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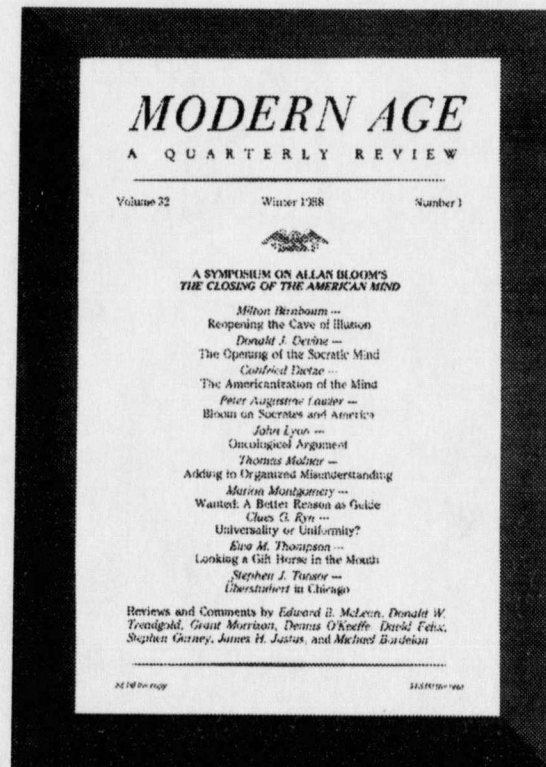


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The *California Review* received a delightful little book called *The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid* from one of the campus Leftie organizations.

Essayist Philip Michaels aims his inimitable quill at this ridiculous book and the barbarities of the dating world.

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Essay Contest

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From the Pen of the Editor:

The national budget must be balanced. The public debt must be reduced; the arrogance of the authorities must be moderated and controlled. Payments to foreign governments must be reduced, if the nation doesn't want to go bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance."

These are not the words of Ross Perot nor of Bill Clinton and not even of Jack Kemp but rather the insightful criticisms of a man from 55 B.C. They are the words of Marcus Tullius Cicero. Although separated by much time and distance they provide important guidelines and information on how governments work best. They are especially interesting in light of our new president. Of course, they are hard words that require action and not the customary "vows" and "read my lips" which characterize political life in the United States.

Unfortunately, given the way that the American citizen has voted (or at least four out of every ten) we have not chosen this more difficult road. The media have informed us that Bill Clinton has received a mandate — a mandate for "change" no less. In reality the referendum on George Bush indicated that he is no longer wanted, but this does not translate into an unequivocal mandate.

While the words of Cicero are not policy statements they do reveal that the problems of government are constant. They may not seem as flashy as one of Ross Perot's placards, but they do emphasize looking to government as a serious problem and temptation. For without a discussion about where we want to take this nation we of course will lose our way — "change," as mantra, is far too nebulous.

According to Bill Clinton, *et al.*, the United States citizen wants a world where the government does something. Most of all, he wants it to direct the economy. And this can mean only one of two things when it comes out of the mouth of a Democrat.

Possibility one: We are going to be nice and not punish business so much and perhaps allow incentives in order to "grow" certain areas of the economy. Which translated means: government does destroy business and we will pull out enough to let it grow for the moment.

Possibility two: he means that disasterous inclination of "arrogant" politicians to control certain markets. These politicians think they know how to better make the infinite decisions that go on in the marketplace at a given

moment. The idea is that politicians are smarter than the entrepreneur. In other words, socialism.

This is not the knee-jerk invocation of a word rightly despised, but rather a real and correct application of a term which indicates what our politicians are up to. Parts of the much vaunted Japanese economy are giving intimations of rebellion to the heralded MITI and asking to be released. And the fact that the United States has suffered least in what is undeniably a global recession is not noticed by America's Democrats or their public relations branch, the American media.

This is not to say that America is without problems. We have serious structural problems not the least of which is the stranglehold of the Democratic Party. The American voter most certainly did not vote for change.

Even in a year when Congress proved by its various ignominious scandals and sleights of hand that it is an end in itself, California voters sent Barbara Boxer to the Senate. Her contempt for the legislative branch is not found in her words but rather her actions. To wit: an abysmal record of absence, a disdain for public disclosure of check kiting, and her refusal to improve the quality of American debate by facing her opponent Bruce Herschensohn. The latter would have been a clear and helpful ideological match up of where we want to go in this country.

One refreshing caveat, however. Liberal room to maneuver is limited. Ronald Reagan began to drive the stake into the heart of liberalism. For example, Bill Clinton had to portray himself as a moderate and more importantly put a muzzle and leash on the Presidential Partner. In addition, the realities of our inner cities and crime equally reveal the bankruptcy of liberal ideals of what the State can do.

With Bill Clinton, however much he is a liberal or a moderate is a moot question. He and Congress are limited by their deficits and the fact that more money means not compassion, but a continued war on poor families and the *mores* which are truly needed to "change" this country for the better. Yes, Cicero is right. But it means work, like making government accountable and the citizen responsible for his own life.

— Matthew S. Robinson
Editor-in-Chief



CALIFORNIA REVIEW
"Imperium et Libertas"

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In Review...

■ THE SAN FRANCISCO SCHOOL DISTRICT, as pure as snow, refuses to say what condoms are for. The safe sex brigade, not wishing to assault public sensibilities with sexual intercourse, describes what one does after donning a condom as "penile insertive behavior." Romance just ain't what it used to be!

■ ASKED RECENTLY ABOUT HIS FAVORITE television show, then President-elect Bill Clinton casually replied that his daughter Chelsea and he were avid followers of the majestic athleticism of *American Gladiators*.

When pressed on the issue from members of the media he was reported to exclaim, "Yes, I did sit in front of the television set, but *I did not watch*."

■ TO THAT LIST OF INNOVATIONS GIVEN TO the world by California, add the salad bar.

■ IN A MOVE NOT SEEN SINCE 1976 WITH THE Episcopal Church and its ordination of women, the Church of England subsequently decided to allow women to be ordained as priests. Although it will pose ecumenical problems which may not allow the first female ordination until the year 1994, it was a move generally accepted.

Said Canon Christopher Colvern of London, "The maleness of Christian ministerial priesthood may be an obstacle to some, madness to others, but I have yet to be convinced it is not a part of God's revelation for the salvation of us all." Somewhere, God (wherever she may be) must be smiling.

■ ACCORDING TO L.M. BOYD'S *CURIOSITY Shop*, a patent medicine under the name of "Dr. Miles' Compound Extract of Tomato" sold extremely well in the 1830s. Today, the doctor's miracle fford paste is commonly known as ketchup.

■ IT WOULD NOT BE UC BERKELEY IF THERE



was not a scandal, and now it is the "Naked Guy." It seems that junior Andrew Martinez has found the enlightened, sensitive side of himself by shedding his clothes and attending classes in the nude. This comes in direct violation of a recent UCB code requiring all students of the University to wear clothes on campus. Draping himself in the First Amendment and psycho-babble, the 19-year-old Martinez stated, "We're socialized in this country to think that a lot of things are necessary in life, but I just came to think it's completely useless to wear clothes." Berkeley administrators didn't buy this line and expelled him anyway. Martinez plans to appeal.

■ NOTE TO CONGRESS: A FRENCHMAN WHO writes a bad check — knowingly or not — is barred by law from using his checking account for one year.

■ RESIDENTS IN LOS ALAMITOS, CALIFORNIA are complaining again of the yearly autumn stench that grips residents of the community. It seems that nightly bands of scavengers parade through the neighborhood in the moonlight hours digging up lawns, harming pets,

rummaging through trash, and most especially stinking up the neighborhood. Before jumping to conclusions, you can rest assured that it is not disoriented Republicans still reeling from Nov. 3, but only the yearly passage of skunks.

■ TALKING 'BOUT MY GENERATION: President Bill Clinton was spotted jogging in a Grateful Dead T-shirt. Wasn't this the same man who denied that... or did he affirm... or was that deny.... Anyhow, this is the same man who also was seen with a notorious "Rock the Vote" shirt during his bout with jogging exhibitionism.

Keeping in "tune," perhaps Kurt Loder of MTV could be White House Press Secretary? Better yet, to show the administration's dedication to female hiring, Tabitha Soren should get the job. Rock the White House, dude!

■ ACCORDING TO L.M. BOYD, IF A TV station wanted to broadcast everything in one edition of the *New York Times*, it would have to broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for more than a month.

■ UNSAFE SEX: IN RANCHO BERNARDO, California, it seems that you cannot have Sex on campus. Monica Torres, 16, had her copy of Madonna's controversial tome confiscated by authorities as she leafed through it during recess with some friends.

"They told me he book was disgusting. It's just their opinion. Me and my friends think it's art" said Torres. Said a defensive Principle Sandra Johnson, "It is inappropriate for a high school campus." Never fear, at least you can still get a condom in the bathroom for a quarter.

■ ANITA HILL, ALWAYS GIVING, OFFERED this at one of her \$10,000 appearances: "Because I and my reality did not comport with what they accepted as their reality, I and my reality had to be reconstructed by the Senate members." We believe you and your reality, Ms. Hill.

HISTORIANS SHOULD STEER CLEAR OF
MAKING MYTHS... GOOD OR BAD

Would You Have Columbus To Dinner?

By Peter Pratt

H

istorians have a basic desire to try to give a better understanding of the past. Yet when given identical information, two historians will interpret this information in completely different ways. The personal bias, ideology, and opinions of the historian, individual to each, cause this great divide. These will be present whether the historian wants them or not. This results in the various "schools" of historical thought, basically separated by ideology.

Revising the historical record helps to get rid of the various falsehoods and myths that come to be accepted as fact. These creep in when someone, usually a non-historian, generalizes and simplifies the historical record, or when a non-historian relates something to fit into their personal agenda. One interesting case is the Spanish Armada. The traditional view, as taught in high school history classes, accepted the view that the English defeated the Spanish Armada through outstanding seamanship, better ships, and better guns.

Today, we know that the weather defeated the Spanish Armada and the English guns, ships, and skills did not play a major role in the conflict. Debunking these myths provides a clearer view of the past, both necessary and good.

Revisionism is different. Revisionists may or may not be historians. Their



primary purpose is not to give a better understanding of the past. Their primary purpose is to put a historical event into their agenda, many times corrupting the actual event greatly, in an effort to legitimize themselves. This has taken place numerous times in the past. Dynasties, tyrants, and authoritarian regimes have all done this with variable degrees of efficiency.

The "Big Lie," used so much by the Nazis, is usually based on some revisionism. One prominent example was the blaming of the Jews by the Nazis for Germany's defeat in World War I. A more recent example is the claim by neo-Nazis that the Holocaust never took place. Both of these lack a factual basis, but they would provide a revisionist view in order to promote an agenda.

Another modern example is the attack on Columbus. Demything Columbus is a good thing — he was human, and not a demigod as some zealous supporters have portrayed him. A century ago idolizers of Columbus tried to make him into a saint, and were stopped only by Columbus's liaison with his long term mistress. Clearly, he was no saint and should never be made one.

But Kirkpatrick Sale, the leader of the current attack on Columbus and the "guru" on Columbus who has appeared on almost every news special on the subject during the past year, doesn't want to do this. Sale is the founder of the N.Y. Green Party and has decided to use Columbus as the vehicle to condemn Western culture, Western society, and this country. His book shapes the past into his agenda. Sale really doesn't care

about things outside his agenda, as shown in a recent book review in *The Nation* where he mocks multiculturalism as boring. For Sale, attacking Columbus is good only for environmentalism. It is interesting to note that this book, of extremely dubious historical value, is being used in a good number of classes this quarter here at UCSD, ignoring the fact that many honest histories of Columbus do indeed exist.

Now UCSD has been declared, by mandate of the Associated Students and of MEChA, a "Columbus Myth Free Zone." An absurdity, if I ever heard one, as it bans free speech and thought. And I know that the proponents did not want to ban the myths that make Columbus into an evil monster, so I guess what they really wanted was a *new myth zone*. Our "Columbus Myth Free Zone" was then really dead on arrival. It expired with the ringing in of the new year — but I don't miss it too much anyway.

A politically correct past (either multiculturalist, environmentalist, socialist, or feminist) is as sterile and faulty as a neo-Nazi one. We do not want a kinder, gentler past. We want a past that is not an attempt to control our world today and in the future.

Orwell wrote, "He who controls the present controls the past. He who controls the past controls the future." Let us remember that this kind of revisionism is an attempt to control our past and our future.

—Peter Pratt is a Graduate Student in History

NEWSPEAK BY ANY OTHER NAME...

So, You Think English Is Sexist, Eh?

B y D a r r e l M e n t h e

Non-sexist writing is all the rage these days. Eager proponents publish manuals and distribute guidelines among the student body and faculty as to which words are flavor-of-the-month and which are *verboten*. We have created *Wordcrime*, akin to *Thoughtcrime* but infinitely more petty. Non-sexist grammarians approach the English language in the same way some mad Frenchman a few years ago tried to improve upon the Venus de Milo with an axe. In truth, the charge of sexism in English is groundless, and "non-sexist language" is, to use a persecuted metaphor, just a corset on

expression.

Sexism in any language must be seen in the context of other languages, and in this context it will be found that English is quite benign. English's only crime is that, lacking a neutral pronoun, it generally uses the masculine. Other languages are blatantly sexist without good reason.

In German, for example, a woman is not feminine unless she is married. An unmarried woman or a girl is referred to as *it*. A man is always masculine unless he is a coward or gay, in which case the man is feminine: "The gay man looked at her watch."

In most Romance languages a mixed-sex group is always referred to as a group of men — five hundred women in a room suddenly lose their gender the moment a man walks in. English at least assigns men and women their appropriate genders.

Furthermore, English only applies gender distinctions to nouns which actually have a gender. Foreign grammars are truly sexist. In German, for example, roughly half the nouns are masculine, and the remainder are split between feminine and neuter. Russian sometimes makes a distinction between inanimate masculine objects and those which are actually men. For women the distinction is deemed unimportant. Czech is just as bad. Latin reserves a special vocative form for men, but women are given no such consideration. Japanese, of course, is a study in its own.

The point of these comparisons is to demonstrate how gender-neutral English really is. Gender in English is actually quite hard to find at all.

The few gender problems that remain to English are essentially insoluble, inherent in the lack of a neutral pronoun. The most obvious problem is the unknown-gender problem illustrated in the sentence, "Someone left his pencil on my desk." The common spoken habit nowadays is to say "Someone left their pencil on my desk," which is a grammatical embarrassment. Fortunately, the context of spoken language is always simple and obvious, so the meaning is still communicated. Using "they" for "he" is tolerable under these limited circumstances.

For written purposes, however, mandatory pluralizing of single unknown subjects demonstrates its limits easily. For example: "One of the sad students looked up from the table. They were disappointed." How many students are disappointed? The old rule is perfectly clear: singular subjects take singular verbs.

Problems multiply in other parts of speech. Take the sentence "Who put this non-sexist manual on the shelf all by himself?" Does the unknown-gender problem require us to say "themselves?" Does this help? Non-sexist rules have caused more than one headache.

One solution for this problem would be to create an unknown gender pronoun, as the French "thon." In the sixties, the old proposal "thon" received new enthusiasm: "Someone left thon's pencil on my desk." Unfortunately, the truth is that one cannot change the fundamentals of a language by edict. Does twelve years of education rid students of "ain't" or the double negative? Millions of bewildered people would be left asking, "who is thon and why does he keep leaving his stuff on my desk?"

But at least "thon" is theoretically sound. Other proposals are even worse. The "his or her" construction is not only wordy, but a veritable Pandora's Box. "Some tall person managed to put his or her pencil on my top shelf all by him- or herself." Should that be by *himself* or *herself*? By *her/himself*? Anybody asked to speak that way would soon be undergoing convulsions.

Some non-sexist writers actually *alternate* between "he" and "she." Gender-obscure subjects such as *monster* change sexes easily within a paragraph, not to mention the reader's picture of what is going on. Usually, the reader begins to multiply the

number of people on the page, and the writer, caught in the mental arithmetic of totaling up the *he's* and *she's*, may become confused himself.

The worst of all is "s/he." How do you pronounce that? Just try to make a possessive or reflexive out of it. All attempts at linguistic reform should heed the iron precept of living languages: *No rule shall be introduced to writing which cannot be applied to speech.*

The old English rule "when in doubt, use 'he'" remains the best solution to a universal pronoun. True, one could use "she" instead, but that would be a change as difficult as "thon" to introduce.

Non-sexist grammarians ultimately throw up their hands and conclude their manuals with the injunction: *Avoid difficult constructions.* This means, essentially, *if you can't say it our way, don't say it at all.* What is language for but the expression of thought? If new rules inhibit communication, if they simply emasculate English's expressive and communicative power, then they are surely the worst rules of all.

Equally egregious as the new rules are the new words. What a crop of weeds! Phrases such as "The history of man" and "Museum of Mankind" are shoved aside like small woodland mammals by such horrendous behemoths as "The history of people" and "Museum of Humankind." Phrases such as "Man the battlements!" must be abandoned altogether, along with "man-made," "man-hour," "manslaughter," and dozens of other useful terms.

On the other hand, words such as "manual" or "manufacture" are allowed because they derive from the Latin *manus*, meaning "hand" (and possibly because *manus* is feminine). At every word we must now run to our Latin dictionaries to see if we should be offended.

We are also told to discard *policeman*, *mailman*, or *paperboy* in favor of the bulkier and clumsier *police officer*, *mail carrier*, and *paper deliverer*. Apart from sheer ugliness, such forms will never prevail because they are just too long. The "-man" suffix fills a very useful place in the language, and the common speaker of this language (or any language) will never naturally use elaborate circumlocutions.

As with non-sexist grammar, non-sexist vocabulary should be pointed out and reviled for what it is: an artificial language and an obstacle to communication. It is the English language, *as it is*, which can conjure up a whole image with a single word or phrase. The power of language lies in the words close to our hearts, not in the sentences we labor to produce.

Our language is also our heritage. We remove a critical link to our parents' and grandparents' generations when their words left in books, recordings, and on film, become archaisms to us.

Ultimately what non-sexist nonsense really produces is a serious gap between private thought and public speech. From university writing programs to Cable News Network (whose anchormen must report on international news without the taboo word "foreigner") we are taught not to say directly what we mean. Instead, we choose words which are politically palatable. That is essence of censorship. It is also a mess.

It's Not My Fault



VICTIMHOOD IN THE NINETIES

I N T E R V I E W



CHARLES J. SYKES IS THE author of two books on American higher education, *Profscam* and *The Hollow Men*. A senior fellow at the



Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, he is a frequent speaker college campuses throughout the country. Mr. Sykes lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with his family. His most recent book is *A Nation of Victims*, about the American ideal of being a victim and the flight from responsibility. California Review Editor-in-Chief Matthew Robinson spoke with Mr. Sykes over the phone on a rainy Friday in January.



I N T E R V I E W

C H A R L E S S Y K E S

How did you come to write your book about victimhood, *A Nation of Victims*?

Well, it's become a dominant theme in American politics and American life in general. I don't think anyone can spend too much time on the American campus without recognizing the role that victim politics plays in the politics of campus life. The rivalry between the various victims' groups vying with one another for the title of the most oppressed, most aggrieved, or most annoyed. This politics of victimization seems to lie behind the growing intolerance on campuses, the shrillness of debate, and the fall of orthodoxy. What struck me, however, was that this was no longer confined simply to the university but that more and more individuals and groups were adopting the pose of victimization. They were picking up the cry, "Don't blame me, I'm not responsible." Whether it is attaching oneself to a group that defines itself by its status of victimhood or whether it is attributing all of one's problems to some complex or dysfunction or addiction or whether it was our national penchant for litigation, it seems to be a thread that runs through American society. It is an increased reluctance to take personal responsibility for our behavior, our tendency to assume the moral posture of victimhood and the very divisive results that ensue.

What kind of reaction has *A Nation of Victims* received. I understand that you sometimes do radio and television appearances. Have you been surprised or had any particularly vehement reactions to the book? Or do people agree with it?

I think that book is successful because it has struck a nerve. I

don't think you can pick up the newspaper without seeing some new example. [For instance] Senator Packwood is accused of sexual harassment and the first thing he does is blame his behavior on alcoholism. It's almost become routine. So, I think, there is a wide-spread sense in America

among people I have talked to and who have read the book that it resonated with them. On the other hand, of course, I get a very emotional reaction from people who have a very deep attachment to their status of being a victim. I often get calls on radio talk shows who object to the theme of the book and insist that they are members of three or four different support groups. Never just one support group. It is interesting that they are members of several support groups, which tends to illustrate the point I'm trying to make: people have substituted therapeutic infirmity for traditional communities and they begin to build their social life, their identity, and their whole worldview around their disabilities or their deficiencies.

Multi-victim victimism.

Multi-victim victimism. Yes, exactly.

You note, though, in this book and cite a number of authors, among them Shelby Steele, that

victimism swallows a person's whole being. It also seems to be one of the lines of thought throughout the book that if you're truly compassionate and truly interested in those people who need care and support that the way of the victim is not the way. Would you care to elaborate on that?

I think that that is a very important point. First, that victimhood tends to swallow the whole person. One of the major themes of the book is that there *are* genuine victims. There are people who genuinely deserve compassion and

“
The attractions of being a victim are obvious. It confers innocence. It confers a sense of moral superiority and genuine entitlements in our society. And those advantages are seductive.
”



“ [Happiness] was something to which we were entitled as a matter of right. We decided that we were entitled to all sorts of self-fulfillment, self-actualization, and self-realization. Good sex without strings.”

special protection... My argument is that the genuine victims are the ones who tend to be elbowed aside in this universal chorus of complaint. If everybody is a victim then the genuine victims find themselves ignored and their suffering trivialized. You do not enhance one's understanding of the plight of the handicapped, for example, by developing new forms of dysfunction like "chronic lateness syndrome" and you do not enhance the problem of racism by insisting that Marion Barry, for example, is a victim of racism... What that does is it trivializes the real problems of racism. It tends to numb people to those problems which leads to what I call "compassion fatigue" in the book.

The other point, I think, is one that I share with Shelby Steele and it is that obsessing upon one's sense of grievance and building one's identity upon one's status as a victim is unlikely ever to lead to genuine self-esteem or personal liberation. In fact, it often leads to precisely the opposite. There is a very profound irony here. Many of the policies of sensitivity and of victim politics purport to have as their goal empowering victims or making them more successful or raising their esteem. [It] will in the long run, I think, have exactly the opposite effect... The attractions of being a victim are obvious. It confers innocence. It confers in some circumstances a sense of moral superiority and genuine entitlements in our society. And those advantages are seductive. And they are also, I would argue, somewhat addictive — to use a popular term from victim culture. It becomes increasingly difficult to separate yourself from that and to rise above your victim status if you feel tied to it.

You seem to have two very influential historical transformations to point to which have led to the transformation into victim rhetoric. It seems to me that one is the rise of the therapeutic culture and the other is the appropriation of the civil rights movement and its rhetoric. This idea of the therapeutic culture is very interesting to me; could you describe a little bit about that? What do you think this will lead to if we continue on the road to

thinking of evil, not as moral bankruptcy, but rather as various psychopathologies?

That is most certainly a central theme of the book which is called the medicalization of American society. And as you indicated we Americans have become much more comfortable in saying that someone is sick or dysfunctional or suffers from this or that complex than we are in making moral judgements and saying that they are bad where they have done something that is evil. And the substitution of medical terminology for moral standards I think has been decisive in this because what it does is it tends to lower or minimize the role of free will; it tends to minimize what we used to call "character" in American society. Now what we are doing and continuing to do at a very rapid rate is redefine larger and larger areas of human behavior into medical and therapeutic terms. I think that ultimately this tends to erode personal accountability and personal responsibility in this way: if something is a disease it is something by definition that happens to us rather than something we do ourselves. If it is a medical problem it is something over which we have quite limited, if any, control. It makes it impossible to make moral or ethical judgements. And it makes it impossible to hold individuals responsible for their behavior. And I think that has happened. I also argue in the book that we need to look at this rise of the therapeutic culture in close conjunction with the decline of traditional religion. In effect...

You actually juxtapose or show that they are antipodal.

Exactly. And I think that in a sense the therapeutic culture has arisen as a substitute religion to take the place of traditional religion. Quite obviously and unfortunately it has failed to really fill that gap. We are not necessarily saner or better adjusted than we were before that. You asked another question too.



Yes, I was interested in the civil rights movement and the effect that it has had [on victim rhetoric]. It seemed to be one of the points that you were highlighting and also as a second influence with the rise of the therapeutic culture.

Another way of looking at it is that there are four other roots to look at for victim culture. The first is America's expectations. America has always had high expectations. We have always believed in the pursuit of happiness. It's there in the Declaration of Independence.

But somewhere along the line we decided, and this is very much a part of the therapeutic society we live in, happiness was not something to be fought for or sacrificed for or worked for. It was something to which we were entitled as a matter of right. We decided that we were entitled to all sorts of self-fulfillment, self-actualization, and self-realization. Good sex without strings. If we couldn't get those things we were very disappointed. We looked for someone or something to blame for that which again really reflects a fundamental change in our worldview, our place in the universe, and what life is all about. Second, related to the civil rights movement was that we experienced a rights revolution in this country. We believed that if some rights were good then more rights must be better. Therefore, we should demand all the rights we possibly can and as loudly and shrilly as possible.

You had a proliferation of groups that adopted the rhetoric and the moral posture of the civil rights movement and applied all of those to themselves including one gentleman with a very large waistline and capacious backside who insisted that he was a victim of oppression because McDonald's restaurant did not create seats that were large enough for him. He threatened to write to the U.S. Justice Department's Minority Rights Division saying that he represented a minority every bit as much

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The culture of victimization is very much a part of our youth culture. By youth culture I do not mean a culture of the young but a culture that refuses to grow up. It is very much my generation's problem.
”**

discriminated against as blacks and Hispanics etc. The problem, of course, was that he was not born with the huge, huge butt. He contributed to that. But those distinctions became lost in the rights revolution. Third, which we talked about before, [was] the de-personalization of blame. "Don't blame me its not my responsibility, I suffer from this medical complex." At the same time [we shift] our focus from individual responsibility to society. And finally, fourth, and this is very much a product of the sixties and early seventies, we created a whole host of entitlements, benefits, and privileges for people who were fortunate enough to identify themselves either individually as a victim or as a member of a victim group. It opened doors to jobs, admissions to colleges, and to political power. All these working together create a very positive incentive for victimhood.

At the very end of *A Nation of Victims* you outline some possible solutions among these *caritas*. One of the things I appreciated about the book was the emphasis on true compassion versus what you call "compassion fatigue" or a Gresham's Law [of victims] where fake victims drive out true victims.

Right. I forgot about Gresham's Law.

To what extent do you think that there could be a return to these values [of compassion]? Do you see that in the future? This is your chance to be a prophet.

I hope so. I would say that it will probably get worse in the short run before it gets better because of the built-in infrastructure of victimization. There are so many groups that have a vested interest in maintaining this culture. This is America's growth industry. Americans have done with grievance what the Japanese have done with the microchip. So I think it will get worse before it gets better.

In the long run, I'm more optimistic because I have a good deal more confidence in people's common sense. People do have an innate ability to distinguish between bogus victims and real victims. They do recognize the huge costs we are paying by balkanizing ourselves into victim groups and by denying responsibility for our lives. Every year it becomes more and more apparent the price we pay for our flight from responsibility.

Some of this may be generational. I'm a member of the baby-boom generation which has turned whining into a cultural motif. One hopes that we will sooner or later grow up.

One thing I do mention in the book is that the culture of victimization is very much a part of our youth culture. By youth culture I do not mean a culture

of the young but a culture that refuses to grow up. That is very much my generation's problem. Hopefully as we move further into middle age that may change....

But I guess my main hopes rest with the residual common sense that people have to be able to [identify real victims]. On the other hand, I have no illusions that it is easy to make a distinction between the politicized compassion, that we see today, and what I call *caritas*, which is a much older and more fundamental sense of compassion and concern for others. It is the sort of concern that does not indulge in moral posturing, doesn't obsess about striking the right pose and making us feel virtuous but is really and genuinely concerned with helping other people. That is the distinction. The opposite of a culture of victimization is *not* a culture of indifference.

It's not Randian.

It is not Randian and its not Nietzschean. I got a letter by the way — and this is off the record, well, it doesn't matter if its off the record — which troubled me deeply. It was from someone who saw me on C-SPAN and who thought that I must be a fan of Friedrich Nietzsche. He thought my critique was very much like Friedrich Nietzsche's [critique] of the slave morality of Christianity.

Now, you've read my book and nothing could be further from the truth. But I could see how one possible future could be that in the reaction to the culture of victimization we turn away from compassion altogether. This is why it is very important to make the distinction.

At some point I could see the society overwhelmed with phony and extreme and annoying claims for compassion saying that the response is to become very hard-hearted and very self-indulgent.

**“
At some point I could see the society overwhelmed with phony and extreme and annoying claims for compassion saying that the response is to become very hard-hearted and very self-indulgent.
”**

It obviously becomes parasitic. If everyone is a victim then no one is.

Exactly. I think that is an important point. When John Bradshaw says that 96 percent of all families are dysfunctional what he is doing is trivializing the problems those kids who are really in dysfunctional families and being abused. That sort of thing is not going to lead to happier, healthier families.

Drawing on your books *Profscam*, *The Hollow Men*, and your new book *A Nation of Victims*, what is your personally favorite example of outrageous victim rhetoric?

Oh my goodness. Oh I'd have to think about that. What's yours? There's so

much out there.

You can just flip on any talk show.

That's right. One of my favorites, lately, has been a woman here in my home town of Milwaukee, a psychotherapist who has developed a new treatment for a disorder she calls "affluenzia." A disease suffered by the affluent.

Oh, the madness.

All of these psychological problems that people with a great deal of money and too much time on their hands have. I was particularly...

Isaw that on Monty Python.

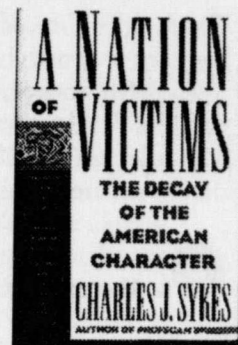
Well, no, this is real, although reality is becoming hard to satirize. She's come up with affluenzia and I think that what I admired about it was, one, the creativity and, two, the entrepreneurial spirit that would invent a disease that affects only people who can pay her bill. How about that? If you want to invent a practice in a new psychological infirmity take the rich.

But what that underlines is that there is literally no one or nothing that cannot fall under the rubric of victimization. White middle class people with lots of money are somehow immune from this. No. In our society? Not by a long shot. I am waiting to see episodes on Oprah Winfrey dealing with affluenzia, books about affluenzia, and support and self-help groups.

Friends of the Affluenzia Impaired.

Perhaps telethons. I'm waiting for the telethon for chronically late. It would never begin on time.

Book Reviews...



A Nation of Victims: The Decay of the American Character

By Charles J. Sykes

St. Martin's Press, 284 pages, \$22.95

Anyone who attends the modern university or opens a newspaper today is familiar with the shrill and self-righteous cry of the victim. We know all too well the tragicomic spectacle in modern culture as the oppressed and perpetually exploited use their status as "victims" to gain increasing control of political debate and glean from the state invented rights or financial compensations.

At UC San Diego we are equally bombarded with such cries of oppression at the hands of society. We are told by a *Guardian* columnist that University of California regents are at war with minority students, purposely raising tuition in their covert and ongoing war to keep minorities out and further racism. Clubs such as the Objectivist Study Group have a speaker shouted down because he dares to criticize multiculturalism. And who can miss the ever present and unavoidable announcements of the International Socialist Club announcing that the world's evils are solely the result of capitalism and its class/race/gender war? Indeed, what unites conversation (undoubtedly one-sided) on the university campus on any issue of gravity is not the ideas of responsibility and freedom, but the mantra of what society owes me and why it is not my fault.

This phenomenon of victimhood is not limited to the university. Any talk show or news broadcast is proof of that. Indeed, the privileged and powerful U.S. Senate has not escaped the onslaught of victimist rhetoric. Republican Senator Bob Packwood in order to escape the charges of sexual harassment advanced by several female aides conjured the possibility that his actions may be the result of alcohol dependence, assuring his

accusers, of course, that he would be tested immediately. Such mountebankery and hucksterism however is becoming the norm as author Charles J. Sykes notes in his most recent book, *A Nation of Victims: The Decay of the American Character*. As Sykes shows us, the examples of hiding or manipulating others with one's victimhood are legion:

"An FBI agent embezzles two thousand dollars from the government and then loses all of it in an afternoon of gambling in Atlantic City. He is fired but wins reinstatement after a court rules that his affinity for gambling with other people's money is a 'handicap' and thus protected under federal law."

"Fired for chronically showing up late at work, a former school district employee sues his employers, arguing that he is a victim of what his lawyer calls 'chronic lateness syndrome.'"

"A man by his own admission has exposed himself between ten thousand and twenty thousand times (and been convicted on more than thirty occasions) is turned down for a job as park attendant in Dane County, Wisconsin, because of his arrest record but sues—on the grounds that he had never exposed himself in a park, only in libraries and laundromats. Wisconsin employment officials ever accommodating to the expansion of human rights, agree and make 'an initial determination of probable cause' that the flasher was the victim of illegal job discrimination."

"The Salvation Army has been sued on the grounds that it violated an employee's right to freedom of religion after it dismissed a woman for using agency equipment to copy materials describing Satanic rituals."

These are only individual examples of a greater transformation which is occurring in American society. In *A Nation of Victims* the reader begins to see a connection between the idiocy of every talk show, the increasing litigation consuming America, and the just plain pervasive use of excuses that is bombarding American society. Mr. Sykes gives us the history and development of the new American ethos of victimhood.

As he writes, "The ethos of victimization has an endless capacity not only for exculpating one's self from blame, washing away responsibility in a torrent of explanation—racism, sexism, rotten parents, addiction, and illness—but also for projecting guilt onto others."

But what has caused American society to jettison the ideas of

responsibility for oneself and one's actions and accept increasingly the notion that "I am not to blame"? Sykes answers this question and charts the simultaneously ridiculous and deplorable path that has choked true compassion and replaced everyday life with the solitary, nasty, poor, brutish, and short war of victims. In such a pitiable war each group pleads that it is the most oppressed and, therefore, in genuine need of government protection, compensation, or sympathy. Reading *A Nation of Victims* one begins to don a kind of surprised and morbid curiosity. The pages offer a relentless and intrepid journey into the new victim mind set and its origin, in what Sykes calls the "therapeutic culture" and the immaturity and rebellion of the 1960s.

According to Mr. Sykes, the compassion and common moral culture which allowed the civil rights movement has been transformed into a political play for attention and special treatment. The victim uses guilt and helplessness to manipulate society. What began essentially as an appeal to common morals and justice has become a war of guilt-mongering. The idea of being a victim of society moved slowly from the civil rights movement eventually to the women's movement, gay liberation, black power, culminating in a state of society that entertains the despondent and psychologically helpless like "Gamblers Anonymous, Pill Addicts Anonymous, S-Anonymous ('relatives and friends of sex addicts'), Nicotine Anonymous, Youth Emotions Anonymous, Unwed Parents Anonymous, Emotional Health Anonymous, Debtors Anonymous, Workaholics Anonymous, Dual Disorders Anonymous, Batterers Anonymous, Victims Anonymous, and Families of Sex Offenders Anonymous."

Sykes is careful to point out that the appeal to victimhood is costly. As we all see ourselves as sick victims we lose the ability to have real compassion. At work in other words, according to Sykes is a kind of Gresham's Law: "Bogus victims drive out

genuine victims." We are becoming a society incapable of responsibility either for ourselves or our neighbors.

This cost, however, is not just for society but also for the victim himself. Sykes writes, "But as one critic noted, seeing oneself solely as a victim — irrespective of other identities — changes one's 'victimhood' from accident to essence. It expands the category of victim until it swallows the whole person." The unhealthy aspects of victimhood are crushing the American character that once prided itself on working hard to improve oneself and excel. Transformations in psychology and politics have changed the traditional idea of evil with the notion that only the state and society can make things right. The implication is that we are all at the hands of a state that can make us better and that life's answers are found in the responsibilities of others to solve our problems.

It is hard to emphasize the strengths and insights of this book. In fact, it is impossible to read without looking at American society differently. The revolution and decay in the American character, that Mr. Sykes describes, are solvable however. Mr. Sykes notes that America can strike a balance between the importance of character and discipline and the idea that some people truly need help. "Critics, inevitably, will snipe at the advocacy of character as a simplistic way to approach complex social problems. But the complexity of these problems may be one of the strongest reasons for a politics of personal responsibility." In addition, he emphasizes a return to *caritas*, the idea that we should not confuse "sentiment with consequences" but rather judge programs by their results and not by their moral afterglow or seeming self-esteem enhancement.

In this way, *A Nation of Victims* is not only mordant and stinging, but truly compassionate. The victimist rhetoric of the university that has entered American life has met in Mr. Sykes not only an insightful critic but also a formidable opponent.

—Matthew Robinson

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PRESTO!

The Alchemy of Job Creation

By Mark Rotenberg

Politicians treat Americans like idiots. Their pollsters tell them to. Fallacies abound in the political rhetoric, and blatant special-interest pandering abounds in most politicians' actions. As we trudge through another recessionary phase of the business cycle, numerous political candidates will wrap their spending bills in the regalia of "creating jobs." But this refrain is little more than a misleading attempt to garner support for big-spending government programs and gain political support of specific employee unions and other special interest groups.

The dynamics of capitalist and mixed economies dictate that money spent through a political system will not be used as efficiently as that same money would if spent in the private sector. When the goal is to "create jobs," each dollar spent counts, and thus it is imperative that it be spent through the most efficient methods possible. Yet politicians from both major political parties regularly use the fallacy of government spending "creating jobs" to convince the electorate that they care about repairing unemployment.

With the country mired in a stubborn recession, a despondent George Bush plucked a \$151-billion transportation bill out of

the Democratic Congress's docket to make a campaign-year public relations statement. In the mud and drizzle of a Texas winter, he signed the massive appropriations bill to an audience of hard-hat construction workers, television crews, and an entire nation. The impact of the bill, he stated, could be "summed up in three words: jobs, jobs, jobs."

The bill would take \$151-billion over six years from taxpayers nationwide, and spend it on various public transportation projects, freeways, and demonstration projects located in the districts of the most influential Congressional members and of members ensnared in tough re-election contests.

The arguments favoring the highway construction are compelling. Construction during a recession is depressed, and unemployment in the construction industry is high — the projects would "create" over 600,000 jobs for the workers. But in the world of government-run economics, capital cannot be "created"

until an equal (or greater) amount has been taxed away from those fighting to maintain their own share of the capital pie — middle-class employees, budding companies, and laborers. For every dollar "created" by the project, somebody somewhere has

Until the myth of government spending "creating jobs" has been dispelled, American taxpayers and employees will be at the mercy of the political gimmicks of the very politicians they choose to elect.

one dollar less to spend, and another person has one dollar less to earn.

The project has in fact "created" an additional \$151-billion worth of unemployment. Yet only the trained eye will observe this strife created by the government expenditure. Others will see jobs appear out of thin air, building a freeway, and will give the local representative his much-needed election-year boost.

The \$151-billion of employment "created" by the appropriation bill, in effect, "destroys" an equivalent \$151-billion of employment in the private sector. While it is easy to see the \$151-billion at work in the form of construction workers building a freeway, it is much more difficult to see the unemployed nurses, automobile workers, secretaries, textile workers and janitors displaced as a result of this redirection of capital.

The trained eye has to look beyond the struggling construction industry and see the smaller, recession-weary companies struggling even harder to make their own ends meet as a result of \$151-billion less capital available. These companies will no longer be available to create more permanent employment in the private sector, and will in many cases have to resort to their own layoffs.

Clearly, leaving the \$151-billion back in the hands of these workers will be much better allocated by consumers than by bureaucrats in Washington, Sacramento, or City Hall.

Furthermore, federal highway funds must pass through a large and costly bureaucracy. Without the restraints of free-market competition (government paper pushers are the monopoly), there is little check on the bureaucratic overhead of such an appropriation. Some call it government "waste" and "inefficiency" and believe it can be eliminated simply by cutting administrative budgets. While this may decrease waste for many cases, it doesn't solve the root problem: lack of free-market incentive. The corporation that manages its books like the federal government, when faced with competition, will either restructure or face bankruptcy. The federal government needs not worry about such competition.

The Congress's flagrant and often intentional mismanagement of the economic crisis, along with Bush's tacit complicity in instances such as the 1991 transportation bill, both served to postpone the country's economic recovery and to assure November's Democratic victory. Instead of creating "jobs, jobs, jobs" as promised, Bush's strategy of federal spending to "create jobs" and jump-start the economy contributed to a second dip in economic indicators.

Despite this, Bill Clinton liked the idea so much, he made it a centerpiece of his proposed "Putting America to work" programs. So much for pragmatism. The new pragmatism coming from the "revitalized" Clinton camp and the now-defunct Bush camp is not "whatever works for the country," but rather "whatever works to get me elected."

After promising in 1988 to "create" 15 million jobs, Bush's complete turnabout from Reagan's reliance on private rather than public job creation has proven disastrous to the private sector. Domestic spending rose faster under Bush's first term than under any presidential term since John F. Kennedy, while total federal government outlays under Bush grew from 22.1 percent of GNP to a projected 25.2 percent of GNP for this past fiscal year. The net effect? \$175-billion less available to a cash-starved private sector, and \$175-billion more being spent in big government's wasteful, inefficient manners.

The prognosis looks worse. Clinton's big-spending programs and his rubber-stamping congress (or was it Congress's big-spending programs and Clinton's rubber stamp?) both promise to drastically enlarge an already bloated government waste machine. It's Government creating jobs for the people, and it's coming with a vengeance.

Hence, I get nervous every time I hear a politician offer to "create" jobs for me. What will I be doing? Shuffling legal briefs in a new federal regulatory agency? Passing "disinformation" to the government of a peaceful third world country? Or will I be

one of those guys making chains out of paper clips in the DMV office while customers wait in a 45-minute long line?

More importantly, who will be paying my income? All the nickels and dimes private-sector working people and companies will have to afford for me to eke out my niche in the public sector will contribute to their respective financial hardships, and possibly to unemployment of their own.

In most cases, if they wouldn't have afforded that nickel or dime to me otherwise, then my employment is an unnecessary diversion of their earned income, and thus a detraction from their desired quality of life.

Economists would agree that capital is ultimately created through proper usage of savings. Our executive and particularly our legislative have yet to prove their abilities to save. Until the myth of government spending "creating jobs" has been dispelled, American taxpayers and employees will be at the mercy of the political gimmicks of the very politicians they choose to elect.

—Mark Rotenberg is a Warren College Senior

Domestic spending rose faster under Bush's first term than under any presidential term since John F. Kennedy, while total federal government outlays under Bush grew from 22.1 percent of GNP to a projected 25.2 percent of GNP for this past fiscal year. The net effect? \$175 billion less available to a cash starved private sector, and \$175 billion more being spent in big government's wasteful, inefficient manners.



SEX AND THE SINGLE LOSER

Sensitivity, Mutual Understanding And Other Such Nonsense

By Philip Michaels

I have a confession to make, and I'm almost embarrassed to admit it, but I've never really believed in any of this "Politically Correct" nonsense. I mean, come on — nobody, save for a couple of Deadheads whose brains have long since been clogged by bong residue, actually espouses this stuff, do they? Someone would be droning on about how this PC craze was sweeping the nation, and I, like any other reasonable human being, would roll my eyes and go back to worrying about more pressing issues, like excessive dryer lint. Nobody with the sense God gave a tree stump *actually* considered words like "manhole cover" sexist, or so I thought. PC, I had decided, was nothing more than a load of hooley.

And then the other day, *The California Review* received a little pamphlet in the mail called "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid." The true disciple of PC, it seems, is not satisfied simply with fighting oppression, mandating sensitivity, and saving the planet. No, at the heart of the PC movement is a concept near and dear to the heart of every man, woman, and child — chasing some tail.

"This is all a big joke, right?" I asked Matthew Robinson, who for some reason, was not terribly amused.

"No, this is a real thing," he told me. "It's even been reviewed."

"As a humor book?" I asked, still unclear on the subject.

"Nope. As a serious PC book."

Lo and behold, he was right. The Tahanga Research

Association has taken the time and energy to whip out a review of "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" by unknown author "X" (The Tahanga Research Association's review credits this masterpiece to Tuppy Owens, which, if I'm not mistaken, was also the name of one of the Marx Brothers...). If this "Getting Laid" book was all a big put-on, then someone had apparently forgotten to tell the Tahanga Research Association. They're in hot, sweaty love with the book, claiming that Ms. Owens' opus "offers some real tofu." The booklet contains "reasonable advice on self-improvement, health, empathy, confession, desire, masturbation, oppression" — because we can't have a PC book without the "O" word — "mutual aid and the like."

Incredibly, the Tahanga Research Association is having its collective leg pulled in a major way — there's no way on earth "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" is on the level. First of all, no self-respecting PC-ite would use the term "Getting Laid." "Co-nuturing," yes, "mutual physical gratification," maybe, but "Getting Laid?" That terminology hardly evokes feelings of sensitivity, warmth, and respect for all genders.

Furthermore, the booklet is replete with nonsense that no human being would seriously offer as advice, unless he or she was in the midst of one severe whiskey binge. Take for example, the "advice" Ms. Owens imparts for oral sex: "Vegetarians might find themselves avoiding going down on each other because of an

ideological opposition to meat. Non-meat eaters will require a change of attitude, tapping into the spiritual aspects of oral sex..." Now, I challenge anyone who believes that there's anything to this PC gibberish to read that last passage with a straight face. I've tried and I'm convinced that someone is having a good laugh at the expense of the Tahanga Research Association.

It isn't completely out of the question that "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" is a calculated attempt to make PC disciples look silly. After all, lefties, PC-ites, and their equally dim-witted ilk are notorious for being easily fooled. History proves this — at some point or another, these refugees from the Woodstock nation have been cozened into thinking that tie-die and bell bottoms were attractive, that free love will make the world a better place, and that Emerson, Lake & Palmer was one hell of a band. These people could probably be convinced that the world was flat (A round earth, after all, is insensitive to those of us who are "geometrically challenged").

But, for a moment, let's pretend that those crazy kids at the Tahanga Research Association haven't had the wool pulled over their eyes — let's consider the fact that maybe, just maybe, "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" was written with a serious intent. Upon careful consideration, the only logical conclusion one can reach is "You have got to be kidding!"

The advice in "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" is about as "reasonable" as letting Jeffrey Dahmer and Ted Bundy baby-sit your kids. The suggestions that aren't dubious, illogical, or illegal are rooted in a gross stupidity that pervades the entire pamphlet. Instead of turning to "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" for advice, the truly lovelorn would be better off picking up a copy of *Death in the Afternoon*, which, at the very least, is a much better read.

Ms. Owens begins by making asinine claims about how "[s]exual repression damages a PC's mental and physical health" and that "[f]ull sexual expression rejuvenates the tissues, whilst regular orgasm is good for the heart and lungs," meaning, I guess, that Madonna has no need to fear for her health.

There are many approaches to getting your jollies, according to the learned Ms. Owens. Witness the everpopular "intellectual approach" where "[s]exual rapport between people engaged in interesting activities" is "devastatingly superior to when it's based on good looks or availability." Ms. Owens suggest that Rablais, Reich, Wilde, and others are good sources for "erotic debate." I can't tell you how many times I've used this very approach.

Me: So, that Reich is a hell of a writer, huh?

My Beloved: Yup. And Wilde isn't too bad either.

Me: I'll say. So... Wanna go have sex?

My Beloved: Sure.

And as if that weren't enough, "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" even contains enough talk about oppression to make even the most sensitive liberal blush. Ms. Owens exhorts us to recognize "the sexuality of the sexually oppressed minorities" and to include "them in your own love life." Ms. Owens is unclear, however, exactly what constitutes a sexually oppressed

minority, so I'll interpret that she means unattractive, goofy-looking fellows like myself. What she seems to be arguing, if I understand her correctly, is that everyone has a constitutional right to do the naughty deed, and to deny them of this simple right is oppression of the most odious nature. As a one of these "sexually repressed" individuals I, for one, couldn't agree more.

I had always considered myself a "love" scholar, but that was before I read "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid." Now, I realize that I was drowning in an ocean of ignorance, after coming across the following pearls of wisdom:

- "Sex generates heat, so it's much more ecologically sound to keep each other warm through passion than to sit around with the fire on." You heard it here first — sex is even hipper than recycling among the environmental crowd. Try this approach at the next Earth Day.

- "Alcohol does lower inhibitions and allows people to express themselves in ways that they might find difficult when sober... Getting pissed can open you up to do things that you're normally afraid to do..." And I had always thought that getting someone drunk so that you could have your way with her was date rape. Boy, is my face red.

- "When you present yourself as an androgynous being, you take on incomparable sexual appeal." After all, it worked for David Bowie.

At the heart of Ms. Owens' little pamphlet is the notion that inhibitions of any kind are a bad thing, a sort of "Sha-la-la-live for today" attitude that's managed to kill off, screw-up, and otherwise, ravage the generations that came of age during the sixties, seventies, and eighties. When she advises the reader to "[g]et in touch with your origins surrounded by distantly-related species," she isn't just talking about romping naked through the forest primeval and having intercourse with every warm-blooded creature within striking distance. She's advocating abandoning any principles or discretions that we had the misfortune of being burdened with. Discipline and self-control are icky things, after all, and it's more fun to give into each and every desire anyway.

Perhaps, it's prudish and, I daresay, oppressive to feel this way, but I always thought that inhibitions were what made love enjoyable. Fumbling to hold someone's hand in a movie theater, shyly sneaking a glance at someone you cared about, awkwardly kissing on the first date — these are far more sensual and affectionate than making out like wild bunnies whenever the opportunity presents itself.

It is my considered opinion, then, that Ms. Owens doesn't know squank about love, and the much ballyhooed PC claim about sensitivity to others is grade-A fertilizer. "The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid" is about personal gratification, pure and simple. The book itself should be used as kindling. And if that makes me an oppressor, then so be it and pass the cigars.

I should include one up-side to this entire "Getting Laid" nonsense — Ms. Owens is a firm believer in safe sex and birth control. Thank goodness. We wouldn't want these PC types reproducing and passing on their inane notions to the next generation.

Parting Thoughts...

Each man is the smith of his own fortune.

—Appius Claudius Caecus

But what is freedom? Rightly understood the universal license to be good.

—Hartley Coleridge

One dies only once, and it's for such a long time!

—Moliere

The original writer is not he who refrains from imitating others, but he who can be imitated by none.

—Chateaubriand

It is an economic axiom as old as the hills that goods and services can be paid for only with goods and services.

—Albert J. Nock

A good book is the best of friends, the same today and forever.

—Martin Tupper

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the

prudence never to practice either of them.

—Mark Twain

Truth, Sir, is a cow, which will yield such people [sceptics] no more milk, and so they are gone to milk the bull.

—Samuel Johnson

Give me a few minutes to talk away my face and I can seduce the Queen of France.

—Voltaire

If they want peace, nations should avoid the pin-pricks that precede cannon-shots.

—Napolean

The never-failing way to get rid of a fellow is to tell him something for his own good.

—Kin Hubbard

If you don't think women are explosive, drop one.

—Gerald F. Lieberman

My mother said: "Marry a man with good teeth and high arches." She thought I should get that into the

genetic structure of the family.

—Jill Clayburgh

Bad spellers of the world, untie!

—Graffito

Live in danger. Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius.

—Nietzsche

All you earnest men out to save the world... please, have a laugh.

—Reinhold Niebuhr

Do not let spacious plans for a new world divert your energies from saving what is left of the old.

—Sir Winston Churchill

Any kiddie in school can love like a fool / But hating, my boy, is an art.

—Ogden Nash

I am incurably convinced that the object of opening the mind, as of the mouth, is to shut it on something solid.

—G.K. Chesterton

A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it is written on.

—Samuel Goldwyn

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