

# CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS



*Day care and illegal drugs* are hot political issues. Yet there has been little public discussion of the relationship between changing family patterns and the use of illegal drugs. Considerable data suggests a close connection between the two. Indeed, the decline of the traditional family seems to parallel the increase in the use of illegal drugs. As legislators consider more federal subsidies for day care, they ought to ponder this neglected bond.

It was not until the 1950's that illegal drug use among children and youth became a source of considerable worry. In 1949, Commissioner of Narcotics Harry J. Anslinger estimated that there were 65,000 heroin addicts in the country, half of them concentrated in New York. Most of the newer addicts were primarily young minority males, who reportedly stole to finance their habit and totally rejected mainstream society. A 1951 article in *Science Digest*, though, noted that "hard pressed to create a market, peddlers have left the slums and invaded middle-class schools and neighborhoods." The Boggs Act of 1951 and the Narcotics Control Act of 1956 strengthened drug law enforcement by setting mandatory sentences for drug traffickers, including the death penalty in some cases.

The 1960's became a decade almost defined by the explosive increase in drug use among teenagers and young adults. The proportion of those arrested who were under age 18 increased from 6 percent in 1963 to 25 percent in 1969. The most startling aspects of this new incidence of youthful drug use were its concentration among the white middle class and the array of substances being used. At the same time, the number of divorces climbed from 393,000 in 1960 to 1,213,000 in 1981; the divorce rate rose 140 percent. The rate of first marriage (new brides per 1,000 single women) declined 30 percent; among women ages 20-24, the fall was a dramatic 59

percent. Some researchers began to suspect that there might be a connection between these developments.

During the 1950-69 period, sociologists and psychologists who looked at the family-drug equation moved toward a common conclusion: family life, properly structured, could and did insulate children from drug experimentation and use; and the more traditional the family, the greater the degree of protection. Eva Rosenfeld, Isodor Chein, and others reported that the families of addicts were characterized by parental death, divorce, or desertion. Father absence had a particularly strong effect on boys.

Richard Blum and associates, in *Horatio Alger's Children*, offered the most complete early assessment of the relationship of family life to drug use. Drawing his sample from San Mateo, California, in the late 1960's, Blum sought to identify those family-oriented factors that correlated with "low risk and high risk" of teenage drug use, within a period of growing general substance abuse. Among white middle-class families, Blum found that certain family patterns were significantly related to "low risk" of drug use. These were families that were intact, where the fathers led; mothers gave their first priority to home-centered activities; religion was an active and vital force; and there were numerous siblings and meaningful linkages to other relatives. Conversely, children and adolescents frequently used drugs in families characterized by divorce, cohabitation, and out-of-wedlock births, and where men and women gave highest priority to activities and interests outside the home.

These implied linkages even help explain the apparent stabilization, or decline, in youthful drug use that has been seen in this decade. After the startling changes in family structure and life seen in the 1960-80 period, several key indicators (including the divorce and birthrates) have since stabi-

lized or turned in healthier directions.

Many congressmen are currently supporting federal legislation for more child-care centers and tax incentives to keep both spouses employed outside the home—actions that, according to the research, will increase drug use among teens. At the same time, these legislators claim to be "waging war" on drugs. If they are serious about that campaign, they would do better to offer tax incentives to families where men and women take the time to rear their own children, at home.

—Allan Carlson

*The Atlanta air* is clear and sultry, yet there's a different air in the Democratic Convention's Women's Caucus in the Hyatt Regency—an air of conspiratorial illusions which stifle zealotry with their cold, hard calculations, but promise victory and the triumph of total human rights.

In the hallway adjacent to the meeting room I'm the recipient of a lecture on the need and right for long-term care legislation. I'm assured that this issue will come to dominate the political arena, and that no less than Claude Pepper supports it. What's the price tag? I inquire. Twenty billion dollars—without batting an eye, yet spoken in a slightly subdued fashion. Can't the private sector answer this need? Unthinkable. Can this cost be squared with Dukakis's goal of deficit reduction? In time, yes. Regardless, the need is surpassing. There it is: the Democratic economic illusion—spend more on social programs, and watch the deficit contract. Of course, the world doesn't work that way, which is why Dukakis never speculates on how to balance the budget. Call it the economic veil.

Moving into the actual caucus, wondering what luminaries might be involved, I spy Geraldine Ferraro on the podium. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, representing New York but sporting a Southern accent, hails this

historic, living monument to the women's movement. "Geraldine," Congresswoman Slaughter informs us, "created a moment in history which will never, never be surpassed." Previous moments of some significance flash through my mind, but I succumb to the tingling sense of unity pervading this religious gathering. (Geraldine informs us that to have secured the additional 15 percentage points necessary to beat Reagan in '84, "you would have needed God on the ticket and *She wasn't available.*")

The Women's Caucus is deep in self-congratulation. The buttons say simply "5%," for the number of women in Congress—only one more Democrat than Republican, with probable growth favoring Republicans. I see Bella Abzug, who meanders about the room as if able to occupy any space at all, possessing total dominion from her matriarchal place within the Parthenon of women's activists. I speak to her and ask her if she has not broadened her appeal beyond women's activists, even appealing to more conservative women. She exclaims she is the same today as she ever was; that she holds out hope for all women across the broad spectrum. It is not she who is changing, but other women everywhere who have changed.

Now appears Ann Richards, treasurer from Texas and the star of the opening night of the convention. More than others, Ms. Richards recognizes the task at hand—to conceal the goals of all the interest groups which flourish under the Democratic umbrella long enough to secure the presidential crown.

From the cluster of people surrounding her at the podium Ms. Richards suddenly whirls to face the audience, cameras, and microphones, and calls out: "Well, how y'all doing? I didn't put on my fancy face cream today so whatever shots you photographers get, get 'em straight on!" Ms. Richards honestly assesses the rigors of the woman as politician but considers the benefits to outweigh the efforts. She recalls that Mae West story in which Mae encounters a friend at a party wearing a formidable mink coat. Mae asks her friend: "Why honey, where did you get that coat?" Her friend replies: "Why Mae, I met a man with \$10,000." Next year the friend

meets Mae, who is wearing a coat of various pelts. When she asks Mae if she met a man with \$10,000, Mae replies: "Why, no, honey. I met 10,000 men with one dollar."

The Texas raconteur continues, claiming she had just been asked outside by a reporter what it was about George Bush that women didn't like. She said, "Sorry, but its hard to explain unless you've gone to a high school dance and looked over at the stag line and seen this guy constantly raising his eyebrows at you, and you say to yourself, 'Oh Lord, I hope he doesn't ask me!'"

For all her down-home style, Ann Richards is this convention's John the Baptist. She acts as a bridge, saying enough of the right things to retain unity with women activists, yet urging a muting of angry voices and forging alliances with those less vocal, and even apparently less Democratic, for the sake of victory. In effect, Richards appears to counsel, to speak the harsh truths about the goals of this caucus is to lose again. And victory is the goal. What better political veil to the truth of their concerns than Senator Lloyd Bentsen?

Bentsen appears amid a phalanx of Secret Service agents and mounts the podium. His voice is so weak as to be barely audible before an audience already stirred by fiery oratory and evangelical exhortation. So inept is the stately Bentsen that an aging women's activist gently moves him closer to the microphone. Once positioned, he begins.

"This year we are going to make this the year of the child," says Bentsen. "For those mothers living below the poverty line we are going to see that you have proper support." The still almost-inaudible Texan assures the gathering that "Michael Dukakis has a great record on issues involving women. He doesn't make a lot of promises, but he has a record of action. Women will play a major role in his administration."

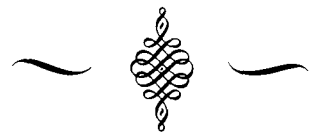
What is the import of such mild platitudes served before a hungry Women's Caucus? The political veil is drawn and coded under the scrutiny of the national media. Enough must be said to insure activating the activists, but not too much to alarm the broader public. Here enters political gnosti-

cism, for only the enlightened few can know what is really going to happen. The result is that suspicion lingers in the minds of the activists and is sure to grow in the mind of the American public. But in the aftermath of the party having said too much four years ago (with a 40,000-word platform), rest content that if the Democrats err this year, it will be on the side of verbal parsimony, for the veil will not be rent.

—Joe Pappin III

*Friends of Chronicles' editor* have been hearing rumors of a book he claimed to be working on for the past decade. The book is finally out: *The Politics of Human Nature*. Beginning with the biological evidence for human nature, the work covers sex differences, the family, the origin of the state, the twin problems of tyranny and treason, and a philosophical justification for the federalism outlined in the American Constitution. *The Politics of Human Nature* is available for \$29.95 from Transaction Books (New Brunswick, NJ 08903). As William Faulkner said of one of his novels, the author hopes you will like this book and tell your friends to buy it.

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## DIPLOMATS, DUPES, AND TRAITORS

by Thomas Fleming

Election '88 has been so far a political flea circus in which the issues are as microscopic as the candidates. The one interesting candidate has been the Rev. Jesse Jackson. If you have seen his very effective commercials, you will remember the pictures of Jackson meeting with President Assad of Syria, and the voice-over reminding us that of all the candidates Jackson is the only one who has carried out top-level discussions with foreign heads of state.

Jesse Jackson is hardly alone in playing the role of ambassador to the world. There are many others: Dr. Bernard Lown, for example. In 1985 Dr. Lown, along with Dr. Yevgeny Chazov of the Soviet Union, received a Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts on behalf of nuclear disarmament. Chazov and Lown were co-founders of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (or IPPNW). Dr. Chazov was equally well-known in the West for signing a statement that bitterly attacked Andrei Sakharov, the Nobel prize-winning nuclear physicist. Sakharov at that time was in forced internal exile and, by all accounts, was being held in a hospital and undergoing a compulsory treatment of psychotropic drugs.

Critics of IPPNW like Edward Lozansky have made the obvious objection to their struggle for world peace: "There's a fundamental link," says Lozansky, "between preservation of world peace and human rights. . . . Only when Soviet people like Sakharov have the opportunity to speak free can we talk about trust, about stopping the arms race, about nuclear disarmament."

One citizen diplomat who has earned the trust of Soviet leaders is Armand Hammer. Hammer was the feature of a recent Soviet television show, entitled *Comrade Capitalist*, that honors him for a lifetime of service to the USSR. Hammer claims to be on friendly terms with most of the world's leaders and carries messages back and forth between President Reagan and Secretary Gorbachev. Jesse Jackson is a comparative newcomer to citizen diplomacy, but Hammer has been at it since 1921, when he cut his first deal with the USSR—he still treasures his personally autographed picture of Lenin.

It is hard to tell where Hammer stands politically. As a very rich capitalist he supported Richard Nixon to the point of making an illegal contribution to his campaign, but he has never repudiated his father's activities in support of the Communist Party. More than one liberal publication—*Harper's* and *The New York Times*, for example—have

