

## THE WORLDS WE LIVE IN

FOR the ordinary man, the meaning of "existential" is best arrived at through the reflection that, even though he might be able to get everything he wants, in terms of external arrangements, he will still have problems. The fear of death remains to haunt him. He cannot compel love. A satiated appetite produces in him feelings very different from the anticipations which existed before he fed himself so well. Having "everything," he finds, is not a condition of happiness, but often the reverse. There have been extraordinary men, of course, who have reached conclusions of this sort from the opposite extreme of nearly absolute deprivation: having nothing, they found the substance of meaning in what was left inside themselves. While such ordeals are endured successfully only by very few, it is of importance that the world of existential reality—despite its obscurity or lack of precise definition—is sometimes discovered by very different paths. There cannot be, that is, a formula for conditioning people into being philosophers.

In the past, we were instructed about the reality of the moral world by the teachers of religion. Not so today. Now we are getting such facts about man and his nature in the form of the gritty empirical findings of psychologists. In "Reality Therapy," as Dr. William Glasser says, "we as much as possible ignore the unhappy past (of patients); we help them always to help themselves and we provide an opportunity for them to benefit themselves in a responsible way." Traditional therapy, he says, tries to ignore the fact that no matter what has happened to an individual, he still has responsibility for what he does. "We are puzzled because we haven't been taught that we can't make people happy and that unhappiness is the result, not the cause, of irresponsibility." Summing up this view, Dr.

Glasser says: "The crux of our theory is personal responsibility which we equate with mental health—the more responsible the person, the healthier he is—the less responsible, the less healthy."

Views of this sort obviously make a problem for psychologists or psychotherapists who, as human beings, feel drawn into one or another of the movements for social justice. Social health, according to revolutionary tradition, will come from a rearrangement of the relationships in society. The good society provides justice for all. Workers for the good society will devote themselves to changing conditions. They will try to create institutions which reflect recognition of basic human equality. These are the things which men of social conscience set out to do for their fellow men, and how could anyone deny their value or importance?

Yet the psychological realities of the existential world cannot be denied either. So the problem becomes one of asking: How do you relate the social morality of right relationships to the individual morality (health) of right attitudes?

This is a difficult question, which is no doubt one reason why you find therapists maintaining a kind of "distance" from the social struggle. They want to know more about the connection between conditions and actual goodness of life. They see the enormous breakdowns between political intentions and the psychological realities which emerge after all the shooting—revolutionary change, legislative reform, socio-economic adjustment—is over.

Naturally enough, people who want to get things done like simple theories of progress. And they want their righteousness to be nakedly clear. They want their goal to be understood and widely desired. So the *doers* of history usually adopt a

doctrine which promises full success. Let us have, they say, none of this equivocation about subjective problems and questions. The world that we can *change* is obviously the real world. . . . This is a way of making one world from two—in the name of the good of man. A world that cannot be manipulated must not be allowed to exist. The imperialism of the moral emotions supports this contention. It is an imperialism which demands intellectual agreement and insists upon telling men how to think. Any alternative is seen as a devious escape from moral responsibility and is to be condemned with all the rage of moral frustration.

There is doubtless some kind of truth here, although it is obviously being misused. In order to act, you must get rid of paradox. You must get rid of it at the time of action, if not for all time. The tougher the revolutionist, the less he cares about the possibility of there being truth in paradox. The soft revolutionist will often admit that, "later on," the paradox of the two worlds may be given proper attention, but the hard-core radical knows better than to make concessions. He keeps the proposition simple, his emotional commitment whole. The political forms of recognition of the paradox (freedom of religion, of conscience, speech, press, etc.) he ignores as irrelevant to the task at hand. He calls them bourgeois luxuries or uses some other epithet to enlist general contempt for indecision in relation to the drive for power. He wants to change the world, and anyone who sows doubts is plainly an enemy.

The psychologists of the present, having gained some awareness of how these things work, are quite naturally more drawn to the paradoxes than they are to the drive for power. They want to know what these paradoxes mean for human beings, and more and more they tend to define the neglect of paradoxes as a kind of mental ill. They do not deny the reality of the problems the social reformers set out to solve, but they question the applicability of familiar solutions. The revolution,

they say, must also bear fruit for existential selves, and they wonder how this can be arranged. They find themselves unable to agree that a proper Stakhanovite worker is the model of a universal man.

It is not only the let-us-change-history people who make one world out of two. There is a school of "existentialists" who also want to keep things simple, and who are willing to shut their eyes to any but a totally subjective theory of progress (which of course must not be called "progress" ) . Here we shall call them Quietists, since they are resolved to have no truck with the boil of events out in the world. As material for quotation on this side of the question we have a paper by A. H. Maslow, titled "Notes on Innocent Cognition" (published last year in Germany in a symposium honoring Charlotte Buhler). The gist of this discussion is a criticism of Zen thinkers for failing to distinguish between finding ultimacy in one particular thing and finding it in the totality of the world. There is a sense, of course, in which ultimacy is the same everywhere, but there is also a sense in which it is not, and it is this latter sense, Dr. Maslow believes, that is commonly ignored in Zen thought. The criticism is pursued in the context of Dr. Maslow's categories of self-actualization and peak-experience (an equivalent of *satori*). He writes:

There is the cosmic consciousness of Bucke, or of various mystics, in which the whole of the cosmos is perceived and everything in it is seen in relationship with everything else, including the perceiver. This has been described by my subjects in such words as "I could see that I belonged in the universe and I could see where I belonged in it, I could see how important I was and yet, also how unimportant and small I was, so at the same time that it made me humble, it made me feel important." . . . "I was very definitely a necessary part of the world; I was in the family, so to speak, and not outside looking in; not separate from the world, not on a cliff looking across at another cliff, but rather I was in the heart of things; I was in the family, in this very big family, and belonged in it instead of being like an orphan or an adopted child, or like somebody looking in from the outside through the window, from the

outside looking into the house." This is one kind of peak-experience, one kind of B-cognition [feeling of essential being], and must be differentiated from the other kind in which fascination occurs, and in which there is an extreme narrowing of consciousness down to a particular percept, for example, the face or the painting, the child or the tree, etc., and in which the rest of the world is forgotten, in which the ego itself is totally forgotten. This is when there is so much absorption and fascination with the percept, and everything else in the world is so much forgotten, that there is a felt transcendence, or at least self-consciousness is lost, or the self is gone, and the world is gone, which means that the percept becomes the whole of the cosmos. . . . This cut-down and narrowed fascination is very much like the Japanese concept of Muga. This is the state in which you are doing whatever you are doing with a total wholeheartedness, without thinking of anything else, without any hesitation, without any criticism or doubt or inhibition of any kind whatsoever. It is a pure and perfect and totally spontaneous acting without blocks of any kind. This is possible only when the self is transcended or forgotten. This Muga state is frequently spoken of as if it were the same as the satori state. Much of the Zen literature speaks of Muga as if it were total absorption with whatever one was doing at the time, for example, chopping wood with all one's heart and might. And yet the Zen people talk about this as if it were the same as the mystic unification with the cosmos. These are clearly very different in certain respects.

So also ought we to be critical of the Zen attack on abstract thought, as if only concrete suchness was worth anything and as if abstraction could be only a danger. This, of course, we can't agree with. This would be voluntary self-reduction to the concrete, . . .

Dr. Maslow draws a parallel between this self-reductionism and the neglect of the difference between the innocence of the child—which is an innocence born from ignorance—and the innocence of a wise man who has knowledge of both good and evil:

The temptation for some religious people is to make the perception of heaven, or of the Being-world, a regression to childhood or to this ignorant-innocence, or else a return to the Garden of Eden before the fruit of knowledge was eaten, which is practically the same thing. It is like saying that it is only knowledge which makes you miserable. Which implies: "Then be stupid and ignorant and you will

never be miserable. . . . Then you will be in heaven, then you will be in the Garden of Eden, and you won't know anything about the world of tears and quarrels."

But it is a general principle that "you can't go home again," you can't really regress; the adult cannot become the child in the strict sense. You can't undo knowledge, you can't really become innocent again; once you have seen something, you can't undo the seeing. Knowledge is irreversible, perceiving is irreversible, knowing is irreversible; in this sense you can't go home again. You can't really regress, not even by giving up your sanity or strength altogether. You can't long for some mythological Garden of Eden, and if you are an adult you can't long for childhood because you just can't get it. The only possible alternative for the human being is to understand the possibility of going on ahead, growing older, going on to the second naïveté, to the sophisticated innocence, to the unitive consciousness, to an understanding of B-cognition so that it is possible in the midst of the D-world [Deficiency-world]. Only in this way can the D-world be transcended, only by real knowledge and only by growth, only by the fullest adulthood.

Here Dr. Maslow needs a bit of interpretation or explanation. B-cognition is philosophic self-sufficiency in the fact of existence, of being. The D-world is the world of felt-deficiencies and longing for completeness—the world of feeling deprived. It is, you might say, the world where all human struggle, achievement, and practical work take place. It is the world where you must begin to seek the good, and cannot help but leave in finding it. There is a close parallel here to the paradox of the alchemist's refining process. The work is done with physical materials, but the harvest comes elsewhere. The true alchemist only *seemed* to care about turning base metal into noble. He went through all the motions of transmuting lead into gold, but actually he was refining the gross elements of his inner nature into the substance of wisdom. His external activities amounted to no more than an *induction* of the inner change, although they were for this reason absolutely indispensable. And they brought their own sort of good—enormously practical and fair to see.

But the point is even clearer when examined directly in connection with human development. The wise man knows both himself and the world; but he could not have learned to know himself without learning to know the world; for in some mystic sense he *is* the world. It follows that knowing the world is *important*; and loving and serving the world are, so to speak, corollaries of knowing it and both the conditions and the bonuses of self-fulfillment.

It is this ingrowing/outgoing equation of life, this recognition of the swell of meaning in the bursting bud, this wonder and joy in universal pregnancy, that Dr. Maslow finds ignored in Zen thought. It is as though the Zen people say, the world need not have been, for, truly, *nothing* is happening out there. But what they are really saying, or ought to be saying, is that to learn what is going on "out there" is extremely difficult, hazardous, and filled with the pain of life. It is the Promethean mission, and you cannot become a Buddha of Compassion without undertaking it. The early settlement of regression is for the Pratyeka Buddhas, the selfish ones who fulfill their private contract with the universe and then are long gone.

No doubt there is non-sectarian, two-world Zen, just as there is existential, two-world socialism, but both, we think, like the meaning of life, are exceedingly hard to find.

Dr. Maslow's idea of the need to reach to unitive consciousness, to an understanding of B-cognition while living and working in the midst of the D-world, might obtain structural dimensions from some metaphysic concerning man and the world. But this step—the elaboration of a metaphysic—is something not many modern thinkers are willing to attempt. It seems less pretentious—less "theological"—to rely upon an intuitive grasp of what is suggested by such equations, and this may be the best plan for the immediate present. Sooner or later, however, it will become necessary to say something about the nature of man, about the sort of being who has a

need to experience the "deficiency" kind of desire or longing, but actually in order to outgrow it, or replace it with an inwardly supplied sense of wholeness. Curiously, there is here a suggestion of the Buddhist doctrine of *maya* as the cause of suffering. Men think that by satisfying their desires, they will gain happiness, but they learn that the meeting of practical needs is not the same as slaking appetites, and they find that "happiness," as Dr. Glasser proposes, comes from quite another activity and attitude of mind.

If this is an account or outline of the nature of man, what then is going on in the world out there with all its ceaseless striving, its struggle to make new and better forms, and the omnipresent tendency of life to suffer confinement and limitation from those forms, especially the institutional forms made for his own use by man?

What generalizations can we make, what abstractions can we derive, to throw light on the external human situation?

Not for an answer, but for evidence of the complexity of this question, we turn to a paper presented to the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Philadelphia Meeting in 1962, by Dr. Lester Grinspoon, instructor in psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School, and senior research psychiatrist at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center in Boston. Dr. Grinspoon was asked to discuss the reactions of people to the prospect of nuclear war, and the material he offered had the title: "The Unacceptability of Disquieting Facts." The general problem is briefly set:

The truth about the nature and risk of thermonuclear war is available; the reason why it is not embraced is because it is not acceptable. People cannot risk being overwhelmed by the anxiety which might accompany a full cognitive and affective grasp of the present world situation and its implications for the future. It serves a man no useful purpose to accept this truth if to do so leads only to the development of very disquieting feelings, feelings which interfere with his capacity to be productive, to enjoy life, and to maintain his mental equilibrium.

Now here, quite evidently, is not an impatient, angry dissertation on the unwillingness of people to "face reality," but an examination of the limiting conditions and perhaps the *rate* of growth of maturity. What Dr. Grinspoon says puts into the foreground such questions as how you go about helping people to encounter unpleasant or frightening truths without feeling compelled to run for cover. He regards the psychological mechanisms by which people hide intolerable truths from themselves as *protective* devices—means to another sort of survival. What good, after all, is a truth which only paralyzes people with horror? And, how, then, do you frame a historical situation in which what *must* be known *cannot* be known?

This last question no doubt turns a problem filled with relativities—relativities which vary widely with individuals—into an absolute dilemma, yet it seems worth doing in order to dramatize a central aspect of the human situation in our time. But perhaps we underestimate the capacities of people to understand and face the realities of the present. Or perhaps such realities can be presented in ways that people will find easier to bear, which will quicken their growth in understanding. After all, it is the "revelation" which overwhelms and emasculates, not the realization which comes as partly our own discovery.

Dr. Grinspoon describes several of the mechanisms of escape from disquieting facts. One of them is called "isolation":

Archibald MacLeish points to the separation of fact and feeling as characteristic of our society. He says (*Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1959):

". . . knowledge without feeling is not knowledge, and can only lead to public irresponsibility and indifference, conceivably to ruin . . . when the fact is dissociated from the feel of the fact . . . that people, that civilization is in danger."

MacLeish is speaking of isolation, another mechanism men use to defend themselves against feelings which may be painful. When a man can acknowledge the fact that a continued arms race

could lead to a nuclear war which might in turn very well mean the death of himself, his family, and millions of his countrymen, without experiencing any more affect than he would upon contemplating the effects of DDT upon a population of fruit flies, then he is probably making use of the defense of isolation. In this way people can be quite facile in speaking about the fact that they and their loved ones would undoubtedly lose their lives should a nuclear war break out. They are speaking of death, then, as something quite apart (isolated) from the feelings associated with the concept of total annihilation. They are speaking rather of an abstraction, of something which has no real connection with themselves. One might, perhaps somewhat fancifully, speculate that this defense of isolation is becoming institutionalized in our rapidly developing reliance on computers and cybernation.

Dr. Grinspoon points out that such "defense mechanisms" have what may be called a constructive side, since concentration on facts signifying extreme danger might unfit us for ordinary action. Just as these mechanisms "make it possible for drivers to go on the highways without overwhelming anxiety in the face of nearly 40,000 traffic deaths and 1,500,000 injuries yearly, so they make it possible for people to go about the business of their daily lives as though the facts of the present world situation with its threats of thermonuclear, chemical, and bacteriological warfare did not exist." He draws this conclusion:

It has been argued by some that solutions to the difficult and dangerous problems which beset the world would be more readily found and implemented if whole populations really appreciated the nature of the present risks. They argue further that ways must be found to *make* people aware, such as showing movies of twenty megaton bursts during prime television time. The consequences of such an endeavor might, however, be disastrous. For if the proponents of such a scheme were to achieve their goal, what they will have done is to have overwhelmed these defense mechanisms and left people burdened with feelings they might have no way of coping with constructively. Contrary to expectations those activities which they might seize upon could very well result in just the opposite of lessening world tension. In fact, there is some experimental evidence which shows that fear-bearing

communications decrease the ability of the recipient to respond adaptively to important facts. . . .

A psychotherapist does not offer an interpretation his patient is not prepared to deal with. Furthermore, it is his responsibility to understand what the consequences of the interpretation will be, what it will mean to this particular patient in this particular relationship and this particular time. He does not make it simply because it exists or because he feels the patient must know. . . . Similarly, he who would have others know "the truth" must take into account what "the truth" would mean to them and how they would respond to it. The truth has a relativity in interpersonal affairs; it has meaning only in relation to people, and this meaning is often difficult to anticipate. The messenger of "truth" bears part of the responsibility for the results of his effort.

Well, what, finally—apart from the technical difficulties of communication—determines the reaction of people to "truth," assuming the messenger to be in possession of it, and that he has clothed it in the clearest possible words?

The major determinant, it seems to us, is what people think about themselves and about the world—whether there is one world, or two, and their feeling about existential values and "progressive" values. Preparation for the reception of "truth," in other words, is a *general* preparation, and not something specific, arising from a particular crisis, or in response to immediate feelings of desperation. Yet there are times when a surge of general understanding may be triggered by the stark, unavoidable reality of an extreme situation. The man who can relate the particular to the general, and by this means help mankind to become *equal to* the most frightening of facts, is truly a teacher of his time.

## *REVIEW*

### REVIEWER'S DELIGHT

A MANAS reviewer is faced with a variety of challenges and limitations. The popular publishing sources occasionally come up with something of significance and must be scanned and read for these timely fragments. But for the most part, the popular is irrelevant and the significant shines only dimly, if at all, through a pervasive haze of old ideas and tired solutions to dead issues—all dressed in the tinsel of sensation and slick diction. Neither newness nor obscurity are criteria of excellence; witness the new publishing ventures featuring the doggerel of angry young beats, disaffiliated homosexuals, peyote-chewers, and the more scientific LSD imbibers, or the proliferation of little magazines—each indistinguishable from the next—or the claptrap of the demonic poets who with masochistic abandon distribute mimeographed bits and pieces of themselves, for a dollar.

The search for review material is further complicated by the availability and the methods by which "review copies" of books, magazines, and pamphlets are obtained. The procedures are not interesting enough to go into here; they tend to resemble a lottery fixed in favor of the popular, the flashy, and the quickly saleable. The university presses (and some of the commercial houses like Basic Books, Beacon, Van Nostrand, Norton, Viking, and few others) are happy exceptions to this unfortunate situation and are, in addition, responsible for the most exciting publishing being done in the United States today.

Then there are space limitations to be balanced against an attempt to provide readers with a thorough survey of likely publications: the thoughtful essay emanating from the affect and scope of one book versus the cataloguing of many books of potential interest and value accompanied by the briefest notes on their possibilities and importance.

A piece of truly bad writing may sometimes stimulate a reviewer to unusual and relevant peregrinations. Unfortunately, most of the current bad writing is not even bad enough to inspire critical

commentary that is not equally as insipid. And the good writing is often not good so much as from satisfactory to luke-warm. The search for new ideas has never been met with quantitative success, and the well-expressed and valuable old ideas presented in a modern idiom are nearly as rare. Our time is one of haystack searching, and for pins which, when found, are usually rusty and dull.

So, it is always a delight to a reviewer—and we hope to readers—to find two magazines like *Pacific Discovery* and *The American West*, both of which can be recommended unqualifiedly and which—for the niceties of a review—complement each other so well. Both magazines are beautifully gotten up, excellently written and illustrated, and, more importantly, both are concerned with understanding and celebrating the natural and historical dimensions of Western North America.

*Pacific Discovery*—"A Journal of Nature and Man in the Pacific World"—is published bi-monthly by the California Academy of Sciences (Golden Gate Park, San Francisco). The magazine's title belies its wide ranging interests, although the articles and excellent photographs are mainly concerned with the natural science and history of the greater Pacific Ocean area. The editors consistently transcend this specialization—if it can be called that—and have been developing a magazine over the past sixteen years which is by now of interest to general readers all over the world.

The magazine features in each issue two pages devoted to "Nature Photography"; this feature has included reproductions of original photographs by Philip Hyde, John Tashjian, Ruth Bernhard, Wyn Bullock, and Ansel Adams. Each photograph is accompanied by a short essay written by the photographer, explaining why he chose a given subject, what ideas he was trying to present, and the methods he used. *Pacific Discovery* includes sections devoted to book reviewing. Periodically there are thoughtful and relevant pieces on conservation efforts and problems; for the astronomy buff, a "Sky Diary" section describes the sidereal peculiarities of the common planets and notes the best times to observe them.

The editorials by Bruce Finson are humanistic in tone; these essays beginning each issue are warm, topical, and excellent examples of perceptive intelligence unself-consciously relating the objective external world to the internal and personal world:

Sometimes at night in the country when I lie on the grass and watch the stars I slowly become quite sure that I can feel this Earth turning—below vast still stars all around. With some practice, I find that I sometimes—just for a moment—can tune-in on this I-am-here sensation during the day. I am still not sure it is completely real. But I now-and-then find, inside myself, beside this strangely familiar sensation of myself upon a planet, a new attitude by me toward stars. I begin to feel, as well as know, more truly where I am in the universe. The idea that the stars are farther away than I can understand becomes more real to me at this inward moment. It builds into a new awareness—I become my real, small size.

And so I re-discover Earth. Whenever I get this feeling—of having just arrived on a new planet—everything I see becomes new to me. Whatever I look at becomes wondrously clear and bright and beautiful—be it Montgomery Street at noon, the waves at Ocean Beach, cream clouds over Mount Diablo, or the tree-neighborly street I live on. I look at everything as if I had never seen it before—and might never see it again. It is all precious, just as it is. Because I live on a planet, I have the privilege of remembering to love. (*Pacific Discovery*, Vol. XVI, No. 6.)

*The American West* is published quarterly by the Western History Association (with editorial offices at the University of Utah and distribution by the Lane Book Company of Menlo Park, Calif.), and is the official journal of the Association. The Western History Association is only a little older (founded in 1962) than its journal, the first issue of which has just recently been released: Winter, 1964. Number One of Volume One contains articles, reviews, and photographs: the lead article by Bert M. Fireman is about a trip the aging John C. Fremont made to Arizona attempting to "strike it rich" in mining; a photographic essay of unusually high quality by Philip W. Sultz contains some outstanding photography of Frontier architecture and design; a three-part series of biographical sketches of Frederick Turner, Herbert Bolton, and Walter Webb (three major historians of the American West) are

written by three of their former students—one of whom is Prof. John W. Caughey of UCLA and probably known to MANAS readers as the book editor of the monthly, *Frontier*; a long section of reviews which deal with books on the West is divided into geographical regions, and there are other features and articles too numerous to mention. Articles to be printed in forthcoming issues include the work of Wallace Stegner, an article by Walter Rundell, Jr. on "Steinbeck's Image of the West," and more excellent photography.

The purpose of the magazine is contained in an editorial by Editorial Board member Ray A. Billington:

. . . Its purpose . . . is to "promote the study of the American West in all its varied aspects," by men and women in all walks of life and all fields of interest. By serving as a market place for their ideas it hopes to encourage the serious—and even the frivolous—writing and reading that will make our pioneer past better known and better understood by all people. . . .

The editors . . . are determined to shape *The American West* into an outstanding journal, appealing alike to professional and amateur historians, and dedicated to the principle of supplying a wide audience with sound but readable accounts of the continent's most entrancing region . . .

Neither *Pacific Discovery* nor *The American West* are commercial publishing adventures. They have little chance of competing with the mass audience periodicals. However, in wishing them luck, we should note that *Pacific Discovery* (and for that matter, MANAS) has been publishing regularly for sixteen years and that the *National Geographic* has been steadily increasing its circulation since its beginnings around the turn of the century. Considering the excellence of content and layout of *The American West*, it seems likely that it will find a place in the selective and non-mass market where only the very best survive.

## COMMENTARY

### THE TROUBLE WITH "DEBATES"

EVER since we printed Rachel Pinney's persuasive advocacy of "really listening" we have wanted to add some kind of appendix dealing with the follies of "debate." We now have material which exactly fits this need—some paragraphs by Edward Cain (who teaches government at State University College of Education, Brockport, N.Y.), in an article on William F. Buckley, Jr., in *Frontier* for April. For the application of this criticism to Mr. Buckley (founder and editor of the *National Review*), readers will have to look up the story in *Frontier*; here we quote only the general principles. Mr. Cain writes:

Debate involves the use of highly selective facts which are fed into stark, logical formula. Consistency is always more important than coherence. The field is deployed in terms of absolutes, and in this campaign of Right versus Wrong nothing short of unconditional surrender is thinkable.

A good debater can win on either side. Having mastered the rules, he embraces the delusion that the game is as important as the issue. The drawback of this exciting deductive pastime is that no quarter is given to the inductive approach. Truth is to be defended, not discovered. Compromise and accommodation are taken as signs of weakness. Flexibility becomes vacillation and free experimentation pure subversion.

If you look carefully at these rules of "successful" debate, you realize that they are no more than a scheme for rationalizing the delusion of absolute certainty. It is a game to be played by madmen, never by those interested in finding the truth. A skillful debater, in the terms of Mr. Cain's definition, is a kind of Typhoid Mary intent upon spreading as widely as he can the infection of his self-righteous certainty.

"Rhetoric," as Mr. Cain says, "is an allied art." With rhetoric you conceal the harsh, partisan argument. "The trick is to color the words as vividly as possible short of obscuring all thought." For spurious elevation you "reach for a remote

reference, classical allusion, or imaginative phrase."

What, then, is the difference between the carrying-power of honest conviction—the warmth and even the "rhetoric" of a man who feels an importance in what he is saying—and the debater's devices? Ultimately, the difference lies in motive. The one embodies the high emotion of the longing to know; the other manipulates that longing in an uncritical audience. The listener has the task of learning how to recognize this difference.

# CHILDREN

## . . . and Ourselves

### CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

[Doubtless nothing in the following communication will be "new" to MANAS readers, but this is an area in which repetition is excusable. Our correspondent is working with the problem of synthesis in educational theory, and reformulation is a necessary part of any such project.]

AS a regular reader of your publication, I often want to comment on your articles, but hesitate because whatever I say will doubtless be repetitious. However, just in passing, some questions were brought up by your article, "Old Wine, New Bottles," in *Frontiers* in the issue of Dec. 18, 1963. This article seems of great import to one who teaches, and there lies my interest—in understanding children.

How few realize that much of what a child does is an attempt at communicating—not just the obvious things, but what lies in layer upon layer of his inner life. Perceptive teachers seem to know this and accompany the child to his deepest regions and in wordless sharing, bring to emergence the wonder-believing part of themselves. In all our living, I think there is nothing so wonderful as to find another, especially in our younger years, who shares with us ideas, feelings, dreams.

In stories depicting Socrates teaching a child, we see how the teacher listens and then comments on what the child says and only then proceeds. A give-and-take such as this is a real communication. In children lie seeds of great promise and a teacher is indeed a privileged person to find his calling in that field—the child's being. If a teacher can make such contact with a child, wide are the open doors and spontaneous and free are the communications, many of which need no words at all. Only the letter of the law lies in the province of technicalities and forms—on the surface, along with a feeling of the need to be right, to be correct, to have answers. But if

one works on that basis an estrangement comes about and the child closes up, more and more. If pressure is applied, all the growing power of the child freezes before the Spring of his life. The growing power is driven by the pressure through places where there are no channels and the making of new openings is difficult, often painful, and sometimes even impossible. Everything in life grows, and the power of growth finds expression in the very ways a teacher who is forceful may criticize. The most contrary children are those who have failed in communication. Perhaps a good part of teaching in these days is not so much teaching as healing the wounds caused by imposed theories.

We have had a succession of "schools" of thought in education—one thinks of the progressive system wherein a child had great liberty, too much in many instances. This was a reaction from what was called the Victorian school of thought, in which parents and teachers had rigid control of the young. Children then were supposed to listen most of the time, obey without question, and submit to disciplines far more strict than a natural development called for. Then an inevitable reaction, and "the growing power" was forced to find channels hard to open.

The "fear of communication" on the part of children is still present, though, and is what I have questions about. In many cases fear is outgrown and the child emerges into adult life quite untouched. In other cases there is no emergence. Today, in broken homes especially, this lack of communication exists. How can a child be helped to stay reaction to one he fears? In one case where a boy had grown up, leaving the home for marriage and establishing a happy family—the parent, guiltless of any intention of reminding the boy he had not been rightly obedient, still aroused such fear in him that he, a grown man with children of his own, could not communicate fully and not at all without overwhelming fear—fear so strong that he became physically ill on contact with his parent.

To blame the hostile child is obviously not taking even the first step in the responsibility of adult teaching—in the home or schoolroom. Certainly the child is doing wrong; certainly he knows it. He feels guilty. To continually call attention to his fear and its outgrowth, ill-feeling, is to impress him all the more with his "sin," and he becomes an even greater sinner. Children largely make their worlds out of what adults give them, especially those designated as teachers in any way. A child will fear communication if to him it is but a further occasion for recounting his sins.

Sometimes, it may seem, a person is so rash and inconsiderate that he needs an outside force to check him—but the questions I ask have to do with the forces which touch the child not so much in this outer, social aspect, as in those inner layers of his being, where his feelings are and his heart is hid. Some children are so vulnerable. One good way to help such a child is to enable him to see that there is a way to express all his love, his true feelings. Since children use imagination with facility and most times with delight, an appeal to this faculty often proves a healing power. To make him unafraid through use of imagined situations is good therapy.

To move a child from fear to bravery through sympathy, by whatever means, is one of the rewards of teaching.

If a teacher only gives, he may shoot wide of the mark; or, with too close a range, seem to need no target. "Give-and-take" means one both gives to and receives from the child; what "comes back" is the most precious of the teacher's guides, for it shows in the child's own terms what his needs are. Of course, there are sometimes great shocks in examining what comes back—if the teacher is enough of a teacher to establish real communication.

Only what the child gives back in honest and fearless reaction will be of use to the teacher. Children can be so conditioned that they give back clearly, promptly, and even hatefully what they

got. It may have hit them with so forceful an impact that the effect was just the opposite of helping the growing process in a child.

Teaching is a challenge? Of course, for to really meet children takes both courage and a great deal of genuine humility; the best teacher is continually having his ideas upset all along the line—methods, evaluations of anything and everything. And the climactic reality is that the true teacher seeks no subterfuge or excuses to avoid facing issues and being honest.

Teaching is "an adventure" because it calls for endless exploration.

## *FRONTIERS*

### Pueblo Indian Ethos

THE growing interest of cultural anthropologists in "psychological insights" revealed by primitive myths is illustrated by two recent books on Pueblo Indians—*Pueblo Gods and Myths* by Hamilton A. Tyler, and *Book of the Hopi* by Frank Waters. The conclusions drawn in these volumes are strikingly similar to the views expressed in Joseph Campbell's latest book, *Occidental Mythology*, and in Joseph L. Henderson's *The Myths of Death, Birth, and Resurrection*. In the case of the Pueblo Indians, and particularly the Hopis, we are reminded that the mysticism of these peoples reflects psychological profundity and is not simply a recounting of ancient ceremonials. In his introduction to the *Book of the Hopi*, Mr. Waters speaks of the need for such understanding:

Almost every Hopi ceremony has been reported with painstaking accuracy by a host of professional observers. Yet their studies are limited to minute esoteric descriptions of ritual paraphernalia and how they are used. The esoteric meanings and functions of the ceremonies themselves have remained virtually unknown. This is not wholly due to traditional Hopi secrecy. Professional scientific observers themselves have never granted validity to those aspects of Hopi ceremonialism that border the sixth-sense realm of mysticism. Indeed the rationalism of all the Western world vehemently refutes anything that smacks of the unknown or "occult." Hence Hopi belief and ceremonialism have been dismissed as the crude folklore and erotic practices of a decadent tribe of primitive Indians which have no relationship to the enlightened tenets of modern civilization.

What they tell is the story of their Creation and their Emergences from previous worlds, their migrations over this continent, and the meaning of their ceremonies. It is a world-view of life, deeply religious in nature, whose esoteric meaning they have kept inviolate for generations uncounted. Their existence always has been patterned upon the universal plan of world creation and maintenance, and their progress on the evolutionary Road of Life depends upon the unbroken observance of its laws. In turn, the purpose of their religious ceremonialism is to help maintain the harmony of the universe. It is a mytho-religious system of year-long ceremonies,

rituals, dances, songs, recitations, and prayers as complex, abstract, and esoteric as any in the world. It has been the despair of professional anthropologists, ethnologists, and sociologists.

Similar thought pervades Mr. Tyler's *Pueblo Gods and Myths*. In "The Face of Animism," he writes:

Pueblo religion is not simple, nor is it the quaint survival of an arrested civilization. It is but one response to the same baffling problems which have beset everyone who thinks, no matter in what age he lives, nor what his conclusions may be. I am sure that no one who has read the earlier chapters will doubt the complexity of the Pueblo pantheon, nor the vitality of Pueblo responses to the particular land from which they emerged and the challenges it has set.

I must repeat one idea concerning the opinion which holds that the Indians are childlike, that they speak in grunts which could not possibly convey a wish, much less an idea, and that they may as well be regarded somewhat like buffalo: since they are nearly extinct they should either be preserved in a cultural museum—whatever that means—or be put out of their misery by some kind of dispersal.

Fortunately the Pueblos, like other Indians, are patient—which is not a childlike attribute, but one born of great experience, the passage of time, and a little knowledge, which makes do when necessary when the future is uncertain. Some branches of Pueblo culture are undoubtedly in crisis today, but some always have been. Looking back, the Pueblos have two great assets: they are still there, which is a Herculean feat for any culture—and, they are still dancing.

The blindness of Anglo-American Christian culture in respect to the depth of Indian mysticism is almost unbelievable. Carey McWilliams, in *Brothers under the Skin*, speaks of "the ferocious exclusiveness of the Anglo-Saxon," and Mr. Waters remarks that "the deeply rooted racial prejudice of the Anglo-white Americans against the Red Indians, virtually a national psychosis, is one of the strangest and most terrifying phenomena in all history." Decimation of the Indian population and eventual extermination of Indian culture seem to have been thought practically a religious obligation from the time of

Cotton Mather. During considerably more than a century of dishonor, nearly every Commissioner of Indian Affairs embodied this destructive bias; whole tribes were moved, often more than once, for the convenience and profit of the white man.

A few years ago, MANAS reported on the confrontation which occurred when the Hopis, traditional pacifists, were refused draft-exempt status, even though they had no recognized right to vote in Arizona. Six Hopis were taken to Phoenix for trial when they refused to bear arms. Mr. Waters describes this disturbing episode:

Finally they were taken to Phoenix for trial. One by one each man was put on the stand to affirm his belief and his refusal to register. "When we were led back and forth between the jail and the courthouse the people looked at us like we were criminals because each two men were chained to each other. We could not get them to understand that what we believed in was much stronger than the chains we were bound with.

The trial ended with the adjudgment of the Hopis as guilty—evidently on the basis that they could not be exempted as conscientious objectors because their Hopi belief was not a recognized church or religion. They were sentenced to three years' hard labor and taken to the prison camp at Tucson to work in a gang building a road up Mount Lemon.

The six Hopis were the only Indians in the gang of some three hundred whites, Negroes, and Mexicans. Some of the men were Quakers, many others simply did not believe in killing because their Bible said, "Thou shalt not kill." This encouraged the Hopis, but just the same they were sad; life in the barracks was miserable and the work was hard. Every night at nine o'clock, when the lights went out, Paul would gather his companions in a corner and talk to them. "We are not in this prison camp alone," he told them. "With us is our Guardian Spirit to whom we promised not to fight or kill any white man that would come to our shores. For we knew even then that our lost white brother Pahana, would come. If we fought any white man we would fight our own brother. And we do not want our own brother's blood to be shed on this land which we have promised many, many years ago. Remember I said 'our brother,' and not just 'our friend.' "

In summary, Mr. Waters relates the Hopi "world view" to perennial problems of philosophy and psychology:

The documentary scholar may question whether an ancient primitive people could have evolved such a rich belief and preserved its full tradition for generations by word of mouth. He may assert that the interpretations of the myths, legends, and ceremonies are largely my own speculations. He will certainly deny that invisible spirits manifest themselves, as described. To those doubts and denials my only answer is that the book stems from a mythic and symbolic level far below the surface of anthropological and ethnological documentation. That it may not conform to the rational conceptualization ruling our own beliefs does not detract from its own validity as a depth psychology different from our own. It stands for itself as a synthesis of intuitive, symbolic belief given utterance for the first time.