

HETERO DOXY

ARTICLES AND ANIMADVERSIONS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES



PRESENT DANGERS

On nearly two hundred occasions in the three years before the breaking of the China scandal, including innumerable campaign appearances and three State of the Union addresses, the President of the United States looked the American people in the eye and assured them that because of his policies "There are no more nuclear missiles pointed at any children in the United States."

If you are Bill Clinton, the truth of this statement probably depends on what "are" is.

But to the rest of us who live in the shadow of a nuclear Armageddon, the President's statement is a morally repulsive and dangerous lie. The shred of truth out of which Clinton has woven his politically useful deception is a meaningless, post-Cold War agreement between Russia and the United States not to target one another's cities. But even if Russia were not a country in a state of near dissolution, the stark military reality is that U.S. intelligence services normally have no way of telling what targets Russia's leaders have actually chosen for their nuclear warheads. In fact, it would take a mere fifteen seconds for Russian commanders to re-target any of the hundreds of strategic missiles tipped with multiple nuclear warheads



they have ready to go.

More important, the Russians are energetically planning for the possibility of nuclear war with the United States. And they are not alone. Thanks to technology transfers courtesy of the Clinton Administration, China and North Korea are also armed with long-range missiles capable of reaching the American mainland. And they are not parties to the non-targeting agreement. Thanks to six years of tenacious, dedicated opposition by the Clinton Administration to the Strategic Defense Initiative, America has no defense against incoming missiles and no prospect of deploying one for many years.

By every reasonable measure, the post-Cold War world is a dangerous one, perhaps even more dangerous than it was during the Cold War itself. That is the conclusion that any responsible commander-in-chief would draw, and that is what he would tell the nation whose security depends on his political judgment. It is the assessment that any responsible Administration would have acted on in the last seven years. But the actual response of the Clinton Administration during those years, as documented by the veteran military reporter Bill Gertz in his disturbing new book *Betrayal*, are different indeed:

Continued on page 15

INSIDE

*Horrors of
Swiss Education*

*Testing as
Racial
Oppression*

*Ethnic Studies
Sellout*

SLOUCHING TOWARD CLINTON DIDION'S TRUMPET

by Noemie Emery

On April 20, 1999, the Independent Women's Forum, a conservative women's group founded in 1991 to counter the feminists in the wake of the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill hearings, held a fund-raiser at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington to honor Henry Hyde and the other House managers who had pressed the case against President Clinton at his Senate trial earlier this year. It was the normal kind of Washington evening that tends to drive interest group politics, at which like-minded people say nice things to themselves and each other and raise money to further the cause. But to Joan Didion, watching on C-SPAN, it was something different: a peek at the heart of political darkness; a force bent on bending our national safeguards to ever more sinister ends. It made her want to write something for *The New York Review of Books*.

Kook country is a strange place to find Didion, once the great hope of American letters, but it seems to be where she has gone. Did you think impeachment was about a president's lies, and his attempts to conceal them? To Didion and to some of her allies, it was something different—an attempt to undermine the very pillars of statecraft, a process which was itself the crime. The crime was finding the evidence, in the interests of forcing a coup that would enable a far-right-wing agenda, oddly backed by the mainstream and secular press. In this view, Didion, who has perhaps spent much too much time in Central America, finds all the earmarks of the classic palace strike: "first of all, the sense of a 'movement' . . . that . . . believed itself under-represented in the conventional electoral process. . . . The reliance, as in the more authoritarian Latin American structures, on *orejas*, 'ears,' . . . tale-tellers . . . encouraged to obtain evidence against those perceived as enemies. . . . There was the aid from the private sector, the dependence on such rich conservatives as Richard

Continued on page 20

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

RIGOBERTA UPDATE: When she won the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for the memoir that turned out to be one long lie, Guatemalan revolutionary Rigoberta Menchu used the money to establish a foundation for the betterment of people in her homeland. The director of the foundation is Gustavo Meono. In June, the Archdiocese of Guatemala City, known for its sympathy to the guerrillas' cause, issued a statement saying that Meono should be tried for murder. He and five of his comrades are alleged to have killed five fellow former Marxist guerrillas in a doctrinal feud. The murder of rivals is about as typical, on the left, as airbrushing the truth out of history.

MULTICULTURAL CHIMPS: Primatologists have gathered voluminous records on the habits of chimpanzees, our nearest relatives in the animal world. Looking for similarities, they have taken note of their mating rituals, eating habits, tool use, and other behaviors. And now researchers have concluded that individual groups of chimpanzees, like humans, have distinctive behavioral patterns that are passed down through generations to create what are in essence their own unique versions of "culture." As detailed in a story in the *Washington Post*, chimps in Kibale, Uganda, and Gombe, Tanzania, have developed a custom known as "leaf-grooming." But chimps in nearby Budongo, Uganda, do not do this. Researchers have also discovered wide variations in how chimps eat ants. Chimps in the Tai Forest in the Ivory Coast dip a short stick into an ant hole to retrieve just a few ants at a time. Chimps in Gombe, in contrast, use long sticks to sweep dozens of ants into their mouths all at once. Chimps in Kibale don't eat ants at all, even though they are plentiful there as well. The contrast is most dramatic in the Ivory Coast, where chimps in the Tai Forest on the west side of the Sassandra River smash nuts while chimps on the east side of the river do not. The researchers also noted that while members of four of the chimp groups do a ritual dance when it begins to rain, seemingly to welcome the water, chimps in two other populations only sometimes do a rain dance and those in the last one never do. The question is—and it would take a university administrator to solve it—should members of this last group have affirmative access to water when it is the others who have made it rain?

THE HEARTBREAK OF DODGEBALL: After the Littleton tragedy, when Bill Clinton talked about how he felt as an overweight boy when he wasn't picked to play in schoolyard games, Chico State PE professor Cathrine Hinberg knew what he meant. The previous spring Hinberg had started a campaign to wipe out what might be called abilitism in elementary school sports. Her new organization is called CASPER, which stands for Concerned Adults and Students for Physical Education Reform. The organization wants to end PE class practices such as asking "captains" to pick teams, teaching elimination games where one person or one team wins, and having classes watch students take fitness tests. Writing on the CASPER home page, Hinberg says, "As a former PE teacher, I'd been aware of inappropriate practices, but it wasn't until I was a parent that I saw so clearly the damage being done." Her aha! moment came in the spring of 1998 when Hinberg sat in on a session discussing dodgeball at the National Conference of PE Teachers. The popular PE class game, it occurred to her, favored strong-armed youngsters and humiliated those who weren't light on their feet. She went home and talked to her ten-year-old son and a friend who said that they had been humiliated by dodgeball. Together the threesome formed CASPER, whose Web site lists inappropriate prac-

tices on the playground and ways to reform them. Hopefully her principles will not be used to select the next World's Cup team for women's soccer.

BILINGUAL DEAD: The education bureaucracy running California's schools has tried hard to ignore the results of Proposition 227, which outlawed the use of bilingual education. But one school district—Oceanside Unified—had read the law, found there was no way around it, and began the mandated English-immersion programs. Oceanside Unified is also the only school district in California to release post-Proposition 227 test scores—and the results from the English-immersion programs have been

Chu Wai-choi, 21, to have his time behind bars increased from 18 months to two years. While Chu will have to return to China after completing his sentence, he will still have the opportunity to make the equivalent of between \$3.22 and \$15.48 per week as an inmate in Hong Kong's prison system. It brings up a conundrum: who are the prisoners in that part of the world, and where are the jails?

ENDGAME FOR PAULA: Paula Jones has begun her slow, steady descent from infamy. Once, presidential spin doctors reviled her as the product of right-wing conspirators trolling with \$100 bills through trailer parks. Now it would appear she is being used as a marketing tool to reach the trailer-park set in her new job—as spokeswoman for the Paula Jones Celebrity Psychic Network. Callers will pay \$3.49 a minute to listen to a voice actor unconvincingly provide them with insights to their future (for entertainment purposes only). But so far Paula's famed psychic powers aren't bringing in too many callers. The president of the company behind the promotion admits that "if this were a horse race, we'd be off to a slow start." But lest well-wishers worry about her future, one of her promoters says that she is considering working on a country/western album.

ENDGAME FOR MONICA: The human sexual equivalent of a milking machine has been on *Saturday Night Live*, she's had a book deal—and she's being sued. George Berry, a 59-year-old Hollywood, Florida, man, has sued Monica because she used sex to extort the President—and got rich and famous for it. Berry figures she owes him \$100,000 in compensatory damages and \$40 million more for the monies Ken Starr's office spent investigating Clinton. Lewinsky's lawyers are moving to dismiss the case as frivolous—and while it certainly is, it also shows that the desire to hold that woman, Miz Lewinsky, accountable for something, somewhere, is not dead.

DEAD AIR TIME: Berkeley's KPFA radio station—flagship of the five-station, Pacifica Network and notable for its hardcore leftist views over the last half century—is in trouble. It turns out that KPFA's leftist management has gotten the message from Bill Clinton's forays into the political center and his embrace of Dick Morris' "triangulations." The station's nomenclature has decided to diversify programming in order to attract a wider audience that will hopefully be younger and multiracial. (Few blacks listen despite Pacifica's slavish agreement with every crackpot radical idea in the black community.) But there's a problem. The "workers" at KPFA (the conflict has been all tricked out in Marxist clichés) claim that the governing bureaucracy is "corporatizing" the station and jeopardizing its leftist identity. The result? Civil War. Management has forcibly gotten rid of many of the employees who publicly complained about the changes, including one broadcaster who, while still on the air, was dragged screaming out of the station by armed guards. The employees, not to mention the local cadre of Pacifica listeners (who are mostly white men over 50), fought back by holding rallies drawing hundreds of people—the most serious of which resulted in 53 arrests. The struggle has even turned violent—at one point, someone repeatedly fired a gun at the offices of management. And as the workers take on the head office, the station itself has even been padlocked, reduced to endlessly replaying old Angela Davis speeches and other such drivel. Hopefully Top 40 is soon to follow. If not, the conflict has at least reestablished Berkeley's reputation as being too small to be a nation state and too large to be an insane asylum.

LUNA BEACH By Carl Moore



astounding. Across grade levels and subjects, the scores of English learners drastically increased in percentile terms after only seven months of English immersion. In this success is a lesson the bitterenders would rather not learn.

JAR JAR, MEET TINKY WINKY: Many critics have derided the new *Star Wars* movie for various perceived failures, but no failure has been more reviled than Jar Jar Binks, the annoying, computer-generated alien who tags along with the film's good guys. At first, Jar Jar was hated because (a) he was annoying and (b) because he spoke with a heavy Caribbean accent. The former outraged diehard *Star Wars* fans, who detest any sign of cuteness in the series. The latter outraged diehard leftists, who believe that all the bad or dopey characters in the film are based on racial or ethnic stereotypes. But the left may be forced to redeem Jar Jar—yes, he is annoying and his accent is atrocious—but he is also gay, according to the *Village Voice*, which portrayed him as a limp-wristed alien carrying a handbag on its front page. While Dan Wilson, of the Lesbian and Gay Services Center in New York's West Village, said that his group had "no information one way or another" whether Jar Jar is homosexual, he also noted that "if he is attacked and bashed the way Tinky Winky was by Jerry Falwell, then we will certainly embrace him in our community."

JAIL IS BETTER THAN COMMUNISM: An illegal immigrant from China appealed to a Hong Kong court for a longer sentence behind bars because he can make more money in prison in still-capitalist Hong Kong than he can working in the mainland. Justice Verina Bokhary turned down the request of

UC Berkeley's Latest Munich Ethnic Studies in Our Time

by Jack Citrin

"Ah, the social sciences," smiled then-Berkeley chancellor Albert Bowker when I was introduced to him as a political scientist more than twenty years ago. "That's where I solve my foreign policy problems."

What might be called Bowker's Law helps explain how Berkeley dealt with a month-long protest by ethnic studies students and faculty this spring. The stimulus for the disruption was the alleged "starvation" of Ethnic Studies through cuts in staffing. On April 14, protesters occupied Barrows Hall, the home of Ethnic Studies. More than forty students were arrested, but negotiations with Executive Vice Chancellor Carol Christ gave them little solace. About two weeks later, six students began a hunger strike, drinking only Jamba juice and Ensure, in front of Chancellor Robert Berdahl's office. This brought him to his knees within a week. When the settlement was announced, a student leader exulted to her followers: "We got everything you asked us to get. We got it all."

The willingness of the Berkeley administration to breach the norms of shared governance in order to buy ethnic peace should warn faculty everywhere. Outside the "hard" sciences, when push comes to shove, ethnicity, not excellence, reigns.

On May 7, the Chancellor published the treaty reached with Ethnic Studies. The administration promised that:

1. Three faculty searches would be authorized immediately for the following year.

2. Five additional faculty appointments would be spaced over the next three years.

3. The Chancellor would use his discretionary funds to provide seed money of \$500,000 over five years for an Institute of Race and Gender Studies to be designed by a committee including student representatives.

4. The campus would allocate an additional \$40,000 a year to recruit minorities from the community colleges.

5. There would be a review of the "equity" of space allocation for Ethnic Studies.

6. The campus would provide space and money for a "multicultural" student center.

7. The campus would accept a celebratory mural in the space occupied by Ethnic Studies in Barrows Hall.

The first three searches approved are replacements for faculty recently denied tenure. The remaining five are in anticipation of coming retirements. The sequencing of these appointments and their relationship to current programs is to be decided by a committee composed of both Ethnic Studies and outside faculty, with the former in the majority. In an unprecedented move, the implementation of the entire agreement is to be monitored by a committee chaired by Professor Pedro Noguera, a professor of education affiliated with the African American Studies department, (separate from Ethnic Studies, per se) and made up of one faculty member from African American Studies and one faculty member, graduate student, and undergraduate student from Ethnic Studies.

The document spelling out these provisions was signed by the chancellor, the chair of the academic senate (who now says he was acting as a private party rather than as the repre-

sentative of the faculty), and the chair of Ethnic Studies. Rather than imagining the signing ceremony, I asked Vice Chancellor Christ, who normally makes the final decision on the allocation of faculty positions among departments, what the scene was like. Unfortunately, she could not say. Ethnic Studies faculty had refused to negotiate with her in the room, presumably because of past disappointments at her hand. Incredibly, the administration acquiesced to this affront. So all the settlement lacked was Neville Chamberlain's coda to Munich: "Peace in our time."



CHANCELLOR ROBERT BERDAHL—
"A CHAMBERLAIN, NOT A CHURCHILL"

Public criticism of the Don is rare in the academy as in the Mafia. Still, there is little doubt that most faculty regard the chancellor's settlement with Ethnic Studies as an abject capitulation. One prominent department chair I interviewed put it simply: "He gave away the store." A second scoffed that "terrorism is the only way to get the administration to act quickly," while a third called the chancellor's comment that the settlement could have been reached through the normal process of allocating resources "a bald-faced lie." Interviews with recent faculty research lecturers, Berkeley's luminaries, elicited comments ranging from an angry "I will feel besmirched every time I go to my office in Barrows Hall" to a quizzical "How did this man get to be chancellor?"

The budget committee of the academic senate normally reviews all proposed faculty searches and makes influential, though not necessarily decisive, recommendations to the executive vice chancellor. Its terse statement on the Ethnic Studies settlement: The chancellor acted on his own, knowing that in departing from normal procedures he was going "against the Committee's grain." Indeed, to avoid an embarrassing rebuff, the budget committee simply was not asked its opinion of the proposed settlement.

The official response to faculty critics appears in an article by the chancellor published in the May 19 *San Francisco Chronicle*. He denies having capitulated to the protesters or "trampled the normal review process." Berdahl reaffirms his commitment to a "strong and vibrant" Ethnic Studies program and describes the Ethnic Studies settlement as a "reasonable" solution providing "nothing that could not have been achieved by the normal process of allocating resources." He con-

cludes by accusing critics like me of making "truth a casualty" by spreading "misinformation."

When interviewed for this article, Vice Chancellor Christ bravely elaborated on the party line. It is wrong, she says, to view the outcome as a surrender: "This was a strange protest. The students complained about cuts when there were none. Now faculty are saying that Ethnic Studies is gaining positions when this is not at all the case." Department chairs who believe otherwise simply are "uninformed." The five-year plan for recruitment in Ethnic Studies is something that would be approved for "any department facing a lot of retirements." If anything, the administration won a "victory" by limiting the department's autonomy through the creation of a multi-disciplinary committee to plan the replacements. No other department would be affected by the allocation of resources to Ethnic Studies; search authorizations for political science, psychology, physics, and the all the rest would proceed as if the protest had not occurred. "Absolutely nothing has changed."

From the administration's perspective, then, the whole episode is much ado about nothing. Its only mistake made was to have failed to implement this "reasonable" plan for Ethnic Studies before the protest began. Is self-delusion an occupational hazard for academic administrators, locked in their offices and surrounded by a conspiracy of silence?

Clintonesque is the best label for the official version of events. In the purely technical sense, of course, the normal process of allocating resources could have resulted in the same outcomes for Ethnic Studies. But this is only because anything is possible under the normal process. The proper question to ask is what would have occurred? Would the budget committee have approved the plan for expediting searches in Ethnic Studies and "mortgaging" positions against anticipated retirements? The answer is almost certainly no. After all, if the plan was so eminently reasonable, why had it not been approved already and why were Ethnic Studies faculty so suspicious of the vice chancellor? All the evidence indicates that the budget committee would be unsympathetic and that the vice chancellor would not proceed without the committee's approval. In the heavy lifting required to justify a flawed policy, Berkeley administrators have resorted to an Orwellian misuse of the English language.

Five of the projected new appointments in Ethnic Studies are in "anticipation" of coming retirements. It is this feature of the arrangement that allows the chancellor to claim that there shall be no permanent increase in the size of the department. Still, since the faculty positions are not contingent upon the retirements occurring according to the anticipated schedule, it is quite possible that there will be growth in the medium term. Budget committee sources acknowledge that the allocation of positions to Ethnic Studies will have no impact on recruitment by other departments in the long-run, but point out that there must be a short-term effect, if only because there is a limit on the campus-wide number of searches approved for any given year.

The normal process of allocating faculty positions at Berkeley is this. A position that opens up through a termination or through a departure to another institution automatically remains with the department. The timing of a search for a replacement is a matter of negotiation, and it is rare that a small department is authorized to conduct three such searches in a single year. When a faculty member retires, the retiree's position

returns to a central pool controlled by the executive vice chancellor; there is no absolute guarantee that the department will regain it. Departments of distinction, of course, almost always do, but Ethnic Studies faculty rightly perceived that they lack the prestige to expect this result.

The crucial point is that the budget committee and divisional deans usually play an important role both in the annual review of departmental requests for positions and in the approval of specific appointments. It is indisputable that here the chancellor took it upon himself to bypass the normal processes of shared governance. The procedural issue aside, though, the substance of the recruitment plan authorized also violates the ordinary rules. Quite sensibly, no department at Berkeley is guaranteed the same size forever. Some grow, others shrink. The chancellor's "reasonable" solution takes this issue off the table as far as Ethnic Studies is concerned. The ultimate victory of the protesters is to have made African American Studies and Ethnic Studies untouchable—no cuts in staff, budget or courses taught can be contemplated. The chancellor's public commitment, unwisely and illegitimately endorsed by the outgoing chair of the academic senate, breaches the principles of rational academic planning by singling out two departments on campus as uniquely privileged. This, perhaps more than anything else, is what enrages so many faculty members.

In denying the chancellor had capitulated, Vice Chancellor Christ told me that nonetheless a decision was made "to allow the ethnic studies students and faculty to claim victory." This odd conception of leadership reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of power. A reputation for weakness is weakness. Perceived surrender is surrender. History shows that appeasement will win the chancellor no friends among those who successfully intimidated him, but only embolden them to pursue additional demands by the same tactics.

Official statistics show that far from being "starved," African American Studies and Ethnic Studies are pampered at Berkeley. When the administration briefly flirted with firmness at an early stage of the conflict, it released data showing that these departments were spared the budget cuts of the early 1990s. Between 1989-90 and 1998-99, the permanent faculty in African American Studies grew from 8.5 to 10 positions, an increase of 18 percent. During the same period, the number of permanent faculty positions allocated to Ethnic Studies rose from 15.5 to 18, an increase of 16 percent. Meanwhile, the total number of faculty positions in the College of Letters and Sciences shrank by 11 percent and there was a 2 percent overall decline in the Division of Social Sciences. For example, Political Science lost 1.5 positions and Psychology lost 3.

All this occurred as the number of undergraduate students in African American Studies and Ethnic Studies declined. Teaching workload can be calculated in many ways, but one measure is the number of majors assigned to a department. In 1996, the number for African American Studies was just 16, or 1.6 per ladder faculty member! Ethnic Studies had 146 majors, or 8.0 per full-time faculty position. The comparable figures for Political Science and Psychology, two large, nationally acclaimed social science departments, are 480 (12.8 per faculty position) and 719 (19.4 per faculty position), respectively.

Between spring 1995 and summer 1998, the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded in African American Studies and Ethnic Studies together was just 163. In the same four-year period, Political Science and Psychology awarded 1045 and 1167 B.A. degrees, respectively. This enormous discrepancy in student contact cannot be accounted for by the relative size of the departments in question.

Clearly, the special treatment accorded African American Studies and Ethnic Studies is undeserved. If anything, equity would dictate either reducing their size or increasing the number of faculty positions in other departments.

In an article in the May 13 *San Francisco*

Chronicle, Chicano Studies professor Carlos Munoz argued that a large Ethnic Studies department was needed at Berkeley because the state's demography was changing and white students must therefore learn about the cultures of the growing Hispanic and Asian segments of the population. In reality, though, his department functions as an ethnic enclave, a kind of safe haven for minority students. Only 2.6 percent of the majors in African American Studies and Ethnic Studies in 1998 and 1999 were white. As for the composition of the faculty, all the African American studies ladder faculty are black, all the Chicano studies faculty are Hispanic in origin, and all the Asian American studies faculty are of Asian background.

I have neither the ability nor desire to evaluate the quality of the course offerings or faculty research in Ethnic Studies in detail. Still, two telling anecdotes are a reminder that this department has a strong propagandistic bent. In fall 1998, the only required lower division course for majors was taught by the department chair as an unadorned paean to affirmative action in higher education. Is this agitprop or scholarship? This one is an easy call.

The latest faculty appointment in Chicano Studies was not the product of a regularly authorized, competitive job search. A Hispanic-American, naturally, he is a self-described Bakhtinian Shakespeare scholar, who, upon being denied tenure by Berkeley's English department, accused a distinguished colleague of racism and threatened to sue the university. Rather than resist, the administration chose to solve this foreign policy problem by arranging a soft landing in Ethnic Studies for the would-be plaintiff. Once securely tenured, his first act was to lead a protest against the end of affirmative action in university admissions. With such worthies in charge, the likeliest motto for the new Institute for Race and Gender Studies is "America Sucks."

According to Chancellor Berdahl, "Uncertainties about access for minorities to UC Berkeley in the post-Proposition 209 era created undercurrents of mistrust beneath the debate" between the administration and the protesters. This comment accurately points to the inextricable link between the survival of Ethnic Studies and the preservation of affirmative action. In other words, since minority students are the constituency for Ethnic Studies, the decline in their number due to the demise of racial and ethnic preferences in admissions presages further erosion in demand for this program. The request for money to recruit prospective clients from the community colleges, then, is an effort to slow a trend that in the normal course of events would lead to retrenchment in the number of allocated Ethnic Studies faculty and graduate students. The protest was a preemptive strike designed to forestall this development.

Doubts about the future of African American Studies and Ethnic Studies as autonomous departments was another reason for an immediate protest. With declining enrollments and mounting criticism of the quality of faculty appointments in Ethnic Studies, subversive talk was at last being heard in the corridors of power. A recent dean of social sciences has hinted that it might be wise to follow the example of UCLA and reconstitute Ethnic and African American Studies as interdisciplinary programs with faculty primarily located in mainstream academic departments. This reform would save money for administrative overhead, enhance quality control in faculty appointments, and mitigate the academic isolation of so many minority students on campus. After all, if the content of ethnic studies truly has value, why enclose it in segregated enclaves? If the faculty in these departments truly are distinguished scholars, why not locate them in departments such as history, sociology, or anthropology, and thereby diffuse the benefits of their expertise more widely?

Naturally, such a reform is anathema to the current ethnic studies faculty and students, since it would undermine the political function of their project. At bottom, the separate department

is the organizational weapon of radical multiculturalism, the doctrine that insists on the essential differences among America's diverse ethnic groups. By guaranteeing the status quo, therefore, the administration's "reasonable" solution serves to strengthen the hold of identity politics on decision-making at Berkeley.

Why, then, did Berkeley quake before a small group of protesters disdained by most students and faculty? Final examinations were to begin just a few days after the settlement was reached, and this historically ends student turmoil. Almost certainly, one reason for the decision to give in is the chancellor's personal beliefs and character. He is an unabashed supporter of ethnic preferences in Berkeley admissions, the now illegal policy that is the lifeline of Ethnic Studies, and openly yearns for the reversal of Proposition 209. The chancellor also seems to be a kindly man who repeatedly expresses his concern for the sensitivities of minority students and his desire that they feel "welcome" at Berkeley. Notwithstanding his past as a student of German history who knows about Bismarck, Berdahl is a therapeutic rather than an iron chancellor. So, saying no to Ethnic Studies would always be difficult for him.

The chancellor is surrounded by advisers who view every decision in terms of how it allocates benefits among ethnic groups. These veterans are mired in the past and unlikely to tell their leader that most Berkeley students and faculty know the Sixties are over. As James Traub wrote recently in the *New York Times Magazine*, the vast majority of Berkeley students today are more committed to the merit principle than to the idea of legislating "diversity" through communal representation. But these are not the students whom the chancellor and his team attend to.

Finally, fear was a powerful motive for caving in. The administration seemed terrified that influential politicians would enter the fray on the other side. Latino power is the current take on California politics, and Chicano studies students were dominant among the protesters. Both the lieutenant governor of California (a regent of the university) and the speaker of the state assembly are Hispanic Democrats who can instigate budgetary reprisals against the university. After the settlement, high-ranking apologists for the administration leaked stories of threatening phone calls to the chancellor. Prudence and the need to cut one's losses, they say, off the record, dictated official actions.

No one should underestimate the courage it takes to stand up to pressure from ethnic activists and ambitious politicians. But this is not to say that there is no choice except to kow-tow. An alternative tack is to rally public support for the autonomy of decision-making on educational issues and to make politicians squirm for picking away at academic freedom. Leaders can follow the example of Ulysses Grant, not George McClellan; Winston Churchill, not Neville Chamberlain; Vaclav Havel, not Janos Kadar.

No one claims that Berkeley now faces the apocalypse. Ethnic Studies is a minor player in a still distinguished institution. Indeed, many faculty regard the resources committed to the paraphernalia of multiculturalism as an inconvenient tax, the cost of doing business in modern America. What this sanguine view overlooks, however, is that the capitulation to Ethnic Studies this spring was yet another step on the downward slide away from the vision of this jewel among public universities as a meritocratic institution committed to excellence rather than social welfare.

This fall, a special meeting of the Berkeley Academic Senate will give the faculty an opportunity to express its disapproval of an agreement reached under duress rather than through the established process of shared governance. Experience suggests that one should not expect too much; courage tends to be in as short supply among faculty as among administrators.

Jack Citrin is a professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley.

A Really Bad School

Inside the Insanity Factory

by Bruce Gatenby

"We class schools, you see, into four grades: Leading School, First-Rate School, Good School and School. Frankly," said Mr. Levy, "School is pretty bad."
—Evelyn Waugh, *Decline and Fall*

As a casualty of the purge of white male academics by the postmodern Gestapo of gender feminists, queer theorists, deconstructionists, post-colonialists, ethnic promoters, and oppression fanatics—the hucksters of a snake-oil called literary theory, which has pretty much destroyed liberal education and the teaching profession in the United States—I'd found my academic career reduced to teaching one class a semester, albeit at a highly rated, expensive private college southeast of Los Angeles.

As if this wasn't enough of a problem, I lived in San Francisco. So I spent a significant portion of my salary flying from Oakland to Ontario once a week to spend three hours with a group of students who majored in economics and would soon be making six figures working for Wall Street firms riding the wave of the largest economic boom since the Gilded Age. Their interest in literature? It was the only required class on the college's curriculum.

My interest in literature had increasingly been metamorphosing from teaching it to writing it. I was both furious and heartsick over what literary critics, who felt that the act of reading was some grand accomplishment worthy of overblown recognition, were doing to the literary tradition, and I didn't want to collaborate any longer. With my increasing amounts of free time, instead of writing smug, jargon-obscured, footnote-swollen articles detailing the thought crimes of the authors I loved, I'd managed to write two novels, a screenplay and co-produce and act in an independent feature film directed by an old friend of mine from the Bennington Writers' Workshop. None of which, mind you, had brought me anything other than an agent, the inevitable dozens of rejection letters, one night on the big screen at San Francisco's Napa Valley Film Festival (but not the distribution deal from Miramax or Fine Line we'd been hoping for) and the satisfaction which creativity supposedly provides.

But creativity is a disvalued commodity in academia and even two published novels and a released film wouldn't be worth the weight of a published monograph on some cutting-edge theoretical topic like the gender and ethnic politics of punctuation (with chapters on subjects like the phallogocentric exclamation point and the racist implications of the semicolon)—to a hiring committee.

Like many unsuccessful writers, I spent large amounts of couchtime daydreaming about moving to Paris, that holy land of the word where no one looked sideways or laughed if you said you were a writer—or asked how many copies your book had sold on Amazon-dot-com. That semester, as if to motivate or torture myself (or both), I taught *The Sun Also Rises* and *Tropic of Cancer*. "How did you go broke?" Bill Gorton asks Mike Campbell in Hemingway's version of expatriate hijinks. "Two ways," Mike replies. "Gradually and suddenly." I could relate to that. Miller was a bit

more optimistic. "Above all, never despair," he counseled. "All that happens is good."

But despair was the motive force of my universe. Everything but despair seemed subject to the second law of thermodynamics in my world.

So as an exercise in Freudian displacement (Freud himself had long been displaced from the academy), I started writing yet another novel, this one about a young American who walks away from his stultifying graduate school experience and moves to Paris to write a novel about his stultifying graduate school experience. As the novel started to grow I felt I had latched onto an authentic, strong, satirical voice—but the details felt artificial and sounded more like a guidebook version

Vermont and back to California, places where I knew no one and was afraid to settle into a secure life because I knew I would be leaving. I had finally moved to San Francisco just to prove to myself that I had some control over where I lived; but as much as I loved the City by the Bay, my professional and personal lives just wouldn't polymerize into any kind of stable, secure, plastic form.

And all this time I kept applying for dozens and dozens of teaching jobs, scanning the ads in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and the MLA job list like an actor looking for that next, career-making audition; by last count over three hundred jobs. Three hundred copies of my vita, transcripts, letters of recommendation, writing

samples... you can do the math on the copying and postage required for that amount of material.

Then one foggy late-spring San Francisco morning, as the semester and my bank balance were winding down to oblivion and the Southern California college had informed me that I wouldn't be needed in the Fall (but things looked good for the following Spring, the department chair cheerfully informed me, asking "are you qualified to teach screenwriting?"), I received a phone call from the Vice Principal of Ecole Les Roches—would I like to come to Switzerland and teach literature and management communications at a small private school in the Alps? I'd sent out so many applications to so many different schools that semester I couldn't remember even applying for the position.

Suddenly visions of week-ends in Paris, Rome, Barcelona,

Venice, Amsterdam surged into the forefront of my thought. I would become an expatriate! Like Hemingway, like Miller, like so many other American writers who'd fled to the continent failures and returned years later as icons of literary history. Moving to Europe suddenly became a tangible reality. But... Switzerland?

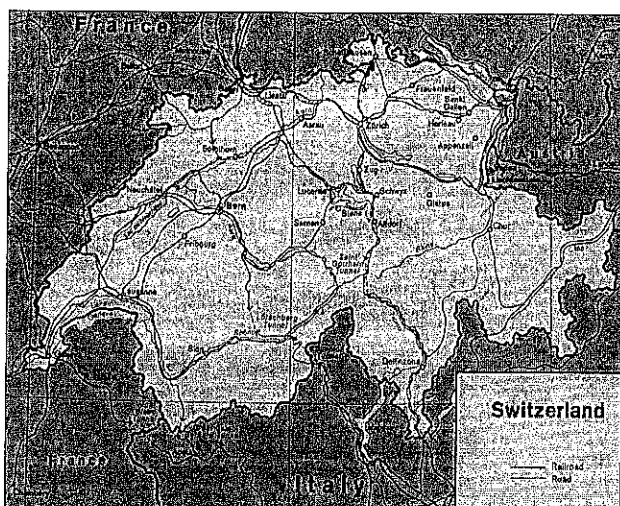
As if sensing the hesitation in my voice, the VP informed me that on arrival a paycheck would be waiting for me, that I would be immediately reimbursed for my ticket, that I could stay on campus for a month or two without cost while locating that perfect apartment or alpine chalet, that while the semester was longer than those at American colleges and universities I would get a week off after ten weeks, four weeks off between semesters, and the final carrot on the stick, a *troisième* bonus paycheck for completion of my one-year contract.

The fact that I'd never heard of the school and couldn't even locate the town of Bluche on a map was irrelevant. The fact that they hadn't even bothered to interview me was irrelevant. The fact that none of my academic colleagues or my friends had ever heard of the school was irrelevant.

I set out researching my new employer. The fact that I could discover no information anywhere about the school except for the promotional blurbs on their own Web site was equally irrelevant.

Europe beckoned.

Two weeks later I was filling out my application for a Permit "B," Swiss working papers which would allow me to live and work there for a year, renewable for up to ten years, when I could apply for a Permit "C"—permanent residence and the opportunity to become a Swiss citizen. While I, too, was fed up with the idiocy of the "rebellious" American consumer, I wasn't quite ready to think about forfeiting membership in the greatest experiment in freedom the world has ever seen.



of the city than the impressions of an artist who had risked all to walk the grand boulevards and back alleys night after rainy winter night, in search of experiences to write about.

I hadn't been to Paris in seven years and so most of the details, from the odor of chestnut trees on summer breezes to the grinning gray gargoyles perched on the tower of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, were from guidebooks I'd checked out of the San Francisco Public Library.

I sent the half-finished manuscript to my agent, who reassured me I was "one of the best unpublished novelists in the country," but then told me to write a thriller or a mystery novel if I ever wanted to sell anything.

With my bank balance hovering around the mid-three figures each month, don't think I wasn't tempted. Paris, of course, was out of the question; just another impossibility in a life that seemed with each passing day to be ruled by what I came to call the Malicious Gods.

Then I received a "I-think-we-should-date-other-people" letter from my agent, who'd decided on a second reading of my manuscript that the economics of the marketplace outweighed any idealist commitment on her part to securing my place in contemporary literature.

Cast adrift, wallowing now in my own sense of unrelenting and unremitting bad luck, at least I stumbled across the perfect title for my next unpublishable novel (and by extension, my life), while flipping through Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet: An Anthology of Misfortune*.

Which pretty much described my academic "career" as well. Before my one-class-a-semester gig, I'd had three "visiting" assistant professorships (basically a temporary lecturer with marginal health benefits) and two National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships around the country, moving every year or two from California to Washington to Idaho to North Carolina to

Under religion, I decided not to mention that I was Jewish.

Two weeks after that I packed two suitcases and boarded a nonstop Swissair flight from San Francisco to Zurich, eleven hours of cramped, coach-class couchtime to consider the new arc of luck sweeping into my life. Next, I took a twenty-minute connecting flight to Geneva (the most expensive per-mile flight in the world, but hey, the school was picking up the tab), then hopped an SBB train, passing by fields of mustard yellow sunflowers, terraced stone hillsides filled with sloping vineyards, and the flat surface of Lac Lemman reflecting late-afternoon sunlight like shaved ice, swans nuzzling lazily on the soft waves.

I finally relaxed and settled back into my seat with Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. The woman next to me opened a copy of *The Journal of Wound Care*, a full-color glossy filled with graphic photos of crater-sized injuries to arms, legs, and torsos. She caressed the pictures with the thin, fine fingers of a surgeon, or a Sadean deviant, then looked up at me and cocked an eyebrow with professional curiosity.

After two hours, I finally stepped off the train in Sierre, a bleak, depressing (and judging from the lack of activity in the streets, abandoned) town where Rilke had given up the ghost, and stood looking up at the knife-edge peaks of the Alps, wisps of clouds and glacial ice turning pink in the falling light of evening. Somewhere up there among the clusters of fur and pine trees was Ecole Les Roches and the beginning of my expat existence. I lugged my suitcases across the empty main street of the town, then boarded the mountain funicular and started climbing toward the town of Bluche.

That's when my misfortune really began.

If someone had told me that there existed a school where wealthy parents from 58 countries paid 30,000 Swiss francs per semester to send their troublesome and mostly uneducated offspring to role-play waiter, waitress, and kitchen help for three years, in order to buy these kids some kind of career in "hotel management," I wouldn't have believed it. If someone had told me that after ten years of higher education, a Ph.D., and six years of full-time university teaching experience, I would wind up teaching twelve classes a week at that same school—I would have taken my mother's advice and become an accountant.

The indifference and apathy toward education in America had caused me to seriously question my commitment to teaching. The outright hostility toward education at Les Roches caused me to abandon it.

But I'm jumping ahead of the story . . . After checking into a cramped but clean dorm room (this was Switzerland, after all), having dinner at one of the two restaurants in town and discovering my French in a real-world situation wasn't even a match for a pre-schooler's parlayvoo, I made my way back to the dorm room and found myself unable to sleep. Jet lag, no doubt. Or the combination of exhilaration and anxiety known as Expatriate Response Syndrome. I finished rereading *A Farewell to Arms*, surprised by the coincidence of Frederick Henry and Catherine Barkley taking the same train ride as I just had (although in the opposite direction to her demise in Lausanne), stared out the window at the pinpoints of stars in the clear black night until, finally, I drifted off about 4:00 a.m. into uneasy sleep.

I awoke at eight, groggy and hungover, even though I'd only had one glass of the local Dole with dinner. At nine we had our first new faculty meeting. I showered, dressed, and stepped outside. The school itself was a single, recently rebuilt four-story building surrounded by mansard-roofed Alpine chalets with red, green, or blue shutters and window boxes filled with blossoming gardenias. I later found out the school had been rebuilt because two disgruntled students had burned it to the ground. But from my innocent perspective, the day was alive with promise, the sun bright, the Alps in the distance shimmering purple, the sound of cowbells clanging from grassy fields below the school. It wasn't Paris, but it wasn't poverty either.

I made my way through the lobby and

located the conference room on the second floor, where I discovered there were not one or two or even three, but seven new faculty members—not because of increased enrollment, but because seven faculty members had been fired at the end of the previous semester. This was not an encouraging development, especially since that number constituted a significant portion of the faculty.

The VP, a former West Point colonel who it was obvious from the start modeled his (I hesitate to use the term) personality after Robert Duvall's character in *Apocalypse Now*, stormed into the room, looked around at us, fired an index finger into the air and screamed "if you even think of sleeping with a Les Roches student you'll be fired!" No hello, how are you, welcome to Switzerland, have a nice flight, sleep, well? As I later found out, this was the charming side of his personality. He sat down and without even taking the time to learn who we were, proceeded to detail out a list of rules and regulations, dress, behavior, and morality codes so draconian that only an obsessive-compulsive control fanatic could have dreamed them up.

I'd meet him a bit later in the day.

After forty-five minutes of regulation after regulation, rule after rule, warning after warning, we still hadn't been told anything about our teaching duties, our schedules, or anything else to do with the mundane details of the job itself. Instead we were warned not to go to the bars and discos in the nearby ski resort of Crans-Montana because "students might be there." We were told not to talk with students outside of school, indeed not even to talk to students outside the classroom, because that's how rumors started. There were no required office hours because students weren't allowed in faculty offices. Even the impression of impropriety could be grounds for dismissal.

It was pretty obvious what those seven faculty members had been fired for.

He took a deep breath, swelling his chest with pride. We were not merely teachers, he informed us, his voice now gilded with the authority of the self-deceived, we were role models for students hoping to achieve the elusive goal of five-star hotel employment. Then a brief smile played over his lips and he said, "Les Roches is not just a school . . . it's a way of life."

What really made it hard to keep a straight face was that it was clear he actually believed this.

Mon Dieu, what kind of Fascist-theme park had I stumbled across? According to Hannah Arendt, sexual repression lay at the heart of all forms of fascism. Who'd understand that better than Heidegger's lover? I'd witnessed this kind of hypocritical nonsense in English departments as rape paranoia and lunatic ideas like the victimizing "male gaze" of gender feminist lore influenced the policies of administrators across the United States. But this wasn't another example of PC mania run amok. This was bureaucratic Absolute Control, Orwell's dystopian vision run amok.

Finally, we were handed our schedules. The VP had been purposefully vague about my teaching duties when I had talked to him on the phone—and now I understood why. Most American academics teach a maximum of three to four classes a week. That's one of the reasons I went into university teaching. But Les Roches was not an American university; actually, it wasn't even a Swiss university. The full name of the school was Swiss Hotel Association, Hotel Management School Les Roches. The SHA was owned by two elderly brothers, who also owned the school and most of the plateau it sat on, as well as Gesthotel, a Swiss hotel chain. One of the brothers was rumored to be a homosexual with a penchant for young Chinese boys, which went a long way in explaining the inordinate number of young Chinese boys on campus. The other brother's son owned San Nick's, the only bar/restaurant the students were allowed to frequent at all hours without repercussions. (We, naturally, were warned not to even think about setting foot in there.) The setup was a classic family-owned vertical monopoly; as I later learned, the school itself was a classic scam.

I stared uncomprehendingly at my timetable. No trouble keeping a straight face now. Nearly every available square of time was marked off. I was scheduled to teach twelve classes a week, roughly three times that of my American counterparts.

What had I gotten myself into?

After a brief coffee break, we were led down the hallway for individual meetings with the Principal. The P was sixties and Scottish, his face the color of cooked shrimp, and he was obviously no stranger to a mid-morning taste of the bottle. He called everyone "lad," in a slurring voice. "Lad," he slurred at me, "the reason we hired you is we need Ph.Ds on the faculty. We've recently received accreditation from a New England academic board to offer a BS degree in hospitality studies and, well, one of their conditions of acceptance stipulated our upgrading the level of the faculty."

As I soon found out, that level was in need of serious upgrading. Most of the faculty possessed only a university degree with no teaching experience and in addition to teaching their twelve classes a week were engaged in a mail-order program with a midlands British college to get correspondence-course Masters degrees. None of the faculty or administration had anything resembling a background in education—but at this point I hadn't figured out that education was the least important goal at Les Roches.

"Lad," he repeated, touching my elbow to signal he was taking me into his confidence, "just between you and me, the school itself doesn't recognize your Ph.D. Don't expect any kind of special dispensation or recognition just because you have a doctorate and we don't. Bachelor's degree, masters degree, doctorate, it's all the same to us."

After reconvening in the conference room, I looked around at my new colleagues. Most of them looked shell-shocked, beaten-down, shoulders slumped and heads lowered in classic submissive-dog fashion. Before we could exchange words of sympathy and solidarity, the architect of this insanity entered the room.

Officially he was the CEO of the school, but in his own mind he was Il Duce, das Fuhrer, Idi Amin, Ferdinand Marcos, J. Edgar Hoover, Augusto Pinochet, and Saddam Hussein scrambled together into the same collective gene pool. I simply called him the Head Fascist (HF). The organization of the school, the rules, the regulations, the paranoia, all were a reflection of his obsession with Absolute Control. He was short, thin, Swiss, with small, beady eyes and the bad razor cut of Ralph Fiennes in "Schindler's List." He ruled by fear and not one member of the faculty had ever questioned his decisions. If they did have questions, they approached him cautiously in the hallways, like some '30s Hollywood hunchbacked lab assistant squeaking "Master! Master!" and already backing away in fear of the Master's response.

He was obviously obsessed with the students' and the faculty's sex lives, but most of all he was obsessed with the appearance of the students. Did I mention that the students wore uniforms? Blue and gray uniforms with bright silver nametags, which were checked not daily, not hourly, but continuously for flaws and infractions. Either the HF or the VP would stand at the top of the stairs and shout observations like "polish your shoes!" "button your coat!" "get a haircut!" "five star! five star!" as students shuffled quickly to class. The students, who for the most part were adults between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, never questioned this treatment. They merely accepted it, along with all the other rules and regulations which governed their lives at Les Roches.

Rules such as the following: they weren't allowed to alter their appearance in any way during the course of the semester. Women were allowed one ring on each hand and one stud in each ear; men weren't even allowed to think about any jewelry other than a watch. No other piercings, no tattoos, nothing which would make one student stand out from the others. They weren't allowed to have a member of the opposite sex in

their rooms after 10:30 p.m. They weren't allowed to have alcohol in their rooms—but they were allowed to drink themselves into the local emergency room at San Nicks, at ridiculously inflated prices, of course. Rule after rule after rule after rule . . . none of which had anything to do with education.

In order to insure compliance with these rules, the school not only expected the faculty to act as disciplinarians, but it also had its own private security team, former members of the formidable Swiss Army, which followed students at night, took down names and student numbers for even the most minor of infractions, and walked into their rooms unannounced at two or three in the morning, checking for carnal peccadilloes. And as I later found out, they also followed members of the faculty; especially single members of the faculty, to see where we went at night.

The faculty also wore uniforms—in this case, business suits for men. Not surprisingly, there were clothing rules: men were not allowed to remove their coats, roll the sleeves of their shirts up, or even loosen their ties in class. Women, however, were allowed to dress like frumpy housewives. Why? The attitude in Switzerland toward working women is similar to that in the United States—forty years ago. Women are actively discouraged from working, especially after marriage; salaries are lower for women and the tax laws penalize any woman foolish enough to want to leave the comforts of domestic bliss and screaming offspring for the rigors of the workplace. Women in Switzerland didn't even get the vote until 1990. They simply didn't have a dress code because they weren't encouraged to be on equal footing with men. In fact, some of them even opted to wear uniforms like the students.

In an atmosphere of such stultifying conformity, the act of loosening your tie or rolling up your shirtsleeves took on the revolutionary significance of tossing tea in the harbor. As the semester progressed, I would find myself committing not only these acts of defiance, but other acts of derring-do as well, like dashing down the corridor sans jacket, wearing dark glasses during lunch hour or doing pull-ups from the ledge of my office door. But all this silliness was still months away from reality, although almost from the start I felt myself losing touch with any reality I'd ever known.

The HF spoke a few words to us in uncomfortable English, even though he required all of his faculty to be fluent in the international language of business. He added little, merely reiterating the VP's warning to stay away from the students. As he left the podium, I heard him comment to the P: "Americans . . . they cannot live up to the high standards of Swiss education."

Les Roches' high standards of Swiss education were focused solely on the outside. The student within could win a landslide election for village idiot but as long as his or her uniform appearance was pressed, clean, and conforming, the coveted Swiss Hotel Association diploma was merely several thousand francs away from completion.

Example: There were no books for my classes. I found this out the first day of school when the VP informed me that they didn't actually use books in most classes—I would have to xerox whatever materials I wanted to use and distribute them to the students. The school library had exactly two anthologies of literature in English—and old anthologies at that. I had brought three books with me: *Tropic of Cancer*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and Charles Bukowski's *Love Is a Dog from Hell*. Guess what the students read that semester.

I wasn't the only teacher handicapped by this lack of materials. The faculty member teaching ethics xeroxed an entire textbook for his class—violating, as I pointed out to him, not only international copyright laws but the foundation of his authority to teach ethics as well. He merely shrugged; he was an ethical relativist.

Example: We weren't allowed to assign

any reading outside of class. The students were just too busy with the heady combination of academics and practicals which constituted the curriculum at Les Roches. (Actually, they were too busy completing their sexual escapades before 10:30 and chasing the goal of dipsomania seven nights a week.) I was told to read the material to the students in class—which didn't leave much time for talking or thinking about the material in class. After I had xeroxed a chapter from *Tropic of Cancer* and told them to read it at their leisure, several faculty members complained to me that students were actually reading and discussing it—in their classes! "My God," one of the women

entire semester to reflect these committee decisions. And on one occasion, we were actually ordered to lower the grades of a particular student, whose independent, free-thinking attitude had brought him the highest GPA in the school and the combined ill-will of the trinity of HF, P, and VP. When I pointed out the ethical, moral and legal implications of such Stalinistic rewriting of student history, every eye in the room pleaded with me to remain quiet.

But even the decisions of the grade committee weren't carved in Sinai stone: a large donation of Swiss francs from any student's parents virtually guaranteed a gold medal semester.

Example: A major part of the school's accreditation plan required increasing the amount of liberal education the students received. Perhaps the accreditation board should have suggested increasing the amount of liberal education the faculty received. In another of those interminable pointless meetings, the VP decided I would be in charge of creating a class in world intellectual movements—because no one else at the school was qualified to teach the history of ideas. I was then told to "dumb down" the class because, at least in the minds of those unqualified faculty members, the students weren't qualified to learn the history of ideas. One faculty member even suggested the entire class be focused on how the history of ideas had affected the hospitality industry. "The categorical imperative and tipping," I suggested.

Example: There was little or no contact with students other than the three or so hours of class time per week. This meant that any student with a question, with difficulties, or with just an enthusiastic desire to know more about the subject was seriously discouraged from pursuing these needs. This was a serious handicap for someone teaching liberal education. I mean, I wasn't teaching them how to sweep crumbs off a banquet table or how to successfully pull a cork from a bottle of Pinot Noir without splattering the patrons. (Thankfully, these demanding tasks were left to other, more hospitality-oriented faculty members.) When I finally did start frequenting the bars and discos of the local ski resort of Crans-Montana, where, just as the VP feared, I ran into many of my students, most of our conversations centered on literature, philosophy, art, and their relationship to life. The students may have been drunk but they were starving for exposure to ideas.

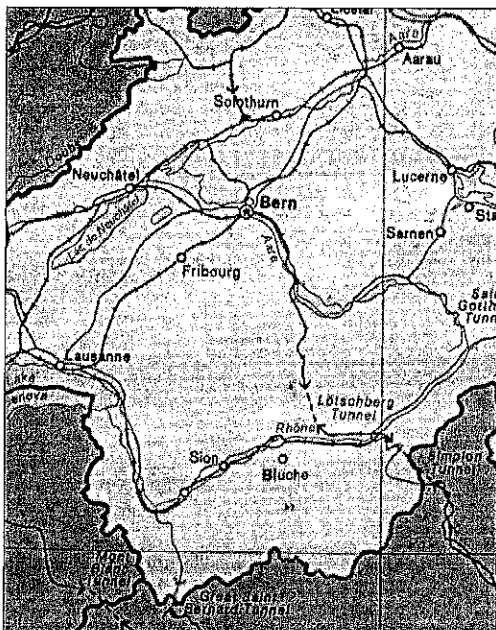
As the first day of disorientation wound down to a conclusion, we were introduced to Madame P—no relation to the P—who was in charge of student accommodations. She informed us we had to be out of the dorms in four days to make room for last-minute enrollees.

So much for a leisurely month or two of searching for that perfect alpine chalet.

It took me four days just to find a cramped, 12-meter square furnished studio apartment, which I deceptively referred to in my e-mails back home to friends and family as the "ski condo."

Speaking of deception, just about everything I'd been told to entice me to Les Roches turned out to be a lie. There was no paycheck waiting for us—we would be paid at the end of the month like everyone else. And as it turned out, we were only paid for half the month. "I don't pay people to be on holiday," the HF informed me when I complained. I then showed him a letter from the VP stating I would be paid for the entire month; his eyes widened and he said he would get back to me. The six other new faculty members had that letter as well, but they thought it best as a group to accept this loss of income rather than to cause trouble at the start of the semester.

After three weeks, the HF had not got back to me, so I made an appointment for an inquisition with him. From behind the protection of his six-foot-wide oak desk, this teutonic Torquemada tried to bully me with talk about budget constraints. I informed him that I now



asked, "what kind of filth did you pass out to them to get their attention?"

Example: Testing took place in an atmosphere poisoned with fear and trembling. The students were herded into a large testing room where the VP would stand center-stage until everyone was seated. Then he would scream at the top of his voice, "You may begin! You may begin!" Students were not allowed to raise their eyes from their test sheets. Teachers patrolled the aisles, slowly walking up and down, up and down, to make sure that any attempts at cheating were discouraged. The VP would walk up and down, up and down, grabbing and thumbing through the pages of dictionaries, searching for crib notes. Occasionally he would shout observations like "thirty minutes remaining! Thirty minutes remaining!" to add to the overall air of nausea. I would walk up and down, up and down, playing every song I had ever heard in my head (Dylan's "Subterranean Homesick Blues" was a perpetual favorite during these testing periods), making faces at the students, trying to distill some of the tension and stress into a laughable, survivable situation. But the students were too scared, too exhausted, or too hungover to laugh.

During one exam, a male student asked to go to the bathroom. I waved him out of the room. The VP ran up to me, his voice shaking with panic. "You have to go with him!" he snapped. "You have to stand next to him while he does his business." "Why?" I asked. "You think he might've tattooed the answers on his penis?" He gave me a narrow look, then his eyes widened and he dashed out of the room and down the stairs after the student.

I guess that possibility had never occurred to him.

Example: As I later found out, the grades we gave were irrelevant. No matter what grade a student had coming out of final exams, a grade committee would decide whether the student would pass or fail. During these meetings we were told to go back and alter students' grades from the

spoke for the entire group of new faculty members—and he had to pay all for the entire month (actually I still only spoke for myself; I just thought it would be interesting to see his response to a group threat). Surprisingly, he relented and a week later we all had our money. The new faculty members looked at me with a new measure of respect—and the sure knowledge that I wouldn't be around for very much longer.

But I'd gotten the money out of the bastard and after another week of wrangling I even managed to get reimbursed for my airline ticket. It had taken the Swiss bankers more than fifty years to agree to reimburse my Jewish compatriots, so I saw this as a moral victory as well. And I hadn't had to call Senator D'Amato either. I settled in for the long months of teaching ahead.

If I've given the impression that Les Roches is an educational concentration camp, a place where both students and faculty are subject to forms of control outlawed by most civilized nations, then perhaps I'm being overly hyperbolic in my choice of metaphor. Remember, Les Roches is not just a school, it's a way of life. I heard that phrase over and over until finally I suggested replacing it with the Borg motto: "resistance is futile; you must assimilate." The truth is, as I write this it sounds to me like I'm making the whole thing up.

I wish I were.

So a less severe choice of metaphor is called for. At Les Roches, they didn't want to kill your spirit—they merely wanted to wound it, so they could revel in the sadistic pleasure of watching you writhe. Surrounded by writhing, wounded spirits was not, however, a pleasure for me. So why didn't I quit? Money would be the easy answer. But the answer lies in my two distinctive personality traits: one, I'm cursed with an inability to walk away from even the most wounding of situations, convinced that if I just try hard enough I can make it work; and two, I have the knack of making the wrong decision almost every time I find myself in one of these situations. So I decided to stay and try to at least understand what was happening around me.

"How have you managed to last this long?" I asked one young faculty member, who'd taken a steady beating of invective, insults, and institutional boredom for nearly four years. He looked surprised, as if no one had ever bothered to ask him that question before; then his eyes dropped and he said, "I guess I've become one of them..."

But I didn't want to be one of them. Most of the faculty spent an average of twelve hours a day, six days a week, locked in the confines of that schoolhouse. The students worked even harder, cooking and serving us breakfast, lunch, and dinner—and sleeping through most academic classes. The administration spent long hours there as well, not only firing a steady stream of salvos at the students but at the faculty as well. After two months of their constant criticizing and complaining about the most petty of regulatory infractions, I was ready to give up on trying to understand the place—and ready to commit a major league regulatory infraction.

Although the official policy of the school spelled out an uncompromising apartheid between faculty and students (we were even segregated during meals into "teacher tables" and "student tables"), when money became a factor, official policy went out the window. Once a month the students were allowed to rent out the school facilities for parties—at 2,000 francs plus a percentage of the drinks—parties we were encouraged to attend in order to demonstrate school solidarity and to add to that percentage; and once a semester the graduating seniors held a "slave auction" to raise funds for their graduation ball. I can imagine the response to a slave auction in the hallowed halls of American academia. Feminists, multiculturalists, and postcolonialists—oh no!—storming both administrative and law offices in outraged anger at those making light of the shameful oppression at the heart of our republic's past. But a slave auction at Les Roches seemed appropriate.

And who were the slaves?

We were.

Members of the faculty volunteered to be sold to the students, who could then use them in any way they wanted for a weekend. Usually this form of sophomoric amusement involved doing a student's laundry, cleaning their dorm room, or cooking them dinner; a weekend role-reversal in the calcified power structure of Les Roches, not to mention an opportunity for a little revenge as well on the part of rule-weary students.

There was a tremendous buzz of anticipation for this year's slave auction. After years of refusal, the VP had finally given in and volunteered to be auctioned off to the highest bidder; students were wiring home for extra funds in order to have the cash in hand to purchase this uniform perfectionist and have him under their power; plots numerous and nefarious were afoot for the just humiliation of this high-volume verbalizer of Les Rochean law; at the last minute, his Swiss-German wife decided against her husband demonstrating a sense of humor about himself; he decided to volunteer me in his place.

Not that I minded. All things considered, nothing even resembling contact with the opposite sex had happened to me since my arrival in Bluche—but I had witnessed some bizarre forms of response by other single faculty members to this lack of opportunity. It's worth pointing out that the only women in the region who weren't married were in high school—or our school. And September in a ski resort isn't exactly the acme of promiscuous promise. One male faculty member, who'd been there a year or so, fell to his knees in the hallway one afternoon and screamed "I need a woman!" I hadn't descended yet into that pit of despair, but I had to admit the illicit idea of a young female student bidding for my services put, well, illicit ideas in my head. And if I really wanted out of Les Roches, there was one time-tested and honored way of getting fired. I had been warned not to even think about it; and now it was pretty much all I thought about.

I also thought about writing, because I wasn't actually doing any writing.

One of my motivations for coming to Europe had been to write. Not only had my novel stalled but my entire writing career as well. I'd lost my agent—and by extension, my access to the world of publishing. For some reason I'd gotten it into my head that if I were only in Europe all that would change. Well, I was in Europe and nothing had changed. Except that I no longer had to worry about money.

The relationship between money and art is a clichéd one: the artist starving in his unheated garret, creating to flatter, in Yeats's words, "beauty's ignorant ear." Or in our times, the marketplace's ignorant ear. But there is some truth to the effect of putting yourself out on the edge, to taking the risk of devoting yourself full-time to your art. How many great novels have the comfortable, tenured pros, scattered in MFA programs across the country, really produced? The reality is that teaching—and by extension, the comfortable lifestyle it provides—has a deadening effect on artistic sensibilities.

Or as Kierkegaard once pointed out, the professors and the poets are alike—except that the poets have anguish in their hearts and music on their lips.

For the reality is that risk has always been the handmaid of great art. And this had never been more true than in the Modernist era. Miller had come to Paris with forty dollars in his pocket. As a young man, Matisse had given up a law career to pursue his dream of being a painter in Paris. His father's parting words: "You'll starve!" And for many years he did. Modigliani and Utrillo, unknowns then, stumbled drunk and broke through the streets of Montparnasse, selling paper airplanes made of their last francs into the linden trees on the Boulevard Raspail. Of course, there are hundreds of others whose stories we never hear about, but that's why it's called a risk.

Every year, hundreds of budding writers graduated with the MFA, hoping to snag one of the coveted jobs teaching creative writing to other hopeful, budding writers, from such outposts of bohemian writerly experience as Ames, Iowa or

Normal, Illinois. Teaching two or three classes a week, collecting forty to sixty thousand dollars a year for eight months of work and taking summers off to "write"; a fine life, but where's the risk?

Before I left San Francisco I took a friend on a tour of the Sonoma wine country. After stopping and sampling the production of about a dozen vineyards, we finally wound up at Francis Ford Coppola's chateau. As we stumbled down the pathway past the main house leading to the wine tasting room, I looked to my left, and there sat the great filmmaker himself, fat, bearded, bloated, a large glass of Merlot in one hand, a long, smoldering Presidente in the other. This was the rebellious filmmaker who had bucked the studio system and once risked his entire life to make *Apocalypse Now*? The definitive portrait of artistic risk, and a great influence on my own values, had been his wife Eleanor's documentary, *Hearts of Darkness*. Now, sated with success, he sat outside sneering at the tourists who lined up to pay seven dollars each to taste the fruits of that success—fruits which now produced films like *Jack* and John Grisham's *The Rainmaker*.

In my mind I had always imagined moving to Europe as taking a huge risk. In reality, I'd set foot firmly inside what Bob Dylan once called "the insanity factory," the bureaucratic system of control which offered the reward of comfortable, materialist compensation for the dropped knee of fealty to the fascist gods of money and power. I no longer had to worry about money. I could now afford not only good food and drink, but many of the consumer goods I had forsaken for the last few years.

Some reward.

It seemed perfectly fitting I was about to be auctioned off as a slave.

Slave night.

The lobby of the school had been transformed into a light- and sound-throbbing simulation of a snobby Euro disco. A long line outside the door, security frisking everyone for weapons or booze, inside high-priced drinks and bodies bobbing to the monotony of techno: "I'm so horny, horny, horny, horny," went the refrain of one popular dance tune. But this wasn't a snobby Euro disco—it was Les Roches' version, which meant it was run on the model of a '50s high school dance. Not only was the security team in high visibility, but the VP and Madame P were as well, chaperoning the behavior of the students. Every once in a while one of them would dart out on the dance floor and separate two groping students, or take away someone who had spent their entire week's allowance on alcohol and now staggered hopelessly around the lobby. Fights were not uncommon.

Needless to say, they also kept a close eye on the faculty as well. We were there to show our support for the students. We weren't there to talk or drink or dance with them.

But some of us were there to be sold to them. And so, at eleven o'clock sharp, dressed comfortably for once in jeans and t-shirt, I and the other captives were lead up on to a platform, where one by one, among the screams and jeers and drunken babblings of the students, we were sold to the highest bidder.

I was bought for several hundred francs by one of the few stable couples on campus, Jenny, a young Filipino woman and her French boyfriend, Philippe. Unlike most Les Roches students, who bed-hopped with the frequency of frogs mating, they had been together for nearly two years. Both were in my classes and both had shown a passionate interest in books, so I just assumed they purchased me for conversational purposes. But when I showed up at their apartment a week later for my slave duties, I discovered that my slave mistress had really bought me for one of her girlfriends: Dani, a young Brazilian who had, it seemed, a tremendous crush on me. She made this clear to me later that evening at the disco in Crans-Montana by kissing me for nearly two hours on the dance floor—in front of about fifty other students. As we left hand-in-hand at about three in the morning, I realized it would only be a matter of days before the entire student

body knew what had happened between us.

Actually, it only took a matter of hours. So after I arrived on campus the following Monday morning, I knew my next stop would be the HF's office for psychological truncheoning, a court martial and a swift firing. I had broken the first commandment of this fascist state: "if you even think of sleeping with a Les Roches student you'll be fired!" Well, I had done more than just think about it.

I wasn't fired.

Even though every single student on campus smiled at me or teased me or made some comment to let me know they knew what had happened, not one member of the administration or faculty had a clue that I had despoiled Eden. The crack ex-Swiss Army members of the private Les Roches security force must have had the night off. Or they were busy following some other rumored budding Che Guevara. Talk about misfortune. I couldn't even get myself fired. I would be stuck in Bluche for the rest of my life.

"I ain't gonna work on Maggie's Farm no more," Bob Dylan sang in my head as I patrolled the aisles of the last midterm before mid-semester break. "Well, I try my best to be just like I am, but everybody wants you to be just like them," Amen, Bob.

Walking up and down, up and down, I finally managed to catch Dani's eye for a brief moment as my body shielded her from the VP. She had turned out to be one of those women who had, in the words of Charles Bukowski, "concrete hearts and beautiful bodies." She'd e-mailed me that she was scared of someone finding out what'd happened; I e-mailed her back that everyone on campus already knew, so it was a little too late for that concern. She e-mailed me back that she thought it best we not e-mail each other back or see each other again until after the end of the semester.

What else should I have expected from someone twenty-two years old and in hotel management school?

By the way, I'm not avoiding the overall ethical question of student/teacher relationships here; because the truth is they happen all the time—in American schools and abroad. I've known feminists who've slept with their students, lesbians who've slept with their students, homosexuals who've slept with their students and both married men and women who've slept with their students. Come to think of it, I've never met an administrator who's slept with a student.

So I graded my 170 midterm papers as quickly as conscience allowed and hopped the TGV to Paris, where I had rented a furnished studio apartment in the trendy 11th arrondissement for the week. Since I couldn't get myself fired, I decided I would flee to Paris, set myself up, and then simply not return for the second half of what would no doubt be an even worse stint in hell than the first half of the semester had been.

So I wandered the grand boulevards and back alleyways of Paris, from the Marais to Miller's Villa Seurat, spending my evenings at Cafe Beaubourg correcting all the mistakes and details I'd gotten wrong in my manuscript. I went to movies, bookshops, clothing stores, museums, FNAC, all the pleasures I missed being holed up in a 12-meter square ski condo just below the icy ridge of the Plein Mort glacier. I flirted with beautiful women who were neither married nor in high school. This was the European life I'd dreamed of living and I could feel its effect on my personality like a wonderful, new lifesaving drug.

Remember those two personality traits I mentioned earlier? They were more deeply ingrained than even I imagined. At the end of the week my inability to walk away from situations asserted itself; I turned in my keys and went back to Les Roches. My mantra now became "never let the bastards win," and I wanted to make sure that when I finally walked out of there it would be with pride intact and both head and middle finger held high.

No one seemed surprised to see me return; perhaps they felt I was finally becoming "one of them." I said to one of my colleagues, "if I sign up for another year of this madness, smack me in the head with a shovel." Dani, she of the concrete heart, had decided that even though we would have nothing to do with each other, we were still in a relationship; she started following me around, sitting near me at break time, lunch time, and dinner time, staring at me almost nonstop with a seriousness of purpose she should have applied to her own schoolwork. At night she would stand next to me in bars and at the disco, but she wouldn't say a word to me, except once to tell me she didn't want

ability to exercise that power, as often and as cruelly as possible.

But I was learning that lesson.

Three or four times a semester, both students and faculty could participate in a casual dress day called "mufi day." I have no idea why it was called this, but at only five francs a head for the ability to dress like a normal human being, it was truly a bargain. All rules were suspended on mufi day, and it gave us the opportunity to be a "real" college, at least for a short period of time.

The effect on the students was amazing. Not only did they look different without their uniforms and name tags, they acted differently.

Instead of acting like scared, uptight, neurotic zombies, they acted like loose, playful, neurotic students. They joked in class, talked back to teachers—and above all, their minds opened up to learning. I really looked forward to mufi days.

On this particular one I showed up on campus wearing jeans, black t-shirt, leather jacket, and motorcycle boots. I hadn't bothered to shave over the weekend. I looked like your typical, hip, poseur American academic, who wouldn't know a motorcycle if it appeared magically between his legs. Walking down the stairs to the mid-morning break, one of my female students laughed and said, "you have a nice ass." As I reached the lobby, however, the VP walked up to me, a look of horror across his face. The HF wanted to see me. Now.

I strolled casually into the HF's office. He sat rigid behind his desk, tie knotted, suit buttoned like a straight jacket. Then he stood up and screamed at me, "You must shave when you come to school!"

"It's mufi day," I replied. "There are no rules on mufi day."

"You must shave!" he repeated, his voice cracking with anger.

I decided it was pointless trying to make him understand the concept of no rules on a no-rule day, because that wasn't the reason he was yelling at me. He was yelling at me because he had the power to yell at me. "Don't ever raise your voice to me again," I told him and walked out.

A few days later the P walked up to me. "Lad," he said, in a surprisingly sober voice, "can I have a few words with you outside?" We wandered off to the terrace and stood under the imposing view of the late-autumn Alps. The leaves had turned and the trees sparkled gold and rust in the sunlight. Never one to make a point when he could circle endlessly around it, the P hummed and hawed, told me it was his birthday, talked about how hard it was for him to quit smoking. I gave him my sympathetic face. Then he said, "this is so embarrassing, lad... well... but..."

"What?" I asked, checking my watch. It was nearly time to go to class; but at Les Roches it was always nearly time to go to class.

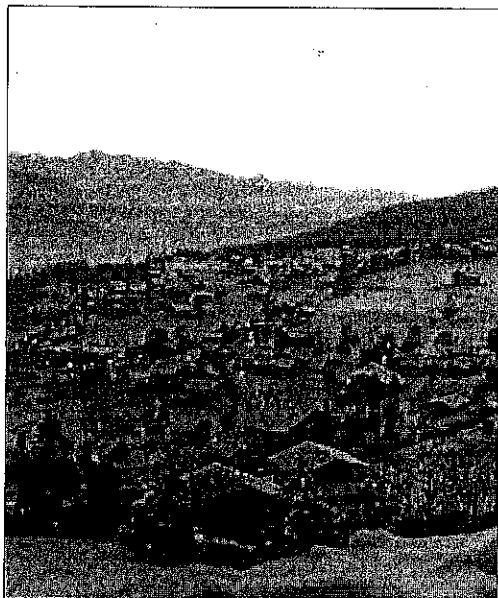
He took a deep breath then said, "it seems you're getting too close to the students."

I wondered if he knew how close I had gotten to one in particular. But of course I was getting too close to the students. I was the only one of these dolts who was teaching them anything other than the mechanics of tableware placement. I was the only one who was actually interested in educating them. And they were responding. They were reading on their own time. They were asking questions after class and at meals. And I was taking the time to answer these questions in full view of everyone both on campus and off.

I pointed all this out to the P. He agreed that educating the students should be of primary importance; "But lad," he said, "attitudes are different here. You have to respect those differences."

"You're right, I suppose. But as an American," I reminded him, "I just can't live up to the high standards of Swiss education." As I walked away, I suspected the bright pink color of his face had little to do with a morning visit to the wine stock.

I tried to enlist other members of the fac-



BLUCHE, SWITZERLAND IN WINTER

to talk in public because the other students might think something was going on between us. I couldn't understand how they'd ever jump to that conclusion.

The administration had a little neurotic surprise waiting for me as well. The P informed me that I would be required to teach two additional classes, with no additional pay, to a "modular" group of students who would be on campus for the second ten weeks of the semester. I informed the P that I would do no such thing. The P informed the HF of my refusal. The HF informed the P that I would do as I was told. I informed the P who informed the HF, that I would quit that day if they didn't leave me the fuck alone.

Once again, the HF relented. I took this as a good sign. Everyone else took it as a sign of doom. "He's never backed down to anyone," my ethics colleague told me. "The rumor is he's afraid of you... that, and he needs your Ph.D." So that's why nothing had happened to me. The school needed my Ph.D. to satisfy their accreditation requirements. I was untouchable. I was invincible. I was ready to take the Big Fall.

By this time I'd realized, of course, that the main goal at Les Roches was to make money. Education was the smoke screen, the sleight of hand, the three-card-monte trick used to scam money out of wealthy parents, money which went directly into the pockets of the two elderly brothers, their business partners known officially as the SHA "school board" and the HF. The reason they wanted accreditation and the ability to offer a BS degree in hospitality studies was so they could get an extra year's tuition out of these parents.

But from my perspective it didn't have to be this way. Given the proper materials, a more qualified faculty, and a less spartan set of rules, we could educate these students as well. I wasn't against these bloodsuckers collecting their money; I was against them trying to break me and many others in the process. As someone who has never had any power in the world, I didn't understand that the one satisfaction of having power was the

ultly to at least attempt to change some of these attitudes, but every one of them were more afraid of losing their jobs than losing their self-respect, their dignity and their membership in the human community. As were the students. Oh sure, every once in a while one of them would quit, or attempt suicide. (Occasionally one succeeded: one of the dorm rooms at Les Roches remains sealed up after a Korean student killed himself; his family wanted to keep the room exactly the way it had been before his death in order to appease his lost spirit. After a large donation, the school was happy to accommodate them.)

But as the weeks of the semester continued with the same unrelenting oppression from the administration, I continued to push too, to stand up for myself and for the right of the students to at least have a chance to learn how to read and write.

But the truth is, I really didn't know what the hell I was doing; I was out of control and the harder these fascists pushed me the harder I pushed back.

The last week before final exams, unbroken and unbowed, I was pulled out of my classroom by the VP, taken to the HF's office and fired. "We know about your involvement with a student," the HF snickered, then assumed a mock-air of insult. "I am very disappointed, but this will result in your immediate termination. We will call the police and have your permit revoked. You must leave the country immediately." I stood up, called him a "fascist bastard," and walked out with both head and middle finger held high.

How did they find out about my "involvement" with a student? I heard many different ver-

sions of the story, which continued to spin out in various forms and fantastic fictions in the weeks following my firing; but it seems that Dani herself, jealous that I was spending too much time talking with other female students, had gone to the HF and confessed our "relationship." Before dismissing her outright as some neurotic shiksa straight out of a Philip Roth novel, it should be borne in mind that she did have a pragmatic reason for doing this: she had been afraid she was going to fail that semester, so she cut a deal with the HF which allowed her to graduate and allowed him to get rid of me.

I was escorted off campus in full view of the faculty and students. The HF probably would have stuck my head on a pike if he'd had that option. For someone with zero background in education and a meaningless diploma from a Swiss hotel school, I was impressed that he understood how to educate by example. After my exit, my final exams were cancelled and the entire semester's grades were erased. There was an emergency meeting of the grade committee, which quickly decided for the first time in Les Roches history to pass everyone.

As for having my permit revoked and having me thrown out of the country . . . all this bluster was one hundred percent pure Swiss cowshit. In actuality, the HF had flied me illegally. He was required by Swiss law and written contract to give me three month's notice of termination. The reason he wanted me to leave the country was that he simply didn't want to have to pay me. As I later found out from the cantonal government, this threat was common among Swiss employers who used minimum-wage

Portuguese immigrant workers and then fired them after a few months. When I explained my situation to the cantonal officer, he threw his hands up in the air and exclaimed "*pas possible! pas possible!*"

Well, possible after all. In order to get my money I would have to sue the school. The cantonal officer encouraged me to do so, convinced that I was in the right and that a judge would be sympathetic to my case. But it would involve a six- to eight-month wait, plus I would have to hire an attorney. However, I was also eligible for Swiss unemployment. Seventy percent of my salary per month and no tax deductions. And so after a couple of weeks of recuperation time in Italy, I took stock of my situation: I could now spend the next six months collecting unemployment, waiting for my day in court, and have all the free time I needed to try and write as a ward of the Swiss state. I would be free from both financial worry and the need to work to support my writing habit. Habit? In five months in Switzerland I had written exactly three pages.

"Every exit is also an entrance." Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz (or was it Guildenstern?) says in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. I mulled that one over. Then I thought back on that fine spring day of wine tasting many months earlier in Sonoma, and what stood out was the anger and sadness I'd felt at seeing a once-great film director reduced by self-betrayal to artistic poverty.

I moved to Paris.

Bruce Gatenby is a freelance writer living in Paris.



IT'S THE POLITICS, STUPID!

The Art of Political War

How Republicans Can Fight To Win

David Horowitz

\$3.95

Bulk Order Price List

Qty	Total	Price per
5	\$ 15.00	\$3.00
10	\$ 25.00	\$2.50
25	\$ 50.00	\$2.00
50	\$ 75.00	\$1.50
100	\$100.00	\$1.00

"Tax breaks for the wealthy on the backs of the poor" is the Democrat sound-bite that defines Republicans as mean-spirited fat cats and enemies of the poor. It is a lie that has been imprinted on the electorate through a million repetitions. It is the chant of every Democrat in Congress, every Democrat political figure, and every Democrat pundit in the media.

What is the Republican chant? *There is none.*

It's the politics, stupid!

Here is an answer to the Democrat mantra:

TAXES FOR THE BUREAUCRATS OUT OF THE POCKETS OF THE PEOPLE.

This pretty well sums up what Democrat policies are all about. If the trillions spent by the welfare state went to poor people instead of to bureaucrats, there would be no poor people; if the education billions went to the classroom and paid teachers to teach (instead of merely to show up for the job), there would be no education crisis.

Republicans have the solutions, but they need to answer Democrats slogan for slogan and attack for attack.

It's the politics, stupid!

— from *The Art of Political War* by David Horowitz

This ad was paid for by the Committee for a Non-Left Majority.
The Committee for a Non-Left Majority, P.O. Box 67128, Los Angeles, CA 90067 www.noleft.com.
The Committee for a Non-Left Majority is a non-profit corporation. Contributions are not tax deductible.

☐ YES! I would like to order *The Art of Political War* by David Horowitz.

Qty	Price	Shipping (call 1-800-699-3313 for shipping prices)	Total	Name: _____
_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	Address: _____

Method of payment: ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ M/C ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover
(payable to the Committee for a Non-Left Majority)

Account Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Signature: _____ Phone: _____

Please return this coupon to the Committee for a Non-Left Majority, P.O. Box 67128, Los Angeles, CA 90067 (800) 699-3313 www.noleft.com

The Newest Racial Oppressor? Standardized Tests

Shooting the Messenger

by Benjamin Kepple

“Right-wing zealots,” the Department of Education official says with exasperation, “are misrepresenting what we’re doing. . . . We are being a little bit mistreated.” The official, who claims to be a “non-political” career employee of the department, is feeling the heat because he is in charge of spin controlling the department’s latest public-relations blunder—the release of a draft “Resource Guide” that deals with how universities and public schools use standardized achievement tests to measure academic performance. The bombshell in the document concerns the “disparate impact” tests allegedly have on blacks and Hispanics, which would make them a form of “discrimination” rather than a neutral measurement of ability. To add insult to injury, the department initially gave interested officials, from universities and other groups alike, a mere four business days to respond to the new guidelines.

It was probably not unexpected that standardized tests would eventually become an official part of the culture wars, one of whose primary theatres of combat has been the issue of how “merit” is determined or whether it is relevant. Nor is it a surprise that the Department of Education, which is on the front lines, should make this decision at a time when courts and voter initiatives are banning racial preferences for “underrepresented minorities.” Proposing that “the use of any educational test which has a significant disparate impact on members of any particular race, national origin, or sex is discriminatory, and a violation of Title VI and/or Title IX [of the 1964 Civil Rights Act], respectively” is a way of promoting preferences by other means, and is perhaps a final salvo in the war over who is qualified for what in our educational culture.

“We do think bias exists . . . in the construct of tests, and the tests reflect a differential in opportunities to learn,” claims Monty Neill, the executive director of the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest), a think-tank based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Neill sees a lot of bias—due to race, gender, and class—on standardized tests. While he denies that his group is shooting the messenger—blaming tests for the poor education that they expose—his case against using test scores for college admissions is exactly that.

“The argument isn’t to rig tests,” Neill insists and then quickly adds, “if the results showed rich students and poor students [doing] the same, it would be absurd.” But he claims that there is a distinction based on class and that this calls the pragmatic as well as the moral basis for tests into question.

This position is staked out with the certainty that it is beyond dispute. But *Forbes* magazine senior editor Peter Brimelow noted in an 1997 analysis of per-pupil spending on education that Utah students, who receive only

\$3,280 in funding per student, scored better than their New York counterparts—which received \$8,162 per student. The Sausalito, California, school district—to take an extreme example—spends \$12,300 per student in a school district that, according to a Cato Institute policy report, mostly caters to poor, black students that live in an unincorporated area near the suburb. Many of these students live in a federal housing project “known for fostering dependence on welfare, crime, alcoholism, and drug abuse.” With its lavish spend-



ABIGAIL THERNSTROM

ing on schools and the presence of the housing projects, Sausalito is a living monument to local and federal wealth transfers. Yet its test scores are the lowest in its county.

Nevertheless, Monty Neill blames tests for what he considers inevitable results. Tests “give some students a leg up on other students.” Even the way test manufacturers frame questions poses bias. If a question refers to stocks and bonds, for example, students from an upper-class background would supposedly have an advantage over their less-moned peers. “Most common knowledge known to poor kids doesn’t show up on these tests,” Neill argues. He also contends test companies write the exams in “hyper-standard language” that no one speaks, making them biased toward the wealthy because rich students supposedly speak a more refined English that is closer to the standard than the dialect of their poorer classmates. He even blames schools for some poor students’ low grades, claiming that “schools are a middle-class to upper-class culture.”

“We’re not saying that there isn’t some information here,” he says of standardized test results. But he says that FairTest’s objections are to “policies that flow from the use of tests,” primarily tracking and allowing the tests to determine curriculum, as they do disproportionately in the inner city. Moreover, he charges standardized tests used for college admissions, such as the SAT, “predict nothing about GPA” or other aspects of a student’s performance in college. Even though tests directly influence only 5 percent of admissions, he claims, they steer admissions “towards upper-class whites and away from poor kids and students of color.”

It’s a situation that Neill says perpetuates inequality—quoting Billie Holliday, he remarks the tests ensure that “them that’s got shall get.” Neill even has an answer for the age-old question: Why do Asians, even those who are recently arrived in America and barely bilingual, score so well on the math portion of the SAT? “An area that has to be talked about is ‘voluntary and involuntary immigration,’” he remarks. “Who are the involuntary immigrants? Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and blacks. . . . They construct a very different relationship to the dominant culture, a relationship of profound antagonism.”

And this, in a nutshell, is the position against tests that has influenced the Department of Education’s stand; a position that has been there for decades but has now reached critical mass as an element in the larger debate over affirmative action and preferences. If Neill puts a distinctive fingerprint on the debate, it is because he regards opponents of his position as racists. When he hears the name of Abigail Thernstrom—a leading education policy scholar, and an opponent of racial preferences but a proponent of improving minority students’ performance, Neill says without hesitation, “Her positions are racist.”

“Going to bat for raising the academic performance of black and Hispanic children is racist? That’s an interesting view,” Thernstrom quips in response. “I’m glad we use such terms in a rigorous manner.”

A member of the Massachusetts State Board of Education, co-author with her husband of *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible*, and a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, Thernstrom is a strong proponent of school reform. She also recently testified against the Department of Education’s proposed assault on testing at an emergency hearing convened by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

People such as Monty Neill, she argues, “equate the disparate impact on black and Hispanic children—on non-Asian minorities—with racism, when in fact it’s exactly the opposite.” Educators use the tests, she says, because “we’re trying to find out what the strengths and weaknesses of teachers and students are.” Standardized tests “are vital instruments for the reform of public education. The children who will benefit most are inner-city black and Hispanic kids.” In a country where black 17-year-olds read on average at an eighth-grade level, Thernstrom notes, “we have to close that gap. We can’t do that without the information.”

That’s an argument that resonates with Marc Levin, executive director of the Campaign for a Color-Blind America, a Texas-based activist group.

“Our public-education system is doing a lousy job of educating children,” he charges. Because of that, he says “Even with vouchers, we’re not going to eliminate the performance gap” between whites and non-whites. He points out that standardized test scores for blacks have, on the whole, been slowly increasing and argues that the anti-test activists simply want to “shortcut this whole process . . . their agenda is to get more black and Hispanic faces at universities, whatever the cost may be.”

And if anti-testing forces succeed in

their drive to reduce the use of standardized tests, Thernstrom warns, they may not even see the need to eliminate the tests completely. They are "willing to settle for race-norming the content of these tests—that is, they want us to read the scores of black and Hispanic children different than those of white and Asian children . . . they want to either get rid of tests or they want racial double standards."

That's exactly what pro-testing advocates are concerned about—that the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights will apply disparate-impact theory to the use of these tests and mandate double standards: one for whites and Asians, the other for blacks and Hispanics. The OCR denies the allegation.

"The notion that we are creating something new is absolutely wrong," charges Arthur Coleman, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the OCR. "The law is what it is. The test measurements are what they are. . . . What this has been about is using tests in the right way."

The Department of Education's new "Resource Guide" is clear about how tests should be used. In order to earn the approval of its Office of Civil Rights, a test—if it does not pass a disparate-impact analysis—must be "educationally necessary," and there must not be alternative evaluative tools available that could have less of a disparate impact.

It is virtually impossible to meet these criteria. "Almost any test you use will show a disparate impact," says Howard Everson, vice president and chief research scientist at the College Board. Disparate impact, he argues, is just a calibration of educational opportunity and educational experience—the racial disparity present is not due to the tests.

"You can't say that the tests are discriminating. That's a simplistic answer to a complex problem," he says. "We've got the psychological and scientific community—the people at the heart of these tests—that have just a ton of evidence that shows the tests aren't biased."

Furthermore, it just doesn't make sense on the part of the test-makers to write a biased exam. "If you didn't stand behind the information and its quality, the school districts and others wouldn't use your test," Everson argues. "The technical information surrounding the large, corporation-published tests is really pretty good, because no resource manufacturer wants to be sued. You don't recover from that too well."

But if nearly every test shows a disparate impact, the first condition to find discrimination is almost certainly met. So how does a school district or a college prove the educational necessity of such an exam?

"You can't prove the educational necessity," says Abigail Thernstrom. If the OCR were to press that point, she says, "we'll lose."

And since the second condition is extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate, it would lead schools and colleges to find alternative forms of assessment in order to avoid discrimination charges. Yet are there truly practicable alternative forms of assessment? What would happen, for example, if colleges switched to a system where grades were the sole requirement for admission?

"Look at the grades disparity—you see the same [racial] disparity in grading," Howard Everson points out. "But people don't want to go there." In fact, Everson says, "just about every measure of academic ability and academic achievement shows a disparate impact."

Such strong defenses of standardized tests—from both intellectuals and officials alike—haven't been enough to sway the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. Although they are certainly no enemies of preferential treatment for minorities, college officials slammed the Office for its handling of the testing affair, strongly enough to get Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Norma Cantu to grudgingly agree to "revise" the language in the Resource Guide before the House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations convened to discuss this issue.

They're going to have a lot of revision to do.

Roger Clegg, general counsel for the Center for Equal Opportunity, a think-tank in Washington, D.C., has written an as-yet-unpublished analysis of the document. He

OCR ignored the experts' advice regarding test bias just as they ignored Howard Everson's warning about the upcoming release of a new edition of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. This document, issued by the American Psychological Association and two other groups, is the industry-standard reference when it comes to creating tests and test guidelines. OCR's Resource Guide quotes the 1985 version of the standards over thirty times; yet the 1999 standards will be released within a few months, making the Resource Guide's test-measurement principles obsolete. Since early drafts of the 1999 standards were widely available among educators and scientists, OCR, Everson says, "should have known that [the new standards were being released]. That was common knowledge."

Despite the Office of Civil Rights' insistence that it is not creating new guidelines, but interpreting existing law, education policy experts don't buy it—or the solutions outlined in the Resource Guide.

Chester Finn, an education-policy expert and a senior fellow with the Manhattan Institute, says that "the OCR has been out with its own reform agenda to do in a lot of reform practices because they don't like them. [Norma Cantu] doesn't like tests . . . and she's out to get them." He recalled when the Office for Civil Rights challenged Ohio's standardized graduation test as being discriminatory. "Only when a bunch of Congressmen came to visit Secretary [of Education] Riley did he call off the dogs, in the form of Norma Cantu."

Abigail Thernstrom says that the Office for Civil Rights is "rolling out a red carpet for plaintiffs to stop standardized testing [in Massachusetts] and other states." They're doing so, she argues, to pressure "colleges and K-12 schools to implement what are, in effect, racial preferences because you have to [assess] the scores of black and Hispanic students differently than whites and Asians. . . . They're really trying to intimidate schools. They really are."

Such intimidation, if successful, would have a chilling effect on the way standards of merit are used in all aspects of education.

"Grades are going to be next," warns Marc Levin.

For his part, Chester Finn dryly forecasts a bleak future if tests are eliminated: "It certainly does make it hard to have a merit-based admissions system if you can't use tests." And while he remarks that "if you get rid of tests per se, that doesn't lead to a [preferential system] per se," the result might end up becoming "something like a random system, where you gave admission to every tenth applicant."

"If we get tied up in litigation for years, that will be the end of education reform in this state," Thernstrom says of Massachusetts' school-reform efforts. "The financial and political support will disappear."

But if those who want to destroy testing are either in denial about the consequences or so dead set on their political agenda that they welcome the havoc it will create, others see in this debate an opportunity to make changes that will bring minority students up to speed.

"We do need to set higher standards, and raise our expectations for all kids," says Abigail Thernstrom. "We need to absolutely have teachers knowing the subject they are teaching. [We need to] hold them and the children accountable for learning it. That's for starters."

And standardized tests, she notes, "are integral to that process."



CHESTER FINN

notes that the OCR is "using the authority of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in this case—yet OCR has not complained about two recent decisions that clearly promote real discrimination, as opposed to theoretical 'disparate impact' and therefore violate Title VI: the State of Texas's elimination of SAT scores for applicants to state-run universities in the top ten percent of their graduating class, so as to admit more blacks and Hispanics at the expense of whites and Asians; and the decision of many major universities to hold Asian and white students to a higher SAT or ACT score, while lowering those standards for black and Hispanic applicants."

Yet OCR ignores the contradiction and continues to press on testing, despite the fact, as Clegg remarks, that "no federal statute requires OCR to challenge selection criteria that are nondiscriminatory on their face and have been adopted without discriminatory intent. To the contrary, the Supreme Court has made clear that Title VI only bans intentional discrimination."

Among other major mistakes, Clegg writes, OCR never defines the degree of disparate impact considered illegal—"a major omission, designed to intimidate educators into abandoning tests that do not have a substantial disparate impact." In short, Clegg's conclusion is that "contrary to OCR's protestations since its guidelines became public, they do not simply restate the law. Indeed, they violate it."

And not only is the Resource Guide legally flawed, the test principles it is based on are out of date.



The Biggest Buzz on the Conservative Calendar

You don't want to miss *The Weekend*, the "conservative alternative" to the Clintons' Renaissance event.* This year's festivities will be held over Labor Day (September 2-6, 1999) at the luxurious Broadmoor, a five star resort at the base of Pikes Peak in the Colorado Rockies. Panels and speeches by some of the most important political figures in the country, along with golf, tennis, swimming, hiking, white water rafting, and hot air balloon trips.

Keynote Speakers:

Newt Gingrich, *Hardball* host **Chris Matthews**, Rep. **J.C. Watts**,
Sen. **Fred Thompson**, New York City Mayor **Rudy Giuliani**

Also:

Jeane Kirkpatrick, **Robert Bork**, **Ralph Reed**,
Fox TV host **Matt Drudge**, MSNBC host **Laura Ingraham**
commentators **Arianna Huffington** & **Pat Caddell**

House Managers: **Asa Hutchinson**, **Lindsey Graham**, **Jim Rogan**,
Charles Canady, House Rules Chairman **David Dreier**

Senators **Ben Nighthorse Campbell**, **Jon Kyl**, **Wayne Allard**
Representatives **Billy Tauzin**, **John Shadegg**, **Jerry Weller**, **Tom**
Tancredo, **Dan Burton**
RNC Co-Chairman **Pat Harrison**

Special Panels on the China Scandal:

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman **Richard Shelby**

Military Installations Subcommittee Chairman **Joel Hefley**

Military Research & Development Subcommittee Chairman **Curt Weldon**

Betrayal author **Bill Gertz**

Tear of the Rat co-authors **Ed Timperlake** & **Bill Triplett**



The Weekend

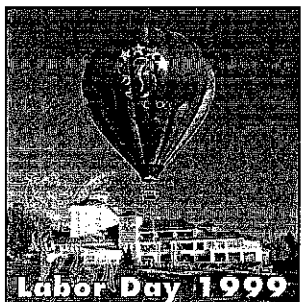
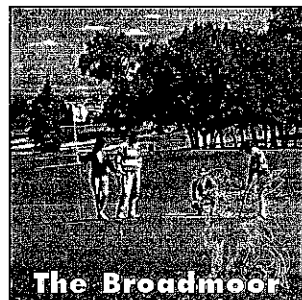
For more information call Noelle McGlynn
at 703-683-5561 ext. 3.

* as reported by Maureen Dowd, Katherine Seelye, *New York Times*, and John Hockenberry, MSNBC

The Weekend is a project of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture.

David Horowitz, President

P.O. Box 67398, Los Angeles, CA 90067 (800) 752-6562 www.cspc.org



Present Dangers, continued from page 1

- While the Clinton Administration has cut America's military by 40 percent and dramatically drawn down America's nuclear forces, the general in charge of Russia's rocket forces has publicly boasted that his are still at 90 percent of their combat effectiveness during the Cold War. The same general admits that his nuclear command and control systems are already stretched 71 percent beyond their life expectancy (and thus susceptible to unauthorized acts by rogue commanders).

- While threats from nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism continue to grow, Clinton has used his veto power to resist every effort by Republicans in Congress to authorize an anti-missile defense program. This opposition has been mounted in the name of the will of the wisp "arms control" agreements with the Russians (who have never been overly scrupulous in observing them) and under the assumption that there was no imminent threat of a missile attack to the United States. In pursuit of these chimeras, as Gertz has documented, Clinton has been willing to go behind the back of his own Pentagon and collude with the Russians in blocking the development of a U.S. anti-missile system. This attitude only changed with the discovery of the wholesale nuclear spy leaks under the Clinton watch and the recent publication of the Cox Report. Even then, the Clinton Administration refused to make a decision whether to implement such a program until June 2000, which ensures that the nation will remain defenseless in the face of a potential missile attack well into the future.

- While the Clinton Administration has stopped all development of nuclear weapons and is in the process of drawing down America's existing forces, and while Clinton's former Department of Energy chief (in charge of nuclear weapons development) has publicly assailed America's "bomb-building culture" and declassified information on 204 nuclear tests for the benefit of potentially hostile powers, Russia and China are engaged in a full-scale nuclear arms race to develop and expand their own nuclear arsenals. The expressed purpose of these large-scale nuclear buildups is to gain military superiority over the United States.

- While the United States has largely closed down its own military shelters, Soviet rulers are devoting massive resources (in a country on the verge of famine) to building an underground nuclear bunker the size of Washington, D.C., which is capable of holding 30,000 people. The evident purpose of this bunker is to allow the Russian elite to survive a nuclear attack so that Russia can prevail in an all-out nuclear war. There is no country besides the United States that could qualify as an enemy in such a war. Meanwhile, Clinton is sending a billion dollars to Russia earmarked for its "nuclear disarmament program" even though the government's own General Accounting Office has already determined that millions of these dollars are going to Russian scientists working to build new nuclear weapons for the Russian military.

Now the Cox Report has revealed that even while the Clinton Administration was steadfastly "engaging" China as a friendly power, the Chinese were systematically plotting to penetrate the Democratic Party, subvert America's electoral process, and (with the help of the President himself) infiltrate the Administration and steal America's advanced weapons arsenal. The bottom-line result is chillingly captured in *The Wall Street Journal's* summary of the bi-partisan report: "The espionage inquiry found Beijing has stolen U.S. design data for nearly all elements needed for a major nuclear attack on the U.S., such as advanced warheads, missiles and guidance systems. Targets of the spying ranged from an Army antitank weapon to nearly all modern fighter jets. Most of the theft wasn't done by professionals, but by visitors or front companies. Lax security by the Clinton Administration is blamed in part, and satellite makers Hughes and Loral are criticized."

Loral and Hughes are the companies that provided the Chinese with the technology to deliver their nuclear payloads. They were able to

accomplish this with indispensable assistance provided by the Clinton White House, which allowed them to circumvent technology controls instituted for national security purposes by previous administrations. Loral and Hughes are large Clinton campaign contributors. In fact, the head of Loral is the largest individual contributor to a candidate in American history.

Pennsylvania representative Curt Weldon, who is chair of the National Security subcommittee on military research and development, and is fluent in Russian, has characterized the six years of Clinton's Administration as "the worst period in our history in terms of undermining our national security." In May 1999, Weldon traveled to Russia, in company with ten other congressmen. On that trip, in his presence, a Russian general threatened the assembled congressmen, warning that if the United States put ground troops in Kosovo, Russia "could" detonate a nuclear device in the lower atmosphere off the eastern United States. The resulting electro-magnetic pulses, he claimed, would "fry" every computer chip in the country, shutting down phones, airplanes, electrical grids, and so on until the country was thrown into absolute chaos. This threat was not made during the Cold War by a ruler of the former Soviet Union. It was made by a Russian general, in May 1999.

These revelations are disturbing enough, but in the initial reactions to the Cox Report there was enough complacency and denial to add an ominous element to the mix. Before the Report was even issued, the Clinton cover-up squad had begun its famous spin cycle. Spokesmen for the White House and congressional Democrats explained that the damage resulting from all the spying was not that great because China only had 18 missiles, while the United States had 6,000. Well, that may be fine temporarily. But the theft has given China a 20-year jump in its nuclear weapons development—an eternity in terms of modern technologies. What happens five or ten years in the future when the Beijing dictatorship has hundreds of missiles aimed at American cities and decides that it wants Taiwan? What consolation would it be to people in Los Angeles, who have already been threatened with a nuclear attack over the Taiwan issue, should Beijing decide to launch even one missile in their direction, given the fact that their President has denied them a missile defense? In the event of such an attack, would Washington be willing to trade 17 American cities in a retaliatory nuclear exchange to defend Taiwan?

On the other hand, if historical experience is any guide, the Communists just might. In Vietnam, the Communists were willing to sacrifice two million of their own citizens (a figure comparable to 72 million U.S. deaths) against the prospect of victory, while 58,000 American soldiers proved to be too great a sacrifice for the United States in pursuit of the opposite result. The Chinese Communists have already killed an estimated 50 million of their own population in their pursuit of a revolutionary future. Why would they not risk another 50 million to achieve a goal their leadership deems worthy?

In addition to making the false and irresponsible claim that the thefts reported by the Cox Committee were not so serious, Clinton and his spinners argued that they themselves were not really guilty because "everyone does it." Shame on Democrats who have gone along with this argument, as they did with similar mendacities during the impeachment process over the President's dalliance with Monica Lewinsky. This is not about a squalid presidential affair but over reckless and perhaps criminal behavior affecting the very lives of the American people. Yes, nuclear spying took place in previous administrations, and in every administration, no doubt, since the invention of the atom bomb. The difference is that previous administrations cared about such leaks and prosecuted the offenders, and had not accepted millions of dollars in illegal campaign contributions from the military and intelligence services of the foreign power that pulled off the theft. Previous administrations did not lift security controls that supplied the thieves with additional

vital military technologies, after the thefts had been discovered. Or systematically disarm their own military forces while this was happening. Or vigorously oppose the development of necessary defenses in the face of the threat. But the Clinton Administration did.

One of the key technological breaks China received without having to spy to get it was the deliverance of supercomputers once banned from export for security reasons. Supercomputers underpin the technology of modern warfare, and not only for firing and controlling missiles. A supercomputer can simulate a nuclear test and is thus crucial to the development of nuclear warheads. But, according to a *Washington Post* editorial (5/26/99), "In the first three quarters of 1998 nine times as many [supercomputers] were exported [to China] as during the previous seven years." This transfer was authorized three years after the spy thefts were detected. What rationale (besides stupidity, greed, or some treasonous motive) could justify this decision? What responsible president or administration official at any relevant level in any government would allow the massive transfer of national security assets like these to a dictatorship they knew had stolen their country's most highly guarded military secrets? And if they did do it, why did they?

Was this the reason for the Chinese cash flow to the Clinton-Gore campaign? If not, what was the payoff the Chinese expected? What was the payoff they received? And who in the Administration is responsible for the cover-ups, the laxity and the leaks that made the Chinese conspiracy work as effectively as it did? Is there, for example, any connection between this security disaster and the fact that Sandy Berger, the President's National Security Advisor, was a lobbyist for Chinese companies before being appointed to his post? Or that he and other top Clinton officials responsible for this mess have been left-leaning skeptics about Communist threats in the past, and radical critics of American power?

In the immediate handling of the national security disaster, a profound disservice was done to the American people, in fact, by both political parties. Shell-shocked by Democratic attacks during the impeachment process, Republicans on the Cox Committee became complicit in an essential part of the cover-up in the name of bi-partisanship. This was the decision to de-couple the spy scandal and the technology transfers from the Clinton money trail to Beijing. This removed a large potential area of conspiracy from the perspective of the report. In all, 105 witnesses to the illegal funding of the Clinton-Gore campaign by people connected to the Chinese military and Chinese intelligence either took the Fifth Amendment or fled the country to avoid cooperating with investigators. They did this with the tacit acquiescence if not the active help of the Clinton Administration. What were they hiding and why did the Clinton Administration, at the very minimum, not care that they were?

The entire debate has taken place in a surreal atmosphere of politics as usual: the partisan defense of the White House, the denial of the real magnitude of the nuclear danger, the political decoupling of the Chinese plot to infiltrate and influence the Clinton-Gore Administration, and the failure even to acknowledge that what is at stake is a massive betrayal of the American people's trust by its national security leadership.

In light of the unfolding national security drama, the American people may someday want to revisit the questions they disposed of during the President's impeachment trial for perjury over an illicit affair. Is bad character an impeachable offense? Does reckless behavior and lying under oath make a leader unfit to be commander-in-chief? Whatever the answers, and whatever the results of the investigations in progress, one thing is certain: the already revealed facts will redraw the legacy of this presidency as the most reckless and dangerous in our times.

A Question of Loyalties

Even as officials were preparing to

release the Cox Report on how the Communist dictatorship in Beijing had stolen the design information for America's nuclear weapons systems, the Democratic National Committee was announcing the appointment of its new "political issues director," Carlottia Scott, a former mistress of the Marxist dictator of Grenada and an ardent supporter of America's adversaries during the Cold War. What could the DNC have been thinking to make such an appointment at such a political juncture? And what might this tell us about the roots of the nation's security crisis—the dramatic erosion of America's defenses and military credibility and the theft of its nuclear arsenal by an opponent the Administration thinks of as a "strategic partner," while its Communist leaders regard America as their "international arch-enemy?"

Carlottia Scott was for many years the chief aide to Congressman Ron Dellums, a Berkeley radical who, with the approval of the congressional Democratic leadership, was first appointed to the Armed Services Committee and then to the chair of its Subcommittee on Military Installations, which oversees U.S. bases worldwide. The Democratic leadership apparently detected no problem in the fact that every year during the Cold War with the Soviet empire, Congressman Dellums introduced a "peace" budget requiring a 75 percent reduction in government spending on America's defenses. Nor did they have any problem with Dellums' performance during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which occurred on Jimmy Carter's watch. As Soviet troops poured across the Afghanistan border and President Carter called for the resumption of the military draft, Dellums told a "Stop the Draft" rally in Berkeley that "Washington D.C. is a very evil place," and the only "arc" of a crisis that he could see was "the one that runs between the basement of the west wing of the White House and the war room of the Pentagon."

Among the government documents retrieved when the Marxist government in Grenada was overthrown were the love letters of

Carlottia Scott, now the Democratic Party's political issues director—to Grenada's anti-American dictator, Maurice Bishop. Scott wrote: "Ron has become truly committed to Grenada. . . . He's really hooked on you and Grenada and doesn't want anything to happen to building the Revolution and making it strong. . . . The only other person that I know of that he expresses such admiration for is Fidel." Bishop and Fidel were not the only Communists in the Americas favored by Dellums. About the time these letters were retrieved, Dellums was opening his congressional offices to a Cuban intelligence agent organizing support committees in the United States for the Communist guerrilla movement in El Salvador. Yet, when Dellums retired, the Clinton Administration's Secretary of Defense, William S. Cohen, bestowed on him the highest civilian honor the Pentagon can award "for service to his country."

After Dellums' retirement, Carlottia Scott became the chief of staff to Dellums' successor, Berkeley leftist Barbara Lee. I met Barbara Lee in the 1970s when she was a confidential aide to Huey Newton, the "Minister of Defense" of the Black Panther Party, whose calling card was the "Red Book" of Chinese dictator Mao Zedong. Also among the documents liberated from Grenada were the minutes from a politburo meeting of the Marxist government attended by Barbara Lee. The minutes state that "Barbara Lee is here presently and has brought with her a report on the international airport done by Ron Dellums. They have requested that we look at the document and suggest any changes we deem necessary. They will be willing to make the changes."

The airport in question was being built by the Cuban military and, according to U.S. intelligence sources, was designed to accommodate Soviet warplanes. The Reagan Administration regarded the airport project as part of a larger Soviet plan to establish a military base in the hemisphere, and Administration officials invoked its construction as a national security justification for the invasion that followed. In an effort to forestall such an invasion, and as head of the House

Subcommittee on Military Installations, Dellums made a "fact-finding" trip to Grenada and issued his own report on the airport, concluding that it was being built "for the purpose of economic development and is not for military use." Dellums' report also made the political claim that the Reagan Administration's concerns about national security were "absurd, patronizing and totally unwarranted." In other words, the captured minutes of the politburo meeting show that Ron Dellums and his aide Barbara Lee colluded with the dictator of a Communist state to cover up the fact that the Soviet Union was building a military airport that posed a threat to the security of the United States.

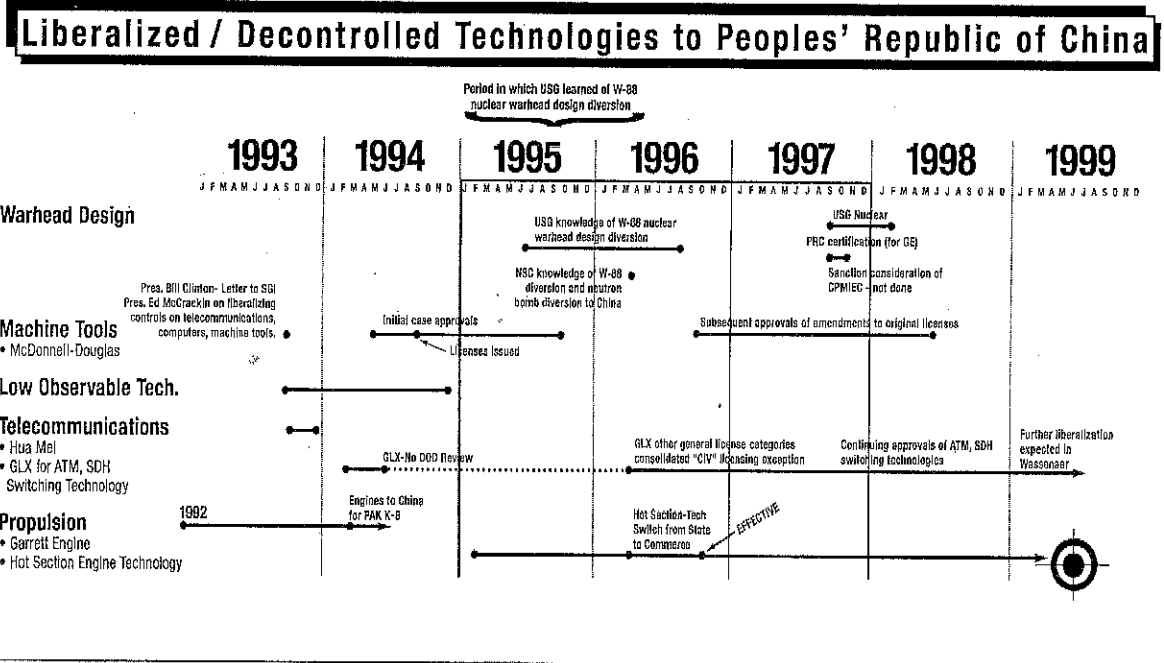
Despite this betrayal, and with the approval of her Democratic colleagues in the House, Barbara Lee is now a member of the House International Relations Committee, which deals with issues affecting the security of the United States. With equal disregard for national security, the Democratic Party has now made Carlottia Scott, former chief aide to both Dellums and Lee—and thus an abettor of these treacherous schemes—the new political issues director of the Democratic National Committee. When I asked a leading Democratic political strategist, who is not a leftist, how it was possible that the leaders of the Democratic Party could appoint someone like Carlottia Scott to such a post at such a time, he replied: "You have to understand that in the 1960s, these people were chanting 'Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, the NLF Is Gonna Win!'"

In the midst of the national security crisis, the DNC has played an aggressive role—especially in the White House cover-up of Chinese penetration of the executive branch. An internal DNC memo obtained by journalist Christopher Hitchens contains this talking point: "This is a race-based inquiry targeted at the Asian-American community as a whole. No one is questioning contributions from U.S. subsidiaries of the U.K., Canada, France, etc."

The left-wing culture that pervades both the Democratic Party and the Clinton

The following charts depict the erosion of national security controls dealing with technology transfers to the Peoples' Republic of China. They also show the visits of Chinese nationals to the White House, Chinese proliferation activities, and President Clinton's waivers to major aerospace companies granting them permission to sell their technology to the Chinese.

These charts appear courtesy of Congressman Curt Weldon's office, and were designed by Liz Fujiwara at the Stovens & Schriever Group in Alexandria, Virginia.

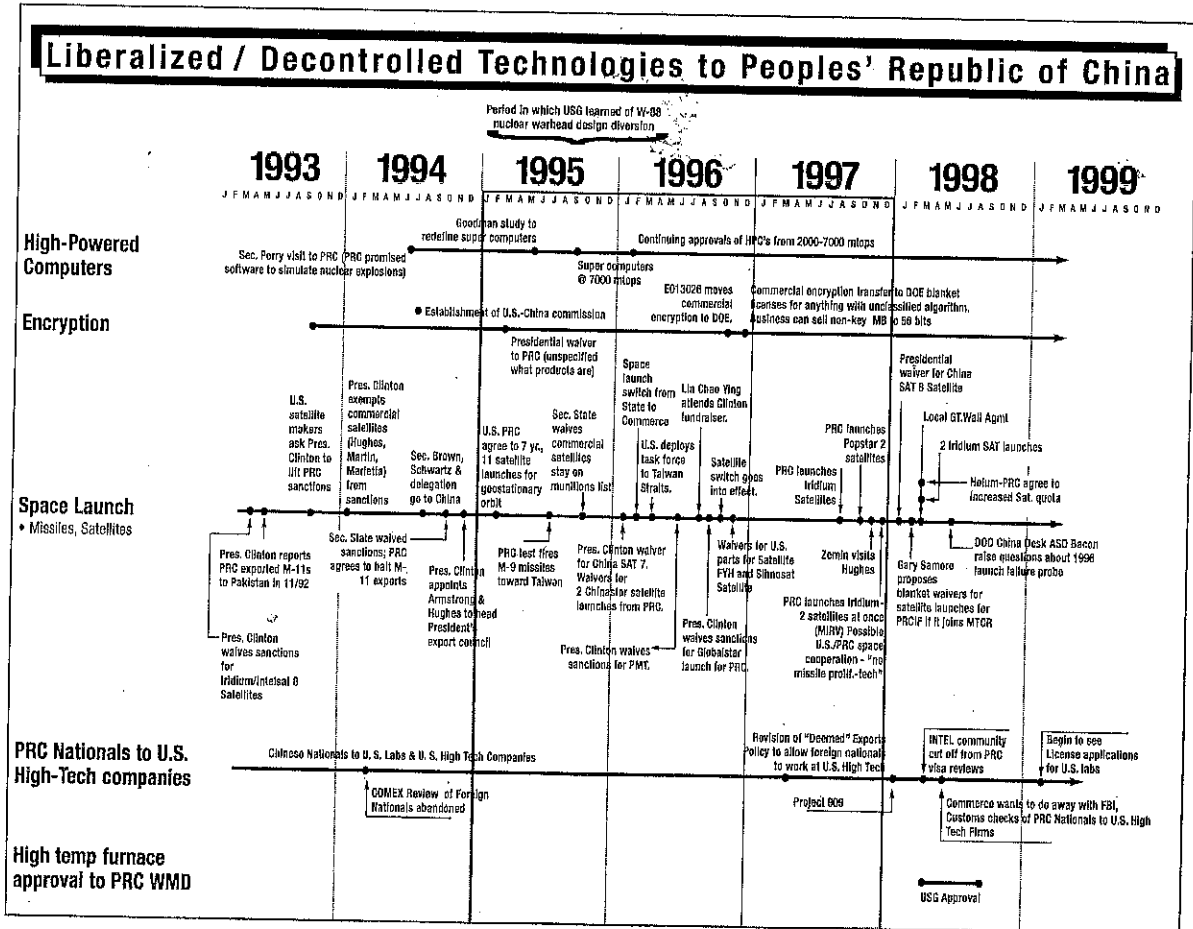


In fact, the current national security crisis may be said to have begun when President Clinton appointed an anti-military, environmental leftist, Hazel O'Leary, to be Secretary of Energy in charge of the nation's nuclear weapons lab. O'Leary promptly surrounded herself with other political leftists (including a "Marxist-Feminist") and anti-nuclear activists, appointing them as assistant secretaries with responsibility for the nuclear labs. In one of her first acts, O'Leary declassified eleven million pages of nuclear documents, including reports on 204 U.S. nuclear tests, describing the move as an action to safeguard the environment and a protest against a "bomb-building culture." Having made America's nuclear weapons secrets available to adversary powers, O'Leary then took steps to relax security precautions at the nuclear laboratories under her control. She appointed Rose Gottemoeller, a former Clinton National Security Council staffer with extreme anti-nuclear views, to be her director in charge of national security issues. Gottemoeller had been previously nominated to fill the post—long-vacant in the Clinton Administration—of Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy. The appointment was successfully blocked, however, by congressional Republicans alarmed by her radical disarmament views. The

Nor is it surprising that the Democratic Party, whose political culture is pervaded by left-

The Manchurian Candidate

With the publication of the Cox Report, we now know that seven years of the Clinton



Administration have coincided with the most massive breach of military security in American history. That as a result of the calculated degrading of security controls at America's nuclear laboratories, the Chinese Communists have been able to steal the designs of our arsenal of nuclear weapons, including our most advanced warheads. That as a result of the 1993 Clinton decision to terminate the COCOM security controls that denied sensitive technologies to nuclear proliferators and potential adversary powers, the Chinese Communists have been given the secrets of our intercontinental ballistic missile systems, along with previously restricted computer hardware. This allows them for the first time to target cities in the United States. In little over five years, the Chinese Communist dictatorship has been able to close a technology gap of 20 years and to destroy a security buffer that had kept America safe from foreign attacks on its territorial mainland for more than a hundred.

Throughout its entire history until 1957, the United States was protected from such attacks by two oceans that have provided a natural barrier insulating it from potential aggressors. In 1957 the Soviet Union acquired an intercontinental missile technology that erased this advantage. Since then, the only real protection the United States has enjoyed has been its technological edge in developing more sophisticated warheads and more accurate missiles than its potential opponents. The edge offered the possibility that America might prevail in a nuclear war and discouraged pre-emptive strikes. The catastrophe that has occurred on the Clinton watch is summed up in the fact that this edge has now vanished, probably never to be regained.

America's new vulnerability to nuclear attack is a reality now not merely in respect to China, but *vis-à-vis* every rogue state that China has chosen to arm. Along with Russia, China is the chief proliferator of nuclear, missile, and satellite technologies to other governments. The governments it has chosen to benefit in this way are notorious stockpilers of biological and chemical

weapons. Among them are the most dangerous and dedicated enemies of the United States: Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

Yet, even after the release of the Cox Report, the attitude of the Clinton Administration is still one of hear-no-evil, see-no-evil. The official line, ritually repeated by the Democratic leadership is "everybody does it" and "it's no big deal," presumably because, at the moment, China only has a few nuclear weapons actually deployed. Far from acknowledging the catastrophe that has occurred or recognizing the dangers it creates, the Clinton White House has hurried to resume export sales of the same previously restricted technologies and to reassert the "strategic partnership" it promoted with the very dictatorship that has declared America its "number one adversary" and has stripped us of our military shield.

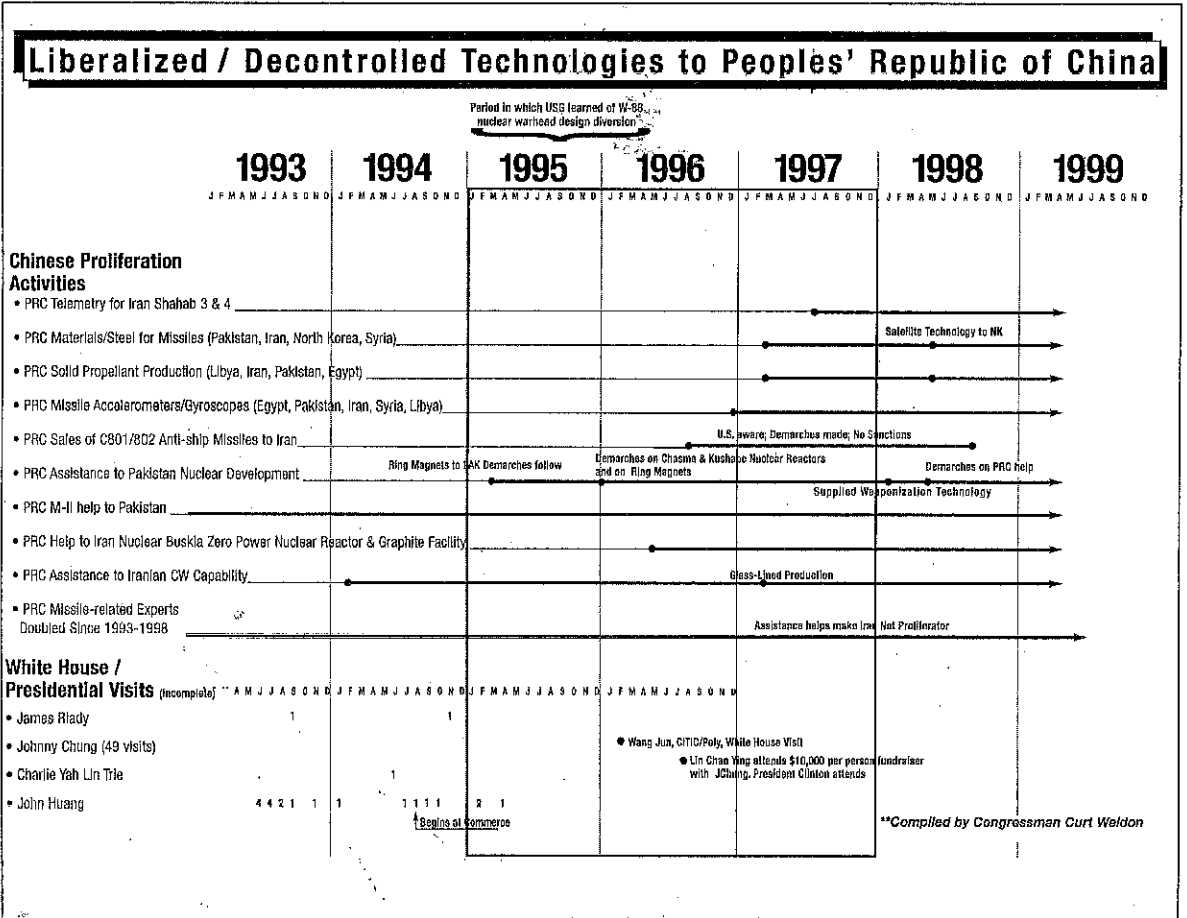
Indeed, the government's awareness of many of the losses dates back several years, during which the Clinton reaction was exactly the same: continue on the destructive course. According to Congressman Curt Weldon, who is a member of the Cox Committee, at least 15 government officials have experienced the wrath of the Clinton Administration because they tried to protect America's secrets from being transferred to China. One case was described in a recent *Wall Street Journal* article by a former security official, Michael Ledeen. According to documents obtained by Ledeen, a mid-level government arms control bureaucrat was asked in 1997 to provide a memo supporting the Administration's certification that China was not a nuclear proliferator and could be provided with advanced technologies. This request was made on the eve of a visit from China's Communist dictator Jiang Zemin. The bureaucrat refused and wrote that the agreement [the Clinton Administration] was about to sign "presents real and substantial risk to the common defense and security of both the United States and allied countries." The official added that China was actively seeking American secrets and that "China routinely, both overtly and covertly, subverts national and multilateral trade controls on

militarily critical items." This patriot was immediately told by his superiors to revise his memo or lose his job. Sadly, he complied with the order and rewrote the document to state that the proposed Clinton trade agreement "is not inimical to the common defense or the security of the United States."

In keeping with its relentless defense of a suicidal policy, the Clinton Administration has failed to prosecute the very spies who have been identified as being responsible for the most critical thefts of American military secrets, and has protected those whose wrists it has slapped. Wen Ho Lee, the man responsible for the most damaging espionage, is known to have downloaded millions of lines of computer code revealing the designs of our most advanced nuclear warheads. But Wen Ho Lee today is a free man. Peter Lee, who gave Communist China our warhead-testing techniques and the radar technology to locate our submarines—until then the most secure element of our nuclear deterrent—is also free, having served only a year in a halfway house for his treason.

Wen Ho Lee was actually protected while performing his dirty work. When government agents requested a wiretap on Wen Ho Lee's phone, the request was denied by Clinton Justice. From its inception, the Clinton Justice Department had never previously denied a wiretap request. In explaining why it has not prosecuted Lee, the Clinton Justice Department claims that its evidence only shows that Lee downloaded the classified information onto a non-secure computer, from which others unknown may have picked it up. But, as defense expert Angelo Codevilla pointed out in a *Wall Street Journal* article, "by this logic no one could be prosecuted for espionage for putting stolen documents into a dead drop, such as a hollow tree, for later pickup by foreign agents." Of course, the Administration lacks even this transparent excuse in the case of Peter Lee, who did in fact give the information directly to the Communists.

Why is the Clinton Administration feverishly covering up for the Communist Chinese and



protecting its leaders and their spies from the wrath that should surely follow their rape of America's most guarded secrets? Certainly not, as Clinton and his complicit Democrat defenders now claim, because "everyone does it." Unlike China, for example, the state of Israel is a democracy and a proven ally of the United States. Yet when an Israeli agent named Jonathan Pollard was discovered stealing secrets, whose dimensions did not even approach the seriousness of these thefts (no technologies, for example, were involved), he was given a life sentence amidst the most solemn anathemas from the officials of the government he betrayed.

The evidence in the case of the Clinton Administration's cover-up for China's espionage is compatible with only one conclusion: The reason Bill Clinton is protecting China's spies and their Communist masters is because in protecting them he is protecting himself. Clinton's China strategy is fully intelligible only in the frame of Clinton's strategy on other matters: the President has triangulated with China's Communist government in pursuit of his own political interest at the expense of the United States. This is not about loyalties that Bill Clinton might have to Communist ideology or Communist dictators. On this, Bill Clinton's record is clear: he has no loyalties, except to himself. It is the solipsistic nihilism that we have come to know as the very essence of Bill Clinton, which has made this treachery possible, even inevitable.

Clinton's triangulation with Communist China has been chillingly charted by two national security professionals (although they do not employ the term itself), with the help of the Thompson Committee investigations into illegal campaign contributions. In *Year of the Rat*, Bill Triplett and Ed Timperlake show that the roots of the Clinton betrayal lie in relationships that go back to Arkansas, and the fact that Bill Clinton owes his political life to the Chinese Communists through their agents, business associates, and friends.

Year of the Rat begins with the authors' observation that the number one funder of the Clinton-Gore 1992 presidential campaign was an Arkansas resident and Chinese banker named James Riady, who has been a friend of Bill Clinton for 20 years. Riady is the scion of a multi-billion-dollar financial empire which is a working economic and political partnership with China's military and intelligence establishment. The Riadys gave \$450,000 to Clinton's presidential campaign and another \$600,000 to the Democratic National Committee and Democratic state parties.

But the importance of the Riadys to Clinton's ascent is far greater than even these contributions suggest, and not merely because the Chinese network, in which the Riadys are only one important factor, extends through thousands of companies and individuals whose contributions no one has as yet attempted to track. Without the Riadys, Clinton would not have won the Democratic nomination in the first place, and would not have been in a position to benefit from their later largesse. In the presidential primaries of 1992, in fact, the Riadys were the absolutely crucial factor that stood between Clinton and defeat. After losing the New Hampshire primary, the candidate faced a crucial test in New York. But he had also run out of money. At this critical juncture, James Riady stepped in to arrange a \$3.5 million loan to the Clinton campaign. New York proved to be the last real competition that Clinton faced on his path to victory.

When the Arkansas governor stepped onto the national scene, he and Riady were not new acquaintances. They had met in 1978, when Clinton was Attorney General, and had not yet become governor of the state. They were introduced by Clinton's chief political backer, Jackson Stephens, the head of Stephens, Inc., one of the largest private investment firms outside of Wall Street. "This began, a friendship," in the words of Timperlake and Triplett, "that has lasted twenty years, and has spread a web of intrigue, financial corruption, and foreign influence into American government."

James Riady had begun his American

banking career earlier in the Seventies as an intern at Stephens, Inc. Later they became partners in the Worthen Bank of Little Rock, the very same bank that subsequently experienced a mysterious fire which destroyed records being sought by Kenneth Starr and other Whitewater investigators in their inquiries into Hillary Clinton's Rose Law Firm activities. It was also through the Worthen bank that Riady arranged the \$3.5 million credit to Clinton's failing primary campaign. The Riady relationship extended beyond the Clintons themselves to their friends and to Hillary's associates at Rose, including its head, Joe Giroir, and a White House aide named Mark Middleton, who later invoked the Fifth Amendment when he was called before the Thompson committee. It was the Riadys who provided a \$100,000 "job" for the indicted Web Hubbell, at the moment when he had indicated to the Starr prosecutors that he might be ready to talk. After the payment from Riady and others, Hubbell changed his mind and chose jail instead.

Understanding the security disaster that has befallen the United States requires an understanding that the leakage of America's secrets proceeded along two parallel tracks. One was espionage, the other was a political-economic track through the legal commercial activities of the United States government and, in particular, through its political oversight of these commercial activities. Past administrations had created and enforced formal controls of sensitive technologies that the Clinton team now systematically dismantled. Political contributors to the Clinton-Gore campaigns played key roles in promoting the dismantling process.

A central figure in the economic track of Chinese activities was the vice president and Far East Area manager for the Worthen Bank, a Chinese-born American named John Huang, who was a friend of Bill from Little Rock days. Triplett and Timperlake make a strong case that it was through the personal intervention of Hillary Clinton that in 1994 John Huang was made a top official in the Commerce Department, where he had access to all the information an agent would need to strip America of the supercomputer technologies vital to the development of advanced weapons systems. Huang also inexplicably retained his top security clearance in the Commerce Department when he left the government.

The decision to leave the government for a position at the Democratic National Committee was made for Huang at a meeting in the Oval office attended by the President, Huang, James Riady, Riady partner and former Rose Law Firm head Joe Giroir, and presidential aide Bruce Lindsey. This meeting took place three days after the President had decided on a strategy to rescue his failing political fortunes, which had reached a nadir following the Democrats' historic defeat in the congressional elections of 1994 and Newt Gingrich's ascension to the speakership of the House. It was the first Republican majority in the House in 48 years. Designed by the President's new political advisor, Dick Morris, the strategy involved a massive television advertising campaign, directed against Gingrich and the Republican House. The campaign has been directly credited with turning the political tide and ensuring the re-election in 1996 of the Clinton team. The chief fund-raiser for this campaign was John Huang.

It should be evident from these facts (and they could easily be amplified) that the alliance Bill Clinton has made with the Riadys and their China network is the key to his political survival and success. It has had consequences for American politics and security so far-reaching that no brief summary can begin to describe them. In 1996, to pick an illustrative example, the Long Beach City Council granted a lease on the demobilized Long Beach Naval Station to a Chinese company named COSCO, which is little more than the naval arm of the Chinese Communist Army and is a major arms supplier to dictators and terrorists. Its cargoes have included rocket fuel for Pakistan, helping to destabilize the Indian peninsula, and nuclear components for Iran, a volatile

factor in the Middle East. In 1996, a COSCO ship was seized in Oakland, California, by U.S. Customs agents, who discovered a cargo of 2,000 assault weapons intended for sale to Los Angeles street gangs.

Why would the Long Beach City Council approve a lease to such a company, particularly if the relevant oversight officials in Washington had alerted them to the nature of the COSCO enterprise? But the relevant oversight officials in Washington did not alert Long Beach to the danger posed by COSCO. On the contrary, they encouraged the deal.

In the 1996 election campaign, Johnny Chung—another middleman for the China network and for COSCO in particular—gave \$366,000 to the Democratic Party. It was subsequently returned after the campaign finance scandal surfaced and it was clear that it had come illegally from foreign sources. Among the sources was a Chinese intelligence officer, Lieutenant Colonel Liu Chaoying, the daughter of China's highest ranking military officer. On the eve of the 1996 elections, a White House official named Dorothy Robyn made a conference call to the Long Beach City Council and applied direct pressure on them to push the deal with COSCO through. Robyn told the Council that the "national interest would best be served if the [COSCO] plan proceeds." The chief competitor for the lease, whose application was denied by the White House pressure, was the U.S. Marine Corps.

Nine months before the COSCO lease was sealed, a crisis had developed in the Taiwan Strait. Elections were being held in Taiwan and the Communist regime, which claims sovereignty over Taiwan, was launching intermediate range ballistic missiles with blank warheads in the direction of the island, an act of blatant intimidation. The Clinton Administration had interposed two aircraft carriers from the 7th Fleet, ostensibly to remind the Communists that Taiwan was an American ally. At that moment, an old Little Rock friend of Bill Clinton's appeared in Washington with a \$460,000 donation to the Presidential Legal Defense Trust that Clinton had set up to defray his legal expenses in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case. The friend also brought his own broken-English personal message: "Any negative outcomes of the U.S. decision in the China issue will affect your administration position especially in the campaign year." The messenger was Charlie Trie, owner of the Fu Lin Restaurant in Little Rock. Trie was also a member of the "Four Seas" Triad, a billion-dollar Asian crime syndicate allied to Chinese military and intelligence agencies. Clinton's written reply to Trie's blackmail was addressed "Dear Charlie" and assured him and his Communist bosses in Beijing that the interposition of the aircraft carriers was "not intended as a threat to the Peoples Republic of China," but as "a signal to both Taiwan and the PRC that the United States was concerned about maintaining stability in the . . . region."

The network of businessmen, agents, and gangsters that links Bill Clinton to China's Communist dictatorship is interwoven with every element of the greatest security disaster in American history. It is as though the Rosenbergs were in the White House, except that the Rosenbergs were little people and naïve, and consequently the damage they were capable of accomplishing was incomparably less. It could even be said in behalf of the Rosenbergs that they did not do it for themselves, but out of loyalty to an ideal, however pathetic and misguided. Bill Clinton has no such loyalties—neither to his family, nor his party, nor his country. As is evident from the disclosures that have already come to light, the damage he has done is without precedent and will dwarf even the legacy of national embarrassment that he earned for himself in the Lewinsky affair. The wounds he has inflicted on this nation, and every individual within it, with consequences unknown for future generations, cannot be said to have been inflicted for ideological reasons or even out of some perverse dedication to a principle of evil. The destructiveness of Bill Clinton has emerged out of a need that is far more banal—to advance the cause of a self-absorbed and criminal self.



Didion's Trumpet, continued from page 1

Mellon Scaife and John Whitehead. . . There was the way in which it was seen as possible that the electoral process could be by-passed."

Plot was never the long suit of Didion's novels, but in her cover story in the *New York Review* (the June 24 issue), she has come up with a doozy, in which hundreds—thousands; millions—of your friends and neighbors have been undercover, working for years to subvert the protections of government. And this is still going on.

Didion proposes her conspiracy while supposedly reviewing *Uncovering Clinton*, by Michael Isikoff, the *Newsweek* reporter who broke the big stories; *Active Faith* by Ralph Reed, the former head of the Christian Coalition, who is now a political consultant; and two books by Robert Bork, the justifiably embittered Supreme Court nominee, whose confirmation hearings in 1987 gave the politics of personal destruction a very bad name. On the strength of no more than four sentences taken from these three books, Didion constructs an elaborate scaffolding capable of encompassing vast hordes of people, and going on back many years. The first is a comment made by Ann Coulter, the conservative lawyer with the best hair in Washington, to Isikoff in a green room last August: "There are lots of us busy elves working away in Santa's workshop," meaning the network of lawyers and activists helping Paula Jones and Kenneth Starr. The next is a sentence from Ralph Reed in which he criticizes a fringe group of the religious right, whose goals he considered untenable: "Some of the harshest attacks on Clinton," Reed noted, "had their origins in the 'Christian nation' or 'Reconstructionist' movements, the more unyielding proponents of which advocated 'legislating the ancient Jewish law laid out in the Old Testament; stoning adulterers, executing homosexuals, even mandating dietary laws.'"

For Didion, the "elves" are the means; these elements of Old Testament morality are the ends; and the justification is found in this passage of Bork's: "Moral outrage is sufficient ground for prohibitory legislation. Knowledge that an activity is taking place is a harm to those who find it profoundly immoral." Never mind that the "elves" could be working at anything Santa wanted; never mind that Reed disapproves of this "Reconstructionist" agenda; never mind that conservatives themselves disowned Bork's proposal as being far too intrusive and like the "correctness" wing of the liberal movement, with its urge to censor "hate gestures," "hate thought," and "hate speech." The obvious is irrelevant, Didion tells us, because all of these people are speaking in code: "The literal 'truth' or 'untruth' of what Bork wrote or said was . . . beside the point, since this was metaphor, and so was understood within the movement." Thus, anyone who complained about Clinton or his scandals; who used the words "morals," or "standards," was part of this "movement," or plot.

Commonplace words, commonplace thoughts, run-of-the-mill political statements, became for Didion proof of a role in this sinister enterprise. Did Bill Kristol, publisher of *The Weekly Standard*, (a hotbed, Didion thinks, of this kind of subversion), call once for the "remoralization" of American politics? Put him in the plot, as a possible felon. What else could such a word mean other than as a secret signal to promote coupist thinking? And what could the "elves" be, but criminal figures, bent on destroying the government?

What Didion finds shocking is not the charges made against Clinton, or his lies about them, but the way in which the evidence was found. She thought Isikoff should not have pursued the leads people gave him, but the sources themselves, who, she believes, were the "real story." She wanted him to consider "the possibility of connections," to say to himself, "You got to Tripp via Willey. You got to Willey via the Jones

defense team. Who gains here? Who wants what out? Why?" Isikoff did consider this, but dismissed it as largely irrelevant: "I could not have cared less about their motives or their ultimate goal. My interest in them was really quite simple. . . . Was the stuff they were telling me true?" Didion shows no interest in this last question, though of course it makes all of the difference.

If the "elves" were spreading false stories, they are crooks, and they belong in prison. If they were not, they are something quite different: a "conspiracy" to tell the truth. There are of course some of Clinton's friends who think this is a truth that should never be told. Clinton's lies do not really matter, because as lies about sex they are in effect merely permissible perjury. But this skirts the fact that the claims made about the President

press. Dupes as they are, she names them one after another—Al Hunt, Sally Quinn, Andrea Mitchell, Cokie Roberts, David Broder, even George Stephanopoulos—all of whom stepped up to the plate to record their convictions that it was Clinton himself who had been the real problem, who had brought his troubles down upon himself. Whether or not they had liked his accusers, whether or not they had favored conviction, they had remained stunned by him and his actions, failing to notice, much less report on, the conspiratorial menace right under their eyes. How could they, she asks, not see the "real story"—that the Constitution was on the near brink of extinction, attacked by Ann Coulter and friends? Didion scorns the "collegial, even collaborative approach the establishment was taking to the matter at

hand, the unwillingness to consider the ramifications of the refusal to conjugate the word 'to conspire,' the way in which an institutional forgetfulness was serving to preserve the sanctity of Washington's status quo."

There she has it! The press was protecting its access to sources, which it will need when the right wing takes power, which she thinks will happen quite soon. And how does she know this? The crowd at the Hayflower Hotel looked upbeat and happy.

If this is not clear to you, it is perhaps because you have not been paying attention, in this last year of tumult, to what the most brilliant minds in the entire country have had to say about a pressing issue of our time. In fact, it is not the journalists who covered the story, but the elite writers of Didion's class who have been the President's staunchest defenders: sometimes, it seemed, his only defenders, as it soon became clear that of the millions who claimed to approve of his performance, none were willing to lift a finger in the man's support. In the few, sparsely attended rallies that greeted the impeachment vote, they were the most impassioned, even hysterical, speakers, suggesting that an inflated literary reputation was a positive marker for moral and political lunacy. As



are the kinds of claims, proven or otherwise, that Clinton and his wife and their friends in the feminist movement found good enough to use to savage their enemies, from Clarence Thomas through John Tower to the many military men whom they cheerfully ruined. The impulse to "punish license" in the current political culture comes from the feminist left, and not the conservatives. But this is a fact that lies outside Didion's field of vision.

Also missing in this odd little story of hers is any sense of the realities of public life. "Who gains here?" Didion thinks is the crucial question. "Who wants what out? Why?" In other words, how would the revelations appearing in the press be molded to promote the coup of impeachment? Being subjected to her fuzzy logic, one wants to scream: Will someone please tell this woman, and some of her allies, that when a president of the United States leaves office, power goes, not to the opposite party, but to his handpicked successor, who then handpicks a successor of his own. She alludes briefly to the Constitutional rules, but she does not seem to comprehend them. Otherwise, she would not say, repeatedly, that the way the right wing sought to impose its agenda is by forcing Bill Clinton to leave. What do you get, if you get rid of Bill Clinton? You get Albert Gore, who appoints Dianne Feinstein. Who is a settled incumbent when he runs in the 2000 election and who can run again in 2004.

Are there three thinking people in American politics who do not think that the Democrats would be in far better shape than they are now had they pushed Clinton out when the scandal first started, and faced the millennium with a squeaky-clean incumbent already in place? Being presidential, instead of straining to seem so? And, not quite so behind in the polls? Some coup!

One of the things that has most ruffled Didion has been the co-option of the mainstream

Morton Kondracke wrote of the impeachment process, "Distinguished writers regard it not as a tale of tawdry sex and perjury, but of American freedom menaced by ayatollahs, Torquemadas, McCarthyites, and Salem witch hunters. The menace is independent counsel Kenneth Starr, who is pictured as the leading agent in a right-wing Puritan conspiracy to remove that most precious of American liberties . . . the right to engage in sex anywhere, anytime." Arthur Miller and E.J. Doctorow called this a "new Salem Witch Hunt." William Styron invoked the moral authority of his friend, the late Francois Mitterand, a Nazi collaborator during World War II. The novelist Jane Smiley compared Clinton favorably to the warmongers who had once held his office. Novelist Toni Morrison denounced the symbolic lynching of our first black president. Novelist Mary Gordon denounced the symbolic rape of our first female president (a theme also raised in *Salon* magazine). Short-story writer Laurie Moore wrote in the *New Yorker*, "That our ungentlemanly president's gentlemanly failure to kiss and tell should be subjected to the legalisms of judiciary procedure is, of course, total madness, a torture and a regicide, which could have only been brought about by Starr, the crazed zealot the right wing didn't know it had."

And Morrison expanded on Didion's theory of what the "real story" had been: "For each bootstep the Independent Council has taken smashed one of these jewels . . . a ruby of grand jury secrecy here, a sapphire of due process there. Such a concentration of power may be reminiscent of a solitary Torquemada on a holy mission of lethal inquisition. It may even suggest a fatwa. But neither applies. This is Slaughterhouse. A sustained bloody, arrogant *coup d'etat*." This repetition of thought, and means of expression, suggests the presence here of two writerly sins—plagiarism, and/or witless conformity; of belonging to what

Roger Kimball in the *Wall Street Journal* has called "a herd of independent minds." A fixation by this crew upon cool Jack Kennedy might have been plausible; the man actually read Norman Mailer, one of their own, after all. But why the herd should adhere to a boor who lies, whines, and snivels with the greasy appeal of a carnival barker, and whose taste is all Grisham? And why is Joan Didion here?

Jane Smiley, it seems was always an idiot; she hates George Bush for pursuing the Gulf War, and cannot forgive nasty John Kennedy for frightening her with the missile crisis when she was a girl. But Joan Didion once had been something quite different: a huge, cutting talent, with an elegant style, and—more important—a tough, steely mind. By 1979, she had published four books, three of them stunning: two collections of essays: *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*, and *The White Album*, and *Play It As It Lays*, a glittering small jewel of a novel, that said more with less words than any prose work written in English since F. Scott Fitzgerald. Didion's prose was described best as "merciless," and she was at her best in dissecting pretension and flabbiness. She was never quite a political writer, in the sense of an interest in mainstream campaigns and elections, but she was an observer of sorts of the cause, cult, and movement; the group that seemed fueled not by ideas but by feelings, the fringe movements of the left and right. Thus she wrote in 1966 about Joan Baez's Institute for the Study of Nonviolence; in 1967 about a Stalinist-Maoist living and working in Southern California; about hippies on Haight Street; about Hollywood liberals; about feminists in 1972. She was "interested not in the revolution but the revolutionary," in the odd ticks of need that drove public passions.

She was a specialist in the illusions of the

extremely well-meaning; the moral pretensions of actors and writers, the trendy commitments of the Hollywood set. Thus she had nailed the "dictatorship of good intentions" that ruled liberal Hollywood; the "vanity and irrelevance" of a 1968 rally for Eugene McCarthy at which Styron and actor Ossie Davis had droned on, to no end, about race. She reviewed the feminists and saw them as children, "converts who want not a revolution, but 'romance.'" She was a trenchant detector of pretense and puffery. How did she fall victim herself?

Didion was thirty-four when *Play It As It Lays* was published, and people then looked for great things. But after *The White Album*, they somehow stopped happening. Each later book was more wordy and rambling; the prose more diffuse and unfocused; the style more precious, until it verged on self-parody. It grew worse and worse, until this last essay—a riot of wandering verbiage, as shapeless as an unpruned hedge. This once-brilliant woman, who once sounded like no one else, now sounds like every- and anyone: repeating, for the thousandth time, the same tired scare words and metaphors. This woman, who once seized like a hawk upon each slight lapse of logic, is unable to grasp the simplest idea—such as, that when a chief executive lies under oath, it is a serious matter; such as, the truth matters; such as, that it makes no sense to attempt a political coup, when success would make the party at which the conspiracy was aimed stronger at the next election; such as, that when many people of different political views—Bill Kristol, Sally Quinn, or David Broder—unite in condemning the acts of one person, they are likely to be motivated not by political interests, but by a concern for common decency and common sense.

But common sense is missing from Didion's maunderings, as is common decency: an

odd turn of events for a woman who once wrote that "People with self-respect have the courage of their mistakes. They know the price of things. If they choose to commit adultery, they do not then go running . . . to receive absolution from the wronged parties; nor do they complain unduly of the unfairness, the undeserved embarrassment, of being named co-respondent . . . character—the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life—is the source from which self-respect springs." A perfect description of the man whom she now is defending.

What happened with her? Perhaps there was always an inner fanatic, a link of the soul with the oddballs she covered, that now has co-opted the whole. As she wrote in her piece on the Maoist activist—"Comrade Laski, CPUSA": "I am comfortable with the Michael Laskis of this world, with those who live outside rather than in, with those in whom the sense of dread is so acute that they turn to extreme and doomed commitments . . . I know something about dread myself, and appreciate the elaborate systems with which some people manage to fill the void. . . . The world Michael Laski had constructed for himself was one of labyrinthine intricacy and ultimate clarity, a world made meaningful not only by high purpose, but by external and internal threats." Threats, such as vast right-wing conspiracies, to impose theocracies on the American people, through the means of . . . Al Gore.

Didion, it turns out, was too comfortable with people like these, so much so she now has become them. An unhappy fate for our once Next Great Writer, for a daughter of the Golden Dream.

Noemie Emery's last article, "Hate Story," appeared in the April/May 1999 issue of *Heterodoxy*.

"The years of the Clinton Administration have been the worst period in our history in terms of undermining our national security."

—David Horowitz

Who's Responsible for
America's Security Crisis?

by David Horowitz

A publication of the National Security Project
of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture.

\$3.95

☐ **YES! I would like to order *Who's Responsible for America's Security Crisis* by David Horowitz.**

Qty _____ Price \$ _____ Shipping \$ _____ Total \$ _____
(Call 1-800-752-6562 for shipping and bulk order prices.)
Method of payment: ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ M/C ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover
(payable to the Center for the Study of Popular Culture)

Account Number: _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Please return this coupon to the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, P.O. Box 67398, Los Angeles, CA 90067 (800) 752-6562 www.cspc.org

REVIEW

Paradise Lost Again

The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead: A Historical Analysis of Her Samoan Research

edited by Derek Freeman (Westview Press, 1999, 279 pp. \$24.00)

REVIEWED BY ERIC GANS



Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*, first published in 1928, has long been a classic, indeed, the classic, of American anthropology, the one ethnological monograph read and loved by the general public. Four generations have been enthralled by Mead's portrait of female adolescence in a tropical paradise of trouble-free sensuality:

Familiarity with sex, and the recognition of a need of a technique to deal with sex as an art, have produced a scheme of personal relations in which there are no neurotic pictures, no frigidity, no impotence, except as the temporary result of severe illness, and the capacity for intercourse only once in a night is counted as senility . . . The girls' minds were perplexed by no conflicts, troubled by no philosophical queries, beset by no remote ambitions. To live as a girl with many lovers as long as possible and then to marry in one's own village, near one's own relatives and to have many children, these were uniform and satisfying ambitions.

But in 1983, nearly five years after Mead's death, Derek Freeman, a New Zealand specialist of Samoan ethnography, published *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, attacking the foundations of Mead's research and severely damaging her credibility. Freeman claimed on the evidence of his own extensive fieldwork that Mead's desire to please her mentor Franz Boas had led her to draw an erroneous, although not deliberately

fraudulent, picture of Samoa as an exception to the biologically determined "rule" that adolescence is a time of conflict. Although the anthropological establishment has by and large defended Mead against Freeman's charges, the "Mead-Freeman controversy" continues to rage. An Australian play (*Heretic: Based on the Life of Derek Freeman*) has even been written and performed to celebrate Freeman's "heresy."

Now in his eighties, Freeman has reinforced his position with a second book concerned

less with proving Mead wrong than with explaining how she came to paint so false a portrait. As its title suggests, *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead* focuses on a "smoking gun" in the form of a public declaration in 1987 by the taupou (ceremonial virgin princess) Fa'apua'a Fa'amua, one of Mead's former Samoan companions, that on March 13, 1926, she and a friend "hoaxed" Mead into believing that Samoan girls engaged in constant and guilt-free sexual activity.

What I find most valuable in Freeman's book is the careful chronological reconstitution, based on access to Mead's field notes and correspondence, of her activities before, during, and after her brief stay in Samoa in 1925-26. Mead's cavalier disregard for statistics and taste for unjustified generalization had already been probed by Martin Orans in his 1996 volume *Not Even Wrong? Margaret Mead, Derek Freeman and the Samoans*. But Orans' useful analysis of Mead's field notes lacks the detailed chronology of Freeman's new book, which makes clear how shallow was Mead's knowledge of the Samoan people and their traditions. It is not a concession to PC to remark on the arrogance of

Mead's claim that in contrast to "complicated civilisations like those of Europe" that require "years of study," "a trained student can master the fundamental structure of a primitive society in a few months."

Freeman describes in revealing detail Mead's disobedience of Boas's orders to stick to her fellowship project on adolescent girls (the source of her funding) and not to engage in general Samoan ethnography, her refusal to live with a Samoan family for reasons of diet and personal convenience, her various side-trips, and her early departure. Overall Mead spent only about five months in Manu'a, the site of her Samoan research (she had previously spent a little over two months in Pago Pago studying the Samoan language). Subtracting time for illnesses, side-trips, ethnological activities, reading correspondence, and writing bulletins, Freeman concludes that "a total of not more than four or five weeks" could have been spent on the assigned study of adolescent girls that would be the principal subject-matter of *Coming of Age*. Mead's disdain for statistics and her haste to leave the scene of her research would seem to reflect a desire to base her written report on a minimum of confirmatory information rather than risk getting bogged down in a more nuanced analysis of a larger quantity of data. Yet even the limited data that she collected is far from justifying her sweeping conclusions.

Freeman's chronicle follows *Coming of Age* through its composition on Mead's return to New York, publication, success, and ultimate canonization in what he calls "the mythic process." In an afterword, Freeman replies to those who have reproached him with publishing his first book only after Mead's death: he had previously corresponded with Mead, and his offer in 1978 to show Mead an early draft of the book arrived during what was

to be her final illness. Also included in an appendix is the revealing exchange of letters between Mead and Boas relating to her Samoan research.

Freeman's assessment of the theoretical lesson of his confrontation with Mead is unchanged from his earlier work: Mead was vulnerable to being "hoaxed" because she was predisposed to find evidence that we are wholly determined by our cultural "nurture" rather than by our biological "nature." The substance of this argument, developed more fully in the earlier volume, begins with the explanation that Boas's emphasis on nurture was the dialectical antithesis to the crude biological determinism that flourished in the generations following Darwin. In the face of the racial imperialism of eugenics, Boas's insistence that culture is the sole determinant of human difference was a welcome defense of the brotherhood of man. But in his drive to provide the cultural antithesis to the biological thesis, Boas erred in the opposite direction. Mead enters the equation as an inexperienced researcher inspired by a naïve loyalty to Boas to seek an exception to biologically conditioned adolescent turmoil that would confirm the master's notion of cultural determinism. For Freeman, Mead's erroneous vision of Samoan adolescent sexuality as without conflict or repression was ultimately prompted by an unscientific subordination of biological imperatives to cultural forms, of "nature" to "nurture."

To what can we attribute the unique popularity and influence of *Coming of Age in Samoa*? To quote Freeman:

"An extraordinary accomplishment" in "the domain of erotics," in the words of Frederick O'Brien . . . it was also vouched for as a "painstaking investigation" by "the most eminent anthropologist in America," Professor Boas of Columbia University.

In other words, what is unique about Mead's book is that it offers the lay reader a scientific guarantee—however unjustified—that there exists a land where adolescent sexuality, more specifically, adolescent female sexuality, is without conflict. It is no coincidence that a paradise of sexually available female adolescents is the dominant setting for pornography. These nubile girls on whom every culture, Samoan or other, depends for its self-reproduction and thus for its survival are the privileged objects of sexual desire, defended as such against unauthorized males by both external and internal restraints. Among the latter, we find the valorization of virginity instilled in Samoans by both Christian pastors and native tradition. But the most tenacious obstacle to free sexuality even in the absence of societal controls and values is the woman's own narcissistic or coquettish resistance to the man's desire as a result of her awareness of her desirability. Mead's extraordinary success reflects her purportedly objective confirmation of the erotic dream of young female sexuality endlessly offering itself to male desire without ever becoming caught up in the infernal dialectic of all desire, not even to speak of the danger of conception. This is the "innocence" that readers have found for seventy years in Mead's account of Samoan adolescence.

Mead's utopian vision is not limited to the sexual sphere. Like the *société commencée* of Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Mead's Samoa is a paradisaical world without passion or violence in which desire comes into existence only to be immediately satisfied, reborn, and satisfied again in an unending blissful cycle. Even in the absence of the two final chapters (added at the suggestion of Mead's publisher, William Morrow) that favorably compare Samoa's tension-free adolescents to the anxiety-ridden youth of modern America, Mead's book lends credence to the mythic contrast between an unspoiled "natural" form of human existence and the "unnatural" lifestyles of modern society.

Although the cult of the virginity of nubile girls has clear roots in biology, what is really denied in Mead's "cultural" analysis is not nature but culture. The source of human conflict,

whether at adolescence or any other time, is not "natural" appetite but desire, which is always mediated through culture. Freeman showed repeatedly in MMS that where Mead sees simple absence of competitive attitudes—"The young man] must never excel his fellows by more than a little"—there is really an elaborate repression of resentful emotion. The refusal of competition that Mead observes reflects the same cultural trait as the competitiveness on which Freeman remarks. Self-control and forms of politeness are not signs of a lack of emotional tension but the opposite. No doubt it is of interest to compare the incidence of violence in different societies—Freeman points out in his first book that, contrary to Mead's affirmations, rape is particularly common in Samoa. But our underlying theory of culture should make clear that even the absence of violence is not due to a lack of violent emotion but to superior means of controlling it. All human societies must deal with the problem of desire, irreducible to "need" and fundamentally insatiable. Like all desire, sexual desire has biological roots, but its violence, and the force with which it is repressed before it can manifest itself overtly as violence, are functions of culture. To claim that adolescence or any other age in Samoa is devoid of internal conflict is to deny a human reality that is not primarily biological but cultural.

In view of the persuasiveness of Freeman's revelations about Mead's predispositions on the one hand and her slipshod methods on the other, I find it unfortunate that he has decided to dramatize his critique by focusing on—and constantly reminding us of—Mead's "hoaxing" by a pair of young women on a single day in 1926. Mead never mentioned these women as

informants in her field notebooks and although she belittled the importance of virginity elsewhere in Samoan culture she was too well aware of the importance still accorded to the taupou's virginity to have believed that the taupou Fa'apua'a Fa'amua was telling the truth when she claimed, according to her 1987 conversation, that "we spend our nights with boys." If this incident contributed at all to Mead's description of Samoan adolescence, it was no doubt less because of her confidence in its purported truth than because she took it as reflecting the culture's underlying attitude of sexual laxity. By insisting so much on a single conversation when Fa'apua'a herself in a later interview claimed that the "hoaxing" was done over an extended period (Orans, *Not Even Wrong* p. 94, citing the *Samoa Times*, May 21, 1993), Freeman leaves himself open to facile rebuttals—a number have appeared in response to his earlier papers on the matter—that avoid confronting the real substance of his argument.

The disparity between Mead's own field-notes (or, indeed, the text of *Coming of Age* itself, which describes both adolescent conflict and many cases of virginity prolonged until marriage), and the sweeping affirmations of sexual freedom quoted above gives evidence that Mead did not need to be "hoaxed" into making these affirmations. Nor need we accuse her of deliberately misleading her readers. The simplest explanation is that, in her desire to lend support to Boas, Mead sought not the statistical confirmation warranted by an empirical study but the exemplification of a "cultural pattern," to use the expression that Mead's friend and fellow Boasian Ruth Benedict would later make famous. The counterexamples that Mead records and even

discusses are not held to contradict the overall "pattern" of behavior. In short, once a "pattern" is chosen, it is essentially unfalsifiable by the data—whence Orans' description of Mead's work as *Not Even Wrong*.

The long-term pernicious effect of Mead's book has little to do with the relative degree to which adolescence is or is not troubled in Samoa and in the United States. Both the "nature-nurture" controversy and the obsession with adolescent psychology that formed the context for her work have long since subsided. But despite Mead's express recognition of the advantage of advanced civilization's "recognition of many possible ways of life" over the "one way of life" of Samoa, her book has been a major source of reinforcement for the Rousseauian myth of the natural harmony of desire, along with its uglier corollary, the blank check offered to resentment against modernity in general and Western market society in particular. Although professional ethnologists have taken Mead's book less seriously than the general public, its enormous popular success has nonetheless influenced academic anthropology in the direction not merely of cultural relativism but of the active mistrust of Western civilization that continues to pervade the softer social sciences. By puncturing this book's utopian myth, Freeman has helped to free us from a lie a great deal more pernicious than anything a couple of Samoan girls could possibly have told Margaret Mead.

Eric Gans teaches at UCLA and writes widely on issues of culture.



THE COMMITTEE FOR A NON-LEFT MAJORITY

www.NOLEFT.com

WEEK OF JULY 26, 1999

See the **letter** California GOP Vice Chairman Shawn Steel sent to 3,500 legislators and party activists

CNLM's new national print-media ad campaign, **It's The Politics, Stupid!**

PollWatch: Bush Maintains Lead after Announcements

Letters to the Editor:
Readers Debate the Future of the GOP

The China Syndrome
Who's Responsible for America's Security Crisis?

Reaching Out: Conservatism with a Heart

The
Art
of
Political
War

David Horowitz

An Agenda for the Republican Future

Contact Monty C. Floyd at 1-800-699-3313

QUICKLINKS: THE CONTENDERS 2000

Gary Bauer
Pat Buchanan

George W. Bush
Elizabeth Dole

Steve Forbes
John McCain

Dan Quayle
Bob Smith

NAVIGATE NOLEFT.COM

The Spark | PollWatch | Support CNLM | The China Syndrome | Letters to the Editor

Court Rules Landlord Must Pay Tenant's Medical Bill

by Judith Schumann Weizner

The Second Federal District Court has ruled that Carmine Albergateore, a diminutive 81-year-old widower, must pay medical expenses and compensation for injuries incurred by his boarder, Thomas Fresser, when Fresser bit into a Heftyboy Hamburger in Albergateore's kitchen and broke a tooth, which he subsequently inhaled.

Following several heroic but unsuccessful attempts by Mr. Albergateore to perform the Heimlich maneuver, Mr. Fresser was rushed to West Side Medical Administration Hospital's emergency room, where the tooth, which contained a silver-mercury filling, was dislodged from his trachea. Mr. Fresser was released from the hospital the following day, but suffered a permanent change of vocal quality due to damage to his vocal cords caused by the sharp edge of the filling.

One week later, Mr. Fresser filed suit against Mr. Albergateore.

In a pre-trial motion, Mr. Albergateore's lawyer sought to have the case against his client dismissed, arguing that Mr. Fresser's wrath would be more properly directed against Heftyboy Hamburger Heaven, where the offending meat patty had been purchased. He argued that, aside from having paid for the hamburger, Mr. Albergateore's only part in the unfortunate incident was that his tenant had chosen to bring it back to his house before eating it.

The court ruled that the suit could proceed because Mr. Fresser had come to live with Mr. Albergateore under Title 19 of the Federal Civility Restoration Act of 1998.

At the trial, Mr. Albergateore argued that Mr. Fresser's injuries had been caused by his own negligence, testifying that Mr. Fresser had often complained about the tooth, that on many occasions he had advised him to consult a dentist and had offered to recommend one, but that Mr. Fresser had said he was afraid of dentists, having received the filling at his first and only dental visit.

Mr. Fresser admitted that he had failed to follow his landlord's advice, but argued that this fact was immaterial because Section 8, paragraph 72.a clearly makes a landlord responsible for the physical well-being of his tenant.

Mr. Albergateore testified that he had complied fully with Section 8, having offered his advice to Mr. Fresser as part of the landlord-tenant relationship as defined by Section 8, paragraph 72.g, which states that "the owner or primary lessor of a premises must offer such counsel as is necessary to effect the well-being of his guest(s) and must exercise due diligence in following up on said counsel

until (s)he and said guest(s) have achieved a mutually satisfactory level of well-being." He explained that, as Mr. Fresser had obviously perceived his well-being as not including a dental appointment, and had expressed his opposition to such an appointment most emphatically, he had had no choice but to consider that further insistence on the matter might distress Mr. Fresser, thus putting him in violation of paragraph 73.k of the same sec-



THOMAS FRESSER

tion ("... the owner or primary lessor of a premises shall say or do nothing that might foster a less-than-optimal emotional state in his/her guest(s).").

The court ruled that Mr. Albergateore should have foreseen that Mr. Fresser's refusal to see a dentist, which ultimately resulted in his nearly choking to death and in permanent damage to his vocal cords, might also have resulted in any number of other dangerous medical conditions, and that the likelihood of acquiring any of these serious conditions clearly outweighed the possibility of an unknown level of emotional upset. Further, because the filling in the tooth had contained mercury, there was the possibility that Mr. Fresser might have suffered a degree of mercury poisoning had he swallowed the tooth instead of inhaling it, a fact that must have occurred to him when he felt the tooth give way, adding to his distress.

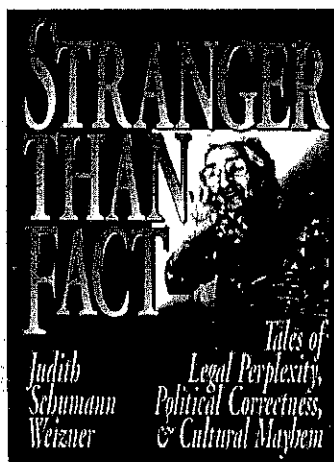
Mr. Albergateore was directed to pay Mr. Fresser's medical bills, the cost of his continuing vocal therapy, and eight million dollars for pain and suffering, as Mr. Fresser had decided one week before the incident to join his church choir.

The Federal Civility Restoration Act was passed as part of the 106th Congress' bipartisan pledge to restore civility to American society.

While it addresses a wide assortment of commercial situations in which civility is a likely casualty, one of its key elements is its effort to improve the relationship between landlord and tenant in housing with fewer than forty units, where the landlord resides on site. Statistics show this to be a traditionally difficult relationship between people of conflicting interests who live in close proximity. In order to reduce some of the tensions that often compromise these relationships, the law requires that landlords take an active interest in their tenants' lives, making sure that they get to work on time, or, on their days off, making sure that they can sleep late undisturbed. They are also obliged to provide recommendations for any services their tenants might require, such as doctors, lawyers and auto mechanics, and must retain one of the Civility Counselors provided for under Chapter 6, Paragraph 22.v. (The American Association of Landlords had opposed the inclusion of lawyers in the list of recommendations, citing a conflict of interest, as landlords would thereby be forced to provide their tenants with help in lawsuits against themselves. However, Congressional leaders, fearing that the omission would suggest that there might be limits to civility, insisted that lawyers be included as a show of good faith.)

One of the most far-reaching provisions of the law, crafted by Rep. Charles Wrigley of New York, is Title 19, under which Mr. Fresser became Mr. Albergateore's tenant. Title 19, subtitled "Graciousness Toward the Less Fortunate," requires that anyone living alone in a house or apartment of more than four rooms must offer one of those rooms to an unemployed homeless person. Subject to approval by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the landlord may then deduct the putative open market rent from his federal income tax, although not from his state or city taxes. The requirement that as long as a Title 19 tenant remains unemployed, his medical expenses are to be paid by his landlord, was included in an effort to rein in Medicaid costs. Since Mr. Fresser was still unemployed at the time he inhaled the tooth, Mr. Albergateore could be held responsible for his medical expenses.

Mr. Albergateore has requested a new trial on grounds that Judge Tippy More, who decided his case, lives alone in an eight-room apartment on Central Park West, but experts say it is unlikely that the Court of Appeals will entertain this motion, as Chapter 92 of the Federal Civility Restoration Act (sometimes referred to as the "So's Your Old Man" clause) excludes appeals based on claims of a double standard for the judiciary as tending to increase the level of societal incivility.



ISBN 1-586442-05-3, 191 pages, \$12.95 cover price

Get the collection of *Stranger Than Fact*

Judith Schumann Weizner's tales of legal perplexity, political correctness, & cultural mayhem for only

\$3⁰⁰

Please call (800) 752-6562, ext.209, to order.
Visit our web site at www.frontpagemag.com