

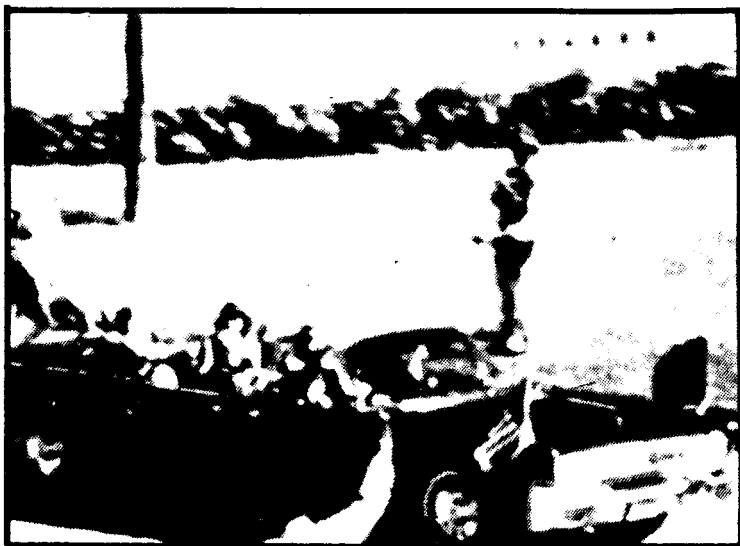
# The Real Paper

January 20, 1979/Volume 8/Number 3

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### T.R.P.: News and Opinion

Alan Berger explains the American Shah in the first of a two-part series. Bernays shows why some bad books make good movies. Plus MacRobert's Short Takes. *Page 5*. Mamis tells how to get into the options market cheap. *Page 8*. Kingston's Boston. *Page 10*. Harvey Yazijian analyzes the House Assassination Committee's conspiracy tendencies and acoustic evidence. *Page 12*.



The Not-Quite-Ready-for-Prime-Time

## Letters

### Money and Roses

As usual, most of Andrew Kopkind's observations of the decadence, alienation, and depersonalization of much of American society ("How to Become One of the 'Hot' Rich," *RP*, 1/13) were right on target and showed a keen sensitivity to the cultural nonsense of our times. Unfortunately, in this age of "The Zen of Making Money" and other atrocities (if there isn't a book like that out now, there will be soon), his article ultimately became no more than another layer of excess verbiage and mystification of a very unmythical topic. Consumption of goods, like the accumulation of wealth, is certainly historical, but to call it "existential" and to suggest that "in the end we have no way of knowing at this very confusing point in our century what we need," and "in the absence of internalized standard of money and things" only feeds the growing army of other-directed zombies and rationalizers of our destructive mass culture. The question of how to live and what we need must be answered by the individual; for there is no one else. As long as there are people on this planet, there will always be inner-directed, seeking people who will continue to look outside the narrow political, social, and economic realities and confront the genuine existential realities of life, pain, searching, birds, trees, roses, sorrow, and death. Those are the only questions we "must" ask. Those are the questions that are forced upon us by our "existential" situation. Things are not so confusing. A rose is still a rose is still a rose. And money is still money is still money.

essentially the same reason: blind obedience. Jim Jones's followers either committed suicide at his directive or were killed if they refused; clearly this was blind or forced obedience. But to casually assert, as Mr. Silverglate does, that those who lost their lives in Vietnam were "following, unquestioningly, the orders of elected and appointed 'cult' leaders" is a gross vilification of the dead and all those who fought in that war. Some, perhaps many, believed even without government coercion, that the cause of freedom, even the freedom of people in a remote corner of the world, was worth the risk of their own lives. We, as a people, have long since recognized the immorality and misguidedness of American involvement in Vietnam, but Mr. Silverglate's equation of the Jonestown cultists' "revolutionary suicide" with the deaths of Americans and Vietnamese in battle is obscene.

Mr. Silverglate asks how the Jonestown "fringe group" (we mustn't call it a "cult" or "sect," he tells us) or other mysterious organizations "can be distinguished in an intellectually and legally principled way from the larger religious and political groups that have gained accepted status in our society." This leads to his second syllogism: any preaching of a particular gospel in an effort to convert is tantamount to "brainwashing;" the freedom to preach in order to convert is protected by the Constitution; hence, brainwashing must [also] be protected by the law. The principal fallacy is, of course, in Mr. Silverglate's first premise: there is a clear semantic, if not legal, distinction that must be made between the preaching (even the exhortation of) belief, and prolonged, intensive indoctrina-

## Garfinkel: The Men's Movement

Garfinkel. The Fifth National Conference on Men's Masculinity was held in Los Angeles over Christmas week, and besides protesting the nonfamilial nature of pro football, working out multitudes of personal "issues," and trumpeting their support for feminist causes, the gathering of 600 or so men may be considered a failure. But in the men's movement, failure is as often as not success. *Page 14.*

## The Arts

**Books** David Thomson portrays the many sides of Joan Crawford in his review of *Mommie Dearest*. *Page 21.* And Elliott Sirkin reviews Andrew Holleran's *Dancer from the Dance*, the best homosexual novel to appear since gay liberation. *Page 22.*

**Theatre** Arthur Friedman looks into the many investigations of the Great Detective, Sherlock Holmes. *Page 24.*

**Music** In Local Color, Rory O'Connor makes Elvis Costello's *Armed Forces* his first bid for the Ten Best of 1979. *Page 26.*

**Movies** Gerald Peary cheers the arrival of two new films from Canada, *The Rubber Gun* and *Skip Tracer*, and from West Germany, *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner*. *Page 27.* David Thomson tracks around moviemaker James Toback to capture the man's many profiles. *Page 28.*

## Out To Lunch

By Robert Nadeau. Our reviewer tries the Empress Room at the Hyatt Regency and finds good high-class executive road food at extremely high prices. *Page 31.*

## Section 2: The Real Almanac

On the cover of this week's Real Almanac, we feature fifteen things to do and places to go. Inside, you'll find information on the hottest cold stuff to hit this town, a Nightlife column on the new Bay Tower Room, a report on the pleasures of white Burgundy, Real Bargains for January 15 to 27, and where to go to find the Natural Grocer. For this week's Real Puzzle, we ask you all to be bill collectors. Film listings begin on page 5, Music on page 11, Around Town on page 14, and Classifieds on page 21.

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## The Not-Quite-Ready-for-Prime-Time

Barry Fagen  
Brookline

## From Ancient Greece to John Wayne

Thank you for your enlightening discussion of male homosexual relations in classical Greece (Alan Berger: "Revere Case Coverage," *RP*, 1/13). Those of us who read the *New York Review of Books* are pleased to discover its usefulness in the world of "alternative" newspapers. Several months ago the *Review* contained a piece about the study of an artistic autistic child, Nadia, who seemed to lose her artistic ability as she gained her "mental health." Perhaps you could discuss this with reference to the son of Sam case. Will David stop writing letters to Jimmy Breslin as his mind heals?

As one who believes not only in homosexual rights but in respect for homosexual cultures and lifestyles, I fail to see your reasons for invoking these issues in defense of Dr. Allen. Both you and the local media fail to discuss the fact that his "research" seems to have been done without benefit of the informed consent of the subjects. Furthermore, his young friends seem to me to be more in the employ of child labor violators than passion. Be that as it may, could you please explain how we might develop a legal/moral/social system that would allow us to distinguish between "... the pursuit of adolescent boys and the violation of children"? Should I include girls in that question? As you suggest, Revere 1978 is not classical Greece, the laws and legal system of Massachusetts are flawed, and indeed the Allen case was misused by the *Globe*. The question is, have you something better to offer than John Wayne, some book reviews, and some insipid prose?

(Name withheld by request)

## Culling the Cults

Harvey Silverglate, in his article, "In Defense of Cults" (*RP*, 12/9/78), introduces two most interesting, if perverse, syllogisms. The first goes something like this: Jim Jones and the US government (in Vietnam) were both "cult" leaders; both led many hundreds of "followers" to their deaths; hence, except in regard to the numbers of lives lost, the Guyana and Vietnam tragedies are equivalent.

By extension, Mr. Silverglate implies that the members of the Peoples Temple who died in Guyana and American servicemen killed in Vietnam did so for

tion by any means available (including induced fatigue, starvation, physical torture, etc.). It is not difficult, then, to distinguish between religious and political groups that "preach" and those that "brainwash": the testimony of former adherents from several groups that Mr. Silverglate mentions (Peoples' Temple, Unification Church, Synanon) is instructive. But perhaps he would argue that those who have been "deprogrammed" are not intellectually principled; I think Mark Lane said something like that a while back.

I, for one, applaud the effort of State Representative John King to investigate the finances of various religious cults; beyond that, the tax-exempt status of such groups should also be carefully examined. Do other cults — or more "accepted" organizations — have millions of dollars stashed in foreign banks, and if so, why? Does the recruitment of new members by groups like the Unification Church, which involves the inducement of the susceptible to go off to an isolated retreat for weeks of indoctrination, amount to criminal activity? Granted that in protecting the rights of the misfits of our society we protect the rights of all, but where, if at all, are these rights being abused? Despite the self-righteous warnings of Mr. Silverglate and others about "harrassment," these are questions that will not merely go away. For a couple of years, apparently, the State Department ignored the horror stories coming out of the Peoples' Temple and chose instead to take Mr. Silverglate's "live and let live" approach. The terrible irony of that credo is obvious.

Bruce F. MacDonald  
Cambridge

## Chinese Cuisine Addiction

Robert Nadeau is a most informative reviewer of restaurants. Although I don't agree with everything he says, as a whole, I find him most dependable. Being hopelessly addicted to Szechwan Mandarin type Chinese cuisine, I, especially enjoy his reviews of that style Chinese restaurants.

Now he's reviewed two restaurants for the second time (*RP*, 12/16/78), which is a marvelous idea. As he says, the turnover of Chinese chefs is notorious. I hope he continues to re-review Chinese places; it is hard to keep current with the changes. I have his book, but wonder whether he might revise his list for *The Real Paper* occasionally.

Mrs. John W. Murray  
Pocasset

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