SUSAN SONTAG

Illness as Metaphor and *AIDS and Its Metaphors*

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014

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Contents

Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick. Although we all prefer to use only the good passport, sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a spell, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place.

I want to describe, not what it is really like to emigrate to the kingdom of the ill and live there, but the punitive or sentimental fantasies concocted about that situation: not real geography, but stereotypes of national character. My subject is not physical illness itself but the uses of illness as a figure or metaphor. My point is that illness is *not* a metaphor, and that the most truthful way of regarding illness – and the healthiest way of being ill – is one most purified of, most resistant to, metaphoric thinking. Yet it is hardly possible to take up one's residence in the kingdom of the ill unprejudiced by the lurid metaphors with which it has been landscaped. It is toward an elucidation of those metaphors, and a liberation from them, that I dedicate this inquiry.

Chapter One

Two diseases have been spectacularly, and similarly, encumbered by the trappings of metaphor: tuberculosis and cancer.

The fantasies inspired by TB in the last century, by cancer now, are responses to a disease thought to be intractable and capricious – that is, a disease not understood – in an era in which medicine's central premise is that all diseases can be cured. Such a disease is, by definition, mysterious. For as long as its cause was not understood and the ministrations of doctors remained so ineffective, TB was thought to be an insidious, implacable theft of a life. Now it is cancer's turn to be the disease that doesn't knock before it enters, cancer fills the role of an illness experienced as a ruthless, secret invasion – a role it will keep until, one day, its etiology becomes as clear and its treatment as effective as those of TB have become.

Although the way in which disease mystifies is set

against a backdrop of new expectations, the disease itself (once TB, cancer today) arouses thoroughly old-fashioned kinds of dread. Any disease that is treated as a mystery and acutely enough feared will be felt to be morally, if not literally, contagious. Thus, a surprisingly large number of people with cancer find themselves being shunned by relatives and friends and are the object of practices of decontamination by members of their household, as if cancer, like TB, were an infectious disease. Contact with someone afflicted with a disease regarded as a mysterious malevolency inevitably feels like a trespass; worse, like the violation of a taboo. The very names of such diseases are felt to have a magic power. In Stendhal's *Armance* (1827), the hero's mother refuses to say 'tuberculosis,' for fear that pronouncing the word will hasten the course of her son's malady. And Karl Menninger has observed (in *The Vital Balance*) that 'the very word "cancer" is said to kill some patients who would not have succumbed (so quickly) to the malignancy from which they suffer.' This observation is offered in support of anti-intellectual pieties and a facile compassion all too triumphant in contemporary medicine and psychiatry. 'Patients who consult us because of their suffering and their distress and their disability,' he continues, 'have every right to resent being plastered with a damning index tab.' Dr. Menninger recommends that physicians generally abandon 'names' and 'labels' ('our function is to help these people, not to further afflict them') – which would mean, in effect, increasing secretiveness and medical paternalism. It is not naming

as such that is pejorative or damning, but the name 'cancer.' As long as a particular disease is treated as an evil, invincible predator, not just a disease, most people with cancer will indeed be demoralized by learning what disease they have. The solution is hardly to stop telling cancer patients the truth, but to rectify the conception of the disease, to de-mythicize it.

When, not so many decades ago, learning that one had TB was tantamount to hearing a sentence of death – as today, in the popular imagination, cancer equals death – it was common to conceal the identity of their disease from tuberculars and, after they died, from their children. Even with patients informed about their disease, doctors and family were reluctant to talk freely. 'Verbally I don't learn anything definite,' Kafka wrote to a friend in April 1924 from the sanatorium where he died two months later, 'since in discussing tuberculosis . . . everybody drops into a shy, evasive, glassy-eyed manner of speech.' Conventions of concealment with cancer are even more strenuous. In France and Italy it is still the rule for doctors to communicate a cancer diagnosis to the patient's family but not to the patient; doctors consider that the truth will be intolerable to all but exceptionally mature and intelligent patients. (A leading French oncologist has told me that fewer than a tenth of his patients know they have cancer.) In America – in part because of the doctors' fear of malpractice suits – there is now much more candor with patients, but the country's largest cancer hospital mails routine communications and bills to outpatients in

envelopes that do not reveal the sender, on the assumption that the illness may be a secret from their families. Since getting cancer can be a scandal that jeopardizes one's love life, one's chance of promotion, even one's job, patients who know what they have tend to be extremely prudish, if not outright secretive, about their disease. And a federal law, the 1966 Freedom of Information Act, cites 'treatment for cancer' in a clause exempting from disclosure matters whose disclosure 'would be an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.' It is the only disease mentioned.

All this lying to and by cancer patients is a measure of how much harder it has become in advanced industrial societies to come to terms with death. As death is now an offensively meaningless event, so that disease widely considered a synonym for death is experienced as something to hide. The policy of equivocating about the nature of their disease with cancer patients reflects the conviction that dying people are best spared the news that they are dying, and that the good death is the sudden one, best of all if it happens while we're unconscious or asleep. Yet the modern denial of death does not explain the extent of the lying and the wish to be lied to; it does not touch the deepest dread. Someone who has had a coronary is at least as likely to die of another one within a few years as someone with cancer is likely to die soon from cancer. But no one thinks of concealing the truth from a cardiac patient: there is nothing shameful about a heart attack. Cancer patients are lied to, not just because the disease is (or is thought to be) a

death sentence, but because it is felt to be obscene – in the original meaning of that word: ill-omened, abominable, repugnant to the senses. Cardiac disease implies a weakness, trouble, failure that is mechanical; there is no disgrace, nothing of the taboo that once surrounded peoples afflicted with TB and still surrounds those who have cancer. The metaphors attached to TB and to cancer imply living processes of a particularly resonant and horrid kind.

tied to notions of moral pollution, and people invariably looked for a scapegoat external to the stricken community. (Massacres of Jews in unprecedented numbers took place everywhere in plague-stricken Europe of 1347–8, then stopped as soon as the plague receded.) With the modern diseases, the scapegoat is not so easily separated from the patient. But much as these diseases individualize, they also pick up some of the metaphors of epidemic diseases. (Diseases understood to be simply epidemic have become less useful as metaphors, as evidenced by the near-total historical amnesia about the influenza pandemic of 1918–19, in which more people died than in the four years of World War I.) Presently, it is as much a cliché to say that cancer is 'environmentally' caused as it was – and still is – to say that it is caused by mismanaged emotions. TB was associated with pollution (Florence Nightingale thought it was 'induced by the foul air of houses'), and now cancer is thought of as a disease of the contamination of the whole world. TB was 'the white plague.' With awareness of environmental pollution, people have started saying that there is an 'epidemic' or 'plague' of cancer.

Chapter Nine

Illnesses have always been used as metaphors to enliven charges that a society was corrupt or unjust. Traditional disease metaphors are principally a way of being vehement; they are, compared with the modern metaphors, relatively contentless. Shakespeare does many variations on a standard form of the metaphor, an infection in the 'body politic' – making no distinction between a contagion, an infection, a sore, an abscess, an ulcer, and what we would call a tumor. For purposes of invective, diseases are of only two types: the painful but curable, and the possibly fatal. Particular diseases figure as examples of diseases in general; no disease has its own distinctive logic. Disease imagery is used to express concern for social order, and health is something everyone is presumed to know about. Such metaphors do not project the modern idea of a specific master illness, in which what is at issue is health itself.

Master illnesses like TB and cancer are more

specifically polemical. They are used to propose new, critical standards of individual health, and to express a sense of dissatisfaction with society as such. Unlike the Elizabethan metaphors – which complain of some general aberration of public calamity that is, in consequence, dislocating to individuals – the modern metaphors suggest a profound disequilibrium between individual and society, with a society conceived as the individual's adversary. Disease metaphors are used to judge society not as out of balance but as repressive. They turn up regularly in Romantic rhetoric which opposes heart to head, spontaneity to reason, nature to artifice, country to city.

When travel to a better climate was invented as a treatment for TB in the early nineteenth century, the most contradictory destinations were proposed. The south, mountains, deserts, islands – their very diversity suggests what they have in common: the rejection of the city. In *La Traviata*, as soon as Alfredo wins Violetta's love, he moves her from unhealthy wicked Paris to the wholesome countryside: instant health follows. And Violetta's giving up on happiness is tantamount to leaving the country and returning to the city – where her doom is sealed, her TB returns, and she dies.

The metaphor of cancer expands the theme of the rejection of the city. Before it was understood as, literally, a cancer-causing (carcinogenic) environment, the city was seen as itself a cancer – a place of abnormal, unnatural growth. In *The Living City* (1958), Frank Lloyd Wright compared the city of earlier times, a healthy organism ('The city then was not malignant'),

with the modern city. 'To look at the cross-section of any plan of a big city is to look at the section of a fibrous tumor.'*

Throughout the nineteenth century, disease metaphors become more virulent, preposterous, demagogic. And there is an increasing tendency to call any situation one disapproves of a disease. Disease, which could be considered as much a part of nature as is health, became the synonym of whatever was 'unnatural.' In *Les Misérables*, Hugo wrote:

> Monasticism, such as it existed in Spain and as it exists in Tibet, is for civilization a sort of tuberculosis. It cuts off life. Quite simply, it depopulates. Confinement, castration. It was a scourge in Europe.

Bichat in 1800 defined life as 'the ensemble of functions which resists death.' That contrast between life and death was to be transferred to a contrast between life and disease. Disease (now equated with death) is what opposes life.

* The sociologist Herbert Gans has called my attention to the importance of tuberculosis and the alleged or real threat of it in the slum-clearing and 'model tenement' movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the feeling being that slum housing 'bred' TB. The shift from TB to cancer in planning and housing rhetoric had taken place by the 1950s. 'Blight' (a virtual synonym for slum) is seen as a cancer that spreads insidiously, and the use of the term 'invasion' to describe when the non-white and poor move into a middle-class neighborhood is as much a metaphor borrowed from cancer as from the military: the two discourses overlap.

In 1916, in 'Socialism and Culture,' Gramsci denounced

> the habit of thinking that culture is encyclopedic knowledge . . . This form of culture serves to create that pale and broken-winded intellectualism . . . which has produced a whole crowd of boasters and day-dreamers more harmful to a healthy social life than tuberculosis or syphilis microbes are to the body's beauty and health . . .

In 1919, Mandelstam paid the following tribute to Pasternak:

> To read Pasternak's verse is to clear one's throat, to fortify one's breathing, to fill one's lungs; such poetry must be healthy, a cure for tuberculosis. No poetry is healthier at the present moment. It is like drinking *koumiss* after canned American milk.

And Marinetti, denouncing Communism in 1920:

> Communism is the exasperation of the bureaucratic cancer that has always wasted humanity. A German cancer, a product of the characteristic German preparationism. Every pedantic preparation is anti-human . . .

It is for the same iniquity that the protofascist Italian writer attacks Communism and the future founder of the Italian Communist Party attacks a certain bourgeois idea of culture ('truly harmful, especially to the proletariat,' Gramsci says) – for being artificial, pedantic, rigid, lifeless. Both TB and cancer have been regularly invoked

to condemn repressive practices and ideals, repression being conceived of as an environment that deprives one of strength (TB) or of flexibility and spontaneity (cancer). Modern disease metaphors specify an ideal of society's well-being, analogized to physical health, that is as frequently anti-political as it is a call for a new political order.

Order is the oldest concern of political philosophy, and if it is plausible to compare the polis to an organism, then it is plausible to compare civil disorder to an illness. The classical formulations which analogize a political disorder to an illness – from Plato to, say, Hobbes – presuppose the classical medical (and political) idea of balance. Illness comes from imbalance. Treatment is aimed at restoring the right balance – in political terms, the right hierarchy. The prognosis is always, in principle, optimistic. Society, by definition, never catches a fatal disease.

When a disease image is used by Machiavelli, the presumption is that the disease can be cured. 'Consumption,' he wrote,

> in the commencement is easy to cure, and difficult to understand; but when it has neither been discovered in due time, nor treated upon a proper principle, it becomes easy to understand, and difficult to cure. The same thing happens in state affairs, by foreseeing them at a distance, which is only done by men of talents, the evils which might arise from them are soon cured; but when, from want of foresight, they are suffered to increase to such a height that they are perceptible to everyone, there is no longer any remedy.

Machiavelli invokes TB as a disease whose progress can be cut off, if it is detected at an early stage (when its symptoms are barely visible). Given proper foresight, the course of a disease is not irreversible; the same for disturbances in the body politic. Machiavelli offers an illness metaphor that is not so much about society as about statecraft (conceived as a therapeutic art): as prudence is needed to control serious diseases, so foresight is needed to control social crises. It is a metaphor about foresight, and a call to foresight.

In political philosophy's great tradition, the analogy between disease and civil disorder is proposed to encourage rulers to pursue a more rational policy. 'Although nothing can be immortal, which mortals make,' Hobbes wrote,

> yet, if men had the use of reason they pretend to, their Commonwealths might be secured, at least, from perishing by internal diseases ... Therefore when they come to be dissolved, not by externall violence, but intestine disorder, the fault is not in men, as they are the *Matter*; but as they are the *Makers*, and orderers of them.

Hobbes's view is anything but fatalistic. Rulers have the responsibility and the ability (through reason) to control disorder. For Hobbes, murder ('externall violence') is the only 'natural' way for a society or institution to die. To perish from internal disorder – analogized to a disease – is suicide, something quite preventable; an act of will, or rather a failure of will (that is, of reason).

The disease metaphor was used in political philosophy

to reinforce the call for a rational response. Machiavelli and Hobbes fixed on one part of medical wisdom, the importance of cutting off serious disease early, while it is relatively easy to control. The disease metaphor could also be used to encourage rulers to another kind of foresight. In 1708, Lord Shaftesbury wrote:

> There are certain humours in mankind which of necessity must have vent. The human mind and body are both of them naturally subject to commotions ... as there are strange ferments in the blood, which in many bodies occasion an extra-ordinary discharge ... Should physicians endeavour absolutely to allay those ferments of the body, and strike in the humours which discover themselves in such eruptions, they might, instead of making a cure, bid fair perhaps to raise a plague, and turn a spring-ague or an autumn-surfeit into an epidemical malignant fever. They are certainly as ill physicians in the body politic who would needs be tampering with these mental eruptions, and, under the specious pretence of healing this itch of superstition and saving souls from the contagion of enthusiasm, should set all nature in an uproar, and turn a few innocent carbuncles into an inflammation and mortal gangrene.

Shaftesbury's point is that it is rational to tolerate a certain amount of irrationality ('superstition,' 'enthusiasm'), and that stern repressive measures are likely to aggravate disorder rather than cure it, turning a nuisance into a disaster. The body politic should not be overmedicalized; a remedy should not be sought for every disorder.

For Machiavelli, foresight; for Hobbes, reason; for

Shaftesbury, tolerance – these are all ideas of how proper statecraft, conceived on a medical analogy, can prevent a fatal disorder. Society is presumed to be in basically good health; disease (disorder) is, in principle, always manageable.

In the modern period, the use of disease imagery in political rhetoric implies other, less lenient assumptions. The modern idea of revolution, based on an estimate of the unremitting bleakness of the existing political situation, shattered the old, optimistic use of disease metaphors. John Adams wrote in his diary, in December 1772:

> The Prospect before me . . . is very gloomy. My Country is in deep Distress, and has very little Ground of Hope . . . The Body of the People seem to be worn out, by struggling, and Venality, Servility and Prostitution, eat and spread like a Cancer.

Political events started commonly to be defined as being unprecedented, radical; and eventually both civil disturbances and wars come to be understood as, really, revolutions. As might be expected, it was not with the American but with the French Revolution that disease metaphors in the modern sense came into their own – particularly in the conservative response to the French Revolution. In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Edmund Burke contrasted older wars and civil disturbances with this one, which he considered to have a totally new character. Before, no matter what the

disaster, 'the organs . . . of the state, however shattered, existed.' But, he addressed the French, 'your present confusion, like a palsy, has attacked the fountain of life itself.'

As classical theories of the polis have gone the way of the theories of the four humors, so a modern idea of politics has been complemented by a modern idea of disease. Disease equals death. Burke invoked palsy (and 'the living ulcer of a corroding memory'). The emphasis was soon to be on diseases that are loathsome and fatal. Such diseases are not to be managed or treated; they are to be attacked. In Hugo's novel about the French Revolution, *Quatre-vingt-treize* (1874), the revolutionary Gauvain, condemned to the guillotine, absolves the Revolution with all its bloodshed, including his own imminent execution,

> because it is a storm. A storm always knows what it is doing . . . Civilization was in the grip of plague; this gale comes to the rescue. Perhaps it is not selective enough. Can it act otherwise? It is entrusted with the arduous task of sweeping away disease! In face of the horrible infection, I understand the fury of the blast.

It is hardly the last time that revolutionary violence would be justified on the grounds that society has a radical, horrible illness. The melodramatics of the disease metaphor in modern political discourse assume a punitive notion: of the disease not as a punishment but as a sign of evil, something to be punished.

Modern totalitarian movements, whether of the right

or of the left, have been peculiarly – and revealingly – inclined to use disease imagery. The Nazis declared that someone of mixed 'racial' origin was like a syphilitic. European Jewry was repeatedly analogized to syphilis, and to a cancer that must be excised. Disease metaphors were a staple of Bolshevik polemics, and Trotsky, the most gifted of all communist polemicists, used them with the greatest profusion – particularly after his banishment from the Soviet Union in 1929. Stalinism was called a cholera, a syphilis, and a cancer.* To use only fatal diseases for imagery in politics gives the metaphor a much more pointed character. Now, to liken a political event or situation to an illness is to impute guilt, to prescribe punishment.

This is particularly true of the use of cancer as a

* Cf. Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929–1940* (1963): '"Certain measures," Trotsky wrote to [Philip] Rahv [on March 21, 1938], "are necessary for a struggle against incorrect theory, and others for fighting a cholera epidemic. Stalin is incomparably nearer to cholera than to a false theory. The struggle must be intense, truculent, merciless. An element of 'fanaticism' ... is salutary."' And: 'Trotsky spoke of the "syphilis of Stalinism" or of the "cancer that must be burned out of the labour movement with a hot iron." ...'

Notably, Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* contains virtually no uses of cancer as a metaphor – for Stalinism, or for anything else. Solzhenitsyn was not misrepresenting his novel when, hoping to get it published in the Soviet Union, he told the Board of the Union of Writers in 1967 that the title was not 'some kind of symbol,' as was being charged, and that 'the subject is specifically and literally cancer.'

metaphor. It amounts to saying, first of all, that the event or situation is unqualifiedly and unredeemably wicked. It enormously ups the ante. Hitler, in his first political tract, an anti-Semitic diatribe written in September 1919, accused the Jews of producing 'a racial tuberculosis among nations.'* Tuberculosis still retained its prestige as the overdetermined, culpable illness of the nineteenth century. (Recall Hugo's comparison of monasticism with TB.) But the Nazis quickly modernized their rhetoric, and indeed the imagery of cancer was far more apt for their purposes. As was said in speeches about 'the Jewish problem' throughout the 1930s, to treat a cancer, one must cut out much of the healthy tissue around it. The imagery of cancer for the Nazis prescribes 'radical' treatment, in contrast to the 'soft' treatment thought appropriate for TB – the difference between sanatoria (that is, exile) and surgery (that is, crematoria). (The Jews were also identified with, and became a metaphor for, city life – with Nazi rhetoric

* '[The Jew's] power is the power of money which in the form of interest effortlessly and interminably multiples itself in his hands and forces upon nations that most dangerous of yokes ... Everything which makes men strive for higher things, whether religion, socialism, or democracy, is for him only a means to an end, to the satisfaction of a lust for money and domination. His activities produce a racial tuberculosis among nations ...' A late-nineteenth-century precursor of Nazi ideology, Julius Langbehn, called the Jews 'only a passing pest and cholera.' But in Hitler's TB image there is already something easily transferred to cancer: the idea that Jewish power 'effortlessly and interminably multiplies.'

echoing all the Romantic clichés about cities as a debilitating, merely cerebral, morally contaminated, unhealthy environment.)

To describe a phenomenon as a cancer is an incitement to violence. The use of cancer in political discourse encourages fatalism and justifies 'severe' measures – as well as strongly reinforcing the widespread notion that the disease is necessarily fatal. The concept of disease is never innocent. But it could be argued that the cancer metaphors are in themselves implicitly genocidal. No specific political view seems to have a monopoly on this metaphor. Trotsky called Stalinism the cancer of Marxism; in China in the last year, the Gang of Four have become, among other things, 'the cancer of China.' John Dean explained Watergate to Nixon: 'We have a cancer within – close to the Presidency – that's growing.' The standard metaphor of Arab polemics – heard by Israelis on the radio every day for the last twenty years – is that Israel is 'a cancer in the heart of the Arab world' or 'the cancer of the Middle East,' and an officer with the Christian Lebanese rightist forces besieging the Palestine refugee camp of Tal Zaatar in August 1976 called the camp 'a cancer in the Lebanese body.' The cancer metaphor seems hard to resist for those who wish to register indignation. Thus, Neal Ascherson wrote in 1969 that the Slansky Affair 'was – is – a huge cancer in the body of the Czechoslovak state and nation'; Simon Leys, in *Chinese Shadows*, speaks of 'the Maoist cancer that is gnawing away at the face of China'; D. H. Lawrence called masturbation 'the deepest and most dangerous

cancer of our civilization'; and I once wrote, in the heat of despair over America's war on Vietnam, that 'the white race is the cancer of human history.'

But how to be morally severe in the late twentieth century? How, when there is so much to be severe about; how, when we have a sense of evil but no longer the religious or philosophical language to talk intelligently about evil. Trying to comprehend 'radical' or 'absolute' evil, we search for adequate metaphors. But the modern disease metaphors are all cheap shots. The people who have the real disease are also hardly helped by hearing their disease's name constantly being dropped as the epitome of evil. Only in the most limited sense is any historical event or problem like an illness. And the cancer metaphor is particularly crass. It is invariably an encouragement to simplify what is complex and an invitation to self-righteousness, if not to fanaticism.

It is instructive to compare the image of cancer with that of gangrene. With some of the same metaphoric properties as cancer – it starts from nothing; it spreads; it is disgusting – gangrene would seem to be laden with everything a polemicist would want. Indeed, it was used in one important moral polemic – against the French use of torture in Algeria in the 1950s; the title of the famous book exposing that torture was called *La Gangrène*. But there is a large difference between the cancer and the gangrene metaphors. First, causality is clear with gangrene. It is external (gangrene can develop from a scratch); cancer is understood as mysterious, a disease with multiple causes, internal as well as external. Second,

gangrene is not as all-encompassing a disaster. It leads often to amputation, less often to death; cancer is presumed to lead to death in most cases. Not gangrene – and not the plague (despite the notable attempts by writers as different as Artaud, Reich, and Camus to impose that as a metaphor for the dismal and the disastrous) – but cancer remains the most radical of disease metaphors. And just because it is so radical, it is particularly tendentious – a good metaphor for paranoids, for those who need to turn campaigns into crusades, for the fatalistic (cancer = death), and for those under the spell of a historical revolutionary optimism (the idea that only the most radical changes are desirable). As long as so much militaristic hyperbole attaches to the description and treatment of cancer, it is a particularly unapt metaphor for the peaceloving.

It is, of course, likely that the language about cancer will evolve in the coming years. It must change, decisively, when the disease is finally understood and the rate of cure becomes much higher. It is already changing, with the development of new forms of treatment. As chemotherapy is more and more supplanting radiation in the treatment of cancer patients, an effective form of treatment (already a supplementary treatment of proven use) seems likely to be found in some kind of immunotherapy. Concepts have started to shift in certain medical circles, where doctors are concentrating on the steep buildup of the body's immunological responses to cancer. As the language of treatment evolves from military metaphors of aggressive warfare to metaphors

featuring the body's 'natural defenses' (what is called the 'immunodefensive system' can also – to break entirely with the military metaphor – be called the body's 'immune competence'), cancer will be partly de-mythicized; and it may then be possible to compare something to a cancer without implying either a fatalistic diagnosis or a rousing call to fight by any means whatever a lethal, insidious enemy. Then perhaps it will be morally permissible, as it is not now, to use cancer as a metaphor.

But at that time, perhaps nobody will want any longer to compare anything awful to cancer. Since the interest of the metaphor is precisely that it refers to a disease so overlaid with mystification, so charged with the fantasy of inescapable fatality. Since our views about cancer, and the metaphors we have imposed on it, are so much a vehicle for the large insufficiencies of this culture, for our shallow attitude toward death, for our anxieties about feeling, for our reckless improvident responses to our real 'problems of growth,' for our inability to construct an advanced industrial society which properly regulates consumption, and for our justified fears of the increasingly violent course of history. The cancer metaphor will be made obsolete, I would predict, long before the problems it has reflected so persuasively will be resolved.