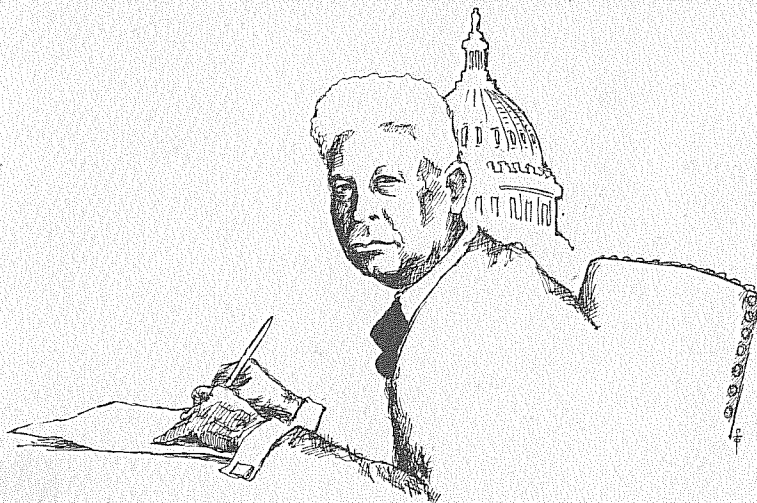


Volume 8
Number 1
Summer-Fall 1987

Lincoln Review

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL



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Susan B. Anthony, Benedict Arnold, Daniel Boone, and on down the alphabetical list.

Children should, at an early age be familiarized with elements of our literary and mythic heritage, if they are later to understand allusions made by writers. These include: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Jack Sprat, Cinderella. Also Achilles, Adonis, Aeneas, Agamemnon, Antigone and Apollo.

It is particularly important to make curriculum changes for children in elementary and junior high school. Hirsch suggests:

"The single most effective step would be to shift the reading materials used in kindergarten through eighth grade to a much stronger base in factual information and traditional lore. At present, heavy emphasis is placed on stories, on chapters from novels (with bridging introductions and conclusions), on essays about human feelings, and other selections of this kind. All these texts convey information, but rarely the kinds most necessary for future literacy. What is needed are reading texts that deliberately convey what children need to know and include a substantially higher proportion of factual narratives."

Without a high level of universal literacy, our modern society cannot be a just society. "The civic importance of cultural literacy lies in the fact that true enfranchisement depends upon

knowledge, knowledge upon literacy, and literacy upon cultural literacy."

To help children abandon the cycle of illiteracy and to become capable of comprehending reading material levelled at the general reader, is an act of liberation.

To withhold the cultural content that would help children achieve mature literacy, is to condemn them to a life of powerlessness and poverty. Cultural literacy would set them free. With a fact-oriented curriculum, the schools could transform children from illiterate households into general readers, capable of partaking in the shared knowledge of our society.

—Solveig Eggerz

Bringing in the Sheaves: Transforming Poverty into Productivity

by George Grant
American Vision Press
\$7.95

There was a time when what passed for an evangelical Christian philosophy of poverty blended a vaguely humanitarian purpose with an inspirational message and a sprinkling of Bible verses. Then, during the 1970s, David Moberg, Donald Dayton, and Ronald Sider helped spearhead the rise of an evangelical new left by publishing studies decrying the complacency they

found in denominations which had been active in social causes a century earlier.

Since then, evangelical social scientists have typically sought to breathe life into the old social gospel by professing to operate from a biblical basis while remaining dependent on a secular liberalism that had much earlier jettisoned any signs of its clerical origins. But despite their concern with "structural injustice," they have formulated their recommendations in terms of the same unjust and coercive political structures that rob Peter to pay Paul while picking the pockets of both. A decade after the publication of Ronald Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, its baptized liberation theology is still the touchstone of accepted evangelical wisdom on the subject of poverty.

A partial corrective to this poverty of evangelical philosophy may be found in the writings of such conservative evangelicals as R.J. Rushdoony, Gary North, David Chilton, and Herbert Schlossberg. A recent addition to this growing literature is *Bringing in the Sheaves* by George Grant. It is the most systematic biblical, historical, and practical evangelical treatment of poverty to date.

The Rev. Grant, who pastors a small congregation just north of Houston, describes his book as "a practical primer for families, churches, and private enterprises

who wish to begin erecting effective models of Biblical charity all over the country." He achieves his stated purpose with admirable dispatch and sets a quick pace with crisp, direct, often eloquent prose while illuminating his practical recommendations with stories from a variety of communities.

The author writes from rich personal experience. When the Houston area was hit by a flood of displaced workers seeking jobs in the early 1980s, he started an outreach ministry at his church to provide emergency relief, temporary jobs and shelter, a job search service, and a networking program involving other churches and charitable organizations. His advice is concrete and his suggestions are practical. In addition, he provides a helpful list of agencies and organizations as well as a bibliography for further study.

But *Bringing in the Sheaves* is not just a handyman's guide for fixing poverty. It is also a meditation on the reasons for "starving in the midst of plenty" and particularly "the war on the poor" that further aggravates the misery. The Rev. Grant does not simply blame "structural injustice," which is too often meant as an appeal for more lavish government programs and tighter regulatory controls over business. Instead, he singles out a general tendency—both within and outside the churches—to pass the buck and thus pass the burden of

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helping the poor to public authorities. This has the effect of institutionalizing poverty and creating a poverty industry that is the very opposite of the biblical program. "Whereas humanitarian social policy keeps people helplessly dependent," he contends, "Biblical charity seeks to remove them from that status and return them to productive capacity."

Indeed, the key to biblical charity is work. "This is because work is the heart and soul, the cornerstone, of man's created purpose." God is glorified by honorable work. The book illustrates this "bootstrap ethic" by citing the efforts of The Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon in late 19th century London and Dr. E.V. Hill in late 20th century Watts.

The Rev. Grant concludes that poverty programs which reject the work ethic and dishonor work stifle the praise of God. They reflect a general unwillingness within church circles to accept—let alone require—responsibility. But charity, like faith, must be expressed through deeds. The Apostle James states the case well: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27).

—*Steven A. Samson*

The Rule of Experts: Occupational Licensing in America

by S. David Young
Cato Institute
99 Pages
\$7.95

The Cato Institute has made it possible for the American people and legislators to review and, hopefully, understand and address, the fateful grip government has on our lives and livelihoods. Through the work of S. David Young, readers obtain the necessary insight on exactly how licensing is not the balm, but the blister of consumer advocacy policy.

The Cato Institute states, "Today virtually no aspect of human life is free from the domination of a governing class of politico-economic interests." Henceforth, Americans are regulated, processed and licensed in love, transportation, eating, housing and clothing—all very basic human needs.

How did Americans come to such a point of governmental domination? S. David Young examines the issue of minority exclusion as the major focus of regulation. Exclusionary biases have been and continue to be an effective means for keeping blacks and other minorities from obtaining