

further suggest that women will have to come to terms consciously and intelligently with the biological forces influencing them. Education *before* and career maintenance *during* the child-dominated period would have to be viewed from a more realistic perspective than is the case now. If the biological factor is indeed a basic force influencing and restricting behavior—as I am inclined to agree with the authors it is—and if we furthermore supplement that crucial factor with the age factor—

as the authors have not done—I have a strong suspicion that startling findings will emerge. Pursuing that course, I believe women's genuine concerns and the chance for removing the obstacles that nature and society have inflicted upon them may be much more realistically addressed. No doubt we would then be in for lively and quite new discussions; which is a happy prospect indeed, the old discussions having grown tiresome and stale beyond description.

saically and ingloriously. The mood is caught in Hemingway's Lieutenant Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* (1929): "I was blown up while we were eating cheese," he says.

The pointlessness of the experience in the trenches led men to despair and to an ironic perception of events. Aichinger notes this mode, but does not handle it with the brilliance and convincing detail found in Fussell's recent *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975). Nonetheless, their common conclusion is that of Hemingway: "Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene."

As might have been expected, the interwar period was marked by a series of starkly realistic war novels. Yet most of them, particularly the work of such actual combatants as Laurence Stallings, William March, James Stevens, and Thomas Boyd, left no lasting impression. When the postwar preoccupation with horrifying details and bitter remorse had been exhausted, these writers and their works fell into permanent neglect.

More lasting and influential were those authors who took the war as a metaphor to express the wider disillusionment of a formerly idealistic and optimistic generation. They saw themselves as looking on, helpless and appalled, at the antics of the men who appeared to have done very well out of the war. The Treaty of Versailles, the Red scares, Harding normalcy, and the rampant materialism of the period disgusted such writers as E.E. Cummings, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and William Faulkner. They all turned to the 1914-18 war (in which none of them had actually fought) as a means of making apt and penetrating comments about their own time.

With such a background it is understandable that the men who went to war in 1941 were more sophisticated and less expectant about the experience than their fathers had been. Indeed, as Aichinger notes, "The characteristics shared by the protagonists of the World War II novels is a total lack of the crusading spirit." Fictional protagonists who fight for a cause (except for the likes of Noah Ackerman in Irwin Shaw's 1948 novel *The Young Lions*) are virtually nonexistent. Instead, men fought well in order to return home more quickly; the end of the war was the only means to escape from the military and

The American Soldier in Fiction, 1880-1963: A History of Attitudes Toward Warfare and the Military Establishment by Peter Aichinger

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Jeffrey L. Lant

As social history has increased in importance in recent years, scholars make use of a much wider range of materials to determine what are thought to be characteristic mental attitudes. In trying to approach a more nearly complete understanding of the total past the historian's attention must now go far beyond the standard documentary sources.

In the process new subdisciplines of the subject field have arisen, one of the most fruitful of which is history and literature. Practitioners of this subdiscipline use literature—not merely the classics that transcend periods, but mediocre poems utterly time-bound, popular but fast-fading novels, ephemeral street ballads and music hall songs—to study an era. As a mine for social historians such productions, no matter how grossly they fail as "art," are invaluable.

Professor Peter Aichinger, Chairman of the Department of English, Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean in Quebec, has written a book that seeks to indicate "some of the ways in which the American war novels have reflected the attitude of the American people toward warfare and the military establishment." To do so, he has examined some eighty novels.

Aichinger's essay, for that is what it

is, divides these works into four major periods: 1880-1917, 1917-1939, 1939-1952, and 1953-1963. These, he feels, correspond to the major epochs in the American experience in warfare.

The men of the first period were bred in the heady days of American high Victorianism, when imperial and expansionist attitudes were rife and acceptable. They constituted a generation of happy warriors. They believed war had a salutary and rational purpose; it was the anvil upon which nations strengthened themselves. As the frontier was closed by the incursions of a more civil society, men looked expectantly to war as a splendid alternative. If wars did not occur naturally, it was entirely proper to force them upon the reluctant.

Jingoists spoke often of such virtues as patriotism, loyalty, comradeship, and bravery—emphatically and in capital letters. Thus they went joyously to their crusade in France, where such virtues would surely be realized. As one of the characters in Willa Cather's pro-war *One Of Ours* (1922) says, "Well, we can't arrive any too soon for us, boys."

Naive and hopelessly earnest young men were blown to bits in Flanders fields, not in heroic victories, but pro-

from a life most of them disdained.

Already apparent are the glimmerings of the tragic motif that became predominant in the Vietnamese war. As Leslie Fiedler has written about the literature of the period: "The notions of glory, honor, and courage lose all meaning when in the West men, still nominally Christian, come to believe that the worst thing of all is to die—when, for the first time in a thousand years, it is possible to admit that no cause is worth dying for."

The Korean experience only accentuated the tendency of the World War II novels, some of the best of which came years later—books such as Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night*. These deal with individuals who can no longer be convinced by the eloquent and sublime propaganda that moved men to war at the beginning of the century. Instead, their protagonists are men immune to idealism and patriotism, men who understand that war will be a continual factor in the nation's life but are by no means convinced that it ever achieves its stated goals.

For the mass of men, deeply suspicious of the military organization and of a nation that can compel them to fight for reasons that are not persuasive, people like John F. Kennedy and Norman Mailer tried to create a compelling heroic model for the atomic age. Their efforts appear to have been prompted less by persuasion than by pragmatism.

Without such a model that will induce men to step forward spontaneously the alternatives are compulsion or an army of uncommitted mercenaries that fight for pay and excitement. Since neither alternative is acceptable for a democratic society, Aichinger is perhaps right in suggesting that the current anti-war literature may be followed by a movement among some novelists to reestablish a convincing heroic mode that can be of service to the United States in its minor wars of the nuclear age.

The restatement of heroic values in a way meaningful to our time will be nothing more than a chimera, however, indeed an actual disservice to the nation, unless men can honestly be persuaded to believe in it and in its accompanying goals and policies. Clearly that is not the case at present. Reintroducing the heroic factor, with its implicit message of self-sacrifice and dedication to qualities grander than oneself, is largely conditional upon a radically altered approach to governance among the nation's highest officeholders. Unfortunately, Aichinger does not bother to consider this significant point.

Professor Aichinger's book is nonetheless an intelligent survey of an important complex of issues. Based on too small a sample, his essay cannot be definitive. It is at least suggestive for future researchers, who will be sure to benefit from what he has begun.

artificially contrived scarcity generated by various forces operating within the overall framework of the international capitalist economy."

That must have been written for another book, for this one shows no such thing. The only attempts in this direction are a few asides to the effect that, but for the oil companies, we would use "public" transport and coal (and have less pollution!) and that the oil companies have not explored the entire world (because oil was so cheap in the Middle East!). The author seems to assume that petroleum is everywhere. For example, the only reason India is oil-dry is that it lacks a "progressive and egalitarian society" like Mainland China. Presumably, if Hussein were overthrown, a Peoples Republic of Jordan would strike oil where John Mecoim could not. In reality, governments can operate routine refining, transportation, and marketing functions, but not exploration. "Wildcatting" is a gambler's operation, and bureaucrats cannot be permitted to gamble. Indeed, in the "socialist" states Tanzer so admires, managers who fail are charged with "sabotage" and put against the wall.

Tanzer catalogues all the conventional sins of the international oil companies: they operate in the U.S. interest, have U.S. government support, make monopoly profits, and play dirty pool in the Third World. Unless one shares Tanzer's disgust for the society in which he lives, it is difficult to understand why these are even venial sins. Most Americans, I suspect, believe that U.S. companies should act in the U.S. interest and that the U.S. Government should protect the rights of its citizens. "Monopoly profits" would hit home, except that Tanzer also believes that oil is too cheap. In truth, for every penny of profit the consumer pays more than four cents to governments.

As to corrupting the Third World, Tanzer chooses to be ignorant of the public morality of those unfortunate countries long before anyone ever heard of petroleum or international capitalism. Any popular history of U.S. relations with the Barbary Pirates is sufficient to illustrate the ethics of most Third World rulers since the dawn of history. The oil companies pay off for the same reason we "tip" the examiner for our driving test.

As to manipulating foreign governments, Tanzer fails to take seriously the

The Energy Crisis: World Struggle for Power and Wealth by Michael Tanzer

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B. Bruce-Briggs

A predictable result of any newly publicized "problem" is what might be called "crisis-exploitation," or the deployment of the problem in support of some course advocated long before the problem appeared. Thus the recent energy crisis has been exploited to justify building mass transit, stopping "suburban sprawl," deregulating natural gas, giving more or less support to Israel, increasing the cost of driving,

slowing down environmental legislation, changing our "materialist" values, and so on. A new crisis also required a battery of ideological explanations to inform the faithful of all sects why the crisis further validates their respective positions.

The avowed purpose of this book is "to show that there is no real energy crisis, in the sense of a physical shortage of energy resources; rather, there is an