

that Theodore Bernstein, who deplored many of these confusions in *The Careful Writer* (SR, July 17, 1965), was RHD's consultant on usage. *Like* as a conjunction, which is O.K. with W3, is here described as "nonstandard," but *quote* as a noun is acceptable. So is *wise* as a suffix, though RHD does not go so far as W3, which offers *stylewise* as a respectable word. RHD cannot be regarded as the ultimate authority on usage—not by any means—but dictionaries can be worse, as W3 proves.

At the press conference Robert Bernstein said: "If you compare this volume in size and scope to other reference works, we think you will decide that if it's as good as we claim it's a tremendous bargain." It isn't anywhere near so good, with or without italics, as "they" claim, but it is a bargain. It is well printed, so that even the small type is legible; it is nicely bound, and it is not impossibly heavy. The pronunciation key is simpler and easier to use than W3's, and is given at the bottom of every other page. RHD has faults aplenty, some of which I have tried to point out; but W3, though not the calamity some of its critics have maintained, is far from flawless. W3 is better in some ways; RHD is better in others, and it is a good bit cheaper. This is a book—as I hope it's unnecessary to say—every word of which I haven't even tried to read. I have simply applied such tests as might serve to indicate what the purchaser will get and won't get for his money, and I conclude that he'll get quite a lot.

—GRANVILLE HICKS.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 1211

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 1211 will be found in the next issue.

FSCUZVCWB ZQ DAAX EX IQEY-

HBA CU BQQN XYHIZCIA OQY

FSCUZVCWB. —SHUDCWU

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 1210

A deaf woman would be displeased at your shouting if she were conscious of it.

—STENDHAL.

LETTERS TO THE Book Review Editor



Whose Territory?

EVEN WHEN I AGREE with Robert Ardrey's *The Territorial Imperative* [SR, Sept. 17], the way he drives his thesis to large generalized conclusions and then applies the conclusions to concrete political situations seems to me unscientific and dangerous. . . . Another recent book by a true scientist, *On Aggression*, by Konrad Lorenz, seems to me sounder, its animal stories more believable, its wisecracks fewer. . . . He clarifies well the various ways in which aggressive impulses are deflected, to allow the species to survive—except for the species *Homo Sapiens*.

Fighting in defense of a territory (Ardrey's prime thesis) is indeed natural, but it may be difficult to identify the territory. Who is the rightful possessor of Cyprus, for example?

MARIAN TYLER CHASE.

Georgetown, Conn.

IT IS A GREAT MISFORTUNE for the clarification of our perplexity in history that modern anthropology, biology and psychology still start their premises from the Aristotelian obsession that man represents an animal set afoot with political impulses and objectives. For in this way they cannot help but conclude that if historic man is an intelligent brute how much more of a beast must he have been in his ancient state of life? . . . These disciplines could render essential assistance to the investigation by furnishing all the conceivable evidence to the contrary. That is, by attesting to the fact that in all the vast beyond of our recorded time no reliable proof can be found with which scientifically to support the assumption that man is an aggressor by nature, indeed, a born killer. . . .

Man strives not for the control of his allegedly inherited "evil instincts." In truth, he strives for the riddance of his acquired historical impulses. For—Freedom from Politics in its largest sense.

KARL OSKAR PISK.

Seattle, Wash.

ANIMALS SELDOM KILL their own species because various inhibiting mechanisms, rituals and ceremonies prevent this. Ritualized contests decide which animal is stronger without injury to the weaker. *E.g.*, rival rattlesnakes push with their heads until one gives way; they do not use their formidable biting power. Evolution has achieved this for the survival of each species. . . .

As soon as man invented weapons and no longer was fighting solely with parts of his own body and meeting rivals face to face, he was no longer protected by his own "social instincts" that guard most animals from killing off their own kind. His powers of thought, so much greater than those of other animals, did develop moral responsibility, but social and technological changes have come so fast that his natural instincts

and inhibitions have difficulty in keeping pace.

CORA WELLMAN.

Milford, N.Y.

Immoral Flowering

FAR FROM BEING "a slice of childhood memory" slapped "between two great hunks of political sermon before serving it up," Han Suyin's *A Mortal Flower* [SR, Sept. 24] is a frank revelation to the entire white race, which for several centuries dominated, oppressed, and degraded the nonwhite races and even considered it was justified in doing so in the name of Christianity. *A Mortal Flower*, *The Crippled Tree*, and the other volumes to follow in the series should be "must" reading for every person with an undiluted white skin. It might help to reestablish in some of us a proper sense of historical perspective and racial conscience—something deficient in our race since Cortez began plundering the New World. Was it really an accident of history that the first atomic bomb was used by a white nation against a nonwhite nation?

LAWRENCE H. BATTISTINI.

East Lansing, Mich.

Misidentified

ALEXANDER CALDER, the noted sculptor and painter, whose book *Calder: An Autobiography with Pictures* will be published Nov. 16 by Pantheon Books, is incorrectly identified as "Thomas" Calder in SR, Oct. 1.

CAROL HILL.

New York, N.Y.

Fusillade on Firearms

I KNOW OF NO FACTS that support Hal Lavine's charge in his review of *The Right to Bear Arms* [SR, Aug. 27] that the NRA ". . . assiduously has spread the misconception that it (the Second Amendment) also protects the right of teen-age hopheads to carry pistols," or that ". . . The reason for the NRA's attitude is simple greed. . . ." In fact I find the NRA most often on the side of good law enforcement concerning guns.

AUSTIN J. MACINNIS.

Los Angeles, Calif.

IT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE that NRA has opposed all bills. It is actively working with legislators and has supported the Sikes (H.R. 14268) and Hayden (S. 3369) bills as well as the Casey bill.

L. A. KING.

New Concord, Ohio

THE REALITIES OF THE DODD BILLS are that they would profit my business as a local licensed store-front gun dealer most enormously—up to a point. Dodd's proposals would dry up all sources of supply of guns except through the local gun dealer. . . .

(Continued on page 62)



Lillian Smith: 1897-1966

By GEORGE P. BROCKWAY

LILLIAN SMITH was a great writer. She was a master of four genres—the novel, the parable, the essay, and the oration—and was a fascinating practitioner of several others, not the least of which was the personal letter.

Like all great artists she was inevitably ahead of her day. At the time of its publication *Strange Fruit* was attacked by some for its sensationalism and dismissed by others as merely a very good problem novel. Twenty-two years later, when the sensations have become commonplace and the problem at least recognized as worthy of solution, the novel stands forth for what it is—a tragedy that can speak to all men everywhere, a work of range and depth and power with few equals in contemporary literature.

Similarly, *Killers of the Dream*, thought in 1949 to be sensation-mongering because of its linkage to sin and sex and segregation, is today the acknowledged—or, often, the unacknowledged—source of much of our thinking about race relations. Without its perceptions the present posture of affairs could hardly be understood—and, it should be added, could not have been achieved.

Everything Lillian Smith wrote was informed by a profound psychological insight that was at the same time a profound moral insight. In *Killers of the Dream* she put it this way: "I began to understand slowly at first, but more clearly as the years passed, that the warped, distorted frame we have put around every Negro child from birth is around every white child also. Each is on a different side of the frame but each is pinioned there. And I knew that what cruelly shapes and cripples the person-

George Brockway is president of W. W. Norton Company, which publishes Lillian Smith.

"You Do It Because You Love Somebody"

ality of one is as cruelly shaping and crippling the personality of the other."

This is an extraordinarily powerful idea. She herself would not have said so; but it is nothing less than an extension, a clarification, a reinforcement, indeed (it is not too much to say) an authorization of the Golden Rule. No longer a sort of balance between competing self-interests, the Rule comes to read: What I do to others, I do to myself. The Golden Rule permits one to hope that one's fellow man may not be able to return a disfavor; as restated it is inexorable: If I diminish my neighbor, I diminish myself; we are both pinioned to the same frame.

Lillian Smith came at this idea from many directions—from literature, from psychoanalysis, from history, from travel, from the religion in which she was raised. Not least did she come at it from her experience of living. In *Killers of the Dream* she wrote that "the mainstream of art has always involved itself with the profound experiences of its age and men's commitment to them." This she deeply believed and resolutely acted upon, often at great risk, always at great cost in the limited time and energy that she had for writing.

In a letter to her publisher she said: "You do what you must do, what seems right, what would make you despise yourself if you didn't do. Or you do it because you love somebody, or a lot of people, so much that you just have to do it. Then when things happen, you stay as steady as you can and that's that."

For fourteen years Lillian Smith fought cancer. Her life was a round of operations, cobalt treatments, hormone treatments. She never gave up. It was perhaps in tribute to her fight that the Atlanta hospital where she died announced that the cause of death was "cardiac arrest."

During those fourteen years she suffered another blow that would have defeated almost anyone else. Her home was destroyed by fire. One completed novel was lost, along with substantial parts of others and her voluminous correspondence.

Yet after that disaster she published four new books, new editions of two others, and wrote enough articles and

speeches to make a pile of manuscript three or four thousand pages high. "One wants to yowl, sometimes," she wrote a friend, "at this never-ending struggle. It has to be; God, I wish I were as courageous as my friends think I am. But when I can work I am happy and content."

Another time she wrote: "But life opened for me, too. . . . The experience of facing my awesome anxiety, then the things you go through again and again (not too painful, remember; painful, yes, but not unendurably so); then death, learning not to fear it really, any more; learning that pain can actually be forgotten especially when one is writing or concerned about others; learning that there is a strange energy inside one that pulls pulls pulls. . . . Yesterday I felt for several hours that I am not going to make it much longer; and the old sadness (but not terror) swept over me; it is really nearly over, I felt. Yet I got up, moved around, messed around with Christmas. . . . I was able to throw off the false or true premonition."

She made it for nine, almost ten, months longer; but she is gone now. She is mourned.

AT HER REQUEST, passages from Lillian Smith's *The Journey* were read at the memorial service for her on September 30. The following is the last passage of the ceremony, and of the book:

"A century from now, men may think it strange that we so long spoke of our times as the age of anxiety; that we let the greed of ordinary men and the power-lust of dictators and demagogues get out of bounds even for a brief span of years; for parallel with the anxiety and the terror and the inquisitors and exploiters and the awful poverty and ignorance there is another way of life building firmly, steadily, swiftly on scientific facts and technics and on men's newly discovered humility and dignity and on their concern for each other. . . .

"I believe future generations will think of our times as the age of wholeness: when the walls began to fall; when the fragments began to be related to each other; when man learned finally