80 Years and Still Young

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From the President

See You In Des Moines!

Allen Powell has done it again! He has resurrected the Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Torch Club, and a charter presentation is planned for April 11, 2005. The Blue Ridge charter will be presented on April 6. Patrick Killough attended the last convention, where the Board approved the charter petition. All most welcome!

The Finance Committee (Jack Horner, Chairman, with Dick Lynch and Ralph Falconer) has prepared an investment policy and investment proposal for the Board.

The History Committee (Arthur Goldschmidt, Chairman, with Abel Fink and Keir Sterling) is undertaking the task of bringing Torch history up to date.

A Few Words From the Editor’s Desk...

Well, the election is finally behind us and everyone has his own idea about what will, or should be happening over the next four years. Some of them may even come to pass. In the meantime, there is plenty of fodder out there for some great Torch papers, such as, “Can Social Security be saved, or does it need to be saved?” Certainly a topic of pressing interest to many of our members. What about Iraq? Are there other places in which we should be similarly involved? The list of subjects goes on and on, seemingly without end, and many of the topics will still be hot for the next election. So pick one, do your research (no tired old party campaign rhetoric, please), and dive in. Who knows, you may solve some of our big problems. I don’t doubt that your solutions will be at least as sensible as any from Washington. These will be great times for political pundits. I’m looking forward to hearing some good papers at meetings of the South Hampton Roads club next season, as well as receiving some very interesting ones for publication in The Torch and as entries in the Paxton program. So start thinking about this and planning for the coming year.

For the benefit of those wishing to submit papers for publication, the following is a partial review of the procedure. Please note that none are in conflict with Paxton paper procedures, so if the Editorial Advisory Committee recommends your paper as a Paxton candidate, it is ready for submission without addition or modification.

Continued on next page
P.S.
I did not begin saving my copies of The Torch when I first joined Torch, but a few years later they began accumulating on a shelf in the corner of our family room that I called “my office.” I’m glad. I now have almost 30 years worth that I can shuffle through to find almost-lost gems from the past.

I was going through copies from the ’70s (sideburns, sideburns, everywhere!) to compare the general subject areas being covered in papers then with those in the most recent copies of the magazine on my TV room coffee table. Pretty much the same.

But the real gem I found was a copy of a presentation to the 1979 Torch convention by L.T.C. Harbour, a regional director from London, Ontario, Canada, where he was an executive in the United Church of Canada. The London club had dissolved, but Len had joined the St. Catharines club to continue the Torch experience.

Print can’t convey the revival-meeting fervor with which he delivered these words, but I want to share a few of them anyway:

“The professional person with whom we seek to share the treasure of Torch is in many ways of a different breed than the professional of earlier generations...Indeed, so specialized is the professional sphere of today that it is possible for a professional to be an authority on the migration of the mayfly and to have no interest in any other subject, nor the ability to enter into a conversation on any other subject of value.”

“Why Torch? Because it offers the specialist an opportunity to discover what interests and stimulates other people. It can bring them out of their own intellectual fortresses as well as cause them to test their own mental mettle in a congenial and critical fellowship.

“Why Torch? Because it offers educated persons, whose intellectual pursuits have been stifled by a hostile society, a chance to open the mind to wider knowledge and to receive assurance that what was learned in the hope of application can still be applied in the accumulation of wisdom.

“Why Torch? Because it offers a respite from the loneliness of self-interest, because it provides a forum for mental exercise which is every whit as important as the two-mile jog, and because it redeems the mind from enslavement to fixed patterns of thought in the company of those who seek the same respite and redemption.”

“Torch,” he concluded, “encourages the pursuit of things which make the world lovelier, livelier, and less lonesome. Torch offers the cynic and the doubter, the honest and the sincere, the precious intangible of hope.”

What else can I say? Amen!

— Paul Stanfield

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Continued from previous page

- Entries are to be typed, double or triple spaced, one side of paper only.
- Include a completed “Manuscript Submission Form.” (Available at www.Torch.org.)
- The first page should contain the title and author’s name, which should not appear elsewhere in the body of the paper.
- The paper should not be bound. A paper clip is sufficient.
- Papers must be no more than 3,000 words in length. We will stretch that at times, but not by much. Our space is limited by our budget and we want to include as many papers as possible in each issue.
- If you have a very good paper, you might want to submit it as a Paxton entry rather than simply for publication in the magazine. The reason is that the Paxton entries which do not win are sent for review by the Editorial Advisory Committee which may recommend publication, thus getting two chances at publication rather than just one.

It is impossible for me to close this without another pitch for the convention. It will be a great time to see a little new geography (for me, anyway), meet other Torch members, and contribute your thoughts for improving Torch. You will be welcomed with open arms, leave with a feeling of satisfaction, and return to your home club with a renewed enthusiasm for Torch. So come on out to Des Moines for fun and frolic. See you there.

— Pat Deans
The Politics of Zoning: A Non-political Perspective

Currently a really hot topic in some communities.
By Ronald L. Bowers

About the Author
Ronald Bowers served an unprecedented five consecutive four-year terms as Washington County, Maryland Commissioner, and was President of the Board for eight of the twenty years. He was an active member of the planning and transportation commission and served on the Smart Growth Commission for the State of Maryland. He was a member of several local, state, and national boards and commissions over a 40-year period.

Mr. Bowers retired from Mack Trucks, Inc., after 40 years of service in the shipping and receiving departments. He served 20 years in the United States Army Reserve as a Company Commander and staff officer, retiring with the rank of Major.

Presented to the Hagerstown, Maryland Torch Club on September 16, 2003.

Background and Introduction
While European cities in the late nineteenth century developed their controls regarding land use and structures, New York City only developed the first zoning ordinance in 1916. New York City’s 1916 Zoning Resolution established height and setback controls on buildings, and separated incompatible uses to stop the undesirable encroachment of industry into Manhattan’s office and department store district.

As skyscrapers became popular at the beginning of the twentieth century, New Yorkers complained about the negative impact of buildings designed like wedding cakes, which taper toward the top in a stair-step style. Later, zoning ordinances and building regulations changed to control the size and shape of the buildings. Many communities across the country followed New York City’s lead in adopting zoning ordinances in an effort to exclude obnoxious or incompatible uses from residential areas. In turn, this protected property value, and had the potential of changing the value of land based upon the zoning qualifications. Controlling land use by establishing mapped zoning districts with set boundaries that are designed to relate permitted and prohibited land uses, height, lot size, building coverage, bulk, and setbacks is known as a “Euclidian Zone.” This method of controlling land use derives its name from the United States Supreme Court decision in Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty, where the town of Euclid, Ohio passed a zoning ordinance that resulted in devaluation of 68 acres of land owned by Ambler Realty Company. The company sued the town, claiming that their land was taken in violation of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which reads “...nor shall private property be taken from public use, without just compensation.” In 1926, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case, Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty, and found that zoning is constitutional, provided that it is designed to protect the public health, welfare, and safety.

Zoning Defined
Zoning is not concerned with ownership but, for clarity’s sake, it should be recognized that zoning is the method in which the government controls the physical development of land and the kinds of uses to which each individual property may be put. A zoning ordinance should be a document that is flexible and changes with the times.

Traditional zoning has proven less than popular in many communities. Zoning typically segregates land uses into four main categories: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Agricultural.

These groups may be used in various combinations. Within each of these general categories are more narrowly defined divisions. For example, a residential zone might be segregated into separate zones for single-family homes, duplexes, town homes, hotels, boarding houses, mobile homes, low-rise apartment complexes, high-rise apartment complexes, or institutional housing. An industrial zone may be zoned heavy, light, or research. A commercial zone may include small stores, shopping centers, gas stations, restaurants, drive-in facilities, adult entertainment districts, and warehouses.

What Do All Those Symbols Mean?
As in any other specialized field, there is a wide use of unique vocabulary and symbols. Just as language varies from country to country, zoning symbols may also vary among communities. An R2 zone in one community is not necessarily the same as an R2 in another community. Frequently, communities use letters of the alphabet as code abbreviations to identify the use allowed in a physical geographic area, such as A for agricultural, R for residential, C for commercial, I or M for industrial or
manufacturing, and P for parking lots. Usually, these symbols are followed by a number to specify the level of use. For example, common generalizations are R1 for single-family homes, R2 for two-dwelling units, R3 for apartment complexes, and so forth.

Though such laws are somewhat universal, the classifications used to describe zoning are not uniform from place to place. It is not uncommon to find that zoning rules that apply to one part of the community are different in another part of the town, or that one town does a mix of residential uses with some commercial uses but a neighboring community might outlaw such a mix.

For instance, local zoning laws commonly require businesses to provide parking. They also may regulate the size and type of business signs. City and county officials will examine these issues for code compliance in each of their respective territorial boundaries. If a parking problem already exists, a plan for dealing with the increased traffic will need to be addressed. Additionally, many local laws limit the size and height of business signs, their appearance, and their placement. There are even some regulations attempting to limit the use of foreign language on signs.

**Discriminatory Aspect of Zoning**

**Why Do We Have Zoning, Anyway?**

Initially, the primary concern of the new zoning ordinances was to protect stable residential areas against incursion of commercial, industrial, and even multi-family uses. As described in the Zoning Primer, published after the first comprehensive zoning ordinance in New York City in 1916 and the landmark Standard State Zoning Enabling Act of 1922, a real and justified concern was stated as follows:

Suppose you have just bought some land in a neighborhood of homes and built a cozy little house. There are two vacant lots south of you. If your town is zoned, no one can put up a large apartment house on those lots, overshadowing your home, stealing your sunshine, and spoiling the investment of 20 years’ savings. Nor is anyone at liberty to erect a noisy, malodorous public garage to keep you awake nights and to drive you to sell out for half of what you put into your home.

There was such concern over this possibility and so many residential areas had been despoiled by inappropriate construction that, between 1926 and 1929, zoning was established in almost every community of any size. Little opposition was found to the new laws; rather, there was almost universal support. Later, legal cases determined that zoning could be used to control minimum lot sizes (Simon v. Town of Needham) and minimum floor sizes (Dundee Realty Co. v. City of Omaha), both illustrating that zoning was going to be used to prop up property valuations.

In general, zoning recognized that the rights of the neighborhood took precedence over the rights of individual property owners. And as an acceptance of this fact, neighborhood zoning was not seen as an infringement on property rights, but a reassertion of their importance on a collective level. The stability of property values that resulted directly from the protection offered through zoning was also beneficial for individual property owners. Zoning became the tool used to carry out the objectives established by the community.

**Zoning v. the Master Plan**

The role of planning versus zoning became a major thread of land use law in the twentieth century. Generally, it was assumed the Comprehensive Plan (also called the Master Plan or General Plan) had priority, and land use regulations were created to implement the plan. A Comprehensive Plan included the following characteristics:

- Plan for the physical development of a community
- Future oriented
- Geographically and functionally comprehensive
- Land use, public facilities, and circulation elements
- Factual studies and analytical framework

The importance of the Master Plan has been established through court cases, and establishes a firm basis for regulation through zoning. This view is held by courts in many states. For example, in Raabe v. City of Walker, the Supreme Court of Michigan noted that: The absence of a formally adopted municipal plan, whether mandated by statute or not, does not invalidate municipal zoning or rezoning. But it does, as in Kiske, supra., weaken substantially the well known presumption which, ordinarily, attends any regular-on-its-face municipal zoning ordinance or amendment thereof.

Master plans were looked on by the public as government instilling its will on private property owners, while zoning was viewed as the tool for protecting personal property rights and property values.

It is not mere coincidence that the concepts of zoning came into being at the same time suburban areas took shape. The construction of inter-urban transit lines, and the development of the automobile, allowed middle and upper class residents to leave the density and congestion of the central urban areas and buy a house on a large lot just outside the urban fringe. These homeowners, who had just “escaped,” developed a real concern that the problems of the city would follow them to their new pristine environment. To keep this from happening, they needed to have protection. Thus, in spite of how it was stated in theory, zoning’s real purpose was to protect single-family homeowners and their neighborhoods.

In fact, zoning has been considered by most middle and upper income homeowners as the primary method for protecting their home and property.

No one is enthusiastic about zoning except the people. The non-people,
the professionals, hope it gets lost. The judges find zoning a monumental bore, most lawyers consider it a nuisance, and the planners treat it as a cretinous member of the planning family about whom the less said the better.

In a practical sense, zoning follows planning and provides legitimacy. Planning may seem more legitimate, since it can consider the broad implications of social ills and appears to accommodate the concerns of all segments of society; however, it is zoning, the behind-the-scenes tool, whose importance is largely overlooked. Ultimately, a community relies on zoning for protection.

Factors In Zoning
Local jurisdictions across the country abide by governing processes recognized by the court. For example, in order for an amendment, modification, repeal, or reclassification of Washington County, Maryland district, a local legislative body shall make findings of fact in each specific case including, but not limited to, the following matters:

a) The report and recommendations of the planning and Zoning Commission.
b) Population change in the area of the proposed change.
c) Availability of public facilities in the area.
d) Present and future transportation patterns in the area.
e) Compatibility with existing and proposed development of the area, including indication of neighboring sites identified by the Washington County Historic Sites Survey and subsequent revisions or updates.
f) The relationship of the proposed change to the Adopted Plan for the County, Development Analysis Plan Map and Policies.
g) That there was a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood where the property is located.
h) That there was a mistake in the existing zoning classification.
i) Whether there has been a convincing demonstration that the proposed rezoning would be appropriate and logical for the subject property.

Dealing With Zoning Problems
Consider a zoning problem from the perspective of a business owner. If the individual has found a location that is ideal, except that it lacks the required zoning, he may be able to work the situation to his favor, because code officials have a certain degree of administrative discretion. According to Nolo Law Center, a non-profit organization which seeks to lend legal advice and assistance to the public, “enough administration discretion exists that it can help greatly to have the administrators on your side.”

Additionally, Nolo Law Center recommends that if employing local people and contributing positively to the economy, it may pay to make contact with city or county business development officials. If they view the business as an asset and do not want that particular business to relocate in another city, they will be able to steer one through the building and safety department. These officials may even advocate on behalf of the business owner before zoning and planning officials. Trade and merchants associations may also provide further assistance. Finally, contractors, lawyers, and others who are familiar with the system and the personalities of those in the administrative positions can pave the way as well.

Appealing An Adverse Ruling
The decision of a zoning or building official is not necessarily final. If you get an adverse decision from the local Planning Commission, for example, you may be able to make use of the zoning adjustment or board of appeals interpret the zoning ordinance in a way that’s favorable. Alternatively, the applicant may be able to obtain a variance, a “special exception to a zoning law,” if a strict interpretation of the ordinance causes a hardship. In some cases, the applicant can get a conditional use permit, which allows use of the property in question as long as those conditions are met.

The Nolo Law Center suggests that, in dealing with administrators and especially appeals boards, it is important to have the support of neighbors and others in the community. A favorable petition signed by most other businesses in the immediate area or oral expression of support from half a dozen neighbors can make the difference between success and failure at an administrative hearing. Conversely, the goal may not be attained if opposition is numerous and adamant. It is suggested that attempts be made to resolve differences before attending a public hearing even if it requires compromises on the details of the proposal.

Going to Court
Every day, hundreds if not thousands of interpretations and applications of building and zoning laws are processed through negotiation with administrators and through administrative appeals. But these channels can fail and it is possible, in many instances, that the issues will require litigation. Litigation is costly and time-consuming. In some instances, however, the court can settle a dispute quickly. For example, if a building permit was submitted to the city that complied with all building and safety codes, and the building official refused to issue a building permit unless the applicant agreed to add something not required by law, one could request the court to issue a writ of mandamus, thus commanding the administrator to issue a permit which was illegally denied.

In Maryland, before court proceedings are initiated, the Office of Maryland State Appeals Board recommends gathering as much information as possible about the cost
of litigation, how long it will take, and the likelihood of success (the court trial can be won, but the city might decide to appeal). This is a very specialized corner of the law; therefore, legal counsel with zoning expertise is highly recommended. Attorneys with zoning experience that know the “ins and outs” of an ordinance stand a greater chance of winning a variance.

**Power of Political Influence**

A gray curtain of politics has fallen over the Utopian idea of planning and zoning, reversing the effects of the original intentions of zoning. Systematic breakdowns occur as a result of power grabs by everyone involved in the process. Internal politics used extensively to achieve results may ultimately be contrary to the public’s health, safety, and welfare.

A proposed development plan begins with a professional planner that specifically excludes and/or includes different types of land uses. The planner initially presents the development plan to a supervisor with a personal agenda to persuade that the plan would raise the quality of life. Specific language is used in the presentation, often focusing on the economic effect on the proposed subdivision rather than the needs of the people.

Public reaction is garnered while developers react with a flurry of activity to beat deadlines and elected officials work their powers to impose moratoriums if they feel it is necessary. Poor planning is never the cause of economic disaster but, rather, drought, heavy traffic, lack of utilities, or other rationalizing arguments.

This so-called politics-in-zoning could move from a detrimental to a beneficial spiral that would, indeed, improve the quality of life if planners would think more like land owners and if the elected officials would give up the quest for power.

A profitable farm is rarely sold to developers. It typically remains a working farm that accomplishes what is needed to maintain open space. Rezoning a working farm should be an unpopular position in the politics of zoning. Working farms should receive the same infrastructural and political attention provided to a business or industry, as farming is an essential tool to creating a well-grounded economy.

**Personal Perspective**

Zoning laws more often than not are enforced for the sake of other people and companies. Political influences can and do shape the outcome of zoning decisions and enforcement. These influences may derive from neighborhoods, elected officials, business associates, and other community leaders.

It is my view that any program of planning, including zoning, can be described as being made up of three components. The first is the basic principle behind the use of the program, the way of the program. The second component consists of the regulations — the ordinances, provisions or rules — established for its use. These provide the what, who, and how of the program. Finally comes the physical layout, which defines the scope of the regulated district — the maps and boundaries — which give the where.

Based on this model, zoning had dealt very well with the second component. Its ordinances and regulations are generally clear, comprehensible, and accepted. The strength and popularity of zoning is due primarily to this factor. However, zoning does not stand up well to discipline review of the other two components. The principle of zoning, that of protection of selected districts from encroachment by “undesirable” uses, is too narrow in its focus and discriminatory in its implementation. If based on broader principles which accommodate the concerns discussed above, zoning could be more acceptable to the community at large, rather than to narrow segments.

Likewise, the mapping of zoning districts creates borders separating communities rather than bringing them together, a perspective that is inherently retrogressive. Districts are generally formed based on the status quo rather than on a vision of how the community should be. Districts with “softer” edges and ordinances could mitigate some of the discriminatory practices now found.

**How Might Zoning Change?**

Through the power of capital expenditures, communities can encourage or discourage growth in certain areas. Certainly new infrastructure leads to growth, while lack of such services inhibits it.

Through the power to give tax incentives or disincentives, communities can exercise growth management. In a capitalistic system, paying for the privilege is an acceptable way to achieve desired ends.

Perhaps zoning’s ordinance regulations could be replaced with zoning through local referendum. Robert Nelson put this controversial concept forward in *Zoning and Property Rights: an Analysis of the American System of Land-Use Regulation*, in an attempt to remove government as much as possible from the zoning application.

**Closing Thoughts and Ideas**

- Zoning is a government program and, as such, it should serve the needs of the larger community first. The stability resulting from zoning is not uniform throughout the community as a whole. What must be recognized is that although it may help maintain property values in one area, it may cause a decline in property values in another, where those who cannot break political zoning barriers must remain.

- The defense of zoning is usually stated in fiscal terms. This argument usually says that, to keep taxes in line, there should not be an undue burden on local services, including schools; therefore, growth must be contained. Larger properties provide a relatively higher tax base with minimal cost for

“Politics of Zoning,” see page 32
Moral Reasoning and Social Structure: A Cross Cultural View

A successful foreign policy requires that we know our neighbors.

By H. William Batt, Ph.D.

About the Author

Bill Batt holds an A.B. from the University of Massachusetts and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the State University of New York at Albany. He was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand from 1962 to 1965. He had taught at several colleges before joining the staff of the New York State Legislative Commission on Critical Transportation Choices and the Tax Study Commission. Since 1992, he has been a consulting associate on matters of tax policy as they relate to transportation, land use, and the environment. For a decade ending in 1997, he was also the founder and driving force of the Hemlock Society of New York, serving as a Board member and officer of the National Hemlock Society as well. He belongs to the Albany Torch Club.


A few months ago, the Albany Times-Union printed a syndicated op-ed piece by Bertram Wyatt-Brown, arguing that America must better understand the power of honor in Middle Eastern cultures.1 He argued that what to us are formalities, honor masks raw power and lends it the dignity of authority.”

Not long after, New York Times columnist, Tom Friedman, added that “the single most underappreciated force in international relations is humiliation.” He also referred to perceived insults in Moslem cultures by western nations and interests. “Never, ever underestimate a people’s pride, no matter how broken they might be. ...Tap into a people’s dignity and they will do anything for you. Ignore it, and they won’t lift a finger. Which is why a Pakistani friend tells me that what the U.S. needs most in Iraq is a strategy of ‘de-humiliation and re-dignification’.”2 Most recently, we’ve witnessed the capture of Saddam, the erstwhile defiant symbol of an Arab reawakening who, upon capture, offered to negotiate rather than go down as a martyr. That action was, to millions of Arabs, the crowning signal of humiliation. What happens next is worth pondering.

Professor Wyatt-Brown, a historian of considerable renown, has written widely on how honor governs social order and personal relationships. His appreciation of honor (and its counterpart, shame) stems initially from his study of US history, particularly feelings engendered in the South by Civil War experiences and other pre-twentieth century encounters.3 History viewed in terms of cultural and psychological values and differences is an area of study that is only now being mined for its relevance and fruits, but it promises to be a rich lode. I myself have pondered several dimensions of these differences after my Peace Corps experiences in the early 1960s. But when I opted to write my dissertation on the subject, my committee gutted the essential conclusions of what I had written; I ended up with a thesis without a thesis, just a lot of information. I was called ethnocentric and even racist for my message. Although I’d insisted upon having an anthropologist on my committee to supplement the required three political scientists in the department, I could not prevail. To get my degree, I buckled rather than to wage a principled fight about it. Years later, I was gratified to learn that Professor Jurgen Habermas, perhaps the foremost living social philosopher in the world today, has now embraced thoughts very similar to what I had written.4 But I didn’t have him to support me in 1970 when I was finishing school.

My basic thesis was that, while society is necessarily a moral order, the levels of obligation inherent in its different forms depends on an appreciation of certain logical assumptions, which societies must work through step by step, and internalize sufficiently to give their forms legitimacy.5 These frames of thinking are experienced emotionally as well as cognitively, and they are learned in unfolding steps through daily life, both individually and culturally. Each generation of children face social dilemmas that require them to integrate these logical frameworks for sufficient appreciation of a social order’s premises. It is through experiencing difficult moral dilemmas and overcoming cognitive impasses that we grow in social understanding. Moreover, the social sanctions available in each culture to maintain order differ in quality and sophistication, and depend on both social organization and common folklore for their grounding.

Writing during World War II about...
Japan, Ruth Benedict drew a contrast between what she called “guilt societies” and “shame societies” to explain the most salient social sanctions in different cultures. During my experiences in Thailand, I had noticed how much honor and shame, as opposed to pride and guilt, were operative factors. Further reading led me to a rich body of then-recent literature in cultural anthropology explaining the dynamics of emotional exchanges. These studies ranged from linguistic analysis in classical civilizations to traditional societies and subcultures in the modern world.

What I was interested to learn, particularly when such studies were tied to development psychology, is that cognitive and emotional development are an unfolding sequence of increasingly refined sensitivities. Hence anger, joy, and fear are all very elementary and diffuse feelings, but envy, guilt, pride, and chagrin, for example, are premised on greater complexity in interpersonal actions and relationships. Indeed, emotions only “develop” in association with cognition, and one finds the existence of advanced emotional feelings only in conjunction with experiences that come with adolescence and afterwards. Every emotion has linked with it some cognitive assumptions — one can’t be fearful without being afraid of something. One can’t be jealous or angry except when some sense of imbalance or injustice is felt. I can’t feel love without its having an object.

Let me offer some examples of shame societies. Think of Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*: there is no evidence of any guilt feelings; there’s no interiorization at all. The social order of Homeric Greece didn’t rest upon obligations and expectations that stemmed from within a person; these were compelled, rather, only by public review. Institutional expectations requiring the presence of what we call conscience had not yet evolved. Many cultures in Eastern Europe and South Asia even today have a family daughter murdered when there is even a rumor of her being compromised, rather than allow that family shame to continue unrequited. Among Native American cultures in their earliest documented form, opprobrium attached to certain behaviors only if one got caught. Or look at the emotional dimensions of teenage gangs to see honor and shame — no guilt! — powerfully present. This adolescent bravado is widely recognized — witness the street exchanges in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 1, between the servants of the Houses of Capulet and Montague:

**Gregory** (servant of the House of Capulet)

*I will frown as I pass [them] by, and let them take it as they list.*

** Sampson** (servant of the House of Capulet)

*Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.*

Enter Abraham and Balthasar of the House of Montague

** Abraham:** Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

** Sampson:** I do bite my thumb, sir.

** Abraham:** Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

** Sampson [aside to Gregory] Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

**Gregory:** No.

** Sampson:** No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir, but I bite my thumb, sir.

**Gregory:** Do you quarrel, sir?

** Abraham:** Quarrel, sir! No, sir.

** Sampson:** If you do, sir, I am for you; I serve as good a man as you.

On it goes until swords are drawn, promising a fight which, of course, neither side wants but both must insist on to protect their honor. They are, of course, relieved when Tybalt arrives and prevails upon all for the moment to put up their swords. Honor must be protected, even at the price of death.

This is not to say that the code of honor disappears when people mature and more evolved emotions surface; a person continues to experience all the feelings developed preceding those most advanced. Consider the code of dueling that prevailed in the US until the mid-nineteenth century. We ought not to lose sight of the fact that Aaron Burr killed Alexander Hamilton when neither one could risk putting life before honor. But in other contexts a more evolved, logically subsequent morality is required, at least among those most discerning in modern society. Because specific emotions can be linked to particular frames of thinking, we have come to appreciate how best to appeal to people, especially children, when we are helping them to develop. We can appeal to what Mencken called our “base instincts” or to what Lincoln called the “better angels of our nature.”

The groundbreaking work of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg (and all their disciples) now help us to know enough about the evolution of cognition and emotion that we can actually plot psychological and then even social and political development along certain dimensions. It appears that, just as for biogenetic evolution, psycho-social evolution can employ Ernst Haeckel’s famous phrase, “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” The key to the evolution of higher cognitive and emotional development is the experience which is brought to bear on that development — John Dewey saw it as a dialectical process. More recently, integrative philosopher Ken Wilber has expanded on this thinking to offer a far-reaching, if somewhat speculative, theory of evolutionary process. But it is amply demonstrated that not all societies unfold as much as we have even though the direction seems to be unilinear in all cultures, and every society is capable of developing the social forms, cognitive assumptions, and emotional complexity that we know in our own. The spread of world culture makes it possible for people in every society to learn and experience the cognitive and emotional dimensions that are manifest in orders of most evolved social complexity. But the generation of that experience must
be recapitulated in each child’s experience in the course of his/her socialization. And the failure to experience this integration results in a fixation which, if enough widespread, will lead to the stagnation and even the disintegration of society.

As I noted, children develop their cognitive and emotional depth from the experiences they meet in their own societies. When those societies have relatively simple structures, the cognitive premises on which the more advanced emotions rest do not provide the stimulus. Again, I stress that this is not bio-genetic but socio-psychological development I’m talking about. I want to argue that the social sanctions identifiable as emotional — anger, fear, shame, honor, guilt, pride, envy, and several others — variously rest on appreciation of social relationships and their legitimacy. In simple social orders, only simple emotions develop. There is no inspirational or provocative context to challenge the emergence of more advanced organizational and emotional experiences.

For purposes of simplicity, let me hypothesize four models of society, each with its own mode of thinking, emotional dimensions, and social structures: the amoral sociopathic collectivity, the extended family or affiliative community, the authoritarian regime, and the social contract society. I’ll outline the particular dimensions of each that are important for my explication, but they will quickly be recognizable to you anyway.

Since, as I mentioned earlier, society is necessarily a moral order, a sociopathic collectivity is an oxymoron, and I am aware of only one documented case where it ever existed — for a very short time. Anthropologist Colin Turnbull describes an African tribe that “in less than three generations deteriorated from a group of prosperous and daring hunters to scattered bands of hostile people whose only goal was individual survival. Walled into their compounds, living in fear of each neighbor, they created a society that closely mirrored...cold and lonely selfishness.” The tribe had been moved by the government from its traditional homeland to a region that lacked the ecology to sustain it. As their resources became ever scarcer, each member came to rely upon cooperative activities less and less. Ultimately, they gathered their food and ate alone, and hid alone inside their huts only to emerge when trying to steal items from others. Absent any obligation to one another or to the community, they ceased to have any progeny and died off. Absent any common morality, they ceased to be a society. Turnbull’s account of The Mountain People, known among themselves as the Ik in happier times, remains a classic in anthropological literature. Their emotional experiences, although at one time richer, had been reduced to fear, anger, sadness perhaps, and even hate.¹⁴

The normal experience is for a child’s emotional nurturing by parents and community so that it quickly learns the situations and obligations that inform them. Every infant and toddler learns what behavior will please or disappoint those who are close and loving. Even pet animals are sensitive to the cues of punishment and reward, disapproval and approval. They rest essentially on dependency relationships — protector and protected. This sensitivity to moral cues extends to the family and the community as a matter of natural development, so that by the time a child is pre-adolescent, he knows a full range of community expectations that sanction social behavior. A child learns to feel protected and safe with some, needy and vulnerable with others. Shame and honor are the first obligatory feelings to supersede even more elementary sanctions like diffuse gratification and fear so as to become the primary operative signals governing action.

Shame and honor sanctions, however, rest on face-to-face relationships. In a traditional village where everyone knows and depends upon everyone else, they are adequate to compel moral behavior. If those prove inadequate, the only option is complete ostracism — banishment to the forest or the desert — which is tantamount to death in most cases. The total dependency on each member of the community on others compels conformity to norms and obligations. In a society like our own, where people interact with others they’ve never met and may never meet again, shame has little force; we depend on other, more “advanced” — should I say “logically subsequent” — sanctions to ensure moral obligation and social conformity. I’ll come back to this in a moment.

Before leaving discussion of shame and honor sanctions, I want to point out that they operate in a wide range of social contexts. I mentioned their force in teenage peer groups. But they have enormous power also in what Max Weber called patrimonial social structures. These are social systems where social dependence is essentially based on affective hierarchies — patron-client dyads of protectors and supplicants — and you will recognize these by my mentioning Haile Selassie’s Ethiopia; Tokugawa, Japan; the Chinese Tong; or the American Mafia; and, indeed, the classic Tammany Hall machine. All these social structures relied upon strong internal affective relationships, every bit as much as do classical villages in traditional societies. Their hallmark is loyalty above all. But they are backstopped by material exchanges and security they offer. The Thailand I experienced was a shame-sanctioned patrimonial social system. The prevailing cultural discourse was such that any transcendent awareness entailed special explanations.

Maintaining social order in shame-sanctioned societies is difficult when people who interact with one another are strangers, and hence are in a position to cheat and otherwise abuse each other. More complex social organizations have had to rely not just upon external sanctions like shame and honor, but
upon more formal structures of law. But they also instill a sense of social order with rules, along with self-governing emotions that people learn from a young age. Because libertine behavior of individuals threatens everyone, children come to develop an “internal gyroscope” that works in most cases to maintain society as a moral order. Whereas in a shame culture it’s perfectly acceptable to violate social norms if you don’t get caught, more extensive and complex societies rely on the conscience of the individual member to control and guide responsible action: guilt and pride. The alternative is chaos, and realizing this truth is the onset of maturity in both individuals and in culture. As several classical scholars have well documented, the “dawn of conscience” is of relatively recent origin, and only among some societies.15

Moral law, and other forms of law, mediate expectations in cases where social interactions demand controls above and beyond what external sanctions are able to compel. In complex societies, people must follow common expectations even when they don’t know one another. When growing children come to realize that norms must prevail throughout a community for it to survive, the first elements of guilt are seeded. At the very least, it is the recognition that no one has the right to do that which, if everyone did it, would destroy society. Pride is the internal reciprocal of guilt, just as honor is the external reciprocal of shame.

This step is in fact a great leap; it requires understanding that social relationships are not just face-to-face dependencies among families and friends. The abstract idea of society is critical; you must see that it is a network of memberships. Relationships resting on shame and honor are largely personal; they involve one-to-one affiliations. The leap from the community to society, or from Weber’s Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft, is a giant one, and one which evolved historically over a considerable time period. It is in this sense that every member of societies today stands on the shoulders of generations past, and one which requires each new generation of children to relive and learn anew the experiences and lessons of time past. Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. So it is also that not all members of society travel through the full gamut of “stages” on which our modern complex society ultimately rests. We have children “coming up through the ranks” all the time, but some people somehow are never challenged, or get “fixated” at sociopathic or intermediate levels of cognitive and emotional gestalts. I mentioned that there are no inexorable forward progressions; the law of entropy can sometimes prevail, too. And because we live in a society with a multiplicity of social structures, we are called upon to make moral calculations of how to act at every turn of our lives. Every one of us, depending on the situation at hand, will entertain moral decisions that may be more or less principled. At any given time, we may be compelled by instrumental calculus, by the possibility of shame or honor, by the pangs of internal conscience, or by all at once. I once saw on the office blackboard of Harvard’s Lawrence Kohlberg, “Exclusively [mature] reasoning is a mark of effete intellectual snobbery.”

One last refinement on formal operational thinking in the moral realm, i.e., on conscience-driven decision-making. Whereas guilt and pride at its most elemental level involves an appreciation of society as an interdependent web, viewing society as a lattice of static relationships leads to rules and laws that are concretized and “reified.” Such a vision of a social order requires a rigid conformity to expectations, and deviance from those expectations is a threat to each and to all. The typical response is an aggressive defense of such orders and attacks upon deviance. Remember Nixon’s “law and order” constituency? They were largely people fixated at this level. It often leads to authoritarian regimes based on visions of a utopian order in which everyone’s position is clear. This was Hitler’s “Thousand Year Reich.” Rooting out evil and its causes, maintaining purity and policing deviance are the hallmarks of such systems. Brutal means are often employed to justify utopian ends. Rules and laws may be internalized and are frequently policed by guilt. But it’s what Fromm called authoritarian guilt,16 and is very limiting in its scope.

A static society might function based on rules alone; social change, however, demands a system of thought processes that allow it. A changing adapting democratic society requires understanding the difference between respect for rules and respect for rules about how to make rules. It entails an understanding of democratic process. That differentiation involves a kind of sophistication which only a minority of people in our own society ever reaches. It assumes an understanding of society as a moral order of hierarchical obligations and expectations. The official morality of our society, the social contract, accepts this distinction even if many of its members do not. If many in our society confront dilemmas in which these distinctions are not understood, we may find ourselves subject to very authoritarian measures.

We as a people depend upon the informal sanctions of both shame and guilt in addition to formal public laws to mediate our social interactions. Many of our social obligations rest on affective face-to-face affiliative ties like family and friends, others on simple instrumental exchanges like the market where no moral dimensions are involved at all. But still others are heavily dependent upon our ability to appreciate the social good that comes from altruistic behavior, and the satisfaction — pride — that stems from knowing we’ve done the right thing (or the guilt that nags at us when we’ve done something wrong). Thailand stands just now on the cusp of appreciating the importance of modern rules and law; but even its elite is not entirely committed
to social contract processes in further development of its social order. Those who know guilt often know it when transgressing static commands, not for expectations growing out of concern for the general welfare in an evolving social context. Obedience to reified law above all other concerns leads to frightful solutions. But Thai people are getting good educations, and are facing experiences requiring them to exercise and test their judgment in ever more complex ways. Their society today, like that of Japan, is a very different one than one which Ruth Benedict wrote about.

I have come to regard these ideas as valid, even though I have not had a chance to do more empirical research on the question myself since I did my work in Thailand in 1971. They continue to frame much of my thinking, and perhaps some day I’ll be able to get back to that research without having to satisfy a dissertation committee. I go back at least once each decade, and I already see growth in the level of political discourse.

But it is a long process. The ideas I’m proposing have applicability to every society and culture, as well as to the thinking of every individual. The prevailing level of thinking of each society has much to do with the social structures that obtain, but “official” ethical frameworks explain many of the formal organizational patterns identifiable in each one. Such designs may for the present retain their legitimacy, but they are not cast in stone. They must be refurbished and secured anew with each generation. And they are in the final analysis subject to the forces of entropy that can overwhelm what efforts we make to maintain their hold. In the final analysis, they are as much subject to the tendencies of the “slippery slope” as they are to the drives for progress.17

References


8 William Foote Whyte, Street Corner Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943; many other works on adolescent subculture, studies of political machines such as Tammany Hall and Mayor Daley’s Chicago, and finally, analyses of the American Mafia.


13 Wilber has been so prolific that it is frequently difficult to know where to jump in. One place is with his Sex, Ecology, and Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution. Boston: Shambhala Press, 1995. This effort he regards as his “first mature work,” and was projected to be the first of three comprehensive volumes at the time it was first issued. His total corpus includes approximately 20 books, all written in a time span of about two decades.


The Game of “What If” – Theory and Practice of Alternate History

Alternate history of a number of subjects might provide interesting Torch papers.

By John Fockler, Jr.

About the Author
John Fockler, Jr. is a 1979 graduate of Colgate University with a BA in history.

Except for brief detours into the worlds of trade magazines and insurance sales, Fockler has spent his adult life working in the hotel industry. He has been a general manager of hotels in Ohio and Pennsylvania, has served as an ad hoc consultant in hotel budgeting, and has taught Hotel Front Office Procedures (twice) at Youngstown State University.

Fockler is also active in the Libertarian Party, having twice been a delegate to its national convention and having served as a member of the Libertarian Party of Ohio’s Executive Committee since 1999. Fockler has been a member of the Youngstown Torch Club since 1999, and currently serves as their President.

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We are accustomed to thinking of history, when we think of it at all, in a linear fashion. History is a collection of names, dates, and events. “In Fourteen-Hundred-Ninety-Two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” We ask the journalist’s questions of “Who, what, when, where,” and, on rare occasions, “Why.”

Sometimes our knowledge of the facts may be incomplete or disputed, as is the case with the Kennedy assassination of 1963. In other cases, historians may debate the motivations of historical figures or differ on questions of who to assign credit or blame. The many academic interpretations of the Battle of Gettysburg are but one example of this.

There is another possibility, though — one that has fascinated humankind for centuries. That is the game of “What if.” What if the history had taken a different turn at some point? What would that mean today? As used in fiction, we call this sort of speculation “Alternate History” or sometimes, “Alternate Worlds.”

In talking about alternate history, I will use the term “time line.” A time line is a single string of historical events reaching from a given starting point into the future. A string of events leading from the Battles of Concord and Lexington through the Declaration of Independence to the Administration of George W. Bush would be one time line, ours, or the so-called “real” time line. A string of events that started with a reconciliation between George III and the American colonists and leading to a twentieth century in which the lands we know as the United States are still part of the world-wide British Empire would be an alternate time line. The time line becomes the background for an alternate history story.

We don’t know when humankind first developed a sense of history. We can doubt, I think, that early humans developed a sense of history until they had become aware of the concept of historical change. Until one can understand that the world of the past was different from his or her surroundings today, a sense of history is pretty nearly impossible. But the beginnings of a sense of history are implicit, I believe, in the beginnings of religion. The idea of a god or gods who did thus-and-so in the past and created humankind reveals a rudimentary sense of history. Certainly, the Prometheus Myth, which recognizes that there was a time when humans existed without fire, reveals the existence of a concept of historical change, even in the absence of hard fact.

It seems certain that speculation into what might have been must have followed close on the heels of that sense of history. According to Harry Turtledove, a professor of ancient and Byzantine history and one of today’s foremost practitioners of alternate history in popular fiction, this kind of speculation dates to, at the latest, the Roman historian, Livy, in his History of Rome from Its Foundation.

Livy wonders what would happen if Alexander the Great had turned his attention to the west and attacked the Roman Republic in the late fourth century B.C. With fine Roman patriotism, he tries to show that his countrymen could and would have beaten the Macedonian king.

Serious alternate history speculation dates to at least 1931. In that year, J.C. Squire edited a collection of essays entitled, If It Had Happened Otherwise. Contributors to that book included such lights as G.K. Chesterton and Winston Churchill. Churchill’s contribution, titled, “If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg,” assumes a world in which the Confederacy won the Civil War, and then speculates what would have happened had the Union won. A similar theme was pursued in Ward
Moore’s 1953 novel, Bring the Jubilee.

The most common place to find experiments in alternate history is within the field of popular literature. If you’re looking for a book of alternate history stories, try the science fiction shelves of your favorite neighborhood bookstore. Alternate history is one of the hot sub-genres in the field today, even spawning its own awards, the Sidewise Awards, begun in 1995.

Why is alternate history generally considered a sub-genre of science fiction today? On the surface of things, the field wouldn’t seem to have much in common with tales of spaceships rocketing through the galaxy and little green men. Turtledove offers some speculation on that:

For one thing, people who wrote other forms of science fiction also came to write alternate history stories. And, for another, alternate history plays by some of the same rules as (other) varieties of science fiction. In many science-fiction stories, the author changes one thing in the present or nearer future, and speculates about what would happen in the more distant future as a result of the change. Alternate history goes down the same road, but from a different starting point. It usually changes one thing in the more distant past and speculates about what would have happened in the nearer past or the present. The relationship seems obvious.

In fiction, there are three common ways of beginning an alternate history story. The first starts with one or more time travelers who find themselves in the past, either by accident or design. In L. Sprague DeCamp’s classic Lest Darkness Fall, an American archeologist suddenly finds himself in Gothic Rome at the beginning of the Age of Faith. With his knowledge of our present-day technology, he sets out to prevent the so-called “Dark Ages” from blanketing Europe.

The second method envisions a multitude of parallel worlds existing side by side through multiple dimensions. This method makes use of a new and controversial theory in physics, the “many worlds” theory. In this kind of story, the protagonists cross an “interdimensional barrier” from their home world to another world in which history has run a different course. In James P. Hogan’s 1985 novel, The Proteus Operation, a team of military commandos, diplomats, and engineers travels from their home world, in which Nazi Germany won World War II, to an alternate world in 1939, before World War II had begun. Their operations lead to the creation of our familiar time line.

The third kind of set-up for an alternate history story, which seems to me to be increasingly popular these days, is — no set-up at all. The story begins in the alternate time line, gradually fills the reader in on the back history, and takes the story from there. One well-known example of this kind of story is MacKinlay Kantor’s, If the South Had Won the Civil War. This work, which began as a 1960 article for Look magazine, details the history of a United States in which the Confederacy defeated the Union. The story envisions talks on the subject of reunion beginning at the time the article was written, the early 1960s. At no time is any reference made to our own time line or to any notion that the world could have developed differently. This sort of story demands a little more from the reader. By its nature, it assumes that the reader is familiar with the history of the real time line. I suspect that the popularity of this kind of “straight” alternate history can be attributed to the fact that, in recent years, more readers have become familiar with alternate history as a form and, therefore, have less need of a fancier set-up.

So, just how do you go about playing the game? Well, as Turtledove told us earlier, the purest form involves changing just one element in the actual history and then, from that starting point, speculating on what the resulting history, maybe even up to today’s world, would look like.

What if the Norse and the Celts had colonized America in the medieval era? What if the Axis had won World War II? What if Henry V had lived longer and consolidated the Plantagenet empire in mainland Europe? What if Mohammed had become a Christian monk instead of founding Islam? Any of these possible histories could have come about from a fairly small change.

For a purist such as myself, there are a few more rules that make the game a little more fun. First, one should never assume a change in the basic character of an historical figure. It might be possible to base an entertaining story on the idea of Adolf Hitler experiencing a Scrooge-like epiphany and becoming a benevolent leader, but such change strains credibility completely out of shape.

Second, just as one should be faithful to the nature of an individual’s character, one shouldn’t assume any kind of radical change in human nature. Whatever we might like to believe about ourselves, human history is a bloody story from beginning to end — enough so that the interludes of peace are notable. It would, in my opinion, bend the rules to assume that a change in some event in the past would have created a pacifist human race.

Third, one should avoid the deus ex machina, the miraculous change from no rational cause. The change made at the beginning of the speculation should either be one that is believable within the realm of chance, or that could follow logically within the historical context. For example, a scenario based on the idea that Lee approved Longstreet’s suggestion to go around the Union left, rather than attacking Little Round Top headlong, qualifies. A scenario based on the Confederacy winning because of aid from twentieth century South African time travelers, while the starting point for a very enjoyable novel, doesn’t qualify as a pure example of the alternate history concept.

I do not intend the term “pure alternate history” to represent any kind of distinction between “good” and
“bad.” The rules I’ve just outlined don’t necessarily apply if one’s intent is simply to produce an enjoyable story. Turtledove has produced a series of alternate history novels, numbering seven to date, which start from the premise that McClellan does not find Lee’s general order written prior to the Battle of Antietam. This is another “Confederacy Wins” scenario that so far carries the alternate history up to the 1930s. This scenario falls well within the limits I’ve laid out for pure alternate history. But another entertaining Turtledove series begins when an alien invasion drops right into the middle of World War II. The Allies and the Axis put aside their differences in order to combat the evil aliens. This is alternate history by the broadest definition, but certainly not an example of the purest form.

Why bother with alternate history? Well, as we’ve discussed, it can be fun just to explore the possibilities that never happened, whether by reading a novel or sharing discussion across the dinner table. I do believe, however, that alternate history has another potential use — as a teaching tool. As I noted at the beginning, the teaching of history in the United States too often focuses on names and dates. But real history is, more than anything else, an endless chain of causes and effects. We know that President Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation, in large part, to try to preserve British and French neutrality in the Civil War. We know that the Union so-called “victory” at Antietam on September 17, 1862, was seen by Lincoln as the opportunity to issue the proclamation without having it appear to be an act of desperation. We know that France and Britain did not recognize the Confederacy, and many believe that the Emancipation Proclamation was part of the reason.

We can reasonably suppose that, had McClellan lost to Lee at Antietam, as he nearly did, that defeat might have encouraged the European powers to recognize the Confederacy, break the Union blockade of the South, and ensure Confederate independence. I believe that to examine this kind of alternate scenario sheds additional light on the chain of events that actually occurred, and helps to assign them their proper significance.

To conclude our discussion, let’s create an alternate time line and speculate on the results. The date is July 9, 1755. A body of 1460 British and Colonial troops under General Edward Braddock approaches the French stronghold of Fort Duquesne, at the present site of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At a ford of the Monongahela River, Braddock’s force is ambushed by approximately 850 French, Canadian, and Native American troops. Braddock’s force is routed and the general himself receives a fatal wound. The only field-grade officer who survives unhurt is a young Colonial major. During the battle, four musket balls pierce his uniform, and he survives having two horses shot out from under him. Thus far, we are in our own historical time line.

Now, let’s imagine that, instead of surviving the second fall from his horse, the young officer strikes his head on an inconveniently placed rock and dies. Where do we go from here?

Let’s jump ahead in time almost 20 years to June 21, 1775. Following the Battles of Concord and Lexington, the Continental Congress appoints an officer to the command of all Continental forces. Recognizing that the conflict has so far centered in New England and wanting to broaden the appeal to the other colonies, the Congress’s choice settles on Virginian “Light Horse Harry” Lee. Lee arrives in New England too late for the Battle of Bunker Hill, but assumes formal command of the Continental Army in early July.

The next year and a half saw several Continental Army defeats and the British capture of the Continental capital city of Philadelphia. Finally, in December of 1777, Lee leads his ill-equipped and ill-trained army into winter quarters at Valley Forge. During this severe winter of 1777–78, the Continental Army gradually melts away. Lee is liked, but he doesn’t command the awe — what we would call today, “charisma” — to keep the disheartened army together. In April, Lee leads the much depleted remnants of his army toward the Delaware River, but his army is ambushed by British troops under General William Howe. Lee receives a mortal wound, and the last Continental troops in the northern colonies are scattered or captured. By September, remaining colonial forces in the Carolinas have dispersed and the Colonists’ revolt is over. John Adams and several other members of the Continental Congress are captured by the British and subsequently hanged. Thomas Jefferson leads a smaller band of patriots south into Spanish-held Florida and exile. Benjamin Franklin is caught and sentenced to die, but is saved from hanging by the intervention of his son, the British Governor of New Jersey.

The young Colonial major whose death changes history is, of course, George Washington.

From this point, you can take the time line in any one of several directions. Perhaps, spurred by the threat of Revolutionary France and fearing a new revolt in America, the British extend Parliamentary representation to the Colonies in the 1790s, and the colonies remain loyal and help Britain defeat the French forces before the turn of the century. Perhaps a vengeful House of Commons clears all the colonists out of central and southern North America and replaces them with nice, placid Germans from the House of Hanover’s European territories. Perhaps the French Revolution never happens without the Americans’ example, but the House of Bourbon lends its support to a second attempt at American separation in the 1820s. Any logically derived outcome is possible — and worth exploring.

This is what alternate history — the game of “What If” — is all about: “Game of What If,” see page 32
The Man Who Saved America

There is a surprise for the reader in this.

By Philip B. Secor, Ph.D.

About the Author

Philip Secor holds degrees from Drew and Duke universities. He has taught political science at Duke and at Dickinson and Davison colleges. He was the Dean of Muhlenberg College and President of Cornell College. In recent years, three of his books have been published, and this talk is a summary of a fourth book that he hopes will be published in the near future.


This is the story of three men and a woman whose lives intersected in such a way as to mortally threaten and then save our country at the time of its birth in the American Revolution. One of these men is familiar to most of us; another is remembered today by only a few history buffs; the third is virtually unknown despite the fact that, for a hundred years after the Revolution, he was one of the most famous and celebrated men in America. The woman would not be recognized by most, even though in her day she was a beautiful, famous — even notorious — lady.

I

The first man in our story is Benedict Arnold, perhaps the most infamous person in all American history. He came from a distinguished colonial family that had fallen on hard times by the year of his birth in 1741. His great grandfather had been with Roger Williams in the founding of Rhode Island in the seventeenth century. He grew up in New Haven, Connecticut where, by the time of his birth, his father had managed to lose the family fortune, marry a rich widow and then lose most of her money through ill-conceived and often corrupt business ventures, and his persistent drunkenness. When Benedict’s parents died, the young man used his small inheritance to open his own apothecary shop, soon went bankrupt, bought up more shops on credit, went into trade in the West Indies, married an attractive wealthy woman, contracted venereal disease in Jamaica, often engaged in shady commercial deals, fought duels with business foes, was often in debt, and spent time in prison. He became something of a dandy, living beyond his means and with no good prospects. Then, war with England broke out and Benedict Arnold finally found his calling as a soldier in the rebel cause.

In 1774, at age 33, Arnold organized a small militia in New Haven, and soon became famous as a hero — if often arrogant, vainglorious, and petulant — military commander. In due course, he was recognized by General Washington as a daring and courageous field officer and sent to command forces in the invasion of Canada and the siege of Montreal. Although this campaign was unsuccessful, Arnold displayed such incredible personal courage under combat conditions that he was beloved by his men and recognized as an exceptional field commander. But Congress did not like the arrogant and aggressive Arnold at all. His self-serving and grasping nature and his unwillingness to play the subtle game of Congressional politics made him nothing but enemies among the new nation’s leaders.

Traveling to Philadelphia in 1778 to seek further advancement from Congress, he met and fell in love with the rich, beautiful, flirtatious Peggy Shippen, youngest daughter of one of the city’s most prominent families, a family well-known for its Tory sympathies. In due course, the wounded thirty-eight year old General married the eighteen year old belle of Philadelphia. He and Peggy proceeded to live a life of luxury, riding about the city in a fine carriage, and enjoying the fast social life of the English-sympathizing upper class, living far beyond their means. Arnold was soon named military commander of the city and proceeded to engage in a variety of shady and even illegal business dealings for which he was cited and court martialed. After a protracted and mortifying trial, the war hero was convicted on several counts and reprimanded by Washington himself for his unsavory behavior. The deeply embittered Arnold decided, with the active and persistent encouragement of his young wife, to sell out to the British at the first opportunity for a handsome cash payment and high rank in their army.

But the problem was how to make a believable contact with the British commander in New York. His wife, Peggy, had the answer. Among the many suitors she had enjoyed teasing when the English had occupied Philadelphia earlier in the war was Major John Andre, a handsome and daring officer who was now adjutant to the British commander, General Henry Clinton. She told her...
husband that Andre would be just the person to contact about his wish to sell out. Major Andre, she was sure, would remember her and pass on such messages to General Clinton, especially if he knew they came directly from her. And so it was done. Peggy became the vital link in the chain of treason stretching between two of her lovers.

But General Clinton was not interested in General Arnold’s offer despite several secret entreaties between the spring of 1779 and early 1780. Clinton simply did not believe that Arnold had the authority or the ability to deliver anything of value and so he was lukewarm in his responses. This further frustrated and infuriated Arnold. He began to badger Washington to give him command of West Point. Once he had this post, he felt he would have something of value to offer Clinton: the vital fortifications along the mid-Hudson River. Finally, the unsuspecting Washington relented and gave Arnold what he wanted. Now Arnold had to wait and hope that Clinton might one day consider control of the Hudson a big enough prize to justify giving Arnold what he wanted as the price for betraying his country.

II

At this juncture, let me introduce the second man in our story: John Andre. He was born in England of French parents in 1750. When he was only nineteen, his father, a successful merchant trader, died leaving him a generous inheritance. John was a handsome and talented young dilettante, a gifted artist and poet who traveled widely in Europe with other rich young men of his day. Seeking adventure, he joined the Royal Fusiliers when he was twenty-five and, as a member of this crack military outfit was sent to Canada in 1775 to help secure British interests there against potential invasion from the American Rebel Army under George Washington. While in Canada, Andre wrote poetry, made sketches, kept a detailed journal describing the fauna and flora and people of the areas through which he traveled, traded with the Indians, and fought valiantly in Quebec against the invading forces of none other than General Benedict Arnold!

Andre was captured and made prisoner by the American forces. According to the military practice of the day, he was not actually interred but was ordered, on his honor as an officer and a gentleman, to travel with other captives to rural Connecticut and live there in exile until the war was over or until he was released in a prisoner exchange. Later the prisoner Andre was transferred to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and later still to the miserable frontier outpost of Carlisle. At Carlisle, he was badly treated by the uncouth locals who lacked any sense of the decorum of eighteenth century warfare and simply despoiled all British officers. Ever thereafter, Andre deeply resented his rude treatment by the Scots-Irish frontiersmen who inhabited this rough wilderness town. He came to have an abiding hatred for the American rebels and to believe that only the harshest treatment of them would result in English victory.

In due course, Andre left Carlisle, still a prisoner of war, and traveled to New York where, even though still nominally a prisoner of war, he enjoyed the fast social life of the city, attending parties, dances, and theatrical productions, and charming the ladies. After a time, the English captured New York and Andre was liberated, free once again to fight the Americans as an officer in the Royal Fusiliers. He became adjutant to General Charles Grey, a fierce officer who was known as a killer who gave no quarter in battle and was totally ruthless in his treatment of the Rebels. In late 1777, Andre moved to Philadelphia when the British occupied that city. Here he cavorted with the same teenaged beauty — Peggy Shippen — whom Benedict Arnold later courted and married when the Americans recaptured Philadelphia.

In Philadelphia, the young British officer cut a dashing figure at the many balls and other galas that defined the lively social scene. He played the flute, danced beautifully, wrote poetry and plays, and became quickly known as one of the most handsome, talented, and well-connected men in Philadelphia. When the English withdrew from the city and consolidated their headquarters in New York, Major Andre went with them as an aide to General Howe. But Howe was soon recalled and replaced by Sir Henry Clinton, who despised Howe and therefore distrusted Andre. So Andre went to war again under General Grey, participating in some of the bloodiest battles in the war at places like Tappan on the Hudson, where Grey repeated the same vicious and murderous slaughter that had characterized the earlier massacres at Paoli, Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Like Grey, Andre was an advocate of ruthless warfare in which no quarter was asked or given.

When General Howe was recalled to England in 1779, Andre set about in earnest to ingratiate himself with General Clinton. Soon he became Clinton’s Adjutant responsible for carrying out many of the corrupt and ruthless policies of Clinton’s military government in New York City. Andre was put in charge of Clinton’s extensive spy network throughout the country, and especially in the crucial Hudson Valley region.

It was at this time that Andre received a secret message from his former lady friend, Peggy Shippen, who he was well aware had married that American officer, Benedict Arnold, who had captured him in Quebec and who was now facing court martial. Andre was shocked to realize that this famous colonial patriot was actually a traitor who wanted to sell out his country for money and rank in the British army. He passed on Peggy’s message to Clinton who, as we have seen, shared his own disinterest in perusing the matter and instructed his aide not to encourage the American general.

But soon thereafter, something happened that changed Andre’s and
Clinton’s minds and led them to encourage the traitor. The long-feared aggressive entrance into the war on behalf of the Rebels by the hated French was suddenly at hand. Once France became fully engaged, Britain would probably lose the war and the colonies would have their independence. Such was the assessment at the time of both Clinton, Washington and, subsequently, of most historians who have studied the American Revolution.

Clinton now desperately needed a decisive victory in the North to convince the French that the American struggle for independence was a lost cause in which they should no longer be involved. To this end, the English commander planned to move quickly up the Hudson River and join forces with the army in Canada that would move down through northern New York State and the upper Hudson to join him near Albany. Control of the Hudson Valley would assure that the northern and southern colonies were divided and prevent Washington from effectively moving troops, food, and military supplies from one section of the country to the other. Clinton would strangle Washington and his revolutionary cohorts at their vital neck: the Hudson River.

To accomplish his objective, Clinton needed to silence and then control the fortifications along the mid-Hudson — especially the cannon and garrison at and near West Point — so that he could proceed upriver from New York City. And this was precisely what the American traitor, Benedict Arnold, was offering. Clinton ordered his Adjutant, Major Andre, to handle this matter immediately and personally. Andre was not to delegate to any of the many spies in his network the crucial matter of making contact with Arnold. He should slip behind enemy lines, meet secretly with the traitor on his own ground, and personally negotiate the terms of the betrayal.

And so the die was cast that would surely lead to French withdrawal from the American cause and, therefore, the certain failure of the Revolution and the return of the colonies to England. Enter the third man in our story.

III

The hero of our story is a long-forgotten man who, in the view of many historians, “saved America” by foiling the treasonous encounter between Arnold and Andre. His name is John Paulding. He was the great grandson of a Dutch Huguenot who had settled his family along the Hudson River in the seventeenth century when New York was called New Amsterdam and Holland, not England, ruled the waves. And what a family it was! The patriarch, Joost Paulding, a shoemaker and cloth maker by trade, arrived on a ship from Amsterdam about 1660. He settled in New Amsterdam, the town established by the Dutch on land purchased just thirty-four years earlier from the Manhattan Indians. Joost later moved his family a bit north to the small settlement at Phillipsburg, later renamed Tarrytown.

One of Joost Paulding’s sons, William, had four sons, all of whom were to serve in the Revolutionary War. One of these sons was a delegate to the first Provisional Congress that met in White Plains to debate and ratify the proposed Declaration of Independence. He cast his affirmative vote on July 9, 1776. Another son was a close boyhood friend of one of our greatest writers, Washington Irving, and also a friend and political supporter of Martin Van Buren. He served as Secretary of the Navy during Van Buren’s presidency.

William Paulding’s greatest satisfaction in his old age probably came from the achievements of his oldest son, William, Jr. This William was a successful attorney in New York City who rose to the post of Adjutant General of the State, was elected to a term in the U.S. Congress, and served in the War of 1812 as a Major General in the New York Militia. Later, he served two terms as Mayor of New York between 1825 and 1829.

But for all the prominence of his immediate family, William Paulding’s most famous and important relative was destined to be his nephew, John — the hero of our story: “the man who saved America.” John Paulding was the son of a somewhat less prominent branch of the family — the poor relations, if you will. John’s family lived in the countryside as farmers and was nowhere near as wealthy, famous, or well-educated as the Pauldings of Tarrytown and New York City. John had little schooling, but he could read and write. He was only a teenager when the Revolution broke out at Lexington and Concord in 1775. Soon, he was a member of one of a number of bands of young men who roamed through the woods in the Hudson Valley between the American lines at Peekskill and West Point, and the British lines near White Plains, carrying messages for one side or the other and often spying for both sides as well.

This was a dangerous, adventurous life for young men of the day like John Paulding who were not of the privileged upper class. They were daring opportunists who took their opportunities where they could find them amidst the disruption and chaos of war. John was a leader amongst his fellows, an unofficial militiaman often doing the dirty work of New York militia officers who needed information or food supplies wherever John and his cohorts might find them. They then took them from bands of English troops or Tory sympathizers among the local farmers. Three times during the War, John was captured by the British. On one such occasion, in mid-1780, he was held in a notorious prison in New York City but made a daring escape over the prison wall and managed to make his way through city streets to the river’s edge and then across the river to New Jersey in a stolen boat, narrowly escaping capture a number of times as he traveled across New Jersey and re-crossed the river opposite Tarrytown to make it safely home.
Before he died in 1818, John would marry three times, have twenty-one children, and be one of the most honored, beloved, and celebrated men in all America. He had medals, statues, and monetary gifts bestowed upon him by a grateful nation and poems, plays, and novels written in his honor as “the man who saved America.”

But I am getting ahead of my story. So let me tell you how this all happened by relating the tale of how the lives of these three men and one woman intersected on a fateful day in 1780.

**IV**

The date is September 23, 1780. The place is a clearing in the woods in Westchester County, New York, not far from the eastern shore of the Hudson River, near Tarrytown. We see Major John Andre, Deputy Adjutant to Sir Henry Clinton, the commander of all British forces in North America, riding more easily in his saddle now. About thirty minutes ago, he had crossed Pine Bridge over the Croton River and was now on the outskirts of Tarrytown, a small village and trading center with about a dozen houses, a Dutch church, a manor house, a tavern, a grain mill, a few shops, a dock on the River from which a market boat made two weekly trips to New York City, and a schoolhouse in nearly Sleepy Hollow. Soon he would be safely at the British fort at White Plains. He breathes a sigh of relief. It had been, to say the least, a harrowing three days since he had begun his dangerous journey behind Rebel lines, met General Benedict Arnold in the woods under the cover of darkness, and reached an agreement with the traitor on terms for delivering the fortifications at West Point: £20,000 cash for the plans to the fortification and a guaranteed 3,000 men to be taken prisoner. Andre had hidden in his boot the plans and other important papers revealing Washington’s military strategies that Arnold had given him to deliver to Clinton. Despite several harrowing encounters with Rebel patrols, the Major was now almost out of danger. Just a few more miles to go...

But those few miles between Tarrytown and White Plains were a dangerous no-man’s-land, partly British and partly colonial, devastated by warring armies and now filled with ruffians, brigands, opportunists, and traitors from both sides who took advantage of residents and travelers alike. Suddenly, three “ragged knaves” rode out of the woods and blocked his way. One of them grabbed the bit of his horse, forcing him to stop. Andre at once identified himself as a British officer and offered the three men the cash in his pocket and his gold watch and much more later, if they would let him go. One of the men was twenty-one-year-old John Paulding. The other two were 25-year-old David Williams and twenty-year-old Isaac Van Wart. Paulding, obviously the leader of the trio, ordered Andre to dismount and demanded to see identification.

The three men ordered Andre to strip to his boots and to take those off. When they discovered the incriminating documents in his boots, Paulding, the only one of the three who could read, perused the papers and declared, “This man is a Spy!”

The three captors reached the wise conclusion that there was no effective way to extract financial gain from Andre because once they released him and he was safely back behind British lines, he would never make good on any promised bribes. So they escorted him to the nearest Rebel outpost, which was at North Castle, where the commander, Colonel John Jameson, questioned the captive, decided that he was indeed most probably a spy, and sent the plans discovered on his person directly to General Washington. Andre was imprisoned at nearby Tappan, tried, and hanged as a spy on October 8, just two weeks after his fateful nocturnal meeting with Benedict Arnold.

Meanwhile, Benedict Arnold had narrowly escaped capture himself. Just hours ahead of the pursuing Washington, he made it to British lines. In time, he was paid his traitor’s price and granted a commission in the English army, where he led savage attacks against his former countrymen in battles in Virginia and his native Connecticut before fleeing to Canada and England, where he enjoyed frequent audiences with the King and many others in the royal family. But when the Tory Government was replaced by the Whig party, Arnold fell from favor and received only modest pensions. Peggy, on the other hand, was a belle of London and was granted handsome pensions for herself and her children before she died in 1804 of ovarian cancer. The once proud beauty was only forty-four. Benedict had died three years earlier, in 1801, a bitter man. He was never as fully appreciated by the British as he thought he should have been and, of course, so hated in his own country that his very name became synonymous with “treason.”

The three so-called “ruffians” who turned the tide of American history on that September afternoon in 1780 with their capture of Major John Andre were hailed as heroes and saviors of the Revolution. They received many awards and honors during their lives and for about a century thereafter. Paulding was often referred to as “Patriot John” or simply, “The Patriot.” George Washington personally awarded each of the three a silver medal and described them as “men of great virtue” who have “a just claim to the thanks of their country.” Congress, in giving them annual life pensions of $200, described them as “young volunteer militiamen” who had resisted Andre’s bribes and “rescued their country from impending danger.” New York State gave each man generous tracts of farm land.

Tarrytown erected a monument and a statue of Paulding at the site of the capture of Andre, and New York City constructed a monument of him over his grave in St. Peter’s Cemetery in Van Courtlandville. As early as 1803, a play opened in New York entitled, “The Saved,” see page 32.
Book Selling in Early America

The predecessors of Barnes and Noble, B. Dalton, and Borders were especially ingenious and entrepreneurial business men.

By Robert Ewing

About the Author

Robert E. Ewing is currently a resident of The Oaks, a retirement community in Pleasant Gap, Pennsylvania. He is an alumnus of St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York and, following military service, did graduate work at Columbia University. A veteran of World War II, he served as a company commander in the Philippine Islands. From 1970 to 1985, he was President and CEO of the Van Nostrand Reinhold Book Company of New York. Previously, Bob had served as Vice President of Professional Books for the McGraw-Hill Book Company. Following his 1985 retirement, he was a consultant to a half-dozen book company clients.

Presented to the Central Pennsylvania Torch Club of State College in December 2003.

We are going to touch, briefly I might add, on the history of book selling in the early days of America — going back into colonial days and moving up through the Revolution and into the 1800s. Actually, this could easily have been named “History of Early American Publishing,” or “History of Early American Book Printing” — as well as “History of Early American Book Selling.” The reason is quite simple. In these early days of this profession, the book seller was nearly always a jack-of-all-trades — printer, publisher, and seller all rolled into one. In point of fact, the separation of these three functions didn’t really take place on any significant scale until about 1825.

A quick aside — For many years, the business of book selling was often romanticized by calling it “the noble profession.” That’s a term obviously scorned by today’s hard-nosed Barnes and Noble and B. Dalton book sellers. Yet it is true, even to this day, that the transaction between the book seller and book buyer remains pretty high-sounding stuff. It is, after all, the free passage of ideas from the creator to the reader — the conduit between author and audience.

Back to the beginning — A man with the elegant and decidedly old-fashioned name of Hezekiah Usher is generally regarded as the “father” of the trade of book selling in the colonies. In the year 1642, he moved from neighboring Cambridge into Boston and established himself as an importer and exporter of various commodities, including books. We don’t know a great deal about those early years — records are sketchy at best — but they do show he was particularly successful selling, for example, Sam Danforth’s Almanack for 1647. That’s just in case anyone thought the current Almanacs now in vogue were a new-fangled invention. Usher established the pattern of being both publisher and book seller with the issuance of his own line of books. He was succeeded by his son, John Usher, who continued to both publish and sell. Two notable titles from the Ushers were Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes in Either England and General Laws and Liberties of the Massachusetts Colony.

Usher was not alone — he had competition, and a good deal of it. But here I’ll mention only one. Benjamin Harris arrived from England in 1686, set up shop, and after a few years expanded his operation. He added a few tables and chairs, sold coffee, tea, and chocolate, and called himself The London Coffee House. Harris was also the publisher of the first American edition of the New England Primer. Oftentimes called “The little Bible of New England,” the primer continued to sell well for nearly two centuries.

Of course it stands to reason, given the distribution of the population back then, that book selling was almost exclusively the province of the New England colonies until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Probably the first dealer of consequence outside that region was Andrew Bradford of Philadelphia. His father, William, had been the first printer in Philadelphia, and Andrew not only took over his business but began his own career in 1712 by becoming the official government printer. For the next decade, he held a monopoly — being the only printer in town and feathering his nest by turning his bookstore into an early version of today’s supermarket. He had, by all accounts, a rather remarkable assortment of whalebone, goose feathers, pickled sturgeon, chocolate, Spanish snuff — and who knows what else — to go along with the books, pamphlets, and almanacs on his shelves. Bookstores like Bradford’s were, in fact, really the first drugstores as we know them now.

It is generally assumed, and often said, that these early bookstores dealt mainly, if not exclusively, in religious tracts, plus some almanacs. This is not the case. And we do have one historical record that belies this. That is the catalogues from some of these early shops we find still available. Most of the larger stores issued a catalogue of some sort, carrying between 1000 and 1500 titles that cut across a wide-ranging spectrum of interests. The largest of the pre-Revolutionary lists was that of John
Mein of Boston, — where else? — whose 1766 catalogue carried 1,741 titles. Shortly after the war, in 1796, Robert Campbell, of Philadelphia, issued one advertising 2,100 titles. And just three years later, the book shop of one H. Caritat, from New York City, brought out a 215-page catalogue listing a somewhat breathtaking 2,700 separate titles. What all these reveal is that while religion continued to dominate as the number one subject, there were substantial amounts of other material available. A good deal of fiction was, as one might expect, imported from England. What we now think of today as mass market romance-oriented material was also made available. Henry Knox's pre-war catalogue, for example, listed such titillating titles as Delicate Distress, Fatal Step, Henrietta-Married Victim, while a competitor's catalogue carried such goodies as Favorites of Felicity, Married Libertine, and Suspicious Lovers.

And, we find it necessary to note here, that under-the-counter erotica wasn't totally ignored. While we can't be certain, it is suspected that the first book of this type to be published and sold in the colonies was the now famous, or infamous if you prefer, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure, by John Cleland — more familiarly known as Fanny Hill. We do know this much — it was first advertised in England in 1748. In the 1780s, a well-known American book seller named Isaiah Thomas imported a copy from there, reprinted it, and sold it here. Sad to say, it was hugely successful, and thereafter widely pirated, reprinted, and sole by many other book sellers.

One other method of book distribution of these early days needs to be briefly touched upon. The book auction began as early as 1714 when a Boston auctioneer named Ambrose Vincent advertised the sale of “a good collection of books at public vendue.” This is the earliest recorded auction and the practice grew steadily, if not spectacularly, throughout the eighteenth century. It came into its own during the first half of the nineteenth century.

At this point, I very much suspect that most of you are wondering, Well, what about the biggest, or best known, name of them all in these early days? That, of course, would be Benjamin Franklin. Surely, mention of his name in any remarks about the early days of printing-publishing-book selling is an imperative. I also suspect that many of you, if not all of you, have read one of the numerous biographies of Franklin. I’m hardly going to dwell on all the details of his 84 long years. Probably the most remarkable aspect of his life was the incredible breadth of his various fields of interest. As illustration: On the two-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of his birth, the Philadelphia-based Franklin Institute, in cooperation with five hundred other societies and institutions, arranged for a celebration of his many accomplishments. This August group finally ended up identifying ten separate areas where his works, or his thoughts, had made a significant contribution: Education and Natural Science; International Relations and Public Service; Publishing and Communications; Science and Engineering; Medicine and Public Health; Printing and Graphic Arts; Religion and the Humanities; Finance, Insurance and Private Enterprise; Agriculture, Horticulture, and Botany; Music, and Entertainment.

Our task here is to touch, and lightly at that, on his role in printing and publishing. Born in the year 1706, Franklin had (to put it mildly) a very short youth. At age 12, he was apprenticed, as a printer, to his older brother, James. But his relationship with his brother was never a happy one. James founded a paper called the New England Courant, one that regularly took potshots at numerous political sacred cows. The Courant, while it covered the news, also published, in the paper, literate essays on a wide variety of topics and young Ben was an early and frequent contributor.

But James, at one point, went too far in his comments and was tossed into the clink by the local authorities. Ben — all of 16 at the time — became the de facto publisher and kept the Courant going until his brother’s release. When James returned, problems between the brothers worsened and Ben left; going first to New York and then, eventually, on to Philadelphia. He continued working in the printing trade, moving from one printer to another until 1728, when he and a partner went into business for themselves. He was, at this time, all of 22. In 1730, he bought out his partner, borrowing money to do so. The business profited and Ben Franklin was financially secure enough to officially retire in 1748 at the ripe old age of 42.

One source of profit — and a major source at that — was printing for the government. Early on in the partnership, Franklin got the job of printing the paper currency for Philadelphia. For a number of years, he was the public printer of currency not only for his state of Pennsylvania but for New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland as well. How he managed to land these lucrative contracts is a typical story of Franklin ingenuity. Hearing about the opening, Franklin gave himself a large boost by writing an essay entitled, “A Modest Enquiry into the Nature and Necessity of Paper Currency.” This was written in 1723, when he was 23 years old and certainly no expert in the field of economics or economic theory. The work was impressive enough to assure him of the job contract.

Financial successes such as this aside, there is no question that the most widely known of all of Franklin’s publishing ventures was, and is, Poor Richard's Almanack (spelled with a k!). While, if truth be told, not many people have ever seen or read a copy of the Almanack, everyone knows one or more of its sayings that made it so famous. Publication of the initial edition of the Almanack was announced in December.

“Book Selling,” see page 33
Alleviating Global Poverty Through Micro-Finance: Fact or Fiction?

A critical review of one anti-poverty program.

By Richard L. Meyer, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

Micro-finance, the process of granting small loans to poor people, has been the darling of the international development community for the past 10 to 15 years. The mass media in the U.S. and abroad has been attracted to it, especially because so many borrowers are women. Articles about micro-finance have appeared in the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal. The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, the flagship institution of the industry, has been featured in lengthy segments on the News Hour and Sixty Minutes. Its founder, Professor Muhammed Yunus, has received multiple honors and has been proposed for a Nobel Prize. This attention has provided much-needed encouragement for a public that has grown weary of providing foreign aid to poor nations.

But does micro-finance really alleviate poverty as argued by its advocates? Can a $100 or $500 high interest rate loan really make a difference in the lives of poor women? How sustainable is the industry and what impact is it making? Should we continue to support it with our tax revenues and private donations?

These are the central issues I want to address. However, first, I will describe the industry and explain how it operates. Then I will discuss the important issues of sustainability and impact on the poor.

WHAT IS MICRO-FINANCE?

Micro-finance is a fairly recent addition to the arsenal of weapons used in the fight against poverty. Its origin is often attributed to the efforts of Professor Yunus, beginning in 1976, to provide aid to the poor who were living near Chittagong University in Bangladesh where he was teaching following receipt of his Ph.D. in economics from Vanderbilt University. He started a small loan program with a local bank that eventually resulted in the creation of the Grameen Bank in 1983. Similar finance programs for the poor were introduced in Indonesia and Bolivia in the 1980s, and the industry expanded in a major way in the 1990s as other countries picked up ideas from these pioneer efforts and created several types of micro-finance institutions (MFIs). Today, most MFIs are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but the industry also includes credit unions, commercial banks with special micro-loan windows, specialized banks for the poor, and nonbank financial institutions. A few NGOs started small but grew steadily and were transformed into banks or nonbank financial institutions.

Originally, micro-finance simply meant making small loans to poor people, often women, who are denied service from commercial banks because they are perceived as risky, having little or no collateral required for conventional lending. They are costly to serve because loan sizes are small. As the industry has matured, MFIs have introduced a wider range of products including housing loans, savings and deposit services, leasing, funds transfer mechanisms, insurance, and even credit cards, all targeted at the poor. But the bread and butter for most MFIs is still a small short-term working capital loan with frequent equal installments and interest rates of two or three percent per month.

The pioneer MFIs created several innovations that make it possible to serve this challenging clientele. First, many use some form of solidarity group lending in which borrowers are organized into groups of 5 to 20 members. Group members are jointly responsible for each other’s loans, and it is expected this obligation will produce critical group dynamics in client selection and loan repayment. It is expected that group members will use knowledge of their neighbors to select only those persons expected to be honest and responsible borrowers as fellow
members. Since all members are denied repeat loans if any member defaults, it is also expected that peer pressure will encourage borrowers to repay on time.

Some MFIs use an individual lending technology geared to the poor so that TV sets, household furniture, hand tools, and even bicycles are taken as collateral. They also hold documents such as sales receipts or receipts for payment of land taxes. Unsophisticated borrowers are induced to repay out of fear they may lose the asset when, in fact, such documents do not provide legal access in case of default.

Rather than establish institutions to directly lend to the poor, there are organizations that create mini village banks of 30 to 50 persons and teach them to operate their own lending programs. Funds are initially provided from outside the village, but in time it is expected that they will become financially independent by mobilizing savings locally.

Loan sizes begin very small, even less than $100 in the poorest countries. Small loans help screen out richer clients and encourage prompt repayment so borrowers are eligible to receive repeat larger loans. Usually, group members get roughly the same size loan so bookkeeping is simple and members are liable for other loans of the same size as their own. Loan terms are typically for a few months or at most a year. Repayment installments are due frequently, often weekly, biweekly, or monthly, and are payable in the MFI office or at local group meetings.

For group loans, all members must attend meetings to pay installments so everyone immediately knows if someone fails to pay. The meetings are also used to collect savings deposits, and provide training and technical assistance that are frequently offered in NGO programs. Regular contact with clients permits loan officers to identify problems before they become serious. Bringing clients together into groups reduces transaction costs for the loan officers, but raises transaction costs for borrowers, so they often prefer to switch to individual loans as soon as they become available.

Most MFIs lend for any purpose, but others try to channel loans into so-called productive micro-enterprise investments that produce something for sale to generate income for the loan installments. But the most productive investment for the poor may be to use the loan to buy medicine for a sick wage earner or to pay school fees so other sources of household income are used to repay the loan. Many borrowers operate small sidewalk stands or kiosks, or village shops selling food supplies and basic necessities, so loans are frequently used to expand inventory. The MFIs put great effort into educating borrowers to understand that regardless of how the loan is used or how productive or nonproductive the investment, they must repay on time. To reduce risks, they often require that potential clients have experience in operating their micro businesses prior to applying for loans. Training may be given in business practices along with nutrition and child care.

Many MFIs specifically target women as clients because they are usually poorer and have fewer economic opportunities than men. They often repay better, because they value highly this new opportunity and do not want to lose access to future loans. They also show greater interest in attending group meetings and use them to exchange business ideas.

**Magnitude of and Support for the Industry**

Millions of people are served by micro-finance today. It has become a sizeable industry, but there is little good data on its exact size. The only attempt to systematically quantify it was reported in a 1996 World Bank study. Nearly 1,000 institutions serving at least 1,000 clients and created in or before 1992 were surveyed. Responses from 206 revealed that over $7 billion in loans were outstanding to over 13 million individuals and groups in September 1995. Moreover, more than $19 billion were mobilized in 435 million deposit accounts. Banks had the largest market share; credit unions were second with 13 percent of the outstanding loan balance. NGOs represented three-quarters of the respondents but held only four percent of the outstanding loans. Persons close to the industry suggest that today there are probably over 10,000 MFIs in the world and some 25–30 million people may be micro-clients.

Micro-finance clients tend to be concentrated in Asian countries, like Bangladesh and Indonesia, where population densities are high and MFIs can reduce costs through large numbers of clients per loan officer. Many Asian MFIs started in rural areas and are now making inroads into urban areas. The opposite situation exists in most other regions where micro-finance started in urban areas, as in Bolivia, and is expending into rural areas. Rural areas in Africa and Latin America present difficult challenges because of low population density and poor transportation and communication infrastructure. Rural clients are often perceived as being more challenging than urban residents because they tend to be poorer with fewer economic opportunities and more seasonal income.

Bangladesh is one of the leading micro-finance countries, and has one of the most complete data systems. At the end of 2000, the Grameen Bank reported 2.4 million members, 95 percent of which were women, with $225 million in outstanding loans. In addition, some 1,000 other MFIs were operating in the country. A total of 585 MFIs reported they had almost 8 million borrowers with over $390 million in outstanding loans. The country’s commercial banks reported micro credit disbursements during 2000 of $65 million, and various government departments reported another $55 million in disbursements. Today, the industry may be serving close to 40 percent of the households in the
country.

Indonesia is an unusual case because its major micro-finance institution is the government-owned Bank Rakyat Indonesia. In 2000, it had about 2.5 million borrowers with $795 million outstanding. This bank has been unusually successful in mobilizing savings from small depositors and reported over 24 million savers. This ten to one relationship between savers and borrowers is evidence of the demand by the poor for safe savings services.

Bolivia is a leading micro-finance country in Latin America. The famous BancoSol is a specialized bank for the poor, with an outstanding loan portfolio of about $70 million in 2001. In addition, fifteen nonbank financial institutions and NGOs are active in the field and reported outstanding loans totaling $170 million. The total number of clients served by these MFIs exceeds 300 thousand, so roughly 20 to 25 percent of the population may be reached by micro-finance in that country.

The total foreign assistance for micro-finance is estimated at about $400 million annually. The World Bank, and the Asian, African, and InterAmerican Development banks supply soft loans and many bilateral donor agencies provide grant and loan assistance to developing countries. The U.S. was an early supporter of micro-finance. Our foreign aid program, the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), reported for fiscal year 1999, that it assisted 277 institutions in 52 countries that supported micro-enterprise development. Organizations in eight countries received $5 million or more during the year — Ghana, Egypt, Jordan, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Peru, and Russia. About $100 million of the total grant support of $153.5 million was used to finance MFI loan capital, training, administrative capacity building, and technical assistance. An estimated 2 million clients received loans from the institutions assisted.

Some MFIs have been successful in obtaining local bank loans once they established their credibility, and some foreign aid funds have been used as guarantees for such loans. Efforts are being made to attract private social investment into micro-finance. For example, the Calvert Company has supplied some funding through its social investment funds. These efforts are still in their infancy stages, however, and it is unlikely that they will surpass foreign aid and private donations in the near future.

The U.S. foreign aid legislation requires that 50 percent of all micro-enterprise resources be targeted to very poor entrepreneurs, defined as those with income no greater than half the poverty line for each country. To reflect differences in regional per capita income, this target was defined as loans of $300 or less to clients in Africa, Asia, and the Near East; $400 or less to clients in Latin America and the Caribbean; and $1,000 or less to clients in Europe and Eurasia. Almost 60 percent of AID’s allocations in 1999 went to programs that met this target.

The poorest of the poor, however, are not reached in most countries in spite of the industry’s rhetoric. The poorest in any country include the elderly, physically and mentally ill, widows, and the destitute. Many have few entrepreneurial skills and are incapable of managing loans. Their problems are usually too complicated to be solved simply by providing financial services, and it is questionable if MFIs are the correct institutions to try to reach them. Some experimental programs link credit to food aid and other types of assistance to help make them creditworthy eventually.

Studies show that inevitably MFIs serve some clients with incomes above the poverty line. Yet they choose to be MFI clients because they find the high interest rates and transaction costs preferable to other alternatives of formal or informal finance. Graduation from specialized micro-finance to regular commercial finance has proven to be difficult for even the most successful MFI clients.

Several U.S. NGOs receive foreign aid funds, in addition to private donations, to develop and strengthen micro-finance programs overseas. Such well-known NGOs as CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children, and Freedom from Hunger engage in micro-finance in addition to their other education, health, and relief services. Some NGOs offer micro-finance as a way to generate income to support their other activities.

There are a few U.S. NGOs that specialize in finance-only projects. For example, the World Council of Credit Unions, headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, is implementing AID projects in 9 countries that are designed to strengthen and upgrade credit unions. The 163 credit unions involved have approximately 1.8 million members with over $400 million in loans outstanding.

Another is ACCION International headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. It has a long history of starting and strengthening financial NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean, and is now expanding into Africa. It helps its affiliates obtain capital and technical assistance from international sources. It also has equity investments in eight Latin American and Caribbean MFIs. Its 18 affiliates in 13 Latin American countries reported almost a half million clients with almost $275 million in loans outstanding in 2000.

One of ACCION’s important accomplishments was to assist its affiliate, BancoSol in Bolivia, to become one of the first NGOs to be transformed into a regulated bank. In the December-January issue of Worth magazine, ACCION, CARE, FINCA, and Freedom from Hunger were listed among its 100 best charities.

**Evaluating Performance of the Industry**

The impressive statistics reported above suggest that the industry is successful in reaching many poor
people, if not the poorest. However, it is necessary to investigate additional criteria to evaluate how well it is performing, and to determine if it is sustainable and making an impact.

Sustainability is a controversial issue for the micro-finance industry. Some advocates argue that as long as a positive impact is made on the lives of the poor, the industry should be supported. Others, including me, argue that is an insufficient standard. Resources have alternative uses, so the micro-finance industry must be evaluated using standard finance and economic tools to determine how well it measures up. The analysis presented in the *Worth* magazine is interesting but insufficient to inform us if we should continue to support this type of development assistance.

The long-term sustainability of MFIs is crucial because the poor will benefit most if they have continuous access to financial services rather than just receiving a single loan. This raises the question, how sustainable are MFIs? Are they achieving full operational self-sufficiency by covering operating costs such as salaries, equipment, vehicles, and buildings? Are they achieving full financial self-sufficiency by also covering financial costs when all resources are charged a commercial or market rate? If they meet the latter criteria, they may be able to continue to operate commercially in the marketplace without relying on donor and government grants and subsidies.

Since MFIs are not required to report their financial accounts to a central data bank, we have incomplete information to answer these questions. But fragmentary data provide some insights. The *MicroBanking Bulletin*, since 1997, has offered participating MFIs the opportunity to submit their accounts and learn how well they perform relative to their peers. It is widely believed that only the best MFIs choose to participate. The recent issue summarized data supplied by 124 MFIs that ranged in size from a few thousand to millions of clients. In total, they reported serving over 12 million clients with almost $6.5 million in loans outstanding in 2000. The ten largest that are mostly Asian heavily influence these numbers, however. Most of the 124 had achieved operational self-sufficiency, but only 64 had reached financial self-sufficiency.

Even the Grameen Bank still relies on subsidies after operating for almost two decades. One analyst studied the Grameen accounts for the mid-1990s and concluded it would have had to raise its interest rate from 20 to more than 30 percent to fully cover costs. We must conclude, therefore, that much of the industry is still highly dependent on subsidies, even though a few flagship institutions operate on a commercial basis.

Not surprisingly, the *Bulletin* showed that financially self-sufficient MFIs tend to be older, larger in number of borrowers and volume of loans outstanding, and have larger average loan sizes. The factors that determine productivity were analyzed and many findings were consistent with what is expected for any financial institution. Different methodologies affect staff performance. Loan officers working with individual loans tend to serve fewer clients than those working with solidarity groups or village banks. Older MFIs tend to reach higher levels of staff productivity than newer ones. Productivity is also affected by client retention and some MFIs report retention rates of less than 50 percent.

Interest rates for loans to the poor are an especially contentious issue. The financially sustainable MFIs tend to report larger margins or interest spreads (the difference between the interest rates charged and the cost of funds), and generate higher yields on their loan portfolios. High interest rates are required to cover operating costs, which can easily exceed 30 percent, build reserves for loan losses, and retain the real value of loan capital in the face of inflation. One of the biggest surprises is that, fortunately, loan losses for serving the poor tend to be quite low in well-run MFIs. Even so, cost-covering annualized interest rates for micro loans easily reach 50 or 60 percent or more depending on inflation rates.

Political ideology and religious beliefs, especially in some Muslim areas, make it difficult to charge high interest rates in some countries. In such situations, MFIs are forced to disguise the actual methods used to calculate interest so they can charge effective rates much higher than the publicized ones. Some MFIs oppose charging high rates to the poor even if this forces them to rely on the uncertainties of donor funding and private donations. Others argue their clients need nonfinancial services even if interest income does not cover the costs. Still others argue they reach very poor clients and should be subsidized for doing so.

The challenge for public and private donors is to determine when these arguments are valid and when they are excuses for institutional inefficiencies or employing poor practices. Conducting peer group comparisons can be useful in sorting out these issues. Moreover, a few micro-finance rating agencies have emerged to conduct in-depth institutional audits that help clarify financial performance and provide valuable information to donors and potential investors.

The impact of micro-finance on the poor is a crucial issue, but even more difficult to measure quantitatively than is sustainability. The fact that the poor continue to use micro-finance suggests they find it valuable, but micro-finance donors want proof of client impact. The challenge for social science is that controlled experiments cannot be conducted to determine impact. If income or consumption levels have improved for poor clients, it is difficult to attribute micro-finance as the cause. Moreover, since loans can be used for many purposes, it is difficult to identify the ways borrowers may have been helped. Many impact studies have been...
conducted without using rigorous methods needed for robust results, so the fund raising stories of how a small MFI loan lifted Dona Maria out of poverty must be read with a degree of skepticism. The loan may have helped, but other factors may have been even more important. She might have found other ways to escape poverty if she had not received the loan.

The World Bank conducted one of the most comprehensive micro-finance impact studies in Bangladesh. The research concluded that household consumption levels rose and nutrition for children improved when families participated in micro-finance. The impacts tended to be greater when women borrowed rather than men. Some of the positive impacts occurred because the loans helped smooth out the seasonality of consumption. Other studies have argued that participation in micro-finance empowered women because they were able to increase their bargaining power by bringing resources into the family. A problem is that most studies have not distinguished if it was actually finance or training and education that makes the difference, or simply the benefits of group interaction.

My view is that we should expect that the poor generally experience positive benefits, but the impacts are diffuse and vary from program to program and country to country. It is difficult to determine if investments in micro-finance, or in improved health and education, or in better roads and irrigation systems make a greater impact on poverty. Currently, there is too much romanticization of the supposed benefits of micro-finance and too little analysis of the failures, which occur when the poor use loans unwisely or suffer unexpected losses. They then may be forced to sell their meager assets to repay or face ostracism from their communities.

Finance is the lubricant, not the engine, of economic growth. Improved access to financial services will make relatively little impact on poverty unless the poor have economic alternatives, are willing to take business risks, and are capable of successfully managing micro enterprises. Encouraging people to save rather than incur debt is a less risky way to help the poor whose capabilities are limited.

CONCLUSION

Micro-finance is an important addition to our arsenal of weapons in the fight against poverty. Undoubtedly, it does some good and deserves support in the competition for public resources. Some of the poor possess sufficient skills and opportunities so that even a tiny amount of capital can make a big impact, even after paying high interest rates for micro loans.

Unfortunately, much of the industry is far from being self-sustainable, and an important segment does not yet have that as an objective. Therefore, future expansion will depend on our willingness, as taxpayers and donors, to continue to supply resources. But adequate resources are not the primary constraint of the industry. What is lacking is institutional capacity to efficiently and sustainably make and recover micro loans. Moreover, as with many good ideas, micro-finance is being advocated as a means to resolve other problems for which it is not ideally suited, such as helping resettle refugees and creating employment for employees laid off in economic reform programs. Most likely, at this moment, someone is even planning a micro-finance program for Afghanistan.

We need to keep our attention focused on the basic challenge of creating economic opportunities for the poor, and avoid the temptation of thinking that micro-finance is a cure-all for development problems. Micro-finance deserves public support, but with a healthy regard for its limitations.

References

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“Iowa – The Surprising Place!”

SPECIAL EVENTS

Thursday evening, June 23, 2005 – “Passport to Iowa” Dinner
Featuring foods of “new Americans” – people who have immigrated to Iowa.
Learn To Be Particular

An interesting look at our attitudes toward and beliefs about work.

By Phil Hugo

About the Author

Phil Hugo of Lima, Ohio, is a native of West Point, Nebraska, and is a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He has a bachelor of science degree in zoology. He has spent most of his adult life as a professional naturalist. His other work experiences have included a stint as a night watchman on a major interstate construction project and as an inspector on waterline construction projects. Phil is currently a self-employed handyman. He has been an artist-in-residence and conducts photography workshops and writes guest columns for The Lima News. In addition to being active in Torch, Phil is a volunteer with local arts organizations. He is married and the father of two grown daughters. Along with writing and photography, Phil enjoys cooking, traveling, and meeting neat people.


Work is love made visible.

From The Propher by Kahlil Gibran

It has been said of writers that we should write about that which we know best, the supposition being we will create a good work because we know what we are doing going into the project.

On the other hand, if we elect to explore subjects of which we know little, we may have to work harder to glean information from the vast fields that lay before us. But if one does choose to write about that which he knows, he will still have to work, perhaps even toil, to show a good product for his efforts. In the words of Karl Marx, “All things of value and use in the world are the result of labor.” I don’t know what manner of “all things of value and use” Marx was talking about, but I will assume he might include a good research paper.

Whether this paper has value and use remains to be seen. I do know that any effort expended, be it talking to people, digging in the library, combing other sources, and discovering more about a subject you thought you were versed in can be rewarding. The process might even help you learn to be particular about what you do.

Writing about that which one knows implies personal experience. In this case, my chosen topic, work, is something that has been an important part of my life as long as I can remember. Having drawn information for this paper from the literary works and personal reflections of others, I will also draw from my own background. I apologize beforehand if I come off as being too personal. But that is what I know.

The genesis of this paper sprouted a few years ago in the asparagus patch of fellow Torch member Louise Daniels. I was removing dead vegetation and applying herbicide when Louise and her friend, Mario Smiraldo, walked over to say hi. When they asked how it was going, I told them I was just doing menial labor. Mario’s reply was, “Oh, I wish you wouldn’t think of it that way.” I told him I didn’t — that all work is good and honorable.

Work. What is it? How do we learn to work? Author Reg Theriault says that much of what he learned came from old-timers. How did you learn to work? Why do we work? Is it for love, money, or pleasure? When the seven dwarfs sang, “Heigh ho, heigh ho, it’s off to work we go,” what kind of job were they leaving? Are there spiritual aspects to work? One of the hallmarks of monastic life is ora et labora, pray and work.

I will try to answer these questions and others. You will have to do your own research on the dwarfs.

First, let’s define two words you will be hearing in this discussion.

**Work:** as a noun, bodily or mental effort exerted to do or make something; purposeful activity, labor or toil, a trade or profession.

**Ethic:** a system or code of morals and conduct. My dictionary lists forty-five definitions of work as verb and noun. While time does not allow us to study them, we can take a look at Bertrand Russell’s definition of work. “Work is of two kinds: first, altering the position of matter at or near the earth’s surface relatively to other such matter; second, telling other people to do so.”

I believe most of us have a good idea of what constitutes work, based on experience and tradition. We know there is heavy, light, skilled, and unskilled work. For some, work is a blessing. For others, it can be a curse. We can even question whether some occupations qualify as work, based on their value to society.

If we know what work is, and we can agree that work is good for the individual and society, does it make
Calvin asserts we are born to work. He puts forth the notion that work is a basic essence, the founder of Presbyterianism taught. "God has given them working hands and feet, he has given them industry." In my opinion, the idea which, among others, helps maintain social order is the general premise of his doctrine is that "The Lord commands each of us, in all actions of life, to consider his calling. Therefore, lest our folly and temerity mix everything up, he has ordained duties for everyone in his particular way of life."

Calvin calls those ways of life "callings." He talks about how "Every individual’s way of life is therefore like a post assigned by the Lord so that he will not spend his life wandering about in uncertainty."

Calvin went on to say that "We are born to work. God does not intend us to be lazy, for he has given men hands and feet, he has given them industry." In essence, the founder of Presbyterianism puts forth the notion that work is a basic human need.

I am told by Reverend Richard Sheffield that Calvin’s thoughts on work are the basic tenets of the Protestant work ethic.

But how do we know how to work? Calvin asserts we are born to work. He may be right. But I did not know how to hull lima beans or effectively use a shovel or pipe wrench when I was born. It was up to my parents and my uncles to teach me. "Make the tools work for you." "Learn to talk and work at the same time." I can still hear my uncle Ambrose saying to me, "You can carry more than that. Make your trips count."

Now, I try to carry eight bags of groceries in one trip!

In the case of my family, if generations have been taught to work efficiently, safely, and with integrity, does that constitute a work ethic? If so, is it likely such a work ethic will be instilled in my nieces, nephews, and daughters? What do you think?

Work and how we do it is about tradition. Look at the Amish. Their children’s ability to work and perform certain tasks comes about through what amounts to an apprentice program. In the words of John Hostetler, author of Amish Roots,

"Parents try to be effective examples for their children, who must accept work and responsibility. Boys learn to care for small animals, gather eggs, feed the calves and drive the horses. Girls learn by helping their mothers with cooking and housekeeping."

According to Bill Randle, "Amish women are hard workers. They start when they are small children and by the time they get married, they have picked up all the essential housekeeping and farming skills that make them such a valuable economic asset in the community."

No matter what your background, the presence of good leaders who teach us the skills and value of work cannot be overlooked. A solid work ethic is not borne of a magic wand or wishful thinking.

Because we are imbued with work ethic does not mean we know how to do certain things. I recently did work for a man from India. He told me he was not a very good handyman, not mechanically inclined. He lacks those abilities because "We were privileged. My parents and their parents were able to hire help to do those sorts of things. Now, I am not interested in learning. I am too old." Does that mean he lacks a work ethic? I doubt it.

But what happens when we are not taught to work? Can we be a valuable economic asset to our community as are the Amish women? If generations can live by working, is it also conceivable that generations can live by not working?

For a partial answer to the question of idleness, we should turn to that master storyteller, Aesop. The man should know something about work because he was a slave. This is from his Eating the Bread of Idleness.

A man trained one of his two dogs to hunt and kept the other as a house dog. The hunting dog complained bitterly because, whenever he caught any game in the chase, the other was given a share of it. "It is not fair," he said, "that I should go out and have such a hard time of it, while you do nothing and live well on the fruits of my labour." "Well, don’t blame me," said the other dog. "It is the master’s fault; for he did not teach me to work for myself, but only to eat what others have worked for."

In other words, don’t blame the kids for being lazy if their parents lived by a code of idleness.

To answer some of my questions about work ethic, or a lack thereof, I went to someone who deals daily with people who do not necessarily feel born to work, especially on a long-term basis.

Mary Ann Dukeman is a manager for a company that provides temporary help for businesses. Her particular area of responsibility is hiring workers for companies that need people to perform common labor, such as packing, sorting, and loading.

Knowing there might be variations on a theme, I asked Mary Ann if the company had a definition of work ethic.

“Our definition of work ethic is A2 —
attitude and attendance.” It sounds simple to me. Unfortunately, the formula must be too complicated for many of the temp workers.

Mary Ann went on to describe the kinds of people she deals with, many of whom call her unflattering names. They do not know how to fill out job applications or look for work. Ten to 15 percent have criminal histories and 20 percent lack GEDs. There is a general lack of civility among them. On a scale of one-to-ten, the average is a three when it comes to poor attitude about work, co-workers, and supervisors. She told me less than 10 percent of them can work two full weeks without missed time.

So why do they bother to show up? It should be mentioned that some temp workers do well and go on to permanent hire status with a company. For most of them, it comes down to money. They are court ordered to pay child support or restitution.

It sounds rather depressing, doesn’t it? I wondered why anyone would bother to find jobs for people who do not want to work to better their lives and the community? To work for the joy of it.

For Mary Ann, it has to do with the human factor. “Every once in a while,” she told me, “someone tells me I made a difference in their life. I help them get a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you. The job is even entertaining — a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you. The job is even entertaining — a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you. The job is even entertaining — a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you. The job is even entertaining — a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you. The job is even entertaining — a GED, learn responsibility. To say thank you.

If we are saying that we must, for the most part, be taught to work, one has to ask where were the role models for the people in Mary Ann Dukeman’s world of work. What went wrong?

How do we get people who do not want to work, or maybe we should say, have no concept of work, to understand Albert Einstein when he tells us, “Work is the only thing that gives substance to life.” Or the words of Thomas Aquinas, “Through good works one puts forth the image of the heavenly person in themselves.”

With Aquinas’ words in mind, I would like to explore an area of work that I sometimes ponder — that being the realm of spirituality and religion, and how they are connected to work and all of its dimensions. Can people of the cloth and others who do not “Remember to keep holy the Lord’s day” remain in good stead with their God? What happens when your faith and work run afoul of the law? What does theologian Mathew Fox mean when he says, “A spirituality of work is about bringing life and livelihood back together again?” Can thoughts on work as expressed by adherents of particular religious traditions parallel those who believe in other ways?

Elmer Jantzi has been a farmer, Mennonite pastor, carpenter, mason, and teacher of theology. At times, he did some of those jobs concurrently. He enjoyed all of them. I asked Elmer, who is also my father-in-law, for his thoughts on the Anabaptist theology of work. “Everything we do is rooted in God,” he told me. “If you can’t take God into the workplace, you better leave, because you will be detrimental to your fellow workers.”

The man also appears to understand Calvin’s doctrine of the calling. “My life in all areas has been a calling — a theological calling.”

I was curious how Elmer reconciled doing his pastoral work on the Sabbath. Wasn’t that contrary to God’s law? Elmer told me he does not get legalistic about those who have to work on the day of rest; about when they take their Sabbath. “The Lord created the Sabbath for man — not man for the Sabbath.”

The Anabaptist theology of work has created problems for some Amish families near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The increased costs of trying to maintain an agrarian lifestyle has forced many families to seek alternative means of income. Among them are woodworking and small manufacturing operations. Consequently, they have run afoul of federal child labor laws that prohibit teenagers from working in potentially hazardous situations, like those mentioned above. Child labor laws do not apply to farms.

In an Associated Press story on this subject, it was reported that one Amish businessman was fined $8,000 because his 13-year-old daughter was caught working the cash register in his leather shop. A steep price to pay for religious freedom and instilling a work ethic in your child.

Sometimes, in order to change laws and concepts of how we approach work, we need to rethink our attitudes. In the words of Mathew Fox, “As I see it, the most important work of our time is work on the human species itself.” As one who knows about going against tradition (Fox was silenced by the Vatican and formally dismissed by the Dominican order for his radical views), he has written an interesting book, The Reinvention of Work — A New Vision of Livelihood for Our Time.

A premise of the book is that we ought not separate life from livelihood, because both come from the same source, spirit, which is about life. To maintain that connection, Fox asserts, among other things, that we should look to our inner self, examine the scientific implications of work, explore the effects of creativity on our work, and reinvent work as it applies to education and our youth.

Radical? Perhaps, but sometimes life and work require reinvention.

My research has shown how beliefs from the Judeo-Christian tradition play an important role when it comes to work and its ethics. But what of other religious beliefs? What do they have to say about work?

Like Christianity, Islam also places great emphasis on the need for hard work and the dignity of labor and those who perform it. The Koran teaches “That man can have nothing but what he strives for and that his striving will soon be seen. Then he will be rewarded for it the fullest reward.”

It has been written that the Prophet was a tireless worker. That even though he prayed well into the night, he was
ready to work with the best of them by
day, no matter if it meant digging
ditches, milking goats, or helping his
wife. By his example, he demonstrated
that all work had dignity. That it was
to better work than beg.

Earlier I mentioned doing work for
a man from India. I was curious about
the Hindu philosophy of work. Mr. Patel
told me that you want to do better, to be
more noticeable than others, but that you
work for your own self and you feel
good about what you are doing. “My
duty is to do the work, the fruit of the
work is in Krishna’s hands.”

In her book, The Working Life,
Joanne Ciulla touches on the Buddhist
philosophy, where the most simple of
tasks, such as sweeping floors,
scrubbing, and gathering firewood can
be a path to enlightenment. According
to Buddha, work itself is not a curse,
although some jobs are less desirable
than others. Paralleling other religious
thought, he teaches that one should not
earn his living by harming others or
being dishonest. A final thought from the
Buddha — “Your work is to discover
your work, and then with all your heart
to give yourself to it.”

We like to think we are so different
when it comes to religion and yet,
despite the differences, there is a
common thread when it comes to ideas.
In this case, work.

I read wedding, engagement, and
anniversary announcements in the local
paper. It is interesting to see what people
do or did for a living.

One anniversary announcement
cought my eye. It listed the man’s
occupation as a self-employed sanitary
engineer. I did not call the man, but I
have a feeling he is a self-employed trash
collector. I guess sanitary engineer
sounds more respectable. However, the
other kind of, and some would say real,
sanitary engineer (make that college
educated) makes his living dealing with
another kind of human waste. Would he
change his name to foster a more
dignified image of himself?

One trash collector commented that
“People don’t see us. They look right
through us. They don’t respect us or
what we do.” In this case, calling
yourself something different will
probably not change people’s perception
of what you do for a living.

I spent several years working as a
naturalist and property manager for the
Girl Scouts. One of the jobs I had
responsibility for was the camp
caretaker. A man I supervised in that
position had a definite feeling about his
place in the staff hierarchy. Jack would
sometimes refer to himself as “I’m just
the lowly caretaker — the low man on
the totem pole.” Yes, he cleaned toilets,
swept floors, mowed grass, and kept
things repaired, as well as checking
groups into the site.

I would tell Jack that I didn’t see it
that way, that his job was just as
important as any other in the
organization. There would be no reason
for people to use the camp if he did not
keep it clean and safe, which he did well.
I doubt I ever convinced him to feel
otherwise.

Other job titles have also been
chanted to convey a different image of
the job or the person doing it. In the
words of Joanne Ciulla, “We name
tings to give them greater significance.
Greater possibilities.” When was the last
time you heard the person who types,
answers the phone, and runs errands
called a secretary? I believe the more
current term is administrative or
executive assistant. Car mechanics are
often referred to as automotive
technicians. Today’s vehicles must be
more technical than mechanical. Sales
people are sales associates or account
executives. Ciulla mentions two college
graduates who gave as their job title
“professional blended petroleum
transference engineer,” because it
sounded better than gas station
attendant.

I often refer to myself as a
professional handyman. Why? Because
it sounds better and adds validity to what
I do for a living? Maybe I’m trying to
convince people that being a handyman
is not something I do on an occasional
basis just to earn beer money. What
euphemism should I use instead of
handyman to make what I do sound more
respectable or have greater possibilities?
Maybe I’ll try “Jack of all trades.”

Perhaps there are stigmas about
some jobs but, in the end, I believe it is
about attitude. Attitude by the people
doing the work and attitude by the
people watching the work. Every one of
us needs to adopt the attitude that all
work is honorable and that workers
should be treated with dignity. No one
should be saying, “I’m just a secretary”
or “I’m just a garbage man” or “I just
work here.” The work they do has just
as much dignity as those who work in
so-called higher professions. High or
low, it is how we carry ourselves in our
work ethic that counts.

My father never told his four sons
not to be plumbers or sheet metal
workers because they were considered
lowly trades. He encouraged us because
it had provided a good living for him,
financially and otherwise. To his credit,
my three brothers followed in his
footsteps.

I think John W. Gardner said it best.
The society which scorns excellence
in plumbing because plumbing is a
humble activity, and tolerates
shoddiness in philosophy because
philosophy is an exalted activity,
will have neither good plumbing nor
good philosophy. Neither its pipes
nor its theories will hold water.

Tools have been part of my life for
as long as I can remember. One of the
recollections I have is receiving a small
red pipe wrench from my grandfather
for Christmas when I was five years old.
For any number of reasons, I wish I still
had it. As a keepsake. As a member of
my arsenal of tools. To see if the wrench
of the early fifties differs from a model
of the new millennium.

Computers. Medical instruments.
Cameras. Hammers. It seems that the
human animal is always trying to invent
a better mousetrap. Something to make
our lives more enjoyable, to take the pain
and effort out of living and working.

My experience with tools is diverse. Jack hammers. Drills. Screw drivers. Rakes. Tools to trim trees and shrubs. Many are powered by electricity. My cordless drill has been money well spent. I’ve wrapped my hands around the handles of a bone jarring jack hammer and the rubber handle of a 20-ounce hammer. Some are used on a regular basis, others infrequently.

I am not a gadget freak. I don’t need to have the latest of what’s new. I just want tools that are well made and will help me accomplish the task at hand, whether it is raking leaves or baking cinnamon rolls.

Because tools hold an important place in my life, I do pay attention to what’s out there. For work or pleasure, I am interested even in that better mousetrap. What the designers and builders of tools come up with never ceases to amaze me. If you watch television, you have no doubt seen some of these tools.

How many of you have seen the amazing hammer that requires only one hand to set and drive the nail? With a supply of nails in the handle, wait for a nail to emerge. Set the nail, then drive it home. As easy as one, two, three. No smashed thumbs. No digging nails out of a nail apron. I doubt any self-respecting finish carpenter would use that item.

We’ve devised any number of tools to facilitate or eliminate the need to rake leaves. Among them are leaf blowers, vacuums, and plastic rakes. I present as evidence a version of the latter, the Wombat. The concept behind this gizwidget is to rake the leaves into a pile and without bending over, use the folding action of the Wombat to pick up the debris and place it in the leaf bag. Unfortunately, I don’t think I can demonstrate it for you because I’ve never used it. I’m still trying to figure out how this tool is connected to burrowing marsupials of the same name.

I mentioned cinnamon rolls. I do not sift the flour when I make them, but when other recipes call for sifted ingredients I use an old-fashioned, hand-powered sifter. However, someone in widget land is trying to alleviate carpal tunnel syndrome among the bakers of the world. While browsing in a department store before Christmas, I saw a battery-operated sifter. I don’t recall the price, maybe twenty bucks, but I can make a lot of cinnamon rolls for that money.

Finally, in the kitchen tool department, how about this dandy serving fork. I found it, not on QVC, but in an antique shop. Just a simple flick of the thumb and the steak slides off. The kid in me sees other possibilities.

As I’ve said, watch television and you’ll see others, like the Steam Buggy and EZ Blaster. Just three easy payments, plus shipping and handling.

This whole thing of tools, their evolution, and how we use them is almost endless. The photographer’s digital camera. The surgeon’s laser. The ditch digger’s hydraulic shovel. Watch out! The robots will soon be everywhere.

One could say that tools themselves are works of art that, in turn, help us facilitate the art of work. Tools can also be used to create works of art such as carvings, paintings, or music.

I would like to focus our attention on another aspect of work: specifically, how it has been represented in works of art. As I write this segment, Puccini’s “La Boheme” is playing in the background.

I confess my operatic knowledge is limited, because it is not one of my favorite forms of musical expression. I would not be able to tell you what the libretto of any opera is about, but I do enjoy listening to well-known operatic excerpts. Many of them truly stir my soul. I suspect serious opera lovers would consider most operas to be great works of art.

I wanted to include different styles of music that relate to work, but I was having no luck with this musical form. However, someone at the public library suggested “La Boheme,” since it is a story about the starving artists of Paris who could not find work. Consequently, their lives were not always good.

Some of you may be familiar with Carmen, the cigarette maker in Bizet’s “Carmen,” and the gypsies who sing while striking their anvils in Verdi’s “Il Trovatore.”

While Puccini’s starving artists may have been in that position by choice, the slaves of the South did not enjoy freedom of choice when it came to the kind of work they did or for whom they served.

I enjoy listening to spirituals like “In That Great Getting Up Morning” and “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.” While renditions of those songs by Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman are undoubtedly different from the original versions sung by slaves, I suspect the emotions the music engenders are not.

What little knowledge I have of spirituals tells me the songs were a way for the slaves to deal with the horrific conditions of work. Long days toiling in all manner of weather, back-breaking labor, cruel slave masters, and disease. If they had no other freedoms, they at least had the freedom of musical spirit and hope to express their feelings of a better life, somewhere, some day.

I am not a singer, but I do find that a feeble attempt at it or humming a few bars of something can bring joy to the work at hand. However, I have never attempted to tell anyone to “Take This Job and Shove It” like singer Johnny Paycheck did. I may not be the most astute businessman alive, but I do wonder how someone could manage to succeed in business without really trying. Maybe I need to see that musical.

Anyone familiar with folk music has heard songs of the genre that deals with work. I wonder how many American born opera singers got their start by singing “I’ve Been Working On the Railroad” as a child? The great American balladeer, Woody Guthrie, wrote many songs dealing with work and hard times. I’ve been listening to his.
“Gothic.” Prior to doing this paper, "Gothic." I was familiar with.

A perusal of the book, Grant Wood —A Study in American Art and Culture, by James Dennis will show how the pastoral and the people who are part of that scene are well represented by this regionalist and painter of the agrarian myth.

No discussion of the arts and work would be complete without looking at the European scene; specifically, Jean-Francois Millet and Vincent van Gogh. If I had asked which one of these artistic giants created the famous painting, “The Gleaners,” would you have said Millet?

Some of you may know his “Man With the Hoe” and “The Sower.”

Quoting from the book, Jean-Francois Millet — Drawn Into the Light, “Millet’s peasants have held their place in social history because they are so beautifully drawn that their gestures speak across decades, nations and cultures.”

Like his contemporary, van Gogh was one to portray the life of the common man and his labors. A sower, people tending vineyards, peasants harvesting wheat and, in his own words, “The best of my works,” “The Potato Eaters.” According to author Richard Muhlberger, “The Potato Eaters represents the artist’s final ministration to them, showing these poor, obscure laborers to the world in their authenticity as noble souls.”

The efforts and toil of peasants, child laborers, cannery workers, and others depicted by artists may not have been respected by the social classes above them. But they have been memorialized by being in books and hanging in museums around the world.

On one occasion, while I was in the library researching this paper, I saw my good friend, John Timmerman. We exchanged thoughts on my chosen topic, and as we went our separate ways, John said, “Don’t work too hard on it.” As I consider his words, I think I did work pretty hard on it. I hope so. I tried to keep in mind my father’s advice to his children as we were growing up — “Learn to be particular about your work,” and “Learn to take an interest in things.” They both sound like the makings of a good work ethic.

As I bring this to a close, I am realizing that I have barely scratched the surface on what I think you will agree is a fascinating subject. I have tried to do what others have done in entire books. There is Studs Terkel’s classic, Working, where he shares his interviews with over 130 workers from all rungs of the employment ladder.

And what are we to make of the attitudes of some baby boomers when it comes to their children and summer jobs? In a Chicago Tribune piece, Bonnie Miller Reubin and Lisa Black tell about parents who discourage their children from working in menial summer employment, such as bagging groceries, flipping burgers, or mowing lawns. The parents feel their youngsters will be better served by pursuing adventure travel, taking advanced placement, and enrichment programs. As one parent said, “What is he going to learn by pushing a broom for eight hours a day?”

What did I learn from pushing a broom? That if I tried to short circuit the process by not using sweeping compound, I would hear about it from my father.

There are those who bemoan the fact there is no longer any work ethic. That people want a paycheck, but they don’t want to earn it. I’m not sure I subscribe to that idea. I see plenty of people with a good work ethic and we would have been in dire straits long ago if there were no work ethic. Could things be better? I believe so, but change will have to be wrought by those who have deep feelings about work and all it entails.

As for my efforts here, did I follow the admonition to write about that which I know? I will leave that for others to decide. I will not go so far as to call this paper a labor of love. Enjoyable? Yes. What I have tried to do is be a reflection of Thomas Aquinas’ words — “To live well is to work well, or display a good activity.”
“Politics of Zoning,” from page 6
services.
- The zoning and rezoning process takes months, far too long. The bureaucratic diatribe burdens the process.
- Influential community citizens have much power and influence on the outcome of a zoning hearing.
- The nine factors to be considered by County Commissioners in a zoning case are critical and fundamental in making a map amendment.
- Certainly there was a time when zoning, as a strictly land use protective tool, was appropriate and needed. In the 1920’s, rampant urban growth led to the need for relief from its congestion and, when that relief was found in newly established suburban areas, some protection was needed against encroachment from the same undesirable and inappropriate uses.
- Zoning became a tool of good government that became too powerful and too little controlled, except by itself.
- Zoning has remained directed toward one end, that of giving protection to select groups, while ignoring the many other impacts and ramifications. As a Detroit lawyer once asked, “The question must be asked seriously whether zoning, as it is currently being practiced, is endangering our democratic institutions. Is zoning increasingly becoming the rule of man rather than the rule of law?” I would be inclined to answer both questions affirmatively.

References


http://www.freedvice.com/law/592us.html

Zoning Primer, p.2.

Simon v. Town of Needham, 42 NE2d 516, 1942.

Dundee Realty Co. v. City of Omaha, 13 NW2d 634, 1944.


“Moral Reasoning,” from page 11


“Game of What If,” from page 14

Glory of Columbia: Her Yeomanry,” that featured Paulding’s capture of Andre and hailed the patriotism and heroism of such independent, hardworking, common-man farmers as the backbone of American Democracy. This play was offered for decades on holidays as a patriotic inspiration.

The Tarrytown monument, erected in 1823, sums up the Paulding legend by describing him as a man who rejecting the temptation of great rewards, conveyed his prisoner to the American camp. Buy this act of noble denial, the treason of Arnold was detected, the designs of the enemy baffled, West Point and the American Army saved; and the
United States now by the grace of God free and independent, rescued from the most imminent peril.

Perhaps no one spoke more eloquently of Paulding than the mayor of New York City, who led a distinguished delegation of civic and business leaders to Tarrytown in 1823 for the sole purpose of honoring John Paulding at the dedication of this monument. In a long address on that occasion, the mayor recalled that, at the time of Andre’s capture, “the freedom of our country was only a desperate hope. The money, the credit, the means, and, I might almost say, the sentiment necessary for continuing the great conflict were either quite exhausted or fast melting away. The capture of Andre, while it prevented the most fatal disasters, and led to the most signal results, afforded at the same time a memorable example of the fidelity and patriotism of the yeomanry of these United States.”

The New York City mayor who expressed these sentiments was none other than John Paulding’s cousin, William Paulding, Jr.

Paulding was indeed the man who saved America, and the very prototype in American history and legend of the common man as hero.

V

Oh yes, I almost forgot to tell you that John Paulding was my great, great, great, great grandfather.

“Book Selling,” from page 20

1732. It would be covering the following year and would be written by Richard Saunders. Richard, as we now all know, was a fictional character existing only in the fertile mind of Ben Franklin. He even invented a wife for Richard — Bridget Saunders. Franklin was careful to keep all of this a secret from the public for a number of years.

The Almanack was useful, instructive, and entertaining. It was also wise, clever, comical, spicy, and even sometimes vulgar. But it was never dull. It was a potpourri covering the weather, astrology, some history, some politics, some coming events. But it is certainly best remembered for the proverbs sprinkled throughout each issue. Few of these were original; rather, they were culled by Franklin from every conceivable source — most of them European. They were often changed by Franklin — Americanized, updated, some shortened, some clarified by Franklin’s touch.

A sampling of just a handful of them — some well known, some not so well known but ones that struck my fancy.

- He that lies down with dogs shall rise up with fleas.
- Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.
- Work as if you were to live one hundred years — pray as if you were to die tomorrow.
- Many complain of their memory, few of their judgment.
- Fish, and visitors, stink in three days.
- Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards.
- Finally, we cannot omit this one: God helps those who help themselves.

Poor Richard’s Almanack appeared for twenty-six years and made Franklin (and Richard Saunders) known not only on this side of the Atlantic but throughout Europe as well.

That, then, is a sketch of the early days of book selling in America. Despite the prophets of doom who predicted that the book was dead, it looks like it will stick around for a while yet. It has weathered all sorts of economic pressures — not to mention a host of potential book killers such as the automobile (everyone would drive around and abandon reading), the movies — first silent, then talking — the radio, television, book clubs, publisher’s direct mail — to name some. But you are welcome to check with John Grisham, Stephen King, Danielle Steele, Belva Plain, and any number of authors whose royalty income quite clearly affirm that the book still remains with us. And so do book sellers. It is a precarious profession, but among people who make and sell books, there is often a feeling that in this generally unhappy world, they may be in the happiest fraternity still standing.

### ACTIVITIES AND SITES NEAR THE SAVERY HOTEL

Des Moines Art Festival – 2 blocks
New Science Center – 4 blocks
New Main Library – 5 blocks
Old Main Library soon to be the new World Food Prize headquarters – 2 blocks
State Historical Museum – 2 miles
State Capitol – 2 miles
Botanical Center – less than a mile
Civic Center – 1 block
Historic Court Avenue District – 2 blocks

New Iowa Events Center – 4 blocks
New Principal River Walk – 2 blocks
Simon Estes Amphitheater – 2 blocks
Blues on Grand nightclub – less than a mile
Iowa Cubs Baseball – 5 blocks
Terrace Hill – home of the Iowa Governor – less than 2 miles
Gray’s Lake – less than 2 miles
Many quality restaurants

*Information and maps will be available at the IATC 2005 registration desk.*
To: Torch Members Everywhere

On behalf of the Des Moines Torch Club, I am delighted to send you a sincere and warm invitation to attend the international convention to be held here in Des Moines, June 23–25. Des Moines is a surprising place and we plan to do our best to surprise and entertain you.

Of course, our speakers and field trips will showcase Iowa’s central role in world food production, but we will also give you glimpses of Iowa’s world class non-farm high-tech industries and businesses. Moreover, the many attractions you will encounter as you journey to Des Moines from any of Iowa’s borders will also surprise and engage you.

Our desire to host the 2005 convention arose from two sources — the 20-year gap since we last hosted in 1985, and the fact that our club shall be celebrating its 50th anniversary. We have planned a Wednesday night anniversary party for our members, the international board, and their spouses and guests.

In the year of our founding, 1955, Dwight Eisenhower was president. Our nation was involved in the Cold War and nuclear war was a grave threat. We were at war in Korea. The Civil Rights movement was in its gestation. In these troubled times, forty-nine local men met for dinner and signed a petition to the International Association to form a local club. The list included eleven administrators and six professors from Drake University, the director of the Des Moines Art Center, four ministers, one rabbi, two hospital administrators, three CPAs, three attorneys, two editorial writers, two physicians, one psychiatrist, one musician, one stockbroker — and no women! The dinner cost was $2.25 including tax and tip.

The early enthusiasm of founding faded and, within ten years, attendance averaged only fourteen. For several years the club struggled, and catered meals were replaced with selections from the Drake University student cafeteria. Able leadership and a concentrated membership drive increased the membership to about thirty and over the years it has remained at that number. The venue was moved to first class restaurants and continues that practice.

From the beginning, the club has always had stimulating and informative papers presented exclusively by members. At least eight papers by members have been printed in The Torch. In 1996, current member, Walter Clark, received the Paxton Award for his 1995 paper, Politics in China. Club members have been recipients of one gold and two silver awards.

One of our members, Paul Stanfield, has rendered outstanding service to the IATC. Paul has served the IATC as president, regional director, director-at-large, six years on the board, and on The Torch editorial board. In 1989, in recognition of this devoted service, Paul was given a Distinguished Service Award.

Fortunately, some good things never change. Our 2005 convention program will repeat three events from the 1985 convention: Headquarters Hotel — The Savery; tour to Living History Farms; and paper by Dr. Neil Harl, international consultant and distinguished professor of international agriculture.

Our club is an active, vibrant club with a current membership of thirty-three representing twenty-eight different professions from Architect to Veterinarian. At our June convention, the members and I eagerly look forward to providing you with a first rate convention program. We also equally look forward to your engaging fellowship and stimulating conversations.

I believe our club represents the finest of Torch aspirations. I eagerly look forward to personally meeting each and every one of you.

~ Paul Joslin, President
Des Moines Torch Club
# Call to Annual Business Meeting & Torch Convention

**The Renaissance Savery Hotel, 401 Locust, Des Moines, Iowa**

## Thursday, June 23, 2005
- **9:00–3:00** IATC Board Meeting
- **12:00–6:00** Registration – Lobby
- **3:00–4:00** Officers Exchange (1st session)
- **4:00–5:00** Business Session I
- **5:30–6:30** Welcoming Reception & cash bar
- **6:30–7:30** Welcoming Dinner, “Passport to Iowa”
- **8:00–10:00** Torch Paper 1: Robert Weast, “Evolution of Brass Instruments”

## Friday, June 24, 2005
- **8:00–5:00** Registration – Lobby
- **9:00–10:15** Business Session II
- **10:15–10:30** Refreshment Break
- **10:30–11:45** Torch Paper 2: Dr. Robert Shumaker, “The Iowa Great Ape Trust”
- **11:45–12:00** Box Lunches
- **12:00–4:00** TOURS: Iowa Farm & Neal Smith Prairie Learning Center – Or, Des Moines Arts Festival – on own
- **5:00–11:30** LaValle Alfresco Cafe with cash bar, “The Tales of Hoffman,” Des Moines Metropolitan Opera, Indianola, Iowa

## Saturday, June 25, 2005
- **7:00–12:00** Des Moines Farmers Market–on your own
- **8:00–5:00** Registration – Lobby
- **8:30–9:10** Meet the Editor/Foundation Officer Orientation
- **9:15–10:15** Membership Development
- **9:15–10:15** Torch Foundation Board Meeting
- **10:15–10:30** Refreshment Break
- **10:30–11:45** Torch Paper 3: “Iowa Agriculture and the World Economy”
- **11:45–12:15** Box Lunches
- **12:15–4:15** TOURS: Living History Farms or Iowa State Capitol–Or, Des Moines Arts Festival–on own
- **6:00–6:30** Reception & cash bar
- **6:30–9:30** Annual Banquet, “The Iowa Bounty” Torch Awards, Paxton Award Lecture

## Sunday, June 26, 2005
- **7:30–8:00** Interdenominational Service (optional)
- **8:45–10:00** Torch Paper 4: Dr. Ann Selzer, “The Iowa Caucuses”
- **10:00–11:00** Business Session III & Closing of Convention
- **11:15–1:30** Torch International Board and Luncheon

## A CHANGE IN THE RULES FOR PAXTON LECTURESHP SUBMISSIONS

This rule change, approved by the IATC Board, is aimed at reducing the length of annual banquet presentations and giving the audience an opportunity to respond to the speaker. Beginning with papers submitted for the 2007 convention, those presented to the local clubs during calendar 2006 and after, papers submitted as Paxton contestants will be limited to 3,000 words. This will result in a 30-minute presentation time at the awards banquet and leave time and energy for a spirited discussion.

Many word processing programs will print a word count for you, but if yours doesn’t, a good approximation will be 15 to 17 double-spaced pages. Getting your paper reduced to this length will mean more editing, but you’ll find the process improves your paper.

While you’re considering a Paxton entry, take a look at the other rules and procedures too. There aren’t many and they aren’t complicated, yet about 50% of entries violate one or more of them. Our rules are designed to make it easier for our volunteer judges to fairly select a winner. So spend a minute reading them and help the process along.
REGISTRATION CANCELLATION POLICY 2005 – Per Person
Cancellations received prior to February 28, 2005 will receive a full refund.
Cancellations received between March 1 – June 1, 2005 will be assessed a $125 fee.
Cancellations received between June 2 – June 22, 2005 will be assessed a $190 fee.
Cancellations received June 23, 2005 and later will be granted no refund.

SIGHTS TO SEE IN DES MOINES, IOWA

THE NEW DES MOINES CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY
The 110,000 square foot, two-story, $33 million central library completion is scheduled for April 2006. The building’s “skin” consists of four foot by twenty-eight foot glass panels. The specially designed panels contain a copper mesh that will be translucent by night and reflective by day. The building has an organic shape and will be surrounded by a park.

The “green roof” is a vegetated roof cover that will consist of thin layers of living vegetation offering an innovative approach for protecting the conventional roof while adding practical and aesthetic benefits. Sedum plants will be “broadcast-seeded” across the median in the spring of 2005.

30–45 MINUTES FROM DES MOINES
• Mamie Eisenhower’s Birthplace
• The bridges of Madison County
• National Balloon Museum
• John Wayne Birthplace and Museum
• Bob Feller Baseball Museum
• Pella, Dutch community
• Iowa State University
• And more

WINNEBAGO RVs – IOWA
Forest City-based Winnebago Industries is cited as one of America’s 26 best-managed companies in the latest edition of Forbes Magazine (January 10, 2005). Winnebago had a banner year in 2004, with record earnings that surpassed the one billion dollar mark.

WORLD’S LARGEST INDOOR RAINFOREST IN IOWA?
The $180 million Environmental Project is more than a rain forest and, in several respects, it’s bigger than England’s Eden Project. Its 20-story-high, caterpillar-like, 4.5-acre enclosure would be larger than the principal Eden dome. It is to feature animals as well as plants, and would include a million-gallon aquarium, recreated wetland, and prairie. It's to be located just off Interstate 80 near the Iowa River and adjacent to a hotel and conference center being built by the city of Coralville. Groundbreaking will be in 2005.

Like the Eden Project, the Iowa project was envisioned with a strong environmental education component. Des Moines businessman Ted Townsend, driving force for the Iowa project, conceived it mainly as an educational institution with tourism as a side benefit.
The Des Moines Valley Torch Club
International Association of Torch Clubs, Inc. – Annual Convention

“Iowa – The Surprising Place”

Our goal is to surprise, delight, entertain, challenge, and excite IATC convention guests.

Des Moines, Iowa June 23–26, 2005

2005 REGISTRATION RATES (U.S. DOLLARS)
Paid by July 1, 2004 – $265 per person
Paid before February 20, 2005 – $280 per person
Paid After February 20, 2005 – $295 per person

Make check payable to: 2005 IATC Des Moines
Mail check to: Harry Hinrichs,
6078 Terrace Drive, Johnston, IA 50131

REGISTRATION INFORMATION
___ Persons @ $_______ (USF)      Total $_______

Torch Member Name ______________________
Profession _________________________________
Guest Name _______________________________
Names for Name Tags _______________________
________________________________________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
City/State ________________________ Zip______
Telephone (      )_____________________________
Email Address _______________________________
Torch Club ________________________________
Special Needs ______________________________
Comments _________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Hotel Reservations
The Renaissance Savery Hotel
401 Locust, Des Moines, IA 50309
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Room Rate $82 standard king or double
Block of rooms held until June 1, 2005

Make reservations directly with The Savery Hotel
1-800-514-4706
Please mention Torch Club 2005 (IATC)
www.renaissancehotels.com

2005 TOURS

Please indicate your interest.

☐ #1 – Friday afternoon Family-owned Century Farm
Visit a real family farm during the lush Iowa summer and learn about modern agriculture. Then on to Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge and Prairie Learning Center to learn how the rich soil of Iowa developed.

Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge & Prairie Learning Center
The refuge features habitat for prairie wildlife, native grasses, plants, and flowers. The purpose of the organization is to enhance refuge habitat for endangered species, restore tall grass prairie and oak savanna habitat, provide educational and wildlife dependent recreational activities for the public, and conduct prairie research. Established in 1991. 8,600 acres. Learning center with audio presentations. Miles of nature trails. Auto tours through elk and bison enclosures. Gift shop.

For more information, go to www.tallgrass.org

☐ #2 – Saturday afternoon Living History Farms
Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa tells the amazing story of how Iowans transformed the fertile prairies of the Midwest into the most productive farmland in the world. While at the 600-acre open-air museum, visitors travel at their own pace through five historic time periods spanning 300 years. On-site interpreters provide a unique learning environment of seasonal activities and demonstrations. A complete visit lasts three to four hours and requires walking. Gift shop.

For more information, go to www.lhf.org

☐ #3 – Saturday afternoon Iowa State Capitol
The Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines signifies the prodigious spirit of Iowa. Built between 1871 and 1886, this magnificent building represents, both inside and out, one of the nation’s finest examples of 19th century architecture. Inside, the building features an array of majesty including many different types and colors of marble, works of art, fixtures and carvings in both wood and stone. One of the most commanding features of the building is the towering dome. The dome, constructed of steel and brick, is externally gilded with 23-karat gold leaf. Each year, the state capitol is visited not only by Iowans, but also by people from all over the world. The capitol’s golden dome can be seen for miles, symbolizing representative government for the citizens of the state. The Capitol houses the Senate and House chambers, the governor and lieutenant governor’s offices, the Iowa Supreme Court, and a spectacular law library.

For more information to virtual tour www.legis.state.ia.us/Pubinfo/Tour

☐ #4 – Friday and Saturday afternoons
The Des Moines Art Festival – on your own
On the riverfront, within easy walking distance of the convention hotel. The Des Moines Art Festival has been ranked by the 2003 ArtFair SourceBook as the 5th Best Arts Festival in the nation! The fun includes live entertainment, children’s activities, food vendors, and more.

For more information, go to www.desmoinesartfestival.org

☐ #5 – Saturday morning
The Des Moines Farmers Market – delegate spouses – on your own
Rated in top 10 in the country – over 200 vendors – food, entertainment, crafts. Saturday, 7am to 12noon – 2 blocks from The Savery – free – 10,000 to 15,000 people attend!

For more information, see www.downtowndsm.info/dfm/index.html
Reflections

“Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.”

– Plato as quoted by the San Francisco Chronicle