

# 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

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



"HARRY TRUMAN!"

"RICHARD NIXON!"

## 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.