

HETERO DOXY

ARTICLES AND ANIMADVERSIONS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES



ANTI-PRISON MOVEMENT

Sonja Sivesind still seems excited as she describes the conference that took place at Berkeley last September. It was called “Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex,” and she and other organizers had expected it to be pretty much another Movement event, or what passes for a Movement event now that the Movement is dead. If they were lucky, she thought, five hundred or so people would attend, most of them the usual suspects. But when 3,500 activists descended on the campus for a weekend to discuss building a grass-roots “prison activist” movement, it not only taxed the facilities to their limits, it boosted Sivesind’s energy and made her think that maybe, just maybe, the Movement was back in business and that the anti prison crusade was the wave of the future.

“It was an incredible conference! It was definitely packed. It took you ten minutes to get through the crowd,” she recalls. Participants jammed into the main hallway, which was lined with information tables, and eagerly gathered up as many pamphlets and fact-sheets as they could. The dozens of seminars in adjoining rooms were also SRO. During the conference’s plenary sessions, even the overflow rooms were filled, and the main auditorium was filled to a dangerous and unlawful capacity with activists, academics, feminists and radical ex-prisoners, and, of course, Angela Davis, the matriarch of this mini-movement.



The Communist professor from the University of California at Santa Cruz lent authenticity to the gathering. Once a fugitive from justice herself, she had been in jail for nearly a year and a half during the heyday of the Movement, as a result of charges stemming from her involvement with black revolutionary George Jackson and the infamous 1970 Marin County Court House shooting, when three prisoners and a federal judge were killed during a bungled effort to free him.

Davis was acquitted in 1972, but fighting against the American prison system has been one of her enduring causes. She was in top form at the conference. For a moment, in fact, it seemed as if it was 1968 instead of 1998, as if a time warp had taken participants back to a day when radicals were taken seriously and had the means to back up their words. And unlike most radical events, this one was based on an undeniable reality. With the American prison population rapidly approaching two million, the nation’s prison system has become a general concern, one of those subjects discussed in multi-part features in the *New York Times*. Prisons are overcrowded, violent, dangerous; they are increasingly filled with black males. This made them an unprecedented target of opportunity, and a number of radicals, with Davis at their head, have seized the day, trying to get such terms as “political prisoner,” “prison abolition,” and “prison-industrial complex” into the vocabulary of every American.

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INSIDE

*The Reds and
The Blacks*

*Male
Complaints*

*The Dream
Deferred*

A REAL ACADEMIC DIALOGUE AT LAST H-NET AND BEYOND

by Tom Nichols

College campuses, for all the noise of the occasional party, rally or protest, are actually very quiet places these days, especially in the classroom. And for good reason: the silence of the classroom—a consequence of the self-referential insularity of the modern university—is what sustains the gravity-defying views on politics and history held by the academic left, for whom silence on contentious issues concerning America’s past and present is golden.

This academic code of silence has long protected views that defy even rudimentary common sense and have remained largely unchanged by events of the past decade: that Harry Truman was a racist, that the Vietnam war was about tungsten and rubber, that Stalin was . . . well, misunderstood. Professors, many of whom have not faced a serious challenge to their ideas since their dissertation defense, imbue captive audiences—

youngsters whose families, sometimes with government assistance, are paying good money—with propaganda that ranges from silly to venomous, all out of sight of pesky parents, taxpayers, and ordinary citizens. On those occasions when conservatives or other contrarians are invited to speak (and actually make it to the podium without the invitation being rescinded), the code of silence is often enforced by protest and physical interference, until the offending speaker leaves and blissful quiet again reigns over the campus green.

But there is one place where the code of academic silence is under assault, and not by loud protests or desperate demands for an open dialogue in the classroom, but rather by the quiet and steady clacking of computer keyboards. The Internet has arrived on campus, and for the first time ever, leftist academics (and the graduate student footmen who often serve them) are encountering a medium they cannot shout down.

As an example of this robust and noisy new academic dialogue, consider H-DIPLO, which arrived

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COMMUNIQUÉS

BEST WITNESS

Thank you for your wonderful article about Elia Kazan and what that gifted and courageous man has endured all these years from the Communist filth in Hollywood. I would like to send him a personal salute for his strength of character in refusing to knuckle under to the vile intimidation of the Communists. I salute him in particular for his clear-eyed, clear-headed analysis of Communism (socialism) and his superb understanding of the basis for American freedoms. The best part is that he thumbed his nose at the Communists and continued to produce a body of work unequaled by anything the Hollywood Communists could come up with. Bully for him. Please give him my sincere regards and admiration.

Elizabeth Sandage
Urbana, IL

Yes, the left is waging a war against America, and the front line on March 21, 1999, was at the Academy Awards site at the Los Angeles Music Center. All the old Communists, anti-anti-Communists, brainless liberals, and assorted leftists were there to attack Elia Kazan, a man neither forgiven nor forgotten after fifty years for outing his erstwhile colleagues in the Communist Party of the '30s. The demonstrators, flushed with classic leftist indignation, very nearly started a riot early in the day. There were also a few counter-demonstrators supporting Kazan, mostly organized by the Ayn Rand Institute. But where was everybody else? After a fine piece about Kazan in *Heterodoxy*, ("Best Witness," February 1999) I didn't see anybody from *Heterodoxy* at the demonstration. The leftists outnumbered the pro-Kazan demonstrators by 10 to 1 and got almost all the media attention. For anti-Communism, this was no way to run a war.

Kelley L. Ross
Via Internet

REFIGHTING THE WAR

I now regret having put aside my December/January issue of *Heterodoxy*. Last night I read Stephen Young's piece on the anti-war movement and the State Department's White Papers on Viet Nam. His facts as reported are correct, but the important U.S. policy/military decisions are neglected or obscured by his tedious and tendentious chronology. The important, signal events of the Viet Nam mis-adventure are: (1)1945-6. The French government re-asserted its hegemony over Indo-China; Ho Chi Minh and the resistance (to Japan) fighters agreed to autonomous status for Viet Nam within the French commonwealth but rejected the French demand for control of the banking system (with some justice. The Vietnamese were aware that French control of the monetary system was the vehicle for colonial-style exploitation of the old Indo-China). The Vietnamese returned to military action. (2) 1954. The French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu. The Geneva Accords divided Viet Nam, temporarily, at the 18th parallel. Elections

were to be held for a single, unifying government within two years. The U.S. installed Ngo Dinh Diem in Saigon as president of the southern portion of the country and, apparently, determined that the unification elections would not be held as scheduled. Economic and Military Assistance Programs were initiated. (3) 1959. Ambassador Eldredge Durbow explained to the assembled American advisors and technicians: "Gentlemen, [there were no women in the group] we are here for one reason and one reason only, to hang on to a piece of real estate." (That is an exact quote.) (4) 1961. President Kennedy sent two missions to Viet Nam. The Staley Commission recommended a large economic aid and development program for South Viet Nam, ranked third in dollar value after Israel and Egypt. The Haig Commission recommended that the existing Military Advisory Mission be

Viet Nam cost 58,000 American and tens of thousands of Vietnamese dead. For the United States, perhaps the largest cost was the loss of innocence of an entire generation. Our youth, our best and brightest, lost faith in the American political process and, perhaps more importantly, their notion of the American ideal.

Frank C. Child
Santa Cruz, CA

FIRST FEM PREZ

The piece by Noemie Emery was great. However, I'd like to add one observation. Feminist (including Hillary's) toleration of Bill Clinton (even as rapist) is grounded in the fact that he proves one of the central tenets of feminism—that women are MORALLY superior to men. This is the foundation of the ideology of matriarchy. Bill Clinton is *prima facie* evidence for their case and they don't want to destroy the evidence. Further, as far as the feminists are concerned, it doesn't matter if there's a few dozen female victims of Bill; they're expendable for the greater cause. They are simply the price that must be paid to PROVE and MAINTAIN their fundamental gender-based doctrine. Bill has provided a wonderful 'springboard' to feminists' increased political power.

Dan Smedra
Colorado

HETERODOXY PRO AND CON

I'm just writing to say how wonderful *Heterodoxy* is. I got turned onto it by one of my clients, who's rather apolitical, but he just happened to have a few copies around and he gave them to me, and I subscribed. Keep up the good work. I just e-mailed the article about Bill Clinton ("First Fem Pres Impeached," February 1999) to one of my liberal friends in Boston. I am so tempted to send her more.

Christine Garcia
Via Internet

I experienced your magazine for the first time sitting in my ophthalmologist's office yesterday. I was thrilled to find a new news-magazine! I quickly got to reading and there it was again, all the acidic, put-down, negative attitudes I hear on talk radio. It is difficult for me to agree when your articles are full of hate. I found some nice to read and very informing, but most—sorry, your magazine is not for me. You must know that all "liberals" are not sex fiends, Communists, and going to hell and all conservatives are not cold fish, fascists and going to heaven.

Nellye Meintsma
Via Internet

What? No editorial space for us lefties? "*Heterodoxy*" my ass!

Prof. Eric Graf
Smith College

HETERODOXY
ARTICLES AND ADVERTISEMENTS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES

WRITE TO US
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enlarged and become a Military Assistance and Advisory Group. With advice and counsel from White House advisors McGeorge Bundy and Karl Kaysen, and against advice from some American residents in Saigon, President Kennedy accepted and implemented the reports. (5) 1963. President Diem was assassinated during a military coup. The coup was apparently supported by the United States Mission. (6) 1964-67. Viet Cong resistance escalated; American military advisors were committed in combat. (7) 1975. The last American helicopter with the last official Americans fled from the rooftop of the American Embassy in Saigon, writing *finis* to the only war in which the United States was defeated. The United States was in Viet Nam to implement the containment policy promulgated by John Foster Dulles and adopted by the Eisenhower Administration. In the name of containment, the United States organized NATO, CENTO, SEATO; in the name of containment of Communism the United States supported unsavory dictatorships around the world: Trujillo in the Dominican Republic; Salazar in Portugal; Syngman Rhee in South Korea. The enemy in Viet Nam was not the Vietnamese; the enemy was Communism. The anti-war movement was based on incomplete but essentially correct information. Their protests were amply justified. It is difficult to effectively "hang on to a piece of real estate" when the owners of that real estate are prepared to die to protect it. The misadventure in

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REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY: To the illustrious names Mapplethorpe, Serrano, and Finley, now add Subcommandante Insurgente Marcos, military strategist of the Zapatista guerillas of Mexico, to the National Endowment for the Arts' Hall of Fame. Subcommandante Marcos, a former university graphics professor, is the author of the childrens' book, *The Story of Colors*, a folktale about Mexican gods who transform the gray world by inventing color. After a year-long evaluation process, the NEA gave \$15,000 to an El Paso publisher to translate the book for American youngsters. One wonders what attracted them to the story. Perhaps it was the inside-cover photograph, in which the Subcommandante is wearing a black ski mask, ammunition belts slung across his chest. Or maybe it was the passage at the beginning of the book which explains, "The men and women were sleeping or they were making love, which is a nice way to become tired and then go to sleep"—or the accompanying picture, which features a male god and a naked woman locked in an amorous embrace. Regardless, when a reporter told NEA Chairman William J. Ivey about the grant, of which he had been unaware, he cancelled it within hours. But Subcommandante-loving kindergarteners should not despair—there is a happy ending to this story: a private foundation quickly stepped in to replace the funds. But revolutionaries south and north of the border have a dilemma yet to face: there is not only sex in this story, which is good, but also smoking, which is bad. Who will sort out the PC priorities?

COMMUNIST VIDEO PIRATES: When Truong Van Tran hung a poster of Ho Chi Minh and Communist Vietnam's national flag in Orange County's Little Saigon district, it didn't cause too much trouble until Tran taunted community leaders about the display's existence, daring them to make him take it down. This may rank as the biggest mistake of Tran's life. In a two-month period, tens of thousands of furious Vietnamese protestors angrily camped outside his Hi Tek video store, demanding that the display be removed. Tran eventually required a police escort just to get into his business. Despite this, he was pelted with eggs once and roughed up twice. As the protests wore on, Tran's landlord sued him and eventually forced his eviction. And if that wasn't bad enough, police at the store found a lot of evidence of pirated videos and video dubbing equipment. They seized 2,000 videos—enough to land Tran in prison, as owning more than 100 dubbed videos is a felony.

MURDER, INC.: Just when O.J. Simpson was finally out of the public consciousness, it was announced that he's returned to his roots as a pitchman. But instead of running through airports, Simpson is appearing in television commercials encouraging the public to use the services of lawyers. For up to \$15,000 per month, legal firms can purchase the services of O.J. Simpson pitching a 1-800 number for any legal problems. Calls generated from that number in the markets firms purchase are then referred to them via a middleman. In this case, the middleman is David Lee, a suspended attorney who was tossed out of the law business for two years due to his "continuous pattern of serious misconduct." Perhaps the money The Juice generates will help him in that search that will never stop as long as he lives—for the killer of Nicole.

COLUMBIA LIES: As reported in the December 1998/January 1999 issue of *Heterodoxy*, Columbia University agreed to pay Accuracy in Academia a refund for costs and fees surrounding Columbia's abrupt cancellation of AIA's "A Place at the Table: Conservative Ideas in Education" conference.

However, Columbia still hasn't paid Accuracy in Academia one cent—and not only that, AIA's Executive Director, Dan Flynn, told the *New York Post* that he hasn't even heard from the university since the whole fracas. While Columbia is busy stiffing Accuracy in Academia, it has also been busy covering its tracks on the home front. In a letter sent to concerned alumni, head University flack Roger Stone dismissed the entire episode as "routine," although he hastened to assure alumni that "Columbia consistently allows the expression of all points of view, including unpopular ones."

GORED TO DEATH: As Vice President Al Gore

the guitar-playing skills of famous musicians, and resurrect his mother and his pet pigeon. Furthermore, if God failed to appear in court, Drusky argued that federal rules of civil procedure would automatically cause God to lose by default. Included in the suit against God as defendants were former presidents Reagan and Bush, the major television networks, all 50 states, all federal judges, the 100th through 105th congresses, and every single one of Drusky's fellow Americans. Lucky this one didn't make it to a jury.

U. MICHIGAN IS A BIG FAT IDIOT: The University of Michigan reaffirmed its commitment to shoddy scholarship not once, but twice recently with the dissemination of two "scholarly" studies: one that showed diverse colleges help graduates live diverse lives, and another that showed the Protestant ethic and conservative political views are bad for fat women. Michigan "asked" Patricia Gurin, a psychology professor at Michigan, to conduct the diversity study in preparation for her testimony on the university's behalf in two lawsuits for discriminating by race in its admissions process. It purports to show that those attending racially "diverse" colleges lead more racially diverse lives, whereas students attending non-diverse colleges live non-diverse lives. But even more pathetic is the other study, co-authored by a professor and a graduate student at the University of Michigan. The title even sounds fat: "When Ideology Hurts: Effects of Belief in the Protestant Ethic and Feeling Overweight on the Psychological Well-Being of Women." The paper has stunning insights like the following: "overweight women perceived that the reason they experienced social rejection from an attractive male was due to their weight." Laymen are also probably unaware that the Protestant ethic forces overweight women to ignore the fact that they are "victims of a discriminatory system" but rather blame "their lesser outcomes" on a "lack of self-discipline, hard work, and strong moral character." The study also

found that being conservative and having traditional values also led to overweight women feeling less happy about themselves.

MINIMUM DALY REQUIREMENT: When two male students attempted to enroll in Boston College's "Introduction to Feminist Ethics" class, Professor Mary Daly, who was teaching the class, hit the proverbial roof. In an interview with Conservative News Service, Daly claimed that the "great energy" released when women study together and "have their own space" is destroyed when men enroll in formerly all-female classrooms. So when the two men attempted to enroll in her class, she did the logical thing—she cancelled all of her classes and took a leave of absence. "I am a tenured faculty member and they can't just kick out a tenured faculty member," Daly said, claiming that she is the victim of a conspiracy orchestrated by not only Boston College, which called her decision "archaic, illegal, and wrong," but also the Center for Individual Rights, a Washington-based advocacy group that Daly bizarrely described as "this far right group of all male lawyers in Washington" that "tried to plant a student in my class." The real reason that Boston College is conducting this "brutal assault on me and my rights" is because of a "right wing invasion." This is not the first time Daly has made a spectacle of herself. CNS reported that the *Boston College Observer* once wrote an editorial about Daly entitled "Why is this Nut-Job Teaching at My School?" It's a question that apparently everyone—students, alumni, and even the school's administration—is now asking once again.



slowly and surely prepares to meet his electoral demise, he's proposing a number of bold initiatives to improve the quality of life for Americans. "The person who deserves to be our next president is the one who understands how tired working parents are," Gore said. "We're seeing the daily commute get longer and longer. And for people who don't think that it's a problem that parents are caught in traffic jams that are lengthening each day, I'll tell you, they haven't been in traffic jams and they don't know what it does to the desire to balance work and family."

C-O-N-SPIRACY: Louis Farrakhan, the anti-white and anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam, is reportedly close to death with an as-yet undisclosed illness, according to the *Final Call*, the official propaganda organ of the Nation of Islam. While it is suspected that he is facing another bout with prostate cancer, Farrakhan and others within the Nation of Islam apparently believe that the U.S. government poisoned him. Word has it that Farrakhan is convinced that he knows who poisoned him, where it was done, and why—he just doesn't know how. It's a claim that former Black Panther Stokely Carmichael also made as he was dying of prostate cancer. This sort of thinking is the last testament of a legacy of hate.

GOD VINDICATED: A New York court threw out as frivolous a man's lawsuit against God. Donald Drusky, 63, of East McKeesport, Pennsylvania argued that God failed to bring him justice in his 30-year battle against the U.S. Steel Corporation, which fired him in 1968. Drusky demanded that God restore his youth, grant him



It Isn't Girls Who Are at Risk

Reviving Hamlet

by Paul Ciotti

I called the U.S. Department of Education last week. They aren't good for much, but they do maintain a National Center for Education Statistics. And last week, the Center gave me a statistic that was really surprising—by 2007, only 43% of all college students will be male.

Some of the reasons for this are quite obvious—the booming economy which leads some of the more bright and motivated males to bypass or drop out of college in order to go directly into the booming technology business; the shift from a manufacturing economy where male strength was an advantage to an information society which places a premium on women's greater verbal and writing skills; and the greater need of women for education than men (at least when the economy is good, poorly educated men can find good jobs in construction or manufacturing, but uneducated women end up in low wage service and clerical slots.)

All of these reasons are probably right as far as they go. But there's another, less justified, reason for the relative decline in male college attendance rates that the media haven't touched yet—it's what National Association of Scholars board member Glenn Ricketts calls “the feminization of education.” In other words, schools have become a hostile environment for boys, a place where male values are trounced and female values honored. “Boys are condemned by their own existence,” says Ricketts. “Manhood is depreciated. Male qualities are depreciated.”

Amidst all the feminist-generated hand-wringing about the need to revive the nation's Ophelias, it is boys who are truly at risk. According to a 1998 analysis by University of Alaska psychologist Judith Kleinfeld (“The Myth That Schools Shortchange Girls”), boys get disciplined more often, held back more frequently and assigned to special education classes three times as often as girls. Polls of students themselves have shown that boys and girls agree (by wide margins), that schools are biased against boys: 69% of boys and 81% of girls thought that teachers considered girls smarter; 81% of boys and 89% of girls thought teachers complimented girls more often; 90% of boys and 92% of girls thought that teachers punished boys more often and 73% of boys and 80% of girls thought that teachers liked girls better than boys. One result of all this: across the board, boys take fewer advanced placement tests, get lower grades, fewer honors, and dislike school more.

Teachers' preference for girls is nothing new, of course. Because nearly three-quarters of public school teachers are female, their classrooms reflect female notions of what education should consist of—students quietly doing their work, reading their textbooks and faithfully completing their assignments on time. Boys have always been more restless, noisy and difficult to handle. They don't like reading or writing as well as girls and don't do as well in those subjects. If anyone doubts that public schools are more congenial to girls than boys, all he has to do is attend a high school graduation. The girls are falling on each others' necks in tears at the passing of what they see as the best time of their lives. Boys, in contrast, are exultant that their long confinement is finally done.

Even so, in the past the problem for boys in school was always less one of anti-male ideology than the unremarkable fact that schools were primarily geared to female rhythms and female perspectives. On college campuses today, in contrast, say Alan Kors and Harvey Silverglate in *The*

Shadow University, “men hear their sex abused, find themselves blamed for all the evils of the world and enter classrooms whose very goal is to make them feel discomfort, while their tormentors live with special protections from ‘a hostile environment.’”

Radical feminism has triumphed so completely at most universities that women studies' professors routinely inform their students that males suffer from “testosterone poisoning.” Although new instructors can't be hired unless they demonstrate a “commitment to (racial and gender) diversity,” real political diversity (a tolerance of conservative points of view) is fiercely sup-



pressed. In the meantime, increasing numbers of schools require freshmen to take courses in oppression studies (i.e. how white males oppress minorities, women and everyone else). Many schools (including some of the most elite institutions in the country) feature speech codes which ban any speech which might offend anyone on sexual, racial, and political grounds. At some schools, administrators have fired out of hand anyone merely accused of sexual harassment, reasoning that it's cheaper to fire someone than risk the substantial financial exposure that a lawsuit would bring.

In theory, universities are one place where all ideas were welcome. But when most young men get to college, they find it not so much a marketplace of ideas as an intellectual garrison state where they have to walk on eggs, refrain from speaking out and otherwise keep their views under a basket for fear some over-politicized female student or professor will claim she was harassed by an “outrageous and insensitive” (i.e. politically incorrect) sentiment. One might wonder, why it is, when over 60% of college professors and a majority of administrators are still male, that these men don't stand up for their gender? Although Christina Hoff Sommers (*Who Stole Feminism*) sees male faculty as too “fainthearted” ever to stand up to radical feminists, the problem goes beyond mere fear. The kind of men who become college professors in the first place, says Ricketts, are liberals and leftists, which is to say people who are forever looking for some way to differentiate themselves from the politically incorrect masses. If that means embracing the radical feminist agenda, they're more than willing to do it.

They also have personal reasons. The kind

of males who become college professors are also often the kind of males who weren't very socially successful in high school, which is to say they were bookish, sedentary, disdainful of sports and not successful socially. Then they become college professors and suddenly find themselves in a classroom full of young, naïve women who not only don't disdain them but actually regard them as brilliant alpha males with breathtaking, ground-shaking opinions. It's no wonder that professors, who against all odds found themselves the objects of their students' adulation and erotic desire, can't speak out against the radical feminist agenda—they've had their hands in the cookie jar too long.

They don't have any more authority.

Then there are the male college students themselves. One would hope they could do a better of taking care of themselves but, at least in the classroom, says Alan McIvor, vice president for enrollment at Michigan's Beloit College, “most young men can't defend themselves. They don't mature as quickly as women. They haven't been taught to think and write. They say something. It gets misinterpreted. And then the feminists come over and beat the crap out of you.”

Some feminists scoff at the notion that the academic environment is hostile to men. Recently I called a Midwestern college association official to ask, among other things, if she were concerned about the falling percentages of boys attending college.

“If it wasn't a problem when boys were getting most of the degrees,” she said, “why is it a problem now?”

Well, it's a problem because radical feminists have made it a problem. By the early Nineties, women had achieved educational superiority by almost any measure—grades, honors, graduation rates—and were rapidly closing any small remaining gaps in the rates at which they get advanced or professional degrees. Yet it was in 1992 that the

American Association of University Women published a study entitled “How Schools Shortchange Girls,” which concluded that girls faced tremendous anti-female bias in school, which wrecked their self-esteem, sapped their energy, destroyed their ambition, and otherwise ruined chances they might have otherwise had in a sexist society such as ours for happy successful careers.

This myth grew quickly in the fields plowed by feminism. “Boys and girls enter school roughly equal in ability,” said Alice McKee, the AAUW educational foundation president at the time (as quoted in a December 1998 *New York Times* article by Tamar Lewin). “Twelve years later, girls have fallen behind in key areas. Whether one looks at achievement scores, curriculum design or teacher-student interaction, it's clear that are schools are shortchanging America's girls.”

It was a clarion call, a shot across the bow of America's educational institutions and Congress quickly responded with the Gender Equity in Education Act. In the words of former *New York Times* writer Fiona Houston, the act essentially provided millions of dollars for elementary and secondary school programs to “teach boys that they are predators and to teach girls that they are victims.” An army of “gender equity trainers” were recruited to teach boys to treat girls better and to instruct teachers in “gender sensitive teaching techniques.” No longer would girls be the victims of unfair testing practices, an insensitive educational establishment, continual abuse or anything else which served to discourage girls from pursuing professional and managerial careers.

With the backing of AAUW (at the time

naively regarded as a non-ideological, mainstream organization), the bill sailed through Congress without opposition. Not a single congressman (and only one senator) asked so much as a single question about the bill, let alone a hostile one.

Overlooked was the fact that in every important particular the report was, in the words of Brookings Institution senior fellow Diane Ravitch, “just completely wrong. What was so bizarre is that it came out right at the time that girls had just overtaken boys in almost every area . . . It was like calling a wedding a funeral.” It was “phony.” It was “harmful” and despite its demonstrable falsehoods, “it dominated the news for years.”

The basis for the AAUW contention that schools shortchange girls was a study by educational researchers David and Myra Sadker. After many hours of classroom observation and study, the Sadkers had, they claimed, discovered that boys “call out” answers to teachers’ questions eight times more often than girls do. When boys called out answers, the Sadkers reported, the teachers listened respectfully. But when girls called out, they were told to “raise your hand if you want to speak.”

Although such conclusions seem suspicious on their face (why would classroom teachers, most of whom are female and fully aware of feminist issues, exhibit such overwhelming bias against girls?), they were uncritically accepted everywhere. Later, when some academics began to wonder if the studies could really be true, they couldn’t find them. The Sadker report had been the very foundation for the AAUW study, which in turn had been the basis for a major revolution in public education—yet all that apparently remained of it was the executive summary. The data on which the conclusions were based had vanished. Sommers checked every data base she could find, and contacted research librarians at Harvard and the Library of Congress. No one had the study.

“It is (normally) hard for a study to disappear,” says Kleinfeld. “Ordinarily, many copies are made and circulated. I telephoned David Sadker to ask him directly about the serious charge that his famous study had disappeared. He could not send me a copy of the report.”

Eventually Sommers did find one of the

Sadkers’ reports on microfilm in Harvard’s education library. But far from establishing the Sadkers’ claim that teachers were biased against girls, Sommers found that, if anything, it showed that schools were biased against boys.

According to the Sadkers’ own research, “when teachers are faced with disruptive behavior from both boys and girls, they are over three times as likely to reprimand the boys than the girls. Also, boys are more likely to get reprimanded in a harsh and public manner and to receive [heavier] penalties.”

Despite the fact that Sadkers’ own evidence contradicted the notion that girls were shortchanged, the AAUW seized on the Sadker study to lobby for new legislation. “Where 9-year old girls were once confident that they could conquer the world, girls at age 11 suddenly began doubting their worth,” Congresswoman Pat Schroeder told Congress. “They no longer like themselves and they begin to question their own abilities.”

In short order, the notion that girls lack self-esteem soon became one of those facts that “everyone knows.” In fact, says Kleinfeld, when she first started her research on *The Myth That Schools Shortchange Girls* she innocently assumed, like everyone else, that girls really did suffer a “severe drop in self-esteem at adolescence.” What she discovered upon actually reading the literature, she says, is that there were “no large consistent gender differences in self-esteem” between the sexes. (The few percentage point differences that do exist are more likely a result of girls’ earlier maturity, which causes them to respond more realistically to questionnaires than boys.)

More importantly, if girls had any self-esteem problems compared to boys, the effects of such problems would certainly show up in girls’ academic performance. Instead, what the research overwhelmingly shows, in the words of *New York Times* writer Tamar Lewin, is that “girls rule in school.” Not only do girls have advantages over boys in terms of their future plans, their teachers’ expectations, their everyday experiences at school and interactions in the classroom, they also consistently get higher grades than males. Furthermore, they get them in every subject from art to social science to math and computer science. Girls aren’t shortchanged by school, Kleinfeld says. If any-

thing, “schools encourage and favor girls.”

What can be done?

In the face of growing feminist hegemony and shrinking male involvement, some conservatives take the position that males should stand together, fight back and recapture the educational system from feminist ideologues and the fellow-traveling, politically correct male professors who support them. But there is another point of view that says this may be one war that’s neither winnable in the universities and perhaps not even necessary to fight.

When institutions lose sight of their real goal, technology has a way of passing them by entirely. For instance, when the Post Office took the position that it was more important to provide jobs to inner city residents than deliver the mail, American businesses (at least for their important communications) largely abandoned the Post Office in favor of faxes, e-mail and express delivery services. When public schools tossed out academic and disciplinary standards to accommodate the supposed self-esteem needs of minorities, the middle class abandoned the public schools. Unless universities suddenly and unexpectedly change their focus, many young males will soon discover that the supposedly critical importance of a university education to their careers has been greatly exaggerated. They’d rather get their educations elsewhere—through corporate training, proprietary schools, night classes, graduate schools, professional programs, the few remaining premier scientific institutions like Cal Tech and MIT, or the rapidly expanding educational opportunities available on the Internet.

In the process, university “fuzzy studies” departments like English, psychology, sociology, political science and history will become intellectual backwaters devoid of free speech and intellectual honesty, inhabited only by feminist faculty ideologues and their neutered male supporters. But they won’t be a place where you’ll find any self-respecting men (or, for that matter, self-respecting women either).

Paul Ciotti wrote *Kafka in Utah* in the November 1998 issue of *Heterodoxy*.



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Marxist Kitsch and the Politics of Bad Faith

The Reds and the Blacks

by David Horowitz

The *Communist Manifesto* is probably the only Marxist text that the millions of activists who responded to his message actually read. Inspired by its vision of social redemption, Marxists went on to kill a hundred million people in the 20th Century and create the most oppressive tyrannies ever known. It is almost a decade since the empire that Marxism built collapsed in ruins, but it is already evident that the lessons of this tragedy have not been learned. The progressive left and its political faith have survived even the catastrophe of their socialist dreams.

Of course, few people outside the univer-

achieve such fiercely desired ends.

The third Marxist idea is the hope that inspires the destruction itself. The extinction of the existing order can lead without much forethought or preparation to a liberated future—a break with the entire history of humanity's enthrallment to these alien forces. It is a mystical creed: the very state which is to be destroyed as the instrument of class oppression, in the very act of destruction will be transformed into a means of human liberation. Animating the leftist faith is the idea that the left itself is the redeeming power, the social messiah through whom a world of social justice will be born.

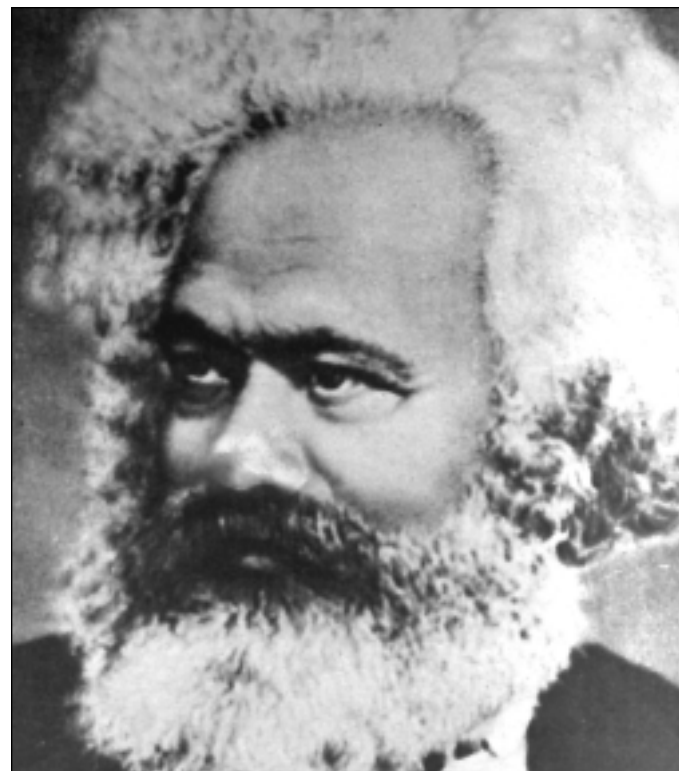
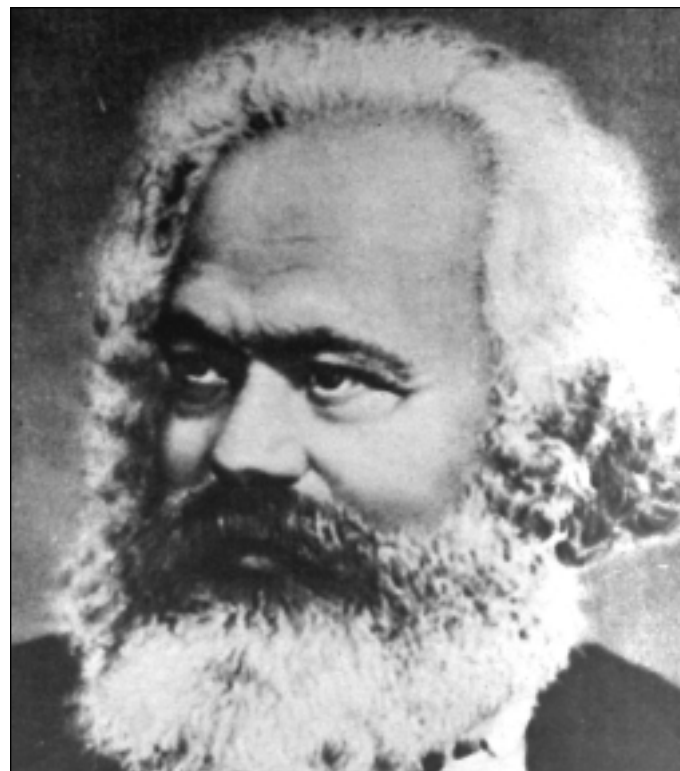
Today the alien power thought by the left to control our destinies is only rarely described as a "ruling class," although it is still perceived as that. Refuted by the history of Communist empires, the left has turned to new vocabularies and concepts to rescue it from its defeats. Today the ruling class is identified as the "patriarchy" or the "white male oligarchy," or in disembodied form as the force of "institutional racism" or "white supremacy." The result is a kitsch Marxism that follows the basic Marxist scheme but results in true intellectual incoherence. Marx's idea of a classless society may make a certain sense in theory even if it is unworkable in practice, whereas the idea of a race-less society or a gender-free society makes no sense at all.

The leftist agenda can be clearly seen in the heart of present conflicts over race, which pose a fundamental challenge to America's multi-ethnic social order. Thus, the proclaimed goal of affirmative action advocates is to "level the playing field." It is defined this way to highlight the left's claim that tra-

ditional civil rights solutions have failed to achieve "real" equality, by which is meant equality of results. Traditional civil rights solutions were focused on the fairness of the institutional process, the elimination of legal barriers to political power and individual opportunity. For Martin Luther King and the traditional civil rights movement, leveling the playing field simply meant extending to black Southerners the constitutional protections accorded to all Americans. It meant making all citizens, regardless of color, equal before the law. Leveling the playing field meant creating neutral rules that did not encompass color or ethnicity but made both irrelevant to the contests of civic and economic life. This was the idea of a "color-neutral" society. It was not that color would be unseen or denied, but that color would not affect individual outcomes, certainly not through the agency of the state. By these standards, the playing field became level once government ceased to play racial favorites, a goal achieved through the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s.

But though the civil rights battles of the Sixties eliminated racial barriers, the results did not become equal. In the left's perspective, this could only be explained by a hidden racism. According to the left, procedural fairness merely masked an institutional bias that effectively preserves the status quo. Just as traditional Marxists deride "bourgeois" democracy as a political sham to preserve the power of a ruling class, so the civil rights left dismisses equality of opportunity as a sham to preserve the superior position of a dominant race. In the old model, an institutionalized class system subverts the democratic form of free elections to preserve a hierarchy of social power. It doesn't matter that the political process is formally democratic, because the economic class system creates institutionalized inequality. The contemporary left and its liberal allies merely transpose this analysis (fatuously it must be said) to the issue of race.

According to the civil rights left, it is the force of "institutional racism" that makes equal opportunity a myth. Educational admissions tests, so it is argued, are culturally rigged to appear neutral, while actually favoring applicants of the dominant color. But this claim is easily refuted. Asian immigrants, who struggle with both a foreign language and an alien culture, consistently score in the highest ranges of standardized tests, surpassing whites and gaining admission to the best schools available. Affirmative action measures in education, are in fact often designed by the left to limit opportunities for Asian minorities,



sities today think of themselves as Marxists, or will publicly admit to socialist aspirations. But behind protective labels like "populist" and "progressive," the old left is resurrected among us and with its destructive agendas fully intact. This makes the ideas of the Manifest, discredited as they are, worth attending to again.

In fact, three destructive ideas advanced in Marx's tract form the core of the contemporary leftist faith. The first and most important is that the modern, secular, democratic world is ruled by alien powers. According to Marx, the democratic revolutions of the 18th century did not establish true democracies. Even though the citizens of industrial nations had dethroned their hereditary rulers and vested sovereignty in themselves, this did not mean they were free. Though liberated from serfdom, workers were now "wage-slaves," captives to Capital, the alien power alleged by Marx to rule the modern world in a fashion analogous to the aristocracies and oligarchies of the past. Behind the façade of political democracy, governments are controlled by "ruling classes," the owners of Capital who just as effectively keep the citizenry in chains.

The second idea of the *Manifesto* flows naturally from this analysis: Politics is war conducted by other means. It is this attitude that inspires the viciousness of left-wing politics, the desire to destroy the opposition entirely, to eliminate adversaries from the field of battle. It is also the perspective that creates the reckless disregard radicals have for institutions and traditions, for what has been created by the generations that went before. In order to create true freedom, the civil orders and binding faiths of democratic systems must be subverted and then destroyed. Treachery and lies are justifiable means to

while favoring low-scoring Hispanics and blacks.

The Asian case shows that the leftist idea is impervious to factual evidence, and that when the left demands a level playing field, it is not really interested in neutral rules and equitable standards. Instead, the racial left wants to redistribute social goods according to its own plan and its own standards of "justice," which exclude persecuted minorities like Asians, Armenians and Jews. The left is not interested in an equal process, and only rhetorically in an equal result. What interests the left is accumulating power, which it justifies as power to arbitrate what is socially "just."

This power is necessarily a totalitarian power in the sense that to realize its agenda the left must invade and dominate the sphere of private life. Consider what it would mean to take the left's demand for equal results in racial competitions at face value. It is true, for example, that 40% of America's black children are poor. This condition obviously puts them at a disadvantage in any educational competition, just as the left contends. The left argues that to make up for this handicap, it is necessary to rig educational standards. But 85% of those poor black children come from single parent homes. It is that circumstance—and not any alien power like "institutional racism"—that actually handicaps them and leaves them unequal. This is the reality the left does not want to face.

A child born into a single-parent family is six times more likely to be poor, regardless of race, than a child born into a family with two parents. By the time such children are ready to compete, they may suffer from dysfunctional behaviors, or have developed disabling habits or have internalized cultural attitudes hostile to academic

achievement, or simply lack the supportive environment that a middle class home provides. Excessive drop-out rates among affirmative action students are the statistical indicators that these handicaps are real. No rigging of standards can make up for deficiencies like this.

In the face of such realities, what can leveling-the-playing-field mean? Making up for the mistakes of the biological parents? Forcing them to get married? Compelling them to be responsible to their children? Requiring them to teach their offspring to study hard and not be self-abusive? Should the state become a Big Brother for those who fall behind, taking over their lives and curtailing their freedoms?

The level playing field that would produce an equality of results is, in fact, a socialist utopia and thus a totalitarian state. To achieve it would require a government both omniscient and wise, a state that would massively intrude into individual lives. Such a state would mandate comprehensive transfers of opportunity and wealth, and would have to conduct a relentless crusade against defenders of liberty and the rule of law. The call to level the playing field, pushed to its logical conclusion, is a call for the systematic sub-

locked out by invisible powers. “Institutional racism” is responsible.

But “institutional racism” is a radical myth. It is merely the discredited Marxist idea that an alien power separates the citizens of democratic societies into rulers and ruled, the dominant race and the races that are oppressed. No one seriously contends, for example, that the admissions officers of America’s elite colleges are racists. In fact, admissions officers are usually desperate to locate as many eligible minority applicants as they can, while offering large financial rewards to those they find. The University of California—one of the few institutions that has been compelled to eliminate its racial preferences—is still spending \$160 million, annually, on outreach programs designed to increase its minority enrollments. Since this is the case, it is hard not to conclude that any deficiency in minority admissions is the result of individual failures to meet universal standards.

Is America a country ruled by racist powers, as leftists claim? Are African Americans oppressed? If so, what would explain the desire of so many black Haitians to come to American shores? Why were so many Haitians ready, a few

years ago before their immigration was blocked, to risk life and limb to make the illegal passage across shark-infested waters? Was it their desire to be oppressed? Were they longing to be dominated by a master race? In fact, it is obvious why the Haitians wanted to come. It is because those who do come have more rights, more opportunity, more cultural privilege and more social power in America than they had in their native Haiti, which has been independent and run by black governments for more than two hundred years. Indeed, as a result of America’s pluralistic democracy, Haitian-Americans are freer and more privileged in America than they would be in any black-run country in the world. The simple truth that the rhetoric of bad faith is designed to obscure is that blacks are not oppressed in America, nor is anyone else. Yet kitsch Marxism prompts powerful voices in our cul-

ture to talk as though they were.

The very presumption of the civil rights left that racial preferences are necessary because America is ruled by a racist majority is both logically contradictory and empirically false. In its hour of victory in the 1960s, the civil rights movement was supported by the vast majority of the American people, including federal law enforcement and the American military, and by ninety-percent pluralities in both congressional parties. Since those victories, public opinion surveys have shown a dramatic increase in the goodwill of whites generally towards the African-American minority, and an equally precipitous decline in attitudes that could reasonably be called bigoted. Large increases in the number of black officials elected by majority white constituencies, and huge income transfers authorized by a predominantly white electorate to black inner-city communities establish beyond all reasonable doubt the solid empirical ground of these reports. Indeed, there would be no affirmative action preferences at all if not for the support of white officials elected by white constituencies.

The very presumption that justifies racial preferences thus involves the left in an intellectual cul-de-sac. The white majority that allegedly cannot be fair in society at large is also a white majority in government itself. If whites must be compelled to be fair by government programs, how can they have designed and instituted those same programs? If the white majority is racist how can a government it dominates be counted on to redress racial grievances? The question is absurd because the premise is absurd. In fact it is America’s white racial majority that ended slavery, outlawed discrimination, funded massive welfare programs for inner-city blacks and created

the very affirmative action policies that are allegedly necessary to force them to be fair.

Ironically, the move to subvert the state’s neutrality—and with it the principle of “color-blindness” that lies at the heart of the rule of law—in the long run works against minorities and particularly African Americans who have been seduced into promoting it. Groups that are numerically larger are bound to benefit more from political redistribution than numerically smaller ones. Over time, as the displacement of blacks by Latinos in urban centers like Los Angeles already makes clear, the racial spoils system will transform itself into a system that truly locks blacks out.

Civil rights is just one battlefield in the real war of the left, which is the war against America itself. The big guns of this war are directed from the centers of intellect on the high ground of the university culture, where tenured radicals have created an anti-American ideology and forced it on the nation’s youth through the educational curriculum. The thrust of this curriculum was summarized in a text by a constitutional law professor at one of America’s elite universities a few years ago. It is the credo of the progres-



version of American individualism and democracy. It is the kitsch Marxism of our time.

In the aftermath of the Communist collapse, the totalitarian danger is so remote that the normal tendency would be to discount it. But to do so would be to ignore the immediate threat inherent in the assault. It is very possible to destroy the foundations of social trust without establishing a social alternative, and it is the nihilistic ambitions of the radical assault that now present the most serious social threat. Underlying the idea of racial preferences, for example, is a corrosive premise that the white majority is fundamentally racist and cannot be fair. For those who embrace the idea, the institutions, traditions and rules that white majorities have established merit no respect. The premise of affirmative action preferences is an assault on the very system of economic and legal neutrality that underpins our pluralistic democracy. By denigrating the rule of law as merely a mask for injustice and oppression, the left destroys faith in the very system that makes democracy possible.

In supporting racial preferences, the left appeals directly to the state to abandon its “color-blindness” and compel the white majority to open doors that would otherwise remain closed. It claims that minorities are “excluded” and “locked out” because statistics show disparities between minority representation in certain jobs, or at certain educational institutions, and their representation in the population at large. But discrimination against minorities is already outlawed, and there are no identifiable racists to blame for the alleged “exclusion” of some minorities, or some elements of minority communities from jobs or university admissions. The left’s insinuation is that those minority elements who have fallen behind are



sive left:

The political history of the United States . . . is in large measure a history of almost unthinkable brutality toward slaves, genocidal hatred of Native Americans, racist devaluation of non-whites and nonwhite cultures, sexist devaluation of women, and a less than admirable attitude of submissiveness to the authority of unworthy leaders in all spheres of government and public life. (Robin West, *Progressive Constitutionalism*.)

Of course the political history of the United States is exactly the reverse. It is in large measure the history of a nation that led the world in eliminating slavery, in accommodating peoples it had previously defeated, in elevating nonwhites to a position of dignity and respect, in promoting opportunities and rights to women, and in fostering a healthy skepticism towards unworthy leaders and towards the dangers inherent in government itself.

This is a vision that is now called “conservative,” but only because leftists currently shape the political language of liberalism and have been able to define the terms of the political debate. There is nothing “liberal” about people who deny the American narrative as a narrative of freedom, or who promote class, race and gender war in the name of social progress. But they have created a situation in which “conservative” describes those who cherish the constitutional and philosophical framework of American pluralism, and guard it against the advocates of a political bad faith.



Anti-Prison Movement, Continued from page 1

At the Berkeley conference, they talked about making their arguments in a way that would play upon the national unease about incarceration rates in America: more money to build prisons than to build schools; as much spent to keep the average prisoner as to educate a student at Harvard. But for all the popular fronting, the radicals' clear goal is not merely to reform the prison system, but to abolish it.

For most Americans, a "political prisoner" is a foreign concept. It conjures up an image of a French intellectual being tortured by Nazis, a dissident slaving in the Soviet gulag, or perhaps a democracy activist languishing in miserable conditions for speaking out against an oppressive Third World dictatorship. However, it is the same label that activists are plastering on close to 150 cases throughout the United States. Convicted cop-killer Mumia Abu-Jamal is perhaps the primary poster boy for the movement, but included in this victims' group are Puerto Rican *independentistas*, American Indian nationalists, and black separatists. Most Americans would say that the difference between such people and true political prisoners, like Wang Dan of China, is that they have gone beyond simple political agitation, and have committed violent crimes, up to and including armed robbery and murder. But for hard-core prison activists, the struggles of radicals such as the recently freed Elmer (Geronimo) Pratt and the still imprisoned Leonard Peltier, involve revolution, not crime. These figures collided with the criminal justice system because America is an irredeemably racist society. And by deconstructing that society—beginning with its prison system—a true justice can be created.

Such ideas resonate with Lin Velazquez and Annie Guerra, hard-line supporters of political prisoners.

Velazquez is a member of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Political Prisoners/Prisoners of War and a self-described *independentista*, committed to securing independence for Puerto Rico "by any means necessary." While she is a photographer for a small Chicago studio during the day, she spends a great deal of her free time working for the freedom of fifteen Puerto Ricans currently imprisoned for charges related to their involvement with the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), the Puerto Rican terrorist outfit responsible for dozens of bombings throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, killing five and wounding more than 70. Most notably, the FALN claimed responsibility for the 1975 bombing of the Fraunces Tavern in New York, which killed four and wounded 57. The group claimed it was a retaliatory strike targeting "reactionary corporate executives." Two of the fifteen were convicted for robbing an armored truck in 1983 to finance Los Macheteros, another Puerto Rican separatist group.

"I strongly believe they don't belong in prison," she says of the fifteen prisoners. "Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States. The UN has declared colonialism a crime, . . . [and] all people have a right to rid themselves of colonialism." She argues the United States' actions after the 1898 invasion of Puerto Rico, namely the importation of the English language and American customs, were "acts of war," and she dismisses the small level of support for independence among Puerto Ricans as a case of "the colonized mind not knowing its own heart."

But Velazquez sees the issue as more than a political struggle. "This has become a human rights issue," she says. "These prisoners have suffered (through) some horrible things," noting that some of them have reported physical abuse while in prison. She argues that the disparate sentences handed down to these prisoners, in addition to the nature of the charges against them—revolving around seditious conspiracy—indicate the political motivation of their prosecutors.

As for the crimes, Velazquez says, "my personal opinion is that Puerto Rico is at war. In any war there will be casualties." The prisoners bombed, she claims, "to draw attention to their cause." She doesn't "have a problem with armed struggle" and apparently the prisoners don't either. None has renounced violence, and the *Chicago Tribune* reports that in their pardon applications they express no remorse or regret for the deaths and injuries they caused.

And in fact, the movement to pardon these criminals is gaining speed. According to Velazquez, the White House has received over 100,000 letters requesting their pardon, and the *independentistas'* case has received attention world-wide, with requests for clemency coming from three congressional Democrats, South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Coretta Scott King, and Rigoberta Menchu, the now-disgraced author of a fabricated autobiography that served to



DAVIS RODE ALONG AT THIS SAN FRANCISCO AREA YOUTH PROTEST

draw attention to Guatemala's civil war.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is even better known, and not just because he unloaded a pistol into a police officer. Abu-Jamal is also a victim in the activists' eyes. There is a political depth to his case, Annie Guerra argues: Jamal's beliefs are why he is in prison.

Guerra, the national office coordinator for Refuse & Resist!, a vocal pro-Mumia and socialist activist organization, says, "There's two parts to Mumia's case. . . . It's not an out-of-the-ordinary case [with] regards to racism . . . what's extraordinary is that he was a Black Panther. He was sentenced to death based on his political beliefs. What makes him acceptable is that . . . he was the voice of the voiceless."

Guerra also sees Mumia's case as a way for the left to resist conservatism: "We think we need to build a movement of resistance. As far as seeing an end to the criminal justice system or the one we have now, we need to see a new society . . . One of the things we've seen in the last four years is what [could be called] the politics of cruelty . . . the fact that they've been able to get away with cutting welfare" shows their power.

They, in this case, is the right, which Guerra and others at her organization consider "Christian fascists" or "the whole damn system from top to bottom." The prison activists' goal, by working for the amnesty of these so-called political prisoners, is to weaken the system enough to free others supposedly politically incarcerated.

People like Guerra and Velazquez are the foot soldiers of the anti-prison movement. Angela Davis and a handful of others with a wider reputation are the field marshals with access to the media and to a wide Movement audience. Davis declined to be interviewed for this article, but her leadership

on this issue has been clear from the onset. She was not only a key organizer of the Critical Resistance conference at Berkeley, she has also spoken around the country decrying the prison system for some time and propagating the line—the party line, as one is tempted to think of it—that incarceration is a means of social control by the ruling class over the oppressed. As a former "political prisoner" herself, she sees the current growth in prisons as society's catchall to solving social ills. "We want to encourage people to think radically," she told the *Sacramento Bee*. "We want to encourage people to think about alternatives, to think about abolishing prisons in terms of the roles that they presently presume to play." Those roles, as reported by a reporter writing about her in the *Boston Globe*, are sinister: "It seems to me . . . we ought to bring up the discussions about the vestiges of slavery within the prison system and the fact that it is becoming a system that is increasingly designed to hold black people—black men, black women—behind bars, sometimes for the rest of their lives."

While it is unlikely that America would ever embrace the hidden agenda, there are signs that Davis and the radical prison reform groups are succeeding—if not in transforming what would normally be considered a question of criminal justice into one of 1960s-style social justice, at least in playing upon the growing disquiet voters experience on the subject of prisons. During the past year, there has been a growing volume of stories in the mainstream press proclaiming the latest disturbing statistics regarding American prisons and repeating, in language which is very similar to that used by the anti-prison movement, the claims of Davis and her cohort—that there are far more black men in prison than there are in four-year colleges; that one in three black men is enmeshed in the prison system; and that the prison population has increased from 200,000 to 2 million in thirty years. These mainstream media—the *New York Times*, the Associated Press, and others—also repeat the claim that it costs more to incarcerate a felon per year than to educate him for a year at a state university. (California, which incarcerates more of its citizens than any other state in the union, is

a frequent target for having built 21 new prisons and only one new college campus since 1980. Another talking point from the party line is to critique the Golden State for increasing its corrections budget 60 percent over the last 10 years, while only augmenting its K-12 education budget 28 percent.)

In addition, the prison-activist movement has also given the media another talking point—that the war on drugs, which they see as a proxy war against the poor and defenseless, has been chiefly responsible for increasing the prison population. "Most folks are now going to prison for non-violent, often drug, charges," contends Eli Rosenblatt, the founder of Berkeley's Prison Activist Resource Center. Rosenblatt also insists that increased levels of incarceration aren't the reason for the large drop in crime rates. "Depending on which of the two major studies [the FBI's *Uniform Crime Report* and the *National Crime Victimization Survey*] one looks at, the overall crime rate has stayed about the same or dropped slightly over the last decade and more," he says. "Now if it were the case that the increased incarceration were the proximate cause of decreased crime you would see at least a modicum of parity. The numbers simply do not bear this out. Prison populations have skyrocketed, and have quadrupled since the Seventies. The crime rate, which is so complicated because of the different methods of measurement and different charges involved, has certainly not dropped that much at all." In other words, the crime rate has not fallen, while prison incarceration rates have gone up.

Such statistics, as the saying goes, rank just below damned lies, although a good many found their way recently into a front-page article for the Sunday edition (February 28, 1999) of the *New York Times*. Joseph Bessette, a Professor of

Government at Claremont McKenna College and the former Acting Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics in Washington, D.C., a non-partisan government agency that is affiliated with the Department of Justice, finds the activists' arguments to be without merit. On a national level, he points out, all government spending (federal, state, and local) on jails and prisons only accounts for 1.1% of all expenditures. "Even at the state level, we're talking about 5 to 8 percent" of the budget being spent on corrections, he argues. "So the notion that prisons are bankrupting us is just ludicrous."

The activists' comparisons between corrections and education spending are also suspect. The increase in California's corrections budget seems noteworthy until one notices that the state will spend \$25.7 billion on K-12 education this year, while spending \$4.6 billion on prisons. Spending \$4.6 billion on prisons in Fiscal Year 1999 seems like a lot of money until a simple budget check shows that California is spending \$33.4 billion on education (\$7.7 billion for colleges) and \$16.4 billion on entitlement programs.

Unlike Rosenblatt and the prison liberationists, Bessette thinks the diminished crime rate and the increase in the prison population are linked: "I would say that there's no question that there is a strong correlation between the prison population and the decrease in the crime rate." He notes the crime rate has been dropping for the last 20 years, except during the "crack epidemic" of the late 1980s.

"Although correlations do not prove causation, they can be very strong evidence. Reasonable people could conclude that the correlation (is similar) to the correlation between cigarette smoking and health problems," he says. In fact, Bessette notes, a RAND Corporation report studying the three strikes law in California showed that "once three strikes was fully implemented, serious and violent crime would be reduced 28 percent." The study also found that "no matter how you increase punishment, you decrease crime."

One feature of the anti-prison movement which the mainstream press ignores, while cozying up to the movement's general social critique, is the fact that the anti-prison activists' humanitarian concerns stop with their pity for prisoners. They resolutely ignore the victims of those prisoners they spend their time romanticizing. At the Critical Resistance conference, as the *Sacramento Bee* noted, participants—including Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), feminist Gloria Steinem, and radical film-maker Michael Moore—found time to discuss "Working Together for Women Prisoners," "Prison as Population Control," "The Prison Industrial Complex and Unemployment," and even "Developing Revolutionary Strategies." Yet not one of the dozens of panels or films discussed the victims of crime.

This is frustrating to people like Joseph Bessette who believe, as anti-prison activists apparently do not, that there is a relationship between punishment and crime. The whole anti-punishment movement bothers him, he says, "at a time when we are enjoying the benefits of being tough. People don't fully appreciate the social benefits of this policy and are drawing back from this policy. Most criminals are not getting the punishment they deserve. The notion that we're being excessively punishing is unfounded."

Criminals routinely serve far less time than Americans think they do. For example, while most Americans think that 15 to 16 years is an acceptable punishment for rape, the average rapist only serves five. In fact, Bessette considers the American justice system lenient. He notes that while the United States convicts 900,000 Americans each year on felony counts, 250,000 are given probation. Mixed in with that number are a few hundred murderers, a few thousand rapists, and larger numbers of burglars. He wonders why people are overly concerned with having 1.8 mil-

lion prisoners when a larger problem exists with a full 3.3 million people in America on probation. "I think that the people against prisons and against punishment aren't looking at these numbers," he says.

Others, such as Patrick Fagan of the Heritage Foundation, find the crime debate isn't focusing on the right issues. Fagan notes that "on a whole host of indicators—sexual, violence, the media culture—I don't think there is any question that we have less internal controls. And if we are less in control, society will have to apply external controls."

Among stable, two-parent families, crime rates are low, regardless of race; in single-parent or broken homes, crime rates are notably higher, regardless of race. When one considers—as Fagan does—that there is a 25 percent illegitimacy rate among whites, 45-46 percent among Hispanics, and 69 percent among blacks, and research shows that



JOSEPH BESSETTE

the rise in violent crime is on par with the rise in families abandoned by fathers, extravagant claims by Angela Davis and others that the criminal justice system attempts to intentionally imprison blacks falls flat.

In the activists' topsy turvy world, the perpetrator is the true victim of his crime. In some cases, violent crime is portrayed as an insurrectionary act by prison abolitionists, even if it is not explicitly politically motivated. Penny Ryder, the Director of the Criminal Justice Program for the Michigan-area branch of the American Friends Service Committee, a pro-abolition group, isn't sure that even violent criminals should be jailed. "Only the very, very dangerous should be put in (prison)," she claims.

Does that include murderers?

"When it's a situational murder, they don't need prison, they need treatment," Ryder claims. "Once people have murdered, they usually are very remorseful for what they did. Half of the time they weren't even in control of what they did."

Situational murder?

To give their critique the illusion of intellectual bulk, Davis and other prison activists use the term "prison-industrial complex" to describe a new alliance between private and public sectors, or oppressors, as they would say. The idea is to conjure up a structure similar to the imagined military-industrial complex thirty years ago. Just as the alliance between the military and industry supposedly propelled the economy during the Cold War, the increasing use of private imprisonment and the farming out of prison labor to private industry has resulted in an alliance between corporations and the prison system that has become a growth industry.

"Prison-industrial complex" is a clever

term—it rolls together the seductive ideas of anti-capitalist and anti-military thought. It paints a picture of an out-of-control machine run by sadistic warders and greedy corporate executives. It allows radicals, in language recycled from the Thirties, to wave the bloody shirt. "Think about the incursion of the corporate structure into the prison industry," Angela Davis told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in language that shows she is not quite yet an ex-Communist. "It's a profitable industry. Corporations provide goods and services to prison, and many of them use prison labor."

Other activists have the same ideas, and they too gain authenticity by having seen the prison-industrial complex from the inside out. Safiya Bukhari, the National Coordinator of the Jericho '98 organization, an umbrella group working to free "political prisoners," spent eight years and eight months in prison for attempted armed robbery and possession of a machine gun. During her time there, Bukhari processed inventory sheets and performed computer-related tasks for New York state agencies—work she now says could easily be done by unincarcerated labor for far more money.

"The only way (corporations) can get away with (paying less than minimal wages) is in the prison system," she claims. "The prisons have become a cheap source of labor," infested by multinational corporations due to trade agreements such as GATT and NAFTA. The question to ask, she says, is "who's making a profit?"

In reality, however, the public corporations that are the business arms of each state's Corrections Department sell a limited variety of goods and services, and are heavily regulated by statutes preventing the misuse of prison labor to undercut wages or competition. Furthermore, they do not employ a majority—or even a great many—of the prisoners that are currently incarcerated. New York offers one of the best examples of how prison labor works.

Corcraft is New York State's prison manufacturing division. Only employing 2,200 inmates statewide—less than 10% of this year's incoming felon class—Corcraft's workers "typically" work seven hours a day, five days a week. Their pay ranges from \$0.16 to \$0.45 per hour, with the possibility of production bonuses. It's not much, but it is more than prisoners can make working in the "non-industrial" areas of the prisons, where they are paid an average of \$0.17 an hour. The manufactured wares of prison industry—which range from furniture, metal items, engravings, and of course, license plates—can only be sold, furthermore, to State agencies and local governments. It is against the law for Corcraft to sell to private individuals or organizations.

Other states have similar restrictions. California's Prison Industry Authority forbids the sale of goods to private individuals or entities within the United States. Illinois only allows private purchase of prison goods if a non-profit organization is the buyer. And even in cases where prison industry is allowed to work for the private sector in a partnership, revenues for the prisons are small. Arizona's prisons, which employ a mere 1,100 inmates at Arizona Correctional Industries, brought in just over \$14 million in the 1998 fiscal year—and 97% of that work was done for other state government organizations.

There are some states which are more than willing to accommodate private corporations interested in prison labor. However, employers must pay their inmate workers prevailing or minimum wage, whichever is higher, in order to qualify for the state's program.

But Ryder and the other bitter-enders insist that anyone studying prisons need only follow the money: "I think prison is [seen as] a place to put working class people."

The anti-prison movement has attempted to throw its body in the path of further prison construction. And it is in this effort that activists have honed their message to appeal to Middle America. Eli Rosenblatt of the Prison Activist

Resource Center argues that America needs more prisons only “if the goal is to lock everyone up, and if we have no intention [as] a society of enabling people to return to their communities as productive and healthy people.”

Safiya Bukhari asks an often-heard question from prison abolitionists: “If crime is at an all time low, why is prison construction at an all time high?”

In fact, even if no more prisoners were brought into the system today, prisons across the nation would still be horribly overcrowded. Illinois’ Stateville Correctional Center, for example, operates at an average 156% capacity. And throughout California, prisons hold, on average, double the prisoners they were designed to hold.

“Overcrowding is often the cause of all the problems,” including violence and unsanitary conditions, according to Kara Gotsch, spokesperson for the ACLU’s National Prison Project. Khaled Taqi-Eddin, an analyst with the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, admits “it’s very scary when you crowd [people] into prison like that. It’s going to do one of two things—it’s going to necessitate

the release of prisoners early or force the hand of (the state) to build more prisons.”

Joseph Bessette has seen that situation first hand. While working in Illinois, he dealt with the results of the executive branch’s decision in the early 1970s not to build any more prisons. The result was a prison system that was very liberal in its policy for granting time off for good behavior and early release, and it was out of control. “They opened the back door earlier and earlier. Time served was spiraling downward,” he recalls. The worst kind of murderers were only receiving 12 to 13 years in prison; rapists were doing three to four years.

In that troubled state, he says, “hundreds of thousands of people became victims of crime, but they were only victims of crime because of early release.” Now that early release programs have ended, the prison population in Illinois has now increased four-fold.

But prison activists sneer at the thought that prison construction might actually relieve inmates from much of the stress they are going through now. “The safety of the inmates? Since when has the prison industry been concerned with

the safety of the inmates?” Bukhari asks.

It is clear from even a few minutes conversation with them that reform is not, when all is said and done, what these activists are looking for. “We are not looking to have 2 million people locked up in clean, well- ventilated, spacious cages with decent food,” Eli Rosenblatt says. “We are seeking an end to imprisonment as it now exists.”

Goals like this—goals that recall the maximalist rhetoric of the Sixties, an era from which the anti-prison movement gains its inspiration—make the ultimate fate of the movement problematical. Yet there is no doubt that in the short term it has already had an impact in framing the debate. Prisons are suddenly a front burner issue, and the criminal justice system is on the defensive. What they were unable to do in the radical Sixties, Angela Davis and her allies seem better able to do in the conservative Nineties—convince the mainstream social thinkers and journalists that all prisoners are political prisoners, and that the prisoners’ bill of rights must include a get out of jail free card.

—Benjamin Kepple

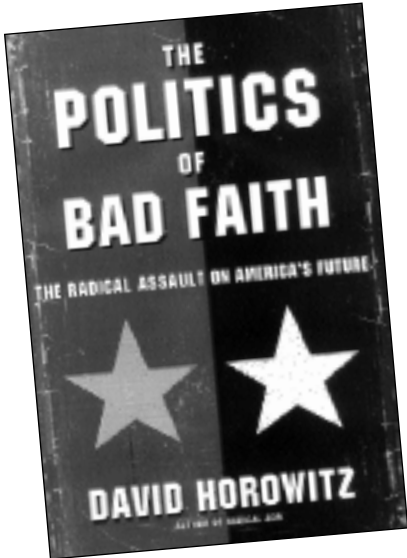


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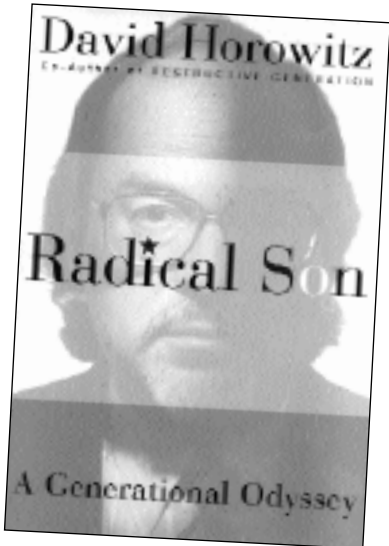


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H-Net and Beyond, Continued from page 1

on the Internet in 1993. H-DIPLO is a computer listserv—in essence, a big email list in which multiple conversations are carried on via publicly posted messages. H-DIPLO is a resolutely non-partisan forum dedicated to scholarly discussion of international relations and diplomatic history. There are scores of other such lists, many of which are under the overall aegis of H-NET, a group of lists clustered around the social sciences and humanities and housed at Michigan State University. (If you have a particular intellectual interest, odds are there is a list out there devoted to it; H-NET may be found at <http://h-net2.msu.edu/>.)

The way it works is this: someone, anyone—H-DIPLO, happily, makes no judgment about formal affiliations or academic rank—can post anything from an opinion to a review, or even just a simple question. The marketplace of ideas and the methods of scholarship which once characterized the university then begin to operate, as other members of the list respond, challenge, correct and otherwise deliberate on the issue at hand.

Sometimes the marketplace yawns, and some of the more arcane postings are met with silence. (If only graduate students could dare to treat the mind-numbing journal articles assigned to them in the same way.) In some cases, matters of fact or requests for data are cleared up relatively quickly, while in others battle is joined and debate can go on quite literally for months on end in a string of hundreds of messages from around the world. I have been a member of H-DIPLO for two years, and in that time have found myself in conversation, both friendly and pointed, with a host of colleagues, students, and working scholars across the intellectual spectrum.

Messages are not edited or reviewed for political content. The only gatekeepers are the editorial board, a group of scholars of various backgrounds who oversee the list with a very light hand, and who in turn designate a moderator to handle day-to-day tasks. This is not to say that anything sent to the list is automatically posted; the current moderator, Diane Labrosse (a doctoral candidate at York University in Canada) estimates that she turns down perhaps a third of the messages sent in any given day, for reasons ranging from ad hominem sniping to factual errors to redundancy. (Messages asking for citations from easily obtainable sources, for example, are frowned upon. The list is not a substitute for basic research.) Roughly half of the messages returned are not actually rejected but rather are sent with a request for revisions, usually to tone down some of the testier exchanges. The point, as Labrosse puts it, is to reinforce the idea that H-DIPLO is “a scholarly list rather than a chat group.”

What makes H-DIPLO so fascinating, and important, is not necessarily the medium of the Internet; if H-DIPLO were just another cautious academic journal reproduced in electronic form, it would hardly be worth comment. Rather, the fascination of H-DIPLO to many of us in and around the academy is that its format has directly breached the sanctity of the academic code of silence and thus challenged an entire community of scholars who until now have remained in splendid political and intellectual isolation. The open exchange and quick turnaround of messages (submissions are usually posted within a day) serve to strip the participants of the traditional perks of academic protection, such as the glacial pace and careful political vetting of the peer-review system, or the highly structured environment of the graduate seminar or undergraduate lecture hall.

Finding themselves for the first time in recent memory outside the cocoon of the university, the reactions of academics have ranged from enthusiasm to bewilderment to outrage. (In theory, of course, academic conferences are supposedly the venue for such excursions into open debate, but anyone who’s sat through one can verify that

all too many of them are about as spontaneous as a Politburo meeting.) Over the past two years, several notable debates have taken place—real debates, with actual opposing views, rather than the self-generated and minor academic controversies over theoretical arcana—and three in particular reveal the deep anxieties felt by the academic left when sunlight peeks through the university window.

[A note: I refer here only to exchanges in which I have been directly involved. The Internet is sometimes a difficult medium, and interpreting the printed discussions of third parties from a distance can sometimes turn into the old children’s game of “telephone.” Interested readers can browse the complete logs of H-DIPLO at <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/logs/logs.cgi>.]

Postmodernism and “Right Wing Anxieties”

For the uninitiated, postmodernism is (briefly) a school of thought which holds that the

But ordinary people are not usually present in the classroom, and they cannot speak up when a professor tries to coat an inconvenient reality in a glaze of postmodernist jargon. Certainly, they are not present for spectacles like the one reported by a young man who told H-DIPLO that his instructor declared that “empiricism is dead,” a pronouncement that was followed by a ritual in which the student was, in his own words, “more or less gang tackled by the professor and several of the other graduate students” for daring to suggest that reality might actually have meaning.

Whether this graduate student still has a future in academia or has gone on to better things is unclear. But his comments led to several responses on H-DIPLO, many from faculty at other universities who deplored his treatment in class and revealed their own doubts about postmodernism. (One professor at Sarah Lawrence College reassured the young man that if the event took place as described, then clearly the professor in question was “a bullying idiot.”) He may have been silenced in the classroom, but his story produced a great deal of discussion on the Internet.

Indeed, this exchange capped several weeks of postings that had been openly critical of postmodernist approaches, and this finally produced an outburst from an aggravated Columbia University historian who made a direct plea for, in effect, censorship:

I did not join H-DIPLO to read ‘how-to’ therapies for rightwing anxieties about postmodern theory. Others may. The present format of H-DIPLO, in any event, lends itself to triviality and the wrong kinds of polemics, loosely voiced opinions of no conceivable interest to but a few. Perhaps the Board and Editors should reconsider the purpose and parameters of the whole exercise? For instance, when the Editors find nothing serious in the bag, let silence reign. I have every confidence in their judgment (and admiration for their heroic efforts).

“Let silence reign”? This is hardly the kind of motto one expects to find over university gates next to “Fiat Lux” or “Veritas.” Clearly, the discussion had struck a nerve. Although I wrote a response, asking the editorial board to reject this unsubtle call to squash expressions of “rightwing anxieties,” it turned out I needn’t have worried, since the editors, to their credit, had no intention of vetting messages and thus satisfying this craving for academic silence.

What was disheartening, however, was not the dust-up over postmodernism itself (nor this clumsy attempt to shut down debate) but the half-dozen messages that I received through private email over the next few days, all of them from graduate students and untenured faculty, and all of which said, in effect, that they wished they could have joined the debate but didn’t dare for fear of professional repercussions. It is a fact of life for many doctoral students that crossing one’s teachers can be the end of a career, and so while they may not share their mentor’s beliefs, they are obliged to keep those disagreements to themselves. (I was not subjected to this experience in graduate school, but I was one of only a fortunate few.)

Still, despite their inability to participate in the debate, were it not for H-DIPLO and the Internet, these students might never actually have seen postmodernist history challenged so directly. Certainly, they would not have been in an audience when issues they wanted to see raised (even if they themselves were powerless to raise them) were actually discussed. They will still have to keep silent when their scholarly elders prattle on in the unintelligible duckspeak of postmodernism, but they at least have had the advantage of seeing some of their colleagues elsewhere do the one thing they cannot: stand up and declare, without



H-NET: AN ACADEMIC FORUM THAT’S ACTUALLY A FORUM

written word does not speak for itself, and that even a writer might himself be unaware of the actual meaning of his own product. It is the means by which countless academics, rather than attempting the hard work of actual research, instead pontificate on the underlying meaning (usually of a sexual nature) behind everything from *Hamlet* to the Cuban missile crisis. Postmodernism is, in other words, a means by which moderately clever minds can spin new articles from old events with minimum effort and maximum jargon.

Confined to the English or Comparative Literature departments, postmodernism is silly, even self-parodying, but generally harmless. But it has begun to have a pernicious influence on the study of history and politics, largely because it held promise to leftists whose beliefs were creaking and straining under the weight of reality, and particularly under the cumulative weight of realities about the Cold War. With more and more evidence appearing to settle questions ranging from the guilt of Alger Hiss to the KAL 007 shootdown, it was only a matter of time before the professoriate would seize on an intellectual approach that always puts “facts” in quotation marks and takes as a fundamental assumption that reality is constructed in the mind of the beholder.

To an ordinary person, of course, postmodernism is plainly nonsense. Some things are true, others are not. Airplanes fly because they are made in a certain way, not because they are socially constructed by their pilots; Mao Zedong’s mode of “discourse” involved murdering millions of his own people, however prettily we might phrase it.

interruption, that their ears are not deceiving them and that their own professors really are spouting nonsense.

The Cold War: The Last Front Fights On

But H-DIPLO is about matters of substance as well as style, as ongoing electronic debates over the Cold War attest. The idea that America won this conflict is commonplace—except, perhaps, in most history or political science departments—because it accords with common sense. Capitalism thrives and Communism is dead, even in the few remaining “Communist” states. The American political system was more dynamic, more resilient, and more powerful than its Communist challenger, and in the end, a coalition of democracies triumphed over an evil empire held together by force. This is widely accepted among people who have not had the benefit of higher education but who knows an evil empire when they see one.

Indeed, could anyone actually believe that, say, Stalin had no designs on Europe or Asia, or that the Soviets were seeking only to defend themselves from an America bent on the rapacious capitalist looting of the USSR’s neighbors? Does anyone still believe that “we all lost the Cold War,” and that America came out of it as badly as the defunct Soviet Union? The answer, remarkably, is “yes,” and any reader of H-DIPLO discussion logs in 1997 and 1998 will find all of these beliefs and others like them expressed. But for once, these excursions into relativism and revisionism appear side by side with dismissals and challenges that would not occur in most classrooms.

A striking example of such a debate took place over the question of the Korean War. In 1990, Yale historian Bruce Cumings wrote a seminal study of the origins of the war in which he argued that the question of “who started the Korean War” was one that should not even be asked, suggesting that there was more than enough moral blame to go around and that the issue of who was really responsible for the events of June 1950 was one that everyone, especially Koreans, should let go.

For years, this interpretation suited many academics and no doubt the Cumings book was taught with the kind of grave and thoughtful “we’ll never know” nods of the head I remember well from my days as a graduate student in Soviet politics. But the collapse of Communism was about to settle the question, whether Cumings or anyone else thought it should be asked. Archival evidence from Moscow finally dispelled any doubt about Stalin’s central, indispensable role in the Korean events. Kim Il Sung asked for permission and assistance and Stalin gave it to him. In 1955, the archives tell us, Khrushchev exploded (in private) that “we started the war,” and that “everyone knows this.”

Khrushchev’s rantings aside, this final word on the Korean War has been slow to get to the universities. When I suggested that the question of “who started the war” had in one fell archival swoop been reopened, settled, and then closed, the anxiety of people who had spent a lifetime equivocating about the Cold War was palpable. (Cumings was not a participant in the discussion; rather, his work had come up in the context of a larger discussion of the Korean War.) One historian at NYU condescendingly suggested that my faith that such questions could be cleared up was “touching” but that “radically differing interpretations of the past” were simply “not subject to the sort of positivist resolutions” I defended. In plain English, what this meant was that the words on the papers from Moscow might not mean what they say—clever and complicated people, these Soviets—and that a tortured interpretation of this evidence might yet salvage the effort to derail a final judgment on Korea as a simple case of Communist aggression.

More scathing were some of the responses that came in when I and others suggested that

Bruce Cumings had engaged in a political choice at the end of his opus not to assign blame for the war because he knew he would have to assign it to the Communists. Having read the book, this was to me, apparent, even obvious. Others agreed; as one professor at Berkeley put it on H-DIPLO, if the evidence had pointed to Harry Truman and Syngman Rhee starting the war, would anyone think Cumings would have argued the question shouldn’t have been asked?

But rather than deal directly with the polemic that Cumings had written in admirably bold and plain terms, at least two academics demanded that I tender an apology to Professor Cumings for even suggesting that his concluding chapter reflected anything but detached scholarship. My arguments were, in the words of a Rutgers historian, “an unacceptable accusation that Cumings does not have intellectual and scholarly integrity.”



H-DIPLO : DIPLOMATIC HISTORY

The current moderator is Michael Marschall.

Welcome

Welcome to H-DIPLO, a member of the H-NET Humanities On-line community. H-DIPLO's editorial board and discussion list editors serve a broad intellectual community. Follow this link for more information.

Discussion List

Our moderated discussion list enables historians to discuss with interests, teaching methods and views on the state of historiography.

Review Project

H-DIPLO regularly commissions scholarly reviews of books and articles. H-Net's Review Project provides an online archive for all reviews published by H-Net's many discussion lists. Offer media and computer software reviews in the near future.

Announcements

H-DIPLO also posts a variety of academic announcements: calls for papers, seminars and fellowships, grant, award and other funding notices.

Resources

Resources selected from the H-DIPLO discussion list are collected on our web site.

Essays and discussion threads: Selected H-DIPLO discussion threads are collected on our web site.

Links to point you toward other web sites of relevance to H-DIPLO's focus: H-DIPLO Bulletin Board Misc. Items: SHAFR panel proposals, etc. Bibliographies and Course Syllabi

H-DPLO: WHERE THE TRUTH COMES OUT

I had said no such thing, of course. Cumings’ interpretations on Korea are well-known and controversial, and I was hardly the first person to comment on them. But there was little else my interlocutors could do: debating the facts of the case could only lead to running smack into the wall of damning evidence found in Moscow. And because I was neither a graduate student nor a junior colleague, there could be no other leverage to stop what had become an embarrassing demolition of Cold War revisionism. The only other option was to level an accusation of unprofessional behavior and hope that such a charge would in itself be enough to halt the discussion. (It wasn’t.)

I have no illusions about whether Bruce Cumings’ plea to drop the question of blame for the Korean War will still hold sway in too many classrooms for some time to come. But the cat’s out of the bag, and thanks to H-DIPLO (and the Cold War International History Project, a goldmine of historical documentation available at <http://cwihip.si.edu/default.htm>), there are that many more students, working scholars, and interested amateurs who might find themselves agreeing with, of all people, Nikita Khrushchev—even if Khrushchev has become too politically incorrect a revisionist to cite in the seminar room or lecture hall.

Cuba Libre!

I’m a former staff member of both the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and so I tend to be more inclined than most academics to find a certain amount of joy in politics as a contact sport. (Although to be fair, I should say the Senate is something like a spirited game of touch football,

while the State House I served in my younger days was more like a hockey game with no puck and extra sticks.) In any case, it’s rare that a professor ever has the opportunity to debate vigorously his most severe ideological opponents outside the academy and find the same level of political combat that people in the policy world encounter on a regular basis. Even in my visits to the Soviet Union, my contacts with Soviet academics and policymakers were always conducted in a polite atmosphere where direct ideological conflict was considered, at best, gauche. (This isn’t to say that after hours, and after a few obligatory toasts to peace, there weren’t a few spirited donnybrooks about whose system of government was the bigger menace to humanity.)

But in the summer of 1998, H-DIPLO readers were treated to something they would never see on an American college campus: an honest, direct, and hard-hitting debate about Cuba . . . with a former Cuban government official. For once, there was no embarrassed host, no apologetic leftist moderator, or angry radical graduate students to shut down those who challenged the official Cuban view. Likewise, there were no bullhorn-toting anti-Castro émigrés to disrupt the proceedings or to silence the Cuban participant or his allies. No subject was off-limits, no intricate formalities (other than common courtesy) were observed, and no question was considered final. The Cuban, a Sr. Carlos Alzugaray formerly of the Cuban Foreign Service, acquitted himself well enough, especially considering that he was treated with less deference than he would have found as a visitor to any American university.

I hadn’t known that Sr. Alzugaray was on the list—reading without posting, in the world of the Internet, is colloquially referred to as “lurking”—but he made his presence, and his anger, clear in the midst of a discussion of the proposed International Criminal Court treaty then being debated in Rome. As an opponent of the treaty, I argued that any court that could conceivably have a Cuban or Chinese or Iranian “jurist” on it was not a court worthy of the name and did not have the moral standing to render judgment against U.S. military officers for putative crimes against humanity. Sr. Alzugaray rose to the occasion and chided me for overweening American arrogance. (In passing, I should note that H-DIPLO cuts both ways: without the Internet, I would have been able to make that statement in a lecture hall without any fear of a Cuban, Chinese, or Iranian citizen rising from the audience to take me to task, and it was pleasantly surprising, but admittedly jarring, to find myself called to defend my views by the target of my criticism.)

What began as a testy exchange about the ICC turned into an extended, heated, and fascinating debate about the nature of the Cuban system, the morality of the U.S. embargo, the actual meaning of Communism, and a host of other issues that American and Cuban scholars might never have the chance to argue about in the intellect-deadening environment of an official international conference. I held fast to my belief that Cuba is a dungeon and that Cuba suffered because of Fidel Castro and his poor choice of friends in Moscow. Alzugaray likewise stuck to his guns that American policy was imperialist, immoral, and indefensible, and that Cuba had prospered despite America’s best efforts. Scholars and amateurs of passionate conviction on both sides of the question carried on parallel discussions while Alzugaray and I crossed rhetorical swords over the course of the summer.

The debate over Cuba involved dozens of scholars and students of various stripes, and carried on into the fall. Some vestiges of it still continue, as discussion occasionally returns to the recent arrest of Augusto Pinochet and the possible parallels with a future arrest of Castro. There was little movement in the positions of the main participants; certainly, Alzugaray and I left the debate with the same beliefs we brought to it. But the

Internet played a crucial role in making sure that the official Cuban line (which in some universities is the official American line as well) about the socialist paradise to the south underwent a sustained and vigorous challenge, in a real debate conducted without time limits or meddlesome, well-meaning liberals trying to help facilitate some chimerical meeting of the minds. And anyone who wanted to watch—any student, any interested citizen, any fellow scholars—could sit in the electronic bleachers and draw their own conclusions without having to brave demonstrators, megaphones, or the chilly stares of their colleagues.

An Electronic Crack in the Wall

Some of the participants of the past few years on H-DIPLO seem to have dropped away, perhaps because of scholarly commitments elsewhere, or perhaps because of a lack of interest in the list's current orientation toward Cold War his-

tory. (The constant flow of new archival materials and declassified documents has naturally pulled the list in this direction in the past year or so.) But some, I suspect, have simply left because they cannot endure the lack of deference and the breach of the peaceful silence which envelop them in the academy. Such people thrive on silence, and the Internet has become a rather noisy place.

But no matter: others have taken their place, and new faces from across the spectrum, from radical left to hard right, have taken up residence in the many discussions underway. Although the roster of participants changes occasionally, one thing is certain: H-DIPLO and similar sites on the Internet have brought down walls erected in the university over the past thirty years once and for all. Any student or young scholar who has access to a computer may now peek through the electronic cracks in the university wall, and see if the vision of the world he has been given in the classroom is even remotely congruent

with what he sees beyond the campus boundaries.

In the end, the net effect of the expansion of the Internet as a vehicle for scholarly debate means that no professor can ever be sure that what he says from the lectern will go unchallenged. This kind of electronic glasnost in the academy, however small, is the beginning of the end of an intellectual Berlin Wall that has protected a great deal of academic foolishness for far too long. The peace and quiet of the rigid seminar room and the oppressive faculty lounge is being disrupted, surely and steadily, by a daily stream of electronic messages that might yet return some common sense and open debate to academic life.

Tom Nichols teaches at the Naval War College. The views expressed are those of the author and not of the Naval War College or any agency of the U.S. Government.



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The following was sent to the entire faculty at Smith College, where Betty Friedan is an alumna, and Daniel Horowitz the author of a new biography of Friedan is a professor. The professor told his classes that the ad below was “McCarthyism.”

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(As in the Right Not To Be Ideologically Indoctrinated in the Classroom)
- David Horowitz

Feminist Fibber

(Reprinted and revised from *Salon Magazine*)

Why do political progressives feel the need so often to lie about who they are? The question is prompted by a recent biography of feminist leader Betty Friedan, which establishes beyond reasonable doubt that the woman who virtually created modern feminism is what may reasonably be called a political imposter. In her path-breaking book, *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan presented herself as a typical suburban housewife not even conscious of the woman question before she began work on her manuscript. But now Smith professor Daniel Horowitz (no relation) has shown that nothing could be further from the truth. Under her maiden name, Betty Goldstein, the record shows that Friedan was a political activist and professional propagandist for the Communist left for nearly thirty years before the 1963 publication of *The Feminist Mystique* launched the modern feminist movement.

There are probably a lot of interesting ramifications of this revelation. As Horowitz s biography makes clear, Friedan, from her college days and until her mid-thirties, was a Stalinist Marxist (or a fellow traveler thereof), the political intimate of leaders of America s Cold War fifth column, and for a time even the lover of a young Communist physicist working on atomic bomb projects with J. Robert Oppenheimer. Not at all a neophyte when it came to the woman question (the phrase itself is a Marxist construction), she was certainly familiar with the writings of Engels, Lenin and Stalin on the subject and had written about it herself as a journalist for the official publication of the Communist-controlled United Electrical Workers union.

Friedan s version of feminism obviously bears re-visiting in light of the new information. Her infamous description of America s suburban family household as a comfortable concentration camp in *The Feminine Mystique*, it s now obvious, had more to do with her Marxist hatred for America than with her own experience as a housewife and mother. Her husband Carl, also a leftist, once complained to a reporter in 1970 that, far from being a homebody, his wife was in the world during the whole marriage, either full time or free lance, lived in a mansion and had a full-time maid, and seldom was a wife and a mother. Of course, no one paid much attention to the family patriarch at the time, simply because as a male he was guilty before the fact.

One indication that Goldstein-Friedan has not liberated herself entirely from the Stalinist mentality that shaped her adult views is the fact that she still feels the need to lie about her identity and views. Although her new biographer is a sympathetic leftist (indeed so slavish in his ideological loyalties one might reasonably describe him as a fellow-traveler), Friedan refused to cooperate with him once she realized he was going to tell the truth. After Horowitz published an initial article about Friedan s youthful work as a labor journalist, Friedan publicly maligned him. Speaking to an American University audience, she remarked: some historian recently wrote some attack on me in which he claimed that I was only pretending to be a suburban housewife, that I was supposed to be an agent.

This was both false and unkind, because Horowitz bends over backwards throughout his book to sanitize the true dimensions of Friedan s past. Thus he describes Steve Nelson as the legendary radical, veteran of the Spanish Civil War, and Bay Area party official. In fact, Nelson was an obscure radical but an important party apparatchik (later notorious for his espionage activities in the Berkeley Radiation Lab), who would be a legend only to other Communists and who was in Spain as a Party commissar to enforce the Stalinist line. Horowitz also bends over backwards at length to defend Friedan s lying, excusing it as a response to McCarthyism. Her attack on him was framed in terms of the ridiculous accusation that he was going to use innuendos to describe her past, based on the fact he was asking questions to establish the reality of what she believed. His response to this right baiting is all-too understanding. The word innuendos, he explains, was often used by people scarred by McCarthyism.

That Communists lied at the time was understandable. They had something to hide. But why is Betty Friedan lying to this day, long after she has anything to fear from McCarthy committees and other government investigators of internal subversion?

Surely no one seriously believes that people who reveal their Communist pasts in the Clinton era have anything to fear from the American government. The folk singer Pete Seeger, a Party puppet his entire life, is nonetheless a celebrated entertainer and was honored recently at the Kennedy Center with a Freedom Medal by the President himself. Angela Davis was once the Communist Party s candidate for Vice President and served the police states of the Soviet empire until their very last gasps. Her punishment for this career is to have been appointed President s Professor at the state-run University of California, one of only seven faculty members state-wide to be so honored. She is a living campus legend, officially invited to speak on ceremonial occasions at exorbitant fees by college administrations all across the country, and memorialized with rooms and lounges named in her honor, despite the absence of any notable scholarly contributions and a corpus of work that is little more than ideological propaganda.

The idea that America relentlessly punishes those who betray her is laughable, as is the idea that leftists have anything to fear from their government if they tell the truth about what they did fifty years ago.

So why the continuing lies? The reason is obvious: The truth is embarrassing to them. Imagine what it would be like for Betty Friedan (the name actually is Friedman) to admit that as a Jew she opposed America s entry into the war against Hitler because Stalin told her that it was just an inter-imperialist fracas? Imagine what it would be like for America s premier feminist to acknowledge that well into her thirties (and who knows for how long after?) she thought Stalin was the Father of the Peoples and that the United States was an evil empire. Or that her interest in women s liberation was just the subtext of her real desire to create a Soviet America. Now, that would require some explaining.

Which is why it probably seemed easier to lie. The problem with this solution is that lying can t be contained. It begets other lies, and eventually becomes a whole way of life, as President Clinton could tell you. One of the lies that the particular denial of the Communist past begets is an exaggerated view of McCarthyism. Fear of McCarthyism becomes an excuse that explains everything. The idea advanced by people like Friedan, that McCarthyism was some reign of terror, as though thousands lost their freedom and hundreds their lives, while the country itself remained paralyzed with fear for a decade is just false. Being an accused Communist on an American college campus in the 1950s, in fact, was only marginally more damaging to one s career opportunities than being a member of the Christian Right would be on today s politically correct campus, dominated as it is by the tenured left. Bad enough, but reign of terror, no. (And where is the outrage from the civil libertarian crowd for this latter-day witch-hunt?)

If we are going to restore civility and honesty to public discourse about these issues, and integrity to intellectual scholarship, it is necessary to insist on candor from people about their political commitments and what they know. And it important to call things by their right names. Without such a resolve, we will continue to be inundated with books from the academy with ludicrous claims like this: In response to McCarthyism and to the impact of mass media, suburbs, and prosperity, a wave of conformity swept across much of the nation. Containment referred not only to American policy toward the USSR but also to what happened to aspirations at home. The results for women were especially unfortunate. Even though increasing numbers of them entered the work force, the Cold War linked anti-communism and the dampening of women s ambitions.

This is the commentary of Professor Horowitz, Friedan s biographer, and the kind of ideological hot air that passes for analysis in the contemporary academy. It can do so only because of the absence of dissenting voices who know better.

by David Horowitz

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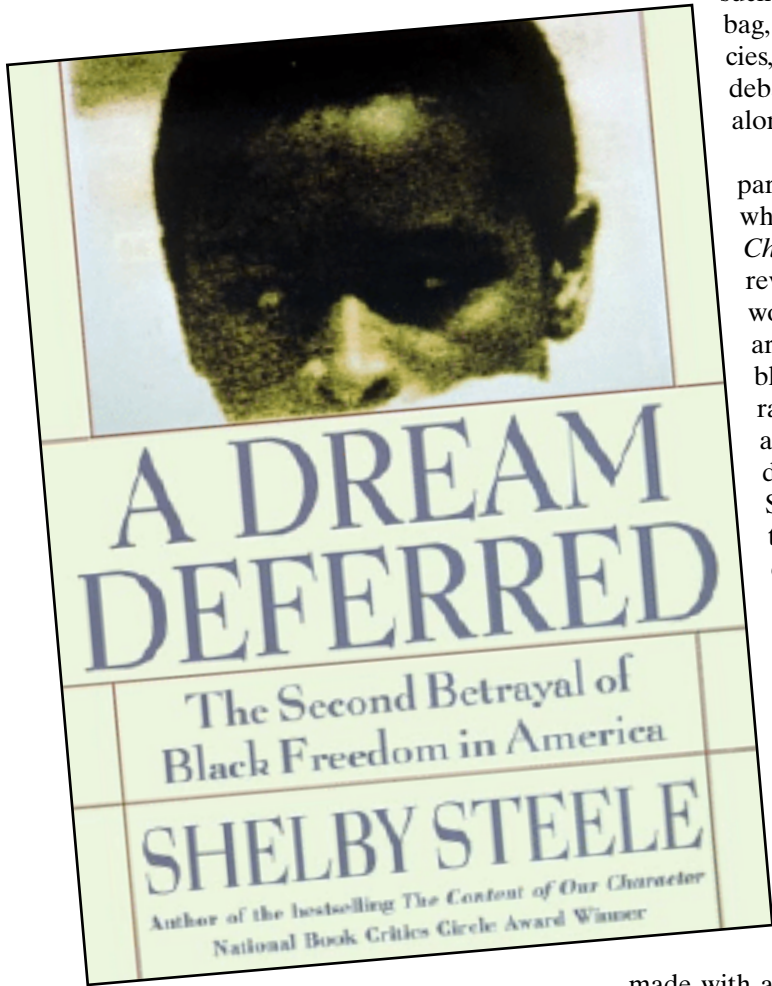
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On the New Plantation

A Dream Deferred: The Second Betrayal of Black Freedom in America
by Shelby Steele
(Harpercollins, New York, 1998, 185 pp.
\$24.00)

REVIEWED BY GLYNN CUSTRED



As co-author of California’s Proposition 209, I have participated in countless debates on the topic of racial and ethnic preferences. One such event was broadcast on national television. Chris Matthews moderated from Washington, D.C. Joe Hicks, formerly of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and now head of the Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, participated from Los Angeles, while I sat in a small studio in San Francisco looking into a camera with no screen to monitor the video portion of the program.

At one point in the discussion I observed that the recipients of racial preferences are not the real beneficiaries at all. The real beneficiaries are the practitioners of identity politics—the lawyers and government and corporate enforcers who make their living by keeping racial division alive in this country. Minorities as a group are actually the victims of such policies and such people, for in order to justify a regime in which one individual is preferred over another solely because of skin color, blacks must plead perpetual group inferiority at the expense of their own individual abilities. In this way, I said, blacks are kept on the plantation of their new masters.

Chris Matthews responded first with a feral cry, then with the outraged exclamation, “I can’t believe you said that!” After the show a technician came to unhook my microphone. With a broad grin he said, “You should have seen his face when you said that about the plantation.”

Chris Matthews’ anguished reaction is quite understandable, for it is a painful thing indeed to hear that a policy you support in the name of compassion and for the charitable uplift of the perpetually downtrodden is really nothing more than a milder, up-dated variation on that long standing American theme of subjugating blacks; that you, as a white liberal, are actually asserting the same underlying principle of black inferiority as did antebellum planters and their segregationist successors, albeit in different degrees of intensity and with far different motives.

You can also understand why Chris Matthews was literally shocked to hear somebody actually say such a thing, and on national television at that, for the honest discussion of race in America, and the policies which have crystallized around it, had become so hedged with taboos that criticism was banned not only from public discourse but even from private casual conversation. But as a result of Proposition 209 and other such initiatives, the cat is now out of the bag, and racial policies, like any other policies, are finally in the domain of public debate where they should have been all along.

This new openness is due in large part to the brave voice of Shelby Steele, whose first book, *Content of Our Character*, published back in 1990, revealed a fact many knew but no one would openly discuss; that black leaders are practicing a kind of politics that draw blacks as a group “into a victim-focused racial identity, that in turn stifled black advancement more than racism itself did.” This debilitating self image, says Steele, creates a dependency mentality that suppresses natural abilities and discourages the all important element of individual initiative. And all this is happening in a period of unprecedented opportunity.

In his latest book, *A Dream Deferred*, Steele builds on the arguments presented in his first book, then describes in clear, direct language the political and cultural system that has developed around race since the 1960s, and the effect it has had on American institutions in general.

One of his major points is made with a revealing anecdote. During a discussion of race at San Jose State University, where he used to teach, Steele argued that black students, like Asians, should focus on self-reliance and individual excellence in an effort to succeed. A professor of black studies rose to speak. “Anger had stolen her self possession, her ability to censor herself,” Steele writes, “and so out of a kind of general alarm she said, ‘if black students do well, they’ll end up like the Asians. They’ll lose their preferences . . .’” In other words the professor, who had only the best for her students at heart, saw the fate of black students as lying not in their own hands, but rather as contingent on the intervention of outside forces.

This illustrates what Steele calls a pervasive “psychology of contingency.” This psychology in turn relies on an assertion of group victimization in which the complexity of the real world with its multiple hindrances and manifold opportunities is drastically reduced to a simplistic dichotomy of permanent white oppression and permanent black helplessness.

Whites are guilty and blacks are helpless victims, thus justifying a regime of racial and ethnic preferences where color trumps merit and where group victimization overshadows individual effort and initiative. At the center stands the “grievance elite,” as Steele calls it, the Jesse Jacksons, the lawyers, the EEOC enforcers, etc. who profit from the system. None of this, of course, could work without the active cooperation of white elites. What, then what, do they get out of it? Their pay off, says Steele, is redemption from collective white guilt.

Such redemption, no doubt, played a major role in the establishment of this system and remains an important part of its continuity in the university and perhaps even among some business leaders. But another, perhaps the major driving force is simple coercion; government enforcement operating in unison with extortionate tactics on the part of the grievance industry. Quotas, in other words, are something like taxes. Pay or suffer. So, business and government agencies simply pay. No doubt many bureaucrats, executives and share holders justify this extortion by secretly believing that blacks can’t make it any other way, so their largesse is also a kind of charity.

This attitude is particularly tragic, says Steele, since one of the primary features of the

black experience in America is not just its endurance under slavery and continued exclusion, but indeed the triumph of blacks as a group despite such adversity. In this regard, he says, it was “imagination, courage, the exercise of free will, and a very definite genius that enabled blacks not only to survive victimization but also to create a great literature, utterly transform Western music, help shape the American language, expand and deepen the world’s concept of democracy, influence popular culture around the globe, and so on.”

The dream blacks held for so long was the dream that they as individuals would be treated as individuals, not as ciphers in a faceless mass; that one day they could realize their talents and enjoy the fruits of their efforts like everybody else in this country. This was the dream Martin Luther King articulated in his famous speech from which the title of Steele’s first book was taken. Yet once blacks stood on the verge of realizing that dream in the 1960s, they pulled back and placed their future in the hands of others, in the mistaken belief that governmental intervention and white benevolence were the only ways they could ever make progress. The dream was thus once more betrayed.

Steele describes the cultural and political structure which has developed around race since the Sixties. This system is so unfair to all concerned that it must rely on intimidation, mendacity, distortion, the suppression of truth and tortured rationalizations for its survival. In this regard Steele has harsh words for black scholars such as Cornel West and William Junius Wilson and for white liberal enablers such as Jeffrey Rosen and Nathan Glazer, as well as for competent yet opportunistic blacks like Vernon Jordan and Colin Powell.

Steele, however, looks beyond the immediate problems engendered by this system to what it has done to society as a whole, by transforming liberalism from a morally based ideology of individual responsibility and freedom into a doctrine in the service of state intervention, and by corrupting the social sciences and the university as well as by extending stigma to whites who now must bear a collective “guilt” for black failure. In this way we are all stigmatized, either by group inferiority or group guilt, thus working against honesty, free speech and the freedom to advance as individuals regardless of race and ethnic background.

Shelby Steele writes with grace, even when criticizing his opponents, and with a feel for language and with a style few of us can achieve, thus investing his thoughtful analysis with even more persuasive force. The central value of the book, however, lies in his brilliant analysis of the present destructive phase of our continuing racial obsession, and his compelling argument in defense of liberalism, whose dream has been realized by so many millions of white Americans but which has been once again deferred for blacks.

One wonders what will eventually happen as the black population continues to be constricted in this way, frustrated, ridden with self doubt and increasingly hostile to white society. And one wonders how long the white majority will accept their assigned stigma and how long they will continue to pay the tribute exacted at their expense by white elites. All this brings to mind the words of black poet Langston Hughes from whom Shelby Steele took the title of his book:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore -
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over -
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?



Glynn is professor of anthropology at California State University, Hayward, and co-author, with Tom Wood, of California’s Proposition 209.

STRANGER THAN FACT

Board of Ed Says Teacher Must Have Surgery or Lose Job

by Judith Schumann Weizner

Camilla Jemail, an eighth-grade science teacher at Smoky Ridge Intermediate School in Smoky Ridge, California, has been ordered to undergo facial reconstruction if she wishes to return to her job in September. Jemail, who has taught in the Smoky Ridge school system for the past eighteen years, has already made several adjustments in her appearance at the request of her school board, but this would be the most far-reaching. She is preparing an appeal before the State Board of Education, and promises to sue if the appeal is unsuccessful.

Jemail's appearance first became an issue seven years ago when one of her female students complained that Ms. Jemail's hair style mocked the residents of the trailer park in which the student lived. The student insisted that since it was common knowledge that Ms. Jemail lived in a condo in nearby Llama Vista, she felt that her teacher's "big hair" style was an expression of condescension toward her and all the other students who lived in trailer parks. While taken aback by the allegation, Ms. Jemail was not averse to changing her hairstyle and availed herself of a tax-deductible make-over, which included a close-to-the-head hair style and a sweeping change of wardrobe, which heretofore had consisted of slacks and turtlenecks. She purchased several suits with coordinated blouses and accessories and found, to her great pleasure, that several male teachers were now interested in dating her.

She had been enjoying her new look and its perquisites for a few months when her principal, Virginia Tarleton, informed her that a seventh-grader from a working-class background had complained that Ms. Jemail's new smart, professional look was making her insecure about her self-worth because her family could only afford to shop at K-Mart.

Told her to save her new wardrobe for the weekends, Ms. Jemail went back to slacks and turtlenecks, although she did continue to accessorize them smartly.

For some months it seemed that her appearance had ceased to be an issue, but one day, following the school's annual Parent-Teacher Tobacco, Alcohol, Drug and Dangerous Substances Information Day and Picnic, a student noticed Ms. Jemail's strong facial resemblance to Joe Camel.

The student's parents complained to the school board, which informed Jemail that the district's consultant on federal compliance had advised them that under the U.S. Code of Ethical Advertising Targeting Minor Americans (USCEATMA) guidelines, her physical appearance amounted to an advertisement for a harmful substance within two hundred feet of a school. They ordered her to take immediate steps to minimize the resemblance, including, but not limited to, not wearing sunglasses in class. Jemail objected, citing a congenital vision problem that caused her to get headaches from bright light, and told the board that if it did not

rescind the directive she would contest it under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The board relented to the extent of allowing the dark glasses, but it ordered her to wear pink, heart-shaped frames whenever she was in school or at school-related activities, and also suggested that she let her hair grow to shoulder length and have it permed to diminish her likeness to the popular advertising icon. She was also told to stop wearing a cardigan to class over her



JOE CAMEL

turtleneck and advised to wear long, flowing, flower-print dresses instead.

Jemail acquiesced, at a cost of \$634 for which the board refused to reimburse her. While the similarity was considerably reduced by these changes, Ms. Jemail's private reservations about wearing flowing dresses and long hair in the science lab were borne out almost immediately when her hair caught fire during an experiment. Due to the quick thinking of a student who sprayed her with a fire extinguisher, she was saved, but the accident left her with very little hair, and the likeness to Joe Camel was once again quite pronounced, despite the heart-shaped pink sunglasses and her skillful use of cosmetics. A few days later, after a student was heard to quip that he had seen Joe Camel smoking in the science lab, her principal gave her an ultimatum: have a nose job or lose her job.

At Jemail's Board of Education hearing, she produced a box of photographs showing that she had always looked like a camel and that the resemblance had been apparent when she was hired. She told the board that throughout her childhood she had endured constant torment by classmates who had cruelly teased her about belonging in a zoo, and had had to undergo extensive psychological counseling before she had learned to accept herself as she was. She explained that Ms. Tarleton's order had induced flashbacks of the insecurity and self-loathing that had made her teen years nearly unbearable.

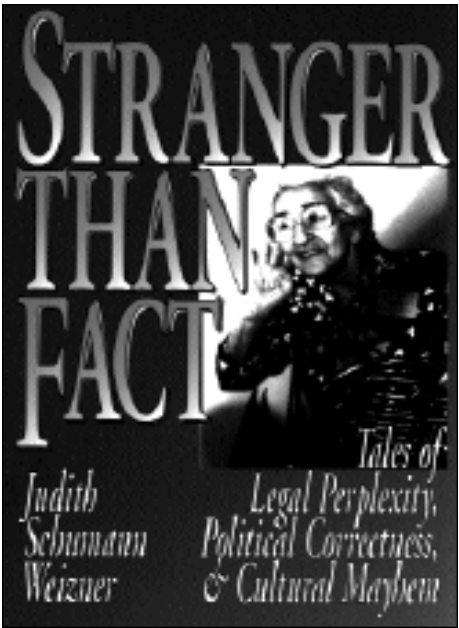
To support her ultimatum, Ms. Tarleton presented a spreadsheet created by the fourth grade computer workshop detailing the projected number of deaths from lung disease that would not occur if Ms. Jemail altered her appearance, and expressed her fear that if Ms. Jemail refused to cooperate, the district could be found in violation of USCEATMA. Citing the USCEATMA accountability inspector's warning that if the situation were not remedied the Smoky Ridge district could lose federal funding for its Attitude Development Workshops, Ms. Tarleton explained that the town council might then be forced to raise property taxes to fund the Workshops to keep the district compliant with a HEW directive 2002 requiring all schools to implement a Concept Harmonization Curriculum by the year 2002.

(The U.S. Code of Ethical Advertising Targeting Minor Americans was developed to guide the advertising industry in the production of ads that are simultaneously informative and educational, while promoting only safe products. Among the changes in advertising soon to become apparent is a prohibition on the use of animal images in ads aimed at children under the age of 27. To minimize the impact of advertising on children, ads for toys must be text-only, and must include the results of testing by the Surgeon General's Office. Last year, when the American Advertising Conference (AAC) reached a settlement with the Justice Department regarding the new standards for print, billboard and electronic media advertising, it also agreed to finance the establishment of a fund, not unlike the Superfund, to pay any health care costs associated with injuries caused by products advertised in ads produced under the Code. This agreement forestalled the implementation of more stringent standards advocated by the Children's Protection Project.)

Jemail protested that she could not undertake surgery, with its attendant risks, for the mere purpose of altering her appearance, and added that her looks had nothing to do with whether or not the students smoked.

Quoting a government study showing that people under the age of 43 are seven times more likely to begin smoking due to the influence of advertising than those over that age, the board upheld Ms. Tarleton's order and told Jemail that if she refuses to have the surgery before the beginning of the new school year, she will face dismissal for insubordination.

Ms. Jemail vows to appeal to the State Board of Education, and is simultaneously preparing to file suit in Federal Court, claiming the right to the peaceful enjoyment of her features, but legal experts believe that she could face an uphill battle depending on the disposition of a 1997 case to be argued before the Supreme Court this month. In that case, a Massachusetts lifestyles education teacher was ordered to undergo a sex change operation that his school board claimed would make him more sensitive to the needs of two transgendered high school juniors.



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