they affected the nature and timing of individual transitions. Greven in fact does suggest (pp. 226-27) that "evangelicals" and "moderates" had quite different approaches to movement through the stages of life: whether the temperaments he sketched created different patterns in the life course is a question of some interest. Indeed, if temperament made no difference in the life course, one might wonder whether it was in fact of fundamental significance.

While the life course may prove to be the most important model to appear to date in the history of the family, it would be unwise in a field so young and active to place too large a bet on the future direction of research.

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* * *


History as inevitable progress can rear its whiggish head in many ways. Currently it often appears in a morally inverted manner. Burton J. Bledstein and Magali Sarfatti Larson ascribe an almost lock-step nineteenth-century evolution and enormous social power to American professions, a development which both authors regard as a bad thing. Impersonal and grasping professions "act" in a collective, seemingly intentional way against the interests of a victimized populace. For Bledstein and Larson, progress for professionals means regress for the interests of the majority of the population in a manner approaching moral totality. By contrast, Donald M. Scott and Clifford E. Clark, Jr. approach the process of professionalization as a series of only imperfectly conscious strategies of often loosely constructed groups seeking means with which to cope as well as possible with a sometimes hostile, frequently indifferent, partly welcoming society. The development of the professions is not an unequivocal triumph, and yet professions spread in ways the populace as well as the aspirants for leadership desire, reservations notwithstanding. Not at all celebratory, this approach leads to a subtle critique rather than to an angry denunciation of American professions. Both modes of analysis lead toward a fuller understanding of the institutions and the ideology of the modern American middle class: what differs is the analysis of the manner in which the hegemony of middle-class values was developed and legitimized.

To be middle-class was the cherished goal for nineteenth-century Americans, Bledstein asserts in his stimulating and elegant study, and the professions, most especially in the universities, were the central agencies by which the middle class "matured and defined itself" (p. ix). Dreading failure, passionately courting success, abhorring amateurism, seeking inner confidence, money and status, booming and boosting, but also grasping for order and discipline, middle-class Americans sought structures, both outward and inward. In a
very imaginative way, Bledstein examines civic associations, building styles, games, learned societies, magazines for all activities, the rituals of mealtime, all as places where structures were built. "The totality of the Mid-Victorian impulse to contain the life experiences of the individual from birth to death [was achieved] by isolating them as science. Describing the outer structure of the visible universe, Mid-Victorians believed that they also described the inner structure of the invisible one. Control of the physical movements of a person in his course of life meant control of the confines of his spiritual attitudes" (p. 55). To this point, Bledstein emphasizes that "opportunistic persons" eagerly sought forms for the social discipline of others. He then marries this need for control to mass submission — "the citizen became a client whose obligation was to trust the professional" (pp. 78-79). The new professional sought not merely "autonomous individualism" for himself but also "unchallenged authority" (pp. 87-88). The submission of one party matched the assertion of the other until Bledstein arrives at "the victimized client, who was reduced to the condition of desperate trust" (p. 102, emphasis added). Bledstein argues that out of their enormous anxiety and order-striving, most people, the non-professionals, voluntarily chose total submission, and that the dominance of the professionals similarly approached the absolute: liberalism approached totalitarianism. "Perhaps no Calvinist system of thought ever made use of the insecurities of people more effectively than did the culture of professionalism" (p. 102).

Bledstein asserts that the "ego-satisfying pretensions of professionalism have been closer to the heart of the middle-class American than the raw profits of capitalism". This assertion strikes me as less than self-evident economically and psychologically, as it seems to me that egoism and capitalism can well be intertwined, but it then allows Bledstein to connect his victim/master duality to the modern American university which he sees as "a primary service organization" in the creation of "usable" scholarship, and a launching pad for the other "derivative institutions" which serve the pretensions and exploit the insecurities of middle-class Americans (p. 289).

Bledstein's consequent description of rudderless, loutish ante-bellum college students trapped in boring, execrably-staffed custodial colleges, if familiar, is well-done. In a quite original way, he then describes the beginnings of the "rise" of the modern university not only in the scholarly search for a scientific world view, but in ante-bellum student literary societies, fraternities, organized athletics, and the student YMCA, all institutions which reflected the middle-class organizational aspirations of the students themselves, and which created a student base for a more serious university. Quite as opposed to being victimized clients these students actively prepared themselves first for Ralph Waldo Emerson, "a cultural spokesman for the slumbering powers of nature within the individual, for self-sufficiency and struggle [who] boosted the ego of the student looking forward to a career" (p. 260). If Emerson in his ante-bellum, more radical phase was something of a counterculture educator, after the Civil War a new generation of mainstream university presidents consciously sought out these career committed young while they opened out the university, and made success stories of themselves. The institution, the leaders and the students were all made for each other. Servicing fears and ambitions, often under the cloak of detached expertise, was the real purpose of universities. Bledstein has little use for this process, which he sees as nearly uniform, continuing until the present.

The institution provided the testing ground for the kind of world an energetic middle class sought to create for itself. And it still does so. Careerism, competition, the standardization of rules and the organization of hierarchies, the obsession with expansion and growth, professionals seeking recognition and financial rewards for their efforts, administrators in the process of building empires: basically, both the 1900 (pp. 288-89).

Such universities served to contain and reduce controversial public issues, and would-be social critics like Richard T. Ely, for instance, learned to mute themselves, to be
careerist in the name of science. In the university, and by extrapolation in all the professions, merit, idealism and genuine service have always at best existed alongside corruption, personal cynicism and duplicity. Bledstein overtly moralizes very little over his picture although he indicates that what was lost morally was an ability for professionals "to respond to each other as members of a common humanity" (p. 309).

Although Larson and Bledstein have both attempted a similar task of demystifying professionalism, where Bledstein's book is clearly written and elegantly argued, Larson's is poorly written, and badly composed. The theoretical sections are especially foggy; the clearest writing is in the historical portions, which are largely derivative, particularly from the work of Robert Wiebe and Samuel Hays. For Larson, discussing roughly the same time period as Bledstein, professionalism has always been a "collective project which aims at marked control", through "the standardized and centralized production of professional producers" (pp. 17, 50). This conscious marketing project was tied to an ideological task: "Inseparable from the [marketing] task, they had to gain special status for their members and give them respectability" (p. 8). At this point Larson employs what might best be termed vulgar Gramscianism. Unlike Antonio Gramsci himself, who believed that leadership must be natural to be effective, and that nineteenth and early twentieth-century European bourgeois domination made considerable social sense to both leaders and populace, Larson believes that the central thrust of the ideology of professionals was artificial, "not only an image which consciously inspires collective or individual efforts, but a mystification which unconsciously obscures real social structures and relations" (p. xviii).

At other places, Larson argues that in fact professionalization emerged from and was determined by the evolution of late, corporate capitalism: "The structures that emerged were analogous beneath the surface: insofar as they were modern, all levels of the new educational systems were spawned by capitalist industrialization" (p. 16, emphasis in the original; also see pp. 145-58). This ill-written passage suggests a determinism which would make professionalism purely derivative from economic process, which would lead to a critique of Bledstein, for example, for taking universities to be primary rather than derivative and often marginal structures. Such reductionism would be ham-handed, but it would deal with the professions in a more modest way. Indeed at times Larson wants to link structure with superstructure though she tells us relatively little about the late capitalist structures which would form the base of her thesis. It is insufficient merely to use late capitalism as a self-evident catch phrase and leave it at that.

As far as I can discern, Larson's general theme is not economic determinist, which could at least deal consistently with the professions as one middle-class vanguard involved in a class project, but her own moral anger that professionals said one thing while acting out the opposite. "Guided — at least ideally — by principles of functional rationality and applied science, the apparently classless organizations transmute power into authority by invoking the legitimacy of expertise. Thus, the reorganization of American society after the Civil War not only established a new system of social stratification, but also, logically, created a new set of ideological legitimations for inequality" (p. 145). If rationality is the ideal, is it not the real principle? Of course not. If the organizations are apparently classless, are they really so? Of course not. "In capitalist society, the social function of ideology is to conceal the existence of class, and the basic structure of exploitation [through] the ideological denial of structural authority" (p. 156).

Shoring up the class system whether purposefully, or unintentionally, a question of intent on which Larson wavers, the professionals were only fooling themselves; their sense of individual freedom and control was but a "mask"; they suffered from "subjective illusion", false consciousness by any other name (pp. 225, 243). Insofar as the middle class had submitted to false Gods unconsciously, they now can awaken.

To separate the progressive human meaning of one's work from the ideological functions inscribed in one's role is a task of personal salvation. This questioning has been
attempted and is taking place today, however silently, however timidly, in schools and in work places. Breaking with ideology, finding new norms for the social production of knowledge and the social uses of competence demands passion, vision, and hard work. This major historical task can only be sustained by a solitary collective, aware of its part and of its place in the overall struggle for human liberation. In a historical perspective, abandoning the ‘subjective illusion’ and the seductions of bourgeois individualism becomes the premise of personal freedom (pp. 243-44).

The unconscious irony in this statement is that Larson has analyzed a “solidary collective aware of its past”, engaged with passion and vision in hard work, throughout her book. Now she wishes simply to reverse, through rhetoric, the moral content of the professions, by appealing to a collective work project including all workers. Does she want a cultural revolution to demolish specialization, expertise, differentiation of status and other rewards? Without levelling, is not a solidary collective aware of its past merely her version of the professions, somehow morally transformed? Will class and exploitation disappear by magical appeals to correctly informed hard work? Were the professionals then structurally correct and morally wrong all along? Did they suffer both from false moral consciousness and a consciousness all too true to the structures of the late capitalist order which Larson finds (of course with good reason) to be so repulsive? I think that Larson answers all these questions in the affirmative, and it is in this way that I believe that the theme of the book is Larson’s moral outrage, an outrage which I am sure is widely shared. Whether that outrage trapped out in such rhetoric is social revolutionary or a variation of bourgeois subjectivism I shall leave to the reader to choose.

Finally one wonders where Larson, the professional sociologist, immersed in the abstract jargon of her discipline, and Bledstein, the professional historian, stand toward the professionalization of their own work, and whether, in addition, their demystification project contains a perverse elitism in their analysis of masters and victims. These are paradoxes to which I shall return at the conclusion of this essay.

In his brilliant essay, Donald M. Scott stays off the horns of these contradictions and paradoxes by examining the ideologies and strategies of the clergy, 1750-1850, within the changing framework of personal and public discourse at that time. Everything basic changed for the clergy, but nothing was dictated from without, nor schemed for in a super-conscious way from within, nor does Scott deduce back in a naive causal manner from what he believes to be results to the origins of change. I have examined the emergence of forms of ministerial organization and consciousness which we might now define as professional within the context of changes in the place of religion in personal and public life and in the nature of church and clergy as social institutions. The result is a specific history of how the ministry changed as a social institution, rather than a description of a process that inevitably turned the ministry into a ‘profession’ (p. xiii).

Scott’s point of departure is the communal order of each mid-eighteenth-century New England town, with the minister as its normally permanent mainstay. Scott believes that at the core of eighteenth-century New England society and culture was “communalism, a social structure and ideology in which order, harmony, and obedience to all authority were the highest public and social values”. The local minister had two roles, as “the keeper and purveyor of the public culture, the body of fundamental precepts and values that defined the social community”, and as “enforcer of the personal values and decorum that sustained it” (p. 12). Colonial historians have always relished arguing over the degree to which this communalism was ever emplaced, and over the timing of its breakdown. More recently “modernization” has become the code word, with the “pre-modern” period a basically timeless, changeless place (thus incorporating the weakest aspect of anthropological theory), out of which history accelerated when “modernization” began. Scott avoids the
shoals of the inevitability of the processes of modernization itself, but there is something suspiciously uniform and timeless in his model of eighteenth-century society.

Once Scott engages in analysis of historical process in this essay, he is exquisitely attuned to the nuances of changing forms and alterations of consciousness, not only in intellectual life but in the lives of the passions. The essay which follows is both rich and pared down, and this summary of it cannot really convey those qualities.

In the period 1790-1810, Scott argues, the eighteenth-century New England order began to crumble. Politics moved from deference to partisanship. The New England clergy first tied themselves to the Federalists, who maintained an ideology of deference even while becoming a political party, abandoning the old paternalist ordering modes in practice. The clergy then beat a "strategic retreat" and attempted to create and guard a domain of "moral citizenship" apart from the state (p. 35). The moral reform societies of the 1810s were institutional expressions of this holding action.

By about 1815 or 1820, the New England clergy moved toward a more forward public position, one attuned to the new, perhaps more democratic and certainly more wide open American society. At the core of what Scott calls "the rise of the evangelical concept of the social order" (the title of Chapter III), was the dramatic conversion experience which propelled many young men into the ministry. For them, self-repression replaced deference, "self-control [rather than] the exertion and acceptance of institutional authority". If there were a tyrant, he was within. The reborn individual now found membership in a "pious national community" of fellow converts, a form for some personal security in an almost anarchic general sea of mobility and flux (p. 36). Institutionally, the New England clergy no longer belonged at the core of the village (which was dispersing in any event), but to a new "evangelical empire" (p. 51) of societies for tract and bible distribution, for home missionary work, for temperance, for Sunday schools, as well as to new evangelical colleges and theological seminaries. The young, often poor clergyman "no longer saw himself as permanently bound and belonging to a place because of the character of his office. Instead he entered [the ministry] as an agent of organized evangelicalism, the dutiful occupant of a particular post which he might have to surrender if service to the greater evangelical cause demanded it" (p. 74).

The change in role, the "sense of agency" (p. 85) brought about by conversion was more inward and powerful than any reoriented institutional sensibility could contain. Unlike the more paced and examined eighteenth-century conversion, the evangelical version was an almost instantaneous burst of spiritual energy. Revivals "both intensified and objectified the sense of total change, as the communicant went from the terrible bondage of sin and self to the joy of righteousness in a matter of hours or days". Swept by guilt, urged by revivalist audience, the sinner acted immediately, moving first to the anxious bench, then to that of the saved, and finally to the exhortation of depraved others. "Thus within the revival itself, communicants moved into a mode of feeling and acting diametrically opposed to the sin and anxiety of their previous life" (p. 84). Rebirth compelled ever-heightening moral activism toward a perfect holiness and against the hated sinfulness.

Moving beyond the channels of the "evangelical empire" in the 1830s, many of the converted focused on slavery, which they believed to be the American evil ne plus ultra, the sin of self-gratification in a specially degraded American form. Theodore Dwight Weld in particular pressed young converts toward a second conversion, against slavery. Most Americans, Northern as well as Southern, recoiled from what they saw as an assault on the political framework by a fanatical "political priestcraft" (p. 102). By 1835, abolitionism had split evangelicalism as well, in large part by opening up an inner evangelical contradiction between activist engagement in the world, and refuge-seeking from it. In the 1830s and 1840s chaos abounded, congregations split, ministers' salaries decreased as their transiency increased. I am not convinced that immediate abolitionism carried as much force in
causing this crumbling as Scott ascribes to it, but it surely was part of the fragmentation he depicts.

The way out of the chaos deepened by militant, divisive evangelicalism in the 1850s was to cool out evangelicalism. Ministers were advised to approach their congregations in a more aloof manner. Suspicion of aggressive and often transitory religious emotions, of the immediate, wrath-filled scourging of the conversion experience, tended to lead mid-century evangelicals toward a gentler conception of a God of Love. "Indeed, the terms employed to describe such feelings are revealing: meek, gentle, humble, sweet, tender, unreproachful, forgiving. Rather than 'zealous' the watchword for this new mode of religious feeling would have to be 'sentimental'" (p. 142). By 1850, churches were becoming "withdrawn islands of piety" rather than threatening bastions of the Lord, and the clergy were becoming the professional guides on the spiritual retreat (p. 147).

Again, one might quibble with Scott over the timing and sweep of this shift, particularly in the confused political realm of the 1850s, where a minister like Henry Ward Beecher might both preach sugary love and vehemently attack the sin of slavery. However, Scott convincingly demonstrates many of the political and social origins of late nineteenth-century sentimental Christianity, which Ann Douglas has described so graphically in _The Feminization of American Culture_.

The enormously popular Henry Ward Beecher provides one very useful bridge from the zealous to the sentimental in nineteenth-century American Christianity, and from office to profession in the ministry, as Clifford Clark ably demonstrates. Rebell ing against the harsh God worshipped by his evangelist father, Lyman, among others, Henry moved toward what Clark calls "romantic Christianity" — "a religion of the heart, an appeal to the feelings and emotions that replaced... cold formalistic evangelical theology". This message was aimed particularly at the anxious emergent middle class. "It was a system of values that prompted compromise, defused discontent, and provided the man on the street with a distinct identity and sense of achievement" (p. 3). Beecher was an instrument finely tuned to the desires of his parishioners and of the huge national lecture and reading audience he reached. He rarely stuck his neck out, and certainly never worried over internal intellectual consistency, but it is his very intellectual second-rateness, tied to his exquisite political sensibility, that made him so popular from the 1840s to the 1880s, and makes him such a representative figure for historians. In addition, he was a great "success story", a shrewd opportunist moving ever upwards from Lawrenceburg, Indiana, to Indianapolis to the flossy Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, and thence onto the national platform of the emerging civil religion certain mawkish evangelists still fill today. Yet if he loved to be popular, Clark insists that Beecher addressed all the major social questions of his day, if hesitantly.

In the 1830s Beecher found slavery a sin, but feared that violence which would be necessary to destroy it. Hence he argued that slavery was unprofitable, and would die a natural death. Unlike the immediate abolitionists, Beecher employed such sophistry, Clark writes, to avoid "the tougher moral issues which concerned the question of how to correct the present injustice" (p. 40). By the 1850s, though outside organized abolitionism, and all the while preaching the Gospel of Love, Beecher moved toward political action, holding mock slave auctions in his church and helping finance the purchase of arms for shipment to free-state settlers in Kansas. (Indeed, Southerners referred to the Sharpe's rifles as Beecher's Bibles.) Thus Beecher backed toward violent radicalism, all the while thinking of himself as an independent moderate. In this, far from being alone, or in a vanguard, Beecher was articulating an increasingly violent anti-southernism which was growing rapidly in the North.

Beecher waffled his way through most public issues in a similar manner. He supported moral probity and self-discipline in liberal sermons which calmed the grasping well-to-do. "[T]here was a glaring contradiction between the two sides of Beecher's social philo-
sophy — his defense of frugality, discipline, and character, and his rationalization of leisure, wealth, and luxury”, Clark writes. Yet rather than dismissing Beecher as a morally depraved new professional, Clark concludes, setting Beecher in his social context, that “it was a contradiction that was inherent in middle-class morality itself” (p. 114). Contradictions notwithstanding, Beecher did urge the humanization of late nineteenth-century capitalism in a way forceful enough to make him something of a father of the Social Gospel, a late nineteenth-century movement of activist, reformist ministers.

So well did Beecher straddle the conflicting desires of his audience that he remained the idol of millions all his life. In an era when preaching, political and religious, was the most popular entertainment, Beecher was perhaps the biggest star. Thus when he was dragged through years of scandal over a liaison he may have had with Elizabeth Tilton, the wife of a fellow preacher, far from condemning him the American Victorian public “simply refused even to consider whether Beecher might have been guilty”, as to so believe would be to call in question the balanced morality for which Beecher was the preeminent spokesman (p. 225). In his chapter on the Tilton affair, as elsewhere, Clark capably demonstrates the subtle relationships of leaders to led in a troubled social environment in which both parties had urgent needs for stabilizing values.

Scott and Clark employ a revisionist mode with which to analyse professionalism as other than the inevitable victory of the forces of progress (or regress). The clergy attempted to read through the dark glass, and to contain social situations which were forever shifting under their view. Adjusting what they considered to be the appropriate social order to what they saw emerging, they indeed served that order. But so did their audiences: professionals and communicants had to share a consciousness of ordering principles for them all to assay the sorting out of their lives. Subordination of the publics followed, but not to just any order, only to an order that felt appropriate. Purely artificial and arbitrary assertions of power did not work well in nineteenth-century America: it was the insistence on self-control, on the internalization of ordering principles, which Scott and Clark demonstrate so well, that characterized the intricate, mutually enforced bonds between leaders and led in a liberal, capitalist society.

Professionals were feared and resented as well as admired and followed; professionalization marked a decline as much if not more than an increase in social power of American leaders, as Daniel Calhoun has suggested in Professional Lives in America and in The Intelligence of a People. It seems crucial to me that Calhoun’s leads in the history of the professions develop, as the Scott and Clark book do, toward a more sophisticated methodology for exploring the mutual relations and perceptions of publics and professions set in clearly defined, broader structural and ideological contexts. By this means, historians will be able to perceive publics as something more complex than passive victims, and professionals as less than triumphant (corruptly or otherwise). There is a fascinating dialectic to be explored which can replace the tendency towards a perversive elitism whereby groups of nasty agents of professionalization dominate masses of suckers.

Finally I would stress that it is all too tempting for professionals to call the professions corrupt in professional monographs. There are elements of professionalism such as detachment, criticism, clarity, honesty which none of these authors would challenge. In addition modern societies seem to have an apparent need for expertise, and this demand seems to carry with it both inequalities of economic and status rewards, and the rigidities of orthodox recognition and licensing systems. This is a terrible dilemma inside which professional individuals, as others, are institutionalized, rewarded as well as punished, and in which their consciousness is formed. Quite frankly I despair much of the time about the possibilities of breaking out of this web — a yearning widespread in middle-class people, not only in professionals — while remaining attached to professional history and the university. Despair too can be easy and self-indulgent, and the search must continue for more humane social forms. Yet I am wary of the net effect of writing too much out of anger
toward our forbears who worked within the boundaries of their imaginations with the difficult nineteenth-century social situation. Like Scott and Clark, I find it crucial to demonstrate some of the dynamics by which limited professionals form and are formed by sets of relationships with other active members of the wider culture in which they live, to explore the full nature, limits, aspirations and all, of the founders of modern professions.

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The Tudor crown, embodiment of the people, was wedded to all society. At least after Henry VII, it was divine. Cranmer once tried to convince an audience that rebellion had never succeeded, and later Sir John Harington put it better when he said that if ever treason prospered none dare call it treason. The familiar frontispiece to a seventeenth-century work, Leviathan, adequately represents an Elizabethan image. If authorities were tireless in the hunt for suspects, reports about them were freely given and not just from the malicious or professional informers. For treason was the primary crime, not merely against an individual sovereign but against the commonweal.

Then I, and you, and all of us fell down, Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.

This period, phenomenal for its state building, changing relationship with the Church, and dynastic complexities, spawned about sixty-eight statutes dealing with treason, an average of nearly one a year from 1534. There had been a few lesser statutes in the fifteenth century, but in 1534 the need was to extend that of 1352 — Coke called it a “blessed act” — which had embraced bringing about or imagining the death of the sovereign, consort or heir, adhering to his enemies, engaging in war against him, coining, and so on. Indeed there had already been expansions in the courts, particularly with respect to treason by words which was now given a statutory basis. This was specifically so with regard to malicious speech against the king’s title or declarations that he was a heretic, schismatic or tyrant. One witness was specified, but this did not give exceptional scope to the prosecution since the medieval statute, which remained in force, had said nothing about witnesses. In any case governments, whatever the statutes proceeded upon, preferred to produce as many witnesses as possible. In 1534, perhaps, the Church was a prime consideration. Professor Bellamy describes this statute as “a specific response to a specific problem” (p. 32), but he pays attention to the often ignored clause about forfeiture and to other legislation sponsored by new marriages and the changing line of succession. Forging the great and privy seals was already covered, but a separate act protected the signet and sign manual, and the 1539 statute of proclamations also introduced a treason provision. Thereafter there were “periodic contractions and expansions” (p. 47). The main Henrician statute was criticized for severity by the act of 1547 which repealed it. Written denial of the supremacy was retained, but for words it had to be the third offence. An act of 1549 closed some gaps, making it treason for twelve or more men to band together to imprison a member of the Privy Council or to alter the laws by force. This was a reaction to recent uprisings, but in truth it came close to describing what Warwick was soon to do successfully. The mood, if not the detail, of 1534 was largely restored in 1552, when two witnesses were specified. Mary in 1553 more or less resurrected 1352, but subsequently — the Parliament of 1554-55