

exactly reversed. We have lost faith in the ability of government to solve our problems. We have developed a new appreciation of how a free, private-enterprise economy (with lower taxes and less regulation) can accomplish more than can be achieved by expert planners.

Perhaps this change was caused by the obvious failure of the liberal policies. After years of the war on poverty, we have more people dependent on government than ever before. After years of federal spending on education, we have an epidemic of illiteracy that was unknown in America in the 1940s.

Do we want an ideology of scarcity with bureaucrats allocating pieces of the pie according to their elitist notions of social justice? Or do we want an ideology of growth in which we can all strive for a bigger piece of a bigger pie?

The American people chose a growth economy when they chose Ronald Reagan in 1980, and the second time around in 1984 they made their choice even more emphatic.

A member of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, Phyllis Schlafly, M.A. '45, is a lawyer, author, and syndicated columnist. This year Good Housekeeping named her the "third most admired woman in the world."

John Updike

What is your favorite spot in and around Harvard?

Well, that's not an easy question. My nostalgic heart flutters between the cavelike entrance to Sever Hall, the far recesses of the Fogg library, and the grand space of (as it was called thirty years ago) New Lecture Hall, now abandoned and nailed shut like a South Bronx tenement. Other vanished fond spots: the counter at the Midget Restaurant, up on Mass. Avenue, and the window tables at the Hayes-Bickford cafeteria, once known universally as the Hayes-Bick. But the spot I will name has not vanished, and indeed has only enriched and deepened with the passage of time. I mean that place on the fourth floor of the Widener stacks where everybody, exiting, has to turn around an inconvenient little set of met-

al shelves and thence with some more strides make his or her way to the door, the brief downward stairs, and the circulation desk. More than once, as an undergraduate, I missed this pivotal, unmarked turn, and found myself faced with a blank wall, or with an indignant Ph.D. candidate dozing in his nook. How like Harvard, I thought at the time, to set us these incidental tests. The spot on the floor, which the vast shuffling hordes of stacks traffic must all traverse, has in the not very many decades of the library's existence been worn into a distinct depression; the gentle tread of scholars has visibly troughed the marble. I hope that particular slab is never replaced, though it grow as deep as the similar spot on the stone threshold of the kitchen in Hampton Court, which generations of royal servants, stepping in and out, have depressed to the depth of several inches. Here, where the Widener architect might have arranged a more convenient corridor, generations of Harvard students and instructors have all had to dodge in obeisance to the immovable primacy of books and their shelving; here word-weary, knowledge-burdened girls and boys have carried each away their few mineral atoms on the soles of their shoes, and made their dent in the world of ideas.

John Updike '54 is a novelist, poet, and critic.

Lester C. Thurow

Why do Americans like the Lone Ranger myth so much?

Americans are unique in their belief in the Lone Ranger. What made America great? Why, Lone Rangers, of course.

The West was settled by Lone Rangers—Buffalo Bill, Calamity Jane. Multitudinous foreign enemies were defeated by Lone Rangers—Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie. American industry was built by Lone Rangers—Henry Ford, Alfred Sloan. Where else but in America would one find a business hall of fame where one can worship at shrines devoted to the Lone Rangers of American industry? Where else but in America would one find a major airport (Orange County's John Wayne Airport) named

after a movie star who was not a Lone Ranger hero but simply played the part in his movies? Americans want to believe in the Lone Ranger so much that they honor fantasy as if it were reality.

Reality was of course very different. The West was settled not by Lone Rangers but by wagon trains and community barn raisings. Those at the Alamo were losers and may have died as prisoners rather than as heroes fighting to the end. Ford and Sloan helped build American industry, but their success traced to innovations in social organization (the assembly line, the committee system) designed to get large groups of people to work together more efficiently. Good ideas but hardly Lone-Ranger type activities.

Myths are interesting since they tell us something about ourselves, but they are also dangerous when they become so strong that they dominate reality. When confronting America's lack of competitiveness in international markets, for example, the standard American reaction is to call for "liberating the entrepreneur"—let the Lone Ranger ride to the rescue. Yet those (Japan, West Germany) defeating us in international competition are hardly practitioners of the Lone Ranger ideal. Precisely the opposite—they are practitioners of the idea that one wins by paying very careful attention to improving social organization and shrewd collective strategic planning.

When it comes to that famous bottom line that Americans also love so well, the Lone Ranger did not exist. Even more important, however, he wasn't alone. He had three helpers (Silver, Tonto, and Scout) who often came to his rescue. The myth about the myth is more extreme than the myth itself.

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Toby Marotta

Why this epidemic of AIDS?

At the beginning of the 1980s, with the help of a dozen of my Harvard College classmates, I produced a book about the nature of male homosexual living and the meaning of gay liberation. *Sons of*