I n July 1996, a human skull was found along the Columbia River near the town of Kennewick, Washington. Anthropologist James Chatters was sent to investigate, and in nine separate trips to the discovery site was able to collect three hundred and fifty pieces of bone. He was eventually able to assemble the nearly complete skeleton of a male of medium height, between forty and forty-five years of age, with features consistent with those of a Caucasian. While washing the bones, Chatters made another discovery. Embedded in the skeleton’s pelvis was a stone projectile point. The big surprise came when the artifact was identified as a type used in the region over 9,000 years ago. Indeed, subsequent radiocarbon dating showed the skeleton to be 9,300 years old.

Of all the things anthropologists study, nothing excites public interest more than ancient and prehistory. Kennewick Man, as the skeleton was now known, was no exception. In fact, it was received perhaps even more press coverage than usual because of its Caucasian features. A facial reconstruction of the skull appeared so Caucasian that one observer commented in a widely publicized comparison that Kennewick Man resembled TV actor Patrick Star until a “stabilize” the river bank.

BONES OF CONTENTION

This, even though the site had been registered as a national land-mark, and despite the fact that Congress had just passed a bill that would

Indians where the Indians won. Indian activists weren’t amused, for the present system of incentives and rewards in which they operate depends on the constant assertion of Indian victimhood and white guilt. Such assertions would not be helped if it turned out that Indians weren’t the first Americans after all; that Europeans may have been here before them; or that Indians, like the Europeans who followed, may have come to America as colonizers to find a racially different aboriginal population, which they eventually replaced. For them it is better that as little possible be known about Kennewick Man, or about any other ancient skeletal material for that matter.

The context in which skeletal material is found is important in its interpretation. For this reason, anthropologists wanted to investigate the Kennewick site more systematically. They petitioned the United States Army Corps of Engineers, in whose jurisdiction the site is located, for permission to excavate. Not only was permission denied, but in April 1998, after a meeting held at the White House on the matter, the Army Corps dumped five hundred tons of rock and gravel on the site from a helicopter, then layered the shoreline with three hundred tons of dirt and logs. They then planted trees on top of the newly configured terrain, at a cost of $1,600. Geologist Tom Stafford said of the work that “the Corps destroyed as much of the site as possible.”

A HANDSHAKE, NOT A HAND, FROM AL Gore

A DAY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

by Ward Connerly

Waiting to be checked through the White House security area on the afternoon of December 19, 1997, I thought about distances. Even though I am black and he is white, for instance, in many respects I felt quite close to the president I would soon be meeting. Both of us are from the South and from the generation that finally escaped the burdens of Southern history. Both of us are from painfully broken homes, and both were saved by powerful maternal figures who had, in their desperate struggles to keep from slipping further down in class, somehow managed to set us each on a course of achievement. And yet we were also very far apart, not because we were from different races, but because of our different views on race. And here the vast distance between us was filled with irony. Bill Clinton’s views had led him to be praised by people such as novelist Toni Morrison as “our first black president.” While mine had led people of Morrison’s political outlook to attack me as “a white man with black skin.”

I also had a sense of the distance we have traveled as a nation, of what a long and tortured road we have walked in our search for racial fairness and how, in recent times, we seemed to have doubled back again on our own tracks. A generation ago, when Martin Luther King Jr. stood in rough-ly the same spot I was standing in, waiting to be ushered into the Oval Office, he brought with him a simple and eloquent plea for equal treatment under the law for all Americans, black and white. The presidents he spoke to—John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, men who until reaching high office never really questioned the malicious racial myths of their day—agreed with him and committed the government to King’s great cause. But now, after almost forty years of national introspection and determined civic and political action had made America a different country from what it had been, the situation was reversed. I had come to
THE DUTY TO DIE

Please explain to me this: If I have an unalienable right to my life, why may my freedom to seek assistance in ending my life be voided by others? Why may others, who do not have a right to my life but only to discuss or coerce me to refrain from seeking help in the exercise of my unalienable right to life? After all, I have a right to life (or free speech or free trade) means to be free to either carry out the action I have a right to or to refrain from doing so. (Just because one has the right to speak freely it does not follow that one must choose to speak, or to trade freely that one must choose to trade). The right to life means being free to choose to live or not to live—it must be up to the rights holder which will be done and whether to seek assistance with the task (just as when I have the right to free speech, I must choose whether to exercise that right, from which I, the school editors and others, to voice what I want to say). Just because some on the left advocate the right to assisted suicide it doesn't follow that it isn't consistent with the American legal-political tradition, let alone that it isn't a good idea. After all, they also advocate, for admittedly dubious reasons and purposes, the right to freedom of speech or worship (though really of free trade, except perhaps when it concerns members of labor organizations).

Tibor R. Machan Via the Internet

Way to miss the point regarding the right to die. Constitutionally you have that right under the property right aspect. As to physicians or others in the "assist" someone, they are merely providing technical services. As Milton Friedman or Thomas Szasz could elaborate to you, there is no need for medical licensure nor to restrict the availability of any and all medications to the public to be used as they see fit. Of course, they could commit true crimes with them such as poisoning someone, but that is punishable by taking their life in return for so doing. Rather, this article is all about control by power groups, government, guilds, unions, etc. It seems to me that you are of the ilk who insist existence and de-existence must be sanctioned by something other than the only entity which truly has that right, the individual. I sure is there is peculiarity in the aspects of the conventions noted in the article, but to ridicule is not to enlighten, but to entertain. Ha! Ha! Ha!

Like slipping on a banana peel, funny to watch, but unpleasant in the experiencing. The next time I want to die, I am most interested in your article, the article by Steve Kepple, because some on the left advocate the right to assisted suicide means to be free to either prevent it or make it illegal, as there are a multitude of ways to check out, regardless of the reason. The assisted-suicide concept means that if I meet the conditions of having a painful, chronic, incurable, and perhaps fatal disease, I can leave this Earth with some dignity and compassion for my family. Let's say I have a most incurable and painful form of cancer. I have made the personal decision that I can no longer go on with this life, and I wish to end it. In Oregon I can legally seek out a professional medical person, obtain the appropriate prescription drugs, take care of my personal affairs, and prepare my family for my passing. Without that legal permission, I can still commit suicide, but I will be forced to choose among more unpleasant, and possibly unsuccessful, methods, and do it in secret so the state will not see me die and force me to prolong my life. Put yourself in that position and ask if you want someone like Mr. Smith telling you that you must live in pain and suffering.

Steve Williams
Eugene, Oregon

CASTRO’S HOSTAGE

Even a stopped clock is right twice a day. With many consensi, anti-Castroism seems to have displaced a more important social consideration—the family. Inogsn has trumped principle. Poor Elián was nearly drowned when his mother and her boyfriend carelessly put him on a flimsy raft to cross dangerous waters, thus depriving him and his family of a relationship. Now, many persons are bribing him with enough goodies to probably spoil him beyond redemption. Much as I hate to say it, William the Imppeached and his normally man-hating attorney general, Janet Reno, make more sense than most conservatives on this issue. They outraged the Republican politicians who demagogued for the Cuban-American votes Reno even called the father/child bond “sacred” John McCain and George W. Bush will never get a "Profile of Courage" award for their stands on this matter. Imagine the posturing if Elián’s father had kidnapped him! Certainly America is superior to Cuba in many ways, but not in domestic relations. In Cuba, Elián’s future fatherhood is more likely to be honored. If he married here, he would come back and in his own home, exculpate the father-est whum of a wife, and likely lose custody of his son. The father is wise in refusing to come here. Besides the outrageousness of begging for his own child, it would subject him to the jurisdiction of the notoriously anti-father Florida domestic relations courts, who have no business in immigration matters anyway. Even the masses got this one right. Dateline NBC (MNBN) conducted an online poll on 1/1799, asking viewers whether or not he should be sent home to Cuba. 86 percent said “Yes” 14 percent said “No.” To appeal to voters’ common sense, conservatives must undertake a fundamental reexamination of social realities (and gender politics).

Richard F. Doyle
President, Men’s Defense Assoc.
REDUCTION AD ABSURDUM

POLYMORPHOUS PERVERSE: The junior feminists at Dartmouth College’s Women’s Resource Center have done it again. Throughout February, they sponsored “The Sex Series,” a series of programs for students that focused, according to a communiqué sent in by an alert reader, “on women’s sexual pleasure.” The events, some designated as parts of the “Torrid Tuesdays Book Club,” and the “Dartmouth Drama Thirstdays: Video Extravaganza,” explored critical women’s health issues by using such resource material as “Mastronaution,” from The Hite Report. A Nationwide Study of Female Sexuality and videos entitled Breasts: A Documentary, and Female Misbehaviors, the latter of which featured provocative images of bondage and trans-sexuality. As if that wasn’t enough, the WRC put up a number of posters around campus advertising a visit by feminist author Inga Munro that were so graphic and repulsive that even hardened students were horrified. The Dartmouth, the official campus daily, reports that a naughty photo of Muscio, whose most notable work’s title is so crude that we aren’t even going to print it, was reportedly included in the posters because it proved that she was “kind of funky.” (Really?) Additional events and resources at the “Sex Series” were generally also so debased as shameless as this. In addition, publicity for the event went on to proclaim that the goal of this month-long exercise situation was to “resist and counter culturally prevalent attitudes and behaviors that denigrate female sexuality and sexual self-determin-ation.”

POLYMORPHOUS PERVERSE II: Along with the above, the sexual equivalent of children playing with caca, the Dartmouth Women’s Resource Center has been buying books. To illustrate Jean Cocteau’s maxim that the problem of the 20th (make that 21st) century is one that stupidity has started to think, we thought we’d list what the girls in Hanover are reading these days. The WRC’s list of recent titles acquired include Sex for One: The Joy of Selfloving by Betty Dodson; Slovenia (do you do it, Lanny?); The Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler; Women’s Oppression Today: The Marxist/Feminist Encounter by Barrie Jean Borwich. At the time of this writing, the Yahoo! search engine lists an incredible 3,868 Web pages about tartar sauce alone.

LUNA BEACH By Carl Moore

"IT DOESN’T MEAN A THING, DEAR. IT’S JUST NEW YORK POLITICS."

POLYMORPHOUS PERVERSE III: after an “alternative” paper, cited in the City Paper, broke the news about a piece of performance art that included defecation, an enema, and sexual acts with a blindfolded volunteer. The incident involved a workshop in a performance art class for which students were suspended by ropes during 24-year-old student Jonathan Yegge’s 10-minute show, which involved the artist performing on his subject a certain act that Bill Clinton knows about and exchanging defecation with him. This has led to damage con- trol on part of the school, protests from the professor supervising Yege and, a bewildered student who can’t understand why the Philistines are wondering. But is it Art? The school reprimanded Yegge by placing him on probation for one year and—horror!—stripping him of his right to engage in intercourse on campus. “It is considered a seri- ous violation for you or any individual to partici- pate, in any activity, sexual or not, which involves exposing yourself or others to any bodily fluids or excretions including, but not limited to, feces, urine, semen, saliva or blood,” wrote Larry Thomas, the school’s vice president, in a letter to Yegge. Yet the issue of responsibility is a little dicey. Yegge has said that his professor, Tony Labat, asked him to perform and that Labat had approved the general content of the work prior to its performance. Labat denied this. He also said that even though the dis- play was “bad art,” that alone wasn’t enough to stop it.

SONG OF BERNAIDNE: At Minneapolis, supporters of Sara Jane Olson held a bowwow rally to figure out ways to offer her aid and comfort. Olson, a member of the Weathermen, went to the barricade during a test as Kathleen Soliah back in the ’70s, when she was a loyal soldier in the Symbionese Liberation Army. A fugitive for nine years, she is now on the verge of standing trial for one of the SLA’s many crimes during its spree—in her case, planting bombs under the cars of Los Angeles police officers after the shootout which left her comrades dead in a burning house. The bombs didn’t go off, although it was not for lack of trying to bring off a tragedy. But the motley crew that showed up at Lake Harriet Community Church to support Olson/Soliah was interested in a genera-tional amnesty. Chief among them was Bernadine Dohrn, leader of the Weather Underground, who spent 11 years as a fugitive herself and who emerged from her life underground to become— unaccountably—an academic using her law degree to influence fashion. She recognizes that fishing is an anti-social activity as smoking is in California, PETA managed to con one of their volunteers to drug a six-foot-tall fish costume and barbecue a specially grilled “humans” for lunch outside of the con- vention. “Fish begin to die of suffocation the moment they are pulled out of the water,” whereas human beings can breathe on land that goes on to describe the supposedly horrendous con- ditions farmed-fish live in before they are prepared for the table. But PETA doesn’t appear to be hav- ing much luck. As of this writing, the Yahoo! Internet search engine lists an incredible 3,868 Web pages about tartar sauce alone.
The Massachusetts Institute of Technology released a much-heralded mea-culpa study in March 1999, admitting to systemic gender discrimination against the school’s tenured female science faculty. Perversely, it seemed a proud moment for the prestigious institution. The dean of the school, Robert J. Birgeneau, told reporters “it’s data-driven and that’s a very MIT thing.” But that depends on what your definition of data is.

It’s clear from the report, “A Study of Tenured Women Faculty in Science at MIT,” that this is not your father’s MIT, or his definition of discrimination.

The report explains that “In the summer of 1994, women tenured faculty in the School of Science began to discuss the quality of their professional lives at MIT. In the course of their careers, these women had come to realize that gender had probably caused their professional lives to differ significantly from those of their male colleagues. Interestingly they had never discussed the issue with one another, and they were even uncertain as to whether their experiences were unique, their perceptions accurate.” The dean told a reporter from Science magazine that the meeting was “akin to a religious experience” in its revelatory impact.

And so the women of MIT “got ready, they aimed, and they got out their tape measures,” as Helen Davies, a professor of microbiology at the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Medicine describes it. They drew up a petition to present to Dean Birgeneau. They wrote: “We believe that unequal treatment of women who come to MIT makes it more difficult for them to succeed, causes them to be accorded less recognition when they do succeed, contributes so substantially to a poor quality of life that these women can actually become negative role models for younger women.”

The heart of the problem is that equal talent and accomplishment are viewed as unequal when seen through the eyes of prejudice. There is a perception among many women faculty that there may be gender-related inequalities in distribution of space and other resources, salaries, and distribution of awards and other forms of recognition. Currently a glass ceiling exists within many departments.

As requested, MIT authorized a committee to study the tenured problem—headed by none other than the chief complainant of gender discrimination, biology professor Nancy Hopkins. The subsequent report, as CNN uncritically reported, “didn’t dwell on obvious disparities like salaries. Instead, it focused on subtle discrimination that made women invisible and excluded them from plum assignments.” Dean Birgeneau, when asked to respond to the report from the Toronto Star that “it wasn’t gross discrimination, but what these women came to understand was that part of their marginalization was a series of minor insults.”

The report reveals a New Age MIT, with little more than feelings as evidence, where gender discrimination is “controversial, and stems largely from unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into all of us, men and women alike.” MIT’s Committee on the Status of Women, for instance, reports that “a common finding for most senior women faculty was that the women were ‘invisible.’” The report says, “Many tenured women faculty feel marginalized and excluded from a significant role in their department.” If MIT did collect any data about this “universal problem,” the school refuses to release it, claiming it’s “confidential.”

“It’s a political manifesto masquerading as science,” Judith S. Kleinfield of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks—whose father went to MIT—argues in a critique of the study published by the Independent Women’s Forum. The report called “subtle,” “unconscious” gender discrimination is “subtle but pervasive, and nobody talks about how much grant money bring in.” At the National Academy of Sciences, for instance, women are “more likely than men to get their grants approved.” No one is holding his breath for that study.

Using the MIT report to fuel a larger movement has its potential problems. Some studies of the MIT genre are that focus on outcome rather than opportunity. The National Science Foundation’s most recent report card on gender discrimination in science and engineering reports that “results of studies of the gender gap, controlling for other factors are consistent with the premise that the gender gap in employment among those with doctoral science and engineering degrees is disappearing.”

That’s it—controlling for other factors detail that always causes feminists problems. Or it should. Like the long-held myth that women earn 75 cents on a male dollar, those who’d like it to be true that there is a wage gap ignore the facts: simply, that women, in general, work less than men. They get half their education and start home to be mothers. And in the case of the sciences, they, in some cases, just don’t want to do it. Many studies of mathematically inclined girls in programs, including the Johns Hopkins Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth, suggest real sex differences. As Kleinfield cites in her analysis, “Most of these young women preferred careers in law, medicine and biology where they can work with people and living things rather than with inanimate objects.” Regardless of the lack of facts and science, the MIT study has propelled careers and a movement.

Take Nancy Hopkins. Her complaints of gender discrimination were the catalyst for the MIT report. Since then, she’s had a taste of gender equity: a salary hike, grants, a much-coveted seat as a member of the National Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Medicine, and then the job of teaching with the Clintons. The University of Pennsylvania’s Helen Davies calls her a “Joan of Arc for this century.” The Chronicle of Higher Education proclaimed “Nancy Hopkins has done for sex discrimination what Anita Hill did for sexual harassment.”

Hopkins’ colleagues in MIT’s science departments weren’t left empty-handed either. One anonymous female professor is quoted in the report as saying, “after the committee was formed and the dean responded, my life began to change. My research blossomed, my funding tripled. Now I love every aspect of my job.” For MIT’s tenure women in science the spoils have included a salary increase of an average of 20 percent, more research money, and lab space. Retired women were given pension increases and the dean vowed to increase the number of tenured women within a year to ten percent.

Do you want to be a university president? Just transplant yourself to a bad administrator. That’s the signal emanating from Robert Birgeneau’s career. After creating a paradigm for fighting what the university’s report called “subtle, unconscious gender discrimination at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he’s been appointed president of the University of Toronto, where he promises to continue his fight against “subtle, unconscious gender equity.” ”Birgeneau’s rapid move from MIT to Toronto says it all: careers are to be made—or unmade—over the political orthodoxy of the moment,” says Daphne Patai, author of Heterophobia: Sexual Harassment and the
Future of Feminism. U.S. News and World Report columnist John Leo, one of the few in the mainstream media to pick up on the Kleinfeld study, concluded in December, "American institutions have left the third rail of campus politics. Presidents and deans of major universities would much rather cage it than ignite it, which means, of course, suppressing it"

The Toronto Star quoted Birgeneau in January as warning that administrators who don’t share his worldview on diversity “may as well shut the doors on third-rail issues.” He reached for comment for this article, but recently told the Canadian National Post that he was misquoted. Still, he recognized the importance of the issues as evidenced by the growing number of institutions of higher education to "aggressively search" for female faculty and endorsed affirmative action as a "temporary measure when it’s needed." He would like to see a logical, rational, and behavioral approach and to help ameliorate the effects of the environment for non-majority people.

In the same interview, he compared the position of females in academia to that of Jews after World War II, "when many academic institutions, both in Canada and the U.S., were reluctant to hire Jewish scholars". MIT practiced absolute merit-based hiring, which meant that we brought to MIT people like Paul Samuelson and Noam Chomsky.

He pointed out that a recent review of the media blitz, the revisionists have taken a different tack. They have a powerful interest group, and they want the female students to believe they are fighting a civil war—as Al Gore adviser Naomi Wolf suggests. "But other women, I worry about being faced with paying their way through college or going on a community college path for physics. It’s wrong, that you women don’t need major in physics to make some diverse-crest happy."

And the MIT report, the Kleinfeld study, the Hopkins‘ study--all of them—have been called "evidence" of gender bias, editorializing as if they never read the report. The study has nothing, not a damned thing, to support it. The study is only evidence of the lack of discrimination.

And it certainly satisfied her peers and employer. Camille Paglia noted in her online column for Salon.com that "The MIT document is unassailable with any reasonable interpretations that should have been red flags to any scurilous journalist." The flags, she says, were all driven right over the face of the people who are not interested in the study to bolster their belief that women are still being discriminated against. Cathy Young, author of "How to Use It With Fire: The New Female Power and How to Use It—there is a huge risk to women being seduced into these fields," says, "There are only a few girls who want it."

As she told the Chronicle of Higher Education, "Women are the ones to blame here. By MIT saying it’s true, gave it validity." She’s right. The MIT report has been an unmitigated disaster, a complete waste of tax-dollars and energy to satisfy the New York Times, which overshadowed it on page one with the headline "MIT Acknowledges Bias Against Female Professors." The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Chronicle of Higher Education did three positive pieces and CNN gave Hopkins the starring role in a magazine-show segment titled "Ivy Bias." Days after their initial report, the New York Times, in their Sunday edition, reported that MIT’s study had "hard evidence" of gender bias, editorializing as if they never read the report. The study has significant social value because it documents with scientific study? Angry at criticism of the MIT study of the environment for non-majority people. In the same interview, she compared the position of females in academia to that of Jews after World War II. "When many academic institutions, both in Canada and the U.S., were reluctant to hire Jewish scholars," she said, "I worried about being faced with paying their way through college or going on a community college path for physics. It’s wrong, that you women don’t need major in physics to make some diverse-crest happy."

And if the pages of the MIT student newspaper are any indication, the generation of MIT scientists aren’t about to recover from the grips of political correctness. How could they, given the models of scientific success? "It’s wrong, that you women don’t need major in physics to make some diverse-crest happy."

With all their public-opinion success, the "women in science" movement isn’t overly concerned with appearing, well, like scientists. When they are asked of their experiences as accomplished professionals, they are looking for a good soundbite they can go to a colleague who offered her an appointment to "think for a long while that groupthink is studded with touchy-feely locutions that dominated women, which means, of course, suppressing them. The study is only evidence of the lack of discrimination.

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Judith Kleinfeld
Alternative Admissions Criteria
by Benjamin Kepple

Affirmative Action by Any Other Name

The University of Michigan has embarrassed me once again. It turns out that my alma mater is actively engaged in testing “alternative measures of student potential” to decide which students will be admitted. U-M is participating in a small research survey bankrolled by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the idea behind the experiment is that by using alternative measures to rate college-eligible applicants, admissions officials can identify those students who would do well at competitive colleges even though those students did not do so well on standardized tests, such as the SAT. The study is especially designed to pick out minority and/or poor students. Of the 700 students drawn from New York City-area schools, most are blacks and Hispanics with “modest grades and standardized test scores,” according to the Denver Post. One hundred students will be admitted to eight colleges and universities located in all parts of the United States, and twenty of them will get a free pass to Michigan.

Not one will take any conventional measure of performance as we know them. Instead, they’ll be graded on how well they stand up to their peers during personal interviews, public speaking, conflict resolution exercises in which they must put together a robot made entirely out of Lego blocks in ten minutes’ time.

My colleagues responded to this choice bit of information as you might expect: they laughed uproariously. “Now we know how you got in,” one coworker said after finding out I got my degree from Ann Arbor.

When I called the University of Michigan to find out its rationale for participating in this bright idea, a spokeswoman informed me, via official statement, that “it is important that we continue to explore and help others explore the complex challenge of selecting students for college.” She hastened to add, in my conversation with her, that the normal admissions process was unaffected by admitting twenty students who can build a mean robot.

Is Michigan’s involvement in this program a brazen admission? The evidence suggests it is. With racial preferences in college admissions eliminated or under attack throughout the nation, the use of alternative admissions criteria is becoming more and more prevalent. In some cases, they exist as reasonable ways to admit poor and minority students to college without sacrificing standards, but most of the time the new admissions criteria result in a hidden agenda that assails merit to serve “diversity”—just as affirmative action does.

David Rogers found all this out the hard way. He’s a law student at Texas Tech University and was one of the coplaintiffs in the Hopwood case against the University of Texas Law School, which did in racial preferences in college admissions at public universities throughout Texas. His fight against the UT Law School may have theoretically helped end preferences there, but it hasn’t been enough to get him into that institution. After waging court fights for years, he finally decided to take his legal career off hold. “I just finally decided the University of Texas is never going to let me in without a court order,” he says, “and court orders are never certain. It’s a big drop to go anywhere else.”

Rogers looks at the current enrollment plan at UT with a large measure of disdain. When asked if the current plan is the old-style of affirmative action without calling it such, he says, “I don’t think there’s any question about that.” As for the latest legislative solution that carries the force of law in Texas in answering the affirmative action question, Rogers says that “basically, it had the intentional effect of countering Hopwood.”

He is talking about House Bill 588, the bill that the Texas Legislature passed soon after the Hopwood decision was handed down by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1996. And not surprisingly does HB588 force the Texas system to admit the top 10 percent of each high school’s graduating class to one of its campuses, it also mandates that the university “consider all of, any of, or a combination of the following socioeconomic indicators or factors in first-time freshman admissions decisions” for those who don’t make it as part of the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class:

(1) the applicant’s academic record;
(2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant, including the percentage by which the applicant’s family is above or below any recognized measure of poverty, the applicant’s household income, and the applicant’s parents’ level of education;
(3) whether the applicant would be the first generation of the applicant’s family to attend or graduate from an institution of higher education;
(4) whether the applicant has bilingual proficiency;
(5) the financial status of the applicant’s school district;
(6) the performance level of the applicant’s school as determined by the school accountability criteria used by the Texas Education Agency;
(7) the applicant’s responsibilities while attending school, including whether the applicant has been employed, whether the applicant has helped to raise children, or other similar factors;
(8) the applicant’s region of residence;
(9) whether the applicant is a resident of a rural or urban area or a resident of a central city or suburban area in the state;
(10) the applicant’s performance on standardized tests; …
(11) any other consideration the institution considers necessary to accomplish the institution’s stated mission. [emphasis added]

As David Rogers says, “In effect, the legislature has eviscerated all standards for college admissions by making so many factors available and by not giving any guidance for weighing the factors.” And while number 18 seems the most pernicious of the lot, Rogers notes point 17 isn’t all that great either. “It allows students to apply to out-of-state colleges that use racial preferences to use those preferences to get into Texas colleges forbidden from using them,” he explains.

The flagrant use of such surrogate measures even bothers some at the University of Texas as well. One professor, who requested anonymity, said that he doesn’t have a problem with the 10-percent solution. It was a benchmark of previous sets of standards, and it was in effect in the 1960s. But he does have a problem with points one through 18 in House Bill 588: “When you give a priority to kids who are the first in their family to go to college, or who are from minority districts, the effect is to make it harder for Anglo kids to get in because they limit admissions.”

But how does Texas’s program work in reality? For those who aren’t in the top 10 percent of their class, the process takes into account a number of factors, including the University of Texas at Austin, the UT system’s most prestigious school, which the applicant’s family is above or below any recognized measure of poverty, the applicant’s household income, and the applicant’s parents’ level of education; the performance level of the applicant’s school as determined by the school accountability criteria used by the Texas Education Agency; the applicant’s responsibilities while attending school, including whether the applicant has been employed, whether the applicant has helped to raise children, or other similar factors; and standardized tests; …

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As David Rogers says, “In effect, the legislature has eviscerated all standards for college admissions by making so many factors available and by not giving any guidance for weighing the factors.” And while number 18 seems the most pernicious of the lot, Rogers notes point 17 isn’t all that great either. “It allows students to apply to out-of-state colleges that use racial preferences to use those preferences to get into Texas colleges forbidden from using them,” he explains.

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cific weights to any factor," Walker says, adding that administrators are trained to read them "wholesale." He elaborates: "You're not reading with a red pen in hand ... you're kind of looking for a minus mark ... You're for-giving of a misspelled word."

UT-Austin uses all of these factors, according to Walker, because "our faculty wanted to value the whole student and not just the student and their test score. We're trying to define success in much broader terms. A student is more than just their academic record and their test score.

In terms of numbers, the policy has thus far been a success, at least from UT-Austin's perspective. In 1997, the year after the SAT—under a short public report with the business-like title of "Implementation and Results of HB 588 at the University of Texas at Austin" in which he compared the essays with the SAT—under a short public report, Walker published a short public report with the business-like title of "Implementation and Results of HB 588 at the University of Texas at Austin" in which he compared the essays with the SAT, he found that over the period from 1997 to 1999, the number of students who were in the top 10 percent of their high school class jumped from 3,796 to 4,930. The number of white students admitted jumped 21 percent, and for Asian admittees, there was a 24 percent jump. But for Hispanics, the number jumped nearly 49 percent, and for blacks there was an increase in class size of 127 percent. While these numbers do not take into account the number of admittees under the other provisions of HB 588, it is clear that, as Walker says, "The University has returned to the diversity level in its freshman class that was present in 1996, prior to the Hopwood decision."

But other statistics contained in the report show that Texas' standards are beginning to erode. In 1997, Walker notes in his study, the difference between the SAT scores of top 10 percent and the rest of the students was 70 points. For the class of 1999, that difference is down to 24 points. In addition, the mean SAT score for these top students has dropped over that two-year period from 1246 to 1220. The mean SAT score for "other" students has increased twenty points, from 1176 to 1196. This suggests that some students in the top 10 percent are not as prepared as they should be in the top 10 percent. Perhaps even more disturbing is that under HB 588, a number of students who have already graduated under a 900—has increased from 0.7 percent of the student body to 3.1 percent. In fact, there has been a slight but noticeable shift downward in SAT scores across the state. "The percentage of top-ten students performing in the lower ranges of the SAT (from below 900 to 1000) are increasing, while the percentages for students performing in the upper ranges (from 1100 to 1600) are decreasing.

The possibility of an erosion of standards is troubling to observers of the new admissions plans in both Texas and Florida, the latter of which recently implemented an admissions policy that would give the top 20 percent of a high school's graduating senior class admission to the University of Florida system. Its plan would make an extra 1,200 minorities eligible for admission to UF, according to Gov. Jeb Bush and UF chancellor Adam Herbert. The plan was also widely seen as an attempt to take the steam out of California business- man Ward Connelly's attempt to hold a refer- endum, prohibiting racial preferences in Florida. If Connelly's initiative succeeds, and it is expected to get on the ballot in 2002, if not this year, it would constitutionally bar the state from using race in college admissions.

Connelly, who is also the architect of Proposition 209, the ballot initiative that ended the use of racial preferences in California and of I-200, which had a similar effect in Washington state, sees the Texas and Florida plans as far different than what California will use, beginning in 2001, to admit the top 4 percent of high-school students to the UC system.

"I think the California plan is a far more rigorous plan," Connelly says. "If you're in the top 4 percent, you would have been in the top 12.5 percent of the student body."

The University of California system is, by design, supposed to serve the top 12.5 percent of students in California. Moreover, admitting the top 4 percent of students won't weaken standards throughout the system, Connelly says: "If any student who currently might be eligible for admission—merely expands the pool of eligible students from 11.1 percent to 12.5 percent of California high schools. After all, it only guaran-
tees admission to one of the UC campuses, not nec-
essarily top schools like UCLA or Berkeley. And, unlike the Texas or Florida plans, students who in California's 4 percent plan are certain that they won't be frozen out of the admissions process. But when one begins to expand that pool, standards drop, quick. The California administrators, when initially deciding

Florida's office of university relations department were not returned. But the chancellor of the University, Adam Herbert, has said that the Talented 20 program "will be phased in at the right time," according to the Orlando Sentinel. He went further in remarks to Florida Today, in which he said, "I believe that the governor's pro-
posal strikes a balance between the possibilities of Florida to become in the next millennium—a place where race and ethnicity are no longer fac-
tors which limit opportunity or give one group or another privileges which others do not."

Of course, if that was the case, then there would be no reason for the One Florida pro-
gram, and the governor's plan wouldn't be a factor, says Connelly's anti-preferences amendment when it reached the ballot and have done with preferences once and for all.

And one professor at the University of Florida, who is worried enough about being seen on the other side of correctness that he asked not to be indentified, sees the One Florida program as "a legitimate effort to bring the state of Florida in line with cur-
rent judicial opinion, the Constitution, and the public will." However, he also notes that "as trying to arrive at the same ends by more subtle means."

"Part of the plan," the professor says, "is that college presidents [at any UF system] will be judged on how well they maintain the current diversity percentages, or increase them." The professor was also concerned with how eager Governor Jeb Bush and the university presidents were to ensure that the current levels of diversity at UF would be maintained.

Indeed, the Talented 20 plan does not do away with racial preferences entire-ly. It also has many of the same surrogate factors that are present in Texas' plan. According to a surprisingly clear descrip-
tion of the program from the governor's office, "Diversity can be achieved without having to make race or ethnicity a factor in admissions decisions. State univer-
sities can now rely on other race-neutral socioeconomic factors in admissions deci-
sions that can be indicative of race or eth-
nicity—factors such as income level, geog-
raphy, special talents and whether an appli-
cant is a first-generation college student."

Yet the release goes on to say, incredibly, that in "utilizing these factors without regard to race that have been used for decades, Florida can achieve the level of diversity desired, while pro-
viding a legally sound statewide policy of admis-
sions." And there you have the unbelievably twist-
ed logic that stems from the Tennessee plan: "race on racial preferences down the throats of its citi-
zens: it won't use racial preferences, just gim-
micks that will provide the same results as the old system did."

Other universities will undoubtedly watch both well the programs in Texas and Florida work out, both in practice and in the courts. Other schools are trying different approaches to the problem: Georgia State University, according to the Atlanta Journal, has called its program as "a legitimate effort to achieve the level of diversity desired, while pro-
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WARD CONNELLY

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

what percentage of applicants to give automatic admission to, saw that "at 6.5 percent, the quality of the student body began to erode considerably."

"There is a substantial difference between the 4 percent [plan] and the way other states are doing it," he continues. "The states are trying to engineer what they call diversity, but they are still trying to ensure a racial template."

Other observers also see problems looming on the horizon for Texas and Florida. "If you simply take the top 10 percent," National Association of Scholars public affairs director Glenn Ricketts says, "graduation standards may be wildly different from one high school to the next."

That leads to problems with the students' performance. "They have to face the music sooner or later," Ricketts says simply, and the final result is that students "end up majoring in remediation." The colleges and universities, he says, "throw (stu-
dents) into the deep end and say, 'swim.'"

Ricketts is skeptical of the universities' rationale for pursuing such programs. "I don't see how they can admit students who aren't prepared or who should have not even graduated high school," he says. "Some people view [these pro-
grams] as a way to keep affirmative action without calling it affirmative action."

The story is that these plans seems to keep the body count up," Ricketts adds. "Obviously, you don't do [the students] any ser-
vise," he continues. "They use the years in vain or bone up to get prepared."

That, of course, hasn't stopped adminis-
trators at the University of Florida from praising the "Talented 20" proposal. Not that they're too bone up to get prepared."

"I think the California plan is a far more
Bones of Contention. Continued from page 1

have preserved it. Why did the federal bureaucracy so adamantly oppose any scientific investigation of the discovery site? One source close to a nearby Indian tribe said this was done to oblige Indian activists who wanted no more scientific investigation of the site. And why did the case go as high as the White House and thus to the top level of government? One journalist observed that the Clinton administration has never seen a multi-cultural issue that it didn't like. Others speculated that the site was destroyed as a favor to a former roommate of Clinton's. Now a federal prosecutor investigating the affair, but he has a special passion for politically correct Indian affairs. Others wonder if it might have something to do with the murky and scandal-ridden activities of White House personnel. It's as if the occupants of the White House have the answer, and it is doubtful anyone ever will. With the destruction of the site, however, one avenue into the exploration of America's past was cut off.

The possession of the bones themselves has been in contention since news was released as to their antiquity. A coalition of Indians living in eastern Washington state claimed the remains of their reputed ancestor, despite the age of the bones and despite the obvious differences between the skeleton and living Indians. This claim was made under provisions of a law enacted by Congress in 1990 known as the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act, or NAGPRA. This law mandates that any institution receiving federal funds must inventory its collection of Indian human remains and artifacts. Then once "cultural affiliation" has been established the material must be turned over to the appropriate tribe. NAGPRA has been extended by interpretation to apply to any cultural material inadvertently found on federal land. When such cultural material has been "repatriated," the new owners can do anything they want with it.

One of the problems with NAGPRA is that it draws no line beyond which cultural material can be claimed by a living community. Since no community can be traced back earlier than five to six hundred years, ancient remains like Kennewick Man presumably fall outside the provisions of the law. The National Park Service, however, has declared that any culture older than 1402 is "Native American." Also, "Native American" communities living nearest a discovery site are "culturally affiliated" and can therefore claim the remains. In the case of Kennewick Man the closest tribes are the Umatilla, the Nez Perce, the Yakama, and the Colville Confederation, which form the coalition claiming the bones.

When the Indians made their claim, the Army Corps of Engineers demanded possession of the bones from the Benton County coroner, with the intention of turning them over to the appropriate federal bureau for immediate burial. To the dismay of the tribes, they were ignored. So, in October 1996 and still in the courts, has been a long, wrassome process of bureaucratic stalling and obstruction, of contradictions and secrecy, of double talk and obfuscation, of bureaucratic arrogance and violations of the law, and even the continued destruction of archaeological evidence. While scientists were denied any access to the skeleton, Indians came and went as they pleased, purportedly to perform "religious" ceremonies. In the process, parts of the femurs turned up missing and some bones were "unintentionally turned over to the tribes." The court finally ordered the skeleton to be sent to another facility. In October 1997, a year after the scientists filed their suit, the bones were transferred to the Burke Museum at the University of Washington in Seattle for proper curation.

In February 1997, the court chastised the Army Corps for its decision to turn over the bones to the claimants without having performed tests to establish "cultural affiliation." The judge also said that the Corps's decision to "repatriate" the bones and its refusal to give scientists access to them were in keeping with the agency's "commitment to the tribal coalition." In other words, the Army Corps of Engineers followed the wishes of the coalition in violation of the law. The court thus vacated the decision of the Corps of Engineers and called for a further review of the case. The judge also dictated certain guidelines for future action by the government.

Scientists were prevented from excavating the discovery site, yet the tribes were given permission for a limited excavation. In December 1997, the government conducted its own superficial excavation before the site was destroyed the following spring. They refused to release any information, though, until forced to do so in January of the following year. The report then finally released contained only inadequate and conflicting data.

In March 1998 the government consolidated its resources by transferring the case from the Army Corps of Engineers to the National Park Service. The Supreme Court of the Interior. The court finally forced the Park Service to conduct a belated investigation to establish "cultural affiliation." One of the plaintiffs complained that some of the personnel selected for the investigation were inexperienced for this kind of task; that wrong samples were taken; and that the entire project was not only corrupt and badly handled. In fact, the observer describes the process as "misdirected science," all at a cost to the taxpayers of well over a million dollars, with the bill still rising.

James Chatters, the anthropologist who assembled the skeleton for the coroner's office, is a critic of NAGPRA. He believes that the government, intimidated by its lawyers, questioned by the FBI and subjected to a campaign to ruin his business, all because he spoke out on a scientific matter in defiance of an ethnic interest group with friends in high places. One accusation floating around is that Chatters is a white supremacist who has perpetrated a fraud in an effort to show that whites were here before the Indians. Even more of Chatters's colleagues criticize him of being "racist" and a cultural "predator," and shunned by some of his colleagues. Meighan, a prominent archeologist and an early critic of NAGPRA, tells of a letter he had written to the FBI. "I am being persecuted," he wrote. "I have faced harassment, threatened with my career, and been subjected to an investigation by the FBI on the thinnest of evidence."

Similar treatment was given to another anthropologist in a case very much like the one from Kennewick Man. This case involved a skull, known as Spirit Cave Man, which was discovered in a rock-shelter in Western Nevada in 1940 and radiocarbon dated in 1994 at 9,000 years. Other skulls more than 8,000 years old, Spirit Cave Man's physical features were different from those of living American Indians. This is illustrated with a facial reconstruction that was exhibited at the Nevada State Museum along with the cranium. Local Indians demanded possession of the cranial material as their property. In the case of Kennewick Man, begun in October 1996 and still in the courts, has been a long, wrassome process of bureaucratic stalling and repatriation decisions. The director replied:

SPIRIT CAVE PEOPLE
human remains be covered with red flannel until touched by menstruating women and that all also demanded that no remains or artifacts be included all the artifacts, pollen samples, food that was of value, for scientific study. This not just cremated human bones but also every- 

This new regime of politicized culture threatens to severely restrict the study of America’s prehistory. Indeed, according to some scientists it will eventually close down that branch of scholarship altogether. But that is only part of the story, for the shift away from science and schol- arship to ethnic politics and postmodernism seen in public policy has created a de facto redefinition of the missions of our cultural institutions. It is also a part of the refocusing of education in America as seen in changes in the curricula of our schools and universities where rational thought is de-empha- sized and where the rationales of identity politics, white guilt, and minority victimhood are taught. 

The politicization of culture also offers bureaucratic government the opportunity to expand: an expansion which magnifies its power and arrogance, encourages it to disregard the rule of law and constrists the freedom of scientific and scholarly inquiry as well as the freedom of indi- 

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“...You have pointed out that many of the decisions in respect to repatriation are not based on valid, scientific principles. We have not claimed they are; the repatriation decision itself is based on politi- cal, religious, and ethical issues.” This is a candid statement describing pro- 
cedures now in force on both the state and federal level. This policy has also created a new industry employing, at tax-payer expense, an army of cul- tural commissars and cultural resource managers who monitor excavations, censor reports, prevent the publication of photographs and data they find “objectionable,” take possession of evidence and sometimes impose bizarre and capricious condi- tions on scientific enterprises. For example, in the excavation of a 2,000-year-old Adena mound to make room for a highway in West Virginia, author- ities agreed to turn over to activists, within a year, not just cremated human bones but also every-thing that was of value, for scientific study. This included all the artifacts, pollen samples, food refuse, and chipping waste. The tribal monitors also demanded that no remains or artifacts be touched by menstruating women and that all human remains be covered with red flannel until they could be reburied. 

Some institutions have rushed to divest themselves of their collections before anyone can cause them trouble. Among the first were the Smithsonian Institution, Stanford University, and the Universities of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Minnesota, who gave away their collections even before NAGPRA was enacted. A strong dose of political correctness is involved in such action, but so too is bureaucratic expedience. In other words, archaeology simply isn’t worth the hassle. 

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cedures now in force on both the state and federal level. This policy has also created a new industry employing, at tax-payer expense, an army of cul- tural commissars and cultural resource managers who monitor excavations, censor reports, prevent the publication of photographs and data they find “objectionable,” take possession of evidence and sometimes impose bizarre and capricious condi- tions on scientific enterprises. For example, in the excavation of a 2,000-year-old Adena mound to make room for a highway in West Virginia, author- ities agreed to turn over to activists, within a year, not just cremated human bones but also every-thing that was of value, for scientific study. This included all the artifacts, pollen samples, food refuse, and chipping waste. The tribal monitors also demanded that no remains or artifacts be touched by menstruating women and that all human remains be covered with red flannel until they could be reburied.

...
initiative—"a national dialogue on race"—he gave me a look that was either triumphant or conciliatory. I wasn't sure which.

But the so-called "race panel" that the president 

The Washington to reaffirm King's message, but I knew I would be opposed by a president who, although he 

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REGENT, and if so, where I would be sitting on the stage. 

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON AND WARD CONNERLY
head of this formation, the president and vice president sat next to each other in a pair of armchairs. Before I could choose a spot, the president patted the sofa and said, "This is your spot." For the next hour I watched him out of the corner of my eye. He was like an accomplished actor, every gesture both entirely spontaneous and at the same time entirely directed. I couldn't help but notice when one of another of our group tangled with Al Gore, he clenched and held his hands up like a friendly traffic cop, as if to say: Hold it now; let's remember we're just having a friendly little discussion here. Or on another occasion, he leaned forward, propped his elbows on his knees, and rested his chin in his hands to concentrate on the momentum of his speaking, making the words of his language into a declarative sentence: What you all are so interesting is that it has caused me to become poetic.

The president didn't tell us that the meeting was being taped, or that the tape would later be transcribed into a rambling text filled with incomplete sentences and lost words marked as "inaudible." He started the meeting in his best town hall manner by saying that he looked forward to hearing from us on the question of whether race still mattered and was "still a problem," not to say "a disease," that there were preferences being given to people simply because they check a box and that benefits are being conferred on the basis of checking that box. ... You said in June of this year that we need to abandon this "metaphorical" and "symbolic" approach to racism, but when I said, "We can't get to the problem of moving this country forward," the president didn't tell us that the meeting was finally over, although he gave the impression that he looked most frustrated by our questions and would not have time to answer them. As Clinton continued to preside over the work of the race panel and to assure all of us that he had not forgotten the meeting, I expected them to pump their fists in a gesture of soliarity with the vice president as he spoke.

As the meeting progressed, I tried to be alert for details, knowing that my wife, like many others of our group, had arrived too early to be interested in what had happened. One thing I noticed immediately was that the president seemed to be a Diet Coke junkie. As Memorial Day weekend approached and I had to deal with the prospects of fresh can, taking away the previous one, which he had hardly touched, I also saw that Clinton genuinely relished intellectual combat and liked having abstracions around.

While the president seemed to be enjoying himself, Vice President Gore had sat still as his stereo boomed out and his eyes bored holes into those of us whose ideas he found most distasteful. After remaining silent during the first part of the meeting, he finally spoke up, in a meandering discussion, to express his concern about whether a community that was half black but with an all-white police force wasn't in clear need of affirmative action... Canady gave a thoughtful answer about how a community with a problem of this nature probably needed to consider a more creative solution than simply counting by numbers—community policing, for instance, or a requirement that police officers live where they worked.

Gore shook his head and made it clear that he strongly disagreed: "To say that there's nothing to the idea that a police force with black representatives would have an easier time relating to the black community is to deny their moral purity in front of those of us whose opinions he regarded as misguided. It always amazes me how casually well-meaning liberals like the vice president work themselves into a lather defending a morally inchoate and handiwork for affecting the very good people who are on the inside. This is a group of real people confronting real daily tragedies that won't be helped by rigging the entrance requirements at a few elite universities. When others in his own party brought up the questions about this when he suddenly kicked up the rhetoric another notch. Referring to my earlier statement, he said that he wanted to dump affirmative action, as he said there is no persistent vulnerability to prejudice rooted in human nature, prejudice based on race and ethnicity and other characteristics as well. "When others in public life are talking about stuff you said is right. I am sick and tired of people telling me poor minority kids who live in desperate circumstances, they can't make it."
The Sun King
by David Ignatius
Random House, 1999, 288 pp., $22.00

REVIEWED BY MARK GAUVREAU JUDGE

I n its more than two hundred years of existence, Washington has produced exactly one great piece of literature. No, it’s not Allen Drury’s 1959 political thriller, *Advice and Consent*. And it’s not any of the gaudy historical tomes of Gore Vidal. No, the best piece of literature about Washington is *Washington and Baltimore*, an obscure collection of short stories by Julian Mazor, a native Washingtonian who wrote fiction for the *New Yorker* in the 1960s. Mazor’s book was published in 1968 by Knopf and is now out of print.

Mazor, whom I once interviewed years ago, understood Washington in a way that the media and political elites who give the city its image never will. *Washington and Baltimore* is a subtle and moving collection of stories about baseball players, troubled kids, and, most often, race relations in a city that is almost 70 percent black. It’s about the real city where people live in row houses and have family in local cemeteries and don’t go to the Kennedy Center or eat dinner at the Palm. The birthplace of Duke Ellington more than JFK Jr. The place that’s not a four-year political stopover, but the home of the legendary black college Howard University, hand dancing, large Hispanic and Irish Catholic populations that couldn’t find the monuments with a map, and George P. Pelecanos, one of America’s best crime writers. (The second best fictitious Washington writer is Pelecanos’s *The Sweet Hereafter*).

In Mazor’s stories, there are no congressmen lurking in the corridors of Capitol Hill, no hard-bitten press hacks, no cigar-chomping editors at the *Washington Post*. There’s no deep back- ground or absolute power. In short, Mazor provides everything not found in *The Sun King*, a recent novel by *Washington Post* editor and columnist David Ignatius. It’s probably the weakest Washington novel ever written—stiff competition there, to be sure—but has received favorable reviews in *Publisher’s Weekly*, the *Washington Post* (naturally), and the status-obsessed *Washingtonian*. Everyone knows the Post is ruled by an imperious triumvirate: sleepless wonks like David Broder, musclebound reporters like the late Meg Greenfield, and young, social-climbing Ivy League snobs who would run over their grandmothers to advance their careers. But do they have to be so clueless about the city they pretend to cover?

That’s what’s so depress- ing about *The Sun King*. It’s not a book putatively about a city been so defiantly ignorant about that very same city, and received kudos from people whose job it is to cover that very city. It also must be said that it’s terribly written. The whole turn of events that make Sidney Sheldon smile. It tells the story of Sandy Galvin, a billionaire baby-boomer. Sandy comes to Washington and buys “The Washington Sun and Tribune,” a newspaper that manages to tepple the Post, then founds. Galvin buys the paper to try and win back Candace Ridgeway, a Sun and Tribune editor, who had dated and loved at—where else?—Harvard. It turns out Sandy, whose Murdocing of the paper is not appreciated by the virtuous old-school hackers at the paper, is bought and scamming the whole deal. Candace decides she must run an unflattering piece on her publisher. They break up, he loses the paper, and dies of cancer. As the blurb have made clear—including one from Cokie Roberts, who’s so much better at this—Ignatius knows about—it’s all supposed to be very Gatsbyy. The book is narrated by David Cantor, a journalist who is brought on board by Galvin. Here’s Cantor, describing the home of Candace Ridgeway, Independent Woman: “A fire was neatly laid in the fireplace, reminding visitors that the mistress of the place didn’t need to keep her warm. Set back from the hearth were a comfortable couch and two easy chairs. Over by the stairs was a wall-stockbeded, signaling that the owner didn’t need to go out to make a drink, either. It was a congenial place to sit and talk. But it was obvious, too, that it was a lonely room, where an unmarried woman spent too many hours reading to herself.”

That Candace can bring home the bacon and fry it up, eh? In a nod to Clinton’s frat antics, Ignatius has the president in some kind of trouble requiring a grand jury, then asks us to believe that *The Sun King* is a classic *Post* liberal, which has come to mean elevating blacks to a group that, when not providing soul for white journalists, is constantly belea- guered and victimized at the hands of whites. A classic and disturbing example of this was provided in early January, when the Post ran a piece about a dispute between an inner-city church and the Howard University. It’s worth a digres- sion to explore, as it offers a startling example of the culture of Ignatius’s *Post* and the deceit of modern liberal journalism.

According to the Post, the dispute broke down as follows: the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Shaw—the black neighborhood where the Washington Post and the *Washington Sun* were both founded—was using the playground of nearby Garrison Elementary School for a parking lot, leading to friction with neighborhood activists who had long fought against the old post office building. But then, maybe to Ignatius black culture only matters as a reflection, the wealthy church members to advance their careers. But do they the Post said in late January that Rodney Foxworth, one of the black residents who had given up trying to impose his usual standards. It was slipping out of his control and he decided to follow Melvin the blues man into the promised land.”

It’s a scene that Tom Wolfe or Richard Price would write about, but here it just flogs down and dies. But worse are the mistakes. The Howard is not on Seventh and T, the White House was one of the largest multiracial gatherings in the city in decades. The Sun banned the story on the front page. Galvin played it like the second Coming helped by the local black community. But we shall not be moved! [Sun editor] Howard Bacon had given up trying to impose his usual standards. It was slipping out of his control and he decided to follow Melvin the blues man into the promised land.”

As the blurb have made clear—including one from Cokie Roberts, who’s so much better at this—Ignatius knows about—it’s all supposed to be very Gatsbyy. The book is narrated by David Cantor, a journalist who is brought on board by Galvin. Here’s Cantor, describing the home of Candace Ridgeway, Independent Woman: “A fire was neatly laid in the fireplace, reminding visitors that the mistress of the place didn’t need to keep her warm. Set back from the hearth were a comfortable couch and two easy chairs. Over by the stairs was a wall-stockbeded, signaling that the owner didn’t need to go out to make a drink, either. It was a congenial place to sit and talk. But it was obvious, too, that it was a lonely room, where an unmarried woman spent too many hours reading to herself.”

That Candace can bring home the bacon and fry it up, eh? In a nod to Clinton’s frat antics, Ignatius has the president in some kind of trouble requiring a grand jury, then asks us to believe that “The precise details of the scandal were difficult to ascertain back then”—as if narrator Cantor—“a fucking journalist!—and everyone in the city wouldn’t know exactly why the president was sitting before a grand jury. When Galvin—who takes over the paper—is cuffed, the sports editor goes nuts, screaming—I am not making this up—“newspapers don’t root for teams!”

But the nadir occurs when Galvin takes Cantor on a stroll to the dark side of town. Most of the book has taken place in the lily-white “hoods that Post.don’t care to like to cover,” like Georgetown, McLean, Cleveland Park, Foggy Bottom. (It’s hilarious how many times people are walking along tony Connecticut Avenue, the center of yuppie Washington.) But Galvin reads out of *The Howard Theatre Book* to the Black Howard Theater in the black part of town. The walk would take almost an hour, but it happens in minutes. Noting you are a Virginian, the black mayor of Washington shows up (a thinly veiled Marion Barry), and Cantor learns that Galvin is buying and restoring the historically black Howard Theatre to win the over the black com- munity. A few paragraphs later, we learn that “They held a ceremony at Seventh and T where Ignatius thinks the theater is] a week later to shunt the building. The Howard had been ruled that, as a matter of law, the congregants should not be moving on the playground.”

Fortunately, there was a watchdog ready to take Ignatius to task. The editor of the *City Paper*, a D.C. weekly, wrote a devastating expose of Gaine’s piece. Gaine, who had never confronted the heretofore trumpet-toting racist, read with a cold facts of the underlying case: A judge had ruled that, as a matter of law, the congregants should not be moving on the playground.”

Carr’s book, which revealed that Rodney Foxworth, one of the black activists quoted by Gaine, has a history as “a caddy for elites” like the wealthy church members. Carr pointed out that Foxworth had lived in Shaw for four years, while Glenn Melcher, a white activist fighting the church use of the park-
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Last Stage Feminism?

What Our Mothers Didn’t Tell Us: Why Happiness Eludes the Modern Woman by Danielle Crittenden
Simon & Schuster, 1999, 202 pp., $23.00

A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue by Wendy Shalit
The Free Press, 1999, 291 pp., $24.00

Reviewed by Carol Iannone

Why Happiness Eludes the Modern Woman, and Wendy Shalit’s A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue, both published in 1999, “the intimate level,” Crittenden writes shortly, “feminism has failed women,” encouraging a super-individualism that has prevented them from successfully fulfilling their feminine needs, providing loneliness and the high-voltage emotional tension of juggling it all. Shalit, too, marvels at that time especially devoted to “curing” all female problems, we find a proliferation of them instead, “from anorexia to date-rape, from our utter inability to feel safe on the streets to stories about stalking and stalkers, from teenage girls finding themselves miserably pregnant to women in their late 30s and early 40s finding procreation miserably difficult.”

What Crittenden urges for ever more state-supported power and “equality” to remedy the miseries their movement has largely brought about, these two writers call for belated acknowledgement of the very differences between the sexes that feminism has managed to suppress, differences they see as crucial in achieving individual happiness and a measure of social contentment as well. Crittenden counters the popular feminist notion that marriage means enslavement for women; rather, she says, marriage is a partnership in which both spouses surrender a measure of individuality to create a successful family life together, and she counsels today’s independent woman to be more willing to make the necessary sacrifices. For Shalit, the insistence that men and women have similar sexual natures has resulted in emotional anguish for women and a loss of the masculine deference that feminine modesty once inspired.

It may not have been absolutely necessary for feminism to become the vanguard recruiter of young women for the sexual revolution (an early caution against that policy was Ingrid Bengis’s insufficiently acknowledged Combat in the Erogenous Zone), but so it happened; proving that girls could be boys became the model of achievement, in sex as in everything else. At the same time, to make the task a little easier, perhaps, boys were told to be more like girls and to hold their masculinity in suspicion and disdain. Men as well as women have been diminished as a result, although these two authors feel that men have gotten the easier deal in some ways. According to Crittenden, women’s willingness to exercise sexual freedom while downgrading the primacy of marriage has resulted in turning men in their 30s into pampered pussies too happy to have intimacy without commitment or responsibility; on the other hand, women begin to see their desirability lessen and their chances dim as they exit their 20s. For her part, Shalit sees young men cultivated to believe that women are just like them turning boorish and casually cruel; just as sensitive to emotional hurt as women, men sail away from their flings, now more clinically named “hook-ups,” while their discarded female partners assert their spurned feminine nature through eating disorders and angry complaints of date rape. (All this feeds further cycles of resentment among men as a group and, of course, adds more fuel to the feminist flames.)

While many try to convince women of how awful things were for them decades ago (feminists often go on to dismiss them from here), things can be now), terrorizing them with old advertisements for floor wax and cartoonishly dishonest films about the Fifties, these two authors wisely find very little excluding. While women today cannot count on men and marriage to provide a secure framework for having children, Crittenden points out, women of the past could take it for granted. Shalit carefully elucidates the thought and feeling behind the old sexual rules, the ones mocked and discarded by feminists, and shows how these rules once afforded women respect, protection, and even love.

Both see the problem as needing individual and collective address. They recognize that so-called freedom of choice has really dripped out one set of rules for women in a larger community of support for specifically feminine life patterns, women will feel pressured to be sexually active without marriage and to work, often at work that very climate of expectation. Crittenden recommends that women restore their “marketability” by insisting on earlier marriage, which will also afford them both the chance to devote themselves to the home when their children are small and ample time later to work on a career. Shalit recommends a return to sexual restraint and premartial chastity as a means of restoring a healthily romantic balance of power between the sexes and realizing more loving relationships. Both authors point out that if more and more women go in these directions, men will have to adapt.

It’s a little disconcerting to realize that it has taken almost two generations for women to reinvent the metaphorical wheel that these truths constitute, but such is the state of our culture that these two books, with their fresh assertions, will not be more welcome. Crittenden’s book is better written and more rigorously argued than Shalit’s, which has a pithy analysis, and clever aperçus. They also give us upfront views of today’s manners and morals. Crittenden, in her 30s, tells of brides actually apologizing on their wedding day for having capitulated to marriage; of increasingly self-centered career women. Crittenden points out that if more and more women go in these directions, men will have to adapt.

Their analyses are airtight as far as they go or as far as they set out for them selves, but they are somewhat shortsighted in the larger context. For example, Crittenden writes of Betty Friedan’s The Feminine Mystique: “In Friedan’s time, the problem was that too many people failed to see that while white women were, they were also human, and they were being denied the ability to express and fulfill their human potential outside the home. The modern problem with no name is, I believe, exactly the reverse of the one Friedan addressed. While we are human, we blind ourselves to the fact that we are also women. If we feel stunted and oppressed when denied the chance to realize our potential, we very likely much when cut off from those aspects of life that are distinctly and uniquely female.”

Thus, the author appears to have accepted Friedan’s extreme diagnosis of women in the Fifties as being deprived of their very humanity. But must we accept this diagnosis as well? Friedan could be accused of picking up the ordinary discontents of some well-educated women into a poorly thought-out demand for society-wide change that came to nothing after a few years, or excluding women who work outside the home meant doing tasks far less “human” and fulfilling than raising children. Furthermore, it is partly in thanks to Friedan’s utter contempt for traditional women’s work that housewives soon found
themselves objects of ridicule and caricature (not least by Betty Friedan herself, who compared them to inmates of concentration camps). As a result, many younger women were quickly rebelling against the terms of the ideological construction. There is sufficient evidence that Friedan deplors. Although a constrained choice, homemaking could still be seen to have been worth it for the sake of the children. But Friedan herself, who conducted surveys to show a worsening of children's quality of life, statistical indicators show a worsening of children's lives today in comparison.

In addition, with The Feminine Mystique, Friedan set out a pattern of exaggeration that she believed had bedeviled the discourse on women ever since. Without her overcharged overstatements of the problem, and those of the feminist leaders who followed her, it is conceivable that the situation of women might have evolved gradually and more symmetrically. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms. 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Modern feminist discourse, and much of modern discourse in general, often works on terms.
Overheated Kitchen Puts Family in a Pickle

by Judith Schumann Weizner

A

Connecticut family has gone to
court to overturn a ruling that
could force their mother to
give up cooking for them.

Bethany Crocker of Bakerhaven has
been on trial for a year in the kitchen because it
is too hot, although the mother of four insists
that she can stand the heat.

Last summer, OSHA ordered the
Crocker's kitchen sealed and an industrial-
grade air conditioner could be installed to
reduce temperatures found to exceed 92 degrees
during the June inspection.

Despite a $200-a-day fine for every day
the kitchen is not in compliance, the Crockers are
fighting the ruling, insisting that Mrs.
Crocker has no problem with heat, but that air
conditioning makes her sneeze. Mrs. Crocker and
two of her children suffer from Niesen's
Syndrome, a disorder in which cold air causes
victims to break into spasms of uncontrollable
sneezing. Because of this, the Crockers have no
air conditioning anywhere in the house. Until
the case is settled and the seal removed, the
Crocker's must also make do without the use of
a ground floor bathroom accessible only
through the kitchen.

The family faces additional fines in the
tens of thousands of dollars due to other charges
stemming from OSHA's directive.

Although Mrs. Crocker does not use her
kitchen in the course of any paid enterprise, she
is classified as a professional homemaker under
the Comparable Worth Provision (ComWorth)
of the Rodham-Smeal Gender Equity Act of 2001. When homemaker received its designa-
tion as a profession, OSHA assumed statutory
responsibility for assuring the safety of home-
makers. (Comworth, referred to by wags as
"The Housewife's Revenge," was included in the
Gender Equity Act in an attempt to assure
women equal access to the benefits long enjoyed
by men in the workplace. It assigns a dollar
value to a wide variety of previously unpaid
activities engaged in mainly by women. An
unanticipated effect of ComWorth has been that
families must now pay income tax on the value
assigned to the woman's work regardless of
whether or not the woman actually earns
money.)

The Crocker's difficulties with OSHA
spawned a complication when Mrs. Crocker was
heard to remark at a cocktail party that OSHA's
directive foundered when the agent informed them
that the house could not go on the market unless
the kitchen and basement had been certified by
OSHA.

Unable to support two mortgages and
determined not to install the unwanted air con-
ditioning unless they were forced to do so, the
Crockers reluctantly decided to reduce their liv-
ing standard until the appeal could be heard.

They began to eat at McDonald's and suspend-
ed their children's karate lessons, but the elder
Crockers quickly tired of fast food and the chil-
dren missed their lessons.

Sensing that the real problem lay in their
having eaten in restaurants where they could
cancel their children's karate lessons, but the elder
Crockers quickly tired of fast food and the chil-
dren missed their lessons.

Seizing the real problem lay in their
having eaten in restaurants where they could
readily be observed by their neighbors, they
decided that henceforth they would buy their
dinners from the deli at Connecticut Comestibles
where Mrs. Crocker did the family's weekly food
shopping. The deli fare would require minimal
preparation, all of which could easily be done at
the dining room table, and the dinner dishes
could be washed in the bathtub; in fact, since
the dishes would have to be carried to the second
floor, due to lack of access to the ground floor
bathroom, they thought the experience might
cause the children something about coping with
hardship. Likewise, the lack of a refrigerator
spurred the children to finish everything on
their plates, since nothing could be saved.

When the weather grew colder, the
Crockers found they craved something more
substantial than deli food. Mr. Crocker bought a
second microwave to replace the one that
remained off limits in the kitchen, but, to reduce
the chance that he would be seen engaging in an
activity that might trigger a new audit, he drove to
New York to make the purchase. When the microwave
was not in use it was unplugged and stowed behind the galoshes in the front hall
closest. The children were instructed not to speak
about any of these matters in school, nor to
their friends or their friends' parents; when it seemed
that the family was no longer in the spotlight, the
Crockers quietly enrolled them in a karate school
across the state line with the promise that they
might return to their old dojo once the hear-
ing had taken place and the matter of the kitchen
was settled.

By January the family had settled into its
new, albeit inconvenient, routine. They were
within five months of their hearing when an acci-
dent in the bathroom gave rise to an unexpected
complication.

Figuring it was safe to surprise his wife
with a nice birthday gift, Mr. Crocker had bought
a diamond tennis bracelet for her in New York,
where he presented with a reminder that she
should wear it under her sleeve until the family's
situation had returned to normal. This she did,
but one evening while bathing the baby, Mrs.
Crocker caught the bracelet on the bathtub
faucet. She would have thought nothing of the
resulting scratch had she not noticed at breakfast
the next day that it was quite sore. By evening it
was clearly infected, so she drove to the emer-
gency room Domestic Activity Trauma Report, he was
unable to reconstruct the exact circumstances
leading to her injury and asked her to show him
everything she had been wearing while giving the
baby his bath. Unfortunately, he observed that
the imprint on her wrist did not match the pat-
tern of the silver bracelet she showed him, and
she was cited for attempting to conceal evidence
in an occupational safety investigation, a charge
that carries a fifteen thousand dollar fine.

The Federal Family Parity
Administration has also cited the Crockers for
attempting to conceal possession of the diamond
bracelet, not enumerated during the family's
audit. Because this is the family's second FFPA
summons within seventeen months, the Crockers face fines equivalent to fourteen times their
excess spending.

Next week the Crocker's must answer
charges preferred by the Federal Bureau of
Posterity Conservation that they are per-
mitting children to live in a house with
out a refrigerator and stove.

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