

rocking back and forth and twisting the end of his blanket. It took a long time because he knew the whole tune. He would hit Janie if she touched his record player today.

"Here's your bib, Janie. Up you go," Mother said.

He stopped rocking and listened. Maybe they would call the police to help find him.

"Bill, will you go get Johnny out of the tent and bring him in to eat?" Mother said.

Slowly, he gathered up his blanket and Charley Bear. He could hardly wait to get in to breakfast. He hated the tent.

## My Responsibilities as a Twentieth-Century American

Tom E. Willey

**I**NDIVIDUAL responsibility in twentieth-century America is a challenging proposition. It is a concept that can encompass every aspect of our lives. A staggering list of explicit duties could be compiled in order to define responsibility in this sense. However, one cannot possibly pursue every opportunity which may exist within the structure of modern society. I, for one, would not attempt to serve as precinct chairman for my political party, organize a Community Chest canvass, bake cookies for the church social, read to disabled veterans on Saturdays, and circulate a petition for the Parent-Teacher's Association. I would not attempt all these activities in the span of a year, nor perhaps in the span of my life. Such a dilution of individual energy would not contribute to the total welfare of any one group. How, then, can a twentieth-century American fulfill his responsibility as a citizen without becoming frustrated by the innumerable vehicles that can serve this purpose?

Home base is the nucleus of any operation. In business, home base is the main plant. For the spider, home base is his web. The spider fulfills his role by maintaining a sturdy and intricately woven web. His opportunities are grasped within the scope of his web. He does not run after every beetle that comes trundling by. Human beings also spin webs. These human webs may be composed of many different materials, but they are effective only when composed of integrity, objectivity, intellectual curiosity, and humility. The human web is personality. I am my own home base. The breadth, depth, and texture of my personality determine the quantity and quality of opportunities that fall within my scope. In examining the natures of my acquaintances who can be classified as "good citizens," I find that they possess most of the materials necessary for an effective web. Being primarily involved in living sound, ordered lives, these people almost unconsciously perform the duties of citizenship without tub-thumping or Chauvinistic patriotism. These people keep their own back yards clean and do not self-righteously peer

over the neighbor's fence to check on the condition of his affairs.

My responsibility as a twentieth-century American is not something I can frantically grab at. It is something I must prepare for. A girder of structural steel plays its role in the framework of a large building only if it has been properly poured, tempered, and secured. Therefore, my responsibility is to pour, temper, and secure myself as a component part of modern society. In my particular case, this can be enhanced by stimulating my intellectual capacities, by developing my spiritual depth and discipline, and by pursuing my life's work with imagination and dedication. The facilities for such a program are at my fingertips, as they are for most Americans. All I have to do is avail myself of them. By expanding these three dimensions of my life, I will increase the scope and quality of my personal web. Then the tangible means of pursuing social responsibility will fall within my province and I will be able to give them more than hollow "do-gooder" noises and nervous energy.

My responsibilities as a twentieth-century American are the same as those of an Early Egyptian or Late Empire Roman. Basically, this concept is fulfilled by being responsible for myself. Though I am but a pinch of flesh in the cosmos, a machine is only as strong as its weakest component part.

## A Legion of Morons

Judy Winslow

**I**N William Allen White's essay "Good Newspapers and Bad," he states that "the moron's name is Legion." By such a statement, Mr. White professes his belief in the idea that our society harbors many individuals who may be classified as morons. Mr. White does not mean morons in the strictest psychological sense of the word, however. He does not use the definition of a moron as being a person who is mentally deficient to the extent that his mental capacity can reach only that of a twelve-year-old child. Mr. White's reference to morons is one pertaining to those persons who have slightly less than average intelligence and who have failed to develop that intelligence to the point where they have a clear conception of right and wrong. These persons, according to Mr. White, are not the illiterate minority as one might expect, but they are the people who make up a large and prominent part of our society. One reason which Mr. White gives for the increasing prominence of this group is public and compulsory education.

I agree with Mr. White's statement, "The moron's name is Legion." The great number of these mentally and morally mediocre people is evident to anyone who cares to observe humanity. These people are often referred to as the mass or the mob. They are a closely knit society, a fact which accounts for their strength; for, if they are not strong in intellect, they make up for this deficiency in unity. In this moronic mass the "herd instinct" is the dominating