C rime, violence, drug abuse, and homelessness are all up because of illegal immigrants, say the leaders of this border town. And since the government isn’t doing anything about it, they plan to take matters into their own hands. That’s the story in Agua Prieta, Mexico, population 130,000.

City officials complain that the United States Border Patrol is dumping expelled illegal immigrants on the town, and claim the United States government is not giving them enough notice when they send back another group from among the estimated two million who illegally entered the United States in that area during the past two years.

If it has escaped notice in Washington, the irony of Mexico complaining about the crime and violence caused by the influx of its own citizens is all too apparent to those in the border area around Douglas, in southeastern Arizona. It is as if the San Diego city council insisted that Mexico retain local Americans vacationing in Baja, lest they clog the roads.

Agua Prieta’s plan of attack is to teach the illegals how to stay in the United States by requesting a court hearing. They believe this will jam the courts and further overwhelm the already understaffed Border Patrol. This strategy is only part of a long-standing campaign of interference in American affairs by the Mexican Government, including repeated incursions on American territory by Mexican military and police, sometimes in collusion with drug gangs. The campaign shows not only a new militancy and sophistication but confirms that Mexico has mastered the nuances of political correctness and is using its leverage to the full. It has been especially effective against the current administration in Washington, whose INS looked the other way as thousands of convicted felons gained entry into the United States and whose scale of priorities places amnesty for Puerto Rican terrorists above protection of the nation’s borders and the rights of American citizens.

Those who must deal most directly with the consequences of Mexican militancy and federal retreat are not politicians, nor candidates for the presidency, but ordinary American citizens living on an increasingly dangerous border. Those who opted to become ranchers in the wide open spaces of southeastern Arizona never imagined that their occupation would include forming posses to control the flash floods of immigrants passing over their lands, but in recent months they have had no choice but to take on the functions of a Border Patrol that has unilaterally withdrawn from the border wars.

Continued on page 12

THE COLD WAR ON THE REFERENCE SHELF
VICTORY INTO DEFEAT
by Henry D. Fetter

H ow will the Cold War be remembered? Those of us who grew up in the Cold War era, and from an early age came to regard it as a more or less permanent part of our lives, can find it difficult to appreciate that it has become just another piece in the puzzle of the past for the next generation. The critical events of 1947 and 1948—the Communist insurgency in Greece, the Truman Doctrine, the Prague coup, the Marshall Plan, the Berlin blockade and airlift—which ushered in that era of confrontation between East and West are as far removed from the present as the Boxer Rebellion or Boer War were then from Truman and Stalin. Students entering college this fall were in first or second grade when the Wall fell. Anything they know now, or will learn hereinafter, about those years, will not be the product of their own personal experience, and soon will not even be derived from the experiences of their parents. As with any other historical event, whether it be the Crusades, or the French Revolution, or World War II, much of what they will come to know about the Cold War will be the product, not of the history they can remember, but of the history that they will be taught.

The history of the Cold War that is now being written for such present and future readers itself has a history. Until the late 1960s the consensus of scholarly opinion squarely placed responsibility for the onset of the Cold War on the Soviet Union’s aggressive efforts to extend communism, and its own power, in Europe and ultimately throughout the world. However, beginning in the late 1960s, and fueled by disenchantment with American policy in Vietnam, a revisionist school emerged which placed the blame on the United States for disrupting the wartime alliance of the “Big Three” and portrayed the Soviet Union as the weak, defensive-minded object of American efforts to achieve world cap-

Continued on page 8
Mathematically Correct

If elementary school teachers understand math better, would their students learn more? The answer is yes. A group of Chinese students who had passed a number of college math courses they have not mastered, the answer may well be no. What 8 to 10-year-olds do need is a sound grasp of what they actually teach—a “profound understanding of fundamental mathematics.”

In her book Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics, Liping Ma compared the responses of 72 Chinese and 23 American elementary school teachers to four questions. One of Ma’s questions was to divide 134 by 2, and to make up a story about the problem. Only 8 of the 23 American teachers gave the correct answer properly spelled (134 / 2 = 67), and 72 or 73. Several gave uncorrected answers like 144 / 28, but six gave no answer. All 72 Chinese teachers gave the correct answer, properly spelled, fully justified. Most of the American teachers who answered correctly could not explain why their solution (invert the divisor and multiply) was correct.

The data the book explores this elementary mathematics. All certified United States teachers have at least a bachelor’s degree, and by law, teachers have studied mathematics, but what they know, they know more profoundly, more flexibly, more adaptively.

“Many reform critics claim that Chinese teachers are not as creative as American teachers, and that the Chinese curriculum is much more rigid and, therefore, less stimulating.”

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for the Ethical Treatment of Animals among the fans. About a dozen picket-wielding, slogan-shout- ing PETA types protested outside CBS’s New York headquarters, calling for the network to shut down its rated reality show. They showed cruelty to animals—particularly rats. Demonstrators chanting “Rats have rights!” and “survive on veg- gies!” even brought along their own pro-vegetarian mascots: Ronie the Rat, an actress dressed in a giant rodent suit, to make their point: “simply that pub- licity-seeking celebrities are using their fame to commit animal abuse,” says PETA spokeswoman Dawn Carr. In its series premiere three weeks ago, Connecticut gave a pop quiz on American history to students at 55 top U.S. colleges and universities, including Harvard and Princeton, as part of a study into the teaching of American history. Only about 20 percent of the students getting a B or C or better—and it was multiple choice! On the other hand, 99 percent correctly identified “Beavis and Butthead” as cartoon characters. None of the books with which students were required to earn credits in American history for graduation.

HANOI JANE REDIVIVUS: But there have been some interesting developments of late in what Fonda refers to somewhat opti- mistically as “the last third of my life.” First, she is now a film director and scriptwriter, and now she tells Oprah in an interview for the new magazine O, “I will go to my grave regretting the photograph of me in an anti-aircraft carrier which looks like I was trying to shoot at American planes . . . . It was the most horrible thing I ever have done.” Forget for a moment the malapropism of anti-air- craft carrier which casts a subversive light on the sentiment and recalls her famous statement on the Jack Cavett Show in the ‘70s when she said that U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia had its roots in our ungodly desire for “tung and lstm.” Forget too other parts of this interview when Fonda betrays an unregenerate pride in hav- ing participated in the paranoia- driven New Left along with “people like Tom Hayden who were living for more than just themselves.” The fact is that it is hard to read her chat with Oprah and not feel that what Fonda finds hor- rible about her famous trip to North Vietnam was the photograph and what it would look like, not the trip itself. Remember what happened on that trip. Allowing her handlers to put her into a low budget remake of Toyko Rose, she visited villages and made claims of burned babies and genocide. She visited the Hanoi Hilton and made claims, after brief visits with incarcerated U.S. prisoners, that their treatment was generous and humane. Then there were the propa- ganda broadcasts in which each word was paganda broadcasts in which each word was...
A Hard Egg to Crack

Senator Hillary
by Kathryn Jean Lopez

O h, how they love her! At a United Nations panel convened as part of a special session on women in June, Hillary Rodham Clinton sat on the dais, speaking on, of all ways, a woman’s reproductive rights. This was 2000—proof Hillary—pure liberal, pure wonk, talking about repayment rates and transaction costs, listening to her sisters’ stories of overcoming. Hillary asked questions, soaked in applause, and listened to a serenade, not surpris-ingly, of We Shall Overcome. The audience couldn’t get enough. Once the panel’s time was up, the First Lady/Senate candidate had a jam-packed schedule to keep to, but she was swarmed by groupies, fans who wanted her autograph on their copies of It Takes a Village, or their UN’s “Women 2000” conference pass, or just a hand-shake. They nearly knocked U.N. envoy Richard Holbrooke over to get to her. Hillary shook hands, hugged, kissed, had her picture taken, and even shrieked upon seeing one long lost sister. You would have thought it was Ricky Martin shaking his bon-bon for lovesick teenage girls.

Why so much adulation? Simply, she was in her natural habitat—and it wasn’t Chappaqua, New York. This was a group of her ideological peers. Women whose lives revolve around, well, women. Women who view women as victims. Women who believe that from Afghanistan to the United States, women are denied fundamental human rights—most fundamentally, sexual rights—namely, abortion. For them! Hillary is some kind of heroine. A spokeswoman. Seems kind of odd, considering, as Laura Ingraham has noted, that “Hillary is such an unlikely model for a self-respecting woman.”

Also a hard egg to crack, although try-ing to get to her yolk has become something of a cottage industry in the publishing world. Amazon lists no fewer than 40 books for Hillary junkies. Inquiring minds and New York voters have a number of uniquely insightful analyses available to them thanks to recent books—two, this year, one from former Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan (The Case Against Hillary Clinton) and another one from pundit Laura Ingraham (The Hillary Trap: Looking for Power in All the Wrong Places). Last year, there was Joyce Milton’s (The First Partner: Hillary Rodham Clinton), Barbara Olson’s Hell to Pay: The Writings of a Staffer in Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Gail Sheehy’s Hillary’s Choice. Both Noonan and Olson hit the New York Times bestseller list with their books. All high-light different aspects of this woman now called Hillary! with an exclamation point. It seems fit-ting that female authors fill the bookshelves with their tomes on Hillary—studying her, investigating her, explaining her—since it is Everywoman that Hillary Rodham Clinton sup-posesly speaks for.

Despite all the delving into Hillary Rodham Clinton—dealing with her as if she is a combination of Sappho, Madame de Stael, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Evita—she is in so many ways a mystery. That is crystal clear and some of it, despite all the mystification, iconography, and symbol mongering, is quite simple. As Barbara Olson, who worked as a staffer in the House of Representatives and the Senate investigating a slew of White House improprieties—crimes and misdemeanors?—notes: “Hillary is a woman animated by a life-long ambition.” That is, “to make the world accept the ideas she embraced in sanctuaries of liberal theology, radical feminism, and the hard left.”

That ambition animates every facet of Hillary Clinton. Perhaps, most oddly, her mar-riage. Odd, it may depend on what your defini-tion of marriage is.

Introduced back at Yale law school by mutual friend and future Labor secretary Robert Reich, few—none of her major biogra-phers—doubt that Hillary loves Bill. As Gail Sheehy notes, Dick Morris has observed that’s the one thing the two definitely have in com-mon: “Hillary loves Bill and Bill loves Bill. It gives them something in common.” Joyce Milton writes “Whatever else can be said about the Rodham-Clinton relationship, and a lot can be, there seems no real doubt that on Hillary’s part, it was love at first sight.” And Bill, at a min-imum admired her—a big star at Yale—from the beginning. Before they were married, he would tell people, “She could even be a sena-tor!”

Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham, as she was then known, were largely unchurched until their 1980 defeat after two terms in the Arkansas governor’s mansion. It may not have cost them the election, but it did not win them—particularly Ms. Rodham—any friends among Arkansans who wondered about the governor and his Yankee atheist wife. Suddenly, after the defeat, he appeared every Sunday as a choir member at the Immanuel Baptist Church, whereas, cynics would note, the services were far from empty. Whereas Rick Lazio appeared on every Sunday show the day after he announced his candidacy, Hillary Clinton has never appeared on a single one, instead sending her lackeys to say her peace.

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Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton may well have been first lady. She certainly was in every way but one: She was off the hook, after all, when her husband, a former Arkansas governor, was impeached. Even now, out on her own as a Senate candidate in New York, the press cannot get anywhere near her. Whereas Rick Lazio appeared on every Sunday show the day after he announced his candidacy, Hillary Clinton has never appeared on a single one, instead sending her lackeys to say her peace.

And if Hillary was bitterly angry

Regardless of her many contra-dictions, most notably her role as the feminist heroine whose adult life has been mostly defined by her cheating husband and his career. Hillary Clinton is untouchable. Even now, out on her own as a Senate candidate in New York, the press cannot get anywhere near her. Whereas Rick Lazio appeared on every Sunday show the day after he announced his candidacy, Hillary Clinton has never appeared on a single one, instead sending her lackeys to say her peace.

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single individual. As Joyce Milton observes, Rodham “escaped embarrassment, and even serious embarrassment, to emerge as something of a heroine.”

Her tenure at LSC wasn’t her first inside-the-Beltway job. Among the many things Americans tend to forget about Hillary Clinton is her early career as a litigation lawyer in Little Rock, Arkansas. As Milton points out, “(however liberal) Republican. Taking the senatorial reelection bid in Arkansas. Hillary Clinton for the first time, the day he formally announced that he would be running for a second term as governor. It wasn’t until February 27, 1982, that Hillary was publicly identified as Mrs. Bill Clinton. As Milton writes. One of the oddest ironies of American history is that the phenomenon of Hillary Clinton Senate candidacy. As Noonan writes, in her Case Against Hillary Clinton, “her leadership of the health care initiative is evidence that working with others, and specifically Congress—working in a way that is truly collegial, and that shows respect for others—is not a strong suit of Mrs. Clinton’s, but a weak one.”

Peggy Noonan writes: “Mrs. Clinton is so famous, so celebrated for her accomplishments. She so quickly and eagerly refers to them. Yet when you look at her record, her reputation for accomplishment seems to just be another fiction.”

Given her record, what can we make of the phenomenon of Hillary Clinton Senate candidacy? As Noonan writes in her Case Against Hillary Clinton, “her leadership of the health care initiative is evidence that working with others, and specifically Congress—working in a way that is truly collegial, and that shows respect for others—is not a strong suit of Mrs. Clinton’s, but a weak one.”

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The three-thousand-seat Berkeley Community Theater, set on the grounds of Berkeley High, has seen better days. The sound system is archaic; the deco bas relief of heroic figures rimming the edifice’s outside is darkly stained and is evocatively modern in an earlier era as the craggy balcony, worn seats, and dingy lighting inside. The Berkeley City Council has entertained proposals to raze and rebuild the relic, but such proposals have been shouted down by town denizens who see the old theater as a living historical monument to passing glo- ries. Bob Dylan and Joan Baez appeared here in their youth; so did Lenny Bruce, the Grateful Dead, the Pointer Sisters, Wavy Gravy, Charlie Mingus, and Goric Vidal. For years, it was also the place to go to check out the Berkeley hipster political scene. Moreover, the theater has played host to “discussions” of the town’s most urgent concerns, such as the recent ruckus at KPFK-listener-sponsored-radio (Local staffers and most of Berkeley’s polyglot leftist community joined in rebelling against the station’s new director who took them out of the building provoking sit-ins, law suits, and typical Berkeley bickering.)

Perhaps more than any other site in the Bay Area, the Berkeley Community Theater has been the arena for benefits, fundraisers, and tributes to numerous names; the ceremonial moments and solemn rituals which tie the city’s radical community together. And so it is once again on this balmy spring night at the end of April, when a sold out house on the inside and huge line out-side mixing the young body-pierced set, Sixties tie-dye-hearts and veteran Commie bag-bearded, all hoping to gain entry. The house this night was very much a revival tent stretched over the faithful who’ve come to chant and sing and be in the good religion of all—the Fifties of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the latter’s death as “our black Moses.”

The event, entitled “Celebrate the Children of Resistance!” was produced by the Midwest East Children’s Alliance (which began collecting and distributing aid during the Intifada to Palestinian children and which now raises money for peanut butter and rocks) and in the presence of peculiar bathos by Danny Glover, who is no Julius Rosenberg. Once again the innocent and the faithful are under siege from McCarthy, HUAC, et al, with their agony functioning as mirror to the current deformed “political persecutions” of convict cop-killer, Mumia Abu-Jamal and the late Judi Bari, a former Earth First leader whose car was bombed in 1990 and who died of breast cancer in 1997. Tonight the matched up themes are played out to the sentimental strains of folk music, poetry, a loose narrative rendered in stentorian tones by Ed Asner, and the dramatic readings of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg letters to one another and to their children—Robert and Michael Meeropol, present and participating—on this night with peculiar bathos by Danny Glover, who is no Julius Rosenberg, but who depicts him in the reading; and by San Francisco Poet Laureate, Janice Mirikitani, an Asian American minister married to the late Rabbi Williams of Glide church fame. (The African American minister who was friends with Jim Jones and who appeared) and in music. And when Mumia’s kid, Jaki, is on stage, his dreads cascading down his spanking white shirt and almost professorial cardigan, one can’t help but be impressed by his well-spoken, quiet demeanor. Similarly, the comedy Lisa Bari (much prettier than her man-hans-faced mother was) is a spirited, bright young woman in her stage remarks. Her grant from the Rosenberg Fund was for music lessons. But the homogenized innocence of the evening is offensive. Nowhere in the program was there any reference to the Julius Rosenberg’s guilt as set forth in recently uncovered KGB files; nor of Ethel who the KGB files asserted must have been shouting down by town powers that be. But there is Janice Mirikitani on stage, emoting like Medea in some outdoor theater as she reads the Rosenberg’s Ethel’s letter: “No matter what anyone says to the contrary, we have done no wrong.” And a little later, “Always remember we were innocent and could not wrong our conscience.” And the idea of guilt—hers, her husband’s, or even Mumia’s—is so anathema to the spirit of victimization professed by these targeted activists—that the enactment of the evening become a syrupy ooze spreading across generations and across crimes and punishments. It is perhaps, most evident in the silent presence of a screen, hanging behind the stage all evening as a reference point. (Save when the screen comes down to reveal a photo of Mumia to accompany yet another of his taped messages to the audience.) The screen projects a gauzy water-color painting of the American flag, superimposed upon which is an inkly, highly idealized rendition of this old Berkeley community theater building looking wistful and romantic. They look beautiful, forever young and innocent, but something about the image bothers me all night until it finally dawns on me that it is the portentous wooden portrait—Joyce Carol Oates as a young author. When the Berkeley Community Theatre finally comes down, this image and the unreality of the celebration, “The guilt will have to go into its time capsule.”

The Bear Weaves the Bloody Shirt in Berkeley
Night of the Living Dead by Henry Plaut

At Pier 33

Grants are awarded “to children of targeted activists to help meet the children’s educational and emotional needs by funding school and camp tuition, college scholarships, and after-school programs . . . Travel grants to enable the children of political prisoners to visit their imprisoned parents.” The Rosenberg Fund for Children is under siege from McCarthy, HUAC, et al, and its funds have been directed to college education but also to gather “past and present beneficiaries (now young adults) for sharing, networking . . . and perhaps for propaganda purposes, one suspects, of evenings such as this one.

Some of the beneficiaries listed in the glossy program are hardly hard-core Marrons. One is the child of a black Los Angeles cop who “blew the whistle” on his fellow officers in the turmoil sur- rounding the Rodney King beating, a move, assert the Meeropol sons which led directly to his being fired. Other beneficiaries have been in South Africa and in Guatemala. The program notes indicate that wherever possible, the Rosenberg Fund for Children favors institutions and resources with a “progressive” bent. And why not? Their sentiment- al justification is that the Meeropol sons themselves survived the horrific impact of their parents’ executions by the FBI. As long as the Meeropol sons and those who supported them have been shouted down, why not the beneficiaries? That is the spirit of victimization professed by these targeted activists—that the enacting of the evening become a syrupy ooze spreading across generations and across crimes and punishments. It is perhaps, most evident in the silent presence of a screen, hanging behind the stage all evening as a reference point. (Save when the screen comes down to reveal a photo of Mumia to accompany yet another of his taped messages to the audience.) The screen projects a gauzy water-color painting of the American flag, superimposed upon which is an inkly, highly idealized rendition of this old Berkeley community theater building looking wistful and romantic. They look beautiful, forever young and innocent, but something about the image bothers me all night until it finally dawns on me that it is the portentous wooden portrait—Joyce Carol Oates as a young author. When the Berkeley Community Theatre finally comes down, this image and the unreality of the celebration, “The guilt will have to go into its time capsule.”

Henry Plaut is a writer living in San Francisco.
In Ray Bradbury’s classic Fahrenheit 451, the insouciant fireman Captain Beatty burned books with missionary zeal. But Captain Beatty did not consider himself villainous. Beatty’s bookburning was rooted in a crude philosophy: “If you don’t like a man, happen to politically don’t give him two sides to a question to worry him; give him one,” Beatty said. “Better yet, give him none.”

Now we find that San Diego State University (SDSU) has labeled its compulsory introductory education course Education 451, and such rich irony deserves scrutiny. This is so especially in light of the course’s endorsement for Mendell Meno, a former member of the California Commission Lionel “Skip” Meno, who now serves as dean of the SDSU school of education. The course, “Introduction to Multicultural Education” expresses the worst pathologises plaguing American higher education, so it is not surprising that Education 451 evokes Bradburian images of censorship, coercion, and bookburning. This year, the SDSU course won the Intercollegiate Studies Institute’s (ISI) Polly Award. ISI awards the Polly each year to the wackest anti-intellectual happenings on the college campus. Education 451 won handily.

In Education 451, they don’t burn books...there are no books to burn. Nor are there written tests, nor is there a written syllabus, nor is there rigorous academic content. Nothing resembling programming and indoctrination in the form of Maoist-style “workshops” run by campus political pressure groups that require students, among other things, to stand before the group and proclaim one’s homosexual reciting “I am gay” or “I am lesbian” and then to discuss their feelings about being gay or lesbian (unless, of course, one is designated a “bi-sexual”). All of this, moreover, is required of graduate students who wish to teach in the state of California. Students vehemently egregious are the required “cultural pluses” in gay bars. These “pluses” equate “gay culture” with what one finds in bars catering to homosexuals, as if the singularly most market epiphenomena in the cultural apex of this lifestyle. If it is really necessary or proper to require future elementary school teachers to participate in an algebra, you must have a cen- tered nightlife that, frankly, the majority of Americans have no time for, gay or not? Education Dean “Skip” Meno offered a straightforward defense of Education 451 on a recent nationally televised Fox News report, saying that “We’re preparing people to work in a diverse society with a diverse student population, that at times requires us to have an understanding of the students that they’re going to work with.” Meno did not address the coercive aspects of the course; he gave no indication that he was even aware of them. He did not explain how cruising the gay bar scene prepares teachers to work with the children who are going to go to school. What does it mean to take the course’s ostensible benefits? Not everyone at SDSU is convinced that the course is beneficial or even benign. Some students vehemently oppose the course’s content. “To mandate the course...that’s sick and twisted,” says the editor of the San Diego State Daily Aztec, a student newspaper, senior Jennifer Menchaca. “I don’t think you’re going in the middle of a gay club have to do with reading, writing, and arithmetic?” Indeed, the arguments against the course go well beyond ideological disagreement over the proper place of homosexuality or multiculturalism in the college curriculum, although those can certainly be debated. The Fox News report was fair as far as it went. But the main argument against the course, as it is presently taught, was missing. While Dean Meno had no comment on the course’s paucity of rigor and substance, here we can note that Education 451 is characterized by low academic standards, aimlessness, trivial content, and indoctrination tech- niques, all of which is required of students at tax- payer expense. Each charge follows.

- Low academic standards-questionable content
- Aimlessness—there is no syllabus, just an eratic lunching from class to class. The anonymous course designers seemed determined not to leave a paper trail that might come back to bite them.
- Trivial and politicized content—some class sessions are “taught” by a student group called the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Association, which runs “workshops.” Why this student group is providing material for a required and accredited graduate level education course is something perhaps only Dean Meno can fathom.
- Indoctrination—reeducation camp tech- niques are used. Remember Frank Sinatra at the Manchurian Candidate, sitting on the stage, recit- ing his lines? The Soviets used similar techniques to indoctrinate workers, of course. These Samokritika sessions coerced workers to recite beliefs they did not hold and admit to sins they had not committed. Similar “role-playing” is a mainstay of Education 451.
- Compulsory at taxpayer expense—if you want a teaching certificate through SDSU, you’re at the mercy of SDSU’s gay student group and, presumably, its political agenda. And it’s all funded by the California taxpayers. Aside from its particular eccentricities, Education 451 represents a broader trend in higher education regarding fad- dish and politically driven courses. Courses with “feminist,” “diversity,” “multicultural,” “race,” “gender,” or “gay” in the title or description are becoming synonymous with intellectual vacancy, lack of rigor, poorly qualified instructors, and trivial- and politicized content. University of Colorado classics professor E. Christian Kopf contends that when administrators say “multiculturalism,” they don’t mean increased foreign language require- ments or immersion in the history, geography, or economics of particular cultures. What they mean is more lightweight coursework required of students. Professor Kopf is not alone in his concern. SDSU plucked Meno from his position as superintendent of the Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaragus Board of Cooperative Educational Services in Angola, New York. Now, five years after Texas, Meno is defending a coercive state-funded course at SDSU that is by all accounts a liberal intellectual mess. Perhaps Education 451 was someone else’s idea, and Meno is simply defending his newly adopted program. Fair enough. But are we really surprised when we discover, five years after he presided over an ailing Texas educational system, that Meno is providing cover for an SDSU course that is almost pathological in seeking out and combining the worst examples of accademia? What, really, is so bad about Education 451? One searches in vain for a redeeming quality in the course, but finds only the coercive and the trivial. It is easy enough to see that Education 451 is designed to goad a certain segment of American society to tell right from wrong, good from bad. It’s about substituting moral paralysis for critical judg- ment. It’s about inhibiting a person’s ability to make the kinds of value judgments one learns in the home environment, the kinds of judgments which derive from a person’s moral compass and are essential for survival in the modern world. Of course, the pesky “home environment” is the bane of the folks running Education 451. This home environment is presumably the universal province of racists and bigots. How else to explain the rai- son d’etre of this course, which promises to incul- cate “tolerance” in—again, presumably—the intolerant graduate students of San Diego State University? The destructive and value-morphing dynamic of Education 451 is mirrored in its novel counterpart, Fahrenheit 451. The novel’s villain Captain Beatty reflected on the “problem” that some people might not willingly embrace the gov- ernment’s officially approved attitudes. Says Captain Beatty: “You can’t rid yourselves of all the odd ducks in just a few years. The home environ- ment can undo a lot you try to do at school.” It seems that at SDSU, at least, the Captain Beatty attitude is no longer required. It is that skyscoring college costs and declining educa- tional standards in America’s public schools as well as its universities, Education 451 seems a par- ticularly odious joke on the taxpayers of California, and an even crueler joke on the students required to take it.

Dr. Stanley K. Ridges is the executive director of the Collegiate Network, a division of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and is the editor of Start the Presses! A Handbook of Student Journalism, published by ISI Books.
It takes an effort of imaginative reconstruction to recall how the Cold War world looked just before its sudden end into some of the most prominent authorities on East-West relations. As the 1988 American Presidential election approached, Princeton scholar Stephen F. Cohen asked, “Will We End the Cold War” [The Nation 10/10/88] and called on the next President to “meet Gorbachev halfway.” Given “a long series of concessions by Gorbachev,” Cohen wrote, “it is time for comparable pressure from the Western side. And all of this can only serve to strengthen the Soviet leadership, not democratic America, that responded to the growing peril of cold war with ‘new world’ boldness and flexibility. To do no less is the real challenge and historic opportunity that awaits the new President.”

In the event, within a year, the Wall was down, the Soviet Union was no more, and the Cold War over—and without the implementation of Professor Cohen’s policy of all-embracing compromise, cooperation, and legitimation. Indeed the Cold War had been won, a result entirely inconsistent with Professor Cohen’s road map of “the next President’s historic opportunity.”

But Professor Cohen was not alone in his disoriented discomfit at the outcome of the war. A month after the Wall fell, the New York Times took a swipe at “American conservatives who can’t seem to get their bearings without Godless commies to kick around.” The Times then greeted the first New Year of the post-Cold War era with the puerile reflections of Michael Shuman, of the left center Institute for Policy Studies, who received “the Nobel Prize of the lower-class majority while the mobilizers of the intellectual citadel of scholarship that attests to a calculated pro-

ventionist interpretation of Soviet responsibility for the Cold War—stoutly buttressed by previously unavailable source material from U.S.S.R. archives. Even at that point, revisionist accounts allotting responsibility to the United States and its allies for the escalation of tensions, and indulging in unsub-

stantiated speculations about Soviet intentions and motives, have failed to withstand scrutiny.

Yet Gaddis is, unfortunately, atypical, and it would be an understatement to say that revisionist interpretations of the Cold War have retained considerable currency despite the sort of evidence he has been able to muster. Even at this black look at current Cold War historiography readily shows, the revisionist perspective has been tena-

tly left unchanged the unrelievedly bleak introducto-

ry paragraph that had appeared in the 1984 edition: “The Cold War has dominated American life since 1945. It has cost Americans $4 trillion, the defense at last, to become the world’s only superpower. It continues today with nearly 100,000 young men, the careers of many others, led the nation into the horrors of Southeast Asian conflicts, and in the 1980s triggered the worst economic depression in forty years. It has not been the most satisfying chapter in American diplomatic history.”

Not surprisingly, Professor LaFeber’s uncom-

fortable handling of the end of the Cold War followed the outlines of this wrong-footed start. The lesson to be learned from the unraveling of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Eastern Europe from Communist rule was that “in truth, both superpowers had lost much of their capacity to shape world affairs as early as 1973.” That “by the 1980’s Americans [were not] any longer able to solve their own internal and external problems,” and that “as world affairs became less predictable and the superpowers’ ability to control those affairs also lessened … no one could conclude that even if the Cold War were over, the world had become a safer place in which to live.”

Still clinging to the “imperial overstretch” the-

sis which had led him to portray (in his 1984 edition) the United States as trapped in a “larger crisis within the capitalist world” and following the downward course of such former empires as the British, Professor LaFeber in 1991 continued to see United States economic power in decline, with “the only solace … perhaps that the Soviets were in even worse shape.”

Under Professor LaFeber’s 1991 scoring sys-

tem, then, the Cold War came off as more or less a draw. That anything good came out of its ending, whether for the peoples of the United States, Europe, or the Soviet Union was not something that any reader would discern from his book—or indeed that anyone might actually have won it.

Of course, Professor LaFeber was writing almost ten years ago. Today the Cold War and its origins have passed more definitively into the realm of the past, and historians have the benefit of a steady flow of new evidence—not the first time, from both contending-

sides—and the opportunity to take a fairer and fuller measure of events that no longer have the topi-

city they did while the Cold War raged. Yale historian John Lewis Gaddis has recently summarized some of the highlights of recent research in We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History. What emerges from Professor Gaddis’s work, drawing on recent discourses from the Soviet archives, is the role of Stalin as prime mover in the conflicts and confrontations that gave rise to, and then shaped, the course of the Cold War. As Professor Gaddis puts it, “as long as Stalin was running the Soviet Union a cold war was unavoidable. . . . It is hardly possible to imagine Nazi Germany or the world and war it caused without Hitler. I find it increasingly diffi-

cult, given what we now know, to imagine the Soviet Union or the Cold War without Stalin.”

In authorizing the North Korean invasion of South Korea, beginning work on a hydrogen bomb before the United States did, formulating plans to incor-

porate a reunified Germany within Moscow’s sphere of influence, and that in the 1980s triggered the worst economic depression in forty years. It has not been the most satisfying chapter in American diplomatic history.”

But despite the fact that scholars now have access to the archives of both sides and know how the conflict ended, the revisionist frame of mind has not only persisted, but has firmly implanted itself in leading works of reference on the subject. These books, have been issued under impeccably “establishment” auspices and bear every outward sign of reliability. Because of their scope and expense they are likely to remain vital references well into this new century. Far from being forced on to the defensive in the face of events—and new sources—Cold War revisionism, through these works, has been granted a continuing influence over the way the student, the scholar, the gener-

al reader, and the policy maker will think about the history of the Cold War and its origins for years to come. Anyone who remembers the Cold War as an awful historical perpetuation, not just a mere footnote, will discern from his book—or indeed that anyone might actually have won it.

At times, it is true, these attempts to black-

about Soviet intentions and motives, have been granted a continuing influence over the way the student, the scholar, the gener-

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Hanging Up on the Hammer and Sickle
by Harvey Klehr and John Haynes

Two months ago, Gus Hall, the longest-serving leader of a Communist Party anywhere in the world, finally decided to hang up his hammer and sickle. After 40 years at the helm, Hall was kicked upstairs to senior chair of the CPUSA, replaced as national chairman by Sam Webb, heretofore an obscure Party functionary. Not a single newspaper apart from the communist People’s Weekly World, has mentioned the story. Yet in its own way, Hall’s career was significant, at least in the extent of its failure, and deserves an epitaph.

Hall was fond of boasting in the last few years that the CPUSA was the fastest-growing political party in the nation; he was given to linking the numbers of Party interviewers who beat a path to the Party’s headquarters in the Chelsea area of New York to the imminent political revival of his movement. The ninety-year old Hall, however, misunderstood why the media periodically cast a glance in his direction. It was curiosity about a species heading towards extinction, not a belief in its rebirth.

Gus Hall has run for president of the United States more times than Harold Stassen and with similarly dismaying results. But it is not just his fellow citizens who have rejected him. Under his long leadership, his own political party has downsized without improving the bottom line. Hall became the Party’s leader in 1959, when the CPUSA was still reeling under the impact of Nikita Khrushchev’s revelations about Joseph Stalin’s crimes. He allowed aside Eugene Dennis, the Kremlin’s long-hand, pick-lead picker who was dying of cancer, by hinting to party reformers that he shared their desire to streamline American communism. But Hall quickly became one of the most orthodox, pro-Soviet Communists in the world. He rallied his small band of troops in support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, expelling dissidents who supported “communism with a human face.” He ousted long-time Jewish members for the crime of supporting Israeli resistance to aggression in 1967 and 1973 and for criticizing Soviet anti-Semitism. He denounced Euro-Communism and relied against Maoists. His efforts kept the CPUSA from growing substantially during the heyday of 60s anti-American dissidence or from profitting from the миллионы of the numerous communist sects that the New Left spawned.

Such loyalty did not come cheap. For years the USSR secretly subsidized the CPUSA. In the early 1980s, the KGB was funneling two million dollars a year to Hall; in 1987, he wrote to the Soviet Politburo pleading for a further four million, claiming that opportunities had never been brighter for a communist breakthrough in American political life. The Kremlin may have doubted that Ronald Reagan’s America was ripe for communism but it did use its annual payroll to three million a year.

Despite the millions rolling into Party coffers, however, the 1980s were difficult years. One of Hall’s closest advisors, Morris Childs, turned out to be a long-time FBI informant. When the story broke, Hall and the Party indignantly denied the charges and, even though Childs came under government protection, Hall squelched an internal Party investigation for fear of being embarrassed. After the death of the Party’s second-in-command, Henry Winston in 1986, Hall resisted demands from African-American members that racial justice required the appointment of another black to the post and was denounced by some long-time allies for failing to impose the same kinds of racial quotas the CPUSA routinely insisted be applied to other organizations.

As the socialist world melted down in 1989, Hall put on a happy face and explained that this development showed that “the reality is that all world events are taking place in a period when the reserves, the power and influence of world capitalism are declining.” After a visit to East Germany he confidently asserted that “anyone who thinks the GDR is going to leave the path of socialism is indulging in wishful thinking.” While deploring the loss of life at Tiananmen Square, he supported the Chinese government and denounced the mass media “for reporting recent world events inaccurately.”

Worst of all, however, was what was happening in the Soviet Union. Gus Hall was aghast at Mikhail Gorbachev’s policies of glasnost and perestroika. For the first time in decades, party publications carried criticism of the USSR. When Gorbachev responded to such indignities by reducing and then eliminating the Soviet subsidy, the People’s Daily World, the Party’s newspaper, was forced to become the People’s Weekly World. After the attempted coup against Gorbachev in 1991, Hall prepared an audio tape supporting the plotters; when Boris Yeltsin faced them down, he halted its distribution and the Party press criticized the coup plotters’ tactics. Hall responded to the collapse of communism in its homeland by advising true believers: “if you want to take a nice vacation, take it in North Korea.”

Hundreds of the CPUSA’s members supported an effort to oust Hall, but at a 1991 convention in Cleveland, his supporters, controlling the credentials committee, refused to seat dissident delegates. Those who made it inside the convention hall were harassed, their microphones cut off and their speeches drowned out by loyalists chanting “Gus, Gus, Gus.” Such long-time stalwarts as Angela Davis, James Jackson, Gil Greer, and Charlene Mitchell were either expelled from the CPUSA or quit in disgust and Hall’s losses changed the locks on the newspaper’s offices to prevent the editors from reporting what had happened.

The party Hall has bequeathed to the new leadership has a few thousand members and virtually no political influence. Once the home of talented artists, writers, and intellectuals, it no longer registers on the screen of American cultural life. Many of its members are life-long communists who will die in the movement to which they have given their energies. Its younger recruits are largely oblivious to the Party’s history, as are most Americans. But something from that history is worth remembering: there is an American tendency to wax nostalgic about old political war-horses like the avuncular Hall.

Gus Hall is a Finnish-American; born Arvo Halberg on the Mesabi Range in Minnesota to immigrant parents who were themselves charter members of the CPUSA. Just like most American boys automatically went into the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, Hall joined the Young Communist League. He was sent to Moscow in the early 1930s to be trained in revolution at the Lenin School. After his return, he went to work for the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in Warren, Ohio, and put his Party training to good use; during an organizing campaign he dealt with recalcitrant workers by heading a bomb squad that blew up their houses. Hall was convicted of a misdemeanor.

Around the time he was in Moscow, thousands of other American and Canadian Finns, most of them communists, were also moving to the Soviet Union, to Karelia, an area adjacent to Finland, to help build a socialist society. Since the radical Finnish community in the United States was small, Hall undoubtedly knew many of those infected by “Karelian fever.” Although Stalin’s regime had sponsored their journeys to the USSR, during the Soviet purges of the late 1930s, hundreds of these Finns were arrested, deported to the Gulag, and secretly shot. The CPUSA not only never protested but denounced their one-time comrades as deviationists and wreckers.

When a Karelian mass grave containing the bodies of hundreds of American and Canadian victims of communism was unearthed three years ago, the CPUSA never raised a word. Although its leaders, through the list of those buried there included Minnesotans from the Finnish-American community from which Hall emerged, are so many of his contemporaries and comrades, he will die in his bed. And, he will have lived long enough to see the complete bankruptcy of everything he ever believed in.
Any expectation that the Encyclopedia might afford the revisionist the occasion to revise his revisions, or that the Encyclopedia would take into account what has been learned since the Cold War ended from previously inaccessible sources quickly evaporates in Professor Paterson's and Jentleson's Introduction to the Encyclopedia's four volumes. First among the development-giving rise to the Cold War that the editors cite is “the emergence of the United States not only as the supreme world power eager to exert its influence as never before but also as the unquestioned leader of the ‘Free World’ [quotes in original], and thus in direct competition with a totalitarian Soviet Union, dominant (at least as a local power) in Eurasia and eager to promote communist revolutionaries worldwide.” This reversal reverses what might more reasonably be viewed as sources of the challenge and the response.

The lengthy entry on the “Cold War” comes in on cue. Written by David Painter of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, the essay asks what was at stake in the Cold War and then passes on the opportunity to revise the revisionists by focusing, in the revisionist tradition, on the United States, not the Soviet Union. First off, according to Painter, because it “provided a justification for the projection of U.S. power and influence all over the world, the Cold War became the means by which the United States and India and Pakistan and Egypt and Israel and Greece and Turkey, and China, and he boasted that ‘Trumanism’ had saved these countries from Soviet invasion and had ‘brought democracy’ to these countries.”

Responsibility for the outbreak of the Cold War is placed at the doorstep of the United States, particularly because of its grasping for global economic hegemony. “The experience of World War II facilitated a global conception of U.S. national security interests and requirements. Drawing on what they believed to be an American ‘ tradition of anti-communism’ as being the raison d'être for U.S. intervention in foreign affairs, the Cold War became the means by which the United States and its main allies and to preserve a broadly defined ‘American way of life’ by constructing an international order that was open to and compatible with U.S. interests and ideals.”

The entry on Stalin, by David W. McFadden of Fairfield University, reinforces the analysis that Stalin’s role in the origins of the Cold War, the reader is informed that, even before the end of World War II, American public opinion began to condemn—appar-ently unreasonably—Stalin’s “steering expansionism,” as well as the agreements reached at Yalta. Notwithstanding the charges of anti-Semitism in American opinion, after Roosevelt’s death, “Stalin proceeded to first try to maintain good relations with his successor. Truman, who might have been counted on to use the U.S. atomic bomb, U.S. foreign aid to noncommunist Europe, the U.S. dominance of postwar global financial institutions, and the strengthening of the Red Army’s occupation of Manchuria over the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of open conflict by 1947.” By then Stalin’s grievances were many, and evidently unquenchable. Moreover, from Germany, never felt compensated for tremendous Soviet losses on the eastern front; and charged Truman with both ‘atomic’ and ‘dollar’ diplomacy’ as the breach between these two great powers. Stalin supported North Korea’s “attempt to unify the Korean peninsula” which “sparked U.S. and then Chinese military intervention.” In summary, “Americans, but not, it would seem, the more dispassionate author, “have continued to hold Stalin principally responsible for the Cold War.”

President Truman faces much tougher treatment. According to Arnold A. Offner, “Truman was determined to advance U.S. inter-ests”—which is proposed as a ‘given’—“and although it might reasonably be considered to be his job description. Early in 1946, Offner writes, Truman initiated a ‘get tough’ policy, ‘sharpening the Soviet Union’s claim to control the strategic Turkish Straits.’ Truman began aid to Turkey, ‘which military planners envisioned as a base for U.S. intervention against the communists through the Balkan national rivalries, but not—as the Truman Doctrine did it—foreign efforts to impose com-munism in countries of Europe and Asia. Established precedent for repeated U.S. intervention in for-eign crises ‘The Truman Doctrine ‘spurred an overblown campaign to contain the Soviet Union and world communism which were too readily blamed for nearly every international or civil conflict.’ And of course, Truman was wrong, at least according to a ‘special UN committee investigating the conflict in Greece’ which allegedly ‘concluded that the Truman Doctrine was excessive and that averted U.S. intervention in the Balkan national rivalries, but not—as the Truman Doctrine had it—from Russian efforts to impose communism abroad, and Balkan national rivalries, but not—as the Truman Doctrine had it—foreign efforts to impose communism in countries of Europe and Asia. Established precedent for repeated U.S. intervention in foreign crises’据此结

As to the ideological dimensions of the struggle, “the communist bloc and the West,” considered the entry on “McCarthyism.” This five-page discussion by J. Gary Clark builds on familiar rhetoric about an “American ‘McCarthyism’” and then “McCarthyism” to hold Stalin principally responsible for the Cold War.”

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Professor Paterson, for his part, reminds us that “American ‘ tradition of anti-communism’ as being the raison d'être for U.S. intervention in foreign affairs, the Cold War became the means by which the United States and its main allies and to preserve a broadly defined ‘American way of life’ by constructing an international order that was open to and compatible with U.S. interests and ideals.”
article. That there was such a thing as “liberal anti-Communism,” that, for example, in the late 1940s, the founders of the Americans for Democratic Action detested Stalin, and that the Soviet system was a bona fide New Deal liberalism to make a sharp break with communists and their fellow travelers, goes unacknowledged. That there was or, is anything good to say about opposition to Communism, that the anti-communist cause was “not without honor,” is unrecognized.

So much for this major effort from the Council on Foreign relations by way of the Oxford University Press. Dwight Macdonald’s Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations provide an alternative—or antidote—to what Oxford has offered? The full volume of the multi-volume Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign relations by way of the Oxford University Press 1945-1991, answers in the negative. Written by the series general editor, Warren I. Cohen, the Cold War unfolds as a study in equivalence, with the United States forcing conflict on a passive Soviet Union.

Although the book jacket promises a focus on “the nature of the Stalinist state, its secrecy and brutality, its dictionary to explain the course of the confrontation” the text itself is innocent of such insights. Instead, we are presented with a Stalin who “shrewdly” buys time with his pact with Hitler and foils a British and French attempt at Munich “to redirect Hitler’s demonic might, to the unwary, appear to make out an overwhelming plausible case of Soviet aggression, adds up in Professor Fitzpatrick’s calculus to nothing more than an American “interpretation,” and an apparently mistaken one at that, which the author is at pains not to endorse—when not setting up a straw man (“world domination regardless of the cost”). Ms. Fitzpatrick’s conclusion from the evidence: “each side demonized the other during the Cold War, the American postwar thinking, the concept of international communism became a conspiracy theory, just as the concept of imperialism was on the Soviet side.”

Finally, what will those who consult such standard references learn about an important subject that has been especially impacted by the new availability of previously inaccessible records in both the Soviet Union and the United States—Soviet espionage in the United States and the involvement of the American Communist Party in such activities?

Thanks to the publication of Soviet archival material that has cast new light on, to borrow the title of the leading work on the subject, the “secret world of American espionage,” the American Communist Party, the involvement of Party leaders in Soviet espionage activities, and the extent of the communist underground apparatus within U.S. government agencies, the script has been transformed, albeit in an irrefutable detail. At the same time, the National Security Agency’s 1995 release of coded Soviet cables that had been kept top secret since the post-World War II Venona Project, has laid to rest some persisting controversies over some of the most celebrated Cold War spy cases (to all but the truest of true believers, a “great loss of life”—without any indication of the horrendous scale of the numbers actually killed. (Imagine how specific the accounting would be if the subject was American slavery or Indian policy.)

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that the United States stop the hunting of immi-
grants,” read the headline on one Mexico City Daily. The Televisa network made the “hunting” its lead story, with announce Joaquin Lopez-Diaz telling it “on behalf of the majesty’s expres-
sions of racism in Arizona.”

The term “racism,” in fact, has become almost commonplace in the politically cor-
correct arsenal of Mexican leftists as their kissing cousins north of the border. Mario Hernandez Olivas, a supervisor at the Mexican office of Immigration and Naturalization Services, told the Arizona Republic “that this is pure racism at its worst… The United States has always been a racist coun-
try. I only go there to buy things.

During the recent Mexican Presidential election, politicians who had been campaigning in the United States, also took up the theme, evidently consider-
ing that the presence of some nine million of their countrymen in the United States, roughly 10 percent of the Mexican popula-
tion, confers special rights on Mexican politicians.

Recent elections offer little hope for change. Vicente Fox, newly-elected Mexican President and member of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) said that the ranchers should be prosecuted like criminals for their “hunting” of the immi-
grants and that the border should be open for free movement of people in the next five to 10 years. Not to be outdone, Francisco Arizmendi, the outgoing PRI said that threatened Mexico “will use all the resources available to stop the wars against our compatriots.”

There was something familiar in the rhetoric. Again the tired template of the racist gringos on a bounty hunt for innocent victims, all part of a militarization of the border by a racist America. Again the dialectic of those noble victims seeking a better life, only to find themselves arrayed against redneck yankee xenophobes looking for scapegoats. And again with a fearful symmetry that is truly uncanny, on every count nearly the exact opposite is true. The border is indeed being militarized, not by the United States but by Mexican smugglers and drug gangs and their frequent allies, the Mexican mili-
taxy and police.

“The multibillion-dollar narcotics trade in Mexico, in essence,” correspond-
ent Robert Kaplan in An Empire Wilderness, “is simply too vast to be dismissed as illegal. It is the heart of the Mexican economy and constitutes the principle economic fact of life for the southern part of North America at the turn of the twenty-first century.” The cocaine trade, the author notes, is worth more than twice the annual in-
surance on the national economy of the United States.

Albert Rodriguez, a former mayor and narcoSmoothie in Mexico City, where all the TV announcers are light-skinned gueros and models in the magazine ads are blondes. Diaz says. But accounts of racism rarely emerge from the Mexican press, the most submissive in the hemisphere after Cuba. Though President-elect Fox has pledged to take on the “by any means necessary” threats of political 

secretary of state Madeleine Albright told Rousso Green that the Arizona ranchers have the right to evict trespassers from their land, a statement of the obvious that falls far short of the stance justified by the inequities of the border problem. The installation of the backward fence serves nicely as a symbol of United States policy, a half-baked attempt at prevention that winds up facilitating the illegal entry of tens of thousands of immigrants, some of whom are politically incorrect enough to tell it like it is.

Albert Rodriguez, a former mayor and police chief of Douglas, Arizona, has the right to protect their property. His stand prompted Daniel Fierros, interim mayor of Agua Prieta, to write in Excelsior that “at the border, there are no judicial guarantees to enable the government to call the shots. Those not on the take have every reason to fear for their safety, a situation noted by human rights organizations on both sides of the border. The focus remains only on the Border Patrol and ‘vig-
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My Generation: Fifty Years of Sex, Drugs, Rock, Revolution, Glamour, Greed, Valor, Faith, and Silicon Chips

Reviewed by Frederick R. Lynch

Rank up your digitally remastered Beatles, Beach Boys, Stones, Jefferson Airplane, and Mamas and Papas. As recent magazine cover stories and television mini-series attest, the Boomers are back. Society and the 78 million or so people born between 1946 and 1962 are reveling in nostalgia as Boomers roll, rock and stumble into middle age. Many struggle comically and cosmetically to postpone such inevitabilities. But a far more serious prospect of economic and societal turmoil looms as hordes of aging Boomers dwarf declining numbers of younger workers who will fund Social Security and Medicare budgets.

But who are the Boomers, really? We desperately need in-depth understanding about the generations beyond 1960s stereotypes and cliches, especially when doomsday economic forecasts (notably Peter Peterson’s Gray Dawn) project grim statistics without sociological insight into the humans behind the data. Alas, most academic sociologists are still too preoccupied with race and gender to heed the story of a generation’s cultural impact is best told through those who achieved or failed, both good and bad.
Court Ruling Extends Concept of Public Accommodation

by Judith Schumann Weizner

In a decision with far-reaching implications, the New York State Court of Appeals has broadened the definition of public accommodation, ruling that the Manhattan Arts Center (MAC) cannot evict a homeless woman from the lobby of Orchestra Hall.

Two years ago, Vera Liffbetta, a homeless, fifty-year-old former postal worker, sued the institution for illegal eviction when its security guard removed her and her belongings from a nook near a bank of public telephones in the lobby of Orchestra Hall.

Citing the fact that during the past spring, summer, and autumn, the MAC management had permitted her to live under a stairway leading to the parking garage, Ms. Liffbetta sued the arts center, claiming that the institution had already agreed in principle to her occupancy. Her attorney, homeless, activist Lucien Sacrevache, argued that his client intended to move back to her original location as soon as the weather improved, and that she had moved further into the building only for the winter when the space under the stairway became uncomfortably cold and damp, causing her to suffer a recurrence of rheumatism. He added that if she were forced to return to the stairwell, a good case could be made against MAC under the Americans with Pre-Disabilities Act.

The arts center countered that while it had reluctantly tolerated Ms. Liffbetta’s occupancy of the area near the parking garage, her malodorous presence in the lobby was the main cause of the precipitous decline in patronage of a restaurant situated in the lobby. Ms. Liffbetta’s continued use of the area for days at a time was driving away patrons, and the restaurant was forced to close. The arts center agreed in principle to return the area to its original purpose and was then surprised by Ms. Liffbetta’s sudden and oft-repeated return to the area.

Pre-Disabilities Act provides that, in cases of failure to maintain an ambience conducive to its success, the arts center may refuse to return the area to its original purpose.

In yesterday’s historic ruling, Judge Leonard Hand ruled that Ms. Liffbetta’s expulsion was illegal because the Manhattan Arts Center had permitted her to live indoors for more than thirty-six hours, the period required in New York to establish legal residency for seasonal candidates, and, reminding MAC’s attorneys that their client was a public accommodation, ordered MAC to expedite Ms. Liffbetta’s return to the location from which she had been evicted and to give her the key to the restroom nearest the public phones.

Until four years ago, Vera Liffbetta worked as a mail sorter at the 98th Street branch of the Post Office, returning each night to her small studio apartment in a brownstone on 101st Street. But following the slaughter of her boss and his family in the lobby by a disgruntled co-worker, Ms. Liffbetta began to question the wisdom of having a permanent address, and began to change residences frequently. Within a few years the search for a new home had come to occupy all of her non-working time, and about a year later she stopped working altogether to concentrate on her quest for ever-new accommodations. Soon she discovered that few landlords were willing to rent to a person without employment, so her quest for ever-new accommodations became more compelling, and, as such, must be open to everyone, with the exception of the term does not refer to the type of accommodations provided and as such, the arts center must provide housing, the sole purpose of an arts center is to present artistic performances to paying public at specified times and not to provide any other kind of accommodation either to a paying or non-paying public.

Sacrevache countered that the purpose of the accommodation was not at issue; his client had not attempted to live in the concert hall or backstage area, which were the only parts of the building dedicated to its purpose, but had remained in the lobby, a completely public area. He argued that while a concert hall in a closed, windowless chamber, ventilated by means of forced air, which may be entered only after one has purchased a ticket, the lobby is reached simply by walking “with the breeze” through a revolving door which opens onto a very public plaza, and that no ticket is required to enter either the lobby or the first-floor restrooms.

In yesterday’s historic ruling, Judge Catherine Wahnssinn agreed, ruling that, for all purposes other than smoking, any part of a building that can be reached by walking “with the breeze” is an extension of the outdoors, and, as such, must be open to everyone, regardless of appearance, odor, or residential status. In a footnote, she remarked that since forced air is actually the air as that which constitutes a “breeze,” the question of whether the concert halls should be off-limits remains to be addressed.

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