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TYPE CASTING

IF you have been to the motion pictures lately, you have probably had first-hand experience of "type casting," in which at least half the cast of players is made up of actors who exhibit their repertoire of stock idiosyncrasies and mannerisms. You know, after a minute or two, what they will do, and what the end will be, so that the suspense is gained from wondering how the inevitable will be accomplished. The novelty of most movies lies in the arrangement of events, not in the acts and thoughts of the human beings who become involved in them.

Years ago, an expert in the field of "pulp" fiction counselled young writers hopeful of a similarly successful career: "Avoid originality as if it were an argument on religion." This, certainly, is a basic ingredient of the formula for popular fiction, as well as for most films, and the fact that efforts which deviate from this rule have little or no chance of being offered to the great audience for "cheap" fiction seems a psychological revelation of some significance.

But *why* should readers demand the hackneyed plot, the timeworn theme? And what is it about these stories and movies which makes them so "bad," in the view of others, even apart from purely esthetic considerations?

"Type casting," it seems to us, is really a deep-lying characteristic of our civilization. It is found, of course, in some measure, in any civilization, but with the endless multiplication of types by the techniques of mass production, as is the case today, it takes on a special importance. Its tendency is most easily recognized when held up before us in the isolation of particular forms of entertainment, but the same thralldom to and reliance on the "familiar" are found wherever there is an obvious technical advantage in classifying human beings. The extensive personnel testing, for example, of persons who apply for work in large-scale industry illustrates the growing habit of "typing" people according to their superficial attributes. There is no real harm, of course, in trying to determine people's special capacities, but inevitably the factors which are important to an employer of labor assume greater importance than the human qualities of individuals. A man who is "maladjusted" with respect to almost any conventional job may in fact be going through some inner crisis which represents a far greater growth than any such testing can signify. The tests are devised to anticipate the probable dollars-and-cents value to a prospective employer of a man or woman at a given occupation. Often, however, larger implications than the "skill" or "temperamental traits" of the tested individuals are read into the results of these tests. The psychology of the tests, also, is largely in terms of fixed norms or values. They seek to establish what a man "is," not what he may be trying to *become*. Their general effect on human beings, therefore, is in terms of indoctrination in "status-quo-ism."

All large-scale organizations, including government, tend to rely upon classification techniques. Applicants to universities are invited to classify themselves by religion and color or race. The draft wants to know about the "religious training and belief" of young men who ask to be recognized as conscientious objectors, and whether or not they believe in a "Supreme Being." The single individual, confronted by all these official requests for self-classification, usually takes the easy way of conforming. How, he may ask himself, could the university, the Government, or any large agency "process" all these people unless some attempt at classification is made?

This, of course, is precisely the point: What is the general character and tendency of a civilization which depends so much upon the classification of men for its order and efficiency? Classification, carried to its logical conclusion, is dehumanization.

The processing methods of large organizations represent one pole of the dehumanizing tendency. The conforming individual is the other pole. We are objecting, here, to the "this-is-my-niche" psychology of the conforming individual—an attitude peculiarly noticeable in religion. It is one thing to say, "I am a carpenter," or "I am a truck-driver," or "I am a salesman," and a very different thing to say, "I am a Methodist," or "I am an Episcopalian," or a "Catholic." Diversity of occupation among men is natural and necessary, but complacent separateness in regard to religion indicates that essential differences in opinion about the nature of all human beings are of small importance. The usual defense of sectarianism or denominationalism is the contention that there are many paths to "truth," all of equal value. The Methodist finds his truth in a Methodist Church, the Catholic in a Catholic Church. Did, Luther, then, engage in a wholly meaningless struggle? This sickly relativism in the name of "tolerance" or the right of every man to "find his own way" is really an excuse for defining tolerance as "indifference" and for not bothering to examine any other way than the one which is accidentally one's own. This is "type casting" in its most repugnant form!

What is the origin of "type casting"? The precedent is medieval and illustrious. In *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, a rather extraordinary book on the Middle Ages, Henry Adams provides an approximate translation of a Latin poem by Alain of Lille, a predecessor of Thomas Aquinas by some fifty years, in which the process of the creation of a new and improved "soul" by God is allegorized. God despatches *Noys* (Thought) to the heavenly warehouse for the form of a new soul, where—

> Among so many images she hardly finds that
> Which she seeks; at last the sought one appears.
> This form Noys herself brings to God for Him
> To form a soul to its pattern. He takes the seal,
> And gives the form to the soul after the model
> Of the form itself, stamping on the sample
> The figure such as the Idea requires. The seal
> Covers the whole field, and the impression expresses the stamp.

This, at least as an allegory, Adams tells us, represented the creative process more or less as Thomas saw it. Interpreting Thomas, he adds: "The utmost possible relation between any two individuals is that God may have used the same stamp or mould for a series of creations, and especially for the less spiritual."

Whatever else may be said about Thomas' "inner meaning," it is plain that for him the differences among men, initially, are entirely God's responsibility—"He" is the original type caster, the maker of all authentic moulds. From this doctrine of human types, it is no great distance, in moral terms, to the modern view of the shaping of the individual entirely by heredity and the conditionings of environment. And in these terms, again, the scientific theory of the nature of the individual is hardly to be distinguished from the traditional religious conception—man himself has a negligible role in both processes.

To this medieval-modern view of man we should like to contrast the Renaissance conception as found in Pico della Mirandola's famous *Oration on Man*. We have quoted this portion of Pico's *Oration* before, and will probably quote it again, for it seems to sum up the essential contribution of the Renaissance—a contribution we are now in danger of losing altogether, due to the modern deprecation of the individual. Everett Dean Martin has aptly paraphrased Pico's expression. It was the intent of Providence, the Florentine maintained, that—

> Man should have neither a fixed abode nor a form in his own likeness. But whatever gifts he

> should choose according to his free will, "Thou shalt define thy nature for thyself." For thou man art made neither heavenly nor earthly, but art as it were shine own maker, having power to decline unto the low brute creatures or be reborn unto the highest, according to the sentence of sine intellect.

This is the Platonic tradition, as opposed to the tradition of the great Classifier, Aristotle, who was so eagerly adopted by the Church. Man as the creator of his own destiny, the definer of his own nature, is clearly represented by Plato in the tenth book of the *Republic*, in the Myth of Er. As this myth is difficult to grasp without careful study, and as J. A. Stewart, in his *Myths of Plato* (Macmillan, 1905), has provided a lucid commentary on Plato's meaning, we quote from Stewart rather than Plato himself in order to convey the grand philosophical theme of the Platonic tradition. The myth is a drama of the ante-natal condition of human souls—and it is also a post-mortem condition, for Plato makes his theory of the shaping of the individual rest upon reincarnation rather than upon "creation" or some other sort of determinism. In the tale of the Myth of Er—

> The Pilgrim Souls are conducted to a spot at which they see, with their own eyes, the working of the Universal Law—they stand beside the axis on which the Cosmos revolves, and see clearly that the revolutions "cannot be otherwise." . . . Yet, within the very precincts of the court of *Ananke* {Goddess of Necessity} in which they stand, the Pilgrim Souls hear the Prophet telling them in the words of Lachesis, that "they are free to choose, and will be held responsible for their choice." Plato here presents the Idea of Freedom mythically under the form of a prenatal act of choice—the choice, it is to be carefully noted, not of particular things, but of a Whole Life—the prenatal "choice" of that whole complex of circumstances in which particular things are chosen in this earthly life. Each soul, according to its nature, clothes itself in certain circumstances—comes into, and goes through, this earthly life in circumstances which are to be regarded not as forcing it, or dominating it mechanically from without, but as being the environment in which it exhibits its freedom or natural character as a living creature. Among the circumstances of a Life "chosen," a fixed character of the Soul itself, we are told, is not included, because the Soul is modified by the Life which it chooses. This means that the Soul, choosing the circumstances or Life, chooses, or makes itself responsible for, its own character, as afterwards modified, and necessarily modified, by the circumstances, or Life. . . .
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> In presenting Moral Freedom under the Reign of Natural Law mythically, as Prenatal Choice made irrevocable by Ananke, Plato lays stress, as he does elsewhere, on the unbroken continuity of the responsible Self evolving its character in a series of life-changes. It is the choice made before the throne of Ananke which dominates the behavior of the Soul in the bodily life on which it is about to enter; but the choice made before the throne of Ananke depended itself on a disposition formed in a previous life; the man who chooses the life of a tyrant, and rues his choice as soon as he has made it, but too late, has been virtuous in a previous life, [but] his virtue had been merely "customary," without foundation upon consciously realized principle.
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> To be free is to be continuously existing, self-affirming, environment-choosing personality, manifesting itself in actions which proceed, according to necessary law, from itself as placed once and for all in the environment which it has chosen—its own natural environment—the environment which is the counterpart of its own character. It is vain to look for freedom of the will in some power of the personality whereby it may interfere with the necessary law according to which character, as modified up to date, manifests itself in certain actions. Such a power . . . would be inconsistent with the continuity, and therefore the freedom and responsibility, of the Self. . . .
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> The momentary prenatal act of choice which Plato describes in this Myth is the pattern of like acts which have to be performed in man's natural life. Great decisions have to be made in life, which, once made, are irrevocable, and dominate the man's whole career and conduct afterwards. The chief use of education is to prepare a man for these crises in his life, so that he may decide rightly. The preparation does not consist in a rehearsal, as it were, of the very thing to be done when the crisis comes,—for the nature of the crisis cannot be anticipated,—but in a training of the will and judgment by which they become trustworthy in any difficulty which may be presented to them.

Plato gave a *philosophy* of freedom, as distinguished from the *intuition* of freedom, the

latter being the dynamic of every genuine revolution, every catastrophic breaking loose from the bonds of the classifiers of men, the makers of rigid caste systems, and of political and religious dogmas. The intuition of freedom may be enough to destroy the shackles of the past, but only a philosophy of freedom will sustain the human spirit, the forever *choosing* mind, beyond those historic moments of exaltation in which men make themselves free. Why, a modern intellectual asks, does the Left always make the Revolution and the Right always write the Constitution? The answer, doubtless, is that the Left loves freedom, but does not understand that freedom can only be made to endure through a knowledge of the law of responsibility; and, further, that the Right loves order, but fails to realize that the order which rejects the dynamic principle of freedom is a dead and useless weight, a hateful burden, finally, for all men.

The type-casting tendency among men is born of timidity, of a lust for security which trembles in the presence of originality and resents human wholeness as both a challenge and a reproach. It is the defense men make against a confirmation of the weakness they suspect in themselves—against the fear that, if some men are permitted to behave as free beings, they, too, will be forced to accept the responsibilities of freedom.

Where may such men gain the courage to face the fact of their freedom, to shoulder the burden of their responsibility? From, we think, that kind of education which Plato advocated—a training of the will and the judgment by which they become trustworthy in any difficulty which may be presented to them—and from the kind of philosophizing about the nature of man which Plato set forth for the study and enlightenment of the entire Western world. The soul, he affirmed, is self-moving. The soul is not an offprint from the mind of some impossible "creator"; it is not the psychic efflorescence of a biological organism, bound by the flux of matter and the blood of race. The soul, he said, is immortal, responsible and free.

Letter from SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG.—All questions relating to the great continent of Africa are of interest and importance. At the moment there is something of a spotlight on the "Indian Problem" in South Africa. The reason for this is not so much that there has been any sudden or marked change in the situation, as that attention has been focussed on problems of long standing by recent legislation, notably, the passage of the Group Areas Act. This embodies the policy of the present Government known as *apartheid*, meaning complete racial segregation.

The earliest white settlers in South Africa were a very small community surrounded by vast numbers of Africans whose stage of civilization at the time was barbarian. In order to safeguard their own standards, segregation of white and black seemed to the settlers right and necessary. In the course of time they came to believe firmly that all persons with white skin belonged to a superior breed.

About the year 1855, struggling sugar farmers on the coast of the small colony of Natal, finding the available native labour quite unsuitable for the working of the plantations, proposed the importation of Indian workers. Considerable delay was caused by the reluctance of both the British and Indian Governments to agree. Finally, however, consent was given and in 1860 importation of Indians into Natal began. Precise conditions were laid down, one being that when the term of indenture had been completed, the immigrant was to be subject to no special laws, but was to come under the same laws as the other inhabitants of the colony. After a period as a free labourer the immigrant could either claim his passage back to India, or he could elect to settle down in the colony, free to engage in any ordinary occupation and subject to no discriminatory legislation. The Indian Government looked upon the scheme as a partial solution of overcrowding in India, and to this end another condition was that the labourers were to be accompanied by wives and children.

An Australian committee decided against accepting immigrant labour on these terms, foreseeing difficulties ahead; but in Natal in 1860 the desire for cheap, amenable labour was so great that all difficulties were cheerfully overlooked. Indian labourers came, the sugar industry prospered, and the colony benefited.

Free or "passenger" Indians followed the indentured labourers and many set up successfully in business. The Indian community grew in numbers and importance, and simultaneously the fears and prejudices of the white colonists were aroused. The very idea that Indians should be treated as equals, should aspire to wealth and education, seemed to the white population altogether improper. The Indian immigrants had been drawn, for the most part, from the lower classes of Indian society. The white population of Natal was, and still is, oblivious of the fact that India had a great civilization and culture, art, literature and philosophy before their own Western ancestors emerged from barbarism.

Unfortunately, prejudice and resentment on both sides has grown with the years. In 1896, as soon as Natal ceased to be a Crown Colony and achieved responsible government, the Indians were deprived of the parliamentary franchise. Indian immigration ceased in 1911, but the existing Indian Community continued to increase. In 1924 the Indians were deprived of the municipal franchise, and since that time have had no voice in the Government at any level. There has been a progressive movement towards more and more complete racial segregation. Legislation to prevent Indians from occupying land in situations regarded as "white" includes the Pegging Act of 1943, the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1946, and finally the Group Areas Act of 1950. This last establishes machinery by which Group Areas can be brought into existence and total *apartheid* enforced.

Not only will Indians be restricted to certain prescribed areas for occupation, but they will also be unable to own property or carry on business outside these areas, should the act come fully into force. So far, no Group Areas have been proclaimed, but work on the matter is busily proceeding in Durban and the surrounding districts, where the majority of South African Indians are domiciled.

The overall picture at the moment is one of conflicting emotions and fears stultifying sound judgment. The Indian feels insecure, uncertain and fearful of the future; resentful of treatment which discriminates against him on grounds of colour alone; frustrated by lack of educational facilities and few openings for satisfying work. The European is also motivated by deep fears—of being "swamped" by a people whose culture is alien, whose standard of living is on the average lower than his own, and whose birth rate is conspicuously higher.

To many, there seems to be no way out of the impasse. To the more prejudiced and fearful, the solution seems to be the complete segregation and repression of the Indians. To a number of more liberal-minded citizens the solution lies in a reversal of *apartheid* tendencies, the giving of the franchise to advanced educated non-Europeans, encouragement of their advancement, and a determination to fit all these fellow-citizens, without injustice or repression, into the complex multi-racial pattern of South African life.

SOUTH AFRICAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
SCIENCE FICTION

EVER since the advent of "Dianetics," the contribution of science-fiction writer Ron Hubbard, we have been hearing somewhat more than usual about the soaring genius of writers who meet the peculiar appetite for fantasy in our technicians' age. Many young scientists who attend professional schools are science-fiction customers. Inventors are said to comb science-fiction magazines for ideas, and it has even been rumored that the U.S. Army has gained new-weapons ideas from similar sources.

When one comes to think about it, the fascination of science fiction is logical enough, and its authors but another expected hybrid born of the prevailing temper of the twentieth century. As with the births of all species, of course, there were forerunners, Jules Verne being perhaps the best known of this type. But the *reason* for a species is the most important thing, whatever mechanistic biologists may say to the contrary. This new species must have come into being simply because imagination always burns bright in some segment of the population and because popular art forms have feverishly proceeded to extremes in an effort to fill the void men feel within. Some artists find refuge in abstraction, while others embrace "functional" involvement with technology.

One contemporary direction of the literary imagination leads to fantasies based upon potential mechanical developments of the future. As a result, however, and typical of our crass and callous age, *human* values in science-fiction stories are apt to be so stereotyped as to be meaningless. The details of the marvelous inventions of the future—the time machines and interplanetary methods of communication and travel—these are described with such loving care and with so many original twists that often readers may overlook the loss of individuality in the persons who revolve around the machines. This is really a strange situation: Man projects the qualities of individual destruction outward, into "machines of distinction," just as he once gave all true individuality to another external creation of his mind—the Personal God. Though we cannot make mechanical substitutes for the imagination, we apparently *can* get writers so tied up with machine concepts that their creativity finds no other outlet.

For all of these reasons, it may be worthwhile to peruse a collection of science-fiction stories from time to time, and to dwell upon some of the astounding horizons presented. They are often poor stories, but occasionally some provocative perspective emerges which seems to justify the effort involved. *Beyond the End of Time,* edited by Frederick Pohl (Doubleday), is perhaps a representative sample of science-fiction generally. We discover here one element which all fiction readers are sufficiently familiar with—the theme of "escape." Examples: The world goes from bad to worse; finally the hero and heroine escape in a rocket ship to a new land where everything will be better for always.

War and destruction are major themes, whether the psychological atmosphere be that of hopelessness or that of a holy crusade against Evil. Some stories are intensely moralistic in tone, the Very Bad planetary invaders being brutally slaughtered by the Very Good defenders; and here, the over-simplified urge for a quick solution to human conflict is simply moved out of the realm of Russia versus America to Mars versus Earth, etc. This easy "transfer" might make us able to see that our "enemies" actually *are* psychological. At present the majority of us are still so immature as to need to believe in enemies. Perhaps, after enough changes of scene—with different "enemies" every year—more of us will eventually wake up to the fact that we create our "enemies," by thought and feeling, incessantly. In the meantime the men who dream up interplanetary conflict can substitute Mars for Marx without suffering any emotional blocks.

Occasionally one finds valuable perspectives occurring here and there in the host of weird stories. After all, the science fiction writer has an unusual opportunity to project his mind's eye beyond familiar horizons. He often pretends he is looking at the earth as a visitor from another planet, and even from this pretense a measure of genuine "objectivity" may be gained. One intriguing story of this sort in Pohl's volume is "The Lonely Planet" by Murray Leinster. In this tale, a planet is entirely covered by a single creature, a cellular organism able to live from the rocks of the planet by photosynthesis, and also capable of such amoeboid movements characteristic of a low order of animal life. The huge creature had a consciousness of a sort never before encountered by man, and "Alyx," as the creature was named by the human invaders, "responded not only to physical stimuli but to thoughts":

> If one imagined it turning green for more efficient absorption of sunlight, it turned green. There were tiny pigment-granules in its cells to account for the phenomenon. If one imagined it turning red, it turned red. And if one imagined it extending a pseudo-pod, cautiously, to examine an observation-instrument placed at its border on the icecap, it projected a pseudo-pod, cautiously, to examine that instrument.

One of the scientists of Earth's expedition explains the process—a result of constant telepathic communication never threatened by distrustful currents:

> On Earth and other planets, telepathy is difficult because our remotest cellular ancestors developed a defensive block against each other's mind-stimuli. On Alyx, the planet, no such defense came into being.
>
> But that did not matter until men came. Then, with no telepathic block such as we possess, it was unable to resist the minds of men. It must, by its very nature, respond to whatever a man wills or even imagines. Alyx is a creature which covers a planet, but is in fact a slave to man who lands upon it. It will obey his every thought. It is a living, self-supporting robot, an abject servant to any creature with purpose it encounters.
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> . . . The Report of the Halycon Expedition to Alyx contains interesting pictures of the result of the condition he described. There are photographs of great jungles which the creature Alyx tortured itself to form of its own substance when men from other planets remembered and imagined them. There are photographs of great pyramids into which parts of Alyx heaved itself on command. There are even pictures of vast and complex machines, but these are the substance of Alyx, twisted and strained into imagined shapes.

We hope readers have not had to strain their minds to recognize this obvious parody on man's exploitation of the forces of nature around him. The subsequent tragedy of Alyx is the tragedy of Earth; energies consumed, twisted and distorted to serve greed or malice. But finally the very force of man's intelligence developed such potent connections between the "Great Being"—whether we call it Earth or Alyx matters little—that the final destruction of humanity is threatened. Yet, we remember, there was originally only friendliness in Alyx, as in Earth. Alyx, in fact, desired only to serve man, but was forced to become whatever men thought of him; so, too, has the earth become—what men have thought of it.

> The creature which was Alyx, being lonely, applied all its enormous intelligence to the devising of a literal paradise for humans, so that they would be content. It wished them to stay with it always. But it failed. It could give them everything but satisfaction, but it could not give that.
>
> The men grew nerve racked and hysterical, after months of having every wish gratified and of being unable to imagine anything except freedom—which was not instantly provided. On its surface, Alyx was as nearly omnipotent as any physical creature could be. But it could not make men happy, and it could not placate their hatred or their fear.

The "Alyx" concept occurs in more than one science-fiction story—the thought of a single Great Being, composed of individual units, yet each one conscious of its complete interdependence with all the other units. In the Pohl volume, for instance, another story, "Rescue Party," describes how the "single units"

comprising a collective mind may join together as a cooperative organization. The author, Arthur Clark, develops this conception of ethical responsibility by implying the possibility of cooperative harmony between humans and all the nature-powers of the organic and inorganic worlds. If the "Paladorian mind" can do it, why not we? And when the "Paladorian mind" *did* "link together," then was formed the most powerful intellect in the universe:

> All ordinary problems could be solved by a few hundred or thousand units. Very rarely millions would be needed, and on two historic occasions the billions of cells of the entire Paladorian consciousness had been welded together to deal with emergencies that threatened the race. The mind of Palador was one of the greatest mental resources of the Universe; its full force was seldom required, but the knowledge that it was available was supremely comforting to other races.

COMMENTARY
USES OF "TYPES"

Two important aspects of the subject of "types" in literature are not dealt with in this week's lead article. First, there is an element of injustice in failing to note that the exceptional film—the film which does contain unstereotyped characters and original moral development—is perhaps commoner, today, than a decade ago. *Viva Zapata*, to name one currently showing, bears the stamp of Steinbeck's intensity and an almost Wagnerian movement toward freedom. The character portrayed by Henry Morgan in *The Well* is another instance of unhackneyed treatment in the films. But this trend and the reasons for it are a subject in itself, to which we may return.

The other neglected question has to do with the moral uniformities of great myths and legends. We should be the last to condemn on the grounds of "unoriginality" the constant themes of ancient tales of gods and heroes. Here, however, the personification of universal human qualities in the leading figures of the story accomplishes a special effect—the mythic character becomes a symbol of *everyman*, and is cherished as a type of the greatness in all human beings. There is a "wholeness" in the hero which is not found in the fragmentized "types" of commercial entertainment.

The myths, moreover, are rich with multi-dimensional symbolism, which may provoke the imagination to wider reaches instead of confining it to a single level of representation. Compare, for example, the theme of "loyalty," as conveyed by Hanuman, the Monkey King, in the drama of the *Ramayana*, known to every Hindu child, with the clownish, tobacco-chewing, "old-timer" cowboy who devotedly and often tipsily serves the bronzed young hero of the routine "Western" movie. This comparison is chosen at random, but what other "stereotype" of loyalty found in our popular arts comes as easily to mind?

The mythic Hanuman has a career capable of endless correlations with daily existence he is not a stultifyingly "personal" type, a mere comic "retainer." There is plenty of humor, too, in the story of Hanuman's exploits, but it does not depend upon grotesque and demeaning caricatures of human behavior.

Our point is that the old and the familiar have as important a place as "originality" in the popular arts, and that the abstraction of human qualities for symbolic representation is a wholly legitimate artistic device. The value of these forms of expression depends upon how and why they are used.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

ONE LITTLE BOY, by Dorothy W. Baruch (Julian Press, New York), is the case history of a child's emotional illness, with medical collaboration of the entire series of treatments being furnished by Dr. Hyman Miller. This "one little boy" is a serious casualty of parental emotional maladjustment, but after more than two years of psychotherapy he emerged "whole" and assured, according to the author's account and his own quoted expressions. However, in order to bring seven-year-old Kenneth out of his psychosomatic asthma, his "indrawnness," and failure to apply himself at school, Dorothy Baruch needed to take on the emotional education of both Kenneth's parents—a process which lasted longer than Kenneth's own release from damaging fears.

Here we come to our first reason for feeling obliged to call attention to *One Little Boy*. There never is, obviously, "one little boy," in the sense that he stands independent and self-contained. No child is able to resist the host of influences which swarm around him, and Kenneth's story is a powerful demonstration of the extent to which even "good" and "well-meaning" parents may be responsible for the actual mental illness of their children. Mrs. Baruch is a child specialist who has acquired considerable reputation among psychotherapists, and in her introduction she speaks with authority on the tremendous responsibilities of parenthood:

> In the twenty or more years in which I've worked with parents and children, I've never seen a child whose thoughts and feelings were not in one way or another basically like this one boy Kenneth's. Just as every child has eyes and nose and mouth similar in structure and function, so also does he have thoughts and feelings basically similar. Just as his eyes and nose and mouth are differently put together so that his face becomes uniquely his own, so also are his basic thoughts and feelings differently put together to make his personality and his problems uniquely his.
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> A child takes little and big things from the world about him and around these he weaves fantasies which are strange and primitive. A child may, for instance, sense his parents' unconscious feelings, as Kenneth did. Or a child may misinterpret his parents' feelings. He may imagine that he is more wronged, more threatened, less preferred than he actually is. In either case, the resentment and anxiety and fear and guilt which color his fantasies then grow out of proportion and problems emerge. Nonetheless, the elements that go into his fantasies are basically the same as those of any normal child.
>
> All children's intimate thoughts about life and sex and love and hate are basically similar. They are strange thoughts to us who have come to believe only in logic. And yet it helps a child if we as parents or doctors or teachers can understand.

It is now time for us to speak of our hesitation in reviewing *One Little Boy*—a hesitation due to recognition of what Mrs. Baruch calls "the shock of encounter" which parents may feel when confronted by intimate revelations of physiological life and sex fantasies. With Kenneth, Mrs. Baruch found a case study made to order for a Freudian psychologist. It is both an exceptional case and a usual one—the pressure experienced by Kenneth and his parents, arising from the theologically distorted backgrounds of all three, is a pressure felt in some degree in almost every family, but the *strength* and *intensity* of the pressure make Kenneth's story rather unique, at the same time highlighting what may happen on a much smaller and less destructive scale in other homes. In other words, here is one case of a child whose fears could not be adequately understood without ferreting out all sorts of complicated sex fantasies. His "repressed hostility," too, centered around sex confusion. So, while parts of this book may make queasy reading, if one can finish *One Little Boy* without appreciating the astuteness of Freud's theories in dealing with certain types of psychoneurosis, we think it fair to say that such a reader will be open to the charge of incurable prejudice against psychoanalysis, for in this case Freud's theories certainly seem valid.

No one, of course, likes to think about his child in Freudian terms, and we hasten to add our

conviction that not all parents *need* to. Kenneth's parents, however, were badly mixed up, apparently from peculiar sex conditionings in their own youth. Other children, too, placed in circumstances as discouraging as Kenneth's, are not as vulnerable to the unpleasantness going on around them. So it would in no sense be in accord with Mrs. Baruch's thoughts for parents to begin suspecting their own children of harboring thoughts just like Kenneth's, while she *does* enjoin her readers to increase their own sensitivity to signs of emotional distress:

> Feelings and thoughts are not absent because they are not spoken. *Not-heard* does not mean *not-present.* Even if your child does not have problems like Kenneth's, he can still have similar feelings and thoughts.
>
> The thoughts and feelings of childhood are deep and dark. If they creep out inadvertently and we meet them with the shock of believing them abnormal, we do one kind of thing to a child. If we meet them with the embracing sympathy born of having already encountered and seen them as natural, we do another.

We have often wondered if the Freudians do not become preoccupied with the "deep and dark thoughts and feelings of childhood," so preoccupied that they see out of focus so far as the average child is concerned. We believe that *most* of the children on the earth have bright and shining fantasies, and that only a relative few have the "dark" ones. Everything, certainly, does not tunnel up from the underground Freudian realm. The generalization, "deep and dark," then, may be questioned, and readers may also take note that the theory applied with such success to Kenneth—the deliberate encouragement of aggression and outward hostility reactions—cannot lay claim to being a panacea, at least beyond the point where the principle of honesty in bringing feelings into the open is grasped. Yet here, too, is something to be learned from the Freudian method, and our own emotional prejudices should not stand in the way. It is all very well for someone to say that "Kenneth's whole trouble was that he had neither a mother nor a father whom he could trust." Mrs. Baruch uses these same words, herself, in conclusion, but the real problem is *how to help these parents* to become "trustable," and how to help Kenneth out of an asthmatic illness which often brought him close to suffocation. We believe that Mrs. Baruch raises important points and raises them well, and this any fair-minded reader will have to grant, even though he may have a distaste for the extensive Freudian content in *One Little Boy:*

> Now to the crux of what all of this has to do with you, the parent. *What you feel is more important than what you say or do.* Often children get your feelings no matter how much you try to hide them. They react to your feelings more than to your words or to any external techniques you may use in their upbringing.
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> Doctors have observed in hospital nurseries that even new-born infants respond to feelings. A nurse who doesn't really like babies gets more crying in her hours of duty than the nurse who gives love as well as care.
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> You have encountered Kenneth's thoughts and feelings throughout these pages. If you can now come to understand that they are not unique in Kenneth nor abnormal, this understanding will communicate itself to your child.
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> Perhaps, then, because of your new inner feeling, your child will bring out some of his thoughts about love and life, about bodies and sex; some of his strange wishes and fears, or at least some of those which are still in his conscious mind. Perhaps he will; perhaps he will not. You needn't try to induce him to. And you definitely won't probe for what may lie beneath the threshold of consciousness. You aren't a trained psychotherapist. But, being attuned, you may hear things you have never heard before, you may notice things you have never noticed. And, being attuned, you will be able to take with greater equanimity whatever he brings.

FRONTIERS

A Dilemma of the Human Species

IN the evolution of organic life we seldom observe sheer creation, but rather adaptation of what already exists. I recall hearing David Starr Jordan tell of a class in comparative anatomy in which his students dissected the body of a man and that of an alligator, side by side. The students were astonished to find the same organs, muscles, nerves, bones and glands in both.

In adapting the same inherited structure to the needs of a giraffe, a weasel, a bat and a man, the results are not always fully satisfactory. We are told that in its mechanical design of bone and muscle, the human body is a second- or third-rate engineering job. A staff of competent mechanical engineers, if they could start from scratch and make a new design, could do much better. This record of imperfect design holds not only in anatomy and physiology, but in man's mental life as well. Take, for instance, the emotion of fear. As part of the mental equipment of the vertebrates, including man, it has served an important purpose. Yet in man it functions imperfectly. Sometimes it saves him from danger, but often it paralyzes his efforts. From appendicitis and hernia to original sin, man suffers from the imperfections of his inherited constitution. Clear recognition of this fact is necessary to free us from the idea, unconsciously carried over from earlier beliefs, that man is naturally a finished and wholly appropriate instrument for the achievement of his proper purposes.

One imperfection of the human constitution is seen in the lack of discrimination in the means provided for insuring continuance of the cultural inheritance. It is imperative for the continuance of human life and society that each generation shall inherit the socially accumulated cultural attitudes and skills. This could not be left to chance. One of the chief means by which this cultural transmission is accomplished is through the conditioning of childhood. Through the period of early infancy and childhood the young personality is very impressionable, and takes on the color, character and attitudes of its social environment.

The more dominant of these impressions tend to persist throughout life, so fully integrated into the personality that often they are mistaken for genetic traits. This early conditioning produces what is commonly called our "second nature." So intimate a part of us do these early impressions become that commonly we unconsciously rely on them as our most dependable guides to the truth. When one searches for the testimony of his own heart it is commonly the imprint of such early experiences which he finds. When one acts in accord with that early conditioning he has a deep feeling of peace and inner harmony. Persons who in later life have been converted to other beliefs, as they grow old experience an inner stress which constantly pulls them back toward the early pattern of belief. There is an old Russian proverb, "What comes in with the mother's milk goes out only with the soul." In most societies similar expressions testify to the depth and persistence of early conditioning.

Where some experience of infancy and early childhood is nearly universal we will find a nearly universal corresponding attitude, which will intrench itself in acceptance, loyalties, doctrines and ceremonials. It is one of the dilemmas of human life that this susceptibility to early conditioning is undiscriminating. It does not discriminate between those experiences which are appropriate to the whole of life, and those which reflect the transitory conditions of infancy and childhood.

One of the most universal experiences of infancy, childhood and youth is that of being immature and weak, and of depending on the protection and care of greater maturity and strength, especially that of parents. Almost no other experience in all human existence is so pervasive, so penetrating, and so unqualified.

By what might be termed an accidental circumstance of fate, these experiences of inadequacy and of leaning upon parents come at the time of life when experiences are making their deepest and most enduring imprint upon personality. Childhood is conditioned by the whole of its experiences, not just by those that will best serve its future needs. The feeling of dependence and the craving for parental support peculiarly appropriate to

childhood, but ill adapted to adult life, become deeply imbedded in the personality, along with attitudes that are useful throughout life.

During adolescence there is an impulse to rebel against this conditioning, and among many peoples social and religious ceremonies have developed which recognize the coming of maturity. But these later developments do not erase the early impressions of dependence on parents. Acceptance of the conviction of weakness and of the need for parental guidance, because of the universality of its origin, becomes one of the more universal of human attitudes, and much of social and religious custom, belief and attitude has grown up around it. Acceptance of this attitude becomes a mark of virtue, while to question it has often become a crime in civil life, and a sin in religion.

As earthly parents disappear or prove fallible the individual seeks new parents or their equivalents. The king or the priest takes their place, or the conception of deity becomes that of a super-parent. Instead of being recognized as a defect in the cultural inheritance, this craving to lean upon a parent or its substitute becomes sanctified and glorified in religion, and made the basis of loyalty in much of government.

When we realize how universal and how penetrating is this experience of dependence, and how deeply are such early experiences embedded in personality, we can see that the emotional weaning of men, and their emotional maturity, will not be quickly and easily achieved. Democracy assumes such maturity, but it has to bear this heavy load of craving for a parent on which to depend. Having had two strong Roosevelts in the White House, there is a rarely expressed but widespread hope that perhaps in a Roosevelt dynasty people may find that super-parent on which to lean. In the field of religion it is interesting to compare the large number of adherents of religious fellowships which speak with authority as would a father of a small child, with the small number of adherents of those fellowships which assume maturity and self-direction on the part of their members.

Should there be general recognition of the origin and nature of the nearly universal feeling of inadequacy and craving for some person or institution or other concept to take the place of the father of a small child, such recognition might lead to changes of personal outlook and of public policy which might strengthen and accelerate institutions, and policies that promote emotional maturity and self-reliance.

Of course man's ability to master circumstance is small enough at most. The ignoring of inherent limitations also has tragic results. Yet it makes a great difference whether the attention and emphasis of a culture are centered on its helplessness and weakness, or whether it endeavors to get a true objective measure of its possibilities. Which attitude it takes may determine whether men cower before a dictator, or achieve self-government; whether they war with their fellows, or develop a spirit of brotherhood.

If we examine one by one the sources of human tragedy we see that most of them are quickly or ultimately removable, by mastery of external circumstances or through physical or mental or spiritual education. The attitude of dependence inherited from childhood is not the best equipment for the furtherance of human well-being.

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