

the Japanese with minimum violence to their sense of right order. Cohen provides a nicely balanced portrait of MacArthur in Japan, a happy contrast to so much of the one-sided literature about the Supreme Commander, whether pro or con. Cohen criticizes MacArthur as self-promoting:

Important Headquarters measures were . . . taken in the name of the Supreme Commander, not the United States, and were accompanied by thunderous press statements emphasizing the revolutionary and epochal features of each successive action. In the heady days of the autumn of 1945, the word went around Headquarters, not entirely a joke, that the Supreme Commander had to be presented with one epochal achievement a week.

Yet Cohen also vividly illustrates how MacArthur's egotism sometimes worked to Japan's, and America's, interest. Because Japan was his turf, MacArthur protected it, such as against demands that Japan's industrial plant be offered up in reparations to the Allies. Cohen describes with patent admiration the stratagems by which MacArthur sabotaged the entire program. At the conclusion of MacArthur's deep stall, a share of Japan's machine tools had been disbursed to the allies. "The total value," says Cohen, "was put at some \$20 million, about 2 percent of what the Russians took out of Manchuria—in one-fifth the time."

As for MacArthur's political views, Cohen writes: "Far from being a convinced ideological rightist, the General was a political primitive with wide open spaces where his reactionary principles were supposed to be." MacArthur's politics were in fact shaped by an intense patriotism that entailed veneration of the revolutionary principles—liberty, democracy, equal rights—that constitute the American creed. With the self-confidence and command of a monarch, MacArthur proceeded to impose that revolution on Japan.

Yet he could not have succeeded, argues Cohen, had the occupation's democratic reforms not been reinforced by rapid economic recovery. Cohen identifies several sources of that recovery. First came emergency food aid from the United States that averted starvation while the economy was restarted. MacArthur secured aid in quantities that even exceeded Japan's needs, says Cohen, by warning Congress that anything less would require more troops to keep the peace. In the next few years, economic renewal was also fueled by war stockpiles that had been hidden by untold numbers of Japanese as defeat grew imminent to avoid confiscation by the victors. Gradually these stockpiles seeped into the postwar economy, an invisible but vital form of capital. Then in 1950 North Korea in-

vaded South Korea, and, as Cohen tells it: "In a matter of days the U.S. army was turning to Japan to provide large quantities of all kinds of military support supplies. . . . Suddenly Japanese makers were besieged with orders for rush shipment, price secondary. . . . Within only a month, the visible effect was startling."

But in Cohen's view, the key to the Japanese economic miracle and hence to the success of Japan's political transformation was a version of the New Deal that MacArthur imposed on Japan. It consisted of a land reform that made Japanese peasants the owners of their own plots and a labor reform that encouraged millions of workers to join unions. "The liberation of the peasantry and the freedom of labor unions to bargain collectively created for the first time in Japan's history a domestic mass-consumer market in depth," he says. This domestic market was essential to Japan's spectacular rise as an exporter, Cohen argues, by allowing Japanese manufacturers to develop and perfect their products before sending them abroad.

The occupation, however, was not entirely a success, in Cohen's view. A severe austerity program was forced on Japan over MacArthur's objections in 1949, designed to stem Japanese inflation and reduce the U.S. foreign aid burden. This step and a reckless purge of Communists, which Cohen says actually targeted fewer Communists than non-Communist radicals and labor militants, bought America considerable bad will among intellectuals, civil servants, and other sectors of Japanese society. Especially painful to Cohen, Japanese labor turned neutralist or anti-American. The result, he says, was "an incomplete alliance," for America a self-inflicted wound.

Given his pedigree as an anti-Stalinist radical at CCNY in the 1930s, I am willing to accept Cohen's word, as I would that of few others, that non-Communist radicals were mistaken for Communists in the later occupation purges, but I wonder if the causes and consequences of anti-Americanism among sectors of the Japanese populace aren't somewhat overdrawn in his account. Given that America smashed Japan in war, annihilating its cities and dropping two atomic bombs on it; that we then remade it to a great extent in our own image; that we then provided it with a great deal of aid (something that seems so often to breed resentment); and that to this day we provide for its defense, I suspect it was inevitable that anti-Americanism would be an active facet of Japanese life. Pride and the human psyche ordain it.

But the larger fact is that anti-Americanism does not dominate Japanese life; it remains a dissent, a countercurrent.

Our alliance with Japan may be in some ways "incomplete"—especially in Japan's failure to shoulder the burdens

of its own defense—but it remains strong. And Japan remains a democratic model to the rest of Asia and an economic powerhouse. These are the fruits of a brilliantly effective U.S. policy, and we are in Theodore Cohen's debt for this fine account of it. □

THE CHILD IN TIME
Ian McEwan/Houghton Mifflin/\$16.95

John Podhoretz

Ian McEwan's *The Child in Time* is an affecting, carefully observed, and beautifully written novel about the abduction of a small child and the catastrophic impact of that monstrous action on the child's parents. But telling this story simply and plainly wasn't enough for its author, who has bur-

dened his slight tome with interesting but meandering disquisitions on the nature of time, an unwarranted intrusion of precious fantasy, and a vulgar bit of political satire.

McEwan clearly intends these apurtenances to distinguish his novel, and critics like the *Wall Street Journal's* Richard Locke have taken the bait. But in truth, McEwan's asides and subplots are awkward and inappropriate inter-

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cludes that do not do justice to the rest of the book. When McEwan forgets these foolish and dilatory games, *The Child in Time* comes to life as a marvelous piece of popular sentimental fiction of the sort that British novelists used to excel at before they became, on the whole, scatological swine.

A few years after his daughter Kate was stolen from under his nose in a London supermarket, Stephen Lewis is living in a perplexed stupor. A successful author of children's books, he has ceased working, has separated from his wife, and now centers his life on a rather desultory official commission on child care. The commission meets once a week, to hear nonsensical proposals for new alphabets and the like, and during these meetings Stephen relives with fatalistic intensity the events of the past years.

He continually re-creates every single detail, thought, emotion in those seemingly meaningless minutes before the child-snatching and afterwards: "Somehow, in no time at all, it was generally known that she was three, that she was last seen at the checkout, that she wore green dungarees and carried a toy donkey. The faces of mothers were strained, alert. Several people had seen the little girl riding in the cart. Someone knew the color of her sweater. The anonymity of the city store turned out to be frail, a thin crust beneath which people observed, judged, remembered." This tour-de-force scene, and a few others like it, testify to McEwan's formidable powers of description and observation.

McEwan also excels at delineating the shifting character of Stephen's distress, from relentless activity in pursuit of the child he can never find and then his fixed, rootless despair. He and his wife Julie, fiercely in love, nonetheless turn on each other emotionally: she considers Stephen's ceaseless quest a form of denial while he considers her mute and motionless grief a self-indulgent wallow.

This is all heartbreaking and convincing, even though McEwan makes much more of the distortions of "time" that Stephen suffers than the book warrants. Basically, most of *The Child in Time* is a collection of Stephen's remorseful flashbacks and current despair, and thus no more experimental in form than a Trollope narrative. But McEwan feels obliged to introduce a physicist to explain that time is relative, while Stephen has what turns out to be an accurate vision of his newly pregnant mother and panicked father discussing whether he should be aborted. McEwan strains for metaphysical depth and achieves only preciousness.

That preciousness extends to McEwan's portraiture. Stephen and Julie are heavily romanticized characters from whom McEwan has no distance and with whom he shares almost every emotion; at times he seems like Dickens, weeping as he commits the abduction of Little Kate to paper. It seems to the reader that the Lewis home was nothing less than perfect before the disaster, like the Lewises themselves. Their responses to the ordeal feature not a moment of moral ambiguity; they behave wonderfully, even in grief, intending no one else any harm, envying no one else their children, and only coming apart because they misunderstand the nature of each other's grief.

Their spiritual perfection—particularly Stephen's—roots the book firmly in the British literary tradition devoted to demonstrating the noble heroism of the "man of sentiment." Stephen is not man as he is, but man as we would wish him to be. This portrait (clearly an idealized self-portrait) is without blemish, while Julie is a wish-fulfillment of an earth-mother wife, as sexy as she is serious, as loving as she is talented. These two make a marriage, face adversity, fall apart, and come finally to a resolution in a manner as pleasing and uplifting, and as cheap, as a really good TV movie.

McEwan is so close to his characters that he never comes near what would be the real resentment on Julie's part: the fact it was on Stephen's watch that Kate was stolen. Not only resentment, but even perhaps a little relief that it was he and not she? But dealing with such questions would make this a different novel, while on its own sentimental terms it really is quite good enough.

That is, except for McEwan's pretentious puffery. For no discernible reason, the book is set a few years in the future, and presents a Labour party view of a Britain under the continuing dominance of Margaret Thatcher. In this brave new world, beggars are licensed by the state, and everywhere are the signs of a new form of welfare-state Social Darwinism. Stephen's panel meets to discuss appropriate measures of child-rearing, but it turns out that it is all a sham; the Prime Minister has written the guidebook already, and it is full of pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps rhetoric that is unconvincing in its extremism.

But McEwan hits his nadir in a peculiar and unnecessary scene in which Stephen encounters the Prime Minister (clearly Thatcher, though she goes unnamed and even unsexed). The Prime Minister comes to his house, complete with nuclear hotline phone, in order to profess passion for his friend Charles

Darke, once his publisher, a junior minister in her cabinet, and now a secretly raging madman who has decided to become a little boy again by living in a treehouse high atop a forest in Suffolk.

The pointlessness of the scene, as well as the distasteful method of inventing a fictional situation and then sticking a real person in it to make that real person look bad and foolish, testi-

fies to McEwan's incapacity to look at his own work critically and hack away at the nonsense. Had he done so, he would have come out with a better novel.

But that book would be getting a less rapturous press. In *The Child in Time*, McEwan reveals his mastery of the art of sprinkling pretentious sugar over essentially sentimental cereal and waiting for others to call it ambrosia. □

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON: POLITICS, PEOPLE AND THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

Randy Shilts/St. Martin's Press/\$24.95

Michael Fumento

The doctors at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta called him "Patient Zero." A stunningly handsome French-Canadian airline steward, Gaetan Dugas had over 2500 male sexual partners on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean by the time he died at age 31. It was in France, the doctors think, that he picked up the AIDS virus. Thence he brought the virus to both San Francisco and New York, where he infected partners through anonymous bathhouse sex and pickups from gay bars. At least forty of the first 248 homosexuals diagnosed with AIDS as of April 12, 1982 had had sex either with Dugas or with someone who had. ("Typhoid Mary" Mallon, by contrast, had fifty-three confirmed cases attributed to her, of whom three died.) Long after his diagnosis, Dugas would sodomize willing partners in dimly lit cubicles, then turn up the lights and point to the purplish Kaposi's sarcoma lesions on his skin. "I've got gay cancer," he would say. "I'm going to die, and so are you."

No one will ever be certain whether Dugas was the one who began the AIDS epidemic in the United States, but it would be fitting if he was. For the way he continued business as usual—or pleasure, as it were—even after his diagnosis is representative of the larger tale of miscreants and fools told in Randy Shilts's *And the Band Played On*, a remarkable feat of investigative journalism that traces the AIDS epidemic from the death of Danish physician Margrethe Rask, a lesbian who contracted AIDS in Africa in 1976, up to mid-1985 and the death of Rock

Hudson. An openly homosexual writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the nation's first full-time AIDS reporter, Shilts names names, slams reputations, and yet poignantly testifies to those few who fought desperately to get the band's attention and those who died horribly while it continued to play.

Introducing the members of the band:

"Fast lane" homosexuals. Some homosexuals racked up as many as a mind-boggling 20,000 sexual partners, engaging in high-risk (receptive anal) acts long after it became apparent that a fatal illness was spreading through the homosexual populations of New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Scoffing at advice to limit partners and avoid such activity, many homosexuals continued going to bathhouses, readily infecting themselves with the AIDS virus and passing it on to others. Homosexual leaders such as Konstantin Berlandt, a columnist for the *Bay Area Reporter*, shed new light on the debate over whether homosexuality is genetic or acquired by stating, "I didn't become a homosexual so I could use condoms." Later Berlandt wrote: "Advice on safe sex, while perhaps well-meaning, is actually collaboration with the death regime that delights in blaming ourselves and would pin the blame on us." Berlandt also used his column to make a pitch for "rimming," known in other circles as oral-anal contact and then considered to be a high-risk activity for contracting AIDS. According to Berlandt, the practice could be "spiritually uplifting."

Other homosexuals saw profit in the epidemic, as did the San Mateo doctor who promised to cure AIDS with massive doses of—you guessed it—Vitamin C. Still others made desperate efforts to pretend that the syndrome was not sexually transmitted, such as the homo-

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