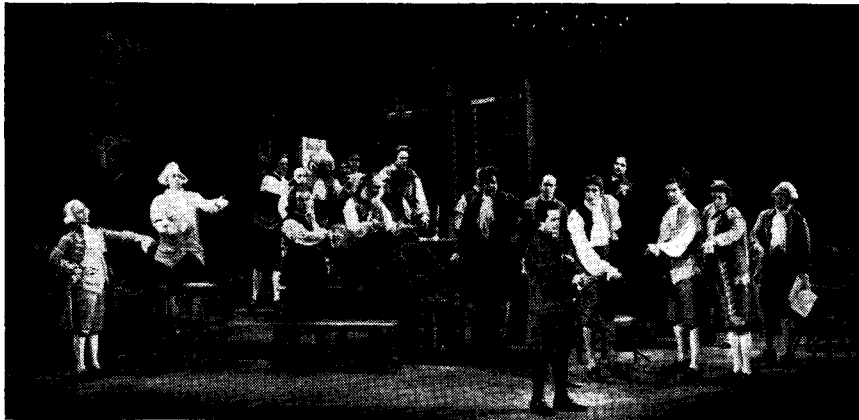


The Theater

Henry Hewes



—Martha Swope.

William Daniels as John Adams in *1776*—"a narrow victory of good storytelling over much that is ordinary."

History à la mode

WOULD IT BE inaccurate to call the new musical hit *1776* Broadway's answer to *Tom Paine*? For whereas last season's Off Broadway treatment of the American Revolution was an enormity full of sprawling, loosely connected images, *1776* appears to be a neatly calculated dramatization showing us how an unlikely mixture of widely differing founding fathers were persuaded to come to unanimous agreement about seceding from the Crown.

The new musical sets out almost like an opera, with the obnoxiously zealous John Adams singing an angry complaint about his colleagues who have been sitting in Philadelphia doing nothing. To

confirm his point, a motley group of some twenty representatives (scaled down from the actual fifty-six) chant about the gloomy time they are having in Philadelphia, which, even in those days, it would seem was not regarded as one of our swinging cities.

Fortunately, however, witty and wise Benjamin Franklin is on hand to save the day. He sees that there is an outside chance of manipulating this wrangling group of politicians into coalition, and the rest of the show is mainly an amusing and fascinating history lesson. The humor varies from Franklin's sophisticated epigrams to sight gags, such as one in which a downtrodden corporal keeps slouching unceremoniously while carrying a message from General Washington. Some of the fun comes from what I can only describe as very un-Hewes-like behavior on the part of North Carolina's Joseph Hewes, who keeps yielding to South Carolina on every decision. The New York representative is also the butt of jokes, and it seems that any reference to the inability of the New York State Legislature to be decisive strikes present-day New Yorkers as hilarious.

Of course, the most entertaining ingredient of any historical drama is its debunking of history. And the show's best number, "But, Mr. Adams," humorously replays the process whereby an unwilling Thomas Jefferson got stuck with a job nobody wanted, namely the writing of the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson, it is postulated, had a stronger motive for not wanting the task: he had planned a trip home to be with his young wife for the first time in six months. The spectacle of poor, sexually frustrated Tom wrestling unsuccessfully

with his lead sentence is droll. And the thought that this great document might never have existed, if Mrs. Jefferson hadn't shown up for one wild night in Philadelphia, is a delightfully modern irony.

The musical is less successful in its attempts at seriousness, and perhaps it should not have tried to go any deeper than it does in the number "The Egg." In this, Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson debate which bird to use as a symbol of the new country, thereby leading us to wonder whether our national character would have been different had they casually chosen the dove or the turkey instead of the eagle. But we are not prepared for the intense emotion of an aria in which a southerner upbraids the North for the duplicity of operating slave ships while professing to want plantation owners to give up their slaves. A better exploration would have been something that delved into the reasoning whereby Jefferson removed the Declaration's explicit stand against slavery. For the irony of this compromise is that although it advanced the cause of freedom, it failed to leap forward far enough to prevent the tragic Civil War. Similarly, what may have been the author's sincere effort to state an attitude, an anti-war dirge, sung by a soldier, only slows the proceedings. And Abigail Adams's remote ballads seem unnecessary telepathy.

Ultimately, however, the evening does eke out a narrow victory of good storytelling and good acting over much that is ordinary and nominal. Peter Stone's book is sure-handed. Sherman Edwards's music and lyrics generally reinforce the plot, and one cannot help but admire the nerve of any lyricist who tries to rhyme "etiquette," "predicate," and "Connecticut." Patricia Zipprodt's costumes are not only attractive, but help distinguish the widely varying personalities of the congressmen who wear them. Jo Mielziner uses subtle lighting effects to give constant variety to what is basically a unit set. And Peter Hunt's formal staging somehow manages not to become boringly repetitive over an evening that is presented without an intermission.

Howard Da Silva makes a lively and playful Franklin. William Daniels is convincingly obdurate as Adams. Ken Howard captures the youthfulness of Jefferson. Clifford David emerges as a fiery Edward Rutledge. And these performances are firmly supported by a cast that includes Paul Hecht, Ronald Holgate, and Roy Poole.

While *1776* virtually does without dancing and catchy tunes, the musical comedy elements that do remain permit it to present a pleasantly didactic scenario that might not have been accepted as enthusiastically had it been offered as a straight play.

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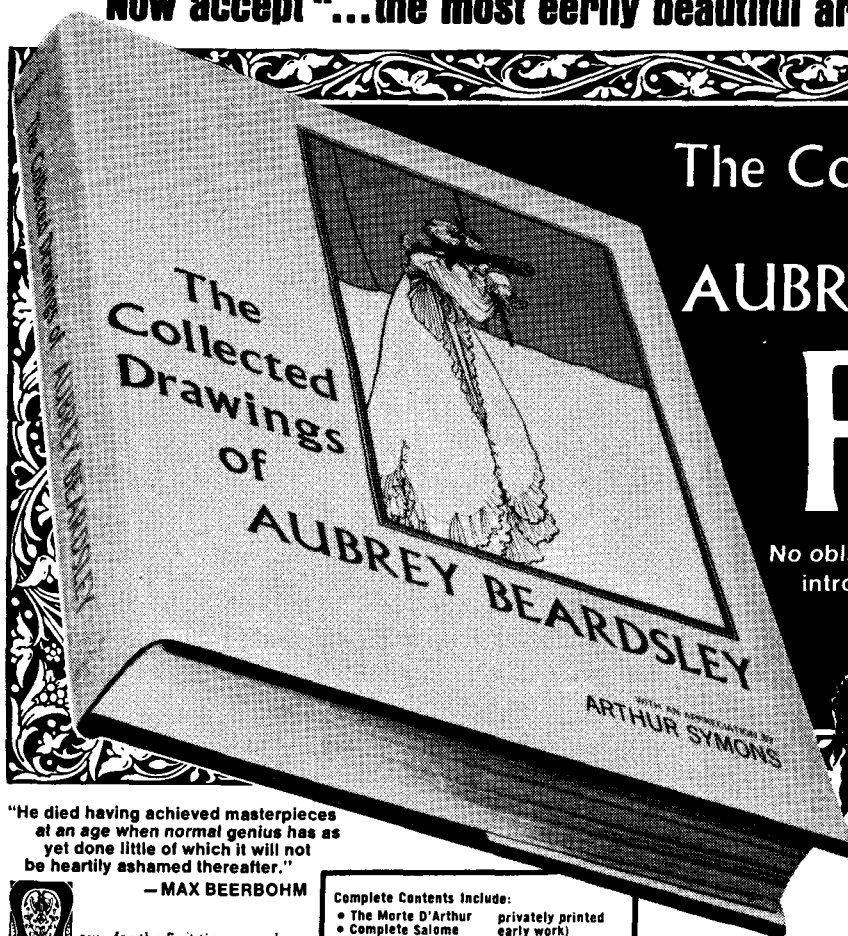
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Why and How I Work

By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

WHAT has made me work? When I was a child at school, the spur that I was first conscious of was anxiety. I was anxious always to be well ahead in puzzling out the meaning of passages of Greek and Latin that I might be called on to construe in class. I am still anxious to arrive well in time for catching trains and planes. This has its disadvantages. It uses up a lot of nervous energy that might be put to more positive use; and sometimes I carry my beforehandness to a point at which it catches me out. When I arrive at the station forty minutes ahead of my train's departure time, the porter will not wait till the train comes into the station; so I have to put my luggage on board myself. Something like that happened to me once when I was called on to construe a difficult passage of Thucydides. I had prepared it carefully; but that had been several weeks ago; and I had now far outshot the point that we had reached in class, and my mastery of this passage had grown rusty.

Anxiety can be a bad thing if it goes to these extremes, and it is never a good thing in itself. It is, though, a powerful driving force; so its drawbacks may be outweighed by its results.

A second spur that has pricked me on has been, and still is, conscience. My grandfather on my father's side came off a farm within sight of the tower of St. Botolph's Church in Boston, England. The puritan conscience was perhaps part of my father's family's social heritage. In my attitude toward work I am American-minded, not Australian-minded.

This article is published by special arrangement with Oxford University Press, which is issuing *Experiences*, by Arnold J. Toynbee on April 10. The book serves as the basis for the accompanying article. Copyright © Oxford University Press, 1969.

To be always working, and still at full stretch, has been laid upon me by my conscience as a duty. This enslavement to work for work's sake is, I suppose, irrational; but thinking so would not liberate me. If I slacked, or even just slackened, I should be conscience-stricken and therefore uneasy and unhappy, so this spur seems likely to continue to drive me on so long as I have any working power left in me.

Anxiety and conscience are a powerful pair of dynamos. Between them, they have ensured that I shall work hard, but they cannot ensure that one shall work at anything worthwhile. They are blind forces, which drive but do not direct. Fortunately, I have also been moved by a third motive: the wish to see and understand. I did not become conscious of this motive till some time after I had become aware of the other two; but I think that, before I became conscious of it, it must have been moving me, and this since an early stage of my life. Curiosity is a positive motive for action. It is also one of the distinctive characteristics of human nature as contrasted with the natures of non-human animals. All human beings have curiosity in some degree; and we also all have it about things that are of no practical use—or that seem, at least, to be of no practical use at the time when one's curiosity is first excited by them. However, this universal human quality is stronger in some people than it is in others. This is one of the points in which human beings differ from each other markedly. The charge of curiosity with which I have been endowed happens to be high. This is a gift of the gods, and I am heartily grateful for it.

When I am asked, as I sometimes am, why I have spent my life on studying history, my answer is "for fun." I find this an adequate answer, and it is cer-