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Soviet Union, which in the eyes of American imperialists is the main obstacle in the path of the United States to world domination. This is indicated by facts such as the tactical training of the American army for war with the Soviet Union as the future opponent, the siting of American strategic bases in regions from which it is possible to launch strikes on Soviet territory, intensified training and strengthening of Arctic regions as close approaches to the USSR, and attempts to prepare Germany and Japan to use those countries in a war against the USSR.

B. The Marshall Plan

1. Secretary George Marshall Speaks at Harvard (1947)*

By June 1947 it was painfully evident that the Truman Doctrine was merely a child on an adult's errand. The hunger and economic prostration produced by the war were providing an alarming hotbed for the propagation of communism in Europe, especially in Italy and France. A communist takeover of all Western Europe appeared to be a distinct (and depressing) possibility. At this critical juncture the secretary of state, General George C. Marshall, speaking at the Harvard University commencement exercises, made the following breathtaking proposal. To what extent is it both selfish and unselfish? What is its relation to the Truman Doctrine?

The truth of the matter is that Europe's requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products—principally from America—are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help or face economic, social, and political deterioration of a very grave character....

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.

Such assistance, I am convinced, must not be on a piecemeal basis as various crises develop. Any assistance that this Government may render in the future should provide a cure rather than a mere palliative. Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government. Any government which maneuvers to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments, political parties, or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit therefrom politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States.

*Department of State Bulletin 16 (June 15, 1947; speech of June 5, 1947): 1159-1160.

It is already evident that, before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government.

It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all, European nations.

2. Senator Arthur Vandenberg Is Favorable (1947, 1948)*

Tax-burdened Americans, having spent billions in World War II, were reluctant to pour more treasure down the "European rat-hole." Eloquent Senator Vandenberg of Michigan (see p. 642), a recent convert from isolationism to internationalism, was one of the foremost champions in Congress of the Marshall Plan. In the following excerpts from letters to his constituents, what are his arguments for the Marshall Plan? In what ways does he see the plan as serving the self-interest of the United States?

I have no illusions about this so-called "Marshall Plan." . . . Furthermore, I certainly do not take it for granted that American public opinion is ready for any such burdens as would be involved unless and until it is far more effectively demonstrated to the American people that this (1) is within the latitudes of their own available resources and (2) serves their own intelligent self-interest.

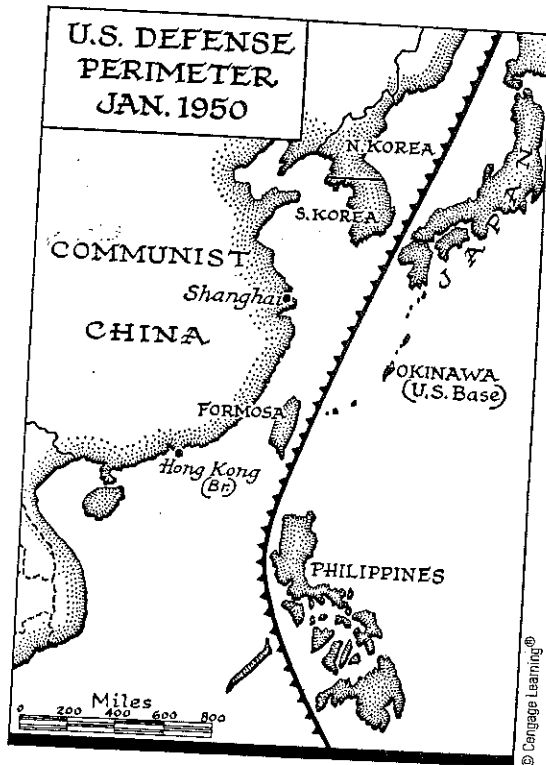
. . . I am entirely willing to admit that America herself cannot prosper in a broken world. But it is equally true that if America ever sags, the world's hopes for peace will sag with her. Meanwhile, however, there are some very realistic problems which we must face—including the basic fact that even our friends in Western Europe will soon be totally devoid of dollar exchange and therefore unable to buy commodities from us which are indispensable to their own self-rehabilitation. I must confess that this poses a tough conundrum in international economics entirely aside from considerations of "charity" or "communism." . . .

So we have no alternative but to do the best we can, in the absence of certified knowledge, and to balance one "calculated risk" against another. . . .

You are entirely right that an "international WPA"[†] can't save Europe from communism or anything else. Is somebody proposing one? I hadn't heard about it. The so-called "Marshall Plan" is the exact opposite, if it runs true to form—and it's our business to see that it does. It is a program geared to self-help. It requires

*From *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* by Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr. Copyright 1952 by Arthur Vandenberg, Jr.; copyright © renewed 1980 by Mrs. Myron Sands and Joe Alex Morris.

[†]Works Progress Administration—a New Deal agency designed to provide employment on public works.



3. NSC-68 Offers a Blueprint for the Cold War (1950)*

Jolted by the communist success in China and the Soviet development of an atomic bomb, President Truman in early 1950 ordered a far-reaching reassessment of U.S. Cold War policies. The result was a lengthy secret document, declassified only a quarter of a century later, known as National Security Council Memorandum Number 68 (NSC-68). The memorandum assessed the balance of Soviet and U.S. power in the world and made sweeping recommendations for a vigorous U.S. military buildup. It laid out, in effect, a blueprint for U.S. foreign policy for the next two decades. It advised against negotiating with the Soviet Union until the United States had time "to build up strength," although it conceded that some discussions with the Soviets were probably necessary "to gain public support for the [buildup] and to minimize the immediate risks of war." NSC-68 also advocated the development of hydrogen bombs and the expansion of conventional military forces, and it frankly acknowledged that substantial tax increases would be necessary to finance this effort. On what premises about the state of the world and the character of the

*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), pp. 237-238, 272-286.

Soviet Union does NSC-68 build its argument? Are those premises justifiable? What policy choices does the memorandum present? Why does it choose the particular policies it recommends? What does it see as the United States' strengths and liabilities in the confrontation with the Soviet Union? What obstacles to developing those strengths does it identify?

I. Background of the Present Crisis

Within the past thirty-five years the world has experienced two global wars of tremendous violence. It has witnessed two revolutions—the Russian and the Chinese—of extreme scope and intensity. It has also seen the collapse of five empires—the Ottoman, the Austro-Hungarian, German, Italian and Japanese—and the drastic decline of two major imperial systems, the British and the French. During the span of one generation, the international distribution of power has been fundamentally altered. For several centuries it had proved impossible for any one nation to gain such preponderant strength that a coalition of other nations could not in time face it with greater strength. The international scene was marked by recurring periods of violence and war, but a system of sovereign and independent states was maintained, over which no state was able to achieve hegemony.

Two complex sets of factors have now basically altered this historical distribution of power. First, the defeat of Germany and Japan and the decline of the British and French Empires have interacted with the development of the United States and the Soviet Union in such a way that power has increasingly gravitated to these two centers. Second, the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged, on the part of the Soviet Union, by violent or non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency. With the development of increasingly terrifying weapons of mass destruction, every individual faces the ever-present possibility of annihilation should the conflict enter the phase of total war. . . .

The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself. They are issues which will not await our deliberations. With conscience and resolution this Government and the people it represents must now make new and fateful decisions. . . .

Four possible courses of action by the United States in the present situation can be distinguished. They are:

- a. Continuation of current policies, with current and currently projected programs for carrying out these policies;
- b. Isolation;
- c. War; and
- d. A more rapid building up of the political, economic, and military strength of the free world than provided under *a*, with the purpose of reaching, if possible, a tolerable state of order among nations without war and of preparing to defend ourselves in the event that the free world is attacked. . . .

On the basis of current programs, the United States has a large potential military capability but an actual capability which, though improving, is declining relative to the U.S.S.R., particularly in light of its probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability. The same holds true for the free world as a whole relative to the Soviet world as a whole. If war breaks out in 1950 or in the next few years, the United States and its allies, apart from a powerful atomic blow, will be compelled to conduct delaying actions, while building up their strength for a general offensive....

There are some who advocate a deliberate decision to isolate ourselves. Superficially, this has some attractiveness as a course of action, for it appears to bring our commitments and capabilities into harmony by reducing the former and by concentrating our present, or perhaps even reduced, military expenditures on the defense of the United States.

This argument overlooks the relativity of capabilities. With the United States in an isolated position, we would have to face the probability that the Soviet Union would quickly dominate most of Eurasia, probably without meeting armed resistance. It would thus acquire a potential far superior to our own, and would promptly proceed to develop this potential with the purpose of eliminating our power, which would, even in isolation, remain as a challenge to it and as an obstacle to the imposition of its kind of order in the world. There is no way to make ourselves inoffensive to the Kremlin except by complete submission to its will. Therefore isolation would in the end condemn us to capitulate or to fight alone and on the defensive, with drastically limited offensive and retaliatory capabilities in comparison with the Soviet Union. (These are the only possibilities, unless we are prepared to risk the future on the hazard that the Soviet Empire, because of over-extension or other reasons, will spontaneously destroy itself from within.)...

Some Americans favor a deliberate decision to go to war against the Soviet Union in the near future. It goes without saying that the idea of "preventive" war—in the sense of a military attack not provoked by a military attack upon us or our allies—is generally unacceptable to Americans....

The ability of the United States to launch effective offensive operations is now limited to attack with atomic weapons. A powerful blow could be delivered upon the Soviet Union, but it is estimated that these operations alone would not force or induce the Kremlin to capitulate and that the Kremlin would still be able to use the forces under its control to dominate most or all of Eurasia. This would probably mean a long and difficult struggle during which the free institutions of Western Europe and many freedom-loving people would be destroyed and the regenerative capacity of Western Europe dealt a crippling blow.

Apart from this, however, a surprise attack upon the Soviet Union, despite the provocativeness of recent Soviet behavior, would be repugnant to many Americans. Although the American people would probably rally in support of the war effort, the shock of responsibility for a surprise attack would be morally corrosive. Many would doubt that it was a "just war" and that all reasonable possibilities for a peaceful settlement had been explored in good faith. Many more, proportionately, would hold such views in other countries, particularly in Western Europe and particularly after Soviet occupation, if only because the Soviet Union would liquidate articulate

opponents. It would, therefore, be difficult after such a war to create a satisfactory international order among nations. Victory in such a war would have brought us little if at all closer to victory in the fundamental ideological conflict...

A program for rapidly building up strength and improving political and economic conditions will place heavy demands on our courage and intelligence; it will be costly; it will be dangerous. But half-measures will be more costly and more dangerous, for they will be inadequate to prevent and may actually invite war. Budgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that our very independence as a nation may be at stake....

The United States is currently devoting about 22 percent of its gross national product (\$255 billion in 1949) to military expenditures (6 percent), foreign assistance (2 percent), and investment (14 percent), little of which is in war-supporting industries....

From the point of view of the economy as a whole, the program might not result in a real decrease in the standard of living, for the economic effects of the program might be to increase the gross national product by more than the amount being absorbed for additional military and foreign assistance purposes. One of the most significant lessons of our World War II experience was that the American economy, when it operates at a level approaching full efficiency, can provide enormous resources for purposes other than civilian consumption while simultaneously providing a high standard of living. After allowing for price changes, personal consumption expenditures rose by about one-fifth between 1939 and 1944, even though the economy had in the meantime increased the amount of resources going into Government use by \$60-\$65 billion (in 1939 prices).

4. Secretary Acheson Defends NSC-68 (1969)*

Many government officials criticized NSC-68 as too simplistic in its view of the world and too rigid and aggressive in its definition of U.S. policies. But its leading architect, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, stoutly defended the recommendations of NSC-68. In the passage from his memoirs that follows, what are his views on the relation of public opinion to foreign policy? How should one judge his admission that he and his colleagues "made our points clearer than truth"? What were the major obstacles to acceptance of NSC-68's recommendations? How were those obstacles overcome?

The purpose of NSC-68 was to so bludgeon the mass mind of "top government" that not only could the President make a decision but that the decision could be carried out. Even so, it is doubtful whether anything like what happened in the next few years could have been done had not the Russians been stupid enough to have instigated the attack against South Korea and opened the "hate America" campaign....

The task of a public officer seeking to explain and gain support for a major policy is not that of the writer of a doctoral thesis. Qualification must give way

*From *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* by Dean Acheson. Copyright © 1969 by Dean Acheson.

As a United States Senator, I am not proud of the way in which the Senate has been made a publicity platform for irresponsible sensationalism. I am not proud of the reckless abandon in which unproved charges have been hurled from this [Republican] side of the aisle. I am not proud of the obviously staged, undignified countercharges which have been attempted in retaliation from the other [Democratic] side of the aisle.

I do not like the way the Senate has been made a rendezvous for vilification, for selfish political gain at the sacrifice of individual reputations and national unity. I am not proud of the way we smear outsiders from the floor of the Senate and hide behind the cloak of congressional immunity, and still place ourselves beyond criticism on the floor of the Senate.

As an American, I am shocked at the way Republicans and Democrats alike are playing directly into the Communist design of "confuse, divide, and conquer." As an American, I do not want a Democratic administration whitewash or cover-up any more than I want a Republican smear or witch hunt.

As an American, I condemn a Republican Fascist just as much as I condemn a Democratic Communist. I condemn a Democratic Fascist just as much as I condemn a Republican Communist. They are equally dangerous to you and me and to our country. As an American, I want to see our Nation recapture the strength and unity it once had when we fought the enemy instead of ourselves.

3. McCarthy Inspires Fear at Harvard (1954)*

Senator McCarthy overplayed his hand, notably in the televised investigation of the army. To millions of viewers he exposed his vindictiveness, arrogance, and intellectual dishonesty. Apologists claimed that his anticommunist zeal, whether sincere or not, destroyed all sense of fair play. His bubble burst when the Senate "condemned" him in 1954 by a formal vote—not, curiously enough, for his abuses of U.S. citizens but for his contemptuous attitude toward the Senate itself. A petition urging the censure of McCarthy was circulated at Harvard University, and two undergraduates who refused to sign it gave their reasons in the first of the following letters to the Harvard Crimson. An English-born student named J. C. P. Richardson, who was backing the petition, took sharp issue with them in the second letter. Who had the sounder position?

To the Editors of the *Crimson*:

This afternoon my roommate and I were asked to sign a petition advocating the censure of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. We both refused. And yet, we both hope that the censure motion is adopted.

Discussing our actions, we came to the conclusion that we did not sign because we were afraid that sometime in the future McCarthy will point to us as having signed the petition, and, as he had done to others, question our loyalty.

*Cited in *Congressional Record*, 83d Cong., 2d sess., p. A6909.

We are afraid that of the thousands of petition signers, one will be proved a Communist, and as a result, McCarthy, or someone like him, will say, because we were both co-signers and classmates of the Communist, that we, too, are Reds.

The fact that two college students and others like us will not sign a petition for fear of reprisal indicates only too clearly that our democracy is in danger. It is clear that McCarthy is suppressing free speech and free actions by thrusting fear into the hearts of innocent citizens.

Let us hope that the Senators of the United States are not victims of the same fear that has infected us.

K. W. L. '58

M. F. G. '58

To the Editors of the Crimson:

The letter sent to you by two Harvard students and published yesterday can safely be said to represent the viewpoint of about one half of those who did not sign the anti-McCarthy petition.

The position taken by the authors is common and understandable, but it is by no means justifiable. In a free society, when opinions become unpopular and dangerous, it is most important that they be expressed. To yield to the climate of fear, to become a scared liberal, is to strengthen the very forces which one opposes. Courage must complement conviction, for otherwise each man will become a rubber-stamp, content to spend the rest of his life echoing popular beliefs, never daring to dissent, never having enough courage to say what he thinks, and never living as an individual, but only as part of the crowd.

Yes, our democracy is in danger, but as long as men are not afraid to express their view in spite of the consequences, it shall flourish. Only when fear is allowed to limit dissension does democracy falter.

The blame for America's present intellectual intolerance rests as heavily on those who have bowed to it as it does on those who encourage it.

Sincerely,

J. C. Peter Richardson '56

B. The Supreme Court and the Black Revolution

I. The Court Rejects Segregation (1954)*

The Fourteenth Amendment (1868) made African Americans citizens and assured them "the equal protection of the laws." The Southern states established "separate but equal" facilities in the schools, public toilets, and transportation. In many instances, however, the facilities for blacks, though "separate," were not "equal" to those for whites. In 1892 a Louisianan by the name of Plessy, of one-eighth African descent, was jailed for insisting on sitting in a railroad car reserved for whites. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, where Plessy lost by a seven-to-one vote (see p. 405). The Court held that separate but equal public conveyances did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. This principle was applied to educational facilities

**Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 492-495 (1954).

5. *Martin Luther King, Jr., Asks for the Ballot (1957)**

While the Supreme Court adjudicated, African Americans were taking the struggle for civil rights into their own hands. The first mass protest against the detested segregation laws erupted in Montgomery, Alabama. On December 1, 1955, a dignified black woman named Rosa Parks refused to move out of the "whites only" seating section of a city bus. For this, she was arrested; at that moment, "somewhere in the universe," one black leader later commented, "a gear in the machinery had shifted." Her arrest sparked a hugely successful boycott of the bus system by Montgomery's African Americans and catapulted into prominence a young black minister of the gospel, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., who assumed a conspicuous leadership role in the boycott. He swiftly emerged as the nation's premier black spokesman and, until his murder in 1968, led a civil rights crusade that changed the face of American society. As early as 1957, he identified political rights as the key to improving the condition of African Americans in the South—where in some states fewer than 5 percent of eligible black voters were casting their ballots in the 1950s. In the speech reprinted here, what benefits does King think will flow from enfranchisement? What does he see as the federal government's role in securing black rights? Was his faith in the power of the ballot misplaced?

Three years ago the Supreme Court of this nation rendered in simple, eloquent and unequivocal language a decision which will long be stenciled on the mental sheets of succeeding generations. For all men of good will, this May 17 decision came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of enforced segregation. It came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of distinguished people throughout the world who had dared only to dream of freedom. It came as a legal and sociological deathblow to the old Plessy doctrine of "separate-but-equal." It came as a reaffirmation of the good old American doctrine of freedom and equality for all people.

Unfortunately, this noble and sublime decision has not gone without opposition. This opposition has often risen to ominous proportions. Many states have risen up in open defiance. The legislative halls of the South ring loud with such words as "interposition" and "nullification." Methods of defiance range from crippling economic reprisals to the tragic reign of violence and terror. All of these forces have conjoined to make for massive resistance.

But, even more, all types of conniving methods are still being used to prevent Negroes from becoming registered voters. The denial of this sacred right is a tragic betrayal of the highest mandates of our democratic traditions and it is democracy turned upside down.

So long as I do not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to vote I do not possess myself. I cannot make up my mind—it is made up for me. I cannot live as a democratic citizen, observing the laws I have helped to enact—I can only submit to the edict of others.

So our most urgent request to the President of the United States and every member of Congress is to give us the right to vote.

*Reprinted by arrangement with The Heirs to the Estate of Martin Luther King Jr., c/o Writers House as agent for the proprietor New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1957 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., copyright © renewed 1985 Coretta Scott King.

Give us the ballot and we will no longer have to worry the federal government about our basic rights.

Give us the ballot and we will no longer plead to the federal government for passage of an antilynching law; we will by the power of our vote write the law on the statute books of the Southern states and bring an end to the dastardly acts of the hooded perpetrators of violence.

Give us the ballot and we will transform the salient misdeeds of bloodthirsty mobs into the calculated good deeds of orderly citizens.

Give us the ballot and we will fill our legislative halls with men of good will, and send to the sacred halls of Congress men who will not sign a Southern Manifesto,* because of their devotion to the manifesto of justice.

Give us the ballot and we will place judges on the benches of the South who will "do justly and love mercy," and we will place at the head of the Southern states governors who have felt not only the tang of the human, but the glow of the divine.

Give us the ballot and we will quietly and nonviolently, without rancor or bitterness, implement the Supreme Court's decision on May 17, 1954.

C. The Promise and Problems of a Consumer Society

1. John Kenneth Galbraith Criticizes the Affluent Society (1958)[†]

America knew fabulous prosperity in the postwar era—or did it? In an influential book first published in the late 1950s, Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith probingly questioned the implications of the United States' apparent affluence. His ideas contributed significantly to discussion among policymakers about the kinds of social reforms that later were enacted as the Great Society programs. What is the distinction that Galbraith draws between the private and the public realms? How convincing is his argument? What does the relationship between private and public goods suggest about the character of American values?

The final problem of the productive society is what it produces. This manifests itself in an implacable tendency to provide an opulent supply of some things and a niggardly yield of others. This disparity carries to the point where it is a cause of social discomfort and social unhealth. The line which divides our area of wealth from our area of poverty is roughly that which divides privately produced and marketed goods and services from publicly rendered services. Our wealth in the first is not only in startling contrast with the meagerness of the latter, but our wealth in privately produced goods is, to a marked degree, the cause of crisis in the supply of public services. For we have failed to see the importance, indeed the urgent need, of maintaining a balance between the two....

^{*}In March 1956 more than ninety Southerners, led by Senator Walter George, presented in Congress their "Declaration of Constitutional Principles," commonly known as the "Southern Manifesto." The document condemned the Supreme Court decision on segregation in education as a usurpation of the powers of the states and encouraged the use of "every lawful means" to resist its implementation.

[†]From *The Affluent Society*, Fourth Edition, by John Kenneth Galbraith. Copyright © 1958, 1969, 1976, 1984 by John Kenneth Galbraith.

If parents, teachers, and ministers conducted their responsibilities by following the ratings, children would have a steady diet of ice cream, school holidays, and no Sunday School. What about your responsibilities? Is there no room on television to teach, to inform, to uplift, to stretch, to enlarge the capacities of our children? Is there no room for programs deepening their understanding of children in other lands? Is there no room for a children's news show explaining something about the world to them at their level of understanding? Is there no room for reading the great literature of the past, teaching them the great traditions of freedom? There are some fine children's shows, but they are drowned out in the massive doses of cartoons, violence, and more violence. Must these be your trademarks? Search your consciences and see if you cannot offer more to your young beneficiaries whose future you guide so many hours each and every day.

3. Betty Friedan Launches the Modern Feminist Movement (1963)*

*Throughout the 1950s, millions of women followed the advice of the day's leading experts—they married young, took on the responsibilities of motherhood, and maintained a stable home for their husbands and children. While some found fulfillment in the domestic sphere, many others felt isolated in their suburban ranch homes, stifled by the drudgery of housework. In 1963, writer Betty Friedan tapped into these women's silent desperation—what she described as "the problem that has no name." An instant best seller, her *Feminine Mystique* sparked a vigorous debate about the role of women in society and helped revitalize the feminist movement. What does Friedan see as the source of women's anxieties? What historical developments gave rise to "the problem that has no name"?*

The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night—she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question—"Is this all?"

For over fifteen years there was no word of this yearning in the millions of words written about women, for women, in all the columns, books and articles by experts telling women their role was to seek fulfillment as wives and mothers. . . .

They learned that truly feminine women do not want careers, higher education, political rights—the independence and the opportunities that the old-fashioned feminists fought for. Some women, in their forties and fifties, still remembered painfully giving up those dreams, but most of the younger women no longer even thought about them. A thousand expert voices applauded their femininity, their adjustment, their new maturity. All they had to do was devote their lives from earliest girlhood to finding a husband and bearing children. . . .

*From *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. Copyright © 1983, 1974, 1973, 1963 by Betty Friedan.

In the fifteen years after World War II, this mystique of feminine fulfillment became the cherished and self-perpetuating core of contemporary American culture. Millions of women lived their lives in the image of those pretty pictures of the American suburban housewife, kissing their husbands goodbye in front of the picture window, depositing their stationwagonsful of children at school, and smiling as they ran the new electric waxer over the spotless kitchen floor...

But on an April morning in 1959, I heard a mother of four, having coffee with four other mothers in a suburban development fifteen miles from New York, say in a tone of quiet desperation, "the problem." And the others knew, without words, that she was not talking about a problem with her husband, or her children, or her home. Suddenly they realized they all shared the same problem, the problem that has no name...

Gradually I came to realize that the problem that has no name was shared by countless women in America...

Just what was this problem that has no name? What were the words women used when they tried to express it? Sometimes a woman would say "I feel empty somehow...incomplete." Or she would say, "I feel as if I don't exist." Sometimes she blotted out the feeling with a tranquilizer...

Sometimes a woman would tell me that the feeling gets so strong she runs out of the house and walks through the streets. Or she stays inside her house and cries. Or her children tell her a joke, and she doesn't laugh because she doesn't hear it...

It is no longer possible to ignore that voice, to dismiss the desperation of so many American women. This is not what being a woman means, no matter what the experts say. For human suffering there is a reason; perhaps the reason has not been found because the right questions have not been asked, or pressed far enough. I do not accept the answer that there is no problem because American women have luxuries that women in other times and lands never dreamed of; part of the strange newness of the problem is that it cannot be understood in terms of the age-old material problems of man: poverty, sickness, hunger, cold. The women who suffer this problem have a hunger that food cannot fill...

If I am right, the problem that has no name stirring in the minds of so many American women today is not a matter of loss of femininity or too much education, or the demands of domesticity. It is far more important than anyone recognizes. It is the key to these other new and old problems which have been torturing women and their husbands and children, and puzzling their doctors and educators for years. It may well be the key to our future as a nation and a culture. We can no longer ignore that voice within women that says: "I want something more than my husband and my children and my home."

D. Eisenhower Says Farewell (1961)*

Dwight Eisenhower, the war hero, presided over nearly eight years of peaceful U.S. relations with the rest of the world. Yet Eisenhower also presided over the largest

*From *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960-1961* (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Service, 1961), pp. 1036-1039.

If you will give your representative similar instructions, there is no reason why we should not be able to complete these arrangements and announce them to the world within a couple of days.

[The next day, October 28, 1962, Khrushchev consented to Kennedy's terms, and a great sense of relief swept over the world. Kennedy himself had privately reckoned that the odds in favor of a nuclear blowup ran as high as fifty-fifty.]

B. President Johnson's Great Society

I. Michael Harrington Discovers Another America (1962)*

Some books shape the course of history. Michael Harrington's *The Other America*, published in 1962, was such a book. It shook middle-class Americans out of their complacent assumption that the problem of poverty had been solved in their country. With reasoned yet passionate argument, Harrington forcefully documented the existence of an "invisible" America populated by hopelessly impoverished people. The book's millions of readers—many of them idealistic young people—helped form the political constituency that made possible the Johnson administration's *War on Poverty* in the late 1960s. Who are the poor people Harrington describes? Why are they "invisible"? What does Harrington identify as historically new about their condition? Are the problems he describes now resolved?

There is a familiar America. It is celebrated in speeches and advertised on television and in the magazines. It has the highest mass standard of living the world has ever known.

In the 1950's this America worried about itself, yet even its anxieties were products of abundance. . . .

While this discussion was carried on, there existed another America. In it dwelt somewhere between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 citizens of this land. They were poor. They still are. . . .

The millions who are poor in the United States tend to become increasingly invisible. Here is a great mass of people, yet it takes an effort of the intellect and will even to see them. . . .

There are perennial reasons that make the other America an invisible land.

Poverty is often off the beaten track. It always has been. The ordinary tourist never left the main highway, and today he rides interstate turnpikes. He does not go into the valleys of Pennsylvania where the towns look like movie sets of Wales in the thirties. He does not see the company houses in rows, the rutted roads (the poor always have bad roads whether they live in the city, in towns, or on farms), and everything is black and dirty. And even if he were to pass through such a place by

*From *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* by Michael Harrington. Copyright © 1962, 1969, 1981 by Michael Harrington. Copyright renewed © 1990 by Stephanie Harrington.

accident, the tourist would not meet the unemployed men in the bar or the women coming home from a runaway sweatshop....

It is a blow to reform and the political hopes of the poor that the middle class no longer understands that poverty exists. But, perhaps more important, the poor are losing their links with the great world. If statistics and sociology can measure a feeling as delicate as loneliness..., the other America is becoming increasingly populated by those who do not belong to anybody or anything. They are no longer participants in an ethnic culture from the old country; they are less and less religious; they do not belong to unions or clubs. They are not seen, and because of that they themselves cannot see. Their horizon has become more and more restricted; they see one another, and that means they see little reason to hope....

Here is the most familiar version of social blindness: "The poor are that way because they are afraid of work. And anyway they all have big cars. If they were like me (or my father or my grandfather), they could pay their own way. But they prefer to live on the dole and cheat the taxpayers."

This theory, usually thought of as a virtuous and moral statement, is one of the means of making it impossible for the poor ever to pay their way. There are, one must assume, citizens of the other America who choose impoverishment out of fear of work (though, writing it down, I really do not believe it). But the real explanation of why the poor are where they are is that they made the mistake of being born to the wrong parents, in the wrong section of the country, in the wrong industry, or in the wrong racial or ethnic group. Once that mistake has been made, they could have been paragons of will and morality, but most of them would never even have had a chance to get out of the other America.

There are two important ways of saying this: The poor are caught in a vicious circle; or, The poor live in a culture of poverty....

Here is one of the most familiar forms of the vicious circle of poverty. The poor get sick more than anyone else in the society. That is because they live in slums, jammed together under unhygienic conditions; they have inadequate diets, and cannot get decent medical care. When they become sick, they are sick longer than any other group in society. Because they are sick more often and longer than anyone else, they lose wages and work, and find it difficult to hold a steady job. And because of this, they cannot pay for good housing, for a nutritious diet, for doctors. At any given point in the circle, particularly when there is a major illness, their prospect is to move to an even lower level and to begin the cycle, round and round, toward even more suffering....

What shall we tell the American poor, once we have seen them? Shall we say to them that they are better off than the Indian poor, the Italian poor, the Russian poor? That is one answer, but it is heartless. I should put it another way. I want to tell every well-fed and optimistic American that it is intolerable that so many millions should be maimed in body and in spirit when it is not necessary that they should be. My standard of comparison is not how much worse things used to be. It is how much better they could be if only we were stirred....

These, then, are the strangest poor in the history of mankind.

They exist within the most powerful and rich society the world has ever known. Their misery has continued while the majority of the nation talked of itself as being

"affluent" and worried about neuroses in the suburbs. In this way tens of millions of human beings became invisible. They dropped out of sight and out of mind; they were without their own political voice.

Yet this need not be. The means are at hand to fulfill the age-old dream: poverty can now be abolished. How long shall we ignore this underdeveloped nation in our midst? How long shall we look the other way while our fellow human beings suffer? How long?

2. President Johnson Declares War on Poverty (1964)*

The United States in the 1960s continued to present appalling contrasts in wealth. An official government report in 1964 declared that one-fifth of the families in the country—9.3 million in all—"enjoyed" annual incomes of less than \$3,000. Under President Kennedy, Congress made a modest beginning at relieving poverty by passing several laws providing for self-help and job retraining. President Johnson threw his full weight behind the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which a Democratic Congress approved and implemented with an initial appropriation of \$947.5 million. This legislation included provisions for a Job Corps that would provide training for unskilled young men and women, aid for education, and a domestic Peace Corps to work with Native Americans and other disadvantaged groups. In a part of his message to Congress, the president made the following plea. Was he convincing in his argument that these heavy outlays would in the long run help the taxpayer?

I have called for a national war on poverty. Our objective: total victory.

There are millions of Americans—one fifth of our people—who have not shared in the abundance which has been granted to most of us, and on whom the gates of opportunity have been closed.

What does this poverty mean to those who endure it?

It means a daily struggle to secure the necessities for even a meager existence. It means that the abundance, the comforts, the opportunities they see all around them are beyond their grasp.

Worst of all, it means hopelessness for the young.

The young man or woman who grows up without a decent education, in a broken home, in a hostile and squalid environment, in ill health or in the face of racial injustice—that young man or woman is often trapped in a life of poverty.

He does not have the skills demanded by a complex society. He does not know how to acquire those skills. He faces a mounting sense of despair which drains initiative and ambition and energy....

The war on poverty is not a struggle simply to support people, to make them dependent on the generosity of others.

It is a struggle to give people a chance.

It is an effort to allow them to develop and use their capacities, as we have been allowed to develop and use ours, so that they can share, as others share, in the promise of this nation.

**Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1964* (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Service, 1965), vol. 1, pp. 376-377 (March 16, 1964).

We do this, first of all, because it is right that we should.

From the establishment of public education and land grant colleges through agricultural extension and encouragement to industry, we have pursued the goal of a nation with full and increasing opportunities for all its citizens.

The war on poverty is a further step in that pursuit.

We do it also because helping some will increase the prosperity of all.

Our fight against poverty will be an investment in the most valuable of our resources—the skills and strength of our people.

And in the future, as in the past, this investment will return its cost manyfold to our entire economy.

If we can raise the annual earnings of 10 million among the poor by only \$1,000 we will have added 14 billion dollars a year to our national output. In addition we can make important reductions in public assistance payments which now cost us 4 billion dollars a year, and in the large costs of fighting crime and delinquency, disease and hunger.

This is only part of the story.

Our history has proved that each time we broaden the base of abundance, giving more people the chance to produce and consume, we create new industry, higher production, increased earnings and better income for all.

Giving new opportunity to those who have little will enrich the lives of all the rest.

Because it is right, because it is wise, and because, for the first time in our history, it is possible to conquer poverty, I submit, for the consideration of the Congress and the country, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The Act does not merely expand old programs or improve what is already being done.

It charts a new course.

It strikes at the causes, not just the consequences of poverty.

It can be a milestone in our one-hundred-eighty year search for a better life for our people.

C. The Black Revolution Erupts

I. Rosa Parks Keeps Her Seat (1955)*

"Jim Crow," or government-enforced segregation of the races—in schools, buses, restaurants, and other public places—defined life in the South from the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II. But in the postwar era, blacks began to protest against the petty humiliations and gross inequalities of the Jim Crow regime. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, an officer in the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), boarded a bus in her hometown of Montgomery, Alabama, to return home after her day's work as a seamstress. The only seat available was in the "whites only" section. She sat down, refused to move,

*"Rosa L. Parks," from *My Soul is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered* by Howell Raines, copyright © 1977 by Howell Raines. Used by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons, a division of Penguin Group (USA) LLC and Russell & Volkening as agents for the author.

The black drivers were openly carrying guns?

Oh, yeah. They had rifles and shotguns. And that's how we got back to Birmingham... I think I was flown to New Orleans for medical treatment, because still they were afraid to let any of us go to the hospitals in Birmingham, and by that time—it was what, two days later—I was fairly all right. I had gotten most of the smoke out of my system.

No one received any attention in the hospital in Anniston?

No, No. Oh, we did have one girl, Genevieve Hughes, a white girl, who had a busted lip. I remember a nurse applying something to that, but other than that, nothing. Now that I look back on it, man, we had some vicious people down there, wouldn't even so much as *treat* you. But that's the way it was. But strangely enough, even those bad things then don't stick in my mind that much. Not that I'm full of love and goodwill for everybody in my heart, but I chalk it off to part of the things that I'm going to be able to sit on my front porch in my rocking chair and tell my young'uns about, my grandchildren about.

Postscript: That same day, Mother's Day, May 14, 1961, the second bus escaped the mob in Anniston and made it to Birmingham. At the Trailways station there, white men armed with baseball bats and chains beat the Freedom Riders at will for about fifteen minutes before the first police arrived. In 1975 a former Birmingham Klansman, who was a paid informant of the FBI at the time, told the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that members of the Birmingham police force had promised the Klansmen that no policemen would show up to interfere with the beatings for at least fifteen minutes. In 1976 a Birmingham detective who refused to be interviewed on tape told me that account was correct—as far as it went. The detective said that word was passed in the police department that Public Safety Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor had watched from the window of his office in City Hall as the crowd of Klansmen, some brandishing weapons, gathered to await the Freedom Fighters. Asked later about the absence of his policemen, Connor said most of them were visiting their mothers.

4. Martin Luther King, Jr., Writes from a Birmingham Jail (1963)*

The year 1963 marked the one hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, yet millions of African Americans remained enchained by racism. Although racial prejudice was a national curse, it worked most viciously in the South, the ancient homeland of slavery. Nearly a decade after the Supreme Court's desegregation order, fewer than 10 percent of black children in the South attended classes with white children. The problem was especially acute in Birmingham, Alabama, the most segregated big city in the United States. Segregation was the rule in schools, restaurants, restrooms, ballparks, libraries, and taxicabs. Although African Americans

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were nearly half the city's residents, they constituted fewer than 15 percent of the city's voters. More than fifty cross burnings and eighteen racial bombings between 1957 and 1963 had earned the city the nickname of "Bombingham" among blacks. Thus Birmingham was a logical choice—and a courageous one—as the site of a mass protest by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Arrested during a protest demonstration on Good Friday, 1963, King penned the following letter from jail, writing on scraps of paper smuggled to him by a prison trusty. He was responding to criticism from eight white Alabama clergymen who had deplored his tactics as "unwise and untimely"—though King throughout his life preached the wisdom of nonviolence. Why does King believe that African Americans could wait no longer for their civil rights? How does he view himself in relation to white "moderates" and black extremists?

My Dear Fellow Clergymen:

. . .

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations. I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative. . . .

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was "well timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, "Wait." But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son who is asking: "Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?"; when you take a cross-country

drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white" and "colored"; when your first name becomes "nigger," your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and your wife and mother are never given the respected title "Mrs."; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness"—then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience....

You speak of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist. I began thinking about the fact that I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency, made up in part of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, are so drained of self-respect and a sense of "somebodiness" that they have adjusted to segregation; and in part of a few middle-class Negroes who, because of a degree of academic and economic security and because in some ways they profit by segregation, have become insensitive to the problems of the masses. The other force is one of bitterness and hatred, and it comes perilously close to advocating violence. It is expressed in the various black nationalist groups that are springing up across the nation, the largest and best-known being Elijah Muhammad's Muslim movement. Nourished by the Negro's frustration over the continued existence of racial discrimination, this movement is made up of people who have lost faith in America, who have absolutely repudiated Christianity, and who have concluded that the white man is an incorrigible "devil."

I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need emulate neither the "do-nothingism" of the complacent nor the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. For there is the more excellent way of love and nonviolent protest. I am grateful to God that, through the influence of the Negro church, the way of nonviolence became an integral part of our struggle.

If this philosophy had not emerged, by now many streets of the South would, I am convinced, be flowing with blood. And I am further convinced that if our white brothers dismiss as "rabble-rousers" and "outside agitators" those of us who employ nonviolent direct action, and if they refuse to support our nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes will, out of frustration and despair, seek solace and security in black-nationalist ideologies—a development that would inevitably lead to a frightening racial nightmare....

I wish you had commended the Negro sit-inners and demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer and their amazing discipline in the midst of great provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths,* with the noble sense of purpose

*Escorted by four hundred federal marshals and three thousand federal troops, James Meredith was the first black student to enroll at the historically all-white University of Mississippi in 1962. Four years later, he was wounded by gunfire while leading a voter-registration drive in Mississippi.

that enables them to face jeering and hostile mobs, and with the agonizing loneliness that characterizes the life of the pioneer. They will be old, oppressed, battered Negro women, symbolized in a seventy-two-year-old woman in Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride segregated buses, and who responded with ungrammatical profundity to one who inquired about her weariness: "My feets is tired, but my soul is at rest." They will be the young high school and college students, the young ministers of the gospel and a host of their elders, courageously and nonviolently sitting in at lunch counters and willingly going to jail for conscience' sake. One day the South will know that when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters, they were in reality standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judaeo-Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. . . .

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood,
Martin Luther King, Jr.

5. *Malcolm X Is Defiant (1964)**

The dramatic confrontation in Birmingham—marked by footage of policemen training fire hoses and attack dogs on defenseless black children—roused public support in favor of a federal civil rights bill, introduced by John F. Kennedy in June of 1963. But by spring of the following year, the bill had yet to pass, blocked by a filibuster in the Senate. While King counseled patience, black nationalist leader Malcolm X struck a less compromising tone, warning whites that civil rights would come, either by the ballot or the bullet. How does Malcolm X justify his more militant stance? How might white Americans have reacted to his message?

If we don't do something real soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964. It isn't that time is running out—time has run out! 1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed. The most explosive year. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro community jiving you and me for some votes. The year when all of the white political crooks will be right back in your and my community with their false promises, building up our hopes for a letdown, with their trickery and their treachery, with their false promises which they don't intend to keep. As they nourish these dissatisfactions, it can only lead to one thing, an explosion; and now we have the type of black man on the scene in America today—I'm sorry, Brother Lomax—who just doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer. . . .

*George Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*, 2nd cloth edition (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1989), pp. 37–38, 44. Copyright © 1965, 1989 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

7. The Dilemma of Vietnam (1966)

By 1966, many Americans were agonizing about their country's involvement in Southeast Asia, and a bitter argument over the Vietnam War was intensifying. In the following image, from the Chicago Sun-Times, renowned cartoonist Bill Mauldin ridiculed both the prowar and antiwar factions. Was his criticism fair? What is the cartoonist's own view of the war? What policy choices other than escalation and withdrawal were there?



Bill Mauldin, 1966 / As published in the Chicago Sun-Times, Inc. 2005. Courtesy of The Chicago Sun-Times.

identification. Thus, such laws would not be rendered unconstitutional but would be extended to apply to both sexes by operation of the amendment, in the same way that laws pertaining to voting were extended to Negroes and women under the 15th and 19th amendments....

Any expression of preference in the law for the mother in child custody cases would be extended to both parents (as against claims of third parties). Children are entitled to support from *both* parents under the existing laws of most States....

2. *Laws Rendered Unconstitutional by the Amendment.* Where a law restricts or denies opportunities of women or men, as the case may be, the effect of the equal rights amendment would be to render such laws unconstitutional.

Examples are: the exclusion of women from State universities or other public schools; State laws placing special restrictions on the hours of work for women or the weights women may lift on the job; laws prohibiting women from working in certain occupations, such as bartenders; laws placing special restrictions on the legal capacity of married women, such as making contracts or establishing a legal domicile.

3. *Removal of Age Distinctions Based on Sex.* Some laws which apply to both sexes make an age distinction by sex and thereby discriminate as to persons between the ages specified for males and females. Under the foregoing analysis, the ages specified in such laws would be equalized by the amendment by extending the benefits, privileges or opportunities under the law to both sexes. This would mean that as to some such laws, the *lower* age would apply to both sexes....

4. *Laws Which Could Not Possibly Apply to Both Sexes Because of the Difference in Reproductive Capacity.* Laws which, as a practical matter, can apply to only one sex no matter how they are phrased, such as laws providing maternity benefits and laws prohibiting rape, would not be affected by the amendment. The extension of these laws to both sexes would be purely academic since such laws would not apply differently if they were phrased in terms of both sexes. In these situations, the terminology of sex identification is of no consequence.

5. *Separation of the Sexes.* Separation of the sexes by law would be forbidden under the amendment except in situations where the separation is shown to be necessary because of an overriding and compelling public interest and does not deny individual rights and liberties.

For example, in our present culture the recognition of the right to privacy would justify separate restroom facilities in public buildings.

As shown above, the amendment would not change the substance of existing laws, except that those which restrict and deny opportunities to women would be rendered unconstitutional under the standard of point two of the analysis. In all other cases, the laws presently on the books would simply be equalized, and this includes the entire body of family law.

3. The Supreme Court Upholds Abortion Rights (1973)*

In 1973 the Supreme Court reignited the abortion debate when it ruled in Roe v. Wade that state laws banning abortion were an unconstitutional infringement on

**Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973).

a woman's right to privacy. While feminists celebrated their landmark victory, conservative religious organizations rallied for a protracted fight to reverse the Court's ruling. How did the justices use the "right to privacy" to navigate the thorny moral, medical, and societal questions surrounding the abortion debate? Does the decision leave any room for legal restrictions on abortion?

We forthwith acknowledge our awareness of the sensitive and emotional nature of the abortion controversy, of the vigorous opposing views, even among physicians, and of the deep and seemingly absolute convictions that the subject inspires. One's philosophy, one's experiences, one's exposure to the raw edges of human existence, one's religious training, one's attitudes toward life and family and their values, and the moral standards one establishes and seeks to observe, are all likely to influence and to color one's thinking and conclusions about abortion.

In addition, population growth, pollution, poverty, and racial overtones tend to complicate and not to simplify the problem.

Our task, of course, is to resolve the issue by constitutional measurement, free of emotion and of predilection. . . .

The principal thrust of appellant's attack on the Texas statutes is that they improperly invade a right, said to be possessed by the pregnant woman, to choose to terminate her pregnancy. Appellant would discover this right in the concept of personal "liberty" embodied in the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause; or in personal, marital, familial, and sexual privacy said to be protected by the Bill of Rights. . . .

The Constitution does not explicitly mention any right of privacy. In a line of decisions, however, . . . the Court has recognized that a right of personal privacy, or a guarantee of certain areas or zones of privacy, does exist under the Constitution. . . .

This right of privacy, whether it be founded in the Fourteenth Amendment's concept of personal liberty and restrictions upon state action, as we feel it is, or, as the District Court determined, in the Ninth Amendment's reservation of rights to the people, is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy. The detriment that the State would impose upon the pregnant woman by denying this choice altogether is apparent. Specific and direct harm medically diagnosable even in early pregnancy may be involved. Maternity, or additional offspring, may force upon the woman a distressful life and future. Psychological harm may be imminent. Mental and physical health may be taxed by child care. There is also the distress, for all concerned, associated with the unwanted child, and there is the problem of bringing a child into a family already unable, psychologically and otherwise, to care for it. In other cases, as in this one, the additional difficulties and continuing stigma of unwed motherhood may be involved. All these are factors the woman and her responsible physician necessarily will consider in consultation.

On the basis of elements such as these, appellant and some *amici* argue that the woman's right is absolute and that she is entitled to terminate her pregnancy at whatever time, in whatever way, and for whatever reason she alone chooses. With this we do not agree. Appellant's arguments that Texas either has no valid interest at all in regulating the abortion decision, or no interest strong enough to support any limitation upon the woman's sole determination, are unpersuasive. The Court's decisions recognizing a right of privacy also acknowledge that some state regulation in areas protected by that

right is appropriate. As noted above, a State may properly assert important interests in safeguarding health, in maintaining medical standards, and in protecting potential life. At some point in pregnancy, these respective interests become sufficiently compelling to sustain regulation of the factors that govern the abortion decision. The privacy right involved, therefore, cannot be said to be absolute....

We, therefore, conclude that the right of personal privacy includes the abortion decision, but that this right is not unqualified, and must be considered against important state interests in regulation.

4. *Phyllis Schlafly Upholds Traditional Gender Roles (1977)**

The feminist upsurge of the 1970s provoked a backlash, not all of it from men. Phyllis Schlafly, a prominent conservative, emerged as one of the most critical opponents of the new feminists' agenda, especially the ERA. In the selection that follows, what are Schlafly's principal objections to the feminist position? How does she conceive of the "Positive Woman"? What differences does she see between men and women?

The first requirement for the acquisition of power by the Positive Woman is to understand the differences between men and women. Your outlook on life, your faith, your behavior, your potential for fulfillment, all are determined by the parameters of your original premise. The Positive Woman starts with the assumption that the world is her oyster. She rejoices in the creative capability within her body and the power potential of her mind and spirit. She understands that men and women are different, and that those very differences provide the key to her success as a person and fulfillment as a woman.

The women's liberationist, on the other hand, is imprisoned by her own negative view of herself and of her place in the world around her. This view of women was most succinctly expressed in an advertisement designed by the principal women's liberationist organization, the National Organization for Women (NOW), and run in many magazines and newspapers and as spot announcements on many television stations. The advertisement showed a darling curlyheaded girl with the caption: "This healthy, normal baby has a handicap. She was born female."

This is the self-articulated dog-in-the-manger, chip-on-the-shoulder, fundamental dogma of the women's liberation movement. Someone—it is not clear who, perhaps God, perhaps the "Establishment," perhaps a conspiracy of male chauvinist pigs—dealt women a foul blow by making them female. It becomes necessary, therefore, for women to agitate and demonstrate and hurl demands on society in order to wrest from an oppressive male-dominated social structure the status that has been wrongfully denied to women through the centuries....

The second dogma of the women's liberationists is that, of all the injustices perpetuated upon women through the centuries, the most oppressive is the cruel fact that women have babies and men do not. Within the confines of the women's liberationist ideology, therefore, the abolition of this overriding inequality of women becomes the primary goal. This goal must be achieved at any and all costs—to the

*From Phyllis Schlafly, *The Power of the Positive Woman*, pp. 11–19. Copyright © 1977.

woman herself, to the baby, to the family, and to society. Women must be made equal to men in their ability *not* to become pregnant and *not* to be expected to care for babies they may bring into the world.

This is why women's liberationists are compulsively involved in the drive to make abortion and child-care centers for all women, regardless of religion or income, both socially acceptable and government-financed. Former Congresswoman Bella Abzug has defined the goal: "to enforce the constitutional right of females to terminate pregnancies that they do not wish to continue."

If man is targeted as the enemy, and the ultimate goal of women's liberation is independence from men and the avoidance of pregnancy and its consequences, then lesbianism is logically the highest form in the ritual of women's liberation. Many, such as [feminist author] Kate Millett, come to this conclusion, although many others do not.

The Positive Woman will never travel that dead-end road. It is self-evident to the Positive Woman that the female body with its baby-producing organs was not designed by a conspiracy of men but by the Divine Architect of the human race. Those who think it is unfair that women have babies, whereas men cannot, will have to take up their complaint with God because no other power is capable of changing that fundamental fact....

The third basic dogma of the women's liberation movement is that there is no difference between male and female except the sex organs, and that all those physical, cognitive, and emotional differences you *think* are there, are merely the result of centuries of restraints imposed by a male-dominated society and sex-stereotyped schooling. The role imposed on women is, by definition, inferior, according to the women's liberationists.

The Positive Woman knows that, while there are some physical competitions in which women are better (and can command more money) than men, including those that put a premium on grace and beauty, such as figure skating, the superior physical strength of males over females in competitions of strength, speed, and short-term endurance is beyond rational dispute....

The women's liberationists and their dupes who try to tell each other that the sexual drive of men and women is really the same, and that it is only societal restraints that inhibit women from an equal desire, and equal enjoyment, and an equal freedom from the consequences, are doomed to frustration forever. It just isn't so, and pretending cannot make it so. The differences are not a woman's weakness but her strength....

The Positive Woman recognizes the fact that, when it comes to sex, women are simply not the equal of men. The sexual drive of men is much stronger than that of women. That is how the human race was designed in order that it might perpetuate itself....

The differences between men and women are also emotional and psychological. Without woman's innate maternal instinct, the human race would have died out centuries ago. There is nothing so helpless in all earthly life as the newborn infant. It will die within hours if not cared for. Even in the most primitive, uneducated societies, women have always cared for their newborn babies. They didn't need any schooling to teach them how. They didn't need any welfare workers to tell them it is their social obligation. Even in societies to whom such concepts as "ought,"

"social responsibility," and "compassion for the helpless" were unknown, mothers cared for their new babies.

Why? Because caring for a baby serves the natural maternal need of a woman. Although not nearly so total as the baby's need, the woman's need is nonetheless real.

The overriding psychological need of a woman is to love something alive. A baby fulfills this need in the lives of most women. If a baby is not available to fill that need, women search for a baby-substitute. This is the reason why women have traditionally gone into teaching and nursing careers. They are doing what comes naturally to the female psyche. The schoolchild or the patient of any age provides an outlet for a woman to express her natural maternal need. . . .

Finally, women are different from men in dealing with the fundamentals of life itself. Men are philosophers, women are practical, and 'twas ever thus. Men may philosophize about how life began and where we are heading; women are concerned about feeding the kids today. No woman would ever, as Karl Marx did, spend years reading political philosophy in the British Museum while her child starved to death. Women don't take naturally to a search for the intangible and the abstract. The Positive Woman knows who she is and where she is going, and she will reach her goal because the longest journey starts with a very practical first step.

B. The Reagan "Revolution" in Economic Policy

I. The Supply-Side Gospel (1984)*

*Since New Deal days, Keynesian economic theory had dominated federal policy. Named for the brilliant British economist John Maynard Keynes, who had developed his ideas most conspicuously in *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* in 1936, Keynesian theory emphasized the role of government spending, including deficit financing, in stimulating the economy. Now so-called supply-side economists argued that continual reliance on government spending sapped money and initiative from the private sector, ballooned deficits, and contained an inherently inflationary bias. The supply-siders came into their own with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980. Here one of them explains the basics of their approach. What is innovative about it? In the light of the unprecedented deficits chalked up in the Reagan years, can supply-side theory be said to have worked?*

Ronald Reagan campaigned for the presidency on a supply-side platform.... Reagan was a different kind of candidate because he emphasized the capabilities of the people and the American economy. He campaigned on a message of hope that sparked a rebirth of confidence in the people. Reagan's optimism was so unfamiliar to the Republican establishment that its candidate, George Bush, called it "voodoo economics."...

The President-elect wanted to get on with his business of using incentives to rebuild the U.S. economy. He ruled out both wage and price controls and the continuation of demand management—the economic cycle of fighting inflation with unemployment and unemployment with inflation. In place of a stop-go monetary policy ranging from too tight to too loose, there would be steady, moderate, and predictable growth in the money supply. And instead of pumping up demand to stimulate the economy, reliance would be placed on improving incentives on the supply side.

This is the policy package that became known as Reaganomics. Its controversial feature is its belief that the economy can enjoy a rise in real gross national product while inflation declines. Monetary policy would first stabilize and then gradually reduce inflation, while tax cuts would provide liquidity as well as incentives and prevent the slower money growth from causing a recession. By creating the wrong incentives and damaging the cash flow of individuals and businesses, the tax system had produced a nation of debt junkies. With the economy strung out on credit, it had to be carefully rehabilitated so as not to produce a liquidity crisis....

Keynesian theory explained the economy's performance in terms of the level of total spending. A budget deficit adds to total spending and helps keep employment high and the economy running at full capacity. Cutting the deficit, as the Republicans wanted to do, would reduce spending and throw people out of work, thereby lowering national income and raising the unemployment rate. The lower

*From *The Supply-Side Revolution: An Insider's Account of Policymaking in Washington* by Paul C. Roberts, pp. 20–25, 89–94, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Copyright © 1984 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

income would produce less tax revenue, and the higher unemployment would require larger budget expenditures for unemployment compensation, food stamps, and other support programs. The budget deficit would thus reappear from a shrunken tax base and higher income-support payments. Patient (and impatient) Democrats, economists, columnists, and editorial writers had explained many times to the obdurate Republicans that cutting the deficit would simply reduce spending on goods and services, drive the economy down, and raise the unemployment rate. Keynesians argued that the way to balance the budget was to run a deficit. Deficit spending would lift the economy, and the government's tax revenues would rise, bringing the budget into balance. Since cutting the deficit was believed to be the surest way to throw people out of work, there were not many Republican economists. When Democrat Alice Rivlin was asked why there were no Republican economists on her "nonpartisan" Congressional Budget Committee staff, she was probably telling the truth when she said she could not find any.

The focus on the deficit had left the Republicans without a competitive political program. They were perceived by the recipients of government benefits as the party always threatening to cut back on government programs such as social security, while the taxpaying part of the electorate saw Republicans as the party that was always threatening to raise taxes in order to pay for the benefits that others were receiving. The party that takes away with both hands competes badly with the party that gives away with both hands, and that simple fact explained the decline of the Republican Party, which had come to be known as the tax collector for Democratic spending programs.

Supply-side economics brought a new perspective to fiscal policy. Instead of stressing the effects on spending, supply-siders showed that tax rates directly affect the supply of goods and services. Lower tax rates mean better incentives to work, to save, to take risks, and to invest. As people respond to the higher after-tax rewards, or greater profitability, incomes rise and the tax base grows, thus feeding back some of the lost revenues to the Treasury. The saving rate also grows, providing more financing for government and private borrowing. Since Keynesian analysis left out such effects, once supply-side economics appeared on the scene the Democrats could no longer claim that government spending stimulated the economy more effectively than tax cuts.

2. The New York Times Attacks Reagan's Policies (1981)*

Critics of President Reagan's budget-slashing and tax-cutting policies fumed furiously but ineffectively during Reagan's first year in office. The new president appeared to be a masterful politician whose will was impossible to thwart. Some observers, however, worried about the real purposes behind Reagan's deft display of presidential leadership. In the following editorial from the New York Times, what are alleged to be Reagan's true intentions? What does the editorial mean when it states that Reagan

*From *The New York Times*, August 2, 1981. © 1981 *The New York Times*. All rights reserved. Used by permission and protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States. The printing, copying, redistribution, or retransmission of this Content without express written permission is prohibited.

"gathers power for the purpose of denigrating its value in shaping America"? Is this assessment fair?

One thing is surely settled: the Presidency is no feeble office. Let a shrewd President single-mindedly pursue a policy broadly grounded in his election mandate, and he can put it across. . . .

But is this President's paradoxical triumph also the nation's? He gathers power for the purpose of denigrating its value in shaping America. He does not say the nation is overextended financially. He does not say guns are momentarily more important than butter. He does not rerank the nation's needs or argue against assorted remedies. He denounces all Federal government as oppressive, as the cause of economic distress and a threat to liberty.

So Mr. Reagan has arranged to shrink annual Federal spending by 1984 by about \$150 billion and cut taxes to let individuals and businesses spend that sum instead. Economically, that is mostly a transfer of purchasing power which cannot much reduce inflation or unemployment, the Federal deficit or debt. On the contrary, a big increase in military spending will enlarge the deficit unless the President finds further huge savings in civilian programs. And the pressure to find them—wherever—is what he values most about his accomplishment.

But why does the President boast that he has thus improved economic prospects? Because he holds, as a matter of faith, that a dollar spent privately creates more wealth than a dollar spent by Government.

That is surely sometimes true: a Government-run railroad that is politically beholden to its unions will tolerate more waste than a private bus company. But it surely also is sometimes untrue: a Government investment in a student or road or depressed community can stimulate more productive activity than the same sum spent by private citizens on diamonds or cameras. Government may be incompetent to achieve some of its social goals. But uncoordinated private spending is notoriously inefficient in meeting large public needs.

Take the obvious, urgent need to cool inflation. Mr. Reagan's answer is a tortuous chain of incentives: cut a family's taxes by \$500 and the money goes to banks and merchants who invest in more businesses and machines which will be more efficient and hold down prices. Also: reduce a citizen's tax on the *next* earned dollar from 29 to 25 cents and he'll work harder longer and thus reduce costs.

But if it were primarily interested in economic results, Government has surer ways to achieve those results—as even Mr. Reagan's plan recognizes. For it aims large tax reductions directly at businesses that buy cost-reducing machines or job-producing plants. A still more efficient plan would have aimed more precisely at the most wanted machines and at workers who hold down wages or communities that reduce sales taxes.

The unavoidable conclusion is that Mr. Reagan wants to use his power primarily to diminish Government—even where that dilutes economic recovery and prevents efficient allocation of resources.

That the President's plan will revive the economy remains to be proved. What is no longer in doubt is that his economic remedies mask an assault on the very idea that free people can solve their collective problems through representative Government.

One day soon Americans will rediscover that their general welfare depends on national as well as parochial actions. And then they will want not just a powerful President but one who cherishes the power of Government to act for the common good.

C. The Reagan-Bush Foreign Policies

Four Views on the End of the Cold War (1994)*

At an extraordinary gathering in the summer of 1994, four of the major figures who played roles in ending the four-and-one-half-decade-long Cold War met in Colorado to assess the process by which the Cold War at last reached its finale. Margaret Thatcher was prime minister of Britain for the entire decade of the 1980s; François Mitterrand was president of France; George Bush served as Ronald Reagan's vice president and was elected president himself in 1988; and Mikhail Gorbachev was the principal architect of the enormous changes that swept through the Soviet Union in the 1980s. How do they agree, and how do they differ, in their appraisals of what happened and why in that momentous decade? Which explanation is most credible? Who should get the lion's share of the credit for ending the Cold War? Which of these leaders is most prophetic about the future?

Margaret Thatcher. There was one vital factor in the ending of the Cold War: Ronald Reagan's decision to go ahead with the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

The point of SDI was to stop nuclear weapons from reaching their objective. The first nation that got it would have a tremendous advantage because the whole military balance would change. So, it was of supreme importance.

This was a completely different level of defense. It required enormous computer capability, which he knew at the time the Soviet Union could not match. And that was the end of the arms race as we had been pursuing it. I told Mr. Gorbachev when he first visited me that I was all for President Reagan going ahead with SDI and that some of our scientists would help if needed.

From that particular moment, everything was not so easy in my relationship with Mr. Gorbachev. At the same time it was clear that (with Gorbachev) we could negotiate in a different way with a different kind of person who was beginning to allow people in the Soviet Union to have freedom of worship and freedom of speech.

So the end of the Cold War had a great deal to do with Ronald Reagan and a great deal to do with Mr. Gorbachev.

Mikhail Gorbachev. I cannot agree that the SDI initiative had this much importance. SDI-type research was also done in our country. We knew that in the defense sector we could find a response. So, SDI was not decisive in our movement toward a new relationship with the West. If you accept that reforms in the Soviet Union started under the pressure from the West, particularly as a result

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air before, and then we heard the explosion," he recalled. The villagers, however, supplied the explanation: They collected the fragments of the missile, on which was printed in black, "Made in USA."

... [I]n reality Pakistanis are deeply torn about the drones. For every anti-American rant they inspire—the recent meteoric rise of Imran Khan, the cricketer turned politician, owes a great deal to his strong opposition to the drone strikes—there is also a recognition that these strikes from the sky have their purpose. At times, they have outright benefited the Pakistani state, as in the summer of 2009, when a drone attack killed Baitullah Mehsud, the leader of a militant alliance in Waziristan who was suspected of masterminding former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's 2007 assassination—Pakistan's Enemy No. 1, but a villain of less consequence to the United States.

Residents of the tribal areas are similarly conflicted. Many favor the drone strikes over the alternatives, such as military operations or less selective bombardments by Pakistani bombers and helicopter gunships. Better a few houses get vaporized than an entire village turned into refugees. Even the brother of the elder I brought to the Peshawar guesthouse said as much, allowing that "in our case, it might be faulty intelligence or mischief by someone" that had caused the strike that killed his brother. Regardless, he said, "I would always go for the drones."

Either way, they are now a fact of life in a secret war that is far from over. Once I called a source—a Taliban commander in one of the tribal areas. His brother picked up the phone and told me that the commander was asleep. It was noon, and I remarked that it was an odd time for a nap. "There are drones in the sky," the brother laughingly replied, "so he is not feeling well."

B. Rising Inequality

1. President Barack Obama Calls Inequality "The Defining Issue of Our Time" (2011)*

Elected as the first African American president in 2008, and reelected in 2012, Barack Obama championed an ambitious program of "progressive" reform in the face of robust Republican opposition. In this 2011 speech in Osawatomie, Kansas (where Theodore Roosevelt had laid out his "New Nationalism" program a little more than a hundred years earlier), he declared inequality and stalled social mobility to be "the defining issue of our time." What does he see as the principal dangers associated with rising inequality?

This is the defining issue of our time. This is a make-or-break moment for the middle class, and for all those who are fighting to get into the middle class. Because what's at stake is whether this will be a country where working people can earn enough to raise a family, build a modest savings, own a home, secure their retirement.

*"Remarks by the President on the Economy in Osawatomie, Kansas," <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/12/06/remarks-president-economy-osawatomie-kansas>, accessed March 26, 2014.

You see, this isn't the first time America has faced this choice. At the turn of the last century, when a nation of farmers was transitioning to become the world's industrial giant, we had to decide: would we settle for a country where most of the new railroads and factories were controlled by a few giant monopolies that kept prices high and wages low? Would we allow our citizens and even our children to work ungodly hours in conditions that were unsafe and unsanitary? Would we restrict education to the privileged few? Because some people thought massive inequality and exploitation was just the price of progress.

Theodore Roosevelt disagreed. He was the Republican son of a wealthy family. He praised what the titans of industry had done to create jobs and grow the economy. He believed then what we know is true today: that the free market is the greatest force for economic progress in human history. It's led to a prosperity and standard of living unmatched by the rest of the world.

But Roosevelt also knew that the free market has never been a free license to take whatever you want from whoever you can. It only works when there are rules of the road to ensure that competition is fair, open, and honest. And so he busted up monopolies, forcing those companies to compete for customers with better services and better prices. And today, they still must. He fought to make sure businesses couldn't profit by exploiting children, or selling food or medicine that wasn't safe. And today, they still can't.

In 1910, Teddy Roosevelt came here, to Osawatomie, and laid out his vision for what he called a New Nationalism. "Our country," he said, "... means nothing unless it means the triumph of a real democracy... of an economic system under which each man shall be guaranteed the opportunity to show the best that there is in him."

For this, Roosevelt was called a radical, a socialist, even a communist. But today, we are a richer nation and a stronger democracy because of what he fought for in his last campaign: an eight hour work day and a minimum wage for women; insurance for the unemployed, the elderly, and those with disabilities; political reform and a progressive income tax.

Today, over one hundred years later, our economy has gone through another transformation. Over the last few decades, huge advances in technology have allowed businesses to do more with less, and made it easier for them to set up shop and hire workers anywhere in the world. And many of you know firsthand the painful disruptions this has caused for a lot of Americans.

Factories where people thought they would retire suddenly picked up and went overseas, where the workers were cheaper. Steel mills that needed 1,000 employees are now able to do the same work with 100, so that layoffs were too often permanent, not just a temporary part of the business cycle. These changes didn't just affect blue-collar workers. If you were a bank teller or a phone operator or a travel agent, you saw many in your profession replaced by ATMs or the internet. Today, even higher-skilled jobs like accountants and middle management can be outsourced to countries like China and India. And if you're someone whose job can be done cheaper by a computer or someone in another country, you don't have a lot of leverage with your employer when it comes to asking for better wages and benefits—especially since fewer Americans today are part of a union.

Now, just as there was in Teddy Roosevelt's time, there's been a certain crowd in Washington for the last few decades who respond to this economic challenge

with the same old tune. "The market will take care of everything," they tell us. If only we cut more regulations and cut more taxes—especially for the wealthy—our economy will grow stronger. Sure, there will be winners and losers. But if the winners do really well, jobs and prosperity will eventually trickle down to everyone else. And even if prosperity doesn't trickle down, they argue, that's the price of liberty.

It's a simple theory—one that speaks to our rugged individualism and healthy skepticism of too much government. It fits well on a bumper sticker. Here's the problem: It doesn't work. It's never worked. It didn't work when it was tried in the decade before the Great Depression. It's not what led to the incredible post-war boom of the 50s and 60s. And it didn't work when we tried it during the last decade.

Look at the statistics. In the last few decades, the average income of the top one percent has gone up by more than 250%, to \$1.2 million per year. For the top one hundredth of one percent, the average income is now \$27 million per year. The typical CEO who used to earn about 30 times more than his or her workers now earns 110 times more. And yet, over the last decade, the incomes of most Americans have actually fallen by about six percent.

This kind of inequality—a level we haven't seen since the Great Depression—hurts us all. When middle-class families can no longer afford to buy the goods and services that businesses are selling, it drags down the entire economy, from top to bottom. America was built on the idea of broad-based prosperity—that's why a CEO like Henry Ford made it his mission to pay his workers enough so that they could buy the cars they made. It's also why a recent study showed that countries with less inequality tend to have stronger and steadier economic growth over the long run.

Inequality also distorts our democracy. It gives an outsized voice to the few who can afford high-priced lobbyists and unlimited campaign contributions, and runs the risk of selling out our democracy to the highest bidder. And it leaves everyone else rightly suspicious that the system in Washington is rigged against them—that our elected representatives aren't looking out for the interests of most Americans.

More fundamentally, this kind of gaping inequality gives lie to the promise at the very heart of America: that this is the place where you can make it if you try. We tell people that in this country, even if you're born with nothing, hard work can get you into the middle class; and that your children will have the chance to do even better than you. That's why immigrants from around the world flocked to our shores.

And yet, over the last few decades, the rungs on the ladder of opportunity have grown farther and farther apart, and the middle class has shrunk. A few years after World War II, a child who was born into poverty had a slightly better than 50-50 chance of becoming middle class as an adult. By 1980, that chance fell to around 40%. And if the trend of rising inequality over the last few decades continues, it's estimated that a child born today will only have a 1 in 3 chance of making it to the middle class.

Our success has never just been about survival of the fittest. It's been about building a nation where we're all better off. We pull together, we pitch in, and we do our part, believing that hard work will pay off; that responsibility will be rewarded; and that our children will inherit a nation where those values live on.

And it is that belief that rallied thousands of Americans to Osawatimie—maybe even some of your ancestors—on a rain-soaked day more than a century ago. By train, by wagon, on buggy, bicycle, and foot, they came to hear the vision of a man who loved this country, and was determined to perfect it.

“We are all Americans,” Teddy Roosevelt told them that day. “Our common interests are as broad as the continent.” And we still believe, in the words of the man who called for a New Nationalism all those years ago, “The fundamental rule in our national life—the rule which underlies all others—is that, on the whole, and in the long run, we shall go up or down together.”

2. Charles Murray Cites the Cultural Sources of Inequality (2012)*

Charles Murray, a controversial and conservative social scientist who has written extensively on issues concerning the welfare state and racial differences, added his voice in 2012 to the highly charged discussion of rising inequality in America. What aspects of inequality does he find most disturbing? How persuasive is his explanation for the rise of inequality?

America is coming apart. For most of our nation’s history, whatever the inequality in wealth between the richest and poorest citizens, we maintained a cultural equality known nowhere else in the world—for whites, anyway. “The more opulent citizens take great care not to stand aloof from the people,” wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, the great chronicler of American democracy, in the 1830s. “On the contrary, they constantly keep on easy terms with the lower classes: They listen to them, they speak to them every day.”

Americans love to see themselves this way. But there’s a problem: It’s not true anymore, and it has been progressively less true since the 1960s.

People are starting to notice the great divide. The tea party sees the aloofness in a political elite that thinks it knows best and orders the rest of America to fall in line. The Occupy movement sees it in an economic elite that lives in mansions and flies on private jets. Each is right about an aspect of the problem, but that problem is more pervasive than either political or economic inequality. What we now face is a problem of cultural inequality.

When Americans used to brag about “the American way of life”—a phrase still in common use in 1960—they were talking about a civic culture that swept an extremely large proportion of Americans of all classes into its embrace. It was a culture encompassing shared experiences of daily life and shared assumptions about central American values involving marriage, honesty, hard work and religiosity.

Over the past 50 years, that common civic culture has unraveled. We have developed a new upper class with advanced educations, often obtained at elite schools, sharing tastes and preferences that set them apart from mainstream America. At the same time, we have developed a new lower class, characterized not by poverty but by withdrawal from America’s core cultural institutions.

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To illustrate just how wide the gap has grown between the new upper class and the new lower class, let me start with the broader upper-middle and working classes from which they are drawn, using two fictional neighborhoods that I hereby label Belmont (after an archetypal upper-middle-class suburb near Boston) and Fishtown (after a neighborhood in Philadelphia that has been home to the white working class since the Revolution).

To be assigned to Belmont, the people in the statistical nationwide databases on which I am drawing must have at least a bachelor's degree and work as a manager, physician, attorney, engineer, architect, scientist, college professor or content producer in the media. To be assigned to Fishtown, they must have no academic degree higher than a high-school diploma. If they work, it must be in a blue-collar job, a low-skill service job such as cashier, or a low-skill white-collar job such as mail clerk or receptionist.

People who qualify for my Belmont constitute about 20% of the white population of the U.S., ages 30 to 49. People who qualify for my Fishtown constitute about 30% of the white population of the U.S., ages 30 to 49.

I specify white, meaning non-Latino white, as a way of clarifying how broad and deep the cultural divisions in the U.S. have become. Cultural inequality is not grounded in race or ethnicity. I specify ages 30 to 49—what I call prime-age adults—to make it clear that these trends are not explained by changes in the ages of marriage or retirement.

In Belmont and Fishtown, here's what happened to America's common culture between 1960 and 2010.

Marriage: In 1960, extremely high proportions of whites in both Belmont and Fishtown were married—94% in Belmont and 84% in Fishtown. In the 1970s, those percentages declined about equally in both places. Then came the great divergence. In Belmont, marriage stabilized during the mid-1980s, standing at 83% in 2010. In Fishtown, however, marriage continued to slide; as of 2010, a minority (just 48%) were married. The gap in marriage between Belmont and Fishtown grew to 35 percentage points, from just 10.

Single parenthood: Another aspect of marriage—the percentage of children born to unmarried women—showed just as great a divergence. Though politicians and media eminences are too frightened to say so, nonmarital births are problematic. On just about any measure of development you can think of, children who are born to unmarried women fare worse than the children of divorce and far worse than children raised in intact families. This unwelcome reality persists even after controlling for the income and education of the parents.

In 1960, just 2% of all white births were nonmarital. When we first started recording the education level of mothers in 1970, 6% of births to white women with no more than a high-school education—women, that is, with a Fishtown education—were out of wedlock. By 2008, 44% were nonmarital. Among the college-educated women of Belmont, less than 6% of all births were out of wedlock as of 2008, up from 1% in 1970.

Industriousness: The norms for work and women were revolutionized after 1960, but the norm for men putatively has remained the same: Healthy men are supposed to work. In practice, though, that norm has eroded everywhere. In Fishtown,

the change has been drastic. (To avoid conflating this phenomenon with the latest recession, I use data collected in March 2008 as the end point for the trends.)

The primary indicator of the erosion of industriousness in the working class is the increase of prime-age males with no more than a high school education who say they are not available for work—they are “out of the labor force.” That percentage went from a low of 3% in 1968 to 12% in 2008. Twelve percent may not sound like much until you think about the men we’re talking about: in the prime of their working lives, their 30s and 40s, when, according to hallowed American tradition, every American man is working or looking for work. Almost one out of eight now aren’t. Meanwhile, not much has changed among males with college educations. Only 3% were out of the labor force in 2008.

There’s also been a notable change in the rates of less-than-full-time work. Of the men in Fishtown who had jobs, 10% worked fewer than 40 hours a week in 1960, a figure that grew to 20% by 2008. In Belmont, the number rose from 9% in 1960 to 12% in 2008.

Crime: The surge in crime that began in the mid-1960s and continued through the 1980s left Belmont almost untouched and ravaged Fishtown. From 1960 to 1995, the violent crime rate in Fishtown more than sextupled while remaining nearly flat in Belmont. The reductions in crime since the mid-1990s that have benefited the nation as a whole have been smaller in Fishtown, leaving it today with a violent crime rate that is still 4.7 times the 1960 rate.

Religiosity: Whatever your personal religious views, you need to realize that about half of American philanthropy, volunteering and associational memberships is directly church-related, and that religious Americans also account for much more nonreligious social capital than their secular neighbors. In that context, it is worrisome for the culture that the U.S. as a whole has become markedly more secular since 1960, and especially worrisome that Fishtown has become much more secular than Belmont. It runs against the prevailing narrative of secular elites versus a working class still clinging to religion, but the evidence from the General Social Survey, the most widely used database on American attitudes and values, does not leave much room for argument.

It can be said without hyperbole that these divergences put Belmont and Fishtown into different cultures.... The members of this elite have increasingly sorted themselves into hyper-wealthy and hyper-elite ZIP Codes that I call the SuperZIPs.

[L]arge clusters of SuperZIPs can be found around New York City, Los Angeles, the San Francisco–San Jose corridor, Boston and a few of the nation’s other largest cities. Because running major institutions in this country usually means living near one of these cities, it works out that the nation’s power elite does in fact live in a world that is far more culturally rarefied and isolated than the world of the power elite in 1960.

And the isolation is only going to get worse. Increasingly, the people who run the country were born into that world. Unlike the typical member of the elite in 1960, they have never known anything but the new upper-class culture. We are now seeing more and more third-generation members of the elite. Not even their grandparents have been able to give them a window into life in the rest of America.

Why have these new lower and upper classes emerged? For explaining the formation of the new lower class, the easy explanations from the left don't withstand scrutiny. It's not that white working class males can no longer make a "family wage" that enables them to marry. The average male employed in a working-class occupation earned as much in 2010 as he did in 1960. It's not that a bad job market led discouraged men to drop out of the labor force. Labor-force dropout increased just as fast during the boom years of the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s as it did during bad years.

As I've argued in much of my previous work, I think that the reforms of the 1960s jump-started the deterioration. Changes in social policy during the 1960s made it economically more feasible to have a child without having a husband if you were a woman or to get along without a job if you were a man; safer to commit crimes without suffering consequences; and easier to let the government deal with problems in your community that you and your neighbors formerly had to take care of.

3. Paul Krugman Dismisses the Cultural Explanation for Inequality (2012)*

Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-winning economist, Princeton professor, and New York Times columnist, sharply criticized Charles Murray's emphasis on shifting personal values as the root explanation for growing economic inequality. What does Krugman see as the principal drivers of inequality in modern American society? Who—Krugman or Murray—makes the more persuasive case? Are there other factors, besides the ones they cite, that help to explain mounting inequality?

Lately inequality has re-entered the national conversation. Occupy Wall Street gave the issue visibility, while the Congressional Budget Office supplied hard data on the widening income gap. And the myth of a classless society has been exposed: Among rich countries, America stands out as the place where economic and social status is most likely to be inherited.

So you knew what was going to happen next. Suddenly, conservatives are telling us that it's not really about money; it's about morals. Never mind wage stagnation and all that, the real problem is the collapse of working-class family values, which is somehow the fault of liberals.

But is it really all about morals? No, it's mainly about money.

To be fair, the new book at the heart of the conservative pushback, Charles Murray's "Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960–2010," does highlight some striking trends. Among white Americans with a high school education or less, marriage rates and male labor force participation are down, while births out of wedlock are up. Clearly, white working-class society has changed in ways that don't sound good.

But the first question one should ask is: Are things really that bad on the values front?

Mr. Murray and other conservatives often seem to assume that the decline of the traditional family has terrible implications for society as a whole. This is, of course, a

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