowed it for our book, but it comes from Lippmann. So, he says, there is this new art in the method of democracy, "manufacture of consent." By manufacturing consent, you can overcome the fact that formally a lot of people have the right to vote. We can make it irrelevant because we can manufacture consent and make sure that their choices and attitudes will be structured in such a way that they will always do what we tell them, even if they have a formal way to participate. So we'll have a real democracy. It will work properly. That's applying the lessons of the propaganda agency.

Academic social science and political science comes out of the same thing. The founder of what's called communications and academic political science is Harold G. Lasswell. His main achievement was a book, a study of propaganda. He says, very frankly, the things I was quoting before-those things about not succumbing to democratic dogmatism, that comes from academic political science (Lasswell and others). Again, drawing the lessons from the war time experience, political parties drew the same lessons, especially the conservative party in England. Their early documents, just being released, show they also recognized the achievements of the British Ministry of Information. They recognized that the country was getting more democratized and it wouldn't be a private men's club. So the conclusion was, as they put it, politics has to become political warfare, applying the mechanisms of propaganda that worked so brilliantly during the first World War towards controlling people's thoughts.

That's the doctrinal side and it coincides with the institutional structure. It strengthens the predictions about the way the thing should work. And the predictions are well confirmed. But these conclusions, also, are not allowed to be discussed. This is all now part of mainstream literature but it is only for people on the inside. When you go to college, you don't read the classics about how to control peoples minds.

Just like you don't read what James Madison said during the constitutional convention about how the main goal of the new system has to be "to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority," and has to be designed so that it achieves that end. This is the founding of the constitutional system, so nobody studies it. You can't even find it in the academic scholarship unless you really look hard.

That is roughly the picture, as I see it, of the way the system is institutionally, the doctrines that lie behind it, the way it comes out. There is another part directed to the "ignorant meddlesome" outsiders. That is mainly using diversion of one kind or another. From that, I think, you can predict what you would expect to find. –used with permission-
DEFINING TERMS Mass Audience Media -- Agenda Setting -- Propaganda

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
1. What are the functions of the elite media?

2. What are the functions of the mass audience media?

3. Does it make a difference if portrayals of social issues are distorted? If so, how, if not why not?