

# Delprov ELF 2002-10-26

## Camp Life in Depression America

The migration of 150,000 to 200,000 people from the southern Plains to nonmetropolitan areas of California was one of the most dramatic epics in the social history of Depression America. Many of these migrants obtained work on farms in the Golden State, and for over fifty years readers of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* have followed the travails of these migrant workers. Through Steinbeck's novel, generations of readers have also been treated to glimpses of the New Deal's migrant labor camp program. For the Joad family in *The Grapes of Wrath*, residence in a well-organized, sanitary governmental camp near Bakersfield, California, provided a refreshing reprieve from the vicissitudes of life in a succession of primitive shanty towns and tent cities. Steinbeck portrayed the camp as a model of order, efficiency, and cooperation. "The rows [of tents] were straight and...there was no litter about the tents. The ground of the street had been swept and sprinkled."

Steinbeck based his fictitious, somewhat idyllic account of life in a federal camp upon his observations and conversations with administrators at the Arvin Migratory Labor Camp in Kern County, California. By 1940 Arvin was one of eighteen camps in California and fifty-six camps nationwide that the Farm Security Administration was operating for migrant workers. Each stationary camp provided recreational facilities, modern restrooms, and laundry facilities.

Although John Steinbeck romanticized the migrant labor camps, his decision to accord them a prominent role in his account of the lives of migrant farm laborers in California was appropriate, for the camps represented a pathbreaking development in federal rural policy: through camp construction, the federal government recognized the physical and cultural needs of some of its poorest rural citizens and assumed responsibility for helping to meet those needs. Alluding to the pathbreaking nature of this development, William Leuchtenburg noted that the Farm Security Administration "was the first [federal] agency to do anything substantial for...the migrant." In their study of relations between farm workers, agribusiness, and the state, Linda and Theo Majka likewise

identified the construction of migratory labor camps as "the most significant and lasting program [for migrant farm workers] undertaken by the federal government during this period [1930s]."

Most migrant laborers never lived in a federal camp and some never even knew that federal camps existed. Nevertheless, many of these nonresidents may have benefited indirectly from the camps. As Richard Lowitt observed in his survey of New Deal programs in the West, the camps "served as models that local communities and growers might emulate and emboldened state, county, and local officials to abolish squatters' camps and to force an improvement of facilities provided by farmers." Additionally, they "made it easier for health and educational authorities to enforce the law and serve the needs of the migrants."

Despite the fact that migrant labor camps were a noteworthy innovation in federal policy that affected the housing and health of many migrants, few historians have studied the camps in detail. James Gregory's incisive portrait of the "Okie subculture" in *American Exodus* draws heavily upon newsletters that were published by camp residents, but his monograph provides scant information regarding camp life. Two other students of the California migration, Walter Stein and Anne Loftis, have devoted more attention to the camps but have focused principally upon camp administrators and camp government. These facets of the camps are highly significant but other facets of life in the camps also deserve attention, particularly from those who share the interest of new rural historians in the lifeways of common people. Likewise, those who are interested in the social integration and class consciousness of highly mobile, economically depressed farm workers will find important implications for their work in the well-documented experiences of migrant agricultural workers in the New Deal camps.

*Brian Q. Cannon, Agricultural History, Number 1, Winter 1996*

- 1 Who were the residents of the camps described in the text?**
- A People who worked for the federal government
  - B Poor and sick people who could not support themselves
  - C People who had left their homes to find jobs elsewhere
  - D Immigrants who had recently arrived from overseas
- 2 What are we told about John Steinbeck and his novel *The Grapes of Wrath*?**
- A Steinbeck’s description of a governmental camp in his novel was positive but not entirely accurate
  - B Public reaction to Steinbeck’s novel forced the government to improve conditions in the camps
  - C Steinbeck’s novel criticized the administration of the federal labor camps
  - D Steinbeck based his novel on his personal experience of life in a labor camp
- 3 In what way did the camps represent “a pathbreaking development”?**
- A The people hired to construct the camps had previously been unemployed
  - B America was the first country in the world to build such camps
  - C Migrant workers had earlier been left to manage on their own
  - D The camps allowed their residents to come and go as they pleased
- 4 What was one of the effects of the new camps, according to the writer?**
- A It enabled local authorities to make migrants conform to federal rules
  - B It improved the living conditions of migrant workers at large
  - C It deepened the conflict between farmers and farm workers
  - D It meant that the movements of unemployed migrants could be controlled
- 5 What is concluded in the last paragraph?**
- A Many aspects of camp life are worthy of further study
  - B The federal camps still have a bad reputation
  - C Lack of reliable sources makes it difficult to study the camps
  - D The camps may serve as a model for today’s welfare services

*Please turn over*

# Christmas Carols

The sound of carols, whether emanating from a supermarket sound system or from the lips of youthful wassailers going from house to house, is one of the surest signals that Christmas is coming. Yet, although it now seems almost unthinkable to celebrate (or survive) the festive season without them, carols originally had nothing to do with Christmas, nor even with Christianity. They were among the many pagan customs taken over by the medieval church, which used them initially as much in the celebration of Easter as of Christmas. The subsequent development of the carol as a distinctive genre standing somewhere between the hymn, the folk-song and the sacred ballad, and having as its subject matter the story and significance of Jesus's birth, serves as an interesting pointer to several major currents in British religious, social and cultural history over the last five hundred years.

Born out of late medieval humanism, carols were suppressed by Puritan zealots after the Reformation, partially reinstated at the Restoration, sung by Dissenters and radicals to the distaste of the Established Church in the eighteenth century, rediscovered and reinvented by Victorian antiquarians and romantics, and rewritten in the late twentieth century to fit the demand for social realism and political correctness. As well as reflecting the mood of their times, some of our best loved carols also contain coded comments on contemporary events, including, perhaps, the 1745 Jacobite rebellion and the revolutions across Europe in 1848.

The derivation of the word 'carol' has been the subject of much speculation. It probably goes back through the old French 'caroler' and the Latin

'choraula' to the Greek 'choros', a circling dance often accompanied by singing and associated with dramatic performances, religious festivities and fertility rites. The carol of classical times was a major element in popular celebrations to mark the passing of the winter solstice and the promise of spring. The coming of Christianity may well have increased the carol's pagan connotations with its lively dance rhythms providing a marked contrast to the restrained and measured chants of the new religion. The Church was for long uneasy about the performance of such popular singing-dances and the 'caraula' was explicitly proscribed in a decree of the mid-seventh-century Council of Chalon-sur-Saône. The singing of carols was further condemned by the Council of Avignon in 1209 and as late as 1435 by the Council of Basle.

Although the Church came relatively early to see the advantages of incorporating elements of pagan customs such as the Roman Saturnalia and the Germano-Celtic Yule in its celebration of Christ's nativity, it took much longer to be persuaded of the merits of carols. It was not until the austerity of early medieval Christianity had been tempered by the new spirit of imagination and romance associated with the twelfth-century renaissance that they were taken up as Christian folksongs. The new humanism also brought a change of emphasis away from death and judgement towards a more incarnational focus on the humanity and personality of Jesus, in which the cradle became almost as important an object of devotion as the Cross.

*Ian Bradley, History Today, December 1998*

**6 What are we told about Christmas carols in the opening paragraph?**

- A Their musical origin has been hotly disputed
- B They date back to early Christian times
- C Their cultural significance has been overstated
- D They were given their Christian function in the Middle Ages

**7 What is said about carols from a historical perspective?**

- A They have remained largely unaffected by the passage of time
- B They have often been regarded as controversial
- C Their basic religious message has mostly been generally accepted
- D Their political importance has been underestimated

**8 What is said about the earliest carols?**

- A They seem to have combined singing and dancing
- B They were usually sung by priests on important occasions
- C Their musical qualities were easily adapted to Christian tastes
- D Their main function has never been properly explained

**9 How did the Church first view carols, according to the text?**

- A The Church had little idea about their public appeal
- B Their pagan origin was in itself unacceptable to the Church
- C Their lack of seriousness made the Church suspicious
- D The Church objected to their widespread popularity

**10 What are we told about Christianity in the closing paragraph?**

- A The introduction of carols affected its general direction
- B It was torn by religious conflicts in the early Middle Ages
- C The role of Christ as a human being was exaggerated in the late Middle Ages
- D Its final acceptance of carols was part of a spiritual reorientation

*Please turn over*

*And here are some shorter texts:*

### ***Cutting Grass***

Gases released when grass is cut or trampled can add significantly to urban air pollution, according to an Australian study. In the city of Melbourne in summer, mowing the grass accounts for up to ten per cent of the hydrocarbons entering the atmosphere which react with other gases to form smog. As much as 50 kilograms of volatile organic compounds, including hydrocarbons, are given off per hectare per year from lawns and pastures. Researcher Ian Galbally says: 'Not cutting grass on smog-alert days won't solve the problem, but when combined with other actions—such as car pooling or riding a bike to work—it will make a difference.'

#### **11 What is the main point here?**

- A Modern lawn mowers are harmful to the environment
- B Cutting grass by hand will reduce emissions of hydrocarbons
- C Machine grass cutting has nothing to do with urban smog
- D Less lawn mowing may help to reduce air pollution

### ***Folk-singing***

Folk-singing has been off the popular agenda for so long that it seemed ready to go as underground as original rave culture, but recent arrivals like the young singer-violinist Eliza Carthy have persuaded at least part of the pop audience that the music has some breath in it yet. As with so many marginal areas of an oversubscribed world of music, though, the weight of hundreds of years of singing and songs is enough to discourage the uncommitted.

#### **12 What are we told here?**

- A Folk-singing will probably fail to make a major comeback
- B Folk-singing as an art form has been dead for many years
- C Folk-singing has always been of limited interest to young people
- D Folk-singing has no place in today's popular culture

### ***Fireflies***

Entomologists have known that some female fireflies flash their light to attract suitors from another species and then devour those who call. As it turns out, the meal arms the females with a double dose of lucibufagins, chemicals that repulse hungry spiders. A researcher at Cornell University raised females of the genus *Photuris* in the laboratory and fed *Photinis* males to only some. Although both the males and females produced lucibufagins on their own, spiders ate only those females who had not dined on suitors.

#### **13 What are we told about female fireflies?**

- A They are usually avoided by males from the same species
- B They may live longer by eating a different kind of insect
- C They could attack spiders lacking a certain chemical substance
- D They mate only with male fireflies from a different species

## ***Morning Sickness***

Morning sickness has long been considered an unfortunate side effect of pregnancy. The nausea, however, coincides with the period of rapid tissue differentiation of the fetus, when development is most vulnerable to interference by toxins. And nauseated women tend to restrict their intake of strong-tasting, potentially harmful substances. These observations led independent researcher Margie Profet to hypothesize that nausea of pregnancy is an adaptation whereby the mother protects the fetus from exposure to toxins. Profet tested this idea by examining pregnancy outcomes. Sure enough, women with more nausea were less likely to suffer miscarriages.

This evidence supports the argument but is hardly conclusive. If Profet is correct, further research should discover that pregnant females of many species show changes in food preferences. Her theory also predicts an increase in birth defects among offspring of women who have little or no morning sickness and thus eat a wider variety of foods during pregnancy.

### **14 What follows from Margie Profet’s main idea?**

- A The health of the unborn child may be harmed by morning sickness
- B Morning sickness may promote the birth of healthy children
- C Morning sickness often affects children’s eating habits after birth
- D Women with morning sickness usually give birth to smaller children

### **15 What else are we told about Margie Profet’s research?**

- A Her results are largely irrelevant to her main idea
- B It proves that women should avoid certain substances while pregnant
- C Her basic argument does not make much sense
- D It is too early to tell whether she is actually on the right track

## ***A Spelling Problem***

We all know that *farce* is a genre of comedy which relies on improbable plots, stereotyped characters, unlikely coincidences and split-second timing for its effect. Fewer of us know that the word can be traced back to Latin *farciare*, the culinary verb “to stuff”, still found on French (and more pretentious English) menus for dishes such as *aubergines farcies* (stuffed aubergines). This unlikely story stems from the fact that in 14th-century England and France, Latin *farsa* or *farzia*, stuffing, was used to denote those bits of the church service which priests were allowed to add by way of improvisation. In other words, it was ad libbed ecclesiastical waffle, a padding-out of the Mass, as the term itself admits. It is worth noting that modern church histories use an alternative spelling, *farse*, presumably in the hope of concealing the unflattering relationship with *farce*.

### **16 What is implied about the spelling “*farse*”?**

- It is used...
- A to express the view that no other spelling of the word should be allowed
  - B to obscure the word’s connection with French culinary delights
  - C to cover up the fact that the word used to have the same meaning as *farce*
  - D to deny that the word’s historical origin is different from that of *farce*

***Please turn over***

*In the following text there are gaps which indicate that something has been left out. Study the four alternatives that correspond to each gap and decide which one best fits the gap. Then mark your choice on the answer sheet.*

## Plagued by Cures

The feather in the cap of 20th-century medicine is the prevention of infectious diseases, especially in childhood. Smallpox was eradicated 25 years ago. Thanks to extraordinary international .....17..... (including cease-fires in wars just so that vaccinations could be administered), polio is on the verge of going the same way. Measles, mumps and whooping cough can also be prevented with vaccines, and their incidence has declined dramatically in the past 50 years. Even some less tractable diseases, such as malaria, have started to bend to interventions. Covering more beds with nets has proved to be remarkably effective, perhaps as effective as vaccinations, at reducing the incidence of this disease.

.....18..... the triumph is by no means complete. It is, of course, well known that preventing or treating an infectious disease can have profound effects on the pathogenic organism that causes it. The evolution of drug resistant strains is the most famous example of such an effect. But now a new worry has emerged. It appears that intervening in infections may have undesirable effects on the hosts—that is, on people—as well as on the pathogens themselves.

The first possible effect is the replacement of one disease by another. As the incidence of childhood infections has fallen, chronic ailments, such as diabetes and asthma, have become more .....19..... In parts of the world where childhood diseases are still common, these chronic ailments are rare.

A direct link between these two phenomena is not yet proven. This may be because there isn't one. Doctors in rich countries have the experience to detect, and the money to treat, chronic disease. In poor countries, such diseases—if detected at all—are low on the list of priorities, and may therefore go unreported. However, a number of studies suggest that this is not the whole explanation. Instead, childhood .....20..... do indeed seem to reduce the probability of chronic disease—an idea known as the “hygiene hypothesis”.

- 17 A efforts  
B research  
C conflicts  
D funding

- 18 A So  
B Consequently  
C Furthermore  
D Yet

- 19 A uncommon  
B harmless  
C frequent  
D deadly

- 20 A experiences  
B vaccines  
C problems  
D infections

*The Economist, November 22, 1997*

***That is the end of the English test. If you have time left, go back and check your answers.***