

the village Voice

a weekly newspaper designed to be read
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One Year Old

The Village Voice is one year old. If we do not use this space for self-congratulation, it is because we abhor the tired, though often true, clichés with which newspapers love to decorate themselves on occasions like these. Suffice it to say, the incubation period is over.

At the moment what gives us the most satisfaction is that The Voice is not a facsimile of every other weekly newspaper—it has an individual character. Although many mistakes were made, we think we have fairly successfully avoided the conventional pitfall of weeklies—parochialism.

We assumed a year ago, and we know now, that Greenwich Village is both a community and a concept. As a concept, the Village embraces a range of interests as wide and as diverse as the world. We have tried in our way to give form to those interests.

But what really occupies us is the future. And for that we have a plan. A very simple and direct one—to make The Voice, within the next 12 months, the most exciting and stimulating weekly in America. If this plan seems wildly improbable, so did The Voice a year ago.

In this anniversary issue we especially want to salute our contributors, whose loyalty and ardor passes even our understanding; our readers, who are so thoroughly responsive; and our advertisers, who make the continuation of this journalistic enterprise possible.

The Night People

by JEAN SHEPHERD

A True Story

IT HAD been one hell of a meal. The food had been selected with the help of the most imaginative chef in the best hotel in New York. Expenses didn't matter, and the wines showed it. Cigars and brandy. There was a nice air of comfort and warm good will in the room.

The 10 or 12 men scattered around the table leaned back from the remains of the meal before them and continued to talk in slow desultory easy circles. With much laughter, as if they all spoke pretty much the same language and enjoyed the same jokes.

A small thin man seated at the end of the table nearest the door reached over and picked up a spoon from the tray of a bus boy who was clearing up the litter. He rapped sharply on his brandy glass for attention, and stood up in a casual way. The conversation died down as everyone turned in his direction, making small movements of concentration as they did so.

'Mighty Proud'

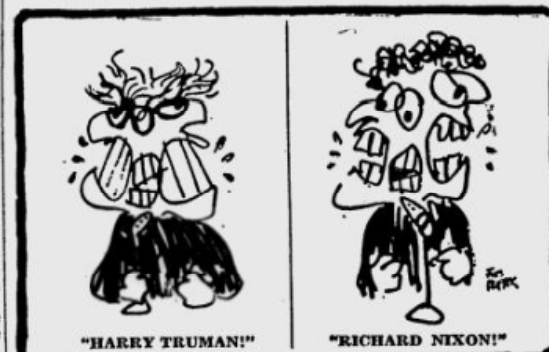
"We all know what we're here for. This campaign we've outlined for you people is a thing that we at the Agency are mighty proud of." He paused and took a sip of his brandy. Coughed slightly and went on. "We've done a lot of detailed customer research for you boys, as well as one hell of a campaign to put the product across." He smiled and leaned over the table, putting the knuckles of both hands on the tablecloth. Nodding to a youngish man seated at his left, he said: "Fred, George is waiting outside in the hall with a couple of the boys from the art department. Give him a shout and get him in

here. We're ready." Fred rose and left the room. The man continued:

"George Murdock will make the presentation for the Agency, gentlemen. I'd like to say a few things about George before he gets here, and I don't want to embarrass him by talking about him in front of him. He is typical of the type of man who will be handling your account at the Agency. Steady, creative, with

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Ways of Politics: II



letters to the editor

Worth It

To the Circulation Manager:

By my best recollection I did return your renewal envelope with \$2 in cash. This was some time ago. Please check your records, and if I am in error I will be glad to send \$2 more. The Village Voice is worth \$4 anyway.

—Anthony Towne
Sixth Avenue

[Subscription-renewal letters went out to all expiring subscribers, including some no doubt who had already re-subscribed. The Voice wishes to reassure the latter that it does not want their money twice. Annual subscription price is now \$3, by the way, for new subscribers. ED.]

Reader in Juneau

Dear Sir:

Most interesting issue of Village Voice arrived today's boat mail. Your paper has caused great interest here. I have requests to pass it around for others to enjoy. You have a swell little paper, and it's getting better. You are to be complimented, since you are reaching your "Happy Birthday" time and going into Volume II era. Good luck.

—Ruth Allman
Juneau, Alaska

The Music of 1984?

Dear Sir:

In 1945 I first read of Edgar Varèse in "The Air-Conditioned Nightmare," by Henry Miller. Since that time I have heard some of his music and have even had opportunity to perform one of his works, ("Density 2.5," for flute alone.)

Varèse is most certainly, as the jazz men would say, a "wig." The great tragedy is that Varèse, the "wig," is concerned only with Varèse. I fully realize the true artist is concerned only about what he has to say. The tragedy occurs because the results of Varèse's genius will contribute so greatly to the demise of the musician as we have known him.

Here is a man who, but for the paradoxical twist of his mathematically inclined brain, could have approached and perhaps passed Ives as the greatest composer to come out of America.

Live Music is Dying
Live music is now, right this minute, dying a hideous death. As a (sometime) performing musician I know this to be true, and I know we as much as anyone are to blame.

We're quick to make records because record sessions pay so well. (Let's not stop and think about how many live performances that recording might cancel in the future.)

"Electronically produced music." Sounds wild, doesn't it? And let's face it, that's what most of us advanced-type thinkers want, isn't it?

Live music is dead. It's said all it can. The live musician, consciously or unconsciously accept-

ing his inevitable extinction, speeds his doom through apathetic and often sterile performances.

So why not "electronically produced music"? Sure, Varèse, you've lived longer than I. You've been through all this. Obviously you believe you're right. Musicians have had it. Make those machines wall!

You're right and I'm wrong. I know it. It's just that I hate being kicked when I'm down. The trouble with me is music. I love it. I love to perform it. But I always have been old-fashioned, and I'm not near as progressive as I'd like folks to believe. So blow some more of that electronic jazz on your box, why wait till 1984? (As a matter of fact, I don't recall Orwell mentioning

music anywhere in his novel. Just how prophetic was he?)
—Kenneth J. Schmidt
Greenwich Avenue

Delight and Relief

Dear Sir:

I read Mr. Seldes' criticism of my book, "Precious Rubbish" (September 26), with delight and relief. No matter how confident an author may be of the accuracy of what he has written, there is always a lurking fear, as he picks up each new review, that he will be caught out on an error or two, large or small.

Consequently you can imagine my satisfaction in perceiving that there was no occasion for alarm this time. I can best explain this

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by GILBERT SELDES

ARTHUR KROCK had a piece in his paper (the New York Times, which is bigger than the one you are now reading and is indispensable seven mornings a week) and in this piece Mr. Krock compared two techniques: that of the cartoonist drawing Rogue's Galleries, as Nast did against Tweed or Rollin Kirby, who rejoiced our hearts on the World—and, on the other side, the gallery presented by a candidate on TV a few days ago, photographs of certain dubious figures in his opponent's party.

Mr. Krock didn't say it was all right for newspapers to use anything like a "smear technique." He said of television: "The medium and its dimensions were new, and therefore the greater the social harm and personal injustice of the proceedings."

Images . . .

I DON'T say no. I think back to something that impressed me a few days earlier—impressed me so much that I did a broadcast about it, and am not sure I made my point.

It was a newspaper headline (not from the N. Y. Times): Miracle at Sea Saves 31 Lives.

Being alive is a miracle and an electric pencil-sharpener may be called a miracle by its manufacturer. But this rescue at sea was something else. I suggest the headline:

Intelligence, Foresight, Courage, and Modern Inventions
Save 31 Lives at Sea

(I suggest it in a vacuum, not to any hard-pressed copy-reader.)

My headline is accurate. The entire story of the ditching of a plane in mid-Pacific is a demonstration of the things and of the human qualities I have mentioned. The plane was flying a route known to be over areas patrolled by small naval vessels; when trouble developed, signals were sent and answered; the pilot made a decision and then kept his plane aloft for hours until daylight made the ditching safer; life-rafts were launched and the rescuing vessel was near enough for a seaman to photograph the whole event.

Miracle? Or Intelligence?

. . . in competition . . .

I REFER this back to what Mr. Krock said—and still without prejudice. By using the word "miracle" the newspaper perpetuates a whole system of ideas which cannot be called obsolete, but which do throw a sort of sentimental haze over the actual thing, the extraordinary manifestations of human intelligence. There isn't a trace of religious or anti-religious bias in this. If the headline had read

Intelligence is a Miracle

and then gone on to the story, I'd have had no complaint.

. . . with the actual

THE perpetuation of stereotypes—verbal and visual—goes on, and Mr. Krock is right in this: the dimensions of TV make these images, which correspond to little or nothing in our lives, always more emphatic. They are in competition with the actual. You see a drug clerk or a judge on the screen, and after you've seen 50 similar ones, you begin to think they are what drug clerks and judges really are—in spite of the fact that the ones you know are quite different.

In general you can assume that the image, if it ever did have anything to do with reality, is now between 20 and 40 years out of date. This is called a cultural lag, I believe. I'm not for it.

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The Night People

Continued from page 4

young dynamic ideas. A good man."

Clean-cut Young Man

At this point Fred re-entered the room with a tall slender clean-cut man in his early 30's. The young newcomer wore large glittering dark-rimmed glasses, an Oxford-grey flannel suit, a white shirt with narrow dark-blue tie. He was followed by two additional men carrying heavy cardboard cases which they began setting up on tripod holders.

Fred seated himself next to his superior, who placed his hand on the arm of the one who wore the horn-rimmed glasses. He turned to the gathering and said: "Gentlemen, here is George Murdock, who will make the final presenta-

tion for the Agency. He will carry it straight on through, and I hope you'll make a few notes on anything that isn't clear. You'll find pencils and paper at your places. After George is through, we'll have time for any questions you might have about the program we've laid out for you." He turned to George, smiled slightly, and said: "The floor is yours, boy. Let's hear it."

George cleared his throat and stepped over to the wall where the charts and graphs were set up. He picked up a short pointer from one of the tripod stands, and began to speak. His voice was extraordinary in its effect. Clear, vibrant, beautifully controlled. It was a voice obviously accustomed to being listened to and one that was made to be used. George knew how to use it. He began slowly and deliberately, pausing occasionally to refer to a chart or a brightly colored graph showing amusing figures as would be done by UPA cavorting up and down the heavy inky-black graph lines.

Spellbound

The audience sat spellbound. From time to time they would chuckle as George tossed in an offhand joke or pun to lighten his



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Cash and Carry

talk. They were obviously impressed both by George and by what he had to say. It was equally obvious that George knew what he was talking about and was enjoying the warm feeling of having an audience absolutely in his command. He toyed with them. Changed his pace constantly. His voice rose and fell almost as though he were reading poetry or narrating a fine-art film. He closed in a rush, at just the right psychological moment. On the upbeat. "There you have it, gentlemen. That's the story. It's been a pleasure being here, and I'd enjoy staying around to answer any questions you might have, but I've got to get back to the Agency for a small meeting. You know how we ad boys are about meetings!" He smiled broadly and, with glasses gleaming smartly, gave a casual wave and left the room.

The small thin man rose again and asked for questions, but it was obvious that the gathering was completely sold on the program George had done his work well. All that remained were a few names on dotted lines and the ball would begin to roll.

Outside in the hall, George waited for the elevator. He look-

ed a little tired, close up, and slightly older than he had in the room he had just left. As he waited, he zipped open his attaché case, from which he removed a bulky dog-eared manuscript with many red-lined phrases. The front cover bore the title "Grommet Presentation" in heavy type. Underneath was the notation in smaller type: "Follow script exactly, do not alter a single phrase. THIS IS IMPORTANT!"

He rolled up the script and tossed it into the wastebasket next to the elevator door. The elevator arrived. On the ground floor he stepped into an empty phone booth and reached for the receiver. Al Kermit, free-lance actor, was calling his agent to see if any calls had come in that day from the casting offices, or if maybe that small part on "Studio One" had jelled.

HARRIMAN HOME, OTHERS THROWN OPEN FOR ART TOUR

The private art collection of Governor and Mrs. Averell Harriman will be thrown open to visitors on Thursday, November 8, to aid the Greenwich House Music School. The art-tour will also include visits to the homes of three other private collectors: Colonel Samuel A. Berger, Mrs. and Mrs. J. K. Thannhauser, and Mr. and Mrs. Jacques Lindon.

Greenwich House Music School, which has an enrollment of nearly 1000, provides scholarships for talented students who are unable to pay the school's modest fees.

Mrs. George W. Naumberg is chairman of the music committee. Tickets for the tour may be obtained by calling CH 2-4140.

Church Has Place In Education, Will Be Forum's View

The function played by a church school in the current educational system will be one of the aspects of Christian Education discussed at a one-day forum at St. Luke's School, Hudson Street, on Saturday.

The forum, which will be attended by representatives of all Protestant Episcopal schools in New York, will be held in conjunction with the opening of a new building at the 10-year-old St. Luke's school. Speakers will include Dr. J. V. Langmead Caserley, of the General Theological Seminary, and the Rev. John Heuss, rector of Trinity Parish.

Father Paul C. Weed, headmaster of St. Luke's, yesterday told The Voice: "Among the subjects to be discussed will be the specific tasks of teaching religion in schools. We believe that specialized groups such as this are needed for the point of view that they contribute to democracy."

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