

## Getting Smart

## The Falling Axe

By Walter L. Smart

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rently drifting and that the motor must be turned on before the boat slips over the falls.

Almost every American realized that we had a sick economy. We may have disagreed about the cause, but we could see and feel the effects of run-away inflation, soaring interest rates, and devastating unemployment. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that a majority of Americans have been supportive of the President's efforts. However, there are some disturbing elements which have begun to surface.

• A recent poll indicated that a majority felt that the

budget cuts were unfair to the poor, but they endorsed the cuts anyway.

• A feeling that certain subtle references to people in need, during the recent campaign, have caused resentment among the haves against the have-nots in America.

We may well be moving toward a time when the majority of the people use the poor, the minorities, etc., as scapegoats for our sick economy. They are definitely being blamed for the amount of taxes deducted from our pay checks. Under these conditions, greed may supplant "caring" as our national mood.

Meanwhile, we must recognize that there is absolutely no way to expand our military budget by a fantastic \$35-40 billion and provide a tax cut to corporations and individuals without wreaking havoc on social services to the poor, and on every other program which offered hope to the poor and a way out of poverty, i.e., through education and training.

Ironically, I believe that some cuts in government spending are needed. It is most unfortunate that Mr. Reagan believes that the brunt must be borne by the poor. But then, let us ask ourselves — in what society, anywhere, was it ever different? Does not might make right?

Contrary to some beliefs, the United States was moving closer than any other country toward a just society, a caring society, one in which principle and law could prevail. If we are not careful, we will lose a great deal more than a severely damaged social service system.

The awesome impact of the cuts has not yet been felt at the neighborhood level. The real crunch will begin in 1982, and yet the cuts continue.

## Happiness Through Health

## More Older Women Are Becoming Mothers

By Otto McClarrin

ingarten, "the late-timing parent was a thirty year old. By the time we finished our interviews in 1979, the boundaries had shifted dramatically, and we focused on the range of age 37-44."

The women in this age span had significantly different experiences than younger mothers throughout the entire process of parenthood, the study suggests. This includes not only the circumstances surrounding their decisions to have children, but also the course of their pregnancies, their perception of the act of childbirth itself, and their experiences in caring for their children.

The national trend toward later parenthood is dramatic. From 1975-1978, there was a 37% rate of in-

crease in the number of women from age 30-34 who had their first child, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. For women aged 35-39, the increase was 22%. "It used to be that when a woman decided not to have a baby at age 35, that was it," said Dr. Weingarten. "Now women at age 42 are still asking themselves the question."

For many of the women, pregnancy had followed a desperate and agonizing struggle against infertility. "Other women cited circumstantial infertility — the right man had not been in their lives, or their relationship wasn't stable enough, or secure enough, to permit parenthood," Mrs. Daniels said.

"For some, who had come to have a sure sense of their identity, their babies were their own gifts to themselves — a profound statement to themselves and to the world about who they were," Dr. Weingarten said.

The researchers studied 86 couples, first-time parents from diverse economic, educational, religious and geographic backgrounds. The complete study, comparing the experiences of parents in the 20s, 30s and 40s, will appear as a book entitled "Sooner or Later: The Timing of Parenthood in Adult Lives."

The midlife mothers face, first of all, the age-related risks of bearing children with chromosomal abnormality, of which Down's Syndrome is the most familiar consequence. Then, there is the introduction of the techniques of prenatal genetic diagnosis, including amniocentesis — a sampling of the mother's amniotic fluid that can identify seventy known genetic disorders.

In some ways, mothers of midlife first babies seemed to enjoy a number of advantages over younger mothers. In general, they were financially more secure, and, among those who had careers, they had tasted some of the rewards of success. In addition, they were more settled.

## Raw Deal

(Continued from page 14)

Reagan's sleight of hand. A coalition of 157 groups, which includes the NAACP, the National Urban League, AFL-CIO, United Auto Workers, the National Council of Senior Citizens, the National Women's Political Caucus, has formed in order to battle the budget-cutters. The Democratic Party should note that many of their constituents have aligned with this coalition. Manatt and Company should note that the bankers' vote is small and that if they expect victory at the polls then the interests of the poor, the trade unions, the environmentalists, etc., must be heeded. Above all, the Democratic Party must undergo internal affirmative action and increase the pitifully small number of blacks in their leading bodies. For if they don't, it is certain that Rev. Ben Chavis and the National Black Independent Political Party will be more than happy to welcome more disaffected blacks into their ranks.

## Coping

## You Must Defeat Stress

## Part II

By Dr. Charles W. Faulkner

they are to resolve.

• Accept the responsibility for your life and the course that it takes. Take charge of it. The mere effort to take charge of your life will give you confidence and some control over it. Do something — even if it is the wrong thing. It is better to do something wrong than nothing right.

• Do not be afraid to lose. Life is full of hurdles and losses. If you fail to conquer a hurdle, try again. But, do not be afraid to try it the first time.

• Judge yourself realistically. Do not expect more of yourself than you are able to produce. There is a place in your society for your abilities. Find your niche and be happy there. Go to a good vocational or psychological counselor. Find out what your best talents are. Find out what your hidden talents are. Let a professional help

you to get your life on track and headed in the right direction.

• Accept yourself for what you are. Nobody is perfect. Accept your strengths and weaknesses. Build upon your strengths. Overcome your weaknesses.

Next week Part III, "You Will Defeat Stress."

Your questions are welcomed. Suggestions for future articles will be appreciated. Cassette tapes of this and other articles are available for individual use, discussion groups and classroom use. All letters and inquiries should be sent to: Dr. Charles W. Faulkner, P.O. Box 50016, Washington, DC 20004.

When the smoke cleared on November 4, 1980, we knew for a fact what many had feared — that Ronald Reagan had indeed been elected President of the United States of America.

The voice of fear came largely from those who knew that they would be in trouble (or should we say "deeper trouble") if Mr. Reagan won. These were primarily poor people, minorities, handicapped persons, and others in need of assistance. Mr. Reagan had campaigned on a platform calling for deep cuts in the federal budget to control inflation, plus significant tax cuts to stimulate an expansion in our economy. Since taking office, Mr. Reagan has moved rapidly to propose the greatest cuts in federal spending in our nation's history. The cuts are so severe that opposition to the cuts is growing in various sectors of our society.

Recently, President Reagan appealed to the country to cooperate with his economic program — decrying the fact that his budget had to run the gauntlet through a larger number of self-interest groups, or selfish groups. He warned that we are all in the same boat which is cur-

Increasingly, as more women are postponing childbearing longer and longer, these older first-time mothers are becoming role models for younger women. And, as a new study reveals, their experiences are singular, and often profoundly moving.

"There is no cultural consensus about how forty year olds should behave as first parents — it's uncharted territory," said Dr. Kathy Weingarten, a clinical psychologist who is a research associate at the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. "They are the pioneers of the new technology, and in that sense they are dramatically different from women of the past."

They are among the first generation of women to benefit from new medical techniques that have mitigated the risks of childbearing at advanced age. And yet, the very techniques that have made childbirth possible have changed the patterns of their pregnancies, and sometimes jeopardized them.

Dr. Weingarten and the developmental psychologist Pamela Daniels, also at the Wellesley Center, have studied these midlife first-time mothers as part of a three-year study of timing of parenthood, and how it affects the lives of men and women.

"When we began our study in 1976," said Dr. We-

How can I overcome stress? How can I eliminate stress from my life and function normally? Why does stress take away all of my physical and emotional strength? These are but a few of the many questions that many readers have asked in their letters.

Tension, gloom, helplessness, sweating, hypertension, loneliness, crying spells, and thoughts of suicide are a few of the characteristics of stress. In my last column, I provided you with seven steps that you should use in your efforts to gain your victory over stress. Here are seven more very effective ways of dealing with stress:

• Do not constantly relive negative experiences by criticizing the action that you took in a certain situation. Most people make themselves tense by daydreaming about their dismanaged activities. Use your experience as a learning tool.

• Seek competent professional advice. Professional counselors are often able to use their experience to advise you on what to do in a given situation. They are trained in helping you to learn how to cope. Professional counselors can show you how to take charge of your life. Use this valuable resource to overcome stress and be happy.

• Identify the problems in your life and do something about them immediately — do not let them linger on and on and on. The longer they last, the more difficult

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