

ducible," but is concerned that pushing fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of speech, to the limit may well result in allowing them "to eat up our other rights."

It will interest readers to know that, when Garvey began this book 15 years before it reached print, he thought of freedom as the right to choose, an idea he now refutes. In his acknowledgment he explains this change by saying that it is not because "I have changed my mind but that I have had a change of heart." He does not explain this beyond saying that he is indebted to family and friends for this change. He credits his new perspective with allowing him to "clear up a number of difficulties I had always had in writing about freedoms." Readers may wonder about this change of heart but not about his current views. He expresses those lucidly and provocatively. Whether or not you agree with his views, you will find his discussion of them to be the product of a mature and thoughtful writer who is at ease with his topic and not inclined to shy away from controversy.

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Michael Foster is a sole practitioner in Tampa, Fla., who specializes in representing plaintiffs in personal injury and wrongful death cases. He is a board-certified civil trial lawyer, certified by both the Florida Bar and the National Board of Trial Advocacy. He received his B.A. from the University of Tampa in 1962 and his J.D. from Stetson University College of Law in 1965.

How to Stop Time: Heroin From A to Z

By Ann Marlowe

Basic Books, New York, NY, 1999. 297 pages, \$24.00 (hardback); \$13.00 (Anchor paperback).

REVIEWED BY JON M. SANDS

There has been a long history of books about drug abuse, as distinguished from books about the drug trade or drug law enforcement. What are drugs like? Why use them? Why risk using dope, smoking pot, snorting crack, dropping acid? What effect, and

what hold, do these drugs have? We want to know. People want to tell us.

A particularly large subgenre of books about drug abuse deals with heroin. It may be the effect of the drug or the artistic pedigree and panache it might have. The coolness of heroin, and the cult of heroin users, has spawned quite a few works. To this list is now added Ann Marlowe's *How to Stop Time: Heroin From A to Z*.

Marlowe used heroin for a number of years. She looks at her experience through a dictionary of dope — an alphabet of addiction. The book is organized by alphabetical terms, from A to Z. The alphabetical topics cover all areas of heroin use and a good part of Marlowe's life. Her alphabetical entries, as a sampling, cover "abstention," "addiction," "dope," proceeding through "free will," "junkie," "nostalgia," "opium," and followed by "overdose," "withdrawing," and "youth." Each entry builds and frequently cross-references; so, while one can dip in here and there, or just turn to an entry that catches an interest, the book is meant to be read from A to Z.

This is a clever technique, offering, as it does, short vivid views, glimpses really, of the various facets of drug use in Marlowe's life. She tries to explain her own experiences with heroin in the context of her background: a middle-class Jewish home with parents who had their own secrets and problems. She herself is bright enough, and driven enough, to succeed in college — Harvard no less — and then get an MBA. Marlowe does not attempt to find a direct cause and effect between her family and her heroin use, though she sees "issues" that heroin addressed. At best, the connection is strained. For whatever reason, after her education she finds herself working in the New York corporate world, partying in the New York club scene, and dealing with a drug habit that, she comes to realize, saps her drive, wastes her time, and consumes her day.

Marlowe is straightforward about heroin. She does not glamorize it nor demonize it. Heroin, for her, was a way of combating certain anxieties, of fitting in, of giving herself what seemed to be control over time when,

in effect, heroin increasingly controlled her time. She does not write that all drug use leads to dope fiends, wasted lives, and dead bodies. It can, but it didn't in her case. She acknowledges the waste dope laid to many lives. Still, she writes, lovingly and lyrically, of the tremendous high heroin can give you. She also talks about the tremendous yearning that the ruthlessness of drugs' chemistry causes. She describes the charm when everything hits right — the dose, the quality, and one's own frame of mind. It is then, in her words, magic. But those wonderful hits come fewer and further between, and the gnawing need for more becomes all too constant.

The dictionary entries of the book deal with her life as refracted in her drug use. She attributes the prevalence of the drug in New York's East Village to its "cachet" and "coolness" among artists, especially musicians. (This is not the first time that cultural chic was tied to heroin use. Jazz and dope have their own destructive duets.) She talks about her milieu — tweed jackets and khakis, ersatz philosophy, and college classes. How, and why, she moved from one to the other, and the different rites of each, provides a sociological glimpse into a privileged class of young adults, not obsessed with money in the Age of Greed, but yearning to be "cool." She also relates interesting vignettes of the nuts and bolts (or bags and lines) of the New York heroin trade. Her riff on "brand names" for cuts or type reveals the American consumer and brand-name mentality even on the street level. She is unsparing in her description of the selfishness heroin causes, which is the high entry fee into the user's cult club of addiction.

The problem that comes with such a personal journey is that you get to know the person and, unfortunately, at the end you may not like her very much. Such is the case here. The more you read the chapters of Marlowe's life, the less sympathy you have for her, and the more you feel that, though she is extremely intelligent, she is also whiny, self-indulgent, and self-absorbed. Her descriptions of drug use focus solely on her world,

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