Shining and Stinking: Polarization and Its Discontents

Edited by David Blankenhorn

1. What is Polarization?

… this being, so brilliant yet so corrupt, which, like a rotten mackerel by moonlight, both shines and stinks.

> Attributed to U.S. Senator John Randolph of Virginia, referring to Secretary of State Henry Clay, 1826.[1]

There was no extravagance … which he did not repeat; nor was there any possible deviation from truth which he did not make … the Senator touches nothing which he does not disfigure—with error, sometimes of principle, sometimes of fact. He shows an incapacity of accuracy … He cannot ope his mouth, but out there flies a blunder.

> U.S. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, speaking about U.S. Senator Andrew P. Butler of South Carolina, May 20, 1856.

No person with the upright form of man can be allowed, without all violation of decency, to switch out from his tongue the perpetual stench of offensive personality … The noisesome, squat, and nameless animal, to which I now refer, is not the proper model for an American Senator. Will the Senator from Illinois take notice?

> Sumner, speaking of U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, the same day.

[1] Henry Adams, *John Randolph* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1898), 286.

On May 21, Congressman Preston S. Brooks of South Carolina, a relative of Senator Butler, attacked Sumner with a cane on the Senate floor, beating him nearly unconscious. Many who approved of Brooks' attack sent him new canes. One, sent by merchants from Charleston, was inscribed: "Hit him again."[2]

Our people now look with contemptuous astonishment on those with whom they had been so recently associated. They shrink with aversion from the bare idea of renewing such a connection.

> President (and former U.S. Senator) Jefferson Davis, speaking to the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America, November 18, 1861.[3]

The little boy and his father were walking down the street. The father touched the boy on the shoulder and said in a soft voice, "Son, don't stare, but over there is a Republican." The boy looked quickly and whispered back, "But Daddy, what is *a Republican?" The father said, "Son, a Republican is a man who'll come down here to live among us, so that when a Republican gets the White House, he'll get the Post Office."*

> A story told by former U.S. Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall, about growing up in the Democratic "Solid South" in the 1930s.

Mississippi will not and cannot try to abide by such a decision … Human blood may stain Southern soil in many places because of this decision, but the dark red stains of that blood will be in the marble steps of the United States Supreme Court building.

> "Bloodstains on the White Marble Steps," Editorial, *Jackson* (MS) *Daily News*, May 18, 1954, referring to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*, which outlawed racial segregation in U.S. schools.

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[2] David Donald, *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 286-287, 305.

[3] Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative* (New York: Random House, 1958), 132.

A man with a conviction is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point.

Leon Festinger, *When Prophesy Fails*, 1956.[4]

I didn't vote for him but he's my president, and I hope he does a good job.

John Wayne (b. 1907) on the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960[5]

I hope he fails.

Rush Limbaugh (b. 1951) on the election of Barack Obama in 2008[6]

What if [Obama] is so outside our comprehension, that only if you understand Kenyan, anti-colonial behavior, can you begin to piece together [his actions]? … That is the most accurate, predictive model for his behavior. This is a person who is fundamentally out of touch with how the world works, who happened to have played a wonderful con, as a result of which he is now president … I think he worked very hard at being a person who is normal, reasonable, moderate, bipartisan, transparent, accommodating—none of which was true. In the Alinksy tradition, he was being the person he needed to be in order to achieve the position he needed to achieve … He was authentically dishonest.

Former U.S. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, September 12, 2010[7]

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[4] Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails,* 3.
[5] Todd McCarthy, *Howard Hawks* (New York: Grove/Atlantic, Inc., 1997), 583.
[6] "Limbaugh: I Hope Obama Fails," *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, January 16, 2009.
[7] "Gingrich: President Exhibits 'Kenyan, Anticolonial Behavior,'" *New York Times*, September 13, 2010.

So often blamed just on the politicians, polarization actually has its roots in us, the electorate.

> Larry J. Sabato, University of Virginia, 2013[8]

At any given time, the most interested, informed, and active members of the public are both the best sorted by party and the most polarized.

> Alan I. Abramowitz, Emory University, 2013[9]

There is no middle ground.

> Calvin Morrow of Christians Uniting for Political Action in Springfield, Missouri, April 10, 2015, discussing the conflict between laws protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination and laws protecting Americans' First Amendment right to freedom of religion.[10]

The proposition that anti-discrimination protections for gays and lesbians in and of themselves constitute an assault on the Constitutional guarantee of religious freedom is currently being promoted by some religious leaders and writers.

Proposals to address these concerns inevitably lead to targeted assaults on religious liberty.

> Russell Moore of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, January 27, 2015, explaining his opposition to anti-discrimination protections for gays and lesbians.[11]

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[8] In the endorsement of the book by Alan I. Abramowitz, *The Polarized Public? Why American Government Is So Dysfunctional* (Boston: Pearson, 2013).

[9] Abramowitz, *The Polarized Public?*, 54.

[10] "A National Battle Over Anti-Bias Legislation Plays Out in a Missouri City," *New York Times*, April 10, 2015.

[11] Elizabeth Bristow, "ERLC's Russell Moore Responds to Mormon Church Decision to Support LGBT Legal Protections," The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, posted January 27, 2015.

Sexual orientation and gender identity laws threaten fundamental First Amendment rights.

Ryan Anderson of the Heritage Foundation, April 2, 2015.[12]

Political polarization is the defining feature of early 21st century American politics, both among the public and elected officials.

Carroll Doherty, Pew Research Center, 2014[13]

[12] Ryan T. Anderson, "Indiana Has Changed Its Religious Liberty Law. Here Is What That Means," *The Daily Signal*, posted April 2, 2015.

[13] Carroll Doherty, "7 things to know about polarization in America," Pew Research Center, June 12, 2014.

2. The Case for Polarization

He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

Saying of Jesus, King James Bible, Luke 11:23.

REPUBLICANS. Turn out, turn out and save your country from ruin!

DOWN WITH THE TORIES. DOWN WITH THE BRITISH FACTION.

Campaign poster, Thomas Jefferson's presidential re-election campaign, 1804

I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as Truth, and as uncompromising as Justice. On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard.

The abolitionist leader William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator*,
January 1, 1831

We are very small in numbers; we have got no wealth; we have got no public opinion behind us; the only thing we can do is, like the eagle, simply to fly at our enemy, and pick out his eyes.

The abolitionist leader Wendell Phillips, 1830s[14]

[14] Cited in Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 138.

I'm gonna buy me a shotgun, with a great long shiny barrel.
I'm gonna buy me a shotgun, with a great long shiny barrel.
I'm gonna shoot that rounder, that stole away my gal.

I'd rather drink muddy water, and sleep in a hollow log.
I'd rather drink muddy water, and sleep in a hollow log,
than to be here in Atlanta, treated like a dirty dog.

Jimmie Rodgers, "Blue Yodel (T for Texas)," 1927

You go to Harlan County
There is no neutral there
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair

Florence Reese, "Which Side Are You On?", 1931

In my time streets led to the quicksand.
Speech betrayed me to the slaughterer.
There was little I could do. But without me
The rulers would have been more secure. This was my hope.
So the time passed away
Which on earth was given me …

For we knew only too well:
Even the hatred of squalor
Makes the brow grow stern.
Even anger against injustice
Makes the voice grow harsh. Alas, we
Who wished to lay the foundations of kindness
Could not ourselves be kind.

But you, when at last it comes to pass
That man can help his fellow man,
Do no judge us
Too harshly.

From Bertolt Brecht's poem, "To Posterity," 1939, translated by H. R. Hays

These depraved souls are so confused and full of hate for the present state of America, and so frustrated in their lives because of lack of vital contributions to God, country and society that their consuming depravity must be fed by destroying those who have contributed to God, country, and society.

> Frank E. Westmoreland, commenting on the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court "Brown v. Board of Education" decision requiring the desegregation of public schools and on the "campaign to destroy the South," in *The South: Last Bulwark of America*, 1958[15]

The myth of moderation which receives so much sanctimonious approval from the North when advocated by the liberals of the South warrants a closer examination than it has thus far received. First of all, it is virtually impossible to arrive a point of moderation between two such diametrically opposed set of circumstances as segregation and integration. Neither can exist in the presence of the other. The well-intentioned peacemakers of the North and South who counsel "moderation," therefore, embody this basic flaw in their reasoning: There is no basis for compromise for those, on both sides of the issue, who think in terms of principal alone. Philosophically, the matter of integration, like that of pregnancy, leaves no middle ground. Segregation and integration are absolutes—and as such are mutually exclusive.

> William D. Workman, Jr., *The Case for the South*, 1960 [16]

He got fightin' mad, this Rebel lad.
He was panther quick and leather tough
and he figured that he'd been pushed enough.

> From the song "The Rebel" (aka "Johnny Yuma"), by Richard Markowitz and Andrew Fenady, 1960

[15] Frank E. Westmoreland, *The South: Last Bulwark of America* (New York: Vantage Press, 1958), 41, 44.

[16] William D. Workman, Jr., *The Case for the South* (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1960), 270.

And I hope that you die
And your death'll come soon
I will follow your casket
In the pale afternoon
And I'll watch while you're lowered
Down to your deathbed
And I'll stand o'er your grave
'Til I'm sure that you're dead

Bob Dylan, "Masters of War," 1963

I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.

U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater, accepting the nomination to be the Republican candidate for president of the United States, July 16, 1964

There's not a dime's worth of difference between the Democratic and Republican parties.

Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama, running for president, 1968 [17]

Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it … One acts decisively only in the conviction that all the angels are on one side and all the devils on the other.

The community organizer Saul Alinsky, 1971[18]

[17] James Q. Wilson, John J. DiIulio, Jr., and Meena Bose, *American Government: Brief Version* (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, 2009), 156.

[18] Saul D. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989; first published 1971), 130, 134.

We [the researchers] presented respondents with two different education plans, the details of which are unimportant in this context. What is important is that half the sample was told A was the Democratic plan and B was the Republican plan, while the other half of our national sample was told A was the Republican plan and B was the Democrats' approach.

The questions dealt with substantive policy on a subject quite important to most Americans—education—and issues that people are familiar with—class size, teacher pay and the like. Nonetheless, when the specifics in Plan A were presented as the Democratic plan and B as the Republican plan, Democrats preferred A by 75 percent to 17 percent, and Republicans favored B by 13 percent to 78 percent. When the exact same elements of A were presented in the exact same words, but as the Republicans' plan, and with B as the Democrats' plan, Democrats preferred B by 80 percent to 12 percent, while Republicans preferred "their party's plan" by 70 percent to 10 percent. Independents split fairly evenly both times. In short, support for an identical education plan shifted by more than 60 points among partisans, depending on which party was said to back it.

Thus, policy positions were not driving partisanship, but rather partisanship was driving policy positions. Voters took whichever position was ascribed to their party, irrespective of the specific polices that position entailed.

> Mark Mellman, "Relationship of Parties and Policies," *The Hill*, March 13, 2013

On one side of the [political] gridlock are those who believe there are deep truths inscribed in the human person, truths that no just state can ignore or deny. On the other side of the gridlock are those who believe there is no such thing as "human nature"; that the very idea of "human nature" has been constructed by powerful forces as a means of control and subordination; that "tolerance" requires the given-human-nature people to welcome whatever the no-human-nature people decide is "their truth"; and that, if the given-human-nature people decline to offer that welcome, they must be legally coerced into doing so by the state.

Thus arguments for opting out of what is sometimes called the American "culture war" are like whistling down the wind. The culture war—these clashing visions of human nature, which involves competing concepts of human happiness—has split the United States, and that division is not likely to be bridged anytime soon.

… For the resolution of the American culture war over the nature of the human person will not, in the final analysis, be a matter of politics. It will be a matter of conversion.

> George Weigel, "The Myth of Washington Gridlock," *First Things*, June 3, 2015

3. The Case against Polarization

Another bad consequence of engaging vehemently *in a party, is that from hence we may contract violent prejudices … Thus prejudiced, we feel nothing in its* true *shape; beauty and deformity, right and wrong, virtue and vice change their very natures within us. We contact intimacies with the most worthless, and reject the friendships of the most deserving. To think* with *us in our party opinions, is enough to constitute the* man of merit*; and to think* against *us enough to brand a man with the appellation of* knave.

… Till anger and meekness, till prejudice and charity, till malice and a propensity to forgive, till the bitterness of inflamed passion and brotherly love, signify the same *meaning, the spirit of party and the spirit of Christianity can never meet together: they are tempers entirely different.*

> William Gilpin, "The bad Consequences of Dissention and Party-rage considered," a sermon preached at Buckingham, July 5, 1747.

Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions.

… But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.

> Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1801, after what historians widely view as one of the nation's most contentious and polarized elections.

... at once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement especially in Literature & which Shakespeare possessed so enormously -- I mean Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason.

The poet John Keats, 1817[19]

It is in morals and manners what the experimental is in natural philosophy, as opposed to the dogmatical method. It does not deal in sweeping clauses of proscription and anathema, but in nice distinctions and liberal constructions. It makes up its general account from details, its few theories from many facts. It does not try to prove all black or white as it wishes, but lays on the intermediate colours, (and most of them not unpleasing ones,) as it finds them blended with "the web of our life, which is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."

William Hazlitt, describing the periodical essay, 1819[20]

These, Mr. President, were some of my reasons for speaking of the history of party under our Government. I had another. It was to mark the difference between the necessary, and, if I may so express it, the legitimate parties existing in all free Governments, founded on differences of opinion in fundamental principles, or an attachment to, or dislike of, particular measures and particular men; between these and that spirit of dissension into which they are apt to degenerate: to throw the weight of my experience, and the little my opinions may have, in the scale, and lift up a warning voice against the indulgence of the passions which lead to them, the allusions that irritate, the personal reflections that embitter debate, and the altercations that debase it. The spirit of which I speak originates in the most trifling as well as the most important circumstances. The liberties of a nation or the color of a cockade are sufficient to excite it. It creates imaginary, and magnifies real causes of complaint; arrogates to itself every virtue—denies every merit to its opponents; secretly entertains the worst designs—publicly imputes them to its adversaries: poisons domestic happiness with its dissensions; assails the character of the living with calumny, and, invading the very secrets of the grave with its viperous slanders, destroys the reputation of the dead; harangues in the market place; disputes at the social board;

[19] John Keats, letter to George and Tom Keats, December 21 or 27, 1817.

[20] William Hazlitt, "On the Periodical Essayists," in Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers* (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1819), 178-179. The quotation ("mingled yarn") is from Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*, scene 4, act 3.

distracts public councils with unprincipled propositions and intrigues; embitters their discussions with invective and recrimination, and degrades them by personalities and vulgar abuse; seats itself on the bench; clothes itself in the robes of justice; soils the purity of the ermine, and poisons the administration of justice in its source; mounts the pulpit, and, in the name of a God of mercy and peace, preaches discord and vengeance; invokes the worst scourges of Heaven, war, pestilence, and famine, as preferable alternatives to party defeat: blind, vindictive, cruel, remorseless, unprincipled, and at last frantic, it communicates its madness to friends as well as foes; respects nothing, fears nothing; rushes on the sword; braves the dangers of the ocean; and would not be turned from its mad career by the majesty of Heaven itself, armed with its tremendous thunders.

> U.S. Senator Edward Livingston of Louisiana, February 29, 1830, decrying and defining what he called an "excess of party rage," delivered as part of the same Senate debates on the use of public lands, and by extension the meaning of the Union and the growing possibility of disunion, which included the famous exchanges between Robert Hayne of South Carolina and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts.

Sir, I have done. I have uttered the sincere dictates of my best judgment, on topics closely connected with our dearest interest. I have, because it was my duty, uttered them freely—without reserve, but I hope without offence; with the respect that was due to the opinion of others, and with a becoming diffidence of my own. It would be a cause of great regret if I should have misapprehended the tendency of any of the doctrines of which I have spoken. It would have been a greater, if, thinking of them as I do, I had omitted the animadversions which I thought their consequences required.

Gentlemen have spoken, with patriotic enthusiasm, of the consolation they would receive, at their last moments, in seeing the flag of their country display to their dying eyes its emblems of union and glory. The period when mine must be closed in night, is too near to refer to it the duration of my country's happiness. But I can anticipate for that beloved country a continuance of freedom and prosperity long after the distant, I hope, the far distant day, when the last of those honorable men shall have finished his useful career. I can apprehend for it the worst of evils before any one of them shall quit the stage.

These hopes are founded on the exertions of active and enlightened patriotism to preserve the Union; these fears, on the madness of party that may destroy it.

Robert Livingston, February 29, 1830[21]

It is hardly possible to overstate the value, in the present low state of human improvement, of placing human beings in contact with persons dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar … Such communication has always been, and is particularly in the present age, one of the primary sources of progress.

John Stuart Mill, 1848 [22]

To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written a book of travels Montenegro, is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

Robert Louis Stevenson, "An Apology for Idlers," 1877[23]

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming," 1919

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[21] *Speech of Mr. Livingston, of Louisiana, on Mr. Foot's Resolution* (Washington, D.C.: Duff Green, 1830), 19-20, 57.

[22] John Stuart Mill, *The Principles of Political Economy: With Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909; first published 1848), 581.

[23] Robert Louis Stevenson, "An Apology for Idlers," in Sevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1896), 109.

There were no Republicans in my neighborhood. None that I ever met. A few votes were cast for Republican candidates, but I figured those were by Jews with mental disturbances or Communists who wanted to hasten the Revolution by making Republicans as visible as possible.

… Being full of horror stories about Stalin from local Trotskyites, I demurred, telling my [Communist] friend the barber that I just wasn't cut out for party discipline. He kept after me. In the years ahead, he said, so much had to be, and would be, changed in this country. There could be no room for neutrals. Each and every one of us will be either part of the liberation of the masses or the enemy of the masses. It would be such a shame to see a nice boy like you, Nathan, on the list of the enemies.

… As for me, I decided that when you know exactly what someone is going to say in answer to every single question you ask, you ought to put your nickel in some other machine.

Nat Hentoff, in his memoir *Boston Boy*, about growing up in Jewish Roxbury, in the 1930s and 1940s[24]

When one reads any strongly individual piece of writing, one has the impression of seeing a face somewhere behind the page. It is not necessarily the actual face of the writer. I feel this very strongly with Swift, with Defoe, with Fielding, Stendhal, Thackeray, Flaubert, though in several cases I do not know what these people looked like and do not want to know. What one sees is the face that the writer ought *to have. Well, in the case of Dickens I see a face that is not quite the face of Dickens's photographs, though it resembles it. It is the face of a man of about forty, with a small beard and a high colour. He is laughing, with a touch of anger in his laughter, but no triumph, no malignity. It is the face of a man who is always fighting against something, but who fights in the open and is not frightened, the face of a man who is* generously angry*—in other words, of a nineteenth-century liberal, a free intelligence, a type hated with equal hatred by all the smelly little orthodoxies which are now contending for our souls.*

George Orwell, "Charles Dickens," 1940[25]

[24] Nat Hentoff, *Boston Boy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 74-75, 77.
[25] George Orwell, *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (London: Victor Gollancz Limited, 1940), 56.

A nation, divided irreconcilably on "principle," each party believing itself pure white and the other pitch black, cannot govern itself.

Walter Lippmann, "Mr. Churchill and Me-Tooism," *Washington Post*, January 26, 1950.

[P]olitics is a matter of adopting oneself to all sorts of people and situations, a game in which one may score but only by accepting the rules and recognizing one's opponents, rather than a moral crusade in which one's stainless standards must put the enemy to shame and route.

Edmund Wilson, in an essay on Theodore Roosevelt, 1951[26]

Question: Would you mind giving me your definition of a mature person?

A mature person is one who does not think only in absolutes, who is able to be objective even when deeply stirred emotionally, who has learned that there is both good and bad in all people and in all things, and who walks humbly and deals charitably with the circumstances of life, knowing that in this world no one is all-knowing and therefore all of us need both love and charity.

Eleanor Roosevelt, from an interview in *McCall's*, October 1953.[27]

The tendency to convert concrete issues into ideological problems, to invest them with moral color and high emotional charge, is to invite conflicts which can only damage a society … It has been one of the great glories of the United States that politics has always been a pragmatic give-and-take rather than a series of wars-to-the-death.

Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, 1962

[26] Edmund Wilson, "The Pre-Presidential T.R.," in Wilson, *The Bit Between My Teeth: A Literary Chronicle of 1950-1965* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 74.

[27] See also Eleanor Roosevelt, *You Learn By Living* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 63.

You love me, you hate me
You know me and then
You can figure out the bag I'm in

Sly Stone, "Everyday People," 1968

4. Civil Society and Public Debate

Some historians view British coffee-houses from 1650 through the mid-1700s as the emergence of an important institution of civil society—a public (or at least quasi-public) space, separate from both Court and Church, in which for the first time on a large scale, a fairly wide diversity of "gentlemen" could come together on an informal basis to discuss public affairs, read and hear the news, and engage in free debate governed (at least in principle) by rules of courtesy and politeness. And, of course, drink coffee!

The first English coffee-house, the Angel, was founded in Oxford in 1650.

Historical Dictionary of Stuart England, 1603-1689[28]

Before coffee-houses, men could not be so well acquainted with one another. They were afrayd and stared at all those that were not of their own sodalities.

John Aubrey, the British writer and antiquarian, about 1681.[29]

Enter, Sirs, freely, but first, if you please.
Peruse our civil orders, which are these.
First, gentry, tradesmen, all are welcome hither,
And may without affront sit down together:
Pre-eminence of place none here should mind,
But take the next fit seat that he can find:
Nor need any, if finer persons come,
Rise up for to assign to them his room;
To limit men's expense, we think not fair,
But let him forfeit twelve-pence that shall swear

[28] Ronald H. Fritze and William B. Robison (eds.), *Historical Dictionary of Stuart England, 1603-1689* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996).

[29] Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 93.

He that shall any quarrel here begin,
Shall give each man a dish t' atone the sin;
And so shall he, whose compliments extend
So far to drink in coffee to his friend;
Let noise of loud disputes be quite forborne,
Nor maudlin lovers here in corners mourn,
But all be brisk and talk, but not too much;
On sacred things, let none presume to touch,
Nor profane Scripture, nor saucily wrong
Affairs of state with an irreverent tongue:
Let mirth be innocent, and each man see
That all his jests without reflection be;
To keep the house more quiet and from blame,
We banish hence cards, dice, and every game;
Nor can allow of wagers, that exceed
Five shillings, which ofttimes do troubles breed;
Let all that's lost or forfeited be spent
In such good liquor as the house doth vent.
And customers endeavour, to their powers,
For to observe still, seasonable hours.
"Lastly, let each man what he ealls for pay,
And so you're welcome to come every day.

Coffee-house rules, 1600s.[30]

… men have assumed to themselves a liberty, not only in coffee-houses, but in other places and meetings, to censure and defame the proceedings of state, by speaking evil of things they understand not …

From one of a series of proclamation by King James II criticizing and imposing restrictions on British coffee-houses, October 26, 1688.[31]

[30] John Timbs, *Clubs and Club Life in London,* (London: Savill, Edwards and Co., 1872), 272-273.
[31] Cited in Cowan, 210.

I was yesterday in a coffee-house" not far from the Royal Exchange, where I observed three persons in close conference over a pipe of tobacco; upon which, having filled one for my own use, I lighted it at the little wax candle that stood before them; and, after having thrown in two or three whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the company. I need not tell my reader, that lighting a man's pipe at the same candle, is looked upon, among brother smokers, as an overture to conversation and friendship. As we here laid our heads together in a very amicable manner, being entrenched under a cloud of our own raising, I took up the last Spectator, and casting my eye over it, 'The Spectator (says I) is very witty to day;' upon which a lusty lethargic old gentleman, who sat at the upper end of the table, having gradually blown out of his mouth a great deal of smoke, which he had been collecting for some time before, ' Ay, (says he,) more witty than wise I am afraid.' His neighbour, who sat at his right hand, immediately coloured, and being an angry politician, laid down his pipe with so much wrath that he broke it in the middle, and by that means furnished me with a tobacco stopper. I took it up very sedately, and looking him full in the face, made use of it from time to time, all the while he was speaking: 'This fellow, (says he,) cannot for his life keep out of politics. Do you see how he abuses four great men here?' I fixed my eye very attentively on the paper, and asked him if he meant those who were represented by asterisks. 'Asterisks, (says he,) do you call them? they are all of them stars. He might as well have put garters to them. Then pray do but mind the two or three next lines! Ch-rch and p-dd-ng in the same sentence! Our clergy are very much beholden to him.' Upon this, the third gentleman, who was of a kind disposition, and, as I found, a whig in his heart, desired him not to be too severe upon the Spectator neither; 'For, (says he,) you find he is very cautious of giving offence, and has therefore put two dashes into his pudding.' 'A fig for his dash, (says the angry politician,) in his next sentence he gives a plain innuendo, that our posterity will be in a sweet p-ckle. What does the fool mean by his pickle? why does he not write at length, if he means honestly?' 'I have read over the whole sentence, (says I,) but I look upon the parenthesis in the belly of it to be the most dangerous part, and as full of insinuations as it can hold. But who, (says I,) is my Lady Q—p—t—s?' 'Ay, answer that if you can, sir,' says the furious statesman to the poor whig that sat over against him. But without giving him time to reply, ' I do assure you, (says he,) were I my Lady Q—p—t—s, I would sue him for scandalum magnatam. What is the world come to? must everybody be allowed to ?' He had, by this time, filled a new pipe, and applying it to his lips, when we expected the last word of his sentence, puts us off with a whiff of tobacco; which he redoubled with so much rage and trepidation, that he almost stifled the whole company. After a short pause, I owned that I thought the Spectator had gone too far in writing so many letters in my Lady Q-p-t s's name; 'But, however, (says I) he has made a little amends for it in his next sentence, where he leaves a blank space without so much as a consonant to direct us! I mean, says I, after those words, The fleet that used to be the terror of the ocean, should lie wind-bound for the sake of a ;after

which ensues a chasm, that, in my opinion, looks modest enough.' 'Sir,' says my antagonist, 'you may easily know his meaning by his gaping; I suppose he designs his chasm, as you call it, for an hole to creep out at, but I believe it will hardly serve his turn. Who can endure to see the great officers of state, the B—y's and T—t's treated after so scurrilous a manner?' 'I cannot for my life, (says I,) imagine who the Spectator means : 'No!' (says he,) 'Your humble servant, sir!' Upon which he flung himself back in his chair after a contemptuous manner, and smiled upon the old lethargic gentleman on his left hand, who I found was his great admirer. The whig, however, had begun to conceive a good will towards me, and seeing my pipe out, very generously offered me the use of his box: but I declined it with great civility, being obliged to meet a friend about that time in another quarter of the city.

At my leaving the coffee-house, I could not forbear reflecting with myself, upon that gross tribe of fools, who may be termed the over-wise, and upon the difficulty of writing anything in this censorious age, which a weak head may not construe into private satire and personal reflection.

A man who has a good nose at an innuendo, smells treason and sedition in the most innocent words that can be put together, and never sees a vice or folly stigmatized, but finds out one or other of his acquaintance pointed at by the writer. I remember an empty pragmatical fellow, in the country, who, upon reading over ' The whole Duty of Man,' had written the names of several persons in the village at the side of every sin which is mentioned by that excellent author: so that he had converted one of the best books in the world into a libel against the 'squire, churchwardens, overseers of the poor, and all other of the most considerable persons in the parish. This book, with these extraordinary marginal notes, fell accidentally into the hands of one who had never seen it before: upon which there arose a current report that somebody had written a book against the 'squire and the whole parish. The minister of the place having, at that time a controversy with some of his congregation, upon the account of his tythes, was under some suspicion of being the author, until the good man set his people right, by showing them that the satirical passages might be applied to several others of two or three neighbouring villages, and that the book was written against all the sinners in England.

Joseph Addison, *The Spectator* (no. 568), July 10, 1714.

In brief 'tis undenyable that as you have here [in the coffee-houses] the most civil … [and] the most intelligent society, the frequenting whose converse, and observing their discourse and deportment cannot but civilize our manner, inlarge our understandings, refine our language, teach us a generous confidence and handsome mode of address …

Coffee-houses Vindicated, 1745 [32]

Whenever, at the head of some new undertaking, you see the Government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association.

I met with several kinds of associations in America, of which I confess I had no previous notion; and I have often admired the extreme skill with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object to the exertion of a great many people, and in getting them voluntarily to pursue it.

Alexis de Tocqueville, the great 19th century foreign observer of the U.S., in *Democracy in America*, 1835[33]

A rich vegetation of associations and organizations for worth-while causes is an American characteristic. Americans are great "joiners" and they enjoy "campaigns" and "drives" for membership or contributions. Social clubs are plentiful, and even they are taken with seriousness difficult to understand. Enthusiasm is invested in committee work of small importance in churches, lodges, clubs and civic associations of all kinds.

Undoubtedly this cultural trait is partly to be explained as an outflow of the idealism and moralism of the American people. Americans are generally eager to improve their society. They also have a kindly spirit of neighborliness. They like to meet each other and to feel tied together for a common cause. For these things they are prepared to sacrifice freely of their time and money. It is natural for the ordinary American, when he sees something

[32] Cited in Cowan, 105.

[33] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 2 (New York: Schocken Books, 1961; first published 1835), 129. (In this quote a "great many men" is here changed to a "great many people.")

that is wrong, to feel not only that "there should be a law against it," but also that an organization should be formed to combat it.

Gunnar Myrdal, the great 20th century foreign observer of the U.S., in *An American Dilemma*, 1944[34]

Civil society is a primary incubator of our philosophies of life and our cultural values. In civil society, we encounter that large, complex arena of our communal life in which we most directly acquire our understandings of what is right and wrong and how to live a good life, and through which we most directly pass on those values to the next generation.

Of course, these three orders—individual, civil society, and state—constantly interact and overlap. The individual person participates in, and influences, civil society. Law and government certainly influence and at times guide civil society—sometimes for good, sometimes for ill—just as civil society influences the state and can help to shape the law. But the essence of civil society is neither the individual nor the state. It is instead the (hugely important) stuff in between.

What makes civil society tick? What is its DNA? When we speak of the person, we are speaking mainly about individual rights and duties. And when we speak of the state, we are speaking mainly about the distribution and uses of power. But when we speak of civil society, we are speaking mainly about the quality of human relationships. The DNA of civil society, then, is not individual behavior and it's not the law. It is relationships, human bonds.

IAV Board of Directors, "To Study and Strengthen Civil Society," 2011[35]

[34] Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1944), 810.

[35] "To Study and Strengthen Civil Society," *Propositions* 5 (New York: IAV, October 2011), 3.