

news; a series of pointless, meandering essays touching on every imaginable facet of the press: campaign reporting, television anchormen, the ratings, the newsmagazines, the rise of Rupert Murdoch, investigative reporting, and so on. The writing is sloppy and repetitive (there are several identical paragraphs repeated in different chapters), and Diamond has an annoying habit of giving us glimmers of good ideas throughout the book and then failing to pursue them or explore them in any depth. He is also rather shameless about patting himself on the back ("I respect both Bernstein and Greenfield, but I told them they were wrong and put my own views about anchormen into an article. . .").

There are some parts of this book that rise above the level of the rest, particularly in the first few chapters on campaign reporting in the 1976 presidential elections. But these chapters shine precisely because they contain what is missing from the rest of the book—the sense that Diamond and the Study Group did their homework, that they collected their anecdotes by working instead of by taking friends out to lunch. After chapter three, though, be prepared for pages upon pages of the random thoughts of Ed Diamond, slapped down on paper with no particular order or shape.

—*Joseph Nocera*

Harvard Hates America. John LeBoutellier. Gateway, \$7.95. John LeBoutellier is a super-earnest young man who was finance chairman for a Republican senatorial campaign while still a student at Harvard, and who has used the two years since his graduation to develop a new philosophy for his chosen party. That philosophy, which he calls *The New Homestead*, is defensible enough with its suggestions about health care (government-supported catastrophic insurance), higher education (using universities to disburse government-backed student loans), and the cost of housing (an innovative mortgage plan). LeBoutellier says that his view draws on "true" Republican principles—that is, those of one century ago—but he never successfully explains why it has anything more to do with the modern Republican Party than with post-Great Society Democrats like Carter and Brown.

What is not defensible about this book is its title—and the one chapter it refers to, a shrill, mean-spirited, and shallow caricature of the "Liberal mind" at his alma mater. In that chapter, LeBoutellier

shows the skill, which has reached full flower in Ben Wattenberg, of making a potentially important case unacceptable through sheer vulgarity of presentation. That first chapter has virtually nothing to do with the rest of the book—but, then, neither does the title, raising suspicions that this is the price LeBoutellier paid to get his more worthy passages into print.

Hired Hands: Seasonal Farm Workers in the United States. Stephen H. Sosnick. McNally & Loftin West, \$20/\$14.95.

Island China. Ralph N. Clough. Harvard, \$12.50. Taiwan and its critical role in the Sino-American relationship is the subject of Ralph Clough's first-rate study. Neither democracy nor totalitarian, "Island China," where, driven from the mainland, Chiang Kai-shek set up headquarters for the "Republic of China," has been remarkable among developing countries for its political stability and economic success. Taiwan is on the way to becoming a medium-sized, affluent, industrial society capable of exporting high technology items. Its problem is whether it can survive without diplomatic relations with the United States.

American military protection is an important deterrent to the forceful conquest of Taiwan by the People's Republic of China. Fortunately, it is not the only deterrent. Increasingly apprehensive about Soviet ambitions in Asia, Communist China is unlikely to jeopardize by military adventure its stake in improving its relations with the United States and Japan.

But a "normalization" of U.S.-China relations as seen from Peking would require that the United States break diplomatic relations with Taiwan, withdraw all its forces from the island and annul its security treaty with the Republic of China. In principle, the United States has accepted the second of these conditions but has linked any such withdrawal to the prospect for a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. It has not agreed to the other two propositions.

In Clough's view, although Peking cannot back down on its conditions, the impasse is not hopeless. The Carter administration could accept these conditions if satisfied that the security and economic well-being of Taiwan were protected—that is, if Peking acquiesced on the continuation of the substance of U.S. relations with Taiwan in return for changes

in the form of those relations. Implicit would be the postponement, perhaps for several years, of the question of Taiwan's ultimate reunification with the mainland.

Clough believes that a productive relationship with China on that basis is possible. He doesn't entertain the notion that getting there will be easy.

—L. R.

James Jones: A Friendship. Willie Morris. Doubleday, \$8.95. So this is how a writer dies. Not with a bang or a whimper, but with courage, steady courage, growing sadness, and enduring love for the too much he must leave behind. At least that is the way rough, hard-drinking, fun-loving, gentle-hearted Jim Jones faced the congestive heart failure that ended his life.

Jones was not one of those writers who despaired over whether there was really anything to say. He was living to finish *Whistle*, the last of the army trilogy (*From Here to Eternity*, *The Thin Red Line*), where he hoped to say it all. In the hospital with heart failure for the fatal last time, Jones propped himself up in bed to make more notes on the last chapter of the work that was his life, but not all his life. Just outside intensive care the people who loved him—family and friends to whom he had given love, advice, encouragement held a vigil round the clock. Sometimes they would drift into his room to exchange last looks, last touches. Jones called for a poem, Yeats' "Lake Isle of Innisfree," and read it aloud for his friends until the nurse ushered them out. The next day he was unconscious, and in another, dead.

But Jones was a lucky man. After a tour of duty in the bloody Pacific theater, he shouldered his way into Maxwell Perkins' office with his first novel. Perkins rejected the book but finally gave Jones a \$500 advance on his next one, *From Here to Eternity*, a book that made Jones rich and famous. He married a would-be novelist and actress primarily remembered as a stand-in for Marilyn Monroe—beautiful, strong-minded, foul-mouthed, enchanting Gloria, who turned out to be the Right Girl, giving him good times, understanding, children, and, what every writer needs even more than money—an absolute fan.

A few years after their marriage the Jones moved to Paris, where their house on the Ile St Louis became the expatriate salon. Jones had been the center, the heart of the American writers' colony, dispensing thousands of dollars worth of booze and priceless comfort, and,

somehow, writing more books—some very good, some just okay—*Some Came Running*, *The Thin Red Line*, *The Merry Month of May*—always making lots of money and friends.

A super life, a funny, raucous, loving, vivid man. And while Willie Morris writes it all with beauty and sensitivity, the book never quite lets us reach Jones, touch him, know him.

The book has two problems, both of which could have been avoided if Morris had waited a few more years before writing, had waited until he better understood where Jones stopped and Morris began, until memories of the man dying no longer shrouded memories of the man. Most of the friends' stories sound slow, muffled—as if Morris interviewed them a week after the funeral when they were still paralyzed with grief. Granted, any compassion is a welcome change from bitter remembrances like Hemingway's *Moveable Feast*, but reverence bordering on adoration also snuffs out life.

Then there's the problem with the narrator. Morris lived near Jones in the Hamptons and was a close friend only during Jones' later years; yet from the beginning, Morris makes himself too large a part of his portrait of Jones—the photographer's shadow obscures the picture.

Morris seems to have a lot of problems coming to terms with his own reputation and work. He spends far too many pages "correcting" reviews he considers unfair to Jones and generally flailing against the critics in an artlessly immediate way. For it seems that in loving Jones, Morris wanted to become Jones, had a slight confusion about just which writer was who. This becomes explicit toward the end of the book, where Morris again feels compelled to go on for pages about a bad review, only this time a bad review of something Morris himself had written! In this rather strange scene he reads the review aloud to Jones, who, with characteristic good sense, tells him to forget about it. (Hell, Jones adds in a throwaway Morris would turn over in his mind for years, that's just like the stuff they wrote about me.)

In all his justification for Jones then, part of Morris' game is justifying himself. Poor Morris, who doesn't know what James Jones knew, that a writer's justification doesn't come from the critics' scribbles, but from his works and from his life. Jones had no worries on either count.

—*Blythe Babyak*