

insight

Published in the United States for
social scientists by the Interstudent
Program of the Henry George Schools
and with the aid of the Alumni Group

** Volume IV - No. 3 **
** January-February 1975 **

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'We shall all burn together . . .'

As you know, the social studies are not a laughing matter - which may account for our tendency to take them too seriously. In the classroom, students are bombarded with a kind of crisis overkill. Hardly a day passes without a listing of the latest TOP TEN in catastrophe. Life in the social studies department has become an endless Japanese monster movie with our imperilled planet under constant siege.

Not only does Mankind lie trembling on the brink of the nuclear abyss, but he faces disease, crime, starvation, unremitting poverty, epidemic societal unrest and a disinclination to raise teachers' salaries.

And these are the fun things.

It is good that we look to the future. Unlike other creatures we are not programmed but can choose right or wrong. We are equipped to envisage the probabilities and choose a direction. Those who plead for higher 'quality of life' are demanding no more than increasing variety of choice. That they frequently advocate policies which limit choice may be attributed less to bad intent than to lack of understanding.

In any case, our choices are limited by the amount and truth of our information. They suffer further limitation from our interpretive inadequacies. Viewed through our subjective lenses the same objective truth may throw such variety of image that contrary choices are certain.

So how can common agreement ever be attained? Simply, because we check to see what others think and accordingly shade our decision. It's not likely that everyone will be wrong so 'feeling the wind' is a reasonable test of a true conclusion.

Except that we are living more and more by collective decision and there is every chance that everyone will be wrong.

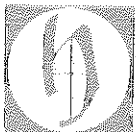
This sorry state is the result of our wish to avoid the effort that decision-making requires. Better that somebody else - preferably an expert - do the job. If he does we are prepared to support and applaud his generous acceptance of this wearisome burden.... Until he blows it!

On the way to the lynching, he desperately explains how immutable forces make good choices impossible; how improvement in one direction leads to erosion elsewhere; how social problems are not scientifically soluble (because people are completely unpredictable); how he has a degree in Pollyanaism that will be useful during the inevitable disasters to come.

He is believed for lack of a contrary argument. Politics becomes the art of the possible and social studies the art of teaching the impossible. Problem solving is ignored and 'reform' rears its pretty head. The reformers spend their boundless energies - not in conquest of misery - but in sharing equally the common distress.

Yet, a realistic appraisal of our situation uncovers a dream that isn't at all impossible. With present knowledge modern agriculture can make of this planet a gourmet cornucopia; modern medicine has hurdled most of the transient assaults on our bodies and can head for the big one - death by aging; modern industry can manage even the ultimate miracle - a pot for every chicken; but this incredible capacity for production and service may never be realised for we have learned and believed a doctrine of despair and defeat.

Harry Pollard



Interstudent Program

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INSIGHT

Editor
Harry Pollard

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We'd like you to contribute to INSIGHT. Apart from articles on classroom survival tactics, we would like your clippings and comments. Your initials will be appended so others who disagree may joust with you.

The Classical Analysis Mini-Courses

Mini-One: The Basics of Political Economy

Some scientific methods as they apply to social problems; Natural law; laws and privileges; basic assumptions of all social sciences; cooperation.

Mini-Two: The Law of Human Progress - Morality and Ethics (Part I)

Human objectives; voluntary and involuntary cooperation; choices; maintenance and conflict; socialism; mercantilism; patriotism; political and economic morality.

Mini-Three: Concepts, Definitions and Names - Voluntary and Involuntary Value

Classifying the universe; production factors and their rewards; determination of value; economic and political value; slavery; taxation and coercion; obligation.

Mini-Four: Economic and Political Systems

Averaging; market pricing; equilibrium and the 'steady state'; the price mechanism; voluntary and involuntary communities; rights - social and individual; contracts; 'power' & 'authority'; laws and privileges; the franchise; 'majority' voting.

Mini-Five: Inevitability of Poverty - Malthus, Mill and Ricardo

Not enough capital causes poverty (Mill); too many people causes poverty (Malthus); not enough land causes poverty (Ricardo); why increasing production fails to help the poor; why welfare fails; why people act in an anti-social manner.

Mini-Six: Ownership and Taxes

Public property, private property and common property; the "Labor theory of ownership"; wealth ownership and land ownership; taxes and community charges.

Mini-Supplements (The following Mini-Sups are numbered to indicate when they may be taken: Mini-Sup Four after Mini-Four, Mini-Sup Five after Mini-Five and so on.)

Mini-Sup 3a: Money - Purchasing Media - Intrinsic and Extrinsic Value - Inflation

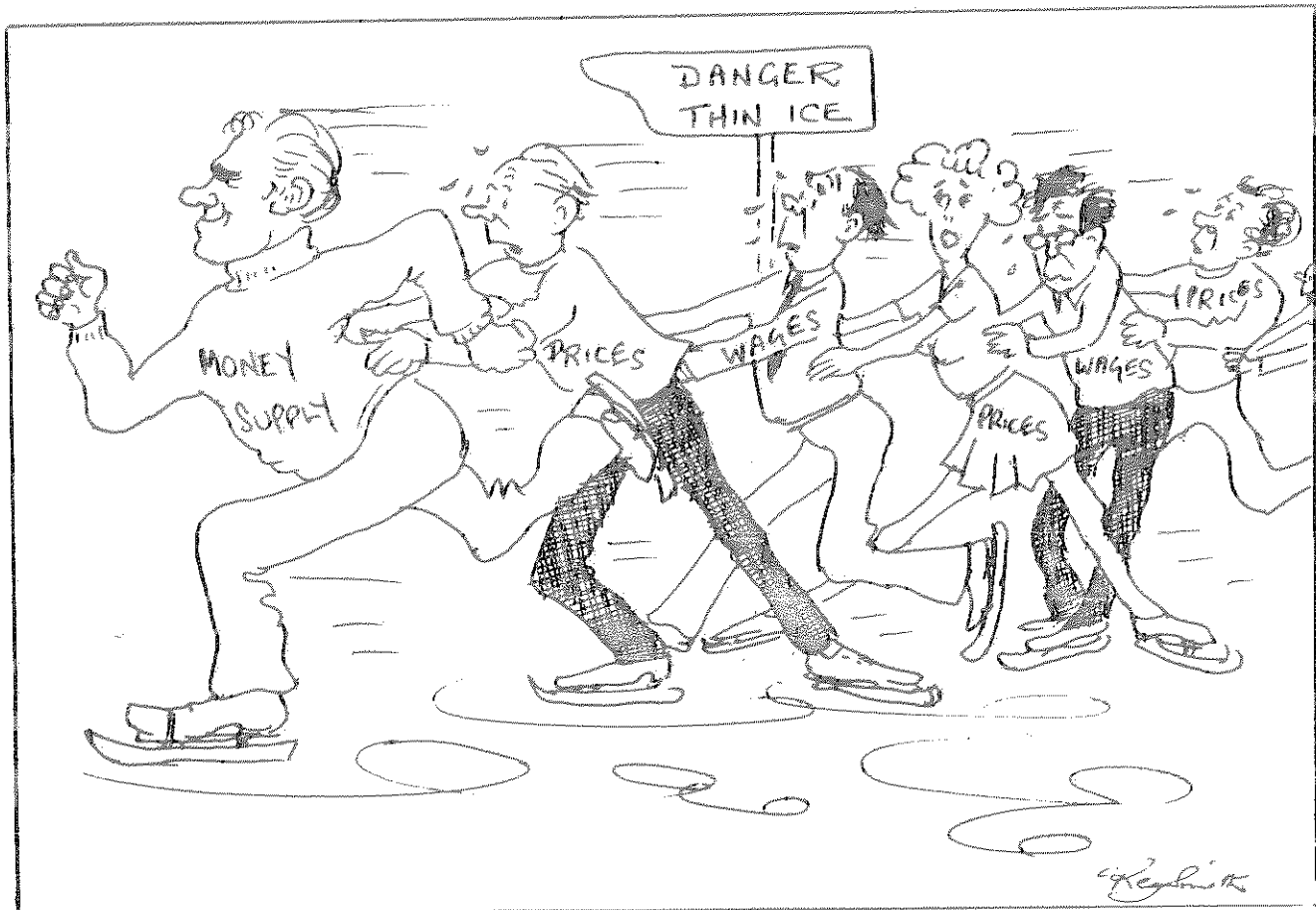
Mini-Sup 4a: Trade - Imports & Exports - War and Peace

Mini-Sup 5a: Boom and Slump - Behavioral Basis of the Crash

Mini-Sup 6a: Government (Limited & Unlimited) - Tyranny (Dictatorial & Democratic)

Mini-Sup 6b: Environmental Problems - The 'Good Life'

Each Mini and Mini-Sup takes five days (or periods). Four days of Socratic Discussion are followed by a Trivium Debate on the fifth. Several, or all the Minis may be used during a semester as part of the regular course. Debate subjects are drawn from regular assignments so no curriculum time is lost.



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NOTES

A number of changes are taking place in the INTERSTUDENT Program Classical Analysis Mini-Course development will be in the capable hands of Janet Terry and Virginia Rettinger game and simulation development will be handled by Stanley Rubinstein and Ted Ehrman....classroom teachers on both coasts and in Canada have volunteered to help INSIGHT expand; they'll be listed next issue....

Contumely

NOW THERE'S THIS GUY JACKSON WHO CAN DO IT BETTER THAN FORD. HE'S THROWN HIS HAT INTO THE RING AND THE WAY PEOPLE FEEL IT'S A WONDER IT WASN'T THROWN RIGHT BACK.

LIKE THE PRESIDENT, HE'S HOT TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF SHORTAGE BY RESTRICTING PRODUCTION WHICH IS A CUTE IDEA EVEN IF IT DOESN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE.

ALL THESE CHARACTERS KNOW ABOUT INCENTIVES - THE CARROT AND THE STICK. THE CARROT DOES THE JOB BY PERSUASION: THE STICK IS THE PAINFUL METHOD. IN A FREE COUNTRY, PEOPLE CHOOSE TO CHASE THE CARROT. WHILE THE STICK IS USED ON THE SLAVES IN THE COLLECTIVES, WHY THEN DO THE POLITICOS ALWAYS THINK "STICK" INSTEAD OF "CARROT"? ARE THEY TRYING NOT TO TELL US SOMETHING? OR MAYBE THEY'RE JUST IGNORANT. LET'S HOPE SO. IF THEY MEAN IT FOR REAL WE ARE IN SOME KIND OF TROUBLE.

AND I GUESS WE'RE IN TROUBLE BECAUSE JACKSON WANTS TO "PUT PEOPLE TO WORK ON A VAST SCALE IN WEALTH PRODUCING ACTIVITIES". WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY DOING NOW - LAZING ON THE BEACH? ALL POLITICOS GET DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR. THEY TEND TO THINK THEY'RE GENERALS IN CHARGE OF GREAT ARMIES AND ALL THEY NEED DO TO MAKE US JUMP IS TO CRACK THE WHIP.....ARE THEY RIGHT?

A. TIRADE

The Alumni Group consists of adult graduates of the many Henry George Schools and classroom teachers (from grade-school to university) whose abiding interest is improvement of the social science curriculum. Improvement means emphasis on scientific method and a rigorous examination of data. No particular philosophy may be ascribed to a member of the Group. Insight is published monthly during the school year for the Alumni Group by the Henry George School of Los Angeles. It is distributed freely under copyright protection, but Subscribers to the Interstudent Program may copy for classroom use in their schools. Opinions belong to the authors, but responsibility for unsigned copy is solely that of the Editor.

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COMMENT

political and economical

Washington 500

About 17 months ago the embargo by Saudi Arabia emptied the gas tanks of American cars and the fuel tanks of American homes. Without taking time - even for thought - the Administration introduced policies designed to maintain the scarcity long after the rest of the world was swimming in oil.

Meantime - if you will excuse the simile - Congress was swinging into action like a well-oiled machine. Their job was not to take the often hasty and usually dubious action dictated by emergency conditions, but to ponder the facts, discuss the alternatives, weigh the possibilities and then *but only then* take hasty and usually dubious action.

So, about 500 days after the crisis hit us in our collective gas pump, Congress moved. The Executive decision to impose a tariff on imported oil was opposed. As an example of true grit it was excelled only by Bobby Riggs' threat to Billie Jean King.

The delay was sponsored by those daring young aspirants to the Presidency - Scoop and Eddie. Its intention was to give Congress a chance to develop "fair and equitable alternatives". Another 90 days of thought - on top of the 500 - ought to produce something startling, such as the recognition that a problem exists.

Not that Congress is unaware that belts may have to be tightened. Already, to save paper, the expense records of their overseas jaunts have been taken out of the Congressional Record. Time was found in their busy schedules to deal with this important issue.

And for other important actions. As 1975 begins, a sense of urgency is all pervasive. By next year Senator McClellan hopes to give the country "a true criminal code". Senate bill #1 will do this. Bill #2 extends to broadcasters First Amendment press freedoms. Bill #3 is a plan to provide everyone with medical care - at their own expense. (It's really at "government" expense, but we know where it comes from, don't we?) This one would be quickly settled in about 5 or 10 years were it not that #50 will guarantee "useful and rewarding employment" to everyone. To do both may take a little time. Particularly as #8 (to put Veterans Day back to November 11th), #10 (to 'save' the Housatonic River Valley) and #18 (to halt the invasion of African honeybees) all deserve their day in court.

Not to mention #64 which will add Alaska and Hawaii to the walls of the Lincoln Memorial and #70 to establish the Desert Pupfish National Mem-

orial. (This last is urgent if the desert pupfish is to be saved.)

We are assured, however, that once the pupfish and the Housatonic River Valley are saved and the honey bees are repulsed, the august body will devote its attention to us.

The Million Dollar Misunderstanding

It costs each year about \$610,000 to keep a member of Congress working on the pupfish issue. This is division of the legislative budget (\$326 million) by the membership (535). If their support systems are included (Library of Congress, Government Printing Office, etc.) the average costs rises to more than \$1 1/4 million.

And the result of this huge burden? Paper forms by the carload. Washington agencies churn out more than 2 billion pieces of paper - 10 apiece for every man, woman or childperson in the country. The Internal Revenue service alone uses nearly 14,000 different forms and letters. It's estimated that small businessmen use more than 850 million man-hours each year completing forms.

The General Accounting Office calculates that the processing of this white avalanche cost no less than \$15 billion in the last fiscal year or about 6% of federal expenditures.

U.S. News reported the case of firm of consulting chemists in New York City who must file 37 federal, 26 state and 25 city forms and awaits with trepidation yet another federal request for the firms 'ecological' effects. Of course the company has all of 5 regular workers and must suffer the result of unrestricted growth.

Not that Congress can be faulted for failing to see this prospective proliferation of paper. There is on the books already a law designed to cut and simplify forms.

It was passed in 1942.

Oil For The Lamps.....

While the charade plays its tedious routine through - Presidential oil tariff - Congressional delay - veto by the Prez - success/failure of the over-ride vote, we should not forget the reason, or rather, the *professed* reason for the play-acting.

It's designed to cut down our 'dependence' on the Ay-rabs and their oil. You see, goes this 5th grade economic argument (from grown men and women yet!) - if we cut down our imports from *them*, they'll find their markets diminished and will quickly come to heel.

But, while the solons procrastinate, the market tirelessly operates to bring supply and demand into equilibrium. And Libyan oil production drops 50%, Abu Dhabi falls 36% and Kuwait slumps by 28%.

But never fear! The Executive is busy in the shape of Henry Kissenger. The attempt is being made to put a floor *under* prices! For fear the U.S. might have to pay *too low a price* Hank is trying to arrange support prices.

He's likely to triumph - yet again. Faced by a declining market and reducing production the Ay-rabs may allow themselves to be forced into a Fair Trade Oil Policy. ("Fair Trade" you will recall is unfair trade.)

The oil companies are vicious, venal, nasty, mercenary and are run by baddies. The State department is sweet, loveable, altruistic and is run by goodies.

Who would you rather have as negotiator in the "oil crisis"? On your behalf? The sweet and loveable amateur - or the hardened professional? State department negotiation generally begins with the question "How much do you want?"

Each time Kissenger or one of the others comes home to announce another success, the U.S. taxpayer develops a nervous twitch. Over the years, he's learned to recognize where the 'buck' stops. It stops with him.

British Phlegm

Nowadays, this refers not to the stolid fortitude of the British, but to their desire to spit at the latest triumph of British negotiators, about whom no more can be said than that they are as good as ours.

Wilson's brilliant Moscow coup - he got a disbelieving Brezhnev out of sick-bed - gave more than \$2 billion in credit to the USSR at half the prevailing commercial interest rate. At the same time Britain is paying higher rates on her loans from other countries. In addition, as the Russians tend to sneer at capitalistic attempts to raise originally set prices, the British bureaucrats will insure exporters (in fact, the Russians) against most of the effects of inflation up to a whopping 25% increase.

Meantime the West Germans are making deals with the Russians also, but *they* get something the British are too gentlemanly to accept - cash.

How Sweet It Is!

The rise in sugar profits caused by the axing of cyclamates had hardly been tucked away in the savings accounts before another mother-lode turned up. Sugar production was up but not enough to satisfy the billions of sweet toothed consumers so 'free market' prices began to soar.

That is, prices of the 10% of production that finds its way to the free market went up. About 90% of the world's 80 million tons of sugar are controlled by governments in some fashion. An intricate network of agreements assured protection for everyone but the consumer. In the haste to support producer prices in times of surplus, our international geniuses forgot to arrange for prices to remain steady in times of shortage. So it's up to us to get them (and us) out of the hole again.

So we will. Sugar consumption is falling in face of high prices. Chocolate makers are laying off workers and cocoa bean grindings are down sharply from last year (about 28% in the U.S. and 25% in Britain).

The '75 U.S. crop of sugar will increase as farmers change from wheat and cotton to the more profitable sugar beet. Substitutes are being hotly pursued with high fructose corn syrup in the lead although in chocolate it causes melting in the hand as well as the mouth. Then there is partame which is 180 times sweeter than sugar. Cyclamates could return for their danger appears to be more imaginary than real.

All in all, you can expect a sugar glut in a year or two, but don't worry. Our friendly local government will protect us from any danger of low prices.

The Ozone Ceiling

As if we didn't have enough to worry about, our underarms are responsible for harming plants - the green kind not the industrial types. Every time we spritz our armpits we release P-11 or even P-12 into the air. This rises and does indescribable things to the ozone layer in the stratosphere. Mostly, it cuts it down and allows the sunshine in. This extra ultra-violet will cause skin cancer and hurt your tomatoes. All from a fluorocarbon spray!

For each percentage point drop in the ozone layer, 10,000 new cases of skin cancer might be expected in the United States alone twitted the UC Irvine professor who revealed this bugaboo. However, during the 13 years or so of peak fluorocarbon production upper atmosphere ozone has actually *increased* by 7%. Instead of relief (at 70,000 fewer cases of skin cancer?) the increase is blamed on the cessation of nuclear air-testing.

The trouble with laboratory work is that just about everything is suspect. But to extrapolate work bench experimental results into stratospheric disasters should be kept for intellectual exercise and not for major news release.

Incidentally, that 7% increase seems rather high. Shouldn't we resume nuclear testing? Or, if that's not possible, how about encouraging aerosol use to help reduce the certain danger of *too much* ozone in the stratosphere.

games and simulations

by

Stan Rubinstein
and Ted Ehrman

City-As-School in New York

In the past several years, a number of local school districts have introduced alternative programs for those students who do not want to attend traditional schools. The Board of Education of New York City sponsors such a program. It is called City-As-School. Under this program, 11th and 12th grade students take courses given by professional associations, private foundations, private and public colleges and local cultural centers throughout the metropolitan area. Credit is given for these courses. Upon the completion of the normal course requirements, a high school diploma is granted. At present about 200 students are enrolled in this program.

One of the courses offered to the City-As-School deals with specific urban economic problems. This course is unique in that it is taught through the use of simulation games reflecting a practical and refreshing approach to economics and urban problems. This course was developed at the Henry George School in New York City.

The Henry George School was established in 1932 and chartered by the University of the State of New York. The School has been involved in teaching economics to adults through its evening courses. This program is offered as a public service. After several successful nation wide projects with high school students, a new program was developed in which youngsters could learn about economics, particularly urban problems, through the use of various simulation games. The course is given at the Henry George School once a week for three hours, over a ten week period. During these weekly class meetings, students participate in simulation games, thus enabling them to engage in role playing and establish a frame of reference for analyzing urban problems. Furthermore, these three hour sessions provide a span of time in which a normal simulation can be completed or at least played to the point where an interruption due to class break, is not significant. This time limit allows the teacher to analyze with the class, various aspects of the simulation game and yet, allows sufficient time to participate in the exercise.

Classes are ungraded, thus relieving pressure for good marks. Evaluation is based upon how well the students learn from their mistakes in playing these simulation games, and their observations during the debriefing stages. Further evidence of student involvement comes from the use of the School's library, in which can be found a number of books and periodicals dealing with urban economics.

Urban simulation games, due to their multi-conceptual design, usually are played on boards which permit players to visualize the process of development. In order to illustrate patterns of change and growth, the boards consist of nothing more complicated than a series of vertical and horizontal grids. These grids convey a microscopic version of neighborhood, divided into blocks. Within this framework, a variety of political, social and economic forces are manipulated, illustrating patterns of development. As growth occurs, problems arise and students readily become aware of the various approaches to meeting the challenges of the city. Despite the fact that students are unaware or do not comprehend the nature of urban economic problems, the results of their actions tend to reflect how cities develop. In particular, poorly planned decisions have a tendency to create inadequate housing, few job opportunities and little or no economic growth.

The course at the Henry George School is built around three urban simulations - *Newtown*, *CLUG*, and *Urban Dynamics*. Teachers could structure an entire course using any of these simulations, since there are a number of experimental exercises, suggestions for adding new exercises, several readings, bibliographies and questions for discussion.

Newtown

Harwell Associates

L. John Wilerson

Box 95

Concent Station, N.J. 07961

Price: \$28 for a kit of two games

no. of players: 18 per kit

Newtown can be employed for either junior or senior high students. Up to four teams (2 players per team can use one game and there are two games in each kit) are employed in building the city. After designating the Town Clerk, money is distributed along with color markers and a score sheet. Prior to each of the six rounds, players secretly bid for land by indicating the desired price and parcel and the

highest bidder receives the land. Building type is determined by chance. (the rolling of dice) Each combination represents one type of construction (industrial plant, home, department store, etc.). Building can only occur on purchased or rented land. Before every even round, a town meeting is held so that players can vote for community projects such as schools, parks, parking lots, sewage treatment plants and a Town Hall. Based on the project, the number of votes needed for approval varies. As one round blends into another, the town begins to take shape and a pattern of growth becomes discernable.

As Newtown develops, students usually note the difference between a systematic development and one that is haphazard. Moreover, it becomes apparent why people build residential structures in certain areas and commercial ones in others. As industry develops, the importance of rivers and access to water power is recognized. However, since industrial plants and factories pollute, its affect on residential properties also helps in shaping patterns of development. Both skill and luck are involved in choosing land and building. "Happenings" (the many events that occur such as fires, floods, and oh yes, fines for not installing anti-pollution devices) illustrate the penalties of poor urban planning. As pollution lowers property values, players recognize that the alternative is higher costs and thus, must decide whether it is worth the additional expenditures. The same is true with public expenditures for parks and schools. Town meetings provide the forum for bringing these issues to light, and for encouraging cooperation, since it becomes difficult to develop the town without people working together. Newtown is designed so that it can

be played on several levels. After the basic game is completed, which takes about two hours, it can then be played emphasizing "political", "educational" and "land use" concepts. It is recommended that this simulation be played before CLUG and Urban Dynamics, since it contains elementary concepts which are more fully developed in other games.

CLUG (Community Land Use Game)

Free Press

McMillan Publishing Company

866 Third Avenue

New York, N.Y.

\$75.00 for the kit

\$4.95 for each students manual

no. of players: 15-20

When presented with a manual of over two hundred pages, both teacher and student may have reservations about becoming involved in this simulation. But upon further examination, it will be discovered that most of the booklet is composed of readings. Preparation time averages 3 to 5 hours. There are many activities that can be utilized in developing economic and urban concepts, understandings and generalizations. Therefore, it may be worth the teacher's time since the potential is unlimited. CLUG is played over three sessions in the alternative high school program. Played on a board containing grid coordinates (15 students divided into 5 teams), each team starts with \$100,000 which is spent on land purchases and payments for taxes and consumer transportation services. Construction con-

We promised you greatness!

(sorry)

A CONSERVATIONISTS LAMENT

The world is finite, resources scarce
Things are bad and will be worse,
Coal is burned and gas exploded,
Forests cut and soils eroded,
Wells are dry, and air's polluted
Dust is blowing, trees uprooted
Oil is going, ores depleted
Drains receive what is excreted
Land is sinking, seas are rising
Man is far too enterprising.
Fire will rage with man to fan it
Soon we'll have a plundered planet.
People breed like fertile rabbits
People have disgusting habits.

MORAL

The evolutionary plan

Went astray by evolving man.

THE TECHNOLOGIST'S REPLY

Man's potential is quite terrific
You can't go back to the Neolithic.
The cream is here for us to skim it
Knowledge is power, the sky's the limit.
Every mouth has a hand to feed it.
Food is found where people need it.
All we need is found in granite
Once we have the men to plan it.
Yeast and algae give us meat
Soil is almost obsolete
Man can grow to pastures greener
Till all the earth is Pasadena

MORAL

Man's a nuisance, man's a crackpot
But only man can hit the jackpot.

ANON - From a London Magazine

* * * * *

sists of industrial, commercial and residential buildings. Each type of construction require particular services such as employment, consumer and commercial services, and transportation. Prices for many of the services are negotiated by the users. As the simulation progresses, it follows a natural development based upon primary and secondary roads, water and energy facilities, availability of labor and capital and tax structure. As each round unfolds, play becomes more complex as taxation, depreciation and the need for capital accumulation become important in over-all growth.

As the simulation game progresses, the rules allow students to internalize on some important aspects of an urban economy. For example, students recognize the relationship between basic industry and employment, housing and transportation costs, the locations of basic services, and the correlation between slums and property taxation. During the initial round, it is not unusual for players to constrain their actions since they may not understand and utilize certain economic concepts. Through a process of trial and error the participants soon grasp basic economic relationships. As economic growth shifts from the production of capital goods to consumer goods and services, players utilize political and social institutions to create community projects. Thus, they begin to employ concepts relating to public consumption and its impact on urban growth. *CLUG* may also be utilized for understanding local taxation, pollution, and education as factors affecting urban centers. Regional specialization, and interdependency are highlighted in the *CLUG* games. After one game, students are well on their way towards appreciating the interdependency of the various activities constituting urban life.

Urban Dynamics

Urbandyne

P.O. Box No. 134

Park Forest South, Illinois 60466

Cost: \$95.00

No. of players: 12

Urban Dynamics is also played around a board consisting of grids representing city blocks. The game illustrates how political, social and economic forces affect urban growth. There are four teams (2 to 3 students per team) and the game takes approximately eight to ten 42 minute periods to play and debrief. Analysis of the forces involved can be done while the game is being played. In the City-As-School course, this simulation game takes about three to four sessions. Each team is designated by a color representing a socio-economic class (prosperous old stock Americans, middle to lower class Whites, middle class Blacks, low income Blacks and other minorities) thus, all teams are not created equally. *Urban Dynamics* has two versions - one historical and the other futuristic. It is suggested that teachers use the

historical version first, since this develops some concepts used in the second version. The board is set up for the decade of 1920, creating an initial pattern for future development. Each succeeding decade permits the players to make political, economic and social decisions. Certain constraints are placed on these decisions. For example, jobs, housing, education and political opportunities may not exist for certain teams due to restrictive covenants, lack of education and other forms of discrimination. Additional rules teach players how to use their strengths (voting power, boycotts, control of land and businesses) to achieve particular objectives. Students begin to understand the nature of why population moves to the suburbs, how coalition governments operate and the dynamics of social mobility.

In several urban simulations dealing with sophisticated institutions, provision is made for concentrating on particular factors. The operation of Model Cities program, health services, pollution problems, development of a megalopolis, state government or the impact of media on urban centers can be introduced in *Urban Dynamics*. All these versions can be played by building them the second version - (futuristic).

As teams compete and cooperate, particular goals are sought, which affect the outcome of play. To control land, to speculate, to vie for political or economic power and to improve one's education all become part of a team's strategy. As moves and goals are planned, each team follows 10 steps per session. Each step is spelled out very clearly in the instructions. Since the board is divided into urban and suburban areas, a normal pattern develops which is similar to the development of many of our Metropolitan areas.

Urban Dynamics cuts across various institutions. Players become aware of how these forces shape urban life. Politically, participants discover how local government affects urban development, how patronage develops, the function of City-Councils and the workings of the legislative process. As the economy prospers, as construction increases, and population blossoms, contemporary urban problems are easier to visualize. The delicate balance between maintaining and sustaining growth is illustrated. In addition, since no force exists in isolation, human needs become intertwined with these aforementioned forces. Coming to grips with welfare, discrimination, and poverty become crucial in urban dynamics.

Does the city have a future? To what degree are we trapped by our history? *Urban Dynamics* offers some insights into these problems. The game allows the teacher to affectively utilize many levels of sophistication that help identify potential solutions.

Alternative high schools in various cities are recognizing the need for new approaches in education. The City-As-School in conjunction with the Henry George School, is attempting to use urban simulation games as a vehicle for students to understand patterns of growth in their city.

HISTORY

and its lessons

—Roy Douglas

The important thing about history is not about what it tells us about the past, but what it tells us about the future. We are probably justified in assuming that the physical and mental equipment with which human beings come into the world is similar in all essentials to what it has been in other societies throughout recorded history. If that is not correct, then the safest thing that we do with history is to scrap it; for we are likely to be gravely misled if we attempt to apply past lessons to future circumstances. However, when we study the deeds, or look at the artifacts, produced in the past, we seem to find little or nothing inconsistent with the proposition that man in his essentials is unaltered.

Before we try to use history, it is rather useful to decide what we are entitled to use and what we are not. In the records of the past, there are some statements which we exclude, because they appear on their face so unlikely that we are disposed to treat them as false. A 6th century writer, for example, tells us that the Emperor Justinian was literally the Prince of Darkness himself, and that the emperor's consort, Theodora, was a vampire. Most of us are probably unwilling to believe that Satan takes human form, and are rather dubious of the existence of vampires, so we tend to reject this kind of story. There are many other cases too, where we conclude that people who purported to record history were telling lies, or were such incompetent observers that their accounts cannot be believed.

Far more common than falsehoods, however, are selected statements of fact. If you pick up a newspaper with whose politics you agree, and compare it with one with whose politics you disagree, you will not often find that they are in dispute as to what actually happened in the incidents which their reporters observed. What they disagree about is the interpretation of those facts; which facts are important; or what other facts one is entitled to infer from those

which are certainly known. I hesitate to venture into contemporary American politics, but - as I understand it - the real dispute over the Watergate business is not so much over what solid factual knowledge we possess as to what other things we may legitimately infer from those facts about the character and motives of members of the Administration.

Suppose that fifty Americans were invited to write a couple of paragraphs about Richard Nixon, or Mao Tse-Tung, or Harold Wilson. I imagine that the characterizations which they would give would vary enormously in all three cases. Now suppose that these same people were asked to write a couple of paragraphs about Nero. I imagine that the fifty accounts would not vary much. Why the difference? The answer, surely, is that those fifty Americans know far more about the living statesmen than they know about the dead Emperor. They agree about Nero because they are all drawing, directly or indirectly, from the same small number of sources. No doubt Nero's contemporaries knew a great many facts about him which have not come down to us. Perhaps contemporaries did not think them important; perhaps the facts concerned did not fit with the line of propaganda which they chose to expound; perhaps men in later ages did not think those facts were sufficiently interesting or important to be worth copying out. In any event, the result is that we have a very clear picture of Nero - yet one which seems exceedingly difficult to believe in as a fair characterization of the man.

If these problems beset us when we try to understand the nature of actual human individ-

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uals, we meet far more serious problems when we try to understand events. A century ago, most children in England learnt history largely as a record of kings and battles. No doubt they rapidly forgot a great deal of the stuff they had been taught, but they doubtless derived the idea that the most important things in history were kings and battles. Long after that - perhaps even to this day - most children in most countries contrived to leave school with the vague impression that their own country was on various occasions involved in disputes with other countries about various matters; and in at least the great majority of those cases their own country was both right and victorious.

A British child tends to learn that the Battle of Waterloo was won by the British general Wellington; a German child that the man who really decided the day was the Prussian general Blucher; a French child that Waterloo was a bit of a fluke, and didn't really matter very much at any rate.

I have not had the privilege of reading what the American and Mexican textbooks have to say about the circumstances in which California became part of the United States. My guess is that the accounts do not differ much on the hard facts, but differ a great deal on the interpretation which should be set upon those facts. The real trouble is that if we give people distorted ideas of what happened in the past, they are likely to project these ideas into the future, and to assume that just as their own group was always right in the past, so also is it likely that it will always be right and victorious in the future.

The modern type of history, with its great emphasis on economic and social considerations, may be no less misleading. In England at least, school children learn quite a lot about the miseries of the poor in the early 19th century, but a good deal less about the miseries of the poor in the 18th century. I think they are very easily disposed to the view that life in the 18th century was all strong ale and smocked peasants dancing around maypoles; while in the early 19th century most working class women spent their lives crawling through underground tunnels with loads of coal, while their children climbed chimneys.

It is all too easy to derive the impression that early industrialism was an unrelieved curse for the poor; a view that is almost exactly the opposite of what most economic historians now believe to have been the case. The real danger to truth is not the lie - which we can nail - but the selected statement of truth which we can't.

Now you may say why should I make such heavy weather of the past? Does it matter? Unfortunately it does. In the British Isles we have been experiencing a spate of bombings and

other violent action in connection with the political relationships of Northern Ireland. One group of bombers call themselves Catholics; another group of bombers call themselves Protestants. In fact, the bombing has nothing to do with any modern religious question. What really lies at the root of the trouble is that there are two groups of people each with very patchy ideas of what happened in the past. Each group is very conscious of the courageous acts of its own members and the wicked acts of the others. These garbled views of history lead each group to father all virtues on their own members and all evil on the others - which extenuates, or even demands, retaliation and reprisal in the future.

The real trouble about the past is that there is far too much of it. Far too many facts are available. Every historian must select certain matters which seem to him important, because if he regales every fact he had unearthed, then his reader is simply presented with an incomprehensible jungle of apparently unrelated events. When a man writes history, he tries to see a pattern; and the pattern he sees is usually very much like the pattern he hoped to find before he started.

Pious historians at one time saw the Roman Empire as part of God's plan to spread the

FOR DISCUSSION

USE THE ARTICLES BY DR DOUGLAS AND DR HARTWELL TO PROVIDE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING:

- : The "philosophy" of History. (The attitude and direction of study, for example - "Only economic history is valid" or "Monastery archives are the best records of fact".)
- : The "science" of History. (The search for demonstrable consequences, for example - "Democratic administrations bring wars; and Republican administrations bring economic depressions" or "If goods don't cross frontiers then armies will".)
- : The "art" of History. (The technical skills and interpretive experience of the historian, for example - "These papers are forgeries" or "This is not the policy of the government, but words for public consumption".)
- : The "findings" of History. (What is known by historians, for example "The Stamp Act was passed in 1765".)

In school it is usual to learn the 'findings' of History. Would it be better for each historian to declare his philosophy and why he was led to his conclusions?

History and Ideology

Thus, the collection of historical data, the choice from these of relevant data, and inference from relevant data, make written history possible: the surviving facts of history do not speak for themselves; they have to be collected, selected, and organized to make sense of the past. But selection and organization are not mechanically determined; they depend on hypotheses invented by the historian, to enable him to construct a meaningful written history from the surviving data. Writing history requires an intellectual effort which, unfortunately, allows the free play of doctrine and prejudice, and the use of *a priori* theories of historical change, as easily as the use of inductive and deductive reasoning and of scientific inference. Interpretation by the use of given formulae is easier than interpretation which requires the trial and error use of differing hypotheses to explain

available evidence. As much construction and explanation in written history derive from uncritically accepted "historical laws" that predict the course of history, as from scientific inquiry, from the scrupulous investigation and interpretation of unique historical evidence. The consequence is that different historians write different histories about the same event. Ability and training combine with beliefs and values, and these in varying degrees determine the quality of the historian's reconstruction of the past. Differing histories of differing quality about the same event lead to controversy, and there then exists the methodological problem of disentangling the causes of controversy, of separating out the elements of incompetence and confusion from those of bias and ideology, and of finding out, as far as the evidence permits, what actually happened in the past.

The complete essay by Dr Hartwell was published by the Institute for Humane studies - 1177 University Drive, Menlo Park CA 94025. Write to the Institute for further information about its publications.

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Christian religion. They were able to adduce a large battery of facts which backed that opinion. Political union was established in the Mediterranean area about the time of Christ's birth. Free movement of peoples in the Mediterranean allowed Christian missionaries to spread their teachings. Finally, the emperor Constantine I himself became a Christian. Christianity was at first tolerated, then eventually became dominant. Once the Empire discharged its functions and the people of the area were Christians, there was no need for the Empire to remain in existence and it was broken down.

To the religious sceptic the same facts admitted of a diametrically opposite interpretation. To Gibbon, the essential good was the Empire - not the religion; and the break-up of the Empire was seen as due, at least in part, to the predominance of the religion which Gibbon deplored.

So too, may one write history in explanation of other patterns which the author wishes to see. Thus, there are various "conspiratorial" theories. Some people like to see history as a process by which the orderly advancement which is designed by Goodies is wrecked by the deeply laid plots of the Baddies. Of course the Goodies and Baddies change from time to time. Thirty or forty years ago American Indians were Baddies; now they are Goodies. I must confess, I find the "conspiratorial" view rather difficult to swallow. History is indeed littered with conspiracies, but most people are so incompetent that their conspiracies hardly ever work out as the conspirators intended and usually produce more or less the

opposite effect.

In our own time there is a very popular simplification of history which for some odd reason is called "scientific", which is credited to Karl Marx. This view sees history as a pattern of threes, tied up with class. Essentially, A produces its opposite B; conflict between A and B produces C - which partakes partly of the nature of A and partly of the nature of B - and brings the whole thing onto a higher plane. Well, this sort of reading of history is always possible if you care to play up the facts which suit your theory and play down the ones that don't. By far the oddest thing about Marxism is that the countries which claim to have undergone Marxist revolutions are without exception countries which Marx said were not ripe for revolution. Apparently you can only make a Marxist revolution if you don't take Marx too seriously.

What emerges from all this? Surely, that we must always view the erudite with a healthy measure of scepticism

What emerges from all this? Surely, that we must always view the erudite with a measure of healthy scepticism; that we should recognize that learned men, just like stupid men, will usually observe the thing which they set out to find. But we cannot ignore history, should we wish to or not. Everybody knows, or thinks he knows, something of what happened in the past; and this knowledge of the past is bound to influence his actions in the future. A false understanding of the past is almost certain to lead to foolish behavior in the future. The only corrective to bad history is better history.

"History is more or less bunk" HENRY FORD (1863 - 1947)