

each other, from their entourage, they expected adherence to what Peter Brown—a longtime functionary in the Beatle empire—describes as a “code of silence.” Basically, that code was respected until 1970, when an embittered John Lennon sat down with *Rolling Stone* editor Jann Wenner in order to confirm, once and for all, that though he was obviously a genius he was surely no saint.

Since then, many books have appeared retailing the behind-the-scenes squabbles and debaucheries that accompanied The Beatles’ Epstein-engineered ascent to fame. *The Love You Make* is the latest and least discreet in that genre. Herein we are matter-of-factly informed that the baby-faced Paul McCartney was a Casanova-class womanizer and a seasoned manipulator

whose back-door business deals helped prompt The Beatles’ acrimonious breakup; that the Krishna-quoting George Harrison secured nearly as many amours as McCartney, and was even tighter with a quid. We learn also that Lennon was at one point addicted to heroin as well as to the imperious Yoko Ono; that he often punched his first wife, the hapless Cynthia; that he regularly baited Epstein—an increasingly unbalanced fellow given to gulping barbiturates and biamphetamines and to seeking homosexual liaisons in public lavatories.

One leaves a book like *The Love You Make* a bit depressed, but convinced that, in the end, The Beatles’ music is far more interesting than The Beatles themselves or any “insider’s” account of their blunders and frivolities. □

tempts to form close friendships. The weakness of *Men and Friendship* is its misperception of the effects of modernity on friendship, and perhaps even of the nature of friendship itself. Yet it is provocative and provides an outstanding example of the lengths to which one must go to attain rare friendship.

In a chapter entitled “The Death of Intimacy in Our Times,” Miller adduces historical evidence to explain the “reasons for male friendship’s current disappearance.” He states that “the decline of friendships in our time must be seen against the decline in intensity and closeness of all human relationships.” Perhaps it is true that industrialism, the market economy, and mobility have decreased opportunities for intimacy, but it is also true that modernity has expanded other opportunities, e.g., increasing the numbers of people we meet and allowing contact by telephone. It is quite possible that modernity has bestowed as many new advantages as it has destroyed old ones. What, then, is to explain the disappearance of modern friendship? Nothing; it has not disappeared. In every age friendship, truly understood, has been exceedingly rare; what most persons consider friendship today would not pass the strict test set by Laelius, the main speaker in Cicero’s famous dialogue *On Friendship*. After dis-

cussing the qualities of sublime friendship, he says: “And I am not now speaking of the friendships of everyday folk, or of ordinary people—although even these are a source of pleasure and profit—but of true and perfect friendship, the kind that was possessed by those few men who have gained names for themselves as friends.”

True friendship, then, is so rare that it gives the illusion of disappearance. Properly viewed, it is an ethical problem, a virtue to be attained. To Cicero and Aristotle, the two most-noted ancient writers on friendship, man was a mixture of base and noble impulses. Virtue consisted of subordinating the base to the noble through exercise; because of the length and the difficulty of the exercise, the truly virtuous man was rare. And only this man knew real friendship.

Men and Friendship does give some insight into the long, difficult process of virtuous friendship. During his search for friendship Miller kept a journal in which he recorded his thoughts and intimate feelings on the state of his relationship with the men he was trying to befriend. Part of that journal is used in the book. At times the journal seems self-indulgent; frequently it is both interesting and motivating. One can see Miller, for example, reach out to other men through correspondence, sympathy, and generous acts, such as helping a friend move. His failures and pain are noted, as are his triumphs. One can also see his guard come up when he enters a new relationship after a sour experience.

Miller claims that the classical essays on friendship are cold and impersonal. His is a warm, personal book, but it is not an improvement upon the old ones. In a general discussion of friendship, Cicero is peerless. *Men and Friendship*, though not up to this standard, is useful, serving as a reminder of the virtuous nature of friendship. □

A Friend Indeed?

Stuart Miller: *Men and Friendship*; Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

by Carlisle G. Packard

Upon learning of the death of his friend Jonathan, David lamented: “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (II Samuel 1:26).

To modern man, this kind of friendship seems proper only for the ancients. Indeed, any contemporary male friendship of comparable depth would most likely be considered homosexual. But this is a rather superficial excuse for not seeking the rewards of such a relationship. Why is true male friendship so rare in our day? What must men do to develop the kind of a bond Jonathan and David had? These

are the questions Stuart Miller sets out to answer in *Men and Friendship*. When Miller was newly divorced he sought to fill the emptiness in his personal life with male friendship. What he found disappointed him: he was in middle age yet had no intimate male friends. The awareness of that absence initiated his search for friendship. That search resulted in this book, which incorporates insights from hundreds of interviews with men about their friendships and also contains his own recounting of at-



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Doing Good With Dirty Hands

***Doing Evil to Achieve Good: Moral Choice in Conflict Situations*; Edited by Richard McCormick and Paul Ramsey;**
Loyola University Press; Chicago.

Reportedly, the American transcendentalist Margaret Fuller once self-seriously declared that she was "now prepared to accept the universe." (To which Thomas Carlyle responded, "By [G—], Madam, you'd better!") Most American liberals—transcendentalists of a sort also—would rather not stoop so low as Fuller, however. Their vision of infinite human goodness is so beautiful that they feel horribly imposed upon by a fallen world where good intentions do not preclude baleful consequences and where decent but distraught men frequently find the lesser of two evils to be their best available option. Such simon-pure idealism paves the way to incalculable concrete grief in the real world we all must inhabit. Because liberals are offended by the racism in South Africa and right-wing oppression in Central and South America, they shrilly insist that until a new order of unadulterated peace, democracy, and justice comes into being in these areas, we must have nothing whatever to do with them. Meanwhile, Cuban and Soviet agents relentlessly prepare to inflict suffering upon the people of these regions—black and white—on a scale they have never known. Similarly, with consciences troubled by the implications of nuclear warfare, liberals demand that the West divest itself of its cruel weaponry. The Soviets commend them for their moral integrity—while continuing to amass the firepower necessary to enforce a worldwide tyranny, brutal and dehumanizing beyond all liberal comprehension. Sober observers may indeed be grateful that, for all its

blind spots, the current administration has at least noticed that we are now so far east of Eden that naively paradisiacal expectations can only make it easier for totalitarian serpents to get America in their crushing coils.

It would be presumptuous to posit that any of the contributors to *Doing Evil to Achieve Good* support Reagan's policies. The list of "social problems of the first magnitude" offered in the introduction indeed suggests that these theologians and philosophers would prefer to ignore the gulag, Afghanistan, and Poland and instead worry about racism in the United States and repression in "some areas of the Third World." In the text itself, five learned men debate the meaning and value of the Catholic doctrine of the double effect (which justifies actions done for "a proportionately grave reason" but occasioning foreseen yet unintended evil) in abstruse and hypothetical terms far removed from specific evils anywhere in the world. But even from the windows of the scholar's ivory tower, man's moral dilemma appears much more unpleasant than liberals generally acknowledge. In the central essay, "Ambiguity in Moral Choice," Father McCormick argues that "love . . . is always controlled by the possible" and must not be "measured by the mere desire or intention." This means, he further elaborates, that in a world "infected by sin and weakness," we must inevitably permit, though not intend, some evils in order to prevent

greater ones. Such insights are central to conservative wisdom. Nonetheless, the convoluted and unresolved arguments in which these scholars engage as they try to establish what evil *is* and how man can distinguish greater evils from lesser ones underscores the commonsense perception that a

Business as Usual

Emily Stipes Watts: *The Businessman in American Literature*; University of Georgia Press; Athens.

Although fraught with the conventional liberal wisdoms, or trivialities, a TV show aired on NBC called *Family Ties* points to a long-lived aberration presented through the products of American culture as if it is the norm: it is the statement that the businessman is an odd man, a veritable weirdo. The program's scenario presents two 60's protesters who remember sit-ins and dancing nude at Woodstock with nostalgia. However, in the intervening years they have created a family in which Ricky Nelson wouldn't feel uncomfortable. Of course, the father runs a public TV station and the mother must be her "own person" by being an architect, and great masses of granola are consumed. But given the facts that Ozzie never seemed to do anything, that Harriet was too good to be true even in the 50's, and that the Nelsons consumed vast quantities of ice cream, these minor updates can be accepted. The interesting point about *Family Ties* is that the first-born, who is

subtle head can articulate morality's finer points but cannot establish its foundations. For that we need a rarer gift, as several of the contributors acknowledge. Fortunately, the eviction notice served on Adam and Eve was not the last divine message sent to earth. (BC) □

now a high school student, is a thorough-going supporter of the free-enterprise system, a young man for whom "grounding" means an injunction against watching *Wall Street Week*. What is striking is that the would-be—or will-be—businessman, contrary to popular portrayals, is not presented as if he is "going through a stage" like acne; in most cases, he seems to be mature and his parents the adolescents.

For the most part, those who have made money or who aspire to do so have taken a beating in the entertainment media and in the arts in America. After the Bolsheviks took over in Russia, the writers there were instructed with truncheons and less-subtle means to glorify the workers who operated the turret lathes and who harvested the wheat. As Professor Watts shows in *The Businessman in American Literature*, American writers, with few exceptions, have deemed it their duty to denigrate the workers in this country who have "made it," to wield the truncheon against the successful. She argues that this state goes back beyond Babbitt, behind Silas Lapham, all the way to the Puritans. Professor Watts does see some changes on the present scene, evidenced in works by Ken Kesey, Stanley Elkin, and James Dickey. Some of her assertions in this regard, however, are dubious. What is unquestionable is that it's a wonder that any young people in this country who have been exposed to "important" works of American fiction have aspired to do anything but dance nude at Woodstock. □

