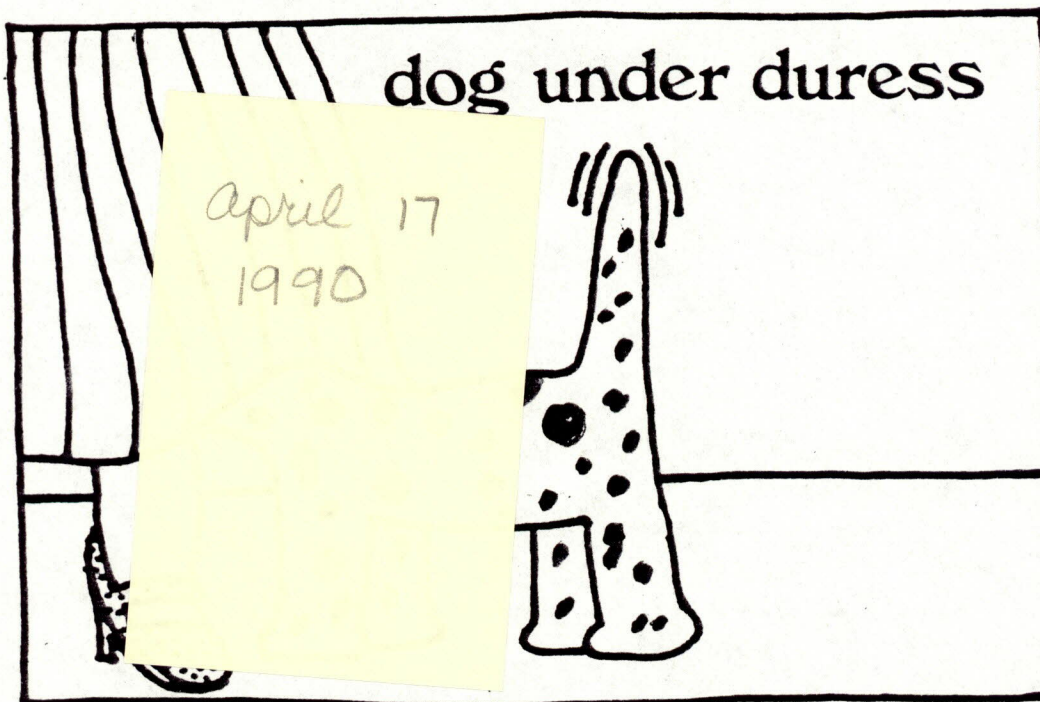


An Occasional Paper in the Continuing Studies  
of  
THE MIDWEST UNDER DURESS



*This particular paper was initially presented on April 17, 1990 under the title:*

## REFLECTIONS OF A CONFEDERATE DALMATIAN OWNER

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*The author's particular focus is to identify those pressures that affect society and its dogs, and particularly those members of society whose business suits are covered with white dog hairs and whose sleep is interrupted by the flapping of ears of the populace in the bedroom.*

- Don Shackelford





A MODERATE PROLOGUE  
IN WHICH THE READER IS GUIDED FROM THE  
TITLE OF CONVENIENCE TO THE SUBJECT

*The Title And How it Relates To The Topic: This essay was prepared for recitation to a small group of Columbus, Ohio citizens. This pleasant facet of Central Ohio's private cultural life provides a meeting ground for academics and others who also prefer avoiding skilled work with their hands. By name, The Kit Kat Club, a name borrowed from a London Society of many decades earlier. The essays are governed by numerous traditions, not all of which are clarified in advance. One is that the title should be related to the essay, but in an obscure way to preclude the audience from doing better research than the essayist. (Note: The presenter is never referred to as a speaker -- this is perhaps in deference to Chicago member John Buchanan who does not like to talk far away from papers.)*

*Anyhow (James Thurber, in writing about Central Ohio, preferred the usage of "anyways" instead of "anyhow"), this particular title stems from the disconcerting practice of people asking what you intend to present, before Nature has revealed the topic to the presenter. From memory, we reckoned that the meeting day, April 18, was Confederate Memorial Day. Only by the pedantic plodding of later research did we verify that Confederate Memorial Day is actually April 26th in Georgia. Critics should bear in mind that Christopher Columbus missed India by a considerably wider margin, but still got our whole town named for him. Columbus didn't feel bad about this (or "badly" as Grand Non-Grammarian Tom Lurie might say).<sup>1</sup> So that's where we get the "Confederate" part of the title.*

*Dalmatians are a dominant theme in the life of this essayist. Not by choice. The phrase "love me, love my dog" is a cliché to some, but an embedded dictum of everyday life to others. The concerned reader may number us among the "others." Economists (who label much and predict little) call this the problem of indivisibilities. That is, you want three eggs but you must buy either a dozen or none. Dalmatians and Theklas present the social scientist with an analogous indivisibility situation.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Post of Kit Kat Grand Non-Grammarian is awarded not on demonstrated performance, but rather following the midwestern tradition of deferring to anyone who has been East to school. Using this criteria, Tom Lurie appears to have nosed out Tad Jeffrey for the post. Presumably because Harvard University is further East than Williams College. It can be assumed that graduates of either institution have learned to speak real goodly.



Another tradition is that one cannot develop essays on a topic where there is presumed professional competency. That is, Dr. Harding should not talk about the subconscious and Erie Chapman should not talk about hospitals, and so on. This means, in our case, we felt pressure to avoid the topic on which we have written before, i.e., the need for intelligent capital discipline in America's financial industry. In response to an audience question of contrived hostility, it was asserted we would be "laughed out of the Futures' Society." Our response was that, even when we know what we are discussing we have been laughed out of more serious places, mostly in the thrift industry but some of which were related to the Academy.<sup>2</sup> Luckily for mankind, no one can foretell the future. That is part of the tension between God and Man.

- o But as early pigeon entrails readers testify, the subject of divining the future holds a fascination for those who intend to be active in the future.



*"I've told you why I need a dog. Now suppose you tell me what makes you think you might be that dog."*

<sup>2</sup> It has become trendy in recent years for people who work at colleges to refer to themselves as laboring in "The Academy." My Mother was there before it became a fad. She went to Wilton Academy, a mill and farm town public high school in Maine. I asked her once why they hadn't called it "Wilton High School?" and she said that people in small towns thought "Academy" sounded fancier, and this was important because they didn't pay teachers very much. Prior to that she, like many of her generation, went to a one-room grammar school where teachers often lacked college degrees. Yet she never made a mistake in spelling or use of the language. There is a message for those who ponder school reform.



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## REFLECTIONS OF A CONFEDERATE DALMATIAN OWNER

As what Gary Ness termed a newer member of this organization, I have never felt I was precisely an insider -- privy to all its lore and tradition. So some things puzzled me a bit initially. Like, why schedule this meeting so close to Confederate Memorial Day? When the date was first announced I thought it was either Confederate Memorial Day or Patriot's Day. This is a problem of being born into a family that moved around.

My parents were from New England, so we were never Southerners, but in my youth we lived in Atlanta. And in the Atlanta of pre-World War II (a decade before Driving Miss Daisy), where the biggest event was the premiere of *Gone With The Wind*, I went to parades of war veterans on patriotic days. The World War I veterans, including my father, marched in some semblance of order. The Spanish American War veterans strolled with their weathered campaign hats and suspenders. And the yellow bus carried a few old men from the Confederate Old Soldiers' Home. They were a bridge to the Civil War past that seemed more recent in the South than it really was. Even then, as a quite young person, I marvelled at the changes they'd seen in their lifetimes.

In addition to the tiny remainder of Joe Johnson's Confederate forces, it was not uncommon then to meet people who had been born as slaves. And, of course, the more common time bridge experience of almost all grown-up people everywhere -- was to have been born in a world where private transportation was by plodding horse and buggy, but end life in a world where private jets were available for the few, and public airline jets available for all citizens.

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No matter that today's public officials remind us that one could once get across London or New York faster in horse drawn days than in this more modern congested automobile era. The main point is that a brief passage of time changed the entire speed of movement...and much of it took place in the lifetime of those in our century.

Going back to a generation before the end of slavery, even communication of ideas could move no faster than the horse or the wind propelled the paper message. Until the telegraph, it had been so throughout history. One wonders if in our lifetimes we can see such a dramatic change of horse to rocketship, pony express to satellite. Probably, but the change will be of a different nature.

In Decatur, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta, there were, at that time, ordinances prohibiting the practice of business on Sunday (only Lane's Drug Store could be open to fill prescriptions and dispense soda). Franklin Roosevelt had not yet levied his widely criticized penny excise tax on the 10-cent movie ticket price. Still, on Sunday, you had to go to more cosmopolitan Atlanta to see a movie. And boys were carefully segregated from girls at the high school level - which created abnormally high traffic in the library which stood between Decatur Boys High and its sister institution. Whether there was another boys high school for the black citizens of Decatur, I never knew. Discussion of their educational needs never seemed important enough to intrude into the overheard adult small talk of the community.

That was then....and not so long ago.



We are at the threshold of the 21st Century. Lacking the time resources to poll the entire body of Kit Kat, we nonetheless ran an informal sample and learned - really quite conclusively - *that the 21st Century is the overwhelming choice of the members as the Century in which we chose to die.*

Having made that choice to try to die in the 21st Century, it is understandable that we should learn more about it. The eternal desire to look ahead is one thing that separates man from Dalmatians. The Dalmatian operates on a real time framework, with little focus on the future. The here and the now (and, more specifically, what can one eat in the here and now) receives priority concentration.

Dalmatians have, in my estimate, gained ground on mankind (as it were) and it is worth thinking about whether this is a trend or a blip, which involves trying to think through in enough detail what the future may bring in order to determine whether person-kind can regain some of the lost ground.

The signs of future change are all around us, often ignored in scramble and clutter of competition for attention. We suppose that in the era of Driving Miss Daisy there were Dalmatian owners and, hence, Dalmatians. But I can't recall any mention of them in the required curriculum for liberal arts majors. In effect, we educated a generation of Americans who were unprepared for life in a world dominated by Dalmatians, foreigners, and adverse change. Now, of course, the era of Dalmatians, foreigners and breathtaking change is upon us, and one runs into them everywhere. This is especially true if they sleep in one's bedroom (Dalmatians, that is). But even the ordinary person -- and ordinary person is a title few ever totally admit to (except when trying to minimize charitable contribution requests) -  
- encounters Dalmatians in ads and fashion magazines.



Futurism has always received somewhat more attention among people than among Dalmatians. There is a society headquartered in Baltimore, and one in Canada, that focuses on futurism. Despite the growing proliferation of speculation on the future, the desired end product, predicting how the world will be, is not done with much accuracy. Business Week recently reviewed three books on the future. I bought and read all three. The reviewer summarized them under the title "On a Clear Day You Can Guess Forever." My two main conclusions from all three books is that (a) the reader is a simpleton, especially if he (usually he) is a business executive, and (b) there are enough trends to go around to support either an optimistic or pessimistic prediction about what lies ahead. We went on to find and buy two more books -- and wade through many of the growing volume of articles.

Knowing how busy you all are, I thought it would economize your time to distill and review these trends. There are dozens, well over 100, identified. But the nine or ten that are clearest and most interesting are those outlined in this paper.

## 101 showcases for stylish dalmatians

By Arlene Vigoda  
USA TODAY

Dalmatians are being spotted all over.

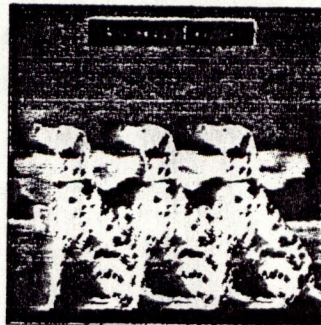
Starring in commercials, fashion layouts, on album covers and in videos, they're the top dog — even though the American Kennel Club ranks them 27th in popularity.

"Visually, they just pop out," says Linda Hanrahan, of Animals in Advertising. "They're so dramatic looking."

We're seeing spots in:

► **Advertising.** Diet Coke, Wrigley's and Hewlett-Packard employ polka-dot pooches in print ads and TV commercials.

► **Pop music.** Animal Logic's self-titled album cover displays three dalmatians; Taylor Dayne's video, *With Every Beat of My Heart*, features one, as does the B-52's' latest, *Deadbeat Club*. And Richard Simmons' six dogs prowl the



DOG DAYS: Dalmatians are the focus of Animal Logic's LP cover.

► **Fashion.** Spotted sweaters and pajamas show up in Perry Ellis' collection. "Dalmatian prints have a campy glamour about them," says designer and dalmatian owner Marc Jacobs.

And models unleash them as a chichi fashion accessory in *Mademoiselle's* April issue.

Says editor in chief Amy Levin Cooper: "They're humorous, sleek, and have great legs



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1. Medical technology will alter the quality of bodily life so that our grandchildren, perhaps our children (and to some extent, us) live like the "marvelous one-horse shay." It "ran for a hundred years to the day," then fell apart all at once without a debilitating and painful decline.

Somatic cell therapy and germ cell therapy promise major payoffs. Baylor University scientists have built an artificial virus that ultimately transports new genes into various cells. And the reverse process is also receiving attention -- engineering to block genes from operating in undesirable ways.

The work on AIDS has stepped up interest in this area and by the year 2000 lots of trials on humans should be underway. These approaches should ultimately make viral infections preventable, and also counter some of the effects of genetic problems.<sup>3</sup>

Another example, Contact Inhibitory Factor (CIF), has turned fatal melanomas in hamsters into normal tissue.

And, TPA (Tissue Plasminogen Activator) dissolves blood clots that contribute to 90% heart attacks. But it's hospital administered now. By 1995 it should be available in tablet form.

And, several separate lines of research, some of which will pay off, are likely to help understand and offset the effects of cell aging. While this will not make us immortal, it can postpone many of the unpleasant declines in physical functioning now associated with advancing years.

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<sup>3</sup> Lack of inherited money is not yet considered small by the more narrow scientific community to be a genetic problem.

- o Anti-hormones (anti DECO) can alter the balance that seems to age cells. Mice without pituitary glands, but with replacement hormones, were frisky adolescents at an equivalent of human age 95.
  
- o SSA (senescent cell antigen) researchers think the body can be induced to attack cancer cells the way it does other unwanted dead cells.
  
- o DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone) prevents cancer and obesity in mice -- men treated with a derivative are only half as likely to die of heart disease.

Paying for all this, and the variety of organ transplants, will be a major problem for the next fifty years, but the costs of medicine could decline in twenty years after a mass prevention takes over.<sup>4</sup>



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<sup>4</sup> What we as laypersons can hope for is that when medical research gets tired of fixing the problems of mice, they will work on us.



2. World population, which will depend mostly on decisions by Asian women as to how many children they will bear, will compound to frightening numbers. Most of us were born into a world of about two billion total population. By the year 2020 it will be about seven billion.

- o The good news is, it will be easier to find people to do something with next weekend.
  
- o The bad news is, it will be tough to find a place to park when you go out with them.

Shifts to slower population growth take place over long periods of time. Indian women marry at 14.5 years. Irish women - at the other extreme - at age 24. It takes a lot to alter such patterns. Cultural patterns involve housing, economic progress and deep-seated religious beliefs. So that, in the next two generations, there is no possibility that world population will not swell. It may start slowing up at about the 10 billion level, but that is likely to be eighty years from now.

- o All of the people who have ever lived will probably be out numbered by those likely to be born in the 21st Century.

3. Northern Europeans and their American descendants, who have always been a militarily aggressive world minority, will become increasingly less relevant as holders of power. They still may be remembered in history for such things as composing orchestra music that their children no longer will practice, and learning to slice potatoes and fry them in beef fat.

- o Europe and its North American descendants have about 800 million people -- it is essentially a non-growing population. In a world population, growing to 7 billion then 8 billion then 10 billion, this group moves toward quaint irrelevancy.
  
- o We were born into a world where London and New York were the largest and greatest cities. By the end of this century they won't make the top five. Mexico City, with 25 million people may become bigger than California.
  
- o Domestically, in the U. S., European descendants will become another American minority. By the turn of the century they will be less than 50% of the population of several important states, such as California. There is debate as to when European descended Americans become officially a minority nationwide. But it's coming.



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4. Micro-electronic technology, the driver of the information revolution, will reach some stages of physical maturity about the end of this century. But applications of this technology will continue to disperse and multiply. And learning to manage the data glut will be a major chore.

- o Quite simply, by the year 2000 any information will be available anywhere, almost instantly, in any form (picture, paper, electronic readout and voice). *Bill Esrey, CEO of United Telecommunications, Inc. tells us that now he plugs in his portable computer, downloads all cash and operating numbers daily, and has all reports show the phone extension of each originator -- this cuts out managerial layering.*
- o The astounding shrinkage of size and speed-up of operation in computer chips may stop about the end of this century. There are, it is believed, barriers when you shrink chip size into sub-atomic physics. These barriers will come in by the year 2000. For example, a chip with one-quarter micron-line width may represent some sort of irreducible minimum (40,000 to a centimeter) -- a human hair is 300 times wider. We're already at one micron-line width.
- o The focus of the future will be on applying this rich technology. The proliferation of applications in ordinary life will be pervasive in just the next few years, and will roll on. Think how the gasoline engine was in 1900, a reasonably mature theory in concept -- not too much different from today -- yet simple then in terms of its applications and refinement. The impact of the gasoline engine on commerce, battle, and daily life since 1900 has been overwhelming.

5. The exciting fields for technological advance will probably shift from electronic and chemical fields to biology.

- o The dominant but declining position of U. S. science will confront the problems of its continuing and increasing dependence on immigrant scientists.
  
- o Throughout our history scientists trained elsewhere -- who chose to live in America -- have been a mainstay. They still are. University faculties would be shorthanded without the Asian physicists and mathematicians. And, increasingly, the American scientific graduate student is a foreigner. (Indian immigrants have, on average, more years of education than Americans.)
  
- o Attracting these people will be essential, but may not be easy. For a while, the Eastern Bloc could replace Asians as a major source of scientific immigration. But "reverse braindrain" could siphon them away.

Besides medicine, biology will need to play roles in agricultural productivity, waste disposal, insect control, preservation of endangered present species (...and perhaps engineered evolution of new ones).



6. The move away from monolithic giant states that dominated world politics for two centuries is already at a stage of fragmentation. In a transitional stage what seems to be happening is that what is labeled the pro-Democracy movement is partly a yearning for freedom, partly a frustrated consumerism and, in many instances, a move toward political tribalism. Groups will be increasingly integrated at the level of the universal economy, but ethnic and religious strife at the local levels, verging on anarchy, is emerging worldwide.

- o We can properly rejoice that communism is on the retreat, that South Africa seems ready to dismantle apartheid, and that Nicaraguan elections reduced a left wing dictatorship. But there are riots in England, Nepal, India, and revolutions in the Philippines. Old scores are being settled in the Balkans.
- o Dispersion of technology is so inevitable that regional destructive capacity cannot long elude the grasp of anybody who wants it. Anybody means small nations or organized dissidents. The recent debates and measures about the relative nuclear strength of Iraq and Israel are simply beginnings.
- o There may never be another empire. Modern tank armies are powerful. But establishing and maintaining control by military conquest seems to be outdated. This is good news for free societies that work -- perhaps bad news for drug fighters.

7. Population aging represents a major force that will reshape domestic politics in Japan, Germany and, to an important and slightly lesser extent, the United States.

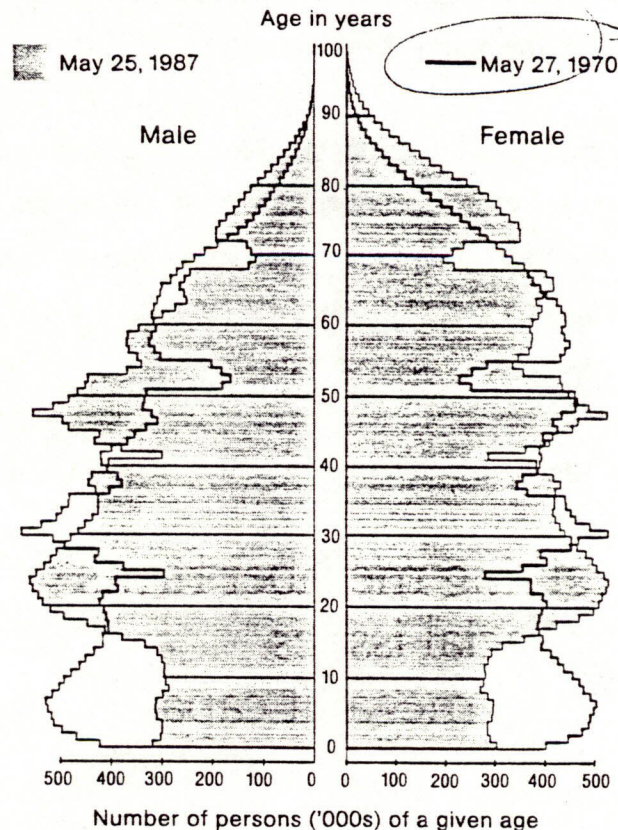
- o The critical ratio is that of worker to non-worker in a society. These trends appear adverse.
  - Prolonged education and lifestyle preference reduces childbearing.
  - Prolonged life swells the numbers of old and elderly.
  - Mature societies will run short of young folk. There are 2.3 job offers for every Japanese high school graduate. The U. S. service industries that depend on 18-year old entry workers will face shortages.
  
- o The young people of the world live in underdeveloped nations such as Cuba, Palestinian refugee camps, India, Mexico, Africa, and the Caribbean. The number of young people in developing nations is said to outnumber the total population in the developed world. Debates on immigration policy will become more urgent.



- o In the USA, people are developing whole industries that hype this simple population age shift.
- o Issues like restricting old drivers; the revival of the euthanasia debate are simply starters. A vast political tug of war over resource allocation may ensue. In 1940, 2% of the Federal dollar was spent on persons over 65. By the year 2000 it will be 30%.

The chart below is not simple to comprehend. Nothing Germans do ever is. Look at the female side, because it takes out most war casualties. The shaded part is what's relevant (the outline simply shows the change since 1970). There are more 72 year olds than 12 or 15 year olds. So who mows the lawn? It looks like a Tannenbaum with a narrow trunk, because there just weren't that many folk under 17.

### Age structure of the West German population



Source: Federal Statistics Office

8. Environmental issues will be less avoidable and the solutions quite costly and every frustrating politically.

Leave aside for the moment such current issues as whether we should curtail cutting down our Northwest forests to preserve the Northern Spotted Owl. Owls and such will be preserved in zoo-like institutions and become the genetic ark of the future.

But there are three complex intertwined focal points for the environment.

- o Air
- o Water
- o Heat

Even the awful contamination by toxic and nuclear waste, a \$300 billion estimate for the U. S. version is severe but less widespread than air, water and heat problems. It is not the worst problem.

With an unlimited sum of money and unimaginable (by today's standard) world cooperation, the worst of these environmental problems can be resolved. But the more realistic easier course - given real world frustrations - is to belittle the problem and to trivialize the response, making mostly symbolic gestures. The recent conference in Washington on global warming is one example of many "do nothing" world meetings to expect in the coming decades.

- o Still, environmental issues have caught the popular imagination and much of sense and nonsense will result.

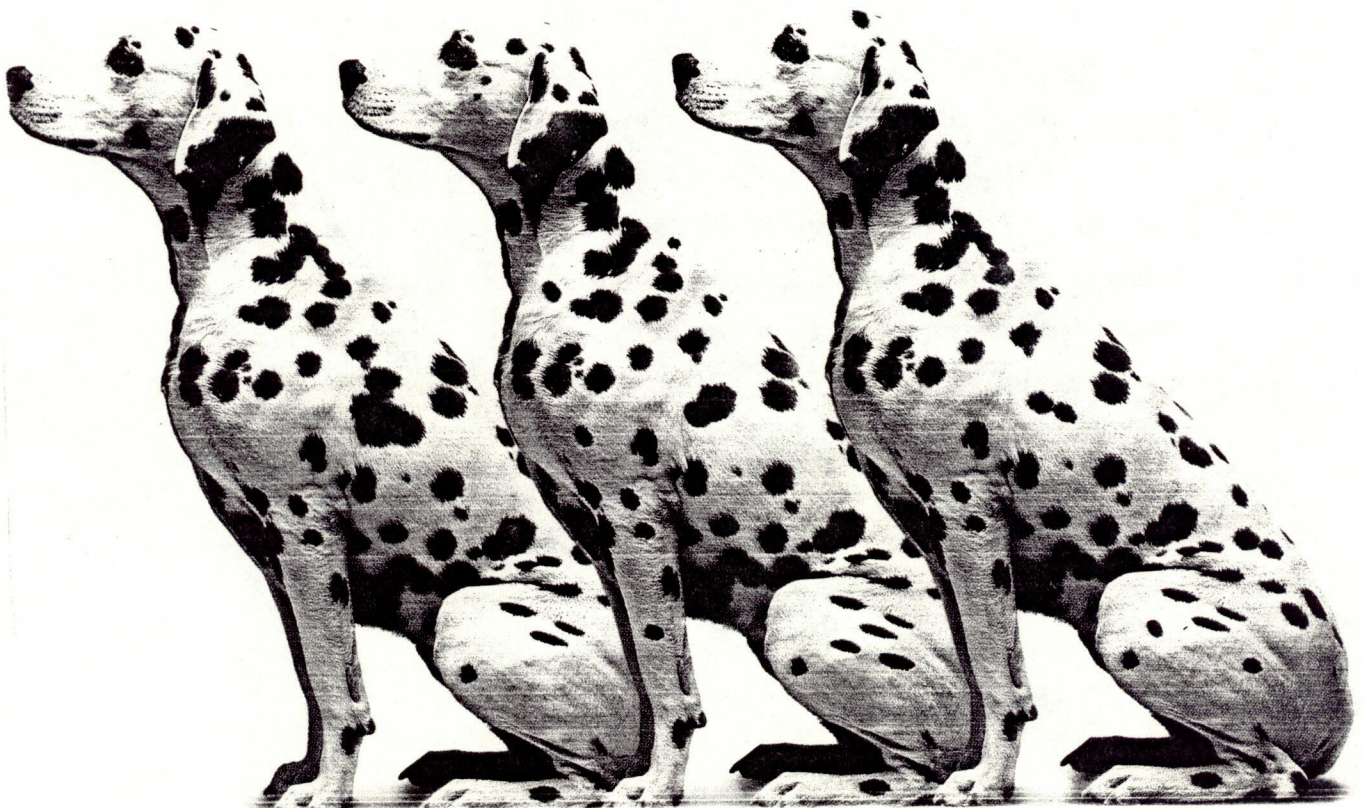


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The Ogallala Aquifer, from which the six potential dustbowl states get water, had as much water as Lake Huron some 30 years ago. Its waterfall has dropped 100 feet in places since then. And the Canadians are worried that Lake Huron itself will fall eight feet.

There has been hysteria and counter-debunking on most environmental issues. But despite debates over whether the world is really warming up, the facts are that the decade of the 1980's saw the six warmest years on record.

- o The real crux is not in the USA. It is the developing world population that wants to industrialize, and drive cars, and enjoy our living standard. Asking them to forego material progress to preserve our environment leads to the logical response of who will pay them to do so.





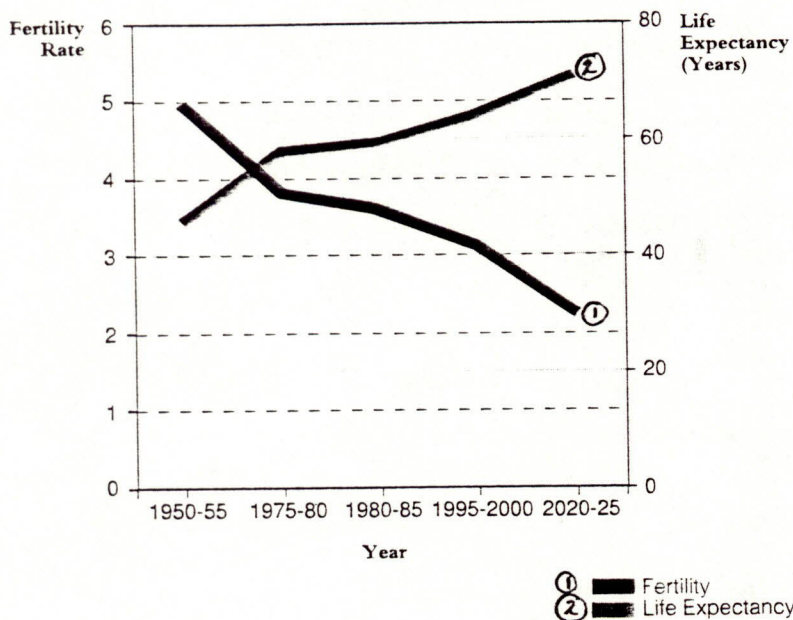
9. In the world economy, standard-of-living issues, as we've thought of them in the past, may not pose very big problems.

- o Feeding, clothing, sheltering ... even the swollen world population should not be that tough. Food and clothing are mainly distribution problems -- not production problems. (Russia, for instance, claims that it loses most of the tons of potatoes it grows because of distribution, rot, and poor harvesting.)
  
- o Energy problems are less easily solved. We should, for instance, be able to overcome our oncoming domestic electricity crisis, but we are not moving in on it yet. Brown outs will become more common. We will need to resolve the dilemma of nuclear energy. The U. S. nuclear plant is seriously aging.
  
- o Domestically, the future economic prospects depend on revival of the export industry and the education of the work force. (Previous papers by Messrs. Mayo and Hyre focused on the non-productivity of our school system.) There is a lot of short term optimism on the revival of international competitiveness by the United States, but the optimism is gut-feel and assumes the defense investment can be productively shifted to improving our efficiency. Japan and Sweden are touted as having many times more productive robots in civilian industry per capital than we.

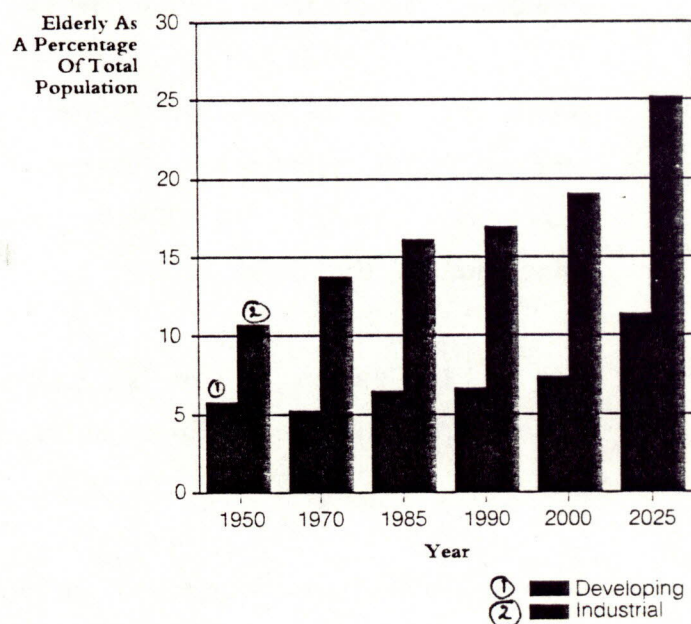


The big economic issue will lie in the astronomical costs of governments attempting solutions to problems seen as those that do not easily yield to throwing money at them ... such as crime ... or family life.

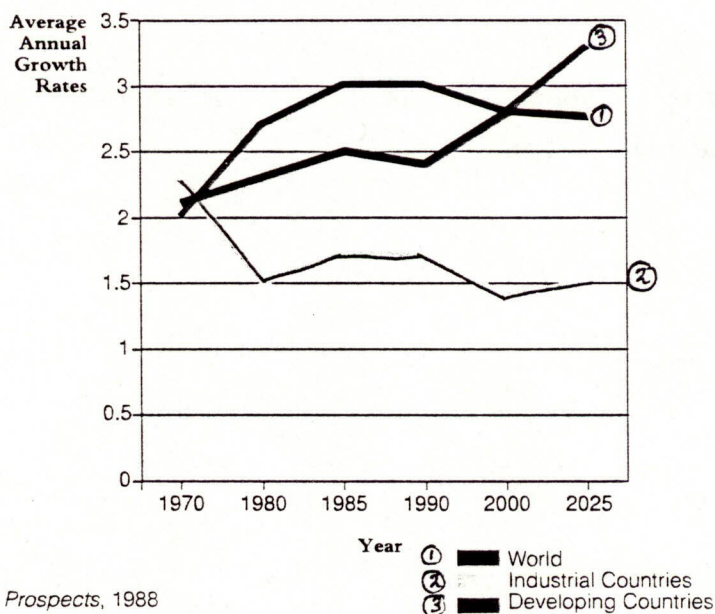
World Population Life Expectancy And Fertility



Industrial vs. Developing Countries' Elderly Populations



Growth In Elderly Populations



10. The tenth clear, standout trend is most difficult for us to identify. But we looked for ten. (We used to find it difficult to write papers. Some years ago it occurred to me that nobody has more than ten worthwhile things to say on any given topic. Premier Clemenceau of France agreed. He pointed out that God was happy to stop at 10 Commandments -- only Woodrow Wilson wanted to go to 14.)

So on the topic of the clear future trends, we stretched to find 10 out of more than 100 items which futurists list. One can add lots of things, but either they seemed of slightly lesser importance, or else we were unpersuaded they were evident trends. For instance:

- o In Religion - there is controversy over whether we are returning to fundamentalism or continued secularism.
  
- o In the Arts (unclearest of all), some forecast a revival based on golden age prosperity and leisure; others see shock value replacing craftsmanship.
  
- o The family remains an institution in trouble, with resolution not in sight.



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The U. S. is still the most emulated nation. But what nation is pointing the way to our future? Japan is the most obvious. It is already the richest nation measured by real estate value, credit, maybe stock value. But Japan may be peaking. Could the nation revealing the future be Argentina, which has taken the lead in showing how, in a once rich nation, government induced inflation resists cure from the left and right. Or could it be Italy, which shows how a diminished role of government produces great prosperity, and 50-mile long traffic jams. Italians are, in some ways, to the right of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan -- because they simply ignore government involvement that becomes excessive.

What is clear is that the global show is moving at speeds that make all participants uneasy about what comes next.

In all great games the best fans are those who are the most informed. Developing a trend scorecard helps to watch this fascinating game evolve.

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Epilogue: Questions follow, such as: Does all this make us a pessimist or an optimist? First of all, the identification of reasonably clear and important trends does not make one a predictor of any type. A presumptuous leap is involved from analyst to seer. Secondly, a principal impact is the awe for the interaction of the variables. The simple linear equation is usually wrong. So, thirdly, one ultimately relies on philosophical premises. I would rather live in a world where change is possible, and likely -- only in such a world does improvement stand a chance.

- Don Shackelford

Sources:

1. Megatrends 2000, by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene
  
2. American Renaissance, by Marvin Cetron and Owen Davies
  
3. Future Scope, by Joe Cappel
  
4. American In the Global '90's, by Austin M. Kiplinger and Knight Kiplinger
  
5. Age Wave, by Ken Dychtwald
  
6. The Economist, various issues -- courtesy of Robert Shamansky

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More interesting than any of the above is a book describing, for the layman, what has been going on in the world of non-linear equations to look at patterns in irregular phenomena.

Chaos by James Gleick