

Book Reviews

Mafia Activity And Its Origin

HONOR THY FATHER. By Gay Talese. World Publishing, \$10.

Here is a combination of journalism in depth and a documentary narrative about a topic that has been treated often in recent years—the Mafia.

Talese sketches in the whole picture, describing the Sicilian origins of the Mafia, naming major names among the 24 segments of the organization in the United States, and presenting in factual form some of the ideas expressed in Mario Puzo's novel "The Godfather."

But the main thrust of Talese's report is the story of one family, an intimately personalized account focusing on two figures that seem to symbolize the rise and fall of the Mafia.

These two are Joseph Bonanno and his son Salvatore, known as Bill. Joseph built a fortune in the racket, adding to it in legitimate enterprises. Bill inherited his father's leadership, but at a time when the family syndicate, torn by feuds, was falling apart.

Eventually Bill, distracted by the feuds, made a comparatively minor slip that landed him in jail.

This book of more than 500 pages presents a viewpoint—that the Mafia, though much publicized, even at its height was a minor factor in organized crime, and since then has fallen apart.

His narrative, immensely detailed, even touches upon the lives of the women and children who surrounded his principal figures.

Talese is a thorough-going reporter, as evidenced by his best selling story about the New York Times, "The Kingdom and the Glory." Once again he has covered a complicated theme in graphic style.

TUESDAY WILL BE DIFFERENT. By Henry Beete Hough. Dial Press, \$8.50. It is a pleasant relief to find in this

Gerald Smith: From Politics To Passion Play

EUREKA SPRINGS, Ark. (AP) — Across the nation Gerald L. K. Smith is described by some as a hate-mongering bigot and by others as a Christian patriot.

In this Ozark mountain town of 2,000, he is known as the man whose "sacred projects" have put Eureka Springs back in the tourist business after 40 years of decline.

"They (the projects) have made our town," said Edna Bergdorf. "We were about as far down as we could get."

Mrs. Bergdorf, who says she is "past 75," remembers when Eureka Springs had a population of 12,000 and drew tourists from across the country to its picturesque, winding streets and mineral springs.

She remembers, too, the mid-1960s when half the buildings in the downtown area were vacant, many hotels and motels were closed, empty houses were in crumbling disrepair and the population had shrunk to 1,400.

Then Smith, who had bought a summer home here, built a massive statue of Christ on a mountain overlooking the town. A trickle of tourists became a stream. Smith built an amphitheater on another hillside and presented a "Great Passion Play" on a 500-foot outdoor set.

The stream became a flood. "Anyone in the motel or restaurant business can tell the nights (Mondays and Thursdays) when the Passion Play is not presented," said Gordon Kennett, motel operator and president of the chamber of commerce. "Those are the nights when we have vacancies."

Smith recently announced he would build a "Holy Land," a reconstruction of places that Christ lived in and visited. "It's the biggest undertaking of its nature ever attempted," said Robert Hyde, the artist who will design the project. "It will dwarf all that has gone before."

He said it will take 10 to 20 years to complete "Holy Land," and it could cost over \$100 million.

Kennett said that about half of the members of the chamber of commerce are "new people" who, like himself, have moved in and started businesses since completion of the Christ of the Ozarks statue in 1966.

Although Smith mixes religion and politics with gusto in "The Cross and the Flag," the monthly magazine of his Christian Nationalist Crusade, he said in an interview that he is determined to keep politics and his religious projects separated at Eureka Springs.

No political literature is distributed at the projects. Neither is there any evidence that he has tried to convert the community to his political views.

"I would no more do that than I would send material to a roster of my church members," Smith said. "No political literature of any sort is put out here. The best (politician) would not be so indiscreet, as to hand out literature in church."

Smith's 40-year campaign against what he calls the "international Jewish conspiracy" earned him the reputation as an anti-Semite. His unbending espousal of conservative causes has earned him enmity of liberals everywhere. He estimates that he has raised and spent \$10 million on "right wing, constructive propaganda" since he launched his Christian Nationalist Crusade in 1941.

He takes the classic conservative positions: in support of neighborhood schools, J. Edgar Hoover, impeachment of liberal members of the U.S. Supreme Court and prayers in public schools; in opposition to communism, pornography, recognition of Red China and fluoridation of water.

book that the long tradition of the personal essay survives. True, this is a collection of letters, mostly to the author's friends, but they really amount to short essays.

Hough is a "character" in the best sense of the word. Now that he is 75 he has behind him a half century as editor and publisher of a newspaper on the island of Martha's Vineyard. He has qualified as a sage of the Yankee strain; he looks back over his life with perception and with a Thoreauvian appreciation of life.

The author's topics have a wide span. He may seem to be talking about the weather and his daily walks with his collie, but in reality he is communicating with nature and the reader. When he writes in quiet desperation on the theme that the supersonic transport plane is a folly, he does not shriek. When he expresses puzzlement over wandering hippies he gives them the benefit of the doubt—because, as an individualist, he assumes that they are individualists too.

His humor is gentle and gentlemanly. He makes philosophical observations in low key, his wit is dry and he writes with grace.

THE CLOSING CIRCLE. By Barry Commoner. Knopf, \$6.95. Commoner was an early prophet in the field of ecology and environmental problems, and because he is so articulate he is one of the foremost communicators on this subject. He has wrapped up the whole topic for the layman in this one book.

He summarizes the environmental crisis; he cites classic examples of the pollution of air (Los Angeles), earth (the area around Decatur, Ill.) and water (Lake Erie), explaining how the effort to correct one trouble often leads to

another.

He argues, citing statistics and surveys, that the "population explosion" and "affluence" have not been, thus far, such major factors as some authorities believe.

His central thesis is that a "sweeping transformation of productive technology since World War II" amounted to a "rapid short-term exploitation of the environmental system" that created a great debt to nature—because, in substituting inorganic chemicals and synthetics for the organic materials with which nature kept a balance, technology has snapped the circle of regeneration. Technology's greatest sin, in his view, is that it brings out new products for the sake of a fast buck, utterly disregarding their "side effects" on the environment—and once a product has been found dangerous it substitutes another with equally bad, or worse, effects.

On the question of survival he finds that the "point of no return"—the point at which degradation of the environment cannot be reversed—in industrial areas of the world "might be from twenty to fifty years, but it is only a guess." His final judgment is that "ecological considerations must guide economic and political ones," meaning major changes in political, economic and social terms. Commoner's book is a major contribution to a major topic of our times.

THE NIGHT COUNTRY. By Loren Eiseley. Scribners, \$7.95. Eiseley is a very rare individual, both a scientist and a humanist.

Professionally he has been an archeologist—a "bone-hunter"—and an anthropologist, but as a scientist he denies that "the authority of science is absolute." As a humanist he is a literary naturalist in the tradition of Emerson and Thoreau, and he staunchly defends the intuitions of this breed of men.

As a writer he has a poetic and philosophical turn of mind, and his prose is filled with brilliant imagery, subtle perceptions and a consciousness of man's role in the world. He is like one of the men he writes about in this book, that early scientist-humanist Francis Bacon.

This is a book of "reflections," an impressionistic, personal and intimate collection of memories and anecdotes. It includes scenes from his childhood and stories about some of his professional adventures; there is an essay on education and educators. There are stories—almost like parables—of lessons he learned from such humble creatures as an owl and a field mouse, there are visions of today's civilization in the perspective of the histories of ancient civilizations, and there are ruminations on the melancholy fact of man's mortality.

This is an unusual book, evocative, sometimes mystical and always mirroring a very sensitive mind.

THE JOURNEY OF AUGUST KING. By John Ehle. Harper, \$6.95. It is in the early years of the 19th century, and the scene of this novel is in the high mountain ranges of North Carolina. It describes a grueling frontier life.

August King is a widower in his 40s, with some personal troubles in his past, who makes his annual trek to a trading post to sell the fruits of his labor and pay off his mortgage. He starts back to his mountain retreat with his mare and cart, a young boy and his heifer, three geese and some supplies. He is looking forward to improving his livestock in the coming year.

But his journey home turns into a great dilemma and a challenge. He finds a brown-skinned slave girl who has run away from her owner, hoping to find her way to a Northern state and freedom. She is 15, part child and part woman, quixotic and unpredictable, but quick-minded.

August is not a very religious man, and he never has been confronted before with the racial issue, but he feels obliged to respond to the girl's plea for help. He gets food to her, then decides to hide her in his cart and get her past the mountain people who are trying to capture her and collect a reward. During the journey of several days August becomes emotionally disturbed, for as a sex-starved near-hermit he feels the temptations of being near a noble girl.

This is a well written historical novel with a convincing ring in its descriptions, dialogue and characterizations. Besides that, its moral and racial implications and its evocation of a man's conscience are pointedly pertinent to other times, including the present.

Miles A. Smith Associated Press

FLAG HAD 45 STARS

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (AP) — A 45-star American flag? The local branch of Goodwill Industries discovered there was one, dating back to 1896 when Utah was admitted into the union.

When Oklahoma achieved statehood in 1907, the 45-star flag became obsolete. Nonetheless, it had a 11-year run.

The flag was donated to Goodwill by Ralph Lindley, who found it in an old box he bought at an auction. Goodwill employees, with his approval, have offered it to the state of Utah.

Student Corporations: A Course In Pride

DENVER, Colo. (AP) — Under their own corporations, teams of students from Denver's Manual High School are running a gas station, remodeling a dilapidated two-story house, designing miniparks for an urban renewal area and putting down more than two miles of sidewalks.

The projects are unique, most of them unlike anything being tried elsewhere in the country, say Manual's teachers.

The idea is to give the vocational students—many of them poor blacks from disadvantaged backgrounds—a running start in their career fields through actual job experience, said Alfred Prudhomme, Manual's coordinator of instruction.

"It's a head start program in the world of work, and one of the biggest byproducts has been enthusiasm," he added.

Steve Moore, a 16-year-old junior in the drafting course and one of eight students manning the gas station's pumps five days a week, bears him out.

"I used to come up here just for the fun of it," said Moore, "but now I'm glad

I'm working full-time.

"You really get to be friends with a lot of people and you get to learn how to deal with them. Besides, it's going to help me too when I get my own car."

A co-worker, Ken Bryant, 17, hopes to manage just such a station himself when he graduates next year.

"I've learned a lot more than I ever thought I would in the auto mechanics course," said Bryant. "Sometimes we make mistakes handling credit cards and we've gotten some bum checks, but not often."

The station, which sports a prominent "Operated by the Students of Manual High" sign, is on one of Denver's busiest streets. Eighteen months ago it was leased by one of the student corporations, Manual Standard, Inc., and has been running, with several breaks to iron out financial problems, ever since.

"For the students, it's terrific," said Arch Jefferies, the school's vocational coordinator. "Learning becomes a necessity. They see why they need decimals and fractions and such, because you can't change a set of blurs or

points without it."

This past summer the station was run with the aid of a grant from the Neighborhood Youth Corps, with the students paid \$1.60 per hour. During the last school year, the students worked it on a part-time basis, getting part academic credit and paid from its sometimes slim profits. Jefferies said it's hoped the NYC grant can be partly continued through the coming year to help keep the station out of the red.

A second student corporation, Creative Urban Living Environments, Inc. (CULE), has three other projects currently under way.

Presided over by 17-year-old Melvin Brooks, its president, and an eight-man board of directors, CULE has 55 student workers.

"I think it's really fine work and helps prepare you for life," says Brooks. Four English students are publishing a free neighborhood newsletter, the Mitchell Legend, and doing public relations work under a \$5,000 contract with the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA). Another 10 from the drafting course are designing four miniparks for a blighted area under a \$10,000 DURA contract, and the balance are handling two construction projects under several more contracts totaling \$50,000.

So far, the students are breaking about-even on the construction work, their costs include subcontracting electrical and plumbing work in the house they are renovating, and paying for ready-mixed concrete for 21 blocks of sidewalks being laid in the neighborhood.

CULE pays its workmen \$1.75 per hour and is planning a 75 cents per hour bonus at the end of the jobs for outstanding performance.

But the big bonus for the 56 teen-agers is not just the money but the pride they have taken in themselves, said Jim Watson, an industrial arts teacher who doubles as the construction boss.

"They can take pride they're pouring as fine a sidewalk as anyone in the city, and group pride in working together, steadily and on time, and accomplishing the job," he said.

"If anything, many of these kids are strictly marginal or below students," said Clifford Lewis, an attorney who teaches social studies at Manual.

"Most of them are overachieving. They're highly motivated because it's not just a matter of learning how to lay cement or repair a house. They learn to run their own companies."

Hope For New Mrs. Van Dyke

NEW YORK (AP) — The most delicate casting job in television this season had to be the wife of the "new" Dick Van Dyke on his CBS series.

After all, the wife of the "old" Dick Van Dyke is now the star of her own highly successful television comedy series and, besides, old Dick and former wife are all over the place in re-runs.

As things are working out, however, Hope Lange has been accepted by the viewers without any credibility problems.

The blonde actress, a divorcee with two teen-age children, seems to have the same appeal for viewers—especially males—that once made stars of Myrna Loy (in "The Thin Man" series) and Greer Garson (starting with "Goodbye Mr. Chips").

Miss Lange's career as the dream wife started four television seasons back, toward the end of the network vogue of comedy-fantasy, with the debut of a minor entry called "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir."

It was broad comedy for the most part, about a widow with two children moving into an old New England house inhabited by the roaring, blustering ghost of its original owner, a sailing ship captain.

"The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" was cancelled by NBC after one season, another victim of low Nielsen ratings, although it seemed to have done pretty well for a series whose appeal was presumed to be mostly to children. ABC unexpectedly picked it up and gave it another season but with the same disappointing results.

While the show was bombing, Miss Lange won an Emmy each season for her Mrs. Muir—a lot of men vote in the contest.

When Nielsen finally exorcised the ghost, Miss Lange took a holiday from television. CBS executives, impressed by her appeal, came up with a couple of offers involving pilot shows but she decided she was not ready to resume steady work.

Carl Reiner, force majeure of the original "Dick Van Dyke Show" obviously was a Langewatcher.

"He called my agent," recalled Miss Lange, "and asked if we could meet with Dick and talk about the new series. We met in Carl's office at Paramount and talked over some of the worst Chinese food I've ever eaten."

"I'd never met Dick but I had admired Carl's work enormously. We all got along well. I liked the idea of working with a live audience. I was most concerned that the thing might be cutesy and the character would be pat, one-dimensional."

Miss Lange said she had not been concerned about comparison with Mary Tyler Moore.

"After all, she had established a new image of her own series, which is a hit," the actress said. "Besides, all of us, except Dick, were too busy with our work."

Reiner, Van Dyke and the show's producers had sold CBS a full season's series—24 episodes—of "The New Dick Van Dyke Show" without making a pilot presentation. The whole lot was turned out in six months at new film studios in

Carefree, Ariz., near Phoenix, a tedious plane trip from Hollywood, home base for most of the cast.

The early Nielsen ratings put the series comfortably among the top third among all shows in popularity.

Hope expects that the second season of "The New Dick Van Dyke Show" will be easier for her than the first. For one thing, her two children, Christopher, 14, and Patricia, 13, are now students in Arizona boarding schools—their own idea, she says.

Their father is actor Don Murray, from whom she has been divorced for several years.

Hope herself was born in Connecticut, daughter of a musician, John Lange, and Minnette Buddeke, a Broadway actress.

Automobile Club Met At Potsdam

Madrid—The annual meeting of the Antique Automobile Club of America, St. Lawrence-Adirondack Region was held Oct. 30 in Potsdam.

Forty-seven members and guests were present. President Raymond Stiles of Madrid presided.

New Business brought up discussion of spring and summer car meets, the 100th year celebration in Norwood and Philadelphia, N.Y. Invitations had been issued from both towns. Also the Potsdam Chamber of Commerce sponsored meet.

The past year, the group gained fifteen new members and lost one, Dr. Ralph Cudlipp through death.

Election of officers was held. Director, Ray Stiles, Madrid; Assistant Director, Milford Curtis, Potsdam; Secretary, Lorraine Stiles, Madrid and Treasurer, Alton Watson, Madrid. Trustees for the coming year, were Keith Collins and Robert Belier, Ottawa and Jack Allen, Watertown.

Movie and slides were shown. Slides were on the recently held Glidden Tour, National Tour in Ottawa, Canada. Several door prizes were drawn for an won by Mrs. Carol Sherman, Mrs. John Austin, Mrs. Jean Petrie, Mrs. Keith Collins and Mr. Carl LaSalle.

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