

Solzhenitsyn...

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Solzhenitsyn, and seems to have had little or no contact with the author. He speaks of the controversy surrounding Solzhenitsyn in general terms, trying to describe the psychology of the Russian government. The reader can mistrust his description when he sees Grazzini's prediction (his book was published originally in 1971) "a Solzhenitsyn in exile is unthinkable." Hans Bjorkegren's biography, on the other hand, is compact and well-documented. Bjorkegren passes value judgments only where it is necessary to separate Soviet propaganda from Solzhenitsyn's account of the situation. It is not overburdened with detail, however, and it makes interesting reading. In writing his version of Solzhenitsyn's biography, Leopold Labeledz chose the role of editor. He collected an exhaustive amount of literature from Soviet journals and from Solzhenitsyn, adding only brief introductions to this material. The outstanding documents in this book are the two interviews with Solzhenitsyn, which are rare in themselves, and the author's Nobel lecture, which appears for the first time in connection with other material on Solzhenitsyn in Labeledz's work. It may be written perhaps too tersely, but the value of this book lies in the amount of authentic material available in this one source.

On the basis of these biographies and the wealth of material that has appeared since his exile, Solzhenitsyn's life story from the publication of *August 1914* to the

present can be pieced together. In 1969, Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Soviet Writers' Union after *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Cancer Ward*, and *The First Circle* had appeared in the West in pirate editions. He had refused to renounce the use of his works as anti-Soviet propaganda by people outside the Soviet Union and he was no longer supported by the government.

August 1914 appeared in the West in 1971. The author had been refused publication by seven Soviet publishing houses, but this was the first manuscript he had sent directly out of the country. The slander and the government spying campaigns against Solzhenitsyn increased. The Soviet authorities said that the sketches of wealthy landowners contained in the book were actually portraits of Solzhenitsyn's ancestors. This, they said, showed that Solzhenitsyn had retained the capitalistic values of the pre-revolutionary bourgeois landowners. The author denied that the novel was biographical in a later interview.

Late in 1973, Solzhenitsyn wrote his now famous letter to the Politburo. When the Soviet government seized parts three and four of his manuscript, the author released *The Gulag Archipelago* to the West, which he had held back for five years. After refusing to answer two official summons, Solzhenitsyn was stripped of his Soviet citizenship in February. His wife and children have now joined him in exile in Zurich, Switzerland. His books have been removed from libraries in Russia, but secret copies of his works are circulating in Russia. The Russian citizens are risking severe punishment to read them.

Solzhenitsyn's writing follows a plan of chronological criticism. When *August 1914* appeared,

Solzhenitsyn said that this novel set in Czarist Russia was the first of an extensive, multivolume history of Russia. The author also said that he was working on a continuation of the novel in a book called *October 1916*, but this has never appeared. *The Gulag Archipelago* begins in 1918 and covers the period until immediately after the death of Stalin. *Gulag*, as it now appears in the West, however, is only in two parts, while the author has written four. It can be hoped that the rest of the book will soon be published, because the author's wife was allowed to bring Solzhenitsyn's documents with her when she left Russia. But the rest of Solzhenitsyn's work will undoubtedly suffer from his exile, because he derives much of his historical evidence from personal sources. He no longer has access to these individuals who have survived Soviet repression in the past.

Solzhenitsyn's life story continues the tale of repression from the end of the Stalinist era through Kruschev's regime and into Brezhnev's time. Even during Kruschev's de-Stalinization campaign (when the Premier sponsored the publication of *One Day* over the objections of the censors), the author was the subject of government wiretapping, censorship of his correspondence and seizures of his manuscripts. It's easy to forget the face of Solzhenitsyn when looking at a picture of Brezhnev smiling at Henry Kissinger.

Solzhenitsyn is a man whom history has isolated in the awesomely responsible position of critic. His criticism is feared in the Soviet Union for the profound influence it could have on the people, influence equal to that of the Party. Solzhenitsyn recognized this when he wrote in his Nobel lecture, "One word of truth shall outweigh the whole world."

Harriet Johnson

"The Economics of Energy"

Roger L. Miller
William Morrow & Company, Inc.
New York, 1974

Suppose you're Richard Nixon. The whole country is on your back because of Watergate. You need something to unite the citizenry again under your leadership. What do you do?

You create an energy crisis. Then you break its back and become a hero.

That's Roger L. Miller's speculation in *The Economics of Energy*. He lays the blame for the crisis with the federal govern-

ment, then wonders if there wasn't a deliberate plan behind government controls and subsidies to cause a shortage.

His argument goes like this: Price controls, in conjunction with the Arab oil embargo, were the major cause of the crisis. When the supply of oil fell off because of the embargo, the effect normally would have been a sharp rise in oil product prices, accompanied by a reduction in the quantity demanded.

He insists there would be no shortage without price controls. A shortage exists only when people can't get enough of a product even though they're

willing to pay the price. If the price goes high enough, there won't be any shortage, because people won't be able to afford as much anyway.

But if prices are controlled, as they are in Nixon's anti-inflation program, the quantity demanded will exceed the supply. Also, suppliers will withhold the product until controls are lifted and they can get a higher price.

Miller's solution is to remove price controls, and to remove all the special privileges of the oil industry—the oil import quotas, the subsidies for exploration, the oil depletion allowance and other tax breaks.

This would restore competition to the industry, Miller says. It would also cause the price of petroleum products to go way up. But, Miller insists, if the industry were competitive, the outrageous oil company profits couldn't be made, and they would find the most efficient ways to meet public energy demands.

Miller's conclusions don't answer one concern, though: Maybe the oil companies can function as a monopoly even without the government's help. Even if oil executives aren't given positions in fuel allocation agencies, will the problem be solved if they can still join together under one massive corporation to get the oil out of Alaska? Miller distrusts the government more than the oil companies, but isn't government regulation necessary to prevent monopoly power? He doesn't say.

Peter Wilson

"They Could Not Trust the King"

Stanley Tretick, William V. Shannon
Collier Books
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In the upper left corner of the back cover, the book is classified as a "History." Well it is and it isn't. There is a connotation in that word of objectivity and clean hindsight. Don't expect this book to be objective. Of course there is a long tradition of biased History books, like the ones you pored over in your formative years, and *They Could Not Trust the King* never begins to approach the open falsity of some of those.

The text for this book was completed on Nov. 30, 1973, at which point the Senate Committee investigation had closed, yet Cox had only just been fired and Watergate as an event in history was still loudly and fiercely evolving. So this is hindsight from the middle of things, like a sports writer releasing his article after just the first half. It is, then, a History in focus if not in encompassing wholeness. And a damn good book.

What makes William Shannon's text so valuable is that it can almost be seen as a "Watergate Handbook." It is a fascinating program to the drama. For each player there is interest-grabbing background material: first and foremost a revealing and chilling picture of Nixon on the way up — the things he said, the creeds he followed, the single-minded path he walked. Then profiles, often surprising, of each member of the committee and each witness. This is the heart of the book's appeal.

If Shannon's words are the story and signature of the men, then Stanley Tretick's 102 photographs are the essence. Images beyond the faces, into the minds. Moments of fright and sorrow, hope and evil that passed before the TV's moving eye too quickly to live long. But they live in this book, and are insights of great depth. The design and layout was done by Allen Hurlburt, and the book is beautifully put together.

They Could Not Trust the King is a valuable record of things that too soon will have slipped into the far past. It is also a compelling picture book to leave in the living room. Look at it, read it, keep it. It's a good book.

Todd Schwartz

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News (albeit on a more local level), among others? Perhaps it is true, as the authors mention too rarely in their book, that journalism was changing all the time; it merely took us until now to give it the old double-take and see what was actually happening. Because there is no denying the renewed interest it can generate these days, the energies it can incite one to expend, and—most important—the urge it can instill in people to care.

Glenn Chang

"Watership Down"

Richard Adams
Macmillan
Copyright 1974

The heroes of this stunning first novel are a ragtag bunch of wild rabbits, and *Watership Down* is the promised land they strike out for when a visionary member of the comfortable, complacent Sandleford Warren predicts (correctly) that disaster will overtake the community. Under the uncertain leadership of a half-grown fellow named Hazel, a few rebellious bucks—the warren's only believers—consign themselves to voluntary exile in the English countryside, where they engage in various misadventures in attempting to found a new home. Against astronomical odds, they succeed.

The odds brooked by Mr. Adams are also pretty steep, considering the extraordinary audacity of his book's conception, but he's a remarkable storyteller. How he manages to make the forbidding material of R.M. Lockley's *The Private Life of the Rabbit*, to which text he expresses indebtedness, into an epic celebration of the beauty of nature, the qualities of courage, perseverance, and kindness, and the value of both democracy and rebellion, is too complex and mysterious a matter to go into at much length here. It helps that Adams has embellished Lockley's material with a quantity of rabbit mythology, folklore, religious stories, legends, and accounts of battle, all vividly and charmingly depicted, often in fragments of a rabbit language which he has also contrived.

More than this, Adams' characters compel attention as complex, flesh-and-blood individuals, whether contending with man and their many natural enemies on the open English moors and fens, or contriving to escape the stifling conditions of a snoozily complacent or totalitarian warren. Their human-ness combines with their insider's perspective on nature and their detached view of the accomplishments of man in a way which informs this book with a deep feeling for our natural surroundings, and with a special concern for the extent to which that most recalcitrant of animals, man, has despoiled his soul and his surroundings with his invention. Adams' perceptions in this connection are never didactic or hollow-sounding; they're presented from the perspective of the rabbits, and the long view of these natural earth-dwellers puts man's artificial constructions in a clear, even and disturbing light.

In the hands of an artist with even a jot less intelligence or integrity, this book could have been a flaccid monstrosity. But Adams believes in his characters and renders their story in a spare, elegant style which is utterly free of sentimentality, condescension or cuteness. Whether he scores points with you may still depend to some extent on your partiality to the somewhat similar sensibilities of Tolkien, A.A. Milne, et al, but the imaginative gifts which underlie *Watership Down's* conception, and the conviction which marks its execution, make this book a remarkable achievement.

Chris Houglum

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