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LETTERS

Not by Bread Alone

Brink Lindsey undertook the considerable task of finding personal fulfillment in capitalism ("Personal Best," July). As the article states, there is challenge to be found on "every level" of free capitalist business. But that point begs the question of whether such competition is personally fulfilling.

The fact that something is challenging does not mean that its completion is fulfilling. For many secretaries, it is a challenge to maintain composure in the face of degradation. The average executive is "challenged" by a mountain of paperwork drudgery daily; its elimination is more depressing than rewarding, as she knows that it will only be replaced by a similar pile the next day.

Lindsey's examples of fulfillment through capitalism are valid enough, but they are hardly common. Mundane and unrewarding "challenges" are far more numerous, and it is simple statistical distortion to lump them in with "rewarding challenges" only because they are "challenging."

What constitutes a meaningful challenge is different for every person. It is absurd to assume that any one system, even one as broad and undifferentiated as "capitalism," holds the key to personal fulfillment for everyone. While capitalism is certainly no worse than any other "ism" in terms of providing "Maslovian meaning," I am hard pressed to find it superior in any respect.

Andrew D. Melnick
New Orleans, LA

I WAS DISTURBED that Brink Lindsey felt he had to apologize for fast-food restaurants, shopping malls, tabloids, and "so on ad nauseam." I shudder to think what life was like in the 1300s for the poor. What would the people who now eat

at McDonald's, shop at K-Mart, and read the *National Enquirer* have had to do for food, necessities, and entertainment back then? Does Mr. Lindsey himself not fall into the trap of romanticizing the feudal period when he criticizes "obsessive materialism and crass commercialism"?

And why is capitalism responsible for the "darker and dangerous side" of "commercial ambition"? Our society produces George Babbitts not because of capitalism, but because it has been stifling individualism and independent thought for most of this century. Capitalism provides individuals with freedom to provide for their own welfare. Teaching them ethics, self-esteem, and the meaning of life is the job of philosophers, not economists.

James Wm. Clement
Ithaca, NY

BRINK LINDSEY BUILDS on Abraham Maslow's concept of "self-actualization." Yet Maslow clearly identified the needs Lindsey describes as "esteem needs," not the higher self-actualization needs. Professional success matters little if one longs to be a poet or a musician. One "must be true to his own nature," Maslow wrote. He rejects as a failed "myth" the theory of "the Economic Man," that under capitalism, "individual happiness and welfare would be sure to result," instead calling for "the psychologically healthy man."

Lindsey also invokes Alexis de Tocqueville. While Tocqueville acknowledged the justness of a free society, he feared its spiritual consequences. He writes of the challenges extolled by Lind-

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sey that, "while man takes delight in this proper and legitimate quest for prosperity, there is a danger that in the end he may lose the use of his sublimest faculties and that, bent on improving everything around him, he may at length degrade himself....Therefore it is ever the duty of lawgivers and of all upright educated men to raise up the souls of their fellow citizens and turn their attention towards heaven."

Lindsey's thesis that free-market challenges satisfy "spiritual needs" only underscores his peculiar concept of the spiritual, a perspective not shared by most of the authors he cites. I too have savored the satisfaction of creating a complex computer program, as Lindsey describes, but the experience taught me nothing about purpose and virtue.

The Greek philosophers advised us to seek the good by pursuing truth, beauty, and justice. Capitalism leads us to seek profit, replacing the classic virtues with advertising, allure, and market share. This leaves most in a spiritual void, if not outright disgust. They stay whole only through truly spiritual pursuits such as philosophy, religion, and art. I support capitalism, but I don't entertain fanciful notions about its "spiritual" benefits.

*Stuart Reges
Washington, DC*

Mr. Lindsey replies: The correspondents let me have it from both sides. James Clement is upset that I lay crassness and Babbitttry at capitalism's doorstep. Meanwhile, Andrew Melnick and Stuart Reges scoff at the idea that there is anything uplifting and spiritual about life in commercial society. Though it's not familiar territory, I think I'll stay in the mushy middle. Capitalism, neither paradise nor hell, is an imperfect social order that nonetheless is superior to any known alternative.

Mr. Clement argues that miserable peasants of the 1300s wouldn't be so contemptuous of fast food, shopping malls, etc. But the issue isn't whether we should go back to the 14th century; it's whether we can make contemporary society, with all its blessings, a little less vulgar and mindless.

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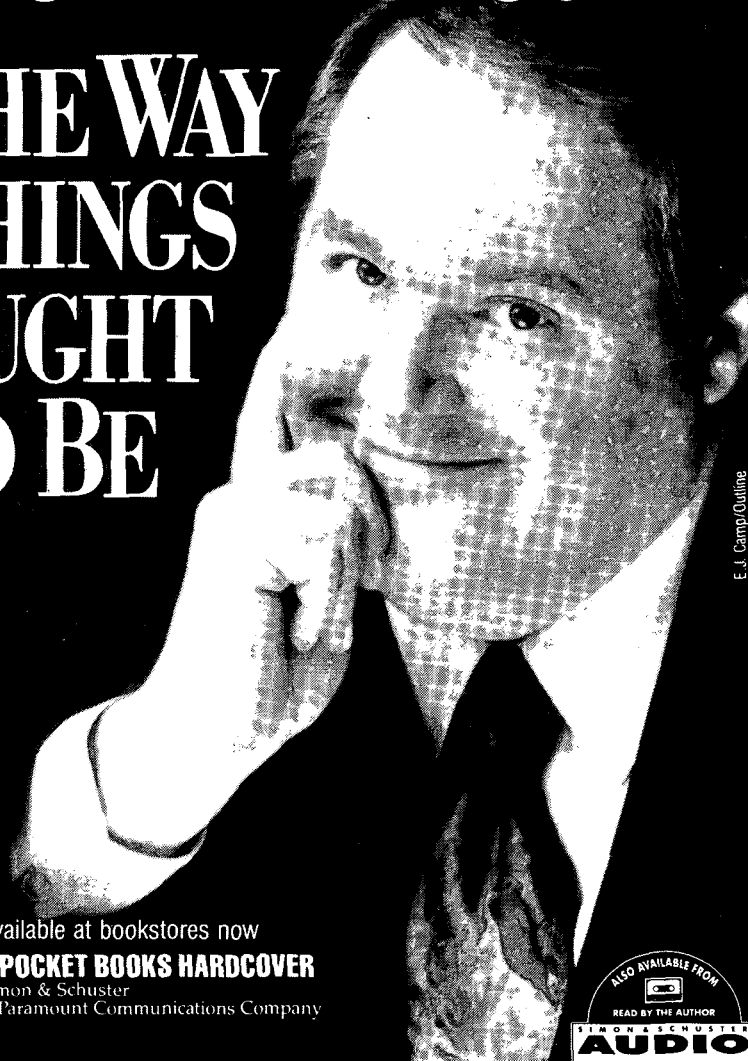
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Mr. Melnick points out that not all job-related challenges are rewarding challenges. That is true, but it is also true that not every moment in the day need be nirvana for you to consider your job, on the whole, fulfilling. Even people who love their work are undoubtedly familiar with tedium and stress, conflict and frustration.

That said, I admitted in my article that "fulfillment on the job is by no means universal, and may even be the exception rather than the rule." My modest point is only that capitalism—through the extravagant variety of jobs it creates and the ever-growing premium it places on creativity—offers the mass of people better opportunities to find challenging and rewarding work than either the traditional village economy it replaced or the socialist economy that tried and failed to replace it.

I explicitly based my discussion of self-actualization on Charles Murray's interpretation of Maslow, as opposed to Maslow's actual writings. Nonetheless, Maslow wrote that "self-actualization means experiencing fully, vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption." That captures perfectly what I meant by fulfilling work: work that (for some sufficient part of the time) you find so intrinsically enjoyable that you "lose yourself" in it.

Of course Tocqueville warned against the dangers of shallowness and pettiness under democratic capitalism; passages such as the one Mr. Reges cites can be found throughout *Democracy in America*, and on almost every page of volume two. While Tocqueville spoke out forcefully and eloquently about the free society's characteristic vices, it is clear to any careful reader that he believed freedom's virtues outweighed those vices. Of the ethos of a free society, he said: "Some individuals it lowers, but mankind it raises." Tocqueville saw the free society as an advance, albeit a problematic one, in the development of the human spirit.

Finally, it is Mr. Reges who has the peculiar, and impoverished, conception of the spiritual. For him the only "truly spiritual pursuits" are such things as philosophy, religion, and art; outside the

Platonic academy, apparently, there is only a "spiritual void." In other words, Mr. Reges can find no place for the spiritual in everyday life, in the life of family and work. To which I can only say: too bad for Mr. Reges.

Review of the Reviewer

Jacob Sullum is that rarest gem among book reviewers: one who is willing to give a fair reading to a book whose conclusions he does not endorse. His thoughtful review of my book *Against Excess* ("Bringing Up the Middle," July) is a model of open-mindedness, careful reading, and well-reasoned criticism. It also has the unusual virtue of giving its reader some notion of the tone and content of the book under review. Many thanks.

Mark Kleiman

John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA

Telling Secrets

I was deeply saddened to read Ruth Shalit's unkind attack on rape survivors and their advocates ("Radical Exhibitionists," July). By demeaning rape survivors who tell their stories as "crowd-pleasing exhibitionists," Ms. Shalit will shame women into silence, fear, and pain.

Ms. Shalit discusses one incident of a college student who later recanted a story she told at a Take Back the Night march. She then leaps to the dangerous conclusion that the phenomenon of telling itself is suspect. First, it is unclear why the Princeton student who initially told a detailed story of a brutal rape in a supportive environment later recanted after secret meetings with school officials. We know only that, facing a formal complaint from the alleged perpetrator and the dean of students' view that she had "compromised" the student's "reputation in the community," the woman recanted. Perhaps her story was true. Perhaps not. But

this issue has nothing to do with the importance of survivors' telling their stories.

Most rape victims suffer alone in silence, believing that they are responsible, that no one will believe them, that they will not be protected. They struggle to live with their secrets. Secrecy causes them psychological anguish, compounding and complicating their original injuries. Sometimes secrecy becomes too great to bear. If she cannot tell anyone what happened to her, the rape victim will lapse into severe depression, anxiety, and shame. Virtually all seriously consider suicide at some time after the abuse.

Telling is an essential act of healing for the survivor. It makes it possible for her to get understanding and help. It helps her admit to herself what happened. It allows her to see herself through the eyes of another, to feel compassion for herself. It can distance the survivor from her pain, and help her to grow into a strong, capable woman. In short, telling transforms her from a victim (defined by the act on the perpetrator) into a survivor (self-defined) and permits her to get on with her life.

Public telling, such as at a Take Back the Night March, is important for both the survivor and the audience. The survivor receives support and nurturance from an audience that believes her, and she feels empowered as a result of taking a horrifying life event and controlling it through her telling. Silent victims in the audience learn that they are not alone, that they too can survive. And perpetrators and would-be rapists lose their greatest protection, silence and fear.

Several years ago I revealed publicly that I am a rape survivor. Since that time, women have approached me everywhere I go to tell me their stories and to express their gratitude for my telling. They have told me they felt empowered, and they in turn have opened my eyes to the prevalence of sexual abuse and the importance of speaking our truths. I have never regretted my decision to tell, and it has resulted in only positive experiences for me.

Finally, it is truly disturbing that Ms. Shalit sees the telling of rape stories as somehow titillating ("sex sells," she says,

LETTERS

although Take Back the Night marches are not "selling" anything). Rape is an act of violence and power. Healthy adults hearing a story of sexual abuse are not "voyeurs" and do not experience sexual arousal. This dangerous view that any discussion of sexuality is taboo has damaged and silenced victims for far too long.

Gloria Allred
Los Angeles, CA

Ms. Shalit replies: Gloria Allred's stirring defense of "telling" does not address the premise of my article: that Take Back the Night, a forum intended to give rape survivors that opportunity, has been colonized by overzealous, partisan activists. My argument is not with survivors of rape who speak out but with protesters who, under the guise of advocacy, pressure these women to become oratorical showcases for campus radicalism—"lenses of oppression," to use their breathless phrase. I did not demean rape victims but criticized those activists who would increase the psychic burden of the already difficult task of speaking out publicly about rape.

While silencing survivors is precisely the opposite of what I intended to accomplish, I will admit to a certain ambivalence about Princeton's Take Back the Night march and other ceremonies of public "telling." In my article, I suggested that the hypnotic performance-art dynamic that makes Take Back the Night so compelling also makes it uncomfortably fetishistic, that the revolutionary enthusiasm which gives it political efficacy may also produce the occasional noble lie. I believe it is possible to embrace the spirit and meaning of Take Back the Night without abandoning one's capacity for critical thought about these issues.

Rather than arguing with Ms. Allred over the fine points of erotic psychology, I propose that the real issue is not voyeurism but the exploitation of voyeurism for smug doctrinal ends, a cynical use of victimization that holds up survivors as artifacts of America's "rape culture," declares rape the "crudest and most direct form of racism," and, without missing a beat, proclaims the need for campus speech codes.

▲ **WHY** do East Asian immigrants perform so well in America?

▲ **WHY** are two-thirds of America's black population middle class — while one-third remains in the ghetto?

▲ **WHY** do Hispanic Americans acculturate more slowly than most other immigrant groups?

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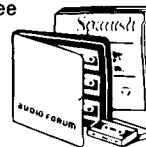
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Rape victims' advocates do their cause no good by treating the veracity of an accusation as an inconsequential side issue. "Perhaps her story was true. Perhaps not," Ms. Allred muses. I doubt the young male student who was accused and subsequently exonerated of accosting a classmate, dragging her to his room, raping her, beating her, and dumping her unconscious body in a stairwell would comprehend or appreciate Ms. Allred's polite suspension of judgment.

Double Trouble

Dirk Roggeveen's support for a second prosecution of the four Los Angeles police officers under federal statute ("Better Fed than Dead," Aug./Sept.) illustrates the politicization of the Rodney King case. The Supreme Court in the 1920s ruled that separate prosecutions by state and federal authorities under certain circumstances do not violate double-jeopardy prohibitions. Civil-liberties groups such as the ACLU have historically opposed this decision, until the King case.

If violations of state and federal statute occur simultaneously, the two cases should be filed in parallel. Charges should not be filed after an unsatisfactory outcome. This is sour-grapes justice, a double dip into the judicial system in an attempt to reach a predetermined result. It is also a racial prosecution, since these officers would not be retried on criminal charges if their victim had been white.

Karl Peterjohn
Wichita, KS

WHILE I CAN APPRECIATE and even agree with Dirk Roggeveen's view that federal prosecution of civil-rights violations by state agents is a necessary check on corrupt or reluctant local governments and juries, I am disturbed that he downplays the aspect of double jeopardy. The Fifth Amendment reads, in part, "nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb..." It does not continue "...except in the case of civil-rights violations."

The rights of all persons in our country would be better served if the federal courts tried all such cases, bypassing the local courts. This would avoid the double-jeopardy problem.

The proscription of double jeopardy is a basic protection for individuals against the state. Although the federal government may re prosecute these cases with good motives, it is the nature of government to oppress, and eventually such seemingly justified circumvention of constitutional protection will be abused.

Patrick Guthrie
Fayetteville, AK

Mr. Roggeveen replies: My article on federal prosecution of police brutality neither supported nor opposed such prosecution of the four LAPD officers. Since I have had no part in the federal investigation, I am not aware of the facts considered in the dual-prosecution decision in the Los Angeles case. The article only explained why such prosecutions generally are important to securing the rights of the citizenry against abuses of police power.

I am well aware of the liberty and justice interests that give rise to the concerns with dual prosecution of federal rights violations. I expect the Founders did not anticipate a large and far-reaching federal prosecutorial apparatus when they drafted the Fifth Amendment. Double jeopardy is a philosophical and legal issue that should continue to be debated despite the current status of the law. We must not ignore other liberty interests when considering the subject of double jeopardy in federal prosecution of civil-rights cases.

How Fierce?

In "Read Our Lips" (June), Stephen Moore mentioned that the "underdog" Oklahoma Taxpayers Union "overcame fierce opposition and big dollars" from the state's power brokers, including the media, in its effort to win passage of State Question 640, which requires that all future tax increases receive a "super-

majority" in the legislature or be approved by a vote of the people at the next general election.

Moore failed to include two critical points. First, *The Daily Oklahoman*, the ultra-right-wing newspaper with the largest circulation in the state (over 2 million readers in a state with a population of 3.2 million), was in favor of State Question 640, so much so that it ran frequent editorials urging passage, including one on the front page the day of the election. Although the television stations and the daily papers in Tulsa were opposed to S.Q. 640, Moore's reference to media opposition hardly rings true.

Second, proponents of S.Q. 640, including the Oklahoma Taxpayers Union, actually outspent their opponents, called Progress Oklahoma, by a large amount. Proponents of the measure spent \$699,373, while opponents spent \$309,000. So Moore's assertion about the opposition's "big bucks" was way off base as well.

Kirk A. Rodden
Professor of Political Science
and History
Murray State College
Tishomingo, OK

Mr. Moore replies: Kirk A. Rodden is wrong in one of his claims and misleading in the other. First, *The Daily Oklahoman* was the only major news outlet to support Question 640. In addition to the Tulsa papers, the Oklahoma Press Association opposed the initiative. According to Oklahoma Taxpayers Association President Dan Brown, "75 percent of the media was against Question 640." I would describe this as "fierce opposition."

Rodden claims that the supporters of Question 640 spent \$699,373 to win passage. According to the State Ethics Commission, the funding was closer to \$300,000. The source of Rodden's error was probably including the approximately \$400,000 cost of getting the initiative on the ballot. Nonetheless, I was wrong when I wrote that the taxpayer groups were outspent by the opposition. It turns out that opponents and proponents spent about \$300,000 each.

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Remote Controls



Donald Stedman using his pollution-detection device

California may soon take a big bite out of automotive pollution—and save businesses thousands of dollars in the process. A bill in the legislature would encourage a precedent-setting remote-testing program that might replace some of the nation's toughest emissions regulations.

California's Clean Air Act requires each of the state's regional air quality management districts to develop a pollution-reduction plan. The plan designed by the South Coast AQMD, which regulates the Los Angeles Basin, forces big employers to cut the number of miles their employees drive during rush hours. Companies that don't develop and implement mandatory car-pools or other trip-reduction schemes regularly get socked with \$5,000 fines.

But these trip-reduction plans don't target the largest cause of auto-related pollution—the tiny minority of drivers who operate the dirtiest cars.

Data gleaned from the 1987 Southern California Air Quality Study (SCAQS) show that cars may cause more than three-fourths of hydrocarbon emissions and 90 percent of all carbon-monoxide pollution in our cities. University of Denver chemistry professor Donald H. Stedman has developed a portable remote infrared sensor that can accurately measure those emissions from cars as they drive on city streets. (See "Going Mobile," Aug./Sept. 1990.)

Stedman has found that 10 percent of all cars cause 50 percent of the carbon-

monoxide pollution from cars; 10 percent of all drivers also cause more than half the auto-related hydrocarbons. (Many of these high emitters are the same cars.)

At a July SCAQS meeting, California Air Resources Board researchers Lowell Ashbrook and Douglas Lawson reported that Stedman's device correctly measures carbon-monoxide emissions 95 percent of the time and hydrocarbon emissions with 85-percent accuracy.

Yet federal and state regulators haven't approved remote testing as part of any pollution-reduction plan. Without these "clean-air credits," local pollution regulators have no incentive to use a technology, no matter how much it cuts smog.

This may soon change. A bill sponsored by state Sen. Gary K. Hart (D-Santa Barbara) would give businesses clean-air credits if they used the remote device to

test and repair their employees' cars. Firms could substitute remote testing for carpools, subsidies for employees to use mass transit, or other trip-reduction plans. The bill, which the AQMD supports, must pass both houses of the legislature. A vote should take place this fall.

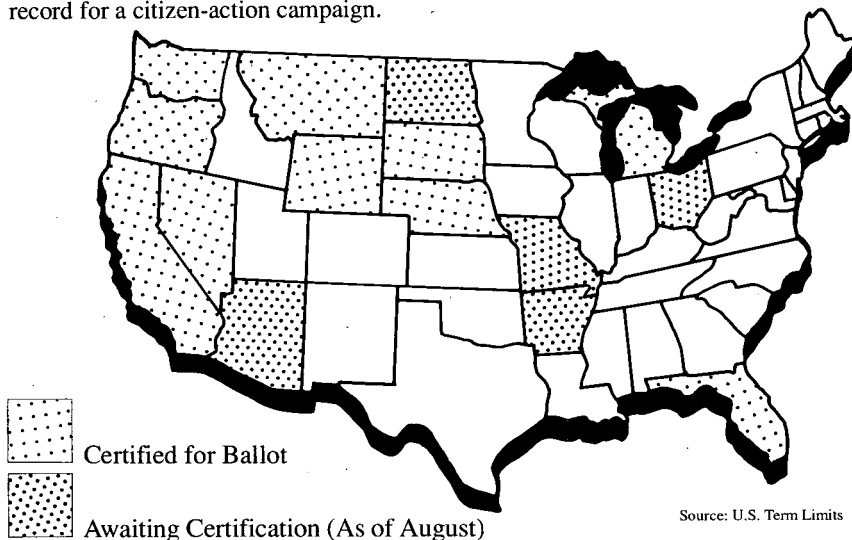
Hart's bill may bode well for remote testing nationwide. The Clean Air Act of 1990 will require employers in eight cities outside California to implement trip-reduction plans by the end of 1996. If remote testing earns clean-air credits, it could substantially cut pollution without huge costs or inconvenience to innocent drivers.

California is well-known for its tough and innovative pollution regulations. If remote testing can pass the scrutiny of the AQMD, regulators in Washington may have to follow suit.

—Rick Henderson

The States of Anger

Voters are angry with Congress this year. They keep reminding us by turning out incumbent after incumbent in primaries. But this November voters could strike their greatest blow yet against incumbents. Voters in as many as 15 states will have the opportunity to vote on ballot initiatives limiting congressional terms. Supporters of term limits have gathered 3.4 million signatures to get the various initiatives on ballots, a record for a citizen-action campaign.





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faced with ethical choices collectively
determine the hopes and quality of life
for everyone...it will be essential for people
in all walks of life to live by an environ-
mental ethic so that our world can be
brought back into balance.” —Robert Cahn



BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Check-Off Play? George Bush's debt-reducing check-off proposal is no gimmick. In *The Wall Street Journal*, the Heritage Foundation's Dan Mitchell notes that each tax dollar earmarked for debt reduction will also permanently cut federal spending by a buck. If every taxpayer took a full 10-percent check-off, spending and interest-payment cuts would balance the budget by 1997.



Common-Wealthy. Boris Yeltsin wants to create "millions of property owners, not just a handful of millionaires." Beginning October 1 the Russian government will give all citizens vouchers they can trade for shares in state-owned assets. Yeltsin will privatize most housing within two years and half of Russian industry by the end of 1995.

Driving Rein. Want to stalk somebody? In 48 states, if you get your target's license-plate number, the motor-vehicles department will sell you his address. (See "Secrets for Sale," Feb.) A bill sponsored by Rep. James Moran (D-Va.) would stop such sales of personal information without the driver's consent.

Grain Drain. Mother Nature may open more markets than Carla Hills. Last year's typhoons wiped out the Japanese rice harvest. Makers of sake, rice beer, and rice cakes now pay twice what they did last year for rice. *The New York Times* reports that these powerful firms may push the government to allow rice imports for the first time.

Liabilities

Freak Enterprise. Phony enterprise zones may replace military bases as the pork-barrel project every legislator wants. *The Wall Street Journal* cites Louisville, whose 45.7-square-mile "enterprise zone" is twice as large as Newark. It encompasses spiffy Standiford Airport and the University of Louisville campus—hardly pockets of "pervasive poverty."

Call Snooping. Bell Atlantic Corp. received 22,000 requests for its customers' telephone records from the FBI, IRS, and other government agencies last year. The company complied more than 90 percent of the time. In some cases, notes *The Washington Post*, Bell didn't inform its customers the government had their phone records.



Ticket Snub. Spectacor Management pulls out of its plan to privately renovate the Los Angeles Coliseum. (See "Just Privatize, Baby," Dec.) Spectacor hasn't sold enough \$90,000 luxury boxes and \$3,600 club seats to finance its \$116-million spruce-up job. "Because of current economic conditions," Spectacor partners tell the Coliseum Commission, "there is no longer a role for a for-profit developer."



Cold Comfort. Get your car's air conditioner recharged fast. Chlorofluorocarbons are being phased out; retail sales of freon (R-12 refrigerant) end November 1. *Consumers Research* reports that a freon substitute—R-134a—exists. But the refrigerants aren't interchangeable. Adapting a car air conditioner for R-134a may cost \$2,500.

—Rick Henderson

Red Tape, Green Money

Ever wonder why your local property taxes continue to climb? Part of the reason lies not in city hall but in Washington, D.C.

Columbus, Ohio, recently estimated the costs to the city of meeting federal environmental mandates. It found that the city devoted 10.6 percent of its 1991 budget, or \$62 million, to complying with federal environmental rules. It projected this amount would increase to 23.1 percent by the year 2000.

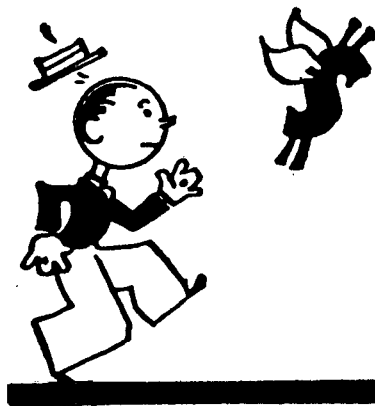
In all, the city found that the cost of complying with federal environmental rules was \$184 per household in 1991. It projected that figure to rise to \$466 (in constant 1991 dollars) by the year 2000.

And the city found that many of the rules it has to comply with have little relevance to the area's real environmental problems. For example, federal rules require the city to test for 52 different pesticides in its drinking water—including pesticides used only on pineapples and rice, neither of which is grown in Ohio.

"There's no rhyme or reason to it," Richard Hick, the city's budget manager, told *City & State*. "Only 16 of those pesticides are common in Ohio." Meanwhile, the city has identified 14 other pesticides not on the list that are common in Ohio and is testing for them.

"We want to test for what's actually in our watershed," says Hicks, "not waste our money testing for things we know aren't there."

—Charles Oliver



Voucher Venture

Sue public schools for malpractice? Disgusted with plummeting test scores and violence-ridden campuses, more than 150 low-income parents are doing just that. With the help of the Institute for Justice, a public-interest law firm in Washington, D.C., parents in Chicago and Los Angeles are suing their school districts for trapping their children in "an educational caste system."

The suits accuse the states of Illinois and California of failing to provide these inner-city children with the equal educational opportunities their state constitutions guarantee. The plaintiffs argue that any political or legislative remedies would take too long to help their children.

Chicago and L.A. public schools certainly have room to improve. During a typical year, roughly 1 in 50 L.A. public-school students is assaulted while attending school. Nearly half of the students drop out before graduation. In most Chicago public schools, more than half the students drop out before graduation. And those who

make it to their senior year and take college admission tests receive ACT scores that rank in the bottom 1 percent of the nation.

If successful, the suits would require the states to provide each plaintiff's school-aged child with a voucher equal to the amount of money the state government spends per student—about \$2,500. (Local school districts kick in another \$3,000 or so.) Each voucher could then be redeemed for tuition at the public or private school of the student's choice.

School board officials are skeptical. In a prepared statement, Illinois State Board of Education spokesperson Eugene Finley said, "The State Board believes that anything that would take money from public schools obviously wouldn't...serve the purpose of improving public schools."

Officials imply that more money alone would improve the quality of education at these schools. Yet the Chicago and Los Angeles public schools are hardly cash-starved. The Chicago school system boasts a \$2.33-billion budget, L.A. schools command \$3.9 billion, and both spend at least



Parents in L.A. and Chicago are seeking tuition vouchers in court.

\$5,000 per pupil, including state money.

A California voucher initiative failed to qualify for this November's ballot, placing the institute's suit in the spotlight. Clint Bolick, the institute's head litigator, says the odds of a legal victory on all counts are "maybe 50-50." Since many state constitutions guarantee universal access to a basic education, a favorable ruling in either Los Angeles or Chicago would reverberate across the nation. "The courts," notes Brookings Institution scholar John Chubb, "have traditionally been more open to disadvantaged groups than the political arena."

—Grant Thompson

Casualties of War

On any given day in 1991, five out of every nine young black men who live in Baltimore were in some trouble with the law. A study released in September by the Alexandria, Virginia-based National Center on Institutions and Alternatives says the drug war is largely responsible for this state of affairs.

The NCIA study reports that on an average day, 56 percent of the city's 61,000 black men between the ages of 18 and 35 were either in prison, on parole or probation, being sought on arrest warrants, or awaiting trial. An April NCIA study found 42 percent of Washington, D.C.'s young black males in legal trouble. Timothy J. Roche, project director at NCIA, says "these patterns mirror other cities with large minority populations."

Nearly 13,000 persons were arrested

for possessing, selling, or making drugs in Baltimore last year—more than three times the number arrested for committing violent crimes. This represented 24 percent of all arrests. The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that whites make up 77 percent of drug users, blacks 15 percent, and Latinos 8 percent—similar to the racial composition of the country as a whole. But last year in Baltimore, where blacks constitute 60 percent of the population, 86 percent of those arrested for nonviolent drug offenses were black.

That a disproportionate number of blacks would be arrested for selling drugs isn't surprising: Inner-city neighborhoods have a higher black population than the suburbs, and urban drug deals often take place on street corners or in other conspicuous areas. But the figures are startling nonetheless: Of those Baltimore juveniles arrested for the sale or manufacture of drugs, 13 were white, more than 1,300 black.

The study indicts drug warriors for

incarcerating nonviolent drug users and street-corner dealers while ignoring such alternative sanctions as drug treatment, victim restitution, and mentoring programs. Roche also says such politically popular law-enforcement tools as mandatory minimum sentences don't let agents of the criminal-justice system "tailor sentences to meet the severity of the offense and the characteristics of the offenders." (See Trends, February.)

The release of the study led Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke to again call for decriminalizing drug use. "We have to take the profit out of drug trafficking," Schmoke told the *Baltimore Sun*. "I know people will say 'there he goes again' talking about decriminalization, but the policies that we have aren't working."

While Roche believes drug legalization should be considered, he hopes the debate over legalization won't deflect attention from the reforms his group seeks.

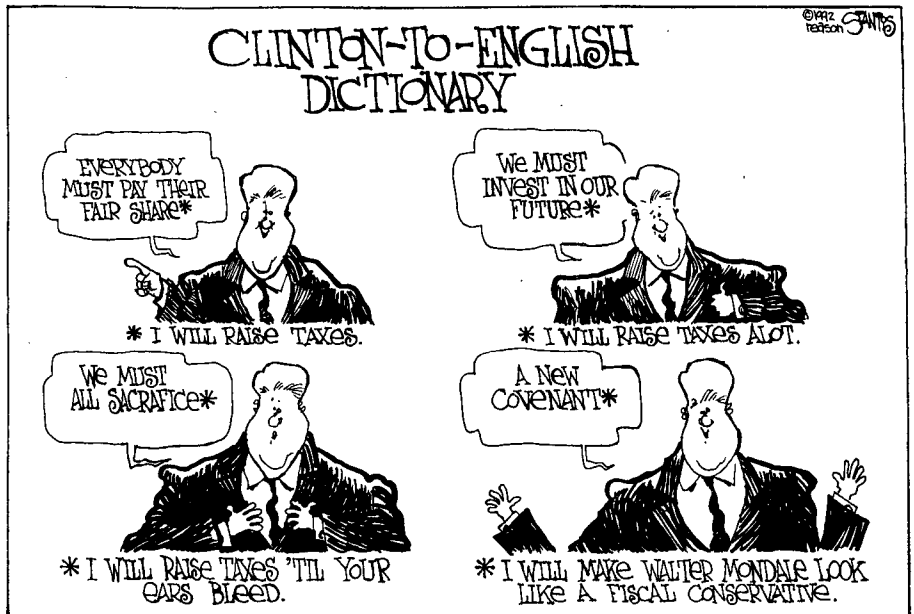
—Rick Henderson

Gil DiNello, a member of the Michigan Senate, is a longtime member of the National Rifle Association and has consistently opposed all efforts to regulate firearms. So why did he introduce legislation that would ban high-powered water guns? Says DiNello, "Real guns are intended to kill. This is intended as a toy."

In an effort to attract tourists, North Korea is offering a honeymoon travel package, including visits to a maternity hospital and an irrigation dam. And who says there's no room for romance in the communist world?

Donald Wildmon's American Family Association is upset with Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, prosecutor Morley Swingle. An officer of the local AFA chapter tried to get Swingle to bring charges against video stores renting adult tapes. But, reports *Adult Video News*, Swingle chose first to find out what community standards were. He polled 237 people who had just served as jurors. When over 70 percent said that Americans should be free to watch whatever they want in their own homes and that stores should be free to provide the material, Swingle declined to prosecute any of the stores. Rather than thanking him for saving the county the \$25,000 it would cost to try a case it probably couldn't win, the AFA criticized Swingle for spending \$137.46 on the poll.

In Southern California, a battle between environmentalists and animal-rights activists has turned ugly. The state has begun trapping and killing foxes in the Ballona Wetlands. This has met with the approval of local environmental groups, who claim that the swiftly reproducing foxes, which were accidentally introduced into the area by man, are decimating endangered species of birds and



generally wreaking havoc on the ecosystem. Animal-rights activists object to the killings—of foxes, that is. They've been leaving death threats on the answering machines of local environmentalists who support the program.

Like most federal agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency maintains a fleet of cars for official use. And like most agencies, the EPA is partial to luxury cars—Lincoln Town Cars and Crown Victorias, in particular. In fact, the EPA fleet averages only 6.3 miles per gallon, less than 25 percent of federal fuel-efficiency standards.

Texas Republicans countered Bill Clinton's August bus tour through their state by hiring an Elvis impersonator to trail him. The faux King set up rival rallies where he sang and served bologna sandwiches. The Republicans did this to show that Clinton had no right to claim the mantle of Elvis. They have a point. Elvis served in the Army, kept his wife at home, and while he, too, may have never inhaled, Elvis swallowed more than his share of pills.

Senate Chaplain Richard Halverson opened a Senate session earlier this year with this prayer: "Gracious Father, investigative reporting seems epidemic in an election year—its primary purpose to defame political candidates.... Eternal God, help these self-appointed 'vacuum cleaner' journalists to discover how unproductive and divisive their efforts are." Apparently, the chaplain memorized the first rule of public speaking: Know your audience.

In a departure from its usual policy, the Justice Department has decided not to seize the car or home of Leslie Cayer Ohta under federal forfeiture laws, even though her son was allegedly dealing drugs out of them. Ohta, an assistant U.S. attorney, heads up the department's seizure operations in Connecticut.

Charles and Glenda Bishop of Cedartown, Georgia, haven't been so lucky: Despite a court order to do so, Polk County Sheriff Jack Kirkpatrick refuses to return \$44,000 he seized from the couple in a failed drug investigation.

—Charles Oliver

Gorgeous San Francisco Mint

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Why Mint State San Francisco Mint Morgan Dollars are a **Bargain Right Now**

by Patrick A. Heller

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A BETTER CLASS OF SLEAZE

BY TODD SEAVEY

Living in New York City gives you many chances to see just how yucky some of the results of a free press can be. A friend of mine recently expressed a desire to visit the city and, while here, see "where the pornography is sold." This is sort of like going to Paris and asking where the Frenchmen are kept or going to Seattle and asking where the espresso is.

Where isn't there pornography in New York? Even pure-minded folk like my friends and I find ourselves forced by New York street ads to ask questions like "What is lap dancing?" (The first time I saw that term, incidentally, it was spelled with two *ps*, leading to speculation that a caribou might be involved.)

This may come as a shock, but I get the impression that a lot of this pornography stuff is *really dirty*. It's understandable that many people have a hard time feeling the world would be a poorer place without films like *Loving Lesbians* and *The Sperminator*.

Another friend of mine finds that as part of his basic cable package here in Manhattan he gets a few hours of adult material every night on the "commercial use" station, Channel 35. We stole a few guilt-wracked glimpses. I shouldn't have been surprised that, instead of beautiful, erotic imagery, the channel featured much that is grotesque or laughable or both, such as the producer addressing viewers while sitting on a toilet, ugly guys spanking each other, leather-clad dominatrices advertising their phone services with appeals such as "Call me now, you worthless piece of ****," and so on.

So here's my concern: If smut is seen as unethical, there's always the danger that our most upstanding citizens will be soft on free speech. But how can smut be seen as morally aboveboard when it's so



defiantly, aggressively sleazy?

Mind you, I don't think the viewer-cum-voyeur who watches pornography is doing anything immoral. This stuff may have a dementing effect, though, if only because it's already considered outside the bounds of decent society and therefore is produced in a spirit of surrender to degradation.

When a segment on the aforementioned Channel 35 starts with a billy club-wielding police officer yelling "No peeing in public!" at a semi-clad woman, you know 1) it's time to avert your eyes and 2) the artistic credo in operation is something like "How low can we go?" rather than "How can we best instantiate Beauty?"

Perhaps there's a Catch-22 here. Pornography will only be accepted by mainstream society when it stops being so perverse and will only stop being so perverse when it is accepted by mainstream society.

I thought I saw a chance for conservative acceptance of smut one year ago. Back during the large-breasts-and-penises phase of Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court confirmation hearings, when he was accused of pornography consumption as well as sexual harassment, I was hoping

his conservative allies on the Senate Judiciary Committee might defend his right to porn. Instead we heard arguments such as Sen. Orrin Hatch's that there may be people as perverted as Anita Hill alleges Thomas is, "but surely they are in insane asylums." Now, I would not suggest that Republicans leap to the defense of sexual harassment. Still, it would have been neat if Thomas had said he did talk about Long Dong Silver and pubic-haired Coke cans, but not in a harassing context.

It would have been a valuable learning experience for the whole nation to see conservatives defending the right to smut and—perhaps more importantly—the right to make crude jokes. The traditional association of conservatives with censorship and liberals with free speech would have been reversed much as it was during the free-speech-on-campus debate. We might then have seen a grand alliance of libertarians, conservative Sunday school teachers, and the decadent right-wingers P. J. O'Rourke calls "pants-down Republicans." Then Dick Boddie, who nearly became the Libertarian Party nominee for the '92 presidential race, could have led this coalition to the White House, buoyed by the support of hordes of adult-movie fans operating under the assumption that "Dick Body" must be a retired porn star.

Until then, pornographers might want to ward off censors with humor, which seemed to work well during the P.C. wars. While renting wholesome films in my local video store, I've noticed titles that even the most puritanical prosecutor would feel silly attacking. *Butt Boys in Space* ("Blasting off for Uranus!") may be a step in the right direction.

Todd Seavey is a writer in New York City.

TOM DALY