ADVANCED READING

PASSAGE 1

It is an unfortunate fact that most North Americans know little about American Indian culture and history. Scholars have studied such matters, but they have not succeeded in broadcasting their conclusions widely. Thus, it is still not widely known that American Indians have epics, that they performed plays long before Europeans arrived, and that they practiced politics and carried on trade.

One way to gain a fuller appreciation of this rich culture is to examine American Indian poetry, for poetry is in all cultures the most central and articulate of the arts. It is especially important that we study American Indian poetry as this poetry can create a context that gives cohesive expression to the crafts, the artifacts, and the isolated facts that many Americans have managed to notice willy-nilly. Even a survey of American Indian poetry reveals a range of poetic thought and technique that defies easy generalization. Jarold Ramsey hazards a summary, however, which serves at least to give the uninitiated reader some sense of what American Indian poetry is like. Overall, he writes, it represents "an oral, formulaic, traditional, and anonymous art form," whose approach is to emphasize the "mythic and sacred" components of reality. It "flourished through public performances... by skilled recitalists whose audiences already knew the individual stories" and valued the performers for their "ability to exploit their material dramatically and to combine them [their stories] in longer cycles" rather than for their "plot invention." Because this poetry belongs to highly ethnocentric tribal peoples, whose cultures "we still do not know much about," it "is likely to seem all the more terse, even cryptic."

American Indian poetry has another feature that Ramsey ignores: it is always functional. Whether sung, chanted, or recited; whether performed ceremonially, as entertainment, or as part of a task such as curing a patient or grinding corn; or whether recited individually or by a group, it is always fully woven into the fabric of ordinary life.

For complicated reasons, American Indian poetry has basically been ignored by non-Indian cultures. Kenneth Lincoln writes that failure to hear American Indian voices results "partly...from the tragedies of tribal dislocation, partly from mistranslation, partly from misconceptions about literature, partly from cultural indifference." Brian Swann suggests an additional explanation: tribal poetry is oral, whereas Europeans arrived in the New World with a deeply ingrained belief in the primacy of the written word. As a result, European settles found it hard to imagine that poetry could exist without written texts and thus that the American Indians had achieved something parallel to what Europeans called literature long before Europeans arrived. As a consequence, Europeans did not fully respond to the rich vitality of American Indian poetry.

PASSAGE 2

Early models of the geography of the metropolis were unicellular: that is, they assumed that the entire urban district would normally be dominated by a single central district, around which the various economic functions of the community would be focused. This central business district (CBD) is the source of so-called high-order goods and services, which can most efficiently be provided from a central location rather than from numerous widely dispersed locations. Thus, retailers of infrequently and irregularly purchased goods, such as fur coats, jewelry, and antique furniture, and specialized service outlets, such as theaters, advertising agencies, law firms, and government agencies, will generally be found in the CBD. By contrast, less costly, more frequently demanded goods, such as groceries and housewares, and low-order services, such as shoe repair and hairdressing, will be available at many small, widely scattered outlets throughout the metropolis.

Both the concentric-ring model of the metropolis, first developed in Chicago in the late nineteenth century, and the sector model, closely associated with the work of Homer Hoyt in the 1930s, make the CBD the focal point of the metropolis. The concentric-ring model assumes that the varying degrees of need for accessibility to the CBD of various kinds of economic entities will be the main determinant of their location. Thus, wholesale and manufacturing firms, which need easy accessibility to the specialized legal, financial, and governmental services provided in the CBD, will normally be located just outside the CBD itself. Residential areas will occupy the outer rings of the model, with low-income groups residing in the relatively crowded older housing close to the business zone and high-income groups occupying the outermost ring, in the more spacious, newer residential areas built up through urban expansion.

Homer Hoyt's sector model is a modified version of the concentric-ring model. Recognizing the influence of early established patterns of geographic distribution on the later growth of the city, Hoyt developed the concept of directional inertia. According to Hoyt, custom and social pressures tend to perpetuate locational patterns within the city. Thus, if a particular part of the city (say, the east side) becomes a common residential area for higher-income families, perhaps because of a particular topographical advantage such as a lake or other desirable feature, future expansion of the high-income segment of the population is likely to proceed in the same direction. In our example, as the metropolis expands, a wedge-shaped sector would develop on the east side of the city in which the higher-income residence would be clustered. Lower-income residences, along with manufacturing facilities, would be confined, therefore, to the western margins of the CBD.

Although Hoyt's model undoubtedly represented an advance in sophistication over the simpler concentric-ring model, neither model fully accounts for the increasing importance of focal points other than the traditional CBD. Recent years have witnessed he establishment around older cities of secondary nuclei centered on suburban business districts. In other cases, particular kinds of goods, services, and manufacturing facilities have clustered in specialized centers away from the CBD, encouraging the development of particular housing patterns in the adjacent areas. A new multicellular model of metropolitan geography is needed to express these and other emerging trends of urban growth.

PASSAGE 3

There is widespread belief that the emergence of giant industries has been accompanied by an equivalent surge in industrial research. A recent study of important inventions made since the turn of the century reveals that more than half were the product of individual inventors working alone, independent of organized industrial research. While industrial laboratories contributed such important products as nylon and transistors, independent inventors developed air conditioning, the automatic transmission, the jet engine, the helicopter, insulin, and streptomycin. Still other inventions, such as stainless steel, television, silicones, and Plexiglas were developed through the combined efforts of individuals and laboratory teams.

Despite these finding, we are urged to support monopolistic power on the grounds that such power creates an environment supportive of innovation. We are told that the independent inventor, along with the small firm, cannot afford to undertake the important research needed to improve our standard of living while protecting our diminishing resources; that only the giant corporation or conglomerate, with its prodigious assets, can afford the kind of expenditures that produce the technological advances vital to economic progress. But when we examine expenditures for research, we find that of the more than $35 billion spent each year in this country, almost two-thirds is spent by the federal government. More than half of this government expenditure is funneled into military research and product development, accounting for the enormous increase in spending in such industries as nuclear energy, aircraft, missiles, and electronics. There are those who consider it questionable that these defense-linked research projects will either improve our standard of living or do much to protect our diminishing resources.

Recent history has demonstrated that we may have to alter our longstanding conception of the process actuated by competition. The price variable, once perceived as the dominant aspect of the process, is now subordinate to the competition of the new product, the new business structure, and the new technology. While it can be assumed that in a highly competitive industry not dominated by single corporation, investment in innovation—a risky and expensive budget item—might meet resistance from management and stockholders concerned about cost-cutting, efficient organization, and large advertising budgets, it would be an egregious error to equate the monopolistic producer with bountiful expenditures on research. Large-scale enterprises tend to operate more comfortably in stable and secure circumstances, and their managerial bureaucracies tend to promote the status quo and resist the threat implicit in change. Moreover, in some cases, industrial giants faced with little or no competition seek to avoid the capital loss resulting from obsolescence by deliberately obstructing technological progress. By contrast, small firms undeterred by large investments in plant and capital equipment often aggressively pursue new techniques and new products, investing in innovation in order to expand their market shares.