

FOREWORD

A Heritage of Stone

THE greatest Horatio Alger story of all is man's rise from a poor but honest animal to his present eminence as a member of the Hydrogen Club. This may well turn out to be the success story to end all success stories.

Man is in the position of the fellow whose Dun & Bradstreet rating is impeccable, who is the pillar of the community but who is liable to shoot himself and others at any moment. Many men are driven by hate or fear of their fellow man; most of the others are indifferent and unconcerned. In either case, in the end, the result is the same.

The ancient problem of man's conduct has been converted by his own technology into the critical question of his survival on the planet. He views objects with honesty but that honesty is on a collision course with the illusory way he regards himself and his fellow man.

Earth was a fairly peaceful place back in the halcyon days when Tyrannosaurus was king. True, Brontosaurus chased the duckbilled dinosaurs around, the ostrich dinosaur borrowed an occasional egg for breakfast from the nests of the others, and undoubtedly there was more snorting and growling than was really necessary. On the other hand, the animals never lined up in formations to destroy each other. Avarice and guile were unknown. There were no dungeons, no leg irons and no thumb-screws. Justice had not yet been discovered, so there were no hangings. The rivers were unpolluted and the clouds were without uranium particles.

But when the forbear of man began to lumber about on his hind legs, leaving his upper limbs free, it was the beginning of the end of innocence. And when he began to make weapons, the lease expired on the Garden of Eden.

This distant ancestor of ours was not a vegetarian but was extremely aggressive in his quest for meat. It was because of his carnivorous nature rather than a desire to be able to contemplate the dialogues of Plato that he learned to think. On whatever other planets there may be with sentient beings, and it is probable that there are others in the universe, it is likely that in every instance its thinking creature was originally an eater of meat who had to free his forward limbs and learn to make weapons to kill his dinner. Although it is one of man's most popular illusions that he is essentially gentle (to imply that another is not a gentleman is to risk being assaulted), he is one of the most aggressive creatures the world has known. There are a few others nearly as aggressive, such as the South American piranja, but they do not harm each other nor are they armed with hydrogen bombs. If man's forbear had not been uniquely aggressive, if he had been a vegetarian, New York City today would be a quiet island forest and where the cement buildings stand and the taxi herds race, deer would graze among the wild flowers. The same aggression which made man an evolutionary success is still an inherent part of his nature.

It took man about 500,000 years to graduate from the Stone Age and obtain the degree of *homo sapiens*. This means that, compared to the mere 5,000 years of his recent recorded history, his time on earth as a savage dominates at the ratio of one hundred brutish years to one civilized year. Expressed in terms of a man of forty years of age, it is as if he spent only the last five months in civilization and all the rest of his forty years living in the jungle with the animals. His actions today are greatly influenced by the thousands of centuries during which he hunted with a stone axe in his hairy hand or crouched in front of his cave, gnawing his primeval dinner from a still bloody haunch and watching with narrowed eyes the strange world in which he found himself.

This primitive man, like his primordial ancestors and their animal antecedents, was not greatly interested in the fate of other men in the forest except as it directly might affect him. The extent of his interest in the welfare of others of his kind can be measured by the fact that he was not above including them in

his diet. From his point of view, in a world in which the problem of his own survival occupied every waking minute, what happened to the men in the other cave was the least of his concerns.

He felt the need for empathy much as he would have felt the need for a lawn-mower, but thought was another matter. It produced better knives and more food and a longer life, and the prodding of these necessities forced a rapid evolution of his capability for thinking. Even in evolution nothing is free. We are paying today for our recently acquired ability to think with central nervous systems as brittle as glass Christmas trees. In any event, a mind capable of thinking in symbols had arrived on Earth and things would never be the same again.

The descendant of this hairy Stone Age man would rebuild the earth, change the course of rivers, and touch the very stars at which his ancestor stared from his cave at night. There was nothing he would not be able to do so long as he was not asked to love his fellow man.

This would not be so difficult were man the lovable creature he believes himself to be. The fact is, however, that the image in which man conceives himself—that of a superbly rational being floating high above the earthbound animals—is a picture of something which does not exist and never has existed. History shows that man is the most savage, brutal creature to walk the earth since the dawn of time, and his vaunted rationality has merely increased his capability for bestiality.

Such reason as he possesses has produced the cross, the bowl of hemlock, the gallows, the rack, the gibbet, the guillotine, the sword, the machine gun, the electric chair, the hand grenade, the personnel mine, the flame thrower, poison gas, the nearly obsolete T.N.T. bomb, the obsolescent atom bomb and the currently popular hydrogen bomb—all made to maim or destroy his fellow man.

In America today this marvelous, rational creature murders every hour, commits a rape every twenty-six minutes, a robbery every five minutes, an assault every three minutes, an auto theft every minute, a grand larceny every forty-five seconds and a burglary every twenty-eight seconds.

Since his emergence from the obscure mists of time onto the

pages of recorded history, he has left a bloody trail of ravage, pillage, and slaughter which his simian cousins and his distant four-footed kin have lacked the wits to match. His depredations crowd history's footnotes from Tamerlane's pile of skulls to the tumbrels of the French Revolution on to the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

The limited use which *homo sapiens* makes of reason is illustrated by the survival, over the years, of such eminently reasonable beliefs as divination of the future, magic, necromancy, mumbo jumbo, unicorns, fortune telling, charms, demonology, sorcery, astrology, numerology, voodoo, curses, love philters, amulets, haunted houses, omens, fairies, elves, goblins, sorcerers, warlocks, werewolves, wizards and witches.

The more irrational an idea has been the more firmly man has embraced it. When the idea has been sufficiently inane and destitute of merit, millions of people have united in their devotion to it. One of the most popular perversions of intellectuality was German National Socialism with its glorification of hatred, its belief in the right of the strong to rule the weak, its contempt for individual rights and its mystical nationalism.

This irrational culture unleashed the inhumanity remaining from the 500,000 years of the Stone Age and the preceding animal centuries. The Nazi adventure forcibly illustrates not only the cruelty of which men are capable once it becomes allowable but the continued detachment of men from each other. In the looking-glass world produced by the Nazi culture, truth was an enemy, compassion a stranger, only the innocent were punished, only the guilty were rewarded and the meek inherited the ovens.

Most of the victims were gassed to death by cyanide or torn apart by machine guns. Others were frozen to death in ice water, placed in pressure chambers until their lungs burst, injected with gasoline and lethal doses of typhus and forced to inhale mustard gas.

This was mankind's greatest crime, yet through it all there was a marked detachment on the part of the executioners and most of the citizens of Germany. For the former orders were orders and for the latter it was not of their doing and they had their own problems. It was always a case of orders from a distant city: a

quota was set, and a long line of gaunt, hollow-eyed skeletons shuffled into a windowless gassing room or trembled on the edge of their own burial ditch. The green uniformed sergeant who locked the door to the gas chamber re-read the letter from his sweetheart in Heilbronn while he waited for the razor-edged cyanide gas to do its work and for the screaming to be finished. The SS cleaning their machine-guns after the massacres made the small talk of soldiers: girls, home towns, the war, furloughs. The hausfrau in the village near the crematorium clucked disapprovingly as she flicked the ash particles off of her baby's clothing on the line. It was all very impersonal but at the end six million human beings were dead.

The medical profession contributed its consecrated skills to the mass production of cadavers, and presented papers at national medical gatherings on such contemporary subjects as experiments in freezing human beings to death. The proudest names in German industry built their new plants close to the concentration camps so as to bring to free enterprise the benefits of slave labor (what's good for I.G. Farben is good for everybody). German businessmen competed eagerly for the building of the mobile gassing units, the huge gas chambers and the special cremating ovens, and for the manufacture of the cyanide crystals which created the killing gas. Lawyers solemnly played the elaborate game of justice while the bodies of the murdered innocent fell daily by the thousands on all sides of them, and judges nicely balanced discretion and the rights of men. Newspaper publishers carefully printed all the news that was safe to print and counted their advertisements. And the contented burghers of the small towns like Dachau, hard by the death camps, passed with unseeing eyes the incoming freight cars jammed with frightened prisoners and the outgoing smoke churning from the crematorium's busy chimneys.

The rest of mankind blamed the Germans, the Germans blamed the SS and the SS, vanishing like the Cheshire cat, left only its explanation that it had simply obeyed orders and that everything had been perfectly legal.

The exemplar of the SS was Adolf Eichmann, the officer in charge of what was referred to, in the de-humanized argot of the

Nazis, as the Jewish problem. What gives Eichmann unusual significance, with regard to the growing problem of the conduct of men, is that this man, who can be described fairly as one of the great criminals of our time, bore no discernible special malice toward the countless victims of the atrocities. While he was moved by his hatred of humanity generally, he was very much motivated by his efforts to advance his own career. His "guilty mind" consisted not so much of his intending the consequences of his actions as it did of his not caring about the consequences. He approached his job precisely as if he were dispatching trucks of chickens to the market and as if the more trucks he dispatched the more quickly his promotion would come.

Eichmann's capsulation from the rest of humanity typifies not only the SS, but, although it was greater in degree, the detachment exhibited by most of the German people. Psychologically, Szondi says, he constitutes an extraordinary individual case but, in the final analysis, he typifies mankind because there is a little Eichmann in all of us.

Eichmann's case presents the question of man's moral responsibility with a clarity that is historically unique because the acts for which he was tried and hanged technically were legal. In the topsy-turvy Nazi culture, it was illegal to marry Jews but legal to shoot them down with machine guns. He had the rare misfortune of being called to account for the immorality of his acts. In a world in which the survival of man increasingly appears to depend on further moral evolution Adolf Eichmann is a meaningful symbol.

The implications of the Eichmann case are many, although few of them are new: that law may be at odds with ethics, that cultures have a tremendous impact on the men living within them, that human nature is dynamic, that unlimited human power becomes terror, that men need moral precepts to live by, as well as laws, and that one does not have to intend evil to be evil. More than anything else, Eichmann stands for the infinite cruelty of not caring.

The minds of men who hate humanity reflect the world they experienced when they were young. The secret aversions of their early years became in Hitler the predatory tiger and in Eichmann the cold-eyed bird, and millions died in agony to pay for their

childhood fears. Like heirlooms the countless cruelties of men are passed down from one generation to the next.

Millions of the victims have found in the darkness of the earth the final sanctuary of oblivion. The ash particles of the others have been lost in the wind and on the wooded hills and river bottoms. Nothing remains of them but their memory in our minds, and that grows fainter and fainter. Yet the hate which killed them and the apathy which was its accomplice abide as if nothing ever had happened.

Whether we survive the Thermonuclear Age may come down to the simple question of whether we learn to care about our fellow men. Perhaps our cruelty and detachment will lead to a final day of fire for the most rational creature who ever walked the Earth. The computers which we have invented now tell us that our losses in a nuclear exchange will be 130 million American dead. We have come a long way from the first stone axe. Or perhaps the new population factor, racing toward us like a tidal wave, will bring even more detachment and, in turn, more dehumanization, more Eichmanns and more victims.

Time was when even the most pious Inquisitor could pull out only one fingernail at a time. Since those nostalgic days, science has been arming our ancient hates and cruelties with increasingly lethal weapons. Yesterday's Eichmann had a vast railroad network for the convenient transportation of families to extermination centers. Tomorrow's Eichmanns will be able to remove entire cities with even greater facility.

The Stone Age long ago was certified as dead from natural causes, but its demise has been greatly exaggerated. It is very much with us today—in our pointed canine teeth for puncturing enemies, our brutal rapes and murders, our pale orchards of skyward pointed metal, and our yawning indifference to the suffering of other men.

Our persevering primitive attitudes toward each other may not allow us to survive our expanding technology. Our Neanderthal alienation from one another makes hate operative and gives it such deadly power, whether the hate is personified by a totalitarian elite or a random paranoid.

That spring evening in New York City when Kitty Genovese was so leisurely murdered, thirty-eight witnesses heard her

screams and watched the killer toy with her for half an hour. Not one of the thirty-eight interfered or called the police. A few were afraid. Most did not want to get involved. One was tired and went to bed. The victim died alone, bleeding at the foot of a wooden stairway.

These thirty-eight grey mice, peeking from the comfort of their holes, may have been watching the destiny of their own race.



Photo by Jim Garrison

MAN'S PREY: The favorite quarry of man is man. In the 20th century alone he has shot, gassed, hanged, stabbed or otherwise disposed of 100 million of his fellow creatures. The Nazis at Dachau had exhausted their supply of crystal for the gas chambers, and the victim above, one of the prisoners, was machine-gunned to death by the SS a few hours before the arrival of Allied troops. There is no record of who he was or where he came from.

Dachau . . . Auschwitz Mauthausen . Sachsenhausen
Treblinka . . . New York City. What is your home town?

The day may come when time seems to hang suspended, when weeds cover our deserted streets and when the only sound is the arrogant squeak of rat swarms, eager now for their turn at evolution. Someone from a distant place, searching through our artifacts, may chance upon a human skull. Perhaps he will pick it up, looking through the goggled sockets at the dusty hollow

where a handful of grey tissue once took the measure of the universe.

"Alas, poor man," he might say. "A fellow of most infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. Where are your gibbets now? Your thumb-screws and your gallows? Your treasured hates and your fond cruelties?"

"What happened to your disinterested millions? Your uncommitted and uninvolved, your preoccupied and bored? Where to-day are their private horizons and their mirrored worlds of self?"

"Where is their splendid indifference now?"

JIM GARRISON

CRIME, LAW AND CORRECTIONS

Edited by

RALPH SLOVENKO
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With 28 Participants

With a Foreword by

Jim Garrison



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PARTICIPANTS

Ralph Slovenko, *Editor*

Ralph S. Banay	Lloyd W. McCorkle
Robert C. Bolles	Russell R. Monroe
Hervey M. Cleckley	Sanger B. Powers
Bruno M. Cormier	Philip Q. Roche
Henry Davidson	Julian B. Roebuck
Norman Fenton	Edward J. Sachar
Lawrence Z. Freedman	Leon Salzman
Jim Garrison	Joseph Satten
Sheldon Glueck	Leon J. Saul
Manfred S. Guttmacher	John L. Schimel
Richard L. Jenkins	Helen Silving
Edward H. Knight	John M. Suarez
I. S. Kulesar	Lipot Szondi
Shoshanna Kulesar	Donald W. Winnicott

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Ralph Slovenko, editor of the volume, holds B.E., LL.B., M.A. (Philosophy), and Ph.D. (Psychodynamics) degrees from Tulane University. He was a Fulbright scholar to France, and a former editor-in-chief of the Tulane Law Review. He served as professor of law at the Tulane Law School from 1954 to 1964. He served as United States Commissioner, and as law clerk to the Louisiana Supreme Court. He has served as a member of the Board of Governors of the Louisiana State Bar Association, Advisory Committee to the Juvenile Court, Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans, and as Director of the Program of Continuing Legal Education for the Bench and Bar in Louisiana. He served as chairman of the standing committee of the New Orleans Bar Association on admission to the Bar and continuing legal education. During 1964-65 he served as senior assistant district attorney in New Orleans, and on the parttime faculty of the Tulane University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry and Neurology. He is presently Professor of Law at the University of Kansas and at the Menninger Foundation. He has published numerous books and articles on law, psychiatry and philosophy. He is the editor of the American Lecture Series in Behavioral Science and Law.

Ralph S. Banay, M.D., a New York psychiatrist, is president and an organizer of the Medical Correctional Association; Professor of Forensic Sciences, Manhattan College; editor of "Corrective Psychiatry and Journal of Social Therapy"; Medical Director of Civic Center Clinic, Brooklyn; owner and director of Greenmont-on-Hudson Sanitarium and Youth Institute, Ossining, N.Y.; and Honorary Surgeon of the N.Y. Police Department. His diverse forensic experience included service as chief psychiatrist at Sing Sing Prison. A graduate of the Royal Hungarian University, his training included residency in renowned clinics in Budapest, Vienna and Amsterdam, as well as in psychiatric institutions in New York, California and Massachusetts.

Robert C. Bolles received a B.A. and M.A. in mathematics at Stanford in 1948 and 1949, and then became seriously interested in psychology, and obtained a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of California in 1956. He taught two years at Princeton and one year at the University of Pennsylvania before moving to Hollins College in Virginia where he is now an associate professor in the Department of Psychology. He is primarily concerned with basic rather than applied research, and in fundamental

1958, and since then he has directed several training projects in the field of corrections. The first was a demonstration program of family counseling in the California prisons, reported in a volume entitled *The Prisoner's Family*. His second project was a demonstration of group counseling in county agencies, reported in two volumes. He has studied the prison systems of the principal European countries and has lectured in correctional systems abroad. In 1950 he represented the United States at the International Penal Penitentiary Congress held at the Hague, and in 1962 at the Brussels Seminar of the International Penal and Penitentiary Foundation. He is currently Director of the Training Project in Correctional Methods under a grant from the Committee on Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention of the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In 1963 he was given the Pepperdine College Award in Corrections by the California Probation, Parole and Correctional Association, and in 1964 he received the Edward R. Cass Award of the American Correctional Association.

Lawrence Zelic Freedman, M.D., is Foundations' Fund Research Professor in Psychiatry, Psychiatric Research Unit, University of Chicago Department of Psychiatry. His past institutional affiliations include: Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University; Chairman, Yale Study Unit in Psychiatry and Law, Yale University; Visiting Lecturer, Yale University Law School; Visiting Scholar, Senior Research Associate, Cambridge University, England; Physician-in-Charge, Psychiatric Dispensary, Grace-New Haven Hospital; Member, Western New England Psychoanalytic Society; Permanent Non-Governmental Delegate, United Nations.

Jim Garrison is District Attorney for the Parish of Orleans. In carrying out the duties of that office, he has attained a position of national recognition. He holds the degree of Master of Law from the Tulane University Law School. He joined the Louisiana National Guard ("The Washington Artillery") in 1939 as a private, went on active duty in 1941, and served five years during World War II, including combat in Europe. He presently holds the rank of Lt. Colonel, Field Artillery, in the Louisiana National Guard. He was at one time an F.B.I. agent.

Sheldon Glueck is known for his studies and honored for his achievements in many countries in the world. Together with Eleanor T. Glueck, his wife and co-worker, he is widely recognized for his research into the roots of delinquency and crime. And to generations of Harvard law students, he taught the fundamentals of criminal law. Professor Glueck took his B.A. degree from George Washington University, and the LL.B. and the LL.M. from National University. At Harvard he obtained A.M. and Ph.D. degrees, and he served as an instructor in Criminology, in the Department of Social Ethics, from 1925 to 1929. In that year he joined the Harvard Faculty of

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