

*Journal of American Studies*, 57 (2023), e1, 1–8

© The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press in association with the British Association for American Studies. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

doi:10.1017/S002187582200024X

# Exclusive Review Essay

## Gold Standard

STEPHEN J. WHITFIELD

Patrick Chura, *Michael Gold: The People's Writer* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2020, \$95.00). Pp. 354. ISBN 978 1 4384 8097 8.

Doris Kadish, *The Secular Rabbi: Philip Rahv and Partisan Review* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021, £95.00). Pp. 240. ISBN 978 1 8008 5966 1.

The subjects of these two books basically belonged to the same generation. Philip Rahv (1908–73) and Michael Gold (1894–1967) shared origins in the Jewish lower class, and rose to literary prominence during the Great Depression. But from the perspective of posterity, what especially links their names is the notion of “proletarian literature.” In novels and short stories, in sketches and poetry, in drama and reportage, the writers who generally accepted this label repudiated the genteel tradition that had crested in the late Victorian era. To be sure, that decorous era of belles lettres had always been contested. It had its outliers – most famously Mark Twain. The list of those who troubled the taste of the era also included, among younger writers, the barely house-broken Theodore Dreiser and Jack London.

But “proletarian literature” needed something more than a formal repudiation of respectability. It tended to be incarnated in those writers who brandished three names – thus testifying to their pedigree, like Richard Watson Gilder and James Russell Lowell and Edmund Clarence Stedman and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. The collapse of the capitalist order at the end of 1929 injected a special urgency into the national mood, stirring desperation and fear to which one unprecedented American response was Marxist-inflected letters. Perhaps the most famous example of proletarian literature was Gold’s *Jews without Money* (1930). This semi-autobiographical novel was published when the specter of unemployment was about to touch one in four American families, when the Republican alliance of Wall Street and Main Street could offer no further assurance of prosperity. The most famous radical journal to address the cultural and political implications of the crisis was the *Partisan Review*, which Rahv coedited.

But by the end of that decade, the momentum of proletarian literature was spent, its energies exhausted. Rahv pronounced its “political autopsy,” and his assessment of the

American Studies Department, Brandeis University. Email: [whitfe@brandeis.edu](mailto:whitfe@brandeis.edu).

typical “proletarian” author was devastating. “While the writer thought he was allying himself with the working class,” Rahv wrote in 1939, “in reality he was surrendering his independence to the Communist Party, which for his own convenience had fused the concepts of party and class.”<sup>1</sup> The theoretical claims of proletarian literature Rahv dissected by noting its endemic confusions. How do writers of working- or lower-class origins depict their social experience? Realistic depiction and radical exhortation were once believed essential. Yet some Fascist novelists, Rahv observed, emerged from the same class and wrote about it, which punctures any definition that does not pivot on political orientation. A critical stance that is attuned to the changing needs of the Communist movement revealed to Rahv how shoddy the definition of proletarian literature was. For example, Gold hailed the *U.S.A.* trilogy as a masterpiece of synoptic power. But when John Dos Passos turned to the right, Gold reevaluated the trilogy, and dismissed it as decadent. Dos Passos’s fiction had not changed; his politics had. The source of such fluctuations of literary opinion suggested the weakness of the very concept of proletarian literature. It was, Rahv asserted, “the literature of a party disguised as the literature of a class. This fact explains both the speed of its development and the speed of its disintegration.”<sup>2</sup>

His “autopsy” notes, written from a left perspective, could be considered authoritative. The notes take on added pertinence because he saw the problem with proletarian literature at the end of the 1930s rather than with the detachment of a later decade. *Partisan Review* had been born under the auspices of the first of the John Reed Clubs of the Communist Party. Yet Rahv is mentioned nowhere in Patrick Chura’s biography of the most inescapable Communist critic and publicist of the era. Nowhere is Rahv’s definitive put-down of proletarian literature referenced. This remarkable scholarly omission signals how very favorable Chura’s treatment of Gold’s legacy is. But the subject of *Michael Gold: The People’s Writer* is admittedly important, and the biographer, who is a professor of English at the University of Akron, probably makes the best possible case for retrieval.

Born Itzhok Isaak Granich, he called himself Irving and then Irwin before adopting the *nom de guerre* of Mike Gold in his early twenties. His life was one of struggle, starting in the tenements, but with Manhattan’s public libraries serving as an escape. (He especially loved Twain.) Gold’s father died an early death, an invalid; and his mother never emerged from material want. Somehow he briefly attended Harvard, or at least claims that he did. With Dorothy Day he interviewed Trotsky in the Bronx, and after the Great War expatriated himself to Mexico, perhaps to flee the first Red Scare. In 1920, when the *Liberator* published a piece by Michael Gold, it was the first time that his new name appeared in print. Two years later he served as the coeditor, with the Jamaican poet Claude McKay, of the *Liberator*. That sparked a lifelong devotion to black culture. Gold met the ex-Wobbly Big Bill Haywood in Moscow, and was arrested in Boston with Dorothy Parker, protesting the impending execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. Gold’s surrealist play, called *Hoboken Blues* (1927), was designed for an all-black cast, and in 1926–28 he served as one of six coeditors of the *New Masses*. At the end of 1929, the Communist Party formed the John Reed Clubs; and Chura credits Gold with being “the driving force behind the organization’s formal manifesto” (131).

<sup>1</sup> Philip Rahv, “Proletarian Literature: A Political Autopsy” (1939), in Rahv, *Literature and the Sixth Sense* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), 7–20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

But it was *Jews without Money* that capped so colorful an early life. This biography claims, for example, that the novel went through eleven printings in the year of its publication. In that same year, when Sinclair Lewis became the first American to win a Nobel Prize in Literature, he praised Gold for revealing “the new frontier of the Jewish East Side” (quoted at 1). Before an international audience in Stockholm, Lewis ranked Gold with other young praiseworthy writers who were his contemporaries: Dos Passos, Hemingway, Wolfe, Faulkner, and Wilder. To Edmund Wilson, Gold was “one of the only American critics of any literary ability who writes about books from the Marxist point of view” (quoted at 157). Although Chura mentions once – only in passing – Daniel Aaron’s *Writers on the Left* (1961), that magisterial work claims that “Wilson still believes that Gold was the most naturally gifted of the Communist writers.”<sup>3</sup> When he applied for a Guggenheim, Hemingway was willing to recommend him, and conveyed the hope that a grant would enable Gold to escape the “exhausting” demands of “daily ... journalism” (quoted at 172). Gold’s candidacy was unsuccessful; and after the triumph of *Jews without Money*, which by 1950 had been translated into sixteen languages, he never wrote another novel. Various projects never came to fruition. Instead Gold made himself into what Chura calls “the unofficial gatekeeper of the American Communist Party’s rigid artistic standards” (2).

Such phrasing isn’t quite right. For the party’s “artistic standards” to be “rigid” presumably means that its literary criteria were harsh but conscientious. That is not so. The standards were not aesthetic, in the sense of upholding, say, sublimity or irony or complexity. What counted was the shifting political demands of Communism itself. The Soviet regime could impose something like “socialist realism” – or else. But a “gatekeeper” like Gold could only encourage the sort of writing that allegedly served “the people.” But exhortation came much less easily to him than condemnation. An entire book, *The Hollow Men* (1941), decried writers who failed – whatever the imperatives of their craft, whatever their imaginative resources – to accelerate the future arrival of what he called “world socialism.” Having remained a Communist until the end of his life, Gold harbored a special hatred for turncoats, renegades, apostates and sellouts who abandoned the dream of revolution. They had chosen not “to stay with the masses” (quoted at 291). Their poems and tales had not done justice to the grim conditions of life under capitalism, prior to its predictable collapse.

Thus Gold dismissed Sinclair Lewis, though famously indigenous to the Midwest, as a novelist who “simply never saw or described the region” (quoted at 268). Or take the prominent fictional defense of the Spanish Republic, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). Gold condemned it for missing class conflict, which infuriated its admittedly very touchy author. Although the young Gold had written dramas for the Provincetown Players, and although Eugene O’Neill touted him as a playwright of genuine promise, this Nobel laureate got targeted too. The gatekeeper complained that “O’Neill was never really in touch with the working class,” merely “a tourist” (quoted at 223). But what was Gold? In fact, he could no more brandish direct experience of the routine of factory life than could Marx himself. Neither knew firsthand the drudgery of industrial toil. Gold’s identification with the proletariat was no more than symbolic. An aura of inauthenticity hovered over him. Married in 1936, he named his first son, born that year, Nicholas, in honor of Lenin. Yet Ulyanov’s given names were

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left* (New York: Avon Library Discus Edition, 1965), 259 n.

Vladimir Ilyich, and he is not known to have called himself Nikolai. That was a common misconception, but Gold didn't even know that. His second son, Carl, born in 1940, was named for Marx, whose own literary tastes, incidentally, ran to Aeschylus – a tragedian quite remote from, say, socialist realism.

Chura's biography is quite deliberately intended to pull Gold's reputation back from the periphery (if not from oblivion). But the effort is unpersuasive, and the vicissitudes of literary stature are most evident, for instance, when considering Gold's hostility to Thornton Wilder. At the *New Republic* in 1930, editor Edmund Wilson invited Gold to review several of Wilder's novels, including *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, which had won the Pulitzer Prize in 1928. Chura, who is generally protective of his subject, quotes briefly from this crude assault, which was entitled "Wilder: Prophet of the Genteel Christ." A rallying cry of class warfare, as well as a salvo against aestheticism, the review should be juxtaposed against the book Wilson himself was then completing: *Axel's Castle* (1931), a sympathetic portrait of such iconic modernists as Joyce, Eliot, and Proust. Over a decade later, Gold couldn't let go of his favorite bourgeois *bête noire*, announcing in 1941 that "it isn't sporting to slug a corpse, and I am not going to re-assault Mr. Wilder at this time."<sup>4</sup>

As worthy alternatives, Gold cited *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and *Native Son* (1940) to prove the "success" of "proletarian themes" (205). Yet in no meaningful sense do the Joads or Bigger Thomas belong to the proletariat. They do not resemble the factory hands and the mill workers whom E. P. Thompson depicted in *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), nor the Chicago slaughterhouse workers in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906). Gold was therefore deluded. It was proletarian fiction that had been left as a carcass. The disparagement of Wilder was amazingly off-key. Three years earlier he had completed *Our Town*, which won a Pulitzer Prize for Drama and soon became among the most frequently staged of the nation's dramas. A year after Gold pretended to treat Wilder sportingly, *The Skin of Our Teeth* won him another Pulitzer Prize for Drama. But as Rahv so insightfully noted, Communists were "primarily interested not in literature but in *authors*";<sup>5</sup> that is, in recruits to the totalitarian movement. The primacy of the effort to enlist writers doomed the difficult struggle to make sense of what they wrote.

Gold himself peaked creatively at the age of twenty-six, and his biographer mostly evades the question of why no second act followed the novel that Alfred Kazin called "a great piercing cry of lament and outrage" (quoted at 145). Of course no disgrace attaches to authorship of only one novel, and Gold's was certainly of consequence. There is nothing even unusual about being a one-book wonder, especially when such fiction often draws upon one's own limited experience of childhood and young adulthood. But surely it is fair to speculate that Gold declined to open himself up to new experiences that might have inspired enlargement of vision and the cultivation of craft. He might have disciplined himself to drill deeper into what he felt were the forces shaping a family or a neighborhood or a community. Instead he expended far too much effort trashing the work of less "progressive" writers. Even Chura finds *The Hollow Men*, which was the only sequel of sorts to *Jews without Money*, to be "unsavory and vindictive," a tiresome series of "attacks on political deserters and dilettantes" (16, 17). When Gold tried to be generous, he managed to come across as rather stupid. For example, he defended yet another Nobel laureate

<sup>4</sup> From the Chura book under review, p. 205.

<sup>5</sup> Rahv, 16.

from an accusation that no one ever made: “Faulkner was never a Nazi” (270). Because Gold’s own literary impulses failed him early, he turned to the ephemera of polemics – an investment that very rarely leads to something timeless.

He also needed money, and the party’s media culture – its newspapers and magazines – served as virtually his only source of income. Only in the early 1930s was Gold somewhat secure financially. After that, he and his family lived rather precariously, especially with the onset of the Cold War. From 1947 until 1950 they lived in France, where his wife Elizabeth had been born. They then lived in the Bronx for six years, with his Sorbonne-educated wife taking on assorted jobs to provide the primary income. Beginning in 1950 Gold ceased writing for the *Daily Worker*. Although he was blacklisted and paid a price for his convictions by living near penury, Chura misses an opportunity to examine the cause for which Gold sacrificed himself and his family. Only one political principle governed Mike Gold: “defend the Soviet Union” (279). In 1945 that meant abandoning the justifications for the wartime alliance that party secretary Earl Browder personified. He was unceremoniously sacked – accused, among other derelictions, of “incurable Browderism.” Gold fully supported the postwar shift to militancy and heightened opposition to the impending “fascism.” When Nikita S. Khrushchev’s “secret speech” to the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956 was revealed, the shockwaves produced massive defections in the movement. Yet Gold was nonplussed. “The Russians are trying to right this wrong,” he explained. He was reassured that Comrade Khrushchev “intend[s] to change the conditions” that had resulted in Stalin’s crimes (278). Even Chura finds the postwar repositioning that Gold felt compelled to make “crass and philistine” (219).

A move to San Francisco did not delay the inevitable impact of aging. His fate was especially cruel – not only destitution but also diabetes and near blindness. A stroke left him partly paralyzed. Although his biographer calls him “a formidable thinker” even in his sixties (274), Gold had evidently failed to grasp the impossibility of reconciling an obtuse allegiance to international Communism with the demands of literary seriousness. He did not live to enjoy what Chura discerns as a partial revival of interest in *Jews without Money*. Chura counts three dozen articles and book chapters devoted to that novel in the last three decades. But even as Gold was dying, a reconfiguration of critical judgment was occurring, the sort of shift to which he was notably sensitive. The recalibration did not work in his favor, because *Jews without Money* would no longer be the one great novel published during the Great Depression, in which a Jewish Communist described growing up on the Lower East Side. That book would henceforth be Henry Roth’s *Call It Sleep* (1934), which displayed Joycean echoes and linguistic virtuosity far beyond the powers of Michael Gold.

At least he inspired, however belatedly, a biography. Philip Rahv has not. *The Secular Rabbi* is “part biography,” Doris Kadish claims, but she also classifies her book as “part history, part literary analysis, and part cultural studies” (1). A professor emerita of French and women’s studies at the University of Georgia, she discovered half a century after her mother’s death her youthful love affair with Philip Greenberg, who would change his surname to Rahv. The thirty-three extant letters that he wrote to Ethel Richman (later Young) spurred the writing of an article that appeared in the *Georgia Review*, entitled “A Young Communist in Love: Philip Rahv, *Partisan Review*, and My Mother.” The book under review – at once personal and academic – is an extension of that article.

Like Gold, Rahv underwent the sorts of name change that indicated an uncertain relation to the larger American society. Born in a village in the southern Ukraine as Fevel Greenberg (8), he lived an unsettled early life, starting out at the age of fourteen in Providence, Rhode Island, where his father became a peddler. (So did Doris Kadish's grandfather in Savannah, Georgia.) The young Greenberg then emigrated to Palestine; then back to Providence on his own, at the age of sixteen; then Savannah; next Portland, Oregon and then most importantly New York City, where he lived beginning in 1932. He never earned a high-school degree and never got a college education. In early adulthood he supported himself by teaching Hebrew, and adopted the Hebrew word for "rabbi" (meaning teacher) for his surname. On page 171, where "Rahv" is transcribed into Hebrew letters (*resh* and *vet*), they are unfortunately reversed. Almost inevitably Yiddish was his first language, but this autodidact picked up other languages too. He lived, like Gold, as something of a bohemian, making do during the Great Depression without the assurance of income. But unlike Gold, Rahv knew his rung on the ladder. "I am not a member of the working class," he wrote to Kadish's mother (71).

But he quickly became a member of the intelligentsia, as the central figure in the history of the *Partisan Review* (which he coedited with William Phillips). For about three decades, that journal occupied roughly the same exalted position in American cultural life that – at various stages – *Horizon* enjoyed in England and *Les temps modernes* did in France. Yet no major American literary critic ever published as little as Rahv did. A monograph on Dostoevsky was left unfinished at his death; and all of his books consisted of collections of his essays (some overlapping). He also edited anthologies. Rahv could not go the distance. But some of his essays became canonical – and not only "Proletarian Literature: A Political Autopsy." "Paleface and Redskin" (1939) established inescapable binaries that covered the span of major American literature. "The Cult of Experience in American Writing" (1940) displayed a genuine aptitude for generalization. As early as 1939, an illuminating introduction to Kafka helped elevate him. Rahv also helped to consolidate the high stature of Henry James as the most sophisticated of palefaces. Because of the cachet that *Partisan Review* earned, Rahv was given the opportunity to spot talent; and Kadish rightly credits him with boosting the careers of Nobel laureates like Saul Bellow and Isaac Bashevis Singer, plus Bernard Malamud. Here is how she summarizes Rahv's achievements: "He forged an essay style that combined depth with accessibility. He dared to defy academic trends toward compartmentalization . . . He dared to opine on all relevant social, cultural, literary and political matters" (182).

*The Secular Rabbi* runs aground, however, in claiming that, by the mid-1930s, Rahv had become "one of the first public figures to take a stand against Stalinism" (10). To be sure, he had started from nowhere to install himself as an influential intellectual. But it is very dubious that he had become by then a public figure in any meaningful sense. The coeditors of *Partisan Review* were not famous in the way that, say, Henry L. Mencken was, writing from his perch at the *American Mercury*, or Oswald Garrison Villard at *The Nation*. Syndicated columnists like Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson were public figures. Nor was Rahv in any way resisting public opinion. It had been, ever since the Bolshevik Revolution, overwhelmingly anti-Russian; and already by the 1920s, intellectuals like John Dewey were condemning the Soviet experiment. What made Rahv and the journal that he coedited so distinctive eludes Kadish. Their anti-Stalinism was somewhat unusual because it stemmed from a radical animus against the capitalist order as well. Because Rahv operated within the

left, he did show courage. Breaking with the Communist Party (to which he had belonged for about half a decade), he showed an independence of political judgment that Gold never acquired.

Although *The Secular Rabbi* claims that Rahv “retained his faith in Marxism and socialism until the end” (179), that set of beliefs was more vestigial than firmly articulated, more a habit and a kind of bravado than a credo by which he conducted his life. In writing that Rahv “was increasingly unsettled as some of his *Partisan Review* associates – Norman Podhoretz, Lionel and Diana Trilling – shifted to the Right in supporting pro-American foreign policy” (11), Kadish reveals a disturbingly feeble grip on American political and cultural history. A phrase like “pro-American foreign policy” is both clumsy and meaningless. When Rahv died, neoconservatism was indeed emerging, even as the Vietnam War continued to rage. But contributors to Podhoretz’s *Commentary*, such as Theodore Draper in particular, subjected the military intervention in Indochina to very sharp criticism. By the 1960s and early 1970s, Diana Trilling only rarely contributed to *Partisan Review*, and her husband, who had taught Podhoretz at Columbia, seems to have kept his own counsel on the war. On cultural issues, Rahv himself had moved dramatically away from championing whatever passed for the avant-garde, nor did he harbor much sympathy for the New Left. By then, Kadish remarks, “much of his writing was reduced to deploring what was new” (11), which sounds very much like a shift to the right.

In fact, the more she seeks to provide historical context for his life and thought, the more problematic *The Secular Rabbi* becomes. To highlight the singularity of Rahv’s anti-Stalinism, for example, Kadish claims that the liberal magazines “supported all efforts to counter Hitler’s rise to power, which meant turning a blind eye to Hitler’s alliance with Stalin. US and British foreign policy, as promoted by Roosevelt and Churchill, similarly continued to support Stalin” (90). This is nonsense. “Hitler’s rise to power” began early in the 1920s, of course, and was fulfilled when he became Chancellor early in 1933. He cemented the “alliance with Stalin” in the late summer of 1939. That pact was made possible by the *failure*, according to Stalin, of the Western democracies to join his nation in opposing the menace of the Third Reich. Kadish fails to specify which policies of Roosevelt, who was pursuing an isolationist and neutralist policy during the 1930s, and Churchill, who became Prime Minister while the Soviet–Nazi pact was in operation, could be considered pro-Soviet. “By the end of 1941,” she adds, “Rahv had moved far enough away from his preoccupation with anti-Stalinism to be willing to endorse the political actions of the United States” (99). Again, which actions does she have in mind? The chain of events is obscured in this account – such as Operation Barbarossa, which provoked even a veteran anti-communist like Churchill to support the Soviet Union, and the Japanese attack on Hawaii, which led to *military* actions against the Axis. What does Kadish imagine Rahv’s response to have been – such inflexible anti-Stalinism that he might have supported the German invasion of the Russian heartland?

Legitimate questions can be raised about the wartime position of *Partisan Review*. Its fear was unwarranted that fascism would be the price of mobilization. During the fulfillment of the Final Solution, the mostly Jewish editors were silent. But *The Secular Rabbi* does not begin to grapple with these issues. Howlers – due either to carelessness or to confusion – also mar the value of this book. It misdates *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) as 1914 (74). Pearl Harbor, a date which will live in infamy, comes out as 2 December (99). Kadish seems to think that Léon Blum was a Communist (81). *A Farewell to Arms*, which she knows was published in 1929, could not have been set

during the Spanish Civil War. That would be *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (86). The number of misspelled names is embarrassing. In addition, inattentiveness lists the “US entry into World War II” among the “catastrophic events” in the years immediately after *Partisan Review* was reborn in 1937 (89).

Perhaps the freshest feature of this book profiles Rahv’s brother, Selig Greenberg, who was three years older. He managed to be admitted to Brown University when the Ivy League was imposing quotas on qualified Jewish applicants. He graduated in 1927, became a physician and wrote two books. Late in 1942 he enlisted as a private, even though his age (thirty-eight) would have spared him from military service. “Selig was an ordinary man,” Kadish writes, which hardly seems just. Admittedly he “embodied the accommodation to bourgeois values that Philip despised” (48). But such scorn does not put the younger brother, who made no effort to enlist during the war and who healed no one of pain, in a very sympathetic light. Which bourgeois values did Rahv repudiate? Two of his four wives just happened to be wealthy; and though Kadish declares that Rahv despised “bourgeois materialism” (129), a mere two pages later she acknowledges that “his social aspirations were outsized” (131). Such inconsistency suggests that Selig Greenberg’s alleged values posed no insuperable barrier to familial cohesiveness. In fact, Rahv broke off relations not only with his brother but also with his father and his mother, who was still living in Israel upon his death. Rahv was dyspeptic, and shared with the party’s gatekeeper of literary standards a characteristic refusal to abide by the admittedly elusive ideal that Lincoln articulated in his Second Inaugural Address – “with malice toward none.”

In Rahv’s final decade or so, he had become an easily bored, lonely, misanthropic crank. Posterity links the names of Rahv and Phillips to the *Partisan Review* as firmly as the names of Addison and Steele are joined at *The Spectator*. Yet the partnership of Rahv and Phillips ended in bitterness and recrimination. When the magazine moved to Rutgers University, Rahv even threatened a lawsuit (in vain). He terminated his connection to *Partisan Review* in 1969. (It died in 2003.) Rahv founded a new magazine in 1970, but *Modern Occasions* lasted only six issues. Friendships with Irving Howe, Norman Mailer, and Susan Sontag ended badly, due to Rahv’s quarrelsome personality. His fourth marriage ended in 1972 with a separation and his ex-wife’s petition for a restraining order against him. Summarizing these grim later years, *The Secular Rabbi* is devastating: “He lost friends, made enemies, and ended his life alone” (141). Because his third wife had died in a fire in their Boston home in 1968, Rahv left behind no personal archives. But the record was already plain that he had outlived his time. For instance, Rahv had been dismayed that the highbrow *Partisan Review* had deigned to discuss the Beatles. That Liverpool University Press has published Kadish’s book may be apt, however. For the band itself offered a cogent piece of wisdom close to the conclusion of *Abbey Road* (1969): “And in the end/The love you take/Is equal to the love you make.”