

# HETERO DOXY

ARTICLES AND ANIMADVERSIONS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES



## NITWIT FEMINISM

One night last April, American feminists, among them Gloria Steinem and National Organization for Women (NOW) president Patricia Ireland, met at the 25th anniversary of the Ms Foundation to hear Roseanne (who once grabbed her crotch while "singing" the national anthem) joke about Bill Clinton's reputed affair with an intern roughly the age of his daughter and excuse the man now revealed to be, if nothing else, a serial propper, because as she said, he is "cute."

This meeting of feminist nabobs was symbolic of the reasons that the Dulles chapter of NOW from the suburbs of Washington rebelled. The women of the Dulles chapter, disgusted with the radical feminist status quo, met with members of the scrappy and conservative Independent Women's Forum (once denounced as "dangerous" by Ireland) a month later to announce their intention to work together on harassment and possibly other issues; to urge the formation of a new women's movement; and to declare that feminism, as NOW has defined it, is dead.

What stuck in the craw of this dissident NOW chapter, the first one to issue such a bold challenge to the national organization? For one thing, the dismissive, even defamatory attitude of the national NOW leaders toward Paula Jones, a contempt they expressed at the same time they were pressing lesser



cases of sexual misconduct that did not involve Democrats. There was also NOW's apparent belief that Clinton's alleged seduction of a young girl in his employ was a harmless consensual "love affair." And NOW's silent, tacit endorsement of the "nuts and 'sluts'" attack by Clinton's friends on the women accusing him of improprieties. And NOW's incoherent and opportunistic position on the Presidential libido, including Ireland's reluctant statement calling the alleged groping of Kathleen Willey a "sexual assault," and then dropping the matter. Even NOW founder Betty Freidan and friend Susan Faludi said that Clinton's office assaults were in his "private life" and none of our business, and NOW halfheartedly considered a march to

the White House and then rejected the notion because, in Ireland's words, it would appear that the organization was "taking a side."

"This is nitwit feminism," said Marie-Jose Ragab, president of the Dulles chapter, which called for the resignation of the NOW national leadership on the grounds that it has made the organization into a laughing-stock and deserted not only the 15,000 women now seeking relief from sexual abuse through the nation's court system, but the founding ideals of a once-sensible movement. Planned to be democratic, NOW's leadership had made the organization repressive and marginal. Planned to unite women, it had made war on religion and families. Planned

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## DIVERSITY HITS THE BEACH AT MONTEREY BAY FUTURECAMPUS

by Paul Ciotti

A funny thing happened to California State University at Monterey Bay on its way to the 21st century. When it opened for business two years ago on the sandy dunes of what used to be the old army base at Fort Ord, campus officials did a nationwide search for progressive diversity-minded faculty, put together a new interdisciplinary social service-oriented curriculum, hired Chicano activists to staff the administration and then sat back to await what they hoped would be a flood of students from "historically under-served, under-educated and low-income populations."

But this rise of the underclass never happened. Contrary to administration hopes, the student body didn't come primarily from the families of strawberry and lettuce-field workers in nearby Salinas. Instead two-

thirds of the school's enrollment grew up in such wealthy white southern California beach communities as Santa Barbara, Santa Monica, Irvine, and Huntington Beach. To officials at the new campus, this was more than a shock. It also raised the disturbing possibility that critics of this "multilingual, multicultural, gender-equitable" school might have been right after all. Perhaps there had never been any need to build another campus in Monterey to serve "historically under-served" populations, or anyone else. Perhaps, most disturbing of all, the reason for building the school had never been educational anyway.

If the California State University at Monterey Bay is, as its boosters insist, "a campus for the 21st century," the future of education in this country is a good deal bleaker than perhaps most of us now realize. To get to the school you start at the Pacific Ocean, drive due east through sandy, wind-swept dunes, past long rows of

*Continued on page 12*

## COMMUNIQUÉS

## Murderously Angry, But Why?

I have often wondered at what, exactly, rappers like Ice Cube are so murderously angry. What fuels their seemingly limitless rage and hatred? Here is a group of young men that has found success and riches beyond the reach of many people, white or black. And they have succeeded in a country that they regard as a bastion of racism. How ironic that the hatred, bigotry, and violence that is espoused in so much of their music is on par with or greater than similar sentiments advanced by the most virulent white racists and anti-Semites. Ice Cube et al. have become more zealous bigots than their strawman "oppressors" ever were, and the revolutionary future envisioned by these hip-hop "gangstas" rivals in its horrors any of the great barbarisms we have witnessed in the twentieth century. Lastly, the true cowardice of Ice Cube and his like-minded fellows is apparent in their calls to "swarm" the suburbs and assault, rape, and murder defenseless whites. There are places in this country where true white racists live and congregate, who I'm sure would welcome with relish the sight of a hip-hop swarm coming their way.

Tom Gordon  
New York, NY

## Marcusian Socialism

David Horowitz's "150 Years of Evil" explodes with deserved anger at the *New York Times* for featuring a eulogy of Marx by English professor Steven Marcus. But Marcus merely proved that he had learned little since his 1974 Random House book, *Engels' Manchester and the Working Class*. That book was a eulogy of Engels' "The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1845" originally published in German, and read with avidity by Germans envious of England's burgeoning industrial power, eager to believe anything derogatory about it.

In fact, a recent edition of Engels' work by an eminent economic historian, the late William Otto Henderson, exposed thoroughly its many false and misleading assertions, and places Manchester's industrial history in proper context. But Marcus evidently neither knew nor cared what competent historians had to say about Engels' Manchester as representative of the down side of the Industrial Revolution in England. Marcus' Manchester was almost one hundred and fifty years out of date, so it is not surprising that his views today on the *Communist Manifesto* are equally out of date. What beguiles academics who cling to Marxian dogma in the face of its overwhelming repudiation by history? Is it because they see themselves in some way in the impressively bearded, monocled figure of Dr. Marx, with his academic pretensions and hunger for power? Perhaps if they read Henderson's masterful two-volume

biography of Engels, they would see that Marx was merely the man Engels, a high-school dropout, hired to flesh out and give an air of academic authority to his predictions of working-class revolution well before Marx had any interest in such ideas. What Engels called "Marxism" is primarily his own ideas—the ideas of Engels the patron, not of Marx the perpetually begging client. If these facts were known and accepted by those who have followed academic fashions, what Engels called "Marxism" might have lost its academic allure long ago.

Lawrence Cranberg  
Austin, TX

## Fables for our Times

A complaint! A valid complaint! The article by Judith Schumann Weizner in the last issue of *Heterodoxy* is truly a sad attempt at satire. Although I've a fairly well developed sense of humor and am able to generally ignore the occasional lapse of good taste or intelligent

cleverly ironical as to call *The Communist Manifesto* a "Sacred Document," so the enclosure has to be wholly *Heterodoxy's* work. I hope you never pull a boner like this again. It tends to call scorn and ridicule down upon the conservative press.

Unless you really did intend "profit" for "prophet," and the misspelling parodies a habit of the *Los Angeles Times* that I never heard of before—in which case I apologize for the foregoing.

Bob Leman  
Bethel Park, PA

## Much Rejoicing on the Internet

Where have you been all my life?! I pride myself on being well read; up to date on all the late breaking; sitting on the cutting edge of editorial/info... I've been lonely too. I must confess. I thought Pat Buchanan and me the only souls of Conservatism left in this country and then I stumble as it were into your website! Just a brief scan of what you have to say about your magazine is enough to whet my UnPC chops. I am between assignments at present and do not have \$25 to fork out for this subscription. I am bookmarking your site and will send in my check soon. I've got to have your magazine!

Ainsley Broussard  
via E-mail  
Austin, TX

## Academic Gulag

When I read the articles in *Heterodoxy* or some of the tidbits on your website, these disparate pieces of information appear to be similar to the sort of fragments that Solzhenitsyn used to assemble *The Gulag Archipelago*.

He secretly smuggled out small pieces of information from the individual camps and pieced together the wider story known as the evil empire. Based on many of the articles I've read, it seems that conservatives (or non-leftists) are forced to act like Marranos in the university setting and to secretly smuggle out bits of information on some of the secretive admission, promotion and teaching practices used by the university left.

The next step in the counter-revolution seems to me to be the creation of a work like Solzhenitsyn's that would galvanize informed opinion in the way that the *Gulag Archipelago* did. It would cover all the secretive practices and injustices perpetrated by the left on free inquiry and thought. It would need a catchy title like the *Gulag Archipelago* to attract attention. This sounds like an effort that you and Peter might like to undertake. It may very well be that the academic world in the Soviet Union was freer than it is here!

Larry Menzin  
Lexington, MA

# HETERODOXY

ARTICLES AND MINIMAL DEVIATIONS OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES

## WRITE TO US

With this double issue, *Heterodoxy* goes on its annual summer break. Expect to hear from us again around Labor Day, when we will be tan, rested, and ready to do battle with the commissars of political correctness once again.

Send your comments to Letters Editor,  
*Heterodoxy*, by mail:  
(P.O. Box 67398, Los Angeles, CA 90067)  
or by email: (bkepple@cspc.org)

writing, Ms. Weizner's effort does nothing more than hold *Heterodoxy* up to ridicule. Of course, its your prerogative as editor to do what you choose, but an article such as "Housewife Arrested" makes it altogether difficult for the less than sophisticated reader to accept *Heterodoxy* as a serious journal of conservative issues. As you know better than most, we need all the serious consideration and attention we can get. If you must print Ms. Weizner's "Stranger than Fact" articles, could you not clearly label them as "Fables for Our Beleaguered Times?" In doing so you would avoid the likely misunderstanding of why you printed the articles in the first place. For the record, I bought two of Ms. Weizner's *Stranger Than Fact* books, one for myself and one for our daughter and enjoy reading them. So I guess I qualify as a fan.

Gene Trimble  
Sun City, CA

## Satire Brings Scorn on Conservative Press

It's certain that the *Los Angeles Times* would never dream of publishing a headline so

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# REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

**HOIST ON THEIR OWN PETARDO:** As Roger Clegg points out, the proponents of bilingual education have long tried to bolster their support for bilingual education by invoking two federal laws, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the EEOA. But now, as the pro-bilingual forces design their lawsuit in the wake of the smashing victory of California's Proposition 227, these two laws may well turn out to be a double-edged sword. Title VI bans any federally funded program from discriminating on the basis of national origin. The EEOA requires each public school system "to take appropriate action to overcome language

barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs." If bilingual education were the only way to teach children English, the anti-227-forces lawsuit, based on these statutes, might have some plausibility. But Proposition 227 calls for another, more effective, method of instruction—rapid immersion in English. It is therefore hard to understand how the rejection of bilingual education can be seen as a failure to "overcome language barriers" in violation of the EEOA, let alone as "discrimination" on the basis of national origin in violation of Title VI. Meanwhile, in an interesting twist, the opponents of bilingual education have begun to use Title VI and the EEOA against it. Supporters of Proposition 227 can point out that children who already speak English are frequently placed in bilingual programs simply because they are Hispanic, which is discrimination on the basis of national origin. The mounting empirical evidence against the educational efficacy of bilingual programs is also enabling their opponents to use the EEOA in attacking them. The courts have interpreted this statute as requiring any language program to pass a three-part test, the last prong of which demands that the program actually produce successful results. Bilingual education's documented failures, particularly as measured by standardized tests in specific school districts, make it a ripe target. What's more, school systems have refused even to test many children in bilingual programs, making it easier to hide the programs' failures.

**MASTERS OF THEIR DOMAIN:** Network Solutions, the private company that contracts with the government to register Internet domain names sites ending with .com or .org, recently allowed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to register six names with the word "nigger," and the Anti-Defamation League another six with the word "kike." The NAACP intends to use its new domains to create Web sites for combating racism. The ADL bought its new names to prevent anti-Semites from getting them. It doesn't plan to use the names. Previously the names were blocked, but then were released to organizations deemed P.C. enough to use them responsibly. Officially, Network Solutions has denied use of only seven off-color words familiar to anyone who knows George Carlin's comedy routine. It even allowed registration of a site whose name represents extreme homophobia. But the two words in question were deemed so sensitive that they had to be given out preemptively to organizations that would use them for the greater good. Nobody holds much hope for people who use hate words, but the Internet doesn't need Big Brother. Also, how many hits will those NAACP sites get?

**PRESIDENT OF STRONG DRIVES:** A new Clinton biography calls the President "young, promising and elegant." It accuses American news media of fabricating the charges that have destabilized his Presidency and says that the Republican Party is guilty of bashing him just so it can return to power. This book says that Clinton is handsome and says it is no wonder so many women have claimed to have had affairs with him. So, is *Clinton: A President of Strong Drives* written by Sidney Blumenthal or some other toady to the President, or a publication of

representations of women who desired other women in Western Europe from the 15th-17th centuries. Focusing on England and Italy, with forays into France, Germany, Spain and Holland, we will read early modern texts (poems, drama, opera, mythology, prints, paintings, domestic artifacts, pornography, and medical writing), as well as contemporary theorizing about lesbianism. Charting continuities and discontinuities between early modern conceptions and twentieth century ones, we will investigate the extent to which a coherent history of lesbianism exists."

## LUNA BEACH By Carl Moore



the Democratic National Committee? No, it is a book that recently appeared on the bookshelves of Beijing. Even though it was worshipful, it was apparently still considered a potential embarrassment because of chapters on the sex follies in the White House. So Chinese officials confiscated remaining copies of the books in anticipation of the Presidential visit. We can imagine the deal struck behind closed doors: you get rid of the book and I won't say anything about Tianamen Square

**BUT IS IT ART?:** The University of Michigan's Art History Department regularly offers Art History 394, "Special Topics." The topic for Section 002 is very special, perhaps even bizarre. "Crossing Erotic Boundaries: Representations of Lesbianism in Early Modern Western Europe," will be offered by Pat Simons, associate professor in art history and women's studies. Simons is the author of such gems of scholarship as *Alert and Erect: Masculinity in Some Italian Renaissance Portraits of Fathers and Sons*, and *(Check)-Mating the Grand Masters: The Gendered, Sexualized Politics of Chess in Renaissance Italy*. The following description gives a sense of what the students in the class are up against: "We will examine the varieties of rep-

**GORE FOR UNPRESIDENT:** In his 1992 book *Earth in the Balance*, then-Senator Al Gore attacked the automobile industry as a destroyer of the environment and recommended the abolition of the internal-combustion engine, writing that cars posed "a mortal threat to the security of every nation." But as he gears up for a presidential run in 2000, the Vice President is apparently ready to jettison these core values. Speaking last month before the Economic Club of Detroit—and undoubtedly hoping a few of the United Automobile Workers' 800,000 members were listening in—Gore was overcome by the romance of the road. "Here in Motor City, we recognize that cars have done more than fuel our commerce," he gushed. "Cars have freed the American spirit and given us the chance to chase our dreams."

**GORE FOR UNPRESIDENT II:** Just to show that he is cool and hip and able to tell a jump shot from a cheap shot, Al Gore issued congratulations from the administration to the Chicago Bulls after they eliminated the Utah Jazz. He said all the usual things about this remarkable dynasty and then came to the subject of its star, and began to rhapsodize about the great Bulls guard, "Michael JACKSON." One might think that Gore had fallen into the syndrome of "they all look alike," but no one looks like Michael Jackson, certainly not the great Michael Jordan.



## Walter Cronkite Doesn't Tell It the Way It Is Interfaith Lefties

by Mark Tooley

**W**alter Cronkite, for a generation the most trusted man in America, is now lending his reputation to a coalition of religious left-wingers who use people such as the former CBS anchor to bash Christian conservatives in order to make themselves seem "mainstream."

"For many, many years, I did my best to report on the issues of the day in as objective a manner as possible," Cronkite wrote in a recent fund-raising letter for the Interfaith Alliance, a religious opponent of the Christian Coalition. "Now, however, my circumstances are different. I am in a position to speak my mind." In the words that follow, Cronkite castigates the "religious right-wing" as a "genuinely radical movement" with a "militant ideology" that is "wrapping their harsh right-wing views in the banner of religious faith."

Standing against what Cronkite sees as "the forces of extremism and division" is the Interfaith Alliance, whose national board, he believes, includes "some of America's most distinguished religious leaders," people who are as "diverse as America."

Walter Cronkite has been conned. In truth, the Interfaith Alliance's board is about as diverse as a Soviet politburo during the empire's final, geriatric years. Yes, some were bald, others had bushy eyebrows. Some came from Leningrad, others from Minsk. Some were septuagenarians, others were octogenarians. But the diversity of Soviet leadership didn't extend any farther than this. So too for the Interfaith Alliance, founded in 1994, whose board is comprised almost entirely of the tired voices of 1960s church activism, the last era of glory for the Religious Left.

There are the usual suspects from the reliably anachronistic National Council of Churches. There are two Catholic bishops from the church's left-fringe. Three liberal rabbis. And several black denominational leaders who shun the social conservatism typical of most black churches.

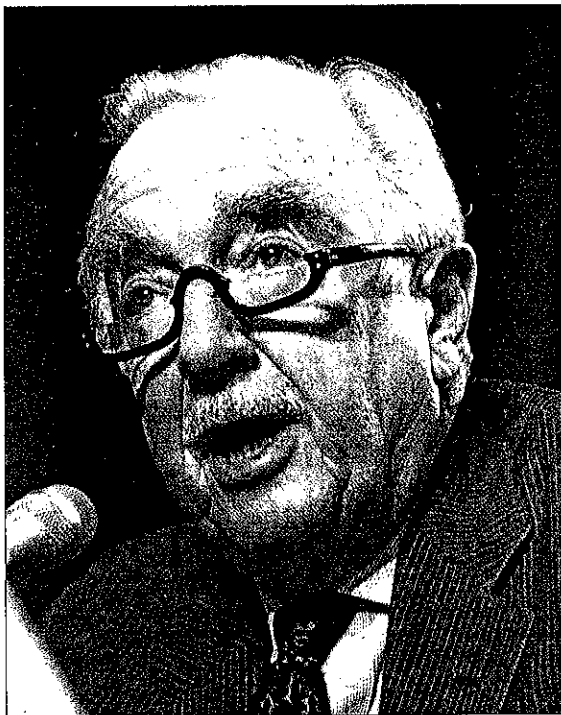
And how about the "wide spectrum" of opinion? The Alliance board includes defenders of partial-birth abortions, advocates of homosexual marriage, opponents of welfare reform, outspoken critics of U.S. national security interests, and apologists for Marxist regimes. On core theological and sexual issues, they disagree even with the teachings of their own denominations. The Alliance did not even bother to procure a token evangelical spokesman to give the organization cover.

The Alliance bemoans the politicization of religion and is deeply offended by the Religious Right's partiality to Republicans. "The Alliance succeeded in revealing the Christian Coalition's partisan core, lifting their veil of religious authenticity," gloated Alliance Vice President J. Philip Wogaman after the 1996 presidential election. (For his day job, he pastors the United Methodist church in Washington that President Clinton attends with the First Lady.) In deriding the Christian Coalition's partisanship, Wogaman did not mention the Alliance's own receipt of \$25,000 from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in start-up money. Nor did he mention the "soft" campaign cash that the Alliance received from Project 96, a \$4 million effort by Democratic Party activists

and labor unions to unseat House Republicans last year. Project 96 funded the distribution of Alliance voter guides in several key congressional races.

Walter Cronkite should consider carefully the résumés of Interfaith Alliance leaders before opposing the Religious Right as outside the mainstream.

According to Interfaith Alliance President Albert Pennybacker, "Religion should never be used as a weapon to promote a political agenda or to wage a culture war." But the hollowness



WALTER CRONKITE

of these words is apparent when one considers that Pennybacker is also chief of the Washington lobby office of the National Council of Churches, which is not commonly known for its reluctance to speak politically in behalf of left causes.

At the NCC's fall 1996 board meeting, the organization's General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell, who is herself an Alliance board member, boasted of the NCC's role in establishing the Alliance.

Like most on the Interfaith Alliance board, Pennybacker and Campbell have long histories of liberal political activism. Both visited with Bill Clinton in early 1995 to offer the NCC's solidarity against the Republican Congress. Both have exploited—and distorted—the arsons of black churches to enrich the NCC's "racial justice" political campaign, which equates political conservatism with white supremacy.

Campbell joined with Alliance board member Edmond Browning, the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, in a highly controversial 1990 visit with Iraqi officials in Baghdad on the eve of the U.S.-led liberation of Kuwait. During U.S. military operations, both condemned perceived American "aggression." Both are favorably disposed towards the homosexual movement. Without official NCC backing, Campbell has demonstrated for homosexual rights, while Bishop Browning has testified before Congress on behalf of "gay marriage."

In 1996 Browning joined Interfaith

Alliance board members Wogaman and John Swomley of United Methodist St. Paul's School of Theology in Kansas City to oppose legislation that would have outlawed partial-birth abortions. Wogaman, who has authored a tract for what was once called the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (now called "Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice"), decried that such a ban would be "unfeeling."

Wogaman has in the past called himself a "democratic socialist." In the 1980s he wrote that socialism "can claim modest but real economic success" in Cuba and China. The United Methodist pastor outspokenly favors the ordination of practicing homosexuals into the ministry. In 1995 Wogaman hosted a symposium on homosexuality and shared his pulpit with the iconoclastic Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong, well known for such surreal statements as his claim that St. Paul was a "self-hating gay man." (Wogaman got into the act too, implying that King David himself might have also been a gender bender.)

Swomley, is a retired seminary professor who is renowned more for his far-left activism than his theology. In 1994 he visited communist North Korea, after which he wrote a glowing report for a United Methodist magazine in praise of the Stalinist dictatorship. Swomley heads the American Committee on Korea, which has defended North Korea's nuclear program.

Former Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderator Herbert Valentine, another Interfaith Alliance board member, once led his denomination's general assembly in a Native American "smudging ceremony," during which a tribal shaman blew away the evil spirits with incense and smoke, astonishing devout Calvinists. In 1993 Valentine defended the church's participation in the radical feminist Re-Imagining Conference, which ignited a nationwide uproar over its goddess worship and celebration of lesbianism.

Of course, no left-wing board could be without its people of color. Alliance board member Amos Brown, pastor of the largest black congregation west of the Mississippi, the Third Baptist Church in San Francisco, endorsed California state legislation in 1994 that would have legalized same-gender marriage. Three years earlier, he testified against Clarence Thomas, whose Supreme Court nomination he called "disgraceful and an insult to African Americans." Brown defended boxer Mike Tyson in 1992 after he was convicted of rape. Even if guilty, Tyson should be punished no more than (acquitted) William Kennedy Smith, Brown declared. Brown joined in a National Organization of Women "Fight the Right" march in 1996. More recently he has condemned Billy Graham, who was planning a San Francisco crusade, for not actively opposing Proposition 209, the California Civil Rights Initiative.

Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit is active in the radical Call to Action, a dissident Catholic group whose leaders have advocated goddess worship, the cause *du jour* for religious feminists. In 1993 he told demonstrators against the Persian Gulf War that the U.S.-led effort to liberate Kuwait from Iraq was "naked in its immorality." Formerly leader of the leftist Catholic peace group Pax Christi, Gumbleton has frequently been arrested for acts of civil disobedience at U.S. military installations. In the 1980s the bishop vigorously defended the Sandinista dicta-



THE CLINTONS WITH PASTOR J. PHILIP WOGAMAN IN BACKGROUND



AMOS BROWN, PASTOR OF THE THIRD BAPTIST CHURCH IN SAN FRANCISCO

torship in Nicaragua, calling the U.S. embargo against the Marxist regime "illegal and immoral." Gumbleton criticized Pope John Paul II for not understanding "the roots of the revolution and how popular that revolution was." Explained the bishop, "The enemy is the United States."

Other Alliance board members include Unitarian Universalist Moderator Denise Davidoff, who is an outspoken proponent of homosexual marriage and abortion rights. At her denomination's 1995 assembly, she supported an effort by self-professed pagans to institute "earth-centered" worship services, whose New Age ties disturbed even many theologically conservative Unitarians.

There is also former American Jewish Congress President Arthur Hertzberg, who now teaches at Dartmouth and is a regular spokesman for liberal causes. Other Jewish leaders were frequently irked by his outspoken criticism of Israeli national security policies. In the 1980s he joined other left-leaning religious figures in denouncing the Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars") as a "system of security based on fear and intimidation." As he once boasted, "I am as liberal left as you can be within the organized Jewish community."

Foy Valentine is a former Southern Baptist official who later became president of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, which adopts an absolutist position against voluntary, organized school prayer and other public displays of traditional religious faith. His support for the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights raised the ire of fellow Baptists, who successfully pushed for his early retirement as chief of the convention's Christian Life Commission.

Perhaps most vitriolic among the Interfaith Alliance spokesmen is Presbyterian minister Robert Meneilly of Kansas City, who has likened the Religious Right to Hitlerism. "We are seeing a new version of ethnic cleansing right here in the United States," he thundered irrationally. Meneilly has said that religions conservatives are a "worse threat than communism," and are "cultic, detestable, and criminal."

It was a sermon and subsequent *New York Times* op-ed by Meneilly in 1993 warning of the threat of "theocracy" in America that fueled the Interfaith Alliance's creation.

Catholic Bishop Francis Murphy of Baltimore opposed spending on SDI in the 1980s and called the U.S. war in the Persian Gulf "immoral." Demanding Saddam Hussein's withdrawal from Kuwait left no room for consideration of Iraq's legitimate grievances, the Bishop said.

Former Episcopal Church executive Diane Porter is a trustee of the Episcopal General Seminary in New York City, where she hailed a

new policy welcoming "committed same-sex couples" as a step forward for the church. She participated in a 1994 summit of black leaders organized by the NAACP in which Louis Farrakhan was enthusiastically received.

Knighton Stanley pastors Peoples Congregational Church in Washington, D.C. He opposed the Persian Gulf War as the "legacy of American racism and cultural arrogance." (In a truly bizarre aside, he blamed the failure of U.S. intelligence to detect Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on "the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in our foreign policy establishment.") In 1995 Stanley helped edit a United Church of Christ hymnal into a politically correct song book in which God is both Mother and Father.

Gardner Taylor, a New York Baptist preacher, is not reluctant to employ a pulpit for politics. "We are in the midst of a new and unbecoming and untoward movement in our land. It's called a Contract with America," he intoned at a worship service attended by President Clinton in 1995. Only four years before, Taylor had joined other leftist church leaders in deriding the U.S. effort in the Persian Gulf War as "wrong, unnecessary, unprincipled—in violation of all standards of fundamental human rights." When introducing Nelson Mandela in 1990, Taylor alleged that the United States "by precept and example taught South Africa the structure of apartheid."

William P. Thompson is a Presbyterian minister who has served on the governing boards of the National and World Councils of Churches (WCC). During the 1980s he assailed U.S. policies in Central America while defending the Sandinista regime, once paying a "solidarity" visit to the Nicaraguan foreign minister and president. As chair of a WCC drafting committee, Thompson blocked efforts to condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Interfaith Alliance advocates "tolerance" and "diversity." But its leaders are nearly uniform in rejecting the historic teachings of their denominations regarding sexuality and many core theological beliefs. (For example, the Rev. Wogaman has warned that insisting on Jesus' Virgin Birth has "hurt" many people.) They vaguely celebrate "faith," but they cannot as a group affirm the traditional faith of Christians and Jews in the God of the Bible. Their real faith is in the outdated political conventions of the secular Left.

Only a single Alliance board member identifies himself as a Republican. And as an outspoken critic of welfare reform and defender of homosexual causes, the Rev. Meneilly is hardly a typical Midwestern member of the GOP. Several board members might be described as mainstream liberals. But most are well to the left of typical Democrats.

Offering no positive vision of its own, the

Alliance falls short of its demands for "civility" by demonizing its opponents as bigots. For religious conservatives, the Alliance is hardly a nuisance, much less a threat. The Alliance summons its support from the *effete curia* of declining churches and elicits its attention from a media anxious to dismiss religious conservatives as a serious force.

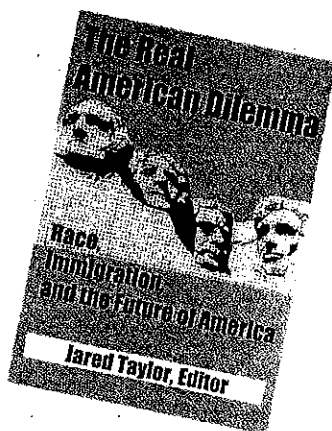
Walter Cronkite, perhaps a dupe of Alliance propaganda, seems to have understood none of this. "Will you help the Interfaith Alliance in saying 'No' to religion as a political cover?" he implores in his fund-raising letter. It never seems to have occurred to him that the Religious Left, including many of the Alliance's present leaders, enlisted America's churches in their political crusades starting decades ago. The resulting moral vacuum ensured that a Christian Coalition would be born to fight against these subversive tendencies.

And that's the way it is.



Mark Tooley is on the staff of the Institute for Religion and Democracy.

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## The End of Theory

by Thomas F. Bertonneau

For years the books accumulated on makeshift shelves, in grocery cartons, spilling over into chaotic piles and stacks on the floor. Many bore the same imprint, the University of Minnesota Press, and represented installments in an ongoing series devoted to contemporary critical theory, the newest, the latest, the slickest. Others, from the hallowed printers at Harvard and Yale, jostled for position. They swarmed after us—my wife and I—like a pack of furies as we moved from one West Los Angeles apartment to another during our graduate school years, and they followed us east, to Michigan, occupying a disproportionate and bulky niche, among our ratty furnishings, in the moving van. When the baby came, they migrated downstairs, where they stood, doubled up on the shelves, against all four walls in what ought to have been the TV room. As books do, especially when stored away, they acquired a musty aroma and yellowed at the margins with age.

These were not the academic paperbacks (seventy-five cents or a dollar) of the 1950s and '60s. Under the category of the trade paperback, they had cost me dearly. They crowded other, less pretentious volumes from the home library. Bedeviled by a Puritan determination not to waste, I devoted uncountable hours to the actual reading of these texts (to use a somewhat suspect term), not only while enrolled in the graduate seminars offered by UCLA's English Department, but, so to speak, on my own. I did not therefore crack the spine of De Man or Derrida merely because Joe Riddel, himself a minor academic star, assigned them. Clearly, on the Westwood campus in the 1980s, wisdom lay enshrined under these names, and no one who pretended to critical sophistication could afford, publicly at any rate, to disdain them.

Real critics ought insistently to ask their colleagues when and where and under what motive they first took up *Of Grammatology*, the oracular disposition that catapulted the obscure Derrida of the École Normale, Paris, into academic celebrity in America. And the questioner should put due emphasis on motive. In my case, terror motivated me: The terror of a callow student admitted to graduate courses in his final undergraduate year who needed, on impulse, without reflecting on the matter, to demonstrate to his professorial mentors and fellow students alike that he knew how to be intellectually hip and how not to be square. What I identified as "my" hunger for the opaque discourse of then-contemporary academy really stemmed, to invoke a bit of verbiage, from postmodernism itself, from "the other." From a veritable legion of "others." From people at Berkeley or Brown who (as one's imagination supplied it) stood on the frontier of theory and looked back at us as at stragglers in a benighted distance. The fact that the UCLA student bookstore had trouble keeping the latest books of literary theory in stock proves that many lived in the same anxiety of being surpassed as I did.

My memory still fixes the first time that

deconstruction impinged on my attention in a way that compelled me to attend to it. Ross Shideler (an insightful authority on Strindberg, Valéry, and much else) offered a seminar on the Symbolist poets, of which people who had taken it spoke highly. As I had outgrown undergraduate courses and had earned tentative acceptance into the graduate Comparative Literature Program, Professor Shideler (to whom, I wish to make it clear, I owe much) invited me to participate with the graduate fellows. In the matter of Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry, Rilke, and Crane, I could hold

sensitive recoil from all institutions, from everything not created by poetic imagination and so not under the control of the aesthetic imperative to order and beautify life. Perhaps, I thought at the time, this was not so different from what Matthias meant, except that I thought the poem an aesthetic success, a precocious use of language evocative of the very transcendence for which its lyric subject yearns ("fazure"), even if he yearns ineffectively. And I had no idea what the terms "inscribed" and "aporia" meant in Matthias's recondite use.

But the point is not Mallarmé, nor even the snobishness implied by the "in" language of would-be literary critics. The point is the resentment—mine—which caused me to impute to the verbal mystifications of my peers a type of *being* from which I felt myself—callow, uninitiated, arriviste—emphatically excluded. In a general way, without subscribing to particular doctrines, Professor Shideler probably approved of the *au courant* attitude which the more advanced students exhibited through their use of the avant-garde terms, and he probably made gestures, overt or subliminal, of this approval. (Shideler, a thoroughly decent man, was never a deconstructor, but he did like to appear hip; indeed, he was hip.) Professorial approval of the new rhetoric could only inflame resentment the more and determine the outsider (myself) to acquire the being, the ontological solidity, that the words seemed to bestow on those who uttered them. Many voices seemed suddenly to be whispering in my inner self urging me to be like the others, to do as they did, speak as they spoke. And this required me to read as they read, to speak as they spoke. All of those "aporias," "inscriptions," and "deferrals" were something I had to master. Soon the cashier at the student bookstore took from me the then stiff price of twelve dollars for Gayatri Spivak's translation of *Of Grammatology* (the title forces the absurd reiteration of the preposi-

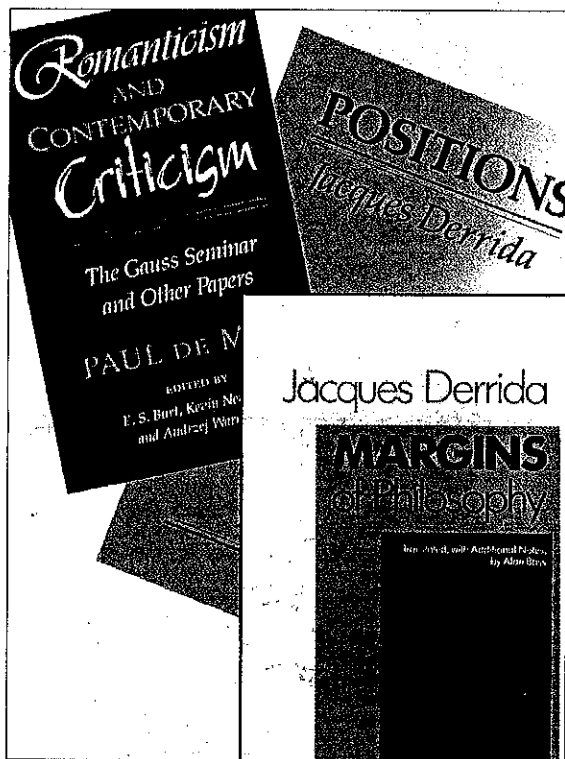
tion), from the University of Chicago Press.

So began the cascade of tomes, but not only of tomes, but rather of polysyllables, postures, and pseudo-paradoxes as well. Call it a pyramid to folly.

Although deconstruction presents itself as the final demystification of myth (the *White Mythology* by which, according to Derrida, the West has perpetually justified its supposed brutal pragmatism), it is itself a myth, a fable for intellectuals, as dependent on vocabulary charisma as any medieval abracadabra. And an abracadabra, a hocus-pocus in chorus, drowned out serious literary studies in those days, as it sadly still does. The many voices whispering inwardly for me to join in the recitation merely echoed the many voices soliciting me outwardly to be like them. It was a context in which the rush to be different always produced unwitting, not to say witless, uniformity.

As we added *Margins, Dissemination*, and *The Post Card* to our personal libraries, and De Man and Lyotard to Derrida—and then Culler and Norris because the rest proved, if truth be told, mainly indecipherable—the psychic turbulence of it made us ever giddier and ever more stupid.

The character of graduate seminars in theory at UCLA around 1986 or '87 resists description for two reasons. In the first place, the intellectual level of the student contributions remained quite low, which resulted from the students' fundamental ignorance of primary texts and tradi-



my own; knowing some of the Scandinavian and Slavic Symbolists even gave me a slight advantage. I knew some philosophy as well and could boast a fairly wide reading in mystics like Boehme and Swedenborg, who exercised considerable influence on Baudelaire and Mallarmé. I lacked one thing, however: a familiarity with the odd new vocabulary being tossed around sportively by the other participants in the seminar. Matthias and Carol (I avoid surnames) appeared particularly adept in this branch of diction, dispensing terms like "binary opposition," and "phallogocentrism" with a studied insouciance. (A raised eyebrow or a slight smile at the corner of the mouth when using such terms strikes me now as having betrayed the self-satisfaction of someone who can make a secret sign or convince others of his status by a cryptic handshake. "Look at me," the locutions seemed to say, in what post-structuralists themselves like to call a "subtext.")

Matthias, already preparing his examinations for the master's degree, casually dismissed Mallarmé's *Les fenêtres* (*The Windows*) as an "enactment" (a word which now so irritates me that I can hardly bear to hear or read it) of the "failure of phallogocentrism" to inscribe its own aporia and claimed that it therefore signified "the sterility of writing as such." The phrase *as such* figured as the tag in many academic locutions at the time, as did the topic of "writing," always invoked in the most tenuous and non-empirical way. Now in my humble view, *Les fenêtres* bespoke a poet's



tional commentary, to which the fatuousness and intolerance of post-structuralism led. In the second place, the professors had relinquished their responsibility as custodians and transmitters of knowledge; they no longer pretended to be authoritative judges of intellectual work. We spent weeks in one of Joe Riddel's seminars discussing the chapters in *Of Grammatology* on Rousseau and in *Dissemination* on Plato. Not once, in my memory, did Riddel suggest or better yet insist that anyone read Rousseau's *On the Origin of Language* or Plato's *Phaedrus*. Still less did any of us on his own think to look into the massive existing literature on these subjects. Neither Rousseau's text nor Plato's needs many pages, and neither uses a specialist's vocabulary. All participants in the seminar could have read both of them on Monday of the first week and doing so would have obviated a great deal of narcissistic palaver. A perusal of Irving Babbitt's *Rousseau and Romanticism*, first published in 1919, would have demonstrated that none of Derrida's "aporias" were new; and a little knowledge of the *Metaphysics* would have divulged that Aristotle doubted the existence of Plato's ideas several millennia before the father of deconstruction.

Instead of primary sources we endured a belated Dadaism of the most depressed and most derivative grade, as unread geniuses in their mid-twenties followed the leader in annihilating all truths of the two-thousand-year Western tradition. Most student discourse in the class stemmed from awkward puns (a sickness still afflicting the humanities). Or the homily on "insides and outsides," a "binary opposition" beloved by the avant-garde, during which the presenter rattled an ornate box with something undisclosed inside it which made a curious noise. Could anyone resist taking the bait? No. And would the presenter say what produced the curious noise? No. Petulantly no. The degree of his petulance, moreover, set the degree of peer-approbation. As to the content of the talk, I remember nothing, nor did anyone else within ten minutes of the presenter having ended it. But everyone remembered the box. Metaphorically, at any rate, no one afterwards could get away with a class presentation without rattling a box. Matthias, of whom I spoke above, ended up extolling the virtues of self-published homosexual pornography at the MLA, no doubt underwritten by a travel grant from the UCLA graduate student fund. Many women, having read the chapter in Jonathan Culler's *On Deconstruction* called "Reading as (like) a Woman," exhibited their scholarly originality by reading as (like) a woman; and many men followed suit.

Since this essay constitutes, in part, a confession, I should admit my own contribution to the circus. Impressed by the Derridean model of a "double text," a species of essay that argues its argument both ways, or merely randomly contradicts itself, the would-be deconstructor laboriously produced, on a typewriter, an essay on Wallace Stevens and Paul Valéry which, in some manner now mercifully forgotten, had it both ways about both of them. The paper made a favorable impression on Joe Riddel, who usually remained aloof. (He gave high marks to all his students, of course, even to the fellow with the rattling box and to Matthias, but he rarely praised them.) At the time, my wife (not yet my wife, but in the prospect) expressed a certain disregard for the enterprise. But why? I wondered aloud. No one else had written such a paper (we all exchanged papers) and the professor had acknowledged mine. It appeared to me that I had squelched the terror of being "out" while other students were "in" by mastering the charismatic words of the deconstructive seminar, the audacious style, the superior pose. She frowned and went back to work on her primary texts from the French Renaissance. Susan

spoke in only one voice, my unconscious rationale prompted me, whereas the faculty, the graduate students *en masse*, and all those books spoke with a voice like a cataract. Denying truths, free-associating from the text, revealing the ubiquity of delusion and power—these activities overpowered us, or at least overpowered our reason.

So how came it, then, that a few years later I drove to the Curious Book Store on Grand River Avenue in East Lansing, the trunk of the Taurus packed with brightly colored soft-cover books boxed up in moving cartons, to sell the lot happily for a fraction of the original (quite horrifying) outlay? What could provide the catalyst for what amounted to a conversion, so that, when proprietor Ray Walsh and I exchanged fifty dollars for a hundred and fifty pounds of books, a long enduring pressure lifted from my soul and a something like my real self made its welcome reappearance? How was it that instead of struggling in the

level of grammar and diction, to outline the sentences by explaining the function of a subordinate clause, and even to point out that words in description of nature actually point to nature and that much in nature is beautiful. When Wordsworth wrote that "the world is too much with us," he was talking about the abstractions that mark intellection for its own sake and tug the person into a state of insubstantial delusion.

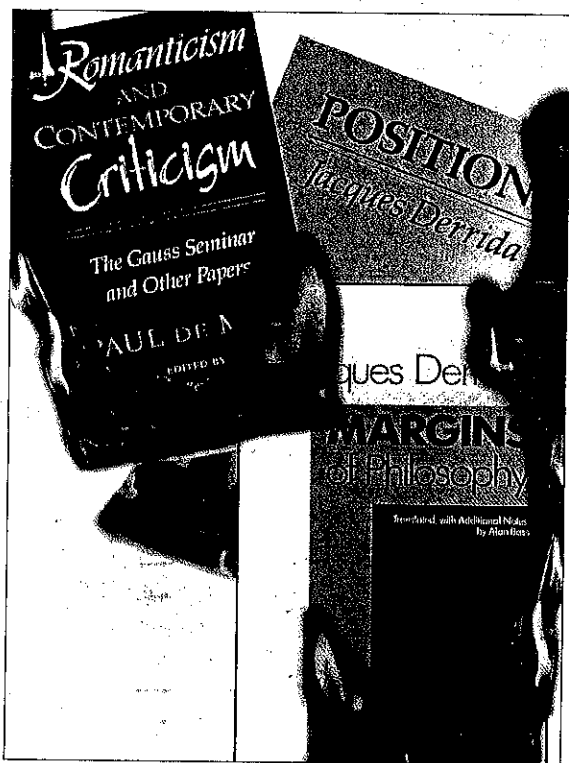
Of course, one did not have to approach one's teaching assignment this way. Matt Schneider, who shared the office with me and became my friend, noted that while he and I did, others conspicuously did not. We often heard them talking about how their students resisted their attempt to convey the deconstructive view that poems and stories are never "about" something but consist merely of "signs" in arbitrary conjunction with one another. ("I baffled them today," one of these would-be teachers once said,

over a self-satisfied smile, as if it were an accomplishment.) "This is destructive," Matt said to me over lunch in the Kerekhoff Coffee House, "it's immoral." He then amended his statement: "It is bullshit."

It was also politics. It soon dawned on me that perfecting the deconstructive litany served a quite specific purpose beyond itself. Despite the postmodern denial that words signify anything, that great mass of Derrideanisms did signify—I would say invariably—that one had adopted the standard left-wing politics of the post-war (of the post-cold war) humanities. The Soviet Union had not yet self-deconstructed in those days, but the Afghan war had stained once more the image of the workers' paradise, contaminating Marxism itself in the process. Reagan's re-election in 1984 indicated, at the same time, a national consensus that excluded the political Left in a resounding way. Circumstances necessitated, then, a new stealth-Marxism, so that the committed could continue their commitment under a less obvious guise. Foucault, although he enjoyed wide currency, was too overtly Marxist and did not quite fill the bill. (He would later reappear with a vengeance.) Derrida did fill the bill. So did Lyotard. So did Frederic Jameson, because his pedantry concealed his rancor. But Derrida more than the others provided an indirect vocabulary for conducting what the Left, in all sincerity, describes

as its critique of ideology. It was politics with a vengeance. My buddy in comparative literature, Tom Haeussler, remarked to me one Friday afternoon that, oddly, the preponderance of departmental boons seemed to fall to a select and invariable group of students, and that these students tended to have close relations with the program's most politicized professor. I said to Tom that my tolerance for ideological professors and their politicized students had shrunk considerably. "Mine too," he said.

When I told Susan about my growing predicament, she recommended an alternative. Extract yourself from the whole phony business, she said. Go study with Eric Gans, a serious teacher who entertained no ideology, who intuited a stable human nature and felt certain that he could make positive statements about it. I did this, and here, immediately, I discovered a mentor with his own ideas, one who stood apart from the babble of neologisms and the ubiquitous uptightness of faculty and students alike. There were tell-tale signs of the man's philosophical soundness which one remarked right away. For instance, Gans blithely ignored the politically correct ban against smoking in the classrooms. Never has an acrid cloud of second-hand vapor from chain-smoked Gauloises been so refreshing. He exhibited, in those days, a slightly overweight jollity and genuine happiness in dialogue with his students. He has since made himself athletic, but the friendliness, the helpfulness, has not diminished in the



mental sea-currents, as I had for years, I made my way to the local Tower Records and happily spent my loot on CDs of Beethoven and Bruckner in performances with Wilhelm Furtwängler leading the Berlin Philharmonie?

The source of this radical change of heart lay back in graduate school, where an increasing discord between the theoretical and the real intruded into my attempt to harmonize myself with the murmur of the transfixed crowd. Graduate students in comparative literature and English at UCLA earn their keep term by term in the teaching of service courses, like freshman composition or the mandatory freshman introduction to literature. The teaching fellows, as the departments call them, share offices in Royce Hall and Haines Hall, six or seven to a room. Teaching freshman composition quickly reminded me that language basics like grammar and diction have nothing to do with a "logocentric conspiracy." They function as instruments enabling people to express themselves clearly and consistently. Helping badly educated freshmen to acquire the rudiments of adult discourse meant that I had to do the opposite of what I had been doing in seminar. The new situation required me to speak clearly, not obscurely, to produce written models of self-evident argumentation, and to find readings for the students, which themselves exhibited these characteristics.

To get eighteen-year-olds to understand a sonnet by Wordsworth, one needed to begin at the

least. Where deconstructors in English prattled on about Plato, Gans actually knew Greek, and dealt, in detail, with the original text; where deconstructors casually tossed around the names of Kant and Hegel, Gans had read Kant and Hegel, in German. I intend to say little more in detail about Gans here; but I do wish to underscore the concreteness of his discourse and his joy in both the beauty and the insight of literature. One could visit the man during consultation hours and conduct an ordinary conversation. Not a trace of pretentiousness. Schneider and Haeussler agreed with me.

One other thing: Gans had studied with René Girard, and he helped the French graduate students bring Girard to campus for a talk. This was, I believe, in 1986. At this point, I was not yet on my later, familiar terms with Gans, and still had attachments to the deconstructionists, despite growing misgivings. In seeking for the discrete event that clarified my confusion and turned me in a new direction, Girard's visit strikes me as that event. Good advertising brought out a big crowd, which filled the lecture room in the northwest corner of Royce Hall, all dark wood and plush carpeting, with magnificent views of the Brentwood Hills through the big windows. Girard's announced topic, "deconstruction and sacrifice," naturally piqued interest. And I suspect that, knowing little about Girard, most of those present expected something other than what they heard.

Enthused about the (half-understood) Nietzschean idea of "the Dionysian," used to the violent diction so important to Derrida, and infatuated by revolutionary rhetoric, many of those who came to see Girard that day probably expected the obligatory verbal sacrifice performed on tradition. They no doubt also foresaw a staid performance, a recitation from a prepared typescript by a speaker confined monotonously to the podium. Instead, Girard gave his characteristic improvised performance, leaving the podium and lecturing *en ambulant* from the aisles. The French accent imbued the words with a slightly comical flavor, although the man commanded his English with idiomatic perfection, right down to the deliberately placed Californian "you know." In sum, Girard said that good empirical evidence argues for a predicable human nature. This nature, moreover, is characterized primarily by two traits. Human beings imitate each other and, in so doing, come into conflict. What mechanisms have evolved to defer conflict? "There is, you know, *le bouc émissaire*, the scapegoat, with his ritual." A shrug of the shoulders accompanied the statement. Myth, in particular, Girard said, confirms what we see about us every day of human behavior by constantly reiterating the story of how a group in conflict deferred violence, and therefore survived, by polarizing its bellicosity around an arbitrary fall-guy. Scapegoating, said Girard, is the universal formula for producing unanimity (or, rather, unanimity-minus-one). History, he continued, concerns the gradual "revelation" of scape-

goating, which historical religions like Judaism and Christianity tend to condemn, even while revivals of myth attempt to justify sacrifice and expulsion. It is curious, said Girard, how certain passages in Heidegger and Derrida bear a close resemblance to episodes in myth.

At this point, Matt Schneider passed me a written note: "At last—an antidote to nihilism!"

Girard's speech had, however, stirred up great hostility, the irony of which passed over the heads of the numerous host, now united in their anger at the one who dared call their sacred language into question. When Gans, moderating, called on the audience for questions, a stream of vituperation gushed forth. Girard's theory, said one notable deconstructionist, was so much "Romanticism," all but spitting out the word. (For the academic Left, "Romantic" functions as a synonym for "Fascist." Never mind that modern radicals are belated mimics of Rousseau, the originator of Romanticism.) "How can you posit an origin for culture," a graduate student wanted to know, "when the whole notion of origin has been discredited?" (This was one of those undigested shibboleths out of Derrida.) The taboo against discussion of origin, Girard remarked in good humor, in fact preserves scapegoating against revelation; and thus does revelation always amount to a scandal for the prevailing wisdom, which is why philosophy has never been able to reconcile itself to Jewish prophecy or to the Gospels. That only made the crowd, which is what it was at this point, madder yet. One of the English department's chief radicals now stood up to give a rambling, denunciatory speech which ended with an invocation of the names of Latin American countries pronounced archly in a Spanish (or at least what he took to be a Spanish) accent: "*Viva la revolución en Nicaragua, en El Salvador, en Guatemala, y naturalmente en Cuba!*" (As amusing as they might seem to outsiders, such rhetorical formulae are routine in the academy.)

By the time Gans called the proceedings to an end, a murmur of animosity indicated that Girard's impermissible hypothesis—that crowds gain their unity through focusing ire against a convenient contemptor—applied incontrovertibly to the present occasion. People who had spent hours in seminar in a state of affected emotional non-involvement (the black-dress blasé of the postmodern intellectuals) now agitated themselves over an idea. You could overhear their comments outside the lecture room as the words resounded in the stairwell. Not analytical, they reflected the formerly tacit and now volatile mob mentality, and each offered as its gist the observation that this guy was definitely not one of us.

Later that day, when Girard sat down to let me interview him for the French graduate student journal, he showed himself to be congenial, forthcoming, without personal conceit, and tolerant of my own struggle with his ideas. (One struggled, not because the ideas were obscurantist, but because they were as plain as day, and for one

mentally befogged by obfuscation, this at first proved baffling.) Girard had made another point, that primary texts—novels, plays, poems—don't need to be strangled with theory because they are already theoretical in the recoverable root essence of the term. In Greek, *theorein* means "observation," intense observation. Poets, playwrights, and novelists fulfill their vocation by carrying out a scrupulous study of human life. Theory, so-called, whose premise is that it knows more than the primary texts is, at best, dangerously arrogant, and, at worst, deliberately self-serving. In his lecture, Girard had finally introduced his concept of "mediated desire." We rarely originate our wants, he said, but learn them from others, as in the various forms of covetousness.

Perhaps even more than his defiance of the deconstructive ban on discussing origins (by proposing an originating mechanism of consciousness and culture), this had stung the crowd into fury. The remark clarified for me my own time-wasting mistake, beginning with my uncritical impulse to assimilate my vocabulary to that of the "in" crowd. More than this, the discourse which began by denouncing all previous discourse in all likelihood did so because it wished to appropriate the perceived authority of much of previous discourse. Only with the greatest difficulty, after long hard years of study, could one ever hope to match Erich Auerbach's achievement in *Mimesis*, or the much-despised Matthew Arnold's in *Culture and Anarchy*. But with the greatest of ease one can denounce and dismiss them.

To be like the deconstructors, one had first to annihilate what they annihilated, and, like my friend Matt, I had eaten my fill of nihilism. Nevertheless, if only from a type of residual idolatry, I hung on to those brightly colored trade-paperbacks from the University of Minnesota Press and elsewhere. The thought that they were there, on my shelf, fed an obscure hunger, as though I had only half-suppressed a taste for dope but knew that I could scare up some Humboldt sensemilla anytime I wanted. But after this hot-house experience at UCLA, I stopped buying the books in question and began to acquire instead second-hand copies of older critical literature, especially the Edwardian and inter-war writers on the classics, and monuments like *Mimesis* and *Culture and Anarchy*. Gradually, the craving subsided. The calm and readable books of Girard, Gans, Walter Hurlert, and Eric Voegelin asserted their importance in my view.

One day, the moment abruptly ripened, and I packed the postmodern stuff into the cartons and took it for resale at The Curious Bookstore. "Oh, they'll sell," store owner Ray Walsh slyly opined. "I'm right across the street from a graduate program in English."

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## Nitwit Feminism, Continued from page 1

to be universal, it had become selective, supporting only those whose viewpoints it favored. Planned to be non-partisan, it had become a tool of the Democrats. To protect the movement from the likes of Steinem and Ireland and Roseanne, the Dulles group felt that it had to go public, destroying the village to save it. "Our ultimate aim is the revival of American feminism," Mrs. Ragab told her audience when she and her cohorts denounced NOW in May. "American feminism is more important than NOW."

The rebellion of the Dulles chapter is only one more sign of a growing disenchantment with NOW. What made this organization, in the opinion of individuals who should be committed to it, the enemy of American women? What gave it an outré agenda that has carried the group out of the national mainstream? These questions are complex ones having to do with the evolution of politics, especially lifestyle politics, over the last three decades. But it is clear that concerns of America's mainly traditional women are no longer key issues for NOW. What counts are issues like a unisex army and an insistence that Title IX be interpreted as an affirmative action law, mandating strict numerical equality between female and male athletes whatever the context and whatever devastation such an interpretation causes to sports programs. What really counts are issues like gays and abortion, which are not high on the agenda of most women. (Gay rights is a non-starter, and while polls show women supporting limited access to early stage abortion, a majority of women also have growing doubts about this procedure and support parental consent and other restraints and restrictions that NOW and its allies abhor. The NOW view of abortion as an absolute civil right that cannot be diluted is held by less than three women in ten.)

NOW has made these marginal issues into a loyalty oath. At times it drifts off into still stranger alleyways such as toying with an advocacy of and defending transsexuals, a theme much in evidence at the last NOW national convention. No wonder the organization's membership has shrunk, according to Ragab and other critics, as women vote with their feet and drive membership down from a high of 250,000 to below 100,000 today. Speaking of the NOW leadership, Ragab, who is a French native, says, "Those women are a laughing stock in the international community. When the world looks at the NOW national representatives, it sees women who believe that gender-bending is a mainstream issue. It is not."

It was the confluence of the items in this agenda with insularity, arrogance, and irrationality that brought the current sexual harassment crisis to a head. Given the identity NOW radicals have given the organization, it was inevitable that Clinton's obeisance to NOW's signature issues—his presence at a gay rights dinner; his support of *Ellen*, on and off-camera; his repeated veto of bills banning late-term

subjective and can be bent to political expediency. "They function constantly in the near-irrational," Marie-Jose Ragab says of NOW's national leadership. "There is no difference to them between the world of the imagination and the world of knowledge. They think that knowledge is 'the imagination of men.'" This leaves them free to invent their own "knowledge"—the "imagination of women"—which in their minds has equal validity with truth. Thus, they have been able to invent statistics—about sexual violence, rape, and eating disorders—when it serves their interest and to deny the truth when it doesn't, as in the case of research showing that children tend to fare poorly in homes without fathers; and that boyfriends tend to abuse women and children, while husbands and fathers do not. If it makes sense to claims that hundreds of thousands of girls have experienced eating disorders; that one-half of all women are raped in their lifetime; that the Promise Keepers are a menace to women, then it may make sense to claim that the messy private lives of conservatives bear attention while the messy private lives of liberals do not; that the fire chief reading *Playboy* in the firehouse is harassment while assault in the White House is not.

"It's the pretense, above all, that does the damage," writes Marjorie Williams, a feminist and admitted Democrat, in *Vanity Fair*. She suggests a plausible case from the left that Clinton's public policies outweigh the effects of the "sordidness" of his personal conduct. But she adds, "Making this argument is something different from simply sweeping his behavior under the rug," let alone celebrating it, as Roseanne and her audience appeared to be doing in their April get together.

"They are making the same lame excuses men used to make fifteen years ago," says Marie-Jose Ragab of the NOW leadership. Lost in the NOW shuffle, according to Ragab and her colleagues, has been what should be the central tenet of a feminist movement—that all women are full human beings and due respect, not toys or objects, which is a view obviously held by many "feminist" male politicians. Nor does the current national leadership appear to care that the hard work of decades appears to be crumbling. As Williams writes in *Vanity Fair*, "When the dust of Clinton's presidency finally settles, the laws against sexual harassment will still be on the books. But the social sanctions against the behavior will be irretrievably damaged."

As will be NOW's moral authority. "We will strive to ensure that no party, candidate, president, senator, governor, congressman, or

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NOW PRESIDENT PATRICIA IRELAND

abortion; not to mention his "model" open marriage to the ball-busting Hillary—should, for NOW, outweigh not only the harm he had done to individual women, but the damage he had done to workplace sexual dynamics and to the belief that all women, even bimboes, ought to get respect from men.

But NOW had claimed the sexual harassment franchise since the Hill-Thomas hearings and could not seem to be absolutely indifferent to Clinton's sexual follies, so the organization came up with an explanation for his behavior. First, it was not in fact legal harassment. Second, even if it was, it was not really a serious offense, especially compared to the depredations of conservative men who committed their sins without an exculpatory commitment to the feminist agenda.

The Dulles chapter of NOW had long been troubled by the growing view among radical feminists, caused perhaps by the work of university deconstructionists, that the truth is

## Following the Feminist Money

NOW has been compared here, in a moral sense to the latter-day Communist empire—an out of touch monolith, cracking under the weight of its ossified doctrines. But in its organizational and operational methods, it also resembles a small dictatorship in which money and power rise to the top. For this the Dulles group tends to blame Patricia Ireland, who, on taking office in 1991, changed the rules to secure her own power, first by extending her own stay in office, and then in permitting herself and the other three officers to run together as a single slate. This had the effect of confirming permanent power by making it hard for an internal opposition to organize. (One person might have challenged any of the current officers; recruiting four opposition members to run as a slate is difficult.)

The members of the NOW nomenclature also vote themselves raises. Ireland's three friends make between \$92,000 and \$98,000 annually and have generous expense accounts. Ireland herself, who pulls down \$118,000 a year (with a travel allowance of \$70,000), has also parlayed her position into seats on the boards of many large corporations, yielding addi-

tional income. And there are sweetheart deals aplenty for other officers. In 1994, for instance, Elizabeth Toledo, a NOW officer and Ireland chum, received a grant of \$459,779 from her good friends in Clinton's Department of Health and Human Services, through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, to develop a model program in California to keep girls from smoking. (The Dulles group and other dissidents would like to see the results of this program, and wonder how, or if, the money was spent.)

They are opportunists. "Mrs. Ragab says of this tight little cadre running the feminist machine: 'There is a little radar in them that tells them where their interests are.'" No wonder NOW's general financial picture is vague, possibly purposely so. The 1996 tax return shows income of just over \$5.5 million, with expenses of \$5.6, listed only under general headings such as "education" (\$1,220,550) and "action programs" (\$1,009,190). Dulles NOW would like to see a more specific breakdown of these figures. They see little evidence of the money NOW spends.

N.E.

# Confessions of a Republican Academic

by Laura Freburg

On the May 11, 1998, editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, Vincent Carroll asked why so few Republicans may be found among the ranks of the country's university faculty ("Republican Professors? Sure, There's One"). In a response to the editor (published May 20, 1998), I detailed my experience as an out-of-the-closet Republican psychology professor at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, as an example of how this disparity is maintained. The small numbers of Republican faculty do not occur by accident. The exclusion of Republican academicians is an overt and conscious effort on the part of ideological gatekeepers.

Gatekeepers become a problem when Republican academicians begin applying for jobs and seeking publication of their work. The first of many checkpoints is the topic and conclusions of a person's research. If this doesn't pass muster, employment and advancement are impossible. On one occasion, I attempted to publish research results that clearly demonstrated long-term academic benefits for children who repeated kindergarten. The editor of the scholarly journal reviewing my manuscript refused publication unless I removed the offensive data and conclusions. He told me, "We don't believe in flunking children anymore." Forget the truth—we're only going to publish those data that support our preconceived policies. Although I really needed additional publications at that point in my career, I pulled the article rather than give in to this outrageous demand. An academician's ability to obtain a position, research funding, and publication is highly dependent on the "acceptability" of the questions he or she is asking. Don't hold your breath waiting for in-depth studies of the effects of daycare on children or the psychological aftereffects of abortion on women. There are some legitimate topics that just won't be investigated because of their potential political repercussions.

Selection committees are also looking for more subtle signals that the candidate will "fit in."

During the interview process, one can observe clothing, language, and general appearance for "fit." At relatively informal lunches and dinners with a candidate, you can listen carefully for family background. As a happily married wife for 25 years with three children, who grew up in the not-so-deprived and staunchly conservative town of San Marino, California, I stand out like a sore thumb. First of all, having three children is totally incorrect, as it contributes to population growth. A long-term marriage to the same man is also suspect. One of the most highly touted professors in my department regales students with stories of how she and her husband were both living with other people when they met, and then he "rescued" her from her abusive relationship. This is far more acceptable than marrying your high school sweetheart. I'm not an alcoholic, my parents never abused me, and I'm not a survivor of anything. The fact that my oldest daughter recently completed her first year at West Point has been the final blow—you're supposed to have troubled children who are

"finding" themselves, not successful ones, and ohmigosh, this is the *military* we're talking about here! In some cases, more overt questions are asked of candidates. Cal Poly is located near Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, which was a magnet for leftist faculty during its construction in the late '70s and early '80s. I'm convinced that many faculty accepted jobs at Cal Poly during that era just to be where the action was. At any rate, I have heard candidates for faculty positions asked specifically what they thought of Diablo Canyon. When one candidate dropped his jaw in amazement at the question, the professor asking

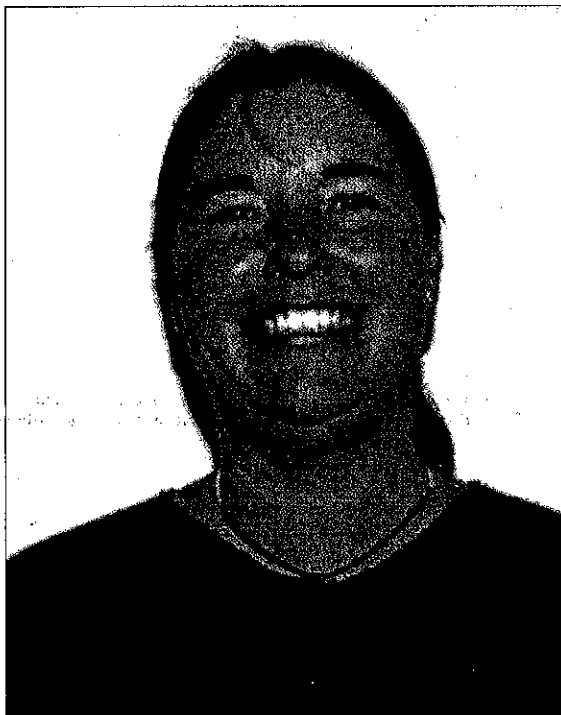
these students' parents, most of whom lived in Orange County, if they knew their sons and daughters were being involved in such an effort.

I serve as the faculty advisor for the Cal Poly College Republicans. Nobody else would take the job, which is a statement about the campus climate all by itself. The students' flyers are destroyed or removed within 15 minutes of posting, their sandwich boards disappear or are vandalized, and faculty have attended meetings to "stare down" those who participate. One of our members posted a Dole/Kemp poster in his dorm window, and had it not been for the volunteer intercession of some pretty high-powered legal types, the student would have been forced by Cal Poly's administration to remove his sign. I'm just guessing, of course, but I think a Clinton sign would not have provoked the same response. At commencement time, we have heard from Democratic State Senator Jack O'Connell, but our local Republican Assemblyman, Tom Bordonaro, who is a Cal Poly grad to boot, has been notably absent from the podium.

One of the most dramatic examples of faculty political influence is the placing of fundamental Christian students in internships at Planned Parenthood or other local agencies engaged in abortion referral. I found an alternate internship placement for one of these students at the Alpha Agency, which is a local non-profit run by churches, and whose goal is to assist those women who choose to keep their babies. The agency provides everything from diapers and formula to deposits for apartments. Personally, I thought this was an ideal solution to the student's dilemma, but I was strongly criticized by my department colleagues for providing this "out." While working with this student, the Alpha director indicated that the agency was unsuccessful in obtaining permission from the university administration for placing their literature at the Student Health Center. Planned Parenthood could do so, but not Alpha. It's not just the faculty who act as gatekeepers.

Faculty also maintain political influence over one another. In department faculty meetings, political bumper stickers, buttons, petitions, and fund-raising requests are openly solicited. One of my colleagues, who travels widely as part of a UNICEF team, shared her slides of a trip to Cuba at a faculty meeting. Her conclusion was that she was "disappointed" that things weren't going better, because, of course, Cuba had such a "superior political system." Heads nodded wisely all around the table. A department colleague of mine was terribly frightened that her failure to participate in an "anniversary protest" at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant would cost her tenure. As a non-tenured faculty member in such an environment, you keep your mouth shut and hope nobody notices you. I gained some temporary respite from this pressure by pointing out that my husband was a small business owner, and we could not take public political positions. Amazingly, this played well enough that I was given tenure in 1991, although suspicions were beginning to show on the part of some of my colleagues.

My cover was "blown" when my husband decided to enter politics himself. He was absolutely outraged by the election to local office of a middle school teacher who was, according to the local District Attorney's Office, a long time "user and seller of illegal drugs." This minor fact, of course, had been carefully hidden by the local



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laughed it off as a joke. The candidate did not get the job.

Once in the system, faculty are in a position to influence students and each other. One of my department colleagues made a habit of asking her students about their families' magazine subscriptions. One hapless student said that her family subscribed to *Reader's Digest*, and she was promptly and publicly humiliated by the professor. The student was told that *Reader's Digest* was "yellow-journalism right-wing propaganda," and that if she wanted the truth, she should read *Ms. magazine*. And to think that for all these years, I thought *Reader's Digest* was just something you read at the dentist's office, with stories like "My Encounter with a Grizzly Bear." After her magazine diatribe, the professor poked her head into my office door, and complained that the students' views don't change nearly enough during their experience at Cal Poly. Other efforts to influence students were so outrageous, they're almost unbelievable. This same professor was notorious for giving "extra credit" to students who would do precinct walking for candidates she selected. The students understood that "extra credit" in this case meant passing the course, and they complied. During the 1980s, the advisor of our department student club arranged for all funds raised by the club to be donated to a group called Madre, which ostensibly helped the "women and children of Nicaragua." Yeah, right. All I could imagine was the reactions of

paper from the voters prior to the election. My husband's interest in this case led him to run for county supervisor himself on two occasions. While the supervisor's position is supposedly non-partisan, my husband was simultaneously on the ballot for the local Republican Central Committee. The reaction among my colleagues was instantaneous and dramatically negative. Some were extremely worried about what I knew about their recreational drug use. Others asked hopefully if ours was a "mixed marriage." One faculty member stated, "We would never have hired you if we'd known you were a Republican." Within six weeks of my husband's declaring his candidacy, I was fired as department head. There had been no personnel reviews or other normal steps taken. No administrators supervised the meeting at which I was fired, which was a devastating experience lasting four hours.

In the ensuing years, I have continued to experience discrimination and harassment based at least in part on my political views and associations. One professor argued against my receiving an internal grant on the basis of my husband's political activities. Although I objected to the administration, no action was taken. My department head circulated offensive Republican jokes via the department e-mail alias, which goes to all faculty and staff. When I suggested to him that this was a misuse of a state resource, he replied that it wasn't a state

resource, because he sent it "after 5 p.m." When I brought a formal complaint to our Affirmative Action administrator, she confided that the system "just isn't set up to deal with this kind of thing." She did indicate that her brother, who was a Republican, also found the joke highly offensive. No action was taken by the administration, other than the fact that a senior administrator congratulated my department head for the "humorous" joke.

Fortunately, I obtained tenure before my status as a Republican became known. Subsequently, I have been turned down four years in a row for promotion from associate to full professor, in spite of some of the highest student evaluations on campus, numerous current publications, and a long record of service to the university and the community. I have filed suit in the Los Angeles Federal Court, and my trial comes up in November. The administrators and faculty responsible for this situation enjoy unlimited legal representation at taxpayer expense via the California State University Chancellor's office in Long Beach. I regret the use of precious education dollars on the part of the CSU for the purpose of defending this discrimination. My family is liquidating assets to pay my legal costs. In the meantime, the former drug-dealing county supervisor now works at Cal Poly, and my husband, with his two masters' degrees in business from USC, extensive mar-

keting experience with Nestle and M&M Mars, and many years of collegiate teaching experience (including Cal Poly), is now told that he is no longer qualified for the part-time teaching pool.

The politically correct stranglehold on America's educational establishment will not be easy to loosen. However, tenured faculty and administrators do retire eventually, and parents, alumni, taxpayers, and financial donors can insist on a more open climate for the discussion of ideas. Start by reading your sons' and daughters' textbooks. The history book currently in use for middle school students in California concludes that Attila the Hun was "tolerant" of other people's religions. If you think tolerant Huns are a novel concept, read your senior high schooler's American history text. There you will learn that Jimmy Carter was the great "Environmental President," but the only thing worth noting about Ronald Reagan is that his father was an alcoholic.

If we cannot establish a climate on our educational campuses in which ideas are freely shared and debated, I cannot imagine how we will achieve any reasonable level of tolerance and civility in our communities and democratic institutions. This current system is self-perpetuating, and will only improve when parents, students, taxpayers, and teachers educate themselves about the situation and demand change.



#### Nitwit Feminism, Continued from page 9

any public official who betrays or ignores the principle of full equality between the sexes is elected or appointed to office," runs the original 1966 NOW statement of purpose. "NOW will hold itself independent of any political party in order to mobilize the political power of all women and men intent on our goals." The members of the Dulles chapter (all Democrats) believe that NOW has since become a full arm of the Democrat Party, eager to shelter its most errant members, and willing to sell out anything in its behalf.

In her *Vanity Fair* article, Marjorie Williams traces the web of connections between the White House, the overtly radical diversity lobbies, and the groups who claim to speak for women at large. She discusses the White House hack who attacked Kathleen Willey and who came to the Clintons via Planned Parenthood and the supposedly neutral Women's Political Caucus; the head of the supposedly non-partisan Women's Campaign Fund (a friend of Hillary) who has said nothing about the White House scandals; the veteran feminist and impassioned crusader against Clarence Thomas who is Hillary's chief of staff. What does a Paula Jones or Kathleen Willey count for against such a juggernaut as this?

Not much. So this spring, while NOW and its allies celebrated "Take Your Daughter to Work Day" in the very shadow of the Clinton White House and watched with straight faces as Clinton signed into law a "Violence Against Women" provision that could still make him a felon, the Dulles chapter came out in support of the Paula Jones lawsuit as being within the framework of the NOW 1966 Statement of Purpose which promised action against public officials accused of harassment. It also approached the Independent Women's Forum, an organization of 900 women, mainly young conservatives with some former liberals, who see themselves as "equity" feminists who don't hate men or family and believe their cause has been betrayed. Together, the Dulles chapter of NOW and the IWF plan to move feminism off NOW's gender agenda and on to more pressing concerns. Marie-Jose Ragab, for instance, wants a feminism based on "reason and knowledge" that applies logic to current economic and cultural problems women face. She is currently working with religious conservatives to fight porn on the Internet, an alliance that the current nabobs of NOW would never countenance.

For years, groups made up of traditional women have dwarfed NOW in numbers, but have had little media presence or appeal to younger professional women. The IWF and the Dulles group are different. The lawyers and writers who comprise their membership speak the media's language and that of the college and young working women, groups NOW has always assumed it controlled. The Clinton scandals have been gold for the IWF particularly, raising its profile, as the media have looked to the organization for "talking heads" to go one on one with NOW's Clinton-defenders on network shows like *This Week*. The defection of the Dulles chapter increases the pressure.

At this moment NOW resembles nothing quite so much as the Soviet Union in its last days of power—a corrupt, vacant shell of a structure, rapidly losing supporters and satellites, living on dreams of past glory. From the moment that the Clinton scandals erupted, the organization began to lose standing with the general public, those women who have seldom marched or donated vast sums of money, but have believed generally in both "women" and "progress" and in what it took to be the ideals of the feminist movement. But press coverage of NOW's political act soon became mocking. Hostile pieces appeared in places like the center-left *New Republic* and the trendy *New York*. Pieces appeared in *George* and in *Capital Style* that called Hillary a dreadful role model. Feminist Naomi Wolf said (also in *George*) that hitting on interns was wrong. And then the queen of the glossies, Marjorie Williams, dumped on them all in *Vanity Fair*, calling the conduct of NOW and its allies "a roadmap to all that ails liberal feminism . . . political self-dealing, class bias, and a dedication to a bleak version of 'sexual liberation' that has deprived them of what was once the moral force of their beliefs."

The alliance with the White House has spent all of NOW's capital. "Bill Clinton has been bad for women," writes Suzanne Fields in the *Washington Times*. "He's brought back the stereotypes—the tramp, the connivers, the vamp, the seductress, the avenger, the patient wife, who will accept almost anything by the public admission that her husband's a cheat, and the vulnerable ingenue on the casting couch, who will accept any kind of degrading behavior to keep an affair going with a powerful man."

Maggie Gallagher and Mary McGrory have nailed the roles of NOW and the Clintons

together in reviving all the old feminist demons: Victorian marriage, the wandering husband, the woman as doormat or slut. Gallagher found the President calling up the image of a time when the cheated-on wife suffered in silence and "men were granted a special license to play around." McGrory noted the President's rise in the estimation of the chauvinist faction which used to despise him and Hillary but now admire him for playing around and her for enduring it. "Hillary Clinton, once regarded as an uppity Yankee shrew, has become something of a heroine among the Bubbas, who relate more to Tammy Wynette than to Eleanor Roosevelt. They once thought of her as 'too smart for a woman,' but now she's a good ol' girl, who stands by her man, and understands 'guy things' better than they thought."

This is the price paid by Bill Clinton to indulge his appetites; by Hillary Clinton to protect her power; and by NOW to salvage its stake in the two of them.

"New York Supergals Love That Naughty Prez," ran the headline for *New York Observer* article last February about a roundtable panel of ten trendy feminists who agreed that they approved of a "boyish Chief Executive" who seemed to be "alive below the waist." They mused on what it might be like to savor a president's semen, and agreed that a "presidential fuckabout" was better than a "fascist pig" (like Ken Starr.) One of those interviewed seemed to sum up the emotions of the rest when she said, "I, for some reason, like Clinton even more after this." They would have fit in at the Ms Foundation gala this past April, when Steinem and Ireland laughed at Rosanne. After this event, Andrea Peyser wrote in the *New York Post*, "These days, I see the feminist movement as one giant comedy routine, with its most vulgar elements—Rosanne, President Clinton, Courtney Love—as its featured acts. In the audience, feminist royalty like Steinem and Ireland applaud like mad, using their clout to validate behavior that many decent people would consider offensive. Maybe this is what thirty years of feminism has brought."

It also has brought the defection of the Dulles chapter, perhaps the first of many such rebellions. And it may also have finally brought the unraveling of NOW itself.

—Noemie Emery

Noemie Emery has written for *The Weekly Standard* and other magazines.

## FutureCampus, Continued from page 1

faded, peeling, two-story wooden barracks with boarded-over windows and through acres of fenced-off asphalt assembly grounds with weeds growing through the cracks.

As a result of the Army penchant for placing everything a quarter-mile from everything else, the campus is too spread out to have a vital center. If it weren't for signs identifying certain buildings as a classroom or the dining commons, it would be hard to recognize the place as a university campus at all. The school's 100 faculty members and 1,500 students are rarely in evidence. The school has no football team, little grass, few trees except the occasional windblown cypress common to this area, no teeming sidewalks, jammed pizza parlors, not even any cozy nooks where students can spend a pensive hour. Even more to the point, there's a decided lack of intellectual excitement in the air, which isn't surprising when you consider how small a role education played in the decision to build a campus here in the first place.

The origins of Cal State at Monterey Bay, in fact, tell a story that is not about education but about the politics of education. When Dick Cheney, the Secretary of Defense in the Bush Administration, announced back in 1990 that the base-closing commission intended to close Fort Ord in the next three years, Leon Panetta, the area's long-time congressman, immediately formed a community task force, first to fight the decision and then, when that failed, to create a new university called CSU at Monterey Bay. It wasn't a universally popular decision. Some Monterey residents remembered how the last University of California built had turned what had once been the quiet seaside community of Santa Cruz into a time warp for aging hippies, tenured radicals, belligerent panhandlers and environmental zealots for whom whales, not dogs, were man's best friend.

To head off fears that Monterey might now take the same path, CSU officials went out and campaigned for the school as if it were a particularly deserving political candidate, warning local residents about the state's compelling need to prepare for "Tidal Wave II"—the alleged hundreds of thousands of additional students they said would swamp the state's universities and colleges over the next ten years. Under the circumstances, they argued, the base was an unbelievably good deal both for California taxpayers and local businesses. In exchange for one dollar, the Army was willing to give the CSU system nearly \$1 billion in property and assets—1,365 acres of prime coastal real estate, 190 buildings totaling 4 million square feet, and 1,253 housing units, not one of which was more than 13 years old.

Then came the clinching argument. Would the residents of Monterey sit back and do nothing while this historic military base closed? If there was no new campus to fill the economic gap when the army left, the Monterey area might well end up with a 35 percent unemployment rate. On the other hand, if a new state university campus went in at Fort Ord it would bring with it 25,000 students, an annual \$200 million budget and many millions more in new construction, all of it flooding happily through the local economy. "The wonderful thing about a campus," pointed out one businessman who got caught up in the enthusiasm, "is when students aren't in class they spend and eat constantly."

The campaign succeeded and the work beating swords into intellectual ploughshares began. But then boyish CSUMB President Peter Smith (as a Princeton undergraduate he was the Princeton tiger at football games) revealed that creeping salt water intrusion into the local water table would forever limit the campus to 8,000 students. And the campus wouldn't even reach that

number for another 30 years.

What about the 25,000 students the university had promised, asked local businessmen waiting for all that money to be spent and the constant eating to begin? Since there was only water for 8,000 on campus, said Smith, the other 17,000 would have to take their classes via computer from remote sites (called "distance learning"). For some, this was not an answer that held water. "But if distance learning is the solution," former CSUMB business professor Tom Anderson wanted to know, "why would CSU build a residential campus at Monterey Bay in the first place?"

As for the supposed economic depression facing the community if a 25,000 student university didn't go in, that, said critics, was a scare tactic to drum up support for a university the Monterey area didn't need, couldn't use, and would be better off not having. For one thing, Monterey County only had 350,000 people, far fewer than that need-

The hasty way in which these substantial roadblocks were dismissed suggested to some that partisans of the new campus must have other reasons for insisting that Cal State Monterey Bay must go forward. These cynics were right. Actually, there was another reason CSU officials wanted to set up shop there—and it had little to do with boosting the local economy or any of the other reasons adduced to support the need for a new campus in Monterey Bay. Because CSU administrators would be building a brand new university, a campus at Monterey Bay would give them a chance to create their very own traditions, implement a multicultural agenda from the ground up, and create a totally new kind of school that would serve as a prototype for higher education everywhere.

"Today, we are seen as a secret promise for American education just as the troops who stormed the beaches at Normandy and established beachheads for campaigns to defeat the Axis powers," said CSU Monterey Bay President Peter Smith in his first state of the university speech. "We have, with great courage and sacrifice, stormed the beaches of tradition, and established our beachhead here at CSUMB."

To create this new philosophy of education, administrators and faculty worked upwards of 15 hours a day putting together what CSU information officer Holly White calls "their perfect world." This blueprint for educational utopia was based on a Platonic ideal: "If I were a student, this is what I would like to learn. This is how I would want to learn it. This is what I would want my students affairs to look like." The committee made rules on everything from curriculum to testing to pet policy—no dogs upstairs, no snakes over six feet, fish tanks limited to 30 gallons on the second floor. "It was like creating a new city," says White.

It was also vastly different from the kind of education most adults received when they went to school. The traditional notion of the "sage on the stage" (professor lecturing to students) was replaced by the newer concept of the "guide on the side" (instructor as advisor/counselor/friend). Students would design their own course of study in areas such as visual and public art, environmental science, entrepreneurship, human communication, and social and behavioral sciences. Grades were de-emphasized, "decided by participants," or dispensed with altogether. (If a student needed a grade for graduate school, CSUMB would assign him a "shadow grade").

The emphasis wasn't whether or not a student had completed a course. Instead students were "assessed" on what they actually knew, a more subjective approach which would allow for minority and/or female students' allegedly "different ways of seeing and knowing." If a student wasn't good at test-taking, for instance, he could write a paper. Or if that wasn't his forte, he could join with others to complete a group project or make a video of their efforts. Students wrote their papers on computers, did research on the Internet, accessed distant databases (a critical function given the school's small and vanishing number of library books), and made "socially relevant" films, videos, and documentaries.

In this laboratory, old ideas were recycled and made to look innovative. One of them was the belief—tried periodically with indifferent success in primary education—that students learn by doing rather than by thinking. So, instead of just studying histories of the local area, for instance, students would actually go out into the Monterey Bay community and take oral histories of longtime residents or retired soldiers from the former military base. As part of the school's commitment to serve the community, students were also required to volunteer to work for multicultural non-profits four hours a week, a process which



BILL CLINTON, LEON PANETTA, AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT PETER SMITH

ed to support a large university. For another, Monterey was a retirement/tourist community without a large college-age population. Most important, perhaps, the area's educational needs were already more than adequately served by four local community colleges, the Defense Language Institute, the Naval Postgraduate School, Institute for International Studies, a branch of San Jose State in nearby Salinas, and the University of California at Santa Cruz just 30 miles north.

Given all these existing institutions, asked critics, what possible justification was there to build yet another school in Monterey, especially since there were plenty of other places in California with exploding populations which currently had no local universities and for which the need for more schools was far more compelling? "If you want to invent a campus for the 21st century," Patrick Callan, executive director of the California Higher Education Policy Center, told the *San Jose Mercury News*, you ought to do it "in a real place—not around the corner from Pebble Beach."

Still, to CSU officials, the offer of so much highly prized ocean-front land was too good a deal to turn down. Later, once university officials began toting up the true costs of cleaning up acres of unexploded artillery shells, mortar rounds, rockets and grenades, ordnance, retrofitting buildings which didn't meet the state earthquake code, and removing asbestos-insulated pipes, it became clear the base was a far less impressive gift than it first appeared.

was supposed to teach what founding provost Steve Arvizu described as "rich white kids" having to contribute to low income communities and "to enter and exit" those communities "respectfully and appropriately." Finally, before students could graduate they had to demonstrate an understanding of "the differential and unequal treatment of people of color, females, gays and lesbians, the poor, and others from historically oppressed groups" and how affirmative action worked to "address inequalities in institutions such as schools, governmental agencies and businesses."

School officials had hoped that the student body would be largely Latino. When the first class turned out to be only 22 percent Hispanic, however, they didn't reassess their assumptions and wonder if they had overlooked the possibility that Hispanic parents wanted for their children what other parents want—a solid education that would lead to the competence required for a good job. Rather, they concluded that they hadn't made the campus multi-cultural enough. So they started packing the curriculum with courses on "Mexican History," "Chicano Life and History," "The History and Politics of Mexico," "Chicano Literature," "La Literatura Mexicana," and "Latina Life Stories" and then supplementing these with still other courses on "Race, Ethnicity and Multicultural Conflict in the United States," "Sociological and Historical Approaches to Race and Ethnicity in the United States," and "Exploring Whiteness." What was missing—an absence these administrators apparently thought Hispanic parents and students would overlook—was the kind of core curriculum considered essential in more traditional institutions. They assumed that Hispanics embodied Montezuma's revenge and just didn't do Aristotle, Plato, Milton, Descartes, Shakespeare, the Federalist Papers, Abraham Lincoln, and Adam Smith.

If faculty members were embarrassed by such omissions, they didn't show it. When asked about the somewhat surprising absence of works by Shakespeare or any British writers in the bookstore, one professor told the California Higher Education Policy Center that "we liberated ourselves in 1776. American people are from different cultures and should get rid of bad habits."

One bad habit school officials got rid of was academic modesty. Despite the school's only having opened its doors in the fall of 1995, one

CSUMB dean claimed the school was already so well-regarded it was now attracting professors who otherwise would have accepted positions at "Harvard, Yale, Princeton and MIT." As proof, CSUMB officials pointed to the fact that the school received 7,000 applications for the first 60 faculty slots, thus allowing the hiring committee to put together a faculty that, according to Steve Arvizu, was comparable to that of "any private elite institution in the country."

Although CSUMB's administration may have considered its faculty among the best in the country, students were somewhat less enthusiastic. "As much as I heard about the teachers wanting to come to the school, the quality of the teachers they did have was pretty low," said Robert Gahnberg, now a 26-year-old student of international relations at the nearby Monterey Institute of International Studies. Gahnberg was also puzzled, he said, by the school's seeming neglect of "Anglo-Saxon culture," and this despite the fact that there were far more Caucasian students than anything else. "For a school that claims to be multicultural, it seems the only culture they were stressing was Hispanic."

"The curriculum seemed to be more social engineering than education," agreed a 38-year-old business student. "It was made abundantly clear that the military was an unnecessary and negative influence. It's drummed into you in every department, white men are bad."

A student journalist complained that professors taught in the "terminology of Marxism," openly advertised their sexual preferences, "exacerbated racial tensions" and tried to "imprint students" with the kind of leftist ideology that made white males "feel on trial."

Stephen Reed, the school's Vice President for External Affairs, dismissed the notion that the school was anti-white male, saying there was nothing new about such hostility in academia. Even so, the ubiquitousness of such hostility came as a surprise to Ronald Peet, a local writer/investigative reporter who, when he took his daughter to the school's first graduation last May, was surprised to find the senior "Capstone" exhibits shabby, left-leaning, and rampant with politically correct attitudes: "One of the themes running through the exhibits was renouncing your whiteness."

If there was ever any doubt regarding the school's true agenda, says Peet, it vanished when

the school hired agit-prop playwright Luis Valdez to head its teledramatic arts program. Valdez, who is considered a national hero in Mexico, founded El Teatro Campesino, a Latino activist theatrical group, which got its start putting on shows for Cesar Chavez's farm workers from the backs of flatbed trucks in the 1960s. Although Valdez subsequently went on to write *La Bamba*, *Zoot Suit*, and *Bandito*, his works were too one-dimensional to have any widespread commercial or critical success. Blaming his rejection on racism, Valdez retreated into a kind of radical Latino mythologizing which exalted the Mexican race (*la raza*), advocated the reconquest for Mexico of Aztlan (a mythical Aztec homeland comprising the southwestern United States), and regarded United Farmworkers founder Chavez (about whom Valdez is currently writing a screenplay) as the literal reincarnation of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl.

Despite his history (or perhaps in part because of it), Valdez is highly regarded at CSUMB. The school was lucky to land him, says former provost Steve Arvizu: "The man is an icon."

But in the view of some critics, CSUMB's Latino students don't so much need icons as they do rigorous academics capable of providing a solid traditional education in institutions which have a real reason for existing in the first place. Shelby Steele, an author, research fellow at the Hoover Institute, and resident of Monterey, sees CSUMB as playing a cruel trick on minority students, "many of whom don't know what a traditional education is supposed to look like, and giving them the kind of education you could never sell to middle-class whites."

"What are these degrees going to mean?" asks Steele. "They don't learn the history of America. They don't learn the history of the civilization in which they live. Instead they talk to old people from Fort Ord. Well, that's fine in an advanced graduate course in interviewing. But undergraduates should be in a classroom in a seat with a paper and pencil. They should be learning the extraordinary history of America, which is the history of the world at this point. If you are ignorant of this, you are lost."

Paul Ciotti is a freelance writer who lives in Southern California.

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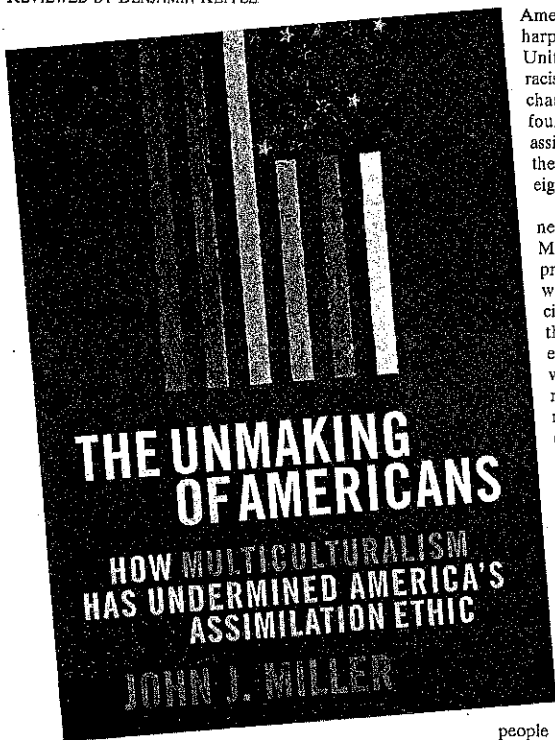


## REVIEW

## Americans, No More? The Unmaking of Americans

By John J. Miller  
Free Press, 1998. \$25, 292 pp.

REVIEWED BY BENJAMIN KEPPLER



inner workings of Rethinking Americanization, an academic conference held at the University of California at San Diego in May of 1996. As Miller writes, "More than a dozen academics presented papers at this conference and almost every one of them attacked the idea of Americanization. They constantly harped on the claims that the United States is irredeemably racist, that racial attitudes have not changed significantly since the founding, and that immigrant assimilation is nothing more than the capitalist exploitation of a foreign-born proletariat."

As an example of this new academic nether world, Miller discusses Lisa Lowe, a professor of literature at UCSD, who claims that the concept of citizenship tricks Americans into thinking that everybody has equal access to the benefits of it, while in reality—or at least her reality—it's a pernicious fraud masking racial, sexual, and class inequality. There is also Juan Perea, a University of Florida law professor, who babbles on about "death by English" and claims Americanization must be "abandoned as a premise of American identity." And the University of Michigan's Roger Rouse, who begs his pupils to support what Miller terms "transnational multiculturalism," a home-made doctrine holding that

people are first ethnic and nationals

second.

But multiculturalism is not the only culprit. Equally bizarre thoughts come from the restless nativists, whom Miller compares to modern-day members of the Know-Nothing Party. He examines and easily debunks such writers as Chilton Williamson, Jr., whose anti-immigration brush even tars the Irish, and the paranoid Samuel Francis, whose racist view of American society is similar to that of the Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

But neither do we "Americanize" immigrants very well today, he points out in "The Practice of Americanization," and this is primarily because of nonsensical policy. This is most evident in Miller's treatment of bilingual education, a program he abhors—not only because it is a dismal failure, but also due to the micromanagement of the program by federal bureaucrats. He correctly notes that bilingual education is a main stumbling block in the way of assimilation. As is often noted, the goal of the program is to teach competency in two languages, but what it actually provides is competency in none and a continuing indenture in the shadowland of the world given up to come to America. *The Unmaking of Americans* offers an in-depth portrait of the failures of bilingual education as a movement, from its inception in the 1960s up to the present day. But these failures are all the more stark when contrasted to the successes of turn-of-the-century urban educators who immersed their immigrant students in English, and by so doing set them free.

So who is to blame? Miller links bilingual education to the multiculturalist bureaucrats who demanded its implementation. "As the architects of anti-Americanization public policies such as bilingual education, they are intent on using state power to preserve native cultures, native languages, and group solidarity." These bureaucrats should be embarrassed. In the recent California referendum that outlawed bilingual education, even supporters of the programs conceded they were failures. But inside and outside of California, Miller writes about school systems under pressure to implement Spanish-only classrooms, professional educators speaking of overcoming "institutional racism," and "Anglo-conformity," and lobbyists blithely arguing that bilingual education will

help prevent "grave psychological harm" to immigrant children confronted with the prospect of Americanism.

These immigrant children can spend as long as six or seven years in bilingual programs, and because of these programs, routinely read and write two to three years behind their grade level. It isn't uncommon to have the best students in a school's program reading one year behind their grade level, and normal students reading at an 8th or 13th percentile level when compared to their peers. Unenforced rules mandating "mainstreaming" and complacency on the part of parents, teachers, and students create a morass in which it is entirely feasible for a student to go through his entire public education in a bilingual program and come away without the tools of citizenship.

Worst of all, however, is that practically all Hispanic students are automatically targeted for these programs, whether or not Spanish is their primary language. Miller notes that for a Hispanic student, being assigned to the bilingual program in New York City, for instance, is like receiving a life sentence. Many bureaucrats work to ensure that students remain in the programs even after they have learned English. Miller draws the moral: "Immigrant children sometimes succeed in spite of bilingual education, but far too often they fail because of it. There may be no better example of an American institution mis-serving its immigrant population than a bilingual education program that refuses to teach English."

Closely related to the bilingual education debacle is the trend towards group rights and identity politics that seems so popular in this day and age. The disuniting force of racial politics also harms assimilation—not only by turning off the immigrant population but also by turning off the native-born population, leaving immigrants who do not want to assimilate and natives who don't want to help them. In addition, what Miller terms "the current regime of voting rights"—the existence of so-called "minority majority" Congressional districts, foreign-language ballots, and the less-well known act of including illegal aliens and non-citizens in Congressional district reapportionment—helps to create a "United Nations nation—a country made up of bickering factions divided by their race, ethnicity, and language." Miller makes a strong case for his statement that the "cult of group rights remains one of the most significant threats to the Americanization of immigrants."

Of course, once citizens become Americanized, there are also the problems associated with naturalizing them. The Immigration and Naturalization Service is one of the worst-run branches of the government, noted for its hideous inefficiency and appalling service to immigrants attempting to naturalize. Lines stretching for hours on a weekday at INS offices—sometimes only located in central cities—are routine, and Miller does an excellent job of not only pointing out the problems in the naturalization process, but also suggesting solutions.

Miller counterbalances a strong pro-immigration stance with common-sense analysis and commentary—the type that makes inherent sense, but perhaps because of this, only has a remote chance of being considered by a legislature. Indeed, it took a referendum in California to end bilingual education, a move that Miller recommends that the entire country pursue post-haste. We are at a crucial time—will we implement the changes needed to assimilate the new generation of immigrants into American society as we have assimilated every generation before them? Or will we allow government regulation, identity politics, and bilingual education work to create dozens of little Quebecs in our midst?

The melting pot metaphor is out of favor these days in discussions about the making of Americans. The self-described partisans of immigrants prefer a more politically correct image like that of the mosaic, with each identity group becoming a part of the larger picture. What this image misses, however, is the notion of the cement—in this case a commitment to American citizenship—which holds the pieces of the national picture together.

While many in the United States see immigration as a looming problem that threatens the very fabric of the nation, John J. Miller makes a convincing argument that the problem is not actually immigration per se, but rather the failure of new immigrants to assimilate into American society. But this failure is not the result of pejorative ideas held by society at large or obstacles created by racism. Instead, Miller presents a lucid and sharp analysis that rightly faults heavy-handed government programs and wacky multiculturalist policies for the collapse of America's assimilationist tradition. Bilingual education, the disturbing political ramifications of group rights, the refusal of government to allow English-only work rules—these instances of massive and usually failed government intervention into the lives of Americans are the stumbling blocks on the path to true citizenship on the part of hundreds of thousands of new Americans.

In a work which combines a healthy dose of historical fact with a cogent analysis of modern-day problems, Miller examines the rise and fall of the Americanization movement and the current roadblocks preventing the revival of the tradition of assimilation. Sharply criticizing government reforms in the late 1960s and early 1970s for undercutting colorblind justice and creating an unworkable ethnic pluralism, Miller also attacks the contemporary offspring of such developments, such as the warped academic propaganda of multiculturalists. "The multiculturalists' greatest fear about assimilation is that it will happen," he writes. "They view Americanization as a kinder, gentler form of ethnic cleansing. . . . In a sense, they want to fracture the American identity and turn the United States into a small global village, like Epcot Center's World Showcase attraction."

As a particularly loathsome example of this hatred of America, he takes us inside the





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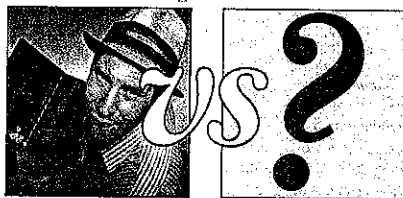
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# Bar Owner Appeals Employment Ruling

by Judith Schumann Weizner

The owner of the Bar None, a small West Side cocktail lounge, is appealing a recent ruling by the Federal Workplace Ambience Regulatory Commission (FWARC) requiring him to continue to pay full wages, as well as medical expenses, to a cocktail waitress who no longer comes to work.

Business owners are closely following the case, which centers around the waitress's assertion that her inability to report for work is due to an emotional problem arising from her employment that she will not be able to resolve if she is obliged to continue working.

The bar's owner, Tom Kollenz, insists he has acted reasonably and legally toward the waitress, thirty-eight-year-old Sherrie Ballantine, and says he is prepared to take his case into the civil courts and go all the way to the Supreme Court if his appeal before the Federal Workplace Code Enforcement Court fails.

Kollenz's problem with Ms. Ballantine began three years ago when patrons began complaining of lipstick marks on their glasses. Eventually, a customer spotted Ms. Ballantine sipping from his drink as she carried it to the table and informed Mr. Kollenz, who demanded an explanation. Ms. Ballantine told her boss that she had always feared she would make a mistake with a patron's order and had devised this method of checking on her accuracy. Although she confided that she was in therapy for her compulsive tendencies and assured him that she was trying to improve, Mr. Kollenz fired her.

After several weeks of unsuccessfully seeking similar employment, Ms. Ballantine returned to the Bar None and asked Mr. Kollenz to reinstate her, promising that she would find a way to control her behavior. Having hired and fired a number of replacements in quick succession, Kollenz relented, but to assure himself that Ms. Ballantine would honor her promise, he watched her closely as she carried out her duties.

Kollenz's palpable lack of trust engendered feelings of insecurity in Ms. Ballantine, and she found herself looking over her shoulder frequently as she did her job. Fearing a lawsuit if she were to stumble and fall on a patron, Mr. Kollenz warned her to look where she was going. She explained that his undisguised, relentless supervision had reawakened the psychological discomfort her parents had inflicted on her when they had caught her playing William Tell with her younger brother. Mr. Kollenz answered by reiterating that if she didn't look where she was going he would fire her and would not take her back.

This threat sent Ms. Ballantine to the FWARC, where she demanded a hearing, charging that by singling her out for scrutiny, Kollenz had poisoned her atmosphere, making it unpleasant for her to come to work.

At the hearing, Kollenz explained that he had fired Ms. Ballantine for cause and re-hired her on probation; he was legally entitled to assure himself that she was meeting the terms of that probation. The FWARC ruled that since there had been no further complaints from patrons, she was obviously in compliance with the terms of her reinstatement, which were simply that she not drink from her customers' glasses, and warned Kollenz that if he wished to avoid

Once more invited by FWARC to justify his actions, Kollenz was cited for unacceptable rigidity, fined eighteen thousand dollars, and told to work out a schedule that she could live with. He was also ordered to instruct his other employees to cease their sarcastic treatment of Ms. Ballantine.

Ms. Ballantine returned to work, but her self-esteem had been damaged and she found it impossible to smile at her customers. Her tips dwindled and she began to question her ability to support herself. As a last resort, her therapist recommended acting classes as a means of bolstering her self-confidence, noting that actors have king-sized egos. Ms. Ballantine eagerly followed this advice and soon discovered a previously unsuspected talent. She enrolled in as many acting classes as she could afford.

The pace of her recovery was slow, however, and she realized that unless her earnings picked up she would not be able to continue her acting lessons. Accordingly, she asked Mr. Kollenz for a paid leave in order to hasten the day when she would be able to return to the Bar None as a fully productive employee. In papers filed with the FWARC, she described his response as "a contemptuous snort that instantly wiped out the gains of many months of therapy."

The FWARC ruled that by disparaging Ms. Ballantine's request, Mr. Kollenz had discriminated against her on the basis of a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act, brought about by his own and his employees' actions, and ordered him to pay her full salary. In addition, since her health insurance coverage does not extend to acting classes, he was directed to pay the cost of her lessons until she feels sufficiently recovered to return to her job.

Kollenz is expected to base his appeal on the argument that if he has to pay Ms. Ballantine not to work he will go out of business, thereby terminating his employer-employee relationship with her, along with any responsibility for her medical expenses. Legal experts do not hold out much hope for his ultimate success, however. Last year, in *Furiant v. Caveatemptore Used Cars, Inc.*, the Supreme Court upheld a ruling by the Federal Workplace Code Enforcement Court that an employer who had damaged the self-esteem of a non-productive salesman could be required to support the families of the victims of the salesman's subsequent murderous rampage. (Charges of accessory to murder are still pending against Vito Caveatemptore.)

The Federal Workplace Ambience Regulatory Commission is reportedly still weighing the possibility of ordering Kollenz to pay Ms. Ballantine overtime for busy periods when she would normally have worked extra hours, as well as an additional 20 percent to cover lost tips, and a bonus of 23 percent of 15 percent of her wages and tips, the amount she would have earned in the stock market if she had not been forced to spend so much on acting classes.



SHERRIE BALLANTINE

a fine and being placed on the FWARC's Register of Insensitive Employers, he would have to scrutinize all employees equally, and to make sure that Ms. Ballantine felt at home at work.

Not wishing to permit a state of affairs that would give his patrons anything to complain about, Mr. Kollenz took to observing her more tactfully and, at the start of each shift, made sure to inquire about the state of her health and to ask if there was anything he could do to make her feel more at home. This did not sit well with the other employees, however, and they began asking her, with exaggerated solicitude, whether she felt well, whether there was anything they could do for her, and whether she might feel more at home if she were to sit down and put up her feet.

Recognizing that she had become the butt of her co-workers' barbs, Ms. Ballantine began to have difficulty falling asleep, and, as a result, was often late for work. Kollenz reminded her that once he had issued the eleven weekly warnings required by Federal Workplace Ambience Regulation C-6, he would legally be able to dock her for any missed hours, and urged her to be more punctual. Stung by his lack of concern for her well-being, she lodged a second complaint with the FWARC, complaining that the sarcastic solicitude of Mr. Kollenz and the other Bar None employees was making her life miserable, affecting her sleep habits and making it impossible for her to get up in time for work.

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