

went to Texas, got into a little scrape with the law. Came down here, got a new name, new start, wife, family; but in my heart, I'm still a Tennessee man.

Like the Apache, Southerners are a noble but defeated people who must find a place in the new order. Gatewood chooses to serve the new flag, while refusing to abandon his integrity or culture; the Tennessean chooses exile. The Apaches are forced to make the same choice. In refusing to do so, they end up in exile anyway.

The Geronimo campaign ends with two incidents, one marked by nobility and pathos, the other by betrayal and perfidy. In the first, Gatewood, after months of searching, locates Geronimo and his remaining band of warriors in a mountain redoubt in the Sierra Madre of northern Mexico. There, he persuades the warrior that the war is over and that there is no point in further resistance, for the Apache are too few. Geronimo agrees to surrender, even though it means a minimum of two years of exile in Florida. In the second scene, Gen. Nelson Miles, who succeeds Crook, orders the Chiricahua scouts who had so faithfully served the Army arrested, disarmed, and put on a train to Florida, where they share the fate of their Apache brethren whom they had fought. Lieutenant Davis goes to see General Miles to protest: "Sir, I thought the U.S. Army kept its word. What's going on out there is a disgrace." Miles responds in the spirit of 1865: "Lieutenant, you are more worried about keeping your word to a savage than you are fulfilling your duties to the citizens of this country. We won. That's what matters. It's over, Lieutenant." In other words, might makes right. In the wake of Appomattox, this has become the new American creed, even though it is often dressed up in moralistic garb.

The film ends as a train, a symbol of the new order, transports the Apache to prison in Florida. One of Geronimo's lieutenants denounces Mangus (the Apache scout) for helping the White-Eye. Geronimo responds in a speech full of pathos and resignation:

There are so few of us left. We should not hate each other. No one knows why the One God let the White-Eye take our land. Why did there have to be so many of them? Why did they have so many

guns, so many horses? For many years, the One God made me a warrior. No guns, no bullets, could ever kill me. That was my power. Now my time is over. Now, maybe, the time of our people is over.

As I watched this scene, I had an unsettling premonition: If present demographic trends continue much longer, the European peoples on two continents may wake up one day to find themselves a small remnant in a land that no longer belongs to them. We, too, may find ourselves on a journey of exile. Unless measures are taken soon to stop the influx of non-Western peoples into our lands, the time of *our* people may soon be over.

H.A. Scott Trask is an American historian living in Missouri.

SOCIETY

Hell Is Other People

by Marian Kester Coombs

Robin N— wasn't sure what was wrong. The suburban Milwaukee mother of three had experienced a pang upon turning 35, but these "pangs" seemed to be intensifying as the months passed. Sometimes, they took the form of paralyzing depression; other times, of anxiety verging on panic. She found herself fearful of going out in public or of seeing other people.

The simplest little things seemed to trigger these attacks: being cut off in traffic; someone hugging her bumper and appearing to curse at her; a salesclerk's rudeness; a woman previously friendly who seemed to ignore her at the grocery store; the hostile "vibes" on a crowded street; a TV news story on yet another horrifying violent crime; a lunch date forgotten, with only lukewarm, late apologies; an unreturned phone call; a sneering putdown of stay-at-home mothers on "Rosie."

If several of these events occurred in a single day, Robin would begin to feel out of control: heart pounding, short of breath, flushed and desperate. Her first thought was that menopause had arrived a little early. But her doctor ruled that out on the basis of hormone tests and sug-

gested that Robin start taking one of the new generation of SSRI (Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors) such as Paxil, Luvox, or Zoloft. He explained that she had developed agoraphobia, which was now highly treatable, thanks to these new wonder drugs.

Today, two years later, Robin says, "I'm coping so much better now, it's like a miracle. Stuff just doesn't get to me now like it used to. It's such a relief to be able to function again."

The parents of 15-year-old Scott W— in a small town near Camden, New Jersey, were perplexed and frustrated. Their son seemed to be going "nowhere." All his interests as a younger boy—skateboarding with friends, playing lacrosse, tinkering with building sets, his dog—had trailed away, leaving nothing but heavy-metal music to fill the vacuum. Scott spent all his free time plugged into this world of hyper-loud, angry, negative noise. And that free time was expanded by his frequent suspensions from school. Attempts to talk to him about his plans, friends, self-image, future—all met with hostile silence.

"He just didn't care about anything anymore," recalls his mother, Shelley. "It was like his world had just stopped. He was really out of it, I guess you'd say."

Finally, Scott was beaten up by a fellow student, and when he fought back, in violation of his school's code of conduct, he was suspended for three weeks. In despair, Scott's parents turned to his high-school guidance counselor. She explained that Scott's problem behavior was widespread among the student body and was most likely due to a chemical imbalance in the brain. The counselor referred them to a clinic that could prescribe a medication such as Paxil for his antisocial depression.

After a year and a half of medication, Scott is having fewer problems in school. While he isn't pulling A's and B's, he is much more cooperative in class and forthcoming with his parents. He still has no firm plans for a college major, but his parents can at least discuss things with him. "Scott says he may not go to college right away," laughs his father, Gene, "and naturally I'm a little disappointed. But he'll find himself. He'll try to make it as a rock musician for a while and then come around."

The vignettes above are simulations of typical women's-magazine fare. Barely an issue is published without at least one such heavily "personalized" story replete

with touching details and "mental-health expert" quotes. As morality tales for the modern epidemic of mental disorders and unhappiness, these articles play an important role in the medicalization of misery, legitimizing a veritable drug war against the population. The old brute-force forms of soma also "work"—heroin numbs the hopeless, marijuana pacifies the agitated, cocaine elates the jaded, amphetamines give an edge to the aimless—but the new forms can tweak and tune much finer nuances of thought and feeling on an almost day-to-day basis.

Within ten years of its introduction by Eli Lilly & Co. in 1987, Prozac had been tried by 28 million people around the world. Together with Wellbutrin, Effexor, Serzone, Luvox, Paxil, Zoloft, Xanax, Ativan, Buspar, and other new designer drugs, sales are now in the tens of billions of dollars annually.

Sales have been further helped by the exploding practice of prescribing these medications to the young—sometimes the very young. According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, at least five percent of young children and adolescents are now clinically depressed. "We see 2- and 3-year-olds fairly regularly," says Dr. David G.

Fassler, author of *Help Me, I'm Sad*, a book about treating childhood depression. "We also see a lot of 5-, 6-, and 7-year-olds." The adolescent suicide rate has quadrupled in the past 50 years. The psychiatric profession, from a long-held belief that the young do not get depressed, has turned 180 degrees to an almost sinister willingness to start troubled kids on antidepressants *en masse*. Modern parents' refusal to "cope" patiently and compassionately with their children's pubescence is leading to its medicalization as well, to the detriment of the children's psychological and physical development.

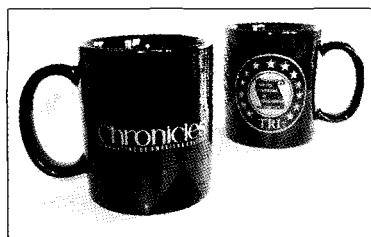
U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher claimed not long ago that "22 percent of the population has a diagnosable mental disorder," whether anxiety (14.9 percent), mood swings (7.1 percent) or schizophrenia (1.3 percent)—and that doesn't include depression, "bipolar" disorder, psychoses, other phobias, "borderline" personalities, ADD, ADHD, sociopathy, or psychopathy. The National Mental Health Association claims that 24 percent of women and 15 percent of men will experience mild to severe depression at some point in their lives. With rates of "abnormality" that high, either the term

"mentally ill" has no meaning, or there is something terribly wrong with our society—or perhaps both.

Dozens of books tell us how to deal with "negative emotions" or people who make you feel bad about yourself—*Toxic People*, in the words of one such book's title—and never once question why others should constitute a wolfish bane and not a blessed resource.

But reading the endless articles or scanning the countless websites, chat rooms, newsgroups, and threads devoted to this or that phobia or syndrome, you find a complete lack of interest in why all these psychosocial disorders are rife. Why, for instance, should a mature, 35-year-old wife and mother suddenly "get" agoraphobia—fear of going out in public, fear of others—after a lifetime negotiating the terrain of society? The major sentiments expressed by sufferers are either "I'm the victim of a deliberately misunderstood and underappreciated disease, and, goddammit, I'm going to be heard and recognized and get relief!" or "[Drug A] works so much better for me than [Drug B]—I swear by it, and they should take that other crap off the market, but of course they won't because it's so profitable."

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AMUG11

NOVEMBER 2001/45

In the economy of human happiness at present, the scarcest commodity of all is what psychologists call "positive social feedback." Reduced to its correlated brain chemical, serotonin, the self-esteem and sense of well-being engendered by positive social feedback can be mimicked by SSRIs such as Prozac and its progeny. Every lonely, unhappy, demoralized soul can finally adapt and cope, blissed out on a customized chemical cocktail. As R.E.M. sings, "It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine."

Psychic engineers are busy constructing the artificial society at the same time computer engineers are constructing artificial intelligence and genetic engineers are constructing clones and even their own genetic code. We rush eagerly to embrace our own replacements despite the warning signs and danger signals. Dehumanization appeals to those for whom the joys of being human have become repugnant—or unattainable.

We live in a decadent time, and what is decadence but autoimmunity on a grand scale, a toxic reaction against what was once good for the organism? Overcrowding, excess of success: When human life seems too abundant, it becomes less precious. Reproducing ourselves hand over fist, we seem the opposite of endangered. Human life cheapens correspondingly. The news and entertainment media wallow in the filthiest, most despicable aspects of human behavior, further exacerbating the situation. And excessive affluence has all but killed off the we're-all-in-this-together feeling that once fortified social relations; the most insignificant rare and dwindling subspecies seem more worthy of preservation than our own overprivileged selves. Susan Sontag infamously stated back in 1967 that "The white race is the cancer of human history"; her sentiment has now mutated into "The human race is the cancer of the planet."

In his 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Philip K. Dick made the point that humanoid robots—androids—are not human (or even alive), no matter how they look or act or how prettily they beg for their "lives." As he listens to Nexus-6 android Rachael Rosen, bounty hunter Rick Deckard reflects,

At this point he could not discern her degree of seriousness. A topic of world-shaking importance, yet dealt with facetiously; an android trait, possibly, he thought. No

emotional awareness, no feeling—sense of the actual meaning of what she said. Only the hollow, formal, intellectual definitions of the separate terms.

As Rick prepares to terminate Rachael, this is what he sees:

Yet, the dark fire waned; the life force oozed out of her, as he had so often witnessed before with other androids. The classic resignation. Mechanical, intellectual acceptance of that which a genuine organism—with two billion years of the pressure to live and evolve haggardly—it—could never have reconciled itself to.

Despite these observations, the bounty hunter is shaken by the seeming humanity of his victims, albeit not enough to spare them in the end.

Dick's point was missed only a few years later in *Blade Runner*, the 1982 film made posthumously from his book: In the film, Rick falls for Rachael and runs away with her. In the book, because he has let her "live" while terminating her more dangerous android "friends," she murders his pet. "If I had killed [her] last night my goat would be alive now. There's where I made the wrong decision," he fumes.

In 2001, we have been treated to Stanley Kubrick's and Steven Spielberg's film *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*, based on Brian Aldiss's 1969 short story "Super-Toys Last All Summer Long." The problem in the original story is the exact reverse of *Blade Runner*: The population-controlled humans are unable or refuse to respond emotionally to the heartbreakingly realistic child-substitute robot, David. His ersatz mother wonders, "Why not simply go upstairs and scoop David into her arms and talk to him, as a loving mother should to a loving son?"—but makes no move to do so.

Dick's novel was a tough-minded warning against loving inappropriate things for inappropriate reasons, a warning that only life is worthy of human love, and the meaning of Aldiss' story is that blood is thicker than water, more powerful and attractive than mechanical perfection, but Kubrick and Spielberg, of course, have another agenda: to prove they can sucker the audience into loving a robot by pulling out all the visual, musical, dramatic and mock-religious senti-

mental stops.

At the DreamWorks SKG fansite, one viewer worries,

I think what disturbed me most of all was how this movie made me feel. For instance, I found myself empathizing way too much with the teddy bear character. I felt badly for him most of all. I can't truly explain why.

He or she shouldn't feel so bad: Spielberg got people to love a mere alien puppet in *E.T.* But the weakness humans have for creatures that look like babies is poignant, not contemptible. Hollywood's cynicism cannot devalue the truly human trait of tenderness.

Also from the fansite comes a typical moral that viewers have taken away from *A.I.*:

In this movie we learn that human beings though valuable, are not necessarily central to the universe. Sentience is however to be prized no matter what form it exists in (grey matter or wires). Once we get over these prejudices we are more free to recognize that it is not as important who or what carries the "torch" of sentience. What is important is that it must continue. We need to free ourselves from being human centered and consider that perhaps our present form is too fragile to survive the next ice age or the next meteor strike, or when our sun burns out in a few billion years. Of course the double edged issue is that we may not survive ourselves. . . . While it would be sad if our species could not continue, it would be sadder if we did not leave something behind that could.

In other words, it's all right for man (as well as all things traditionally defined as "living") to pass away and for synthetic, inorganic beings to take their place. We dehumanize ourselves and, at the same time, humanize our mechanical creations.

Those characters on TV who weep and gesticulate and beseech—do we "kill" them when we turn off the set? Does the empathy felt by viewers toward the David and Teddy characters mean they must be "real," not just the flickering shadows of actors playing a role? Is that twice-removed pathos as "real" as the

emotions David is programmed to feel? So goes the *reductio ad absurdum*. The point is that android "emotion" really is reducible to wiring, but that of humans is not. It makes a great difference whether the "programming" is done by God or by His creature, man.

Only the human factor adds "value," and only human life has moral significance. The economic crisis caused by the tendency of the rate of profit to fall once machines replace human labor is akin to the emotional famine caused by the weak, broken, mediated, remote, suspect, compromised, ambivalent, treacherous, abolished relationships in modern society. Just as machines ultimately cannot create "surplus value" (profit), because you only get out of them what you put into them, so material substitutes for love and friendship can never supply the happiness and satisfaction created by social relations. Only people can "add value" to economic activity by their intelligent labor, and only *other* people make life worth living.

All those studies that show that rising socioeconomic status means fewer friendships should finally be cross-referenced with those that demonstrate the psychic costs of social starvation. Modern men and women, in seeking to free themselves from dependence on others, have made a pact with the devil. Mothers have even come to prefer "alienated labor" outside the home to the task of rearing their own children. Now, the devil demands payment.

"There's no need for red-hot pokers," muses Garcin at the end of Sartre's unconvincing little melodrama *No Exit*. "*L'enfer—c'est les Autres!*"—"Hell is—other people!" Too many people now agree with him.

Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.

RELIGION

Gods of Inclusion

by Mark Tooley

Although America remains overwhelmingly Christian in affiliation (if not necessarily in practice), the connoisseurs of multiculturalism like to pretend otherwise—often rather insistently.

Public events involving religion must acknowledge Zoroaster and Zeus as much as Moses and Jesus. Multiculturalists find claims about the exclusive truth of any religion, particularly Christianity, especially offensive. They eagerly denounce as a bigot any Christian or Jew who insists on adhering to the First or Second Commandment, even within the confines of his own community.

This attitude, although supposedly sensitive and inclusive, is really insulting to the true believers of any religion. The underlying assumption is that either *all* religions are equally true or *no* religion is really true. Multiculturalists have faith in multiculturalism, but little else. And they jealously practice their own inquisitions to guard the dogmas of their secular faith.

One such inquisition was recently waged against a Methodist minister in Marietta, Georgia. For seven years, the Rev. Randy Mickler's 6,300-member Mt. Bethel United Methodist Church has hosted the baccalaureate service for the graduating seniors of Walton High School. The service, which is a voluntary event for the students, has been Christian.

This year, members of the high school's baccalaureate committee wanted to alter that focus. They requested that Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and even Wiccans be incorporated into the service and that Christian symbols in the sanctuary, including the cross, be covered and references to Jesus Christ be omitted. A rabbi was also invited to deliver the sermon.

Mickler agreed to the last request, although he insisted that the rabbi speak from a podium instead of the pulpit, which is reserved for Gospel preachers only. As for Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Wiccan involvement, Mickler said no. He also firmly rejected disguising the church's Christian identity.

Walton High School officials responded by moving the baccalaureate service to the Cobb County Civic Center, with Mickler's support. But at least one student on the baccalaureate committee—a former student reporter at CNN—saw Mickler's refusal as a nifty media sound bite that neatly captured the supposed parochialism and intolerance of the Bible Belt.

After the Atlanta media were notified, Mickler's church was deluged with inquiries. The Methodist minister's refusal to countenance a polytheistic service in his own sanctuary set off a storm of pro-

tests, with special emphasis on the denial of the pulpit to a rabbi. What could this be but antisemitism?

"We are Christians," Mickler responded, "and the only deity we exalt is God personified in Jesus Christ. When it comes to denying who we are, that's where we draw the line." Mickler pointed out that his church regularly loans its parking lot to a nearby Orthodox Jewish synagogue, and that Jewish rabbis have spoken at the church—but not from the pulpit. Previous baccalaureate services had been non-denominational but still Christian, Mickler said. The church had no obligation to host non-Christian worship in its sanctuary.

One of several *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* stories declared that Mickler's "inflexible" and "unyielding" attitude had caused the whole community to "gasped" and had sent Christians and Jews "reeling." The newspaper recalled that the Methodist minister was controversial for his outspoken support of an anti-homosexual-rights resolution approved in Cobb County in 1993 and for opposing a 1994 Supreme Court ruling barring Cobb County from posting the Ten Commandments in a court building.

One of the foremost supporters of homosexual rights in Cobb County during the 1993 controversy was Rabbi Steven Lebow, the same rabbi who had been invited to deliver the Walton High School baccalaureate sermon. The latest bronchitis was portrayed as a rematch. A homosexual publication called Mickler an "agent of hatred and exclusion" and pegged him as the direct heir of his segregationist ancestors. The "overwhelming public repudiation [of Mickler's church] should encourage us all."

Meanwhile, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* claimed that other Methodist clergy in the area were distancing themselves from Mickler. Some supposedly displayed messages of solidarity with Rabbi Lebow on their church marquees. Mickler countered that he had received hundreds of supportive messages from fellow clergy.

To his congregation, Mickler explained in a Sunday message:

I want you to understand, that never would I do anything to embarrass you or our non-Christian friends. At no time would I ever want our Jewish friends to feel slighted, hurt or embarrassed. I thank God for our Jewish friends'