IDEAS IN CULTURE
by Jeffrey Hart

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We all live in the midst of ideas. We espouse some and attack others. Ideas manifest themselves as opinions, slogans, parts of seemingly coherent structures, and they exist at the core of many of our attitudes. Yet ideas are stranger things than at first they may appear. "Certain sentiments," writes Lionel Trilling, "consort only with certain ideas and not with others. What is more, sentiments become ideas by a natural and imperceptible process. 'Our continued influxes of feeling,' said Wordsworth, 'are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed representatives of all our past feelings.' And Charles Peguy said, *'Tout commence en mystique et finit en politique'* — everything begins in sentiment and assumption and finds its issue in political action and institutions. The converse is also true: just as sentiments become ideas, ideas eventually establish themselves as sentiments."

In the following remarks I want to begin a process of reflection upon ideas, especially political ideas, but also upon other kinds as well. I say I want to begin a process of reflection because in truth I myself have only begun this process myself, and what I can say here is necessarily limited by my own thought and experience. Many of the things I have to say will point in directions that I myself have not yet traveled. However, I do want to raise some questions about what ideas actually are, and how they actually function, and why in the life of our culture some ideas seem to prevail and some do not. In the title of a famous book, the late Richard Weaver asserted that *Ideas Have Consequences.* That is true, of course, but it might be still more accurate to say that some ideas have consequences. Why is that so?

I am going to argue that ideas often stand in an illuminating relationship to some objective reality, but that often, perhaps most of the time, that is not their primary function. Instead, they are vehicles of social communion, symbols of social status, claims to moral superiority, instruments of the will to power, and thrilling consumer items. In this functional chaos, the whole question of the truth of an idea easily becomes a kind of embarrassment.

It may be that the truth of an idea is not the most interesting and valuable thing about it. I myself do not finally believe that, but, of course, the moral claim of truth has been an issue since the beginning of conscious reflection upon ideas. It certainly was the issue between Socrates and the Athenians, and we know how that ended. Socrates' ideas had merit but they were difficult to live with.

By way of preliminary, I would like to relate three stories, or little items, arising out of what a social scientist would call my own "raw experience." Each item contributed to my own education concerning ideas as they function in actual human existence.

Number One. During the year 1968, I worked as a political speech writer in the presidential campaign of Richard Nixon. Until then I had been largely literary and academic, and until then my view of a political idea was essentially that of the civics class or the League of Women Voters. That is to say, if I had bothered to formulate the matter to myself at all, I would have said that the candidates identify leading "issues," and then take "positions" on these issues; and that the voters then assess the "positions" taken and decide which of the candidates is preferable. I would not have agreed with the League of Women Voters on the positions to be preferred, but I certainly agreed with them on the importance of political "issues," "positions," "principles," "ideas."

Then I ate the apple. In actually writing political speeches it gradually dawned on me that the ideas in a political speech are not there to illuminate reality for the benefit of an audience but rather to establish a sense of communion between the speaker and the audience. It helps if the ideas have merit, if they are in some sense true. But that is not the finally important thing about them. Interestingly enough, Nelson Rockefeller never grasped this point, though he probably pays more cash per word for his political speeches than any politician in history. They sound as if they had been processed through an academic department and polished by a think tank. They bristle with thoughts and statistics. But they tend to be hopeless. The real function of ideas in a political speech, as I just remarked, is to establish a sense of communion between speaker and audience. The ideas are magnets attracting the iron filings of emotion. They make the audience feel that the speaker understands them, sympathizes with their condition, loves and hates what they love and hate, shares their view of the world.

Ideas, I thus began to understand, are not at all pure things, hard intellectual pellets. Their status in actual existence is not purely rational. Then things moved closer to home, and

I experienced an academic revelation. I move now to the next item.

Number Two. Here, I am at an academic cocktail party, very congenial, and I am surrounded by colleagues and the usual chit-chat. The touchy subject of South Africa comes up. I myself am hardly enamored with the present regime there, but the situation does strike me as complicated, and anyway on this occasion the devil is in me and I assert a number of things. That, in fact, the original Dutch and English settlers were there first, and then defeated the Zulus to make good their claim to the territory; that the blacks there today are undoubtedly better off than blacks, say, in Mozambique; that the current white regime, though obviously repressive, is probably the only thing that keeps the various tribes from slaughtering one another; and that, when and if the present regime is overthrown, the place will certainly not get majority rule but some sort of black dictatorship, most likely horrendous. In sober truth, these assertions, though they may have some merit, may be largely irrelevant. Debater's points may be entertaining at the Oxford Union but the historical process

ideas and sentiments.

Not surprisingly, therefore, I have noticed that liberals in the academy and elsewhere tend to sound alike. The signals are quite uniform. Certainly there is a wonderful irony present here, since the liberal's myth of himself presents him as a fiercely independent thinker, one who even puts a high valuation on heretical opinion. Nevertheless, when these fiercely independent thinkers turn up to nail their heretical theses to the door of the cathedral, we find that they have all arrived at the same theses. We may therefore be permitted to think that these theses have less to do with some lonely vision of the truth than with group self-interest, group identity, and group cohesion. Their ideas, as Samuel Johnson put it, "are not propagated by reason but caught by contagion." They are part of what sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman call "the social construction of reality" — that is, they constitute an accepted and more or less official body of doctrine that may advance the interests of the group, but certainly make the members feel comfortable.

tends to ignore them. These assertions, however, were not addressed on grounds of merit at the cocktail party, nor were they criticized as irrelevant on grounds of realpolitik. Instead, a full professor drew himself up to his full tweedy height, harrumphed like some Colonel Blimp, and announced: "Sir, no gentleman could have a good word to say about the white racist regime in South Africa."

This was a moment of illumination. Political ideas in this circumstance were not true or false or some mixture of the two. They were badges of status, symbols of respectability. And, by George, it was absolutely true. Nice people, people wearing tweedy jackets and regimental-striped ties, just did not, in fact, have a nice word to say about the South African regime, or for that matter the one in Chile, just as nice people did not make a big noise about abortion, say, or busing, or pornography. Ideas on such subjects were not so much true or false as respectable or socially disreputable.

Finally, I turn to item: *Number Three*. We have all noticed that various groups of people tend to *sound alike*. Sinclair Lewis, for example, had a very good ear, and he had a lot of fun at the expense of Coolidge-era businessmen and their cliches when he wrote *Babbitt*. But all cultural subgroups do tend to sound alike as they give verbal expression to their

II

It is important to grasp the degree to which ideas are in fact social constructions, serving social needs. One of the fundamental propositions of the sociology of knowledge holds that the plausibility of a view of reality depends upon the social support it receives. We obtain our notions about the world largely from other people, and these notions continue to be plausible to us because other people continue to affirm them. A person whose "plausibility structures" were entirely internal would be some kind of madman.

Suppose you were suddenly set down in a society in which everyone assumed the truth of astrology, while you assumed its falsity. In this society, everyone except yourself explained all occurrences with reference to the movement of the planets and stars. There is no doubt that in due course you would begin to question the bases of your own skepticism. You might not really admit the fundamental importance of Pisces and Scorpio, but you would at least soon begin to show some sense of deference to the official truth. Even if you wished to express skepticism, you would be obliged, merely to avoid ostracism, to provide elaborate signals of that deference. You would have to say things like, "This may sound foolish to you. . ." or "I know that this is just my own opinion. . ."

One might think that the propositions of the physical

sciences, at least, are exempt from social conditioning. This turns out not to be true. That they are not exempt the late C.S. Lewis argued brilliantly in his posthumously published Cambridge University lectures on cosmology, which have been gathered in the book *The Discarded Image.*

There turn out to be cultural styles in cosmology and biology. We all know that sometime during the 17th century the old Ptolemaic model of the universe, with the earth at the center, was dropped in favor of the heliocentric Copernican theory. We also know that during the nineteenth century the natural selection theory of biological evolution came to be generally accepted. We connect both events with the supposed discovery of new facts. Lewis takes a different view.

"The old astronomy," he writes, "was not, in any exact sense, 'refuted' by the telescope. The scarred surface of the moon and the satellites of Jupiter can, if one wants, be fitted into a geocentric scheme. Even the enormous, and enormously different, distances of the stars can be accommodated if you are prepared to make their 'sphere,' the *stellatum,* of a vast thickness. . . . . But the change of Models did not involve astronomy alone. It involved also, in biology, the change — arguably more important — from a devolutionary to an evolutionary scheme . . . . This revolution was certainly not brought about by the discovery of new facts. When I was a boy I believed that 'Darwin discovered evolution' [but] in Keats, in Wagner's tetralogy, in Goethe, in Herder, the change to a new point of view had already taken place. Its growth can be traced far further back in Leibniz, Akenside, Kant, Maupertius, Diderot. Already in 1786, Robinet believed in an 'active principle' which overcomes brute matter, and *la progression n'est pas finie.* For him, as for Bergson or de Chardin, the 'gates of the future are wide open.' The demand for a developing world — a demand obviously in harmony with the revolutionary and the romantic temper — grows up first; when it is full grown the scientists go to work and discover the evidence on which our belief in that sort of universe would now be held to rest. There is no question here of the old Model's being shattered by the inrush of new phenomena. The truth would seem to be the reverse; that when changes in the human mind produce a sufficient disrelish of the old Model and a sufficient hankering for some new one, phenomena to support that new one will obediently turn up. I do not mean at all that these new phenomena are illusory. Nature has all sorts of phenomena in stock and can suit many different tastes."

III

As should now come as no surprise, the same kind of socio-cultural analysis can be applied to theological opinion. The former Queen of the Sciences, like the sciences themselves, is deeply embedded in the cultural matrix.

Both theistic and atheistic philosophies have of course been available since time immemorial. There is nothing new about either position. But one or the other position acquires authority under concrete historical circumstances. We are all familiar with the famous Victorian Crisis of Faith, as a result of which thousands of individuals passed from some form of theism to some form of agnosticism or atheism. It would be naive to assume, however, that the Crisis of Faith occurred because Hume on miracles or the Biblical scholarship of Tubingen suddenly swept the mass market, and that everyone, upon reading this material, closed the volumes with a Eureka of forehead-slapping agreement.

No, it was not the aristocratic skepticism of the philosophes that prevailed, or even the academic skepticism of the Biblical critics, but the bourgeois atheism of the marketplace.

Sir Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill and the other formulators of the new ethos did not refute Anselm or Aquinas, they merely ignored them. Someone has quite truly said that "intellectual progress," as it is called, takes place not because of what we learn but because of what we forget. The great project of the 17th and 18th century bourgeoisie was not to understand existence but to make a living in it. The cultural focus shifted sharply toward the physical world. Anselm's ontological argument does not do much for the trade in spices or tobacco, but navigation certainly does. Metaphysical ultimates, at least in the short run, proved to be irrelevant to the economic enterprise. The empirical and utilitarian philosophies which reflected the dominance of this culture were designed not so much to understand the world as to control and possess it, and, at least in the short run, they were triumphantly successful.

I do not mean to condescend to these phenomena. Ideas in any actual human circumstance are always largely instrumental in character. Always and everywhere people tend to think that ideas are current because they are true. Actually, they are current because they are convenient.

Parenthetically, if you would like to experience a rare intellectual pleasure as well as a genuine epiphany, I would recommend to you John Murray Cuddihy's book *The Ordeal of Civility* (Basic Books, 1974). This consists of a stunning application of the sociology of ideas to the work of Sigmund Freud. It was among the National Book Award nominees last year, but because of its subversive potency has become a kind of underground classic.

IV

I would now like to turn to the ideas and attitudes of a particular contemporary subculture, and attempt a rudimentary socio-cultural analysis of the ideas familiar in the liberalism of the ordinary academic community. This is important, I think, even though those ideas themselves are relatively uninteresting, because such liberalism radiates outward from the academic hub to the various spokes of the cultural wheel — to the media, of course, but also to the professions and to what is called "educated" and "enlightened" opinion generally.

You will notice that the effect of this process will be to de-mythologize and de-absolutize the liberal ideas. They are normally asserted as gleaming, self-evident axioms, of universal validity. Under closer inspection they turn out to be epiphenomena of circumstance and self-interest. To undertake this is to reperceive liberalism as, in its own way, provincial. While we are at it, moreover, we will attempt to discern beneath these slogans and platitudes the almost-never-avowed assumptions that inform them. In this pleasant exercise, I would like to examine three aspects of the liberal idea pattern as it manifests itself in culture. Those aspects will be 1) psychological, 2) economic, and 3) consumerist.

First, the psychological. The mood in the academy naturally fluctuates with changing circumstances. Across the nation, that mood is now very different from what it was a half-dozen years ago. Nevertheless all experience testifies to and all objective surveys confirm the fact that academic opinion tends to be startlingly more liberal than opinion in the surrounding society. This shows up not only in candidates preferred but in a whole range of issues and attitudes.

But why is this so? The academic liberal would have a ready explanation. Academics tend to be liberal, he would explain, because they are better informed, more rational and

ar-sighted, and less selfish, than other people. No one who as ever sat through a faculty meeting can accept that explanation. Most college professors, though perfectly competent in their academic field, are by no means remarkably intelligent or even especially well-informed outside their field. A good mathematician is likely to be what I would call sub-*Atlantic Monthly* in range of information and general culture. The resident campus poet is only too likely to be an intellectual monstrosity.

What then is the explanation for the liberal character of academic culture? You will note that a college faculty is by no means a random sample of the general population. It is, rather, a self-selected and rather special sample. In my opinion, the original act of career-choice is probably fundamental here. The choice of an academic career is also at the same time a negative decision — as much a choice *not* to be a lawyer, a general, or a businessman, as to be a Shakespeare scholar or an expert in structural linguistics. I do not think the academy makes people liberals. Individuals who are already left or

fellow rooted for the Marines or the cowboys, the liberal rooted for the Vietcong or the Indians. The sense of alienation from customary attitude is total. You can sense this in the language itself, and language always carries cultural values in it. The English word "abortion" simply does possess powerful negative overtones. You simply cannot say "I had a marvelous abortion the other day." In his negative culture, the liberal converts abortion into a positive cause. Figures who are pariahs in the ordinary culture — the pornographer, the Communist, or whatever — become in the negative liberal culture the objects of special solicitude.

This thesis-antithesis relationship has long been there, I think, but in recent years it has been reinforced by powerful economic motives.

As Kevin Phillips and others have been explaining recently, the familiar liberal ideas now provide the rationale for a virtual new class of exploiters. This new class has established itself at exactly the same time as we have seen an enormous growth in academia. This new class or post-industrial elite
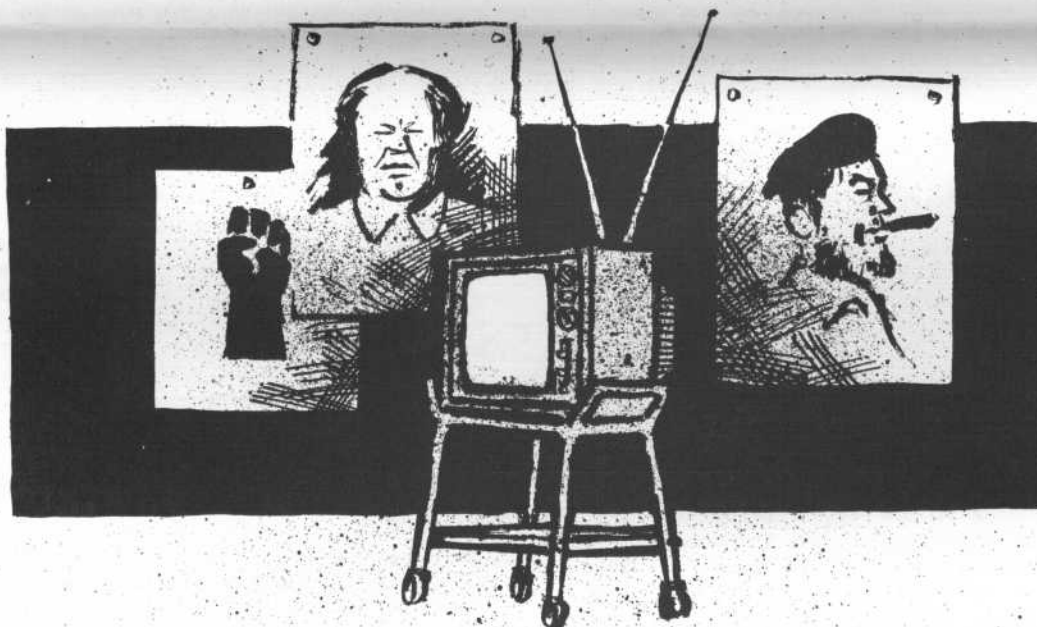
liberal, and on uneasy terms with ordinary society, tend to choose the academy.

Naturally, the choice is dressed up as something else, much more flattering to the ego. The academic individual is a "critic of society" and an "independent thinker." Within his own environment, however, we do not seem to encounter much criticism or independence; merely a lot of people who tend, as noted before, to "sound the same."

Second, the Economic Motive. Nothing in the above psychological observation would necessarily predict the content of liberal opinion. After all, it would be possible for these individuals to "sound the same," and also separate themselves doctrinally from the rest of us, if they were all devotees of Nietzsche or Buddha. I suppose one answer here, applicable over the last century or more, would take a "history of ideas" form. It would argue that the traditional attitudes and ideas of Western culture form, so to speak, the thesis, while liberalism constitutes the antithesis, the negative image. Thus, from the liberal perspective, most of the traditional virtues become negative qualities. If the traditional thesis was Christian, the liberal antithesis had to be secularist. If ordinary human nature admired victory, the liberal cherished victims, real and contrived. If the ordinary

is in the business of selling social environment.

This particular enterprise has long been with us, of course, but the really huge boom started just over a decade ago, and it gave rise to a new and expanding class of persons consisting of professionals in education, urban planning, welfare, social research, rehabilitation, compensatory programs of all sorts, poverty law, informational systems, innovative textbook design and publication, computer software application, various kinds of communications and media ventures, and so on. After Lyndon Johnson's 1964 landslide, the lopsidedly Democratic Congress enacted a cascade of social programs. Education, housing, and urban outlays soared. Enactment of the War Against Poverty alone brought expenditures of $2 billion a year and rising. As a spin-off effect, it called into being around a hundred new firms in the Washington area, and of course many others elsewhere, functioning as consultants on the subject of poverty.

As the federal billions began to flow into the Social Concern sector, private enterprise was quick to sniff out the opportunities. Corporations began to find educational innovation, urban studies and assorted rehabilitation schemes immensely profitable. Social concern became a gold rush. The victim of society was a virtual Klondike. We saw the mushrooming of new economic entities, what might be called

Social Concern Conglomerates. There is a genuine parallel here to the big Bull Market of the later 1920s, the so-called Coolidge Prosperity. In the Big Bull Social Concern Market of 1965-68, Wall Street investment houses gobbled up securities with names redolent of scientific technology related to social problems, environmental purification, social research, planning, and all the rest of it. This entire enterprise of course has an immediate and voracious interest in large and increasing federal expenditures. The budget of HEW long ago passed that of the Pentagon. In the struggle among competing elites, the military-industrial complex, so-called — and I am no apologist for that elite — is losing the budgetary battle to the Social Concern elite.

Naturally, this new class of Social Concern entrepreneurs is ideologically liberal. As I have said, it is in the social change business. Without social change, social problems, programs, solutions, and goals, the new class certainly would be in bankruptcy proceedings. Social change is to the new class of social problem solvers as inventory turnover was to the old mercantile class, or a good cotton crop to a still earlier plantation elite.

The uncomfortable truth here is that most people do not desire to have their social environment processed according to theory. On the other hand, most of the social change items on our recent and present agenda had their theoretical foundations laid in the academy. Given my point, above, under psychology, this should not be very surprising.

In the antiquated Marxist model, society is supposed to resemble a pyramid, with a tiny capitalist elite at the top exploiting the masses toiling below. As Robert Whittaker has pointed out in a brilliant recent book called *A Plague on Both Your Houses*, this antique Marxist model hardly describes our present reality. Of course, as C.S. Lewis has explained, a model can be stretched. More and more people and institutions can be crowded into that exploitative peak of the pyramid. Nevertheless, American society today does not so much resemble a pyramid as it does an egg. It is broadest in the social middle. At the top, struggling for power with increasing success, are the new class of Social Concern exploiters, busy reordering our priorities.

The liberal ideas, no doubt generated elsewhere, back in time, ideas conceived under other circumstances, now legitimate and protect this new post-industrial Social Concern industry.

V

The Consumerist Aspects. I would like to turn now to my third and last analytical point, which has to do with the way in which ideas circulate under the concrete circumstances of our culture.

At the time of the French Revolution, ideas were circulated largely by intellectual popularizers such as journalists, pamphleteers, and the philosophes in the Parisian salons. This Republic of Letters, as it was sometimes called, was also called The Fourth Estate. It functioned, that is, as a fourth extra-constitutional power in the political equation, the other three estates being nobility, clergy, and commons. The Fourth Estate was of course a prime engine of revolutionary energy.

In our own time, the media have emerged as a vastly more potent Fourth Estate — the printed and also the electronic media — and they are continuously involved in the marketing of ideas and attitudes.

I would argue that there is something in the very nature of a liberal idea that renders it especially suitable for such marketing by the media.

You will have noticed that conservative ideas do not, usually at any rate, have a "vogue." They do not characteristically become the subject of fashionable chit-chat and their progenitors do not star on the talk shows. In contrast, it is possible to identify a succession of liberal "vogues."

Consider a few of the liberal and/or radical ideas that have had notable currency in recent years. The early Kennedy years glittered with the promise of a technological utopia. The think-tankers at Rand and Hudson had banished the irrational. Cost-accounting, computers, and options dominated the scene. McNamara was rationalizing the military, Lindsay was rationalizing New York, and Neustadt was rationalizing presidential power. The theologians jumped into this think tank. Not only did Harvey Cox invite us to live in the gleaming Secular City, but the Vatican, heavily influenced by social scientists, junked the old liturgy and provided its constituency with a rationalized new one.

To be sure, the results, in actuality, were quite dim. McNamara failed in Vietnam, Lindsay failed in New York, Congress frustrated Neustadt's designs. An epoch in modern theology lasts about five years, and Harvey Cox, when last spotted, was some sort of mystical guru.

The technological promise of utopia gave way to utopia through charismatic revolutionary guru: Che Guevara, Mao, Castro, Ho, Malcolm X, Frantz Fanon. Their baleful faces gazed out from poster and paperback.

Then, poof, that gave way to another cast of characters. More mystical gurus came on the scene, some from the East, some from the chemical laboratory. Utopia was mystical, it was chemical, or it demanded closeness to nature. In his best-seller *The Greening of America*, Charles Reich — in real life a professor of law at Yale — told us that we were going to be saved by virtuous and unrepressed college students, an amazing idea.

Now, in a certain sense, all of these and other such currents were novel and therefore "interesting."

Herbert Marcuse's doctrine that the West is "repressive" precisely because it is tolerant — its very tolerance preventing revolution — is certainly interesting. The contrasting idea, that the freedoms of the West, given the limits of human nature, represent a considerable civilizational achievement, actually seems banal by comparison.

It is much more interesting to be told by James Coleman in an earlier phase that black children can be improved by busing than to be told by Edward Banfield and James Coleman in a later phase that they cannot.

John Locke's tabula rasa, an early metaphor for the position that we can achieve felicity by innovation in the social environment, is inherently interesting. A contrasting stress on things like heredity, or an anthropological stress on the density and intractibility of culture, seems dull and depressing by comparison.

It is much more interesting to be told by George Leonard in *Education and Ecstasy* that education will save the child than to be told by Christopher Jencks that it will not.

Conservatives tend to stress things like the immutability of human nature, and its flawed character, the lessons of experience, the complexity of a given situation. Not very exciting.

We thus arrive at the following paradox. The liberal and/or radical idea is striking and interesting because it describes an

unreality. The conservative idea or attitude often tends to seem banal and boring because it has greater affinity for reality. But the very novelty of the liberal-radical idea gives it tremendous impetus in a media-oriented culture which thrives on the marketing of novelty. If you are running a TV talk show, a weekly news magazine, or even a boutique, Malcolm X and the earlier Tim Leary are much more valuable entertainment properties than Edward Banfield or Michael Oakeshott.

VI

The liberal idea, then, manifests itself within our culture possessing certain psychological, economic, and structural advantages. It also possesses a large vulnerability and it is just here that it can be most effectively attacked.

You will notice that other cultural ideals, past and present, have not been reluctant to define and even celebrate themselves. We know what Socratic Man was, and Chivalric Man. The latter was celebrated in song and story. The Christian churches have always been quite explicit about the individual they are trying to fashion. We know what a gentleman is, and we even know what Maoist Man is. Why is it, then, that there is no similarly clear outline regarding Liberal Man?

When we notice this, I think we are on to something important. We can, with a little effort, deduce Liberal Man from the assorted ideas, attitudes, and positions with which we are familiar. But that we actually are obliged to do this is most revealing. When we make explicit the liberal perception of man, it turns out to be base, shameful, and ignominious. Almost as soon as formulated, he tries to slink away into the shadows, embarrassed. No wonder his advocates resist such an effort at formulation.

My colleague at *National Review*, Joseph Sobran, however, has assayed the task, and in conclusion I would like to draw upon his words in one of his recent essays.

The liberal, he writes, possesses an "integral world view" that

> sees man as an animal; an animal whose destiny is a life of pleasure and comfort. Those who view things in

this light tend to believe that this destiny can be achieved by means of enlightened governmental direction in removing (and discrediting) old taboos, and in establishing a new economic order wherein wealth will be distributed more evenly. It is interesting to note that they describe such a redistribution as being "more equitable," because that suggests [note: the environmental thesis again] that they ascribe inequalities of wealth to differences in circumstances rather than ambition, intelligence, fortitude, or any of the myriad other moral virtues that may lead to fortune. . . .

It is interesting to note, too. . . that they never deride or censure human behavior as "bestial" or "animal," because they see man himself as an animal in essence, and cannot be indignant about behavior proper to an animal. They *are* indignant about suffering, which is to say animal suffering — pain, hunger, physical discomfort — and the frustration of animal appetites in general . . . .

This is a morally passive view of man . . . . The middle-class virtues are assumed to blossom spontaneously under the right material conditions; progress comes inevitably, so long as there are not reactionaries "impeding" it . . . . Although [this view] asserts the obligation of those who are well off to share their abundance with the "less fortunate," they can never make demands of the less fortunate themselves . . . . It is characteristic of them to invoke the poor early in any public discussion . . . . As James Burnham has penetratingly put it, the liberal feels himself morally disarmed before anyone he regards as less well off than himself . . . . If pleasure is man's destiny, it is his right. Nobody should have to endure hardship, even if he brings it on himself. Parenthood, when it comes unlooked for, is cruel and unusual punishment, and people who fornicate no more deserve to be assigned its duties than a man who kills somebody deserves to be hanged.

Well, there we have the larger strategic vulnerability which, in due course, will overwhelm the tactical strengths of the liberal ideas. Of all the conceptions of human nature and man's destiny down through the ages, this one must be, morally and aesthetically, the most ignominious and derisory.

Hillsdale College is marked by its strong independence and its emphasis on academic excellence. It holds that the traditional values of Western civilization, especially including the free society of responsible individuals, are worthy of defense. In maintaining these values, the college has remained independent throughout its 131 years, neither soliciting nor accepting government funding for its operations.