

operate to make scientists want to plagiarize, misrepresent someone else's position, get back at their enemies in print, muscle in on someone else's research project so as to get a free ride on their publication, or sabotage their competitors through anonymous peer reviewing.

All this happens, admittedly. But anyone who's been in an academic environment for more than five minutes *knows* that it happens and is already quite aware of the associated costs and benefits. So it is in the other chapters as well: Very little that Ghiselin says is wrong, it's just stuff that we already knew.

Then maybe the book's reason for being is that the author has a solution to the problem. Indeed he does, and in the last chapter of the book, "On Keeping Science Pure," Ghiselin reveals it. It's that scientists ought to be more honest. "So far as the problems of academia go," he says, "one solution might be to adopt a more favorable attitude toward honesty in all of our conduct, and not just in the scholarly life." Not only is this *one* solution, it's the *only* solution Ghiselin offers in the course of the book. Again, you can't say that this is *wrong*, it's just not exactly *news*. It's not even helpful.

What you can say on behalf of Ghiselin's book is that it's clearly written, with plenty of vivid analogies, well-chosen examples, and lots of insider anecdotes and vignettes, many of them taken from episodes in Ghiselin's own life. And if anyone out there still harbors the delusion that scientists are above the fray (because they pursue, after all, The Truth), Ghiselin's book will come as a much-needed, albeit rather shocking, corrective. But that's about all you can say.

The rest of it is a dreary recitation of well-known abuses. Indeed, the author doesn't even go into the problem of dishonesty very deeply, paying no attention to whether operating from base motives might in some cases lead to *good* science. Rather, his touchstone is the refrain, "A good scientist never lies," which is advanced as if its truth were self-evident, which it is not. In fact, Ghiselin himself accuses George Gaylord Simpson of dishonesty but later calls Simpson one of the "grand old men of

evolutionary biology."

So, why do we have this book? More than anything, Ghiselin comes across as a scientist who has reached that point in his career where he's not getting any new ideas and so looks around for something else to do.

Ghiselin's own response to this common plight is to cast a jaundiced eye over all that he has seen and experienced during the course of his long and productive career. Naturally, he's seen lots of abuses and has had to put up with his share of idiots, bastards, and fools. He's fed up and has decided that he's not going to take it anymore.

Nothing wrong with this, of course, except that in order for the result to be a positive contribution to the practice of science or anything else, it's got to be more than a list of charges followed by a five-page pep talk. As it is, the book is sometimes embarrassingly, even naively, self-serving, as the author evens up old scores and gets back at his teachers, critics, reviewers, and other assorted opponents, illustrating in front of our eyes some of the tackiest practices he complains of.

Ed Regis, author of Who Got Einstein's Office?, writes frequently on science topics.

Marijuana: Costs of Abuse, Costs of Control, by Mark Kleiman, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 217 pages, \$37.95. The War on Drugs continues to consume billions of dollars in government spending each year. But the ironic result of spending all this money, argues Mark Kleiman, a lecturer in public policy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School, is that government seizures have forced consumers to consume more dangerous drugs than they would have if the government had not started its "war."

In *Marijuana: Costs of Abuse, Costs of Control*, Kleiman looks at the results of the federal government's efforts to eliminate marijuana production, distribution, and consumption. In fiscal year 1982, Kleiman estimates four federal agencies (the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Customs Service, and the Coast Guard) spent \$423 million on anti-

marijuana efforts (38 percent of overall federal antidrug spending). By fiscal year 1986, Kleiman estimates, the figure had risen to \$636 million, consuming about the same percentage of federal time and funds.

But the billions spent by the feds had little effect on checking the marijuana trade. While overall consumption fell by 4 percent, consumers shifted from smoking less potent Latin American dope to more powerful domestic sinsemilla. Sinsemilla prices dropped by 7 percent; imported marijuana prices rose by 6 percent. And despite the efforts of thousands of federal, state, and local dopestoppers, Kleiman says, "there does not appear to have been any prolonged or widespread shortages."

Why can't the federal government win the war on marijuana? Kleiman notes that marijuana production and distribution is an extremely decentralized business; federal seizures of large "mother ships" from Colombia have caused the distribution trade to shift to smaller operations in the United States and Mexico. Because the marijuana business comprises many small distributors and growers who will fervently protect their investments—a domestic dope grower who loses his crop can forfeit four to six months' earnings—Kleiman believes that the federal government will never win its war on marijuana.

One hazard created by government prohibitions of the paraphernalia used to smoke marijuana is that the state indirectly encourages the most hazardous forms of dope smoking. Marijuana is a potent carcinogen, with about four times as much cancer-causing tar as cigarettes made from tobacco. Using bongos or water pipes removes these tars, ensuring safer dope smoking. But "antiparaphernalia" laws that prohibit the sale of bongos, Kleiman notes, indirectly encourage marijuana consumers to smoke joints, thus increasing their risks of lung cancer. (Other alleged harmful effects of marijuana, Kleiman adds, such as claims that dope smoking causes chromosome defects or "cerebral atrophy," remain unproven.)

—Martin Morse Wooster

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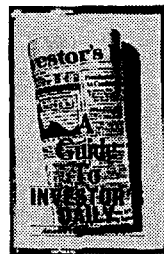
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LOCAL HEROES

BY THOMAS W. HAZLETT

The HUD scandal has revitalized those of us who had assumed the spirit of enterprise to be dying in America; that old Yankee hustle still has some life. Why the headlines are filled, however, with such dog-bites-man fare as "Ex-Sen. George Murphy May Have Used Influence to Gain HUD Subsidies" is curious. Who did you think were keeping all those simply exquisite Washington, D.C., eateries in the black, if not the influence peddlers from Terms Past? Perhaps all those *current* public servants who attempt to privatize public resources by dancing around the lines of conflict-of-interest law?

Yet, the federal government, I am convinced, is a piker in the corruption game. It's just too competitive a market. Too many competing interests; too many competing sellers of the public interest (535 in Congress alone); too many competing news snoopers. The real seat of our government, in every sense, is City Hall, which barely noses out state legislatures in a bruising Corruption Bowl. For all the right-wing grouching about the horrors of Washington and the majesty of the government "closest to the people" (yeah, like right inside their wallets), state and local governments in America are notoriously shady enterprises, demonstrating the twin evils of local monopoly and a cozy-with-the-powers press.

It is not just the Koch scandals in New York, epic corruption in its own right, or that Washington Mayor Marion Barry could easily lay claim to the "Noriega of North America" title were there to be any unfixed competition for the honor, or the legacy of Mayor Daley I in Chicago. It's that even the straight arrows in local government have such abundant opportunities for cash—and so little oversight from lazy and generally incompetent City Hall reporters—that they'd have to be constantly on their toes to avoid having some unearned income land in their money market accounts. And virgins are no

match for the politically macho down at the zoning board.

Take the stench emanating from the California state capitol. When the feds set up a sting operation in 1986, to see if it was really possible to corrupt the democratic system, they were astonished at how far their dollars would stretch. Establishing a phony private firm, Gulf Shrimp Fisheries Inc., the G-men requested legislation entitling the company to government subsidies. In a tribute to responsive government, the bill was drawn in a flash and zipped through both houses without opposition. The FBI agents, worried that they had tampered with the process, then notified the governor, who vetoed the measure. *But they had to tell him.*

The feds are now attempting to prove to a grand jury that key legislators took the campaign money, just a few thousand, in fact, in exchange for legislative favors. The Democratic state senator who carried the 1986 bill (similar legislation sailed through in 1988 with different backers) holds that the firm received the legislative grant on its own merits, by portraying itself as "a poor little outfit that hadn't a pot to cook in and wanted to borrow money to set up a little organization and hire a few unskilled folks." (Just as on game shows, the legislature makes you answer a quiz question before it doles out the cash.)

Note the sort of tale that merits taxpayer dollars; note further the sort of empirical investigation that accompanies legislative action. Given that this enterprising image was woven out of whole cloth, one may infer precisely how diligent the legislature is in separating bona fide claims from superfluous ones.

In Los Angeles, mayor-for-life Tom Bradley (just reelected to his fifth term in a pro forma procedural balloting), has been using his position to collect multiple \$18,000-a-year fees to either "consult" or serve on the boards of financial institu-

tions. These institutions, coincidentally, happen to be lucky enough to land million-dollar city deposits in *non-interest-bearing* accounts.

Once this came to the very lethargic attention of the *Los Angeles Times* (the story was broken by the far lesser *Herald*), Bradley reacted in a strange variety of ways, declaring there was no conflict of interest—but resigning his banking posts and denying that anything untoward had been involved. One piece of evidence was sensational: Someone used white-out in an attempt to erase "per the mayor" notation on documents instructing the city to shift L.A. funds into Far East National Bank, a Bradley consulting client.

No kidding. White-out. As a former semibearded president (who once used 18 minutes of audio white-out) said, "it only makes it worse when you cover it up."

I'd give Pete Rose 8-5 that Tom Bradley's not any lower than the median local official, or state legislator, in America. Take the recent mayor of Syracuse, Lee Alexander. He was convicted last year of extorting a wide range of city contractors for \$1.2 million. What is noteworthy is that this felon was thought by his peers to be highly honorable—he was elected president, in fact, of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. But give a man a 16-year municipal incumbency and it becomes cloudy as to where public dealing stops and private wheeling begins. I believe the confusion is wide-spread.

Statistical evidence exists to support this view. In 1987, the FBI conducted a sting investigation involving New York City public servants. They offered bribes to 106 civic leaders; 105 grabbed them instantly. But the 106th refused to be pulled into the net. He insisted upon holding out for a higher offer.

Contributing Editor Thomas W. Hazlett teaches economics and public policy at the University of California, Davis.