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## Leisure and the Esfuture<sup>1</sup>

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WHAT will *homo futurus* be like in consciousness and behavior, particularly leisure?

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a *Theology of Leisure*

He/she will be like us, and different. That's as far as we can answer without leaving safe ground. But who wants to stay on safe ground when confronted with a siren question that lures us to the edge of our world and beyond, off into the darkness? But into the darkness we go with fear and trembling when risking much, with modesty when risking something, with sci-fi (i.e., science fiction) boldness when risking nothing but an hour's fantasy.

This paper invites you to all three moods. It's bloody serious how we fantasize the future, what scenarios our psyches en flesh in "consciousness," for — as we know better than ever our forefathers could — what catches your fancy may capture your fantasy, and what captures your fantasy captures you: a human being is the self-fulfilling prophecy of his/her interiority; we become like what we dream toward; what gets our steady attention gets us.<sup>2</sup> *Fear and trembling*, a hesitant yet fascinated awe, is appropriate, even essential to optional human responding as we direct our attending toward the future — of each one's own, of our relationships and collectivities, and of mankind.<sup>3</sup>

*A Theology of Leisure*; his research for Herman Kahn (Hudson Institute), "Religion Projections: Early 21st Century"; and his article, "Meditation" (Atlanta Symposium on Mystery and Transcendence in Modern Life).

<sup>1</sup> On the planning committee for the Conference on Religion and the Future six years ago I suggested that the four workgroups be named "Biofuture," "Technofuture," "Sociofuture," and "Esofuture" — the last neologism to avoid unwanted connotations of "Psychofuture" (e.g., that we will *all* be crazy in the future, whereas only *most* of us are crazy now)... the Greek adverb and prefix "eso" indicating unprejudicedly the "inside" of the person and of his relations — future man's innering and innerness as awakening, awareness, attention-intention, and devotion.... For gadget-minded, space-and-sci-fi-boggled Americans, "the future" tends to mean "the technological future" (my "technofuture") as unerringly and as inaccurately as "morality" tends to mean "sex." Aiding and abetting this impoverishment of "the future" as an abstraction and of the concrete present are the hold-your-breath ecstatic ads of certain giant corporations whose own technology is "higher" in the sense of younger and more complex.... In spite of the fact that now, in 1973 — face to face with ambiguous fallouts from the scientific-technological first and second revolutions (mechanical and electronic), and with the unambiguously evil use of our destructive technological potential in Vietnam — the American honeymoon with science-assavior should be over in spite of the romantic blandishments of political-chauvinist and commercial propaganda. But the exofuture (to coin the polar term), is, alas, for the mass of Americans, almost as alluring as ever.

<sup>2</sup> My sharpest experience of this was being on a panel with Herman Kahn at the conference on Religion and the Future, Valley Forge, 1969.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase "fear and trembling" is *biblical*, from Philippians (2.12 TEV: the mood in which you are to "complete your salvation... for God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his purpose"); and *existential*, from Søren Kierkegaard's classic of that title. No matter one's personal metaphysics, what is indicated here — in both senses of "indicated" — is the religious attitude the soul feels before the tremor-producing, fascinating Mystery, *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (Otto). The repression of this

A mid-intensity mood we should have when projecting alternative futures is *modesty*, a moral modesty because of the good-and-evil ambiguities of history and of our own human hearts, but also an intellectual modesty because of the undistinguished record of reason through the synaptic clickings in our species' uniquely developed neo-cortex.<sup>4</sup> We tend to feed the future, as we do the past, with our anxious and self-serving fantasies as well as with our healthy hopes, filling the lacunae of our knowledge with propaganda, ladening our souls with ego-static, imprisoning future and past in our narrow purposes and thus confining our spirits to the role of unfree prison guard.

And one more mood-ingredient in a healthy futuric consciousness: scifi *boldness* — usually dilettante as when reading science fiction or exposing our brainpans to the sights and sounds of "2001" or even horse-operas to the stars like "Star Trek"; but sometimes this boldness gets serious enough to spawn major gatherings of scifi doers, space engineers, Washington economists (for without Congressional appropriations, nothing!), artists, parapsysics, historians, philosophers, science journalists, psychologists, physiological psychologists (brain/mind specialists), sociologists, data technologists, systems managers, design scientists, government bureaucrats, museum executives, and theologians. As a theologian I push the ultimate context as "God," the comprehensive Gestalt, and identify with the everywhere-and-at-all-times conviction that this is mankind's essential saving dimension; in "space"

psycho-primitivity (which I call "primitive man within") has impoverished and endangered "modern man"; and *homo post modernus* is permitting, encouraging, the return of wonder (viz. Sam Keen's *Apology for Wonder* [New York: Harper and Row, 1969]), and horror (as in the peace movement's revival of primitive horror at the killing of our fellows — as one of our sons, refusing to register for the draft, said "No tribe has the right to seize its young to kill the young of another tribe; it is as barbarous as human sacrifice; it is human sacrifice"). . . . To this mood contrast the heartless technopsyché of the Pentagon Papers\* with its linear military scenarios innocent of the divine/human factor and thus guilty of inhumanity; and the personal symbol of this mentality, Herman Kahn — but see, on "reverence," the last p. of his and Anthony Wiener's *Toward The Year 2,000* [New York: Macmillan, 1967]): we cannot be saved without the recovery of reverence for each other, for life, for the good earth. (\*The now of Vietnam is the future of America's Erector-set mentality as it controlled Washington's decision-makers a decade ago.)

<sup>4</sup> Moral modesty is a consequence of the dialectic between moral seriousness (which moves toward action for "the good"); honest, penitential confrontation with one's own unwitting and witting pollution of the stream of human history; and historical knowledge, which reveals the proclivity of good intents to energize evil as well as good events. Intellectual *immodesty* succumbs to cynicism (reason surrendering reality-testing) or prometheanism (headtripping toward the City of Man). Intellectual modesty is the mind-set of those who live in the tension, on the hyphen, between these two dehumanizing and destructive extremes.

[our very recent experience of physical transcendence of planet Earth] I see a paradigm and gift of this saving dimension: we the species cannot make it, cannot thrive or even survive, without reflexes from this pristine psycho-leverage feedback from this Buck-Rogers-come-real widened imaginal sphere which now forms an anti-environment to all our provincial, less-than-global feeling habits and thought-forms and thought-processes.

So much for what I judge the three essential components in a creative and humane attitude for dreaming, planning, and moving toward the future. Come to think of it, it is rather in line with the Christian injunction to love God (the biblical god of power, love, and justice) and the world (his creation), including yourself (his servant). "The world" is now — scientifically and practically, as it always has been theologically — more than "the earth." Uterus, society, nature, history, and space — the five wombs of *homo futurus*.

#### BEHAVIOR, CONSCIOUSNESS<sup>5</sup>...AND LEISURE

All this talk about appropriate mood and attitude for optimal facing of decision-making about the future is not as far from the theme of this essay as may seem. The "esofuture," future man's interior terrain and meteorology, is being shaped as I write and as you read these words. The future is born in the conjunction of night dreams and day dreams, and of nightmares and daytime psychic terrors. The very atmosphere in which "futurists," some of whom now want you to call them "mellontologists" (i.e., students of the "about-to-be"), convene and communicate, contributes to the "spiritual formation" of our descendants. The term is from a now much debated aspect of Catholic training for the priesthood. When a decade ago I said to Catholic biblical scholar John MacKenzie, "We Protestants are becoming more concerned about the virtual absence of 'spiritual formation' in our so-called mainline seminaries," he replied "We Catholics, at least many of us, are glad to be getting rid of it: you can have it!" I of course was referring to the habituation of the heart, and he to the heartlessness

<sup>5</sup> Jesus' current popular press presses him into various roles — and thus continues a practice as old as the New Testament, which tries on Jesus many roles (the Coming One, Teacher, Messiah, Son of David, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior, Lord, etc.), all illuminating, none adequate or even (taken alone) accurate. His current *house*-press (among his professed followers) likes "the Man for Others," the "Man of the Future," "the Lord of the Future" — titles that are helpful, and descriptive of his current influence, but under the same burdens: (1) his personal complexity in spite of the simplicity of his motive (viz., to be obedient in living and announcing God's Kingdom), and (2) the inherent difficulty in hermeneutics of psyching the ancients — on which the classic is H. J. Cadbury's *The Peril of Modernizing Jesus* (Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1962).

of ritual externalism — both truths, in Matthew 9:13, in the mouth of God: *Ich freue mich über barmherzige Menschen und nicht über frommes Gehabe* (which I came across on my knees this morning in the last step of my daily custom of reading the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and one modern language — a habit of the past one-third century of my own “spiritual formation”; the German statement is by J. Zink).

Currently I am teaching for clergy of all churches (about equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant) a continuing education course in spiritual re-formation — “spiritual” here meaning not just pious but “of the spirit,” that is, “of the inner life” (a conscience to be conscientious about consciousness, including the preconscious, the subconscious, and the unconscious). The assumptions are (1) that “health” requires a mutual forming-informing, an energy homeostasis (a dynamic equilibrium), a synergism between “action” (the outer life) and “reflection” (the inner life of meditation, contemplation, prayer, ratiocination [the strictest linear thinking], and self-guided fantasy); (2) that a new lifestyle for the religious professional is slowly emerging and needs a bit of pushing; (3) that a “consciousness” — a particular way of feeling-perceiving self-others-world-source-destiny — is not just a gift (as in conformism, either traditional or faddist) or a role-mask pretense (calculating self-manipulation), but an assignment to adventure, discovery (of one’s authentic self), integrity (in relating to that self and its inner Grounding, “God”), and authenticity (in relating to all realities other than one’s “soul”-in-God); (4) that the professional religious leader is in society’s most natural position for helping people *do* “consciousness” (i.e., take full responsibility for their own attending and intending, in the light of the full human heritage of helps thereto); and (5) that one’s daily personal and professional praxis is the primary laboratory for *doing* one’s own consciousness, discovering and reinforcing one’s authentic self and service.

Is all this anything but David Riesman’s decades-old “inner-directed” versus American hustle-and-bustle “outer-directed” and corporate “other-directed”? The taxonomy is helpful, though I am suspicious that the model of self-containment is apt to be the Stoic gentleman or the Buddhist contemplative rather than the Christian servant-of-God-and-man-in-the-world, a model that is not *just* “inner-directed,” and so is not so vulnerable to perjorative terms like autosuggestion, self-hypnosis, ego-brainwashing, and navel-gazing.... Why such a longish note on the interior life of the clergy? Because it is the occupation I am most inside of (having taught in theological seminaries, then having been a minister in one local church for more than a decade, then having worked chiefly with clergy while on a national staff for almost a decade, and now being “into” continuing education for clergy and laity); but also because among the social roles priestcraft is, more

than any other, assigned to responsibility for "consciousness" and therefore has a responsibility of unique pertinence as we discuss and shape the esofuture ("we" here meaning the whole society) and neoleisure.

"Futurism" is itself already a quasi-life-style, a Gestalt of ritual and thus learnable behavior—partly molding a new consciousness, mainly responding to an emerging global psyche with its neo-nearly-everything... including neo-leisure.

Ah, we have arrived at our subject! We began with the question "What will *homo futurus* be like in behavior and consciousness?" We said that the question is being answered *right now* in the decisions we make personally and collectively (and we should add, nationally and internationally) in relation to indicated changes in attitude, behavior, and consciousness—though we have hardly touched on the positive and negative incentives that "indicate" the changes. And we implied that behavior/consciousness is not a chicken-or-egg question but an interacting dynamic of "outer" and "inner" (rather tricky terms, but adequate for our purpose here). And now we are saying that this new situation provides opportunity for, and it demands, if we are to sustain and enhance it, *new ways of conceiving leisure in relation to work, and a new mix of old and new ways of leisuring. Which brings us to...*

#### DEFINING LEISURE

In a book eight years ago I defined leisure in a fashion to which I am still sticking: "Leisure is *discretionary time beyond the time needed for the exigencies of existence, plus the ability and inclination to employ this 'free time' for truly human ends.*"<sup>6</sup> The definition avoids both the workbound, reflexive, negative, and egocentric notion of "free time" and the neoclassical, aristocratic, and purely qualitative idea of "leisure." So as to be operational, it accepts time-boundedness; to make room for motive and sanctions, it insists on a purposive element.

Now, in the context of the familiar phrase "the leisurely attitude," the present article is faithful to the limitation to interiority ("attitude") or "consciousness" (in its *au courant* sense) and, with less rigor, the further restriction to futurity.<sup>7</sup> Because futurics (imagined future conditions) and scenarios (imagined future decision/consequence situa-

<sup>6</sup> *Toward a Theology of Leisure* (mimeodistribution by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the National Council of Churches, 1965), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> The term "attitude" is one on which neurologist-psychiatrist-philosopher Viktor Frankl has a near patent, his central operating conviction being that every human being always and everywhere is responsible for the attitude he takes toward his situation, no matter how "free"—powerful or impotent—he may be in it to change its extrapsychic particulars. Not a cop-in, neopietistic

tions) are projections from the present, however, and thus not *de novo* creations, all such fantasizing, be it ever so intellectual (academically respectable) and persuasive (rhetorically powerful), stands under the radical existential question "Sez who?"

When the Hudson Institute asks me my perception of relations between the decline in Latin American priests, in the afterlife belief, and the present-and-future relations between the church and economic-political revolution, my "existence" is up against Herman Kahn's "existence," my image of man-in-world converging and colliding with his (chiefly colliding). Reasons for all this learned projecting (which the event often proves less accurate than unlearned guessing) include social control (sociologists' "earlier intervention") and cultural confrontation (preplaying *Kulturkampf* to minimize hurt and waste and to maximize human payoff, enriching the participating persons and groups, though not necessarily economically). My own "existence" — my whole self-in-world — sees the need for both *control* (and so, therefore, I promote coercive sterilization of women at the third birth, and adequate police protection — just two examples) and *confrontation* (and so, therefore, my provisional support for the balance-of-energy dynamic between persons and groups — including threat-dialogue, as in the healthy tension between structures of "justice" and justice-motivated counter-structures powerful enough to give "the System" nightmares).

individualism (neglecting or denying the extraspsychic factors' rights to influence the inner life...and sociology of knowledge...and social-control factors in the situation), but a radical addressing and thus honoring of the human core as in four Nazi concentrations camps he experienced the paradox of being reduced to nothing and *thus* finding that core-everything. (The core of his life-message about this human core is in his *Humanitas* article "Determinism and Humanism," VII. 1, 23ff.) ... My own putting of this truth for the past two decades goes something like this: "I am responsible for what gets my attention and holds it; what gets my attention gets me: I am responsible for what I'm got by and for, what each day's conscious contents are, therefore, for my convictions, my cause, my God: each day, from among the gods (values, personal and impersonal; and hetero-consciousnesses), I choose *my* God (dignified, by my subjectivity, with the capital "G"), who by a feedback loop reinforces and perhaps (depending on the character of this for-me "divine") judges, sifts out, evaluates my operational values (my actual intrapsychic [decisions, attitudes, habits] and extraspsychic [actions-in-the-world] behavior)." ... The primary responsibility for my esopresent and my esofuture lies in my heart and hands, is mine. If this essay seems to belabor this point, it is because I see it as "the word," the primary message that needs to be spoken to power today — to the seat of power in the person, to official and unofficial people-helpers (clergy, social workers, psychotherapists, and the paraprofessionals of all these functions), to educators, and to all who have primary responsibility for the structures and structuring of power. Concern for how to move from theory to action on this moved me to motivation research, and thus the thesis of a second doctorate: *Sanctions in the Control-Literature of Postapostolic-Precaholic Christian Leaders* (unpublished dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1954).

As a matter of personal and occupational fact, most of my energy goes into the side of confrontation (rather than control) — the promise (fundamentally the biblical promise of “the Kingdom of God”) more than threat; and this essay should be read in the light of “where my head is at,” what I am “into” — those powerful phrases that illumine the psychology of attention and the sociology of knowledge. I have brought “attitude” and “futuraity” together in my argument that in this problem context the most humanly productive “frame” of “mind” is *fear and trembling with the appropriate mix of modesty and boldness*. I propose to complete the article with some (I hope) nourishing observations on the particulars of my definition of leisure, disciplining myself (again, I hope) to confine the observations to what is pertinent to “the esofuture,” where our (humanity’s) head will be at tomorrow.

#### DISCRETIONARY TIME

1. Recall the parameters in the paragraph (above) with my definition of leisure. I straddle the quantity/quality polarity in the dialectical history of “leisure.” I see “leisure” as largely timebound though decreasingly workbound. It is not just whatever you do or do not do when you are not “working,” but it *is* time, *particular* time, *the* time with which you personally can do what you want; it is time at your discretion, nobody else’s, nothing else’s. As such, it is that time that you are up against with your *whole* being, and as such is the most important time you have or will ever have and is more serious to “hominization” (as in Teilhard and Karl Rahner) than any other time. So time is one parameter in leisure, and the other is purpose. But, say “the kids,” if it is purposebound, it is not leisure. Say I, it is not leisure unless one purposes spontaneity within the time, for spontaneity is an essential dimension of wholeness, and wholeness is “where it’s at” in discretionary time.

2. As is usual in moral-ethical matters, what we need here is not so much good counsel as mind-boggling models whose behavior is yet not entirely unreachable for us. Can you stand without weeping in the room where Anne Frank’s diary was found in a pile of rubbish? Think of the reluctant discretionary time she had, and what use she made of it! Think of whoever “took off time” to write the *Bhagavad Gita*, “Song of the Blessed One,” whoever he was (or she?). Think of the lazy-strenuous courage of Gautama under the bo tree. Or for a bizarre picture, think of Bucky Fuller meditating every night and nap on — the Lord’s Prayer! Or think of that Lord: think of Jesus, who took off from work in the carpenter’s shop *permanently*, whose “discretion” was to discover and do “the Father’s will” toward “the Kingdom of God,” the *shalom* of perfect human fulfillment in the restoration and completion of creation.

3. Now, discretion is discriminating choice, choice is decision, and decision implies options, that is, variant opportunities. And opportunities? Any considerable range of them requires these components: disposable hours, expendable dollars, and available relationships with persons, things, and institutions. Unless we are prepared to affirm that "discretionary time" is a special privilege rather than a human right, the logic of the phrase is a radical social ethic... but here I must resist being seduced by my radicality away from everyman's responsibility for his own interiority and thus for "the esofuture" of mankind — no matter how extensive his discretionary time and his options therein.

4. Which has second-class status, "work" (equals "labor," i.e., remunerative employment) or "leisure" (i.e., nonremunerative time)? If the leisure is only "free time," that is, time back-defined from labor, leisure is second-class time: we are living to work instead of working to live, and nothing less than an oceanic psychic shift will be needed to give "leisure" equal status with "work." But that shift had already occurred almost a decade ago when my San Francisco cabbie said "These hippies, they *are* different. Other people spend all their time working and then enjoy as a sideline. With the hippies, life comes first, and work is the sideline." The soon sad story of the California hippies shows they had not entirely solved the work/leisure dilemma, but at least they were a form of *homo futurus* — whose grandfather worked 70 hours a week and died at 40 and whose father works 40 hours a week and will die at 70. So far, "the new work-free time that has been achieved for all has not brought leisure in any meaningful sense."<sup>8</sup> Design science's "human space" (for city-planner Doxiadis the harmony of God, man, and environment) needs complementation with what I may call human time, that is, *all* time used for (the final phrase of my definition of leisure) "truly human ends." It is James F. T. Bugenthal's "elastic clock," time constantly reevaluated to include its "nontechnical values."<sup>9</sup> For myself, I am hopeful. Western man is fast getting over his infatuation with the machine and is maturing into a love-hate relationship in the older generation, and a temporary (?) hate relationship in some of the more gifted of the younger generation; so our prospects are good, given the additional fact of cybernation, that the machine will once again become man's servant and surrender its second industrial-revolution imperium over him.

5. But what then? Then — already now — man will be once again "without excuse," up against himself and the question of his inner resources, without his historic alibi "work" and his scapegoat "tech-

<sup>8</sup> Arnold W. Green, *Recreation, Leisure, and Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 167.

<sup>9</sup> L. R. T. Bugenthal, "The Elastic Clock," *Humanitas*, III. 1, 4ff.

nopolis.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, in ways none of us foresaw a few short years ago, we Americans are being driven in on ourselves by our experience of the ambivalence of “science” — enemy and wastrel and criminal as well as friend and enricher and liberator —, by shaken confidence in our institutions, by a shaken economy, by our hair-graying realization of our evil in Vietnam, by our children’s disenchantment with the machine-blessings culture they grew up in, by our own dubiety about inherited values and options, and by an ever-present worry about those basics of basics, personal survival and social stability. All this, plus a fresh spiritual wistfulness. The esofuture has arrived!

6. The “discretionary time” front is, of course, ragged. Masses are forced into reluctant leisure — unemployment, early retirement — without either the outer or the inner resources to use their now-full time with discretion . . . without the roundtrip fare, after essentials are paid for, to go to the park or zoo . . . without a heart curious enough to haunt the free libraries and join groups of seekers . . . without a conscience committed enough to struggle, alone and in movements, for justice and peace. A diametrical from them is the inwardly and outwardly rich human being who has unreluctant nondiscretionary nontime, or at least claims to. One is reminded of Jesus’ ironic statement that even the little the poor have will be taken away from them and given to the rich! Then there is the reluctant leisure of the very rich. In an overnight clinic I led for Miami Beach hoteliers, the number-one agony on which they hoped for help from me was “the last-six-days problem” — meaning what to do about the last two-thirds of the average guest’s nine-day (and \$900) stay, after the first three days the guest being bored and a burden to the hotel. But why would the National Council of Churches send me, a theologian, into *that*? Because (naturally!) it is a theological problem — a problem of spiritual shallowness, a problem of meaning-malnutrition (Frankl’s “existential anxiety,” for which his logotherapy is a specific). Together, our workshop listed 49 action-suggestions the hotelier can spread before the bored rich . . . not just time-killers, either . . . ways of giving oneself . . . not just back-home conversation-pieces, either . . . One may begin with the rearguard question “What are the meanings (to them, others, society, the future) of the ways people are now spending their disposable time (and other resources)?” But one should press on to the vanguard question “Now that disposable time is increasing, (1) how can it be spent for optimal human payoff (for the person, others, society, and

<sup>10</sup> In his Letter to the Romans (1-7), Paul uses the phrase “without excuse” to describe man come of age before his own nature (“conscience”) and before the latest historical development (“torah,” the “teaching” of God’s will through the Abraham-Moses-Jesus tradition).

the future)?, and (2) how engage people in the vision of and the processes toward this goal (in theological language, the praise of God through the joy of the whole creation)?" The economics of all this brings us to the second phrase of our definition of leisure:

#### THE EXIGENCIES OF EXISTENCE

1. "Ya gotta eat!" is often heard in the mouths of the underemployed, the overemployed (on the Peter Principle), and the well employed but in a hairy human relations situation — three more worker-classes in our society. Now, eating is one of the "exigencies of existence," and there are still many Esaus who sell their birthright for a mess of it. There is a thereness about the organic values, the insistent claims of our material selves; in fact, the "throwness" of our bionees is so insistent that the cynics, which on this subject means practically everybody and not just the Marxists, say that the body's claims are ineluctable. To which my standard reply is that Jesus knew and chose which was "the Last Supper" — but those are words for heroes, who are always in short supply.

2. Of course some of the individual's belly-need terror has become lessened now that "Over the hills to the poorhouse" (which I often heard my grandparents use as a stick motivator) has become "Over the hills to the fatter welfare check, the family-income floor, and GAW" (Guaranteed Annual Wage). Inexorably the cord is being cut, strand by strand from year to year, between basic human needs and money, with ambiguous results. For example, recently I set up a public dialogue between a utilities president and a forty-year-old woman who had "never worked for pay a day in my life, nor has anybody else in our family for these three generations." The situation was unfair to the executive in being untypical of third-generation welfarers: this woman spends her time playing with the children in Harlem's streets, discovering and trying to meet directly and by referral any urgent family needs she discovers. Result: she's certainly not "unproducing" of human values. For him it was a mythblowing evening, and for many in the audience. She is as free as was Jesus from worries about "the exigencies of existence" — an uncomfortable comparison, for the executive is also the chief lay officer of his parish church.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary or service occupations (the most expanding class) are decreasingly looked at primarily for their price tags, and a growing number of hard workers have no price tag on their work. A few years ago I began "Second Career Theological Education" for Manhattan executives who plan early retirement followed by dollar-a-year "employment" as ordained ministers in situations unable to provide salaries — a program now widened somewhat

to include many not intending ordination, and now called "MidCareer Exploration." These middle-aged men and women, some with their spouses, come directly from their offices to the seminary, work with me for about six hours, then either retire at the seminary or make a very late-night commute home.

At the upper reaches of our society there has been a trickly development from "Money is everything, or at least can buy anything you want" to "Money is no object" to "Money is really not all that interesting, and is certainly not satisfying" — along with increasing leisure-consciousness and leisure-planning (odd weeks-off expanding from first the short ad then the long weekend). For most of my potential Mid-Careerers there *is* no "time needed (to earn money) for the exigencies of existence" (or soon won't be), and income increments fall under the law of diminishing ego-returns. Upon increasing numbers of Americans has come that affluence which in the India of three millenia ago was the soil for the slender plant of ascetic Hinduism, Prince Rama and his kind saying "Is this all?" and then turning inward to find the More and the Other. It should not surprise us, then, that America's emerging esofuture has some Eastern-hemisphere qualities, Apollonian as well as Dionysiac.

But the terrors of downward mobility have increased — unemployment by machine-displacement and underemployment for the same reason; ever earlier retirement, and "topping out," stasis where you are on the pyramid, the failure to advance further — which equals real though relative failure, "success" being confined to those arriving at the top and those in process of perpetual promotion toward the top..... In most of this sweaty striving, the term "exigencies" applies not to existence but only to ego. Ego rewards and ego punishments are less and less concomitant with dollar arithmetic.

3. While "the time needed for the exigencies of existence" ("earning a living") is decreasing, "time for oneself" — which logically should increase — is increasing only for the disciplined few: the many are as busy as ever, working at leisure when not working at work, largely because commercialized leisure has caught their fancy, purses, and hours. It is another application of Parkinson's Law: the leisure industry expands to fill the hours released from earning a living. In four states leisure is the number-one industry, and it is number two in five more (e.g., second in Pennsylvania only to steel).

The world has not yet found a moral alternative to war (in William James' phrase), nor has the American worker found a *moral* alternative to work — "moral" here meaning "for truly human ends." Criteria for morality in this context are not heteronomous, imported; they are quite concrete: does the particular "leisure" experience refresh one's body, enrich one's "spirit" (decisional life, expanding the options and

self-confidence as a decision-maker), stimulating the psyche (esthetic perception, and fantasy-power), sharpening and feeding the mind (intellectual ability and capability), improving one's relational skills (to things, people, God), increasing both peace-joy (because things are right with the world) and concern-disturbance (because things are wrong with the world, and one senses a call to help right the wrongs)? —does one, now, feel both more together and together with?

If a "leisure" experience does none of these things, in it one has been only a victim (at least of oneself, and probably also of others). If a "leisure" experience does only one of these things — say, refreshes the body — it has something to recommend it, but not much. And if more than one criterion applies to a particular "leisure" experience, and if one has a variety of types of such experience, one can be said to have some sense of and commitment to the humanization of leisure. Social engineering can proceed along this line, on the basis of generally recognized human and humane values, without being cancelled by differing commitments, religious and other. And it just may be that in gathering around the leisure problems, a secular community may develop psychosocial muscles to head into thornier issues of community life.

4. One leisure value unlisted among the criteria in section #3 is "getting away from it all," legitimate escape (versus escapism), the "ecstasy" of *homo ludens* ("play man" or "man at play" or "gaming man" or "sportive, playful man").<sup>11</sup>

5. Then there is the anchorite (lit., "withdrawn") or hermit (lit., "of the desert"), whose cultural "ecstasy" is more or less permanent — a countercultural character who, in secular garb, is alive today in America in fiction and fact. The shrinking of remunerative work calls the social planners, hopefully meaning all of us, to relate the leisure factor to a number of things.<sup>12</sup> These include (1) economic justice, (2) the growing need for human services to humans (without elaborate retraining of those displaced by machines), (3) breaking the ideological

<sup>11</sup> As distinct from emotional ecstasy, cultural ecstasy is (lit.) "standing out away from" your dailiness, your exigencies-and-obligations routine. It is momentary or prolonged breaking of both the necessary and the neurotic lock-steps of life. It is freaking out, creatively or destructively or both. It is the ambiguous heroine ex-hausfrau family-abandoner on a *Life* cover. And it is everybody's occasional fantasy, an inexpensive "trip" except when it gets a "fix" on you — as in the cases of the nonheroes in Elia Kazan's *The Arrangement* and John Updike's two *Rabbits: Rabbit Run* (New York: Fawcett, World, 1962) and *Rabbit Redux* (New York: Fawcett, World, 1972).

<sup>12</sup> Changes are radical enough so the terms are getting fuzzy, as when David Riesman, (*Abundance for What? And Other Essays*: [Garden City: Doubleday, 1964], p. 175, tells us there's a good prospect that we shall "break down the boundaries between work and leisure without getting rid of either."

cord between job and income, (4) breaking the psychic cord between work as production time and leisure as consumption time, and (5) getting a new (for Americans) freedom from possessions.<sup>13</sup> There is also (6) using the new sense of ecological responsibility to motivate toward nonpolluting uses of disposable time, (7) learning to see and relate to the "useless" neighbor and the "useless" self (in underemployment, joblessness, or retirement), and (8) centering life beyond the old society's work-given center.<sup>14</sup> Every one of these has a heavy "spiritual" dimension, requires intense "inner" attending, caring, intending, and deciding-to-act-in-this-way-toward-this-human-goal. The esofuture and neo-leisure are in synergistic relation.

### ABILITY

1. "Leisure is discretionary time beyond the time needed for the exigencies of existence, plus the *ability*...." "Exigency" is (literally) "drivenness": once our mammalian needs we are bio-driven to meet are met, we are ready for the next question: Now that we are successful mammals, what does it mean to be human? The leisure revolution is inherently pro-human in driving us to confront this advanced question. The ability to use discretionary time "for truly human ends," and the question how to be human, are not two questions: the first reveals whether a person can answer, is answering, the second.

2. Neurophysiologically our capacity so far outruns our ability that the whole human race is an underachiever, locked into historic toil to survive and thrive as the most complex mammal. *We are homo primitivus!* We have met early man, and he is us. To do our best at humanizing leisure, the time available to us to become both better mammals and more than mammal, is to advance the evolutionary cause of the human potential. Psychologically it aims at joy: theologically at praise.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Emerson: "If I keep a cow, that cow milks me."

<sup>14</sup> The old synthesis is breaking down: we're beginning to see a little less of the situation Marshall McLuhan (*Understanding Media: The Extension of Man* [New York: McGraw Hill, 1965] p. 143) describes: "The media of money and writing and clock began to converge into an organic whole ... that has brought us as close to total involvement of man in his work, as a native in primitive society or an artist in his studio."

<sup>15</sup> The hunger for joy is, I think, the main reason William Schutz's *Joy* (New York: Grove, 1967) is still the human-potential movement's best seller; and Bernard Gunther, also of Esalen, has put out a number of highly popular how-to-joy-with-the-body books. My own experience of teaching in a number of human-potential centers confirms the publishers' data: joy-hunger is a big "in" in our joyless though somewhat happy society. But of course at the lower and outer reaches of society the slogan is not "human potential" but "liberation," and the joy situation is much different there: more joy, but also more frustration and pain.

3. As a pastor I often heard the despondent retiree say "Work is all I am good for; what'll I do now?" I buried enough of them, soon after their retirement and their asking me the question, to force on me a deep decision to speak and work for an earlier intervention in the work/retirement process. Now our whole culture, victimized by the destructiveness of a runaway work-ethic, is threatened with the equal destructiveness of a runaway leisure-ethic, or rather play-ethic, or rather (sadly) fun-ethic, paralleled by pathetic efforts of the work-ethic to reassert its primacy. Those whom the gods would destroy, they first give overwork then overleisure?

4. *Against* the acquiring of this "ability" are both inner and outer impediments. Many simply do not have the emotional freedom, and only in a community of caring can they acquire it. This is the primary therapeutic impetus within the small-group movement that in myriad shapes has swept America since World War II. Churches and synagogues are the largest ready-made social structures for the task (largest both in the sense of the most numerous and in the sense of actual size in communities), and they have been strong at it. But secular structures, chiefly everything lumped under "the human-potential movement," have provided a haven for those turned off from (and those never turned on to) institutional religion. Increasingly the two streams, intra- and extra-church, have been finding common channels.<sup>16</sup>

Many do not have, however, the human-relations skills needed to open them to others and their own interpersonal potential for releasing others to a more human use of leisure time.<sup>17</sup> Many live alone, or

<sup>16</sup> E.g., in Gerald and Elizabeth Jud's *Training in the Art of Loving* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1972).

<sup>17</sup> I mean more than developmental "socialization," and other than manipulative "public relations." I mean special training in relating with one's whole person to the whole person of another; encouraging trust and thus honesty; learning how to face conflict positively, not resisting it as evil but making it creative; sharing responsibility and thus leadership; facilitating conversation so that depths open up (dialog) and persons freely and gladly share what means and matters most to them (witness), asking prophetic questions that open not only issues but a group to issues questioning and perhaps even threatening its existence or at least membership (the open group), encouraging alliances (coalitions, clustering) to achieve social and political clout, when necessary bypassing channels to relate directly to power persons (whether their power is official or not), and discovering and releasing individuals' potentials for contributing to the group and thus to society in general (whether or not the particular individual has the credentialization to exercise his particular ability). On this last, and affecting other items in this list, take Jerome Agel, *The Radical Therapist* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), as a breakout from the official confines of one profession, to release what I may call the universal paraprofessional oriented toward his own wholeness and toward a more human social order: "Therapy is change, not adjustment. This means change — social, personal, and political. When people are fucked over, people should help them

alone-in-an-unfree-nuclear-family, or even alone-in-a-commune — and need to break out into a more vulnerable and hopeful social situation (within or beyond their present living-arrangements). Many need help in fantasizing, where all free-time-shaping begins, and so can neither get away without going away nor play the sensory pieces of their daily life into new designs that motivate to experimentation. Few know how to play with words and ideas. Many are severely turned off on words and ideas, and have become radically nonverbal, so that the powers of words and ideas to release their leisure “ability” are not available to them.

On the simplest grid, let the ranks represent “rational” and “non-rational” and the files “verbal and nonverbal,” and label the boxes in that order A, B, C, and D. Most of our formal education has been in box A, and much of “human-potential techniques” is intended as corrective for the consequent crippling (emotional repression, “intellectualizing” in the escapist sense, overindividuation, etc.); but ironically, many of the younger habitues of “growth centers” are fairly well developed in boxes B, C, and D — and hypotrophic in box A, so that they occasionally say to me “How about a straight headtrip? I’m so damn sick of touchy-feely-nudy-dancy....”

Many flounder from failure of imagination, from inner poverty: “I’m bored, and I can’t think of a damn thing to do that I’d like to do.” Similar are those deficient in game experience, who can’t game themselves into authentic new games.<sup>18</sup> And those who tinker with externals for a thrill, a jag, a trip — superpower cars, power tools, outboards, abominable snowmobiles, and sex organs used merely as toys. And those too hung up for work and against pleasure to do anything “merely for pleasure.” So much for the inner impediments.... The outer? Grinding poverty (and absence of economic skills and disciplines), race-and-class prejudices, geographic maldistribution of leisure resources (libraries, museums, etc.).

5. *For* the acquiring of this “ability”? The list is lengthening as the culture gets richer (i.e., more options) and the populace more sensitive to human values. But this moves us into....

fight it, and then deal with their feelings. A ‘struggle’ for ‘mental health’ is bullshit unless it involves changing this society which turns us into machines, alienates us from one another and our work, and binds us into racist, sexist, and imperial practices” (p. xi).

<sup>18</sup> In TA (transactional analysis), “game” is used otherwise, to mean inauthentic, self-serving, others-manipulating behavior, so “games-free” is authentic behavior. In my sense here, we are and should be never free of “games,” fantasy-constructs lived into reality. Play, games, shift consciousness, free one from old psycho- and socio-molds, open life to new emergents, so to new life and a new society.

## INCLINATION

1. A person or group may have numerous abilities to use leisure for truly human ends, but lack the inclination.<sup>19</sup> Here I wish to say only enough to make the point, it is so obvious. The primary need is for motivators new as well as old. It is possible, after this agonizing period of automation unemployment, to rehumanize work so that it inclines to life-enrichment and human service beyond workhours: motivation researchers and design scientists and systems analysts are teaming up to this end.<sup>20</sup> One who learns to be freer while working both because he so intends and because the job is (re)shaped to that intention, will be more apt to be responsible while off work.

2. It is possible to help the shift from personal identity centering in work to personal identity centering elsewhere — possible, but far from easy. Even in the leisure (i.e., off-work) world one faces, in our society, the tension between hierarchical and egalitarian motifs and processes, competition is more lived and cooperation more preached, just as in the work-world. Here are some helps in making the shift:

a. Stop! Stop everything! Every day just sit quietly and slow everything down, using yoga, transcendental meditation, anything that works for you — which means you have to experiment to find the best kenotic (self-emptying) technique for you. One wit said, "My new career is doing nothing. I chose it because it voided a large fill in my life."<sup>21</sup>

b. Meditation, in the positive sense of playing with content in the mind, is the plus balancing the minus, the catharsis of "a." Robert Lee likes to translate Psalm 46.10 as "Have leisure and know that I am God." Hear a modern American physicist-mystic: "The Now is no mere nodal point between the past and the future. It is the seat and region of the Divine Presence itself ... the Now contains all that is needed for the absolute satisfaction of our deepest cravings ... we have found in this holy immediacy of the Now the root and source of time itself."<sup>22</sup> For Jew and Christian, daily meditation will normally include the Bible.

The common sensations and presences of daily life should be content for meditation, held in attention till the awe and wonder come

<sup>19</sup> See the "Motivation and Human Need" issue of *Humanitas*, III. 3.

<sup>20</sup> See the "Automation and Leisure" issue of *Humanitas*, III. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Lewis Grossberger on the New York Times, 8 March 1972, Op. Ed. page. Obviously, writing the essay violated his "new career." But he shows exceptional kick-it-ability. (One biblical word for this is "repentance," changing one's direction and worldview.)

<sup>22</sup> Thomas R. Kelley, *A Testament of Devotion* (New York: Harper Bros., 1941), pp. 95 f.

alive and one is moved to worship. Sam Keen, in *Apology for Wonder*, says it is not true that sophisticated modern man cannot experience the primitive's awe and wonder; just give it a little more time, hang in a little longer with whatever you are trying to appreciate, whatever reality you are meditating on, and that reality and you will come alive to each other.... In most of us, what I call "primitive man within" (PMW) is repressed and forgotten except when he/she surfaces slavering with lust or howling with rage—so he/she has an unbalanced, unfair press in Apollonian society and in our Apollonian psyches. But PMW can teach us, if in meditation we let him/her surface *gently*, to experience the mysterious awe out of which he/she wrote "The heavens declare the glory of God, And the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Psalm 19.1).<sup>23</sup>

Consider what the reluctant leisure, the reluctant asceticism, of prison has brought forth through the centuries and especially during and since World War II. A very popular course at New York Theological Seminary and in its Centers is "Prison Literature During and Since World War II"—the cell productions of D. Bonhoeffer, M. L. King, D. Berrigan (who co-taught the course once), etc.... In Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Alyosha tells Ivan he doesn't pray that his prison term will be shortened: "Why d'you want freedom? In freedom your least grain of faith will be choked with weeds. You should rejoice that you are in prison. Here you have time to think about your soul."

c. Strengthen the will by getting into action on something you have been wistful about for a long time. Then reflect on that action, with emphasis on self-examination. Give special attention to the comic: it cuts you down to size, but also builds you up to size. And it is itself a celebration of life and thus a praise to God. The three loves in Jesus' summary of torah—of God, self, and neighbor—are all insistent, all calling, and in all of us all crippled. Rollo May says that transconsciousness, reaching out and ahead (in addition to consciousness, subconsciousness [reaching behind], and the unconscious), led naturally to his masterpiece, *Love and Will*.<sup>24</sup> An illustration of this is Dale Lind, restaurant manager 45 hours a week and bartender in the same establishment another 45 hours, who taught for his bar folks in the New York Theological Seminary a lay course that brought out such eagerness that it would not quit at "the end," but developed into three continuing groups still going as of this writing. An ordained minister, the Lutheran Church has just commissioned him as its first "minister to young people in their places and times of leisure."

<sup>23</sup> Sam Keen, *Apology For Wonder* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969).

<sup>24</sup> Rollo May, *Love and Will* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969).

d. Experiment with religious rituals — personal/private, family/group, public. Find what fits best, and keep evaluating for payoff; take responsibility for helping shape group and public ritual. The Holy is in the common, but it takes ritual sensitization to experience and reveal the presence in the common and in the uncommon. Spiritual directors used to call such ritualization of life — such continuous recognition of the Holy here and now in the light of holy history (owning your heritage) and holy hope (“the Promise”) — “holy habits.” Of course while you never outgrow your need for ritual of some sort (for centering life, etc), you *do* outgrow some rituals; and everybody knows rituals themselves can go dead and be a corpse on one’s back and a drag on human progress and cultural innovation — but few know how lively religious ritual, old or new, can be, for few give it all they’ve got, and you get exactly what you pay for (so Camus’ phrase “Christians aren’t paying up . . .”).

For example, the old sabbath was leisure day, sabbath eve dividing the week into labor behind and leisure ahead — and most Christians found this Jewish custom valuable enough to absorb into resurrection day, “the Lord’s Day,” Sunday. Too, the sabbath-Sunday came to have, in addition, the afterlife meaning of Rest Ahead — as in the New Testament’s Letter to the Hebrews (where “sabbath” is both now and not yet) and in the hymn (*Pilgrim Hymnal* # 409) “Help us all to work our best; Bless us in our daily labor, Lead us to our sabbath rest” (meaning next Sunday....and next....and next, without limit at the life/death boundary). Freedom *in* the sabbath and the sabbath-Sunday was the original idea and feeling; freedom *from* this custom was an understandable cry when, for reasons of mutual ossification and spiritual coolness, the custom came to be experienced as more burden than blessing.... And take holidays, now by most experienced as anything but holy days, vital forces and oases for leisure and life.... Then there is that millenia-old habit, grace at meals; and also family daily devotion. . . . What, if anything, in modern life fills these special times?

For myself, I must answer “Exactly what has been filling them for millenia.” I am not pushing my piety, just describing a way of life-ritualization that I, and we as a family, have found deeply satisfying and highly motivating. There are other paths, and leisure ways need to learn from each other; but here’s the Elliott catalog: grace at all meals, individual private daily devotion, Sunday church-going (with Sunday and through-the-week sharing of our part of the responsibility for the life and work of the church), family daily devotion (which through all the years has taken anywhere from ten minutes to two hours, depending on how much individuals bring to share — experiences, clippings, public issue, private joys and pains — and how turned on we get — always involving some exposure to what for us is primary

scripture, the Bible — and always closing with prayer, all kneeling, even when the children were going through agnostic and atheist periods — all learning both a compassionate identification with “the world” [God’s creation as good and God’s creatures as worthy of our concern and action] and a prophetic distance from “the world” [antihuman, anti-earth processes and structures: we are a radical family]). Observing solar and lunar festivals (primitives that we are, within), and the dominical semester (the Church Year’s half-year celebration-remembrance of the events in Jesus’ life) — a combination nature-and-history cycle. Leisure built into life as liturgy, and thus into all of life. All very old-fashioned, of course.

To the secularist this way of life seems queer, and I reply “Let’s consider the alternatives....” How best live life “for truly human ends”? As orthodox open, or evangelical radical, my way of living it has spine and flesh, power and joy, affirmation of the earth (and so of my animality) and of yesterday and tomorrow as well as of the here-and-now, and eagerness to learn from other heritages and other humans.

#### TRULY HUMAN ENDS

“Leisure is discretionary time beyond the time needed for the exigencies of existence, plus the ability and inclination to employ this ‘free time’ for *truly human ends*.” What those ends are as I see them so saturates the article to this point that I do not even need to list them; and besides, there is real convergence coming on what’s “human.” For this section I made a long list of truly *inhuman* ends in leisure, and another of truly *human* ends — and threw them out. You can make your own, and should: leisure used to be “permitted” (the etymological meaning of the term), but now it is enjoined: we are “called” to it, however you may conceive the calling, and called to make the best of it — the human best. Our future, eso- and exo-, is at stake.