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From the President

The last five years of involvement in Torch Club matters have been eventful for me. I had been a Torch Club member for about fifteen years in Grand Rapids, Michigan, when I first became a regional officer. During those years, I always found the Torch club meetings to be the single most enjoyable organizational events in my experience. The table conversations were always stimulating, as were the papers and discussions. One of my activities as Regional Director, President-Elect, and President has been visiting clubs from as far east as Wilmington, Delaware all the way to Sacramento, California.

One of the features of Torch Clubs is the independence of individual clubs. The International Association of Torch Clubs sets few guidelines as far as conduct of meetings and such is concerned. There are, indeed, different procedures and practices among the clubs I have visited. One similarity, however, is striking in all the clubs; the interesting papers and conversations. The fact is: Torch Club members are usually interesting people and it is always a pleasure to meet new ones in different clubs.

Because of the enjoyment I have received from membership in Torch over the years, I am determined to do the best I can to make sure that this organization for the exchange of ideas continues to thrive.

During January I visited the host committee in Toledo, the site of the 1999 Torch convention. Conventions are enjoyable affairs, rather like enlarged Torch meetings. They have a minimum of business and feature excellent papers and stimulating contacts. In this edition of The Torch magazine you can read two letters from members who attended a convention for the first time, last year in Kalamazoo.

However, this year may be unique. The Board expects to present some new ideas and developments to bring Torch into the new millennium. You all know that we now have a web page, thanks to the committee: Leo Kellogg, Kate Fleisher and Scott Stanfield. I have already utilized the web page in membership recruiting. Please make a point of having a look at it and you will see that it contains all the background information you need to tell a prospective member about Torch. The web page can be reached at www.torch.org.

During his presidency, Reed Taylor formed the Vision 2000+ Committee, with Past President George Crepeau as chairman. This committee was to take a long hard look at our organization and take the beginning steps to revamp, revise and reorganize anything that appeared to need it. George has said "Nothing is sacred." It may well be that the first reorganization will affect the status of Regional Directors. We may decide that membership development should be their first priority. We have a master membership development individual in Allen Powell, who is responsible for the formation of two new clubs. The Board voted Allen a special award, which was presented in Hagerstown, Maryland by our President-Elect, Ralph Falconer.

Ralph has been responsible for the development of the Torch Leader, the interactive newsletter now being sent to club presidents and secretaries, which provides information and requests feedback from the clubs. The response is growing and the reaction to the new pamphlets has been very positive.

Please plan to attend the convention in Toledo in June. The host committee is planning an exciting event and I feel sure that you will find it a rewarding experience.

--Ruth Giller

The Mail Box

The editor happily surrenders this space to two letters from our members. Both are from people who attended their first Torch convention last June. The first is from Linda Porter, a relatively new Toledo member, and the second is from Edie White, the first woman member of the South Hampton Roads Club and its first woman president. Perhaps their enjoyment of the convention will be contagious and leave you wanting to go next year.

To the Editor:

Invited to my first Torch meeting in October 1997, by the next month I had become a full-fledged member. In May it was revealed to me that I’d be attending the convention in Kalamazoo in June. Assuring me that I’d have a good time, the president of the Youngstown (Ohio) Torch Club, Dr. Oscar Darlington directed me to be prepared to present a report at our September meeting.

And that was everything and all that I was told about the Torch Convention. It was not merely a good time that I had, but a marvelous one. It was quite a learning experience and I still believe that this was the beginning of something new.

--Linda Porter

To the Editor:

I attended the Torch Convention in Toledo last June. It was the first time that I had been to a Torch Convention. It was a very enjoyable experience. The convention was well organized and the sessions were interesting.

The Torch Convention is a great way to meet new people and to learn about Torch Club activities. It is also a great way to get to know other Torch Club members from different clubs.

I highly recommend attending the Torch Convention to anyone who is interested in Torch Clubs.

--Edie White
Gertrude came to Boston with her parents as a young girl in the early 1920s. But as a fifth grader, she insisted that the words to the tune her classmates sang every morning as "My country 'Tis of Thee" were the words to "God Save the King" that she sang in Canada.

So she was belting out "God save our gracious..." as her classmates were rendering "My Country ''Tis of Thee...". She persisted in doing so even after the teacher punished her, although the teacher came to admire her fierce loyalty.

As she grew older, Gertrude found her neighbors' racial biases even more puzzling—and aggravating—than the choice of words for their anthem. You may recall the turmoil in South Boston that accompanied school integration.

But the congregation of the South Boston church that called my son as pastor had healing across the lines of race as one of its goals in choosing him.

As a first step in that direction, the black choir of Roxbury Presbyterian church that was invited to provide the special music at the homes of Kalamazoo's historically renowned citizens, it seemed that I

A gentle statement, sure. Like singing "God Save the King." But a determined one.

--Paul Stanfield

Experience from start to finish.

Beginning with the great accommodations and on to various meeting rooms and the dining area, all was attractive and comfortable at the Radisson at Kalamazoo Center.

When I arrived at the conference registration desk for the Torch conventioners, members of the convention staff were greeting guests with a warm welcome, answering questions and being of any assistance necessary.

The topic of the convention, "Vital Urban Living: Challenge, Culture, and Collaboration" was well timed and very appropriate when one considers the U.S. as this century closes.

The various papers presented on the topic dealt with critical issues in a thoughtful and positive manner. Problems and concerns were clearly articulated, examined thoroughly, solutions thoughtfully and carefully developed. Moreover we were given conclusive proof that these problem solving strategies could be successfully implemented.

All the presentations were well done and thought-provoking. I found that the information the speakers shared has practical applications. I came away more knowledgeable and hopeful in the face of urban disintegration.

I learned much about Torch itself during the various business meetings—"Meet the Editor" and at the Women in Torch Breakfast just to name two of them.

In addition there was a meeting in which the topic of increasing Torch Club membership was discussed. I found this very useful and came away with some positive suggestions and strategies that we can implement in the Youngstown chapter.

Dr. Henry Hunker of Columbus, Director of Region 5 (of which Youngstown is a part) made himself known to me and in a correspondence after the convention offered the name of a potential member for our chapter.

For a change of pace during the convention, we visited some very interesting sites in and around Kalamazoo. The mansion in which the Ladies' Library Association is housed, the Park Club, a Tour of Historic Homes in Kalamazoo and the Gilmore Car Museum were some of the places that members of Torch had an opportunity to visit.

I greatly enjoyed all the places I visited, but the tour of historic homes would have to be my favorite. With Gilbert E. Smith's rich and colorful descriptions of the houses as well as their occupants, it seemed that I was transported back in time while visiting the homes of Kalamazoo's historically renowned citizens.

Without exception everyone was friendly and welcoming. A newcomer, I was immediately made to feel like a part of the group. I met extraordinary people who have fascinating lives and interests. Such diverse professional endeavors, knowledge sets, and ideas and opinions make it a true learning experience to engage in conversation with any member of Torch.

Is it possible to meet such a group of people in one place other than a Torch Convention?

I was favorably impressed in every way by my experience in Kalamazoo. It is with much gratitude that I thank the Youngstown club for offering me the opportunity to attend the convention. I met many wonderful people and made some friends whom I look forward to seeing at the next Torch convention in Toledo, Ohio.

Sincerely,
Linda Porter

Please see "Mailbox," page 31
A topic new to the editor, but vital to many.

Women as Medical Research Subjects - Should We Open the Door?

by Gregg E. Stover

Introduction

My interest in medical-legal ethics started when I was invited 23 years ago to be one of the original members of the Human Use Committee of a new clinical research facility opened in Kalamazoo. This research center performs medical research on human subjects involving experimental procedures, drugs and devices.

The role of the Human Use Committee is to review all proposals for research before they are implemented and to decide whether or not they are implemented. The committee is made up of physicians, a scientist, a nurse and three community members representing social work, law and religion. We have a consulting pharmacologist who attends all of our meetings.

Our primary responsibility is to evaluate the risks and benefits of the research to the human subjects. That task, as you can imagine, is loaded with issues and that was the topic of my last Torch presentation.

Since then, one of the issues that has become of particular interest to me, as a son, husband and father of two daughters, is how very little research is done on women to determine the risks and benefits to them of new medical discoveries.

History

Most medical research is done only in adult males, most of them between 21 and 45 years of age. Yet women, who constitute 52% of the population represent 70% of health-care consumers.1

The obvious result of the exclusion of most women from medical research is that the safe use of new drugs is unavailable to most women.

Why have we had systematic exclusion of most women from medical studies? Most of the exclusion has been of women who could become pregnant thereby exposing an additional life to the risks of the research. Add to that, the long prevalent notion that one body is the same as another. If it is safer to use healthy young men as research subjects and if it is believed that there is little difference between the way a female body and a male body handle drugs, the results of research on males can be extrapolated to apply to females.

However, the wonders of science have revealed that there are significant differences between male bodies and female bodies, far beyond the obvious. We are putting females and their fetuses at risk by not including them in research!

A recent study documents what some of us have sensed, that sex and gender2 are undervalued and understudied variables in many fundamental areas of biomedical science.

The study, “Sex and Gender Bias in Animal Research and in Clinical Studies of Cancer, Cardiovascular Disease and Depression,” reported in the Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences3, points out that in a heart study of more than 22,000 physicians there was found to be a beneficial effect on coronary heart disease from taking an aspirin every other day. Yet, no women were included in the study even though it is recognized that cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for women as well as men. A more recent study now suggests that aspirin may have a similar effect on women.

Lung cancer is the second leading cause of death in American women. It is known that in lung cancer and other forms of cancer that affect both male and female, incidence rates as well as etiological and other treatment factors may differ considerably in men and women. However, in the research studies so far there has been little focus on sex or gender.

Even when women are included in drug studies, they are often excluded in the early phases of the study. This has happened even in studies of a class of drugs of which women are the primary users. For example, depression is a disorder estimated to affect two to six times as many women as men. When antidepressant drugs for the treatment of depression were studied, women were excluded from the early phases. The result is that there is inadequate information on the long term effects of the drugs in women.

Animal Research

In probing this problem, the authors of the study uncovered a more basic problem. Animal research provides not only the basis for human studies, but also an understanding of biological and behavioral mechanisms for human and animal health and
well-being. Therefore, all new drug research begins in animals. They asked: what is the extent of sex bias in the selection of animals in basic research studies. They found similar but even more extreme patterns of bias than in human studies. The practice is to use primarily male subjects and to generalize findings to females with little or no rationale. This generalization of data from males to females therefore assumes that there are no biological differences between the sexes. They reviewed studies published in 1984 and 1991 to determine if any trends would appear over that seven year period when there was thought to be increasing awareness of the issue. They found the results to be more extreme in 1991 than in 1984, a trend in the wrong direction.

The studies mentioned above were published in the Behavioral Neuroscience Journal and the Journal of Comparative Psychology. Then, as a balance for those journals and to survey a wider range of basic scientific disciplines, they reviewed the journal Science for the same years. They found that the journal Science followed the same pattern as the others and that the scientists reporting their studies and the editors approving their manuscripts were totally unconcerned about the sex of the subjects and the issue of generalization of data.

To determine whether the pattern is simply coincidental or inadvertent, the authors interviewed many scientists about why they did not use female animals in their research. They were told by almost everyone that because of the estrus cycle, female animals did not give the same results as male animals. It was clear from the informal discussions that these scientists acknowledged that females differed from males in ways that might affect the results of their studies. Yet, none of the papers discussed the problem of the female’s estrus cycle as a rationale for not including females and in studies where females were included, they did not study sex differences in order to limit, if necessary, the generalizations to be made from the study. The conclusion is that many scientists do not want to use female animals and, in not doing so, they may be practicing poor science.

Human Subjects Research

Next, the authors reviewed studies of human subjects involving Cardiovascular Disease, Lung Cancer and Major Depression as reported in leading journals in 1984, 1991 and 1992. Their findings were that even as late as 1992 there continued to be a preference for male subjects in most scientific and clinical areas. They continued to generalize the data from males to females without rationale. Even when females are included, the data are usually not analyzed separately, but combined and generalized to both males and females. Too often, there is no indication as to what the sex of the subjects was. The team was particularly disconcerted by the fact that the most extreme insensitivity to the identification of sex of subjects and to the issue of generalization occurred in the journal Science, one of the world’s leading interdisciplinary scientific journals.

In asking scientists if they would willingly include women in clinical trials, they heard: “Oh, I have no problem about including women, but female subjects are hard to find.” Others answered: “It will really cost an enormous amount of money to recruit women for my studies and that would decrease the amount of research I could conduct.” Yet, separate studies have shown that women are more willing to participate in research studies than are men. There were concerns expressed that a woman’s menstrual cycle would interfere with the problem being studied. Yet, in no study that included women did the author refer to the menstrual cycle or hormonal variation as a limit to their sample, research findings, or generalizations.

It may be that most studies can be generalized from male to female or vice versa, but without adequate investigation we cannot make that conclusion, particularly in the area of health. It is reasonable to assume that differences in male and female body weight or hormones may result in differential effects of medication or surgical intervention and anesthesia.

The authors acknowledged that sex or gender issues are not simple to study since they may be explained in so many different ways; however, they argue, it simply is not good science to ignore the issues.

Issues/Arguments

Another author argues that it is not only poor science, it is unethical and illegal. Jacquelyn Kay Hall, a registered nurse and a lawyer, writing in IRB, a journal of ethics in human subjects research, tackles one of the toughest areas in which to overcome the exclusion of women. She advocates the inclusion of pregnant women in medical trials. Ms. Hall discusses the three major arguments against the inclusion of pregnant women in research trials.

Protection of the Fetus

First is the wish to protect the fetus, certainly a worthy goal. Consider, however, a woman who has a fatal illness, who is pregnant and who might benefit from a research drug. She is told she cannot participate in the research because she is pregnant. She has two choices. She can choose to abort to make herself eligible to participate in the life saving research. The abortion can be legally justified at any stage of development on the grounds of saving the life of the mother. Is it pregnancy that is endangering the life of the mother? Or, is it the condition resulting from being pregnant—the exclusion from the opportunity to participate in life saving research that is threatening the life of the mother? In terms of protection of the fetus, being aborted is obviously not in the fetus’ best interest.

The other choice the woman has, is to continue the pregnancy at continued risk to her life without the benefit of the research. Being born to a mother who is at risk of death is certainly not a desirable situation for a baby who was protected from the research. Allowing the pregnant woman to participate in the research may well put the fetus at less risk than either of the other two options.

If the risks are really difficult to evaluate, it might be argued that the parents and the fetus are better off if the fetus is aborted rather than born with some defect. Whether or not that is true, it is a value judgment for the parents to make, not for the researcher to impose upon them.

The federal regulations do not require exclusion. The regulations require that adequate consideration be given to the selection of potential subjects. Simply excluding all pregnant women prevents adequate consideration.

In setting limits on the inclusion of subjects, the regulations provide that, studies must first be completed on animals and nonpregnant individuals; however, they then set out the following exception: “except where the purpose of the activity is to meet the health needs of the mother.” Normally, pregnant women are not to be admitted to studies, under the regulations,
unless the risk to the fetus is minimal. However, they specifically provide that where the purpose of the activity is to meet the health needs of the mother, the requirement with respect to risk for the fetus is less strict, it requires that the fetus will be placed at risk only the minimum extent necessary to meet the health needs of the mother. Furthermore, the regulation on activities directed toward pregnant women provides that the activity is permitted “only if the mother and father are legally competent and have given their informed after having been fully informed regarding possible impact upon the fetus, except that the father’s informed consent need not be secured if the purpose of the activity is to meet the health needs of the mother (or he cannot be found, etc.).”

Furthermore, the regulations state the no inducement, monetary or otherwise, may be offered to terminate pregnancy for purposes of the research activity. The ability to participate in a life saving research study may well be an inducement to abort for a woman who is told that she could participate if she were not pregnant.

**Liability Exposure**

The second major argument is that harm to the fetus might produce liability. Those involved in research are concerned about the increased risk of lawsuits when two lives are potentially at risk.

However, the Supreme Court in a 9 to 0 ruling held that liability fears and fetal protection are not sufficient reasons to discriminate on the basis of sex. In the case known as “The Johnson Battery Case” against Johnson Controls, Inc., the Court said that in passing the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 the Congress mandated that decisions about the welfare of future children be left to parents who conceive, bear, support and raise them, and concerns about the next generation were not part of the essence of the employer’s business.

That case involved a refusal to hire women because of potential risk to fetuses if women became pregnant while performing the job in question. The Court held that discrimination based on a woman’s pregnancy is, on its face, illegal discrimination because of her sex. It said that if the employer fully informs the woman of the risk, and the employer has not acted negligently, the basis for liability is remote.

Hall argues that if it is illegal to discriminate based upon a woman’s potential to become pregnant in the employment situation, the case is much stronger for a pregnant woman denied the opportunity to decide whether to participate in life saving research.

Furthermore, she points out that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals with disability cannot be excluded from participation in or denied benefits of the service, program or activity of a public entity or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity. In the research setting, pregnant women are treated as though they are impaired.

**Physiological Differences**

The third major argument is that the physiology of pregnant women is so different from that of non-pregnant women that the inclusion of pregnant women in the study would invalidate the data. Some researchers assert that the purpose of research is science, not treatment. They are concerned that admitting pregnant women to their studies compromises the science.

In fact, the physiology of women differs far more from the physiology of men than the physiology of pregnant women differs from that of non-pregnant women. To accept the difference of physiology argument is to accept the notion that all women should be excluded from medical studies in order to protect the science.

If pregnant women are never included in research, Hall argues, the effects of the treatment under study will never be known. Therefore, researchers can go on excluding pregnant women for the reason that the potential side-effects are unknown. This circular rationale becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

**Trends**

Are any efforts being made to include more women in general and pregnant women in particular as medical research subjects? Very definitely.

The National Institutes of Health established an Office of Research on Women’s Health to strengthen and enhance research related to diseases and conditions that affect women and to ensure representation of women in study populations of NIH supported research. According to a 1991 article by Levine and Dubler in the IRB Journal, the goal is not to convince women to become research subjects for the good of themselves and others, but rather to make more equitable the selection of subjects who will undertake the risks and share in the benefits of research.

While serving as the first woman Director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Bernadine Healy, in 1991, instituted the Women’s Health Initiative. It is a 15 year, $625 million NIH study. It is the largest clinical research study of women and their health ever undertaken in the U.S. or elsewhere. It will look broadly at the chronic disease that threaten women most: heart disease, stroke, cancer, osteoporosis and depression—in relation to each other and in the context of women’s overall health. It is the first major study to recognize that cultural, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic characteristics affect the kinds of illness people develop and the way they respond to treatment. It is expected to lead to a series of needed recommendations concerning practical issues such as diet, hormone replacement therapy, vitamin and mineral supplements, exercise and a range of biological and behavioral factors that impact women’s health. It will examine the way interventions may interact. Hormone replacement therapy, for example, may be good for the heart and the bones, but may introduce a slightly increased risk of breast cancer when taken long-term. If this intervention is combined with a low-fat diet, can the benefit of estrogen be enhanced and the risk be diminished? Blood samples from subjects will be stored so that as new molecular markers for disease become available (such as genes for osteoporoses, breast or ovarian cancer, stroke, or Alzheimer’s) they will be able to ask whether women with different genetic and biological makeup should get different advice about diet, weight, prevention or treatment.

Dr. Healy also caused the NIH to begin enforcing its long ignored policy that a study or trial inappropriately excluding women would not be funded. NIH policy requires the inclusion of women and minorities in research study populations so that research findings can be of benefit to all persons at risk of the disease, disorder or condition under study. If there is exclusion, a clear compelling rationale for exclusion or inadequate representation is to be provided. Principal investigators of NIH funded studies must report annually on the number of subjects planned and enrolled to date by...
What about the Food and Drug Administration? In 1983, the FDA reversed its policy that excluded fertile women from early studies of drugs in order to reflect the view that determinations of risk are properly left to women, their physicians, institutional review boards and sponsors. In 1993 the FDA’s Working Group in Clinical Trials in a special report said that new drug applications will reviewed for compliance with the 1988 FDA mandate to analyze data by sex, and for compliance with the policy that reasonable numbers of women have participated in the research. The revised policies urge the inclusion of pregnant women, especially when the trial represents the only source of promising therapy for a life-threatening condition.

As I discussed earlier, one study reviewed reports of research studies covering periods both before and after these policy changes and found the trend to be in the wrong direction. Without broader support, it may be a long while before we see any tangible results of the policy changes.

**The Challenge**

The challenge to Institutional Review Boards is the increased responsibility created by these policy changes. The IRB must not only perform its traditional role of assessing the risks and benefits to the participants in determining whether or not to approve a protocol for research, it must now determine whether unjustifiable exclusion of subjects is a part of the protocol. It is very difficult to weigh the benefits and risks to a fetus, for example, when there is no data upon which to base the evaluation. The affirmative duty to be more inclusive of women may well conflict with the duty to assess whether the importance of the objective is in proportion to the inherent risks to the subject. If is of course easiest when the subject is suffering a life threatening disease and the research offers treatment that could be effective. It is much more difficult when the subject is healthy or the likelihood of effective treatment is minimal or unknown.

In many studies the IRB faces what Douglas Martin and his colleagues describe as the incommensurability problem. Risks and benefits may not be quantifiable and it may be difficult to balance one against the other, especially where risks and benefits cannot be compared by the same standard or measure—where they are incommensurable. For example, in phase I drug trials, drugs are introduced into human subjects for the first time. Although substantial knowledge about the drug is obtained from extensive animal studies before exposure to human subjects, many of the undesirable effects of drugs are evident only in human trials. Most other than cancer studies (where the drugs are generally highly toxic) use healthy subjects. Here we encounter two types of incommensurability. First, different domains of health status are involved, physical and mental. The subjects assume the direct risks of toxicity and side effects. For healthy subjects the primary and sometimes only benefit is the knowledge that they have helped society. The subject is incurring a physical risk in expectation of a potential psychological benefit. The second type of incommensurability involves the fact that the risks and benefits affect different people. The healthy subjects assume the risks and the benefits accrue to society in general or to an unidentified subgroup of society who may one day require treatment using the drug under study. In other words, there are different types of risks and benefits in phase I drug studies and they are distributed between different people.

This is not a problem unique to the use of women in research, but it helps perhaps to underline the challenges faced by an institutional review board in meeting its new duty to increase the numbers of women included in research.

The fact that there are challenges does not diminish, the compelling need to improve women’s health by including more women as research subjects.

**Other Emerging Issues**

Before closing, I would like to mention some emerging issues in one of the most vexing areas beginning to confront medical researchers and Institutional Review Boards: genetic testing.

Patients in medical care are often asked to give samples of tissue for study in order to assist in their treatment. They may not know that those tissues might also be used for research unrelated to their care. It is now possible to identify an individual’s propensity for many diseases through detection of the genetic make-up of the individual from a small sample of blood or saliva. Informed consent is often lacking in this regard.

The genetic information can be so revealing that retention of samples that might be used for research at any time in the future has potentially huge ramifications medically, psychologically and economically for the patient and the patient’s relatives. Of special concern is the fact that genetic information, if disclosed to or discovered by third parties, can be used to deny insurance coverage or access to employment. Not only informed consent, but confidentiality issues abound.

As in many areas, the technology is advancing faster than the applied ethical standards. How do we balance the good that can come from genetic research for the individuals, their families and society with the risks that the individuals and their families may incur?

The inclusion of more women as research subjects is essential, if not easy to implement. We are seeing great benefits from genetic testing. Protecting individual rights in the process is not easy, but is certainly essential.

**References**

1 Mish, PG, quoting Bernadine Healy, former Director of the National Institutes of Health, *Kalama Zoo Gazette*, Oct. 18, 1995; D3.
2 Used here “Sex” refers to basic (genetically determined) physiological and anatomical differences; “gender” refers to differences that are socially or culturally determined, e.g., beliefs about women or men that in a particular context may interact with their medical treatment.
Much of the technology we have is the result of fortunate accidents.

Serendipity in the Discovery Process

by Linneaus C. Dorman, Ph.D.

About the Author

Linneaus C. Dorman holds an undergraduate degree in chemistry from Bradley University and a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Indiana University. After working four summers as a chemist for the USDA, he began his professional career in R&D at The Dow Chemical Company in Midland, Michigan in 1960, and retired in 1994 as a senior associate scientist. His research was focused in the areas of pharmaceutical chemicals, biopolymers and thermoplastic elastomers. He is a patentee, contributor to scientific journals, co-recipient of the Bond Award (Am. Oil Chem. Soc.) in 1960 and named a Dow Chemical Central Research Inventor of the Year in 1983. Dr. Dorman has been very active in numerous scientific, academic, and civic organizations for which he has received a number of honors and awards.

This paper was delivered to the Saginaw Valley Torch Club on January 6, 1998.

The subject of this paper is Serendipity in the Discovery Process, particularly as it relates to the experiences of a retired scientist. Simply put, serendipity is an accidental discovery, or as Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines it, “the faculty or phenomenon of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.” The word was introduced in 1754 by Horace Walpole, an English man of letters, and is based on the fairy tale “The Three Princes of Serendip” who constantly made discoveries, by accident or sagacity; sagacity meaning “keen intelligence and shrewdness.” An accompanying word “pseudo-serendipity” was coined by Royston Roberts, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Texas, to mean an accidental discovery of a method or means to make some something that was, indeed, sought for.

Simply put, serendipity is an accidental discovery, or as Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines it, “the faculty or phenomenon of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.”

The first defining example, or at least one of the most important, was attributable to the Greek mathematician Archimedes in third century B.C. King Hiero of Syracuse, Greece ordered a crown to be made of pure gold. Since it was known even in that day that gold could be diluted or alloyed with lesser costly, lighter metals like silver or copper and still have the appearance of gold, the king gave Archimedes the task of verifying the purity of his gold crown. Archimedes had developed formulae to determine the densities of regular shaped solids, like cubes; determining their weight and volume, one could then calculate their densities. The problem was that a crown did not have a regular shape, so how was he going to determine its volume? One day at a public bath, Archimedes made an enlightening observation, the volume of the water that overflowed from his bath vessel was equal to the volume of his body that had entered the water. He had discovered how to measure the volume of an irregular object! Filled with emotion and excitement, he ran naked from the bathhouse exclaiming “Eureka, eureka! I found it.” Measuring the crown’s volume by water displacement, Archimedes was able to determine the crown’s density and establish that the crown was not pure gold, which resulted in the goldsmith’s execution.

An early example of pseudo-serendipity was the accidental discovery by Charles Goodyear in the 1930’s of how to cure or vulcanize natural rubber. It was known that mixtures of latex, a vegetable emulsion of oil and water from certain trees, and sulfur formed rubbery materials, but these became hard and brittle at cold temperatures and shapeless at hot temperatures. After many tries to cure mixtures of natural latex and sulfur, a mixture of the two accidentally spilled on a hot stove resulting in a flexible mass that retained its shape over a wide temperature range. He had successfully vulcanized rubber. In this case, he knew what he was looking for, but the method of success was accidental, hence a pseudo-serendipitous discovery.

Through time, numerous accidental discoveries have played important roles in the evolution of modern society in science as well as other fields of endeavor. Many are familiar to you. Issac Newton’s encounter with a falling apple and his observation that the fall was always perpendicular to the ground, set into motion thought processes that led to the discovery of gravity and a better understanding of the solar system, i.e., why planets and their moons do not coalesce into one another; Jenner’s observation that the milkmaids who had recovered from cowpox were less likely to become infected with smallpox, which ultimately led to the concept of
vaccination against infectious diseases; of penicillin by Fleming, dynamite by Nobel, X-rays by Roentgen; in the modern era, nylon and Teflon by Carothers and Plunkett, respectively, at DuPont. Closer to home, a member of this Torch Club, Earl Warrick, found that silicone rubber could be fabricated to have useful, commercial properties when it was filled or blended with silica. The late Ray McIntyre of the Dow Chemical Company invented Styrofoam brand insulation material by copolymerizing monomers styrene (a liquid) and isobutylene (a gas). He was hoping to make a less brittle form of polystyrene, anticipating that the polysobutylene component upon incorporation would impart impact strength. Whereas the styrene did polymerize forming polystyrene, the isobutylene did not polymerize; instead, it functioned as a blowing agent and a foam-like solid was formed, the forerunner of Styrofoam; and two recent triumphs of serendipity were Velcro and Post-Its. This is but a brief summary of inventions by rendered by serendipity.

Early inventions that owed their discoveries to serendipity or pseudo-serendipity were not disdained by their scholarly inventors because they originated by accidental occurrence. Quite the contrary. Louis Pasteur expressed it this way, “In the fields of observation, chance favors only the prepared mind.” And I would add, open mind. Further, noted polymer chemist Paul Flory, on the occasion of receiving the most prestigious American Chemical Society medal, the Perkin Medal, said “......Happenstance usually plays a part, to be sure, but there is much more to invention than the popular notion of a bolt out of the blue. Knowledge in depth and in breadth are virtual prerequisites. Unless the mind is thoroughly charged beforehand, the proverbial spark of genius, if it should manifest itself, probably will find nothing to ignite.”

These rather erudite explanation of the serendipitous process belie some of the more bizarre occurrences of serendipity. For example, Mazur, a research chemist at G.D. Searle Co. was working on an anti-ulcer drug project. One day, Mazur’s assistant was heating a methanol solution of an intermediate product in a flask when a little bit of the solution accidentally boiled out of the flask and got on his fingers. Later when he wet his fingers to assist in picking up a piece of paper, he immediately detected an unusually sweet taste which was traced out to be aspartame or Nutrasweet, the essential ingredient in the artificial sweetener Equal. Having residual material on his fingers indicated he had not cleaned his hand well after the spill.

Then, there is the story of Tomshige Hori, a scientist at Snow-Brands Milk Company in Japan, who was experimenting with electrical equipment trying to test the conductivity of milk, an activity which had nothing to do with his job. One day, he forgot to turn off his equipment and found that the milk had curdled. Not fearing the rebuke of his management, he followed up what he had observed and this eventually led to an automated process for making cheese, a process his company commercialized.

As you can see, these latter two examples of serendipity do not exactly fit Flory’s “Knowledge in depth and breadth are virtual prerequisites” concept; these were, plainly and simply, examples of bad laboratory practice! On the other hand, however, their observations did incite “the proverbial spark of genius,” which eventually lead to commercial successes.

My favorite story (fiction) involving serendipity was about a rather misguided businessman (not a member of this club). The townspeople felt he never should have gone into business in the first place. One day in a moment of desperation, he barged into his minister’s office, who at the time was having pain and difficulty putting a sermon together, exclaiming, “Reverend Smith, I’ve got all kinds of problems at my business, the plumbing needs repair, the roof leaks, accounts receivable are low, accounts payable are high and the merchandise is overstocked and I can’t meet the payroll! What shall I do?” Rev. Smith, who was also a little desperate too, said (to get rid of him) “Johnny, go home, take your bible, place it on the kitchen table, open it with your eyes closed, then put two fingers on a page and the two words your finger land on will guide you out of your troubles.” A month later, Rev. Smith ran into Johnny, he was happy as a lark, in a new suit and was driving a new car. “Thank you Rev. Smith, that was some good advice that you gave me.” “Oh, what was that?” asked Rev. Smith? “Well, you told me to put two fingers on a page in the bible and the two words that my fingers landed on would guide me out of my troubles.” “Son,” the surprised minister asked, “what were those Two Words?” Johnny gleefully replied, “CHAPTER ELEVEN.”

Now that we have witnessed a relatively few examples (except the last one) of the power of serendipity in shaping our standard of living, we now ponder the question of its value in future discoveries. To approach this question, we first must look at some current trends in the research and development community. Obviously, time does not permit a comprehensive review, but there are some “bullets” or “snapshots” that should get us started.

Since the fall of communism and the onset of globalization, competitive pressures have had an impact on practically all segments of society. Research and development is a costly enterprise and, hence, is not exempt from these competitive pressures. Let’s look at some of the newer developments or paradigms affecting research and development, first internationally. Owing to a budget deficit in Russia, funding for the Russian Foundation for Basic Research was slashed 55% this year, other governmental agencies were also affected. German funding of R&D sunk by more than a quarter over the past decade. In Japan, support for

Please see "Serendipity," page 30
Is the new millennium a harbinger of good or evil or just another tick of the clock?

Gerbert and Me

by Charles G. Nelson

About the Author

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This paper was delivered to the Lincoln Torch Club on February 17, 1997.

I have known since mastering addition and subtraction that, if actuarial tables are reliable, I would probably see the turn of the century. More recently, it has dawned on my consciousness that we will also be entering a new millennium, a prospect which has more than just historic pertinence; it has eschatological overtones as well, elements of the end times or the last things.

There has been talk during the recent presidential election about ‘building a bridge to the 21st century.’ The implication is that there will certainly be a 21st century and that it will be worth getting to. One could also interpret the imagery by inferring that there is a great chasm at the end of this millennium which will require bridging with great presidential skill.

Most who place importance in millennia are doom sayers. Nostradamus, the sixteenth century French prophet, was quite specific:

The year 1999, month seven,
From the sky shall come a great king of terror...

William Butler Yeats, writing around the beginning of this century, describes a circumstance which still seems current:

...Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

The scientific prophets of today foresee destruction of the earth through uncontrolled industrialization, famine resulting from over-population, disastrous climatic effects of the hothouse phenomena, the destruction of the sea’s ability to renew life, or, of course, a thermonuclear chain-reaction which might possibly turn the earth into a temporary sun. These threats to survival are generally conceded to become acute toward the end of the second millennium AD.

However frightening our prognostications may be, they are pale by comparison with those contemplated a thousand years ago. There was no mass media to alleviate the panic. The earth was considered the center of the universe, so what happened here was final. The general populace was convinced that the end of the world, the final judgment, the unleashing of Satan, The Second Coming would happen at midnight on December 31, 999.

There was one man living then whose composure seemed to surmount the general fear. His name was Gerbert. Gerbert of Aurillac, the most accomplished man of the Middle Ages was born in France in AD 938. I was born in Nebraska in 1937. We are contemporaries a millennium removed. We have little in common. He was raised in a monastery; I in a small rural town. He was considered to be among the most educated men of his time, credited with inventing the pendulum clock and introducing the use of Arabic numerals into western Europe. He became keeper to the keys of the kingdom, the living link between humanity and God, successor of St. Peter, Romanus Pontifex, Sanctissimus Pater, Servus Servorum Dei,—Pope Sylvester II.

What we do share is the opportunity to observe and experience the transition to a new millennium—he from the tenth century stage, and I from the twentieth century audience. Gerbert and I will have been about the same age at the turn of our respective millennia, able to distance ourselves from the passionate optimism of youth, yet not quite ready for doddering pessimism. There was and is the sense that something epic is about to happen; that people will act differently; that it will be more than mere movement of the clock. Grocery store tabloids have picked it up, with accounts of strange phenomena related to the millennial happening. It is not too much to expect that there will be some hysteria abroad as we approach the end of 1999.

A thousand years is about thirteen lifetimes. Quantum jumps take place. Fewer than ten millennia have passed during recorded history. A review of the last five will illustrate the magnitude of change from one to the next:

• 3000 BC - The wheel had recently been invented by an individual Sumerian.
2000 BC - Ice Cream was invented in China; it became a favorite dish of the Chinese emperors.
1000 BC - King David reigned in Israel.
AD1 - Imperial Rome was a curious mixture of splendor and decadence; it ruled the western world.
AD 1000 - Icelandic explorer Leif Ericson is believed to have been one of the first Europeans to set foot on North America.

The tenth century has been called the century of lead and iron. There were no remedies and not even a way of diagnosing the cause. The Vikings had their own specialties in treatment of foes. It was their custom to burn the house of an enemy with every living creature inside, though occasionally they would spare a visitor or a bondsman.

The tenth century has been called the century of lead and iron. There were many signs of apocalypse. Every phenomenon of nature filled people with alarm. Thunderstorms were considered to be the voice of God announcing the Day of Judgment; in England a meteor caused much fear and trembling; in Aquitaine, the sky rained blood; cities of Italy and Gaul were ravaged by fire. Barbarian invasions were not yet finished, with hordes of fanatic Saracens, Spanish Moors, Thor-worshiping Vikings, pagan Bulgars, and fierce Magyar horsemen, the Hungarian Scourges of God, besieging Western Europe.

Recurrent famine added to the misery. Five or six times during the tenth century bad harvests, invasions, droughts, floods, and wars caused a terrible decline in agriculture, with starvation resulting in widespread cannibalism. Parents ate their children. Robbers not only waylaid their prey, but also devoured them. Hosts murdered their guests for their flesh. Buried corpses were dug up, roasted and eaten. People believed that the orderly laws of nature had been suspended, that the natural flow of the seasons, which until then had ruled the earth, had fallen into utter disorder foretelling the end of all mankind.

Wars and famine were followed by epidemics. One such plague, the dreaded St. Anthony's fire, was caused by ergot, a fungus of the rye plant. People eating bread made from the rye developed gangrened fingers and toes which turned black and fell off. In more severe cases, the disease consumed and sloughed off all the limbs of the body it attacked. There were no remedies and not even a way of diagnosing the cause. Medicine was largely a matter of magic and illness was usually looked upon as divine punishment.

Some trembled at the approaching doom evident in signs and portents; others yearned for second-coming liberation from the miseries all about them. One nearly universal assumption was that the apocalyptic prophecies of the biblical Revelation were about to be fulfilled at the end of the first millennium since its writing:

Revelation 20:1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. 3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season... 7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. 8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth...

The world was truly getting worse and worse. THE millennium was behind them; Satan was about to be loosed, having been bound when Christ came into the world—the symbolic, if not the real beginning of the Christian calendar. Destruction was at hand. The people, not so much the clergy, were certain that the prophecies of the book of Revelations were about to be fulfilled. The learned clergy, such as Gerbert, now Pope Sylvester II, were not as concerned, but as the end of the first AD millennium approached, people all over Europe became more acutely convinced that the end of the world was at hand. Churches were packed with those who had given up all their earthly possessions in anticipation of impending doom. There had been an epidemic of benevolence ranging from distribution of land to forgiveness of debt to freeing of prisoners in an effort to assure favorable treatment in the last judgment.

Now it was December 31, 999. One account of the gravity of the situation has been passed down. As was apparently the case throughout Europe, in Rome the immense Basilica of St. Peter’s was crowded for the midnight mass. The story is told this way:

Pope Sylvester II [Gerbert] stood before the high alter. The church was overcrowded, all in it lay on their knees. The silence was so great that the rustling of the Pope’s white sleeves as he moved about the alter could be heard. And there was still another sound. It was a sound that seemed to measure out the last minutes of the earth’s
thousand years of existence since the coming of Christ! It echoed in the ears of those present as the pulse-beat does in the ears of a man with a fever, and its beat was loud and regular and never stopped. For the door of the church sacristy stood open, and what the audience heard was the regular, uninterrupted tick, tick, tick of the great clock which hung within, one tick for every passing second.

The Pope was a man of iron will-power, calm and collected. He had probably left the sacristy door open purposely, in order to secure the greatest amount of effect at this great moment. Though his face was pale as death with excitement, he did not move nor did his hands tremble.

The midnight mass had been said, and a deathly silence fell. The audience waited...Pope Sylvester said not a word. He seemed lost in prayer, his hands raised to the sky. The clock kept on ticking. A long sigh came from the people, but nothing happened. Like children afraid of the dark, all those in the church lay with their faces to the ground, and did not venture to look up. The sweat of terror ran from many an icy brow, and knees and feet which had fallen asleep lost all feeling. Then, suddenly—the clock stopped ticking!

Among the congregation the beginning of a scream of terror began to form in many a throat. And, stricken dead by fear, several bodies dropped heavily on the stone floor. Then the clock began to strike. It struck one, two, three, four...It struck twelve...The twelfth stroke echoed out, and a deathly silence still reigned!

Then it was that Pope Sylvester turned around, and with the proud smile of a victor stretched out his hands in blessing over the heads of those who filled the church. And at the same moment all the bells in the tower began to peal out a glad and jubilant chime, and from the organ-loft sounded a chorus of joyous voices, young and older, a little uncertain at first, perhaps, but growing clearer and firmer moment by moment. They sang the Te Deum Laudamus—"Thee, God, we praise!"

The whole congregation united their voices with those of the choir. Yet it was some time before cramped backs could be straightened out, and before people recovered from the dreadful sight offered by those who had died of fright. When the Te Deum had been sung, men and women fell in each other’s arms, laughing and crying and exchanging the kiss of peace. Thus ended the thousandth year after the birth of Christ!

There were mixed emotions. Some had relied on the Second Coming to liberate them from the misery of the middle ages. Most, though, saw the delay as a reprieve from even worse possible alternatives. There was a rush to undo the beneficence that had mistakenly been committed as premature penance. Land and goods which had been given away in a spate of generosity were quickly reclaimed; debts were renewed; prisoners were rounded up, as much as possible and returned to complete their sentences.

Now it was the year 1000. There was a flourish of activity as church buildings went up throughout Europe, especially in France and Germany, to express thanks at the postponement of Judgment day. The Indian Mathematician Sridhara recognized the importance of the zero. Norseman Leif Ericson discovered the Western Hemisphere.

Pope Sylvester II died of unknown causes on May 12, 1003. Because of his inquiring mind and his exceptional education, he was considered by some to be allied with the devil. A huge human head which Gerbert had magically constructed would answer only to him. When he inquired whether he would be Pope, the head answered yes; when he asked if he would die before he read mass in Jerusalem, the head answered no. Unfortunately for Sylvester II, the immortality he assumed as a result eluded him when he said mass in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, a church in Rome to which the demon head had referred. Recognizing his mistake too late, he fell sick and died. He was said by some to have been the Antichrist, whose satanic powers had postponed the Second Coming. Nearly four hundred years later he was exonerated by Dietrich of Riems who commented that, “The Romans hated this excellent Pope for his great knowledge and wisdom and for this reason slandered him as having practiced the devilish arts.”

What many had thought was the end of the time turned out to be the beginning of a millennium of greatness. To be sure, there were immense disasters, diseases, wars, depressions, and barbarity. Had Gerbert been clairvoyant he could have wowed the crowd at the Basilica of St. Peters that New Year’s Eve with a litany of future developments which none would have believed.

Could anyone reasonably predict what would happen during the next 1000 years? The Battle of Hastings, the cathedral at Chartres, the Crusades, Chaucer, the Black Death, Leonardo DaVinci, Michelangelo, Joan of Arc, the Gutenberg Bible, Christopher Columbus, Slavery, Copernicus, Shakespeare, the Taj Mahal, Handel and Bach, the hot-air balloon, Mozart and Beethoven, San Francisco, the Steam Engine, The Declaration of Independence, Lewis and Clark, The Battle of Waterloo, the Railroad, The Civil War, Florence
and rule his with saints for a thousand years. Premillennialists pessimistically believe that the world is on a downward moral spiral which will end when Christ will come before the millennium of peace during which Satan will be bound. The Christian world of the tenth century was clearly premillennial in the belief that they were about to witness the final great battle. Postmillennialists optimistically believe that the world is really getting better because Christ already rules and will come again when all things are ready. It is not difficult to see how such epic imagery, with a cast of billions, could inspire awe and mystery.

We are at the threshold of another millennium. It is hard to imagine a performance like that of a thousand years ago. We are in command; technology is triumphant; the economy is strong, the supernatural cannot complete with the big screen for our minds. If we are to be destroyed, it will be by our own hand, or by some ominous political force, but not by reason of a date on the calendar. We’re confident of ourselves, we’re strong, we’re not afraid. The millennial ball will come down in Times Square with the predictability essential for television commercials and the crowd will behave in the inane manner customary to the occasion. Nothing unusual will happen - or will it?

We do conduct ourselves differently at thresholds; each New Year’s Eve proves that. We become introspective, or reverent, or drunk, depending on our outlook. The decades are a bit larger; we talk about the 30’s, the 60’s, the 80’s and as we pass from one to another, the news media overstate the bests and the worsts and we place more importance on their interpretation. None of us here remember the turn of the century, but we all have vague ideas of the ways in which it influenced people in the late 1800’s. The religious awakenings spawned hymns and movements that have affected us most of this century. It’s happening again as we approach another, as evidenced by the rise of the religious right, by God’s elevation to the status of Cover Man on a recent issue of Time Magazine.

But now we encounter a thousand-year observance. Whether it happens at January 1, 2000 or January 1, 2001 is a matter for scientists and attorneys; the truth is that the ordinary people and the computers will respond to it when the first number changes. If we were prescient; would we project doom or progress for the year AD 3000? Not in the big things, like anti-gravity, or space colonization, the ability to control the weather, the cloning of genius, the successor to capitalism, the workless workplace, the raceless society, the direction of mass political will, the age of leisure, or contact with other life in the universe...Not in these, but in more important matters:

- Will Mickey Mouse still be on t-shirts?
- Will there be a SuperBowl M?
- Will the Nebraska State Capitol still be standing?
- Will man remain the only animal capable of lighting a fire?
- Will the Cowboy still be a national social hero?
- Will Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony be known?
- Will the Torch Club have become galactic?
- Will anyone remember Gerbert?

Perhaps, if, as Gerbert might have said, the Lord tarries.

References

Nightingale, Abrahm Lincoln, Charles Darwin, the phonograph, the Industrial Revolution, the Automobile, the Airplane, the Great War, Einstein, Radio, the A-bomb, Television, Computers, Man on the Moon, the Torch Club of Lincoln! It would have been quite a stretch to have imagined this progression in the tenth century when al-Tasrif had just compiled a manual of surgery which gave instructions on the use of iron cautery and the healing of arrow wounds.

What is it about a thousand years that makes it mystical? Albert Speer, who was Hitler’s architect, wrote in 1954, his ninth year of a twenty-year term in Spandau prison.

The party Rally of 1938 had just ended when Hitler summoned me to a post-Rally conference. He went over the events of the preceding week day by day, assigning praise or blame... “We must keep the procedures for these events fixed [he declared] so that they will become unalterable rites while I am still alive. That means that no one will be able to mess these things up later on.”

Up to this point I had taken the phrase Das Tausendjährige Reich (The Thousand Year Reich) as purely rhetorical, a mere claim to establishing something that would last more than a single lifetime...I had long thought that all these formations, processions, dedications were part of a clever propagandistic revue. Now I finally understood that for Hitler they were almost like rites of the founding of a church.

Religions are not hesitant to deal in thousands of years. One of the basic tenets of Christian belief is, “that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. [II Peter 3:8]

Millennialism, in the Christian world, is the belief that Christ will bind Satan and rule his with saints for a thousand years. Premillennialists pessimistically believe that the world is on a downward moral spiral which will end when Christ will come before the millennium of peace during which Satan will be bound. The Christian world of the tenth century was clearly premillennial in the belief that they were about to witness the final great battle. Postmillennialists optimistically believe that the world is really getting better because Christ already rules and will come again when all things are ready. It is not difficult to see how such epic imagery, with a cast of billions, could inspire awe and mystery.

We are at the threshold of another millennium. It is hard to imagine a performance like that of a thousand years ago. We are in command; technology is triumphant; the economy is strong, the supernatural cannot complete with the big screen for our minds. If we are to be destroyed, it will be by our own hand, or by some ominous political force, but not by reason of a date on the calendar. We’re confident of ourselves, we’re strong, we’re not afraid. The millennial ball will come down in Times Square with the predictability essential for television commercials and the crowd will behave in the inane manner customary to the occasion. Nothing unusual will happen - or will it?

We do conduct ourselves differently at thresholds; each New Year’s Eve proves that. We become introspective, or reverent, or drunk, depending on our outlook. The decades are a bit larger; we talk about the 30’s, the 60’s, the 80’s and as we pass from one to another, the news media overstate the bests and the worsts and we place more importance on their interpretation. None of us here remember the turn of the century, but we all have vague ideas of the ways in which it influenced people in the late 1800’s. The religious awakenings spawned hymns and movements that have affected us most of this century. It’s happening again as we approach another, as evidenced by the rise of the religious right, by God’s elevation to the status of Cover Man on a recent issue of Time Magazine.

But now we encounter a thousand-year observance. Whether it happens at January 1, 2000 or January 1, 2001 is a matter for scientists and attorneys; the truth is that the ordinary people and the computers will respond to it when the first number changes. If we were prescient; would we project doom or progress for the year AD 3000? Not in the big things, like anti-gravity, or space colonization, the ability to control the weather, the cloning of genius, the successor to capitalism, the workless workplace, the raceless society, the direction of mass political will, the age of leisure, or contact with other life in the universe...Not in these, but in more important matters:

- Will Mickey Mouse still be on t-shirts?
- Will there be a SuperBowl M?
- Will the Nebraska State Capitol still be standing?
- Will man remain the only animal capable of lighting a fire?
- Will the Cowboy still be a national social hero?
- Will Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony be known?
- Will the Torch Club have become galactic?
- Will anyone remember Gerbert?

Perhaps, if, as Gerbert might have said, the Lord tarries.

References

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Teen Violence: A Problem?

by Beth Beckner, Ph.D.

About the Author

Beth Beckner holds a B.A. from Sweet Briar College and a Master’s degree from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health. Her Doctorate is from North Carolina State University in Adult Education. She is ASCP certified as medical laboratory technologist specializing in bacteriology.

Following five years as a Peace Corps Volunteer, Beth continued working in Africa and the Middle East, first with a health training program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, and then as an independent consultant in training and management. She is presently semi-retired. She is a member of Delta Omega national public health honor society and Phi Kappa Phi national academic honor society. Her name appeared in the 13th edition of Who’s Who of American Women.

This paper was presented at a Torch Club meeting, October 15, 1996 at Hagerstown, Maryland.

Teen violence: a problem? The topic popped up very briefly, almost accidentally at a Torch Club meeting here several years ago. I don’t remember who the speaker at that meeting was, or the speaker’s topic, but during the discussion that followed, one of our new members cited the increase in teenage violence as a problem. One of our other members, in a loud, self-assured voice, said “Horse-feathers!” or words to that effect, and dismissed the whole topic as a media-created fiction.

Today’s kids are no worse that we were.

Perhaps because the first speaker was a very new member, or because she had been trained to be conciliatory instead of combative, she dropped the subject.

We all did. Or at least I thought we had. But I couldn’t let it go. I found myself clipping articles and watching documentaries and questioning friends and relatives, teachers and teens.

So when I was asked to present a paper this year, it seemed logical to address this topic which has continued to occupy my thoughts. The clincher was finding a piece by Bill Moulden in a July 1996 issue of our local newspaper entitled “Nation’s Crime Wave is a Fiction.” He says “There is no crime wave! As the most reliable data keeps showing, crime is declining, with the economy the main factor. By...churning the same stories over and over again on the nightly news, the media creates these phony crime waves.

It seems that the opinion expressed by our Torch member several years ago is still being promulgated. Hence my paper.

First, I will list a few—a very few—examples of recent teen violence reported in (yes, I admit it) the media. Then I’ll present what I think are some persuasive statistics. Next I will look at opinions of various experts and non-experts regarding probable underlying causes of this real or perceived problem. Finally, as a conclusion for my paper and a basis for what I hope will be a spirited discussion, I will offer my opinion on whether teen violence really IS a problem and, if so, what its underlying causes might be.

First, some examples, collected between mid 1994 and mid 1996, from our local newspaper:

- In Philadelphia, a tenth grader pulls a 9 mm Ruger from his book bag and kills a classmate during biology class. His reason? “He punches me and kicks me and makes me look like an ass.”
- In Redlands, California a 13 year old boy shoots the principal with a shotgun, then kills himself after the two meet over a disciplinary problem.
- In Ft. Myers, Florida a group of teens calling themselves a “militia” (even though they cannot define the term) kill their school band director after he questions them about a gas can they are carrying. They have since been charged with, in addition to the band director’s murder, numerous arson cases or a car-jacking, and had been about to torch the school when the band director questioned them.
- In Hagerstown, Maryland a gang of teenage girls—students and dropouts from Smithburg and Boonsboro high schools—break into an apartment and beat two 14 year old girls, then rob and trash the apartment. The gang call themselves The Hood Rats.
- In San Luis Obispo, three teens are charged with drugging, raping, torturing, and killing a 15 year old girl in hopes that “a virgin sacrifice would get them a ticket to hell.”
- In Annapolis, a first year female cadet confides to her roommates that she has recently killed a 16 year old girl who had sex with her boyfriend.
- In Pompano Beach, two brothers ages 16 and 18 cruise a black neighborhood in their mother’s Mercedes convertible—drunk, laughing, and shooting three-inch darts into the back of a 54 year old cyclist.
- And in Boonsboro, Maryland the
In East Bernard, Texas, four members of the high school’s championship baseball team tie the team’s mascot, a cat, in a sack and beat it to death with baseball bats. Then they run over it with a truck. After the school superintendent suspends them, a dead goose, a dead raccoon, and another dead cat are tossed onto his lawn.

In Somerset, Pennsylvania, three boys drive nails into the heels of an eight year old with a claw hammer, then fill the holes with golf tees, because he has refused to steal tobacco for them. The boys’ ages are 14, 10 and 9 years old.

In San Antonio, a 13 year old girl is convicted of murdering two younger children because she was annoyed by their crying. She was twelve at the time of the murder. If that seems too young to kill:

In Baltimore, a 12 year old boy has been charged with first degree murder in the stabbing death of his 13 year old neighbor following an argument.

In Chicago an 11 year old boy has been charged with murder for slitting the throat of an 85 year old woman during a robbery.

And in Richmond, California, a six year old has been charged with attempted murder in the near fatal beating of a one month old infant. The boy had recruited two eight year olds to help him steal a tricycle in the infant’s home. He already—at age six—had a reputation as a thief and a bully who liked to hit other children with sticks.

I assume you are as shocked by these accounts as I was. Are they media-hyped exceptions? Let’s look at some numbers. First, in the eight years between 1985 and 1993 there was a 65% increase in murders by 18-24 year old males. Even more frightening, the increase for younger males, ages 14-17, rose 165% (1995 FBI report) This year’s FBI report states that violent crime dropped 4% last year, in the fourth straight year of decline, but cautions that drop “masks an alarming rise in teenage violence.” In the four years between 1990 and 1994, the murder rate for teens rose 22%. This is especially foreboding because the teen population will increase by 17% over the next 10 years.

A 1993 Met Life survey found that ten percent of teachers and one-fourth of students had been victims of violence in or around schools. Closer to home, although Maryland ranks fifth in the amount spent to fight crime, it ranks tenth in the level of violent crime, and fourth in juvenile violent crime. Finally, the crime rate for our own county, after three years of decline, jumped 13% between 1994 and 1995, more than triple the statewide increase of 4%.

So where do these statistics point for the future? According to Dr. J.A. Fox, Dean of Northeastern University College of Criminal Justice in Boston, “An impending crime wave of teen violence is facing us as the adolescent population begins to rise in America. There are 39 million children under the age of 10 in the U.S., more than we’ve had for decades.

Now let’s look at some of the probable underlying causes for this real or perceived problem. In 1993, in the Government’s first national study of schoolyard violence, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) surveyed 16,000 high school students. More than a tenth of those surveyed had carried a weapon to school in the past month. In New York City schools, also in 1993, officials seized 3,905 weapons, including 4 rifles, in addition to 2,249 weapons detected by the schools’ scanners.

According to a Charleston, West Virginia student, “The attitude is, if you don’t have a gun, you’re nobody.” So weapons are a likely contributing factor. Then there are drugs, including alcohol. An estimated 12.5 million Americans use illegal drugs. 76% are white, and 74% are employed. A government report released this year stated that the rate of drug use among 12-17 year olds was 10.9% last year, almost double the rate of four years ago. The same report states that 46% of parents expect that their children will try illegal drugs. In the above-mentioned CDC survey of 16,000 high school students, one-fourth of them said that they had been offered, sold, or given drugs on school property.

A University of Michigan study of 52,000 students found that one-fourth of eighth graders used illegal drugs at least once in 1994. That percentage rose to 34% if inhalants were included. A 1994 survey by the National Council on Alcoholism found that 20% of tenth graders and 30% of seniors had been drunk in the past month.

And it’s not just the boys. By age 15, a girl is 15 times more likely than her mother to have tried illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.

So what? What is the connection between drug abuse and teen violence?

College students who regularly use marijuana perform poorly on tests of attention, memory, learning, and general intelligence, even after 19 hours without smoking. And as we’ll see in a later section, doing poorly in school puts children at high risk for juvenile delinquency.

If a child smokes marijuana as early as 12 years old, he is 79 times more likely to have an addiction problem later in life. Substance abuse is found in 60-63% of all domestic violence, which is the leading cause of injury in females ages 15-44. According to the DEA, narcotics are implicated in half of all violent crimes and a third of all murders. (Reader’s Digest, September 1996) Alcohol use is implicated in two-thirds of date rapes and other sexual assaults among teens and college students. Finally, in a recent Parade magazine survey, teens themselves most frequently listed drugs as the single worst influence in their lives.

Yet we are seeing fewer anti-drug messages in the media. Conversely, we’re seeing drug abuse, particularly of marijuana treated positively in rap music, in TV programming, and other areas like fashion.
Speaking of Media...Let’s look at the media’s contribution to violence, starting with videos. In 1991, the video game Mortal Kombat debuted and immediately became a huge success. There’s an impressive amount of blood throughout the game, and the winning player can finish off his opponent by ripping his still-beating heart from his chest, or by tearing his head off, with its twitching spine still attached. A spokesman for the company said that the target market was 8-13 year old boys. Mortal Kombat and its sequel have made millions for its producers, and MK III and a movie were released last year. Nintendo, Sega, and Atari have been trying to catch up, “trying to build a better bashing machine.”

According to the Harvard Mental Health Letter of June 1996, more than 100 laboratory studies over a 40 year period show that at least some children exposed to films of dramatic violence act more aggressively toward inanimate objects or other youngsters...There results have been seen in many countries, among boys and girls, and in all social classes, races, ages and levels of intelligence. In addition, more than 50 field studies over the past 20 years have found that children who habitually watch media violence behave more aggressively and accept aggression more readily as a way to solve problems, regardless of age, sex, social class, and previous levels of aggression. Several mechanisms appear to be at work. There is simple imitation, especially if the aggressor is attractive and the aggression is rewarded. Further, the child can justify to himself his own acts of aggression. In addition, there is desensitization to the effects of aggression and to one’s own emotional and physical responses to it. Finally, viewed aggression may provide a “cognitive cue” for future aggressive acts by the viewer.

By the end of elementary school, the average child has seen 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on TV alone. But the learning isn’t only visual. A study by J.D. Johnson of the Psychology Department at UNC Wilmington found that violent rap music increases tolerance of, and predisposition to, violence. More surprising, perhaps, is that non-violent rap was associated within an increased tendency toward materialism, decreased interest in academics, and lower hope for long term personal success. As Maryland’s Attorney General Curran put it, “With the media as their teacher, they learn over and over again that violence is okay—it is rewarded, it works, and it causes no pain.

One form of violence—domestic abuse—is in turn a cause of further violence. Violent youths are four times more likely to come from homes in which their fathers beat their mothers. 2-4 million women are battered each year, and 42% of murdered females are killed by their intimate male partners. More than 3 million children in America witness this brutal treatment of their mothers each year, learning that violence is a legitimate means to control someone and that aggressiveness is a sign of manliness. Ninety-four percent of Maryland prison inmates were abused children. Abused children are three times more likely to be substance abusers, six times more likely to commit suicide, and 74% more likely to commit a crime against another prison.

This brings us to the issue of fathers who are not actively abusive, just absent. Columnist Suzanne Fields believes that the central issue of our times is fatherlessness. At least 15 million children in America live without their biological fathers (that’s 38%). A child’s hero is too often likely to be a drug dealer, womanizer, or whoever else television, rap, and rock lyrics portray as hip. And ironically, the welfare system designed to support single mothers renders the man still more optional.

A closely related problem is teen pregnancy. Why? Children of teenage mothers are three times more likely to end up in prison. And daughters of teenage moms are 83% more likely to become teen mothers themselves, thereby continuing the cycle.

Why do these girls keep having babies? An Illinois Program found that 61% of 445 teen mothers had been sexually abused. The average age at which the abuse started was 11, and half of the abusers were more than 10 years older than their victims. In a Washington State study, where 68% of 535 teen mothers had been abused, the average age of the father was 24. The absence of a father in the home was found to increase the risk of abuse, which was usually by the girl’s stepfather, her mother’s boyfriend, an uncle, cousin, or brother. The study noted that “sexual coercion and rape are much more difficult problems to deal with than saying we have a lot of sexually irresponsible girls out there. Let’s not give them welfare anymore.”

Another underlying problem, according to columnist Leonard Pitts, is “our collective failure as parents. As if they fear to be grown-ups, fear to say to their children “You will not do this because it is wrong...and I love you enough to bear your anger when I must.”

The consequences of not setting boundaries for children are extensive. The assumption that they can have what they want, when they want it creates an entitlement mentality that is frightening as the child becomes an adolescent. Related to the lack of boundaries is a lack of consequences. Some children don’t understand consequences because at home there are none. Even the laws have failed in teaching consequences. For instance, in many states, the records of juvenile offenders are sealed forever at age 18. So whatever they do before that age doesn’t count. Moreover, in West Virginia, for instance, the sentence must be “the least restrictive” punishment for that particular crime. Essentially the laws allow juvenile offenders to thumb their noses at the laws of our society. As a result, crime is glamorized. Teens think jail is no big deal; it may even be seen as a rite of passage, something to be proud of.

Two problems contributing to teen violence are school-related. They are
A revealing examination of a major trading partner:  

Japan: An Outsider’s Inside View  

by Donald J. Clark

About the Author

Donald J. Clark spent eight years in Japan (1978-86) as Area Director (Japan and Korea) for the non-profit Institute of Cultural Affairs, and as a freelance consultant and university lecturer. He lived in Tokyo, traveled extensively, and presented seminars in many parts of Japan. This provided him with unusual opportunities to learn the culture, morals, values, beliefs and behavior patterns of Japanese people. Since moving from Tokyo to Portland, Maine, where he is a consultant to management teams, he and his Japanese wife have organized and led three business tours to study total quality and teamwork in Japanese industry. He holds a B.A. from Williams College and a M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary.

This paper was presented to the Torch Club of Western Maine March 5, 1997.

The Japanese word for a foreigner is “gaijin.” To the Japanese ear “gaijin” has some heavy connotation not associated with our word “foreigner.” A “gaijin” is a foreigner but a “gaijin” is also an “outsider,” someone who isn’t Japanese, who doesn’t understand Japanese culture, who doesn’t know how to behave properly, who really can’t be trusted, who may be dangerous, and, in the deepest reaches of the Japanese psyche, is a barbarian. A foreigner may live in Japan for years, speak Japanese, marry Japanese, but he or she never ceases to be a gaijin.

I was a gaijin for eight years and it was a good life. I was surrounded by Japanese friends, well treated, and addressed as “Clark-sensei” (teacher), a term of high esteem. But I was always a gaijin.

An interesting aspect of Japan’s interface with the world since the middle of the last century is that gaijin have been more successful in explaining the Japanese to others than the Japanese themselves. At the end of the 19th century an American named Lafcadio Hearn lived in and wrote about Japan, and his book Japan, An Interpretation, is a classic guide to understanding Japan. During World War II the U.S. military recognized the need to prepare people to work with the Japanese after the war was over. Ruth Benedict, an anthropologist, was asked to research Japan and write a book. She interviewed Japanese prisoners of war, Japanese Americans, and others, but, with the war, could not visit Japan. Nevertheless her book, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, was excellent, and is to this day a critical reference point for anyone who seeks to know about Japan.

I don’t pretend to be in the same league with Hearn and Benedict, but I do claim the same privilege, interpreting Japan based on an eight year sojourn. Because of my background and the nature of my work, I approached Japan with an open mind, and quietly absorbed the culture, and values, and ambience of the place. I had a sense of getting inside the Japanese mind and to some degree seeing the world the way they see it. I found it agreeable and it answered some need that I had for a different way to approach life’s more inscrutable questions. There was something soothing about Japan which satisfied the soul. In this talk, an outsider’s inside view, perhaps you will hear this undertone and begin to understand what I mean.

But, being a gaijin means being an outsider. I turned out to be a good student of culture but a poor student of language. I accomplished a lot but I was always at least one step removed from the point where decisions were made and actions taken. I married a Japanese women, and together over a period of three years we arrived at the decision to leave Japan for the U.S. My wife now says that Japan is a great place to visit but she wouldn’t want to live there.

Snapshots of Japanese Society

Here are a few quick verbal snapshots of life in Japan.

Image One - Being Japanese is the religion of Japan.

Japan has many holidays but it always seemed to me that New Years most clearly displayed the depths of the Japanese soul. At the end of the year you make things right by paying all your bills, cleaning your house, smoothing out human relationships. Then on New Year’s eve or New Year’s day, you dress well and visit a Shinto Shrine or a Buddhist Temple or both. You join an incredible crowd of people and slowly make your way to the shrine or temple, observe a couple minutes of prayer, toss a few coins in the huge box, clap your hands or ring a big bell, write a prayer for the new year on a small piece of paper and tie it to a bush, and move on. It’s wonderfully refreshing. It has the feeling of a huge family, a people, a cult, disguised as a modern nation.

Perhaps after that, if you live in Tokyo, you make your way to the Imperial Palace and join another huge throng on a large plaza in front of the palace building. Several times during the day the imperial family, the emperor and empress, and the next generation, come out on a glass enclosed second story balcony, dressed in formal western clothes, and wave to the people. In unison the people raise their arms and cry “banza!” the traditional way of honoring the Sun God, even though Emperor Hirohito many years ago renounced his divinity and that of future emperors.

Just below the surface, there is a benign paternalism supported by both the Shinto tradition which binds together the emperor, the land and the people, and the Buddhist tradition of honoring ancestors and family. This unique mixture of tradition and religion provides reassurance and security and order, and is a great underlying strength of Japan.

Image Two - Japan is a “natto” society.

Natto is a fermented bean paste which is eaten as a breakfast food by some people in some parts of Japan. It is as distinctly Japanese as vegemite is Australian and peanut butter is American. Its outstanding characteristic is stickiness. Having never actually tried it I speak only from second hand but it is said that once in your mouth it is nearly impossible to chew.

A contemporary Japanese writer, who
in my opinion has done an exceptional job of writing about Japan and Japanese-ness, called Japan a “natto” society. Everything is dense and close and stuck together. Not only is the population density extreme but it is what we now call a highly wired society. The small spaces between people are filled with emotion, tradition, obligation and shame all coming from the same source, a singular mindset or worldview. This binding consciousness reached a high stage of development during the long centuries when the Japanese islands were isolated from the rest of the world, both by geographical reality and by government policy. In this intense, inwardly focused world, says the writer, decisions are made not in the head but in the “hara,” the stomach or “gut.” The hara is the seat of feelings and emotions, and it is hara that governs decisions.

In Japan one of the most effective forms of punishment for stepping out of line is called “murachichibu,” a practice similar to what the Amish call shunning. In the tight, dense world of Japan, being cut off by others is a punishment worse than death. There is no place to go, no way to pull up stakes and “go west,” and no escape from your isolation. You step back in line or you live a strange half existence. Likewise, in everyday life, you are very careful never to say a definitive “no” to anyone about anything. You may suck air through your teeth and mutter “muzakashi,” “it’s very difficult,” but you don’t say “no,” you preserve your connections, you keep your options open, you nurture the human relationships which surround you and support you.

Being Japanese is a difficult business. A Japanese child experiences freedom, but as he grows older the web of expectations and obligations grows more complex and less forgiving and the natto is less yielding. Image Three - A sparse language in a dense culture.

In this dense society, language is different. If you are Japanese and speaking with other Japanese, you are surrounded by an invisible “field” of meanings, expectations, assumptions, cultural values and intuitive perceptions, all developed over many generations and transmitted to you through your mother’s milk and the air you breathe. You can count on the fact that you are speaking to someone like you who lives in the same mental and emotional world as you do and who understands your unspoken thoughts as well as your words.

Therefore language stops short of detailed precision and relies heavily on non-verbal expression. In fact, the whole tradition of Chinese characters, which the Japanese adopted long ago, is communication through images or pictures, not through descriptions. Frequently when two people are talking, one will begin to “write” on the palm of his hand, drawing the character which conveys a subtle but complex meaning that mere sound cannot. In contrast, we English speakers use lots of words, struggling to find the right ones in exactly the right combination to inform the other person precisely what we mean.

That does not mean that the Japanese language is simple. It’s exceptionally difficult in two ways: what it does communicate, and how it is written. It’s the nuances that count in a natto society. There are three different ways of talking, depending on whether the person to whom you are speaking is above you, or below you, or on the same level and the pronouns for “I” and “you” are seldom used. It is the “what” that counts, not the “who.” There are honorifics, and courtesies, and references which, most say, are just beyond the ability of the non-Japanese late comer to the language ever to master. Language reinforces the status of gaijin.

Centuries ago the Japanese adopted the Chinese style of character based writing, and adapted it. While the Chinese actively use seven or eight thousand different characters, the Japanese use “only” about 3,000, and with a knowledge of 1,800 characters you can read a newspaper. These are called “kanji.” To supplement this form of writing, the Japanese then invented a 46 character system called “hiragana” which can be used to write word sounds what cannot be captured by the kanji. This is a relatively simple system using five vowels matched to write word sounds what cannot be captured by the kanji. This is a relatively simple system using five vowels matched up with the basic consonant sounds. Illustration: a, i, u, e, o; ka, ki, ku, ke, ko. Consonants cannot stand on their own. Then, the Japanese invented a second set of 46 characters, called “katakana,” conveying exactly the same sounds, but used for writing non-Japanese words imported temporarily or permanently into common usage. For example, here is the word “computer” in katakana, kon-psyu-ta. Or take my name: Clark. In katakana, it comes out Kiu-la-ku.

I find it interesting to speculate as to what this system does to the minds of children as they move through the educational process. My guess, its that it requires a level of mental discipline which exceeds anything we experience in learning to write English. Perhaps this discipline underlies some of the impressive achievements of Japanese society. Image Four - Borrow, adapt and improve.

Western society uses the word “imitate” as a put-down when trying to diminish the Japanese achievement. They don’t create, they say, they imitate (or borrow, or copy, or steal). It is, in fact, true that the Japanese have adopted important components of their culture from others, but be very careful when evaluating this fact. From China came a system of writing, public architecture, rice cultivation, tea, Zen and Confucius. From Korea Japan received Buddhism, and various arts and crafts. From the west they imported technology, modern education methods, parliamentary democracy, modern military science, and much, much more.

Japanese genius lies in the ability to adapt and improve, and to integrate the new into the old while improving both. The key word, is “improve.” On any list of Japanese values, improvement would be in the top two or three, and that means improvement of anything and everything, beginning with one’s self, and including the land a farmer cultivates, the craft one pursues, the technology one uses, the tools one creates, and the services one provides. Even a reliable cash cow like the Sony Walkman has never been allowed to coast on its popularity—it has been improved with every passing year. Herein lies the secret behind the astonishing success Dr. W. Edwards Deming enjoyed in “teaching” the Japanese about quality. The principles were already in place; he helped them with methods and techniques.

A side note about religion may be of interest. Shinto is the religion of Japan, a rather simple belief in spirits and gods closely wed to the land and the people. Shinto includes everyone. Buddhism was imported, adapted and, “improved,” and became a second major component in Japan’s religious mosaic. With it’s infinite flexibility, Buddhism became Japanese and made peace with Shinto. The two happily exist side by side and most homes have both a Shinto shrine for the gods, and a Buddhist altar for the ancestors. This is further complicated by Confucianism which was imported from China around the time of the great shogun, Tokugawa, and became the underlying value system of Japan defining a hierarchy of relationships. Christianity was a religious intrusion that came with the early
Europeans, and it enjoyed some early successes. When the chips were down in the mid 17th century, however, the Jesuits and others chose to cling to a demand for doctrinal purity and exclusive loyalty, and Christianity all but disappeared. The Japanese discovered that becoming a Christian really meant ceasing to be Japanese.

How Japan Got That Way

When I was preparing to move to Japan in 1978 a friend on mine offered some advice. “Remember,” he said, “the Japanese do everything upside down and backwards.” It was good advice. The longer I lived there the more I realized that in values, practices, thinking, relationships, and dozens of other ways, the Japanese are 180 degrees away from western ways. They are our opposites. Perhaps the “snapshots” have given you some feeling for this very unusual culture.

The question then is this, “How did Japan get this way?” Here are a few factors to think about.

• Geography and demography

Japan is an island nation with a land mass about equal to Montana. It is constantly threatened by earthquakes and typhoons. Except for some coal which is now gone, it has no natural resources other than water. Some 80% or more of the land is mountainous and sparsely populated. The density of population on the flat lands of the Kanto plain where Tokyo is located, and in Kinki area around Osaka, is extraordinary. Japan has always been more heavily populated than most places in the world and today supports over 120 million people, 50% of the U.S. population, and these tiny bits of land.

Geography and demography have over the centuries forced the Japanese to focus on cooperation, mutuality and values that stress the group rather than the individual. In the rice growing village typical of Japan, cooperation is essential. Rice must be planted and harvested at very specific times. rice growing village.

• Religious and intellectual isolation

The Japanese islands have never been successfully invaded. During long centuries Japan was occasionally threatened by China and Korea, but never conquered. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Europeans began arriving and their economic and religious aggression began to have a serious impact on Japanese society. It became a matter of great concern, and thus in the middle of the 17th century, when the Shogun Tokugawa established a stable national government, it was not long before he forced the westerners out, closed down all western commercial and religious enterprises, and slammed the door. The door remained securely closed for 200 years and Japanese culture continued to develop in its unique way while other cultures in Asia and Africa were colonized and westernized, and therefore changed forever. It’s difficult to name another place in the world that remained as free of western influence for so long.

Further, the Japanese islands have never in recorded history received migrants and are therefore highly homogeneous. The only exceptions are a small number of aboriginal Ainu, and some Koreans imported for labor in the first half of this century whose children’s children are still not allowed to become Japanese citizens. Japan’s naive, animistic and timeless spirituality has never included belief in one God who rules the universe, nor produced a “Bible” which delivers God’s revealed truths, nor preached a theology of guilt and forgiveness and salvation. There has never been an awakening like the European Renaissance when feudalism and superstition were shrugged off. The Japanese have never experienced a scientific revolution resulting in a secularization of their society. Right and Wrong, and Good and Bad, are concepts foreign to a society in which life is ruled by a web of obligations and duties rooted in the family, community and the cult which is the nation. Shame before your neighbor, not guilt before God, is the sanction which prevails.

• The top down revolution

Following centuries of natural, and then enforced isolation, Japan made a move in the middle of the 19th century. The Tokugawa shogunate was showing weaknesses after 200 years, at exactly the same time that the west was again showing its strengths. Remember Admiral Perry. From this situation arose a cadre of young nobles who planned and led an almost entirely bloodless revolution, and transformed their country. They restored the emperor to a key role and got rid of the shogun. They sent students to the west to learn, and invited western experts to Japan. In very short order they created a modernized nation that was prepared to compete in the world with the established powers of the west.

But Japan remained Japan. The parliamentary political system, the trains and electricity, the factories and the goods they produced, the national education system, the universities; all this was a layer of modernity spread over the top of an ancient and stable culture like butter on a piece of bread.

The Drama of Today and Tomorrow

This was not a problem for the first 120 years following the Meiji restoration in 1868; indeed, it was a distinct advantage. The Japanese people had the advantage of an established social discipline, the tradition of learning and adopting, and a value system that supported study, work and improvement. This enabled Japan to quickly join the small club of developed nations with a strong military capability and in 1904, a mere 40 years after modernization began, startled the world by beating a great European power, Russia, and, a few years later, conquering most of Asia. After that sorry misadventure, these same characteristics supported Japan’s rise from a defeated and devastated country to a world economic position second only to the U.S. We were awed by this achievement and if we are wise we will continue to listen carefully and learn from the Japanese.

The Japanese, however, are now in a totally new situation, and the weaknesses of their political, social and economic systems are becoming apparent. The natto society discourages individualism and the nails that have stuck up have been hammered down for a long time. This same society is very uncomfortable with any course of action that has not first been exhaustively examined, and improved, and approved by everyone who is or will be involved. For a long time this was not a major obstacle to dealing with the world. Now it is. The speed of change in the information age, in technology, science, trade relations, global politics, to name only a few, has left Japan reeling. The economy must be restructured and businesses must become leaner and more flexible. The massive centralized bureaucracy which is highly respected, and

Please see "Japan," page 31
A view of problems which sometimes appear insoluble.

Tracking the Arab-Israeli Conflict

by C. Walter Clark, Ph.D.

About the Author

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The Arab-Israeli conflict seems endless and insoluble. One hears that its roots lie in antiquity, in a distant past to which parties to the dispute today, Jews and Arabs, make reference. It isn’t. The conflict is modern, with directed roots in nineteenth and twentieth century European and Middle Eastern history. While not a continuous ancient struggle, it is protracted. If we may trace it back to the first waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine, Aliyahs, it is a century old.

I shall attempt to track the conflict in a manner which will shed light upon its changing character and permit us better to comprehend its current status. My analysis is geared to two important characteristics of the conflict, that it is multilevel and two-dimensional. It has been waged at three levels: international, regional, and domestic. Each level has identifiable actors or players, pursuing interests in cooperation or competition with other players, and by their behavior affecting the nature and direction of the conflict. The focus of the conflict moves among these three levels over time, and changes in politics at each level affect Arab-Israeli relations including prospects for peaceful settlement.

In addition, the conflict has interstate and intercommunal dimensions. At times it is an interstate conflict principally; at other times it is primarily intercommunal, a conflict between two communities in a single territory. As I will seek to demonstrate, at the present moment the most important dimension is intercommunal, and the focus of the conflict is domestic. The chief external actor is the United States. It is my view that in the present circumstances, if the United States is unwilling to perform as a strong interventionist broker, what happens over the short term will be determined by the idiosyncrasies of Israeli and Palestinian domestic politics.

International Level

From the beginning, the Jewish-Arab conflict involved international and regional actors. Major external forces included individual states with power and interests in the Middle East as well as regional and global intergovernmental actors, such as the League of Nations and, at the end of World War II, the United Nations and Arab League.1 We begin by considering changes in the conflict at the international level.

A feature of the conflict for much of the recent past was competition and cooperation in the region between Cold War superpowers. In 1956 Washington and Moscow collaborated in securing international rejection of the invasion of Egyptian territory by Israeli, British, and French troops, creating in the process the first United Nations peacekeeping force. From the late 1950s into the 1970s conflict was the hallmark of Soviet-American relations in the region. Moscow withdrew diplomatic recognition of Israel at the time of the 1967 Six-Day War, and, in 1973, the U.S. and USSR, backing opposing sides in a fourth Arab-Israeli War, engaged each other in nuclear saber rattling and brinkmanship diplomacy. The superpowers invested billions of dollars providing military and economic support to their regional clients. The regional balance of superpower influence shifted in the late 1970s when Egypt, under leadership of Anwar Sadat, switched Cold War patrons and reached out to Israel. The U.S. seized that opportunity to broker a peace between Israel and Egypt.

U.S. diplomatic efforts were unable in 1982 to prevent Israel’s invasion of Lebanon, and Israel became involved in its longest war, directed in this instance against the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was at that time headquartered in Beirut. Now, amazingly, the PLO leader’s headquarters is in Gaza.

The reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s brought “New Thinking”2 to Soviet Foreign policy and disrupted economic and political life in the USSR sufficiently to set the stage for an end to Communist Party rule and collapse of the union itself. He was the precipitating cause of the end of the Cold War, and, with its end, one of the external factors which fueled the struggle between Israel and its neighbors disappeared. In the post-Cold War, Washington and Moscow cooperated in the liberation of Kuwait following Iraq’s invasion and as co-hosts for Palestinian-Israeli peace talks in Madrid.

In brief, in the 1990s configurations of interests and forces at the international
level favor a peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. What about the regional picture?

**Regional Level**

At the time of the founding of Israel, Arab states were united in their commitment to eradicate the Jewish state, believed to have been established with imperialist backing in the heart of the Arab world. The Jewish presence in the region was a major factor keeping the ideal of Arab nationalism alive. In its most idealized form, Arab nationalism aspired to eventual unity of the entire Arab world. Over time the call for Arab unity grew weaker, in no small part because individual Arab states developed substantial state interests sometimes in conflict with interests of other Arab states. While hostility to Israel was the strongest force holding Arab states together, it would be insufficient in the end to advance the goal of Arab unity in a substantial way. Clearest expression of the goals and policies of the Arab nation as a whole may be seen in the debates and resolutions of the Arab League.

Arab rejectionism—rejection of a political, that is, peaceful, settlement of the conflict—was strongest in the first 25 years of the life of Israel in which time the conflict was overwhelmingly interstate in character, a continuing, often violent struggle between Israel and its neighboring Arab states. Palestinian Arabs, mostly refugees in territories bordering Israel, were without a government of their own and front-line Arab states, especially Egypt and Jordan, were self-appointed representatives of Palestinian interests. In 1964, at the first Arab summit meeting held at Arab League headquarters in Cairo, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was created. From the start the PLO operated in a position of dependence on established Arab states, even after 1968, when one of its several factions, al-Fatah—Fatah meaning conquest—led by Yasser Arafat, achieved internal dominance.

From 1952 to 1970 the Arab world had a recognized leader, Gamel Abd al-Nasser, the Egyptian president, and under his leadership was committed to a military solution to the Israeli problem. His actions in the mid-1950s—blockading the Strait of Tiran at the south end of the Red Sea, sponsoring Fedeyeen raids from Gaza into Israel, and nationalizing the Suez Canal—provoked the 1956 war which, while a military success for Israel, was a political success for Nasser, who presented himself as an Arab leader who successfully stood up against Israel and western imperialism. That political achievement assured Nasser the position of leader of the Arab Nation, a position he occupied until the next war, the Six-Day War in 1967, which was a great military victory by Israel over Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, giving to Israel control over the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Golan Heights.

Nasser died in 1970. The next Arab Israeli War, in 1973, was initiated by his successor, Anwar Sadat, who had in mind a limited military goal undertaken for major territorial and political purposes. He wanted the return of the Sinai Peninsula, an end to the state of war with Israel, and improved relations with the United States, whom he anticipated would be a more useful patron than the Soviet Union. Israel was surprised by the Egyptian attack and suffered early setbacks in both the Sinai and, at the hands of Syria, in the Golan. While Israel would recover and mount successful counteroffensives, the war would end with Egyptian forces in control of territory held before the attack by the Israeli army. Egyptian pride, badly damaged in 1967, was revived, and Sadat’s authority as Egypt’s president was enhanced. From an improved political position at home, Sadat initiated independent overtures leading through American brokerage to a separate peace with Israel. Sinai was once more a part of Egypt, and U.S. economic aid flowed into Egypt. These achievements did not come without political cost. Egypt was expelled from the Arab League, and Sadat was assassinated.

Having used military strength to repel and defeat neighboring states, Israel would next employ military force in an attempt to defeat the PLO. Concerned especially about the possibility of enhanced PLO influence among Palestinians under Israel’s military occupation and PLO-inspired terror, Israel invaded Lebanon in a war against the PLO. While one goal was achieved—the PLO was forced to evacuate its Lebanon based guerrilla forces and its headquarters—the costs to Israel were high. Israel’s conduct in the war, especially heavy shelling of civilian neighborhoods in Beirut and complicity in the Sabra and Shatilla massacres, caused loss of favor in the international community and promoted, for the first time, serious division within Israeli society in time of war. Moreover, prolonged Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon alienated Shi’i Muslims and contributed to the rise of a new anti-Israeli element there, the Iran-supported Hizbollah.

In the 1980s and 1990s the focus of the Arab-Israeli conflict shifted to the Palestinian-Israeli struggle, which had both interstate and intercommunal dimensions. The interstate dimension prevailed in the early 1980s, highlighted by Israel’s war against the PLO in Lebanon. The intercommunal struggle, brought to center stage by the eruption of the Intifada, the Palestinian uprising in Gaza and the West Bank, became the dominate dimension of the conflict in the late 1980s. As the intercommunal conflict is in the domestic arena, it will be dealt with in the next section of this paper, however, it is possible at this point to draw some general conclusions about the evolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict at the regional-level.

One evident pattern in that evolution is the gradual decline in strength of Arab Nationalism. It was a force strongest in the 1950s and 1960s largely because of two stimuli, the common bond of...
rejectionism among Arab states and the

competition between antagonistic superpowers for clients and advantages within the region. Arab Nationalism declined for a variety of reasons. In several important Arab states the experiences of the 1967 and 1973 wars led to growing disinterest in a military solution to the conflict with Israel. Yet, at the same time, these unsuccessful Arab military efforts contributed to the rise of Islamist or Islamic Fundamentalist movements in the region. Also in the 1970s, Soviet-American détente reduced somewhat the regional competition between Moscow and Washington and facilitated agreements between Israel and Egypt reached at Camp David. Egypt’s defection from the ranks of rejectionist Arab states weakened the spirit of the anti-Israeli movement in the region as well as its emergence of a more independent PLO, which, belatedly but certainly, gained authority within the Arab world as “the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.” In 1993, the PLO was recognized by Israel and the United States as having that authority, making possible the Oslo Accord.

**Domestic Level**

We may now turn to examine developments in the domestic level of the conflict. The domestic level achieved a central position with the outbreak of the Intifada in December 1987. The Intifada was a spontaneous popular Palestinian uprising against Israel’s military occupation in Gaza and the West Bank, although, at the time, both the Israeli government and the PLO denied its spontaneity. Mark Tessler, in his detailed history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, concludes that the Intifada was intended as a message to Israel and the world. Put simply the message was: “We exist and have political rights, and there will be no peace until these rights are recognized.” It was an explosion of civil disobedience, in part a struggle between young rock-throwing Palestinians and armed Israeli Defense Force personnel, though over time it became more violent. Even thinking in strategic and policy making circles was influenced by the Intifada, as evidenced by a 1989 Jaffé Center report in which a respected body of Israeli academics and former military and intelligence officials accepted the possibility of a Palestinian state in the occupied territories.

Understanding the Intifada requires going back twenty years before its outbreak to the Six Day War of 1967. Before 1967 it was meaningful to talk about Israel as a Jewish state, as only 17% of its population were non-Jews. I refer to Israeli-Arabs who remained behind at the time of the 1948 war of independence. Now suddenly with the territorial expansion of 1967 more than one-third of the population in Israeli controlled territory were Arabs. Post-1967 Israel is a bi-national state, in which Palestinians under occupation were subjected to military authority under which control over many aspects of their lives was in the hands of Israelis. These would include the ability to move from place to place, access to water resources, whether or not their schools would be open or closed, their ability to occupy or settle land and to participate in politics and social action. In some periods, when Israeli policies tended toward the generous, West Bank Palestinians were represented in the Jordanian Parliament. But always, Palestinians were subject to decisions made by the Israeli government employing a harsh occupier’s law, the law, in fact, which the British military had developed for application during its reign as a colonial power. A new generation of Palestinian Arabs, born and raised under military occupation, emerged in 1987, resentful of its position and lacking fear of the IDF, and the Intifada is the result.

The Intifada altered the calculus of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and its consequences are important for both Palestinian and Jewish communities. Within the Palestinian community it illustrated a willingness and a capacity to act independently, without direction from the Arab League, from Jordan, or from the PLO. It also proved to be an opposition which Israel found extremely difficult to control. Its regional military superiority was of little avail. The harsher the suppression, the wider the support for the Intifada among Palestinians. And harsh methods were applied: breaking the legs and/or hands of young Palestinians so that they could not run nor throw stones; long periods of incarceration without benefit of trial; occasional application of torture during interrogation; bulldozing homes of families of terrorists, and so on. It was a terrible time as well for Israeli soldiers who were taunted, injured, sometimes killed. The Intifada would wind down only when, in the aftermath of the Iraq-Kuwait war, under Soviet-American sponsorship, Palestinian leaders were allowed to join in peace talks in Madrid.

The Six-Day War and, in time, the Intifada, had important consequences for Israeli society and politics as well. One consequence was felt with particular force in the IDF. Israeli soldiers, while quite willing to go to war against enemies outside Israel’s borders, were much less comfortable as occupiers, policing refugee camps and West Bank and Gaza towns and cities. Policing became more demanding and sometimes exasperating with the growth in number of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

The most important consequence of the Six-Day War for Israel was the impact of its territorial conquests on its politics. It is only after the 1967 war that the ideal of Eretz Yisrael (Land of Israel) becomes a major political force. Used often to refer to a “greater Israel,” extending well beyond the boundaries at the time of independence, the concept was embraced to legitimize the right of Israel to hold on to territories seized in 1967. Also, significantly, the Six Day
War gave life and substance to a messianic territorial Zionism that has since grown in influence in Israel's political life. It is manifested by Gush Emunim, 10 the ideological and organizational life of the settlers' movement, which offers a brand of "territorial Zionism" proclaiming "That the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over the Biblical Land of Israel would deepen the spiritual character of the country and hasten the coming of the Messiah." The National Religious Party also increased in prominence following the Six-Day War. NRP, represented in the present Cabinet, has argued that Judea and Samaria, which is how the political right in Israel refers to the West Bank, was the central core of the Holy Land and to withdraw from it would be a violation of Jewish law.

The settlement movement did not begin in full force immediately after the 1967 war, rather it developed through three stages. In the beginning, under a Labor government, paramilitary settlements were established in the hilly terrain overlooking the Jordan River. Labor, at that time as now, accepted the strategy of trading land for peace, which was also the requirement of UN resolution 242 which brought an end to the 1967 war. In Labor's plan, therefore, settlements were viewed as geostrategic facts on the land to be retained in Israeli hands as security insurance after the West Bank was returned to Jordan in exchange for a peace settlement.

The second stage in the history of the settlement movement is the Gush Emunim-Likud phase beginning in 1977. On the Gush Emunim side, settlements were created and expanded because they had redemptive value. Gush Emunim has an Ethno-nationalist outlook based on the belief that each nation has its own character and that a territory and a people are not separable. Therefore territorial Zionists, such as members of Gush Emunim, always talk about the "Land of Israel" and never about the State of Israel. While many in the Likud shared these views, some did not, yet the Likud sought to create Jewish settlements in occupied territories as political facts on the land, not in preparation for a trade of land for peace, but rather to prevent the possibility of any future integrated, contiguous Palestinian political entity. The Likud government, after coming to power in 1977, accepted the so-called Drobles Plan as a general guide. The settlement plan was defined by Drobles as follows: State land and uncultivated land [along the central massif in the West Bank] must be seized immediately in order to settle the areas between the concentrations of minority population and around them, with the objective of reducing to the minimum the possibility for the development of another Arab state in these regions. It would be difficult for the minority population to form a territorial continuity and political unity when it is fragmented by Jewish settlements.

The meaning of political facts on the land is made clear in this statement. The increased size of the Jewish population in the West Bank, however, did not so much result from these linked religious and political motives, but from economic ones under a third phase in the settlement drive. From 1977, when the second settlement phase began, until 1981, the number of Jews resident in the West Bank only increased from 5,000 to 17,500. This suggests that the annexationist zeal of territorial Zionism was not widely shared in the Israeli population at large. Beginning in 1981, however, a new strategy for creating political facts on the land began. Under leadership of Ariel Sharon, whose image was tarnished by his complicity in the Sabra and Shatilla massacres in Beirut in 1982 but who is now once more a member of the Israeli cabinet, bedroom communities were created with substantial government subsidization. Large numbers of Israelis moved into these communities, each within 24 kilometers from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. That's approximately 20 to 45 minutes driving time. In this way, the Jewish population in the West Bank grew rapidly, reaching its present size of about 115,000. The Palestinian population, referred to as the "minority" by Drobles, numbers about 1,000,000.

A political derivative of this effort was the expansion of support for settlements in occupied territories within the moderate mainstream of Israeli society. All in all, the settlements create serious obstacles to a final peace, especially the creation of a contiguous territory for the Palestinian authority. And this is by design, just as it is by design that Benjamin Netanyahu in March 1997 authorized proceeding to build a Jewish neighborhood in predominantly Arab East Jerusalem. The final settlement regarding Jerusalem is made more difficult by this act. Deliberately.

Today the domestic level of the Arab-Israeli conflict is framed by the Israeli-Palestinian Accord (or Oslo Accord) which included the following: a Declaration of Principles (September 1993); letters of mutual recognition written by Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin, which were an essential requirement before the Accord could be ratified; and the Cairo Agreement (March 1994). The Accord is asymmetrical, reflecting Israeli advantages: Israel is a state and the PLO is not; Israel controls the territory in dispute; and Israel enjoys enormous military and economic advantages over the PLO. Yasser Arafat was attracted to the Accord because it afforded him opportunity to recover from a position in the early 1990s of extreme military, financial and political weakness.

The Accord is a five-year interim agreement embracing the formula of an exchange of land for peace, citing UN resolutions 242 and 383. It calls for initial establishment of Palestinian authority in Gaza and Jericho, with subsequent expansion of that authority in the West Bank. Certain matters are specifically
defered until the final settlement, these matters being left in the interim, therefore, to the unilateral discretion of Israel. Included in this category are contentious issues: Jerusalem, Jewish settlements and their internal security, and Israeli military sites in the occupied territories. Disputes over interpretation and implementation are to be resolved by direct negotiations through a Joint Liaison Committee. Should negotiations fail, provision is made to employ conciliation or arbitration, but only by agreement of both sides.19

What is clear about the Oslo framework is that responsibility for the Israeli-Palestinian relationship is fixed squarely on the leadership of the two sides. The two leaderships reflect, of course, the political character of their own communities, which we shall now examine.

The Palestinian Community is scattered. At the beginning of the present decade the approximately 4.5 million Palestinians were spread about as follows: approximately 700,000 in Israel proper, these are the Israeli Arabs; one million in the West Bank and 600,000 in the Gaza Strip; 1.2 million in Jordan; and between 200,000 and 300,000 each in Lebanon, Syria, and Kuwait and other Persian Gulf emirates. After 1991 many Palestinians in Kuwait and the Gulf were forced to seek residence elsewhere. The immediate population base for the Palestinian Authority therefore is 1.6 million. What legal relationship Israelis-Arabs will have with the Authority is yet to be determined. And in the Palestinian Diaspora outside Israeli-controlled territory, there are approximately 2.1 million people. Their relationship to the Authority and the prospects of their return to Palestine remain major puzzles.

Palestinians divide their political loyalties. Most identify with the PLO, but it must be remembered the PLO is a coalition of many factions. The largest of these is al-Fatah, headed by Arafat. His authority to speak effectively for the entire PLO derives from an ability to fashion compromises among factions. He managed, for example, to secure support for the Oslo peace initiative from George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine faction. Yet the Popular Front remains a rival to Arafat’s leadership both inside and outside the occupied territories. Hamas, an Arabic word meaning “zeal,” is the acronym for Islamic Resistance Movement, a militant wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West Bank and Gaza which appeared in response to the Intifada. Hamas is a rejectionist element—that is, it rejects the goal of political settlement—and it is popular. Its popularity derives not so much from terrorist actions as from its social and economic activities among the poor in the Palestinian community, and the poor are abundant.

Arafat and the Fatah faction, therefore, face substantial opposition within the Palestinian community itself. The Oslo Accord and the creation of a Palestinian Authority under Arafat’s leadership enhanced his stature, but continued support is linked to progress toward the ultimate goal of statehood as well as more immediate advances in economic well-being for the community. The Accord itself grants little power to the Palestinian leader, yet imposes on him some heavy expectations, including the prevention of acts of terrorism directed against Israelis and controlling outbreaks of violence, responsibilities about which he frequently is reminded. Fulfilling these responsibilities is made difficult by virtue of the fact that Fatah has limited means of control its political rivals especially at times when provocative actions by Israeli and Israeliin fuel nationalist passions among Palestinians. In such circumstances, when Arafat does too much to rein in Palestinian passions, he loses political support in the community; when he does too little, he is subjected to the wrath of the Israeli government. Rocks and hard places come to mind.

The Israeli community is divided in a variety of ways. On the issue of Israeli-Arab conflict a fundamental line of division is that between those who believe there can be no peace without security and those who believe there can be no security without peace. To an extent this is a Likud-Labor division. In the 1996 political campaign Benjamin Netanyahu argued that there were inadequate guarantees for security in the Oslo Accord. Labor leader Shimon Peres countered by insisting that there could be no security until peace was made with the Palestinians. Netanyahu won that election by a razor thin margin.

On the right wing of Likud and among the Likud government’s coalition allies are rejectionists, political leaders who oppose the peace process itself. Some of these are in the Cabinet. Three Cabinet ministers responded to the Hamas suicide bombing in Tel Aviv on March 21 with a demand to end negotiations with the Palestinian Authority and impose economic sanctions against Palestinians areas. Earlier in March in the aftermath of the slaying of Jewish school girls by a deranged Jordanian soldier a senior Cabinet minister told a political meeting that if violence broke out, “the Israeli Army might reoccupy all Palestinian areas and drive Mr. Arafat back into exile.”

On the Israeli side of the Oslo Accord decisions are made by a leadership that is, at best, only cautiously committed to the process, and, at worst, opposed to it. Moreover, there are rejectionists on the right wing of that government who are, as Israeli writer Amos Oz put it, “opposed to any kind of peace based on the recognition of the existence of two peoples living on the same land.” A common interest exists between this element in Israel’s leadership and Hamas.

Conclusion

There is no doubt about the timing of the present crisis in the peace process. It erupted following the Israeli government’s decision to begin construction of a large Jewish neighborhood—a settlement—in East

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Jerusalem, inevitably perceived by Palestinians as a continuation of the Likud settlement policy, another fact on the ground, to be in place to affect any final political arrangement. It is certain that Prime Minister Netanyahu knew this decision would be provocative. The plan for that settlement has existed for some time. It was not implemented under Labor precisely because it would likely upset the peace process. A similar plan to open a tunnel along the Western Wall beneath a Muslim holy site was also not acted upon by previous Israeli governments because it was too provocative, yet Prime Minister Netanyahu, in September 1996, opened the tunnel. Predictably, demonstrations and outbreaks of violence followed. 61 Palestinians and 15 Israelis were killed.

Now the situation at the domestic level is one in which rejectionists in both camps flourish, and terror and violent recrimination are the consequences. The authority of Arafat diminishes in this setting. To be aggressively firm against rejectionists in the Palestinian community means to stand against his own people. And in Israeli politics the power of the moderate center is reduced by circumstances of evident insecurity.

At the regional level, Israel’s recent actions are reviving an urge to unity among Arab states stronger than at any time since the early 1980s. Arab states, for the most part, believe they cannot stand by quietly to witness Israel’s continued territorial acquisition at the expense of Palestinians. Islamist elements in Arab societies and remaining rejectionist Arab states benefit by these circumstances. Governments in Arab states taking the lead in supporting the peace process—Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia—are constrained by domestic Islamist groups quite as much as Netanyahu may be constrained by Israeli rejectionist groups.

Post-Cold War circumstances at the international level are such that only one outside player has sufficient influence to affect the peace process, and that is the United States. At present two factors operate to limit the degree of U.S. intervention. One is the knowledge that America’s domestic political configuration makes it risky to appear to favor Arab interests over Jewish interests. U.S. foreign policy statements are more likely to be openly critical of Arafat than of Netanyahu, as was the case when Dennis Ross, the U.S. special envoy to the Middle East, returned in late March from an emergency trip to speak with the two leaders. Ross’ first public statements stressed the need to curb violence as the essential prerequisite to reviving the peace process, which is, of course, the Likud position.

The second factor restricting the current level of U.S. intervention is the need to be successful. Intervention must produce an achievement in the manner of the Camp David breakthrough in September 1978.

For the time being, therefore, the peace process is stalled. The locus of the process is the domestic level, and there is in the process a great asymmetry in power between opposing sides, so that the direction taken is being determined principally by a partly reluctant and partly rejectionist Israeli government. Changes of substance within Israeli politics and/or increased external pressure on Israel seem necessary to return to the peace track. The Israeli political scandal, which involves the indictment of the head of the Shas Party, a coalition partner in Netanyahu’s cabinet, makes it less likely that a Likud-Labor collaboration will take place, and the absence of circumstances conducive to dramatic American brokerage makes effective U.S. intervention any time soon unlikely.

References
1 The Arab League is today an intergovernmental organization of 22 Arab states. It was formed in 1944 at meetings in Alexandria, Egypt, with the first Arab League Council established in 1945.
2 Elements of “New Thinking” included breaking out of the security dilemma by seeking to achieve security through cooperation with the U.S., an end to expansionist elements of Soviet foreign policy, which included major roll backs such as withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan, and the promotion of nuclear disarmament.
3 The league was first organized to promote the interests of Arab peoples and, most immediately, to organize opposition to Palestinian Jews and later to Israel. In 1978 Egypt’s membership was suspended following the Camp David Accord. Egypt returned to the League in 1987. In 1990 the League attempted to resolve the Gulf Crisis, without success, though it did not adopt resolutions condemning Iraq’s conquest of Kuwait.
4 Fedeyeen is an Arabic term meaning guerrilla forces, commandos, or terrorists. Since the 1950s it is applied mainly to Palestinian terrorist groups.
5 “Party of God,” a religious Shi’i organization in Lebanon said to have ties with Iran.
6 The Arab League summit in Rabat in 1974 declared the PLO to be “the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people,” a position given additional practical substance with Egypt’s “defection” in 1978 and Jordan’s King Hussein’s renunciation of claims to the West Bank in 1988.
10 Roughly translated: “Community of Believers.”
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The Awards Committee Chair, Mary Alice Butkofsky, should have your nominations by March 31, 1999. Please send a copy to your regional director too.
Is the term “business ethics” an oxymoron?

Building the Ethics of Business in a Global Economy

by David C. Smith, Ph.D.

About the Author

David C. Smith is president of the Council for Ethics in Economics, a Columbus, Ohio-based worldwide association of leaders in business education, and the professions working to strengthen the ethical fabric of business and economic life. He has designed and presented seminars and workshops on ethics in organizations for executives and managers of businesses, various levels of government, colleges and universities, and not-for-profit organizations. In addition, he is the author of articles and book reviews in the Business Ethics Quarterly and the Journal of Business Ethics as well as the lead chapter in the book Ethical Dimensions of College and University Teaching: Understanding and Honoring the Special Relationship Between Teachers and Students published by Jossey-Bass. He holds a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis and a Ph.D. from Yale University. He is a member of the Columbus, Ohio Torch Club.

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In the broad sweep of history, business and commerce are activities that have had a profound impact on shaping human experience. To think simply of the civilization of the West, the reference point for many of us as we enter a global age, commerce as much as conquest has shaped our society and environment. In the ancient world, economic ties and trade provided the social context for the spread and interaction of those philosophical and religious ideas and values that form our fundamental intellectual tradition. Later, the settlement of the New World was driven by a complex interplay of economic, political, and religious motivations.

The exploitation of science and innovation for economic gain, technology, drove the great industrial revolution of the West with its profound historical consequences of urbanism and mass society. The systematic acquisition and investment of capital has created large enterprises whose daily actions can enhance or diminish the lives of thousands of people.

To continue painting in broad strokes, whatever the historical import of business may be, the ethical tradition of Western civilization has tended to take a rather negative view of this human activity. Perhaps at the root of this ethical discomfort with business is the suspicion that those who devote themselves to the purchase and sales of goods and services face special temptations of dishonesty, or risk the loss of virtuous moderation, as they struggle for gain in the hurly-burly of the marketplace. Jesus’ vivid, absurdest simile of a camel struggling to pass through the eye of a needle speaks to the dilemma of wealth, if not to the life of business per se.

The worldviews descending from Platonism and Stoicism, characterized by a hierarchical Chain of Being, place business’ focus on material goods and practical particulars on a rather lowly rung of human activity in comparison with the more elevated contemplation of abstract ideas and eternal verities. The dualism of matter and mind that runs through the Western tradition would also seem to imply the complete disconnection of business enterprise from moral worth, a connection which is, however, reestablished through almsgiving or the suggestion of the Protestant ethic that the accumulation of wealth—conducted in a spirit of sober duty (Weber’s “this-worldly asceticism”) may be a sign of election. There are possibilities for the camel to squeeze through after all.

In sum, the notion that “business ethics is an oxymoron” is hardly a new notion. And as much as I detest that cliche, I might as well acknowledge that, not only is it alive and well; it has a rather distinguished intellectual lineage.

The Thesis

Against this background, what sense can we make out of the business ethics movement of our own time? On the academic side, what can we hope from the hundreds of university business ethics courses or ethics modules in business-discipline courses? Granted, the concern with business ethics has created a demand for textbooks and case studies, for scholarly journals and learned societies, for specialized scholars, and now for distinguished scholars to fill endowed chairs of business ethics. But beyond these typical hallmarks of academic professionalism, what can we hope for from this investment? What can we hope ethically from this endeavor? What impact will it have on how future business decision makers act when the well-being of persons is at stake?

On the business side, too, we need to ask the question of reasonable expectations. The influential magazine Business Week noted in July 1996 that business ethics is a “billion-dollar industry.” Arthur Andersen & Co., KPMG Peat Marwick, and Coopers & Lybrand have all launched national ethics consulting practices staffed with experts from academe and government. Law firms, freelancers, and even the Council for Ethics
in Economics offer ethics consulting services to companies in” writing corporate statements of ethics principles, developing comprehensive ethics code, designing the mechanisms by which ethics problems or violations can be reported, and creating ethics training programs for employees. More than 100 major companies have full-time internal ethics officers with broad powers of investigation and access to top management and the board of directors. There is a new professional association of corporate ethics officers with meetings and training programs.

Granted, much of this billion-dollar “ethics” industry relates to ethics only tangentially. Some of that investment aims merely at creating good public relations or corporate image. Those goals are straightforward matters of business prudence, not questions of moral choice. Another huge chunk of that billion dollars is invested in strengthening legal compliance through documentation and monitoring, especially meeting the standards of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines of 1992 that give businesses with comprehensive ethics/compliance programs a huge break if legal violations happen to occur. But apart from these legal and prudential considerations, what can we hope ethically from the business ethics industry? What is going on that might improve the quality of decisions when the well-being of persons is at stake?

My thesis today is that we have reason to hope that we are, on a global scale, moving toward consensus on higher standards of ethical conduct. Indeed, the very globalization of the economy, is, I think, a ground of hope as well as a perplexing new dimension to the problem of business ethics. As I said at the beginning, one must make these claims of progress with some modesty. The signs of the times are often conflicting. I read the newspapers. Not a day goes by that there is not a business ethics issue. If it is not the latest example of an individual business person succumbing to the temptations of greed or desire, it is the report of how some large corporation is rolling over the legitimate interests of individuals and communities in a spirit of utter ethical indifference.

I think I’ve set myself a tough enough thesis to defend. I’ve raised the oxymoron issue. I’ve indicated that even the most visible manifestations of growing concern for ethics in both the university and the corporate world are fraught with nonethical (not necessarily unethical) motivations. And now I’ve set the problem up as a global issue, opening the issue of ethical relativism. Whose ethics? Whose values?

To shift our focus toward the prospect of moral progress, I first want to discuss how ethicists understand their enterprise. This will serve, I think, to reframe the challenge of “building the ethics of business.” I will then mention three areas where I see signs of business ethics progress—in the struggles against corruption, against dehumanizing labor, and against environmental destabilization. We should then have time for discussion in which you bring the breadth of your rich and varied experiences to the issues. First then,

How do ethicists see the issues?

Several years ago (in another city) I was trying to recruit corporate participants for a college-sponsored business ethics workshop. I had planned the program carefully and engaged top national experts to deliver the key program sessions, so it was with some pride that I invited a major bank to send a team to the workshop. When I called a senior executive to follow up on the invitation, he said, more or less: “We just had an executive who worked for this bank for thirty years defraud us of millions of dollars. This man had enjoyed great professional success and was highly respected by all of us in top management. If your workshop can guarantee that nothing like that will ever happen again, I’ll be happy to sign up.”

Needless to say, I couldn’t promise that. Ethicists aren’t mind readers. Nor do we claim to be able to cure human perversity, to prevent people from doing things they know perfectly well are wrong. Rather, ethicists strive to build capacities of the imagination and intellect that will, we hope, serve as the basis for good decisions amidst the complexity of competing claims.

Several years ago, Daniel Callahan and Sisela Bok discussed the goals of teaching ethics as follows. (Much of the work of consulting is teaching in a broad sense.)

Goals in the Teaching of Ethics
(Callahan and S. Bok)
- Stimulating the Moral Imagination
- Recognizing Ethical Issues
- Developing Analytical Skills

Reframing the problem of building the ethics of business in a global economy

The very globalization of the economy that presents so many challenges for business ethics also invites us to reframe the problem. For multinational businesses (some of which operate in more than 100 countries), responsibility for the environment involves not just concern for the health and safety of workers and communities where
operations are located, but assessing the potential impact of their choices on the global ecosystem. Likewise, in global terms, bribery and other forms of corruption are no longer merely ethical challenges for individual managers and companies as they seek to do business under highly competitive conditions. High level bribery and corruption are now seen as problems that siphon away billions of dollars from job creation, investment in plants and equipment, and research. Corruption works against the development of trust that international commerce depends upon.

Labor issues, too, require a globalization of our ethical imagination that matches the globalization of the economy. Downsizing and reengineering in the United States, crushing levels of unemployment in Western Europe, chronic underemployment in the developing world are all part of the same problem, a problem compounded by the mobility of capital in relation to labor. There is a growing global awareness most vividly in consumer protests in North America and Europe against sweatshops and child labor.

Thus, when we reframe the problem of business ethics as one of ethical imagination, we recognize that catalogues of abuses, or the latest scandals and corporate misdeeds, don’t tell the whole story. If we look for signs of growing ethical imagination, we find them—among consumers, business leaders, and governments. On a global level, I think we’re developing a more vivid, action-inspiring awareness of the implications of business choices for human well-being.

Perhaps one reason that I’m inclined to see signs of progress is that I work on a daily basis with ethics experts and business leaders throughout the world who are committed to strengthening business ethics. In task forces, study groups, and research projects, we seek strategies for developing the ethical imagination and analytic skills needed to address complex issues.

From time to time, the Council’s work comes to fruition in major conferences. Last fall we held our Second International Conference for Business Leaders here in Columbus. Some 360 business leaders and scholars from 20 countries came together to talk about specific issues in “Building the Ethics of Business in a Global Economy.”

Drawing in part on the discussions of that conference, let me take up the question of progress in regard to the three global problems I’ve mentioned: corruption, the environment, and the conditions of work.

Corruption

When the United States passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in 1977 in the wake of the Lockheed scandal, the law was widely ridiculed in other parts of the world as the project of American moralistic idealism and bemoned by many U.S. companies as a millstone that would destroy their competitiveness. Twenty years later, the picture looks different. While there are still complaints about how foreign firms use bribes to undercut the winning bids of U.S. firms, there is growing international agreement that the United States was on the right track in its approach to the problem.

At the Council’s International Conference, Stuart Gilman of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics noted how corruption strips economic resources, contributes to cultural poverty and crime, discourages private-sector investment, destroys the confidence of citizens in their government, and destabilizes entire countries and regions.

Today more than 50 countries have government offices dealing with anti-corruption. As Gilman says, “we expect codes for behavior not only in government, but in the private sector. We expect criminal and administrative penalties for violating these codes. We expect transparency of financial interest, certainly for leaders of government and, increasingly nowadays, for leaders in the private sector as well. We expect systems of procurement that emphasize integrity and fairness, and education and training for all employees so they know what’s expected.”

A new international organization has been established to fight bribery and other forms of corruption. Transparency International is headquartered in Germany. The U.S. Director, Nancy Boswell, credits the press with exposing corruption in many countries. She sees, globally, that democratic reforms are accompanied by demands for accountability. “The time is right,” she argues, “to achieve lasting reform.”

At the International Conference, Boswell gave examples of how governments, non-governmental agencies, and corporations are cooperating in South America to eliminate bribery and kickbacks on major government contracts.

The 25 countries that make up the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have also agreed to take concrete steps to combat bribery of foreign public officials. This is the first multilateral agreement against corruption. Under OECD guidelines, countries such as Germany that currently permit tax deductions for bribes paid abroad, are changing their tax laws. The World Bank, too, is beginning to focus on the importance of transparency in the major projects it funds.

The Environment

Some of the most important opportunities for business to demonstrate growing ethical responsibility relate to the environmental impact of extracting, manufacturing, and other business activities. In regard to the environment, there are encouraging signs of business initiatives. Major corporations have endorsed principles of responsibility regarding the manufacture, transport, use and disposal of their products. More importantly, they are integrating environmental values into management systems. Total Quality Environmental Management approaches are rooted in values of sustain ability and seek to establish quantifiable performance standards.

The ISO 14000 series of standards concern environmental management and monitoring. These standards, set forth by the International Organization for Standardization in Switzerland, are being adopted by companies worldwide. As Michael Silverstein observes, “Like the ISO 9000 quality standards, which have led more than 40,000 companies worldwide to seek quality certification in order to achieve product acceptance in many international trade settings, ISO 14000 standards are likely to become a kind of ‘green visa’ within the global trading community.”

There is no clearer example of progress in environmental responsibility than the chemical manufacturing industry’s Responsible Care initiative. Detailed codes cover the manufacture, transportation, use and disposal of hazardous chemicals. One of the important features of Responsible Care is the involvement of community stakeholders in discussions of environmental and health effects.

These environmental initiatives, then, are not merely the good intentions of a few socially responsible companies. They guide the direction of entire—indeed, the direction of worldwide manufacturing. These developments are the real story of business and the environment. As Silverstein
observes: “Above the waterline, in clear view, U.S. legislatures and agencies are backing away from environmental protection. Less visible but more substantial, private, market-driven, international, self-regulatory corporate forces—the other nine-tenths of the iceberg—are moving in a very different direction.”

The Conditions of Work

The third area in which I see progress in building the ethics of business relates to the conditions of work. There is growing consensus that sweatshop labor, child labor, and forced labor are affronts against human dignity. They violate the essential ethical obligation we have to respect the dignity of all persons and not to use others merely as means to our economic ends.

In regard to labor issues, consumers are playing a key role. Surveys in the United States and Britain indicate that growing numbers of consumers—50 to 80%—say that they take a company’s ethics into account when making a purchase. Thus the manufacturers and retailers of clothing, athletic shoes, and other low-tech consumer items manufactured in developing countries take great marketplace risks if they are perceived as exploiting workers.

Avoiding bad publicity is prudent; it doesn’t necessarily have anything to do with ethics. But surely the ethics impulse is there in many business decisions. Levi Strauss manufactured a million garments in China in 1993, but then withdrew its manufacturing operations because of China’s “pervasive violations of basic human rights.” The CEO, Robert Haas maintained that it was more important for the company to remain true to its ideals than to continue to produce in China, even if it put this huge market at risk.

In the United Kingdom, C&A, a major clothing retailer, recently visited its Code of Conduct for the Supply of Merchandise under pressure from Oxfam. The new code requires suppliers to offer employment conditions that respect fundamental human rights. C&A requires suppliers to disclose the conditions of manufacturing and reserves the right to make unannounced inspections of their facilities. The code prohibits child labor, forced labor, physical or mental abuse of workers, and insists on adequate standards of health and safety. The company is committed to a program of education for its employees and suppliers to make them aware of these standards and requirements.

Here in Columbus, earlier this year the Limited received recognition from the secretary of Labor for its record of good monitoring of the labor practices of vendors.

And then there’s Kathy Lee. Some of you may have heard of this popular co-host of a daytime television talk show. (I realize that watching daytime television voluntarily is an offense that calls for expulsion from Torch, but perhaps you have caught glimpses of this program in airports or the dentist’s office.) The Wal-Mart Chain of retail stores sells a line of sportswear named for Kathy Lee. When an activist group disclosed earlier this year that the Honduran company making the Kathy Lee line was cheating its workers, Frank Gifford, Kathy Lee’s husband went down and personally handed out money directly to the underpaid workers. The normally perky Kathy Lee cried.

But Kathy Lee did more than cry. She did more than just try to repair her image. She went on to demonstrate leadership in keeping the issue of sweatshop labor before the public.

The activist expose awakened Kathy Lee’s ethical imagination. Ethical imagination, in turn, triggers responsible action. Of course, we all need regular stimulation of the moral imagination of our choices are to be ethically responsible.

To conclude, I’ve tried to mention a few particulars about business conduct in support of my thesis that we can see encouraging signs of progress toward greater ethical responsibility. I’ve argued that there are encouraging signs of global consensus about the most critical issues—not simply the disarray of diverse values.

In particular, I have contended that this progress is to be found in expanded ethical imagination, the wellspring of responsible action. I recognize that ethical imagination does not automatically produce moral courage, and that our ability to empathize with others is often limited when our own economic or ego interests are involved. Nevertheless, I think we’re making progress in raising the ethical expectations of business. As we extend our vision of corporate purpose beyond merely maximizing return on invested capital, we discover new ways to tap the capacities of these strong and powerful organizations to advance a wider range of human goods and purposes.

As Mr. Ryuzaburo Kaku, chairman of Cannon, puts it, up to now we have looked to almost solely to government to address broader social and environmental issues. He believes we can now look forward to business using its capacity to help solve these complex, pervasive problems. “I think,” he says, “that business is obliged to become involved in finding solutions to social problems and that corporations have the talent, skill, and resources to do so...Business can assist government and bureaucracy.”

Building the ethics of business in a global economy is a long and difficult task, but the journey promises to be an exciting one, with much at stake for all the people of the world.

Bibliography

Sykes, Charles J. 1995. Dumbing Down Our
We'd love to hear from you...

If you have any comments, criticisms or suggestions regarding anything you've read in any issue of either The Torch magazine or The Torchlight, please let us know.

Send your comments to:
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FAX (757) 623-9740
basic research is being fueled by the recognition that their access to basic research, the engine that has driven its ability to develop and commercialize many products, is drying up and they now must begin to do their own basic research. Many laboratories in these countries are in dire need of repairs and modernizing. The present currency woes in Asia will only exacerbate these problems. In the U.S., fortunately, there is an upswing in the support for all R&D. In 1997, there was an increase of about 4.2%. This increase is due mainly to increases in support by industry, owing to the realization that structural and operational changes of recent years now need to be augmented with R&D for long-term profitability.

In spite of these favorable trends in the U.S., it will not be business-as-usual for R&D in industry or the universities. In industry, one pattern that seems to be emerging is the close oversight of R&D by business management. For example, at Lucent Technologies, “...chemistry research is valued when it fulfills a strategic corporate purpose,” according to James W. Mitchell, manager of Lucent’s Materials, Reliability & Ecology Research Laboratory. “Effective research management is obtained by building partnerships with business units and developing R&D strategies linked to business strategies.” This could take the form of evaluation processes which clearly define the criteria for progressive steps (and feedback loops) from start of an idea or concept stage to a developed commercial product. Currently, about 20% of industrial R&D budgets is allocated for short-term research, e.g., on existing planned business lines, and about 6% for longer range directed basic research. Opportunities for exploratory research to achieve breakthroughs will be limited. The balance, or the lion’s share, is for engineering, pilot plant construction, design, etc. Other trends have begun to emerge in industry, driven by world competitiveness such as outsourcing of research, rapid automated synthesis and testing of potentially new drugs and computer-assisted algorithms for complex problems.

Academic laboratories will also experience some structural changes. There will be more partnering with industry and governmental laboratories, i.e., meshing basic science with technology. In the 1980’s, this would have been considered intellectual heresy in many quarters. Basic science will be asked to direct some of its fruits of research and energies toward solving real world problems, social and economic, and national needs.

Taken together, I believe these trends and paradigms signify greater control, increased accountability, demand for faster response times and micromanagement of the discovery process. Can serendipity be a force for discovery in these new environments? Will these new forces hinder or negate serendipity, which seems to work best for the individual researcher with freedom to observe, explore, and create? I do not know, only time will tell. I do believe, however, there will be changes and adjustments in both the training for, and the practice of research and development. At best, we can hope that in pursuing societal needs, and there are many, progress will be facilitated by sagacity, wisdom and understanding and not be impeded by dogma, rigidity and intransigence. Certainly, if serendipity is to survive in the new global environment, it will take a big dose of mutual trust between those who practice discovery, and those who manage and fund it.

References
(2) ibid, pp.1-3.
(3) ibid, pp.53-54.
(4) ibid, pp.13-14.
(5) ibid, pp.19-23.
(6) The discoveries of penicillin, dynamite, nylon, X-rays, and Teflon are also described in Roberts’ book, see reference (1).
"Violence," from page 15

trucy and dropping out. According to the U.S. Justice Department, “Just as smoking and drinking are considered a gateway to drug abuse, trucy is a gateway to dropping out of school. And school failure puts you at high risk for delinquency.” More than 70% of Miami students age 13-16 prosecuted for criminal violations had a record of trucy. In Minneapolis, daytime crime dropped 68% after police started citing trucy. In Detroit, one-fourth of students drop out between 8th and 9th grade. Ninety percent of children in Detroit’s drug courts are dropouts; ninety-two percent are functionally illiterate, and there is a 75% recidivism rate. At least 80% of all prisoners are high school dropouts.

What about those who stay in school, go on to college? Despite record spending for education, 89% of 4 year colleges offer remedial courses and 30% of freshman enroll in them. Why are students dropping out or just scraping by? First, an estimated 10% of Americans suffer from some form of dyslexia, which still may go undiagnosed.

And the others? A ten-year Temple University study of 20,000 high school students found them to be “increasingly disengaged, sabotaging themselves. It’s not cool to be smart. Moreover about 25% of parents have “checked” out of parenting, and students with low involvement of parents in their education were twice as likely to have repeated a grade and 3 times as likely to have been suspended or expelled.

One last, often cited underlying problem is a sort of national or global crisis in values. As William Raspberry puts it, “The almost oft handheld assaults and cold-blooded killings are only marginally a fire arms problem. It is simply another manifestation of a problem I have described as the "consciencelessness" of...children who have reached adolescence and beyond without having internalized any important sense of right and wrong, who have no internal brakes on their behavior, who can maim, destroy, and kill without remorse.”

How did they get that way? Charley Reese pulls no punches in a column headed The Trouble With Today’s Youth: Adults. “Who would YOU choose,” he asks, “for a role model. Looking at public figures today is like rummaging through a garbage heap...Who’s to tell them to be brave, honest, compassionate, industrious, disciplined, frugal, chaste, just and humble?”

My conclusion is that teenage violence IS a problem. It is serious, widespread, self-sustaining, non-cyclical, and can be expected to increase with each generation. The underlying causes are social and the solution must therefore be multifaceted, penetrating all levels and generations of society. This is certainly a case of, “if I am not part of the solution then I am part of the problem.”

A lot of foot dragging and complaining, with howls of protest, Japan is changing because the alternative is far more dreadful. One opened Japanese writer, who used to be one of the powerful bureaucrats, says that the world must keep the pressure on Japan because that is the only way in which change can take place, and change is essential.

Conclusion

The calendar of Japan is marked by the reign of each emperor, and each reign is given a name. Thus the second half of what we call the 19th century is the Meiji Era, the time of modernization. That was followed by the long reign of Emperor Hirohito, the Showa era, a time of growth to world status. In 1989, the present emperor, Akihito, came to the throne, and the Heisei era began at a highly appropriate time. This new era will be a turbulent time for Japan as the traditional is vigorously challenged by the innovative. If today were March 5th, 2097 I think we would be discussing a quite different Japan, one that in the course of the 21st century of our common era underwent a profound cultural transition and became truly a global society.

"Mail Box," from page 2

To the Editor:

Almost half a year has elapsed since the Torch convention of last June in Kalamazoo, but the memory is still golden, and I feel moved to share some of the highlights:

Registration and the brief business meetings conducted by our President, Ruth E. Gitter, were efficient and took little time away from the stimulating and enjoyable presentation of papers and exchange of ideas.

The Thursday evening opening gala was a WOW! We began with a reception at the historic "Ladies Library," launched in the 19th century. This gave us an opportunity to examine fascinating old books as we nibbled and sipped. Then we walked to the impressive Park Club for a fine dinner. We wound up the evening evening with dessert at the sparkling new Public Library. The building handles light and space with imagination. The cost per foot for the building it was well below most new libraries. It gave all of us from areas needing library space—and who does not?—inspiration and impetus.

The Torch papers delivered by a variety of speakers focused on urban development. We received an overview of how Kalamazoo is revitalizing its downtown. Brief presentations by the families who have moved into the attractive living space over commercial buildings in the central city were really interesting. Having city council members sharing meals and discussion with us gave us a feeling we knew this town and its history and dreams.

The tours offered on the free afternoons were all tempting. I particularly enjoyed the historic homes in all their 19th century splendor. They are still in use, and were a change from the Virginia's 17th and 18th century showplaces.

The Saturday night banquet with the Paxton Award speech on how history is changing was a real highlight. You should read it in the fall issue of The Torch and know that hearing it was even better.

Overall our hosts, food, hotel accommodations, and fellow Torch members were gracious and delightful. It was a memorable weekend and persuaded me to register early for the Toledo convention in June, 1999. Hope to see you there.

Sincerely,
Edith R. White

Torch Magazine Winter 1998-99 31
Call to Annual Business Meeting and Torch Convention

The annual business meeting and convention of the membership of the International Association of Torch Clubs will be at the Radisson Hotel, Toledo, Ohio, June 24-27, 1999.

The official agenda follows:

**Schedule of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday, June 24th</th>
<th>9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.</th>
<th>Convention Session III: Torch Paper III Northwest Ohio: From Rust Belt to Boom Belt, Moderator: Edward F. Weber. Panel Members: Dick Anderson, Glen Hiner, Edward Reiter, Norman Thal.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>International Association of Torch Clubs, Board meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Conference Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Business Session I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Welcoming Reception and Cash Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Dinner with Toledo Torch hosts and thereafter return to hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, June 25th</td>
<td>10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast (on your own)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Conference Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Torch Club Officers Round Table (training session)</td>
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<td>8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Meet the Editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:05 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Business Session II</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Convention Session I: Torch Paper I The Sixty Years Struggle for the Great Lakes by David C. Skaggs</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Luncheon</td>
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<td>1:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Tours provided as individually selected</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Convention Session II: Torch Paper II Erie: Rebirth of a Great Lake, by Elliot J. Tramer</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 p.m. - 11:00 pm.</td>
<td>Social time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 26th</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Convention Session IV: Torch Paper V A Lumpy Stew - Ethnic Identity in Northwest Ohio, by David Beckwith, Center for Community Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast Buffet (provided by Torch)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration Desk open for year 2000 Torch Convention in Winchester, VA</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Optional Interfaith Worship Service led by Rev. Stanley D. Schneider</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Convention Session IV: Torch Paper V A Lumpy Stew - Ethnic Identity in Northwest Ohio, by David Beckwith, Center for Community Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Business Session III and Convention Close</td>
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Torch Magazine Winter 1998-99
The Torch Club of Toledo - 1999 Convention Registration

International Association of Torch Clubs, Inc. - Annual Convention
Toledo, Ohio June 24-27, 1999

Please complete this form and return it (with your check) to:

Torch Club of Toledo, Ohio
c/o Glenn Fitkin, Jr.
4911 Derby Road
Toledo, Ohio 43615
(419) 537-6942

Make checks payable to "Torch Club of Toledo, Ohio"
and indicate "Torch Convention '99" on the check.

REGISTRATION RATES
$230 (U.S.) - Through March 31, 1999      $250 (U.S.) - After March 31, 1999

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

_____ Persons @ $________ (U.S.) Total $________ (U.S.)

Name(s) & Profession: __________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

City/State: ____________________________ Zip: ____________

Telephone: (       ) ______________ Torch Club: ______________

Special Needs: _________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Instructions for Hotel Reservations at the Radisson Hotel - Toledo, Ohio

♦ Call the Radisson Worldwide Reservation Desk at:

1-800-333-3333

♦ Inform the Reservations Agent that you are with the International Torch Club.

♦ Tell the Reservations Agent when you plan to arrive and when you will depart.

♦ A block of rooms are reserved at the rate of $88.00 per night.
This rate will also be offered for attendees wishing to extend their stay.

About the Saturday Panel

The Saturday panel of nationally known business executives, describing an economic turnaround, will be a highlight of the 1999 Torch Club convention in Toledo, Ohio. Working under the title "Northwest Ohio: From Rustbelt to Boombelt," the group will give a variety of views of factors involved in that transformation.

Glen H. Hiner, President and CEO of Owens Corning, Inc., will explain why his firm decided several years ago to construct its new World Headquarters in Toledo. He also will talk about the influence of location on a large company's production facilities.

Edward J. Reiter, Chief Executive of Mid Am, Inc., a rapidly expanding regional bank holding company, will look at the financial aspects of the dramatic turnaround. He'll talk about the importance of banking and quasi-governmental organizations in stimulating existing businesses and attracting new business to the area.

Norman R. Thal, Jr., is the former President and Chairman of Inshield Die and Stamping, a family owned small business. His comments will focus on how the business climate is changing from manufacturing to services, and with it, the changing role of small business.

Richard P. Anderson, chairman of The Andersons, a regional agri business and retailer, will show the importance of Toledo as a transportation hub...via water, rail, and air.

Each of the speakers has a long list of involvement in various civic organizations, and each has a broad knowledge of and experience with Toledo's economic situation.

Moderator for the panel discussion will be Edward Weber, former U.S. Congressman from Toledo, and past president of the Toledo Torch Club.

The Saturday morning panel discussion is expected to generate a number of questions from the audience, and the panel members are uniquely qualified to explain how the economic fortunes of Northwest Ohio were dramatically reversed in a relatively short span of time.
Reflection

"Torch exists because it is the only organization solely devoted to improved understanding between members of the various professions...Is there a better reason for the existence of Torch or a more commendable objective than the furtherance of understanding?"

--Clarence Peterson