

preferably related to some fashionable Liberal dogma.

Notice: two gifted young men who begin their careers with enormous popular and artistic success, each of whom becomes, with time, less popular and less artistically successful. In their private and artistic lives, they become obsessed with the fashionable trappings of the American left: "causes" and social significance in his films for Brando and pseudo-philosophical leftist - Freudian - Marxian - you - name - it ravings in and out of print for Mailer. Instead of building on their initial popularity, they decide to become fashionably alienated. They strike poses. They make headlines -- but not for their artistic creativity.

Paralleling their decline is a similar decline in the political fortunes of American Liberalism. The Democratic Party, through which the Liberal establishment makes its wishes known, began to slowly but inexorably lose its historic association with the working class and lower-middle class American just about the time Brando and Mailer were turning their backs on "popular" success. The decline was momentarily halted in 1960, with the help of some gracious Democratic voters of Cook County, Illinois, who so loved John F. Kennedy they voted for him more than once. Yet, within less than ten years, things got so bad that midway through the Presidential campaign of 1968 some polls showed Hubert Humphrey, the ultimate late-forties Liberal, with less than thirty percent of the vote, an astounding political phenomenon.

Liberalism which could once claim to speak for the working man became increasingly alienated from him. In the public mind, the party of Al Smith became the party of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., John Kenneth Galbraith and other assorted Liberal academic zanies, men who mocked the values, openly scorned the lifestyle and derided the intelligence of the average big-city Democratic voter.

It is interesting to note similarities in the manner in which Brando, Mailer and Liberalism declined. All three chose what might be called the road of alienation. Democratic spokesmen began to sound like dime-store Jeremiahs, scolding the nation, demanding great sacrifices for alleged wrongdoing, calling down vengeance from heaven upon the hapless taxpayer who, according to the Democratic leaders, simply wasn't doing enough. It was a political version of Brando and Mailer artistic alienation: to hell with popularity and the masses, it's more fun to preach than to listen.

Thus, Liberalism has become the common scold of national politics. During the past ten years, every time a Liberal opened his mouth, out dropped a complaint about the racial attitudes of the white working class, the tyranny of the police or some other fashionable doctrine of doom and despair. The masochistic tendencies previously noted in Brando's characterizations are evident in almost every major Liberal politician, along with the running-off-at-the-mouth messianic delusions noted in Mailer. A masochistic messianic politician doesn't stand much of a chance with the average voter no matter

how much the intellectual left may love him.

The same is true of actors and writers. It may be tremendously self-satisfying to know that the film critic of *Esoteria Quarterly* just loved your work or that some deranged British critic in the *New York Review of Books* found your latest light-hearted tale of sodomy just three degrees south of the best of Andre Gide -- but it doesn't cut any ice with the people who buy tickets and books.

A psychologist could probably find the cause of this deliberate alienation from the mass audience and the Democrats' suicidal impulse to shove guilt and despair down the throats of an unwilling electorate. Whatever the cause, the result has been the same for Brando, Mailer and Liberalism: a slow slide into decadence and disrepute, a loss of creativity and imagination and a tendency to shower maledictions upon ordinary people for not applauding when their values and interests are ignored or abused.

The decline of Brando and Mailer has not had any great effect on the history of our nation. But the decline of Liberalism is one of the great historical mysteries that



scholars will ponder for years to come. Why did Liberalism die?

Perhaps the secret can be found in an examination of Brando's films and Mailer's books. A comparison of Clark Gable's portrayal of Fletcher Christian in *Mutiny On the Bounty* and Brando's Christian a generation later is revealing. Gable's Christian is virile, confident, optimistic and outgoing; Brando's is unsure, moody, introspective and bewildered. Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is the representative protest novel of the thirties, yet it is a veritable hymn of praise to the capacity for self-renewal in the United States compared to Mailer's dreary, sullen, vicious portrayal of his country in fiction and non-fiction. A similar comparison of FDR's speeches with those of contemporary Liberal spokesmen shows the same change from supreme self-confidence to doubt, from optimism to pessimism.

Thus the decline of Brando and Mailer parallels a more disastrous and more significant decline in what was once the single greatest ideological force in the free world. Today almost every political observer has noted the movement of the blue-

collar worker and the middle class away from Liberalism. It is a movement which can be seen in politics and in the popular arts. The mass audience -- and the voting public -- just won't endure self-indulgence and cynicism and pseudo-intellectual posturing on the part of artists or politicians. Mailer and Brando have discovered this in art. The Democratic Party would have been wise to study the decline of these two giants of the late forties and early fifties, for in their decline can be seen the same historical process that is now leading the Democratic party to suicide. □

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Abortion

Bradley Warren Evans

Indianapolis attorney, Mr. Daniel Byron, and Notre Dame Law School professor, Dr. Charles Rice, have brought suit in Indiana court asking the court to hand down the finding that an unborn child is a legal person and entitled to protection of his Constitutional rights--a point still undecided by the higher courts.

Their brief states that the unborn child has a life of his own and is not simply a "part of the mother" -- a view held in ancient societies and in our own until the end of the nineteenth century. Recent medical research shows, the brief argues, that a distinct and individual life begins at the moment of conception, in that the genetic components determining the characteristics of the person are decisively established. Medical authorities are cited to show the fetus has distinctive biological status, and that life processes which make him a separate individual begin almost immediately.

Brown County, Indiana in autumn, the Mackinac Bridge during deer season, Colonial Williamsburg in the spring and the Astrodome anytime all have something in common: a lot of people won't see them these days. Take, for example, the 300,000 unborn infants who will be killed by abortionists' knives in New York this year.

Those babies, instead of inheriting the privilege of sucking in the crisp fragrance of the first day of winter, will be cut up, injected with saline solution, vacuumed into a bottle, or suffer any number of ingenious methods of killing cooked up by a society gone mad. Artur Rubenstein and Ludwig von Beethoven were almost aborted. How many geniuses have been shovelled into hospital incinerators? How many morons, indeed, for they were created by no less a Being than were their precocious counterparts?

We have lost our respect for human life. If we don't manage to prevent babies, then we kill them in the womb. And old people? And socially troublesome minority groups?

And as Lenin's abortion program presaged the later genocidal programs, had we better not contemplate the consequences? And to identify these consequences, we had better take a look at and attempt, briefly, to tag the reasons.

We must recognize initially the fact that abortion has become monstrously casual. A New York hospital's ObGyn section has a cheery receptionist who answers the phone, "Hello, Pregnancy Interruption Service." Thousands of American women stroll nonchalantly into abortion clinics, have a baby yanked from their insides and then proceed home to cook a delightful meal for their ideal two-child family that evening. It is nothing more to them, one suspects, than spending a few desultory hours under their hair dryers.

One explanation advanced with some plausibility for this perfunctory killing is economic; i.e., decisions concerning family life--moral decisions--are now being made in America with all the pecuniary concern of shopping for a can of cut-rate peas. An economically rationalized society arrogates its exchequer morality to the sphere of human life, and questions of life and death come to be dictated by what Joseph Shumpeter called "an inarticulate system of cost accounting." That is to say that even babies are now subjected to fluctuations in supply and demand, and that their lives are literally dependent on the vagaries of the Dow Jones 40 Industrials.

Another, and related, explanation is that America's divorce from Christian morality has proceeded so far that convenience, i.e. a grotesque perception of the nature of leisure, wills that no children are to be allowed to interfere with *carpe diem*.

The principle of *non serviam*, or a desire to evade responsibility for the consequences of one's actions, has been noted before (cf. Dr. Charles Rice, *The Vanishing Right to Live*). In this regard, the now-descredited shuck of "population explosion" provided a convenient public-spirited mask for avoiding the natural ends of sex--babies. Now that this particular evasion has been debunked, we look to find, not a "population explosion" but a "copulation explosion," whereby couples freely employ sexual acts as mechanisms of mutual masturbation--indulging in the pleasure (and it is pleasure), but then proceeding to scrap the attendant responsibility.

Our Puritan heritage is far from dead. The same mindset which cringes at the thought of untrammelled breasts bouncing joyously down a campus sidewalk sees something deplorable in earthy, human things. On the other hand, Women's Lib--which purports to emancipate females from artificial convention--at the same time advocates the most unnatural stance toward human life, favoring artificial contraception and abortion. Women's Lib, indeed, could be the surreptitious arm of the Puritan auxiliary. Today devotion to the work ethic, a utilitarian outlook on family life and a tendency to see the world as the repository of all things bad are inherent in what Paul Cole Beach calls the "New Manicheism." This particular heresy--one which becomes more evident in America every day--posits the eternal conflict between spirit and matter--with

the bad guys (matter) frequently coming out on top. Thus, by this reasoning, life is so bad that it is to be avoided at all costs. Conception, babies, sex, all of these are to be run from as the plague because to bring life into a world so preternaturally malevolent would be--by the rationale of today's implicit Calvinists--the highest sin.

What we have, in sum then, is a hatred of life in America which springs, implicitly and explicitly, from a convergence of the above-mentioned and diverse factors, and which is translated even into public policy via the claptrap machinery of the democratic political process.

From whatever combination this loathing of life emerges, it can only be Bad News for Modern Man. But culpability for the Bad News will not be laid at the feet of any particular political cabal. The Nixon Administration presently is pursuing a

vigorous anti-life policy (witness the imminent 1.1 billion dollar "birth control" bill, the population commissions, Dr. Roger Egeberg's abortion statements, *ad infinitum*). But Nixon's support in this ghastly endeavor comes from Republicans, Democrats, conservatives, liberals and you name it.

The attack on life is, in short, broad-based and ferocious.

The response to it must of necessity be no less ferocious, and perhaps tactically unconventional. □

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The Unheavenly City

by Edward C. Banfield

Little, Brown, \$6.95

Recent years have witnessed some pleasant developments in the field of urban study, to wit the emergence of revisionists. As a matter of fact their growth in a field which had early been dominated by evangelizing charlatans almost renews my faith in the intellectual process. The city had long been the special demesne of Liberal ideologues who extinguished every problem in a gush of cool cash-money, generally from someone else's pocket. This technique has for years sustained vast populations of loving social workers inspired by self-images of the Good Fairy and offered security to big city politicoes who--in the words of Boss Plunkitt "seen (their) opportunities and took 'em." Unfortunately it failed to solve many social problems, and when in the early fifties Liberal urban planners made urban studies a profitable field for research at the major universities every intelligent taxpayer despaired for the city and prepared to move to South Dakota. Not only would our urban slums cost more but so would out academic slums. The professors proved us right. They fashioned urban renewal, model cities and all sorts of hair brained housing projects and transportation mazes until their more successful cities looked like gigantic jungle gyms with the emphasis on jungle.

But now the genius of the social strategists is under attack from revisionist scholars like Daniel P. Moynihan, James Q. Wilson and Edward Banfield. In *The Unheavenly City*, Banfield captures at least two laurels: A) he has antiquated much of the tommyrot once fatuously accepted as conventional wisdom, and B) he has vindicated much of the earlier conservative scholarship attracting long overdue prestige to the authors of this scholarship. In *The Unheavenly City* Banfield exhibits more coherent knowledge of modern urban problems than any single author has ever shown in one volume. The only book even approaching Banfield's erudition, thoughtfulness, and coherence is Daniel P. Moynihan's *Toward a National Urban Policy*.

Early in his study Banfield endeavored to think about "the problems of the city in the light of scholarly findings," whereupon he tripped across the embarrassing discovery that "the overwhelming majority of city dwellers live more comfortably and conveniently than ever before." Even the most impecunious city dwellers live more comfortably than in the past and indeed could live better still were it not for their being inflicted with the many imbecilic government programs dreamed up by persons of the middle and upper classes who wish to "do good" regardless of consequences. In asserting that most urban problems (at least those not arising from racial injustice, poverty and ignorance) are not serious (merely questions of amenity) and that society is unlikely to solve them because it simply does not want to solve them. Banfield, I believe, is subjecting Liberals to cruel and unusual punishment while nevertheless sounding an essential conservative theme--a theme sorely needed in a society psychically frazzled by its inability to feed the hungry, calm the waters and all that.

Banfield's argument is compelling. For instance today we gnash our teeth over congestion and air pollution yet blithely run about clogging the cities and fouling the atmosphere. The only way to ease urban congestion is to disperse the population, but most people do not want to live in Dog Patch. They want to live in cities where the action is, where multitudinous opportunity abounds...where congestion abounds. The same problem underlies pollution. Pollution is not caused by fate or the turning pages of history; a city's pollution is caused by the consumption of its private citizens. They can lessen pollution by giving up their automobiles for mass transportation or bicycles, paying a little more for utilities, exercising more responsibility in their purchase and use of consumer goods. But automobiles are a positive necessity in many persons' lives; the cost of living is high enough in cities already and responsibility is the concern of govern-