

**ONE-DIMENSIONAL SOCIETY REVISITED:
AN ANALYSIS OF HERBERT MARCUSE'S
ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN 34 YEARS LATER**

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Abstract

Using a page by page analysis of Herbert Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man, the author finds insight and empathy with almost all of the ideas in this 1964 book, written at the apex of the Cold War and the Space Race. Marcuse wrote that contemporary industrial society dominates life and repulses all alternatives, its "project" is to convert nature and people into "stuff", and it absorbs criticism by co-opting it from within. Although Marcuse did not foresee the collapse of European Communism, his writings about the domination of the industrial world are more prescient: the author finds the progress of free market capitalism has actually speeded up, with disastrous consequences for both the world's poorest people and its physical ecology.

Using contemporary historians, critics and writers that can support Marcuse's analysis, as well as personal experiences and observations, the author cites sources that show 40,000 people die of starvation every day, that 90 million people are born every year, and about 1/3 of the world lives in a realm of exploitation and suffering. In addition, the environment is irreparably damaged, and capitalism may consume itself with automation and electronic financial speculation. The author proposes a reasonable standard of living for individuals to solve the problems of poverty and environmental chaos, just like teachers are paid to educate children. There must also be a more independent source of information about this crisis, and that information should be brought into classrooms, and the largest corporations must be convinced that rectifying the situation, and paying for it, is in their best interests. The entire project that Marcuse was critical of must change toward the idea of finding ourselves in the service of others. To that end, schools should de-emphasize job training and concentrate on current events and consumer education, there should be more resources for the development of the arts, students should spend more time in school, and post secondary students should spend one academic year working in poorer countries. The cost of these changes should not be argued: there is adequate technology, expertise and wealth in society, what is lacking is the will.

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Introduction

This is not a thesis on Herbert Marcuse, but rather a personal reflection on the contemporary world using One-Dimensional Man as a structural guide. Marcuse was uniquely perceptive in his analysis of political and economic trends and his ideas still have a great relevance today, in an age when “globalization” is an undisputed reality. His book therefore serves as a useful background structure for my own exploration of some of the moral dilemmas we face in our increasingly interdependent world.

Many times before I completed this work I was asked by friends and colleagues what I was writing about. Many times I answered in a flippant light voice: the utter uselessness of education and the downfall of civilization as we know it. Always, there was laughter, and then I would expand on my ideas if I thought there was a willing listener. In the centre of that answer there was the truth, but a truth so heavy, a truth that required so much detail and knowledge and research it was a truth that could leave one despairingly paralysed, so that all I felt I could do was make a superficial mention of it. Perhaps the laughter was at me for wanting to delve into those dark corners that lead infinitesimally outward beyond our comfortable lives. Worse, I fear the laughter (or possibly, I know some of the laughter) was *at* me for even contemplating the gravity of the situation and hoping something can be done. The paralysis I often felt sets in at that question: what can be done? I know now at the outset of this chapter by chapter analysis of One-Dimensional Man that nothing can be done by me beyond these writings, and with the exception of a few suggestions, I know I can only take readers to the edge of our comfortable lives, and have them look out with increasing despair.

It was Herbert Marcuse who first articulated for me the sense of being an individual inside a giant machine, a feeling of near powerlessness about the force of industrial society chewing up the universe. It was 1969 when I read the introduction to One-Dimensional Man along with a few other parts of the book. It settled easily with me at that time, given the social and historical context I was in: industrial society was a great machine, grinding along the very thin surface of organic life on our planet like some catastrophic factory on bulldozer treads. Nature was chewed up in the front, and out the rear came products or, as Marcuse calls it, "stuff". Worse, there was nothing to stop it, for any opposition to the machine (or system as we called it then) seemed to get co-opted, and while the machine would often turn left here, or right over there, or advertise its effects in a more pleasing way, it seemed unstoppable. As Marcuse wrote in his introduction, this machine as I called it was

"...the latest stage in the realization of a specific historical project--namely the experience, transformation, and organization of nature as the mere stuff of domination.

As the project unfolds, it shapes the entire universe of discourse and action, intellectual and material culture. In the medium of technology, culture, politics and the economy merge into an omnipresent system which swallows up or repulses all alternatives." (Marcuse, pg. xvi)

I clearly remember in 1970 a lecturer in Economics at the University of Lethbridge saying that he found comfort in reading this introduction over and over again. This man claimed he was being denied tenure because he wished to teach ideas like this, and the more powerful of his colleagues found him to be a dangerous radical, and that they would claim that his research was faulty. We students found him a very engaging lecturer and wanted to support him. The

man soon left the university, and we nodded to ourselves about Marcuse being right, that any true opposition is repulsed or co-opted.

This anecdote is indicative of my own feelings about the times in the next few years. It was easy for a student like me to read Herbert Marcuse in 1970 and criticize the system. The cause of opposition to the Viet Nam war was raging across North America while in Canada we could afford to protest another country's idiotic foreign policy: our economy was booming, unemployment was low, the university was a centre of intellectual crystallization as yet mostly unfettered, and it was so easy to identify people like Richard Nixon as the symbol of everything hateful about this machine. When I have been asked by a younger generation about the sixties, a few are genuinely interested in the nature of confrontation, how lines of political demarcation were drawn, particularly in the United States, and how there came to be social behaviors and even types of clothing and hair that were worn like uniforms. There was a feeling of a system at war with itself, with young people feeling paranoia about military movements inside their own country, with American war resisters arriving in Canada hatching schemes of terrorist activity against the military (I listened in one of those late night conversations where the participants were earnestly in the beginning stages of planning to blow up a freight train of napalm components in transit from the Ontario factory to the coast, supposedly on its way to Viet Nam), while the American governments of Johnson and Nixon felt themselves to be in a state of siege.

In the fall of 1970 I was personally involved in another crisis, one that

gave a peculiar Canadian twist to Marcuse's insights. The FLQ was a small group dedicated to the overthrow of the Anglophone domination of Quebec society. They had carried out mailbox bombings in the mid-sixties, but in October of 1970 two cells of about 50 armed militants had kidnapped Pierre LaPorte, a provincial cabinet minister, and James Cross, a British diplomat. I was an Associate Editor at the student newspaper the Meliorist in Lethbridge. Although the Editor and everyone else on the staff were not in sympathy with armed militancy in Quebec, we all knew there were some important political ideas and legitimate complaints that the FLQ had. We felt we should publish their manifesto as an educational act. The night before the very day we were to bring out that issue the body of Pierre LaPorte was found and then the War Measures Act was declared.

This was a shock. We felt in Canada we were far more liberal, far more tolerant, and our government more benign than the United States. Our Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, had been portrayed in the media as a sort of intellectual philosopher-Prime Minister. But the War Measures Act was virtually martial law, and we could have been arrested for publishing the manifesto. Just as we saw our "liberal" government turn reactionary, I saw many friends who seemed to be all for the idea of fighting the system and not "selling out" counsel me against such action. Professors who had previously seemed to be champions of dissent were now urging us to withdraw the publication, fearing that the university would be seen as a hotbed of terrorism. The Editor withdrew the paper after a few hundred copies had been distributed.

While the Editor began a rather tortuous process of consultation, the day passed. In the middle of the night a letter was hand delivered to him from the Dean of Arts and Science, reminding him that should he be convicted of any illegal activity, he would be expelled from the University. The Editor soon resigned, and the staff voted for me to become Editor. I vowed to distribute the remainders of the paper the next morning.

I did so. Later that day, at a special Student Council meeting I discovered what had taken place without my knowledge. The Lethbridge Chief of Police phoned the Acting President of the University to inform him that he was coming on campus to arrest me for violating the War Measures Act. Quickly a meeting was set up with those two and the President of the Student Council over lunch off campus. At the end of the meeting the Student Council President (who had absolutely no authority or mandate to do so) agreed that in return for me not being arrested I would not publish anything further by the FLQ. And while my name was one of several hundreds bandied about by the national and local media (and undoubtedly by the RCMP) as being a sympathizer, I learned that professing support for a supposedly alternative lifestyle and criticizing a foreign government over a disastrous war is one thing, but when the machine seriously feels threatened, the lines are drawn hard and quick and many former dissenters jump on board, turning from liberals to reactionaries. Again I had the feeling Marcuse was right, that a true critique of society would necessarily need real freedom of ideas, and that when the machine was seriously threatened the freedom would be curtailed, sometimes brutally.

It was so easy in that time to think of the machine as being “them” while “we” on the outside were still unadulterated. All that has washed away for my generation and my own history is probably typical.

I graduated in the summer of 1971, saved some money while working on the railway and left the following spring for Victoria B.C., hoping to write an important autobiographical first novel while working part time in the food business. While dreaming of success hunched over my typewriter, I saw the nature of the confrontation outside my basement apartment dissipate and the feeling of the urgency of Marcuse's analysis become a memory. He was right, but what could we do about it? I felt the raw creativity and rebelliousness of rock music from the fifties and sixties turn formulaic and unashamedly business oriented in its public persona. I watched as Nixon kept the Viet Nam war going, only to announce the negotiation with North Viet Nam would bring about peace in the months before his re-election. The memory of those stirring romantic moments when the world watched as the Americans went into space and then landed on the moon were replaced by a tired cynicism about the brilliant science involved (it's just a distraction from our earth bound problems, they've been there, now what?).

The continual criticism of this overbearing omnipresent machine and its achievements began to wear thin. After all, look at the abuses of Communism, from Prague, to Beijing, to the Gulag? Hadn't the true democracy of the West found vindication in the removal of Richard Nixon, proving that “the system works”? And when the Americans finally gave up on Viet Nam, didn't that prove

that reason was returning? And while this was moving along outside my window, I was tiring of the shoestring budget of working three days a week to support my reading and writing, especially when the rejection slips became more frequent. After getting laid off from the food business in Victoria in early 1975 I worked that summer as a Customs Officer.

Yes, I worked for almost six months as a law enforcement officer for the same government that tried to have me arrested five years earlier as a terrorist sympathizer.

How did I justify that to myself? My rationale at the time was that I was merely executing the will of the people in terms of tariffs and illegal immigration. I saw the law as something that is there to be enforced, and that I was not responsible for making the laws, I was only carrying out a democratically supported policy. I told myself that I didn't necessarily morally disagree with some of the things people did when they broke the law, for example, having some marijuana with them when they crossed the border, but that if they were caught they would have to face the consequences of breaking the law. In terms of this rationalization I saw it as a mechanical reaction between the law breaker and the government, and I just happened to be on the side of the badge. Some of my friends wondered how I could do such a thing because I had smoked marijuana in the sixties, and that I had to lie about it when I got hired. By that time I had long given up the idea that marijuana made you cool and a good combatant against the machine. I actually saw drugs as counter-productive, just another form of consumerism semi-tolerated by society at large

that kept people from actually changing their situations, like alcohol.

In retrospect, it would have been a far more difficult question if I was asked in the job interview why I published the FLQ manifesto, and why I now wanted to be part of the government. The answer I would have given was that I began to feel that the government was in fact the instrument of the people, the laws were the expression of the democratic will of the people, and that:

(a) the machine itself wasn't so bad--I had watched liberal dissenters turn reactionary, radical dissenters splinter off into virtually ineffective militant terrorists, rock musicians turn into money hungry fools, and drug users turn from people seeking to expand their consciousness into people with serious addiction problems,

(b) there was still very little that could be done about changing the force or direction of the machine that Marcuse described, and

(c) I needed the benefits of a well paying job (I was able to save enough money to visit Europe when the job finished).

And so with reluctance, and probably like many others of my generation, I came into a sort of peaceful co-existence. The Customs job also turned out to be very interesting, finding myself cleared to the "Secret" level, reading bulletins about the possible infiltration of Patty Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army, wearing a uniform, watching American entertainers come to Victoria and get superficial treatment from the senior officers while those of my generation riding in Volkswagen vans got a full search. I also confess to finding great pleasure in taking handguns away from shocked Americans who seemed to

think Canada was some sort of 51st state. The Customs job did allow me the opportunity of going to Europe with the money I saved. The most notable and relevant experience from those six and a half weeks was a visit to the Dachua Concentration Camp. The power of the impressions from that half day visit continue to this day and still have some measure of influence on my thinking.

The following summer I worked as an Armoured Car Driver, and the summer after that I left Victoria for Toronto. Within a few months I met my wife, and soon had given up hopes of getting my work published and settled into full time work in the food business. The next 13 years were uneventful, notably only in the fact that I became more and more obligated (ultimately it was my choice) to work harder and harder in the food business. I progressed up a sort of small business corporate ladder as the economic boom in the eighties in Toronto roared around my head. When my son was born in 1983 things changed subtly. I found I would rather be with him, sharing and teaching him things, than going out and spending money. As the years wore on and my business experiences became more depressing and demanding (not so much personally, just watching the greed of individuals and corporations, the pool of sharks circling the prey and then each other) I sought a way out. I moved back to Lethbridge, enrolled at University a second time intending to be a teacher.

It was here that I was reawakened, and it was here that this convoluted autobiography begins to connect back to the ideas of Herbert Marcuse.

In the fall of 1990 I was deeply immersed at university in the preparations for becoming a teacher. I had already done some practice

teaching and found it both difficult and rewarding. One night I went to bed early and picked up Time magazine. There had been a conference at the UN about child poverty. World leaders had flown in, made speeches about how terrible things were, and flown back out again. Amid the rhetoric the statistics hit me like pressure pushing on my chest: every day 40,000 people die of starvation. I read and re-read the articles, and felt a deep twisting ache. How could I teach *that* to children? Not only had I not realized the situation was that bad, I again reached a level of discomfort, much the way people feel when seeing beggars in the street, when visiting Anne Frank's house or the ovens at Dachau. Simple emotional grief is not adequate, for the discomfort lingers into the next day, the next week, perhaps it accumulates with you in unforeseen and unknown ways.

I researched the issue and found much more supporting evidence. From many sources, it appears in the years since that conference the numbers of dying haven't changed, and all signs point to the fact that the numbers will increase. In addition, the population on the world is fast approaching 6 billion, basically doubling since my birth. The ecological calamities on the planet are increasing, and the hold of giant international corporations on the world's economies is increasingly becoming more interlocking and incestuous.

As I went further into a sort of secret gloom, the areas of dismay broadened. And it was in a sense a secret gloom, for in my personal life I am not a depressive person, I remain cheerful, friendly and helpful. I became a teacher, and continue to teach elementary children on a First Nations reserve near Lethbridge. In spite of sometimes exasperating working conditions (some

children being unable to fit in the structured school situation due to poor parenting or disabilities, which are in fact caused by 80% to 90% unemployment, which in turn is the result of a nation chewed up and left on the fringes by the machine Marcuse describes), I have made myself into a reasonably good teacher. I know that in my classroom if I am better at teaching reading there will be quantifiable improvements with these children. There is a better chance for them to get more of an education and advance themselves and thus have a chance at more economic gain and physical comfort than their grandparents had under the oppressive boarding school system. And I also know the consequences of children remaining illiterate, so I work in good conscience with this struggling but improving community. There have been times when I have been near grief, but many more times than that I have literally felt my consciousness expand with pride, delight and personal satisfaction unknown to me from any other job.

But the secret gloom continues. More research led me to find Canadian levels of educational attainment increasing dramatically in thirty years, while unemployment in that same time period went from 5% to 10%. I discovered the German education system was one of the best in the world, and yet six months after taking power Hitler had all the German children repeating "Heil Hitler" 100 times a day, while the high school students worked out math problems about fuel supplies and bomb loads. I found that Hitler, Lenin, and Mao were incredibly literate, leaving me with a strange queasiness about how much literacy has been emphasized recently as a celebrated cause to move the

illiterate toward some kind of improved future.

I read more history of this century, and reflected on my own times. I have continued to live in an extremely privileged world of peace and prosperity, while the rest of the world contorts through near unimaginable happenings. I was born just a few weeks before Mao marched into Beijing. I remember ice and milk being delivered by horse and wagon to our Calgary home, and I remember the day a television set was brought to our house a few years later and how it changed our family. I remember watching a tiny glimmer of light from the moving star called Sputnik, and the eager wonder and concern in my older brother's voice about communist spy satellites watching us. I remember watching President Kennedy say how his country would put a man on the moon. I remember the nervousness of my teachers at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis and at the time of John Glenn's re-entry to earth. I remember the shock and weight of the first Kennedy assassination, and I think back on how subtly the world seemed to change after that. I remember the Freedom Marches, the Watts riots, the assassination of Martin Luther King, the student and labor rebellion in Paris, the crushing of the Prague Spring, the Red Guards, and the steps on the Moon.

I remember when a computer filled up entire rooms, and now I try not to think about all the fantastical possibilities to be had with machines smaller than television sets. I remember watching the Berlin Wall come down, the tyrant Ceausescu demanding his constitutional rights standing in front of a firing squad. I remember the reports of primitive genocide from Rwanda where the

limit of murder was set at about 250,000 because the killers only had machetes and not more advanced technology. I remember how ludicrous it seemed to have movies of space aliens in the 1950's, and now there is the chance of fossils on Mars and a lake of ice on the moon.

All this has played itself out before us while the population of the world has doubled, while democratic systems of government seem to be increasing while tyrannies are declining, while we become more educated, while we face the fact that every year approximately 100 million people are added to the world population as another 13 to 14 million die of starvation.

More research brings more gloom, the gloom brings a discomfort of the intelligence. My teaching makes sense to me and my students, but the rest of the world seems to be a sense-less explosion of brilliant technology, violence and brief hard scrabble living and undeserving death.

After this discomfort had settled in, I chose to find out some of the particulars of our world situation as we head toward the symbolic time of reflection, the year 2000. Then I chose to closely read and analyse One-Dimensional Man as a critique of our world, especially in the light of the devolvement of communism and the seemingly unanimous acceptance of free form international capitalism as the necessary twin that follows along with various kinds of representative democracy.

The selective particulars of our world situation will be worked in alongside the page by page analysis of Marcuse's book. At the finish, I will move up to the precipice of the future and wonder aloud about the role of

education. Only vague notions will be possible: we need more education about world affairs in our classrooms, we need more education about the destructiveness of continual "consumeritis", we need more education about the power of the information media, and above all, we need to think and decide carefully how not to repeat historical mistakes. After all the disasters of the 20th century we have found that literacy is not enough to avoid tragedy, and that increasing the levels of education do not necessarily lead to more employment.

Education remains the area with the most potential for change. Almost every voter and consumer goes through some kind of education process or school, but they are also put through a socialization process. Every major change in attitudes of the students that mature into active adults can allow political change to come to fruition, can allow volunteer organizations to flourish, can allow consciousness to spread forward into qualitative amelioration of our situation, or back into academic research, and then forward into action again. However, education remains an area loaded with peril. Our world wide levels of education have never been higher, but so has our level of misery. There are more scientists alive now than ever before, but our situation is like that of the tired hot air balloon floating over the muddy battlefield and heading out over the darkest possible canyon.

Have a look over the precipice. We must find a way to act.

Herbert Marcuse 1898-1979
Biographical Information

There are two main sources of biographical information about Herbert Marcuse: notes attached to his published works, or commentaries on his work, and second, Kellner's Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism. (pgs. 13-37) The notes attached to the books can be summarized this way:

Herbert Marcuse was born in Berlin in 1898. He was a student at the University of Berlin and the University of Freiberg. At Freiberg he received a Ph.D. for his work on Hegel and Hegel's philosophy of history. When the Nazis came to power in Germany he left and taught in Geneva for a year. In 1934 he moved to the United States and worked at the Institute of Social Research at Columbia University. From approximately 1940 to 1950 he worked with the United States Office of Intelligence Research in the State Department, finishing as the Acting Head of the Eastern European section. In 1950 he returned to Columbia and worked at the Russian Institute. In 1954 he moved to Brandeis University, and taught there until 1967, when he moved to the University of California. Marcuse remained active writing and granting interviews up to his death in 1979. (cover notes from Beacon Press and Vintage Press editions, and from Biographical Note, Macintyre).

Kellner's work has more detail, with biographical information attached to commentary on specific works of Marcuse. The information arises from at least two interviews Kellner had with Marcuse in 1978. From this Marcuse maintains his upbringing was that of a "typical German upper-middle-class youth" even though his was a Jewish family. He was ordered into the German military in 1916, but remained in Germany in the reserves due to poor eyesight. In the

winter of 1918 he went to the University of Berlin and then to Freiberg.

Marcuse maintained in these interviews that his "political education" started with the German Revolution in Berlin in 1918 (Kellner, pg. 15). He joined the Social Democratic Party (SPD). The German Revolution of 1918, with strong direct ties to the Russian Communists, set up a Socialist republic in Bavaria, and a Soviet republic in Munich. However, the two leaders of the new German Communist Party were "quickly murdered by free lance army gunmen" and the new republics were "suppressed with unexpected brutality" (Hobsbawm, pg. 68). Marcuse became disillusioned with this revolution first when he saw German soldiers electing their former officers to be the new leaders, when the two communist leaders Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered (he saw the SPD aligning itself with "reactionary, destructive and repressive forces") and when he began to detect foreign influence (Russian) in the German Communist Party. Marcuse returned to academic studies of literature, philosophy and political economy in Freiberg, feeling that

"...fascism was coming, and that led me to an intensive study of Marx and Hegel. Freud came somewhat later. All this I did with the aim of understanding just why, at a time when the conditions for authentic revolution were present, the revolution had collapsed or had been defeated, the old forces came back to power, and the whole business was beginning all over again in degenerate form." (Kellner, pg. 18)

Marcuse wrote and defended his doctoral dissertation *The German Artist-Novel* in 1922. He returned to Berlin and with the help of his father bought a partnership in a publishing company. In 1927 he returned to Freiberg to work with Martin Heidegger, and also continued to seriously study Marxism. In 1932 he left Germany, the year before the Nazis came to power. He would later become more critical of Heidegger when that philosopher's Nazi sympathies

became widely known. (Kellner, pg. 35)

Kellner maintains by that time that Marcuse's three main foundations of all his writings were established: "politics, aesthetics, and philosophy".

There are two other points in Marcuse's life I have found interesting. The first is that One-Dimensional Man is in general highly critical of governments and other large organizations that promulgate the forces of advanced industrial society, and that view was in part probably influenced by Marcuse's experience working for the American government (the Office of Intelligence Research) from 1940 to 1950. No information is available, but I could speculate that he was able to help the Allies defeat Hitler because of his antipathy toward the Nazis and his native German language. The fact that he became Acting Head of the Eastern European Section would indicate that for a few years after Hitler was defeated his knowledge of Germany and Communist theory were undoubtedly useful to the US State Department.

The second point is my own memory of his popularity in the late 1960's in North America and Western Europe. Although there were many facets of dissent at the time, Marcuse was considered to be a revered thinker behind many protest movements. He was not one to be found actually in a demonstration, but as an intellectual giving interviews and writing articles supporting various anti-government and anti-industrial society movements. Among popular figures of the time, Marcuse seemed to have the most clearly thought through philosophy among those against the establishment, with the possible exception of Dr. Martin Luther King.

The popular media (Time magazine in particular) labelled him a Marxist philosopher, but this was a gross simplification so typical of what Marcuse himself would declare as a way the established powers "swallow up or repulse all alternatives". Marcuse used Marxist analysis as a method of dissecting and

understanding the forces in modern society. Careful reading of the text of One-Dimensional Man shows he was no more sympathetic to Russian Communism than he was to American Capitalism.

The following is a list of Marcuse's major books, based on Kellner's research and my own collection:

Eros and Civilization Beacon Press, 1955

Reason and Revolution Beacon Press, 1960

Soviet Marxism Vintage Press, 1961

One-Dimensional Man Beacon Press, 1964

A Critique of Pure Tolerance Beacon Press, 1965

An Essay in Liberation Beacon Press, 1969

Five Lectures Beacon Press, 1970

Counterrevolution and Revolt Beacon Press, 1972

Studies in Critical Philosophy Beacon Press, 1973

The Aesthetic Dimension Beacon Press, 1978.

Marcuse's Introduction:
The Paralysis of Criticism: Society Without Opposition

Marcuse begins with the question:

Does not the threat of atomic catastrophe...also serve to protect the very forces which perpetuate this danger? If we attempt to relate the causes of the danger to the way in which society is organized...we are immediately confronted with the fact that advanced industrial society becomes richer, bigger and better as it perpetuates the danger. (Marcuse, pg. ix)

To Marcuse in 1964 it was the constant USA/USSR nuclear tension and co-existence that allowed industrial society to continue to produce goods, services and attitudes, all in a state of competitiveness. I remember the "kitchen debate" between Khrushchev and Nixon, where Nixon demonstrated sleek household appliances as a justification for his "free" society, while Khrushchev complained about the general uselessness of such products as indicative of wasted resources. This debate now seems symbolic of deeper rifts between industrial societies, but it turned only into a rift of items and quality that hid the competitive nature of those two industrial giants.

There is no denying the tension of those times, rooted in mistrust going back past World War II. The historian Hobsbawm wrote that

Entire generations grew up under the shadow of global nuclear battles which, it was widely believed, could break out at any moment, and devastate humanity. (Hobsbawm, pg. 226)

Both nations seemed to be on the verge of immediate combat, or nuclear holocaust. My simple childhood view was one of growing awareness of this danger, supported by media stories of fallout shelters, air raid drills at school, patriotic support for Canadian weaponry and inane Bob Hope television specials that "entertained" US troops near the actual frontiers of communism.

However different these two societies seemed at the time, now it appears

they were similar in their distrust and production of products or achievements as a gross justification for their own existence. Khrushchev may have seemed to have lost the kitchen debate from our free market view of the time, yet ended up having the prestige of presiding over a system of domination that at its peak had one third of the world's population under some sort of ideological control while its satellites and spacemen peered down from the highest frontiers.

Both sides thus found themselves committed to an insane arms race to mutual destruction, and to the sort of nuclear generals and nuclear intellectuals whose profession required them not to notice this insanity. (Hobsbawm, pg. 235)

By the third paragraph of his introduction Marcuse had called this type of society "irrational as a whole", saying that this was destructive of the free development of human needs and faculties,

...its peace maintained by the constant threat of war, its growth dependent on the repression of the real possibilities for pacifying the struggle for existence--individual, national, and international. (Marcuse, pg.ix)

In a few sentences Marcuse comes to a central point that reaches forward to ideas found in many areas in the rest of this chapter, and into many tributaries of my own commentary and research.

Our society distinguishes itself by conquering the centrifugal social forces with Technology rather than Terror, on the dual basis of an overwhelming efficiency and an increasing standard of living. (Marcuse, pg. x)

When Marcuse writes about our society, does he mean capitalism, or industrial society as a whole? In 1964 it would have been read as capitalism, but now I could argue the broader approach. After all, one of the reasons Communism seemed to fail in Europe was the attempt, ultimately unsuccessful, to deliver products and an increasing standard of living, comparable to their antagonists, while maintaining an enormous defense establishment.

Why is the word technology in capitals? After reading the entire book, it

comes through clearly that Marcuse views technology and science as the instruments of industrial domination, instruments that deliver more and more products more and more efficiently. Isn't this true, don't we have more "stuff" than ever before?

Yes we do. Look at that three word sentence, and think about the word "we". As I present my arguments verbally to friends and colleagues, I find myself at a disadvantage: I am simply not very good at oral arguments, and I turn into a brooding grump. But Allan they say, what about the fact that your grandfather worked 7 days a week on the railway, what about the fact that people are living longer lives, what about the fact that my ancestors were saved by medical technology, what about the fact that we don't have children working in factories, what about these wonderful computers and the Internet, what about all the space exploration? And I agree, all good and interesting things.

But the word "we" is significant. When I throw up the facts of 40,000 dying from starvation every day, (Time, Oct.1,1990, and James Phillips, Facts on World Hunger) the fact that one fifth of the world goes to bed hungry every night and lead short miserable lives, all the while dreaming hopelessly of some great capitalist nirvana that is in essence out of reach save for the disastrous environmental side effects, there is a pause in the argument. Technological advances and products are good for us here in the penthouse of the world, but utterly useless for the disadvantaged, most of whom are in other parts of the world.

But the argument resumes. There will always be poor people they say.

But I reply, must there be so many?

But that is because the world population is larger.

Exactly my point, more people are dying than ever. In the Middle Ages, a time of "darkness" that we have supposedly left behind, life was undoubtedly cruel for the bottom fifth of the population.

Existence was in any case a struggle in which only the most robust could triumph. Although we have no idea what the birth rate was, we can guess from the high proportion of child remains in the cemeteries that the infant mortality rate was quite high. Abandonment of new born infants was common. (Mollat, pg. 28)

Have we made "progress" from that time? It could well be the amount of people living short miserable lives in Europe 1,000 years ago was one-fifth, or one third. To me, it is significant that the actual *number* of people unnecessarily dying today is so phenomenal that it becomes more important than *aratio*.

But in the whole process, they say, we have more than ever, just look at what we have done, we now have more scientists alive now than at any other time in history, we are producing more food than ever.

But that is exactly my point I say, the word is "we" and not all of us, not the whole world. We could easily take some of the profits from one international corporation and feed all of the dying, perhaps more easily than a Middle Ages monarch could use his treasury to feed all of his peasants...but we don't.

And soon the argument ends. But inside the inarticulate heart of these conversations lies my own feelings, an identification with Marcuse. Just as he offered an elaborate critique of industrial society, I have found an intuitive linkage. In the core of my thinking and feeling lies the unshakable notion that our industrial society is a success only for a few, that this century has witnessed an acceleration of catastrophe, due mostly through terror, technology and an almost tripling of the world's population.

In short and overall, failure. And education as an institution, with its increasing levels of attainment and literacy seems not to have been effective in establishing any kind of consistent dialectic to criticize this failure. (In fact an argument will be made later that education is merely a socializing and job training institution that aids in this great failure.)

Now that the threat of immediate nuclear annihilation has abated with the collapse of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, perhaps Marcuse's foundation of the threat of war as justification for the "irrational" society using technology is quaint and dated. On the other side of the coin, the fact that the wholesale acceptance of some type of capitalism by virtually every country in the world by 1997 while the world continues on an accelerated pace of industrial production, environmental damage and population growth illustrates to a *greater* degree this level of the "irrational" elements in industrial society using technology. Even China, still formally Communist, has unleashed a sort of free market where it is "glorious to get rich" (or so said their late leader Deng). Two journalists who have reported from or actually lived in China for years, Gwynne Dyer and Patrick Brown, both lectured to Canadian audiences recently, and both said virtually the same thing: that there really aren't any true communists left in China, that the Chinese economy is growing faster than almost anywhere else in the world, and that the damage to the environment in China is remarkable. (Dyer) (Brown)

To appreciate Marcuse's ideas of the "irrational" nature of modern industrial society using technology, and to accept my own judgment of this century and the modern industrial society as being "in short and overall, failure", the following should be considered as debatable support for this argument.

How did the world of the 1990's compare to the world of 1914? It contained perhaps five or six billion human beings, perhaps three times as many people as at the outbreak of the First World War, and this in spite of the fact that...more human beings had been killed or allowed to die by human decision than ever before in history. (Hobsbawm, pg.12)

...it was without doubt the most murderous century of which we have record, both by the scale, frequency and length of the warfare which filled it, barely ceasing for a moment in the 1920's, but also for the unparalleled scale of the human catastrophes it produced, from the greatest famines in history to systematic genocide. (Hobsbawm, pg. 13)

A rate of economic growth like that of the second half of the...Twentieth Century, if maintained indefinitely (assuming this to be possible) must have irreversible and catastrophic consequences for the natural environment of this planet, including the human race which is part of it. (Hobsbawm, pg. 569)

In the next few decades, there are practically bound to be global famines. (Dyer)

The real differences are not in the nature of our global problems, but in their greater intensity compared to the late eighteenth century. The earth again confronts a population explosion...involving *billions* rather than millions of people. At the same time we are witnessing a knowledge explosion in an extraordinary number of fields of technology and production. (Kennedy, pg. 12)

New scientific breakthroughs often create structural problems of transferring their benefits from the "haves" to the "have-nots" within that society; today's global community is presented with a far larger challenge as advanced technologies threaten to undermine the economies of developing societies. (Kennedy, pg. 13)

The relatively conservative English military historian John Keegan states that 50 million people have been killed by war since...1945. What's more, much of the responsibility for such violence lies with the international arms traffic--the largest international trade good of our day. (Saul, pg. 11)

Two hundred million children aged four to fourteen are in the work force. Life expectancy in Central Africa is 43 and dropping. One third of the children in the world are undernourished. Thirty per cent of the work force is unemployed. (Saul, pg. 12)

Our century has known anguish of apocalyptic dimensions. (O'Brien, pg. 29)

Global unemployment has now reached its highest level since the great depression of the 1930's. More than 800 million...are unemployed or underemployed in the world. That figure is likely to rise sharply between now and the turn of the century, as millions of new entrants into the work force find themselves, many victims of a technological revolution that is fast replacing human beings with machines...(Rifkin,pg. xv)

Every day transnational corporations announce that they are becoming more globally competitive. We are told that profits are steadily rising. Yet at the same time, companies are announcing massive layoffs...the

introduction of new laborsaving technologies are resulting in greater productivity, larger profits, and fewer jobs. (Rifkin, pg. xvi)

...there are more Transnational Corporations in the top hundred and fewer countries; 47 to 53 in the 1990 list (list of the world's largest economies), with only 39 to 61 in 1980. (Horsman & Marshall, pg. 201)

With this evidence, what do we do? Marcuse would say that to offer a critical theory of contemporary society--and therefore to begin a foundation for hope for the next millennium--there must be standards, and those standards are based on two value judgments:

1. the judgment that human life is worth living, or rather can be and ought to be made worth living.
2. the judgment that, in a given society, specific possibilities exist for the amelioration of human life and specific ways and means of realizing these possibilities. (Marcuse, pg. x, xi)

In the process of setting these standards and judgments Marcuse rejects outright any kind of "transcending" analysis, or metaphysics. In other words, solutions lie within the realm of history and reality, not religion or fantasy.

There are three more important foundations for this book in the Introduction: the way society contains social change, the way technology is used as an instrument, and how the whole force of modern industrial society is a specific historical project. Here is the first:

Technical progress, extended to a whole system of domination and coordination, creates forms of life (and of power) which appear to reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination. Contemporary society seems to be capable of containing social change--qualitative change which would establish essentially different institutions, a new direction of the productive process, new modes of human existence. This containment of social change is perhaps the most singular achievement of advanced industrial society. (Marcuse, pg. xii)

There are possible counter arguments to Marcuse's belief that society contains social change. One would be that society itself is formless, directionless in the broadest sense, and is therefore incapable of deliberately

eliminating or co-opting opposing forces. This has some credence, however, I can think only of the vast security networks like the CIA, the defunct KGB, and the formidable research and development and marketing divisions of multinational corporations that are specifically designed to protect their "interests". Another argument would be that society does indeed change, that the great movements of democracy, like those lead by Mandela, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, and the great revolutions and upheavals, are evidence of industrial society taking very sharp turns. This argument would seem to have the most supporters. Of course it would be of no surprise to find that the supporters are well educated people living in the "have" countries. To the starving in Central Africa, the prostitutes in Bangkok, and the children making rugs in India, they probably couldn't care less. When I think of the people in the whole world, industrial or not, and when I think of the "progress" of this century, I tend to see it as evidence that social change has been contained. Here at the end of the century, things look to be in a state of failure, heading for catastrophe.

This conclusive feeling of mine is not without doubt. I know that there are qualitative differences in society, and considerable improvements have been made by those heroes and many others. They acted as they did, without reward and with the power of torture and death breathing on them, knowing that it would make a difference in the quality of people's lives. Perhaps the rationalization is that things would be immeasurably worse without the actions of Nelson Mandela, and that we need more like him in the coming century. I know they must have acted as they did, because I do as well, in an incredibly smaller and heroic-less way, when I teach First Nations children how to read and write English, because my efforts will give them a better chance of succeeding within the dominant culture. This feeling of agreement with Marcuse, and yet having a measure of doubt about how the individual can

occasionally bring what seems to be qualitative change, cannot be resolved. At this time it remains in a state of vague tension.

The final proof that someone like Marcuse could use to show that society contains social change, is the virtual defeat of communist economics. The last great narrative, as some call it, for change, has collapsed and we will proceed at an even faster pace of production and consumption, regardless of the damage. At this time it is difficult to imagine any popular movement of any type that does not to some degree submit to some sort of capitalist economics, and that one monolith predominates the comings and goings of our world.

The second foundation of this Introduction is Marcuse's way of seeing that technology is used as an instrument of domination.

In this society the productive apparatus tends to become totalitarian to the extent to which it determines not only the socially needed occupations, skills and attitudes, but also individual needs and aspirations. It thus obliterates the opposition between the private and public existence, between individual and social needs...technology serves to institute new, more effective, and more pleasant forms of social control and social cohesion. In the face of the totalitarian features of this society, the traditional notion of the "neutrality" of technology can no longer be maintained. Technology as such cannot be isolated from the use to which it is put; the technological society is a system of domination...
(Marcuse, pg. xv, xvi)

There of course are the obvious tools of domination: American spy satellites that can read a license plate from outer space, the monitoring of bank accounts and computer records, the proliferation of American/Western European military power, and the growing predominance of multinational corporations. But there are subtler uses of technology. The production of running shoes, coupled with television marketing of professional sports can for example change the way third world teenagers look at their own national cultures. The incredible growth of Hollywood movies worldwide, and the widespread domination of television news networks like CNN and the Star

Channel, spread a kind of cultural domination that embraces vaguely liberal tendencies of democracy, commercials for products beyond the realm of basic food, clothing and shelter, and a wholehearted embrace of a culture based on short attention spans, violence, explosions and artless vulgarity. This realm is of course, a more "pleasant" form of social control than say what the British tried 150 years ago when they sold opium to the Chinese in return for silk, tea and colonialism. Can we think of a way that technology will become more neutral in the future, a way that will allow this kind of domination to lessen? With the growth of computer networks, probably not.

As a further point, television itself can be seen as a greater and more pleasant form of social control, where millions are "entertained" 24 hours a day. Of course we are entertained for 22 minutes out of 30, while being bombarded with 8 minutes of consumerism. And in that 22 minutes we are all too often hypnotised with grinding conformity, democratic boosterism, and people acting out hilariously useless and/or unreachable lifestyles. The televised production of professional sports is another fantasy world where a few individuals from obvious minorities make fantastic salaries for a few years, while the millions of spectators watch their way into a disassociation between physical exercise and achievement. To have vast populations devoting their rapt attention and investing their hysteria in athletic contests between cities and countries does tend to keep a lid on serious political awareness and activity.

The final foundation in Marcuse's Introduction is his understanding of what he calls a specific historical project.

As a technological universe, advanced industrial society is a *political* universe, the latest stage in the realization of a specific historical *project*--namely, the experience, transformation, and organization of nature as the mere stuff of domination. As the project unfolds, it shapes the entire universe of discourse and action, intellectual and material culture. In the medium of technology, culture, politics and the economy merge into an omnipresent system which swallows up or repulses all alternatives.

(Marcuse, pg. xvi)

This idea of society being involved in a great project to transform nature was a startling idea that made immediate sense to me when I first read it and still has a great feeling of truth to me, almost 30 years later. Before accepting that idea let me offer up the opposing argument, that there is no great project, no great myth that people and organizations unknowingly pursue, that they simply act randomly, presumably in self interest alone. This would seem to be borne out by the fact that some of our largest organizations, multi-national corporations, are fixated with short term quarterly profits regardless of the consequences. However, if that were the case, executives in such corporations would bail out every few months (some do) with cash in hand and disappear, but the business leaders tend to hang on, develop business plans of expansion and takeover into new markets, and spend corporate money on research and development for future products.

But is the myth of the historical project of the transformation of nature *the* myth of 1997? I believe it is the dominant one, the myth that is doing the most change/damage to the world in the physical sense. There have been other great myths in the past: the Homeric legends, the infallibility of Emperors, and the righteousness of the Christian/Buddhist/Hindi/Moslem world and extra-world orders. With the growth of capitalism and the slowly receding influence of Christianity upon the physical realms of our European and American worlds, the transformation of the frontiers and the trade of raw materials for products made the pursuit of the frontiers an over-arching rationale. Virtually every continent was changed forever with the sweep of settlements and the growth of cities at the edge of the wilderness.

Has this stopped? Yes, with the lack of arable land, with the failure to find Eldorado, with the disastrous wars of the 20th century, there are no more

frontiers for populations. Arguably, the last frontier was the darkest of all forests, the edge of space, and when the Americans landed on the moon the post-modern era began. The Apollo 8 mission, the first one that allowed human beings to look back to see their entire planet hanging in space, gave astronaut Bill Anders a unique realization.

We came all this way to explore the moon, and the most important thing is that we discovered the earth. (Chaikin pg. 119)

We have been to the moon, we cannot live there, we cannot send over boat loads of our poor and tired masses, let alone our spoiled aristocratic scions, territorial leases in hand--it is just too expensive. We can inch forward with the justification of scientific research, but essentially the frontiers are frozen. The specific historical project will not be denied however, and the project still searches for ways to transform nature into products, chewing up the rain forests, sending boat loads of tourists to Antarctica to watch the ice melt beneath the habitats of endangered species, heading back into the reluctant non-corporate enclaves of the third world with television and movies and computers that sell themselves and everything visible on the screen.

As the myth of the frontier disappears and as the quasi-alternative of communism collapses, we are still left with the ramifications of this project. The world is still producing more and more products, we are ripping up the natural world at unbelievable speed, the population, in terms of sheer numbers is almost mutating and the power of multinational corporations is beginning to reach into the area of majority influence--more companies are more powerful than many nations--the search for a name to this supportive myth that drives us continues. Whether it is Marcuse's idea of the project of industrial society or something else, whether there is an actual physical frontier "out there", the effects are the same. And for lack of argument at this time about any other

underlying myth, the idea of industrial society as a giant machine, chewing up the earth and warehousing products out the rear end, all the while co-opting dissent and alternatives, remains the most valid and perhaps the most graphic.

Chapter One:
The New Forms of Control

A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress. Indeed, what could be more rational than the suppression of individuality in the mechanization of socially necessary but painful performances; the concentration of individual enterprises in more effective, more productive corporations...(Marcuse, pg. 1)

There is no denying that for most of us in the wealthier parts of the world, we are comfortable, and life can be relatively smooth and reasonable compared to the beggars I saw in the streets of Mexico City. "Democratic unfreedom" is a unique turn of phrase, at first at odds with today's support for the growth of democratic movements. Yes, we can vote Liberal or Conservative, Republican or Democratic, and there are quantifiable changes in regulations, government employment, economic optimism and reaction to different types of crisis. But for us it can be argued that there is little change away from the pressures of working to provide a means to go beyond the basics of survival and into the deeper recesses of consumerism. There is also arguably little difference in the effect our voting patterns usually have on changing the situation for the 40,000 who die every day, or on the hundreds of thousands of child laborers. So although we have a choice between Clinton and Dole, Major and Blair, and Chretien and Charest, the strongest effects don't often reach us, which is perhaps why voter turnout is so low.

More recent writers seem to have taken the same stance in support of Marcuse.

...we live in a corporatist society with soft pretensions to democracy. More power is slipping every day towards the groups. That is the meaning of the marketplace ideology and our passive acceptance of whatever form globalization happens to take. (Saul, pg. 32)

And in a later commentary on the hostility of that corporatist thinking to the high costs of maintaining a strong regulatory public sector:

...the citizen is reduced to the status of a subject at the foot of the throne of the marketplace. (Saul, pg. 76)

The general trends of capitalist development in the industrial nations are hindered less and less by national social and economic reform. As a result there is a progressive increase in economic inequality, with structural unemployment and poverty growing continuously; the trends in planetary pollution and environmental destruction continue to deepen; there is a decline in national sovereignty, with autocratic rule and coercive social control gradually becoming more common and alterations of the party in power increasingly meaningless; and there are widespread legislative assaults on wages, trade union rights, and labour standards. (Teeple, pg. 4)

A few paragraphs later Marcuse notes that the satisfaction of needs, the ability of industrial society to provide better and better products as a justification for its domination over nature and the unfreedom of citizens, does not depend on whether it comes of an authoritarian or non-authoritarian political system. Unknowingly foreseeing this industrial society continuing on at a greater pace than it did when communism was a dominant ideology, he writes that

...non-conformity with the system itself appears to be socially useless, and the more so when it entails tangible economic and political disadvantages and threatens the smooth operation of the whole. (Marcuse, pg. 2)

Marcuse presumes that if we could become free from "proving" ourselves on the market, it would be one of the greatest achievements of civilization, and we would be free to exert "autonomy" over a life that would be our own. In other words, if we could rid ourselves of having to work for a life, it would be almost unimaginable what we could do. Of course, many would say the idea is ludicrous, but in a very problematic way, it is already happening.

We are entering a new phase in world history--one in which fewer and fewer workers will be needed to produce the goods and services for the

global population. (Rifkin, pg. xvi)

And so, instead of technology freeing the worker to enjoy the products of labor, the global economy is freeing the worker to land unceremoniously and at the peril of the shrinking of the social safety nets after being "let go".

In a statement that will continue to be contentious among democratic futurists, Marcuse maintains that the most open of our societies is totalitarian.

For "totalitarian" is not only a terroristic political coordination of society, but also a non-terroristic economic-technical coordination which operates through the manipulation of needs by vested interests. It thus precludes the emergence of an effective opposition against the whole. (Marcuse, pg. 3)

How totalitarian can life in the United States and Canada be? This argumentative point goes to the heart of Marcuse's ideas. It challenges our ideas of progress, freedom, nationalism, perhaps even our purpose as humans. We--supposedly all politically democratic and consumer driven societies--think of ourselves as "progressing" toward more wealth and peace for the sake of our children, and for the glow of civilization. Do we not have the right to quit our jobs and move elsewhere? Do we not have the right to vote, to organize lobby groups, to choose our spouses, to go as far as we want in public education? How can this be totalitarian, compared to the times of living under Hitler, Stalin, Ceacescu, Pinochet, Mao, and Verweord?

Here, my previously mentioned not without doubt feeling arises. After reading the story of Mao's personal physician, after numerous literary and cinematic studies of the Holocaust and a visit to Dachau, after reading of Nelson Mandela's 27 year struggle, and after becoming friends with someone who fled Romania--he called Communism a monument to stupidity--there seems to be a quantifiable, unquestionable difference between my life and those who had to live and die under political totalitarianism. True, all too true. However, all too

often the truthful sanctity of those last eight lines is often used as a wholesale blanket justification for the kind of government/economic system that we currently have, even though there is no "other" like communism to rival it.

There is a kind of totalitarianism at work in our world. First think of the total domination our profitable world here has over the poorest pockets of life, how we seem to be totally incapable and/or unwilling to make quantifiable changes to the situation, and/or ignorant of the gravity of the crisis. Thus the totalitarianism is of those one fifth in the penthouse of the world over the bottom one-fifth of the world, those who are dying in the streets, working in match factories in 35 degree heat, trying to scratch out another day of food and water while advertisements for Nike, Hollywood movies, McDonald's and IBM flicker on the edge of their consciousness.

The other side of this totalitarianism is the kind that is inflicted upon ourselves, by our transnational corporations. As we have more things to buy, we have to have more money to buy them, all fantastically distanced away from food, clothing and shelter and into realms of breath freshener for dogs, cleaners for the unseen places in our toilets, and automatic garage door openers. It takes a heroic effort, after being bombarded by all kinds of advertising, not to buy things. Our main "free" entertainment, television, is loaded with direct pleas for purchasing and indirect messages about the importance of quasi-liberal sentiments emanating from television networks that are totally self-reliant on the advertising largesse of transnational corporations.

The damage this kind of totalitarianism does is hard to quantify. It is all part of the machine and project of society, converting nature into "stuff", but the effect on the individuals is harder still to estimate. A personal guess is that the constant stream of product advertising gives the pounding message of "buy me and you will feel good". Thus buying something equals feeling good. Thus

spending is relatively easy (compared to earning) and gives a good feeling. Thus buying or putting something in your mouth makes you feel good. Thus the solution for every personal problem and headache, metaphorical or otherwise, is to have something or to put it in your mouth. Thus, problems can be solved or hidden with tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or credit cards. Thus the line between illegal and legal substances is imaginary when the consciousness of the consumer is overwhelmed by the unconscious pull of the advertiser.

Just how effective these products are in making us happy and advancing us toward a better world is contentious, a question I force myself to think about when I purchase something. Do I need it, or do I like it? Will this one thing I like stop me from buying more, will I be satisfied? No, because I continue to earn money to buy more things I like. But when I am on my deathbed and look back, will I really care how white my shirts were, or how shiny my Dodge was on April 29, 1997? I know what the answer will be, but I cannot stop buying things I like, I can only modify my needs. And when I am on my deathbed, what I think will bring me the most comfort will be thoughts of my family, and the achievements--perhaps it was the money I raised for flood victims, the completion of formal education, quitting smoking, writing a novel, painting my house, teaching children--things that involved very little purchasing, but a lot of quiet thought, discipline, work and initiative, the opposite of buying and putting things in my mouth. I can confess to actually teaching this philosophy, and going beyond the Alberta curriculum in my Grade Six classes under the guise of a Language Arts exercise. I have the students make lists of things and see if they can classify them under the headings of consuming or doing, for example, helping a younger sister with her reading is doing, and eating junk food is consuming.

Perhaps Marcuse would be in sympathy with me. He writes that with the mechanization of work, this could become the basis for the potential freedom

of all of us. However we need new modes of realization for this to work.

Such new modes can only be indicated in negative terms, because they would amount to the negation of the prevailing modes. Thus economic freedom would mean freedom *from* the economy...

Political freedom would mean liberation for the individual *from* politics over which they have no effective control. Similarly, intellectual freedom would mean the restoration of individual thought now absorbed by mass communication and indoctrination, abolition of "public opinion" together with its makers. (Marcuse, pg. 4)

Marcuse continues on to say that the satisfaction of human needs beyond the biological level have always been preconditioned, and that there are actually "false" needs superimposed on the individual by particular social interests. This results in a

...euphoria in unhappiness. Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate, belong to this category of false needs.

No matter how much such needs have become the individual's own... they continue to be what they were from the beginning--products of a society whose dominant interest demands repression. (Marcuse, pg. 5)

How do we begin to understand the extent of this type of repression?

How can we as objects of "productive domination" create freedom? This question now takes a global frame, for in 1964 Marcuse was writing about the burgeoning middle classes in the privileged countries, but now we can perhaps see more clearly the problem when we examine the struggling citizenry of the third world, watching those neon advertisements flicker in the background while they search for clean water and a meal for their children, when the daylight is beginning to fade and the possibility of going to bed hungry is much more likely to happen again. How can they create freedom, when they are barely alive? Is it up to us, who are at best beginning to understand our unfreedom, and their suffering? Does the spread of democracy bring any hope to them?

Marcuse would say no.

Under the rule of a repressive whole, liberty can be made into a powerful instrument of domination.
 Free election of masters does not abolish the masters or slaves. Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom...(Marcuse, pg. 7)

To Marcuse, this system flattens out the distinction between the former classes, between real individual needs and conditioned needs, and the distinction of the mass media between information and entertainment, and as agents of "manipulation and indoctrination". This note on the mass media is quite prescient, because of the conglomeration of many supposedly different types of media into larger transnational organizations, with mergers in the last few years happening at such a dizzying pace that it seems impossible to keep track. Which group owns which? Time/Warner/CNN/Sony/Columbia/NBC/Rupert Murdoch/Conrad Black/Gannett/Disney? Is there a quantifiable difference in the quality of information offered by these corporations? They all depend on advertising for 90% of their revenue, with the exception of the movie industry, which uses sophisticated multi-media campaigns to lure in admission purchases to counter the possible negative effects of inconsistent products.

In essence, we buy, we seem happy about it, and yet there is no freedom in the choices, and all the buying keeps supporting the machine, and we have jobs inside the machine, so it must be fine, so we need to keep buying to support the machine that we are part of. Marcuse calls this the "rational character of its irrationality".

Its productivity and efficiency, its capacity to increase and spread comforts...the extent to which this civilization transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body makes the very notion of of alienation questionable. The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. (Marcuse, pg. 9)

What if we don't want to go along with this feeling of our souls being

intertwined with our possessions?

The intellectual and emotional refusal “to go along” appears neurotic and impotent. (Marcuse. pg. 9)

This phrase “to go along” echoes in me like a riddle. I didn’t seem to go along when I was growing up, but then perhaps it was far easier to join a supposed counter-culture group, and eventually discover that not going along either ended in one extreme of militant terrorism, or at the other, complete subjugation back into the system after a handful of years--and I could certainly be accused of that, working for Canada Customs five years after I was almost arrested for treason when the War Measures Act was declared. But the riddle continues with my current classroom experience. When I do my best to make my students “behave”, am I not turning them toward socially acceptable behavior and academic skills that will help them find employment, and thus become a successful consumer in our dominant society?

This question has some historical ramifications on a First Nations reserve. Although more pleasant and theoretically limitless than the older and more frightening boarding school systems, the current native education system--controlled by the bands themselves--is like all other systems a form of indoctrination and job training. A few natives see this in racial terms, as a Native system that pays lip service to native culture but is basically a “white” organization in terms of its goals. Some send their children to the school knowing this, but a very few rebel outright, and if they themselves have avoided addictions they keep the children at home, without any formal academic instruction, hoping to “teach” their children their way. These few children--I have known two out of more than a thousand on the reserve--have been completely unschooled, and are unable to even be brought in the doors of the classroom without extreme coaching, and they were unable to stay very long.

These parents, in some way, recognize the enormity of this machine that Marcuse describes. Perhaps they see it only in the racial and historical terms of their particular geography, but they see a system as unfriendly to their freedom. The question that I want to ask is how will those children grow up? Will they be true rebels and non-conformists who can contribute to solutions, or are the solutions to be found from among those already completely indoctrinated in the educational system?

Marcuse writes of an "inner freedom", a private space where you can become and remain yourself, and says that today this private space has been "invaded and whittled down by technological reality". This has led to virtually one dimension of life, something that is everywhere and "in all forms". It is so pervasive that this false consciousness becomes the "true consciousness".

The productive apparatus and the goods and services which it produces "sell" or impose the social system as a whole. The means of mass transportation and communication, the commodities of lodging, food and clothing, the irresistible output of the entertainment and information industry carry with them prescribed attitudes and habits, certain emotional and intellectual reactions which bind the consumers more or less pleasantly to the producers and, through the latter, to the whole... as these beneficial products become available to more individuals in more social classes, the indoctrination they carry ceases to be publicity; it becomes a way of life. It is a good way of life--much better than before--and as a good way of life, it militates against qualitative change. Thus emerges a pattern of *one dimensional thought and behavior*... (Marcuse, pg. 12)

Substitute "social classes", Marcuse's lingering experience with Marxism, for "third world countries" and we have a strong analysis of our world today. And I find a strong link between Marcuse writing about the consumers being bound pleasantly to the producers, and Marshall McLuhan in his 1964 book *Understanding Media*.

...in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message.
The electric light is pure information. It is a medium without a message...

the "content" of any medium is always another medium.
 For the "message" of any medium or technology is the change of scale
 or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs.
 (McLuhan, pg. 23-24)

After writing about how religion and politics promote the same one
 dimensional thought, and how non-operational ideas are considered "non-
 behavioral and subversive" he explores the idea of "progress". The quotation
 marks are his, but the understanding of that is only now beginning to enter in
 our academic thinking as we begin to de-value our mainstream European
 centered "civilization". Progress could have been reached when

material production...becomes automated to the extent that all vital needs
 can be satisfied while unnecessary labor time is reduced to marginal
 time. From this point on, technical progress would transcend the realm of
 necessity, where it served as the instrument of domination and exploita-
 tion...technology would become subject to the free play of faculties in the
 struggle for the pacification of nature and society. (Marcuse, pg. 16)

However, this did not happen in the Marxist states (the government did not
 wither away) and it will not happen in our countries either. Marcuse writes that
 the status quo defies all transcendence, and the mature industrial society closes
 itself against this, in spite of growing potential to do so in our time. The econo-
 mist Rifkin confirms this potential.

The introduction of more sophisticated technologies, with the accom-
 panying gains in productivity, means that the global economy can pro-
 duce more and more goods and services employing an ever smaller
 percentage of the available work force. (Rifkin, pg. 11)

Marcuse concludes the chapter with what he considers to be the two
 features of advanced industrial society:

...a trend toward consummation of technological rationality, and inten-
 sive efforts to contain this trend within the established institutions.
 (Marcuse, pg. 17)

As technology opens new "dimensions for human realization" it

becomes irrational. This irrationality is conquered by domination.

...domination, in the guise of affluence and liberty--extends to all spheres of private and public existence, integrates all authentic opposition, absorbs all alternatives...creating a truly totalitarian universe...
(Marcuse, pg. 18)

The argument I will be facing is with the entire premise of our advanced society being totalitarian, and with the question of just how free we are. Rather than go into lengthy philosophical analysis on freedom and tyranny, I will leave this chapter with two personal feelings. The first is that I have irrefutable evidence that my life is qualitatively better than that of many of my ancestors, whether that is my grandfather who worked seven days a week for the railroad, or my most distant ancestors in Britain, who lived from crop to crop under the shadows of the tyranny of the Church, the King, or various types of bacteria.

The second is that I am undoubtedly on one of the highest possible levels of human existence. I am 48 years old, in good health, with a comforting family life, an interesting job, a deep interest in this subject, and an appreciation for the wonders of any kind of art. I have witnessed fascinating and compelling events in this century, but have lived only in peace and prosperity. My country is certainly one of the wealthiest, and my continued comfort is probable for another 30 years. But, when I think of all the people like me who live in this privileged space and who are enslaved to spending and addiction, either of legal or illegal products, I think of a kind of dictatorship of people's spirits by "things". And when I view our industrial society as a complete global environment, I think of how totalitarian it really is. I am in the privileged minority, while the beggars of Bangladesh are powerless victims. Their lives hang by as thin a thread as the thread that kept Hitler's or Stalin's victims alive just before they too perished.

Chapter Two:
The Closing of the Political Universe

Marcuse begins his second longest chapter by referring to our world as a "society of total mobilization". Here the fact that the book was published in 1964 with probably the bulk of the writing done before the Kennedy assassination (but most likely influenced by the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961) has a significant influence. I remember even as a very unaware Junior High school student the concern in my teachers, even in my parents voices, about the "Communist juggernaut" while a few people, even in a small out of the way city like Calgary, were building fallout shelters. I remember how the Cuban Missile Crisis gripped us, even to the point where we were visibly worried on our way home from school and after football practices that at any moment the Soviet ICBM's would be roaring overhead heading for American targets while we would be lucky enough to last a few weeks until the fallout poisoned us. We had in fact in previous years practiced diving under our desks in case of attack, and had watched films about the communist threat. Although it is hard to validate from that long ago just how "totally mobilized" our society was, I was certain of a communist threat from the other side of the world. But was it real?

After the fall of communism, we can see that the missiles were real, the military strength was real, but that the idea of Russian world domination was not. Even among the murderous henchmen in the Kremlin there was no wish to force issues and actually press the buttons that would launch the missiles and destroy the giant industrial machines. It appears to have been an effort by their own leaders to inspire their own military-industrial complex to catch up with

the capitalist world, and to in fact mobilize their own citizenry. Evidence now comes from two inner sources, the highest ranking Soviet official to ever defect, and Chairman Mao's personal physician.

Arkady Shevchenko was the Under Secretary General of the United Nations and at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis worked in the innermost Soviet diplomatic circles. Although he said that Khrushchev wanted to create a "nuclear fist" in close proximity to the United States, he was soon out manoeuvred in the crisis by Kennedy. Khrushchev had wanted a quick solution to the balance of nuclear power, but Party and military bureaucratic leaders wanted long range programs that "would involve astronomical expense".

Inevitably these expenditures would undermine Khrushchev's plans to aid the consumer. Khrushchev had unrealistically committed himself with widely touted promises "to catch up with and surpass America by 1970 in per capita production. He wanted guns and butter, or a modest amount of butter anyway.

In the aftermath of the crisis it was plain we had not been on the brink of nuclear war. At no moment did Khrushchev or anyone else in Moscow intend to use nuclear weapons against the United States. When the crisis broke, our leaders were preoccupied almost exclusively with how to extricate themselves from the situation with a minimum loss of prestige and face. (Shevchenko, pg. 154-155)

Dr. Li Zhisui was Chairman Mao's personal doctor from 1954 until Mao's death in 1976. Although there were many times when he was "sent" away from personal contact with Mao, he invariably returned as a confidant, privy to the most intimate conversations for the majority of his service. He recalls the Moscow conference of November 1957 as an apex of communism. The Russians had launched Sputnik and seemed to be catching up to the capitalist world in industrial production and technological achievement. Almost a third of the world seemed to be under Moscow's growing influence. The black and white images of Khrushchev and Mao and other communists atop the reviewing stand in the Red Square seemed to have been truly horrifying for the

Americans. The frightening scenarios from that image was chronicled in the semi-fictional work *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe.

...the situation was obvious. A colossal panic was underway, with Congressmen and newspapermen leading a huge pack that was baying at the sky where the hundred pound Soviet satellite kept beeping around the world. In their eyes Sputnik I had become the second momentous event of the Cold War. The first had been the Soviet development of the Atomic bomb in 1953.

Lyndon Johnson, who was Senate Majority leader, said that whoever controlled 'the high ground' of space would control the world.

The New York Times, in an editorial, said the United States is in a 'race for survival'...House Speaker John McCormack said the United States faced the prospect of 'national extinction'... (Wolfe, pg. 57-58)

But the image of total Communist solidarity was a fraud. Dr. Li writes at length about the personality differences between Mao and Khrushchev, and how superficial political similarities could not overcome historical distrust.

Superficially, the two men were cordial...but the talks between the two men did not go well, and Khrushchev's memoirs record the disdain he felt for Mao's unorthodox ways. The Chairman was deliberately playing the role of emperor, treating Khrushchev like the barbarian come to pay tribute. It was a way, Mao told me on the way back to Beidaihe, of 'sticking a needle up his ass'.

Mao's catalog of complaints against the Soviets had grown, but could be reduced to a single, overriding concern. 'Their real purpose' Mao said, 'is to control us. They're trying to tie our hands and feet. But they're full of wishful thinking, like idiots talking about their dreams.'

(Li Zhisui, pg. 261)

In other words, while we were fed rumours about the great "Red Menace" in Europe and Asia and in space, while we were in a state of mobilization, cooperation between two great communist countries would reach such a low point that they would seem to be enemies, symbolized by the intense personal dislike their leaders had for each other.

Marcuse documents some of the features of this society of total mobilization, a "productive union" of the "Welfare State and the Warfare State". Among the features are:

- * concentration of the national economy on the needs of the big corporations,
- * hitching this economy to a world-wide system of military alliances, monetary arrangements, technical assistance and development schemes,
- * gradual assimilation of blue collar and white collar population, and
- * fostering of a pre-established harmony between scholarship and national purpose.

Marcuse give examples about how indistinguishable the two American political parties really are because of this productive union, and how instead of how certain classes were in opposition to the system as a whole, there is now a collusion between business and organized labor.

Class struggles are attenuated and "imperialist contradictions" suspended before the threat from without. Mobilized against this threat, capitalist society shows an internal union and cohesion unknown at previous stages of industrial civilization. (Marcuse, pg. 21)

Thirty years later the historian Hobsbawm would confirm Marcuse's perception. He would refer to the years immediately after World War II up to the early 1970's as a Golden Age.

...the aftermath of the Second World War was followed by some twenty-five or thirty years of extraordinary economic growth and social transformation, which probably changed human society more profoundly than any other period of comparable brevity. (Hobsbawm, pg. 6)

Another modern writer, David Halberstam, has unknowingly agreed with Marcuse. Halberstam's 1991 book, The Next Century, is a colossally ethnocentric disappointment, for it only deals with this prize winning journalist's lament for the lack of American leadership and its modern internal decay. However, his nostalgic lament wistfully goes back to 1964, ironically coinciding with One Dimensional Man's publication.

The high-water mark of it all, I think, was 1964...Lyndon Johnson was planning the Great Society, the final step in bringing the American Dream to every household. That year the Ford Motor Company brought out the Mustang, a sporty, sexy car produced primarily for what was deemed the youth market. Johnson had opened his election campaign in Detroit on Labor Day with Henry Ford II on one side of him and Walter Reuther on the other. Clearly he was the candidate of the new, classless America. (Halberstam, pg. 63)

Marcuse returns to his understanding of Marxist fundamentals by saying that there has to be an alienation of the laboring classes. But in 1964 in the modern industrial states any new consciousness of this alienation is barred by a society which has as

its *raison d'être* in the accomplishments of its overpowering productivity. Its supreme promise is an ever-more-comfortable life for an ever-growing number of people who, in a strict sense, cannot imagine a qualitatively different universe of discourse and action... (Marcuse, pg. 23)

Nowhere in all of One-Dimensional Man does Marcuse wish for a return of Communism, or any kind of totalitarianism. He has used the Marxist method of seeing classes and their societal control as a method of analysing the direction of the industrial world. However in 1964, at the height and in the heart of the Golden Age he was saying in essence, that most of what we saw, we liked, we believed was indeed false consciousness. In spite of the ever-growing good life that he saw expand around him, he sensed true emancipation was not to be found in either Lyndon Johnson or a shiny Mustang. In fact, Johnson for millions began to be the personification of evil with his Viet Nam debacle, and the shiny Mustang is now on the slag heap after adding immeasurably to traffic deaths and air pollution.

The matter is now that the world situation is in true crisis, and although the American economy isn't quite as robust as it was in the mid-sixties, and the rot of the inner cities sends a reek of violent addictions toward the wealthy and isolated, the domination of the capitalist economies is nearly complete. Does

capitalism have to have an opposition to weld together a great illusory national purpose, and therefore prosperity? Perhaps it only needs the ghost of communism, lingering on in memory or in Cuba and North Korea. Perhaps this ghost is not enough to unify the populace in either fear (fallout shelters) or exhilaration ("The Eagle has landed.") as it did before, but with the growth of transnational corporations, the degree of exploitation and damage expands with the daily birth of 240,000 people and the daily death of 40,000.

The overall consensus is that the projected growth in the world's population cannot be sustained *with our current patterns and levels of consumption*...it is therefore important whether the planet contains four billion people...as it did in 1975, or 8 to 9 billion, as is likely in 2025... developed Northern regions place much greater stress per capita upon the earth's resources than do developing countries, simply because the former consume so much more.

According to one calculation, the average American baby represents twice the environmental damage of a Swedish child, three times that of an Italian...and 280 times that of a Chadian or Haitian because its level of consumption throughout its life will be so much greater. That is not a comfortable statistic for anyone with a conscience. (Kennedy, pg. 32,33)

It is clear we must learn about "a qualitatively different universe of discourse and action" before it is too late.

Marcuse then lists aspects of what he calls the transformation of the laboring classes, a transformation that keeps them from fomenting a 1917 type of revolutionary consciousness. The first is that mechanization is increasingly "reducing the quantity and intensity of physical energy expended in labor." This has many effects, one of which is the reduction of the sting of physical labor that may have pushed many in the past to follow Lenin's promise of "Bread, Peace, Land". Another effect would be the increase of leisure time, and still another would be the tremendous increase in the necessity for education for the worker, who can no longer get by with grade six education, a high standard in 1917. Undoubtedly these have all blunted revolutionary fervor, and while there is no

intrinsic value in revolution for its own sake, the lack of oppositional consciousness may have an immediate effect today with the lack of concern by most of the populations of the wealthy northern countries with the current ecological and population crises.

The second of Marcuse's observations on the laboring classes is how "the 'blue-collar' work force declines in relation to the 'white-collar' element".

The assimilating trend shows forth in the occupational stratification. In the key industrial establishments, the "blue-collar" work force declines in relation to the "white-collar" element; the number of non-production workers increases. (Marcuse, pg. 27)

It would have been relatively easy for Marcuse to see the size of the laboring work force shrinking in his time, and easy to extrapolate that it would continue. The speed at which that has happened in the last twenty years would perhaps startle him, with not only robotics replacing the shop floor worker, but computers replacing the clerical staff so that only investors, high level management and low level maintenance and security staff are needed to fulfill the production. The economist Rifkin cites a new factory in Japan that uses only two workers where a hundred were needed decades ago. He also documents the change in US Steel.

In 1980 United States Steel, the largest integrated steel company in the United States, employed 120,000 workers. By 1990 it was producing roughly the same output using only 20,000. (Rifkin, pg. 134)

Not only are the number of workers decreasing, productivity is increasing along with profits. A future of better products, more products, less workers is already here, and an outcome for the world is uncertain. Who can buy the products, if fewer people are employed to buy them? Factory after factory is "trimming excess fat" as well as clerical staff and service employees. And yet American unemployment now, in the summer of 1997, is below 5% while their inflation is at 3%, a strange but enjoyably uneasy place for economists.

While some new jobs are being created in the U.S. economy, they are in the low paying sectors and generally temporary employment. (Rifkin, pg. 4)

Time magazine cites the new economic "good news" but notes that it is in part caused by increased consumer debt. In a related essay from the May 19 issue, John Greenwald gives reason for this kind of situation.

The Cold War's demise has helped reduce the federal deficit, and thus interest rates, by shifting dollars away from military spending. At the same time converts to capitalism have craved American products, enabling U.S. companies to ring up rising sales from Russia to Chile. With the whole world eager for American computers, cars and corn, U.S. exports reached a record \$611 billion in 1996 and have been outstripping that pace this year. America's companies, and especially its workers, went through restructuring torment in the early '90s, but as a result are now punishingly competitive. (Greenwald, Time, pg. 20)

This economic good news for the largest economy in the world has a vicious side, with the non-competitive, the unemployed and some of the young unable to advance themselves in an education system that is skewed to deliver the best programs and teachers to the wealthier localities. The former American Labor Secretary Robert Reich, is quoted in the same issue:

One in five children lives in poverty. Forty-four million Americans have no health insurance...Americans are segregated by income as never before, so it is far easier to pretend the worse off don't exist. They're out of sight. (Pooley, Time, pg. 20)

So with this most recent trend of the dissolution of the hundred year old class lines, the poor becoming less visible in the northern industrial countries while the less developed world begins to buy more and more industrial products, there is a flattening out of distinctions, both in terms of classes and countries. There perhaps is only a distinction between those who have some level of consumer comfort, and those who think they are striving toward it.

This dissolution of distinctions is noted by Marcuse in his third and fourth

points.

These changes in the character of work and in the instruments of production change the attitude and consciousness of the laborer...

The new technological work-world thus enforces a weakening of the negative position of the working class: the latter no longer appears to be the living contradiction to the established society. (Marcuse, pg. 29,31)

The phrase "living contradiction" seems quaint today, but for Marcuse who was raised in the revolutionary times during the First World War, the stark contrast was obvious to everyone. There were the rich of Europe, who were almost always connected to some ruling class, or new entrepreneurs, often making fortunes from the more sordid aspects of colonialism. The poor seemed to live on another planet, and appeared that way to the rich. In today's modern industrial society, the poor on welfare watch the same television channels, go to the same movies, are susceptible to the same advertising and cheer for the same local sports teams. The wealthy in turn have to find more ways to distance themselves from the poor, whether that is by sending their children to private schools, wearing a more "exclusive" type of brand on the jeans or watches, or by having more artificial distinctions of any kind on any product far beyond any semblance of the notion of quality.

The poor and the former working classes of the prosperous industrial countries have bought into this way of life (even if that means they now have a temporary low paying job at an employer like Wal-Mart, instead of a unionized factory job that paid 50% more), a life as Marcuse says, that appears to bring an ever-more-comfortable life for an ever-more-growing number of people. The consequences are as different as they are expected. With this loss of class distinctions, comes the loss of consciousness that goes with it, and with that loss of consciousness an attendant loss of criticism and awareness that our way of life is seriously endangering the ecology of the planet, the well-being of the poor countries and is in part responsible for the daily death of the starving of

women and children in the "ever-growing" slums and pockets of human hell.

The other side is the fact that life for those former working classes is quantifiably better: there are less hours worked, with less pain, and the workers are able to buy more comfort. The only "living contradiction" today are those dying every day in dusty fields or fetid slums. That contradiction is almost completely out of sight. There are rare attempts to bring the numbers into focus, but among the giant media machines this is not news. Occasionally we see a flicker of this in our world: the paid televised commercials for World Vision. The U.N. conference of 1990 that I referred to in my introduction was the cover story for Time magazine, but only for the Canadian and International editions. The American edition, with the largest circulation, instead ran a cover story on the supposedly avant-garde film director David Lynch, and there were no articles about the conference at all.

What about the cost, admittedly guessable, of having the former working class deprived of a target for their frustrations because they have bought into the promise of a more prosperous life?

...decisions over life and death, over personal and national security are made at places over which the individuals have no control.
 ...the tangible source of exploitation disappears behind the facade of objective rationality. Hatred and frustration are deprived of their specific target, and the technological veil conceals the reproduction of inequality and enslavement. (Marcuse, pg. 32)

Let me speculate on that admittedly guessable cost. Being deprived of real self control, some will lose themselves in personal psychological problems, usually manifested by addictions. A few become randomly violent in a personal way. A few become organized in their attack on society, like the Unabomber. Others join cults. Millions of others simply live quietly, unknowing of the damage inflicted upon the world, unknowing of their true individual potential. For those lost in addictions, the industrial world is happiest. If all the money

spend on Vodka in Russia in a month were saved, all the people in the world dying of starvation would live that month. If people simply stopped smoking tobacco, if people would donate a few dollars a month instead of having another case of beer, if addictions like cocaine and gambling would be curtailed...the list of "ifs" is long and wistful, but even that stretches into realms of arguments about the psychological weakness of people. What is true is that opportunities for liberation are being missed as people and governments literally seem to sleep walk through the last years of the millennium. Marcuse would call this sleep walking a

pure form of servitude: to exist as an instrument, as a thing.
(Marcuse, pg. 33)

Marcuse continues this chapter with the subtitle "Prospects of Containment". Here he speculates beyond 1964, and asks if there is any hope that this "growing chain of production and repression" will change? He starts with two assumptions, one, that there will be no nuclear war, and two, that there will always be an Enemy to coexist with capitalism. Given those two assumptions there will be maintenance of an increased standard of living for an increased population, in spite of the continued production of the "means of destruction" (weapons, which is true) and the "methodical waste of resources and faculties" (ecological destruction, which is also true). The only point he did not see, and a most fascinating one, is that of course that this chain of production and repression continues even with communism on the ash heap. He also speculated accurately that the base for this capability to continue the chain will be available with

- (a) the growing productivity of labor;
- (b) the rise in the birth rate of the underlying population;
- (c) the permanent defense economy;
- (d) the economic-political integration of the capitalist countries, and the

building up of the relations with the underdeveloped areas.
(Marcuse, pg. 34)

Although the population of the northern industrialized countries has remained virtually stable since 1964 (compared to the rest of the world), it is clear why transnationals are going after world wide markets with their burgeoning populations: in spite of the great amounts of dying, there exists a large potential market for hamburgers, movies and shoes. And although there have been cutbacks with military spending since 1990, there still is a permanent defense economy with international trade in weapons and armaments larger than ever. As for (d), the most recent advances in both travel and communication have made the selling of products easier in the most distant of lands.

Marcuse continues with a mention of a centrifugal tendency, automation.

It seems that automation to the limits of technical possibility is incompatible with a society based on the private exploitation of human labor power in the process of production. (Marcuse, pg. 35)
Complete automation...would open the dimension of free time...this would be the historical transcendence toward a new civilization.
(Marcuse, pg. 37)

However, Marx saw that automation could finally eliminate too many workers, drive down wages until there was not enough money to buy the products that came faster and faster from the factories. Modern economists partly agreed, but said in effect the labor pool will create new industries.

By 'releasing' workers, the capitalists were providing a cheap labor pool that could be taken up by new industries which in turn would use the surplus labor to increase their own profits. The profits would be re-invested in new labor saving technology that would once again displace labor, reduce unit costs, increase sales, creating a perpetually upward cycle...(Rifkin, pg. 17)

The outcome will always be debatable. What is known with certainty is that it is not the product itself that sells and keeps the factories busy, it has to be supported with more and more advertising. In the last year I was in business

General Foods had \$9 billion in sales, but spent \$1 billion in advertising. In other words, when the consumer spends 90 cents for two packages of Jello, 10 cents is for the cost of advertising to convince other consumers to keep buying more Jello. With the pressure of advertising, and the continuing cycle of automation, worker displacement, search for foreign markets, workers are continually adjusting, borrowing and buying and scraping their way toward a world of better products. The products will usually be found wanting and destructive, and they in turn may never realize that as Marcuse says they are existing as an instrument, as a thing, not only as a worker, but as a consumer.

Rifkin maintains that the early stages of automation after the end of World War I had two effects on the American business world. When productivity rose dramatically while wages stayed relatively stable, the worker as consumer began to be valued.

New concepts of marketing and advertising...took off in the 1920's, reflecting the business community's growing determination to empty its warehouses and increase the pace of consumption to match the ever-accelerating productivity. (Rifkin, pg. 21)

Nothing, however, proved more successful in reorienting the buying habits of American wage earners than the notion of consumer credit. At the time of the great stock market crash, 60 percent of the radios, automobiles, and furniture sold in the United States were purchased on installment credit. (Rifkin, pg. 22)

It was clear that a path was established: instead of automation liberating the worker, for the most part it allowed the factories to produce more with fewer workers, and while the displaced workers were let go they were simultaneously courted with advertising and credit to buy up the products they no longer made. Easy parallels can be made today with transnational corporations searching for worldwide markets to match their robotized factories' growing inventories.

Marcuse then writes for many pages on the contradictions of the Soviet system. His analysis can best be summed up with this prescient sentence:

The more the rulers are capable of delivering the goods of consumption, the more firmly will the underlying population be tied to the various ruling bureaucracies. (Marcuse, pg. 43)

And when it became apparent that Moscow, Prague and Bucharest and all the others couldn't deliver the goods, and when it also became apparent that their soldiers weren't willing to shoot their own people (China, and North Korea excepted), Communism crumbled as fast as it had spread 70 years earlier.

Marcuse follows with commentary on what he calls "backward" countries. In the entire book, this appears to be the only instance of inconsistency in thought and language, by today's standards, for he does not put the word backward in quotation marks. For someone who has built a virtual fortress of an argument against what appears to be the "progress" (quotation marks are mine) of industrial civilization, calling India and Egypt backward (used three times) hints at the extent of the hold of "progress" even over himself, because forward has linguistic implications of going towards the good, while backward implies some kind of cultural stagnation.

However, his observations remain sharp in the area of colonialism, even with these few notes of prejudice.

And in these same countries the dead weight of pre-technological and even "pre-bourgeois" customs and conditions offer a strong resistance to such superimposed development. The machine process (as social process) requires obedience to a system of anonymous powers--total secularization and the destruction of values and institutions whose de-sanctification has hardly begun. (Marcuse, pg. 46)

This of course is perfectly clear in the great hostility many Islamic countries have towards the United States today. The United States is not the only power to permit rampant modern capitalism to have free reign over the movements of its foreign policies, but with the American tendency to blunder along in their peculiarly ethnocentric way as the policemen of the world, they have picked up the greatest hostility. The purest and most radical forms of Islam have

perceived this “system of anonymous powers” as a threat, and they have blamed the United States, only slightly displacing their mark against the influence of transnational corporations.

To sum up, the backward areas are likely to succumb either to one of the various forms of neo-colonialism, or to a more or less terroristic system of primary accumulation. (Marcuse, pg. 47)

Moreover, indigenous progress would presuppose a change in the policy of the two great industrial power blocs which today shape the world--abandonment of neo-colonialism in all its forms. (Marcuse, pg. 48)

Now that one of those power blocs is in decline, American influence doesn't need to be so overt. The transnationals have rushed in. Example: as the market for cigarettes has declined in the United States, Canada and Northern Europe with better health programs and government regulations, the transnational tobacco companies are heavily promoting and advertising their products in the third world, and with great success.

The last section of this chapter is titled The Welfare and Warfare State. Marcuse states that the decline of freedom and opposition is not a matter of corruption or deterioration. It is objective

insofar as the production and distribution of an increasing quantity of goods and services make compliance a rational technological attitude. (Marcuse, pg. 48)

Let me reiterate a basic change in the passing of 34 years since publication: although it would seem that we have more freedom and more chance to change things politically, we seem to be less free in the sense that the choices of democratically nominated persons seem to be indistinguishable. In addition, the “Enemy” as Marcuse would call the Cold War opposites, no longer exists so that compliance with our systems of production seems even more rational. And this rationality becomes monolithic because very few of us have it in our consciousness and sphere of action to help the 20% of the world that is on the edge of starvation every night, a fact that would rattle the foundations of this

rationality. And yet this rationality of course permeates all our education systems, where very little criticism of our monolithic consumer society is even dreamed about, let alone made part of any curriculum, with the possible exception of Science classes that point out the hazards of pollution.

Advertising, public relations, indoctrination, planned obsolescence are no longer unproductive overhead costs but rather elements of basic production costs. In order to be effective, such production of socially necessary waste requires continuous rationalization--the relentless utilization of advanced techniques and science. (Marcuse, pg. 49)

There of course is the kind of rationalization we all do when we look out across our polluted earth: "well, that's the price of progress". There is another kind of rationalization often employed where even the most harmful of industries are justified by the fact that they employ thousands of people. But there is a deeper rationalization that I came to understand a part of as I read through this book. Later on, and often, Marcuse continually mentions science, and I kept thinking of abstract theorists working on chalkboards in quaint universities. But the science that is rationalized into the productive whole is quite different.

Science is used by business every minute the factory is working. A principle of science is that when a theory can be objectively produced by others many times over it becomes a law, a truth, an objective reality. When a factory uses a scientific principle over and over again--perhaps using some function of electricity to chrome plate metal--science is rationalized into the productive process. Every time a product is made precisely the same way, it is done objectively to established scientific principles, for without science the uniformity of production could not be possible.

To Marcuse this rationality, with the rationalization of science helping to increase consumption, even the "diversion of productivity" is a "constellation" that reduces the "use-value of freedom".

...there is no reason to insist on self-determination if the administered life

is the comfortable and even the 'good life'...on this ground the transcending political forces *within* society are arrested, and qualitative change appears possible only as a change from *without*. (Marcuse, pg. 49)

Marcuse concludes the chapter with a paragraph on how capitalism and communism actually seem to need each other to develop their kind of oppositional repressions, along with obvious increases in comfort for their citizens.

Both systems have these capabilities distorted beyond recognition and, in both cases, the reason is in the last analysis the same--the struggle against a form of life which would dissolve the basis for domination. (Marcuse, pg. 55)

So in 1964 to Marcuse, the political universes were closed, from within. Any true dissent or criticism was crushed or ignored or co-opted, all for a kind of productive rationality. But now, is it any different? Yes, the communists don't seem to be locking up as many people, but who knows about the pathetic minor league terrorism inflicted on the populace by home-grown mafias and supposedly democratic politicians like those in Bosnia and Bulgaria. Yes the nuclear doomsday clock has eased off, but the weapons are still there, almost begging to be stolen out of former Soviet missile silos and parcelled off to some Islamic Jihad.

It is different now, but political options seem decidedly one dimensional, precisely because of the "victory" of capitalism. The ghost of communism may haunt us for decades like some evil brand of economics, banished like Napoleon to some island-like place like North Korea or Cuba. And the very fact of their banishment, the power of the victors, adds greater rationality to the closing of this political universe. This is again the basis of domination that Marcuse meant. The dying poor have no idea why they are dying, not realizing that if all the money spent on pet food in the United States every month were converted into food and clean water they would live. Populations are burgeoning with weakened governments unable to even count their own

people, so enslaved are they to an idea of economic expansion that means in effect give us your raw materials at a few cents per pound and you can buy our Ohio corn or Japanese television sets. Weapons and cash move around the globe like quicksilver, while everywhere we see capitalism with a human face.

Chapter Three:
*The Conquest of the Unhappy Consciousness:
Repressive Desublimation*

After having written about political integration of industrial society Marcuse turns to the "realm of culture". His training and interest in Freudian psychology have an influence, and an understanding of "desublimation" is necessary.

According to Freud, the most successful defense mechanism is sublimation, the expression of sexual or aggressive impulses through indirect, socially acceptable outlets. (Sdorow, pg. 441)

To Marcuse, the weight of the industrial society has blunted and repressed our earthly and human instincts. I do not wish to interpret the matter further, I hope only that Marcuse was using this as a term of description, and not as an actual method of understanding humanity. It was Marcuse himself who rejected any kind of "transcending analysis", and it was this limiting scope of sticking to facts and history that I find both simple and elegantly appealing. I do not wish to enter into metaphysical debates or philosophical discussions about the importance of the subconscious mind. To me it is a realm unproven. As to the basic urges that seem to have been genetically built in to our 500,000 year old human existence, I rate the needs of food, clothing, shelter, sex and defense as the most important, and perhaps not even in the least subconscious or preconscious. The urge to make art and experience spirituality would come after the first five are satisfied, and again, these might not even be subconscious. For me to imagine a vast pool of primitive urges secretly deep inside each person is possible, but completely unreliable and unproven.

Rather than the urges diving back into darkness within each of us, we simply forget about them if they are not useful. For example, if we have no time to express ourselves artistically, we delay using them, probably at no cost to the self aware person. Likewise, I feel there is no basic violent urge subconsciously

programmed into us beyond self defense and the need for food, the aggressiveness is all consciously programmed in the material world by others. With exceptions for those people who are physiologically incomplete (FAS, for example) I feel that we can understand every motive of action from within the realm of rational consciousness. I refuse to ascribe the reasons for the wars in Central Africa to a primitive genetically subconscious urge of a group of people to hack others to death with machetes, likewise, I do not ascribe Hitler's policy of racial extermination to a need for a subconscious desire of his Aryan followers for a Gotterdamerung.

I do believe, as Marcuse does, that modern industrial society is indeed blunting artistic expression, but instead of the blunting effect turning the urges into dark individual pools of the subconscious, we simply forget about them as they are repressed into memory. Marcuse feels that the

progress of technological rationality is liquidating the oppositional and transcending elements in "the higher culture". (Marcuse, pg. 56)

Marcuse does not define "higher culture", but given his European education and upbringing, we can guess at its elements. (Modern critics may disparage him for not being worldly enough, and too European in outlook for his obvious preference for the art of "Dead White Men"--I will provide a partial defense later.)

What is happening now is not the deterioration of higher culture into mass culture, but the refutation of this culture by reality. (Marcuse, pg. 56)

Marcuse sees the reality in some cases surpassing the higher culture, for we can fly, go to the moon, cure deadly illnesses, all beyond the abilities of the ancient cultural heroes or myths. But our modern industrial society has as Marcuse says, betrayed the hope and destroyed the truth of the higher culture. This was a realm always in contradiction with social reality but these

two antagonistic spheres of society have always coexisted; the higher culture has always been accommodating, while the reality was rarely

disturbed by its ideals and its truth. (Marcuse, pg. 56)

This higher culture is flattened out so that the antagonistic parts cease to be oppositional and another dimension of reality.

This liquidation of *two-dimensional* culture takes place not through the denial and rejection of "cultural values" but through their wholesale incorporation into the established order...

In fact they serve as instruments of social cohesion. The greatness of free literature and art, the ideals of humanism, the sorrows and joys of the individual, the fulfilment of the personality are important items in the competitive struggle between East and West. They speak heavily against the present forms of communism, and they are daily administered and sold. The fact that they contradict the society which sells them does not count. (Marcuse, pg. 57)

I can clearly recall that from the 1950's through the mid-1980's how it seemed that we were reminded of how the communist system did not allow freedom of artistic expression. There was a brief allowance of Russian abstract art soon after Stalin died, but that was crushed in a few years. Artists and writers like Solzhenitsyn were harassed and imprisoned, and could only thrive in an underground network. But it was not an anti-art system of government, as was portrayed in the western media, it was a system of governments that limited only the kind of art that they saw as challenging to their authority.

A friend who lived the first 16 years of his life in communist Romania told me of the concentration of classical literature in his education: Homer, Shakespeare, Tolstoy. Ballet and the symphony flourished in Russia, as did a certain number of operas in Beijing. Paintings that were at least a 100 years old were not only safe to look at in a Communist society, they were in fact assets of the government and its museums.

What was not allowed in Eastern Communist societies is important to my understanding of the role of art in society, and I am going to use it to lead on to a theory that parallels Marcuse's ideas of the most challenging art being taken as a "wholesale incorporation into the established order" in our western

democracies. As a cautionary note, I must not take credit for the wholeness and development of this theory. As someone who has taken dozens of visual arts and literature courses at university, talked extensively with professors and artists, written an unpublished novel and tried to get a career started in music decades ago, I have become an amalgam of so many other peoples theories that I cannot pin down exactly where these ideas originated--with one exception. I have been significantly influenced by Northrop Frye's Fables of Identity, Anatomy of Criticism, T.S.Eliot, and The Critical Path.

Nearly every work of art in the past had a social function in its own time, a function which was not primarily an aesthetic function at all. The whole conception of "works of art" as a classification for all pictures, statues, poems, musical compositions is a relatively modern one. (Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, pg. 344)

Like Frye, I believe that the idea of making art for the sake of making art, is modern, that what we sometimes call art from thousands of years ago--a pyramid, a religious mask, a Greek vase, a Roman bust--was mainly created for a function, like architecture. The pyramid was for the Pharoah, the mask was for the priest, the vase to hold wine, and the bust was to honor an emperor. There may have been tremendous skill and craftsmanship and engineering incorporated into the creation of the work, but it was primarily created for a clear purpose other than the creation of art. Even to create art to decorate a wall is to make art for a purpose.

To me the most challenging and wholesome art is that which is made for its own internal aesthetic purpose. It is an art that exists as independently as possible, as a separate world, and thereby stands in opposition, and sometimes in antagonistic freedom to what Marcuse calls the social reality. In order for it to stand on its own, art must not only have a creative integrity with its aesthetic purpose, it must not be created under financial pressure. The artist who is overly concerned with selling the painting, publishing the novel, staging the

play or selling a million copies of the song, will be to some degree constrained or influenced by that need. Perhaps she should sing a little clearer or throw in more sentimental feeling, perhaps the painter should not make the image so abstract as to be unrecognizable, perhaps the play should not have so many meaningless obscenities, perhaps the novelist should put in more gunplay...and soon the work is compromised, and it ceases to revolve around the ideas of creating an independent world, and revolve around derivation, formula and entertainment.

This does not mean that occasionally an artist can be successful financially with a particular work of art. Once an artist has an established income from creating entertaining and pleasing pieces, they may find relief from financial pressure and start to create, or on occasion, make an investment in creating whole other worlds of composition that are strange and separate realms that lead us into another kind of consciousness, a consciousness of an "other" world that stands in opposition to the recurring pressure of the social reality.

There are further qualifications. The most integrated art can withstand being co-opted into the vast industrial system if it does not become too didactic, that is if it does not devolve into nothing but political or moral statements. Straightforward messages about ideas are not art but philosophy. The best art has a balance of form and content. If there is nothing but technique, there will be nothing but pretty paintings, lightning fast guitar solos, dazzling cinema-photography, clever rhyme schemes and a fascinating murder mystery plot. There must be some measure of intellectual involvement to match the technique, but pure message without craftsmanship, artistic technique, or ingenious displays of forms can be both boring and disagreeable if you don't happen to like the message.

In sum the best art, the art that can stand for years as an “other” world in opposition to the grind of our modern industrial society, must:

1. not be primarily created to fulfill a function other than that of making a separate world of art,
2. not be primarily created under financial constraint as that would influence the artist and the outcome of the work, and,
3. have an internal balance of form and content, without an overt didactic message.

With these limitations, what can qualify? I will give a few examples from my interests and studies, although there are thousands that we know of, and perhaps thousands more that never get into public view. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings was originally started by the Oxford professor to simply entertain his son, but very soon became so demanding it took on its own integrity, regardless of its size and seemingly slim chance at publication. Miles Davis’s album Bitches Brew was heralded as a breakthrough in jazz in 1970 while the trumpeter had a long established reputation and income: he simply gathered a new group of musicians around him and went into a studio and more or less spontaneously created sounds not driven by conventional jazz or popular rhythms. John Lennon’s song I Am The Walrus is a totally bizarre creation of sound, rhythm and nonsense lyrics that has nothing to do with the popular music history that he was a part of creating in the years previous to 1967. Picasso’s Les Femmes d’Alger is the beginning of cubism with its ugly twisted limbs and faces. Judy Chicago’s The Dinner Party is a room of absent mythical and real women, their presence indicated by plates and place settings.

There will be arguments about these selections, but to me they all exist as separate worlds of composition, bravely standing as realms of consciousness that the viewer, reader or listener does not need a great deal of

interpretation to be lost in. And that experience of being lost in those other worlds can only be regarded as being a healthy other-worldly opposition to the industrial state, regardless of the ironic fact that all those works made money for organizations after their creation. Is it a coincidence that of the examples, perhaps only Lord of the Rings would have been allowed in Communist countries at the height of their totalitarianism? All the others would have been regarded as useless examples of personal decadence or subversive anti-socialism, and all of these may be examples that illustrate how "alienated" the creators were from the worlds they lived in, how their own created realms were entirely different compared to the pressing public reality of their times.

In this highly speculative realm of making judgements about what is "art" there will be endless arguments. What about Mozart, what about Picasso's Guernica? Mozart was often forced to create music due to financial pressures, and isn't his work among the best art in the world? There is no question about his talent, his craft, but while many critics can say great art came out of those financial pressures, I can respond by saying he didn't often transcend his form, and was somewhat repetitive, safely reproducing themes and techniques he knew were popular (even if he himself designed that popularity from his previous works). Today, hundreds of years later, to me most of his work seems comforting, relaxing, and not the least bit challenging.

The Guernica by Picasso represents a more debatable issue. Having viewed the work myself in New York, I can admit to being profoundly moved. It is other-worldly, it does take you into itself. The art critic John Canaday supports the popular contention that it was started in anger.

Guernica was not a particularly strategic target. Its destruction was primarily a test run...a rehearsal for World War II. The rehearsal was successful. Most of Guernica was reduced to rubble and its inhabitants destroyed with it...Picasso's outrage as a Spaniard and as a human being produced the Guernica in a matter of weeks. (Canaday, pg. 484)

We cannot now ask Picasso how much "anger" he put into the work. A clue for me would be the fact that he took several weeks to finish the painting. When I saw it I was first moved by its general anti-war message, with the twisted human and animal shapes clearly representing agony and murdered life. But as I stood in front of it, more and more I became occupied with the techniques Picasso used: using only blacks, whites and grays he had balanced his own twisted graphic styles of painting those human and animal shapes with the struggle to have them fit into a larger composition. So although Picasso seems to have started in anger, with even a didactic impulse to tell the world about the horror of the bombing, what remains after weeks of his artistic struggle is anything but impulsive: a marvellously intriguing balanced composition involving his own varied techniques and textures that takes the viewer into a totally different, albeit horror filled, world. I was left with a feeling of the painting showing an independent world that used virtually every technique a mature artist like Picasso could summon, and its didactic anti-war message became secondary.

It would be speculation if Marcuse would agree with my criteria, however, some of the art that fits his definition of the kind of art that would be part of his ideas of "higher culture" would probably qualify. If it happened that the kind of art that he studied in Europe in the early part of this century happened to be what we now call the art of dead white men, so be it. It was simply not possible to find any other kind of art--and the art of other non-European cultures available at that time does not qualify if you agree with the assertion of Northrop Frye that such art was made for a purpose and also by my qualification outside my criteria.

Marcuse writes of this kind of artistic alienation as having a kind of

lingering feudal (pre-technological) inspiration even in a "bourgeois period"

...because its authentic works expressed a conscious, methodical alienation from the entire sphere of business and industry, and from its calculable and profitable order. (Marcuse, pg. 58)

The characters that arose from this kind of alienation were not the great moral or religious heroes that often sustained the established order. They were more disruptive characters like

the artist, the prostitute, the adulteress, the great criminal and outcast, the warrior, the rebel-poet, the devil, the fool--those who don't earn a living, at least not in an orderly and normal way. (Marcuse, pg. 59)

Now, with the crush of modern industrial society, and perhaps with the disappearance of the shadow of the communist industrial state, their subversive force, as Marcuse calls it, their destructive content has been invalidated.

In this transformation, they find their home in everyday living. The alien and alienating oeuvres of intellectual culture become familiar goods and services...

The absorbent power of society depletes the artistic dimension by assimilating its antagonistic contents. In the realm of culture, the new totalitarianism manifests itself precisely in a harmonizing pluralism, where the most contradictory works and truths peacefully coexist in indifference. (Marcuse, pg. 61)

The most challenging works of art, with their creation of separate worlds, like the debatable examples I have given, do live in a world of indifference. And what replaces them in public consciousness? Weaker and weaker art, until the art becomes formulated, profit making entertainment that creates not an entire world that stands in opposition as some sort of "other", but a dreamy drug like world of total escapism. What types of art seem to be becoming less popular toward the end of this millennium? Painting, opera, serious theatre, sculpture, poetry. What types of art are maintaining a steady rate of popularity? Perhaps jazz, the novel, and musical theatre. What entertainments are gaining tremendous popularity and wealth for their capitalist owners at the expense of

other arts? Television, movies, and professional sports.

All that need be said about professional sports is that it is a tremendously successful investment for businessmen, and a delusionary waste of time for the billions who follow their favorite players and teams instead of spending time to ameliorate the world wide situations of poverty and disease.

I have struggled for 43 years against television, and still cannot resist for long its useless brand of humour, entertainment and news. And yet I cannot find any more than fleeting glimpses of art out of the millions of hours and hundreds of channels in mainstream television. As for the concentration of media control in television ownership, that alone dictates that we can never get a clear view of issues and events that threaten the status quo. There are too many advertisers to worry about, too many viewers with common sensibilities that cannot be angered for television to be anything but laughter and second rate drama punctuated by nauseating commercials for products we don't really need sold by companies who have so much profit they have to burn part of it away in advertising and public relations campaigns. And the commercials they often make are clever, engaging, and blissfully ignorant. A recent commercial for a car was startling: the vehicle was featured with a background deliberately meant to look like Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream*. The vehicle moved along through fluid lines of paint, the people looked vaguely distorted, but the message was that this vehicle is the thing to buy. The makers seemed to have absolutely no consciousness of the absent central figure, howling at a horrifying world, perhaps having foreknowledge of the impending disasters of the 20th century. Marcuse could have predicted this from 1964, the year of the Mustang.

...this essential gap between the arts and the order of the day, kept open in the artistic alienation, is progressively closed by the advancing technological society. And with its closing, the Great Refusal is in turn refused; the "other dimension" is absorbed into the prevailing state of affairs...Thus they become commercials--they sell, comfort, or excite.

(Marcuse, pg. 64)

One of the most powerful art/entertainment forms invented in this century is the moving picture. Today it is a great profit centre for American business and a great purveyor of ideas, ideas unfortunately stilted by the force of our post-communist industrial society. By the mid-1930's American movies began to dominate the international markets, selling as many tickets as all other countries motion picture industries combined.

Men and women learned to see reality through camera lenses. For while there was growth in the circulation of the printed word, it lost ground to the film. The Age of Catastrophe was the age of the large cinema screen. In the late 1930's for every British person who bought a newspaper, two bought a cinema ticket. Indeed, as depression deepened and the world was swept by war, Western cinema attendances reached their all time peak. (Hobsbawm, pg. 193.)

American movies continued to be simply a very strong business. There was a decade of weakening when television became popular and the domestic market for entertainment became flooded, and then slowly Hollywood bounced back. Now a single successful Hollywood movie can make hundreds of millions of dollars in North America and at least that much internationally, and the most successful half dozen every year can also make other hundreds of millions on marketing ancillary products such as toys and T-shirts. It is not inconceivable that the latest Steven Spielberg film Lost World will make in total \$1 billion.

Although that amount is not as large as the sale of automobiles or computers, the proliferation of Hollywood movies around the world is a cultural force only now beginning to be comprehended. Side-effects include the spread of the English language, the second most popular language (after Mandarin Chinese).

English is increasingly becoming entrenched as the language of choice for business, science and popular culture. Three-quarters of the world's mail...is written in English, as is 80% of the electronic mail on the Internet. Soon, more people will speak English as a foreign language than speak it as their mother tongue. (Geary, Time, pg. 41)

What values, obvious and subtle, are these Hollywood pieces of entertainment spreading? Keep in mind the popularization of the VCR has allowed for many movies to be seen many times over by adults and children, who clearly have realized their parents seem to be quite satisfied that they can sit quietly in front of the VCR and watch a movie at home without getting into trouble.

I have watched movies since my father sent my brothers and I off on Saturday afternoons to watch double feature westerns downtown for 25 cents. I have found comfort and escape, and very rarely, moments of great art in the cinema. Now, as my interest in the world situation becomes more focused I find myself becoming more and more critical of Hollywood, while still enjoying the escapism of movies at least once a week. Here are some observations about the cinema in the last 15 years when Hollywood movies have moved on to a growing world wide audience.

1. Real drama is often replaced with shock value.
2. Real emotional content in a movie is usually accompanied by a sound track--does this mean in life we can't have emotion without music?
3. The continuing "unreality" of genres like science fiction, crime dramas and teenage slasher movies can be said to teach children that life is full of nothing but swearing and explosions.
4. With the amount of movies being made there is a lack of art, and a tremendous amount of poor, manipulative entertainment.
5. With the exception of American blacks, most minority groups aren't represented fairly in terms of their actual populations.

6. With rare exceptions, most leading male and females in Hollywood productions have even features (meaning: handsome, beautiful) and aren't overweight like almost half of North Americans.
7. Depictions of the monotony of working life are rare. This is partially due to the dramatic conventions of telling a good story, but somehow an illusion is created that most characters, who are supposedly images of ourselves, lead lives full of drama and humor.
8. The preponderance of America as a setting (although admittedly, many times portrayed as a dangerous and unsatisfying place) tends to deny the reality of other cultures. American actors, settings, values and therefore prejudices are exported world-wide.

This spread of movie culture mirrors the fear Marcuse had about the best instincts of art being swept away by the advanced industrial society. Just as in movies, where terrific conflicts usually end happily, and insoluble demons are defeated and the audience leaves slightly out of breath ("The summer's best ride!" say the critics, who are actually carney barkers for the movie industry), Marcuse sees the "higher culture" as being liquidated.

As modern classics, the avant-garde and the beatniks share in the function of entertaining without endangering the good conscience of the men of good will...the liquidation of the higher culture is a by-product of the conquest of nature, and of the progressing conquest of scarcity. Invalidating the cherished images of transcendence by incorporating them into its omnipresent daily reality, this society testifies to the extent to which insoluble conflicts are becoming manageable--to which tragedy and romance, archetypal dreams and anxieties are being made susceptible to technical solution and dissolution. (Marcuse, pg. 70)

I can find a great deal of critical empathy with Marcuse at this point, and I will continue to investigate movies as an example of the limitations and possibilities of popular art. The act of making a movie is in many ways an outlet for industrial society to allow its more bizarre impulses and questions to be ex-

pressed, while usually making a profit for the entrepreneur producer. Tragedy and romance, dreams and anxieties are all played out on the screen, made palatable, occasionally pushing the limits of common taste. At the end of the year, in a gushing act of self-aggrandizement, there is a glitzy awards show with actors and producers and speeches and film clips, all designed to show people around the world how wonderful movies are, especially the ones in the past year...this could exactly be what Marcuse meant by the word "manageable".

But can there be genuine works of art created from within this system, and can these works of art create entire worlds that stand in opposition to the grind of industrial society? Yes they can, but after forty years of watching, there are very few examples that cross over from mere escapism in a darkened theatre to enlightenment of consciousness, few examples that can leave the hearts and minds of the audience in an entirely different state of feeling two hours later on the streets outside the theatre. As T.S. Eliot wrote in an essay on poetry and drama:

It is ultimately the function of art, in imposing a credible order upon reality, and therefore by eliciting some perception of an order *in* reality, to bring us to a condition of serenity, stillness and reconciliation... (Eliot, pg. 87).

I have experienced that kind of serenity, stillness and reconciliation with 2001: A Space Odyssey, Apocalypse Now, and Schindler's List.

The third movie is the most debatable. It could be argued that instead of creating an entirely different world, the movie in fact only graphically re-created a particular part of World War II. It could also be argued that Steven Spielberg created the movie with an overt purpose to tell the Holocaust story through the eyes of his exceptionally crafted movie making skills, and thus he had a political agenda, an overriding purpose, other than art. We cannot guess at his purpose, he seems to have only said in interviews that it was time for him to tell a story of

the Holocaust, and his incredibly successful career of making entertaining movies allowed him the "clout" to get the movie made and distributed. On the other side of the question, his financial freedom possibly gave him more artistic license than perhaps any other director. Another criticism of the movie was that it had a political agenda, that it was driven by the didactic purpose, however noble, of trying to educate against discrimination and racism.

I have a great deal of difficulty reconciling my notions of independent art with my sensibilities on this part of our history. One of the most jarring and unforgettable events of my life was a visit I made to the Dachau concentration camp in 1975. I simply cannot forget the camp, the museum, and that building with the large ovens where people were burned alive. I have come to see that part of our history as pivotal--perhaps the darkest of times can reinforce our drives for tolerance and compassion and lessons learned at the cost of the lives of millions. And then the intellectual sensibility shows me another side of the complicated question: perhaps Marcuse is right, and this art is a way for the "insoluble conflicts to become manageable", for the darkest impulses to be expressed, quantified, dealt with, while the theatres make a profit (not Spielberg, he donated his profits to a Holocaust foundation) selling popcorn.

And so I stand baffled by the brilliance of the clarity of feelings when I watch the movie, by my confusion about whether it is art, about how our society manages to allow such brilliant pieces to be sent out to the public, how it is an outlet for liberal impulses of sympathy and sorrow, how it can reinforce in the viewer the need for tolerance and for the defense of the defenseless.

But I lean to Marcuse's side of the argument. Schindler's List fascinates me with the presumably accurate portrayal of the blandness of evil and mechanized violence, it brings me to shock and tears, but it is about something that happened more than 50 years ago. It doesn't effectively challenge the

current industrial state, it does not seem to do much to alleviate the suffering of the people who are dying of starvation right now--except to perhaps create a climate of sympathy in individuals who then in turn may act in a more humanitarian manner. As shocking and effective as it is, it remains like a painting in a museum that we can turn away from. It is an allowable expression in our industrial society to get rightfully indignant about genocide that happened in the past, and the further back the events, the less emotional we can be. Do we get equally rightfully indignant about William Wallace being executed in Braveheart, something that happened perhaps 700 years ago?

The most effective work of art that would challenge our society would be a story about what is happening right now in the slums of the African and Asian cities, about children starving to death on the streets, about women working 12 hours a day without making enough money to feed their children while the city environment becomes more and more polluted. Such a story would show how the invisible hands of multinational corporations are depleting natural resources like the rain forests and water, how local governments are either corrupted or in the trance of "development", or how innocent populations are massacred in the crossfire of two primitive armies, both of whom are supplied with weapons from reputable companies headquartered in the safe northern industrialized states.

Would such a movie be made? Would such a movie interest filmmakers enough to develop an interesting story line? Would such a movie threaten the image of certain multinational companies, who undoubtedly have share holding tentacles that reach all the way inside major Hollywood studios? I am sure Marcuse would agree with me on this: the Hollywood movie that tells the real story of what is happening right now in the world, cannot and will not be made.

Marcuse finishes this chapter with a commentary on sexuality.

The conquest and unification of opposites, which finds its ideological glory in the transformation of higher into popular culture, takes place on a material ground of increased satisfaction. This is also the ground which allows a sweeping *desublimation*.

Artistic alienation is sublimation. It creates the images of conditions which are irreconcilable with the established Reality Principle, but which, as cultural images, become tolerable, even edifying and useful. (Marcuse, pg. 72-73)

Marcuse continues on in the same paragraph to note that these changed images promote social cohesion and contentment. The next paragraph makes what I feel and think is a contentious jump from art to sexuality.

The Pleasure Principle absorbs the Reality Principle; sexuality is liberated (or rather liberalized) in socially constructive forms. This notion implies that there are repressive modes of desublimation, 15... It appears that such repressive desublimation is indeed operative in the sexual sphere, and here, as in the desublimation of higher culture, it operates as the by-product of the social controls of technological reality, which extend liberty while intensifying domination. (Marcuse, pg. 72)

The footnote number 15 makes reference to an earlier book Marcuse wrote called Eros and Civilization. I have no desire to comment on other writings of Marcuse, and for that matter, on what other writers say about him. I am only interested in One Dimensional Man. I fear that Marcuse is stating that humanity has those deep pools of sexual energy that when thwarted turn perverse. Coming out of the early part of the century in Europe, it is understandable that many intellectuals like Marcuse fell under the sway of Freud, who in his own way was a monumental force in changing the way medicine treated mental illness and regarded mental health. However, as I stated before, I feel those deep realms in the mind are possible but not provable. I will come to a partial agreement with Marcuse on this area: the forces of domination in our modern society seem to have granted more sexual freedom to individuals, and seem to have allowed more references to sexuality in public view (advertising for example), and have in fact found ways for businesses to profit from this

"liberation". In return, in a very generalized way, the machine of industrial society, that image of a factory on treads going over the surface of the earth, eating up the wilderness in front of it while "products" come out the back end, continues on and in fact is in acceleration. Therefore, the trade-off has been a productive one.

Marcuse then brings in the concept of libido, the pool of sexual energy that Freudian psychoanalysts call the

...instinctual craving or drive behind all human activities. (Landau, pg. 373)

Marcuse writes that the mechanization of industrial society has in fact "saved" some of the libido "the energy of Life Instincts" by virtue of the reduction of the number of hours needed to earn a living. But instead of the energy going into an entire landscape of effort as he says, instead of the home made loaf of bread taking a great deal of that energy, we have factory produced bread with time left over for everybody. Although this has reduced the amount of "misery, toil and filth", they were part of a background of "all pleasure and joy". As a result,

...a whole dimension of human activity and passivity has been de-erotized. The environment from which the individual could obtain pleasure...has been rigidly reduced. The effect is a localization and contraction of libido, the reduction of erotic to sexual experience and satisfaction. (Marcuse, pg. 73)

This emphasis on libido by Marcuse to me is an unnecessary diversion from his central arguments. He is certainly more of an expert on Freud than most scholars, but I cannot get interested in a general erotic impulse as being a driving force of humanity. As I wrote before, I rate the basic needs as being for food, clothing, shelter, sex and defense as most important, followed by the need for art and spirituality. It is also questionable to me whether the industrialization of our modern world has focused our instincts purely on the narrowness of sexuality, rather, I am certain it is reasonable to presume that the supposed

increase in human sexuality since the Victorian Age may simply be a fact caused by the increased amount of free time working people have and the fact that businesses are more open about profiting from sexuality. Marcuse notes the changes with these observations.

It has often been noted that advanced industrial civilization operates

with a greater degree of sexual freedom...

Without ceasing to be an instrument of labor, the body is allowed to exhibit its sexual features in the everyday work world and in work relations. This is one of the unique achievements of industrial society--rendered possible by the reduction of dirty and heavy physical labor; by the availability of cheap, attractive clothing, beauty culture, and physical hygiene; by the requirements of the advertising industry, etc. (Marcuse, pg. 74)

As a central point, Marcuse maintains that this management of the libido by the industrial society is even pleasurable for the managed individuals, and thus allows for the "voluntary compliance" of individuals with the main forces of society.

The technological and political conquest of the transcending factors in human existence...here asserts itself in the instinctual sphere: satisfaction in a way which generates submission and weakens the rationality of protest. (Marcuse, pg. 75)

As before, I will not venture into the areas of the possibility of the power of the libido as Marcuse does. However, I completely agree with the idea of a process generating submission and weakening protest, but for a much, much simpler reason: in our society, most of us have our basic needs met, usually rather comfortably, we even have relative freedom in matters of sexuality (even though there are grave consequences for not understanding limits of sexuality) and we even have time to dabble in spirituality and art if we want. In other words, as Marcuse said earlier in a different context, our society, for the most part "delivers the goods" and thus we have compliance and only weak protests.

Marcuse also blames the Superego, another Freudian term for the urge

to do the right and good thing, as censoring itself and thus accepting the faults, the lacks, and the “forbidden evil act”. Again, the analysis takes off in an unnecessary direction for my sympathy, but returns with a succinct point.

...loss of conscience due to the satisfactory liberties granted by an unfree society makes for a *happy consciousness* which facilitates acceptance of the misdeeds of this society. (Marcuse, pg. 76)

Are we totally in a happy world now? Are we in our happy consciousness more, or less aware of the plight of the world than we were in 1964? I could make an argument that we are more aware of the failures of industrial society than we were in 1964 for two reasons: one is that the gloss of “western” righteousness and fear of the “other” has disappeared with the pressure of so many disillusioning events that seemed for me to start immediately after this book was first published. The second reason is that it is impossible to keep out of most people’s consciousness the dark glimmer of the facts that the world is in some kind of danger, not only because of improved communications, but also due to the fact that the world really is in worse shape than it was in the mid-sixties, years that the historian calls the “Golden Age”.

...twenty-five or thirty years of extraordinary economic growth and social transformation, which probably changed human society more profoundly than any other period of comparable brevity. (Hobsbawm, pg. 6)

Most people today are aware of environmental degradation, economic stagnation in parts of the third world, and even a few are aware of the fact that we are facing a disastrous population explosion. But is it enough to mobilize our resources to action to halt the general degradation? No. Great efforts have been made by non-governmental agencies (NGO's) and the United Nations, but not nearly enough has been done. Marcuse predicted even then that the gloss and veneer of early sixties society would not be complete enough.

To be sure, there is a pervasive unhappiness, and the happy conscious-

ness is shaky enough--a thin surface over fear, frustration and disgust. This unhappiness lends itself easily to political mobilization; without room for conscious development, it may become the instinctual reservoir for a new fascist way of life and death. (Marcuse, pg. 76)

Although he seems to be basing his prediction for unhappiness on the frustration of Freudian desires, my simpler explanation would be that a kind of unhappiness based on a patchy social and familial fabric, and the inability of industrial society to "deliver the goods" all the time to all the people while maintaining an enormous governmental or institutionalized capitalistic presence, will give rise to a minor league fascism. We can see this in the spread of cults in the midst of the most prosperous countries, and in people like Timothy McVeigh and Ted Kascynski.

Returning briefly to sexuality, Marcuse compares the literature of the last century (Goethe, Baudelaire, Tolstoy) with it's "mediated, sublimated" sexuality as being inherently more potent and uncompromising, and thus more dangerous to the industrial society, with current (circa 1964) sexual practices.

In contrast, desublimated sexuality...is infinitely more realistic, daring, uninhibited. It is part and parcel of the society in which it happens, but nowhere its negation. What happens is surely wild and obscene, virile and tasty, quite immoral--and, precisely because of that, perfectly harmless. (Marcuse, pg. 77).

Marcuse has based some of the foundations of this chapter on his Freudian views. Both art and sexuality are seen as instinctual primitive urges that are often blunted, co-opted or repressed in the name of industrial progress. The price paid by individuals who obtain the "goods" is a happy consciousness with dark swirling undercurrents of urges blotting out their conscience and restricting their consciousness...he calls it an "atrophy of the mental organs for grasping the contradictions and the alternatives".

With Freud put aside, we are still left with a startling analysis of a smooth

society progressing through the diminishing frontiers on earth and now through the edges of space. Counter impulses are turned upon themselves and remain ineffectual.

In this general necessity, guilt has no place. One man can give the signal that liquidates hundreds and thousands of people, then declare himself free from all pangs of conscience, and live happily ever after. The antifascist powers who beat fascism on the battlefields reap the benefits of the Nazi scientists, generals and engineers...what begins as the horror of the concentration camps turns into the practice of training people for abnormal conditions--a subterranean human existence and the daily intake of radioactive nourishment. (Marcuse, pg. 80)

The substitution of the word polluted for radioactive is all that is needed to update this paragraph. If one were to link the consciousness of every human today, if we could think of ourselves as one human being existing in six billion manifestations, the overall awareness would be as Marcuse says, subterranean. Some of us in the prosperous world have a happy consciousness. Most of us outside that prosperity are too busy scratching a short living together before the impending gloom to have any more than edited glimpses of an unreachable distant city of gold filled with deluxe running shoes, sports figures and dinosaur movies.

And the few of us who maintain a functional unhappy consciousness without lapsing into addictions feel blunted, impotent. What difference does it make that we have a kind of careful sexual freedom, a multitude of entertainments instead of art, and the rare occurrence of a winning team? This unsuccessful world, as a single unit of consciousness, is on the edge of expressing itself, and with an ironic reversal, it might be in ways that advanced industrial civilization cannot repress or refute.

Chapter Four:
The Closing of the Universe of Discourse

Marcuse begins his longest chapter by reiterating his idea of the Happy Consciousness being a belief that the real is rational and that the system delivers the goods. He writes that the extermination camps from the last war are gone and the great nuclear war has not happened...and we now we see in fact the Communist "loss" in the Cuban Missile Crisis proved the forces of goodness were beginning to dominate, even the American Space Program was beginning to quickly close the gap on the Soviets at the time Marcuse was writing this book.

Torture has been reintroduced as a normal affair, but in a colonial war which takes place at the margin of the civilized world. And there it is practiced with good conscience for war is war. And this war, too, is at the margin--it ravages on the "underdeveloped" countries. Otherwise, peace reigns. (Marcuse, pg. 84)

Marcuse may have been describing the Vietnam War, or many other colonial skirmishes from the early sixties. He was remarkably prescient about this statement matching the final results of what happened in Vietnam. Although there have been wars with equal ferocity (Iran vs. Iraq), higher death tolls (Rwanda), and equally dubious military strategies (Afghanistan), Vietnam is distinguished by the fact the United States now acknowledges it "lost" the war, and by the fact there have been copious amounts of study and media coverage and public consciousness about that conflict, disproportionate when compared with other wars since 1964. One of the more interesting is Philip Caputo's A Rumor of War, an account of his time as a fighting lieutenant in Danang, 1965-66. It is almost eerie the way Marcuse predicted what would happen in 1964 compared to the way Caputo described what happened to himself and those around him only a year later.

There is also the aspect of the Vietnam War that distinguished it from other American conflicts--its absolute savagery. I mean the savagery that prompted so many American fighting men--the good, solid kids from Iowa farms--to kill civilians and prisoners.

General Westmoreland's strategy of attrition also had an important effect on our behavior. Our mission was not to win terrain or seize positions, but simply to kill: to kill Communists and to kill as many of them as possible. Stack 'em like cordwood. Victory was a high body-count, defeat a low kill-ratio, war a matter of arithmetic. The pressure on the unit commanders was intense, and they in turn communicated it to their troops. (Caputo, pgs. xviii-xix)

Caputo's statement of war being a matter of arithmetic demonstrates how language can be twisted, ironically or not, to make euphemisms out of the horrible. Marcuse concentrates in this chapter on how language is crimped, euphemized, diverted and re-invented so as not to disturb the Happy Consciousness.

This sort of well-being, the productive superstructure over the unhappy base of society, permeates the "media" which mediate between the masters and their dependents. Its publicity agents shape the universe of communication in which the one-dimensional behavior expresses itself. (Marcuse, pg. 85)

In the years since the time of publication, there has been another aspect that has strengthened the spread of Happy Consciousness, and the domination of the capitalist industrial machine over the surface of the world. The incredible increase in communications, and in travel and trade, which are another type of communications, are spreading those values, partially by means of the spread of the English language. I have mentioned the spread of Hollywood movies and their artless attitudes. The National Basketball Association has recently begun to outsell every other sport in its rate of growth--Mongolian tribesmen know who Michael Jordan is--and CNN has become a virtual world television network that has information and access often more direct than many government intelligence agencies. In addition, the quick spread and linking of the Internet has communicated the domination of powerful industrial societies.

Although the Internet does have a vast potential for alternative communication, the domination of control by large communications corporations (at the time I am writing this on my Mac computer, Bill Gates, who is now estimated to be the richest man in the world, seems virtually insatiable in his acquisitions or destruction of competitors, including the company that made this machine) will influence and ultimately license everything in the computer area, and they will of course be doing it in English.

This permeation of English throughout the world is significant, and although not forecasted by Marcuse, can be understood in terms of how that language has been and will be an effective tool for the spread of modern industrial values. I have already mentioned how English is now the second most popular language in terms of the number of speakers, how it is virtually everyone else's choice for a second language, and how English is spoken in more places of the world than any other language. English is the language of international air traffic, the language of sea captains, the language of 80% of the Internet, the language preferred for international business, the language for the most popular movies, and undoubtedly, with the fading of Russia, the preferred second language of Eastern Europe and space exploration. English was the language of the first telegraph, the first telephone, the first radio and first television broadcasts. A recent article in The Globe and Mail by two international correspondents (titled English Rules) updates the spread of English.

Throughout Eastern Europe, millions of Poles, Hungarians and Czechs who used to be forced to learn Russian have gratefully dropped that language in favor of English, which is not only the language of commerce and mass culture but of their future military allies.

Geopolitical changes elsewhere have served to strengthen English as well. In South Africa, the collapse of apartheid has undermined the official position of Afrikaans in favor of English. In Asia, English has become the *lingua franca* of business, displacing French in such places as Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. (Drohan, Freeman, *Globe*, pg. D1)

Although the spread of English had its beginnings in the dominance of the British Empire in the previous two centuries, the influence of the industrial might of the United States is now leading the world. The writers continue:

While America's victory in the Cold War can be credited to its economic and military might, it isn't just nuclear weapons and Stealth bombers that are winning the linguistic war for English. It is also the power of Hollywood and American popular culture. English is the language of T-shirts, rap music, advertising and MTV. American culture is an export industry that outranks Aerospace exports when it comes to Global penetration. And every can of Coke, rock-music CD or McDonald's hamburger spreads that culture a little bit further. (Drohan and Freeman, *Globe*, pg. D1)

Is English spreading because it is easy to learn? As a teacher I can say unequivocally it is *not* easy to learn. In Alberta elementary schools 40% of the curriculum time is allocated for Language Arts: reading and writing, and to a lesser extent, listening and speaking. Children often can give the clearest indications about inconsistencies in a pattern of learning, and there is a great gap between the logic of hearing and speaking (immigrants to English speaking countries know of this hardship too) and the rare rules and illogic of spelling, writing and reading. There are 26 letters in the alphabet, but 44 phonetic sounds from different vowels and consonants (O'Grady and Dobrovolsky, pg. 31). Some of the most popular words in English (and, the, of) are not verbs or nouns and are thus harder to learn. Of the 5000 most frequently used words in English, only 40% are actually English, 39% are derived from French, and 21% are from other languages. English has readily adopted words from other cultures to describe the expanding experiences as first the British Empire and then the American Industrial domination spread over the world. And sometimes the spelling was integrated with previous similar meanings, and sometimes not (for example, is it tipi, or teepee?) There are almost no spelling rules to teach children, and in fact the best strategy for learning to spell is not a mechanical

skill, but an attitude called a spelling conscience, where the writer simply makes any possible disciplined effort to correct errors. In the Drohan and Freeman article they quote the British linguist David Crystal from his book English as a Global Language.

A language becomes an international language for one chief reason: the political power of its people--especially their military power. (Drohan and Freeman, *Globe*, pg. D1)

Marcuse continues by noting how what he calls the "common man" has become very creative in the use of slang and colloquial expressions, and he notes a few from his era, some of which seem almost quaint now: "head-shrinker, egghead, boob tube, think tank, dig it, and gone, man, gone".

However, the defense laboratories and the executive offices, the governments and the machines, the time keepers and managers, the efficiency experts and the political beauty parlors...speak a different language and, for the time being, they seem to have the last word. It is the word that orders and organizes, that induces people to do, to buy, and to accept. (Marcuse, pg. 86)

I have always tried as a teacher to be, what is called by my university, a "reflective practitioner", that is, a teacher who continually thinks about a better way to teach as I work in my classroom everyday. Teaching First Nations children in an area that has 85% unemployment means the majority of the students are behind their grade level in measurable academic skills, even though most seem to have a kind of raw intelligence and a respect for the value of school. There was no clearer example of this than the year my own son was in Grade Six in an advanced (French Immersion) program in Lethbridge while I taught Grade Six on the Reserve. My son had the advantage of two parents who spent a lot of time with him, interested relatives, an early support and stimulation system to start reading skills, the benefit of travel and being included in adult conversations, and many toys and books. With all that in place, he was enrolled in French Immersion, a school program where he has been taught all

the academic subjects in the French language, with the exception of English itself. By the end of his year in Grade Six most of his Provincial Exam scores were in the exceptional range, but in the class I taught on the Reserve, the 24 students as a class, (some of whom seemed to be innately intelligent and as curious as my son) only two had individual tests scores in the exceptional range, while about 60% simply failed the exams.

Marcuse speaks of the "last word" as a means of the establishment always winning the language battle in its domination, and it was clearly evident in this mass of Provincial Exams that Alberta Education gives Grade Six students every year that their function is to intensify the testing of skill levels in English reading. There were five exams that year: Math, Science, Social Studies, a Language Arts reading comprehension test and a Language Arts writing assignment. If a student was a year behind in reading skills they were only likely to pass half of the Math exam, the half that did not have questions written out in three complicated sentences. The writing exam alone was two hours, an unusually lengthy exam for 12 year olds. The motives of this right of centre conservative government for bringing in such testing could include a desire to make students "accountable" (meaning, to put pressure on the teachers) or to "measure their success" (meaning, to see how they rate compared to other countries in the industrial world), or to simply attack liberal ideas of whole language instruction. The exams do not measure hard work (with the exception of the writing exam, all the others were multiple choice), the ability to work with other people, the ability to make choices in life based on moral issues or discipline, the ability of students to use their ancestors language or culture, athletic or kinesisthetic ability, or creative ability.

One exam in particular sticks in my mind. The student was a hard working, regular attending, respectful and funny girl. She wrote a brilliant story

for the exam about having a dream and becoming a duck, it was filled with humor and character beyond her years, and yet it received just a bare passing mark from the provincial marker. I concluded that the exams merely measured the ability to sit perfectly quietly in a classroom, and carefully read standard, complicated English. I can also attest to the fact that the exams are an ever higher standard that are notched up imperceptibly each year. When I was in Grade Six as a student 35 years ago, our Math consisted of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, now that is only half of what is taught. And the level of reading skills has also jumped in those 35 years, the program of Social Studies and Science has been intensified. Why, who needs this? Industry and government. Who loses out? The families on the margins here, and by comparison, the families in the third world. Only the very wealthy families in Burkina Faso, Bangladesh and Costa Rica could hope to have exam results close to that of my son, and to be realistic they would want to have those results come from their children who would write the exams in English, everybody's choice for a language of prosperity.

And yet the exams are valued, and all throughout North America exams like this are becoming more valued. Part of it is connected to this idea of having the last word. While colloquialisms and dialects rage around us, indicating real human response to the real world, standard English bends but does not break. It integrates the playful street language into advertising ("It's the real thing") and the artful visionary language of the movie Star Wars into the name for a nuclear defense plan in space...it is not the least surprising that copyright laws on this matter did not pertain, according to the U.S. court system, to the Ronald Reagan defense initiative. A great practical aspect comes into play here. If every English speaker began to write their spoken language phonetically, in a short time people from Newfoundland could not read a letter from Texas, and people

in Australia could not send an Internet message to a bilingual speaker in Bombay, their dialects would be too distinct. The language would break up into pockets of true self expression and response to reality, products like movies and the NBA could not be sold as easily and the Happy Consciousness of the great smoking cities of the industrial giants could not be spread as quickly. Marcuse writes of how the language integrates the language of protest and refusal, and instead of just seeing this problem as a characteristic of a dominant industrial force using "language" we can now see it as a way this force is using the "English" as a method of international domination.

How can such protest and refusal find the right word when the organs of the established order admit and advertise that peace is really the brink of war...

In exhibiting its contradictions as the token of its truth, this universe of discourse closes itself against any other discourse which is not on its own terms. (Marcuse, pg. 90)

Marcuse then points out how language in the popular media combines an identification of the person and function. He uses examples from Time magazine of the early sixties:

"Georgia's high-handed, low-browed governor...had the stage all set for one of his political rallies last week."

The governor, his function, his physical features, and his political practices are fused together into one indivisible and immutable structure which...overwhelms the reader's mind. The structure leaves no space for distinction, development, differentiation of meaning...(Marcuse pg. 93)

After giving a further example about how abridgements like NATO and UN do the same thing, Marcuse notes that the style is one of an overwhelming "concreteness", the thing is identified with its function. The basic vocabulary and syntax stand in the way of differentiation and separation.

This language, which constantly imposes images, militates against the development and expression of concepts. In its immediacy and directness, it impedes conceptual thinking...(Marcuse, pg. 95)

I am not enough of an expert at language to agree, or disagree with

Marcuse on this issue of the structure of language. I am convinced, however, that in the time that has passed since 1964, great quantities of information coming from the mass media have switched from the printed word to the television image. Although there is some sort of rebirth of a kind of literacy among the current 80 million Internet users who must read some text that comes along with their advertising and news reports, most people of the world get information from television. After all the sitcoms and dramas, after we drown in a flood of advertising, we are left with television news. And with television news, almost all of it is the image of the conflict or the traffic accident or the hurricane, the image of the news anchor with their sincere, polite tones, both verbal and facial, and their three sentence summaries of the most complicated situations. A few chat shows may have the beginnings of political debate, but they are relegated to odd hours on independent networks. The modern political leader, having won elections, knows exactly how to handle the situations: three sentence summaries of the most complicated situations in polite measured tones for the evening news.

A case could be made for this thought: although it may be a stretch of logic to agree with Marcuse on the structure of a language, especially the English language, impeding conceptual thinking, a much more cogent feeling of agreement could be made for thinking of language today as the language of television and radio and common printed media. Take an individual's favorite newspaper and magazines, radio stations, television programs and movies: a great mass of words, pictures and sounds that barely even mention the "hot spots", let alone the true nature of the crisis that the world faces. Thinking of that entire mass of communication as *a world of total language* (call it English Media Image Language), Marcuse's description now seems contemporary.

The unified, functional language is an irreconcilably anti-critical and

anti-dialectical language. (Marcuse, pg. 97)

Marcuse believes that this unified language is the largest dimension of thought in human consciousness, and it suppresses the other dimension, the historical dimension. He says that this is not an academic suppression, but a political one.

It is suppression of the society's own past--and of its future, inasmuch as this future invokes qualitative change, the negation of the present. (Marcuse, pg. 97)

After spending many pages to discuss how the true study of history can give rise to "dangerous insights", Marcuse uses the example of how this functional language was used effectively in the perversion of communism, from the thoughts of Marx, through Lenin, Stalin and post-Stalinist leaders. It would be far harder to be critical of our "western democracies" as having a language that "no longer lends itself to discourse at all". After all, those communists were just dictators, and almost all of them are gone, how can life under Clinton, Chretien and Blair and Helmut Kohl be as bad? Of course it isn't as bad, for don't we have the right to move around to find jobs, to have choices about leisure time, to have the right to write letters to the editor without fear of arrest, to vote, to form a lobby group? Yes, true, there are undeniable, qualitative differences.

But when we consider all the media that pours in on us, we are bombarded with an anti-critical language. We do remember history, but a very selective history: the history of communism, the holocaust, the American revolution, World War II. But as Marcuse says, the suppression of the past means that the future is limited, and thus real qualitative change is limited. The final judgment for me about the power of this "language" and its suppression of history, criticism and discourse, is the fact that the current world situation lives and breathes death, and we remain ineffectual. Yes we have freedom, yes we have comfort and good "products", nice "stuff", yes we can watch an obscure

television channel on Sunday at 9am that makes us think a little, yes we can dig up a journal on world affairs at the library or university, but we as a whole society are not doing enough. Over and over it returns to me, all our freedoms are only potentials, and any true language would lead us on to a method of finding truth in an action of relieving misery and death. A few pieces of a new language come through to us, and a few things are done: a recent television campaign, albeit after prime time hours, show the soon to be dead boy, lying on a bed looking at the camera, while flies buzz around his eyes. Then the image blacks out for a five second printed message: 35,000 die every day, you can help, call World Vision. That and one other ad on television six months ago is the only mention of this crisis in all the movies, television, newspapers, magazines and radio I have seen in the last year. I have to consciously dig and research to find information about it. So unlike a tyrannical system where truth is suppressed, while often flourishing underground, truth is suppressed today not through laws and secret police, but it is simply drowned out by ratio of the vast encompassing new English Media Image Language. So although we do not have, what Marcuse calls an "authoritarian ritualization of discourse", that is we don't run around a mass rallies shouting "Death to the Imperialist Running Dogs!" we do have a softer type of it flooding the world. See how Marcuse in 1964 matches his idea of language to this new English Media Image Language.

This language controls by reducing the linguistic forms and symbols of reflection, abstraction, development, contradiction; by substituting images for concepts. It denies or absorbs the transcendent vocabulary; it does not search for but imposes truth and falsehood. But this kind of discourse is not terroristic. It seems unwarranted to assume that the recipients believe, or are made to believe what they are told. The new touch of the magic-ritual language rather is that people don't believe it, or don't care, and yet act accordingly. (Marcuse, pg. 103)

Marcuse finishes this chapter with a section titled "The Research of Total Administration", a complex and difficult exploration into philosophical

foundations of individual thought.

What is taking place is a sweeping redefinition of thought itself, of its function and content. The coordination of the individual with his society reaches into those layers of the mind where the very concepts are elaborated which are designed to comprehend the established reality. (Marcuse, pg. 104)

To disagree with Marcuse would not be difficult. After all, we here in the free western democracies can go to university, study the great thinkers, will our way through the world using our freedom, think any thoughts we want and remain uncontaminated by the forces around us. We can resist advertising, quit smoking, vote for whom we please, eat healthy foods and avoid heart attacks, find a better job and turn off the television, right? Perhaps, as individuals, we can do most of those things, perhaps some, perhaps none. But my logic of judgment repeats to me that we should think of ourselves as one great human society, and with 40,000 people dying of starvation each day, with one-fifth of the world barely scratching out existence above the starvation line, that we are failing as a world, and therefore, our thought processes are controlled, somehow, by those that profit most from keeping things the way they are. That is, if our thought processes were freer, we would be able to improve our total society, given that it would be a natural impulse to do so, which I believe also to be true. In other words, we are failing as a world society, we are perhaps on the edge of an even more drastic collapse, therefore, our thought processes have been redefined as Marcuse says, perhaps stunted, controlled, perverted.

Marcuse writes that concepts can be universal, and essential to a particular thing. But concepts can also have a transitive meaning.

...they go beyond descriptive reference to particular facts. And if the facts are those of society, the cognitive concepts also go beyond any particular context of facts--into the processes and conditions on which the respective society rests...(Marcuse, pg. 106)

This going beyond the operational level into particular societal facts

leads to what Marcuse calls an "excess" of meaning, an excess that illuminates the deceptive form "in which the facts are allowed to be experienced." This in turn leads to a "false concreteness", something that is isolated from the conditions which constitute its reality.

In this context, the operational treatment of the concept assumes a political function. The individual and his behavior are analysed in a therapeutic sense--adjustment to his society. Thought and expression, theory and practice are to be brought in line with the facts of his existence without leaving room for the conceptual critique of these facts. (Marcuse, pg. 107)

If this form of society is the only reference point, this sociological and/or psychological adapting is valid, writes Marcuse, but if there is to be a larger critical analysis of the society, whether from some moral or international standard, this is not enough.

The therapeutic and operational concept becomes false to the extent to which it insulates and atomizes the facts, stabilizes them within the repressive whole, and accepts the terms of this whole as the terms of the analysis. The methodological translation of the universal into the operational concept then becomes repressive reduction of thought. (Marcuse, pg.108)

Marcuse then ends the chapter by giving examples over many pages referring to instances of how sociologists and psychologists use this type of process to "treat" the aberrations back into functionalization. The entire process becomes "circular and self-validating" and proclaiming

the existing social reality as its own norm, this sociology fortifies in the individuals the faithless faith in the reality whose victims they are... (Marcuse, pg. 119)

There could be a case made by experts in logic to say that Marcuse's steps of reasoning may be missing a point or two in his last 15 pages. After reading through it many times it does become clearer, but not easier. But rather

than dissect it further, I want to jump that process of those 15 pages on to a bridge of beginning and ending where I can return to agreement. This chapter was called *The Closing of the Universe of Discourse*, and through a method of controlling formal language, and by the spreading domination of English, and finally by the flooding of billions of minds by what I call the English Media Image Language, critical thinking has been shuttered. And for more than any other reason, I base my agreement on my own logic: if critical thinking were more successful and more amelioration of truth and historical fact were manifested, then this century and in particular this moment in time would be more successful (life supporting and humane) for the entire world. But the world is not successful enough, is perhaps heading towards an impending dark age, and thus it is entirely reasonable for me to agree with Marcuse when he says there has been a sweeping redefinition of thought itself.

History still gives us lessons, and a few images from my own studies remain sharply focused in memory. I am always wondering about how an unknowing society can come to believe its leaders who will soon lead them to death. The historian Hobsbawm notes that in the winter of 1932-33 44% of Germany was unemployed (Hobsbawm, pg. 93) and a then a few years later the entire country seemed unified, mobilized, optimistic. I cannot forget the visual power of the film *Triumph of the Will*, especially a scene where more than 100,000 soldiers stood at attention in a giant stadium, silently watching Hitler and two others silently march the length of the stadium to place a wreath at a monument to fallen soldiers. Was there a redefinition of thought in that time?

Another image comes out of Maoist China from Dr. Li's book on Chairman Mao. The great push to have the peasants make backyard steel furnaces was on in 1958, even though the little lumps of steel from the melted pots and pans were totally useless to industry. The doctor was travelling on Mao's train,

wondering aloud to a friend how the furnaces appeared so suddenly, and how at the same time, the rice crop looked so bountiful.

What we were seeing from our windows, Lin Ke said, was staged, a huge multi-act nationwide Chinese opera performed especially for Mao. The party secretaries had ordered furnaces constructed everywhere along the rail route, stretching out for ten *li* on either side, and the women were dressed so colorfully, in reds and greens, because they had been ordered to dress that way. In Hubei, party secretary Wang Renzhong had ordered the peasants to remove rice plants from faraway fields and transplant them along Mao's route, to give the impression of a wildly abundant crop. All of China was a stage, all the people performers in an extravaganza for Mao. (Zhisui, pg. 238)

Was there a redefinition of thought in that time?

I am afraid there is a redefinition of thought now, at this moment. Hitler and Mao were completely new experiences for Germany and China, and that was the closing of the universe of discourse that Marcuse describes. And now, because communism and fascism are defeated, we say such things can't happen here. But it is happening to our world in the way record numbers of people are dying of hunger and disease, silently falling into the dust or into sleep, and this is a completely new experience.

It is hard to break the bounds of society and think about redefining our thought process. Are we not successful, surrounded by signs of our hard work, correct thinking and luck?

Let me root this thought in one more immediate image. Here I am at the computer, it is the middle of July, 1997, in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. I am thinking back to two days ago when I was playing on a local golf course. It was late afternoon, the temperature was perfect with no wind, the sky clear, the surrounding coulee hills with their brushy semi-desert dryness in contrast with the silent river and the beautifully manicured course fairways. Small molded hills with trimmed grass roll on the sides of the playing areas, different

shades of green become apparent as the shadows get longer. I was playing well, the sky showing different blends of blue toward the east, and the controlled arch of the ball perfect as it rose up from the shadows, up to become graced with the receding sunlight dazzling white on the ball before it tumbled down to the green. How difficult it was to think of anything else but the moment and the surrounding scene--the course is aptly called Paradise Canyon, and regarded as one of the most beautiful in Canada.

But the course and the moment are symbolic. Golf courses are shaped in an obsessive-compulsive way, with nature completely tamed, groomed to a wealthy sport, with pesticides underneath and all around. Continual maintenance ensures nature--a weed perhaps, a blight on a tree--never interfere with this reality. It is a thin product itself, laid on top of the thin film of life support on our world. And as my ball rose up into the sunshine and back down again, I was struck by the beauty of the created moment: so completely placid I could not but help to rate it as an utterly peaceful time in my life in mid-summer. But I knew it was only part of our world reality, I knew the golf course was so beautiful as to be almost artificial, and I knew it was light years removed from everything I am trying to understand in Marcuse's writings, and everything I am trying to express.

I hope by beginning to think about it, on a serene early evening in Paradise Canyon I can keep opening up my own Universe of Discourse.

Chapter Five:
Negative Thinking: The Defeated Logic of Protest

Chapter Five is the first of three chapters on “negative” and “positive” thinking, negative being the critical process of not accepting all the happy consciousness that modern industrial society sends out to its citizens. Marcuse starts by repeating the statement heard in philosophy courses “that which is cannot be true”, and says that initially this makes no sense. But then by bringing in the opposite, “what is real is rational” he begins his argument. At this stage, after all the quotes and statements, it may be beginning to make sense that with all the disasters in this century, and all the death and misery at this moment, in spite of the great technological advances and wonderful lives a few of us live, the reality that we live in is not rational. Not rational in a moral sense, for why should we enjoy this kind of life while others don’t (just because we were lucky enough to be born here and not in a Calcutta slum), and not rational in a sense of all human peoples existing as one race destructively and exploitively coexisting with themselves and nature.

Marcuse maintains that the first idea, and even the second one, express the idea of the “antagonistic structure of reality” and of thought trying to understand reality. Since reality is antagonistic--and here he may unknowingly be thinking of European/North American modes of consciousness--it must therefore be conquered. There could be considerable argument made for the fact that the indigenous peoples of North and South America, and possibly Africa and Australia, and possibly certain Asian cultures, viewed reality as an organic whole, and that the human members had to live in a mode of care and respect for the physical environment. The antagonistic element may have arisen from Greco-Roman cultures that viewed the gods as occasionally

unfriendly and uncaring, or it may have arisen from Old Testament ideas of a harsh, unforgiving god. Regardless of origin, the predominant European/North American consciousness of reality seemed to be that of nature as being antagonistic, and was therefore something that must be conquered. This thinking seems to be very much alive in industrial society today, and in fact has taken hold outside of North America and Europe, first in the guise of colonialism, and now lately in "economic development".

Marcuse maintains that there is an equation of "Reason=Truth=Reality", and this joined the subjective and objective world into one antagonistic unity.

The totalitarian universe of technological rationality is the latest transmutation of the idea of Reason. In this and the following chapter, I shall try to identify some of the main stages in the development of this idea--the process by which logic became the logic of domination.
(Marcuse, pg. 123)

Advanced industrial civilization, Marcuse writes, is predesigned with the idea of Reason being a specific historical project. Although there are many different modes of thought, the stabilizing tendencies overwhelm the subversive modes of thinking until we have the "triumph of one dimensional reality over all contradiction". Marcuse believes the roots of this triumph go back to Plato and Aristotle. There is Being and Non-Being, and Truth is the way to understand what "really *is*". However, Non-Being is not just Nothing, it is a potentially destructive threat to Being, so therefore the struggle for Truth is the struggle against destruction.

Inasmuch as the struggle for truth "saves" reality from destruction, truth commits and engages human existence. It is the essentially human project. If a man has learned to see and know what really *is*, he will act in accordance with truth.

This conception reflects the experience of a world antagonistic in itself--a world afflicted with want and negativity, constantly threatened with

destruction, but also a world which is a *cosmos*, structured in accordance with final causes. (Marcuse, pg. 125)

On the next page Marcuse makes an interesting jump in his argument, not unreasonable to me. After establishing the idea that man has the faculties and powers of analysis to lead a "good life", it soon became apparent that value judgments will be made, that "freedom from toil is preferable to toil", and that an intelligent life has a better value than a stupid one.

It so happened that philosophy was born with these values. Scientific thought had to break this union of value judgment and analysis, for it became increasingly clear that the philosophic values did not guide the organization of society nor the transformation of nature. They were ineffective, unreal. Already the Greek conception contains the historical element--the essence of man is different in the slave and in the free citizen, in the Greek and in the Barbarian. (Marcuse, pg. 126)

It is difficult to imagine the society of Plato and Aristotle producing "scientists" in the way we think of scientists. It would be difficult to imagine a group of Athenian scholars, accustomed to understanding mathematics, or perhaps debating the values of the latest drama, suddenly turning around and issuing a report to their governing councils that science should now begin to break up value judgments and analysis. But I think if science is also considered to be a realm of practical science, where products are consistently made to scientific principles for the benefit of the market and the entrepreneur (perhaps as craftsman repeatedly using consistent production processes in order to dye clothing, or perhaps using scientific principles as a way to accurately navigate the Mediterranean Sea), then the pressure to divorce analysis from value judgment would come from the growth of Hellenic merchants wanting to consolidate their power and wealth. They, like business practitioners of today, would simply want to expand their markets using that kind of science, and were very rarely interested in value judgments. It wouldn't be until perhaps the last two centuries when some purveyors of scientific thought,

positioning themselves as the antithesis of religious superstition, would publicly demand a neutral science unencumbered by the limitations of religion . So instead of science with a capital "S", some great societal force willfully manipulating contemplative thinking, it was probably practical science just gaining ground and shedding non-pragmatic considerations.

Marcuse then moves on to his interpretation of the world view, promulgated by Plato and Aristotle, involving Finite Being, Logos, and Eros. He writes that Finite Being is incomplete realization, subject to change, and thus is not Truth.

The philosophic quest proceeds from the finite world to the construction of a reality which is not subject to the painful difference between potentiality and actuality, which has mastered its negativity and is complete and independent in itself--free. (Marcuse, pg. 127)

Marcuse interprets Aristotle, who wrote that the perfect higher reality, God, attracts the lower reality, manifested in Logos (logic) and Eros (erotic), when combined, are subjective and objective, creation and destruction, all in one. This kind of truth "transforms the modes of thought and existence". The idea of Reason, and the idea of Freedom come together in this attraction for the higher reality.

To Marcuse, the flaw occurs because there are parts of existence that can never be true because

they can never *rest* in the realization of their potentialities, in the *joy* of being. In the human reality, all existence that spends itself in procuring the prerequisites of existence is thus an "untrue" and unfree existence. Obviously this reflects the not at all ontological condition of a society based on the proposition that freedom is incompatible with the activity of procuring the necessities of life, that this activity is the "natural" function of a specific class, and that cognition of the truth and true existence imply freedom from the entire dimension of such activity. This is indeed the pre- and anti-technological constellation *par excellence*. (Marcuse, pg. 128)

At this point it might be easy to dismiss Marcuse for his "Marxist" interpretation, and he probably was at some time: it is indeed a jump, albeit a logical one to Marcuse, to presume that things are the way they are because of some split of thinking in Aristotle's time that had something to do with the fact that the success of Athens was largely due to the incredible numbers of slaves that were there to do the dirty work while the philosophers had time and freedom to think out loud. But is it? There would certainly be an attitude, pervading most of what was thought about, that certain types of work was meant for slaves, while other types were meant for women, and that only certain types of people--male citizens--could vote. Thus, what is real is rational.

Marcuse writes that from those beginnings, there is essentially no difference in kind between pre-technological reality of the ancient Greeks and technological reality of today's industrial society. The difference is only in how "earning a living" is organized, and by implication that I would add, by the number of machines that can automate the work process and produce a wider variety of "stuff" that we can purchase.

The classical concept implies that freedom of thought and speech must remain a class privilege as long as this enslavement prevails. For thought and speech are of a thinking and speaking subject, and if the life of the latter depends on the performance of a superimposed function, it depends on fulfilling the requirements of this function--thus it depends on those who control these requirements. (Marcuse, pg. 128)

All that we need change in this analysis is the phrase "class privilege" to "privilege of the prosperous billion" to make this a more contemporary analysis. For the pressure remains, except for those who are born into wealth and don't even have to work at any job in their lives, to work at some job of approximately 40 hours a week to earn money to continue to live. The variety comes in to play with the quantity and quality of work throughout the industrial

world: 40 hours a week in Canada might get you \$400, while 60 hours a week in Mexico City might bring home the equivalent of \$100.

...access to truth remains mere potentiality as long as it is not living in and with the truth. And this mode of existence is closed to the slave-- and to anyone who has to spend his life procuring the necessities of life. Consequently, if men no longer had to spend their lives in the realm of necessity, truth and a true human existence would be in a strict and real sense *universal*. (Marcuse, pg. 129)

Here I must disagree. To make a broad brush statement to the effect that if you have to spend your time earning a living you cannot have the access to truth goes against my own experience and knowledge. After all, Marcuse himself had to earn a living, and being a prominent professor of philosophy near the end of his life at North American universities he probably had his income move up into the upper middle class range, and yet he had time to perceive truth, as he saw it with his writing. I can say that I am *beginning* to have some understanding of the true nature of the world condition because I am a teacher in North America who can make an acceptable income by only working at teaching 41 weeks a year out of 52. I can also say that I had less of an understanding of this condition when I was working 60 hours a week, 50 weeks a year in business in Toronto. Factors of time, prosperity and discipline to consciously study and think and learn instead of becoming a compulsive consumer have a great deal to do with it. Where Marcuse and I converge again would be with the peoples of the world, perhaps half, who have to work so hard so long just to survive that the only time allotted to the pursuit of truth would come with organized religion, and many would argue that would be the numbing of the mind, or even the antithesis of the truth.

To Marcuse, this is a contradiction of the values of truth.

For philosophy, the contradiction is insoluble, or else it does not appear

as a contradiction because it is the structure of the slave or serf society which this philosophy does not transcend. Thus it leaves history behind, unmastered, and elevates truth safely above the historical reality. (Marcuse, pg. 129)

Marcuse then moves deeper with his analysis into the contrast between the thinking realm (two-dimensional thought) and the one-dimensional aspect of earning a living.

The ontological concept of truth is in the center of a logic which may serve as a model of pre-technological rationality. It is the rationality of a two-dimensional universe of discourse which contrasts with the one-dimensional modes of thought and behavior that develop in the execution of the technological project. (Marcuse, pg. 130)

After several pages of exploration of early philosophic ideas, Marcuse states that philosophy developed a "contradictory, two-dimensional" style that is the inner form of dialectical logic.

For example, it could be read as follows: man *is not* (in fact) free, endowed with inalienable rights, etc., but he *ought to be*, because he is free in the eyes of God, by nature, etc. (Marcuse, pg. 133)

Because of the two dimensional aspect of the argument, the difference between what is and what ought to be, it automatically forces philosophy to become a sort of political or societal philosophy, with half of its examinations looking over at the hard edged reality outside the realms of thought where people have to earn a living. This type of critical analysis of the outside world could become "subversive", however,

Thought has no power to bring about such a change unless it transcends itself into practice, and the very dissociation from the material practice... gives philosophic thought its abstract and ideological quality. (Marcuse, pg. 134)

It is this abstract quality that is the very life of thought, and yet it is the abstraction and the transcendent nature of thought that pulls it away from the "established societal universe".

At the classical origins of philosophic thought, the transcending concepts remained committed to the prevailing separation between intellectual and manual labor--to the established society of enslavement. With the exception of the materialistic "heretics" philosophic thought was rarely afflicted by the afflictions of human existence. (Marcuse, pg. 134, 135)

To Marcuse, philosophy has constructed a "realm of Reason purged from empirical contingency" and the two dimensions of thought no longer interfere with one another. He points to Aristotelian formal logic, where thought is organized in a manner very different from that of the Platonic dialogue, where "thought is indifferent toward its objects." Using the same laws of organization, calculation and conclusion, but translating the reality into symbols, things become abstracted "from their particular substance".

This general quality (quantitative quality) is the precondition of law and order--in logic as well as in society--the price of universal control. (Marcuse, pg. 136)

After re-reading the pages several times, it becomes clearer, and not unreasonable, to agree. Philosophy does continually abstract, does continually turn symbols and metaphors into practical statements, and then the statements can be turned into laws. It is simply impossible to know if this is what Aristotle meant, and a survey of Greek philosophy with a translator is not worthwhile. It may be equally logical to disagree with Marcuse: how could the intricacies of formal logic developed by Aristotle have anything to do with modern ideas of law and order, for that was a philosophy in another language, it was on the other side of the world, it was filtered through 2,000 years of cultural experience.

But instead of debating intricacies, I will bridge ahead a few paragraphs to where I can trust the sensibility of Marcuse.

The idea of formal logic itself is a historical event in the development of the mental and physical instruments for universal control and calculability. In this undertaking, man had to create theoretical harmony out of actual discord, to purge thought from contradictions...concepts become

instruments of prediction and control. Formal logic is thus the first step on the long road to scientific thought...(Marcuse, pg. 137)

Although there is a difference between the logic of Aristotle and modern logic, writes Marcuse, they are similar in their ordering of thought and the neutrality they have towards the content. It became "logical" to organize terms into the system of those which could be calculable, the objective, and the incalculable, the subjective.

What immediately follows on page 138 is a long, interesting and argumentative quotation that I will use as a place for a brief area of expansion of personal thoughts to end this chapter. Before that, there are two more sets of ideas worth noting.

On page 139 Marcuse writes of the sterility of "Aristotelian formal logic" and how philosophic thought developed alongside and even outside this logic. Logic continued as a special discipline that did not change despite new concepts.

Indeed, neither the Schoolmen nor the rationalism and the empiricism of the early modern period had any reason to object to the mode of thought which had canonized its general forms in the Aristotelian logic. Its intent at least was in accord with scientific validity and exactness... (Marcuse. pg. 139)

In contrast to this type of logic, Marcuse elevates dialectical logic. This logic, he writes is determined by the real, which is concrete.

It attains its truth if it has freed itself from the deceptive objectivity which conceals the factors behind the facts--that is, if it understands its world as a *historical* universe, in which the established facts are the work of the historical practice of man. This practice (intellectual and material) is the reality in the data of experience; it is also the reality which dialectical logic comprehends. (Marcuse, pg. 141)

Through this type of logic we can come to understand the work of the true historical subject: "man in his struggle with nature and society".

Reason becomes historical Reason. It contradicts the established order

of men and things on behalf of existing societal forces that reveal the irrational character of this order...(Marcuse, pg. 142)

This elevation of dialectical reasoning by Marcuse would be expected. From his own historical perspective, it was the foundation of the great alternative, communism, and although Marcuse, if he were alive, would certainly admit to the great failures of practical communism, and perhaps would not be too surprised by its demise, he would maintain that the ideals of dialectical argument were perverted by tyrants. At this time, it would be premature to go into lengthy analysis of the movement from dialectical reasoning to communism, with its failures and successes on some great checklist. Marcuse is most valuable when he uses his sharp analysis on contemporary industrial society, regardless of whether or not we believe most of our difficulties can be traced back to the sterility of Aristotelian logic. Look at his statement about formal logic back on page 138.

The elements of thought can be scientifically organized--as the human elements can be organized in the social reality. Pre-technological and technological rationality, ontology and technology are linked by those elements of thought which adjust the rules of thought to the rules of control and domination. Pre-technological and technological modes of domination are fundamentally different--as different as slavery is from free-wage labor, paganism from Christianity, the city state from the nation, the slaughter of a population of a captured city from the Nazi concentration camps. However, history is still the history of domination, and the logic of thought remains the logic of domination. (Marcuse, pg. 138)

With the sharpest of ironies, Marcuse points out the small difference between the Holocaust--a sacred cow for today's thinkers--and perhaps a war like the Crusades when Godfrey of Bouillon captured Jerusalem and then spent a week slaughtering all the citizens. The difference between the two might only be the technology and organization of the instruments of death (which could make the difference in the quantity of the slaughter), for both the

Nazi administrators and the Crusaders were absolutely convinced of the validity of mass murder.

Is it Aristotelian logic that is to blame for the rise of science, and is dialectical philosophy to be blamed for the perversions of communism? The question about blame arises, because in our, and my, eagerness to sort through the disasters, we hope for one secret cause, one factor not found that will explain the tragedies and give us a candle to light up our future.

But I doubt if we will find it, if it exists at all. The ringing truth of "history is the history of domination" is dulled by the possibility that the logic of thought is not necessarily the logic of domination. Far too many causes for justice were not based on any kind of logic, except for the logic of the spiritual fear that the non-believers were bedevilling the world. Science has developed its own neutral logic to explore, quantify, and reproduce results, and then to reproduce items on a production line. The application of science is totally at the will of individuals in control: Crusaders, Nazis, Communists, and Americans using physicists in Los Alamos to develop the Atom bomb.

I must return again and again to the fundamental "wrongness" of what is happening at this moment, to put these philosophical debates (formal logic vs. dialectical thinking) into an appropriate place. 14,000,000 people are dying every year from starvation, 1 billion people live in misery and close to death, the physical health of the planet is in danger and the world's population, and thus the numbers of people in misery, is increasing. The great industrial machine of capitalist domination seems to be unmotivated to do very little about it. The force of enterprise and self preservation for the advantaged is cloaked in a fog of ignorance.

Can science be responsible for this? No, because science is a mere instrument, and on the other side of the matter, if science could be blamed for it

share of misery, it should also be credited for the success that allows so many of us to live in comfort, here, and now.

Could formal logic be blamed? The link is possible, but tenuous for me. That method of thinking is a string that reaches back thousands of years, into another language and culture, and although still in use, I cannot yet see a strong enough connection. Marcuse titled this chapter "Negative Thinking: The Defeated Logic of Protest" as a way of saying that dialectical thinking and protest were on the losing side in the battle with the logic and science of the great industrial machines. I am equally certain that dialectical thinking is not necessarily the way, or at least the only way, out from under this situation of wrongness. If Marcuse could argue that formal Aristotelian logic and the development of scientific thought has led us to a modern time of industrial domination, which could even be extended past this book in 1964 to the moment of wrongness at this very hour, we could also argue that dialectical materialism led the world to the horrors of suffering caused by Stalin and Mao.

Out of this wrongness, and out of this ever-sharpening analysis, I come to the middle point of this study. Notions of what to do are dismissed: the problems too immense, the catastrophes too possible even amongst the most well meaning. But underneath, for me, certain ideas are taking shape, although I cannot yet build a great methodological foundation. I *can* base them on my reading, sensibility, experience--an inner method of logic that searches for the "rightness" of the potential for our world.

1. We must begin to think of ourselves being part of a great consciousness of humanity, and that we will not find comfort until all people in the world can work away from suffering. We must stop thinking as individuals, as mere families, communities, or even nations, and feel that our welfare is the welfare of the entire world.

2. We must find a way to come to terms with economics and integrate it into a new moral world consciousness.

3. We must recognize the power of the great industrial machines to absorb ideas of change and criticism while still maintaining domination.

4. We must continue to search through the mistakes of history and recognize how entire countries and political movements took disastrous turns despite the feeling of the populace that this was the best thing to do.

5. We must recognize the power of a capitalist English Media Image Language that will continue to grow and dominate with the expansion of television, movies and computer networks.

6. We must recognize that quantifiable improvements in the world situation are entirely possible and practical.

And the most vague of notions I have is that education, not just classroom education, but education from parents and elders, and the influence of the English Media Image Language, is a variable in this wrongness.

Chapter Six:
*From Negative to Positive Thinking:
 Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination*

With the first paragraph Marcuse continues the argument from the other chapters:

In the social reality, despite all change, the domination of man by man is still the historical continuum that links pre-technological and technological Reason. (Marcuse, pg. 144)

Here again I come to a fundamental question: are we not better off now than we were 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 years ago? Of course it depends a great deal on the "we". If I measure myself, someone who has lived all his life in peace and relative prosperity, who has more than six years of post secondary education and numerous interests and experiences, and a good family life, of course, I would be much better off than all but the wealthiest from any past era. But if the "we" were to include someone in our privileged land who is chronically unemployed and has numerous personal addictions, then perhaps there were many people living simpler and happier lives in pre-technological times. And then if I include the "we" to be people on the edge of just getting enough food and shelter to survive (Rifkin estimates that today 800 million people are unemployed or underemployed, and then add to that the fact that every year at least 90 million people are added to the world, most of whom are born into third world poverty) perhaps the two billion out of the nearly six billion alive at the moment aren't better off. Taking perhaps a third of our planet's people as being not as well off as the majority of people who lived in simpler agrarian or hunter/gather societies perhaps 1,000 or 2,000 years ago, the validity of our industrial world is completely on new and shakier ground. And with that validity, the urgency and assumptions of "economic development" and even the

"education" system that supports that development become less unquestionably awesome. What is the point of all this if we are not better off?

There are many counter arguments. The first of which is that we do not, and cannot know just how comfortable and satisfying it was to live in another time and/or another culture. It does seem that North American Plains natives had ample food, shelter, culture and relative peace before Europeans arrived.

Native economies in the Americas were not poorer, more precarious, or more miserable than their contemporary European counterparts. Indeed, recent studies of hunting and gathering societies suggest that the natives of the western interior may have lived a life of relative comfort and plenty. Skeletal analysis of palaeolithic remains in Europe and Africa, for example, indicates that the hunter-gatherers of the stone age were taller, stronger, and healthier than were the people in the intervening millennia...the argument that native societies were 'poor' depends of course upon our evaluation of material accumulation; if we agree that our human needs are finite...then these societies were as wealthy as they wished. (Friesen, pg. 20)

Some of the indigenous cultures of Central America were both prosperous and violent: I remember visiting the pyramids outside of Mexico City, and later reading that the top of the pyramids were perfect execution places needed to satisfy the bloodthirsty Aztec gods.

In the temple to Huitzilopochtli, atop the great pyramid in the centre of Tenochtitlan, Aztec priests slew countless thousands of human victims. The temple precinct, the altar, the priests themselves reeked of the blood of those sacrificed to keep Huitzilopochtli in his daily rounds as the Lord of the Sun. (Quirk, pg. 19)

And if some African cultures seemed to exist for decades in agrarian peacefulness, others were often murderously warlike. And in Europe, peasant life could be a model of sanctity, devotion and in spiritual terms, evolved consciousness--and just as likely to be short and full of ignorance, when not in the various tides of war, serfdom, famine, repression and disease. So how do we know which culture was better off?

The logic of the 2/3 versus 1/3 is hard to deny. Some would argue that

for 2/3 of the world today, most of whom are living in some kind of democracy, that the success of four billion people, and the great success of perhaps the top one billion that are leading the world in culture and technological achievements, indicates that we are better off. The reverse of this argument would be: no matter how brilliant the pictures of distant galaxies, no matter how many people brought back from the edge of death in hospitals, no matter how exciting our movies and music and running shoes and Nissans are, the moral dimension of having two people out of six suffering while others have more than enough for everyone to live comfortably is unforgivable. This situation, *morally* unforgivable to me, and probably equally so to any number of great historical characters such as Marx, Jesus Christ, and Muhammed, negates any argument about our world being "better off". Since we cannot go back into the past and compare arbitrary standards of happiness and contentment, we must logically rest in either of two assumptions, one that things are better now than ever, or two, that things for some on our planet are as bad as other times, and if not as bad, they are going to get worse. In addition, we must consider the fact that we are in a time of relative world wide peace: an outbreak of large scale war would push the judgment even more for our time being worse than other times.

And yet this notion of us being better off seems to go hand in hand with the idea of "new and improved" products as manifestations of a better life and, as Marcuse says, the Happy Consciousness. Which captain of industry said that his product is a perfect example of a better life? Perhaps none directly today (although Bill Gates comes close), but implicitly implied in every piece of advertising: this product will be better than the old, which you must jettison, and the new will make your life better. Whether it is the nauseating IBM TV commercial that shows how wonderful things are in the rest of the world when people get hooked up to the Internet with IBM, or the Saturn car that can now

keep up to the Porches on the racetrack, we are bombarded with advertising messages roughly equivalent to:

NEW=BETTER=FREEDOM IF YOU BUY IT=
WORK TOWARDS BUYING IT ABOVE ALL ELSE.

Marcuse writes that the only difference between pre-technological society and today is the "transformation of nature" which alters the base of domination from the King to the serf to a dependence on the "objective order of things", a more indirect and subtle control that, I would add, manifests itself in the rationality above.

The limits of this rationality...appear in the progressive enslavement of man by a productive apparatus which perpetuates the struggle for existence and extends it to a total international struggle which ruins the lives of those who build and use this apparatus. At this stage, it becomes clear that something must be wrong with the rationality of the system itself. (Marcuse, pg. 144)

Marcuse describes this rationality:

Scientific management and scientific division of labor vastly increased the productivity of the economic, political, and cultural enterprise. Result: higher standard of living. At the same time, and on the same ground, this rational enterprise produced a pattern of mind and behavior which justified and absolved even the most destructive and oppressive features of the enterprise. (Marcuse, pg. 146)

Now that Communism has crumbled as a form of government in all but a few states, analysis of the inner workings of these societies only seems to sharpen Marcuse's critical view. Marcuse was equally strong in his criticism of the totalitarianism of the modern industrial communist state, how they were even more obvious and less talented in their ways of "delivering the goods". We can now look inside countries like Russia, who are just opening their archives, and see how the most intelligent of its people bought into the tyrannical "reconstruction" and domination of their society.

A recent book by Pavel Sudoplatov is a good example. The writer

started as an idealistic revolutionary with little to lose in 1917, and a world of exciting opportunity to gain. He rose up through the secret service ranks, and soon was responsible for organizing assassination teams to wipe out the nationalist opponents (Ukrainian, Georgian) to Soviet communism. Although he never pulled the trigger himself, he was personally responsible for the deaths of six "counter-revolutionaries" or spies, including Trotsky. He continued to rise in the bureaucracy until he was only one rank below the Secret Police chief Beria, in charge of many international spy networks, and espionage against the attacking Germans in World War II. In addition, he was in command of the network that literally stole the entire design for the American A-bomb and helped Russia become a nuclear power, and thus enabled the Russians to be a balance to the Americans in the Cold War, and push the Doomsday clock closer to zero hour.

Hard at work inside the privileged Moscow bureaucracy he had only a hint of the domestic horror perpetrated on the millions outside of the area of Red Square, although he knew of the military purges, and of Beria's permission from Stalin to pay "the supreme penalty--shooting" to the 26,000 captured Polish officers in the Katyn forest in 1940.

But when Stalin died Beria tried to make a move for power and was soon arrested and shot. Sudoplatov was also arrested on trumped up charges, and spent the next 15 years in jail, sometimes in torture, sometimes in a self induced starvation coma to avoid more torture. More torture, he knew, would lead to the his confession of crimes he did not do, which would then lead to his own bullet in the back of the head.

At the end of the book in 1994, after his release, retirement and pardon by the new state, was Sudoplatov able to see beyond the thinking that as Marcuse wrote, "justified and absolved even the most destructive and

oppressive features of this new enterprise"? No.

Beria and his enemies in the leadership had identical morals. I agree with the writer Kiril Stolyarov, who said that the only difference between Beria and his rivals was the amount of blood they spilled. However, we must give them all their due. Despite their crimes, Beria, Stalin, Molotov, and Pervukhin succeeded in transforming the Soviet Union from a backward agrarian hinterland into a superpower armed with sophisticated nuclear weapons. (Sudoplatov, pg. 428)

We can only hope that we can learn to think outside of our own comfortable realm to understand the kind of mistakes that are happening, but instead of thinking in terms of a country, like Sudoplatov was unable to do, we must learn to think of things happening to our entire world.

Marcuse continues by writing about the separation of science from ethics.

The quantification of nature, which led to its explication in terms of mathematical structures, separated reality from all inherent ends, and, consequently, separated the true from the good, science from ethics. (Marcuse, pg. 146)

Marcuse follows his argument that nature is scientifically rational only in terms of the "general laws of motion--physical, chemical, or biological". Outside of this, we live in a world of values, and since the values are outside rational objectiveness, they become subjective, reached only through "metaphysical sanction".

Values may have a higher dignity (morally and spiritually), but they are not real and thus count less in the real business of life... The same de-realization affects all ideas which, by their very nature, cannot be verified by scientific method. (Marcuse, pg. 147)

All of these unscientific values--humanitarian, religious, and moral--are lumped together as factors of social cohesion, because they are only ideal. Thus their unscientific nature "fatally weakens their opposition to the established reality; the ideas become mere ideals:"

...they don't disturb unduly the established way of life, and are not inval-

idated by the fact that they are contradicted by a behavior dictated by the daily necessities of business and politics. (Marcuse, pg. 148)

I want to bring back my “morally unforgivable” situation of a few paragraphs ago to this analysis. To me, anywhere from 1.5 to 2 billion people living on the edge of starvation and in misery cannot balance out the “progress” of our century and its largely scientific achievements. To Marcuse, it is the nature of the modern industrial state that this “moral” concern be elevated into the realm of the ideal, far above the effectiveness of the practical business of life. Is there hope that the moral concern will thrive and help to turn around the situation? What if this analysis of Marcuse somehow miraculously becomes popular, what if educators begin to evaluate curriculums on the basis of world wide moral needs, what if the educators in our wealthy modern states raise several generations of students who learn of this moral concern, and turn it into some sort of action? Regardless of whether it comes from this piece of writing or someone else’s, how long will it take, 10, 15, 25 years, if at all?

I choose to be optimistic about the *possibility*. I take for an example the use of tobacco. In North America, cigarette smoking was regarded as an acceptable method of relaxation up until the early 1950’s. By the early 1960’s piece after piece of evidence began to pile up that smoking was detrimental to health. Today smoking in public buildings is rare, smoking is actively discouraged and small businesses are profiting from helping, or supposedly helping people to quit smoking. Although large numbers of North Americans still smoke, the number has declined significantly, and American regulators have recently been able to force manufacturers into admitting their products are addictive. However, the marketing push is now to sell more cigarettes in the rest of the world, especially the poorer countries where the medical and governmental resources against the tobacco business are limited.

Within 25 years, tobacco-induced illness is expected to overtake infectious disease as the leading threat to human health worldwide. Developing countries are especially at risk because more people are smoking.. than 20 years ago.

According to WHO, nearly one out of every five people on the planet smokes cigarettes. An estimated 800 million smokers live in developing nations. (McGinn, pg. 71)

The *moral ideal* would be to stop smoking, but for many it seems unreachable. (I used to smoke, only for four years as a youth, and I found it extremely difficult to completely quit.) But that is an *ideal*, and as Marcuse writes, that ideal should not interfere with the "daily necessities of business and politics".

Ann McGinn, writing in the 1997 "State of the World" book published by the Worldwatch Institute, points out how the necessities of that business and politics realm can even seem irrational.

It simply does not make economic sense for a government to promote smoking while at the same time bearing the brunt of health care costs caused by tobacco use. China exemplifies this irrational policy. The tobacco industry is China's largest source of revenue. Profits and taxes to the Chinese government totalled \$8.6 billion in 1995. Yet just two years earlier, the annual direct health costs and indirect productivity losses from smoking were estimated at \$11.3 billion by China's Academy of Preventative Medicine. (McGinn, pg. 73)

I can assume that China continues to promote smoking because the tax and profits are immediate revenue, while the health care costs may take several years to mount up as people may smoke for years or perhaps decades before hospitalization expenses are required.

I could choose to be optimistic about this particular situation because people in North America and Europe have proven that cigarette consumption can be drastically cut down. However, the pessimistic side shows that developing nations do not have the resources or political will to discourage smoking, and while the population of the world is increasing at the rate of 90 million a year, it is likely that the actual number of smokers will continue to

increase by millions every year. The competition between pessimism and optimism is handicapped by the fact that as more countries sink into economic crisis caused by increased population, environmental degradation and racial/ethnic tensions and wars, the quick fix of cigarette taxation becomes attractive. And thus the ideal remains above the business of reality.

Marcuse then spends several pages discussing the supposed theoretical limits of physics and science, as he understood them in his time. He maintains they all lead to an objectification of nature. He summarizes with what he calls a "less idealistic interpretation" from the philosopher Karl Popper. Throughout history science continually discovers and rediscovers the same reality, the exploration is just a matter of exploring further layers of the same objective reality.

In this process, the historically surpassed concepts are being cancelled and their intent is being integrated into the succeeding ones--an interpretation which seems to imply progress toward the real core of reality, that is, the absolute truth. Or else reality may turn out to be an onion without a core, and the very concept of scientific truth may be in jeopardy. (Marcuse, pg. 151)

It was obvious to Marcuse to say that science would not accept this idea of an onion without a core.

In other words, theoretically, the transformation of man and nature has no other objective limits than those offered by the brute factuality of matter, its still unmastered resistance to knowledge and control. (Marcuse, pg. 151)

This is a critical point in Marcuse's philosophy. Going back to his Introduction where he writes about the "experience, transformation and organization of nature as the mere stuff of domination" he has now, in his own analytic justification brought this point to us: modern industrial society is a great project to conquer nature, and even the brute edges of nature can only hold the project back for a short time.

A romantic description of breaking through this “brute factuality of matter” comes from the writer Tom Wolfe. When the American pilot Chuck Yeager became the first to break the sound barrier in 1947, he related the experience to Wolfe this way:

The X-1 had gone through “the sonic wall” without so much as a bump. As the speed topped out at Mach 1.05, Yeager had the sensation of shooting straight through the top of the sky. The sky turned a deep purple and all at once the stars and the moon came out--and the sun shone at the same time. He had reached a layer of the upper atmosphere where the air was too thin to contain reflecting dust particles. He was simply looking out into space. (Wolfe, pg. 47)

This kind of romanticism of technology is the critical fuel in the constant fight against the boundaries of nature--in the same book Wolfe refers to the “Right Stuff” that pilots and astronauts had to “push the edge of the envelope”. Marcuse continues:

The science of nature develops under the technological *a priori* which projects nature as potential instrumentality, stuff of control and organization. (Marcuse, pg. 153)

There is a slight hope now that this romanticism of technology has been blunted. The time of One Dimensional Man was the time of thousands of nuclear weapons pointed at targets, ready to launch within minutes. It was a time when the Soviets felt they could control national destinies of entire nations in Eastern Europe with weapons and ideological purity. It was a time when the Americans felt they could win a land war in Asia with technological and moral superiority. It was a time when President Kennedy would promise landing and returning from the moon before 1970, a seemingly brazen prediction about a monumental achievement of engineering, finance and will. As mentioned earlier, it was a time that Historian Eric Hobsbawm called the Golden Age.

An Age of Catastrophe from 1914 to the aftermath of the Second World War was followed by some twenty-five or thirty years of extraordinary economic growth and social transformation, which probably changed

human society more profoundly than any other period of comparable brevity. In retrospect it can be seen as a sort of Golden Age, and was so seen almost immediately after it had come to an end in the early 1970's. (Hobsbawm, pg. 6)

The last moon landing, Apollo 17, was December of 1972. By that time Kennedy, and probably his idealism, were murdered. The Soviet hold on Eastern Europe seemed strong (but now we see the seeds of dissolution were being sown by economic difficulties and a new post-revolutionary generation of Communist leaders), the Americans had ravaged Viet Nam while losing the war, and the very slow process of nuclear disengagement had begun--although we are still close to at least an "accidental" nuclear disaster. It would be acceptable to call the last moon landing the beginning of our post-modern world, and the writer Andrew Chaikin seems to hint at it in his book about the Apollo voyages when the optimism came off the edges of the technological vision.

Project Apollo remains the last great act this country has undertaken out of a sense of optimism, of looking forward to the future. That it came to fruition amid the upheaval of the sixties, alongside the carnage of the Vietnam War, only heightens the sense of irony and nostalgia, looking back twenty-five years later. By the time Apollo 11 landed, we were already a changed people; by the time Apollo 17 landed, we were irrevocably different from the nation we had been in 1961. It is the sense of purpose we felt then that seems as distant now as the moon itself. (Chaikin, pg. 583)

Marcuse next comes to an argument about the actual machinery of technology itself.

One may still insist that the machinery of the technological universe is "as such" indifferent towards political ends--it can revolutionize or retard a society.

This neutrality is contested in Marx's controversial statement that "the handmill gives you a society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill society with the industrial capitalist." (Marcuse, pg. 154)

In other words, rationalizers of science insist that it is not the nuclear bomb itself, not the pesticide, not the handgun or landmine that does the

damage, it is the people behind the scientific products that do the damage. As the American National Rifle Association succinctly summarizes it in a popular bumper sticker, "Guns don't kill people, people kill people". Superficially, that logic is undisputable, and as Marcuse writes:

True, the rationality of pure science is value-free and does not stipulate any practical ends, it is "neutral" to any extraneous values that may be imposed upon it. (Marcuse, pg. 156)

The flaw is looking at the instrument itself out of the societal context. If we look at just the handgun--which I did several times in the summer of 1975 when as a Canada Customs officer I confiscated handguns from seemingly nice American tourists--it *is* just a thing. If that handgun were taken out of its context and sent in a time machine 20,000 years back, it would simply atrophy in a swamp. But the handgun cannot be removed from its present day context. It was developed out of a specific need for one operator to pull its trigger and send a projectile hurtling at blind speed into the heart or brains of another human, to viciously rip apart networks of blood and nerves and bone and to terminate life. It was not meant to kill rabbits for food, it was not meant to continually fire bullets into painted plastic targets, it was not meant to injure humans in the foot so they could not move forward aggressively. It was designed by scientists and engineers, and it was created on a production line that used scientific techniques of precise, uniform replication so that the consumer could kill people if necessary. Whether we paraphrase Marx to say that the hand-mill gives you the society of the feudal lord, or reverse it to say that the feudal lord gave the impetus to design the hand-mill, practical science is inextricably linked to political/economic ends, and theoretical science is merely the cloudy vapor that will bring the certainty of rain.

An interesting historical note on the conflict of intelligent scientists

realizing that the transition from pure theory to realized production can be both quick and deadly can be learned from the study of the creation of the A-bomb. The bomb itself was pure theory, and a letter from Albert Einstein to President Roosevelt in 1939 prompted the Americans into action, fearing that the Nazi war machine would develop some sort of "super bomb". The Manhattan Project was soon started, and a collection of the most brilliant theoretical scientists, some of whom were from Europe and had unknown Communist or Socialist sympathies, were sequestered in Los Alamos, New Mexico. As the project unfolded, Robert Oppenheimer began to realize that the necessity of creating a "defensive" weapon to fight fascism would soon lead to its "offensive" use, far beyond the confines of World War II. He began to share his information with the Soviets.

We received reports on the progress of the Manhattan Project from Oppenheimer and his friends in oral form, through comments and asides, and from documents transferred through clandestine methods with their full knowledge that the information they were sharing would be passed on. (Sudoplatov, pg. 194)

Sudoplatov continues by documenting his knowledge, learned through an extensive secret agent network, of Oppenheimer's motivations.

Oppenheimer saw the threat and promise of the Atomic Age and understood the ramifications for both military and peaceful applications...we understood that he and other members of the scientific community were best approached as friends, not as agents. Since Oppenheimer, Bohr, and Fermi were fierce opponents of violence, they would seek to prevent a nuclear war, creating a balance of power, through sharing the secrets of atomic energy. (Sudoplatov, pg. 195)

Not only did war speed the transition from pure theory to manufacturing practice, it provided the context for the physicality of the weapons that we now have to live with. And as awful as it may seem to contemplate, it will only be a matter of time--perhaps as much as 100 years--before nuclear weapons are used. There are too many motivations, too many nations, too many scientists who can simplify the terrible production processes for it not to happen. The

nuclear weapon as a “thing” and the context from which it was created will not remain unused any more that the Magnum 45 handgun remained unused for civilian murder, it is only a question of accessibility. Marcuse would probably agree.

Observation and experiment, the methodical organization and coordination of data, propositions, and conclusions never proceed in an unstructured, neutral, theoretical space. The project of cognition involves operations on objects, or abstractions from objects which occur in a given universe of discourse and action. Science observes, calculates, and theorizes from a position in this universe. (Marcuse, pg. 157)

Marcuse continues his thinking to state that the scientific method provided both the practical production and the pure concepts for the domination of man by man through the domination of nature.

Today, domination perpetuates and extends itself not only through technology, but as technology, and the latter provides the great legitimation of the expanding political power, which absorbs all spheres of culture. In this universe, technology also provides the great rationalization of the unfreedom of man...(Marcuse, pg. 158)

Agreement comes from a more popular book and thinker, from exactly the same year of publication. Marshall McLuhan starts his first chapter of Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man as if he and Marcuse were intellectual twins (although we have no record of them having contact with each other in 1964, or of having read each other's books).

In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. (McLuhan, pg. 23)

Just as Marcuse sees domination through technology and as technology, McLuhan could see the domination of a medium as a message. And what is the future of this domination? Marcuse writes that it will be science, in theory and

practice, even before application is tied to a specific societal project. It is easy to see in retrospect how Communist societies used science to try to catch up with capitalist industrial and weapons production as a specific historical project. But now that the Communist opposition has collapsed from its own weight, what is our project today? We seem partially adrift in a post-modern sense after the conquest of the moon and the collapse of old empires. There also seems to be a growing cynicism caused by instantaneous, though selective, world wide communication of more and more knowledge of world suffering coupled with a sense of resignation to free range capitalism. I fear it is nothing but bringing more and more products to more and more markets, and the suffocation of any form that stands in the way as being undemocratic, or “unfree”. Perhaps the obviously non-business challenge of going to the moon for “scientific” purposes has been totally overtaken by economic project management involving “sponsors” and the “selling” of time or cargo space on the space shuttle. Now in 1997 American scientists trumpet the fact that the robot probe that went to Mars cost only about \$150 million, while there is unintended irony in the fact that the most expensive Hollywood movie yet, the Titanic, cost somewhat more.

In other words, the scientific universe would be the horizon of a concrete societal practice which would be preserved in the development of the scientific project. (Marcuse, pg. 160)

If, as Marcuse says, the scientific universe provides a horizon for our “concrete” societal practice, what is our current project, other than the transformation of nature (which could also mean today raw populations) into stuff, or products, or markets that will buy “stuff”? There is some romanticism in the

conquest of a specific continent, or a moon, but now that the romanticism has been stripped away, and while we may listlessly drift into nostalgia, it may be healthy for us to see through those romantic surface myths, into the real project.

Marcuse then spends several pages analysing Jean Piaget's "genetic epistemology", and then moves on to Husserl and the "socio-historical structure of scientific reason". Marcuse writes of the "mathematization of nature" trying to create an "autonomous absolute truth", and how geometry "idealizes" the practice of surveying and measuring nature, all of which is a "universal quantifiability" that is a "prerequisite for the *domination* of nature". This is what Marcuse calls "Galilean science", a way of methodical, systematic anticipation and projection that arose out of this deeper project. But because it arose out of this project, Marcuse maintains that it cannot transcend it. There may be an "inherent limit to the established science and scientific method" that will prevent us from "envisaging a qualitatively new mode of seeing".

The point which I am trying to make is that science, *by virtue of its own method* and concepts, has projected and promoted a universe in which the domination of nature has remained linked to the domination of man-- a link which tends to be fatal to this universe as a whole.
(Marcuse, pg. 166)

Marcuse speculates that a change in the direction of "progress"--something we can see that is more clearly needed now that it was 34 years ago-- would also affect the very structure of science, but at his time of writing he could only guess that science would end up with different concepts of nature and different facts. These would not be opposing truths but different facts, as if we could send out our spaceship of scientific verification in any one of five other directions.

Marcuse summarizes the chapter, but before noting that in the

“established universe” non-contradiction and non-transcendence is the “common denominator”, and before mentioning that some linguistic analysis will follow in the next chapter (as an attempt to show the “barriers”), Marcuse writes about a foreboding sense of gloom.

The world tends to become the stuff of total administration, which absorbs even the administrators. The web of domination has become the web of Reason itself, and this society is fatally entangled in it.
(Marcuse, pg. 169)

I had written in Chapter Three about the rare but actual times that in the realm of art truth and/or effective societal criticism can come through despite the fact that the artists may have been clearly compromised in the past, or have been motivated by means other than those of a more pure expression of creativity or thought. A fitting closing example to match Marcuse's thought of society being “fatally entangled” comes from the prosperous rock musicians The Eagles. In the song The Last Resort, the singer seems to refer to a civilization on the final edge of the frontier (probably California, their home) that is doomed. First produced in 1976 (perhaps the beginnings of Post-Modern consciousness seeping into the minds of artists and musicians) it remains simply evocative and even more relevant today.

Who will provide the Grand Design,
What is yours and what is mine?
'Cause there is no more new frontier
We have got to make it here
And satisfy our endless needs
And justify our bloody deeds
In the name of destiny
And in the name of God...
(Henley/Frey)

Chapter Seven:
The Triumph of Positive Thinking: One Dimensional Philosophy

One-Dimensional Man is divided into an Introduction and three sections. The first four chapters are under the title One Dimensional Thought, the second section, One-Dimensional Thought, contains chapters 5, 6, and 7, and the last section, The Chance of Alternatives, has chapters 8 and 9 and the Conclusion. This chapter then is the last of the chapters that analyses Marcuse's view and research of our modern industrial society. The concluding section looks at our possibilities as Marcuse saw them in the early sixties.

Chapter Seven starts with an investigation of linguistics, and leads on to a critique of the philosophy of positivism, a school of thought that Marcuse believed was dominating modern thinking. In the course of this investigation Marcuse summarizes, sometimes very evocatively, his main themes of how "one-dimensional" our society and thinking are, and how we seem to be trapped in a "totally manipulated and indoctrinated universe". (The end of this chapter reaches page 199 in the 1964 Beacon Press edition; Marcuse's last section on "Alternatives" is only 54 pages past that. Thus the scope and detail of the analysis is about 80%, and the *possibility* of alternatives is a mathematically depressing 20%, a ratio I tended to agree with even before I started my Introduction.)

The redefinition of thought which helps to coordinate mental operations with those in the social reality aims at a therapy. Thus, linguistic analysis claims to cure thought and speech from confusing metaphysical notions--from "ghosts" of a less mature and less scientific past which still haunt the mind... The emphasis is on the *therapeutic* function of philosophic analysis--correction of abnormal behavior in thought and speech, removal of obscurities, illusions, and oddities... (Marcuse, pg. 170)

Inside any beginning Linguistic textbook--I will use the O'Grady and

Dobrovolsky book I struggled through a few years ago-- there will probably be a statement about how "creative" human language is, and then a statement pointing to the need for language constraints.

Constraints are essential to the viability of the creative process. If well established words were constantly being replaced by new creations, the vocabulary of English would be so unstable that communication would be jeopardized. (O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, pg. 2)

Although taken out of the context of a thoroughly respected volume, I am certain the authors mean perhaps not just words, but the entire structure of speaking. Rules of English grammar do make allowances for totally new words, and as I wrote in a previous chapter, English is a continually changing language, expanding across the globe with the number of speakers, with the geographical networking with the capitalist media, and with the continual integration of new words. The controlling aspect of written grammar, taught with great diligence by well meaning teachers exactly like me, keeps the most creative aspects of street experience and language limited to poetry and song lyrics. The most stilted types of language, that of the lawyers who interpret and make laws, remain virtually unmoved, and for most people, uniquely and deliberately mysterious and boring.

The classroom teacher in me responds to the curriculum. How do I teach what we call in our Province, Language Arts? On the margins of our successful materialistic culture, a group like the First Nations suffers immeasurably from unemployment and poverty. There are direct correlations between the level of education attained and employment, and from my experience, the amount of hope in each parent's heart for the welfare of both themselves (adult education) and their children. And not surprisingly, the weakest part of every student having difficulty in academics is their reading skills. The more successful the

student is with reading, the formalized decoding of our language, the more likely they are to advance in formal education and thus have more opportunity for economic stability. At the current time, if a First Nations person completes their first university degree, their chances of employment are actually slightly greater than a non-native person, due to the numerous Canadian Government programs of assistance in hiring and job creation, usually directly on the Reserve.

Knowing this, I teach honestly: that is, I know the better I am at my job of teaching Language Arts, the more likely my own particular students will be at finding a better economic situation than their parents. At the same time, I know this is due to current policy, and that in the past the teaching of native children was virtually devoid of any great level of optimism that the majority of Canadian parents could feel about their children participating in “education” for a “better future”. I also have seen far too many children sitting only one desk away from me, struggling with the incredible vagaries of English spelling, trying desperately to uncode a swamp of meaningless patterns in a language where half the letters are silent, the shadowy look of defeat and incomprehension already built into their 11 year old faces.

But with this particular honesty, I also know that in the time that has passed since Marcuse published this book, the academic standards have been raised, supposedly to meet the “demands” of our society, which really mean, the perceived need from the business and science sectors of our economy. Like the bar in the high jump competition, like the ante in a poker game, or like the number of missions Yossarian needed to finish his tour of duty in the novel *Catch-22*, a level of qualification always seems out of reach. When I was in Grade Six, all I learned was to add, subtract, multiply and divide. When I taught Grade Six, all that was taught, along with ratios, per cents, five sentence word

problems, countless variations of operations with fractions and decimals, as well as perimeter, area and volume and many other ideas. When I was in Grade Six, Social Studies consisted of Canadian and British Commonwealth geography and history. When I taught Grade Six there were very extensive programs for study of China, Ancient Greece and Government, and the students had to be able to summarize information in order to manipulate concepts of rights and responsibilities, and wants and needs. The reading level of most of the questions on the Grade Six Provincial Exam were often beyond that of the Grade Level and even of the textbooks. It was almost as if the exam was designed as a barrier, using the reading of English like it was a foreign language for the marginalized.

In the past 35 years, I would roughly estimate that Grade Six math has jumped two years in the skills needed, while Social Studies has jumped by perhaps one to one and a half years in the skill levels needed. And while the skill levels of the First Nations people have jumped a great deal--more high school and university graduates, more students passing Provincial Exams--compared to the increase in the levels of educational achievement in the rest of Canada, it is not significant. In 1971 6.6% of the males and 3% of the females in Canada had a university degree; in 1991 12.8% of the males and 10% of the females had a degree, basically doubling for men and tripling for women. In 1971 the percent of males having less than Grade Nine education was 33.2; in 1991 it was reduced to 14.3%. (Columbo, pg. 71)

This raising of the standards and levels of educational attainment within our developed countries clearly not only tends to keep the marginalized groups on the margins (while holding out the legitimate chance for the best students of all groups), it also keeps the third world countries from gaining ground in the spheres of academics, science and technology.

In the developed world, the U.S. leads with 23% holding a university degree. Canada came second with 15%, then Japan (13%), and Sweden (12%). (Columbo, pg. 74)

Eric Hobsbawm offers more detail, and it is startling.

...in an increasingly globalized world, the very fact that the natural sciences speak a single universal language and operate under a single methodology has paradoxically helped to concentrate them in the relatively few centres with adequate resources for their development, i.e. in a few highly developed rich states, and above all, in the USA. (Hobsbawm, pg. 524)

With this concentration of educational attainment and scientific research in the "have" countries, it would be easy to be sympathetic to Marcuse's prediction that linguistics would continue to identify

...as its chief concern the debunking of transcendent concepts; it proclaims as its frame of reference the common usage of words, the variety of prevailing behavior. With these characteristics, it circumscribes its position in the philosophic tradition--namely, at the opposite pole from those modes of thought which elaborated their concepts in tension with, and even in contradiction to, the prevailing universe of discourse and behavior. (Marcuse, pg. 171)

Marcuse writes that these modes of thought are "negative thinking", and that this kind of negative thinking can lead to the development of concepts, and is in fact a distinguishing quality of Reason. However linguistics moves within a framework that does not allow for such contradictions, and is thus, as a science, limited to only a therapeutic function.

On the next page Marcuse details his research into the words "positive" and "positivism" by going back to the philosophic school of Saint-Simon. In the end, positivism is

a struggle against all metaphysics, transcendentalisms, and idealisms as obscurantist and regressive modes of thought. Philosophic thought turns into affirmative thought; the philosophic critique criticizes *within* the societal framework and stigmatizes non-positive

notions as mere speculation, dreams and fantasies. (Marcuse, pg. 172)

Marcuse continues by writing that this positivism has become the technological reality. Everything outside this world, "unconquered, blind nature", is now within the reach of science and progress. And not only does that mean that the power of science and technology continues on, it is in fact aided by the lack of opposition from philosophy. Many pages further into the chapter, Marcuse notes that almost all of the philosophical arguments are reduced to "academic game playing", and as he writes at this stage

It leaves the established reality untouched...(Marcuse, pg. 173)

I find merit in this argument, but I listen to my own objections. After a number of philosophy courses, but with an admitted limitation on the quantity of philosophic readings, I can say that I find philosophy and university philosophy departments (Marcuse maintains they are dominated by positivism) full of *ineffectualness*. Very little seems to change in the world, while the philosophers, most of whom have academic (often tenured) appointments, talk, muse and teach about thinking, about thinkers, and publish articles about thinking and thinkers. As these philosophers teach perhaps 10 hours of classes a week, and research and write and publish, very little of what they do seems to change the general direction of society. They remain well paid, ensconced in their chairs, "protected" from the comings and goings of public opinion. It is as if industrial society has this release valve for academic arguments: let the philosophers criticize, to a degree, let them publish articles in journals that a handful of academics read, let them occasionally publish 1000 copies of a book. Most of the time the work is about arguments thought about in the past, and therefore of little threat to the movement of modern industrial society.

There are other sides of this argument. First, Marcuse himself was comfortably ensconced at a university position, and had in fact, like other

American university professors, been forced to take some sort of academic oath not to teach ideas that could possibly lead to the overturning of the US government. (This was particularly significant, and significantly enforced during the American involvement in the Viet Nam war.) Another point of opposition is that while the philosophers remain ineffectual, they are in fact training thousands of undergraduates in different modes of thinking: possibly leading those new thinkers into opposition, or the opposite, imbuing them with a sense of defeat and academic isolationism.

I do find philosophers ineffectual. But I have also come to learn that bits of philosophy, amplified by personal agendas, can become mass movements with the widest possible range of moral implications. Communism came into being in Russia for many different reasons, but a small part of the impetus (or perhaps rationalization) came from Karl Marx's philosophic analyses. Hitler's infatuation with nationalism and racial purity gave him license so that he and his theorists could dip into the contexts of Nietzsche's ideas any time the need arose. Mao Zedong was intelligent enough to read deeply into Chinese and Marxist philosophy and construct his own idealism (to suit his more pragmatic purposes, often with very elegant writing), all the while deeply mistrusting philosophers and academics in general.

Those bits of philosophy weren't ineffectual, in fact we have a very clear knowledge about which of those bits of philosophy were far too effective. Effective is in this case philosophic thought leading to action, and any intelligent reading leads me to realize that Marcuse wants an effectiveness that will criticize and help improve the course of industrial society. And surely, Marx and Thomas Jefferson and Adolf Hitler and Mao Zedong wanted the same thing, at least early in their idealistic stages. What is the difference? How do I know my concern for criticism and effectiveness will not lead us to more misery, and not

less?

I don't. I only have the knowledge that our current situation is irreparably bad, and getting worse every minute with the pressure of increased population and environmental degradation. The philosopher's ineffectiveness seems to be part of the problem: possibly our most intelligent people sit in their chairs, withdrawn into games of publish or perish, delving into deliberately arcane language.

Moreover, all too often it is not even the ordinary language which guides the analysis, but rather blown up atoms of language, silly scraps of speech that sound like baby talk such as "This looks to me now like a man eating poppies," "He saw a robin," "I had a hat." Wittgenstein devotes much acumen and space to the analysis of "My broom is in the corner." (Marcuse, pg. 175)

There is no doubt to me that writing extensively about a broom in the corner does, as Marcuse contends, leave our "established reality untouched". And now is not the time to leave our established reality untouched. Again and again, I go back to the barest of facts: 40,000 people, mostly women and children are dying every day. 40,000 divided by 24 is 1,666 per hour, about 28 per minute, or about one every 2 seconds. In the time it takes to read "My broom is in the corner", a person dies needlessly. A philosopher in a chair muses thoughtfully on the sentence, turns it over in his mind. In that time, a starving child raises himself out of the dust in Central Africa, brushes the flies away from her eyes with her last reservoir of energy, and then collapses down, mouth open, into the dust, the light of consciousness gone from the eyes. The philosopher is still sitting in the chair.

But what is the most effective action, and from what philosophy? Friends and colleagues and thinkers hover around my shoulders. Allan, how do you know what to do, which bits of philosophy will lead to the best solution, which chunks of economics will help the most people? Will it be capitalism, will it be

the spreading of wealth, will it be a mixed economy, will it be foreign aid, will it be from charity movements like World Vision or from the Mother Teresa's of the world, will it be armed intervention against maniacal tyrants who would rather kill political enemies than feed their people, will it be from wealthy people like Ted Turner committing to give \$100 million a year to the United Nations?

The possible fields of action seem to multiply with the increasing knowledge of the predicament. And those hovering at my shoulders are asking: what philosophy will you base this action on? There are thousands of books and hundreds of schools of thought. Books and books full of complex, confusing analyses that are usually very hard to read. Books and books that seem to deliberately obscure meaning in the guise of intelligence. Books and books that seem to say: if the philosophy is simple, it can't possibly be important or intelligent. Books and books that seem to be a self-perpetuating industry of deliberate and ineffectual confusion.

My philosophy is founded on everything I have read, everything I have experienced, and on myself as a judgmental filter that has lived all my life in a time of peace and in a place of prosperity. My philosophy is not arrived at with 300 pages of byzantine language; in fact it will be audaciously simple, despite the prejudice that such a philosophy cannot be serious.

Human beings are potentially the most fully realized beings that we know about. To be less than realized, to live in misery and pain, is against Reason. Like all biology, the natural, automatic procedure is to flourish, but unlike virtually every other life form, we have the ability to engineer and control and bring an expanded flourishing to our lives. Human beings have shown potential for intelligence, creativity, compassion and achievement far beyond any other life form. Every human has this potential, therefore, every life should be protected and nourished in this direction. And this potential is not fully

realized until every life is protected and given a chance to fulfill its own potential. When every life has been protected and is on the way to fulfillment, then the arrangement of human affairs should proceed with these guidelines : the most good for the most people.

Everything else should be a rational expansion of the preceding paragraph. If that means that population growth should be limited so that all living people, and not just two-thirds, can have an adequate chance at fulfilling their potential, so be it. If 50 years from now it means population can be increased because scientific advancements permit, so be it. If that means some forcible sharing of wealth from the rich to the poor, so be it. If that means that our educational institutions must find ways to teach the gravity of the worldwide situation so that the conditions for this protection and fulfillment of billions of human lives is possible, so be it. The times of survival of the fittest, and the voracious, exploitative, short sighted industrialism that goes with it, have to end.

This is not a uniquely original way of thinking, nor is it a particularly complex philosophical foundation. In fact, it is a kind of utilitarianism.

The basic formula of the utilitarians-- "the greatest good to the greatest number" --reflects this interest. All of the utilitarians--Bentham, Mill, and Sidgwick--were concerned with the elaboration and refinement of this formula...(Jones, pg. 303)

However, the administration of this philosophy will be the most monumental of tasks involving every sphere of realized activity, and beyond these very few suggestions, I refuse to go further. There are more intelligent experts, more specialists who could rise to the challenge, but most important, the administration of this philosophy will change as the situation changes.

It is perhaps now a little easier to see the attraction the criticisms of someone like Marcuse has to those who believe in this philosophy. The old way of simply stoking up the industrial machine, and converting "nature" into

"stuff" belongs to the times when there was a physical frontier, and it is now a dangerous and spent philosophy.

The self-styled poverty of philosophy, committed with all its concepts to the given state of affairs, distrusts the possibilities of a new experience. Subjection to the rule of the established facts is total--only linguistic facts, to be sure, but the society speaks in its language, and we are told to obey. (Marcuse, pg. 178)

Marcuse writes that there is an "irreducible difference" between the world of everyday thinking and language, and the world of philosophic thinking. Exactness and clarity in philosophy cannot be attained in the world of ordinary discourse. When philosophy finally does get to the place where it can finally and accurately describe all the conditions happening with the broom in the corner, or with another example, the taste of pineapple, can it

...ever serve as a critique in which controversial human conditions are at stake? (Marcuse, pg. 180)

These conditions arise out of a larger universal context that we all live in and act in. Marcuse writes that the positivist analysis cannot take into account this larger context. In a lengthy and remarkable passage, Marcuse describes this larger context.

This larger context of experience, this real empirical world, today is still that of the gas chambers and concentration camps, of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, of American Cadillacs and German Mercedes, of the Pentagon and the Kremlin, of the nuclear cities and the Chinese communes, of Cuba, of brainwashing and massacres. But the real empirical world is also that in which all these things are taken for granted or forgotten or repressed or unknown, in which people are free. It is a world in which the broom in the corner or the taste of something like pineapple are quite important, in which the daily toil and daily comforts are perhaps the only items that make up all experience. And this second, restricted empirical universe is part of the first; the powers that rule the first also shape the restricted experience. (Marcuse, pg. 180)

To Marcuse, linguistic or philosophical analysis of the broom in the

corner is not enough, because it springs from the same universe that brought us both the concentration camps and the Cadillacs. There is merit in investigating the history in everyday speech.

To be sure, such statements can reveal many ambiguities, puzzles, oddities, but they are all in the same realm of language games and academic boredom. (Marcuse, pg. 182)

Positive thinking and positive philosophy continues on its way, working only within its scientific realm, clearing up little scientific ambiguities, developing reproducible results, but ignoring the "great and general ambiguity and obscurity" of the larger total universe of experience. Any attempt at this largest of mysteries and the nature of the suffering millions of people are enduring at this moment would interfere with the scientific (business) of production. Any attempt to use inexact, vague or even contradictory language results in the labelling of the material as "poetic" or "metaphysical" as the

most effective way of protecting the normal universe of discourse from being seriously disturbed by unfitting ideas. (Marcuse, pg. 184)

As we move closer to the close of the millennium, it seems more "unfitting" ideas are appearing over the horizon. Too many people are dying of starvation for the mass media to ignore. Too many corporations are trying to sell products to an underdeveloped world that can only pay for them with natural resources or cheap labor. Too many corporations are automating their factories or putting the production process out to laborers in the third world countries, making the products unaffordable for both the laid off workers in the old country or the poorly paid workers in the new country. Developing countries want all the products the developed world has, and will rip up their forests and cultivated fields to make room for factories and highways, leaving them with too

little food and too much industrial waste. Many governments condemn warfare while private industries within their borders make great profits selling weapons.

Marcuse spends many pages analysing this paralysis of philosophy to apprehend the “unfitting”, tracing it back to the difference between Aristotelian and Galilean concepts. Although the philosophic universe has “ghosts”, “fictions” and “illusions”, analytic philosophy debunked the illusions, “but also the truth in those illusions”.

...a whole body of distinctions which men have found worth drawing is rejected, removed into the realm of fiction or mythology; a mutilated false consciousness is set up as the true consciousness that decides on the meaning and expression of that which is. The rest is denounced--and endorsed--as fiction or mythology. (Marcuse, pg. 188)

Marcuse then notes that the process of “civilization” invalidates myths as being primitive and immature thought (think of the Greek myths--once a religion, now simply interesting stories) but that often rational thought is also turned to mythological status. He gives the example--debatable in 1964 as it is now--of the theories identifying historical possibilities (Communism) as being made to appear irrational.

Thus, in the process of civilization, the myth of the Golden Age and the Millennium is subjected to progressive rationalization. The (historically) impossible elements are separated from the possible ones--dream and fiction from science, technology and business. (Marcuse, pg. 188)

When the myths were separated from the “rational” aspects of society, they could be manipulated, brought in and taken out at will, depending on the political aspirations of those in power. Marcuse called this the “shift in the locus of mystification”.

It was the total mobilization of the material and mental machinery which did the job and installed its mystifying power over the society. It served to make the individuals incapable of seeing “behind” the machinery

those who used it, those who profited from it, and those who paid for it.
(Marcuse, pg. 189)

Marcuse was referring to the Fascism that he himself just barely escaped.

A frightening exposition of the education system under Hitler that adds color to Marcuse's statement that those swept up by this mystification cannot see "behind" it. Two sources in particular are of interest: Blackburn's Education In The Third Reich, and Erika Mann's (daughter of novelist Thomas Mann, a contemporary of Marcuse) School For Barbarians. Blackburn detailed in several chapters how Hitler and his theorists pulled out the necessary bogus ideas from Nietzsche, from Wagnerian opera, or by their own simple invention.

The National Socialist educational philosophy assumed, above all, the malleability of human personality and the capacity of a modern totalitarian state to shape in a predetermined form the youth entrusted to its schools. German youth, for the most part, proved receptive to simplified heroic legends and to black and white comparisons, and German teachers succumbed just as meekly to Nazi *Gleichschaltung*, or coordination. (Blackburn, Preface)

Erika Mann's book, published in 1938 is filled with examples of how the curriculum had been changed to suit the needs of the Nazi's. Math problems were changed into calculations of bomb loads, chemistry lessons were devoted to studying the effect of poison gas, and art was for the depiction of battle scenes. She wrote in her chapter titled "Heil" how no German group was more affected by the change to dictatorship than the children.

...but the German child is a Nazi child, and nothing else.
He attends a Nazi school; he belongs to a Nazi youth organization;
the movies he is allowed to see are Nazi films. His whole life, without
any reservation, belongs to the Nazi State. (Mann, pg. 19)

For a specific example, Mann recalls the use of "Heil Hitler", an abomin-

ation of the German word "Heil", which actually means salvation.

Every child says "Heil Hitler!" from 50 to 150 times a day, immeasurably more often than the old neutral greetings. The formula is required by law; if you meet a friend on the way to school, you say it; study periods are opened and closed with "Heil Hitler!"; "Heil Hitler!" says the postman, the street car conductor, the girl who sells you notebooks at the stationery store; and if your parents first words when you come home to lunch are not "Heil Hitler!" they have been guilty of a punishable offense, and can be denounced. (Mann, pg. 21)

Marcuse then compares the Fascism of that time with "today", which is of course the Cold War times of the early sixties.

Today, the mystifying elements are mastered and employed in productive publicity, propaganda, and politics. Magic, witchcraft, and ecstatic surrender are practiced in the daily routine of the home, the shop, and the office, and the rational accomplishments conceal the irrationality of the whole. (Marcuse, pg. 190)

Step ahead another 34 years to the time of the late 1990's. Erika Mann wrote in a time of totally oppressive Fascism; Marcuse wrote in a time of near total "free-world" acceptance of the attitudes of the Cold War where every industrial product was an example of the quality of a nuclear armed ideology in opposition to communism. What are the mystifying elements of our day?

One aspect represented in television commercials is a bogus kind of globalism. Whether it is Archer-Daniels-Midland's "Feeding the World", IBM's glorification of five or six different "ethnic" looking communities hooked up on the Internet with their computers, or AT &T's latest quick cut/rock music imagery that has something to do with telephones and communications research with a beautiful image of the earth in space, it is all a mystification of their corporate goal to have larger international profits.

Another mystifying element is this great diversion into the logic of professional (including the Olympics and World Championships) sports. In such competitions the goal isn't really to win, but to be able to reduce all the

variables of competition so that one can say that this person is faster than this other, that this soccer team has a better win-loss record, that this player can be counted on to score from outside the three point circle. Inside each sports' rules is a system to simplify competition so that we can really compare, and a television broadcasting license that slows down, replays and glorifies each meaningless step, swing, kick, jump or shot. The entire package is a delivery system to the consumer that glorifies specific skills, endurance, strength, and often courage (but rarely intelligence) and is therefore simplified life. The difficulty is in the enormous amount of time and energy billions of people put into watching and dreaming about sports. The youngest of these billions of people dream of becoming professional athletes with million dollar contracts, but in reality only a few thousand achieve it for a few years. And all the while the teams are professional businesses, and their games are televised with ample commercial messages for companies like ADM, IBM and AT&T.

A third mystification is with the romance of democracy. A quick confusion has developed between capitalism for businesses and individuals, and the process of adult voters selecting representatives who design the laws and budgets that control their countries. Since communism "collapsed" democracy "won", and the simplified logic is that capitalism is part of democracy and is therefore the best way to organize the production and distribution of goods in the industrial machine. A current manifestation of this is the general optimism felt about the North American economies. Now in the winter of 97-98, in my small city of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada an economic forecaster by the name of Garth Turner comes into town. Sponsored by an investment firm, he is polished, amusing, intelligent. He has been the Minister of Revenue for the Canadian government and a published writer of several books on investment. He mounted statistic after statistic, graph after graph of how the stock market *is*

the economy, of how over the last 40 years the stock market has consistently increased with a better rate of return on investment than anything else. Look, he says, unemployment is around 8-9% in Canada but 5% in the USA. Other than that, these are the best times we've ever had. Look, he says, inflation for us is 1.8% a year, interest rates are the lowest in 40 years, look the deficit is turning into a surplus, look the American economy that we are tied to is even stronger. Get a mortgage on your house now, and take the money and invest it in something like mutual funds, the interest on the loan will only cost you about a third of the profit you will make on the stock market. And this will continue for another 10-15 years as the baby boomers earn the most money they've ever made. And furthermore, he says, we have all this, and we have peace.

Indeed. We have peace. We don't even have nuclear weapons from opposite sides of the globe within a hair trigger of being set off, like we did in that other time of economic boom, "The Golden Age" as the historian Hobsbawm calls it. In fact we only dream about nuclear war through the movies Hollywood creates when some incompetent and/or greedy Russian steals and sells the weapons off to some smaller, more ideological customer. Indeed, we have peace, and the mystifying process is warm and comfortable. So what if two days after Garth Turner filled his Lethbridge audience with optimism and plans for mortgages and diversified portfolios I manage to catch the World Vision television commercial on an American network that illustrates again that 35,000 people are dying every day from starvation?

Marcuse is not optimistic for the chance of most people to see beyond this mystification.

In speaking their own language, people also speak the language of their masters, benefactors, advertisers. Thus they do not only express *themselves*, their own knowledge, feelings, and aspirations, but also something other than themselves. (Marcuse, pg. 193)

Marcuse writes that when we express ourselves we are forced to use the terms of our “advertisements, movies, politicians, and best sellers.” This results in both a mystification of perception (incoming) and confusion of communication (outgoing).

“What people mean when they say...” is related to what they *don't* say. Or what they mean cannot be taken at face value--not because they lie, but because the universe of thought and practice in which they live is a universe of manipulated contradictions. (Marcuse, pg. 194)

In the end, Marcuse maintains, with a bit of irony, that philosophy, by aiding in the clarification of those contradictions, could actually become “therapeutic” in the sense that it would lead us to a more effective criticism and exploration of possible alternatives.

Philosophy approaches this goal to the degree to which it frees thought from its enslavement by the established universe of discourse and behavior, elucidates the negativity of the Establishment (its positive aspects are abundantly publicized anyway) and projects its alternatives. (Marcuse, pg. 199)

To Marcuse in 1964, he was in a totalitarian era, albeit a much more pleasant one in the United States than it was in the Germany he fled in the 1930's, or the Soviet system he studied from the US State Department in the 1940's. In some sort of ultimate nightmarish way, we might be now in the most totalitarian of all times. Because we up here in the penthouse of the world allow our corporations (funded by our purchasing of mutual funds) to exploit the poorer countries while we sell them myths of “development” we excuse the daily death of 35,000 as a necessary price of having a large world. And because our current system, as Marcuse says, “delivers the goods” more effectively than either the Nazis or the Communists, it is likely to remain unchanged and un-

challenged for even longer. And when investment forecasters like Garth Turner take their overhead chart medicine show on the road to small places like Lethbridge and proclaim that “we have all this, and peace too” we find it all too easy to believe every single word. Marcuse says these words are coming from an established universe of ordinary language, but this universe of ordinary language tends to coagulate into a totally manipulated and indoctrinated universe. (Marcuse, pg. 199)

Thus ends Marcuse’s eight part analysis of One Dimensional Society and One Dimensional Thought: a totally manipulated and indoctrinated universe. Part of me, like every reader, is probably saying, yes, our industrial society seems to be grinding along, bumping into the absolute limits of the frontiers and turning back on its own tracks and breathing its own exhaust. Then another part of me says “But we have...” and then we should stop. It is true, “we” have so many things, but not “we” in the global sense. And it is this, the truest sense of the meaning “we” that we must keep in our minds as we look at alternatives, in spite of the coagulation of language in the manipulated and indoctrinated universe. For language and philosophy has proven to be exactly like the industrial machine we live in, capable of turning in on itself and breathing its own exhaust.

Chapter Eight:
The Historical Commitment of Philosophy

Marcuse introduces the idea of *universals* to show how philosophy is committed to the “mutilated reality of thought and speech”. For some reason he does not define these universals for another eight pages, so I will jump ahead to set the frame of reference. Writing that these universals seem to “designate the ‘stuff’ of the world”, he defines them as

...primary elements of experience--universals not as philosophic concepts but as the very qualities of the world with which one is daily confronted. What is experienced is, for example, snow or rain or heat; a street; an office or a boss; love or hatred. Particular things (entities) and events only appear in (and even as) a cluster and a continuum of relationships, as incidents and parts of a general configuration from which they are inseparable; they cannot appear in any other way without losing their identity. They are particular things and events only against a general background which is more than a background--it is the concrete ground on which they arise, exist, and pass. This ground is structured in such universals as color, shape, density, hardness or softness, light or darkness, motion or rest. (Marcuse, pg. 211)

Marcuse wrote previously that philosophy tried to “exorcize” these myths and “metaphysical ghosts”, and now he maintains that “the ghost continues to haunt”.

These universals continue to persist in common as well as “poetic” usage. (Marcuse, pg. 203)

Contemporary literary commentators would agree, perhaps only referring to them with different names. The literature critic Northrop Frye spent most of his life organizing and understanding all literature in terms of recurring patterns of myths, symbols and archetypes. A writer did not simply create a story or poem, it arose out of a complex and rich literary history that could be made up of what Marcuse calls universals.

The unity of a work of art, the basis for structural analysis, has not been

produced solely by the unconditioned will of the artist, for the artist is only its efficient cause: it has form, and consequently a formal cause... every poet has his private mythology, his own spectroscopic band or peculiar formation of symbols, of much of which he is quite unconscious. (Frye, pg. 11)

Marcuse believes that if we cannot actually verify these universals or mythological/symbolic ideas without looking at the "whole" as an "unmutilated experiential context" (Frye seemed to spend his whole academic life, and wrote half a dozen books building an elaborate structure of criticism), they are simply dissolved back into "modes of behavior and dispositions". A consequence of this dissolution is a depersonalization of responsibility. When a universal such as the "university" or the "Pentagon" (not just the physical building at the moment, but a history and a cluster of relationships)

operates as an entity different from its component parts--to such an extent that it can dispose of life and death, as in the case of the nation and the constitution. The persons who execute the verdict, if they are identifiable at all, do so not as these individuals but as "representatives" of the Nation, the Corporation, the University. (Marcuse, pg. 205)

These entities are much more powerful than the individuals inside them, and they produce an ultimate, universal reality, overriding the peoples subjected to it.

The real ghost is of a very forcible reality--that of the separate and independent power of the whole over the individuals. (Marcuse, pg. 207)

On the other side of that reality is the individual's consciousness--a "disposition, propensity, or faculty" that is common to separate members of a group, class or society.

On these grounds, the distinction between true and false consciousness becomes meaningful. The former would synthesize the data of experience in concepts which reflect, as fully and adequately as possible, the given society in the given facts. (Marcuse, pg. 208)

This consciousness produces a tension between the mental processes, and

the conscious acts. For every act completed, there were other alternatives not completed, they are “negatively present” as an environmental force which precondition the mind to reject certain data. These things are present as “repelled material”, their absence is a reality. This tension is just like the universals themselves.

It seems that the persistence of these untranslatable universals as nodal points of thought reflects the unhappy consciousness of a divided world in which “that which is” falls short of, and even denies, “that which can be”. (Marcuse, pg. 209)

The apprehension of the beautiful, Marcuse says, is easy to understand because it is directly and clearly experienced by many people. What is not often consciously experienced, due to what he calls the “contrast-character of beauty, is the opposite “negatively present” reality. Like the other alternatives not completed, looking at a rose with four different shades of deep red woven into folds of petals holding crystal drops of spring rain could produce a look into a reality of ugliness, depression, or suffering. Like my own scene of the golf ball flying peacefully up out of the dusk into the last rays of the sunset on a calm summer evening, I find myself forced to think of the unfortunate children of the world, struggling to get enough to eat before they try to fall asleep.

Marcuse prefers Stendhal's definition of beauty as the “promise of happiness” because it refers to a condition in which things “occur momentarily while vanishing” because when vanishing they manifest the many potentialities of what a thing could have been. This aspect of the “vanishing” nature of things and people is particularly haunting for me. Not only is there a wraith-like quality

to the vanished children starving on the plains of Central Africa or in the slums of polluted, corrupt cities--they could have been so many other potentialities--there is a sense of vanishing in every family that has children. Nothing is closer to me than my wife and son. There is an essence of vanishing about my own self and my wife, for we grow old together, our bodies acquire lines and defects, and slowly our lives, like everyone else's, is a march toward disfigurement and death. But the most wistful of all of these "vanishings" is the growth of our son. There is a great profundity in the simple phrase older parents say to each other: "they grow up so fast", for that is a saddened recognition that time is moving relentlessly and that there are only so many opportunities for enjoying the company of your children and guiding their approach to life. When the last child finally leaves the home the total reality of so many other possibilities (what Marcuse called "negatively present") strikes at the parents--what was right, what went wrong, why was this path taken?

This negative presence is not necessarily negative in any system of value judgment, just a series of options not ventured into. For example, experiencing something frightful makes one feel thankful for sanity and health. The recent book Seasons In Hell by Ed Vulliamy graphically illustrates the primitive horror of the Bosnian War that was fueled by rabid racist nationalism. Here he interviews a young Muslim in 1992:

He concentrates hard as he recalls seeing two brothers hauled off his bus by Serbs looking for men of fighting age: 'They took them to the edge of the bridge, above the riverbank, and kicked one of them over the edge. The other tried to run away, but they grabbed him and threw him over as well. Later, a Chetnik put a gun into a child's mouth and said that they wanted any jewellery and money we had, and if we did not give it to them, he would blow the baby's head off.' (Vulliamy, pg. 141)

After reading that I immediately felt myself putting my arm around my son, who

wasn't really there, but safely in bed asleep, and I told him that I loved him, wondering about the luck we have had to live in peacetime, and prosperity.

Just as there is a negative relation to all things, Marcuse writes that these actual and negative relations and potentials combine into a "whole", and this "whole" shows the total difference "and tension between potentiality and actuality".

And by virtue of this relation, the concrete quality seems to represent a negation as well as realization of the universal. Snow is white, but not "whiteness"; a girl may be beautiful...but not "beauty"; a country may be free (in comparison with others) because its people have certain liberties, but it is not the very embodiment of freedom. Moreover, the concepts are meaningful only in experienced contrast with their opposites: white with not white, beautiful with not beautiful. (Marcuse, pg. 213)

Marcuse continues by maintaining there is more in the abstract noun beauty, than there is in the quality beautiful. This "substantive universal" (beauty, for example) is the actual "stuff" of our world, and it designates potential in a "concrete, historical" sense.

Thus the concept of beauty comprehends all the beauty not yet realized; the concept of freedom all the liberty not yet attained. (Marcuse, pg. 214)

Immediately following is a significant marker that denotes Marcuse's disposition as a thinker. While musing about "universals" he seems as ineffectual as the other philosophers he had criticized, but with the following it is easier to see the gradations of his reasoning and the hard, realistic background that his One-Dimensional Man springs from.

The philosophic concepts are formed and developed in the consciousness of a general condition in a historical continuum; they are elaborated from an individual position within a specific society. The stuff of thought is historical stuff--no matter how abstract, general, or pure it may become in philosophic or scientific theory. (Marcuse, pg. 215)

Commentators will say, "Ah, yes, the Marxist historical background", and that is acceptable, for Marcuse in his life witnessed Communism as the great alternative, he watched the process move from Communist theory on paper to Communist government with nuclear weapons. However, the Marxist interpretation of historical theory was one of just many potentials that could have been followed at the beginning of the twentieth century, just as the Global Capitalism model is one of many options for the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Although I have little patience for the validity of Marxist theory, there is a great ringing of truth for me in the idea that the "stuff of thought is historical stuff". After teaching for years on a First Nations reserve here in Alberta it was soon easy to see how the thoughts and attitudes of many of the children have a lot to do with that community's 85% unemployment rate. That unemployment rate has a lot to do with attitudes of defeatism and isolation fostered by a paternalistic white government that in the last century was unable to stop the slaughter of the buffalo, and willingly encouraged the pressure of European immigration, which led to the treaties that gave away 99% of the land of Alberta in return for blankets, rifles, subsistence food and "Christian" education.

Another example would be Eric Hobsbawm's Age of Extremes. Seeing the Twentieth Century as a unit that started with the First World War, and ended with the collapse of Communism, he showed that there was a line of factors and causation from one era to another: the European Depression an extension of the cost of World War I, the rise of Fascism due to both of those, the strength of Communism arising from the defeat of Fascism, nuclear weaponry arising out of World War II, the Cold War partially attributable to the spread of nuclear weapons, the Cold War standoff partially resulting in the Space Race, and so

on. And Ed Vulliamy, in the previously mentioned and acclaimed book on the Bosnian war, Seasons In Hell, details the extensive mesh of history that goes back almost a thousand years that allowed for the worst of the racist nationalism to be manifested, led on by shrewd orators seeking to solidify their political positions as the Communist government was imploding.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is a much-invaded, much trodden-upon country which has emerged, been submerged and re-emerged over a millennium. It has never had the national-racial identity of Serbia or Croatia, and has been variously claimed and overrun by both. (Vulliamy, pg. 29)

An eloquent final example of “the stuff of thought is historical stuff” comes from fiction.

“ ‘Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past,’ ” repeated Winston obediently. (Orwell, pg. 204)

The influence of history, Marcuse writes, is vital in the creation of “projects”. These are the great motives that guide all our thinking, conscious or unconscious, whether that is the regular business of getting up every morning and going to work, or in the musings of philosophy, the expression of art, or the pushing of the frontiers in science. The world of objects, according to Marcuse, is a world of a specific historical project.

I have used the term “project” so repeatedly because it seems to me to accentuate most clearly the specific character of historical practice. It results from a determinate choice, seizure of one among other ways of comprehending, organizing, and transforming reality. The initial choice defines the range of possibilities open on this way, and precludes alternative possibilities incompatible with it. (Marcuse, pg. 219)

What is our project today? As difficult as it is to look at the moment in the context of history, we should try to discover what it is that moves our society, whether that is Canadian, American, “first world” or the “Global Village”. I have

a suspicion, as I wrote earlier, that the great project of the last several hundred years, the transformation of nature at the frontiers into "products", is losing its secret validity. After the moon missions were successful and finished, there was a clear drifting from idealism into mere organizational focus: how to fix this economy, how to get rid of Nixon, or the communists, how to deal with OPEC, how to win more Super Bowls or World Cups, how to get interested in computer potential, how to create more economic development. As noted before, when Astronaut Bill Anders thought to himself as he circled the Moon:

We came all this way to explore the moon, and the most important thing is that we discovered the Earth. (Chaikin, pg. 119)

It may have been the turning point, even though the moon landings were still in the near future. In its historical context, landing on the moon may have been the most starkly isolated moment of scientific power in hundreds, perhaps thousands of years: we have left the Earth that made us. And after six missions had landed and returned and 12 men had walked in the dust with the beautiful and whole Earth rising above them, there was no great impetus to keep going in that direction: other missions in the shuttle were far more pedestrian. Perhaps if great quantities of gold, oil, beaver pelts, gunpowder or silk were found there would have been more missions, but there was nothing of immediate value for business, and it is still far too expensive for any more purely scientific missions.

So what is our project today? For now the question will remain open but there seems to be a lack of articulated vision, and instead we are stuck with the remnants of the catastrophic "converting the wilderness into products" that brought us to this point. And between the strands of those remnants there is a vacuum where international corporate venturism under the guise of "economic development" runs far too many spheres of influence in the world by default.

Marcuse continues by proposing criteria for judging the "truth value of different historical projects".

- (1) The transcendent project must be in accordance with the real possibilities open at the attained level of the material and intellectual culture.
- (2) The transcendent project, in order to falsify the established totality, must demonstrate its own *higher* rationality in the threefold sense that
 - (a) it offers the prospect of preserving and improving the productive achievements of civilization;
 - (b) it defines the established totality in its very structure, basic tendencies, and relations;
 - (c) its realization offers a greater chance for the pacification of existence, within the framework of institutions which offer a greater chance for the free development of human needs and faculties.

(Marcuse, pg. 220)

It is impossible to escape the value judgments passed here. The entire tone of his book has been one of severe criticism for modern industrial society, capitalist or communist. For Marcuse it is a great machine that eats up and co-opts all alternatives, and this resonates within me from my own experiences. However, the phrase "productive achievements of civilization" hangs out in the air: what exactly is productive, is it "producing", is it "products"? And what about civilization, is that not a word laden with meaning about the "uncivilized", about the wilderness out there, and comfortable civilization in here? For the moment, this is only worth a few thoughts, for it indicates how the most severe of critics has difficulty even "imagining" alternatives divorced from our universals and projects. Granted, there are limitations caused by the fact that English was Marcuse's adopted language, but we have to consider the limitations of language, which is of course a structure of the dominant industrial society itself.

The phrase "pacification of existence" is also worth comment. Very few climates on our planet are completely temperate; ancient peoples exposed to nature in all but a few places could die without clothing, shelter, weapons or their own intelligence as a group. Thus nature is mostly a deadly paradise,

and everything about the human body and mind, from opposable thumbs to earlobes to our large brains is a genetically programmed process of self-preservation. Existence, nature as well as the society groupings and the passage of time, has proven to be something that needed to be pacified. So unlike some regressive romantics who may think that living in a cave and growing your own food and making your own clothes and weapons is a better life, I am certain it is not necessarily better, or worse. I know that there is no intrinsic wrongness in many of our modern systems and structures: if we can feed all of our people, find a peaceful method of co-existing with our environment and find a way to reduce physical conflict (utopia!) the skyline of New York City at sunset could be just as fascinating as sunrise in the Himalayas. Thus the pacification of existence could really become in the future the pacification of our own systems that were in the past meant to pacify the wilderness.

With that example, could that new pacification of existence become our new *project*?

Every established society *is* such a realization; moreover, it tends to prejudge the rationality of *possible* projects, to keep them within its framework. At the same time, every established society is confronted with the actuality or possibility of a qualitatively different historical practice which might destroy the existing institutional framework. (Marcuse, pg. 219)

The answer is yes, but not without great and traumatic change to the current stakeholders.

There are many ways that a society can keep its project sound, and keep the possibility of other projects as only possibilities: military, legal or religious domination, the corporate lure of employment or the threat of factory closures, or self imposed moral standards. One of the major methods of socializing people to remain loyal to its projects is through education.

W.F. Connell's A History of Education in the Twentieth Century World

is a massive text that documents 80 years of educational change. Covering all the major thinkers of those years and a detailed survey of educational practices in every major country and every continent, it shows how the idea of academics, of learning for the sake of learning, is not the most important idea in education. The first reasons for education in a country are usually for patriotism, for socialization of children, and for job training. Academic pursuits are usually and universally in third or fourth place, even though the structure of curriculum seems to be based around academic subjects.

Education had never in its history been solely concerned with intellectual development. Schools had always supervised their pupils' manners and tried to influence their character and general development. When once they extended their care to the pupils' environment, they became involved in social policy. (Connell, pg. 10)

As a very dramatic example, Connell notes the appointment of A.V. Lunacharsky as the first Commissar of Education only *four days* after Lenin seized power in Russia in 1917. In Lunacharsky's first address on that day he clearly set out five educational tasks for Soviet schools. The first two were:

The elimination of illiteracy;
The provision of universal general education of a kind that would be distinctive of the new communist civilization;
(Connell, pg. 197)

Perhaps 100 years earlier, on the other side of Europe, the American educator Horace Mann laid the groundwork for the Common School Movement.

In terms of its value orientation, Mann's common schools were reflective of the dominant Protestant ethos of the time rather than agencies of value change. Public schools were not exclusively academic but were also to develop the morals and ethics of the young. The ethical system that Mann embraced merged the values of the Protestant work ethic with those of an emergent capitalism. (Guttek, pg. 193)

Egerton Ryerson of Canada provides a third example. Considered to be the major influence in English Canadian education in the last century, Ryerson had these goals for a place being transformed from colonial wilderness to independent nation state:

First and foremost, a system of education must be Christian...
 Secondly...schooling must be universal. A truly national system must also be "extensive" or "comprehensive": it must meet the needs of all ranks and vocations by providing both elementary and advanced institutions of education. As well the system must be both British and Canadian. Finally, the system must be the active concern of government.
 (Gidney, pg. 789)

In my earliest years as a university student, when I became entranced with the power of ideas and art and writing, I was in love with the idea of education: reading books, talking and thinking about "great" ideas, exploring art and history. I was certain that the more educated we all became, the more civilized we would become, and that true education would lead us out of the domination that I read into Marcuse's writings. Years later in the 1970's I began to move away from that idea when I saw many of the "hippest" and most "humane" of the leaders of the sixties radicalism drift back into the system, or spin off into a dangerous terrorism and/or drug abuse pattern, or disappear and forget about social change as they pursued purely personal agendas--as I did. When I returned to university in 1990 to get my education degree I began to see how much influence the factors of nationalism, socialization and job training had in formal education. After teaching for five years on a First Nations reserve I realized how much time was spent in training young people to become effective parts of the great industrial machine, and how little time was spent in leading them towards becoming independent and critical thinkers. Imagine a band of options with liberated critical thinking being the goal of education on the left side, and socialization, job training and patriotism being the goal of education

on the right side. My idealism in 1967 would place my beliefs far on the left, but my experiences by 1997 would place my knowledge of what education really was far on the right.

Education in general, is a way for society to entrench the goals and practices, conscious or unconscious, of its projects. Other possible projects are allowed to be studied but not usually critically assessed until the university level. In rigid societies, discussion of alternative projects are met with repression, and the cycle of repression and paranoia increase until, like in the former East Germany, one person in ten ends up being on the payroll of the Stasi, their secret police. In other societies, alternatives are allowed to be studied, and a few changes are added to the general forward motion, usually years after they would have been most effective, but they are often either mocked or drowned out in the general din of the march of progress. Marcuse confirms this near the end of his chapter:

Thus, within the framework of a given situation, industrialization can proceed in different ways, under collective or private control, and, even under private control, in different directions of progress and with different aims. The choice is primarily (but only primarily!) the privilege of those groups which have attained control over the productive process.
(Marcuse, pg. 222)

The control is a system of "enslaving necessity", he writes, and the way to freedom is going to come from those who understand this given necessity "*as insufferable pain, and as unnecessary.*"

The italics are mine. In 1964 Marcuse would have a hard time finding many people on both sides of the Cold War in our modern industrial states that knew they were part of a controlling system that caused insufferable pain. (Of course, millions in India, China and South Africa knew what he was talking about.) Today when we have a few random television commercials leaking into

our living rooms that proclaim thousands of people are dying every day from hunger, it is easier to understand how prescient he was.

How does Marcuse think we can begin to be free from a system causing insufferable pain?

As historical process, the dialectical process involves consciousness: recognition and seizure of the liberating potentialities. Thus it involves freedom. To the degree to which consciousness is determined by the exigencies and interests of the established society, it is "unfree"; to the degree to which the established society is irrational, the consciousness becomes free for the higher historical rationality only in the struggle *against* the established society. (Marcuse, pg. 222)

What Marcuse is saying is that the more irrational a society is, the more likely there is to be intelligent opposition. Looking back, Soviet Communism eventually proved to be unworkable, and the most intelligent dissidents that we knew about--Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn--seemed to be the epitome of enlightenment next to the vapid, stupefied, and pharmaceutically propped up Leonid Brezhnev. On the other side of the Cold War, the Americans lived through their self inflicted wounds of the sixties and seventies with a controlling system comparably more flexible, and thus a system that is harder to make the greatest changes: it bends but does not break from its domination.

Marcuse, with his knowledge and bias toward Marxist theory sees the proletariat as the potential liberators.

Thus, according to Marx, the proletariat is the liberating historical force only as revolutionary force; the determinate nature of capitalism occurs *if* and *when* the proletariat has become conscious of itself and of the conditions and processes which make up its society. (Marcuse pg. 222)

The word proletariat to us is quaint. Our factory workers live in comfort remarkably different from those of 100 years ago, in fact union protected jobs are usually a very well paying and secure working environment. And of course the amount of blue collar jobs is steadily shrinking while there is a solidification

of service occupations that bring about a degree of material comfort manifested by the proliferation in technological appliances. Our poorest people, when expressing dissent against the system are too often mute, or heard and then forgotten, or worse, they simply turn their frustration on themselves and are lost in addictions and self destruction. The consciousness for change will not come from such an antique classification described by the word proletariat; if anything it might come from the historically aware individuals higher up the prosperity ladder who have time, and or conscience to think about such things.

What of the poorest people in other countries, are they in opposition to their established societies? With few exceptions, (perhaps the Mexican Chiapas revolt) armies of change are marching, not to ameliorate terrible working conditions, but to seize power for ethnic or nationalist gain, and even those motives have often proved to be bogus manipulations by cynical leaders really only intent on lining their own pockets.

Marcuse concludes the chapter by saying that the truth of a historical project is not necessarily founded in the fact that the society is in power, judgment of its truth will come through other criteria noted before in the quotations on the transcendent project.

In the contemporary period, all historical projects tend to be polarized on the two conflicting totalities--capitalism and communism, and the outcome seems to depend on two antagonistic series of factors: (1) the greater force of destruction; (2) the greater productivity without destruction. In other words the higher historical truth would pertain to the system which offers the greater chance of pacification. (Marcuse, pg. 224)

We can now see what he was right about. Soviet bloc Communism had enough of the powers of destruction such as nuclear weapons, but could not maintain a comparable level of productivity. Economists will have different theories of exactly how those communist economies failed, but it was clear that the other weapons of destruction in their arsenal--terrorism, paranoia, murder of

civilians-- were not used in 1989 because individuals in the administration had lost the will to kill their own people to defend a failing system (the Chinese government clearly did not lose this murderous will). Communism as a grand alternative has run its race, and it took seventy years for the European application of Marxist theory to prove, with all its terrorism and technology, that either it was intrinsically inefficient, or so comparatively inefficient that its leaders allowed it to die in its sleep from old age. But also what has been lost is the opposition to capitalism, and now the forces are truly unleashed for a global pacification that is bringing its own kind of destruction. Marcuse called this chapter *The Historical Commitment of Philosophy*, and there is still great merit in the idea of dialectical argument leading to a change in consciousness. Global capitalism is unleashed, and now the dialectic process is beginning again with the knowledge that on the other side of multinational profits are those people in *insufferable pain* .

Chapter Nine:
The Catastrophe of Liberation

Even the title is laden with controversy: how can the ideas of catastrophe be linked with liberation? Everything that I, and millions others of my generation were taught, and taught to others, was that liberation was desired, whether that was spiritual, political, economic or educational. The idea of liberation has been in the vocabulary of our now dominant industrial society since the time of the American and French Revolutions. What catastrophe could this be?

Of course, there is catastrophe at this moment, in this very minute when another 25 people die of starvation. Linking catastrophe with liberation would be best understood by standing these two facts together: in the 1980's, as it is today, 35,000 to 40,000 people (World Vision's television commercials report the number as 35,000, while Time magazine reported it as "more than 40,000") were dying of starvation every day, and rounding that to an even 36,000 people would mean 1,500 die every hour, and at the same time one of the largest food and tobacco companies, Philip Morris

was piling up cash at a rate of almost \$190,000 an hour...
(Barnet, pg. 216)

In theory, it would take perhaps \$3,000 to allow those 1,500 to live, and then perhaps another \$16,000 to provide shelter, education, some kind of economic activity and some kind of third party intervention reduce the birth rate and improve community health so that their daily condition will slowly improve. But in practice, the 10% of that one multinational corporation's profits has not been allocated to improve our world, and thus we will still be in the year 2,000 in a "catastrophe of liberation".

This of course is not rational, let alone a morally comfortable situation. Marcuse starts this chapter by saying that the

degree to which the established society is irrational, the analysis in terms of historical rationality introduces into the concept the negative element--critique, contradiction, and transcendence. (Marcuse, pg. 225)

The transcendence stage is a final part of assimilation, or co-optation, as the radicals from the 1960's used to say, because it is an acceptance of the negative aspects of industrial society as a sort of dark side of the "inevitable by-products" of the "story of growth and progress". Marcuse refers to this "grand unification of opposites" that fights qualitative change.

True, a totalitarian administration may promote the efficient exploitation of resources; the nuclear-military establishment may provide millions of jobs through enormous purchasing power; toil and ulcers may be the by-product of the acquisition of wealth and responsibility; deadly blunders and crimes on the part of the leaders may be merely the way of life. One is willing to admit economic and political madness--and one buys it. (Marcuse, pg. 225)

There is a harmonization, as Marcuse calls it, enforced by the pleasing dominance of technology, that permeates, and then dulls the consciousness of all the people, even the critic. Here is a lengthy section, in a personal tone, that shows how Marcuse felt his own consciousness was becoming dull.

I ride in a new automobile. I experience its beauty, shininess, power, convenience--but then I become aware of the fact that in a relatively short time it will deteriorate and need repair; that its beauty and surface are cheap, its power unnecessary, its size idiotic; and that I will not find a parking place. I come to think of *my* car as a product of one of the Big Three automobile corporations. The latter determine the appearance of my car and make its beauty as well as its cheapness, its power as well as its shakiness, its working as well as its obsolescence. In a way, I feel cheated. I believe that the car is not what it could be, that better cars could be made for less money. But the other guy has to live, too. Wages and taxes are too high; turnover is necessary; we have it much better than before. The tension between appearance and reality melts away and both merge in one rather pleasant feeling. (Marcuse, pg. 226)

At the time Marcuse was writing this, the automobiles in our showrooms here were the biggest, least efficient, shiniest manifestations of the Cold War indus-

trial machine one could imagine, with tailfins like swan wings and front grills with a 100 chrome teeth. To me, a boy of 14, the new cars were the epitome of longing and excellence, by becoming entranced with their attractiveness I would be able to imagine myself living an entire life totally alien from my working class upbringing. I would look through glossy print ads of the Buicks and Lincolns when I snuck into the car showrooms, unaware at that time of how much the pairs of human models in the brochures all looked like the American President Kennedy and his wife.

Marcuse thought change away from that shininess and the pleasant feelings of co-optation and transcendence was possible, but not likely. Unfortunately, the passage of 34 years has proven him right. Now our vehicles are more fuel efficient, the fins have disappeared, they are lighter and easier to handle, which also means that we are more likely to be killed instantly when we hit another oncoming vehicle. But there is no great change in the direction of the automobile industries, or the industrial world at large.

Such qualitative change would be transition to a higher stage of civilization if tehnics were designed and utilized for the pacification of the struggle for existence. In order to implicate the disturbing implications of this statement, I submit that such a new direction of technical progress would be the catastrophe of the established direction...
(Marcuse, pg. 228)

After proposing a new definition of Reason, and comparing it to Reason as it was applied in the past, he writes that scientific abstractions proved themselves in the conquest of nature, whereas philosophic abstractions did not. Thus the presupposed philosophic idea of

...freedom from toil, ignorance, and poverty, was *unreal* ...while scientific thought continued to be applicable to an increasingly powerful

and universal *reality*. (Marcuse, pg. 229)

Immediately after this, Marcuse proposes the conditions for hope. He writes that when industrial society is at an advanced stage, scientific rationality could be translated into alternatives.

Within the established societies, the continued application of scientific rationality would have reached a terminal point with the mechanization of all socially necessary but individually repressive labor...
(Marcuse, pg. 230)

Marcuse, in his lifetime, saw automation move from the dark of 19th century factories, through the assembly line, into the era of robotized possibilities, and pronounced it as a turning point. He correctly understood that with the production of nuclear weapons, satellites, frozen TV dinners, and ridiculously looking automobiles that the technology was at hand to potentially liberate the world from drudgery and poverty--technological potential, that is. But the events of the last 34 years have proven the technological potential has remained unfulfilled, even in fact promising more while proportionally delivering less. More people are living, and dying unnecessarily, while more people have electricity, television, junk food and unstable employment than ever before.

Jeremy Rifkin's The End of Work is a mountain of evidence for this theme. Example after example passes by: automobile assembling using more and more robotics until the unions give up protecting the newest workers and try for some kind of eventual retirement security for the bulk of its membership, banks using computerized bank machines (ATM's) instead of tellers, giant farms with million dollar equipment replacing scores of family farms and workers. More workers are forced into part time work in the industrialized countries while short term manufacturing is created by paying low wages in third world countries. Industrial development chews up arable land and pollutes the aquifers, while corporations seem to grow richer. The stock market continues to increase its

value, but only 10% of the transactions have anything to do with the actual businesses, the other 90% is paper trading based on speculation. Rifkin summarizes it with a chapter he titled The Fate of Nations:

We are rapidly approaching a historic crossroad in human history. Global corporations are now capable of producing an unprecedented volume of goods and services with an ever smaller workforce. The new technologies are bringing us into an era of near workerless production at the very moment in world history when population is surging to unprecedented levels. The clash between rising population pressures and falling job opportunities will shape the geopolitics of the emerging high-tech global economy well into the next century. (Rifkin, pg. 207)

Here Rifkin's "historic crossroad" echoes what Marcuse called "the *break*".

But this stage would also be the end and limit of scientific rationality in its established structure and direction. Further progress would mean the *break*, the turn of quantity into quality. It would open the possibility of an essentially new human reality--namely existence in free time on the basis of fulfilled needs. (Marcuse, pg. 231)

At this point, all rationality and morality would point to the necessity of this kind of *break*, but it would take a gargantuan world wide effort today to make the break happen, and there seems to be a vacuum of motivation. Not enough people and organizations with wealth and power are motivated to change the way they do business because they don't feel responsible for anything other than their own cubicle of interest.

I fear a break of a different kind may be forced on us by economics. I simply remain baffled with the subject; I have a vague understanding of supply and demand and having spent 13 years in the food business I learned how to personally operate inside the machine, but I am unsure on large topics, especially on the idea of how wealth (as opposed to basic needs and relative comfort) is created. But I have an intuition about our direction as an industrial world: global capitalism may consume itself. If businesses continue to seek short term profits, automate their workplaces, reduce their payrolls and move

many full time workers to part time positions without benefits, there will be fewer people earning what I would call middle class dollars. And when they earn less, they spend less, and can no longer afford the products and services the businesses produce (unless they borrow money, which may eventually bring about another depression). I look back 70 years and feel uneasy.

The historian Hobsbawm brings out the reasons for the Crash of 1929 and the Depression that followed.

What was happening, as often happens in free market booms, was that, with wages lagging, profits rose disproportionately and the prosperous got a larger slice of the national cake. But as mass demand could not keep pace with the rapidly increasing productivity of the industrial system in the heyday of Henry Ford, the result was over-production and speculation. This, in turn, triggered off the collapse. (Hobsbawm, pg. 100)

He also notes in that there was a great expansion of consumer credit, which led to record high bankruptcy rates during the Depression, and the great increase of factory efficiency with the advent of mass production meant that factory inventories increased faster than actual sales. I have already mentioned the visiting financial expert Garth Turner urging the average home owner to get a mortgage and take the money and invest it in mutual funds, and I continue to get all sorts of mail urging me to do the same thing. News reports drift in from time to time about "temporary market corrections" while financial commentators help us relax by saying there are too many controls in place for the Depression and Crash to happen again. Of course they are not going to say the market is fragile because they have a vested interest in being part of that community *and* they don't want to be the ones to set off a panic, which only proves that with their inside knowledge a panic could be possible with a few inadvertent statements.

Other ways capitalism may burn itself: the degradation of the environ-

ment, and the over emphasis on advertising and promotion, which continually raise product costs. In the 1970's there was some concern that there actually may be limits to the amount of oil reserves in the world, but in the last 20 years there have been a continuation of reserves being discovered, while some aspects of petrochemical consumption have been reduced. And the amount of other minerals being discovered has been constant, so some resources, although non-renewable, seem to be plentiful enough for the next 50 years. But what isn't renewable is the agricultural base and the aquifers and the ozone layer, and as population increases demand for food products go up while arable land (rice fields turned into apartment buildings and factories) and usable water shrinks (over use of irrigation and pesticides) and growing cycles become unpredictable with increased warming. There have been great strides in the yields of crops in the last forty years (the Green Revolution), but gains have been negated by increased population, and by the control of that increased production by giant agricultural and food processing conglomerates.

Advertising is a unique phenomenon of our century. Aided by the growth of literacy (print advertising) and then by radio, television, and now with the Internet, we are inundated with messages to buy that the 19th century citizen did not have to live with.

The simultaneous rise of global markets for consumer goods and global media for promotion has boosted worldwide expenditures on advertising. In 1989 corporations were spending over \$240 billion on advertising and another \$380 billion on packaging, design, and other eye-catching promotion. The combined total amounts to \$120 per person around the world, almost double what the average citizen of Mozambique earns in a year. (Barnet, pg. 171-172)

I have already mentioned how just a few years ago General Foods spent \$1 out of every \$9 the consumer pays on advertising: part of the money we are spending on food is to convince ourselves to buy more of the product. Now

General Foods is owned by the tobacco giant Philip Morris, and it was purchased with the 35% profits earned from the sale of a carcinogenic product responsible for the yearly deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. To me this is an precise symbol for capitalism burning itself.

The cigarette is the most widely distributed consumer product on earth, the most profitable, and the most deadly. (Barnet, pg. 184)
Philip Morris spends more than any other corporation in the world on advertising. (Barnet, pg. 197)

Cigarette companies literally kill their customers. With the anti-smoking rules and pressure in the industrialized countries, tobacco companies seek safer markets in the third world, and they continue to do well with distribution and profits. Not content with killing smokers and non-smokers with second-hand smoke, not happy with the tremendous amounts of money needed for increased health costs, not fully satisfied with gobbling up huge quantities of raw materials needed for paper, cardboard and plastic packaging, not happy with the burning of billions of cigarettes that daily add carcinogenic smoke to our atmosphere, cigarette companies are eagerly turning farmland needed to raise crops to feed third world populations into tobacco farms.

For farmers to switch to another crop would require alternative financing. But banks in developing countries rarely lend to small independent agricultural producers. However, if the farmer has a guaranteed market thanks to a tobacco company, banks become interested. From Costa Rico to India to Kenya, scarce government and private finance is being siphoned off to tobacco farmers. Tobacco raising is an attractive proposition for small farmers because the returns per hectare are much higher than for food crops, and unlike fruits and vegetables, which are highly perishable, tobacco is easy to store and to transport with minimal loss. (Barnet, pg. 207)

All this together is a darkening of our world, and a necessary gloom settles into my consciousness. It seems there will be fewer workers and more

products, more paper transactions on the stock market, more advertising that we have to pay for, while thousands die every day, while our planet earth is burning and smoking itself into a polluted hell. Marcuse was right, and I think the time for this *break* has already come. We have been to the moon and found it wanting. And the symbolism is fitful: like the cigarette, the most popular and most heavily advertised product, our industrial world is probably burning itself toward extinction.

Marcuse writes that the break could possibly come, but it still must depend on the "continued existence of the technical base itself."

For it is this base which has rendered possible the satisfaction of needs and the reduction of toil--it remains the base of all forms of human freedom. The qualitative change rather lies in the reconstruction of this base--that is, in its development with a view of different ends.
(Marcuse, pg. 231)

In order to do this, Marcuse writes that we must revive certain values, not in spiritual or other like terms, but in technical terms.

For example, what is calculable is the minimum of labor with which, and the extent to which, the vital needs of all members of a society could be satisfied...(Marcuse, pg. 232)

Of course we have long passed the point where we have the technical ability to feed, clothe and give shelter to every person alive--take the possibility of Philip Morris using 10% of its profits to save every person dying of starvation every day, for example--and Marcuse calls the obstacles that prevent this "definable political obstacles". These obstacles come from the "oppressive, unmastered forces in society". Technology itself cannot overcome this, it can provide the "historical correction" of the premature identification of Reason and Freedom.

To the extent to which technology has developed on this basis, the

correction can never be the result of technical progress per se. It involves a political reversal. (Marcuse, pg. 234)

Marcuse then introduces his concept of "pacified existence". Although it is a guiding idea, it is almost a taboo, a "ridiculed end of technology", perhaps, to take his words further, a kind of utopia, or as he writes, "the repressed final cause behind the scientific enterprise". Marcuse then warns against what he refers to as "technological fetishism", noting that he was wary of this in other Marxist critics who wrote of the "future omnipotence of technological man".

Technics, as a universe of instrumentalities, may increase the weakness as well as the power of man. At the present stage he is perhaps more powerless over his own apparatus than he ever was before. (Marcuse, pg. 235)

After we make the minor adjustment of forgiving him for using "man" instead of "people", here is the point worth arguing: with our technology, and prosperity, and leisure time, are we more powerless than 100, or 1000 years ago? And do I have any more power to change the direction of our industrial machine than would a single person in the middle of a tribe of 1000 some 10,000 years ago? Some would say I do have more power today because of the spread of democracy and the power of global communications. Of course, I must have a vehicle to change things, some understanding of the media, to get published, or to make newsworthy events, and time to do this, and time to study how to do this, and in the meantime I have to earn a living for my family, and I may be able to find time after I relax a bit after my working day, and oh by the way, maybe I'll just watch the next show or the ball game coming up...and if I do get some media attention to my cause will it get the volume of attention it deserves, or will it get lost in the wash of bestsellers and Friday movie openings and Olympic games and Nike ads and IBM ads and Nissan ads? It is an uphill effort, and I am constantly being seduced away from my criticism of the failure of our society

and my desire to get other people to change things with me. I feel powerless, perhaps even less happy than a tribesman 10,000 years ago who probably lived a short and dangerous life, but was comforted by strong, primitive religious or shamanistic beliefs, strong family bonds, and the virtually unspoiled natural world, absolute in its majesty. Who knows for sure?

What I am sure about, if we use the word people, and think of people as the entire motion of human life on top of the crust of our planet, is that we have a lot less power than we are led to believe. When we think of the species as a whole with the thousands that are dying every day from lack of food and simple medicine, with other thousands dying every day from traffic accidents, wars and cancer and addictions, and with perhaps 2 billion people living lives in poverty and desperation, "we" and the "people" are far more powerless over the apparatus than in the idealized utopias that are promised by the ideas of "technological man", "global communications", "cyberspace", "free market" and "democracy". The reality and the scientific mythology might as well be as far apart as the Moon and the Earth.

To Marcuse, true pacified existence must have a

qualitative as well as a quantitative *reduction* of power, in order to create the space and time for the development of productivity under self-determined incentives. (Marcuse, pg.236)

Pacification "presupposes mastery of Nature" but there are two kinds, a repressive and a liberating one. And as Nature becomes mediated it goes through a historical transformation.

History is the negation of Nature. What is only natural is overcome and recreated by the power of Reason. (Marcuse, pg 236)

All joy and all happiness derive from the ability to transcend Nature-- a transcendence in which the mastery of Nature is itself subordinated to liberation and pacification of existence. (Marcuse, pg. 237)

Marcuse continues by writing that civilization produces the means for freeing

"Nature from its own brutality" by using Reason as a transforming power, and it can only fulfill this function as a "post-technological rationality" where technology itself is a tool, an "organon" for the "art of life".

Here Marcuse is perhaps the most misunderstood, for his sentiments sound so remarkably like the generalized goals of science that are found in the introductions to school textbooks or curriculum guides, or perhaps in the 1950's world of Disneyland, or perhaps in the vague notions of high school students heading off to university for careers in science. Worse yet, these misunderstood generalities have been traced to the rationalizations for terror in Fascist and Communist, perhaps even democratic governments. Science was to be the great tool that we would use to make life better, we would find cures to diseases, make household living easier, make the world a better place, we would have "better living through chemistry". Of course the idealistic science community wanted to create a better world, but in reality, almost all science has been co-opted by business in the development of products, and then in the scientific principles of reproduction of results, which in turn becomes the practice of exact replication on the factory production line. Marcuse stands out from all these other glowing pronouncements about the use of science if we just go back a few pages and recall: science can become a tool for the pacification of Nature and a tool for the art of life if we remember that at this point people have more powerlessness than ever, and therefore there must be a "political reversal".

Marcuse then brings Art into the argument as a possible meliorating force. In Chapter Three I put forward my own ideas of what "Art" should be, and how it could stand as a way of bringing some kind of truth and peace to our world wide suffering. I find myself in complete agreement with Marcuse, but of course that may be because I was influenced by his work in 1969 just when I

was beginning my university studies of art and literature.

Like technology, art creates another universe of thought and practice against and within the existing one. But in contrast to the technical universe, the artistic universe is one of illusion, semblance...the powerless, illusory truth of art...testifies to the validity of its images. The more blatantly irrational the society becomes, the greater the rationality of the artistic universe. (Marcuse, pg. 238-239)

The rationality of art, its ability to "project" existence, to define yet unrealized possibilities could then be envisaged as *validated by and functioning in the scientific-technological transformation of the world*. Rather than being the handmaiden of the established apparatus, beautifying its business and its misery, art would become a technique for destroying this business and this misery. (Marcuse, pg. 239)

For Marcuse, an artistic transformation (a painting of a sword is better than the real sword) violates the natural object by taking it out of its functional context but the "transformation is liberation". This kind of liberation is the creation of an "other", and there are "other" places in civilization.

Civilization has achieved this "other," liberating transformation in its gardens and parks and reservations. But outside these small protected areas, it has treated Nature as it has treated man--as an instrument of destructive productivity. (Marcuse, pg. 240)

The last six pages of this chapter compress the arguments into a powerful language, there is an exactness with his statements and occasional imagery that sound more true today than they might have in 1964.

In the contemporary era, the conquest of scarcity is still confined to small areas of advanced industrial society. Their prosperity cover up the Inferno inside and outside their borders; it also spreads a repressive productivity and "false needs".

It was obviously with a high measure of prescience that Marcuse was able to see this kind of catastrophe in the early 1960's--perhaps it was from his perch within the State Department, his knowledge of the destruction of WW II while he may have been sitting inside the monstrously useless giant finned cars of

1959, perhaps it was from his knowledge of theoretical revolution in pre WW I Germany transformed into a bastardized Stalinistic tyranny. He somehow had the ability to see right through the "products" to the industrial motivations behind the Cold War, and this sight is true at this moment when these kinds of products and productivity goals are sweeping through the Third World, especially China, India and Indonesia.

The obvious comforts generated by this sort of productivity, and even more, the support which it gives to a system of profitable domination, facilitate its importation in less advanced areas of the world where the introduction of such a system still means tremendous progress in technical and human terms. (Marcuse, pg. 241)

Marcuse also saw that in order for liberation we would need a "reduction of overdevelopment" because the "affluent society" (it is in quotes, it would be safe to presume that he read or at least knew something about Galbraith's book with the same title) is not a suitable model for development. Because society at that time was in permanent mobilization (Cold War)

...against the risk of annihilation, and since the sale of its goods has been accompanied by moronization, the perpetuation of toil, and the promotion of frustration. (Marcuse, pg. 242)

He saw the elimination of "profitable waste" as something that could increase the social wealth, he saw the end of "permanent mobilization" as a way to stop denying the satisfactions of individuals. Of course, the lack of a Cold War today may have improved the life of the planet, since we are no longer minutes away from total nuclear catastrophe, and perhaps people are more relaxed in the developed world. For the child laborers in Asia, or the starving in Sub-Saharan Africa, it matters not one bit. And the lack of total mobilization has not meant

the end of military conflict, nor the decline in the production of most weapons. But Marcuse may have been right in the sense that it has changed our consciousness, and I believe there are two possibilities that go in opposite directions. With the collapse of communism (it may still be revived in small pockets of the world) there has been a whole hearted rush to "development" and free market economics, and this may have in fact speeded up the destruction and industrialization of the world. The opposing possibility, which is completely true, is to focus the attention of people and individuals (how few they are and what influence they have is debatable) on ways and means to salvage our situation.

Another step toward toward liberation must be taken by the reduction of our population, but Marcuse gloomily saw into the future and felt such reduction would be given a low priority.

A new standard of living, adapted to the pacification of existence, also presupposes reduction in the future population. It is understandable, even reasonable, that industrial civilization considers legitimate the slaughter of millions of people in war, and the daily sacrifices of all those who have no adequate care and protection, but discovers it moral and religious scruples if it is the question of avoiding the production of more life in a society which is still geared to the planned annihilation of life in the National Interest, and to the unplanned deprivation of life on behalf of private interests...such a society needs an ever-increasing number of customers and supporters; the constantly regenerated excess capacity must be managed. (Marcuse, pg. 243-244)

Even with the thousands of unnecessary deaths every day, we are still adding 90 million people to the Earth every year. This of course produces a large mass of poor people, but it also produces gains in middle class populations, or people with aspirations to it. And from this group come potential customers for all sorts of non-essential products--India with 900 million people

now has a “middle class” of 100 million. Richard Barnett’s book Global Dreams has an entire chapter on how billion dollar food companies alone are spreading their products and factories to both the busiest and most remote enclaves of the globe in search for more customers. Executives literally seem to salivate when the words Global Markets are spoken, and with the speed of international computerized communications, currency, product ideas, profits, and paper transactions carry on 24 hours a day.

The crime is that of a society in which the growing population aggravates the struggle for existence in the face of its possible alleviation. The drive for more living space operates not only in international aggressiveness but also within the nation. Here, expansion has...invaded the inner space of privacy and practically eliminated the possibility of that isolation in which the individual, thrown back on himself alone, can think and question and find. (Marcuse, pg. 244)

This makes that kind of privacy the “most expensive commodity”, and in what Marcuse calls the “overdeveloped” countries it makes an ever-larger part of the population “one huge captive audience”, enslaved to their own liberty through the “media of amusement”. He then asks, can a society such as this rightfully “claim that it respects the individual and that it is a free society?” Only if the “repressed dimensions” in an individual come to life again in the form of needs and satisfactions, and this process *may* create the prerequisite for qualitative change--“the redefinition of needs”.

Although the “repressed dimensions” phrase shows Marcuse’s Freudian bias, there can be no dispute about the fact that qualitative change and the redefinition of needs can and probably should come from those moments of privacy where an individual is quiet and away from the constant media and consumer advertising bombardment. In fact, if this absence of bombardment

were total, Marcuse writes, it would “plunge the individual into a traumatic void”.

Thus liberation may come from this darkened void of privacy. Could it be prayer, could it be a Buddhist retreat, could it be meditation? Marcuse ends the chapter with another clue. The system has withstood the contradiction of nuclear brinksmanship and “questionable foodstuffs” (from his time of writing) and in our time, deaths by starvation, the degradation of the planet, and, so far, the inability of capitalism to completely burn itself out. But the people cannot

...tolerate being deprived of the entertainment and education which make them capable of reproducing the arrangements for their defense and/or destruction. (Marcuse, pg. 246)

The catastrophe of liberation has brought some of us out of the realm of want and physical suffering into a realm of relative peace and prosperity. But the peace is local, enforced with intimidations of military superiority, and the prosperity has become an abomination of plenty linked to the exploitation of resources and labor in poorer parts of the world. We are freer than before, but “we” refers to wealthy industrialized citizens strong enough to withstand the temptations of addiction and the barrage of media inflicted consumeritis that assaults their privacy. It does not refer to the “we” of the rest of the world that struggles for bread and a warm sleep while they are shadowed with advertised lures for a shining new life, as far out of reach to them as the billboard image of a Mercedes is to a crippled beggar inching his way through the crowded, polluted capitals of the Third World.

Chapter 10: *Conclusion*

Marcuse's 11 page Conclusion begins with an emphasis on the value of the "aesthetic dimension". One dimensional society is irrational in its power and domination and rationality, and when compared to the "insane" aspects of this rationality, the opposing "irrationality" becomes the home of the "really rational", ideas that may "promote the art of life".

The aesthetic dimension still retains a freedom of expression which enables the writer and artist to call men and things by their name--to name the otherwise unnameable. (Marcuse, pg. 247)

The real face of our time, writes Marcuse, is in certain novels and plays that go beyond imagination and actually speak a language of Reason in a reality which

justifies everything and absolves everything--except the sin against its spirit. Imagination is abdicating to this reality, which is catching up with and overtaking imagination. Auschwitz continues to haunt, not the memory but the accomplishments of man--the space flights; the rockets and missiles...(Marcuse, pg. 247)

Art can vicariously haunt the imagination and give a more accurate image of total reality that can rarely be grasped at living here, in our secure lands in times of peace and prosperity. It is true that careful study of history and current events can also bring a perspective to the general irrationality of our world, but they are at their best when they are unemotional. Art can, in those very memorable but rare instances, move us to understand a depth of feeling about instances and situations that take us beyond our own security. A survey of Twentieth Century painting shows that from the earliest efforts of Picasso and Braque in the disquieting years before the First World War, painting has wrestled with the idea of getting away from the "pretty pictures" of Impressionism and Romanticism to lead the viewer to a kind of transcendence through the vehicles

of Cubism, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, Op art, Pop art, Performance Art, and many others. By completely removing itself away from any kind of realism (aided by the advent of the camera, which could do a more accurate job), painting forced the viewer into other realms of perception, which became, to use Marcuse's words, an "other" that often inadvertently reflected the pain and confusion from the reality the artist lived in. Picasso's Guernica and The Charnel House examine the horrors of World War II style war, the shadowed nightmarish courtyards of Chirico bring feelings of alienation and desolation, the landscapes of Dali bring us to worlds of utter strangeness, and the tortured smearing of the human features in Francis Bacon's portraits speak of subjects trapped in their addictions. I agree with Marcuse, for these paintings are closer to the real faces of our century than almost every television show, and certainly every theme park, every sports championship, every advertisement and every election speech. This is not to say that art cannot be an effective criticism, an "other" by engaging techniques to take us into worlds of peace, harmony and colorful radiance--in fact I am just as visually moved by Van Gogh and the Canadian J.E.H. Macdonald's The Tangled Garden as I am by Picasso and Bacon, and as a hobby I prefer to paint like the former.

But my judgment of the "real face" of our century can be found in the word face. Art is a face, an expression, a plastic reality that can distract us or push us to thought, and more rarely, indirect action. I remember my trip to Europe in the fall of 1975. I was determined to hit all the tourist stops, with a heavy emphasis on art galleries. My own journal was full of commentary on many paintings, and after courses in art history, sometimes seeing the real painting one metre from my eyes left me literally intellectually awakened, as if my head was just lifted up out of darkness into true color and form. Here is what I wrote about my experience in the Van Gogh museum:

I was struck numb. I appreciated, saw the dynamic craftsmanship in every painting, but there were ten or so that were unspeakably powerful. He has shown us millions of possibilities, millions of worlds within the trees, millions of things in blades of grass and sunflowers that a biologist could only touch on one at a time. He has made a contribution to the quality of life, and I feel much richer now.

A few weeks later I wrote of an entirely different experience, one that shows just as clearly the possibilities of direct experience (as opposed to Art, which may be considered a direct experience with the face of an artist's experience). This was an experience that will probably remain with me as long as I live, it was my visit to the Concentration Camp at Dachau.

Another bright day, snow frosted onto every branch and leaf. The sky was a pale blue, streams of jet vapor arced the horizon like thin strokes of a brush. It was unbelievably peaceful when I, along with other North American tourists, solemnly strode past the gates of Dachau.

The museum was first, the photos enlarged up to the ceiling when appropriate, the endless despair, suffering, death, corruption, suicide, torture. It is so monstrous: could this really have happened? Could I fall into such a trap, either as captive or captor?

The exhibits are morbidly consuming--intellectually, I know of this kind of plague: the photo of the inmate committing suicide by jumping into the wires, the piles of bodies, the inmate with the top of his skull removed for "experiments"...I grew numb, but was moved again and shaken by the sight of two women and one man finally captured after defending their ghetto (Warsaw) when most others simply filed into the camps. There was some sorrow in their faces, but there was defiance, there seemed to be dignity. The man had his fist raised, clenched, almost a salute. Their faces were calmer, more refined than the crabbed mad dog sneers of the camp guards and administrators, it was obvious. I trembled and choked.

It was peaceful when I walked the length of the grounds alone, several times holding back tears. The crematorium--of course that word was debased because a real crematorium is where the *dead*, not the living, are burned--was off to the left. Set in a small wood, by a stream, compelling for its rustic sensibility, there were pine trees nestling what appeared to be a suburban type of house. I saw two swans foraging in the stream as I walked inside.

The ovens inside were nearly incongruous, neatly arranged, clean and presumably efficient, like a large bakery. It takes a minute to set in what happened here, the room gets darker, I choke again, the air seems

red and full of blood, there is a faint mad buzzing sound...

So now, more than 27 years later, the memory continues to haunt me, just as Marcuse predicted, and it haunts the art I have seen, and it haunts the great wondrous events of our time, including the space flights that I look back on as the turning point in our search for the new frontier. Academic history alone can be powerful, but the experience of going to the place where it occurred, and then connecting it with the lessons or books or lectures was for me the most powerful. Auschwitz continues to haunt the accomplishments of man, Marcuse wrote, and for me Dachua continues to haunt not only all the Picasso's and Van Gogh's and Rembrandt's and Vermeer's that I saw, but the Vatican, the Eiffel Tower, the London theatre, the brilliant blue mist of Venice and the chill brittleness of the Swiss Alps.

Marcuse then writes of the beauty inside the terror in our modern and prosperous societies. Here, imagination has become an "instrument of progress" in the creation of "Industrial Parks" nuclear plants and fallout shelters.

If the horror of such realizations does not penetrate into consciousness... it is because such achievements are (a) perfectly rational in terms of the existing order, (b) tokens of human ingenuity and power beyond the traditional limits of imagination. (Marcuse, pg. 248)

At my age, there are several technological "tokens of human ingenuity and power" so far away from my understanding that I tend to just admire, rather than criticize them as parts of a great and largely unsuccessful industrial machine. Headless frog embryos, cloned animals, experiments with organic tissue substituted for silicon in computers, DNA testing that can release the guilty from 20 years of prison and track down the innocent, an ersatz pyramid constructed in Las Vegas to lure gamblers while dinosaurs and alien creatures chase actors across 1000 movie screens every week...they are all baffling and dazzling. Marcuse calls this the "obscene merger of aesthetics and reality" that in fact

inhibits the scope of imagination.

In reducing and even cancelling the romantic space of imagination, society has forced the imagination to prove itself on new grounds, on which the images are translated into historical capabilities and projects. (Marcuse, pg. 248-249)

Recalling my previous criteria for Art, that it must be free from financial constraint and overt didactic messages (again let me emphasize that this kind of formulation owes a lot to One-Dimensional Man), note how Marcuse maintains that the artist's imagination needs to be separate from the dominant society.

Separated from the realm of material production and material needs, imagination was mere play, invalid in the realm of necessity, and committed only to a fantastic logic and a fantastic truth. When technical progress cancels this separation, it invests the images with its own logic and its own truth; it reduces the free faculty of the mind. (Marcuse, pg. 249)

Marcuse then moves into a few paragraphs of what he fears, based on his Freudian interests. He writes that if we "give to the imagination all the means of expression", all of the horrible images that we truly possess, this would be a regression.

The mutilated individuals (mutilated also in their faculty of imagination) would organize and destroy even more than they are now permitted to do. Such release would be the unmitigated horror--not the catastrophe of culture, but the free sweep of its most repressive tendencies. (Marcuse, pg. 250)

This is questionable, at best. Even granting the tremendous corrupting and co-opting influences of the modern industrial state, I doubt if artists could use their imagination to be any more of a destructive reflection of society than they already have been. There is no darker pit of the imagination than what can be seen in the movies Schindler's List or The Killing Fields, far darker than any fictional ruminations of Edgar Allen Poe or the novel The Silence of the Lambs. To me the true horror is when this idea of giving to the imagination "all the

means of expression" is given over not to artists, but to politicians, dictators, soldiers, and militia men, and we have seen this recently in Bosnia, Rwanda and Algeria. To Marcuse, perhaps he still feels there is a dark Freudian pit inside every person, a heart of darkness that either must be repressed or controlled. Until the liberation or modification of modern industrial society into "other" alternatives that will allow for a freer and lighter and fuller kind of consciousness, along with its imaginative component, Marcuse seems to think such release would be "unmitigated horror". To me, what matters is not how dark the expressed imagination of artists can be, but whether or not the above mentioned groups are allowed to express into criminal action their most primitive xenophobic rages. It matters not whether their urges are unconscious, subconscious, or fully conscious, it only matters what they actually do.

Marcuse goes so far as to say that we might even have to give up some things that are now free to us in order to liberate our imaginations--in other words, give up many components along with the repressive shell so that we can move on to a freer world.

To liberate the imagination so that it can be given all its means of expression presupposes the repression of much that is now free and that perpetuates a repressive society. And such a reversal is not a matter of psychology or ethics but of politics, in the sense in which this term has here been used throughout: the practice in which the basic societal institutions are developed, defined, sustained, and changed.

(Marcuse, pg. 250)

He does not say what things we are going to have to give up. And to me it does not matter that he has been briefly derailed into Freudian concepts, because he comes right back out again when he writes that in order to have a reversal in our repressive society we have to have a political change. And not just in the way we vote Liberal or Conservative, Republican or Democrat, Christian

Democrat or Socialist. The entire organization of goods, services, labor, capital and profit should be examined. I wish to put it as simply as possible: in terms of the human and environmental costs, the world with its post-communist, post-modern free form capitalism is not working as well as it could, certainly not as well as we are led to believe, and I have every reason to believe the situation will get worse, perhaps even to the point of a major economic and/or environmental collapse.

Marcuse continues his argument from a different side: the satisfaction of everyone's vital needs is "incompatible" with the "prevalence of particular interests". Is there is some force in the world that says 40,000 must starve to death everyday, would there be a corporation that believes that in order for their profits to remain high they must deny food to the living? There are military groups who often use food as a bargaining chip when negotiating for weapons, territory, peace terms, and there are private profiteers and gangsters, but large corporations? No, there are none that we know of, and they certainly need good public relations to maintain with the rest of their customers, but that does not mean that their interests and the interests of those 40,000 are compatible : surplus food could easily be donated without a serious depression in food prices, a small tax could be levied at some point, inventories could be reduced. Spending 13 years in the food business taught me many catch phrases, and in food retailing one is that (in North America at least) you can't sell from an empty shelf. There is stock in the back room, stock moving on trucks, stock sitting in the production warehouses. But the corporations will say that consumers demand that the supermarket shelves be full 24 hours a day every day of the year, and without a consumer effort to change that attitude we in the affluent

world will always have at least 10% more food than we need just for the sake of psychological comfort. What would Marcuse think about this?

The goal of authentic self-determination by the individuals depends on effective social control over the production and distribution of the necessities (in terms of the achieved level of culture, material and intellectual). (Marcuse, pg 251)

I can hear commentators immediately saying "I smell a Marxist.", and rightfully so, for this kind of terminology is as common as snowflakes in Moscow. What is different now is that we should think in terms of an entire world of citizens, not just limit the idea of "control over production" to within nationalist borders, for there are some countries that clearly don't have enough resources to feed all the people, whereas the world's largest corporations that have their money electronically cross borders do. The nation state is not as independent as it once thought itself to be.

Self-determination in the production and distribution of vital goods and services would be wasteful. The job is a technical one, and as a truly technical job, it makes for the reduction of physical and mental toil. In this realm centralized control is rational if it establishes the preconditions for meaningful self-determination. (Marcuse, pg. 251)

In other words, the basics of food, clothing and shelter should not be controlled by private corporations. How this can be done could be the subject of entire fields of research, but Marcuse hints that it could be that

the combination of centralized authority and direct democracy is subject to infinite variations, according to the degree of development. (Marcuse, pg. 252)

This in turn will be developed by the degree

individuals are liberated from all propaganda, indoctrination, and manipulation, capable of knowing and comprehending the facts and evaluating the alternatives. In other words, society would be rational and free to the extent to which it is organized...by a new historical Subject. (Marcuse, pg. 252)

Immediately after introducing the idea of a new "Subject", Marcuse writes that he doubts it will come into being.

The power and efficiency of this system, the thorough assimilation of mind with fact, of thought with required behavior, of aspirations with reality, militate against the emergence of a new Subject.
(Marcuse, pg. 252)

There are facts which make a critical theory of society, and its possibility of bringing into being a new Subject, completely valid:

...the increasing irrationality of the whole; waste and restriction of productivity; the need for aggressive expansion; the constant threat of war; intensified exploitation; dehumanization. And they all point to the historical alternative...(Marcuse, pg. 252)

Some critics would simply reduce his arguments to a case for communism, the "historical alternative", and I am sure that is what happened in the past. It is again worth noting that he recommends that any possible solutions can be a combination of centralized authority (government controlled), and direct democracy, the choice of who shall be the law makers, presumably without the typical kind of tyrannical repression.

Marcuse remains pessimistic. The facts and alternatives are there "like fragments which do not connect" and although Dialectical theory is not refuted, "it cannot offer the remedy". The domination continues not only in the technological conquest of nature, but in the "conquest of man by man". The only freedom of thought coming out of this conquest by what he calls the "administered world" is the

consciousness of its repressive productivity, and...the absolute need for breaking out of this whole. (Marcuse, pg. 253)

Marcuse spends the last four pages discussing critical theory, which I take to mean the kind of thinking that led to Marxism, and its hope against the domination of modern industrial society. Critical theory was developed because it

was confronted with the presence of real forces...*in* the established society which moved...toward more rational and freer institutions by abolishing the existing ones which had become obstacles to progress. (Marcuse, pg. 254)

Marcuse is probably referring to the beginnings of the democratization and liberalization movement in the late parts of the last century that forced some of the European monarchists to begin reforms. Leaders like Lenin concluded the movement was insincere and a total break was needed, because the reforms were a facile co-optation and did not have the scope of the larger idea of the "liberation of inherent possibilities". Today, writes Marcuse, liberation of inherent possibilities no longer "adequately expresses the historical alternative".

The enchained possibilities of advanced industrial societies are: development of the productive forces on an enlarged scale, extension of the conquest of nature, growing satisfaction of needs for a growing number of people, creation of new needs and faculties. But these possibilities are gradually being realized through means and institutions which cancel their liberating potential...(Marcuse, pg. 255)

It is true that our societies are *gradually* realizing those goals, in themselves neither unworthy or unreasonable. It is just that while we *gradually* go toward those goals thousands are dying daily, and the speed of a possible collapse is gaining on us. But for now, and for the lucky ones on the planet, life is good.

At its most advanced stage, domination functions as administration, and

in the overdeveloped areas of mass consumption, the administered life becomes the good life of the whole, in the defense of which the opposites are unified. This is the pure form of domination. Conversely its negation appears to be the pure form of negation...reduced to one abstract demand for the end of domination...this negation appears in the politically impotent form of the "absolute refusal"...(Marcuse, pg. 255)

The traditional ways of protest become ineffective, writes Marcuse, because of the power of this kind of totalitarianism. From my brief scan of history, read and lived through, here are my thoughts: certain protests are allowed like a release valve, there is a kind of freedom of speech, but accordingly there is a very little administered organization to the protests and they usually fizzle out. Only the very bravest and most intelligent individual players can change the direction of the great industrial machine: Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Lech Walesa. But, didn't they actually change things? Yes, and Mandela's new South Africa is infinitely preferable to Verwoerd's, King's death brought about laws of tolerance and fairness, and Walesa's courage in the face of the dangerous Eastern Bloc was remarkable. Their contributions can never be degraded, but after all is done, the world is still a giant industrial machine, slightly more tolerant but still hell bent on a destructive course. To Marcuse, these protests are perhaps even dangerous "because they preserve the illusion of popular sovereignty".

How accurate was he, writing in the early 1960's? He did not know of Martin Luther King's assassination (to which he might say, I told you so) or the lasting effect he would have on the United States. He could not have imagined that the brutality of racism would lock up Nelson Mandela in the same year that

this book was published, only to actually turn the prisoner into a future world leader 27 years later. And with the dissolution of communism in Eastern Europe even the seeds of protest that began in Poland with Walesa's movement began years after Marcuse's death. It is impossible to predict how he would have responded to these lessons in history, but perhaps it would be like my own: these are great individuals who have shown that rarely, but possibly, within the heart of the system itself, change occurs for the better. But he would remain skeptical, perhaps more so than I am prepared to be, in saying that the great force of the industrial machine is still moving to disastrous collapse, only now it has the "illusion of popular sovereignty".

Now that some of the most oppressive and visible features (communism, administered racism, apartheid) of totalitarianism have melted, and we are left with a kind of financial totalitarianism that strips the environment and starves its victims instead of shooting or imprisoning them, where will change come from today, now that we are in Marcuse's future?

However, underneath the conservative popular base is the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system; it is an elementary force which violates the rules of the game and, in doing so, reveals it as a rigged game. (Marcuse, pg. 256-257)

Is it a rigged game? I fear it is, as much now as it was in 1964. I return to my own world, and look at my son, now 14. I move over to my desk and pull out a copy of Time magazine from October 1, 1990. The cover page is Children

Without Hope. This was the article that originally made me turn over in my mind the terrible thought, as I was preparing to become a teacher, how could I teach this (the daily death of 40,000 from starvation) to children? There is a picture of an undernourished 11 year old girl squatting in the Ethiopian dust, gathering onion-weed bulbs, the only thing that will grow in a land burned by drought, a land where civil war has kept the distribution of food aid from getting to her.

Now think of my son. Born in peace and prosperity, with loving parents, enough food and clothing and space for three children, with all the toys, books and games and family attention needed to become healthy and advantaged. And he has proven a great example for those advantages: healthy, bright, achieving well in school while learning most everything in another language (French Immersion), he is completely computer literate, well read, well adjusted and at 14 has lived in or travelled to Toronto, Quebec, New York City, Florida, Minnesota, California, Vancouver and Southern Alberta. Now I look back to the photo of the girl: if she still is alive, which is possible, she would be 18 now. By any method of measurement, comparing my son to the girl, it is, as Marcuse wrote, a rigged game.

Nothing indicates that it will be a good end. The economic and technical capabilities of the established societies are sufficiently vast to allow for adjustments and concessions to the underdog, and their armed forces sufficiently trained and equipped to take care of emergency situations. (Marcuse, pg.257)

How much these concessions will amount to is completely under the controlled agenda of the prosperous nations. Canada does allow immigration, but a high

percentage of it is from other industrialized areas, and only smaller amounts from countries like Ethiopia, where the girl was photographed in 1990. The United States has invested a great deal in border patrols to keep unwanted Mexicans and others out of their country, and if that wasn't enough, the great barrier of the oceans keeps the southern peoples and the Asians at a distance. The starving of those in distant lands do not really physically threaten us, but their continually expanding existence is a reminder of our own moral barbarism.

The facile historical parallel with the barbarians threatening the empire of civilization prejudices the issue; the second period of barbarism may well be the continued empire of civilization itself. But the chance is that, in this period, the historical extremes may meet again: the most advanced consciousness of humanity, and its most exploited force. It is nothing but a chance. (Marcuse, pg. 257)

Marcuse ends the chapter and the book without a lot of hope. He pays homage at the very end by quoting Walter Benjamin:

It is only for the sake of those without hope that hope is given to us. (Marcuse, pg. 257)

What he thinks we are left with in the end will only be that hope and chance. Although I cannot imagine how much hope I have after this exploration into the world of the One-Dimensional Man, I do have hope that it could be more than chance, and the glow of those few shining examples from the singular voices of those like Nelson Mandela lead me to believe that the reflection might still be strong enough to, at least for now, ward off the impending gloom. But as Herbert Marcuse wrote in 1964, it may be nothing but a chance.

Chapter 11:
Final Notes

After many years of teaching on the Peigan Reserve I found I was sometimes asked why I drove two hours every day, why I created a newspaper for the students, why I worked hard to raise money so my Grade Six students could have a six day, 1000 km trip to the coast at the end of their year, why I would often create my own lessons instead of just following the textbook. A few times I would say that it was because I felt that was what I had to do in an area that had a surplus of teachers and declining school board budgets, other times I might say it was because I was adding extra things I could put on my resume. Both reasons were true. But there was a reason I came to understand after several years, a reason I did not wish to say out loud. *Sometimes in the service of others you find yourself.*

At the time I am writing this, I am no longer teaching on the Reserve. There was a movement, understandable of course, to replace the non-native teachers with native teachers, and although I would have been able to remain there for many more years I felt it best to leave on my own terms, with many good memories and a quantifiable list of achievements. I also knew that due to the established pay scale grid used by the teaching profession in most places in North America, I may soon become too expensive a teacher to hire when school administrators are faced with a shrinking budget. Now that I have taken a few temporary jobs (teaching English as a Second Language to immigrant adults, and substitute teaching) I have come to realize what I have missed in the last few months: the great, exhausting commitment to a community of others. This commitment was where I developed parts of myself that I had not known before in my previous jobs in the business world.

I don't wish to be shown off in such a completely altruistic light, because I was reasonably paid for my efforts: in our prosperous and peaceful Canadian society I had enough money for a house, car, reasonably inexpensive pleasures like movies, golf, and occasional vacations in California or Ontario. My family has been successful in avoiding the many addictions inflicted upon society by the large corporations, government agencies (lottery tickets, taxes on alcohol and tobacco) and criminal undersocieties. Life has been good.

There are a few keys in these last three paragraphs, incredibly personal as they are, as to how I would wish individuals to respond to the need for change, in education and in other spheres. The first is to put them into context. Even as I was serving others by teaching, 40,000 were still dying every day on the other side of the world, the physical environment is being damaged, population is increasing at 90 million a year, and global corporations continue to search for markets and profits, unabated now that the last alternative, communism, has become a museum piece of economic experimentation and terrorism.

Inside that context, it would be easy to say everybody must serve others: perhaps more food banks, more foreign aid, more donations to World Vision, more conferences on food, poverty, environmental degradation, and so on. Every one of those is important, necessary, and should be intensified. Such efforts of course are the antithesis of the kind of corporate frontierism that is scouring the world in search of more middle class people of any country and color to find more customers for their products, or "stuff" as Marcuse calls it. But there is the haunting feeling that will not be enough, because it hasn't been enough in the past. We must take into account basic human self interest.

What would be far more effective, but probably enormously difficult to initiate and administer, would be to pay people and organizations to solve these

problems, just as I was reasonably paid to make extra efforts to a community of others in my teaching. In other words, a reasonable standard of employment for those people who can solve problems of poverty, population and environmental degradation.

"Fine, noble idea Allan, but the great industrial machine won't be convinced, they will co-opt you and say it's a good idea but not do anything about it. And by the way, how are you going to do it, who will pay for it?"

There is no way at this time for me to imagine how this will be done. There are more capable administrators and visionaries. All that needs to be said is that it *must* be done, and that there is enough wealth in the world to do it. Except for some recommendations I will make for schools here in the prosperous part of the world, I absolutely refuse to go into specifics. I will not even recommend, like Marcuse does at the end, that there should be both a centralized authority and direct democracy. Nor will I recommend that there should be a guaranteed basic level of food sustenance, clothing, shelter and medical care, as tempted as I am, for there may better ways to harness economic technology other than enforced guarantees. Not only will I probably err, it will simply be a way the counter-productive forces will criticize and deflate the urgency of the argument, and thus continue the cycles of repression that Marcuse understood so clearly in 1964 in One-Dimensional Man. The unnecessary dying and suffering must end, it is morally unforgivable for it to continue. It simply *must* be done, and there is the technical capability to do it.

Before tackling these enormous problems, there must be a preparation for doing, coming from what Marcuse calls on his last page the "most advanced consciousness of humanity". I am sure he meant the most advanced consciousness possible at this given time, rather than some spiritual absolute. And that most advanced consciousness must be rooted in the world as a

historical universe. But who controls the interpretation of history? Historians and educators. How would we know what would be the most truthful of many interpretations at the moment for any given incident?

We usually have a difficult time sorting through influences and lobby groups and government agendas to find a historical reality: this is what Marcuse called a "universe of manipulated contradictions" And since, as Marcuse says, the industrial society swallows up or repulses alternatives, we quite probably feel impotent, despairing, withdrawn. What good will it do, for there seems to be an oppressiveness in both the blanket of the sort of smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom of the modern capitalist machine, and with humanity's proclivity to continually make errors, cause wars, fall into racist nationalism, and neglect the poor and impoverished. And most nauseating of all, is the knowledge that the poorest are dying right at this instant, that capitalism may eat itself up and our planet may have some kind of neurological overheating caused by too much smoke, either from tobacco or factory smoke stacks. How telling is it that the world's biggest industry is weapons, the world's biggest consumer product is the cigarette, and the world's biggest advertiser is a cigarette company? Why not just continue to enjoy the comforts up here in the penthouse of the world for perhaps another 20-30 years?

The great industrial machine is not perfect. Knowledge seeps through the network of mass media, signs of decay are everywhere and there are days of panic when shouts of despair ring through the stock markets, indicating a true knowledge of just how much our financial schemes are like a house of cards. Perhaps Marcuse was right when he concluded it is nothing but a chance that there will be an improvement, but a chance could be amplified into a possibility if enough people were convinced it would be in their best interests to start thinking of *their* best interests as being the welfare of the whole earth and all of

its people. Like the romantic existentialists at the middle point of this century, I believe that we should try for the good and right, even if the odds are stacked against us, like Camus' Dr. Rieux in the novel The Plague, or perhaps like Camus and Malraux themselves, resistance fighters inside France during World War II.

There is a great deal to be despairing about, a great deal that stands in the way of us understanding the real historical truth of what is happening at this very moment, of understanding how bad things actually are in the world. We now have the lack of alternatives to capitalism, and a generalized world wide romance for "economic development" and "global markets". As Marcuse wrote, we need a dialectical analysis, a negativism against this sort of monolithic attitude, and perhaps it will be freer now that there is no association of anti-capitalism with Soviet style communism. We also have the international proliferation of English, Hollywood movies and American/European style advertising, all of which leads to an unthinking wash of a sales pitch and advertising image that I called the English Media Image Language. In the fourth chapter of his book, titled The Closing of the Universe of Discourse, Marcuse was prescient enough to see the wash of words and images and advertising and call it "anti-critical, anti-dialectical".

At this stage of crisis in our world history this preparation for doing must be based on a critical, historical stance, and history would include today's current events. Knowledge unaffected by the corporate and government influence must be able to flow freely so criticism can lead to a more truthful picture.

Allan, that's impossible. Primitive governments control the media. Democratic governments give more freedom, but the advertisers have a measure of control. The great industrial machine will not harm itself with damaging information.

This is not necessarily true, and there is a sign for optimism, ironically with the latest technological developments. The Internet is being used so information can be sent instantly to other parts of the world, and it is harder to control. And generally, just as there seems to be more information available through a capitalist controlled media than in a tyranny (as long as it doesn't directly affect the advertisers, and as long as there are enough information competitors with different advertisers), there is the fact that some government financed media that do not have a lot of government influence (like our own CBC or the British BBC) seem to have even more freedom than the others to bring a more truthful picture. There will of course be an interesting debate on its ability, and admittedly, the control of funding for the CBC and BBC is a form of censorship. But inside this progression, if it can be seen as such, lies the fact that we are more likely to get a little more of the truth.

However, good journalism alone will not bring the importance of each truth, for each incident, accident, coup, war, famine and achievement could be nothing more than flotsam in an ocean of impressions. Journalism must be linked to history and critical thought. I am proposing that the standards of journalism be raised so that journalists could understand events in a larger historical perspective and communicate that to us. A great deal of responsibility will have to fall on the editors to search through the events of the world, and look for the critical, the indicative, to fight off the propaganda, and to bring to light the truest nature of our precarious situation. A journalist must also become a practicing historian, and he must be trained as such.

That's a fine idea. High ethical standards for journalists, and a virtually influence free media. It would be almost impossible to start, and hard to maintain.

I agree. As Marcuse says, it is nothing but a chance, but we must begin.

The preparation for doing, the gradual assault on our world of crisis, must also come from education. I can quickly hear voices from the universities, saying that education has usually, inevitably, sometimes exclusively been nothing but as socialization plan, a method of job training, a reinforcement methodology of patriotism. Indeed, Connell's massive study confirmed that throughout the world in the 20th century, that was exactly the case, and that academics, the learning for the sake of learning, was either third or fourth on the list of priorities in schools. However, the alleviation of the crisis is not a purely academic goal, for it is not a matter of needing a new technology, it is a matter of finding the will to utilize the resources: it is a social goal. Education in the past has been bent for social goals, for good or ill, and the future will be no exception. Hitler and Lenin and Mao recognized the importance of schools and universities and barefoot doctors and gave those issues priority. In the last century Horace Mann fought an uphill but successful fight to make education in the United States available to all members of the public, to have classrooms controlled by professional teachers, and to have the entire system supported by taxes. In Canada, Egerton Ryerson lead a similar and equally effective movement, with the additional goals of having the education system reflect the values of the British monarchy (with loyalty to the new Canadian federation) and less directly, the social values of Protestantism. To me the most remarkable successes of both Mann and Ryerson were in convincing the leading powerful interests that people and businesses should pay for the schools. Financing was eventually given because people and businesses became convinced obtaining such a social goal was necessary for a stable national society. And so it should be today, with the much larger international social goal of alleviating the effects of suffering on billions of people. There is wealth in the world. Telling leaders of powerful organizations that it is morally unforgivable

to let these people suffer and die will not have much more of an effect, because that has already been done. Telling them that allocating a small part of profits to pay professionals to solve these problems may make greater sense, for it is more likely that the individuals saved, revived and economically independent, however poor they might be, will become more able and likely to be buyers of corporate products.

Corporate products? Have you completely gone over to the other side?

In a sense yes. Studying Marcuse, and living through the last half of this century has shown us that the power of industrial society to co-opt alternatives is absolutely relentless. We cannot go back. We are no more likely to find our way back to simpler hunting/fishing/agrarian times than we are to have the shape of our skulls revert to those found in the dirt from 200,000 years ago. (Unless of course we have a nuclear holocaust. Then all bets are off, and an apocalyptic scenario similar to dark science fiction movies like Waterworld, Blade Runner and the projected future in Terminator 2 are more likely.) But today only a very few commune societies like the Hutterites and the Amish can keep the forces at bay, and even their future is in doubt with the obvious physical encroachment of expanding populations, environmental dissolution and social influences.

In other words, hope the system can correct itself. But not everybody understands the urgency of the problem, and those that understand are not able to bring about much of a change.

This is where education, in spite of its previous record of being a mere socialization agent or patriotic nationalistic herald, has a chance to lead. It will take generations, and as the dimming of the light around us becomes more obvious, it will be a race, and as Marcuse wrote, "nothing indicates that it will be a good end". But to not try when we have full knowledge of the gravity of the

impending disaster is morally unforgivable.

Marcuse wrote of the specific historical project of the experience, transformation and organization of nature as the stuff of domination. That project has led us to a kind of bankruptcy, and that kind of thinking, call it a kind of frontierism, or romantic scientism, must be replaced with a new kind of project. And even if that new project is slightly less fallible, and even if we have the knowledge that the new project is open to some measure of capitalistic corruption and co-optation, we must move on with it. And instead of the majority of our industrial efforts being spent on converting the frontiers into profits, we should turn inward to ourselves. We have been to the moon, and after a brief hurrah, we found it wanting. I am suggesting, as only one person living through the last half of our disastrous century and heading toward a very dark millennium, that the project become an inward effort. Instead of pushing the borders of the frontiers with science, and later having corporations use technology to develop products and find more markets, we must simply learn that teaching and helping others is more important, vital, and at this stage, absolutely essential to our survival.

In the service of others we will find ourselves.

This should become the heart of our curriculums for the new millennium.

Here is a sketch of some of the practical matters that come to mind; the list is neither complete nor detailed.

- * Reduce the emphasis on job training. Instead increase the importance on community volunteerism so the emphasis moves from the one (me) to the many (others).

- * More time should be allocated to consumer education and understanding the power of advertising. The goal should not be to just buy better products, but to buy less, and to value experience in life over the acquisition of

things.

- * Establish a news gathering source as free from influence as possible.

The truth is not pleasant, but students must become aware (at age appropriate levels) of poverty, suffering and discrimination. They must be made aware of the responsibility they have, living in times of peace and prosperity, to work in the service of others. An intensified curriculum of current events relying on daily newscasts and/or Internet access could have teachers lead students back from current events into history, making history more relevant.

- * More time and money should be put into updating curriculum

resources, especially in this area. In an ideal school, an extra half hour a day would be spent on either the independent newscast or Internet. This would mean teachers would have to work longer, and not necessarily for more money. Considering the tremendous responsibility of trying to mitigate the impending crisis, some of the burden must also fall on their shoulders. In Alberta that would mean that students would be in school another 100 hours per year. Mathematically that would mean 23.75% of the time students are awake in any given year they would be in school, as opposed to the current 21.9%. (Each student averaging 15 hours awake times 365 days = 5475 hours. School usually is 30 hours per week times 40 weeks = 1200 hours, 1200 divided by 5475 = 21.9%.)

- * There must be more time and resources devoted to the understanding and development of the arts. First, a sharpening of the skills of critical analysis can often come as much from studying a painting or performing in the school band as it can from reading comprehension or mathematics. Second, the encouragement of art that stands on its own, free from commercial influence, literally stands as an "other", another effective form of criticism and creativity for its own sake.

* Every university student must spend one academic year working in the poorer countries. Although theoretically more expensive and difficult to administrate, it could be potentially the most effective method of changing the consciousness of the future leaders in our wealthier societies. Travel has immeasurably enriched my experience and understanding, and other teachers I have met who have taught abroad would agree. Groups as diverse as travelling executives and missionaries know it enriches them beyond an academic classroom level of thinking. Intern teachers and nurses could be involved in community work, management students could be helping small businesses, science students could be helping with agricultural research and production, and arts students could be helping in the revival of cultures. All students of course would probably also be pressed into the teaching of English. Whether this program would add a year to the current academic requirements, or simply have it as a substitute, is not that important.

* The cost of these programs should not be argued. Compared to the benefit, it is minimal. There is wealth in our society, and there is adequate technology and expertise. To get involved in the tactics of how it should be paid, by raising this tax or cutting this expense, would be counterproductive at this stage, and it would just be a way for those with the greatest control to deflect, dilute and ultimately defeat this necessity. There is wealth and methods, we need only the will.

With an entire generation of adults having gone through an educational system that focuses more on world needs and histories instead of nationalism, a system that tries to balance the effects of consumeritis for individuals with a sense of being committed to others, there is a chance that a new collective sense of self might emerge. It may be nothing but a chance, but by working in the service of others it will be a far better chance than what we have now.

As Marcuse wrote, the Holocaust continues to haunt. It has haunted me. By combining the academic, studied history, with the consciousness of sympathy, and with the actual visit to Dachau it has become a real moment in the recognition of the depths of life. But that haunting is by now common, although not any less important. The uncommon hauntings are around us, drifting like flashes of ghostly static between our television advertisements, behind our statements of quarterly profits, through our computer linkages with the poorer, polluted countries. There were other moments that haunted me: travelling to Mexico City in 1973 and watching the beggars come out at night, and having one woman with horribly disfigured and gnarled feet, sitting on a blanket, staring at me. And then in 1990 the photograph of the poor child digging for onion weed bulbs in the Ethiopian dust, while I sat in bed and read for the first time about the 40,000 who die every day. I can not ever forget the thought: how could I teach this?

Here the argument ends. I have been through One-Dimensional Man from cover to cover, analysed, expanded, added observations, and made a case for change. I have shown how the continuation of the path of our industrialized world will lead to even greater suffering and catastrophe, and perhaps even to a great apocalypse, an explosion and subsequent collapse that will leave wreckage for hundreds of years.

In my Introduction I started by answering the question of why I was writing about Herbert Marcuse, and at the end of that chapter I made an invitation to look out over the precipice. Now I have brought the arguments forward, couched in the structure of analysis and commentary of a very formidable, prescient and remarkable philosopher. But what if in one last effort we leave that place of academic persuasiveness and dialectics and commentary, and go

into the purely speculative place of the haunting, leaving science and history behind, pushing over the edge of the precipice and into a darkened realm? I look at the photograph of that Ethiopian girl in 1990, struggling in the dust for onion bulbs. Where is she now?

My name is Nasri. At least it used to be Nasri before I died. I lived in Ethiopia for a short time.

Where am I now? I cannot tell you. Even if I could, I would not tell you. Let me just say that things--existence, not life as you know it--is much better now. My mother and father and brothers and sisters are all with me now.

From where I am I know of you. I know all that you have done, and all you have not done. I can speak your language, any language. Is it that you don't want to know about the very hard miserable life I had? If you listen carefully you can hear children just like me somewhere in the world. Some are being born and crying, some are just learning to walk, some are being carried. Some are dying this second, and this second, and this second, and on and on...some are dying while they look up into hot African skies that will bring no rain. Some are dying in garbage heaps in Mexico City. Some are being beaten in the slums of Recife, their frail and diseased bones cracking just before their pitiful screams. Some fall peacefully asleep in the night in Calcutta and Bombay and drift down the rivers to the ocean.

When I was alive I spent my last months digging through dry soil, looking for roots and bulbs. I would dig slowly through all the dirt within reach and then I would move a bit farther away and dig again. My mind--memories? feelings?--would become blank until all that was there was the seeing of the bleak hot land and the doing of the squatting, digging and sifting with my dry cracked hands. I had no reason to speak, it only hurt my throat.

I would feel something when I looked at my mother. Something, but I

could not know what it was. I would see her trying to work harder at begging, I would see her trying to dig more, I would see her moving around in the dark. I would see something in her eyes. I wanted to look, but as soon as I looked I had to turn away.

Sometimes the soldiers would come by in trucks. We gave up looking up at them. They would never stop. The dust would get in my eyes and throat, so I would just put my head down until it was quiet again.

Dying came like a dream. As I hurt more and more, I had to stop more from the digging. I remember lying down, and then getting up and starting again. I remember falling over and turning my head away from the sun. I remember getting up again after another dream of soldiers and dust. I stood up but lost my balance. I fell over and my left leg twisted beneath me. There was a horrible sound of something being torn apart. I screamed, and very soon I could not scream any more. I straightened myself out, and laid face down in the dirt. I kept fading off into dreams. I think I came back into being awake a few more times, but each time the burning made me dizzy.

Now I can see, I can think, I can understand. Why should you give up your peace? Why should you risk losing what you have? Why should you keep my story out of your children's books? It was hard and miserable. Perhaps if you fully understand what happened to me, and what is happening to 1,500 of us every hour, to 25 of us every minute...no, it might drive you mad.

So stay with your life for now. Have your children grow up healthy, and hope they get their share of peace and laughter. You don't want them to know about my life until they can do something about it.

And you? Is there any point in telling you about lives like mine until you can do something about it?

I can feel time changing. I can see ahead. I can feel the births and

deaths as an expanding cycle. If I want I can hear the sounds of everyone.

Something is going to happen in the distant time ahead, something that hasn't happened before, not ever.

What is it? Are you ready?

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