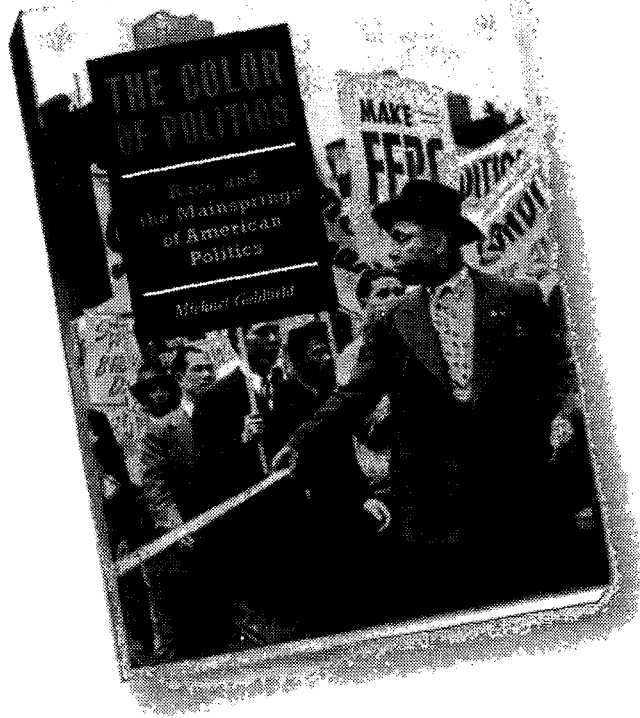


America in Black and White

**The Color of Politics:
Race and the Mainsprings of American Politics**
By Michael Goldfield
The New Press
404 pages, \$19.95

REVIEWED BY NELSON LICHTENSTEIN



The *Color of Politics* is a hugely ambitious book that attempts nothing less than a synthetic reinterpretation of all U.S. political history. Relying upon the political economy of Karl Marx and W.E.B. Du Bois, as well as contemporary scholars like Eric Foner and Numan Bartley, Michael Goldfield convincingly demonstrates that race has been a central part of every critical turning point in American history, from colonial times to the present.

In the process, he evaluates the leadership of all oppositional movements—from Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the '30s and '40s—by a single measure: the degree to which their ideology and practice favored interracial solidarity between black and white. Goldfield argues for such a standard because "race consciousness and racism pervade every fiber of our social existence." Thus, he hands out a set of moralistic, meta-historical judgments; it's pass or fail, scored according to the author's test form. Goldfield's heroes are those white radicals, liberals and working-class leaders who recognize

the need to form interracial alliances. His villains are those who fail to do so.

While structurally sophisticated, this analysis of American racism is frequently distorted by a failure to come to terms with the actual social consciousness of Americans, black or white. Goldfield does not really understand the way that consciousness changes over time and under new social conditions. Where University of Minnesota historian David Roediger, among others, seeks to understand the psychology and ideology of white racism, Goldfield simply wishes to condemn it.

Goldfield, a white radical political scientist known for his studies of American unionism, writes with a chip on his shoulder. Eager to settle historiographic scores with a wide range of scholars, he judges them also by his definition of interracial vanguardism. Thus, Alan Dawley's pathbreaking 1976 book, *Class and Community*, "must be added to the pantheon of white labor apologies," and "even such perceptive writers as Eric Foner ... fail at times to strike the right note."

Goldfield highlights several decisive

moments of political and racial flux in the nation's history. He begins with Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia, when a biracial group of laborers, slaves and indentured servants briefly forced a colonial governor to flee Jamestown. Afterwards, Southern colonies racialized the nature of servitude, not initially because they considered blacks culturally inferior, but because the rebellion made control of white labor a central concern of the landowning elites. A frightened gentry began to import more African slaves and wrote the structures of white supremacy and black servitude into law. For Goldfield, this is the strategy that the American ruling class has followed ever since: divide, conquer and turn white workers on their black brethren. That analysis is neither subtle nor new, but the history of capitalist labor relations is just as often crude and stark.

Although anti-slavery sentiments had spread widely by the end of the 18th century, the founding fathers, whose leading lights included many Southern plantation owners, put the force of the federal government behind the institution. The

Revolutionaries failed to arm their slaves against the British, and servitude was inscribed into the Constitution itself, in what Goldfield describes as an "absolute contradiction and lie" within the very heart of the American polity.

In keeping with his focus on interracial vanguardism, Goldfield's analysis of the Civil War makes John Brown and his abolitionist cohort that era's monumental figures. (This is not a book about black self-emancipation.) Goldfield asserts, rather ahistorically, that the abolitionists "displayed a greater commitment to racial egalitarianism than any other interracial movement in the United States has, before or since." Like the other protagonists in this book, they are a vanguard cadre, often isolated and persecuted, but knowing that they are on the right side of history.

On the other hand, the Northern white working class of the 19th century fails Goldfield's test. Repeatedly, he labels its racism and allegiance to the Democratic Party "obtuse," "blindness" and a "white blindspot." Such retrograde sentiments, he argues, forestalled the emergence of a "determined labor or radical organization whose leaders and members saw the connection between the struggle for freedom for African-American slaves and that of 'free' labor in the North."

But is it really fair to blame a historical group for its "obtuseness"? Goldfield could have explained such white working-class sentiments by referring to the psycho-social theories of Roediger, or to the anti-slavery, but racist, "free labor" ideologies of the period. But since Goldfield has only contempt for cultural explanations, he is left with little more than a moralistic condemnation of a racially poisoned white working class. In Goldfield's historiography, there is little room for the complicated interplay of ideology, politics and social transformation.

Discussing the period following the Civil War, Goldfield, like Foner and Du Bois, argues that the failure of radical reconstruction was the decisive event that established the preconditions for not only a reassertion of white supremacy in the South, but for a political order in which "the shadow of the plantation covered the whole of the United States

with hardly an exception." Indeed, Goldfield's thorough and insightful discussion of the consolidation of this order points to one of the strengths of the book: the pivotal role he assigns to the struggle for justice in the South in the political transformation of the nation as a whole.

Finally, Goldfield devotes two long chapters to the 1930s and '40s, which represent for him the last, best moment when working-class interracialism could have transformed the labor movement, and with it the nation. He correctly highlights the importance of Operation Dixie, the large-scale post-World War II effort to organize the South. The drive's failure to build an interracial union movement crippled the capacity of the civil rights movement to link calls for economic justice to desegregation.

Here, the Communists stand at the crux of Goldfield's history. Although he approvingly cites Trotskyist James Cannon on the crimes of American Stalinism, Goldfield's impassioned defense of the Communist trade union leadership ignores any such critique. They are latter-day abolitionists, giving "moral authority" to an interracial unionism, often in contrast to the not-so-covert racism and accommodation that Goldfield finds among "right-wing" CIO leaders, like Walter Reuther and Philip Murray.

But if one approaches the question of racial justice not from the point of view of interracial vanguardism, but from the perspective of black workers themselves, then the conflict between the Communists and their opponents becomes less central. Of that minority of blacks who were actually enrolled in trade unions, most were organized by unions whose leadership was neither radical nor interracial. But in the '30s and '40s, that still represented an enormous leap forward, since African-Americans understood that even retrograde unions provided them with a certain autonomous space and a set of contractual standards by which they could challenge the capricious paternalism and invidious racism of the Jim Crow worksite. That is why African-Americans were loyal unionists, whatever the political character of their trade

union leadership.

Moreover, black workers often found that their interests were best served not by aggressive interracialism—which was frequently blocked by working-class racism itself—but by self-organization. As the black Marxist C.L.R. James put it, "Black and White, Unite and Fight" is unimpeachable in principle, but it is often misleading and sometimes even offensive in the face of the infinitely varied, tumultuous, passionate and often murderous reality of race relations in the United States." The militant dockers of early 20th-century New Orleans organized into separate black and white locals, but they nevertheless waged successful joint struggles. Even in the postwar South, black textile workers frequently favored their own separate organizations, which ensured that African-American voices and interests would get a hearing at the plant and with the national union.

Indeed, the most successful mid-century challenge to Jim Crow America came from an all-black union. Goldfield ignores the role played by A. Philip Randolph, the leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the architect of President Roosevelt's 1941 executive order that opened millions of war industry jobs to African-Americans. One wonders if Goldfield's neglect is a product of his distaste for Randolph's outspoken anti-Communism or of his hostility to the nationalism that infused Randolph's 1941 March on Washington movement.

There are other problems with this book. It is full of irritating factual mistakes, and the author's voice is self-indulgent. The New Press could have edited it better: The argument is highly repetitious, and the social science notation is ugly and confusing. Still, no topic is more important, and no judgment more pressing, than the one Goldfield offers on the final page: A unified movement for a just, equitable society can be achieved only "by placing the principle of racial egalitarianism on the top furl of our marching banner." ■

Nelson Lichtenstein teaches history at the University of Virginia and is the author of Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

EXPERIENCED GRASSROOTS ORGANIZER sought to work with 40-state activist network in pursuit of sweeping campaign finance reform. Salary \$40's, commensurate with experience. Résumés to Public Campaign, PO Box 33844, Washington, DC 20033-0844.

Third Party Congressional CAMPAIGN MANAGER. Experienced, progressive. Bilingual a plus. Relocate to Santa Fe. Salary BOE. EOE. Inquiries: tcloak@unm.edu, (505) 243-5069.

TRAINING COORDINATOR—The California State Employees Association currently has a vacancy for a management position of Training Coordinator for its Civil Service Division. This position will be responsible for developing training modules; working with a statewide steward committee to train members at the worksites; and providing other training needs to staff and membership. Excellent pay and benefits. The position will be assigned to the Sacramento office but extensive statewide travel and weekend work is required. If you have a strong labor background; have developed labor-related curricula and have trained union staff and/or members, please send your résumé to: CSEA Personnel Director, 1108 "O" St., Sacramento, CA 94814. EOE.

UNION ORGANIZER—Progressive health care union. Experience

with organizing, negotiations, contract administration, leadership development. Salary DOE, comprehensive benefits, EOE, car required. Send résumé to 300 Queen Anne Ave. N., #335, Seattle, WA 98109.

ORGANIZER. Progressive low-wage workers union seeks organizers and other staff for large-scale campaign based in L.A. Requires dedication & commitment to building community, economic and political power. Prior Exp. Preferred. Fax résumés to: Ana (213) 381-7348. EOE.

HELP TURN BACK THE TIDE of excessive corporate power around the world. INFAC has a 20-year history of waging long-term grassroots corporate campaigns—and winning. Remember Nestlé & GE Boycotts? That's INFAC. Now expanding staff in national (Boston-based) Campaign Headquarters for Tobacco Industry & Hall of Shame Campaigns. 4 full-time positions available: Campaign Director; Re-

searcher/Grantwriter; Grassroots Fundraiser; Major Gifts Fundraiser. Start March 2, 1998. Letter of interest & résumé TODAY to: INFAC, K.L., 256 Hanover St., Boston, MA 02113. (800) 688-8797. FAX (617) 367-0191. www.infact.org.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE where it makes a difference. Organize low-income workers in the Deep South to fight for justice. Louisiana positions available in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and New Orleans. Start at \$12,000 + bonuses. Good benefits, fully-paid health insurance. Call (504) 923-3102, write: 5177 Greenwell Springs Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806, or e-mail "seiu100br@igc.org."

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publication containing more than 200 new job

listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists, profiles of nonprofit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: Community Jobs, 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 838, Wash., DC 20036.

IN THESE TIMES seeks volunteer editorial interns with a strong interest in progressive politics and independent publishing to work two days a week at our Chicago offices. The internship consists primarily of fact-checking, but it may also include some research, reporting, proofreading, writing and administrative tasks. Send cover letter, résumé and clips (optional) to: Craig Aaron, assistant editor, *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

IN THESE TIMES seeks part-time advertising interns with an interest in progressive politics and independent publishing. Internship consists of assisting Advertising Director in contacting advertisers, promotional planning, media kit design, new business campaign and special 21st anniversary issue. Contact: Patricia Gray, *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. (773) 772-0100, ext. 236; fax (773) 772-4180.

PUBLICATIONS

SAVE THE IDEAS! Without independent sources of ideas and discussion, democracy and dissent cannot thrive.

Continued on page 36

JEWISH CURRENTS

February, 1998 issue

Editorial on the crisis of the Netanyahu government; "New York City Elections, 1997," David Hacker; "A Day Trip to Nablus, Autumn, 1996," Anika and Kenny Movchine; "Jewish Identity, Politics of Diversity," Ralph Seliger.

Single issue: \$3 (USA).
Subscription: \$30 yearly (USA).

JEWISH CURRENTS

Dept. T, Suite 601,
22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003

CHIAPAS

CHALLENGING HISTORY

INDIGENOUS VIEWPOINTS ON
THE POLITICAL
SITUATION IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

SPECIAL EDITION OF *AKWE:KON JOURNAL*.
SINGLE ISSUE: \$14.00 PPD. ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION: \$18.00 (U.S.) CHECK/VISA/MC TO:
300-JT CALDWELL HALL,
CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NY 14853

THE WITNESS MAGAZINE

considers today's societal, cultural and religious issues from a left-wing, Christian, and frequently iconoclastic perspective. \$25/10 issues, each issue is topical. For a complimentary copy, call 313-841-1967; fax: 313-841-1956; or e-mail: editor@thewitness.org. Checks, Visa and Mastercard accepted. The Witness, 7000 Michigan Ave., Dept. 1, Detroit, MI 48210-2872.

The Independent Press Association works to nurture and encourage independent publications committed to justice for all. To find out more, write to IPA, P.O. Box 191785, San Francisco, CA 94119-1785, or call (415) 896-2456. www.indypress.org.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

SPANISH, CULTURE, TOURS, at Escuela Azteca. Summer in beautiful Cuernavaca. \$220 two weeks. Intensive grammar all levels. Weekend tours. Minicourses with Ross Gandy, Ph.D. (Mexico: Reform or Revolution?). Live with Mexican family. For brochure: call (52-73)-15-24-69. Address: ESCUELA AZTECA, Apdo. Postal 76-005; 04201 Mexico, D.F.

SPANISH IN GUANAJUATO—Two weeks, \$255. Instituto Falcon, Jorge Barroso, Mora 158, Guanajuato, Gto 36000, Mexico. Ph./Fax: (473) 2-36-94. E-mail: infalcon@redes.int.com.mx.

Visit our website at:
www.infonet.com.mx/falcon.

A PEOPLE VACATION in beautiful Guatemala. Personalized Spanish classes at indigenous-owned school. Volunteer opportunities. Fantastic excursions. R&B with local family plus 5 hrs/day of classes is \$130/wk. Contact CBA, 1432 Elizabeth Street, Lexington, KY 40503, (606) 278-5008. E-mail to pwuff@uky.campus.mci.net.

CUBA & CHIAPAS

Revolutionary Cultures: Explore the reality of life in Cuba and the Zapatista movement in Chiapas. A two-week Reality Tour May 15-27.

GLOBAL EXCHANGE • 800-497-1994

PUBLICATIONS

IN THESE TIMES BACK ISSUES—Did you miss out on our Globalization Issue? Your spouse threw the Fall Books issue into the recycling bin before you got to it? Don't worry. Back issues of *In These Times* are available for just \$5 a copy. Send check or money order to *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, IL 60647.

AIR PURIFICATION

ENVIRTECH PRODUCTS, INC. "No filter" air purification systems that reduce dust, mold, VOC's, pollen, bacteria, smoke and odors. Retail \$495-\$995. Units for homes, offices, cars and commercial. Phone (303) 469-4537; FAX (303) 469-0421.

MISCELLANEOUS

FREE CASH GRANTS! College. Scholarships. Business. Medical bills. Never Repay. Toll Free 1-800-218-9000 Ext. G-3077. \$1000'S POSSIBLE TYPING. Part Time. At Home. Toll Free

Explosive 3rd Ed. Defrauding America

Unprecedented coalition of CIA, DIA, DEA agents, Mafia family figures, drug traffickers, reveal decades of gov't. corruption & harm inflicted upon Americans. TWA 800 secrets, Washington-ordered assassination of American POWs, CIA drugging of America, much more. Dynamite. 753 pgs. \$28 +\$4. Any time: 1-800-247-7389; DWP, Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507.

(1) 800-218-9000; Ext. T-3077 for listings.

SEIZED CARS from \$175. Porsches, Cadillacs, Chevys, BMW's, Corvettes. Also Jeeps, 4WD's. Your area. Toll free (800) 218-9000, Ext. A-3077 for current listings.

GOV'T FORECLOSED homes from pennies on \$1. Delinquent tax, repro's. REO's. Your area. Toll free (800) 218-9000, Ext. H-3077 for current listings.

PUBLIC HEALTH

IS GULF WAR DISEASE CONTAGIOUS? Write: HPAF, POB 10088, Tampa, FL 33679.

BUMPER STICKERS

CUSTOM-ORDER Buttons, Bumper-stickers, T-shirts, Business Forms/Checks. Union label. New Solidarity (888) 275-6336.

PERSONALS

EROTIC, INTELLIGENT, imaginative conversation—Discreet, personal and pleasurable. Please inquire (617) 661-3849.

CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER

links compatible singles who care about peace, social justice, gender equity, racism and the environment.

Nationwide. Since 1984. All ages.

FREE SAMPLE: Box 444-IT.

Lenox Dale, MA 01242, (413) 445-6309; or at <http://www.concernedsingles.com>

IN THESE TIMES classified ads work like your own sales force.

WORD RATES:

95¢ per word / 1-2 issues
85¢ per word / 3-5 issues
80¢ per word / 6-9 issues
75¢ per word / 10-19 issues
65¢ per word / 20 + issues

DISPLAY INCH RATES:

\$30 per inch / 1-2 issues
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
\$22 per inch / 20 + issues

Thomas Paine

VIDEOCASSETTE

This educational, "very informative," and "fascinating" 40-minute video, written and hosted by Thomas Paine Scholar Carl Shapiro, was telecast via cable TV throughout northern New Jersey in the spring of 1992. In this original, unedited video, the essential meaning of Paine's extraordinary career as revolutionary writer and foremost exponent of democratic principles is recounted in a presentation "sure in its content" and clear in its delivery. A discussion of little-known but significant incidents in Paine's life adds immeasurably to this memorable video.

VHS cassette, \$25.00 ppd. (USA)

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS, P.O. BOX 102, RIDGEFIELD, NJ 07657

**Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.
Or FAX your ad with VISA or Mastercard number to 773-772-4180.**

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ issue(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Continued from page 30

drum and organ burst. The music is jazz-informed, without the solos or improvisation, and willing to throw in some feed-back or slow down to a sound effect-strewn crawl.

Also big in Chicago is so-called "insurgent country." It's lonesome, it's got twang, and it sounds like Hank Williams with his boot on the distortion pedal. Brett and Rennie hate the term but play some of the best around as the Handsome Family; their two albums, *Odessa* and *Milk and Scissors* (Carrot Top), are among my favorites from the last few years. He's a Texan with a Masters in music; she's a Jewish writer from Long Island who dabbles in performance art.

Brett and Rennie lead me to the Radar Bros. "We've been listening to them a lot lately," Brett says. "They've got a kind of a mix between the Beatles and country." To me, the Radar Bros.' eponymous record (Restless) sounds more like a cross between Neil Young's *Harvest* and Codeine—the band *and* the drug. This threesome from Los Angeles makes music for anyone who finds solace in gentle arrangements and wry lyrics. Winsome, warbling Jim Putman sings about writing films, underwater culprits and supermarket pharmacies. Guitar lines pick out catchy hooks while the drummer keeps slow, slow, measured time. The next day, I'm humming the songs standing in line at the ATM.

My main musical conduit for years has been my old roommate, Scott, who was program director for the rock show at our college radio station. For a living, Scott manages a Chicago record store; for kicks, he publishes *Speed Kills*, a fanzine that explores the fecund interplay between muscle cars and punk rock music. Scott recommends *From Our Living Room to Yours* (Trance Syndicate), the latest album by the American Analog Set, a Texas four-piece that combines "a Velvet Underground guitar jangle with a Kraut rock-informed metronomic backbeat." The band writes pop gems, then slows them

down, building a languorous, almost hypnotic melody with simple lyrics gently added to the mix. It uses a steady guitar strum, a vintage Farfisa organ and the titular eight-track "studio" to build songs the way I imagine the Amish build furniture, with an eye to the traditional, an understanding of the virtues of the elemental and a firm grasp of what makes a classic. I especially love the first track, "magnificent seventies," eight minutes of organ washing over strings.

My friend Jay's beat at the college radio station was jazz. Now in Hollywood, where he puts together film soundtracks, Jay offers up English sax player Courtney Pine's *Underground* (Antilles), which he characterizes as "jazz meets funk." On this album, Pine's quartet plays with more of a solid, shake-your-booty rhythm than most jazz allows. It's infused with some scratching and sampling from DJ Pogo, which adds to the funky feeling. This is smooth stuff: Pine credits late '60s masters, including Cannonball Adderley and Eddie Harris, as his inspiration, and the warm tone of the horns reminds me of orange sunlight at dusk.

For some rap, I decided to go to the truest of fans: New York City high school kids. My fiancée Jill, who teaches in Queens, put me in touch with Eric, a quiet but quick student who writes his own raps—and even has rented some studio time to record them. To my delight, his list of recent faves includes Rakim and L.L. Cool J, old school denizens who have found a way to stay current. They remind me of when I followed rap pretty closely, before gangsta's bloodshed got too thick.

Chicago has never been well-represented in the hip-hop world, so I'm glad that Eric also mentioned the Windy City's Common. On his third album, *One Day It'll All Make Sense* (Relativity), Common raps in a loping, steady way. He talks about loving those close to you, religion and respecting others, but he isn't saccharine or preachy. By turns, he can be funny or showcase his street sense. The production samples ringing phones, '70s-era keyboards, eerie horror-music hooks and Burt Bacharach strings, and throws in some real turntable scratching, too. It's a welcome respite from the simplistic, full-song samples of Puff Daddy and his cohort.

My friend Mick has been raving about a woman named Albita for a while, so I ask her why she likes the Cuban singer so much. "She's a total gender bender," Mick says. "She's on one album with a hot red dress with her boobs practically exploding out and on the next in a '20s men's suit. Especially in concert, she sings with a lot of innuendo—you can't tell if she's singing some songs to the men or the women in the audience."

Albita's latest, *Una Mujer Como Yo* (Epic), is often explosive, always lively. Even slower songs like "Tócame con un Beso" are supported with a sinewy rhythm section. The title track, a propulsive, horn-effused joy, grabs you by the ears and dares you to try a few moves on the floor. With a full-throated chorus backing up her confident contralto, Albita provides a worthy counterpart to a brassy band with serious chops.

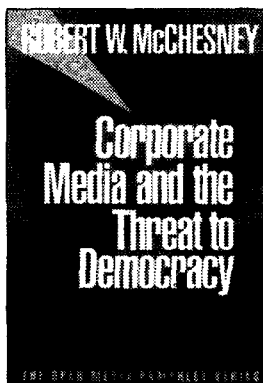
These propulsive Latin beats remind me that I'm not *that* old after all. ■

Carl Vogel recently moved from Chicago to New York, where he edits *City Limits*, an urban-affairs magazine.

AVAILABLE from *IN THESE TIMES*

"In this fine study, Robert McChesney points out that the extent of public participation into communication policy-making is a measure of the level of democracy, and that the U.S. is achieving new records in decline of such participation. ... McChesney's work has been of extraordinary importance. ... It should be read with care and concern by people who care about freedom and basic rights."

—Noam Chomsky



Corporate Media and the Threat to Democracy \$4.95
also available

The Decline of Socialism in America: 1912-1925 \$15.95

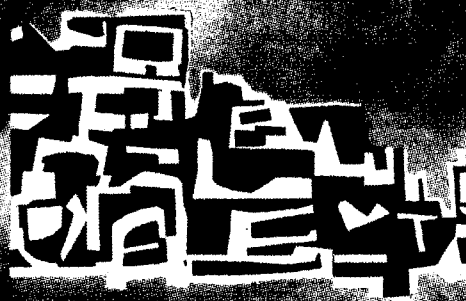
Send payment to:

In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647

Add \$2.00 for shipping and handling

in the end

isotope²¹⁷
THE UNSTABLE MOLECULE



By Carl Vogel

Rebirth of the Cool

once was hip.

A decade ago, I knew all the underground bands, which label they were on, where they were from. I walked around Northwestern University listening to the Hollowmen, Green, Didjits, Great Plains—Midwestern bands that never hit it big nationally, even in the limited, indie-rock definition of big.

Then I got ... older. I stopped listening to college radio, and my hip crowd scattered. I recently found myself using the *New York Times* to find out about new music. Let's face it, when the Gray Lady has something to teach you about punk rock, it's time to return to the well.

I've always believed that the best stuff is known by the local insiders and few others. Luckily, I'm blessed with friends who like a wide array of musical styles and can tip me off to the gold.

The first person I call is Brian, who plays guitar in 40K, a four-piece Chicago rock band that writes shimmering melodies. Brian is always finding great records, new and old, and goes to clubs almost nightly to see what the rest of the town is up to. He suggests the debut album by a band named Isotope 217, part of the instrumental, jazz-infused, meandering sound that's been growing in Chicago over the last few years. "They're doing exciting stuff," he says. "There's an interplay of guitars and horns, but they're not straddling the jazz-rock meridian as much as some local groups." The six songs on Isotope 217's *The Unstable Molecule* (Thrill Jockey) are edgy, energetic and modern (in the '50s meaning of the word). My favorite, "Beneath the Undertow," is a vibrant showcase that ends with a serene horn note alternating back and forth with a syncopated

Continued on page 29

