

## THE GLOPS or WHY WE STUDY SOCIAL SCIENCES

It was a cold, stormy night on the north coast of Norway, January 5th, 1948, and the people dwelling in the huts along the shore banked their glowing fires, and rolled into their beds at an early hour to save fuel.

But neither the storm, nor the cold, nor the fact of January, 1948, bothered a certain individual named Mrs. Glop. For Mrs. Glop didn't live in Norway, nor did she live in the year 1948. Ah, no, kind reader, Mrs. Glop (or Glopa, as she was then known) lived in a humble cave in what is now known as New Mexico, U. S. A. This was the year 160,000 B.C.

For those who have never studied Sociology, let me elucidate. Man of that time was known as primitive. However, he was not educated enough to know that he was primitive, so he didn't care. Another factor which cannot be omitted in this outline is their lack of civilization. Yes, dear readers, there were no great wars in which primitive man could get killed; no slums disfigured the rows of caves of old New Mexico; nor did any candidate hurl polite though subtle remarks at each other in their effort to attain civil officialdom. In short, man of the year 160,000 B.C. was not civilized.

With that sketchy background, let me go on to introduce the Glops. The name, Glop, of course, was a family name of the cave-town of Glopborough. Man had only a few centuries back started to develop what was later called language. Hence, a close economy of words was necessary in the choosing of family names. This particular family was sired by Glopo, with the aid of his good wife, Glopa. The two boys were named respectively Glop and Glop, while the girls were called Glopine, Glop, and Glopette.

The Glopboroughite lived in one of two ways: one, by a system of direct appropriation; or, two, by working in the local factory, owned by Glopo. This factory manufactured eel-hooks, which were transported to Siberia. The Siberians sent Glopo frozen smelts in return, which he paid his workers at the rate of three smelts per hour. This factory played a most important part in the economic life of the community, because usually its inhabitants were on strike on some pretext or other.

The direct appropriation system was quite different, however. A man goes hunting; he walks miles and miles to find the tracks of some edible animal. After he finds a spoor, he's off for another five or six miles tracking the animal down. Finally, when he has killed it, he drags the entire carcass back to the village—a distance of



twenty to thirty miles—then cuts it up, keeps the hide and tongue, and throws the rest away. As soon as he is ready to eat, all his fellow citizens of the brotherly little community pounce on him, take his hard-earned goods, and leave him lifeless or so close to it that it doesn't make any difference. Little did they know that many years later a wise old scientist was going to call this, "Survival of the Fittest."

And little did Glop (or Mr. Glop, as you will) realize that his attempts to satisfy his economic wants was later going to be the subject of study, often futile study, for hundreds of college students. For they too, as well as Mrs. Glop would try, unsuccessfully, to analyze his acts.

The neighbors living on the right of the Glops were called the Flops, and those living on the left, the Flops. Though it would seem that his name indicated the contrary, Mr. Flop was a success in life—for a tractarian is not a man who drives a tractor, nor is a plumber a maker of plums. Mr. Flop, then, was not a flop. The rest of the Flops, however, were complete flops, whole and entire. There was something Uriah-Heepish about them which made them extremely unpopular in the settlement. Besides being clammy and sickening, Mrs. Flop, the matron of the family, was terrifying in manner and appearance. Next to Glopa, she was the terror of the village, and because of the fear she stirred in every heart, was known as the Caesar. Her three daughters, Veni, Vidi, and Vici, were likewise a striking trio. They took after their mother; when there was a strike at the factory, they were always the instigators (As I said before, they were a striking trio.). Flopa and her hefty progeny would saunter through the streets ordering the workers to stay away from work; obedience was immediate and unconditional.

Besides being an industrialist, Glop was an inventor, and for this reason could not always be present to supervise the work at the factory. Right now, he was working on a new type of axe. Not that there was particular reason for having a new type of axe—it just seemed that his instinct told him what to do. But to us of the 20th Century, the object of his acts is apparent: providence had fixed that some day thousands of years later, the bread and butter of many college professors would depend on whether or not Glop invented this wonderful new axe. Many expeditions would go forth to the caves of England and the deserts of Africa with the sole purpose of finding but one Glopian axe.

And so it was that on a bright sunny morning in what was call July, Glopa urged her husband to get up and try to end the strike at his factory now running its fifth straight week.



Mrs. Glop, along with Mrs. Flop, always took the side of the strikers, right or wrong, and demanded certain concessions for them. The cause of the present strike was the dismissal by Glopo of a certain laborer who had demanded four and a half smelts for one hour overtime. Mrs. Glop lost her temper entirely this morning, and ordered her husband to attend a meeting of all the workers which she and Flopa had called. Many millions of moons later, this would be known as compulsory arbitration.

Finally Glopo arose and called his two sons to come to the meeting with him. He picked up his cudgel which was lying by a tree, and gave the dog a kick as he passed. (The dog, who also partook of the familial patronymic, was called Gloporum).

The three sauntered down the main drag to a deserted cave at the end, where the workers had already assembled. Though the procedure of this group was rather dissimilar to our parliamentary procedure, it certainly achieved more decisive results.

Glopo no sooner showed himself in the cave-mouth with a son on either hand, than a volley of stones came flying from the darker recesses. The meeting was open for business. Glopo first pleaded with them to be quiet. After they had subsided, he addressed them.

"Last month I fired a man," he said,—probably in the same tone of voice with which Spartacus spoke the words: "Yesterday I killed a man in the arena."—yes, I fired him, but at that time I didn't know that you, the workers of Glopborough, wanted time and a half for over-time. I have come here today to make an announcement. In the future, the rate of pay for overtime will be four and one-half smelts per hour!"

With this announcement came a wave of applause which shook the very cave in its foundations. Labor had won another victory! Clearly the time was near at hand when all labor-management disputes would come to an end. Hurray for us, hurray for Glopo!

—JAMES E. TRAINOR '49

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### NATURE'S GIFTS

God's gifts are bountiful, flowing from His hands in lavish splendor,  
Sprinkling the earth with signs of Him Whose love for man  
Has been so oft rejected, wasted, scorned,  
And left unclaimed, since first the world began.