

## 1: A look at the Dark Ages: A time when things were really Medieval

*The war of the "ages", and other essays, Paperback - by Dan. Gilbert (Author) Be the first to review this item. See all 8 formats and editions Hide other.*

It has seemed to me worth while to show from the history of civilization just what war has done and has not done for the welfare of mankind. In the eighteenth century it was assumed that the primitive state of mankind was one of Arcadian peace, joy, and contentment. In the nineteenth century the assumption went over to the other extreme — that the primitive state was one of universal warfare. This, like the former notion, is a great exaggeration. Man in the most primitive and uncivilized state known to us does not practice war all the time; he dreads it; he might rather be described as a peaceful animal. Real warfare comes with the collisions of more developed societies. If we turn to facts about the least civilized men we find proofs that they are not warlike and do not practice war if they can help it. The Australians have no idea. Note. Their fights do not lead to slaughter or spoils or other consequences of victory. Quarrels between tribes are sometimes settled by a single combat between chiefs. They have no political organization, so there can be no war for power. An Englishman who knew them well said that he knew of serious wounds, but he had known of but one death from their affrays. We are told Edition: Perhaps the converse would be true: We are not astonished to hear that they develop excessive tyranny and cruelty to those who are weaker than themselves, especially to women, and even to their mothers. This is attributed in great part to head-hunting and cannibalism. In general they know the limits of their own territory and observe them, but they quarrel about women. In one case only had he heard of war for any other reason; three brothers, Barolongs, fought over one woman, and their tribe had remained divided, up to the time of writing, into three parties. During his residence in the Bechuana country he never saw unarmed men strike each other. They quarrel with words, but generally both parties burst into a laugh and that ends it. A Spanish priest, writing an account, in , of the Aurohuacos of Colombia, 5 says that they have no weapons of offense or defense. If two quarrel they go out to a big rock or tree and each with his staff beats the rock or tree with vituperations. The one whose staff breaks first is the victor; then they embrace and return home as friends. Even our American Indians, who appear in Edition: Wampum strings and belts were associated with peace-pacts and with prayers for peace. In contrast with these cases we find others of extreme warlikeness which account for the current idea that primitive men love war and practice it all the time. But if we examine the cases of peacefulness or unwarlike-hess which have been cited, we see that only two or three seem to present evidence of Arcadian peace and simplicity, such as, in the imagination of the eighteenth century philosophers, characterized men in a state of nature. Probably if we had fuller knowledge these few instances would be much modified. What we see is that men have always quarreled. The cases which have been selected are some of them also those of people who have been defeated, broken, and cowed down. Another set of examples consists of those in which abstinence from war is due to cowardice, and with it go the vices of cowardice — tyranny and cruelty to the weak. These cases are calculated to delight the hearts of the advocates of strenuosity. What our testimonies have in common is this: When we undertake to talk about primitive society we should conceive of it as consisting of petty groups scattered separately over a great territory. I speak of groups because I want a term of the widest significance. The group may consist, as it does amongst Australians and Bushmen, of a man with one or possibly two wives and their children, or it may have a few more members, or it may be a village group as in New Guinea, or a tribe or part of a tribe as amongst our own Indians. It is to Edition: Every individual excludes every other in the competition of life unless they can by combining together win more out of nature by joint effort than the sum of what they could win separately. This combination is what makes groups and brings about industrial organization. When a man and woman unite in the most elementary group known, they do it for economic reasons, because they can carry on the struggle for existence better together than apart. As soon as it breaks, the fractions begin to compete with each other. If by greater culture a higher organization becomes possible, two groups coalesce by intermarriage or conquest, competition gives way to combination again, and the bigger unit enters into competition with other composite units. Thus at all stages throughout the history of civilization competition and combination

forever alternate with each other. These groups are independent of each other, their size being determined by their mode of life, because the number who can live together economically is limited by the possibilities of the food-quest. When a group outgrows this limit, it breaks up and scatters. The fact of former association is long remembered and there is a bond of kinship and alliance which may at times draw former associates together again for festivals and religious observances, but after they separate the tendency is to become entirely independent and to fall under the type just described; viz. Their remoter relationship does not keep them from quarreling. Edition: In the book of Judges 1 we see cases of war between tribes of Israel in spite of the higher bond which united them with each other and separated them from the Gentiles. All the members of one group are comrades to each other, and have a common interest against every other group. These two sentiments are perfectly consistent with each other; in fact, they necessarily complement each other. Let us see why that is so. War arises from the competition of life, not from the struggle for existence. In the struggle for existence a man is wrestling with nature to extort from her the means of subsistence. It is when two men are striving side by side in the struggle for existence, to extort from nature the supplies they need, that they come into rivalry and a collision of interest with each other takes place. This collision may be light and unimportant, if the supplies are large and the number of men small, or it may be harsh and violent, if there are many men striving for a small supply. This collision we call the competition of life. Of course men are in the competition of life with beasts, reptiles, insects, and plants "in short, with all organic forms; we will, however, confine our attention to men. The greater or less intensity of the competition of life is a fundamental condition of human existence, and the competition arises between those ultimate unit Edition: The members of the unit group work together. The Australian or Bushman hunter goes abroad to seek meat food, while the woman stays by the fire at a trysting place, with the children, and collects plant food. They cooperate in the struggle for existence, and the size of the group is fixed by the number who can work together to the greatest advantage under their mode of life. Such a group, therefore, has a common interest. It must have control of a certain area of land; hence it comes into collision of interest with every other group. The competition of life, therefore, arises between groups, not between individuals, and we see that the members of the in-group are allies and joint-partners in one interest while they are brought into antagonism of interest with all outsiders. It is the competition of life, therefore, which makes war, and that is why war always has existed and always will. It is in the conditions of human existence. In the cases which have been cited of nature peoples who have no war, we have heard mention already of division of hunting grounds and of quarrels which arise about them. Wherever there is no war, there we find that there is no crowding, as among the scattered Eskimo, or that, after long fighting, treaties and agreements have been made to cover all relations of interest between the groups. These we call peace-pacts, and it is evident that they consist in conventional agreements creating some combination between the groups which are parties to the agreement. Each group must regard every other as a possible enemy on account of the antagonism of interests, and so it views every other group with suspicion and distrust, although actual hostilities occur only on specific occasion. Every member of another group is a stranger; he may be admitted as a guest, in which case rights and security Edition: We can now see why the sentiments of peace and cooperation inside are complementary to sentiments of hostility outside. It is because any group, in order to be strong against an outside enemy, must be well disciplined, harmonious, and peaceful inside; in other words, because discord inside would cause defeat in battle with another group. Therefore the same conditions which made men warlike against outsiders made them yield to the control of chiefs, submit to discipline, obey law, cultivate peace, and create institutions inside. The notion of rights grows up in the in-group from the usages established there securing peace. There was a double education, at the same time, out of the same facts and relations. There are two codes of morals and two sets of mores, one for comrades inside and the other for strangers outside, and they arise from the same interests. Against outsiders it was meritorious to kill, plunder, practice blood revenge, and to steal women and slaves; but inside none of these things could be allowed because they would produce discord and weakness. Hence, in the in-group, law under the forms of custom and taboo and institutions had to take the place of force. Every group was a peace-group inside and the peace was sanctioned by the ghosts of the ancestors who had handed down the customs and taboos. Against outsiders religion sanctioned and encouraged war; for the ghosts of the ancestors, or the gods, would rejoice to see their

posterity and worshipers once more defeat, slay, plunder, and enslave the ancient enemy. The Eskimos of Bering Strait think it wrong to steal from people in the same village or tribe; a thief is publicly reproached and forced to return the thing stolen. The sentiment of cohesion, internal comradeship, and devotion to the in-group, which carries with it a sense of superiority to any out-group and readiness to defend the interests of the in-group against the out-group, is technically known as ethnocentrism. It is really the sentiment of patriotism in all its philosophic fullness; that is, both in its rationality and in its extravagant exaggeration. The Mohaves and the Seri of southern California will have no relations of marriage or trade with any other people; they think themselves superior. The Mohaves are wild and barbarous and the Seri are on a lower grade of civilization than any other tribe in America. Therefore, we see that ethnocentrism has nothing to do with the relative grade of civilization of any people. He burst into a rhapsody about Greenland. We find then that there are two sentiments in the minds of the same men at the same time. These have been called militancy and industrialism. The latter term does not seem to be a good one and it is not apt until we reach high civilization; what we want is a term to express the peace sentiment in antithesis to militancy, but industrialism has obtained currency and it has this much justification, even for savage life, that, inside the group, the needs of life must be provided for by productive labor. Generally that is left to the women and the men practice militarism. It would not be possible for neighboring groups to remain really isolated from each other. One has in its territory stone or salt, water or fuel, limited fruits, melons, nuts, fish, or perhaps other natural materials which the others need. They also take wives from each other, generally, but not always. Hence arise treaties of commercium and connubium, which bring about a middle state of things between war and peace. These treaties are the origin of international law. A comparison of modern municipal and international law will show that the difference between the relations of members of the in-group with each other, and of the groups with each other, still exists. They began with both together.

*The War of the Ages and Other Essays* by Deacon Dan Gilbert, , available at Book Depository with free delivery worldwide.

From the Editor By Carol Berkin All historians are at heart detectives, carefully sifting through the records of the past we find in archives, museums, and sometimes musty attics. But letters, diaries, and speeches are far from the only sources that provide us the clues we need to reconstruct the past. Much of what we know about ancient civilizations, and more recent ones as well, comes from those intrepid archaeologists who meticulously examine the brick and mortar records of cultures long buried from our sight. In this issue, *History Now* focuses on the remarkable work being done by these detectives—many of them high school and undergraduate students—who, armed with trowels and sieves and determination, uncover the unwritten records of civilizations. Mierendorf reminds us that the past can be preserved in multiple ways; charred animal bones, storage pits dug in the ground, and remnants of old houses tell these stories just as letters or diaries preserved in archives do. Artifacts found in the soil layers at Cascade Pass—including stone knives, spears and arrow tips, and charred plant parts—show that these people hunted animals and collected berries for food. Rothschild and Diana diZerega Wall give us a remarkable inside look at archaeologists as practitioners of their craft. These items are recovered from sources most of us would never expect: The success of their project had political and legal consequences as well as providing a window onto a long-gone New York: Blakey takes us through the steps involved in saving a burial ground discovered by construction workers in the busy financial district of New York City in . The burial ground project was able to determine the life span, health, and sex ratio of those in this resting place, and it traced their African origins from warring societies and empires including Calibar, Asante, Benin, Dahomey, Congo, Madagascar, and others. Public pressure saved the cemetery from destruction, and a national monument dedicated to these early enslaved and free ancestors of African Americans was constructed. In the wake of the death of Martin Luther King Jr. This project opened up a new opportunity to understand slavery from the perspective of the enslaved. In his essay, Davidson focuses on the eight summers he spent running field schools at the Kingsley Plantation in Florida. Together with over students, Davidson was able to excavate four slave cabins and an African burial ground. The discovery of religious paraphernalia—especially personal and house charms—helped him uncover the religious beliefs and practices of the enslaved. In this essay, he shares some of the fascinating revelations provided by these charms. Miller traces the history of a project that just last month made stunning discoveries. The idea for creating this trail in Texas came in , during the sesquicentennial observance of the Civil War. Miller tracks the role of local communities in gathering information on more than fifty people, places and events that went into the webpage created by the project. But excavation by the project is also producing artifacts of great significance: Soon afterward, Miller reported that local archaeologists had found a manufactured tool that was to 10, years old. This issue is also chock-full of special features. You will also have access to two Gilder Lehrman videos: You can also dig deeper by reading three essays from the Gilder Lehrman Institute archives. Carol Berkin, Editor Headquarters:

*The War of the Ages and Other Essays by Dan Gilbert, Deacon starting at \$ The War of the Ages and Other Essays has 4 available editions to buy at Alibris.*

It was the same in the s. In this world before and after the Great Depression, there was a lone voice for sanity and freedom: He speaks in *The Causes of the Economic Crisis*, a collection of newly in print essays by Mises that have been very hard to come by, and are published for the first time in this format. Here we have the evidence that the master economist foresaw and warned against the breakdown of the German mark, as well as the market crash of and the depression that followed. He presents his business cycle theory in its most elaborate form, applies it to the prevailing conditions, and discusses the policies that governments undertake that make recessions worse. He recommends a path for monetary reform that would eliminate business cycles and provide the basis for a sustainable prosperity. In foreseeing the interwar economic breakdown, Mises was nearly alone among his contemporaries. In , he warned that central banks will not "stabilize" money; they will distort credit markets and generate booms and busts. In , he departed dramatically from the judgment of his contemporaries and sounded an alarm: His essay was called: Credit expansion cannot increase the supply of real goods. It merely brings about a rearrangement. It diverts capital investment away from the course prescribed by the state of economic wealth and market conditions. It causes production to pursue paths which it would not follow unless the economy were to acquire an increase in material goods. As a result, the upswing lacks a solid base. It is not real prosperity. It is illusory prosperity. It did not develop from an increase in economic wealth. Rather, it arose because the credit expansion created the illusion of such an increase. Sooner or later it must become apparent that this economic situation is built on sand. Did the world listen? The German-speaking world knew his essays well, and he was considered a prophet, until the Nazis came to power and wiped out his legacy. In England, his student F. Hayek made the Austrian theory a presence in academic life. In the popular mind, the media, and politics, however, it was Keynes who held sway, with his claim that the depression was the fault of the market, and that it can only be solved through government planning. Just at the time he wanted to be fighting, Mises had to leave Austria, forced out by political events and the rising of the Nazis. He wrote from Geneva, his writings accessible to too few people. They were never translated into English until after his death. Even then, they were not circulated widely. The sad result is that Mises is not given the credit he deserves for having warned about the coming depression, and having seen the solution. His writings were prolific and profound, but they were swallowed up in the rise of the total state and total war. But today, we hear him speak again in this book. Greaves did the translations. It is her view that in the essays, Mises provides the clearest explanation of the Great Depression ever written. Indeed, he is crystal clear: It makes for a gripping read, especially given that we face many of the same problems today. This book refutes the socialists and Keynesian, as well as anyone who believes that the printing press can provide a way out of trouble. Mises shows who was responsible for driving the world into economic calamity. Just as in his attack on socialism, here he was brilliant and brave and prescient. Mises was there, before and after. He was writing about contemporary events. He issued the warnings that the world did not heed, the warnings we must heed today.

### 4: A Review of Christianity and War, and Other Essays Against the Warfare State

*William Graham Sumner, War and Other Essays, ed. Albert Galloway Keller (New Haven: Yale University Press, In other ages it has often been furnished by war.*

Marjorie, five years older; and Avril, five years younger. When Eric was one year old, his mother took him and his sisters to England. Eric was brought up in the company of his mother and sisters, and apart from a brief visit in mid, [14] the family did not see their husband or father Richard Blair until Before the First World War, the family moved to Shiplake , Oxfordshire where Eric became friendly with the Buddicom family, especially their daughter Jacintha. When they first met, he was standing on his head in a field. On being asked why, he said, "You are noticed more if you stand on your head than if you are right way up. He said that he might write a book in the style of H. Cyprian inspired his essay " Such, Such Were the Joys ". At the age of five, Eric was sent as a day-boy to a convent school in Henley-on-Thames, which Marjorie also attended. It was a Roman Catholic convent run by French Ursuline nuns, who had been exiled from France after religious education was banned in He boarded at the school for the next five years, returning home only for school holidays. During this period, while working for the Ministry of Pensions, his mother lived at 23 Cromwell Crescent, Earls Court. He knew nothing of the reduced fees, although he "soon recognised that he was from a poorer home". But inclusion on the Eton scholarship roll did not guarantee a place, and none was immediately available for Blair. Blair remained at Eton until December , when he left midway between his 18th and 19th birthday. Wellington was "beastly", Orwell told his childhood friend Jacintha Buddicom, but he said he was "interested and happy" at Eton. Gow , Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge , who also gave him advice later in his career. His parents could not afford to send him to a university without another scholarship, and they concluded from his poor results that he would not be able to win one. Runciman noted that he had a romantic idea about the East , [23] and the family decided that Blair should join the Imperial Police , the precursor of the Indian Police Service. For this he had to pass an entrance examination. In December he left Eton and travelled to join his retired father, mother, and younger sister Avril, who that month had moved to 40 Stradbroke Road, Southwold , Suffolk, the first of their four homes in the town. He passed the entrance exam, coming seventh out of the 26 candidates who exceeded the pass mark. A month later, he arrived at Rangoon and travelled to the police training school in Mandalay. He was appointed an Assistant District Superintendent on 29 November Working as an imperial police officer gave him considerable responsibility while most of his contemporaries were still at university in England. When he was posted farther east in the Delta to Twante as a sub-divisional officer, he was responsible for the security of some , people. At the end of , he was posted to Syriam , closer to Rangoon. Syriam had the refinery of the Burmah Oil Company , "the surrounding land a barren waste, all vegetation killed off by the fumes of sulphur dioxide pouring out day and night from the stacks of the refinery. She noted his "sense of utter fairness in minutest details". He spent much of his time alone, reading or pursuing non- pukka activities, such as attending the churches of the Karen ethnic group. At the end of that year, he was assigned to Katha in Upper Burma , where he contracted dengue fever in Entitled to a leave in England that year, he was allowed to return in July due to his illness. While on leave in England and on holiday with his family in Cornwall in September , he reappraised his life. Deciding against returning to Burma, he resigned from the Indian Imperial Police to become a writer, with effect from 12 March after five-and-a-half years of service. He visited his old tutor Gow at Cambridge for advice on becoming a writer. He had found a subject. These sorties, explorations, expeditions, tours or immersions were made intermittently over a period of five years. For a while he "went native" in his own country, dressing like a tramp , adopting the name P. Burton and making no concessions to middle-class mores and expectations; he recorded his experiences of the low life for use in " The Spike ", his first published essay in English, and in the second half of his first book, Down and Out in Paris and London He lived in the rue du Pot de Fer, a working class district in the 5th Arrondissement. He began to write novels, including an early version of Burmese Days, but nothing else survives from that period. His experiences there were the basis of his essay " How the Poor Die ", published in He chose not to identify the hospital, and indeed was deliberately misleading about its location.

Shortly afterwards, he had all his money stolen from his lodging house. Whether through necessity or to collect material, he undertook menial jobs such as dishwashing in a fashionable hotel on the rue de Rivoli, which he later described in *Down and Out in Paris and London*. The family was well established in the town, and his sister Avril was running a tea-house there. Although Salkeld rejected his offer of marriage, she remained a friend and regular correspondent for many years. He also renewed friendships with older friends, such as Dennis Collings, whose girlfriend Eleanor Jacques was also to play a part in his life. Blair was writing reviews for *Adelphi* and acting as a private tutor to a disabled child at Southwold. He then became tutor to three young brothers, one of whom, Richard Peters, later became a distinguished academic. Over the next year he visited them in London, often meeting their friend Max Plowman. He also often stayed at the homes of Ruth Pitter and Richard Rees, where he could "change" for his sporadic tramping expeditions. One of his jobs was domestic work at a lodgings for half a crown two shillings and sixpence, or one-eighth of a pound a day. He kept a diary about his experiences there. Afterwards, he lodged in the Tooley Street kip, but could not stand it for long, and with financial help from his parents moved to Windsor Street, where he stayed until Christmas. Mabel Fierz put him in contact with Leonard Moore, who became his literary agent. Eliot, also rejected it. Blair ended the year by deliberately getting himself arrested, [43] so that he could experience Christmas in prison, but the authorities did not regard his "drunk and disorderly" behaviour as imprisonable, and he returned home to Southwold after two days in a police cell. This was a small school offering private schooling for children of local tradesmen and shopkeepers, and had only 14 or 16 boys aged between ten and sixteen, and one other master. At the end of the summer term in, Blair returned to Southwold, where his parents had used a legacy to buy their own home. Blair and his sister Avril spent the holidays making the house habitable while he also worked on *Burmese Days*. The pen name George Orwell was inspired by the River Orwell in the English county of Suffolk [46] "Clink", an essay describing his failed attempt to get sent to prison, appeared in the August number of *Adelphi*. He returned to teaching at Hayes and prepared for the publication of his book, now known as *Down and Out in Paris and London*. He wished to publish under a different name to avoid any embarrassment to his family over his time as a "tramp". Four days later, he wrote to Moore, suggesting the pseudonyms P. This was a much larger establishment with pupils and a full complement of staff. He acquired a motorcycle and took trips through the surrounding countryside. On one of these expeditions he became soaked and caught a chill that developed into pneumonia. He was taken to Uxbridge Cottage Hospital, where for a time his life was believed to be in danger. When he was discharged in January, he returned to Southwold to convalesce and, supported by his parents, never returned to teaching. He was disappointed when Gollancz turned down *Burmese Days*, mainly on the grounds of potential suits for libel, but Harper were prepared to publish it in the United States. Eleanor Jacques was now married and had gone to Singapore and Brenda Salkield had left for Ireland, so Blair was relatively isolated in Southwold "working on the allotments, walking alone and spending time with his father. The Westropes were friendly and provided him with comfortable accommodation at Warwick Mansions, Pond Street. He was sharing the job with Jon Kimche, who also lived with the Westropes. Blair worked at the shop in the afternoons and had his mornings free to write and his evenings free to socialise. These experiences provided background for the novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*. As well as the various guests of the Westropes, he was able to enjoy the company of Richard Rees and the *Adelphi* writers and Mabel Fierz. The Westropes and Kimche were members of the Independent Labour Party, although at this time Blair was not seriously politically active. One of these students, Elizaveta Fen, a biographer and future translator of Chekhov, recalled Blair and his friend Richard Rees "draped" at the fireplace, looking, she thought, "moth-eaten and prematurely aged. The relationship was sometimes awkward and Blair and Heppenstall even came to blows, though they remained friends and later worked together on BBC broadcasts. By October his flatmates had moved out and he was struggling to pay the rent on his own. The Road to Wigan Pier Main article: *The Road to Wigan Pier* At this time, Victor Gollancz suggested Orwell spend a short time investigating social conditions in economically depressed northern England. Priestley had written about England north of the Trent, sparking an interest in reportage. The depression had also introduced a number of working-class writers from the North of England to the reading public. It was one of these working-class authors, Jack Hilton, whom Orwell sought for advice. Orwell had

written to Hilton seeking lodging and asking for recommendations on his route. Arriving in Manchester after the banks had closed, he had to stay in a common lodging-house. The next day he picked up a list of contacts sent by Richard Rees. One of these, the trade union official Frank Meade, suggested Wigan, where Orwell spent February staying in dirty lodgings over a tripe shop. At Wigan, he visited many homes to see how people lived, took detailed notes of housing conditions and wages earned, went down Bryn Hall coal mine, and used the local public library to consult public health records and reports on working conditions in mines. During this time, he was distracted by concerns about style and possible libel in *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*. He made a quick visit to Liverpool and during March, stayed in south Yorkshire, spending time in Sheffield and Barnsley. As well as visiting mines, including Grimethorpe, and observing social conditions, he attended meetings of the Communist Party and of Oswald Mosley's "his speech the usual claptrap" The blame for everything was put upon mysterious international gangs of Jews "where he saw the tactics of the Blackshirts" "one is liable to get both a hammering and a fine for asking a question which Mosley finds it difficult to answer. The first half of the book documents his social investigations of Lancashire and Yorkshire, including an evocative description of working life in the coal mines. Gollancz feared the second half would offend readers and added a disculpatory preface to the book while Orwell was in Spain. Orwell needed somewhere he could concentrate on writing his book, and once again help was provided by Aunt Nellie, who was living at Wallington, Hertfordshire in a very small 16th-century cottage called the "Stores". Wallington was a tiny village 35 miles north of London, and the cottage had almost no modern facilities. Orwell took over the tenancy and moved in on 2 April

### 5: George Orwell - Wikipedia

*The first of four anthologies of essays on economics, liberty, and sociology by Sumner, edited by Albert Galloway Keller. Chapters XI and XII are reprints of two chapters from What Social Classes Owe to Each Other (). Page scans are available.*

On the other hand, the name of the United States has always been, for all of us, a symbol for a state of things, a set of ideas and traditions, a group of views about social and political affairs. Spain was the first, for a long time the greatest, of the modern imperialistic states. The United States, by its historical origin, its traditions, and its principles, is the chief representative of the revolt and reaction against that kind of a state. I intend to show that, by the line of action now proposed to us, which we call expansion and imperialism, we are throwing away some of the most important elements of the American symbol and are adopting some of the most important elements of the Spanish symbol. We have beaten Spain in a military conflict, but we are submitting to be conquered by her on the field of ideas and policies. Expansionism and imperialism are nothing but the old philosophies of national prosperity which have brought Spain to where she now is. Those philosophies appeal to national vanity and national cupidity. They are seductive, especially upon the first view and the most superficial judgment, and therefore it cannot be denied that they are very strong for popular effect. They are delusions, and they will lead us to ruin unless we are hard-headed enough to resist them. In any case the year is a great landmark in the history of the United States. The consequences will not be all good or all bad, for such is not the nature of societal influences. They are always mixed of good and ill, and so it will be in this case. Fifty years from now the historian, looking back to , will no doubt see, in the course which things will have taken, consequences of the proceedings of that year and of this present one which will not all be bad, but you will observe that that is not a justification for a happy-go-lucky policy; that does not affect our duty to-day in all that we do to seek wisdom and prudence and to determine our actions by the best judgment which we can form. War, expansion, and imperialism are questions of statesmanship and of nothing else. I disregard all other aspects of them and all extraneous elements which have been intermingled with them. I received the other day a circular of a new educational enterprise in which it was urged that, on account of our new possessions, we ought now to devote especial study to history, political economy, and what is called political science. I asked myself, Why? What more reason is there for pursuing these studies now on behalf of our dependencies than there was before to pursue them on behalf of ourselves? In our proceedings of we made no use of whatever knowledge we had of any of these lines of study. The original and prime cause of the war was that it was a move of partisan tactics in the strife of parties at Washington. As soon as it seemed resolved upon, a number of interests began to see their advantage in it and hastened to further it. It was necessary to make appeals to the public which would bring quite other motives to the support of the enterprise and win the consent of classes who would never consent to either financial or political jobbery. Such appeals were found in sensational assertions which we had no means to verify, in phrases of alleged patriotism, in statements about Cuba and the Cubans which we now know to have been entirely untrue. Where was the statesmanship of all this? If it is not an established rule of statecraft that a statesman should never impose any sacrifices on his people for anything but their own interests, then it is useless to study political philosophy any more, for this is the alphabet of it. It is contrary to honest statesmanship to imperil the political welfare of the state for party interests. It was unstatesmanlike to publish a solemn declaration that we would not seize any territory, and especially to characterize such action in advance as "criminal aggression," for it was morally certain that we should come out of any war with Spain with conquered territory on our hands, and the people who wanted the war, or who consented to it, hoped that we should do so. We talk about "liberty" all the time in a big and easy way, as if liberty was a thing that men could have if they want it, and to any extent to which they want it. It is certain that a very large part of human liberty consists simply in the choice either to do a thing or to let it alone. If we decide to do it, a whole series of consequences is entailed upon us in regard to which it is exceedingly difficult, or impossible, for us to exercise any liberty at all. The proof of this from the case before us is so clear and easy that I need spend no words upon it. Here, then, you have the reason why it is a rule of

sound statesmanship not to embark on an adventurous policy. A statesman could not be expected to know in advance that we should come out of the war with the Philippines on our hands, but it belongs to his education to warn him that a policy of adventure and of gratuitous enterprise would be sure to entail embarrassments of some kind. What comes to us in the evolution of our own life and interests, that we must meet; what we go to seek which lies beyond that domain is a waste of our energy and a compromise of our liberty and welfare. If this is not sound doctrine, then the historical and social sciences have nothing to teach us which is worth any trouble. There is another observation, however, about the war which is of far greater importance: We boast that we are a self-governing people, and in this respect, particularly, we compare ourselves with pride with older nations. What is the difference after all? The Russians, whom we always think of as standing at the opposite pole of political institutions, have self-government, if you mean by it acquiescence in what a little group of people at the head of the government agree to do. The war with Spain was precipitated upon us headlong, without reflection or deliberation, and without any due formulation of public opinion. Whenever a voice was raised in behalf of deliberation and the recognized maxims of statesmanship, it was howled down in a storm of vituperation and cant. Everything was done to make us throw away sobriety of thought and calmness of judgment and to inflate all expressions with sensational epithets and turgid phrases. It cannot be denied that everything in regard to the war has been treated in an exalted strain of sentiment and rhetoric very unfavorable to the truth. At present the whole periodical press of the country seems to be occupied in tickling the national vanity to the utmost by representations about the war which are extravagant and fantastic. There will be a penalty to be paid for all this. Nervous and sensational newspapers are just as corrupting, especially to young people, as nervous and sensational novels. The habit of expecting that all mental pabulum shall be highly spiced, and the corresponding loathing for whatever is soberly truthful, undermines character as much as any other vice. Patriotism is being prostituted into a nervous intoxication which is fatal to an apprehension of truth. There are some now who think that it is the perfection of statesmanship to say that expansion is a fact and that it is useless to discuss it. We are told that we must not cross any bridges until we come to them; that is, that we must discuss nothing in advance, and that we must not discuss anything which is past because it is irretrievable. No doubt this would be a very acceptable doctrine to the powers that be, for it would mean that they were relieved from responsibility, but it would be a marvelous doctrine to be accepted by a self-governing people. Senator Foraker has told us that we are not to keep the Philippines longer than is necessary to teach the people self-government. How one man can tell what we are to do before the constitutional authorities have decided it, I do not know. Perhaps it is a detail in our new method of self-government. Then again, if we have done anything, especially if we have acted precipitately, it is a well-recognized course of prudent behavior to find out where we are, what we have done, and what the new situation is into which we have come. Then, too, we must remember that when the statesman lays a thing down the historian takes it up, and he will group it with historical parallels and contrasts. There is a set of men who have always been referred to, in our Northern states, for the last thirty years, with especial disapproval. They are those Southerners who, in 1861, did not believe in secession, but, as they said, "went with their states. Yet within a year it has become almost a doctrine with us that patriotism requires that we should hold our tongues while our interests, our institutions, our most sacred traditions, and our best established maxims have been trampled underfoot. There is no doubt that moral courage is the virtue which is more needed than any other in the modern democratic state, and that truckling to popularity is the worst political vice. The press, the platform, and the pulpit have all fallen under this vice, and there is evidence that the university also, which ought to be the last citadel of truth, is succumbing to it likewise. I have no doubt that the conservative classes of this country will yet look back with great regret to their acquiescence in the events of 1861 and the doctrines and precedents which have been silently established. Let us be well assured that self-government is not a matter of flags and Fourth of July orations, nor yet of strife to get offices. Eternal vigilance is the price of that as of every other political good. The perpetuity of self-government depends on the sound political sense of the people, and sound political sense is a matter of habit and practice. We can give it up and we can take instead pomp and glory. That is what Spain did. She had as much self-government as any country in Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The union of the smaller states into one big one gave an impulse to her

national feeling and national development. The discovery of America put into her hands the control of immense territories. National pride and ambition were stimulated. Then came the struggle with France for world-dominion, which resulted in absolute monarchy and bankruptcy for Spain. She lost self-government and saw her resources spent on interests which were foreign to her, but she could talk about an empire on which the sun never set and boast of her colonies, her gold-mines, her fleets and armies and debts. She had glory and pride, mixed, of course, with defeat and disaster, such as must be experienced by any nation on that course of policy; and she grew weaker in her industry and commerce and poorer in the status of the population all the time. She has never been able to recover real self-government yet. If we Americans believe in self-government, why do we let it slip away from us? Why do we barter it away for military glory as Spain did? There is not a civilized nation which does not talk about its civilizing mission just as grandly as we do. The English, who really have more to boast of in this respect than anybody else, talk least about it, but the Phariseism with which they correct and instruct other people has made them hated all over the globe. The French believe themselves the guardians of the highest and purest culture, and that the eyes of all mankind are fixed on Paris, whence they expect oracles of thought and taste. The Germans regard themselves as charged with a mission, especially to us Americans, to save us from egoism and materialism. The Russians, in their books and newspapers, talk about the civilizing mission of Russia in language that might be translated from some of the finest paragraphs in our imperialistic newspapers. The first principle of Mohammedanism is that we Christians are dogs and infidels, fit only to be enslaved or butchered by Moslems. It is a corollary that wherever Mohammedanism extends it carries, in the belief of its votaries, the highest blessings, and that the whole human race would be enormously elevated if Mohammedanism should supplant Christianity everywhere. To come, last, to Spain, the Spaniards have, for centuries, considered themselves the most zealous and self-sacrificing Christians, especially charged by the Almighty, on this account, to spread true religion and civilization over the globe. They think themselves free and noble, leaders in refinement and the sentiments of personal honor, and they despise us as sordid money-grabbers and heretics. I could bring you passages from peninsular authors of the first rank about the grand rule of Spain and Portugal in spreading freedom and truth. Now each nation laughs at all the others when it observes these manifestations of national vanity. You may rely upon it that they are all ridiculous by virtue of these pretensions, including ourselves. The point is that each of them repudiates the standards of the others, and the outlying nations, which are to be civilized, hate all the standards of civilized men. We assume that what we like and practice, and what we think better, must come as a welcome blessing to Spanish-Americans and Filipinos. This is grossly and obviously untrue. They hate our ways. They are hostile to our ideas. Our religion, language, institutions, and manners offend them. They like their own ways, and if we appear amongst them as rulers, there will be social discord in all the great departments of social interest. The most important thing which we shall inherit from the Spaniards will be the task of suppressing rebellions. If the United States takes out of the hands of Spain her mission, on the ground that Spain is not executing it well, and if this nation in its turn attempts to be school-mistress to others, it will shrivel up into the same vanity and self-conceit of which Spain now presents an example. To read our current literature one would think that we were already well on the way to it.

### 6: The War of the Ages and Other Essays : Deacon Dan Gilbert :

*Born in , Bobbio has lived through the major events of the past century, and his experiences of Fascism, Communism and the Cold War lend his reflections a melancholy that distinguishes them from earlier eulogies on old age and death.*

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### 7: George Orwell: Inside the Whale

*XV THE CONQUEST OF THE UNITED STATES BY SPAIN [ ] DURING the last year the public has been familiarized with descriptions of Spain and of Spanish methods of doing things until the name of Spain has become a symbol for a certain well-defined set of notions and policies.*

A Look at the Dark Ages: When Things were Really Medieval The Dark Ages were a period of great upheaval, constant war, horrendous plague, and stagnant cultural growth. But through these difficult centuries new ideas and a new culture was born. The Dark Ages is a period that is generally accepted as having begun in the year with the fall of Rome and ending in with the launch of the first Crusades. The fall of Rome sets a good understanding for what the Dark Ages were all about because for centuries the Roman Empire was a unified force that brought stabilization to most of Europe. It had a vibrant trade and commerce industry that supported a reasonably secure lifestyle for millions of people. When Rome fell, this network of trade and commerce collapsed and the European World was set into chaos. It took seven hundred years of wars, plague, and poverty before the continent came out of it and was moved into the Renaissance. The emperor ruled over everything and when this all fell the concept of one man ruling the world still remained. It was this aspiration to rule over everything that perpetuated the darkness of the times. Lords from all over Europe were engaged with each other in battles for land and power. This battling lasted literally centuries and it meant a constant drain of resources and a standstill in cultural growth. Outside Forces make it worse This constant struggling for power within the continent of Europe made it very easy for outside forces to penetrate into the continent and further wreak destruction and drain wealth and resources. From the north Vikings constantly invaded and plundered and from the south Moorish invaders brought war and the word of their prophet. The whole continent was under the constant pressure of three points of attack “from within and from both the north and south. The Plague negates all progress Throughout the first century of the Dark Ages Europe made slow but tangible progress and Emperor Justinian was on the verge of reuniting the continent when the bubonic plague hit and killed tens of millions of people. This destroyed all hope of reunification and kept the continent in chaos for several more centuries. The Force that brought us out of the darkness Christianity was an ideal that rose to power during the dark ages and many warlords of the time embraced it. This had a unifying force on the entire European continent and even though there were many kingdoms they all swore allegiance under the pope. This brought an end to the internal fighting that had been going on for centuries and this unification was solidified with the launching of the Crusades beginning in This gave all the various warlords and kings a common religious goal and a foe they could join together and focus on. The Crusades, while being for the most part a failure in that they held very little of the land they attempted to conquer, were a significant factor in the rebirth of Europe in that Europe was reunited under a common religion and returning crusaders brought back with them to Europe a wealth of new information in architecture, medicine, philosophy, mathematics and many other areas. This infusion of ideas, paired with the end of constant war within Europe set the stage for the Renaissance. The Dark Ages were an extraordinarily difficult period in the story of humanity. It is estimated that million people died at the hands of war, poverty, and plague. But during this time new ideas and ideals were born and much of the groundwork was laid for the world we know today. The Great Mortality - La moria grandissima began its terrible journey across the European and Asian continents in , leaving unimaginable devastation in its wake. Five years later, twenty-five million people were dead, felled by the scourge that would come to be called the Black Death. Weapons and Armor in a Scottish Museum - It is a small museum on the top floor of a building that doubles as a library. But what a gem. They have some amazing weapons and armor including this chilling breastplate. Check it out here.

## 8: Excavating American History | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

*Public consciousness of the threat of nuclear war is rising steadily. Responses to the nuclear dilemma are conflicting and often confusing. Never have we been more in need of information and perspective, for if we wish to avoid war we must understand it.*

Biography[ edit ] Early years and education: Taylor, the curate; and the Rev. Elisha Brooks Joyce " , the rector. Christ Church is the oldest Episcopal parish in New Brunswick and the Kilmer family were parishioners. He won the first Lane Classical Prize, for oratory, and obtained a scholarship to Rutgers College which he would attend the following year. Despite his difficulties with Greek and mathematics, he stood at the head of his class in preparatory school. At Rutgers, Kilmer was associate editor of the Targum , the campus newspaper , and a member of the Delta Upsilon fraternity. He completed his Bachelor of Arts A. It was here that his poem "Trees" was written in February By June , Kilmer had abandoned any aspirations to continue teaching and relocated to New York City, where he focused solely on developing a career as a writer. This was a job at which one would ordinarily earn ten to twelve dollars a week, but Kilmer attacked the task with such vigor and speed that it was soon thought wisest to put him on a regular salary. Kilmer would later write that " By this time he had become established as a published poet and as a popular lecturer. According to Robert Holliday, Kilmer "frequently neglected to make any preparation for his speeches, not even choosing a subject until the beginning of the dinner which was to culminate in a specimen of his oratory. A series of correspondence between Kilmer and Father James J. Daly led the Kilmers to convert to Roman Catholicism, and they were received in the church in In one of these letters Kilmer writes that he "believed in the Catholic position, the Catholic view of ethics and aesthetics, for a long time," and he "wanted something not intellectual, some conviction not mental " in fact I wanted Faith. Her lifeless hands led me; I think her tiny feet know beautiful paths. You understand this and it gives me a selfish pleasure to write it down. He had established himself as a successful lecturer" particularly one seeking to reach a Catholic audience. His close friend and editor Robert Holliday wrote that it "is not an unsupported assertion to say that he was in his time and place the laureate of the Catholic Church. Over the next few years, Kilmer was prolific in his output, managing an intense schedule of lectures, publishing a large number of essays and literary criticism, and writing poetry. An Anthology of Catholic Poets In August, Kilmer was assigned as a statistician with the U. Though he was eligible for commission as an officer and often recommended for such posts during the course of the war, Kilmer refused, stating that he would rather be a sergeant in the Fighting 69th than an officer in any other regiment. The most notable of his poems during this period was " Rouge Bouquet " which commemorated the deaths of two dozen members of his regiment in a German artillery barrage on American trench positions in the Rouge Bouquet forest north-east of the French village of Baccarat. At the time, this was a relatively quiet sector of the front, but the first battalion was struck by a German heavy artillery bombardment on the afternoon of March 7, that buried 21 men of the unit, killing 19 of which 14 remained entombed. In a letter to his wife, Aline, he remarked: None of the drudgery of soldiering, but a double share of glory and thrills. This coolness and his habit of choosing, with typical enthusiasm, the most dangerous and difficult missions, led to his death. During the course of the day, Kilmer led a scouting party to find the position of a German machine gun. When his comrades found him, some time later, they thought at first that he was peering over the edge of a little hill, where he had crawled for a better view. When he did not answer their call, they ran to him and found him dead. According to Father Francis P. His body was carried in and buried by the side of Ames. God rest his dear and gallant soul. According to military records, Kilmer died on the battlefield near Muercy Farm, beside the Ourcq River near the village of Seringes-et-Nesles , in France, on July 30, at the age of

### 9: War and Other Essays - Online Library of Liberty

*Innovation During the Middle Ages Essays - The Middle Ages, contrary to its name, was a dynamic period of innovations. Throughout this period, visual arts were employed to communicate important messages to the public as well as private wealthy patrons.*

Among the people who praised it were T. And in fact the subject matter of the book, and to a certain extent its mental atmosphere, belong to the twenties rather than to the thirties. *Tropic of Cancer* is a novel in the first person, or autobiography in the form of a novel, whichever way you like to look at it. Miller himself insists that it is straight autobiography, but the tempo and method of telling the story are those of a novel. It is a story of the American Paris, but not along quite the usual lines, because the Americans who figure in it happen to be people without money. During the 1 boom years, when dollars were plentiful and the exchange-value of the franc was low, Paris was invaded by such a swarm of artists, writers, students, dilettanti, sight-seers, debauchees, and plain idlers as the world has probably never seen. In some quarters of the town the so-called artists must actually have outnumbered the working population – indeed, it has been reckoned that in the late twenties there were as many as 30, painters in Paris, most of them impostors. And the whole atmosphere of the poor quarters of Paris as a foreigner sees them – the cobbled alleys, the sour reek of refuse, the bistros with their greasy zinc counters and worn brick floors, the green waters of the Seine, the blue cloaks of the Republican Guard, the crumbling iron urinals, the peculiar sweetish smell of the Metro stations, the cigarettes that come to pieces, the pigeons in the Luxembourg Gardens – it is all there, or at any rate the feeling of it is there. On the face of it no material could be less promising. The intellectual foci of the world were Rome, Moscow, and Berlin. It did not seem to be a moment at which a novel of outstanding value was likely to be written about American dead-beats cadging drinks in the Latin Quarter. Of course a novelist is not obliged to write directly about contemporary history, but a novelist who simply disregards the major public events of the moment is generally either a footler or a plain idiot. From a mere account of the subject matter of *Tropic of Cancer* most people would probably assume it to be no more than a bit of naughty-naughty left over from the twenties. Actually, nearly everyone who read it saw at once that it was nothing of the kind, but a very remarkable book. How or why remarkable? That question is never easy to answer. It is better to begin by describing the impression that *Tropic of Cancer* has left on my own mind. When I first opened *Tropic of Cancer* and saw that it was full of unprintable words, my immediate reaction was a refusal to be impressed. Nevertheless, after a lapse of time the atmosphere of the book, besides innumerable details, seemed to linger in my memory in a peculiar way. *Tropic of Cancer* was much more vividly present in my mind than it had been when I first read it. My first feeling about *Black Spring* was that it showed a falling-off, and it is a fact that it has not the same unity as the other book. Yet after another year there were many passages in *Black Spring* that had also rooted themselves in my memory. The books that do this are not necessarily good books, they may be good bad books like *Raffles* or the *Sherlock Holmes* stories, or perverse and morbid books like *Wuthering Heights* or *The House with the Green Shutters*. But now and again there appears a novel which opens up a new world not by revealing what is strange, but by revealing what is familiar. The truly remarkable thing about *Ulysses*, for instance, is the commonplaceness of its material. Of course there is much more in *Ulysses* than this, because Joyce is a kind of poet and also an elephantine pedant, but his real achievement has been to get the familiar on to paper. Here is a whole world of stuff which you supposed to be of its nature incommunicable, and somebody has managed to communicate it. The effect is to break down, at any rate momentarily, the solitude in which the human being lives. And though he does not resemble Joyce in other ways, there is a touch of this quality in Henry Miller. Not everywhere, because his work is very uneven, and sometimes, especially in *Black Spring*, tends to slide away into more verbiage or into the squashy universe of the surrealists. But read him for five pages, ten pages, and you feel the peculiar relief that comes not so much from understanding as from being understood. It is as though you could hear a voice speaking to you, a friendly American voice, with no humbug in it, no moral purpose, merely an implicit assumption that we are all alike. For the moment you have got away from the lies and simplifications, the stylized, marionette-like

quality of ordinary fiction, even quite good fiction, and are dealing with the recognizable experiences of human beings. But what kind of experience? What kind of human beings? Miller is writing about the man in the street, and it is incidentally rather a pity that it should be a street full of brothers. That is the penalty of leaving your native land. It means transferring your roots into shallower soil. Exile is probably more damaging to a novelist than to a painter or even a poet, because its effect is to take him out of contact with working life and narrow down his range to the street, the cafe, the church, the brothel and the studio. Henry period, but the Paris scenes are the best, and, granted their utter worthlessness as social types, the drunks and dead-beats of the cafes are handled with a feeling for character and a mastery of technique that are unapproached in any at all recent novel. All of them are not only credible but completely familiar; you have the feeling that all their adventures have happened to yourself. Not that they are anything very startling in the way of adventures. Henry gets a job with a melancholy Indian student, gets another job at a dreadful French school during a cold snap when the lavatories are frozen solid, goes on drinking bouts in Le Havre with his friend Collins, the sea captain, goes to the brothels where there are wonderful Negresses, talks with his friend Van Norden, the novelist, who has got the great novel of the world in his head but can never bring himself to begin writing it. His friend Karl, on the verge of starvation, is picked up by a wealthy widow who wishes to marry him. There are interminable Hamlet-like conversations in which Karl tries to decide which is worse, being hungry or sleeping with an old woman. In great detail he describes his visits to the widow, how he went to the hotel dressed in his best, how before going in he neglected to urinate, so that the whole evening was one long crescendo of torment etc. The whole book is in this vein, more or less. Why is it that these monstrous trivialities are so engrossing? Simply because the whole atmosphere is deeply familiar, because you have all the while the feeling that these things are happening to you. And you have this feeling because somebody has chosen to drop the Geneva language of the ordinary novel and drag the real-politik of the inner mind into the open. For the truth is that many ordinary people, perhaps an actual majority, do speak and behave in just the way that is recorded here. The callous coarseness with which the characters in *Tropic of Cancer* talk is very rare in fiction, but it is extremely common in real life; again and again I have heard just such conversations from people who were not even aware that they were talking coarsely. Miller was in his forties when it was published, and though since then he has produced three or four others, it is obvious that this first book had been lived with for years. It is one of those books that are slowly matured in poverty and obscurity, by people who know what they have got to do and therefore are able to wait. The prose is astonishing, and in parts of *Black Spring* is even better. Unfortunately I cannot quote; unprintable words occur almost everywhere. But get hold of *Tropic of Cancer*, get hold of *Black Spring* and read especially the first hundred pages. They give you an idea of what can still be done, even at this late date, with English prose. In them, English is treated as a spoken language, but spoken without fear, i. It is a flowing, swelling prose, a prose with rhythms in it, something quite different from the flat cautious statements and snack-bar dialects that are now in fashion. When a book like *Tropic of Cancer* appears, it is only natural that the first thing people notice should be its obscenity. Given our current notions of literary decency, it is not at all easy to approach an unprintable book with detachment. Either one is shocked and disgusted, or one is morbidly thrilled, or one is determined above all else not to be impressed. The last is probably the commonest reaction, with the result that unprintable books often get less attention than they deserve. It is rather the fashion to say that nothing is easier than to write an obscene book, that people only do it in order to get themselves talked about and make money, etc. What makes it obvious that this is not the case is that books which are obscene in the police-court sense are distinctly uncommon. If there were easy money to be made out of dirty words, a lot more people would be making it. *Tropic of Cancer* has been vaguely associated with two other books, *Ulysses* and *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, but in neither case is there much resemblance. What Miller has in common with Joyce is a willingness to mention the inane, squalid facts of everyday life. But there the resemblance ends. As a novel, *Tropic of Cancer* is far inferior to *Ulysses*. Joyce is an artist, in a sense in which Miller is not and probably would not wish to be, and in any case he is attempting much more. Miller is simply a hard-boiled person talking about life, an ordinary American businessman with intellectual courage and a gift for words. As for the comparison with *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, it is even further from the point. Both books, use unprintable words, both are in some sense

autobiographical, but that is all. *Voyage au bout de la nuit* is a book-with-a-purpose, and its purpose is to protest against the horror and meaninglessness of modern life — actually, indeed, of life. It is a cry of unbearable disgust, a voice from the cesspool. *Tropic of Cancer* is almost exactly the opposite. The thing has become so unusual as to seem almost anomalous, but it is the book of a man who is happy. So is *Black Spring*, though slightly less so, because tinged in places with nostalgia. With years of lumpen-proletarian life behind him, hunger, vagabondage, dirt, failure, nights in the open, battles with immigration officers, endless struggles for a bit of cash, Miller finds that he is enjoying himself. So far from protesting, he is accepting. But there is something rather curious in being Whitman in the nineteen-thirties. It is not certain that if Whitman himself were alive at the moment he would write anything in the least degree resembling *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman was writing in a time of unexampled prosperity, but more than that, he was writing in a country where freedom was something more than a word. The democracy, equality, and comradeship that he is always talking about are not remote ideals, but something that existed in front of his eyes. In mid-nineteenth-century America men felt themselves free and equal, were free and equal, so far as that is possible outside-a society of pure communism. There was poverty and there were even class distinctions, but except for the Negroes there was no permanently submerged class. Everyone had inside him, like a kind of core, the iteaowledge that he could earn a decent living, and earn it without bootlicking. The reason is simply that they are free human beings. Life has a buoyant, carefree quality that you can feel as you read, like a physical sensation in your belly. If is this that Whitman is celebrating, though actually he does it very badly, because he is one of those writers who tell you what you ought to feel instead of making you feel it. Luckily for his beliefs, perhaps, he died too early to see the deterioration in American life that came with the rise of large-scale industry and the exploiting of cheap immigrant labour. Miller's outlook is deeply akin to that of Whitman, and nearly everyone who has read him has remarked on this. *Tropic of Cancer* ends with an especially Whitmanesque passage, in which, after the lecheries, the swindles, the fights, the drinking bouts, and the imbecilities, he simply sits down and watches the Seine flowing past, in a sort of mystical acceptance of thihg-as-it-is. Only, what is he accepting? In the first place, not America, but the ancient bone-heap of Europe, where every grain of soil has passed through innumerable human bodies. Secondly, not an epoch of expansion and liberty, but an epoch of fear, tyranny, and regimentation. Hitler, Stalin, bombs, aeroplanes, tinned food, machine guns, putsches, purges, slogans, Bedaux belts, gas masks, submarines, spies, provocateurs, press censorship, secret prisons, aspirins, Hollywood films, and political murders.

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