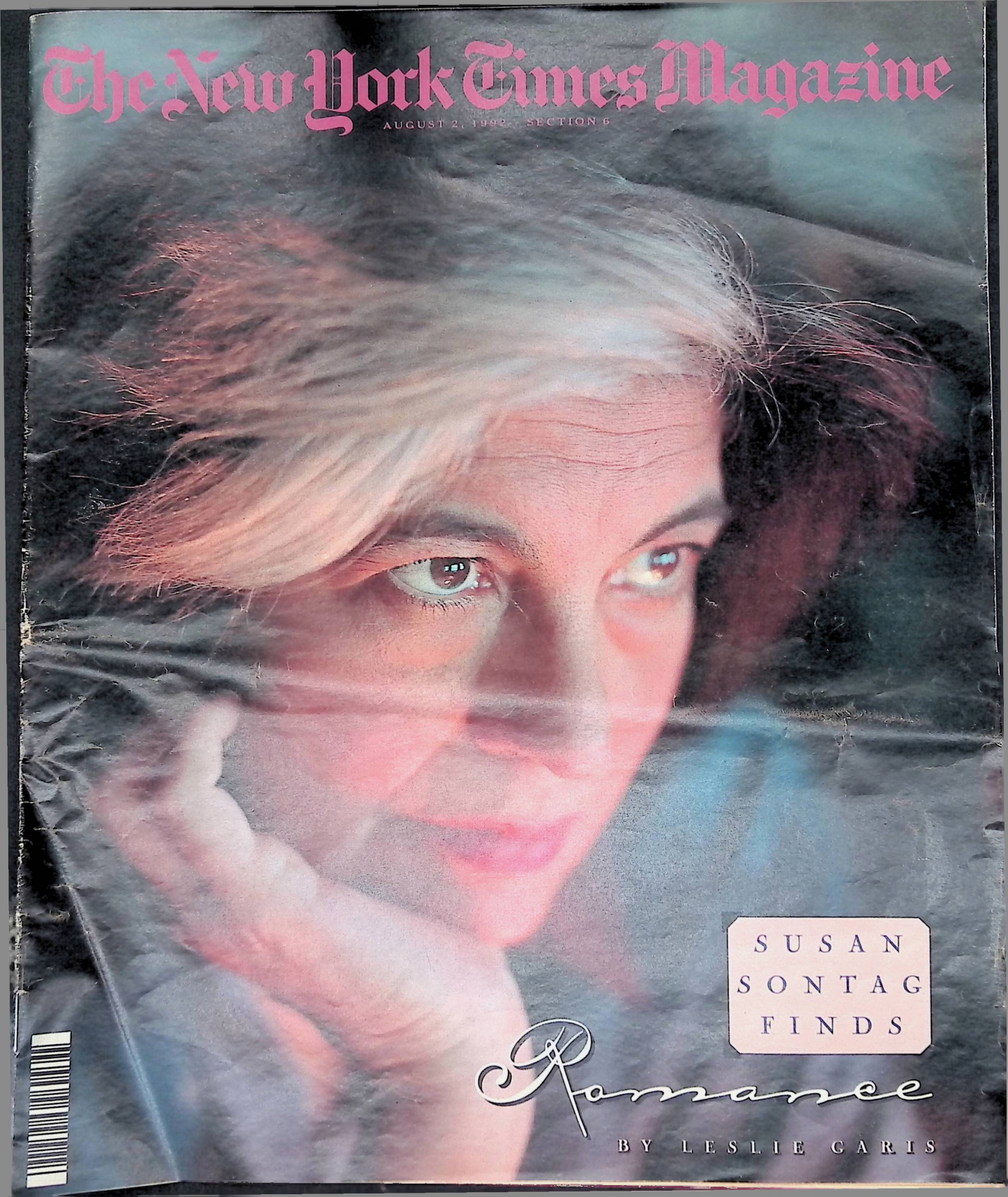
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AUGUST 2, 1992 · SECTION 6



SUSAN SONTAG FINDS Romance

BY LESLIE GARIS

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AUGUST 2, 1992

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Susan Sontag Finds Romance

Leaving behind the innovative essays that made her reputation, a celebrated intellectual discovers a 'delirium of pleasure' in releasing a flood of fictional passions about the 18th century.

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Hostile Takeover: The Republican Raid on Massachusetts

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Susan Sontag. Photograph by Gregory Heisler for The New York Times.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GIVE THIS DOG A JOB

Could someone please give Donald McCaig some more sheep ("Give This Dog a Job," July 5)? He obviously has too little to do on his farm if he has time to come to New York and watch us walk our dogs.

MELISSA WHITE
New York, N.Y.

Pet dogs do not need to be given a job because they already have one. Their job is to love and help protect their masters. In return, they receive their masters' love and protection. Research suggests that pet ownership, and in particular dog ownership, yields many health and psychological benefits. Dog ownership has been found to buffer stress and may even boost immunological resistance to disease.

Dogs are supportive in times of stress, act to reduce tension among family members, make people feel safer in their homes and serve as encouragements to their owners to get exercise from walking. Perhaps, most important, dogs help make humans feel more humane — a fact that may elude those intent on treating animals as "beasts of burden."

RONALD JAY COHEN
Spring Valley, N.Y.

My dogs do not have a job, nor do I. I have been "let go" and live in a modest New York City walk-up with Teddy, a medium-white mutt, and Sally, a Scottish terrier. We do not shear, breed or confine sheep. Sally and Teddy are freeloaders. They freely give affection and a sense of security where there is none.

If possible, I'd pay them back, but love is the only good exchange in my home.

KATHY HARDEN-LENKEI
New York, N.Y.

Urban dogs of medium to large size have an occupational opportunity that Donald McCaig failed to mention: running companion. In my Philadelphia neighborhood, the accompanied runner is invariably female and the canine companion is typically a golden retriever, a Labrador retriever or, my own choice, a standard poodle. Poodles look bigger than they really are; they are quick to respond and actually look as if they enjoy running.

GAIL W. HEARN
Philadelpha

WALK A LITTLE FASTER

Thank you for Douglas Martin's article "Walk a Little Faster" (July 12). Thirty-six years ago, I was lured away to the Middle West by movie versions of ivy-covered college towns. I returned to New York last fall "to walk a little faster" in this wonderful metropolis. New York should issue a call home to all of us living abroad in the land. In our hearts, we will always yearn for one more bite of the Big Apple.

ESTHER LAMIS
New York, N.Y.



When I read your article, I was reminded of my last visit to New York City, in the fall of 1983, and the wonderful time I had. My husband was in town for a conference, and my 4-month-old daughter, Jennie, and I joined him. While he attended meetings, Jennie and I toured the city — she in a Snugli on my chest and I wearing a new pair of Nikes, purchased at B. Altman. Our progress around town was often impeded, however, by New Yorkers — those reputedly rushed folk who had to stop and sneak a peek at the baby. Doors were held open, seats were offered and other courtesies were extended to us by young and old, male and female.

SUZANNE LOOMIS
Yardley, Pa.

KEEPING CONTROL

As I read Marion Hart's Hers column "Keeping Control" (July 12), I was reminded of my own attempts at secrecy when I was 19 and in need of an abortion. I was not in a foreign country, but in the United States.

Both of us were in countries where abortion was not only legal, but a very common practice, and yet we felt the need to keep it a secret.

Perhaps it is shame or embarrassment that encourages our need for secrecy, but the secrecy Hart felt was necessary in China and the secrecy many women feel is necessary in the United States hurts us and our right to control our bodies. With our silence, we may destroy our right to choose.

ANNE GRAUE
Ossining, N.Y.

I find myself increasingly disturbed by the dispassionate terms in which the abortion question is framed by pro-choice writers like Marion Hart. I am concerned that the equation always seems to be expressed as pregnancy versus "all my plans — for passing year-end exams and for future travel and study," rather than, say, "all my plans" versus a human life.

LINDA JORDAN
New Hamburg, N.Y.

QUAYLE'S MOMENT

I was shocked to read in Andrew Rosenthal's article "Quayle's Moment" (July 5) that Dan Quayle was chosen, in part, because he had "looks that would appeal to women." I knew the G.O.P. was out of touch with voters, but this is really "beyond the pale," as President Bush might say. Not only is the strategy

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LETTERS

wrong, it's insulting. What women care about is equality and respect in the home and workplace, *real* support for families, in the form of a national family policy, and the unabridged right to make their own reproductive choices. Get a clue, boys!

DEBRA LEIGH BOYLE
Philadelphia

Thanks to your article on Dan Quayle, I have gained greater insight into the Vice President's motivation. Quayle's emphasis on family values — and especially his criticism of Murphy Brown — is put into a new light.

Sibling rivaly is one of the oldest problems plaguing the family. When your author writes, "It is as though Charlie McCarthy had suddenly bounded off Edgar Bergen's lap and started to speak his own lines," it all became clear to me. Candice Bergen, the actress who portrays Murphy, has often referred to herself as "Charlie McCarthy's sister" — Edgar Bergen was her Dad — and now Charlie has his chance to get at "sis" through the voice of Dan Quayle.

TOVA WEISER
West Orange, N.J.

Much coverage has been given to Dan Quayle's recent pronouncements about family values. But legislation that President Bush has vetoed, like the Family Leave Act, shows that his Administration has little interest in preserving the family.

Quayle can rail against liberals and Murphy Brown all he wants, but the record speaks for itself.

CATHY RAYMOND
Newark, Del.

DANIEL DAY-LEWIS

Daniel Day-Lewis need not have felt a sense of shame about his work in "Ever Smile, New Jersey" ("The Intensely Imagined Life of Daniel Day-Lewis," by Richard B. Woodward, July 5). I caught the film in Madrid and found it a nice change from the usual commercial stuff that hits the big screen.

Your article stated that the film was released only on video. However, in Spain, you could catch it in a theater.

A. E. SALMERON
Madrid

FIT FOR THE ROAD

I read Hal Rubenstein's article "Fit for the Road" (Fitness: July 12) and thought he couldn't be serious in saying that you need all of that equipment to get exercise while on vacation. Try walking 15 minutes from the station to your hotel, luggage in hand, instead of lifting weights. Jogging can be a pleasant form of sightseeing, and as for the portable steps (at $340, no less), most hotels have excellent and usually empty stairwells. Exercise is one thing no one has to buy.

CAROLYN SEYDEL
New York, N.Y.



"Fit for the Road" had me fit to be tied. In it, Steven Lischin of the World Gym cautions, "Interrupt your workout several times a month and you'll never see the changes you long for."

But you are not going to lose muscle over a weekend. As for cardiovascular strength, what happened to 20 minutes, 3 times a week? If you feel guilty after skipping a weekend of exercise, you need to work out compulsive feelings, not your body.

JEAN BASS
New York, N.Y. ■

The Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters for publication should include the writer's name, address and daytime telephone number, and should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, Magazine, The New York Times, 229 West 43d Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. We regret that because of the large volume of mail received, we are unable to acknowledge or return un-


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ON LANGUAGE

BY JACK ROSENTHAL



Mickey Mousing

AS A CARTOON character, Mickey Mouse is approaching Social Security age, having first seen the light in November 1928. As an expression, *Mickey Mouse* remains as current as the news. But it has a different meaning from the one it had when the character was born — actually, half a dozen different meanings.

A few weeks ago, Ross Perot was grasping for words to ridicule the idea that he spies on his enemies. He called the charges "fairyland," "animal crackers" and, heaping on the scorn, "Mickey Mouse tossed salad." *Mickey Mouse*, in that heated context, plainly meant "loony," "cartoony," "outlandish."

But that's not the meaning Carl Doebel, a Republican banker, had in mind last spring when he told a reporter about his disgust with Republican legislators in New Jersey. "If I could," he said, "I would tell them to their faces that I demand more substance instead of this Mickey Mousing around in Trenton." To him, *Mickey Mousing* means "patently false posturing."

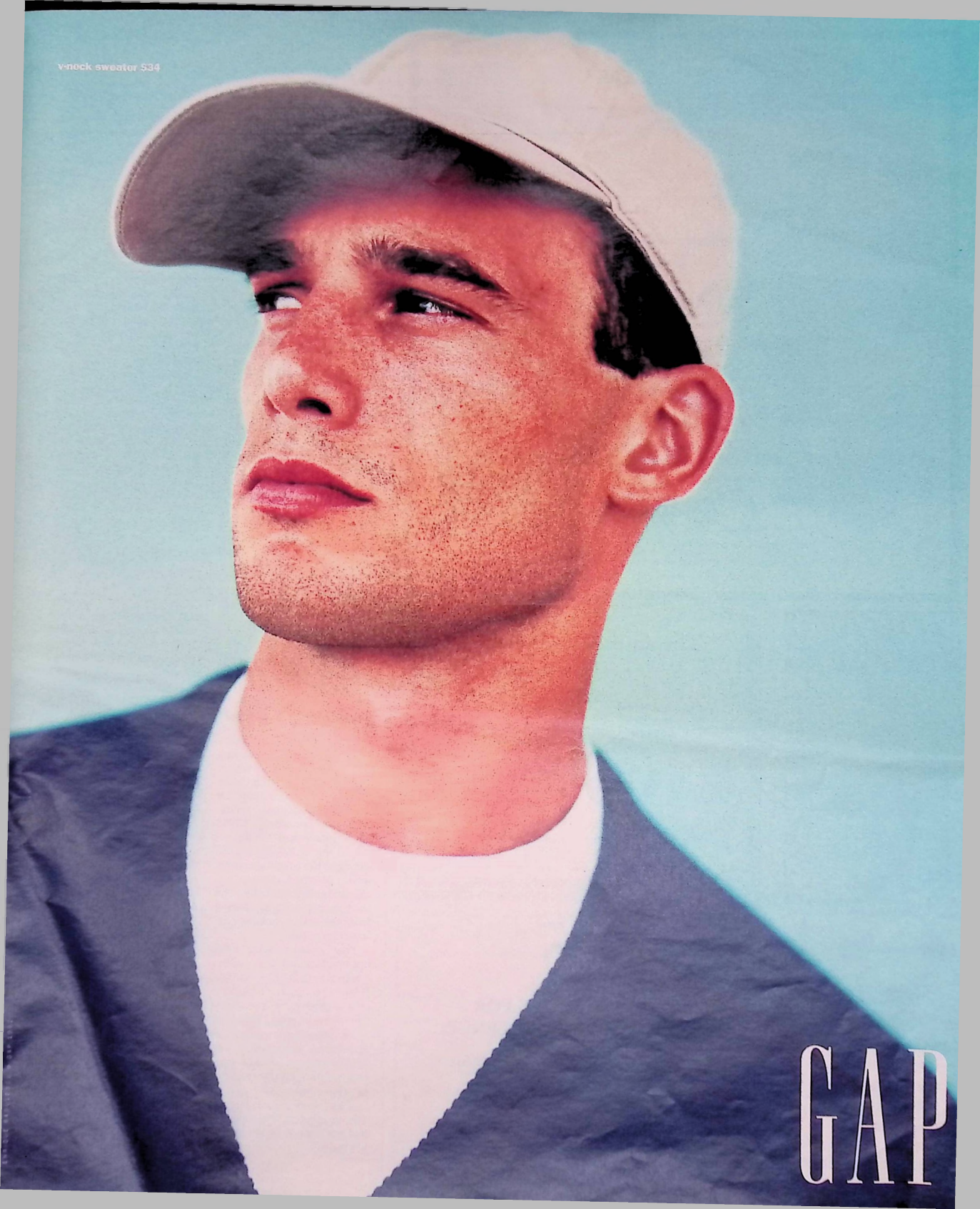
That's quite different from what Los Angeles investigators mean when they describe organized criminals as the "Mickey Mouse Mafia." They see the once-fearsome mob so weakened that even bookies won't pay tribute anymore. In this context, *Mickey Mouse* means "powerless," "pallid."

That's somewhat different from the meaning known to every undergraduate. This is the second definition for *Mickey Mouse* in Webster's New World Dictionary: "childish, oversimplified, unrelated to reality," as in "a Mickey Mouse college course."

Dave Smith, the Walt Disney Company's archivist, tells one story that adds two more meanings. During World War II, a man named Carl Nater, head of educational films at Disney, was challenged by Government auditors for including overhead on his bills. *Mickey Mouse bookkeeping*, they called it, meaning "a caricature of normal practice." But a reverse usage simultaneously arose — to describe bureaucrats insisting on mindless obedience to regulations.

There are even two meanings for *Mickey Mouse music*. The Times's recent obituary for Lawrence Welk noted that his detractors derided his "tinkly Mickey Mouse music." That meaning agrees with the first definition of *Mickey Mouse* in New World: "Designating dance-band music that is corny, unimaginative, bland." But the original Mickey Mouse cartoons were the first films in which the music soundtrack was fully synchronized with the action. Hence *Mickey Mouse music*

Jack Rosenthal is the editorial page editor of The New York Times. William Safire is on vacation.


v-neck sweater 534
GAP

started out as a term connoting technical respect, says Dave Smith, the archivist.

Why are there so many ways of using *Mickey Mouse?*

Many of the usages devolve around the meanings given by the Random House Dictionary of the English Language for the entry, lower case, *mickey mouse.* They are: "trite," "corny" or "petty," "trivial," even though there's nothing about Mickey that's loony, posturing, pallid, officious or petty. Mickey Mouse the character may be naïve, but he is cheerfully, likably so.

"Mickey was a *clean* mouse, right from the start," Richard Schickel wrote in his book "The Disney Version." That's so true that Nazi propagandists mocked themselves when they tried to mock him, as in this German newspaper excerpt quoted in "Maus II" by Art Spiegelman: "Mickey Mouse is the most miserable ideal ever revealed. . . . The greatest bacteria carrier in the animal kingdom cannot be the ideal type of animal. . . . Away with Jewish brutalization of the people! Down with Mickey Mouse! Wear the Swastika Cross!"

Why then has the name of this likable cartoon character generated so many negative meanings? The clearest answer springs from watches. Half a century ago, the Ingersoll Watch Company pulled itself out of financial trouble by marketing the first Mickey Mouse watches, of which millions have since been sold. Today, they can be campy, whimsical treasures. One can spend $1,995 for a Swiss-made 18-karat-gold version by Jean Lassale, but the originals were, well, *Mickey Mouse* — cheap, tacky, schlocky. The subsequent usages derive from the watch, not the cartoon character.

That answer alone does not explain all the varied meanings that have evolved from the term. Linguists and sociologists recognize the phenomenon, however — a secondary, sideways spread by association. Literal meanings may diverge but the underlying sense — in this case "trivial" or "tacky" — remains. Mickey Mouse is not *mickey mouse,* but his watch is, and so is his name.

Animal Farm

WHILE ROSS PEROT groped for cartoon-animal imagery, Bill Clinton and George Bush checkered their campaign oratory with references to the real thing. Nothing literary, like Orwell's "Animal Farm" symbolism. On the contrary, they are often eager to demonstrate by their language how rustic, and therefore regular, they are. It goes with the strained first-name informality that turns so many politicians from James Earl Jr. (Carter) to Jimmy and J. Danforth (Quayle) to Dan.

To Governor Clinton, child of Hope, Ark., farm idiom comes naturally and frequently. Gwen Ifill of The Times recalls that Clinton was asked during the New Hampshire campaign if he thought somebody was deliberately planting questions about his relationship with Gennifer Flowers. "When you come across a turtle sitting on a fence post, it didn't get there by itself," he responded. "Someone had to put it there."

In Dover, N.H., he was asked whether he might consider quitting the race after yet another controversy. John King of The Associated Press remembers his insistent reply: he would stay in "until the last dog dies." Within a month, he could speak with satisfaction of his triumphs on Super Tuesday: "The hay's in the barn."

Questioned during a televised David Frost interview in May about his claim that he had not inhaled marijuana, Clinton said: "I was dumb as a post the way I handled that." In June, on a paid 30-minute national telecast, one of the comments he made about the Federal deficit was: "We're eating our seed corn, as we say in the farming country."

Farm words don't always come as naturally to George Bush, the Connecticut Yankee who transplanted himself to Texas. But they did when he appeared at the Texas Republican convention in June. What did he think about Ross Perot as a candidate for President? There's "too much at stake, as we say here, to buy a pig in a poke." As we say here. ■

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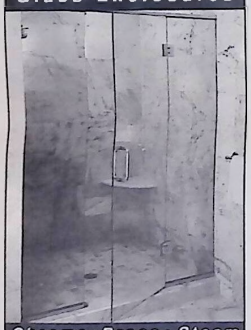
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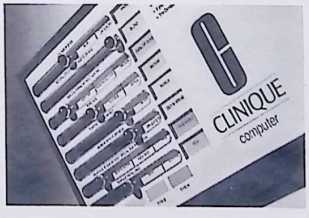
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ABOUT MEN BY JOHN JEROME



Hard as Nails

THE RUBBER SPATula I use to scrape the last kernels of rice from the bowl isn't in its usual place; I spy it in the stack of dishes to be washed, and grab and use it, feeling a little surge of satisfaction at not getting another utensil dirty. This is a legacy of that other Depression. When the dishes are done, rinse the dishpan with cold water, not hot; hot water costs money. It is amusing to catch myself reviewing these techniques. Apply the same approach to carpentry, for example, and the aim would be to do the work with the fewest possible tools. This does not result in effective carpentry.

Not that my carpentry is or ever was effective. Such craft as I possess was taught me by my stepfather, Ott, a brooding German who married my mother in 1939, when I was 7 and my brother, Jud, was 12. Whenever we wanted to make something out of wood, Ott would hand us a coffee can full of bent nails. Carpentry, we should understand, began with the straightening of nails. With a hammer and an old flatiron that we used as an anvil, we would beat the bent nails back to a child's version of straightness. In the process we would catch the occasional small flange of flesh between hammer and anvil, raising a blood blister. It was frustrating as well as painful.

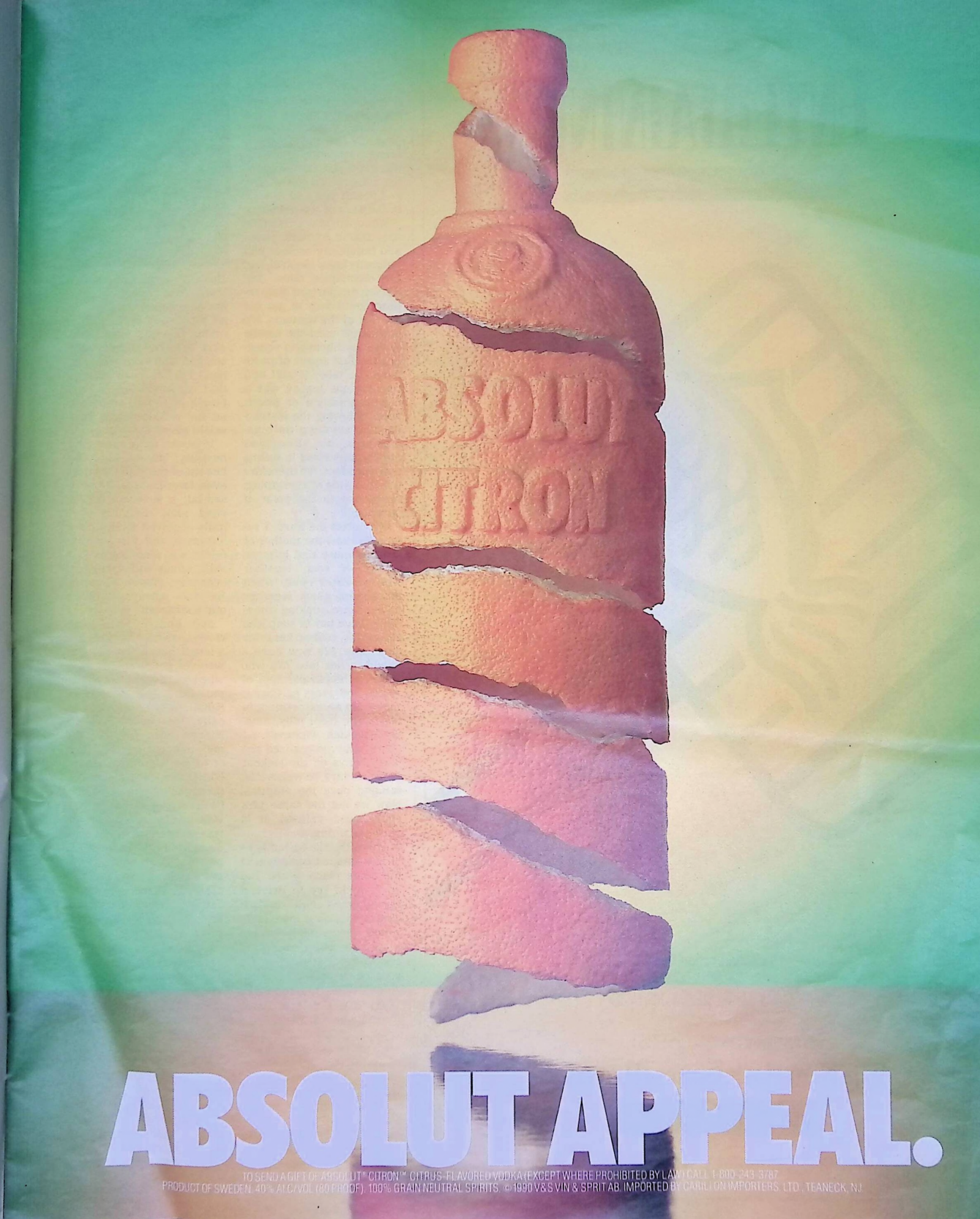
If there weren't enough used nails on hand, we would be sent out to salvage more. The rafters of our garage were always stacked with used lumber, but if we made it past the nail-straightening stage and wanted to use some actual wood, we had to find our own. This meant stealing it from someone else's scrap pile, in effect, although such a term was never used. We were upright people.

I don't know what privations Ott may have endured earlier in the Depression, before we knew him, but when he married my mother, he had a good, stable job. He moved us to a new house and owned a Buick, but drove it rarely, since public transportation cost less. We were middle-class, but it was a mean household. We cleaned our plates. (I still clean mine, at 60, when I shouldn't, for reasons not of waste but of health. My wife teases me about it. Depression Baby, she calls me.)

There are larger Freudian issues here, obviously, but what interests me now is our *cheapness* — in part, perhaps, because it is coming back. The 1990's bring a return to the 1930's mentality, a new austerity. Cheapness almost seems smart again.

An elderly friend tells me about growing up with two shirts to his name, one to wear while the other was in the wash. That's how Ott managed his shoes: two identical pairs rotated faithfully like tires, one pair to wear while the other recovered in the closet. The shoeshine kit — homemade, of salvaged lumber, of course — was a major appliance in our house, and one did not open a new can

John Jerome, the author of "Stone Work," a book about wall-building in New England, lives in Massachusetts.


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of polish until the old was completely used up, the thin line of colored wax driven farther and farther down into the seams of the can until it finally disappeared. (In the 1950's I taught in a school that supplied red pencils for grading papers. To get a new red pencil you had to turn in the stub of the old one.)

When World War II made it patriotic to save paper and tinfoil, my brother and I already knew the drill, had the techniques down pat. We were experts at dismantling containers to get out the last of the contents. We learned to used the handle of the toothbrush to squeegee the last squirt of paste from the tube. (I still do.) One curious legacy was a family tradition of never, ever, following the instructions for anything: the manufacturer, we knew, was mostly interested in selling more product. We therefore used too little of everything: cheapness to the point of paranoia.

Old habits die hard. I remember how the mother of one playmate tied leftover slivers of soap together with a rubber band. When the slivers stuck together on their own, making something like a bar of soap, she stored the rubber band for next time. We now have a friend in her late 70's who sends us an assortment of jellies and jams at Christmas — in an assortment of used jars, from jelly, mustard, pickles, whatever. At some point we realized she was always on the lookout for more jars, so we started sending back the empties. Now we get the same jars every year, refilled. It is very satisfying.

A nail that has been bent once wants to bend again at the same place. When Jud or I would try to drive a straightened nail, and it bent again, as it invariably would, we'd yank it out, tap it more or less straight, and try once more to drive it. To a carpenter a bent nail is a ruined nail, tossed aside. What my stepfather was teaching us was not carpentry but cheapness. For his own projects he used new nails, of course. Jud always said his adolescence ended the day he visited a lumber yard and found out how little nails cost.

My wife sees clearly that giving us bent nails was a hostile act. It spun off our childish energies into much less productive enterprises, but enterprises that wouldn't use up any of Ott's time or his precious stock. (He died with the rafters still stacked with salvaged lumber.) The bent nails insured that we would fail, in fact taught us to fail, preparing us for a Depression that would never end.

The bent nails insured that we would fail, in fact taught us to fail.

I never quite saw the hostility, giving him the benefit of the doubt. I knew even then he wasn't a miser but a severely frightened man. Driving bent nails required skill with a hammer, and I'm sure he felt he was teaching us that skill, along with patience, economy, diligence, thrift. He was always building our character.

Jud and I were both clowns, always working for a laugh, but the only laughs we ever got from Ott were when we did something stupid. He hated cleverness. Emotionally, psychologically, he never had a chance with us, but his message got across. Both of us became writers and corresponded briskly throughout adulthood. Until the day of Jud's death he was still sending me letters written on the back of discarded manuscript pages. I don't think I ever got anything from him in a clean envelope in my life.

Our early correspondence was remarkable not for the quality of the discourse but the narrowness of the margins. The necessity of double-spacing manuscripts filled us with desolation. I still save paper clips. As a family our cheapness was defiant. This is not a virtue.

I'll save anything else, but not nails. I don't do much carpentry anymore, but in my basement, along with some salvaged lumber, I have coffee cans full of bright new nails, in all sizes, waiting. I am rich. ■



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SUSAN SONTAG FINDS Romance

Leaving behind the innovative essays that made her reputation, a celebrated intellectual discovers a 'delirium of pleasure' in releasing a flood of fictional passions about the 18th century.

BY LESLIE GARIS

AS SOON AS SUSAN SONTAG DELIVERED the last section of her new novel, "The Volcano Lover," to the offices of her publisher, she felt bereft. "It was like taking a beloved person to the airport and returning to an empty house," she says softly, intensely, during a recent interview in her New York apartment. "I miss the people. I miss the world."

The principal characters — although there are many others — are Sir William Hamilton, the 18th-century English minister to the Court of Naples; his wife, Emma, and Horatio Lord Nelson, England's most revered naval hero, whose love affair with Emma became as famous as his impressive victories over Napoleon. Under the title (which refers to Hamilton's obsession with Mount Vesuvius), Sontag has appended the words, "A Romance."

A romance by the author of "Against Interpretation," "Styles of Radical Will," "Death Kit" and "AIDS and Its Metaphors"? A romance by the intellectual champion of modernism; the eloquent admirer of Roland Barthes, Elias Canetti, Antonin Artaud?

"In order to find the courage to write this book, it helped me to find a label that allowed me to go over the top," she explains. "The word 'romance' was like a smile. Also, the novel becomes such a self-conscious enterprise for people who read a lot. You want to do something that takes into account all the options you have in fiction. Yet you don't want to be writing *about* fiction, but making fiction. So I sprang myself from fictional self-consciousness by saying, It's a novel — it's more than a novel — it's a romance!" She opens her arms and laughs un-self-consciously. "And I fell into the book like Alice in Wonderland. For three years, I worked 12 hours a day in a delirium of pleasure. This novel is really a turning point for me."

At 59, she has already had a remarkable career. Although she has written fiction, two plays and four films, she is primarily known for her learned and startling essays. Dealing from a seemingly limitless store of knowledge, she has examined the 20th century from widely divergent points of reference, like literature, painting, illness, photography, philosophy, pornography, film, sociology, anthropology, communism and fascism. Having lived for long periods in France and Italy, conversant in three languages (translated into 23), she is a true polymath internationalist.

Carlos Fuentes, the Mexican novelist and man of letters, and another writer who straddles many cultures, compares her to Erasmus, the greatest humanist of the Renaissance: "This is one of the worst-informed eras in history, just like the beginning of the 15th century. Countries are ignorant about each other. And, like Erasmus, exactly when it is needed, Susan Sontag is a communicator in this broken-down world. Erasmus traveled with 32 volumes, which contained all the knowledge worth knowing. Susan Sontag carries it in her brain! I know of no other intellectual who is so clear-minded with a capacity to link, to connect, to relate. She is unique."

As she sits in her kitchen, she does have the air of one who has wrestled prodigiously, and over a considerable lifetime, with essential questions. Wrinkles and creases run wild on her unadorned face. Her skin is as pale as a monk's. Her long, unruly, onyx-black hair is rent by a dramatic slash of pure white that runs like an ice flow over the crest of her head. But her candid expression, her round dark eyes that fill easily with tears, her frequent laughter and her deep, vibrant voice

Leslie Garis is a frequent contributer to this magazine on literary subjects.

Susan Sontag, at left in her kitchen, and a photograph of Mount Vesuvius, top, which ignites her new novel, "The Volcano Lover."

PHOTOGRAPH OF SONTAG BY GREGORY HEISLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; VESUVIUS BY ASSOCIATED PRESS, CIRCA 1920.

suggest the eagerness and avidity of a seeker; a curiously timeworn child who needs a bit more sleep.

"I think I've always wanted to write this book," she is saying. "I'm glad to be free of the kind of one-note depressiveness that is so characteristic of contemporary fiction. I don't want to express alienation. It isn't what I feel. I'm interested in various kinds of passionate engagement. All my work says be serious, be passionate, wake up."

"The Volcano Lover" anatomizes immense varieties of passionate engagement. Hamilton loves abjectly not only his art collection, which he continually augments, but Vesuvius, his beloved volcano, whose threats and displays of destructive energy hold him in permanent thrall. He loves Emma as a connoisseur loves a Leonardo, with cultivated, refined appreciation.

Enter Nelson, the man of action, the genuine hero, and another sort of passion is ignited in Emma, which relegates Hamilton, the expert on nature's power, to the status of outsider in the drama of human forces unleashed under his own roof. And then there are the passions of revolution and an epic array of 18-century follies engendered by romantic dreams of reason.

SONTAG, HERSELF, IS A hybrid of reason and romance. One need only peruse the vast library in her airy five-room apartment for confirmation. An intellectual who studies the history of ideas might have many books. But only a person intemperately in love with reading possesses 15,000.

"I'm an addicted reader," she says, "a hedonist. I'm led by my passions. It's a kind of greed, in a way." She laughs happily. "I like to be surrounded by things that speak to me and uplift me."

I ask how the books are arranged.

"Ahhh. By subject or, in the case of literature, by language and chronologically. The 'Beowulf' to Virginia Woolf principle. I'll show you."

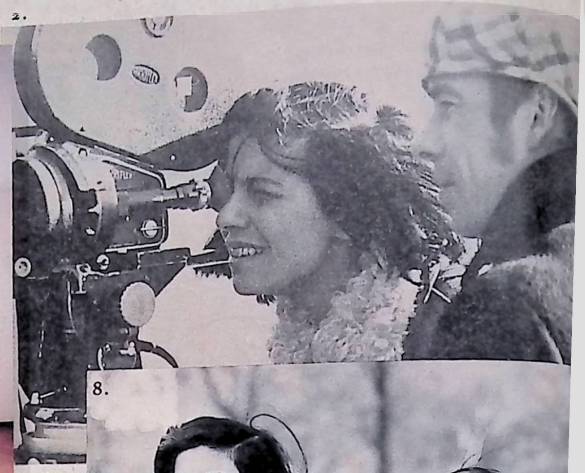
"Nothing is alphabetical?"

"I know people who have a lot of books. Richard Howard, for instance. He does his books alphabetically, and that sets my teeth on edge. I couldn't put Pynchon next to Plato! It doesn't make sense."

We enter a room off the kitchen, where Karla Eoff, Sontag's assistant, sits at a desk answering what she describes as three years of correspondence — all let go during the writing of "The Volcano Lover."

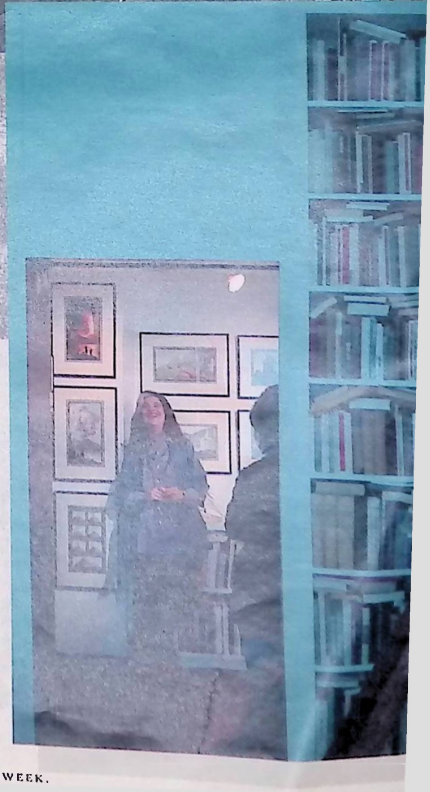
"Here is English literature," says Sontag by a floor-to-ceiling bookcase. "You need a ladder. It starts here, and here are the Chaucerians." She sweeps her hand over several shelves, "and then comes Shakespeare, Elizabethan Stuart plays,











1.
Sontag in the living room of her apartment.

2.
Sontag with Lars Swanberg on a postcard announcing the 1969 opening of "Duet for Cannibals," a movie she wrote and directed. Swanberg was director of photography.

3.
Sontag in 1966.

4.
With her son, David Rieff, at Harvard, where she was doing graduate work, circa 1954.

PHOTOGRAPHS NOS. 1., 5. AND 9. BY GREGORY HEISLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; NO. 3 BY TONY ROLLO/NEWSWEEK.

g Album

3.



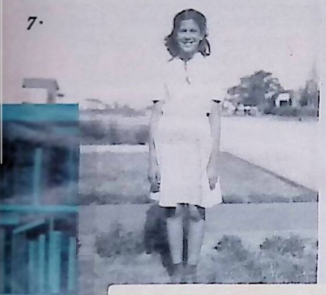
4.



5.



7.



6.



5.
Mother and son at the City Bakery in New York earlier this year.

6.
Susan and her sister, Judith, circa 1940.

7.
Sontag in Tucson, Ariz., where she spent her early childhood, circa 1943.

8.
Sontag with David Rieff, circa 1964.

9.
At home with her assistant, Karla Eoff.

10.
Susan with Judith in Tucson, circa 1944.

Marlowe, Middleton, Webster, the poets," she gestures on through dozens and dozens of books. "It's very approximate. Here's Beckford, William Blake and then Wordsworth."

"You don't have a separate poetry section?"

"No. It's all here. It's where they come. There's Byron. I have all of English literature here. There's Oscar Wilde, and there's Meredith and Hardy. Of course, when I get into the modern stuff you can see who I read and who I don't. For instance, I adore V. S. Naipaul.

"And here's French literature. Up there is Montaigne, then Rabelais, Pascal, Racine, but it's not just the main people. I have a lot of so-called minor writers who aren't minor to me."

We move from shelf to shelf, room to room. Spanish, French, Italian literature, all untranslated. Japanese, Greek, Chinese and Russian literature, in English.

In the living room — almost empty except for one couch, the only rug in the apartment and one Mission chair — is ancient history, Judaism, a huge library of early Christianity, followed by Byzantium and the Middle Ages.

In Sontag's study is an oddly giant-size burgundy velvet chair, a desk with an I.B.M. Selectric II typewriter (she has resisted the computer) and, of course books: here are philosophy, psychiatry and the history of medicine. Discreetly recessed next to a rose-colored marble fireplace is a tiny room that contains books by Sontag.

"I used to keep them in my closet."

"Why?"

"Oh," she sighs deeply, "I don't want to look at my own books. A library is something to dream over, a sort of dream machine."

"Have you read everything here?"

"Oh, yes. Over and over. You see, they're full of slips of paper." Indeed, narrow strips of white paper stick up from the books like shoots of wild vegetation. "Each book is marked and filleted. I underline. I used to write in the margins when I was a child. Comments like 'How true!' And 'I have felt this also!' " She roars with laughter.

I ask what she wrote in Aristotle.

" 'Aristotle means here that' — Oh, please! It's so embarrassing now."

We enter the long hallway that connects the rooms. "The art river starts here."

What appears to be a complete library of the history of art, all oversize books, runs on low shelves from one end of the hallway to the other. On the wall above the shelves is a series of engravings of Vesuvius, the hand-colored originals from a book commissioned by Hamilton in 1776. Under the prints, on top of the bookcase, is the skull of a

(Continued on page 31)

Learning to Talk of Race

THE LOS ANGELES RIOTS EXPOSED AN 'US VERSUS THEM' MENTALITY, THE AUTHOR ARGUES, IN A COUNTRY PLAGUED BY CONTEMPT FOR THE COMMON GOOD. By Cornel West

WHAT HAPPENED IN Los Angeles this past April was neither a race riot nor a class rebellion. Rather, this monumental upheaval was a multiracial, trans-class and largely male display of justified social rage. For all its ugly, xenophobic resentment, its air of adolescent carnival and its downright barbaric behavior, it signified the sense of powerlessness in American society. Glib attempts to reduce its meaning to the pathologies of the black underclass, the criminal actions of hoodlums or the political revolt of the oppressed urban masses miss the mark. Of those arrested, only 36 percent were black, more than a third had full-time jobs and most claimed to shun political affiliation. What we witnessed in Los Angeles was the consequence of a lethal linkage of economic decline, cultural decay and political lethargy in American life. Race was the visible catalyst, not the underlying cause.

The meaning of the earth-shaking events in Los Angeles is difficult to grasp because most of us remain trapped in the narrow framework of the dominant liberal and conservative views of race in America, which with its worn-out vocabulary leaves us intellectually debilitated, morally disempowered and personally depressed. The astonishing disappearance of the event from public dialogue is testimony to just how painful and distressing a serious engagement with race is. Our truncated public discussions of race suppress the best of who and what we are as a people because they fail to confront the complexity of the issue in a candid and critical manner. The predictable pitting of liberals against conservatives, Great Society Democrats against self-help Republicans, reinforces intellectual parochialism and political paralysis.



Los Angeles, May 1992: A failure to connect that binds all Americans even more tightly.

The liberal notion that more government programs can solve the problems is simplistic — precisely because it focuses *solely* on the economic dimension. And the conservative idea that what is needed is a change in the moral behavior of poor black urban dwellers (especially poor black men, who, they say, should stay married, support their children and stop committing so much crime) highlights immoral actions while ignoring public responsibility for the immoral circumstances that haunt our fellow citizens.

The common denominator of these views of race is that each still sees black people as a "problem people," in the words of Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women, rather than as fellow American citizens with problems. Her words echo the poignant "unasked question" of W. E. B. Du Bois, who wrote: "They approach me in a half-hesitant sort of way, eye me curiously or compassionately, and then instead of saying directly, How does it feel to be a problem? they say, I know an excellent colored man in my town. ... Do not these Southern outrages make your blood boil? At these I smile, or am interested, or reduce the boiling to a simmer, as the occasion may require. To the real question, How does it feel to be a problem? I answer seldom a word." Nearly a century later, we confine discussions about race in America to the "problems" black people pose for whites rather than considering what this way of viewing black people reveals about us as a nation.

This paralyzing framework encourages liberals to relieve their guilty consciences by supporting public funds directed at "the problems"; but at the same time, reluctant to exercise principled criticism of black people, they deny them the freedom to err. Similarly, conservatives blame the "problems" on black people themselves — and thereby render black social misery invisible or unworthy of public attention.

Hence, for liberals, black people are to be "included" and "integrated" into "our" society and culture, while for conservatives they are to be "well behaved" and "worthy of acceptance" by "our" way of life. Both fail to see that the presence and predicaments of black people are neither additions to nor defections from American life, but rather *constitutive elements of that life.*

TO ENGAGE IN A SERIous discussion of race in America, we must begin not with the problems of black people but with the flaws of American society — flaws rooted in historic inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes. How we set up the terms for discussing racial issues shapes our perception and response to these issues. As long as black people are viewed as a "them," the burden falls on blacks to do all the "cultural" and "moral" work necessary for healthy race relations. The implication is that only certain Americans can define what it means to be American — and the rest must simply "fit in."

The emergence of strong black-nationalist sentiments among blacks, especially young people, is a revolt

Cornel West is a professor of religion and director of the Afro-American studies program at Princeton University. His book "Race Matters" will be published in the spring.



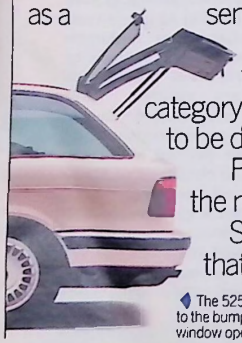
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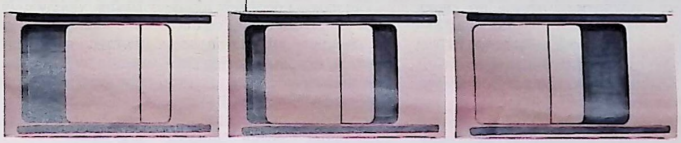
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against this sense of having to "fit in." The variety of black-nationalist ideologies, from the moderate views of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas in his youth to those of Louis Farrakhan today, rest upon a fundamental truth: white America has been historically weak-willed in insuring racial justice and has continued to resist accepting fully the humanity of blacks. As long as double standards and differential treatment abound — as long as the rap performer Ice-T is harshly condemned while former Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl F. Gates's anti-black comments are received in polite silence, as long as Dr. Leonard Jeffries's anti-Semitic statements are met with vitriolic outrage while Presidential candidate Patrick J. Buchanan's are received with a genteel response — black nationalisms will thrive.

Afrocentrism, a contemporary species of black nationalism, is a gallant yet misguided attempt to define an African identity in a white society perceived to be hostile. It is gallant because it puts black doings and sufferings, not white anxieties and fears, at the center of discussion. It is misguided because — out of fear of cultural hybridization, silence on the issue of class, retrograde views on black women, homosexuals and lesbians and a reluctance to link race to the common good — it reinforces the narrow discussions about race.

To establish a new framework, we need to begin with a frank acknowledgment of the basic humanness and Americanness of each of us. And we must acknowledge that as a people — *E Pluribus Unum* — we are on a slippery slope toward economic strife, social turmoil and cultural chaos. If we go down, we go down together. The Los Angeles upheaval forced us to see not only that we are not connected in ways we would like to be but also, in a more profound sense, that this failure to connect binds us even more tightly together. The paradox of race in America is that our common destiny is more pronounced and imperiled precisely when our divisions are deeper. The Civil War and its legacy speak loudly here. Eighty-six percent of white suburban Americans live in neighborhoods that are less than 1 percent black, meaning that the prospects for the country depend largely on how its cities fare in the hands of a suburban electorate. There is no escape from our interracial interdependence, yet enforced racial hierarchy dooms us as a nation to collective paranoia and hysteria — the unmaking of any democratic order.

The verdict that sparked the incidents in Los Angeles was perceived to be wrong by the vast majority of Americans. But whites have often failed to acknowledge the widespread mistreatment of black people, especially black men, by law-enforcement agencies, which helped ignite the spark. The Rodney King verdict was merely the occasion for deep-seated rage to come to the surface. This rage is fed by the "silent" depression ravaging the country — in which real weekly wages of all American workers since 1973 have declined nearly 20 percent, while at the same time wealth has been upwardly distributed.

The exodus of stable industrial jobs from urban centers to cheaper labor markets here and abroad, housing policies that have created "chocolate cities and vanilla suburbs" (to use the popular musical artist George Clinton's memorable phrase), white fear of black crime and the urban influx of poor Spanish-speaking and Asian immigrants — all have helped erode the tax-base of American cities just as the Federal Government has cut its supports and programs. The result is unemployment, hunger, homelessness and sickness for millions.

Driving that rage is a culture of hedonistic self-indulgence and narcissistic self-regard. This culture of consumption yields coldhearted and mean-spirited attitudes and actions that turn poor urban neighborhoods into military combat zones and existential wastelands.

And the pervasive spiritual impoverishment grows. The collapse of meaning in life — the eclipse of hope and absence of love of self and others, the breakdown of family and neighborhood bonds — leads to the social deracination and cultural denudement of urban dwellers, especially children. We have created rootless, dangling people with little link to the supportive networks — family, friends, school — that sustain some sense of purpose in life. We have witnessed the collapse of the spiritual communities that help us face despair, disease and death and that transmit through the generations dignity and decency, excellence and elegance.

The result is lives of what we might call "random nows," of fortuitous and fleeting moments preoccupied with "getting over" — with acquiring pleasure, property and power by any means necessary. (This is not what Malcolm X meant by this famous phrase.) Post-modern culture is more and more a market culture dominated by gangster mentalities and self-destructive wantoness. This culture engulfs all of us — yet its impact on the disadvantaged is devastating, resulting in extreme violence in everyday life. Sexual violence against women and homicidal assaults by young black men on one another are only the most obvious signs of this empty quest for pleasure, property and power.

Lastly, this rage is fueled by a political atmosphere in which images, not ideas, dominate, where politicians spend more time raising money than issues. The functions of parties have been displaced by public polls, and politicians behave less as thermostats that determine the climate of opinion than as thermometers registering the public mood. American politics has been rocked by an unleashing of greed among opportunistic public officials — following the lead of their counterparts in the private sphere, where, as of 1989, 1 percent of the population owned 37 percent of the wealth — leading to a profound cynicism and pessimism among the citizenry.

And given the way in which the Republican Party since 1968 has appealed to popular xenophobic images — playing the black, female and homophobic cards and realigning the electorate along race, sex and sexual-orientation lines — it is no surprise that the notion that we are all part of one garment of destiny is discredited. Appeals to special interests rather than public interests reinforce this polarization. The Los Angeles upheaval was an expression of utter fragmentation by a powerless citizenry that includes not just the poor but all of us.

AMERICANS CONFINE DISCUSSION OF RACE TO THE 'PROBLEMS' BLACK PEOPLE POSE FOR WHITES.

WHAT IS TO BE done? How do we capture a new spirit and vision to meet the challenges of the post-industrial city, post-modern culture and post-party politics?

First, we must admit that the most valuable sources for help, hope and power consist of ourselves and our common history. As in the ages of Lincoln, Roosevelt and King, we must look to new frameworks and languages to understand our multilayered crisis and overcome our deep malaise.

Second, we must focus our attention on the public square — the common good that undergirds our national and global destinies. The vitality of any public square ultimately depends on how much we *care* about the quality of our lives together. The neglect of our public infrastructure, for example — our water and sewage systems, bridges, tunnels, highways, subways and streets — reflects not only our myopic economic policies, which impede productivity, but also the low priority we place on our common life.

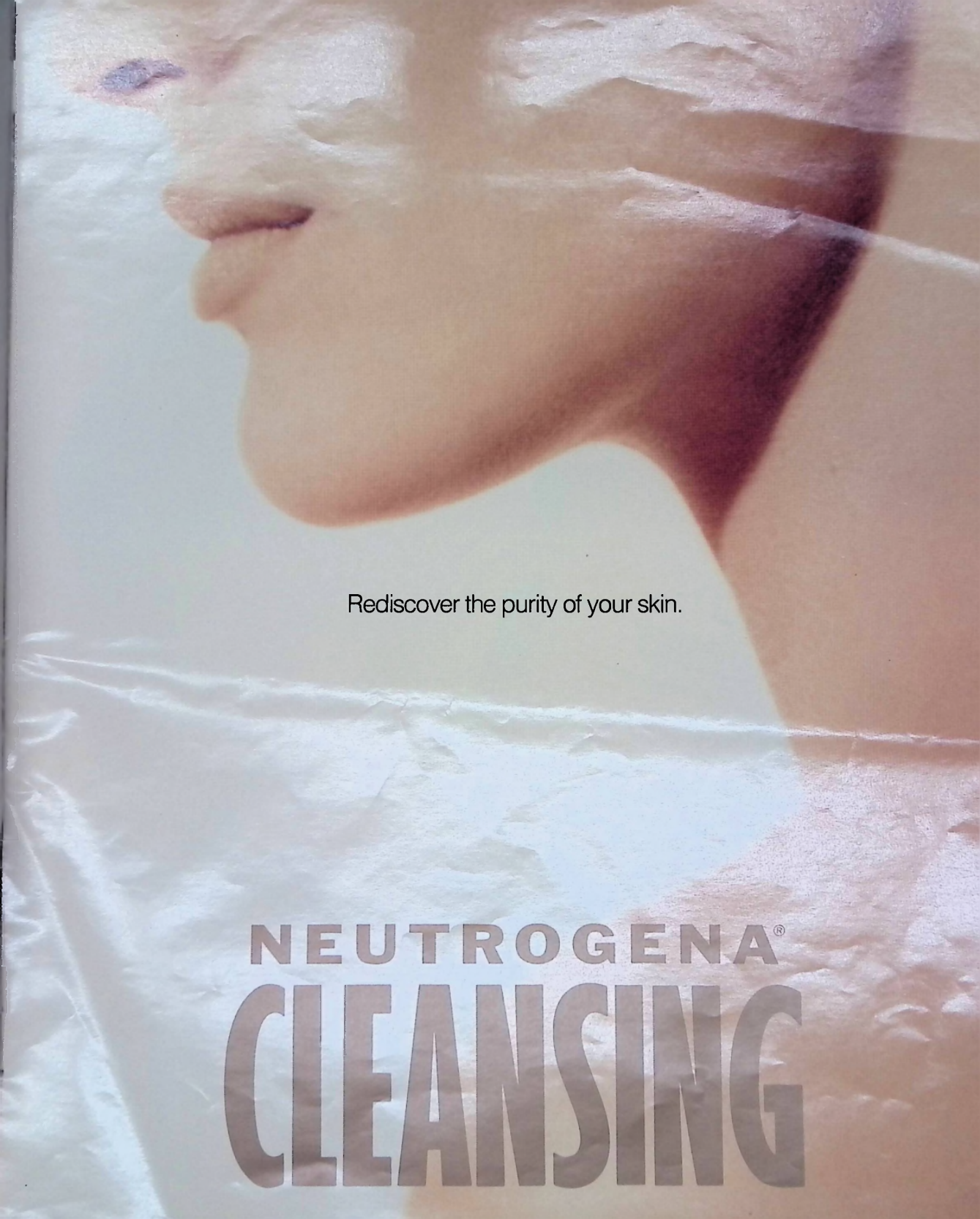
The tragic plight of our children clearly reveals our deep disregard for public well-being. With about one out of five children living in poverty in this country and one out of two black children and two out of five Hispanic children doing so — and with most of our children ill equipped to live lives of spiritual and cultural quality, neglected by overburdened parents and bombarded by the market values of profit-hungry corporations — how do we expect ever to constitute a vibrant society?

One essential step is some form of large-scale public intervention to insure access to basic social goods — housing, food, health care, education, child care and jobs. We must invigorate the common good with a mixture of government, business and labor that does not follow any existing blueprint. After a period in which the private sphere has been sacralized and the public square gutted, the temptation is to make a fetish of the public square. We need to resist such dogmatic swings.

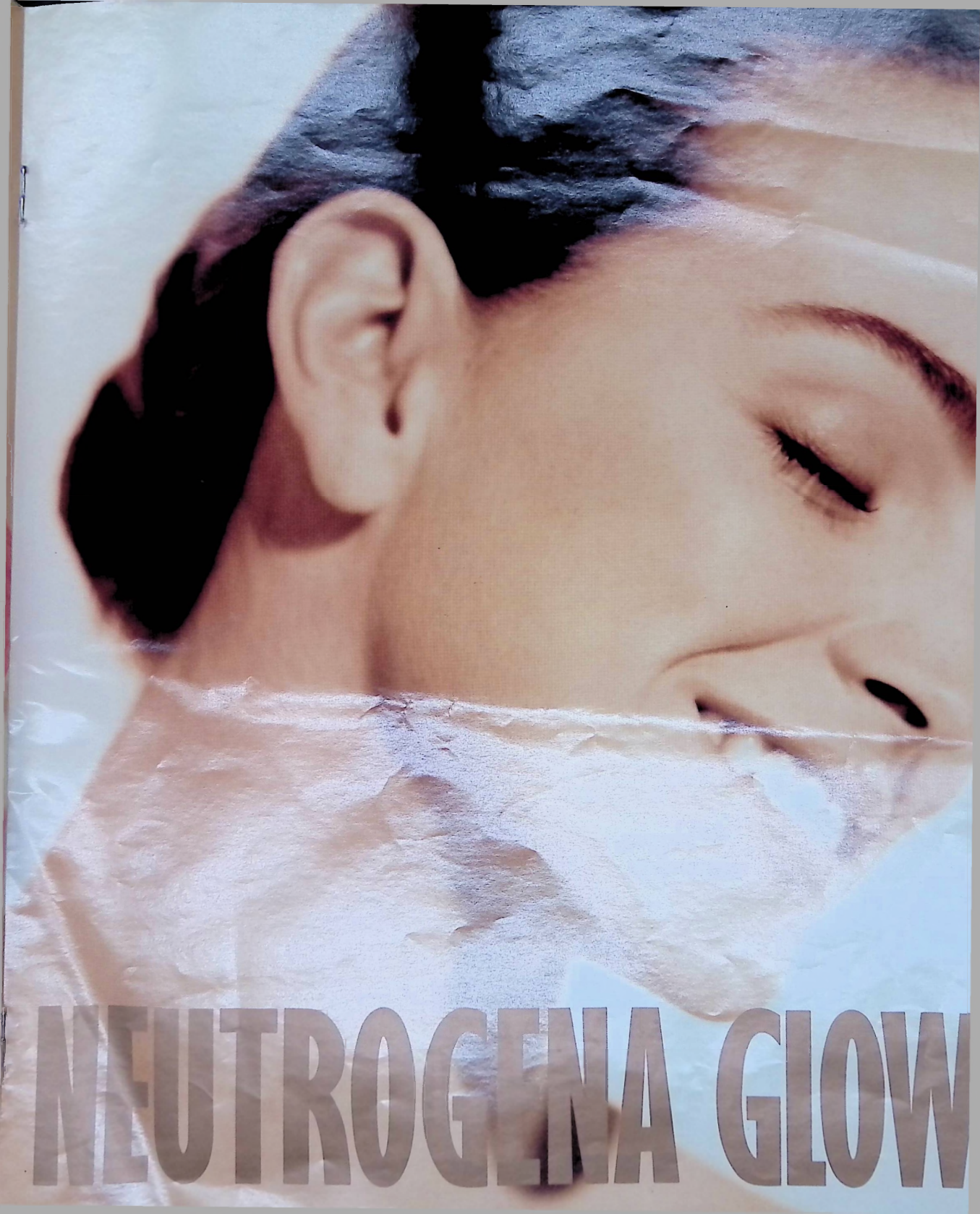
Last, the major challenge is the need to generate new leadership. The paucity of courageous leaders — so apparent in the response to the events in Los Angeles — requires that we look beyond the same elites and voices that recycle the older frameworks. We need leaders — neither saints nor sparkling television personalities — who can situate themselves within a larger historical narrative of this country and world, who can grasp the complex dynamics of our peoplehood and imagine a future grounded in the best of our past, yet attuned to the frightening obstacles that now perplex us. Our ideals of freedom, democracy and equality must be invoked to invigorate all of us, especially the landless, propertyless and luckless. Only a visionary leadership that can motivate "the better angels of our nature," as Lincoln said, and activate possibilities for a freer, more efficient and stable America — only that leadership deserves cultivation and support.

This new leadership must be grounded in grass-roots organizing that highlights democratic accountability. Regardless of whether Bill Clinton's cautious neoliberal programs or George Bush's callous conservative policies prevail in November, the challenge to America will be determining whether a genuine multiracial democracy can be created and sustained in a era of global economies and a moment of xenophobic frenzy.

Let us hope and pray that the vast intelligence, imagination, humor and courage in this country will not fail us. Either we learn a new language of empathy and compassion, or the fire this time will consume us all. ■


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SONTAG

(Continued from page 23)

horse and a circle of wishbones — rather like a pagan altar to nature and death. In the rest of the apartment is Sontag's collection of black-and-white prints by Piranesi and other 18th-century artists. The volcano prints — almost the only color in the house — radiate with the lurid red of flowing lava.

As I walk down the hall, from Greece into the Renaissance and through the 19th century, I remark on the uncanny perspective one has just passing by the titles.

"Yes," she says. "What I do sometimes is just walk up and down and think about what's in the books. Because they remind me of all there is. And the world is so much bigger than what people remember."

SONTAG'S CHILDhood world, although not materially impoverished, was intellectually and emotionally meager. Her early years were spent in Arizona, where she rarely saw her alcoholic mother or her father, who had a fur business in China, because they spent almost all their time in the Far East. Susan and her younger sister were cared for by a housekeeper. When Susan was 5, her father died in China of tuberculosis. Her mother remarried, and the family moved to Los Angeles. Again, the adults traveled while the children stayed home. Her enormous intelligence further ordained her solitude. She read at 3, wrote a four-page newspaper at 8 and had a chemistry laboratory in her garage at 9. Many ardent, fruitless hours were spent trying to convert neighborhood children to her interests.

"I can remember my first bookcase when I was 8 or 9. This is really speaking out of my isolation. I would lie in bed and look at the bookcase against the wall. It was like looking at my 50 friends. A book was like stepping through a mirror. I could go somewhere else. Each one was a door to a whole kingdom."

"Did you have a mentor?"

"No, no, no. I discovered books. When I was about 10 years old, I discovered the Modern Library in a stationery store in Tucson. And I sort of understood these were the classics. I used to like to read encyclopedias, so I had lots of names in my head. And here they were! Homer, Virgil, Dante, George Eliot, Thackeray, Dickens. I decided I would read them all."

"With absolutely no encouragement?" I'm incredulous.

"I didn't allow myself to look for it. And these people couldn't encourage me, since they didn't understand what I cared about. I very quickly located the source of judgment completely outside my life — from the great dead. If somebody said, 'Oh, you're very smart,' I would feel as if I had been told I had black hair. It was such a given. And compared to the standards I was setting myself, I didn't think I was so smart. I thought that I *cared* more than other people. If they cared as much, they could do what I was doing. I didn't think I was a genius."

"Wasn't your mother proud of you?"

"My mother was a very withholding woman. You have no idea. . . ." Her voice drifts off. We are back in the kitchen. Her hair, which has been gathered into the semblance of a ponytail, has been gradually escaping from its elastic band, which she now removes entirely and plays with in her fingers. Her nails are so short I think she must have bitten them.

She continues. "I would put my report card by her bed at night and find it signed at the breakfast table in the morning. She never said a word." She sighs. "I have a vision of my mother lying on her bed, with the blinds drawn, and a glass next to her that I thought was water, but I now know was vodka. She always said she was tired. As a consequence, I am happy to sleep four hours a night."

Sontag's sister, Judith, was only 12 when Sontag left home at 15, and they hardly saw each other until they were both in their 50's. Judith, who is also extremely intelligent and went to Berkeley, is married, has one daughter and lives on the island of Maui, where she owns a small business. The two sisters discovered to their surprise that they had many things in common — among them a love of books.

"I think a childhood like that," Sontag says, "breeds a great talent for stoicism. If you're going to survive, you say, I can take this; it's bearable. Otherwise you're lost. I refuse to see myself as a victim. I'm the most unparanoid person in the world. In fact, I envy paranoids; they actually think people are paying attention to them." She laughs. "I didn't feel persecuted, I felt abandoned."

When she was 15, her principal told her she was wasting her time at North Hollywood High and graduated her. She was delighted. Now her life would really begin. After one term at Berkeley, she enrolled at the University of Chicago, which at that time had a set curriculum and no electives. She took exams when she entered and placed out of most of her courses. She had already done the reading.

"I audited classes in the graduate schools, and that was wonderful. I would start at 9 in the morning and go all day. It was a feast."

It was there she met Philip Rieff, a young instructor in a social theory course that Sontag had placed out of. It was 1950, December of her second year. On friends' recommendations she went to hear him lecture on Freud (his 1959 book, "Freud: The Mind of the Moralist," is essential reading for scholars). Ten days after the lecture, they were married. She was 17. It was an endless conversation. He was, she says today, the first person she could talk to.

He seemed older than his 28 years, and Sontag looked extremely young. He was a dapper Anglophile, while she, a Westerner, lived in blue jeans and wore her hair long down her back. They were an odd-looking couple. Soon after they were married, she attended one of his lectures and behind her one student whispered to another, "Oh, have you heard? Rieff married a 14-year-old Indian!"

For the next nine years, she and Rieff lived an academic life. Their son, David, was born in 1952. Sontag received master's degrees from Harvard in English literature and philosophy and finished her course work for a Ph.D. when she received a fellowship to Oxford. At the same time, Rieff was offered a fellowship at Stanford. They went separate ways for one academic year, but when Sontag returned to America the marriage unraveled. It was 1959, and Sontag at last realized one of her childhood dreams: she moved to New York. She had a child, a furnished mind and no income. "I had $70, two suitcases and a 7-year-old," Sontag recalls. (Her lawyer told her she was the first person in California history to refuse alimony.)

David Rieff was another prodigy. He calls himself today "overeducated." His two books, "Going to Miami" and "Los Angeles, Capital of the Third World," were both critically acclaimed. I asked him about his childhood, if he felt under great intellectual pressure, and he said he was comfortable with scholarly activities — athletics would have been a reach. He painted a picture of mother and son so close in age and interests that "separation — even the ability to distinguish between who was who — was difficult and took longer than it should have." During the first New York years, "I was very aware of how precarious our life was. We lived in very small, close quarters for a long time. Life was pretty tough. After that, things started to go much better. She was making a career."

After a stint of teaching philosophy and the history of religion at various New York colleges, she wrote her first novel, "The Benefactor," and decided to stake her future on writing full time. In 1964, she emerged as a literary star with an audacious essay for Partisan Review, "Notes on Camp," which defined for the first time that esoteric, urban, cult sensibility, which exalted artifice and mocked seriousness. The essay is peppered with Oscar Wilde quotes, like "To be natural is such a very difficult pose to keep up."

"On Style," an essay published the following year — an exhortation to "encounter" art as "an experience, not a statement or an answer to a question" — established her as the seer at the vanguard. She was dubbed the new "dark lady of American letters," the title previously assigned to Mary McCarthy.

WHEN I ARRIVE AT HER Chelsea apartment for our second day of talks, she has been correcting the proofs of Emma's death scene and is awash with emotion. But it is clear that it is the whole project, the *fact* of this book — which is so different from anything she has ever done — that is overwhelming her this morning. I ask her again about her notion that "The Volcano Lover" is a turning point.

"I think every ambitious writer looks for the right form, and I always felt whatever form I chose constricted me."

Her two novels, "The Benefactor" and "Death Kit," both published in the 60's, received mixed reviews. Criticized for being too self-conscious, more concerned with modernist literary fashion than with the raw material of life, they were nevertheless praised for their powerful intelligence, original ideas and precise language.

It has been 25 years since "Death Kit," during which time she has become internationally famous for her essays. Now she says the essay is a dead form for her.

"The essays were a tremendous struggle. Each of the large ones took nine months to a year. I've had thousands of pages for a 30-page essay — 30 or 40 drafts of every page. 'On Photography,' which is six essays, took five years. And I mean working every single day."

"When you say working, are you looking things up, checking references?"

"No, no, I don't look anything up until after I've finished and I'm checking. No, it's just writing. I'd get started, and then I'd run into a ditch, and then I would start again — and again."

Temperamentally, Sontag is an admirer. All her best essays celebrate creators, thinkers or the created work of art. This quality led her into essay writing — and led her out of it.

"The Canetti essay was the beginning of the end. I wanted to honor Canetti." Her essay probably helped win him the Nobel Prize. "Yet as I was writing, I thought, 'Why am I doing this so indirectly? I have all this feeling — I'm in a storm of feeling all the time — and instead of expressing it I'm writing about people with feeling.' "

Twelve years ago in London, while poking around the print shops near the British Museum, Sontag first saw the volcano prints Hamilton had commissioned. She was immediately drawn to them and bought several. Years later, she read a biography of Hamilton and the story began to simmer.

"When I started the novel, it seemed like climbing Mount Everest. And I said to my psychiatrist, 'I'm afraid I'm not adequate.' Of course, that was a normal anxiety. What worried me was that I

(Continued on page 43)



HOSTILE TAKEOVER

THE REPUBLICAN RAID ON MASSACHUSETTS • BY CHRISTOPHER LYDON



GOV. WILLIAM F. WELD, FISCAL CONSERVATIVE AND SOCIAL LIBERTARIAN, IS DISMANTLING THE WELFARE STATE. MANY DEMOCRATS ARE SECRETLY DELIGHTED.

WILLIAM FLOYD WELD, THE GOVernor of Massachusetts, is different from you and me. He bags wild boar on weekends and he drops yachting jargon into the class warfare of state politics. "You need somebody who has deep keel," he said on the stump two summers ago. "You need somebody who can steer by his wake."

The inner man Weld likes to describe is drawn from the idylls of his boyhood in Smithtown, where the family estate covered a square mile of eastern Long Island. The pond alone on the place was 125 acres. With his father and uncle one day in the 1950's, men and boy had set out in two boats when a thunderstorm crackled and the men went back to shore. "I stayed out for six hours," Weld reminisces, "and when I came back, they said, 'Boy, you must have been slaying them out there.' And I said, 'No, actually I didn't get a nibble all day.' And they wouldn't believe it. But nothing makes me happier than to be waiting, and waiting, for a fish to bite."

Take your pick from that picture of the elements that people love, or don't, about Bill Weld, who doesn't *need* votes or public office any more than he needed those fish he was waiting for. Note the easy familiarity with private wealth, the great expectations, the detachment verging on obliviousness, the patience, the solitary calm and, above all, the air of personal sovereignty.

None of those qualities are diminished in the outdoorsy Brahmin Republican, now 47, who has sprung a hostile takeover on the Kennedy, Dukakis and Tsongas base in Democratic Massachusetts. "Tough on Taxes, Tough on Crime" was Weld's winning slogan two summers ago. A downsizer and a privatizer, he is cutting taxes and closing public hospitals, taking apart the same agencies that Gov. Michael S. Dukakis made a career of building up. A former Federal prosecutor and chief of the criminal division of the Justice Department — a post he quit in a celebrated split in 1988 with the Attorney General, Edwin Meese 3d — he has put liberal Massachusetts politics under arrest.

At the same time, he is striking themes with generational and national resonance. Fiscal conservatism and social liberalism seem naturally married in Weld's mind. If he can make harmony out of the dissonance, the next national candidate from Massachusetts will be a libertarian Republican.

The first baby-boom Governor of Massachusetts represents old money and a measure of new morality. He is a child of tax-revolt politics and equally of the women's and gay rights movements. He is, in his phrase, a "filthy supply-sider," righter than Reagan on tax cuts. He favors the death penalty for the most heinous murders and once talked about taking television sets away from prison inmates. He believes in school prayer, though he does not advocate it. "I consider myself much improved," he has said, "for having heard a bit of Scripture every morning" through six years of prep school at Middlesex.

Despite that bit of Bible-thumping, he takes a libertarian stand against the regulation of sexual behavior. When the Republicans debate abortion at their convention in two weeks, he will be the point man of an abortion-rights insurrection. And in typically blunt Weld-speak this spring, he said he philosophically favors taking all state limits off abortions, even for ninth-month pregnancies. The loss of some viable life, he said, is "a price I would pay in order to have government stay out of the thicket. I leave it up to the women." He advocates gay rights and without fanfare has appointed homosexuals to judgeships and to his subcabinet.

Yet William Weld is not primarily a "life style" governor. In the pit of a regional recession, he has slashed his way to stable, balanced budgets — purging welfare rolls and, in alternate swift strokes, easing business taxes. The compassion lobby may never forgive him for his sang-froid — for afflicting the afflicted and comforting the comfortable. On the other hand, The Wall Street Journal editorial page puts Weld first among the country's governors for fiscal policy.

By midsummer, Weld had pared almost 12 percent of the state payroll, and is still cutting. He gets surprisingly high marks on matters of structural reform from the Democratic guru David Osborne, co-author of the best seller "Reinventing Government." No one of any political stripe questions that Bill Weld is in charge. In fact, many people in this one-party Democratic state are furtively enjoying one-man Republican rule.

Not everybody, mind you. "He's your eccentric funny uncle that everybody likes, but he's out of touch — seriously out of touch," says State Senator Patricia McGovern, whose district includes the depressed, arson-scarred mill city of Lawrence. As Senate Ways and Means chairman, McGovern is the last of the urban populists in real power in Massachusetts, but she is quitting her office this year in despair about Weldism.

"When I tell the Governor about a fire in my city, he says: 'Can you use the space for economic development?' I say: 'Economic development? Governor, we're talking about a burnt-out three-decker on a residential street — and 30 percent of them are vacant in *(Continued on page 50)*

Christopher Lydon is a news broadcaster and interviewer with WGBH, the public television station in Boston.

THE GOVERNOR IN HIS OFFICE, LEFT, AND AT A MEETING ON REDISTRICTING, ABOVE. WITH WELD, CENTER, ARE, FROM LEFT, JOHN MOFFITT, HIS FORMER CHIEF SECRETARY; WILLIAM M. BULGER, SENATE PRESIDENT; JAMES T. BRETT, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE, AND MARTIN A. LINSKY, HIS CURRENT CHIEF SECRETARY.

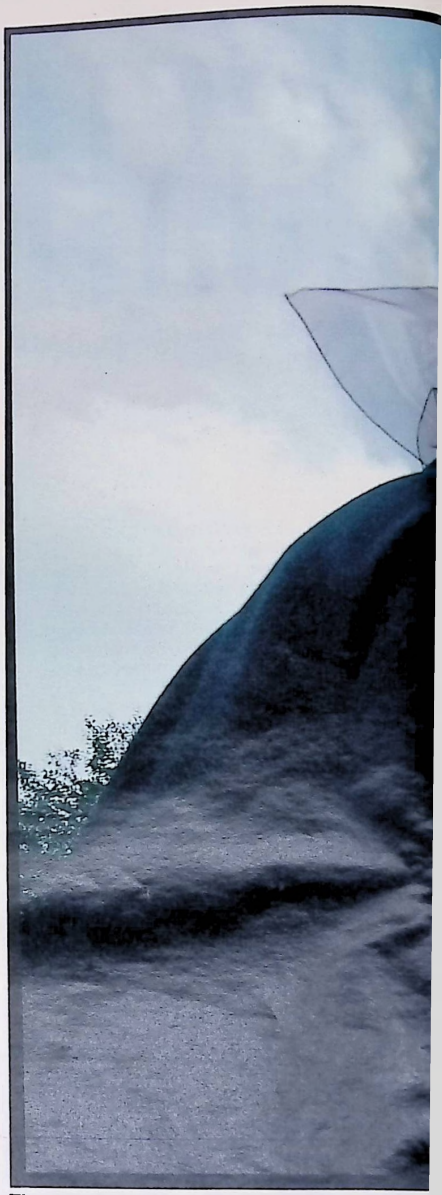
'Is This What The 15 People At the TV Tower Died For?'

BY JOHN BUDRIS

Two years after Lithuania's bloody break from the Soviet Union, the country still has the air of a liberated prison camp.



Giedre Bautriene blames an inept and indifferent hospital system for the death of her mother (in photo).



The memorial at the television tower where Lithua

THE LATE-AFTERNOON SUN slants through a stained-glass wall in Lithuania's Soviet-built Parliament building, lighting the pained features of Jurate Musteikyte, a 39-year-old translator. It isn't the glare that is causing her to wince but the racket of three Parliament deputies arguing endlessly over the loudspeakers about privatization. At issue is whether old Communist Party hacks are getting an unfair advantage.

Not long ago, Parliamentary deputies were heroes who challenged the mighty Soviet Union. Today, Parliament is split into 10 squabbling

John Budris writes frequently on the Baltics.



e killed last year while fighting for independence. Most Lithuanians readily concede that only their children or grandchildren will reap the rewards of their sacrifice.

factions. Even Sajudis, the movement that unified Lithuania's independence drive four years ago, has divided into several different camps. In opinion polls, only half the population now approves of the direction the country is going.

Jurate was one of many young patriots who stayed at their posts through Bloody Sunday, the violent Jan. 13, 1991, crackdown by the Soviet Union, and the failed Soviet coup last August. Now, scarcely two years after tiny Lithuania became the first republic to declare its independence from the Soviet Union — setting off an ethnic and nationalist chain reaction that arguably finished off the Soviet Union — she can hardly wait to leave for her studies in Norway.

"Is this what the 15 people at the TV tower died for — so the deputies can quarrel over investment laws and how they fit into their self-interest? You get worn down listening to this day after day — it becomes unbearable."

For the vast majority of Lithuanians — as for most people today throughout the old Soviet empire — the euphoria of freedom has ebbed away, replaced by a grim, gray reality. Still home to about 75,000 Russian troops, still polluted by indiscriminate industrial and military dumping, still struggling to rebuild an obsolete economy in virtual isolation and anonymity, still trying to define itself as a nation in a new Europe, Lithuania seems lost.

But that reading — reinforced by widespread feelings of dislocation, disorientation and depression — is somewhat superficial and, in any event, not terribly surprising, says Liucija Baskauskas, a Lithuanian-American anthropologist. "We should expect all the attendant dysfunction of a liberated prison camp because that's exactly what we have," she says. "Instead of breaking down walls after the door cracks open, first the prisoners fight for better cells. I would suspect that an inmate at Auschwitz, if asked whether he preferred Perrier to Evian, would get confused too."

Most Lithuanians readily concede that only their children — or maybe even their grandchildren — will reap the rewards of their sacrifice. Their attitude is reflected in a joke circulating in Vilnius: The pessimist says, "It can't get worse." The optimist says, enthusiastically, "Of course it can."

Indeed it can. Home to 130,000 Russian troops and millions of ethnic Russians, the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have developed into a seething, ethnic boiling pot that the British For-

"I just feel safer in a European luxury sedan."



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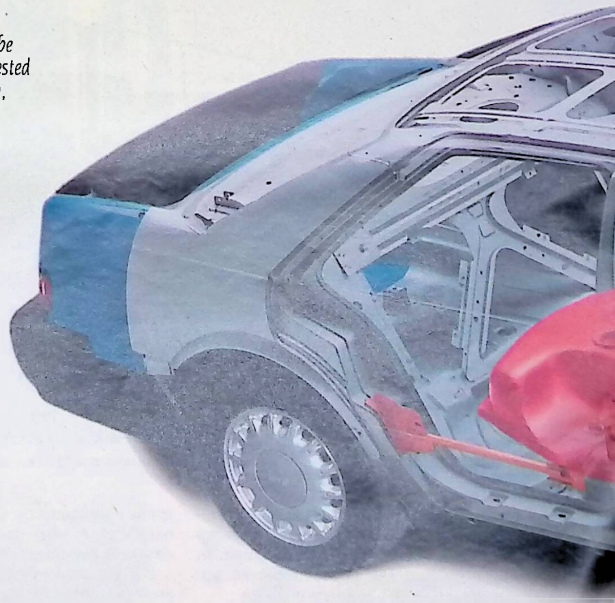
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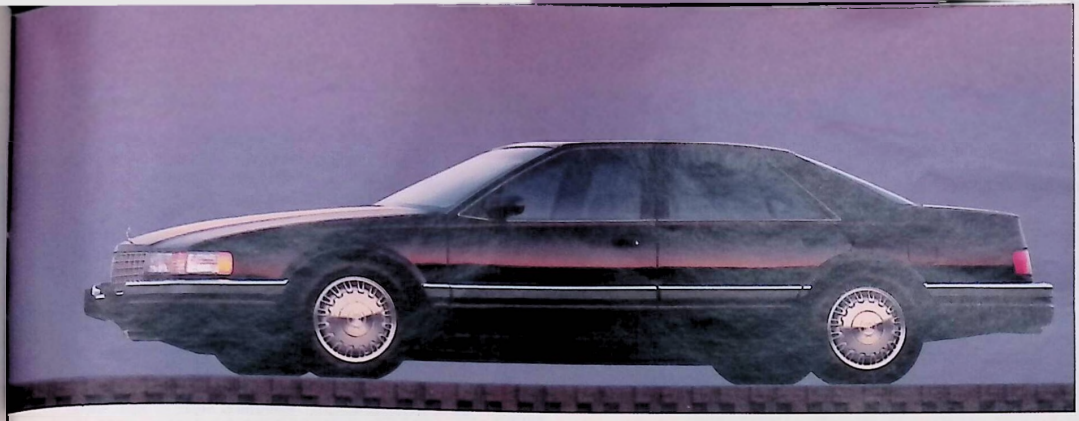
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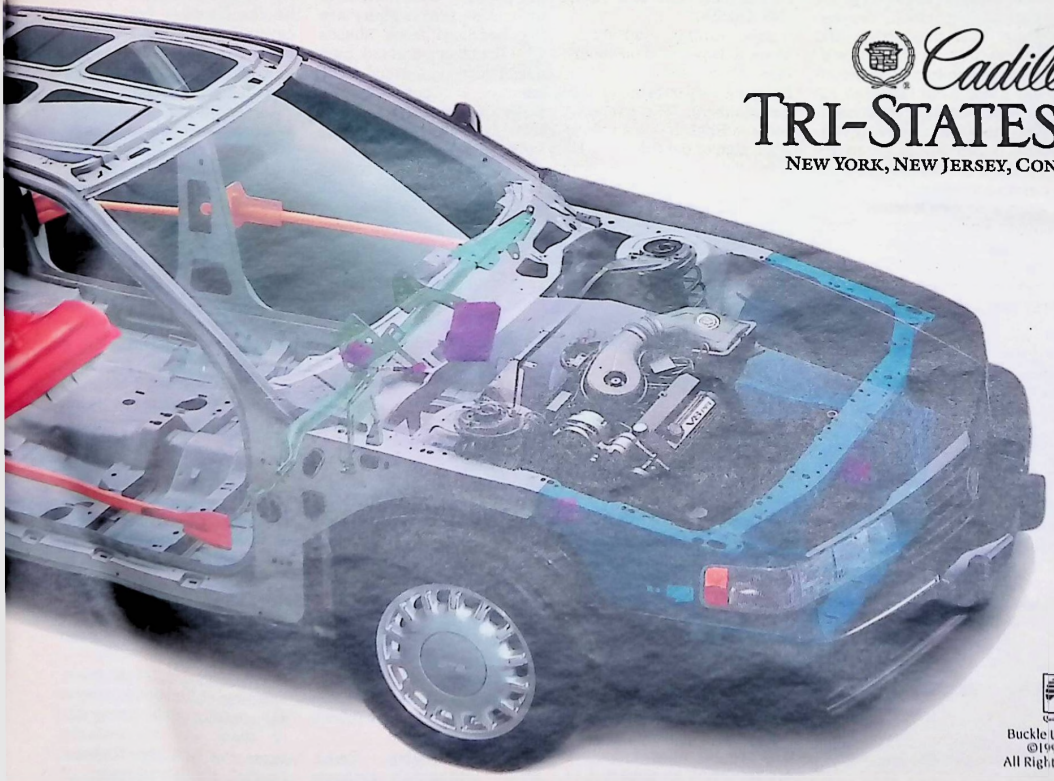
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eign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, described recently as "potentially more explosive" than Yugoslavia.

But Lithuania, where Russians account for less than 10 percent of the total population of 3.5 million, may well be the Slovenia of the Baltics, the state that manages to slip away when the nastiness begins. The Russian Parliament recently threatened Estonia with economic sanctions, claiming that a new citizenship law requiring proficiency in the Estonian language discriminates against Russians, who make up about 30 percent of the population there. Latvia, with a population that is 40 percent Russian, is preparing a similar statute. In Lithuania, however, most Russian are already citizens, and were exempted from any language requirement.

The Baltic states are frequently lumped together, but their histories, personalities and prospects are vastly different. While Estonia has strong cultural and historical links to Finland and Scandinavia, and Latvia still retains strong German influences, Lithuania is the Baltic loner. It speaks its own Indo-European language (which linguists trace to Sanskrit), was the only Catholic republic in the old Soviet Union and represents the easternmost outpost of Roman Catholicism. Even Catholic Poland, which claimed Vilnius as Polish territory between the world wars, is no easy ally.

It was no accident, then, that Lithuania was the first Soviet republic to challenge Moscow. "Lithuanians are starring in a morality play they wrote for themselves," says Paul Goble, a former State Department specialist on Eastern Europe. "They cast everything in moral terms. Latvians and Estonians don't have that tragic sense that all life is to be viewed from a moral dimension."

Or, as President Vytautas Landsbergis put it: "People don't put themselves in front of tanks because they want better radios. For survival as a people, as a nation, yes they do."

In some respects, however, Lithuania's isolation and idealism are its major assets. While its politics have now degenerated into bickering and backbiting, it did enjoy a honeymoon after independence, during which new legal and commercial codes were developed. These have made for a sound and stable business climate, which should — once the Russian troops leave — attract significant Western investment. As an agricultural country, with about 60 percent of its gross national product derived from food production and processing, it hasn't suffered economically as much as Estonia or Latvia. Although a drought is decimating this year's harvest, Vilnius hopes ultimately to use its food to extract precious oil and spare parts in trade with a hungry Russia. And a huge nuclear-power plant, the source of much environmental worry, is still a major economic asset that provides most of the electricity used by industrial Kaliningrad, the small Russian territory to Lithuania's west.



Lithuania is the Baltic loner, with its own Indo-European language and predominantly Roman Catholic population.

But these abstractions hold little meaning or comfort for most Lithuanians, few of whom have the money to participate in the commercial society that has so rapidly and conspicuously infiltrated their country. In the long run, as Lord Keynes said, we are all dead. People would like to see some return on their investment of blood and material sacrifice.

ON THE STREET outside the Draugstye Hotel, once the posh quarters in Vilnius for visiting Communist Party hacks, an elderly Russian woman has set up a table and drawn a long line of shoppers for her hottest item — bananas. When an Australian journalist reaches the front she says in crafted English, "One kilo. Hundred and forty rubles." He flashes two fingers. "Two hundred and eighty," she retorts. When he asks a question, the woman shakes her head and says, "No English."

Says Emilija Kapturauskiene, a 39-year-old public-affairs officer for Lithuania's fledgling Department of the Environment: "She can only count in English — not speak. It's a sign of the times."

In the hotel restaurant, with its neo-Stalinist décor of reds, dark wood and brushed steel, Emilija is uneasy. "I can't get used to it in here," she says, glancing at the menu. "I'm waiting for someone to come and tell me to leave." Lunch for two would cost her about two days' pay, or two American dollars and change at official rates. I assure her it's my treat.

At the next table several Russians work on a fourth carafe of vodka, nibble a third round of herring, get louder at each mouthful and smoke up a Marlboro storm between courses. It is 11:20 A.M.

"Traders from Kiev or Minsk, the new breed of capitalists," Emilija says, bristling at each outburst of laughter. "Being called a speculator was once the worst insult and being one was a crime. Now it's supposed to be the recipe to repair our broken society, isn't it? No wonder doctors are reporting an epidemic of depression. Who wouldn't feel crazy?"

While there are obvious inequalities in the early dividends of independence, Lithuanians see this as the price of freedom from the Soviet Union. Although they both despise and admire the new class of carpetbaggers for whom the material benefits of independence came hard and fast, independence itself is never questioned — nor is it blamed for the daily shock of rising prices and uncertain employment.

Like most people in Vilnius, Emilija and her husband, Jonas, an experimental physicist at Vilnius University, live in a nondescript concrete apartment house. There is hot and cold running water, but not always at the same time.

Today most apartments are privately owned, under a Government program that allowed the occupants to buy their apartments at very low rates. A two-bedroom box in a Vilnius high rise now sells for the equivalent of about $20,000, more than 20 years' combined salary for a typical working couple.

But in several parts of town, single-family homes are popping up for the first time in 50 years. Many are four-bedroom town houses with fireplaces and oak parquet floors that would fit in smartly in Georgetown or Boston's gentrified Back Bay. Their owners, Emilija says, are former apparatchiks who made their money by selling state goods in the black markets.

In other parts of town, members of the old Communist ruling class are busy remodeling the best flats Vilnius has to offer, apartments that came as the perquisites of party loyalty before independence.

Weary of talking about past iniquities, Emilija suddenly changes the subject. "My friend's 17-year-old son is gifted in music and mathematics and even taught himself English. He should be going to the university. But he will not. He wants to be a trader — get into business. Even my own two boys are thinking about how they can sell their talents. My youngest thinks of prices for the cartoons he draws. I don't like it at all, but I suppose it will help them survive. For them there will be different rules."

A TELEPHONE CALL sends Lithuania's Defense Minister, Audrius Butkevicius, rushing out of his office. Intelligence sources have intercepted a telegram ordering Russian paratroopers to reclaim a building in Kaunas that was a Soviet officers' club until its appropriation by a Lithuanian youth group. The authorization comes from Gen. Valeri Mironov, the commander of the 130,000 former Soviet troops remaining in the Baltics. In the last raid on a Lithuanian target, last July, before the Soviet coup attempt, Soviet troops executed six customs officials gangland style — with shots in the head at point-blank range.

An hour later a relieved Butkevicius returns. Negotiations have succeeded, and the club is spared. But Butkevicius draws little comfort from his small diplomatic victory.

"Mironov is a career officer," he says. "That means he takes orders from above and carries them out. Can he be trusted? I don't think so. That is why it is important for Europe and the United States to see these troops as a regional problem which causes tension and instability. The West should use all its resources — both political and economic — to hasten the removal of these Soviet forces. It is in their interests too — not only ours."

Under the threat of delays in desperately needed cash infusions from the International Monetary Fund, the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, promised that the troops would be removed and that Moscow was "politically committed to discuss a withdrawal timetable."

Baltic leaders, accustomed to soft pledges from the east, want an immediate and internationally supervised pull out. But local commanders from the Commonwealth of Independent States are balking, insisting there is no place else to put the retreating troops. Butkevicius scoffs at that, pointing out that most of the troops are young conscripts who could go right back to the homes that they just left. In fact, he says, fresh recruits flooded into the Baltics this spring following the most recent draft call.

The Russians, far from calming Lithuanian fears, seem almost to be going out of their way to enflame them. Col. Gen. Ilya Kalinichenko, the commander of the C.I.S. border guards, told

(Continued on page 44)

BY CHRISTOPHER IDONE

Old-Country Cooking



Tony May, owner of San Domenico in Manhattan, preparing sautéed peppers — a rustic dish from his childhood.

THIS IS THE SEASON when the garden is growing at full tilt and the cook's imagination can go wild with ideas for preparing fresh produce. Whether you are trying to keep up with the abundance of your prospering tomato plants, the zucchini that runs riot overnight or the farm-stand bounty of peppers piled high in colors from muted ivory to bright red, the key to preparing summer vegetables is simplicity.

Few hold to this theory better than Tony May, owner of the San Domenico restaurant on Central Park South. May and his chef, Theo Schoenegger, reinterpret the elegant cooking style based on what used to be served in the households of the Italian aristocracy. When cooking with friends and family at his country home, however, May reproduces the robust food of his childhood.

"I remember that the evening meal was the highlight of each day," he says. "A dozen of us would sit around a large table laughing, joking and fighting, while we ate our beans and mussels in broth or a pasta with fresh vegetables, fragrant with olive oil and flecks of peperoncino. There was always a soup, or patate, served with watered-down wine. Fresh fruit was our dessert. The fish were cheap, the beans were healthy and the fruits and vegetables arrived from the farm. The food was as simple and poor as it was delicious and pure."

Among the dishes May recalls are fresh sardines — those silvery morsels prepared according to the whim of the cook, which are never to be confused with the tinned variety. Sardines are the herring of the Mediterranean. These sweet, tender fish arrived home still jumping in the pail. They were often marinated in lemon juice, garlic and parsley or baked with breadcrumbs, olive oil and parsley.

On a recent morning at May's country home, some dozen friends trickle into the spacious and airy kitchen. They are greeted with an enormous bowl of warm zeppole — a Neapolitan fritter made of yeast, flour and eggs and coated in sugar — prepared by Marisa, May's 17-year-old daughter, and his par-

Christopher Idone, with Helen McEachrane, is the author of "Cooking Caribe" (Panache Press/Clarkson N. Potter). Molly O'Neill is on vacation.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CLAUDIO EDINGER FOR LIAISON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ents, who are here on a visit from Italy. The zeppole are served with steamy cups of espresso topped with hot foamy milk.

After a visit to his garden to gather up herbs, squash and tomatoes, May heads to neighboring farm stands and then makes a stop at the local fishmonger. Back home everyone pitches in to prepare the afternoon lunch. The delineation between who chops garlic, who cleans fish and who washes the pots does not exist. The rhythm is more instinct than habit. So is the parental gaze that trails behind with wooden spoon in hand, making sure May sticks to the rules and follows the lessons of his youth. As the morning rushes by, glasses of crisp pinot grigio replace cappuccino.

The menu is easy: fresh filleted sardines marinated in lemon juice and garlic; zucchini, sautéed with a splash of vinegar, olive oil and chopped mint; and a quick sauté of colorful sweet peppers. A tomato salad prepared with oil, vinegar, fresh oregano and a covering of ice cubes is almost a conceit. Since summer tomatoes lose their fresh and fragrant taste when refrigerated, this is a way to give them a quick chill and end up with a delicious extract of juices that can be scooped up with crusty bread. Tender baby octopus as purple as a battered boxer is sliced to reveal chalk-white meat, then tossed with lemon juice, olive oil and cracked pepper. A salad of warm poached salt cod and boiled potatoes anchors the meal, along with a pasta dish of farfalle cooked in a sauce of eggplant and tomato, spiced with hot pepper and sweetened with fresh chopped basil.

For a cool-down dessert, a granité made with espresso and sweetened with sugar and a touch of rum and Sambuca is set in the freezer to crystallize, then shaved into glasses and topped with a spoon of whipped cream for a chilling end to a summer's meal.

"What I do here," May says, "is take my childhood memories of meals long past and recreate the 'cucina casalinga' " — home cooking — "of my grandmother, mother, father and aunts. It is a style of cooking that works so well with the produce that is available to us here. It's all different now, yet it's all the same."

The following recipes are adapted from Tony May.

Marinated Sardines

1 pound fresh sardines
6 lemons, halved
2 cloves garlic, chopped
¼ cup flat Italian parsley, roughly chopped
1 teaspoon peperoncino
¼ cup olive oil.

1. Carefully scale the sardines. Remove the innards, excess bones and spine by pulling from head to tail. Wash and pat dry with paper towels. Flatten the sardines in place in a glass or ceramic dish, skin side down. Squeeze the juice of 3 lemons over the sardines. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours.

2. Drain off all the liquid. Squeeze the juice of the remaining lemons over the sardines. Drain again. Set aside.

3. When ready to serve, drain the lemon juice and arrange the sardines on a platter. Sprinkle with the garlic, parsley and peperoncino. Drizzle with the oil. Set aside for 20 minutes and then serve.

Yield: Six servings.

Baby Octopus Salad

2 pounds baby octopus
1 cup olive oil
½ cup Italian parsley, roughly chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
3 lemons, halved
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

1. Clean the octopus by turning it inside out and removing the eyes and the small bone at the bottom of the head. Wash thoroughly.

2. In a large kettle of salted boiling water, cook the octopus 30 to 45 minutes, depending on their size. Drain and cool under cold running water. (It is necessary to peel larger octopuses.) Cut the octopus into ¼-inch strips and drain. Place the octopus on a large platter. Add the olive oil, parsley and garlic. Pit the lemons and squeeze over the octopus. Season with salt and pepper and toss.

3. Set aside to marinate for one hour. Serve at room temperature.

Yield: Six servings.

Farfalle With Tomatoes And Eggplant

Salt
2 medium eggplants, cut into ½-inch dice
½ cup olive oil
3 cloves garlic, sliced thin
1 pound ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
⅛ teaspoon dried oregano
1 whole peperoncino
Salt to taste
1 pound farfalle, dried
About 1 cup fresh or canned chicken stock
1 cup chopped fresh basil.

1. Salt the eggplant and set aside to drain for one hour or more.

2. In a skillet large enough to contain the sauce and the pasta, heat ¼ cup of the oil with the garlic over medium heat. When the garlic is golden, remove from the oil. Add the tomatoes, oregano, peperoncino and salt to taste. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring from time to time. Set aside.

3. Drain the eggplant and squeeze out the excess liquid.

4. In a clean skillet, heat the remaining ¼ cup of the oil over medium heat. Add the eggplant, season with salt to taste and sauté until tender, about 15 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, in a large kettle of salted boiling water cook the farfalle until partly cooked, about 10 minutes. Place the skillet with the tomato mixture over medium-high heat. When the tomato mixture is hot, add the chicken stock. Add the eggplant and toss. Add the drained farfalle and cook for 5 minutes or until the farfalle are al dente. Stir in the chopped basil and serve in warm bowls.

Yield: Five to six servings.

Sautéed Red And Yellow Peppers

8 large sweet bell peppers, combination of red and yellow
¼ cup olive oil
3 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 tablespoon fresh marjoram

1. Core, seed and devein the peppers. Cut into ¼-inch strips. Set aside.

2. In a heavy skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Sauté garlic until golden. Remove from pan. Discard.

3. Add the peppers to the pan. Raise the heat to medium-high. Sweat the peppers until they soften and begin to brown, shaking from time to time.

4. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with marjoram. Place on a platter and serve.

Yield: Six servings.

Salt Cod Salad With Parsleyed Potatoes

2 pounds dry salt cod
¼ cup olive oil
4 garlic cloves, chopped
2 lemons
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
6 medium potatoes, boiled and sliced ¼-inch thick
¼ cup Italian parsley, chopped.

1. Soak the cod for 48 hours in cold water, changing the water at least 5 times.

2. In a large kettle of boiling water, boil the cod for 30 minutes or until tender. Drain and cool. Break the cod into small pieces and place in a mixing bowl.

3. Add the olive oil, garlic and juice of the lemons and season with salt and pepper. Toss.

4. Arrange the cod salad on a large platter and surround the salad with the potatoes. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve.

Yield: Six servings.

Zucchini Marinated With Mint

2 pounds small zucchini
1 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
2 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

1. Wash and trim the zucchini and cut into ⅛-inch rounds. In a heavy skillet heat ¾ cup oil over medium heat. Add half the zucchini and sauté until golden on both sides. Remove and drain on paper towels. Add the remaining oil if necessary, and repeat with the remaining zucchini.

2. Place the zucchini in a bowl and toss with the remaining ingredients. Arrange on a platter and set aside for 20 minutes or until ready to serve.

Yield: Six servings.

Iced Tomato Salad With Oregano

8 large, firm, ripe tomatoes
2 teaspoons fresh oregano, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
8 ice cubes.

1. Slice the tomatoes into thin wedges and place in a large bowl. Add the oregano, garlic, olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

2. When ready to serve, place the ice cubes on top.

Yield: Six servings.

Granité al Caffè

4 cups espresso (measuring cups)
1 cup granulated sugar
2 ounces dark rum
2 ounces Sambuca
½ pint heavy cream, whipped.

1. Prepare the espresso and dissolve the sugar into it while the espresso is still hot. Stir and cool.

2. Add the rum and Sambuca. Divide the mixture into 2 flat tin pie pans. Set in the freezer for 3 hours.

3. When ready to serve, grate the frozen espresso with a four-tined fork into 6 chilled small goblets. Add a spoonful of whipped cream on top and serve.

Yield: Six servings.

Pier 1 basics sale

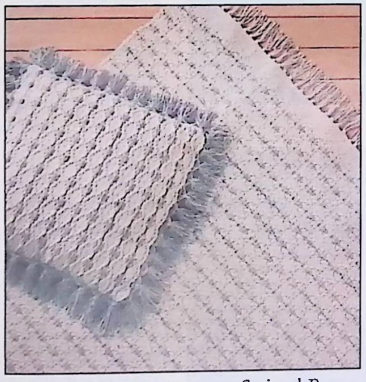
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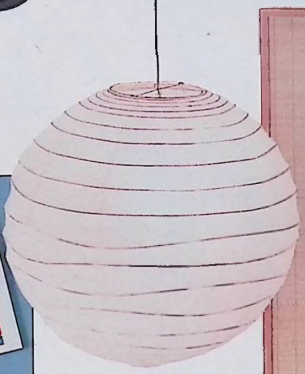


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FASHION

BY CARRIE DONOVAN

Hand Baggage

TOTE THOSE BAGS. LIFT those sacks. The whoppingly overscaled handbag will be the one to lug around this fall.

As a rule, designers seldom show handbags on the runways. But at the recent fall collections in Paris and New York, the models more often than not strode out clutching impossible-to-ignore satchels.

To be fair, it should be pointed out that these clothing designers have been, or are just now, in the handbag business as well. And why not, when the bag is probably every woman's most essential accessory?

These new daily carry-alls, whether boxy or squishy, are certainly roomier. There will be no excuses for having forgotten some important bit of business — just for not being able to find it in one of these capacious containers. ■





FAR LEFT: *Karl Lagerfeld showed this enormous quilted-leather box bag for Chanel. It will not be produced (the cost would be astronomical), but it certainly drives home the importance of the big bag.*

TOP: *Adrienne Vittadini's smooth calf satchel, $240. At the Adrienne Vittadini Boutique, Riverside Square, N.J.; Beverly Hills, Calif., and Palm Beach, Fla.*

BOTTOM: *Isaac Mizrahi's plaid portmanteau, $550. At Bergdorf Goodman. Saks Fifth Avenue.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILFRID ROUFF (FAR LEFT)

SONTAG

(Continued from page 31)

would not be writing essays, because they have a powerful ethical impulse behind them, and I think they make a contribution. But my psychiatrist said, 'What makes you think it isn't a contribution to give people pleasure?' "

She stops talking and bites her lip. She is clearly moved and is trying not to cry. She takes a deep breath.

"And I thought, ohhhhhh. That sentence launched me."

"ILLNESS AS METAphor," "AIDS and Its Metaphors" and "On Photography" — all book-length essays — challenge us to consider a deeper view of the concept of illness and the effects of the visual image than we ordinarily attempt. Sontag's object is to liberate perception from the simple and reductive by offering a more layered analysis. Her essays equate complexity with clarity and obfuscation with oversimplification.

"Ill people are haunted by dread, shame and humiliation," she says angrily. The two illness books are an attempt to rectify the human cost of these superstitious, medieval notions. Above all, she adds, "I am always struggling against stereotypes."

Robert B. Silvers, the editor of The New York Review of Books, which has published much of her writing, describes her quest to reject lazy assumptions as the "cautionary element in her work." Sontag calls it the "Don Quixote in me."

Because her prose is polemical and her philosophy avant-garde, she has, on occasion, angered many older and more conservative critics. Richard Poirier, for many years an editor of Partisan Review, remembers when she was an exotically beautiful young writer for his magazine and aroused the ire of Phillip Rahv and others of the New York intellectual establishment, who distrusted both her enthusiasm for popular culture (film, dance, music) and her dense academic knowledge.

"She was one of those rare creatures," he told me, "who knew about what was going on in the universities and in European criticism, who had the courage and the force of will and character to challenge the men in the intellectual community to pay attention to these things."

IF HER INTELLECT IS rigorous and pure, so is her apartment, for aside from books and papers, the environment is strikingly Spartan. She says she goes out seven nights a week with friends for dinner, concerts, plays. She has phenomenal energy and stays out late, always ready to do one more thing, go one more place. ("Suddenly it's 4 in the morning," she says, "and somebody suggests something else. You go on. You don't say you're tired or you've had enough. Because you can never have enough.") Considering her abundant social life, I am amazed at the absence of furniture — there are so few places to sit. Doesn't she have friends over?

"No. This apartment is the inside of my head. It's a map of my brain."

"Have you always lived alone?"

"No, no. Not only have I at different times lived with lovers, but I've had friends come and stay. I like the idea that there are other bodies in other rooms." She has never remarried, but she has many intense friendships, which constitute a kind of multifarious international bond.

FROM THE LATE 1960's to the mid-70's, Sontag was an expatriot. David had dropped out of Amherst College, and joined her in Paris, living in separate apartments, entirely absorbed by French culture, rarely speaking English. She returned to New York in 1976 (by then David was at Princeton), when she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I remember when I was thrown into the world of people with cancer, one of the things that most surprised me was people saying, 'Why me?' But I saw that for lots of people these dramatic illnesses became victim situations. Illness is like a lottery — some people get ill and you happen to be one of them. I didn't feel a victim of my illness."

The prognosis was grim. At that time, New York oncologists were more alarmist about chemotherapy than they are now, so she chose to follow the treatment of Lucien Israel, a renowned French oncologist, who recommended radically high doses of chemotherapy, which, in the end, were administered by a reluctant Sloane-Kettering in New York.

"My New York doctors said, 'Don't you realize that this is very extreme treatment and you're going to suffer a lot?' And I said" — her voice is barely audible — "but you people don't give me any hope. He's not promising anything, but he's offering much more treatment."

She underwent chemotherapy for two and a half years — an unheard-of amount of time in the 70's. The final cost was near $150,000. Since she had no medical insurance, Robert Silvers raised the money for her by writing letters and calling a number of her friends in the intellectual community. Almost everyone gave something, and those who were able gave a great deal.

"Did you always have hope?"

There is a long silence. "You live with two feelings. I thought I was going to die. But. . . ." She fingers a small clock with a double face; one for America and one for Europe. "I really wanted to fight for my life. I was told I had a 10 percent chance to live two years. I thought, well, *somebody's* got to be in that 10 percent."

"How did you react to dying?"

"I was terrified. Absolutely terrified and horrified. Horrible grief. Above all to leave David. And I loved life so much. But, I thought, I *must* believe I will die, because that's the only way I can have dignity or use the time that's left. But I also thought, well. . . ." Her voice rises and disappears. "I was never tempted to say, that's it. I love it when people fight for their lives."

She knew Ingrid Bergman during her last illness and tried to persuade her to see Dr. Israel, but Bergman refused, saying she'd had a good life and didn't mind dying.

Sontag is incensed as she tells this story. "I said, 'Why not have *more* of your life?' But she said, 'No, no, it's all right.' It drove me crazy — that anybody would say that! It's, again, my mother, of course. Resignation, resignation, it drives me wild."

She is now, except for slight problems with a kidney, in good health. She says that at 59 she notices no difference in her energy from her early 20's.

There is a great deal of death — even gore — in "The Volcano Lover," and I ask her if she drew on her cancer experiences for those sections.

"If you think you are going to die, and you are spared, you can never completely disconnect from the knowledge. You always feel a little posthumous. But I think one's imaginative participation in the horrors that are part of history. . . ." She looks outside. Her apartment has sweeping views of the Hudson River. "I can never take my own unhappiness really seriously because I think so much of how badly off most people in the world are."

She has always had a high political profile, from her early radical days to her work on behalf the victims of Soviet totalitarianism. During the Vietnam War, she made a famous, controversial trip to Hanoi. She remembers a woman she saw in a factory there, working under the most abject conditions. When Sontag expressed outrage, the woman told her she was so much better off than her parents, because, as rice farmers, they lived up to their hips in water.

"I don't think a week goes by when I don't think of that woman. 'I'm dry,' she said. 'I have work in which I'm dry.' "

I'm reluctant to believe that social morality can be so internalized, and ask her if it doesn't seem "artificially rational" to ameliorate her own grief by making make such historic comparisons.

"No, you don't decide!" She is leaning forward passionately. "You either are in touch with that imaginatively or you're not. It's not deciding — it's the other way around. I can't screen it out. I feel I'm receiving messages all the time. And sometimes I'm overwhelmed."

"Overwhelmed by what?"

"By suffering. A friend once said to me, 'You are lacking a skin that most people have.' I'm also incredibly squeamish. I cannot watch most American movies. I don't even have television."

AS PRESIDENT OF PEN in 1987 and as an original member in 1974 (with the founder, Richard Sennett) of the New York Institute for the Humanities, she has been an effective advocate for imprisoned writers.

When Sontag conceived of "The Volcano Lover," she acquired an agent (Andrew Wylie) for the first time in her life and won a lucrative four-book deal with her lifelong publisher, Farrar Straus Giroux. With that advance, she bought this apartment. Then, in 1990, she was awarded a MacArthur fellowship, which will pay $340,000 over five years, *plus* medical insurance. She is at last comfortably, even luxuriously, set up.

I experience the monkish silence in her apartment and ask her an odd question. "Do you believe in an afterlife in which you'll meet your literary heroes?"

"No."

"Most people hope to meet their relatives. You don't anticipate Homer and Dante?" I'm only partly joking.

"Not at all. What pleases me is just the idea that I'm doing what they did. That's already so astonishing to me. Because. . . ." She is speechless. "Literature needs lots of people. It's enough to honor the project."

"What is the project?"

"Oh . . . to . . ." she sighs deeply ". . . to produce food for the mind, for the senses, for the heart. To keep language alive. To keep alive the idea of seriousness. You have to be a member of a capitalist society in the late 20th century to understand that seriousness itself could be in question."

Her leg is propped up childishly on the table. Each day, like a young graduate student, she has worn the same pair of sweatpants and sneakers, with different rumpled shirts. She is reluctant to talk about a next project, except to say she wants to write fiction.

"To me, literature is a calling, even a kind of salvation. It connects me with an enterprise that is over 2,000 years old. What do we have from the past? Art and thought. That's what lasts. That's what continues to feed people and give them an idea of something better. A better state of one's feelings or simply the idea of a silence in one's self that allows one to think or to feel. Which to me is the same." ■

LITHUANIA

(Continued from page 38)

Butkevicius in mid-June that "the Polish-Lithuanian border is seen as the Russian border, and our soldiers are there to defend the interests of Russia." The Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei V. Kozyrev, said recently that Ukraine, Moldova and the Baltic states should "accept on their territories legions with special status and very close, privileged links with Russia."

President Landsbergis says: "This is a dangerous situation. I believe that Mr. Yeltsin is sincere about the agreements we signed concerning the removal of the Red Army. But I am afraid that this part of the Soviet military is just not under his control.

"Forget seven years," he continues. "At the rate they're going it will take 700 years. Meanwhile, they are still acting like the army of an occupier, conducting military maneuvers at will, cutting trees, despoiling the environment." More important, he says, their presence discourages foreign investment.

According to a recent report by Lithuania's Department of the Environment, 50 years of Soviet military occupation has inflicted environmental damages that will cost at least $150 billion to repair. Although virtually no one is expecting restitution from Moscow, "we detail every infraction because in other parts of Eastern Europe Moscow claimed a right to compensation for the 'improvements' made by their army," says Antanas Jonukonis, a department investigator.

Near the Soviet airfield at Sauliai in central Lithuania, for example, benzene concentrations in the drinking water from towns and villages near the base are 10 times levels that are considered safe for consumption. According to Jonukonis, so much diesel fuel and other petroleum products have been dumped at the air base that local residents operate a new kind of black-market business: extracting a low-grade heating fuel from the saturated soil.

"There was one incident a while ago which in fact did not even happen on a military base," Jonukonis says. "Without notice or permission — of course — the Soviets conducted war games in one of the last surviving old growth forests in Lithuania. It is a sanctuary — sacred land, really. How can one put a price tag on such a loss?"

The forest, called Greenwoods, is woven into Lithuanian legends and folklore. Some of the plants destroyed under Soviet tank treads were rare European species surviving only in the preserves, according to Jonukonis.

After reciting a litany of environmental infractions by the Soviet army, Jonukonis, a soft-spoken man in his late 60's, clasped his hands together like an altar boy and told a story from his boyhood. "The Russian army came to our farm and wanted firewood. My father offered a pile of oak he had recently cut for the winter. The Russians said it was too wet. So they just cut the logs out of our house to burn in their bonfire. It was early fall and the hazelnuts were ripe. Instead of bending the trees to pick the nuts, the Russian soldiers chopped them down."

SITTING ON A TINY stool in her 8-by-8 kitchen, Giedre Bautriene is talking about her former work as an editor at one of Vilnius's most respected publishing houses. With government subsidies cut off and paper costs rising, layoffs and cutbacks are rampant, she says.

She recalls a colleague who received a pink slip and an offer to stay on as the cleaning lady. The distraught woman jumped from an 11th-story window. "How could she tell her daughter that her mother the editor is now the washerwoman?"

She spreads 18 American dollars on the table — a month's pay from her job at a cultural foundation. "This won't even buy a couple of tanks of gas for the car I don't have," she says. "But it will get us to the country and back in my father's car — if it doesn't fall apart on the way."

But material discomforts are not foremost in Giedre's thoughts these days. On the living-room wall above the couch where her father now often sleeps hangs a grainy black-and-white photograph of her mother. On the morning before Christmas Eve, Giedre's mother fell on an icy walkway and hit her head on the pavement. In Lithuania's hospitals — where the indifference of the Soviet system survives amid growing shortages of basic medicines and supplies — a serious but treatable injury became a death sentence.

The family says she was misdiagnosed as a stroke victim, given incorrect medicine that worsened her injuries and left lingering in a hospital ward during the holidays. She died of infection two weeks after a brain operation that may not have been necessary.

"We stayed in the hospital with her around the clock and provided the best nursing care we could, what we knew how to do. What we didn't know — like changing I.V. lines and urine bags — we learned," Giedre says.

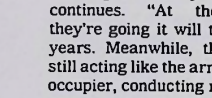
Stopping at times when the subject becomes too painful, the sisters describe a 19-day horror story of bribes for nurses and desperate searches for medicines and specialists. Mostly they speak about the shortage of compassion in a medical system where patients are treated like impositions.

"Like those killed at the TV tower, I believe my mother was another kind of victim of the old Soviet system," Giedre says. "I've seen pictures of field hospitals from the American Civil War. That's what it was like. When we ran out of disposable syringes they used the Soviet ones, the kind they sharpen on a stone. Even unconscious, my mother would startle from the pain."

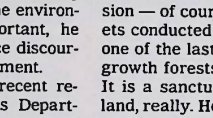
Most days, Giedre says, a woman arrived before the morning shift and swabbed the floor of the intensive-care unit with a dirty rag tied to a stick. "She was dipping the rag into a bucket of water and barely ringing it

LUXURY HOMES AND ESTATES

MONTANA RANCHES



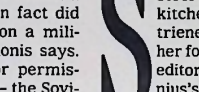
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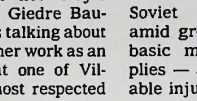
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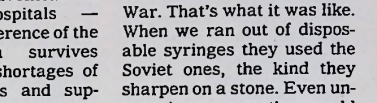
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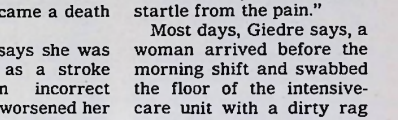
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The New York Times Magazine

out with her hands," Giedre says. "There had not been any disinfectant for quite a while. She told me so. But there was blood and urine on the floor under the patients. So what she was really doing was going from room to room, spreading a film of blood, urine and filthy water everywhere."

Many hospitals operate under triage conditions. Shortages of insulin, antibiotics and disposable needles continue despite several airlifts of Western medical aid. Donated medicines are often outdated. Surgeons routinely ask patients to arrange for their own supplies before operations — from catheters and urine bags to gauze and antibiotics. Often, these have to be bought on the black market for hard currency or in one of several private, cash-only clinics and pharmacies.

Under these circumstances, foreigners living in Lithuania take extra precautions. One American family in Vilnius keeps several thousand dollars in cash on hand, in case someone needs to be rushed to a hospital in Helsinki or Berlin.

At a hillside cemetery in Vilnius, Giedre tidies up her mother's grave. With no wind, the two candles burn even and straight. A half-dozen other mourners tend nearby graves, as is the Lithuanian custom in the months after a death in the family. In the fog and dusk their candles spread an amber glow around the crosses and headstones.

"My mother always wanted to have Christmas Eve supper again in a free Lithuania," says Giedre, her voice trailing off. "We have so much work to do here."

THROUGHOUT THE COUNtry, one often runs across people of Lithuanian descent who have returned to help rebuild their tarnished homeland. One of those is the anthropologist, Liucija Baskauskas, whose parents were among the thousands of Lithuanians who fled to the West after the Soviet occupation in 1940, when a third of Lithuania's population — more than a million people — were executed, imprisoned, exiled or forced to emigrate. But two years ago she packed up her three children, a California husband and a fat Rolodex and returned to become vice rector of the University of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas. But she seldom stays put very long.

At the Vilnius airport, Baskauskas hustles for a flight to Copenhagen, where she is seeking financial backing for Lithuania's first independent television station, a venture she hopes will "re-educate four million people."

"My vision is to bring foreign programming in the original language with Lithuanian subtitles — from "This Old House" to the A B C 's of business to university-level courses," she says. "I want Lithuanians to see themselves in a wider stream of people and not just as a nation caught in a resurgence of 18th- and 19th-century nationalism."

Baskauskas's introduction to broadcasting was a baptism by fire, to say the least. After the Vilnius television-and-radio center was stormed by Soviet Black Berets and paratroopers on Bloody Sunday, she relayed signals from the Kaunas station round the clock for nearly a week in English and Lithuanian. With communications in Vilnius cut, her broadcasts were often the only source of information for Western journalists. Her debut grabbed Moscow's attention as well.

"Someone was trying to get a message to me, and that was to stop," she says. "While my youngest child was home hiding under the bed our apartment in Kaunas was demolished."

Although she says the nation needs a kind of Marshall Plan to rebuild a crippled economy and clean up a poisoned environment, Baskauskas says the national psyche needs to be healed first.

"We need to build a new parallel structure and not expect the old society to create anything but what it already knows — hierarchy, bureaucracy, control and even terror. Even in free Lithuania, the Government still wants to have exit visas for its citizens to travel out of the country."

In schools, she says, a new orthodoxy is rapidly replacing the old. Teachers who three years ago forced atheism on the children are now dragging them to church. "Literally the same nail that held up the portrait of Lenin now holds up the crucifix," she says. "It beats anything out of Dickens."

"If I were God, I would give every 17-year-old a Eurail pass, $100 and a kick in the pants. When they came back you'd really see this nation take off." Here she pauses, and the pace of her words slows. "This brave nation survived genocide," she says. "Every criticism should be followed by this reminder." ■

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A House With *Split* Personality

PARADE THE GHOST OF THE 19TH-CENtury interior-design crusader Edith Wharton through this house and even her famously critical eye would relax its squint. "The better the house, the less need for curtains" was one of Wharton's famous maxims. In this East Coast family's house by Shelton, Mindel & Associates, the New York City architectural firm that designed the house and its interior, there are curtains — but they're limited to the street side.

That single row of curtains is emblematic of the Janus-like divide in the house: the front and back are totally dissimilar. The street side is formal, guarded and crisply studded with small-paned windows, which knock the grand edge off the house. So do its surprising proportions. The building is 130 feet long but only 22 feet wide, which isn't as massive a width as the structure's size would traditionally command. "It's a house that's a 'built idea,' " says Lee Mindel, one of the architects. "The style isn't too fuddy-duddy and it isn't too funky — it's elegant and employs a tradition of craftmanship."

Around the back, there is more evidence of the architects' craft. Here the house is undressed, windows bare. The kitchen, living room and dining room are all doorless and open wide onto a glass-and-lattice-grid hallway. This airy hall toys with notions of traditional enclosure, as well as the classification of materials as indoor or outdoor. The walls are made of outdoor wooden siding, the floor is rough bluestone, the lattice has a garden association and the lights are exterior lamps.

There's a counterpoint: leave the latticed hallway and the rooms are elegant havens with cherry wood walls, floors inlaid with ebony, rugs made to order, even a chandelier over the dining-room table.

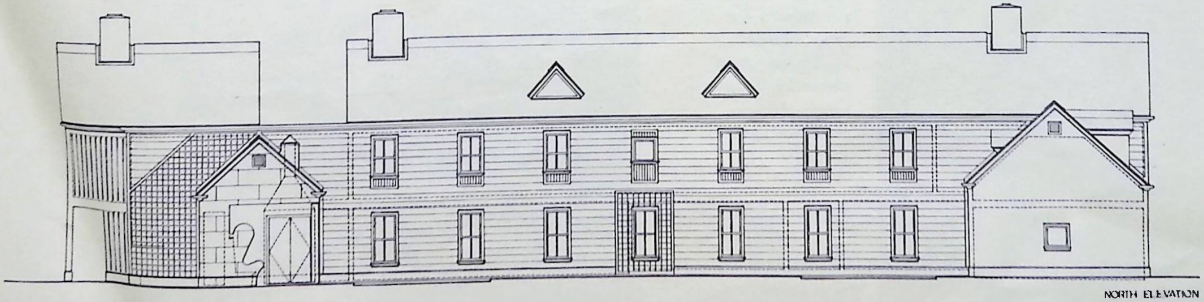
The spirit of the division between the building's public front and private back is again evoked by the hallway. Traveling the long length of this hall — especially when it is lit up at night — is like taking a stage walk across the backyard. Surely Edith Wharton would have given the nod to such a theatrical gesture.



OPPOSITE PAGE: *Whimsical symbols of entry frame the front door where an oversized traditional porch bench forms an exaggerated silhouette.*

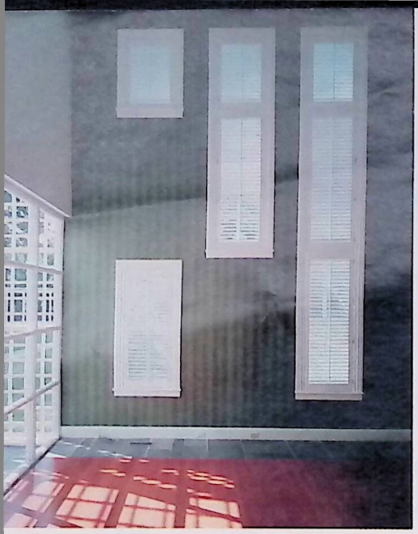
ABOVE: *The large scale of the house is reduced by texture devices, including the shadow of a grid on the entryway and masonry coursing routed onto clapboard.*

BELOW: *The front elevation of the house — with its three chimneys, small-scale entryway and large-scale garage — suggests symmetry where there is none.*



NORTH ELEVATION

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL MUNDY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DRAWING BY REED MORRISON.



TOP LEFT: *From the outside, the windows appear to follow a staircase. The top window aligns with an interior hall stair window, providing a view through the house.*

CENTER LEFT: *Bluestone, used for all the inside and outside floors, is an exterior material brought into the interior.*

BOTTOM LEFT: *A two-story gilt frame opening — where a mirror is expected — reveals the back of the living-room fireplace. The chair is designed by André Dubreuil, and the rug is by Shelton, Mindel & Associates for V'soske.*



NEAR RIGHT, TOP: *The rear elevation details the way traditional forms are pulled apart and recombined.*

NEAR RIGHT, BOTTOM: *The fireplace and the cherry wood wall have similar carved reveals. The grid is repeated in the V'soske rug. Chair by Shelton, Mindel & Associates for Jack Lenor Larsen.*

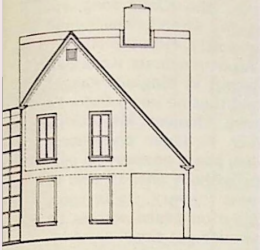


FAR RIGHT, TOP: *The building separates and opens up at the entrance hall. The surface treatments here are green-shingle wainscoting, unpainted shingle and vertical board and batten.*

FAR RIGHT, BOTTOM: *The private courtyard area behind the house makes another kind of transition from outside to inside.*



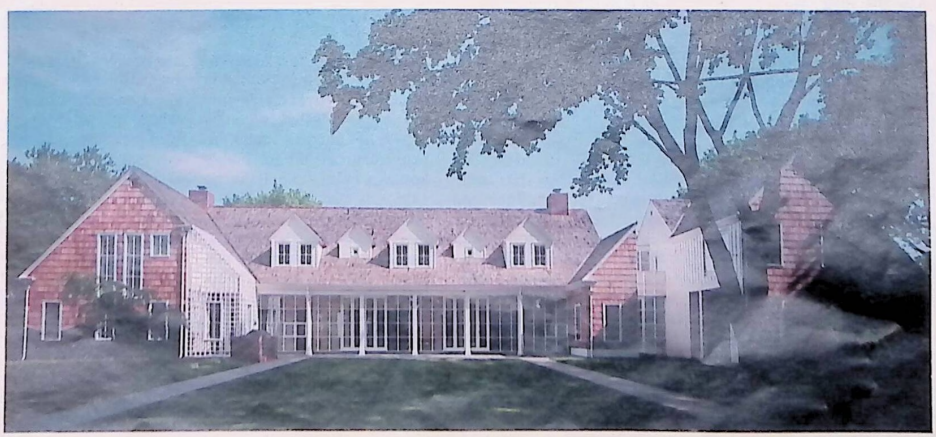




SOUTH ELEVATION







PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL MUNDY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DRAWING BY REED MORRISON.

WELD

(Continued from page 33)

Lawrence right now! And why in the world would you use a three-decker for economic development when you've got miles of empty mill space in the city?'

Pat McGovern remembers another fight, over relief lists. The Governor said to me, 'They drink, you know.' I said: 'That's why we have a program in there for alcoholics.' He said: 'Where do you go into the work history of the people claiming welfare?' I said: 'Governor, what work history?' I said: 'They're sick, a lot of them.' "

State Representative Mark Roosevelt, from the smart Beacon Hill section of Boston, draws a similar picture of Weld from a different angle. Roosevelt is the up-and-coming chairman of the Education Committee in the Legislature and, like Weld's wife, Susan, he is a great-grandchild of Theodore Roosevelt. "What people say is missing in him — some kind of connectedness — is, I think, essential in a politician," Roosevelt says. "We practically forced him last year to tour the Holyoke schools and see 38 and 40 kids in a classroom. It was a nonevent to him. His comment about the kids in Holyoke was: 'They are not learning nothing.' People asked if he'd send his kids to those schools, and he ducked.

"If you have the view, as I do," Roosevelt continues, "that most of the advantages in life are the consequence of luck, it gives you some obligation to look out for the rest. Bill Weld has been lucky all his life. But does he care? You know, I like the man. He's fun and disarming in ways we're all familiar with. I grew up with a lot of people like Bill Weld, but never did I imagine they ought to be running a major branch of government. Except for the brains, the analogy with Reagan holds up. He's clearly smart, but he's lazy as hell and he doesn't seem to care enough about anything to come in and make it happen."

Pat McGovern and Mark Roosevelt carry on all the more about Weld because their own party chieftains have gone almost silent. Weld talked the overwhelmingly Democratic Legislature into effectively repealing universal health insurance, and he got it to remove the last fiscal patch that Dukakis slapped on the state in 1990 — a sales tax on services like lawyering and architecture.

Senate President William M. Bulger of South Boston declared his truce with the Republican Governor. "It's almost a luxury we can't afford, to bicker and squabble at this time," Bulger says. And a lot of younger Democrats, like the House Ways and Means chairman, Thomas M. Finneran of Boston, sounded notes of the New Realism. "Traditional lunch-pail liberal and progressive Democrats are beginning to question the vitality of their own programs," Finneran comments. "It's as if Weld had become a convenient excuse for pulling back from some of the further reaches of the Dukakis era."

Hard-core liberals are catatonic, certain they see a monster of national proportions in the making. "The Democratic party has imploded," says James Braude, who duels with Weld on behalf of the state workers' unions. "Weld has cowed the Democrats and beaten them on everything. He is the post-Bush Republican for 1996. He's a guy who says he's for women and homosexuals. And he's one of a handful of governors who proposed tax cuts in 1992. He's won virtually all his initiatives and sustained nearly every veto, without any bitching and moaning about the other party's majorities. He can say: 'I've beaten the old-boy Democrats into submission and I could do the same in Congress.' "

WELD IS, IN fact, recapitulating Ronald Reagan's transformation of Washington in 1981, reducing taxes and social services. But he has done it with Kennedy-esque charms — perhaps the only way it could be done in Massachusetts. His manner is relaxed, erudite, often playful; his ideological agenda is sheathed in ironic good humor. Michael Dukakis could seem to disdain people he agreed with. Bill Weld has a talent for disagreeing with people without seeming to disapprove them, and he has always cultivated friends across the spectrum.

He looks like an overgrown schoolboy, his rangy 6 feet 4 inches plumping up in middle age, his incandescently pink face roped in golden orange hair. Weld himself has fancied that he resembles the heroic Last Tory — the lumbering, untidy, phlegmatic and encyclopedic Christopher Tietjens — in his favorite book, Ford Madox Ford's tetralogy, "Parade's End." That suggests Weld's allusive literary flair more than his looks. Weld has not only read widely in five languages — Latin, Greek, French and Spanish, as well as English — he is one of those people who has clearly been formed by his books.

It was Anthony Lewis's "Gideon's Trumpet," about a right-to-counsel case that "really got me on the road to law school." Michael Harrington's "The Other America," he says, "gave me an idea you could get things done in public service." Friedrich Hayek's "The Constitution of Liberty" shored up his conservative bias. Eclectic and enthusiastic, Weld sails over the obvious contradictions of Hayek and Harrington, the socialist. He is a Founding Fathers buff who has devoured Max Farrand's "The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787" and is still arguing Claude G. Bowers's analyses of "Jefferson and Hamilton."

"I was brought up a Hamiltonian," Weld rambles in a characteristic digression. "When I was at Middlesex, I wrote a fawning paper about Alexander Hamilton and how wonderful he was. Now I don't agree with *one thing* that guy stood for, and I agree with *everything* Jefferson stood for. I was brought up to think: Oh, the Adams family was so wonderful and Jefferson was an upstart. Last 10 years, 180 degrees."

Weld loves "dry" literature, and Vladimir Nabokov above all — "greatest writer of the 20th century, no question," he laughs, trying to provoke an argument. Nabokov was catnip in college, he says, for "you know, someone who liked Latin and elegiac poetry and wordplay." Decades later, Nabokov is a presence: "I mean, I think Nabokov is so colossal I sometimes get depressed. The guy can hit you with a septilingual pun. That's an Excedrin headache for a wannabe!

"But I also think Nabokov can be uplifting," he adds, as if to dispel the hint of a "let them eat puns" taste in literature. "Just a phrase can stay with me for decades, many of them. There's a throwaway reference in 'Pale Fire' to someone meeting his lover, and just for a moment she was 'a shivering rag doll in his arms.' But 'shivering rag doll.' I mean, how perfect. I should think he's by far the most brilliant writer I've ever encountered. Again, a lot of emphasis on the language, but God resides in the well-chosen word in my book." And the well-placed comma, he might have added; Weld passed copies of Fowler's Modern English Usage among his staff on the subject of commas, and he proofreads office texts relentlessly.

Hard-core liberals are catatonic, certain they see a monster of national proportions in the making.

Weld is a public man who does not stint on his private pleasures — for whom the pursuit of happiness seems constitutionally important. He knows underground movies and loves to tabulate his personal history by his successive rock-and-roll passions. He begins with the Beatles' "Rubber Soul" when he was at Harvard and proceeds through "Between the Buttons" (the British pressing) by the Rolling Stones and "I'm a Man" by the Steve Winwood edition of the Spencer Davis Group when Weld was at Oxford. Lyrically literate white bands dancing through cultural disarray are his thing. When he was Federal prosecutor in Boston a decade ago, Weld got hooked on "Once in a Lifetime" by the Talking Heads. "Another year, I played 'Lola,' the Kinks song, every day when I came home. Not softly, either.'

A postgraduate Knox Fellowship in England taught Weld that he loved Oxford's otiose idleness almost too much — lager and chocolates, poker games and parties without end, 10 sets of tennis every afternoon, played on grass so that no one ever got tired. "And after a while, the magnificence of it all, the fact that every single college had six grass tennis courts embarrassed me. Embarrassed *me!* So I came back to go to law school."

Weld's periodic public exertions over two decades seem partly a matter of fighting the undertow toward indolence and irrelevance. His air in the Governor's office today is that of a civilian on temporary duty. He still reveals more natural enthusiasm for criminal justice than for social justice; he seems enamored more with law than with government. He was never so happy, he claims, as when he finished studying and started making money. "I'm an unregenerate capitalist," he says. "I haven't had a boring job in the public sector yet, but I also enjoy the private sector, and I think I will die as a lawyer in private practice in the city of Boston."

Suddenly he has the right aphorism: "I want to be remembered as somebody of whom it can be said: He seen his duty and he done it. But also of whom it can be said: He seen his opportunities and he took 'em."

BILL WELD WAS A long shot for election, in one sense. In another, he had a 350-year head start and fertile ground to cultivate.

One of the dirty little secrets of Massachusetts politics is the suspicion that the Irish are not ready for self-government in this most Irish of American states. In the last 40 years, Massachusetts has elected only one Governor of Irish blood, Edward J. King, who interrupted Michael Dukakis's reign in 1978 and was not renominated in 1982. On St. Patrick's Day in South Boston every campaign year, Senator Bulger, who taunts all comers, loves especially to spear Yankee Re-

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publican candidates. "Vote for Elliott Richardson, he's better than you are," Bulger used to say. In 1990, Bulger gave Weld the same treatment, but there was clearly some dark Celtic self-mockery in the jest.

In the Governor's office, Weld has not just restored a tradition of aristocratic Yankee lordship, he has made governing look easy and WASP ascendancy seem an expression of natural law, if not of divine right.

Weld does indeed have majestic New York and Boston roots in his mother's and father's families — not to mention the Roosevelt clan he married into. And his sparkling student years at the Middlesex School and Harvard accurately foreshadowed the grown man — brilliant and expressive, disciplined, democratic and yet centered in himself almost to the point of isolation.

Joseph Weld, the founder of the American clan, arrived in Boston in 1635 with, as the teasing goes, only a few tons of gold to his name. He fought the Indians for Gov. John Winthrop, and died the richest landowner in the colony. It was Bill Weld's grandfather, Francis Minot Weld, who founded the investment house White Weld & Company and married his partner's daughter. Their son, David, Bill Weld's father, was a reluctant Wall Streeter who prepared his sons to do something different.

On his mother's side, Bill Weld is descended from William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence for New York. Bill Weld says he is more impressed by the real estate that the Floyds assembled in the salt marshes of Long Island's Great South Bay, where Weld learned to hunt. His favorite forebear seems to be his mother's father, John Treadwell Nichols, who was curator of fishes at the Museum of Natural History and used to carve his initials into the shells of painted and box turtles on the Floyd property at Mastic. "And they're found even now," Governor Weld says with affection, "you know — JTN, 1922, or 1918."

Bill Weld came to Massachusetts, as many people do, to go to school. He is still remembered around Middlesex as the brightest boy of all time. He was adept at racquet sports and an antic star on the Gilbert and Sullivan stage, in both male and female roles; in "Princess Ida" he played "a very coquettish Melissa," his yearbook said. He was also a fierce debater and founder of the chess club. When he graduated first in his class, the Middlesex headmaster, Lawrence (Monk) Terry, vowed he would push a peanut around an eighth-of-a-mile oval driveway if Weld should do as well in college. Four years later, Weld won the bet and Monk Terry paid off.

On his last Latin exam at Harvard, he had to translate three pages of Dorothy Parker into the mother tongue, and then render into the lesser Asclepiadean verse form "Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross, to see a fine lady upon a white horse." As usual, he aced the test. "Serious stuff," Weld remembers with some pride. "Not terribly useful, but very serious."

He graduated in 1966 ("absolutely the last 50's class out of Harvard," he says) managing to miss the civil rights and Vietnam War debates that were then billowing up on campus. "I was foggy," he says of those years. "I wasn't out there participating in the great events of the day. That came later. It was a small world. The world at home didn't have any people in it; it had a lot of birds and fish, but no people. The world at school consisted of my studies, to which I paid assiduous attention. So I wasn't out marching."

The jump from Latin prosody to the blood sport of politics turned on a phone call in 1973. Weld had coasted through Harvard Law School and flunked his Vietnam physical with kinks in his spine. He was a zealous legal associate (under the supervision of Michael Dukakis) in the old Boston firm of Hill & Barlow when Martin Linsky, a friendly tipster, called to say that the House Judiciary Committee in Washington was looking for a nice young Republican lawyer to help with Watergate research. "And I said: 'Oh, Marty, I can't. You know how it works here — seven years to make partner.' So I hung up and just sat there," Weld laughs, "gripped by the certain knowledge that I had just made a major blunder. And I called him back instantly and said: 'Time out. I think I would like to pursue that.' "

Under John Doar, alongside Hillary Rodham, Weld labored in the constitutional and legal section to define things like Richard Nixon's right of cross-examination and, above all, what constituted an impeachable offense.

What drew Bill Weld to the public arena? "Whatever it was," he says, "it's something that crossed my mind between hanging up the phone on Marty Linsky and picking the phone up again to call him back."

Weld flopped spectacularly in his first dive into politics against a popular state Attorney General, Francis X. Bellotti, winning precisely 2 of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts and less than a quarter of all the votes. But he'd won his Republican spurs the hard way, investing at least $200,000 of his own money in the race and taking a severe licking like a man. Puzzled friends remember him saying it was the most exciting thing that had ever happened to him.

In 1980 he took a flier on Representative Phil Crane's Presidential campaign, at the far-right end of the Republican spectrum. Later, he paid enough dues into the Reagan campaign to win a political appointment in 1981 as the United States Attorney for Massachusetts.

More populist in spirit, Weld feels, than liberal or conservative, his elite, bipartisan team chased eagerly after defense-contracting fraud, money laundering at the Bank of Boston, the Italian mob and political corruption when the Reagan Justice Department would have been happy with drug busts.

Weld relentlessly pursued the 16-year Mayor of Boston, Kevin H. White — Captain Ahab, it seemed, against the Great White Whale. Though he convicted some minnows in the White machine, Weld never indicted the Mayor. Neither did he concede defeat. On the contrary, Weld has boasted ever since that the suspicions and headlines he fired up prevented Kevin White from running for a fifth term in 1983.

Nothing in Weld's Justice Department service marked him like the leaving of it. By the spring of 1988, Weld was chief of the criminal division under Attorney General Meese, and Meese was sinking under questions about his friendship with E. Robert Wallach, whose deal-making ranged from an Iraqi pipeline project to the Wedtech Corporation in the Bronx. It was surely the moment for an ambitious politician to slip quietly away from Meese, but Weld quit with an angry and quite public bang. "I thought Wallach had hopelessly compromised him," Weld says now. When he went to the White House to insist "this is over the line, Mr. President," Weld saw Ronald Reagan nod off and said to himself: "I've got to get the hell out of Washington!"

> The Governor speaks of himself as 'still a work in progress in terms of political belief.'

Weld was a bold and lucky underdog running for governor two years ago. The instinctive strategy was to hold the right on taxes and court the left on sex. He was the only candidate in either party who fully embraced the radical Question 3 tax-cutting initiative, to repeal $1 billion of emergency Dukakis tax increases. And after Lieut. Gov. Evelyn Murphy dropped out of the Democratic primary, Weld was the only candidate who sounded enthusiastic about both gay rights and abortion choice. It helped that the Democratic nominee was the truculent ex-Texan, John R. Silber, president of Boston University, who made a primary campaign of warning old folks that their health care must be rationed and hectoring Cambodian immigrants for accepting Massachusetts welfare.

Weld's winning majorities in the comfortable suburbs

around Boston resembled nothing so much as the political base of his law-firm mentor of 20 years ago, Michael Dukakis, who first won the Governor's office himself on a no-new-taxes pledge in the last bad recession in 1974-75. So politics had come full circle, with the economy.

THE CENTRAL pressure on Governor Weld is to rebuild the foundations of public education, which local tax caps gouged and eroded in the 1980's. The most provocative new players in the State House game are a fresh generation of business lobbyists who tell the Governor that the key to Massachusetts's livelihood is job training, not low taxes.

"The technology community is growing faster today in Silicon Valley than in Massachusetts, under a heavier tax burden in California," says Stephen Coit, a venture capitalist who formed a council of businessmen to attract industry to the state. "Massachusetts will never be a low-cost state. It will prosper as a high-value-added state. If our schools are not as good as they were in the 70's, we can't do it."

Weld's agenda in school reform is not far from Osborne's paradigm in "Reinventing Government." It includes a minimum annual state expenditure in the range of $5,000 per child. The money would move with the children as they shopped freely around a liberated marketplace of public schools. Yet the gap between Osborne and Weld is grand: "Governor Weld is a real fiscal conservative," Osborne says. "He believes in fairly minimalist government, and he has been willing to throw a lot of people off welfare so he can give a tax cut to business." Democrats like Osborne and Mark Roosevelt want to crack the cap on local taxes to allow for inflation and rising school enrollments. But Weld has his own roots in tax-cap politics to protect.

Weld speaks of himself as "still a work in progress in terms of political belief." Toward the end of two long interviews this spring, he said, "I am not a minimalist on government. . . . There is a difference between the way I approach government and the way Mike Dukakis does. Possibly because of the economic crisis that we were in, I have made it my business to restore the investment climate. And I haven't let a lot interfere with that. I think Michael used to spend his time and energy on the plight of the less fortunate.

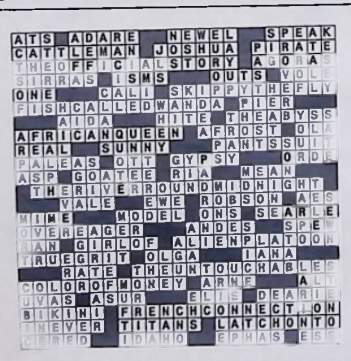
"If times improve, you're likely to see me going around spending money on open-space acquisition and preservation. The environment is an exception to my libertarian streak. It's an area where the government has to be more assertive rather than less, because the economies of scale are enormous, and it's just not in the interest of private business to do the work that has to be done.

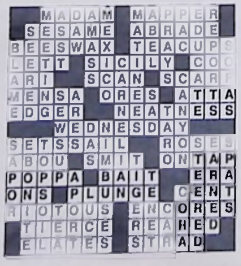
"You will probably see, instead of $32 million added to the prevention accounts, like AIDS prevention and teenage pregnancy prevention, you'll probably see $320 million. You'll see a lot of money in there, to try to stop these problems, like crack babies, before they start.

"I think that the reaction to the Rodney King verdict around the country shows that a lot of people don't feel that the society as a whole has invested in their communities. For 20 years, I bought Pat Moynihan's line that this is not about race; it's about economic class. I'm not so sure. I think maybe it's about both, and that we have to invest in geographic communities of color. So you'll probably see more of that activity — attention to economic opportunity areas, essentially the same thing as enterprise zones."

Weld has a full summer of political tests in front of him: Can he reinforce the Republican minority in the State Senate to preserve his legislative veto? Can he shepherd a single Republican, or two, into the all-Democratic Congressional delegation? Can he hold a beachhead for abortion choice at the Republican convention? "I don't know why they shouldn't have a big-tent platform. I'm not asking them to have a pro-choice platform. I'm just saying: Look, we've got at least six pro-choice Republican governors. We've got half the members of the party, if not more, who are pro-choice on the question of abortion. Why shut them out?"

He is a competitive man with a winning record and an ironic mind that seems entirely unthreatened by criticism or even defeat. One wonders: Can he be as free as he seems from any need for approval? "Yeah," he says blithely, calling up the memory of a boy with a fishing rod waiting for a tug on the line. "I think it's about sitting in that boat," he says. "That's exactly what I think it is." ■





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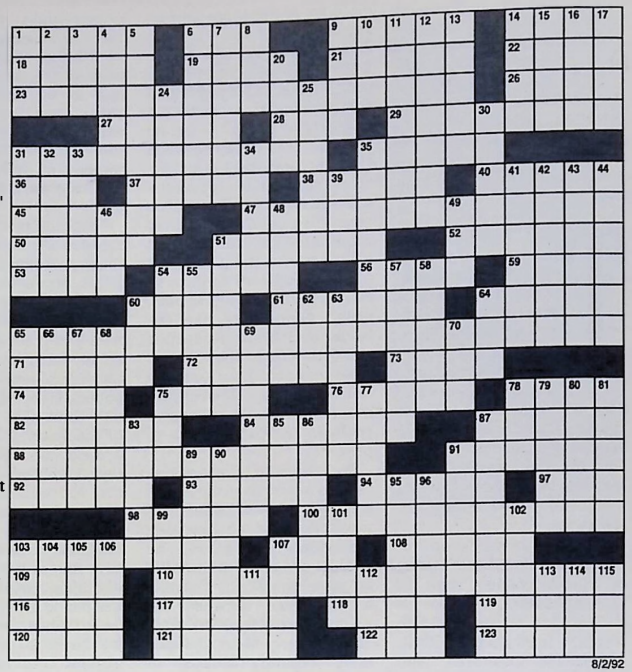
BY JOY L. WOUK/EDITED BY EUGENE T. MALESKA

ACROSS

1 Mother of Ishmael
6 Small drink
9 Nomadic reindeer herders
14 Merriment
18 Busy airport
19 Bakery employee
21 Grenoble's river
22 An incarnation of Vishnu
23 Epic blank-verse sequel by John Milton
26 Eager
27 Brazilian seaport
28 Egyptian setting-sun god
29 Soft-shell clams
31 "A thing of beauty is ——": Keats
35 Bridge supports
36 Where Aaron died
37 Novelist Trump
38 Munchausen, e.g.
40 Shores (up)
45 Galahad's mother
47 Accept philosophically
50 Walk between trees
51 Kind of leather
52 Female water spirit
53 Textile worker
54 Places for dancers
56 Descry
59 Actress Skye
60 "Whose woods these —— think I know": Frost
61 Source of the Mississippi
64 Cheekbone
65 An American's right
71 Hindu princes
72 Mad
73 Nice night
74 Land owned absolutely in feudal days
75 La —— tar pits
76 Lifetime, to Livy
78 What Sandburg called "a bucket of ashes"
82 Some are flying
84 Sand-trap shots
87 Italian food staple
88 "A —— I have won . . .": Shak.
91 Opticians' products
92 Attempt, in Évian
93 Nita of the silents
94 H. Hoover or H. Wallace
97 William Corcoran endowment
98 Salad ingredient
100 Elated
103 Most carefree
107 Explorer Johnson
108 Provide (with)
109 "Le Roi d'Ys" composer
110 "She was a ——": Wordsworth
116 Northern capital
117 Situate
118 De Witt Clinton's "ditch"
119 Israeli coin
120 Reporter's question
121 Pool member
122 Westchester inst.
123 Wat Tyler was one

DOWN

1 Lindy or bunny chaser
2 Eureka!
3 Needlefish
4 "The Sheik of ——"
5 Set new boundaries
6 Canaanite military leader
7 Vestigial vendors
8 For each
9 Novelist O'Flaherty
10 "—— Lay Dying": Faulkner
11 Retiree's concern
12 Feign
13 Passover feast
14 Metric weight
15 Wash
16 Eastern V.I.P.
17 St. Louis bridge builder
20 Anatomical network
24 TV's "—— Lucy"
25 Burrowing rodent
30 Colo. resort
31 Forward
32 In good spirits
33 Papal cape
34 Railroad car, in Valladolid
35 Uttar ——, India
39 Henri's donkey
41 Unit of angular measurement
42 A troupial
43 Auricles
44 Guides
46 Cash attachment
48 —— Alverio (Rita Moreno)
49 Bull's order
51 Group of three
54 Hiemal sound in comics
55 Odin, Thor et al.
57 Treats inadequately
58 —— New Guinea
60 "—— Italien": Strauss
62 The smart set
63 ". . . —— of fat things . . .": Isa. 25:6
64 Sch. near Harvard
65 Windpipe: Comb. form
66 Glorioles
67 Towns in Ark. and Pa.
68 Galileo taught there
69 Actress Sanford et al.
70 ——-aller (last resort)
75 Degree for a hosp. worker
77 Element of a moral code
78 He lost his shadow
79 Very, to Verdi
80 Violinist born in Russia
81 Sample
83 Author of "The Greening of America"
85 Terhune canine
86 Like a Puccini product
87 Like part of a grandfather clock
89 Not part of a series
90 U.S. Open singles champ: 1972
91 Magna cum ——
95 Kind of synthetic textile fiber
96 Stevland Morris from Saginaw
99 Corded fabrics
101 Reputation
102 Snow, in Sedan
103 Use a bubble pipe
104 Mascara recipient
105 A river at Rennes
106 A framer of Roger Rabbit
107 Palindromic emperor
111 She wrote "Solar Barque"
112 A cetacean
113 Swabbie
114 Otto I's dom.
115 A Russian chess master



8/2/92

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ACROSTIC

BY THOMAS H. MIDDLETON

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. Black squares indicate word endings. The filled pattern will contain a quotation reading from left to right. The first letters of the guessed words will form an acrostic giving author's name and title of work.



A. Out; dead; vanished 27 79 130 61 138 190 124

B. French Impressionist painter (1834-1917) 2 180 159 174 69

C. Small town, especially one on a railroad line (2 wds.) 167 92 23 129 123 83 109 140 178 68 156

D. Astral Ram 80 135 48 95 11

E. Pretentious, blustering talk 162 141 77 128 66 147 183 120 137 99 118

F. Separate; different 194 30 166 60 86 189 171 75

G. Obvious; undeniable 88 176 24 114 188 31 152

H. Dealing with first principles 63 107 145 110 76 25 91 50 71 29

I. Mockery; sarcasm 45 110 26 40 64 173 157 90

J. Communications, as, e.g., between units of the armed forces 175 100 17 112 4 44 96

K. Female sweetheart or lover 153 7 161 62 65 143 15 139 111

L. Cold; tangy 28 3 67 36 177

M. You said it! Exactly! (2 wds.) 186 6 151 125 165 93 113

N. Climbs; mounts 158 85 22 155 117 14 196

O. Spur; spark plug; moving spirit 32 170 119 146 42 54

P. Pin placed transversely to fasten a chain, rope, etc. 5 134 47 184 106 70

Q. Martin Luther King Jr.'s theme, Aug. 28, 1963 (4 wds.) 46 12 115 94 78 100 18 193 43 33 154

R. Prime; conduit 132 185 74 87

S. Tricky; shifty; puzzling 89 51 142 38 163 103 13

T. Expression of disapproval 181 131 191 169

U. Output; upshot 10 72 39 182 105 49 16 84

V. Split; take a hike; "shape up" alternative (2 wds.) 164 108 187 82 56 9 172

W. Adhesive friction of a body on a surface 53 57 122 73 136 21 102 34

X. Normandy landing site east of the Vire, June 6, 1944 (2 wds.) 37 81 168 121 97 101 19 1 144 179

Y. Rushing or moving violently 148 195 127 133 150 8 52 98 59

Z. Paraguay tea (2 wds.) 35 104 149 41 192 20 58 55 126

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