



*Gary Hart* has withdrawn to the seclusion of his Rocky Mountain home, claiming that the nation's press, led by the *Miami Herald*, invaded his privacy. Donna Rice, an aspiring actress suddenly in the limelight, is spending most of her time denying to any reporter who will listen that there was anything immoral in her relationship with Hart. The national media, for the most part, is treating the rise and fall of the onetime front-runner as if it were nothing more than a morality play.

Yet the Hart debacle raises issues far more serious than whether or not Gary Hart, or any presidential candidate, has ever cheated on his wife, and the press's proper role in reporting this. The ramifications for national security, for the American family, and for the AIDS epidemic should be taken into account as we approach election year.

Former Senator Hart first attempted to play down the furor over his reported liaison with Ms. Rice with wan humor. He told the audience at a New York fund-raiser on May 5th that "After the past few days, I'll look forward to negotiating with Mikhail Gorbachev!"

How does he know he hadn't been? The reason why British Defense Secretary John Profumo and West German Chancellor Willy Brandt were driven from office was not because their extramarital affairs had offended puritanical elements within their countries. Rather it was because their questionable conduct had exposed them to the possibility of Soviet blackmail. Like our Moscow embassy, they were compromised.

The Hart organization displayed a naive disregard for even elemental considerations of security. By their own admission, attractive young women were interviewed for campaign positions one afternoon, spent that night in the home of high-ranking campaign officials, and were admitted

immediately to the closest circles surrounding a would-be Commander in Chief. All this on the basis of what Mr. Hart himself called "only a casual relationship." How can we expect a teenage Marine at our Moscow embassy to be on his guard against KGB entrapment when a presidential candidate sets such a casual example?

On the domestic front, there is probably no issue as important as the American family. Our staggering welfare bill is stark testimony to its decay. Bill Moyers interviewed a young, single man named Timmy and was shocked to discover that he had fathered six children—two aborted and the rest, with their mothers, on welfare. The number of Timmys, young men ready to father children but unwilling to be a father to them, is growing in direct proportion to the decline of respect for the institution of the family.

Like all candidates, Hart presented himself as the consummate family man. He kicked off his campaign surrounded by his smiling family. As the pressure mounted for him to explain his relationship with Ms. Rice, it was his wife who went on nationwide TV in his defense. Yet the life-style revealed by the press showed a man who preferred to spend even his leisure time outside the family circle.

The question here is not primarily one of hypocrisy but of a need for leaders who not only believe in the family but exemplify it in their own lives. The road out of the ghetto runs through the family, not the welfare office. The leader who, by precept and example, teaches the Timmys of this country respect for the family will be offering the hope of a better life to them, their consorts, and their illegitimate children, besides helping to balance the federal budget by reducing the number of singletons on the welfare roles.

The flip side of the family issue is

the allegation, always implicit, of adulterous behavior. This has by and large been handled by the press as a narrow and not overly important question of Hart's personal morality. Yet here again there are larger issues at stake.

The specter of AIDS, called by President Reagan our number one public health problem, has raised the stakes for premarital and extramarital sex. Surgeon General Koop and Secretary of Education William Bennett both agree on the need for abstinence or for stable, monogamous relationships as the primary means of combating this insidious disease.

The issue is not what former Senator Hart did or didn't do with Ms. Rice during the evening in his townhouse or the night on board his friend's yacht. Let us take Hart at his word when he protests their innocence. The issue is rather the impression made by a presidential candidate when he casually engages in such encounters.

Values are as often "caught" as they are taught. Is the Hart example likely to strengthen or weaken those patterns of behavior which alone can control the spread of the AIDS epidemic? Are young people, who consciously or not look to our leadership for what is permissible and what is not, more or less likely to avoid a promiscuity which can kill?

Every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future. America is not in the business of electing only paragons of virtue for its highest office. But where epidemics, such as AIDS, or social breakdown, such as a decay of the American family, or foreign threats to the security of the nations are present, then the President must take the lead in confronting them, not only in words, but also in deeds. These are the issues of the late 80's, the successful resolution of which will go far towards ensuring the future health, welfare, and security of the United

States. Any presidential candidate ignores them to his political peril.

—by Steven W. Mosher, director of the Asian Studies Center at the Claremont Institute in Montclair and author of *Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese and Journey to the Forbidden China*.

**James Burnham, R.I.P.** He was a controversialist. As a literary critic he argued with T.S. Eliot, and as a Trotskyist he quarreled with Trotsky himself. Almost alone among the ex-Communists, he made the full journey to a conservative world view, and before his death he returned to the Catholic faith.

He wrote many books, some of which will not be soon forgotten: *Congress and the American Tradition*, *The Suicide of the West*, and *The Managerial Revolution*. This last, written just after his defection from Communism, remains the most powerful theoretical analysis of the *coups d'état* that overtook the governments of Germany, Italy, Russia, and the United States. Moderate defenders of the welfare state shudder—and rightly so—when Burnham's name is mentioned. He knew a revolution when he saw one and recognized the New Deal for what it was, the American version of national socialism.

In his later years, as senior editor at *National Review*, Burnham became the most trenchant of cold warriors. For him containment could never be a solution. The free West had to commit itself to driving the Soviet Union back within its borders.

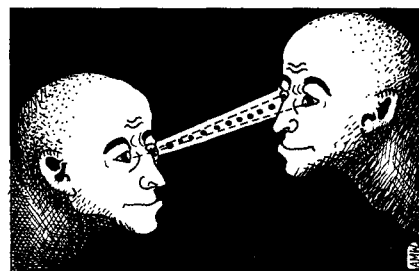
There was no cant in him, and if he had little patience for political philosophy, it was because political theories were so often little better than slogans designed to cover the libido dominandi. He frankly called himself a Machiavellian, and his name would be worth commemorating if his only accomplishment had been to introduce the insights of Machiavelli, Pareto, and Mosca into contemporary political discourse.

Burnham has few followers today. The halfhearted anti-Communists who twitter about democratic globalism would have affected him with equal measures of disgust, amuse-

ment, and despair. Of those who presume to follow his footsteps, Samuel Francis may be the only really faithful disciple, and Francis' *Power and History* remains the best introduction to Burnham's thought.

I met James Burnham only once for a brief moment at the Ingersoll Prizes banquet in 1983, when he was being honored as the first recipient of the Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters. The Eliot winner that year was Jorge Borges. There they were in an extravagant Chicago hotel, standing together, two grand old men with visions of the world so powerful, so lucid, and so terrifying that few of us in this enfeebled age dare dart a glance at them. (TF)

**Video stores** may be socialism's most recent victim. In a recent *Heartland Perspective*, William Irvine notes that public libraries are now taking a bite out of the \$3.4 billion video tape rental business and cites the obvious parallel of public and private libraries. In the last century, there was a host of



private libraries offering a wide variety of reading for relatively low fees. While some specialty libraries did endure (I have belonged to three simultaneously), most were driven out of business by the government libraries that depend on tax dollars. The results of socialized reading are no better than we could have expected. Primarily they serve as powerful agents for the degradation of reading tastes. Walk into a local library some time, as I have done all over the country, and attempt to check out some obscure fact in a standard reference book or to look up a quotation from Polybius. Sorry, no German encyclopedias and no Greek. You will find multiple copies of last year's best-sellers, teenage sex

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manuals, and books on every conceivable hobby. You will not find, however, anything but the most popular works on any serious subject. What is worse, librarians have a nasty habit of rebinding them—in order to make room for Jane Fonda tapes. When complaints are made, librarians take refuge either in democracy—"We're only buying what people want"—or freedom of expression—"We have to stock the *Playboy Reader*; you don't believe in censorship, do you?"

It would be a comfort to believe that a cadre of literate and decent people could some day seize control of the nation's libraries. Unfortunately, librarians constitute as entrenched a bureaucratic class as teachers whom they resemble in many ways: Committed to the managerial state that overpays them, they react like scorpions to any suggestions made from the outside. There is only one solution for public libraries as there is for public schools: take away their—I should say *our*—money. (Irvine's paper, "The Rise and Fall of the Video Store," is available from The Heartland Institute, 59 East Van Buren, #810, Chicago, IL 60605.) (TF)

*Harems have always been* a sign of power in the Middle East. Sultans and sheiks with the most wives and concubines are usually in charge of the country's political and economic fortunes. In contemporary America, however, rich and powerful American men do not keep harems, and most of us would prefer to keep it that way. Still, in the rising number of young women "wedded" to the state, we may discern the emergence of a sort of

government "harem," troubling for its size and for the cultural and social realignments it suggests.

Neither exotic nor erotic, the American government's "harem" does not consist of sultry beauties living in palatial luxury but of impoverished single mothers who rely upon the state as a surrogate "husband" and provider. The state is far from generous with its welfare wives and may enact "workfare" proposals requiring them to do harder things than belly dancing. Yet the number of the state's wives keeps growing. Two reasons for the growth of the state harem stand out. The first is divorce.

In recent decades, America has witnessed a cultural revolution in casual divorce. A recent Harris poll reassured us that of all American marriages in existence only one in eight will end in divorce. The trouble is that recent marriages have done far worse than older ones. A study for the Center for Population Research predicts that over 40 percent of marital unions formed in the 1980's will end in divorce. And as Stanford researcher Lenore Weitzman has shown, one in seven divorced women must rely upon the government as a substitute provider, at least temporarily.

The second and larger reason for the growth of the state's harem is illegitimacy. Since 1960, the number of children born out of wedlock has tripled, surging to flood tide among teen mothers. This jump in illegitimate fertility is all the more dramatic in a society which has seen its overall birthrate plummet to well below replacement levels. In 1960 only 5 percent of American births were illegitimate; today the figure is 21 percent. Among the approximately three in five


unwed mothers who must turn to the state for support, the average period of welfare dependence is over nine years, according to a recent government analysis.

What we are seeing is the emergence of the "mother-state-child family" as a widespread social arrangement, competing with—and to some degree undermining—families based on marriage. The growing number of such families dooms many children to lives of grinding poverty, even as it imposes an economic strain on parents who must support their own children, while at the same time paying taxes to support the state's harem.

Government wives stand a good chance of never escaping from poverty. Recent studies show that married people escape from poverty much more often than singles but that women on welfare rarely attract husbands. And because the daughters of women wedded to the state are two and a half times as likely to participate in premarital sex than the daughters of intact marriages, even more young women in the next generation will likely end up in this dismal harem.

Since a major component of the problem is unwed teenage mothers, bringing teen marriage back may be the easiest way to free young mothers from welfare dependency. Indeed, in a recent issue of *The Public Interest*, Maris Vinovskis proposes that the government begin subsidizing teen marriages as a way to reduce the country's welfare crisis. Since three-fourths of white teen marriages (and one half of black) survive at least 10 years, Vinovskis thinks it makes sense for government to "finance these young marriages while both parents continue their education."

Even if the government would make a good matchmaker—a highly dubious proposition—such a move would disastrously increase government control of family life—which is the problem to begin with. Far better if parents, churches, and local communities encouraged and economically supported teen marriages. In any case, a teenage girl who is going to have a baby will probably get married. The question is, who will be the groom: the father of her child or the polygamous state? (BC)



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## THE PRICE OF FREE VERSE *by Thomas Fleming*

“A poet in our times,” wrote Thomas Love Peacock, “is a semi-barbarian in a civilized community.” What Peacock meant by civilized community is not too hard to guess: that rational, humane, progressive society of Britain and Northern Europe, which Peacock’s eccentric friends—Shelley, Coleridge, and Byron—all seemed bent on destroying. Poets were barbaric, because they continued to celebrate heroic violence and religious superstition in a society of steam locomotives and parliamentary commissions.

Of the barbarian qualities of verse, Peacock failed to mention the most characteristic—rhythm. There may be poetic traditions in which the regular alternation of strong and weak elements played no part, but Peacock and his

Romantic friends knew nothing of them. (Since much lyric poetry is actually song, even if a text appears to lack formal rhythm, the song probably did not.) The quantitative rhythms of Greek and Latin (relying on the oscillation of long and short syllables) and the accentual rhythms of Germanic languages (including English), while they differ in so many respects that Nabokov thought it pointless to apply Greek terms like “iambic” to English verse, they still share this one essential quality: the predictable rise and fall of light and heavy, weak and strong that echoes the beat of our heart and the patterns of light and dark, cold and hot, life and death by which our existence is ordered.

All savages and barbarians love to sing and dance, including the savage children of our semicivilized race, and the Greeks did not clearly distinguish among the three rhythmic arts of verse, dance, and song. Next to Homeric epic, the greatest of ancient poetry was designed as song and dance routines: the odes of Pindar and the great lyric passages of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. When critics came to devise a language to describe poetic rhythm, the words themselves had to be derived from the terms used by dance-trainers and chorus masters. We still speak of feet as well as arsis and thesis, usually without any sense of the original connection.

In civilized Athens, the most popular literary form may have been the dithyramb, an ode in honor of Dionysius that was sung and danced by a chorus of 50 male citizens. What survives of the Theban poet Pindar’s dithyramb for the Athenians provides eloquent testimony to the powerful place that such poetry had in the life of the city. The extravagant and passionate language—the ancient critics called such a style “dithyrambic”—awakens echoes of earlier times when Greek religion bound its participants in the barbaric ceremonies of blood. Some of the effect may come out in a modern “imitation” of two dithyrambic fragments:

### Pindar in Athens

Pindar called the gods down from Olympus to sanctify his chorus in holy Athens—where the city’s heart was mobbed and fuming with incense—and join them there in the marketplace. What did the poet offer them? Crowns twisted from violets and songs plucked from the Springtime as he went in a splendor of music that comes only from Zeus, up to the god sprouting ivy, the thunder mortals interpret as shouting in our dazed blood: Dionysius; singing praises of the son of the highest father and Cadmus’ daughter.



ANNA MYTEL-KRZESKI '87