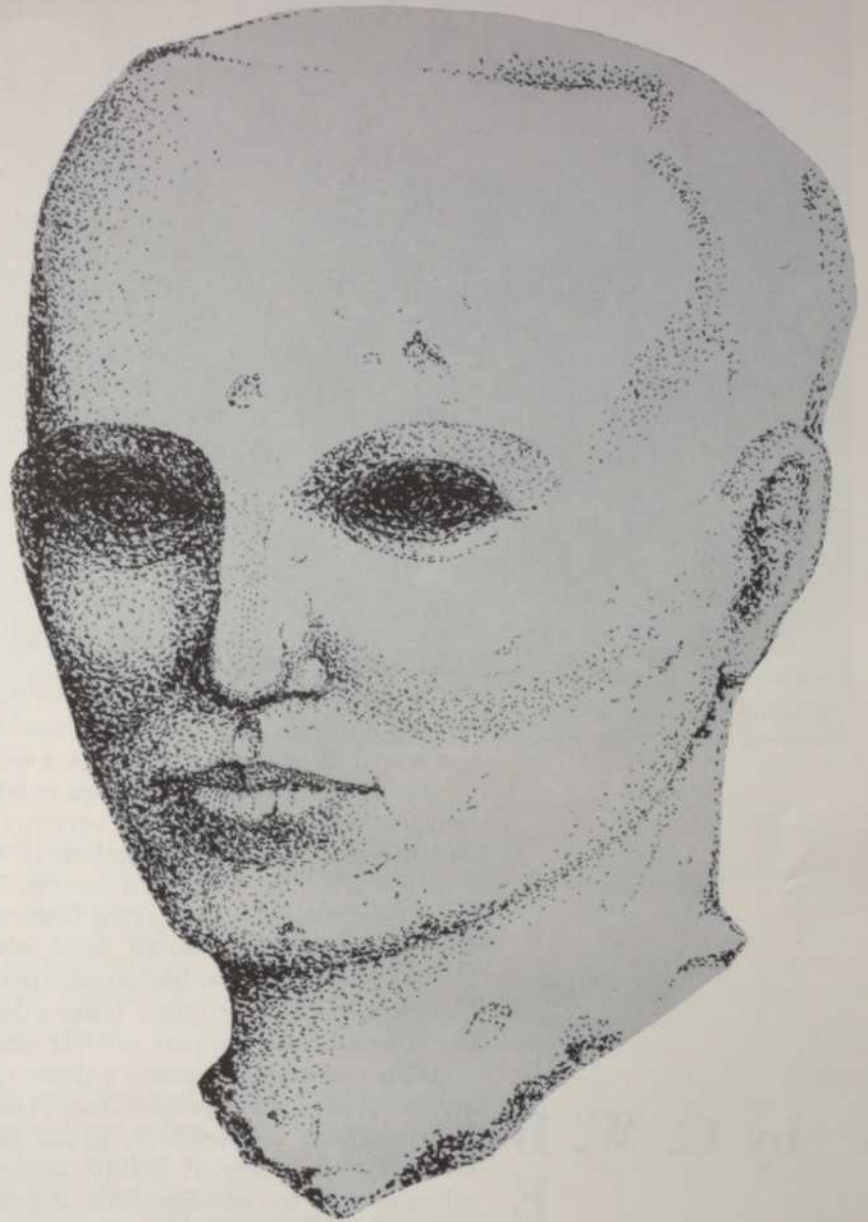


THE NEW FACE of MAN

Articles of Evaluation



Never before has man been subject to such a kaleidoscopic environment as today's. Discoveries, ideologies, and economics of which he can hardly keep track—much less evaluate—pour from the thousand affecting neighborhoods of his incredibly shrunken world. Poised on the edge of a space age, man ironically is conditioned more by environmental forces than at any time in his history. In its series, *The New Face of Man*, the *Sooner Magazine* hopes to present an evaluation of these new forces and their probable influence on our lives. These evaluations will be written by specialists at the University who themselves help to shape the new face of man through their teaching, research, and their love of perspective.

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THE NECESSITY

IN A WORLD where sputniks beep mechanically over the towering heads of radioactive mushrooms; where subliminal advertising and mass education trample upon privacy and individuality; where many people are not sure that life is worth living and are only sure that it never can be lived as formerly—in such a world it is small wonder that we are tending to become uniform statistics on the office charts of factories, clubs, political organizations—and mental institutions.

While trying to survive in today's environment we can easily develop almost unbearable neuroses. Pills and psychology sometimes cure them, but it may well take a philosophy of living to prevent neuroses. In our new world it is necessary to consider the philosophy of our lives as never before.

What is philosophy? I ask the question not simply as an academician, but as a human being. I am speaking of philosophy as a way of living, not merely as a scholarly study. Philosophy means "the love of wisdom." Philosophy, therefore, is first and foremost a sincere pursuit of, or dedication to wisdom. It is not the actual attainment of wisdom. Rather it is the attempt to find wisdom.

And what is wisdom? I suggest that it is the art of living in this world with oneself and with others. To live in this world is to live in the sort of world that I have described—a world of gadgets and things, a world of others and a world of conflicts.

To live in a mechanized age is truly an art. It should not be a mechanical act. When living in a mechanical world becomes mechanical living, man loses his human heritage; and there is certainly no wisdom in that. To live with others is an accomplishment which is meaningful only if we can live first with ourselves. The individual person must be sufficiently integrated from within before he can truly live with other persons. But self-integration cannot exist without self-love or self-respect.

Dr. Erich Fromm has emphasized the wisdom of self-love or self-respect. If one hates one's self, one either hates others, or becomes overly dependent on others in order to gain their support to hide one's own feelings of guilt or self-hatred.

This nation has become a great nation of joiners. I sometimes suspect that there are no more lonely people than American joiners. There is, however, nothing wrong with working cooperatively in the community with different organizations, providing one has found himself before attempting to lose himself in groups. To try to find ourselves merely by joining clubs or groups is to become an "organization man" rather than an organized man—a whole person from within.

As Socrates long ago pointed out, one must know one's self. This is the true beginning of wisdom. Such knowledge of oneself is not merely an intellectual matter; it involves also the emotional and spiritual values of the person.

Wisdom may include reason, but it must also go beyond reason. A man's feelings, his hopes, his spontaneity and creativity, and his sense of wholeness must be developed. This is the essential task of knowing oneself.

As I have suggested, to live with others today does not mean to give up our personhood, rather it recognizes the necessity for our own personhood. To live with others also compels us to recognize others for what they are. Such recognition is difficult and almost impossible if we must look at others with half-blinded eyes. Such blindness can be removed only if we are whole persons. It is far easier to know others when we know ourselves. For with such knowledge of ourselves comes compassion for others; and without compassion, there is no real understanding of others.

Christian and non-Christian religions alike advocate the doctrine of the love of man for man. What does this amount to? What does it mean? What does it require?

by C. W. B
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Dr. Carlton W. Berenda—Chairman of the University of Oklahoma's department of philosophy, authority in the subjects of relativity, physics, and psychology.

It does not mean that one must accept what is hateful in a man, and it does not mean that one cannot protest against the evils of other men. When Jesus Christ entered the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, he took with him a whip with which he drove out the money-changers. Jesus preached the gospel of love; however, he also used force. This is not a contradiction in Jesus, but rather a recognition that one must sometimes punish or correct an evil action, even though one loves and continues to love the person being punished. In fact, *because* Jesus loved such persons, he attempted by force to *correct* their sins and prevent their damnation.

So much has been written about the nature of love, that only a few words need be added to make clear an important point relevant to these times. Love can be compassionate or merely passionate; it can be understanding love or it can be a demanding "smother" love which seeks to possess the soul of the other person.

Many mothers today are sacrificial in their love of their children in order to gain a manipulative control over them—a sort of bargain-basement love: I do this for you, so you must do this for me. Such "smother" love generally grows out of a sense of insecurity and inadequacy on the part of the mother—she does not have enough respect for her own personhood to assert herself and her own needs, but must always "give in" to her children.

A child must have, and really demands structure and limitations in his world; he must know what he cannot do as well as what he can do.

If a parent can provide limitations and even punishments while still giving understanding love to the child, the child can learn from such corrective punishments without fearing that his parents no longer love him. A parent can correct a young child and still love the child, even as Jesus compassionately corrected the money-changers in the temple.

Philosophy remains today what it has been for more than two thousand years: The art of living. In this day and age, philosophy becomes an absolute necessity for survival—for the survival of life and for the survival of our spiritual integrity.