

“Political Correctness:” A Short History of an Ideology

Edited by William S. Lind

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Introduction

As Russell Kirk wrote, one of conservatism's most important insights is that all ideologies are wrong. Ideology takes an intellectual system, a product of one or more philosophers, and says, "This system must be true." Inevitably, reality ends up contradicting the system, usually on a growing number of points. But the ideology, by its nature, cannot adjust to reality; to do so would be to abandon the system.

Therefore, reality must be suppressed. If the ideology has power, it uses its power to undertake this suppression. It forbids writing or speaking certain facts. Its goal is to prevent not only expression of thoughts that contradict what "must be true," but thinking such thoughts. In the end, the result is inevitably the concentration camp, the gulag and the grave.

While some Americans have believed in ideologies, America itself never had an official, state ideology – up until now. But what happens today to Americans who suggest that there are differences among ethnic groups, or that the traditional social roles of men and women reflect their different natures, or that homosexuality is morally wrong? If they are public figures, they must grovel in the dirt in endless, canting apologies. If they are university students, they face star chamber courts and possible expulsion. If they are employees of private corporations, they may face loss of their jobs. What was their crime? Contradicting America's new state ideology of "Political Correctness."

But what exactly is "Political Correctness?" Marxists have used the term for at least 80 years, as a broad synonym for "the General Line of the Party." It could be said that Political Correctness is the General Line of the Establishment in America today;

certainly, no one who dares contradict it can be a member of that Establishment. But that still does not tell us what it really is.

This short book, which Free Congress has decided to make available free over its website, seeks to answer that question. It does so in the only way any ideology can be understood, by looking at its historical origins, its method of analysis and several key components, including its place in higher education and its ties with the Feminist movement. Finally, it offers an annotated bibliography for those who wish to pursue the subject in greater depth.

Perhaps the most important question facing Americans today is, “Do we really want America to be an ideological state?” Because conservatives know where all ideologies lead, our answer, resoundingly, is “NO!” But if we expect to prevail and restore our country to full freedom of thought and expression, we need to know our enemy. We need to understand what Political Correctness really is. As you will soon see, if we can expose the true origins and nature of Political Correctness, we will have taken a giant step to its overthrow.

William S. Lind

Chapter 1

What is “Political Correctness”?

by

William S. Lind

Most Americans look back on the 1950s as a good time. Our homes were safe, to the point where many people did not bother to lock their doors. Public schools were generally excellent, and their problems were things like talking in class and running in the halls. Most men treated women like ladies, and most ladies devoted their time and effort to making good homes, rearing their children well and helping their communities through volunteer work. Children grew up in two-parent households, and the mother was there to meet the child when he came home from school. Entertainment was something the whole family could enjoy.

What happened?

If a man from America of the 1950s were suddenly introduced into America in the 2000s, he would hardly recognize it as the same country. He would be in immediate danger of getting mugged, carjacked or worse, because he would not have learned to live in constant fear. He would not know that he shouldn't go into certain parts of the city, that his car must not only be locked but equipped with an alarm, that he dare not go to sleep at night without locking the windows and bolting the doors – and setting the electronic security system.

If he brought his family with him, he and his wife would probably cheerfully pack their children off to the nearest public school. When the children came home in the afternoon and told them they had to go through a metal detector to get in the building, had been given some funny white powder by another kid and learned that homosexuality is normal and good, the parents would be uncomprehending.

In the office, the man might light up a cigarette, drop a reference to the “little lady,” and say he was happy to see the firm employing some Negroes in important positions. Any of those acts would earn a swift reprimand, and together they might get him fired.

When she went into the city to shop, the wife would put on a nice suit, hat, and possibly gloves. She would not understand why people stared, and mocked.

And when the whole family sat down after dinner and turned on the television, they would not understand how pornography from some sleazy, blank-fronted “Adults Only” kiosk had gotten on their set.

Were they able, our 1950s family would head back to the 1950s as fast as they could, with a gripping horror story to tell. Their story would be of a nation that had decayed and degenerated at a fantastic pace, moving in less than a half a century from the greatest country on earth to a Third World nation, overrun by crime, noise, drugs and dirt. The fall of Rome was graceful by comparison.

Why did it happen?

Over the last forty years, America has been conquered by the same force that earlier took over Russia, China, Germany and Italy. That force is ideology. Here, as elsewhere, ideology has inflicted enormous damage on the traditional culture it came to dominate, fracturing it everywhere and sweeping much of it away. In its place came fear, and ruin. Russia will take a generation or more to recover from Communism, if it ever can.

The ideology that has taken over America goes most commonly by the name of “Political Correctness.” Some people see it as a joke. It is not. It is deadly serious. It seeks to alter virtually all the rules, formal and informal, that govern relations among people and institutions. It wants to change behavior, thought, even the words we use. To a significant extent, it already has. Whoever or whatever controls language also controls thought. Who dares to speak of “ladies” now?

Just what is “Political Correctness?” “Political Correctness” is in fact cultural Marxism – Marxism translated from economic into cultural terms. The effort to translate Marxism from economics into culture did not begin with the student rebellion of the 1960s. It goes back at least to the 1920s and the writings of the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci. In 1923, in Germany, a group of Marxists founded an institute devoted to making the translation, the Institute of Social Research (later known as the Frankfurt School). One of its founders, George Lukacs, stated its purpose as answering the question, “Who shall save us from Western Civilization?” The Frankfurt School gained profound influence in American universities after many of its leading lights fled to the United States in the 1930s to escape National Socialism in Germany.

The Frankfurt School blended Marx with Freud, and later influences (some Fascist as well as Marxist) added linguistics to create “Critical Theory” and “deconstruction.” These in turn greatly influenced education theory, and through institutions of higher education gave birth to what we now call “Political Correctness.” The lineage is clear, and it is traceable right back to Karl Marx.

The parallels between cultural Marxism and classical, economic Marxism are evident. Cultural Marxism, or Political Correctness, shares with classical Marxism the vision of a “classless society” i.e., a society not merely of equal opportunity, but equal condition. Since that vision contradicts human nature – because people are different, they end up unequal, regardless of the starting point – society will not accord with it unless forced. So, under both variants of Marxism, it is forced. This is the first major parallel

between classical and cultural Marxism: *both are totalitarian ideologies*. The totalitarian nature of Political Correctness can be seen on campuses where “PC” has taken over the college: freedom of speech, of the press, and even of thought are all eliminated.

The second major parallel is that both cultural Marxism and classical, economic Marxism have *single-factor explanations of history*. Classical Marxism argues that all of history was determined by ownership of the means of production. Cultural Marxism says that history is wholly explained by which groups – defined by sex, race and sexual normality or abnormality – have power over which other groups.

The third parallel is that both varieties of Marxism *declare certain groups virtuous and others evil a priori*, that is, without regard for the actual behavior of individuals. Classical Marxism defines workers and peasants as virtuous and the bourgeoisie (the middle class) and other owners of capital as evil. Political Correctness defines blacks, Hispanics, Feminist women, homosexuals and some additional minority groups as virtuous and white men as evil. (Political Correctness does not recognize the existence of non-Feminist women and defines blacks who reject Political Correctness as whites).

The fourth parallel is in means: *expropriation*. Economic Marxists, where they obtained power, expropriated the property of the bourgeoisie and handed it to the state, as the “representative” of the workers and the peasants. Cultural Marxists, when they gain power (including through our own government), lay penalties on white men and others who disagree with them and give privileges to the groups they favor. Affirmative action is an example.

Finally, both varieties of Marxists employ a method of analysis *designed to show the correctness of their ideology in every situation*. For classical Marxists, the analysis is economic. For cultural Marxists, the analysis is linguistic: deconstruction. Deconstruction “proves” that any “text,” past or present, illustrates the oppression of blacks, women, homosexuals, etc. by reading that meaning into words of the text (regardless of their actual meaning). Both methods are, of course, phony analyses that twist the evidence to fit preordained conclusions, but they lend a “scientific” air to the ideology.

These parallels are neither remarkable nor coincidental. They exist because Political Correctness is directly derived from classical Marxism, and is in fact merely a variant of Marxism. Through most of the history of Marxism, cultural Marxists were “read out” of the movement by classical, economic Marxists. Today, with economic Marxism dead, cultural Marxism has filled its shoes. The medium has changed, but the message is the same: a society of radical egalitarianism enforced by the power of the state.

Political Correctness now looms over American society like a colossus. It has taken over both political parties – recent Republican conventions were choreographed according to its dictates, while cultural conservatives were shown the door – and is enforced by many laws and government regulations. It almost totally controls the most

powerful element in our culture, the entertainment industry. It dominates both public and higher education: many a college campus is a small, ivy-covered North Korea. It has even captured the clergy in many Christian churches. Anyone in the Establishment who departs from its dictates swiftly ceases to be a member of the Establishment.

The remainder of this short book will explore the subject of Political Correctness further: its history, its method of analysis (deconstruction), and the means by which it has attained its influence, especially through education.

But one more question must be addressed at the outset, the most vital question: how can Americans combat Political Correctness and retake their society from the cultural Marxists?

To that end, it is not sufficient to criticize Political Correctness. It tolerates a certain amount of criticism, even gentle mocking. It does so through no genuine tolerance for other points of view, but in order to disarm its opponents, to let itself seem less menacing than it is. The cultural Marxists do not yet have total power, and they are too wise to appear totalitarian until their victory is assured.

Rather, those who would defeat cultural Marxism must defy it. They must use words it forbids, and refuse to use the words it mandates; remember, sex is better than gender. They must shout from the housetops the realities it seeks to suppress, such as the facts that violent crime is disproportionately committed by blacks and that most cases of AIDS are voluntary, i.e., acquired from immoral sexual acts. They must refuse to turn their children over to public schools.

Above all, those who would defy Political Correctness must behave according to the old rules of our culture, not the new rules the cultural Marxists lay down. Ladies should be wives and homemakers, not cops or soldiers, and men should still hold doors open for ladies. Children should not be born out of wedlock. Open homosexuals should be shunned. Jurors should not accept race as an excuse for murder.

Defiance spreads. When other Americans see one person defy Political Correctness and survive – and you still can, for now – they are emboldened. They are tempted to defy it, too, and some will. The ripples from a single act of defiance, of one instance of walking up to the clay idol and breaking off its nose, can range far. There is nothing the Politically Correct fear more than open defiance, and for good reason; it is their chief vulnerability. That should lead cultural conservatives to defy cultural Marxism at every turn.

While the hour is late, the battle is not decided. Very few Americans realize that Political Correctness is in fact Marxism in a different set of clothes. As that realization spreads, defiance will spread with it. At present, Political Correctness prospers by disguising itself. Through defiance, and through education on our own part (which should be part of every act of defiance), we can strip away its camouflage and reveal the

Marxism beneath the window-dressing of “sensitivity,” “tolerance” and “multi-culturalism.”

Who dares, wins.

Chapter II

The Historical Roots of “Political Correctness”

by

Raymond V. Raehn

America is today dominated by an alien system of beliefs, attitudes and values that we have come to know as “Political Correctness.” Political Correctness seeks to impose a uniformity of thought and behavior on all Americans and is therefore totalitarian in nature. Its roots lie in a version of Marxism which seeks a radical inversion of the traditional culture in order to create a social revolution.

Social revolution has a long history, conceivably going as far back as Plato’s *Republic*. But it was the French Revolution of 1789 that inspired Karl Marx to develop his theories in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, the success of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia set off a wave of optimistic expectation among the Marxist forces in Europe and America that the new proletarian world of equality was finally coming into being. Russia, as the first communist nation in the world, would lead the revolutionary forces to victory.

The Marxist revolutionary forces in Europe leaped at this opportunity. Following the end of World War I, there was a Communist “Spartacist uprising in Berlin, Germany led by Rosa Luxemburg; the creation of a “Soviet” in Bavaria led by Kurt Eisner; and a Hungarian communist republic established by Bela Kun in 1919. At the time, there was great concern that all of Europe might fall under the banner of Bolshevism. This sense of impending doom was given vivid life by Trotsky’s Red Army invasion of Poland in 1919.

However, the Red Army was defeated by Polish forces at the battle of the Vistula in 1920. The Spartacist, Bavarian Soviet and Bela Kun governments all failed to gain widespread support from the workers and after a brief time they were all overthrown. These events created a quandary for the Marxist revolutionaries in Europe. Under Marxist economic theory, the oppressed workers were supposed to be the beneficiaries of a social revolution that would place them on top of the power structure. When these revolutionary opportunities presented themselves, however, the workers did not respond. The Marxist revolutionaries did not blame their theory for these failures. They blamed the workers.

One group of Marxist intellectuals resolved their quandary by an analysis that focused on society’s cultural “superstructure” rather than on the economic substructures as Marx did. The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci and Hungarian Marxist Georg Lukacs contributed the most to this new cultural Marxism.

Antonio Gramsci worked for the Communist International during 1923-24 in Moscow and Vienna. He was later imprisoned in one of Mussolini’s jails where he wrote

his famous “Prison Notebooks.” Among Marxists, Gramsci is noted for his theory of cultural hegemony as the means to class dominance. In his view, a new “Communist man” had to be created before any political revolution was possible. This led to a focus on the efforts of intellectuals in the fields of education and culture. Gramsci envisioned a long march through the society’s institutions, including the government, the judiciary, the military, the schools and the media. He also concluded that so long as the workers had a Christian soul, they would not respond to revolutionary appeals.

Georg Lukacs was the son of a wealthy Hungarian banker. Lukacs began his political life as an agent of the Communist International. His book *History and Class Consciousness* gained him recognition as the leading Marxist theorist since Karl Marx. Lukacs believed that for a new Marxist culture to emerge, the existing culture must be destroyed. He said, “I saw the revolutionary destruction of society as the one and only solution to the cultural contradictions of the epoch,” and, “Such a worldwide overturning of values cannot take place without the annihilation of the old values and the creation of new ones by the revolutionaries.”

When he became Deputy Commissar for Culture in the Bolshevik Bela Kun regime in Hungary in 1919, Lukacs launched what became known as “Cultural Terrorism.” As part of this terrorism he instituted a radical sex education program in Hungarian schools. Hungarian children were instructed in free love, sexual intercourse, the archaic nature of middle-class family codes, the out-datedness of monogamy, and the irrelevance of religion, which deprives man of all pleasures. Women, too, were called to rebel against the sexual mores of the time. Lukacs’s campaign of “Cultural Terrorism” was a precursor to what Political Correctness would later bring to American schools.

In 1923, Lukacs and other Marxist intellectuals associated with the Communist Party of Germany founded the Institute of Social Research at Frankfurt University in Frankfurt, Germany. The Institute, which became known as the Frankfurt School, was modeled after the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. In 1933, when Nazis came to power in Germany, the members of the Frankfurt School fled. Most came to the United States.

The members of the Frankfurt School conducted numerous studies on the beliefs, attitudes and values they believed lay behind the rise of National Socialism in Germany. The Frankfurt School’s studies combined Marxist analysis with Freudian psychoanalysis to form the basis of what became known as “Critical Theory.” Critical Theory was essentially destructive criticism of the main elements of Western culture, including Christianity, capitalism, authority, the family, patriarchy, hierarchy, morality, tradition, sexual restraint, loyalty, patriotism, nationalism, heredity, ethnocentrism, convention and conservatism. These criticisms were reflected in such works of the Frankfurt School as Erich Fromm’s *Escape from Freedom* and *The Dogma of Christ*, Wilhelm’s Reich’s *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* and Theodor Adorno’s *The Authoritarian Personality*.

The Authoritarian Personality, published in 1950, substantially influenced American psychologists and social scientists. The book was premised on one basic idea, that the presence in a society of Christianity, capitalism and the patriarchal-authoritarian

family created a character prone to racial prejudice and German fascism. *The Authoritarian Personality* became a handbook for a national campaign against any kind of prejudice or discrimination on the theory that if these evils were not eradicated, another Holocaust might occur on the American continent. This campaign, in turn, provided a basis for Political Correctness.

Critical Theory incorporated sub-theories which themselves were intended to chip away at specific elements of the existing culture, including “matriarchal theory,” “androgyny theory,” “personality theory,” “authority theory,” “family theory,” “sexuality theory,” “racial theory,” “legal theory” and “literary theory.” Put into practice, these theories were to be used to overthrow the prevailing social order and usher in social revolution based on cultural Marxism.

To achieve this, the Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School recognized that traditional beliefs and the existing social structure would have to be destroyed and then replaced. The patriarchal social structure would be replaced with matriarchy; the belief that men and women are different and properly have different roles would be replaced with androgyny; and the belief that heterosexuality is normal would be replaced with the belief that homosexuality is “normal.”

As a grand scheme intended to deny the intrinsic worth of white, heterosexual males, the Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School opened the door to the racial and sexual antagonisms of the Trotskyites. Leon Trotsky believed that oppressed blacks could be the vanguard of a communist revolution in North America. He denounced white workers who were prejudiced against blacks and instructed them to unite with the blacks in revolution. Trotsky’s ideas were adopted by many of the student leaders of the 1960s counterculture movement, who attempted to elevate the black revolutionaries to positions of leadership in their movement.

The student revolutionaries were also strongly influenced by the ideas of Herbert Marcuse, another member of the Frankfurt School. Marcuse preached the “Great Refusal,” a rejection of all basic Western concepts, sexual liberation and the merits of feminist and black revolutions. His primary thesis was that university students, ghetto blacks, the alienated, the asocial, and the Third World could take the place of the proletariat in the Communist revolution. In his book, *An Essay on Liberation*, Marcuse proclaimed his goals of a radical transvaluation of values; the relaxation of taboos, cultural subversion; Critical Theory; and a linguistic rebellion that would amount to a methodical reversal of meaning. As for racial conflict, Marcuse wrote that white men are guilty and that blacks are the most natural force of rebellion.

Marcuse may be the most important member of the Frankfurt School in terms of the origins of Political Correctness, because he was the critical link to the counterculture of the 1960s. His objective was clear: “One can rightfully speak of a cultural revolution, since the protest is directed toward the whole cultural establishment, including morality of existing society...” His means was liberating the powerful, primeval force of sex from its civilized restraints, a message preached in his book, *Eros and Civilization*, published

in 1955. Marcuse became one of the main gurus of the 1960s adolescent sexual rebellion; he himself coined the expression, “make love, not war.” With that role, the chain of Marxist influence via the Frankfurt School was completed: from Lukacs’s service as Deputy Commissar for Culture in the Bolshevik Hungarian government in 1919 to American students burning the flag and taking over college administration buildings in the 1960s. Today, many of these same colleges are bastions of Political Correctness, and the former student radicals have become the faculties.

One of the most important contributors to Political Correctness was Betty Friedan. Through her book *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan became the mother of the modern feminist movement in America. Friedan was not a member of the Frankfurt School, but she was strongly influenced by it. Her work offers a useful case study of the Marxist roots of Political Correctness.

Friedan devoted almost a full chapter of *The Feminine Mystique* to Abraham Maslow’s theory of self-actualization. Maslow was a social psychologist who in his early years did research on female dominance and sexuality. Maslow was a friend of Herbert Marcuse at Brandeis University and had met Erich Fromm in 1936. He was strongly impressed by Fromm’s Frankfurt School ideology. He wrote an article, “The Authoritarian Character Structure,” published in 1944, that reflected the personality theory of Critical Theory. Maslow was also impressed with the work of Wilhelm Reich, who was another Frankfurt School originator of personality theory.

The significance of the historical roots of Political Correctness cannot be fully appreciated unless Betty Friedan’s revolution in sex roles is viewed for what it really was – a manifestation of the social revolutionary process begun by Karl Marx. Friedan’s reliance on Abraham Maslow’s reflection of Frankfurt School ideology is simply one indicator. Other indicators include the correspondence of Friedan’s revolution in sex roles with Georg Lukacs’ annihilation of old values and the creation of new ones, and with Herbert Marcuse’s transvaluation of values. But the idea of transforming a patriarchy into a matriarchy – which is what a sex-role inversion is designed to do – can be connected directly to Friedrich Engels book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. First published in 1884, this book popularized the now-accepted feminist belief that deep-rooted discrimination against the oppressed female sex was a function of patriarchy. The belief that matriarchy was the solution to patriarchy flows from Marx’s comments in *The German Ideology*, published in 1845. In this work Marx advanced the idea that wives and children were the first property of the patriarchal male. The Frankfurt School’s matriarchal theory (and its near-relation, androgyny theory) both originated from these sources.

When addressing the general public, advocates of Political Correctness – or cultural Marxism, to give it its true name – present their beliefs attractively. It’s all just a matter of being “sensitive” to other people, they say. They use words such as “tolerance” and “diversity,” asking, “Why can’t we all just get along?”

The reality is different. Political Correctness is not at all about “being nice,” unless one thinks gulags are nice places. Political Correctness is Marxism, with all that implies: loss of freedom of expression, thought control, inversion of the traditional social order and, ultimately, a totalitarian state. If anything, the cultural Marxism created by the Frankfurt School is more horrifying than the old, economic Marxism that ruined Russia. At least the economic Marxists did not exalt sexual perversion and attempt to create a matriarchy, as the Frankfurt School and its descendants have done.

This short essay has sought to show one critical linkage, that between classical Marxism and the ingredients of the “cultural revolution” that broke out in America in the 1960s. The appendices to this paper offer a “wiring diagram” which may make the trail easier to follow, along with a more detailed look at some of the main actors. Of course, the action does not stop in the ‘60s; the workings of Frankfurt School are yet very much with us, especially in the field of education. That topic, and other present-day effects of Frankfurt School thinking, will be the subjects of future chapters in this book.

Profiles

Georg Lukacs

- He began his political life as a Kremlin agent of the Communist International.
- His *History and Class-Consciousness* gained him recognition as the leading Marxist theorist since Karl Marx.
- In 1919 he became the Deputy Commissar for Culture in the Bolshevik Bela Kun Regime in Hungary. He instigated what became known as the “Cultural Terrorism.”
- The Cultural Terrorism was a precursor of what was to happen in American schools.
- He launched an “explosive” sex education program. Special lectures were organized in Hungarian schools and literature was printed and distributed to instruct children about free love, the nature of sexual intercourse, the archaic nature of the bourgeois family codes, the outdatedness of monogamy and the irrelevance of religion, which deprives man of all pleasure. Children urged thus to reject and deride paternal authority and the authority of the Church, and to ignore precepts of morality, were easily and spontaneously turned into delinquents with whom only the police could cope. This call to rebellion addressed to Hungarian children was matched by a call to rebellion addressed to Hungarian women.
- In rejecting the idea that Bolshevism spelled the destruction of civilization and culture, Lukacs stated: “Such a worldwide overturning of values cannot take place without the annihilation of the old values and the creation of new ones by the revolutionaries.”
- Lukacs’ state of mind was expressed in his own words:
 - “All the social forces I had hated since my youth, and which I aimed in spirit to annihilate, now came together to unleash the First Global War.”
 - “I saw the revolutionary destruction of society as the one and only solution to the cultural contradictions of the epoch.”
 - “The question is, Who will free us from the yoke of Western Civilization?”

- “Any political movement capable of bringing Bolshevism to the West would have to be ‘Demonic’.”
- “The abandonment of the soul’s uniqueness solves the problem of ‘unleashing’ the diabolic forces lurking in all the violence which are needed to create a revolution.”
- Lukacs’ state of mind was typical of those who represented the forces of Revolutionary Marxism.
- At a secret meeting in Germany in 1923, Lukacs proposed the concept of inducing “Cultural Pessimism” in order to increase the state of hopelessness and alienation in the people of the West as a necessary prerequisite for revolution.
- This meeting led to the founding of the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt University in Germany in 1923 – an organization of Marxist and Communist-oriented psychologists, sociologists and other intellectuals that came to be known as the Frankfurt School, which devoted itself to implementing Georg Lukacs’s program.

Antonio Gramsci

- He was an Italian Marxist on an intellectual par with Georg Lukacs who arrived by analysis at the same conclusions as Lukacs and the Frankfurt School regarding the critical importance of intellectuals in fomenting revolution in the West.
- He had traveled to the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and made some accurate observations that caused him to conclude that a Bolshevik-style uprising could not be brought about by Western workers due to the nature of their Christian souls.
- Antonio Gramsci became the leader of the Italian Communist Party, which earned him a place in one of Mussolini’s jails in the 1930s, where he wrote *Prison Notebooks* and other documents.
- These works became available in English to Americans.
- His advice to the intellectuals was to begin a long march through the educational and cultural institutions of the nation in order to create a new Soviet man before there could be a successful political revolution.
- This reflected his observations in the Soviet Union that its leaders could not create such a new Soviet man after the Bolshevik Revolution.

- This blueprint for mind and character change made Gramsci a hero of Revolutionary Marxism in American education and paved the way for creation of the New American Child in the schools by the education cartel.
- The essential nature of Antonio Gramsci's revolutionary strategy is reflected in Charles A. Reich's *The Greening of America*: "There is a revolution coming. It will not be like revolutions in the past. It will originate with the individual and the culture, and it will change the political structure as its final act. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence. This is revolution of the New Generation."

Wilhelm Reich

- In his 1933 book entitled *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, he explained that the Frankfurt School departed from the Marxist sociology that set "Bourgeois" against "Proletariat." Instead, the battle would be between "reactionary" and "revolutionary" characters.
- He also wrote a book entitled *The Sexual Revolution*, which was a precursor of what was to come in the 1960s.
- His "sex-economic" sociology was an effort to harmonize Freud's psychology with Marx's economic theory.
- Reich's theory was expressed in his words: "The authoritarian family is the authoritarian state in miniature. Man's authoritarian character structure is basically produced by the embedding of sexual inhibitions and fear in the living substance of sexual impulses. Familial imperialism is ideologically reproduced in national imperialism...the authoritarian family...is a factor where reactionary ideology and reactionary structures are produced."
- Wilhelm Reich's theory, when coupled with Georg Lukacs' sex education in Hungary, can be seen as the source for the American education cartel's insistence on sex education from kindergarten onwards and its complete negation of the paternal family, external authority, and the traditional character structure.
- Reich's theory encompassed other assertions that seem to have permeated American education:
 - The organized religious mysticism of Christianity was an element of the authoritarian family that led to Fascism.
 - The patriarchal power in and outside of man was to be dethroned.

- Revolutionary sexual politics would mean the complete collapse of authoritarian ideology.
- Birth control was revolutionary ideology.
- Man was fundamentally a sexual animal.
- Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* was in its ninth printing as of 1991, and is available in most college bookstores.

Erich Fromm

- Like Wilhelm Reich, Fromm was a social psychologist of the Frankfurt School who came to America in the 1930s.
- His book *Escape from Freedom*, published in 1941, is an ideological companion to Wilhelm Reich's *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.
- Fromm asserted that early capitalism created a social order that bred a sadomasochistic and authoritarian character of which Martin Luther and Adolph Hitler were prime examples.
- He asserted that the same capitalistic social order resulted in Calvin's Theory of Predestination, which reflected the principle of the basic inequality of men that was revived in Nazi ideology.
- He asserted the authoritarian character experiences only domination or submission and "differences, whether sex or race, to him are necessarily of superiority or inferiority."
- He asserted that "Positive Freedom" implies the principle that there is no higher power than the unique individual self; that man is the center and purpose of life; that the growth and realization of man's individuality is an end that can never be subordinated to purposes which are supposed to have a greater dignity.
- Fromm made the real meaning of this "Positive Freedom" clear in another of his many books – *The Dogma of Christ...* wherein he describes a revolutionary character such as himself as: the man who has emancipated himself from the ties of blood and soil, from his mother and father, and from special loyalties to state, race, party or religion.
- Fromm makes his revolutionary intent very clear in *The Dogma of Christ...* "We might define revolution in a psychological sense, saying that a revolution is a political movement led by people with revolutionary characters, and attracting people with revolutionary characters."

Herbert Marcuse

- Like Wilhelm Reich and Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse was an intellectual of the Frankfurt School who came to America in the 1930s.
- He has often been described as a Marxist philosopher, but he was in fact a full-blooded social revolutionary who contemplated the disintegration of American society just as Karl Marx and Georg Lukacs contemplated the disintegration of German society: “One can rightfully speak of a cultural revolution, since the protest is directed toward the whole cultural establishment, including the morality of existing society...there is one thing we can say with complete assurance: the traditional idea of revolution and the traditional strategy of revolution has ended. These ideas are old-fashioned...What we must undertake is a type of diffuse and dispersed disintegration of the system.”
- Marcuse published *Eros and Civilization* in 1955, which became the founding document of the 1960s counterculture and brought the Frankfurt School into the colleges and universities of America.
- He asserted that the only way to escape the one-dimensionality of modern industrial society was to liberate the erotic side of man, the sensuous instinct, in rebellion against “technological rationality.”
- This erotic liberation was to take the form of the “Great Refusal,” a total rejection of the capitalist monster and its entire works, including technological reason and ritual-authoritarian language.
- He provided the obtuse intellectual justifications for adolescent sexual rebellion, and the slogan “Make Love, Not War.”
- His theory included the belief that the Women’s Liberation Movement was to be the most important component of the opposition, and potentially the most radical.
- His revolutionary efforts would blossom into a full-scale war by revolutionary Marxism against the European white male in the schools and colleges.

Theodor Adorno

- He was another Marxist revolutionary and member of the Frankfurt School who came to America in the 1930s.
- Along with others, Adorno authored *The Authoritarian Personality*, which was published in 1950.

- Adorno's book was inspired by the same kind of theoretical assertions revealed in the works of Wilhelm Reich, Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse based on analytical studies of German society that were begun in 1923.
- The basic theme was the same. There was such a thing as an authoritarian character that was the opposite of the desired revolutionary character. This authoritarian character was a product of capitalism, Christianity, conservatism, the patriarchal family and sexual repression. In Germany, this combination induced prejudice, anti-Semitism and fascism according to Frankfurt School theory.
- It so happened that most Americans were products of capitalism, Christianity, conservatism, the patriarchal family and sexual repression in their youth. So Theodor Adorno and other members of the Frankfurt School had a golden opportunity to execute Georg Lukacs's and Antonio Gramsci's program for creating social revolution in America instead of Germany.
- They would posit the existence of authoritarian personalities among Americans with tendencies toward prejudice, and then exploit this to force the "scientifically planned re-education" of Americans with the excuse that it was being done in order to eradicate prejudice.
- This scientifically-planned re-education would become the master plan for the transformation of America's system of fundamental values into their opposite revolutionary values in American education so that school children would become replicas of the Frankfurt School revolutionary characters and thus create the New American Child.
- This can be confirmed by noting that *The Authoritarian Personality* is the key source of the affective domain of Benjamin Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* of 1964, which guided the education cartel thereafter.

Chapter III

Political Correctness in Higher Education

by

T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr.

On a growing number of university campuses the freedom to articulate and discuss ideas – a principle that has been the cornerstone of higher education since the time of Socrates – is eroding at an alarming rate. Consider just one increasing trend: hundreds (sometimes thousands) of copies of conservative student newspapers have been either stolen or publicly burned by student radicals. In many cases these acts have taken place with the tacit support of faculty and administrators. The perpetrators are rarely disciplined.

While it would be easy to dismiss such demonstrations of intolerance as student pranks, these incidents are the surface manifestations of a more pervasive and insidious trend – a trend that has as its goal the destruction of the liberal arts tradition that has helped create and sustain Western civilization.

Though some pundits have claimed that the prevalence of the ideological intolerance known as Political Correctness has been exaggerated, the opposite is closer to the truth. Political Correctness has become so deeply ingrained in American higher education that many campuses are now dominated by an atmosphere of uncertainty and apprehension. An increasing number of dedicated students and faculty members now live in fear that their intellectual pursuit of truth will offend the Grand Inquisitors of Political Correctness.

The techniques of Political Correctness are now well known: attacks on the curriculum in the name of “multiculturalism,” the imposition of restrictive and vaguely-worded “speech codes” and mandatory “sensitivity training” courses for freshman that are little more than systematic efforts at ideological indoctrination. But the influence of Political Correctness has spread in other disturbing ways. Consider a few recent incidents from the university battlefield.

- At Amherst College in Massachusetts, a homosexual student group covered the university’s sidewalks with graffiti, including the slogan “Queer by Divine Right,” which was scrawled in front of the campus chapel on Good Friday. When the *Amherst Spectator*, a conservative student newspaper, criticized these chalkings as promoting “hatred and division,” student protestors publicly burned copies of the paper.
- When the *Cornell Review*, another conservative student newspaper, published a parody of the course descriptions from Cornell’s heavily-politicized Africana

Department, campus militants blocked traffic at the center of the campus for several hours and burned stolen copies of the *Review* in a metal trash can. The militants went on to demand that the university provide “racial sensitivity” classes for incoming freshman, a campus speech code and more money for segregated minority programs such as a blacks-only dormitory.

- Students who participate in ROTC programs have told friends and family that they are afraid to show up for class wearing their uniforms because their grades have been arbitrarily marked down by faculty members who are hostile to the military.
- In the wake of a rash of sexual harassment charges that have been filed by extreme feminists against their alleged enemies, some professors have begun to take out insurance policies to protect themselves from the crushing financial burden of malicious and frivolous lawsuits.
- A faculty questionnaire at the University of Massachusetts asks professors what “contribution to multi-culturalism” they have made. The questionnaire is then used in making decisions about tenure and promotion.

It is worth remembering that for every dramatic and well-publicized example of Political Correctness, there are innumerable instances where its influence is more subtle, but just as real.

The Origins of Political Correctness in Higher Education

While the ideology of Political Correctness is hardly restricted to our campuses, there is no doubt it originated there. The intellectual roots of this phenomenon stretch back over centuries. Ultimately, the origins of PC can be traced to the rise of modern ideology and its quest for power. In contrast to the classical and Judeo-Christian traditions, which stressed man’s need to understand the moral order and conform himself to it, modern ideologies have sought to dominate and control the world. In the twentieth century these ideologies finally gained political power in Communist states.

But in the West, ideology has not been able to make such a direct assault on our traditions of ordered liberty. Rather, radical intellectuals have sought to undermine the foundations of knowledge itself, concentrating their efforts on the transformation of the university.

The turning point in the academy came in the 1960s, when militant students launched a guerilla attack on the traditions of Western culture and the liberal arts. Seeing that they could not gain lasting power through demonstrations alone, many of these militants opted to remain “in the system,” going on to become professors themselves. This generation of “tenured radicals” (to use Roger Kimball’s phrase) has now become the establishment in the vast majority of our institutions of higher learning. As university

presidents, deans, and department chairmen, they have set about hiring other ideologues in their own image and have instigated the repressive policies we know as Political Correctness. These politicized academics will be extremely difficult to dislodge from their current positions of power.

Ideology vs. Liberal Education

The stakes in this war of ideas are high, for they include the very concept of freedom itself. Americans have always understood the intimate and vital connection between liberal education and political liberty. That is why Political Correctness is nothing less than a death blow aimed at the heart of our republic.

In his seminal book, *The Idea of a University*, Cardinal John Henry Newman defined the “liberal arts” as a pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. By way of contrast, he defined the “servile arts” as those modes of study that serve only specific, immediate ends. The liberal arts are liberating, Newman argued, because they enable men to discover the underlying principles that guide us toward wisdom and virtue.

Were he alive today, Newman would view Political Correctness as “servile” because its purpose is to advance a political agenda to a position of national power. Militant professors in increasing numbers are shamelessly turning their podiums into pulpits, abandoning the search for objective truth and setting about the task of indoctrinating their students.

The Devastated Curriculum

The proponents of Political Correctness have concentrated their efforts on the core of a liberal education, the curriculum. Their efforts will radically alter what new generations of Americans will learn. In this battle the handmaiden of Political Correctness has been the “multicultural” movement. A number of critics have rightly pointed out that multiculturalism is more than an argument for courses that concentrate on groups that at one time were disadvantaged or oppressed. Rather, multiculturalism involves the systematic restructuring of the curriculum so as to hinder students from learning about the Western tradition. Since the ulterior motive behind Political Correctness is an attempt to restructure American society along egalitarian lines, it is imperative for its proponents to instill in the minds of students a thoroughgoing cultural relativism.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the Politically Correct assault on the curriculum is that it has occurred at many of America’s elite universities. Take, for example, the case of Stanford University, an institution that has long played a leadership role in American higher education. Stanford eliminated its long-standing Western civilization requirement in 1988 and replaced it with a multicultural program known as “Cultures, Ideas, and Values.” Under this new program freshmen at Stanford can just as easily study Marxist revolutionaries in Central America as they can Plato, Shakespeare or Newton.

Stanford has also led the movement away from serious study of history. Students at Stanford, like students at all but one of the other top 50 universities in the United States, are not required to take a single course in history. Instead, they are offered a choice of courses under the heading of “American Cultures.” According to one recent graduate of Stanford, it is impossible to fulfill the “American Cultures” requirement by studying Protestantism, Irish Americans, or the American West, while courses that do fulfill the requirement include “Film and Literature: US-Mexico Border Representations” and “Contemporary Ethnic Drama.” Stanford students must also take courses in “World Cultures” and “Gender Studies” that include “Chicana Expressive Culture” and “Misogyny and Feminism in the Renaissance.”

Because elite institutions such as Stanford set an example for the rest of American higher education, other universities eagerly adopt these devastating assaults on the curriculum. This “trickle-down” effect will have a long-lasting impact on the way future generations of Americans will be educated.

Intolerance and the Assault on Freedom

The two pillars that have traditionally sustained the liberal arts are academic freedom and freedom of speech. Without the freedom to pursue the truth and to write and speak freely, authentic scholarship is impossible. But both of these fundamental freedoms have been routinely abrogated by the establishment of speech codes, “sensitivity” classes, and a general atmosphere of fear and intimidation on campus.

For example, younger professors who have not received tenure must not only be careful of what they say, but of what they publish. Ideological university administrators in the 1990s have created an environment dominated by suspicion that is far more intense than anything spawned by anti-Communist Senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s.

The most tragic victims of this age of Political Correctness are the students. The traditional goal of a liberal arts education – acculturation, whereby students absorb the inherited wisdom of the past – has been set aside. Increasingly, a university education today seems to involve rote learning of political opinions. When all is said and done, Political Correctness substitutes smug feelings of righteousness for the traditional habits of critical thinking. One distinguished scholar recently lamented that “higher education is increasingly about acquiring attitudes and opinions that one puts on like a uniform.”

Because the academy is a relatively isolated world, it can allow politicized administrators to turn the campus into a laboratory for experiments in social transformation. When critics of Political Correctness have compared the atmosphere on campus to that of a totalitarian state, liberal pundits have been quick to denounce them as hysterical. Few of these pundits have any first-hand experience of daily life on campus.

The Movement for Academic Reform

Despite the institutional power of the campus radicals, forces are at work seeking to spur authentic academic reform. The academic reform movement relies on the principles of accountability, communication and a commitment to authentic scholarship. One force of academic reform is a growing demand among parents for greater accountability from colleges and universities. At a time when studies show that students are paying more and learning less than ever before, parents in increasing numbers are becoming discriminating consumers.

Another force is independent student newspapers whose journalists publicize the antics of Political Correctness on campus. In the past, campus radicals thrived in the enclosed world of the university, but their actions are no longer going undetected. The advent of conservative student newspapers on dozens of campuses has forced campus militants into the open where they are most vulnerable to the scrutiny of an exasperated public.

Two years ago, those who fund the Collegiate Network asked the Intercollegiate Studies Institute to take over the administration of their program to support and enhance responsible student journalism. The Collegiate Network contributes seed money, practical help and intellectual guidance to the 60 conservative student newspapers which provide alternative forums of discussion at many of the nations most elite (and closed-minded) universities.

These alternative papers have identified abuses at all levels of academic life and engaged in investigative journalism that has been remarkably fair and accurate. Perhaps the most well-known “scoop” came from Yale University’s alternative paper, *Light & Truth*, a publication supported by the Collegiate Network. The editors of *Light & Truth* discovered that the \$20 million gift of alumnus Lee Bass was not being used for its intended purpose of supporting an integrated course in Western civilization. Their report broke open the scandal, which ended when Yale returned Mr. Bass’s money. The subsequent furor cost Yale a great deal more than Mr. Bass’s \$20 million – both in monetary terms and in the loss of confidence of many Yale donors that the current administration can be trusted.

Not all the scandals uncovered by alternative campus papers are of this magnitude, but there are innumerable abuses that can be exposed by investigative student journalism. The law school at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, banned representatives of the U.S. military from setting up recruiting tables there, despite receiving federal tax dollars from the Defense Department. An article about this outrageous assault on freedom that ran in both the student-run *Carolina Review* and in the national student newspaper published by ISI, *CAMPUS*, raised a hue and cry on and off campus. North Carolina legislators took immediate action and passed a bill prohibiting taxpayer-supported schools from discriminating against the military when prospective employers come to the university.

At the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the *UWM Times*, a conservative student newspaper, revealed that a university administrator had been soliciting signatures for local Democrat candidates for public office, in direct violation of a state law forbidding university employees from engaging in political campaigning. The university chancellor, despite having issued a directive against such campaigning, refused to reprimand the administrator in question – perhaps because the chancellor himself violated both the state law and his own directive by signing one of the petitions while at work. The story was picked up by the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* and the abuse was brought to an end.

Now that alternative newspapers and organizations dedicated to academic reform are spreading the word, the larger communities that surround our institutions of higher education are getting more involved in serious academic reform. For example, the National Association of Scholars is encouraging university trustees to take a more active and vocal role in opposing the excesses of Political Correctness. Efforts of this type must be expanded and intensified.

In the long run, the most direct method of defeating the inquisitors of Political Correctness is simply to stand up to them. Individual acts of defiance often entail serious risks: students can face star-chamber proceedings that are humiliating and demoralizing while faculty can lose their bids to receive tenure. But every act of resistance causes a ripple, encouraging others to stand up to ideological intimidation. With the support of a significant number of parents, donors and alumni, these Davids may yet slay the Goliaths who tower over them.

The Fire of True-Learning

Perhaps the strongest force for true academic reform is that which seeks to defeat the ideological depredations of Political Correctness by winning the war of ideas. The best students have a questioning intelligence that cannot be satisfied with political slogans. When such students have access to serious scholarship they respond with enthusiasm. Even today acculturation still takes place under the mentorship of outstanding scholars at various institutions around the country. Moreover, some colleges and universities continue to swim against the ideological tides of our time.

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), in conjunction with the Templeton Foundation, has identified the best professors, departments, colleges and textbooks in American higher education today. This program, the Templeton Honor Rolls for Education in a Free Society, celebrates excellence and serves as a guide for parents and students contemplating the daunting choice of which college or university to attend. By singling out the best in higher education, the Templeton Honor Rolls also encourage donors to reward universities that preserve the traditions of the free society.

Prospective college students, their parents and donors can also benefit from a comprehensive guide to 100 of the top institutions of higher learning in America published by the ISI. The guide contains substantial, essay-length treatments of all 100

institutions, including 80 elite schools that were selected on the basis of competitive admissions standards and 20 schools that ISI particularly recommends for their commitment to a liberal arts education. The ISI college guide warns students about the ideological dangers on the campuses and steers them in the direction of the best professors and departments. As best-selling author William J. Bennett wrote of this project, “All too often, Americans treat colleges and universities with a deference that prevents them from asking hard questions and demanding real results. But if there is ever to be genuine, long-lasting education reform, parents and students will have to become shrewder and better-informed consumers of education. The ISI guide is a powerful tool in this effort.”

One of Edmund Burke’s most famous sayings is that “the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” For generations, Americans have treated higher education with respect and awe – a token of their faith in the liberating power of the liberal arts. But in the face of Political Correctness, it is time for the American public to temper its respect with a critical sensibility and to undertake a more direct effort to call academia to account. It is time for good men and women to demand that American higher education live up to its best traditions and eschew the tyranny of Political Correctness.

Chapter IV

Political Correctness: Deconstruction and Literature

by

Jamie McDonald

Literature is, if not the most important cultural indicator, at least a significant benchmark of a society's level of civilization. Our nature and environment combine to form each individual mind, which in turn expresses itself in words. Literature, as the words society collectively holds up as exemplary, is then a starting point of sorts – a window into the culture.

Today's literary field is therefore worth examining for the insights it provides into our current cultural milieu. The contemporary American literary field is awash in "isms:" Marxism, Freudianism, feminism, and so on. Most of these are the academic cousins of what is called in the common culture "Political Correctness." Literary theorists take their particular brand of criticism and apply it to literature in an effort to find self-affirmation in a "discovered" meaning of the text. For a feminist critic, for example, no longer does Andrew Marvel's "Upon Appleton House" have the beauty of the grounds as its theme; it speaks instead of the evils of a patriarchal line of inheritance. These "cultural critics," so named because they critique literature based on the point of view of a particular culture, arose in the 1960s, but their schools of criticism only truly began to pick up steam with the arrival of the school of deconstruction in the 1970s.

The works of the father of deconstruction, Jacques Derrida, began to be translated from the French by American professor Gayatri Spivak in the mid-1970s, a time when the U.S. literary scene was ripe for its influence. The economic Marxists were alive and well on American campuses, and the cultural critics were still being fed by the radicalism of the times. Feminists, "queer theorists" and "literature-by-people of color" critics had gained a foothold in the earlier decade, but they had in their meager arsenals only a vague feeling of repression. What they lacked was philosophical backing – the courage prompted by having their own *logos*. The arrival of deconstruction from France provided that philosophy.

At that time, that generation of academics was doing what all academics do, telling the previous generation that it had it all wrong. In this case the rebellion was against the New Critics – so-called even now, decades after their prime. The New Critics specialized in finding the meaning of texts without regard to background information such as authorial intent, a process that had "the text is everything" as its guiding principle.

The new generation of critics set out to turn that principle on its head. Instead of "the text is everything," the new generation claimed that "everything is text" and turned to analyzing anything and everything in relation to the literary work. If a poet wrote a

poem that included a female character, the critics would look into the poet's relationship with his mother, his wife, his sister and so on in an effort to offer up an interpretation of the work. This could have (and often did have) the positive effect of using biographic information to gain new understanding of the work; however, these new interpretations were not attempts to discern the true meaning of the work (as the New Critics had done) or even to discover the author's intended meaning (as traditional readings attempted). This new generation of critics instead became prime practitioners of what is known in literary circles as "cultural criticism." They strained to view literature from the "woman's point of view" or the "gay point of view" or the "radical minority point of view." Their attempts were not to find meaning – they were influenced too greatly by relativists for that – but to find sexism, racism or "homophobia" in the works of male, European or heterosexual authors.

Derridean deconstruction became a tool for these cultural critics. Simply stated, deconstruction is a school of thought that posits that words have no meaning. Instead, words have "~~traces~~" of meaning. The meaning of a word is continually disappearing, leaving us with only the memory, or ~~trace~~, of what that meaning once was. (Similar to Heidegger's term ~~being~~, Derrida often uses the crossed-out word ~~trace~~ in an effort to indicate a meaning that is simultaneously present and disappearing.)

A metaphor may be helpful to understand the underlying philosophy of deconstructionism. If I say the word "pen," then you think of the object there in the desk drawer. But if I throw the pen at someone, then the word "pen" begins to lose the benign meaning of a writing apparatus with ink; to use deconstructionist terms, the original understanding of the word "pen" undergoes erasure to leave only a ~~trace~~. Instead the word "pen" becomes associated with a weapon, a projectile, a means of expressing (perhaps) anger. If the pen strikes someone, then the word "pen" to that person means something painful, a personal injury, impetus for striking back and so on. These meanings constantly grow and change because the human mind is always interpreting and reinterpreting. Because of this, deconstruction argues, it never fully settles on *the* stable meaning for the word "pen." Based on this linguistic argument, deconstructionists conclude that since any meanings in words are so quickly diffused, we can never really communicate at all. Words no longer have meaning.¹

The postmodern catch word "differance," along with terms like "erasure" and "~~trace~~," entered American scholarship through Derrida's writings. By combining the concepts of (and the French words for) "deferment" and "difference," Derrida came up with this name for the endless deferment of meaning that takes place. Derrida claims that differance is the reason that words cannot have meanings; the mind continually understands things in different ways so that the original meaning loses its importance as the *proper* meaning - it becomes a mere ~~trace~~.

Ultimately this is insufficient for today's cultural critics – they need words to mean things so that they can point to artistic works and bemoan how they illustrate or exemplify the repression of minority cultures. But other than its general philosophy,

¹ I am indebted to Dr. Orrin Wang of the University of Maryland for this illustration.

deconstruction offered something more important. It offered the techniques to “show” how all language deconstructs itself.

The deconstructionists specialized in “deconstructing” literary works – although they steadfastly insist that the works deconstruct themselves and the critic only illustrates how this happens. These techniques of deconstruction usually involve isolating the surface meaning of the literary work – the “traditionalist” meaning – and attempting to show how the work itself violates that traditional meaning. For example, they will take a love poem and pick apart the language until they find something that they can interpret as unloving. Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s sonnet “How Do I Love Thee? Let Me Count The Ways,” ends with the words “I shall but love thee better in death.” The clever deconstructionists might combine these with Browning’s earlier words, “when feeling out of bounds for the edge of beauty and ideal grace,” to conclude that Mrs. Browning is actually reaching for her husband’s death. “Why is she looking for the *edge* of beauty?” the deconstructionist asks. “She clearly does not want to remain in or before beauty; instead, she is seeking some way around it.” The deconstructionist attributes this apparent disparity to the problem with language, “differance,” and quickly concludes that the poem – like all other language – has no meaning.

Once they realized the power of this school of thought, the cultural critics embraced it readily, for here they discovered a method of attack on the traditional interpretations of literary works. They used deconstruction to remove traditional meaning and replaced it with *new* meaning. That meaning was the Political Correctness that infests our society today. For example, after the traditional meaning of “How Do I Love Thee?” has been destabilized in the process described above, a feminist critic might come along and - in the absence of a stable traditional interpretation – declare that the poem is “really” concerned with how women in nineteenth-century England were conditioned to see themselves as secondary to men.

Since “everything is text” in the postmodern mantra, the cultural critics did not hesitate to apply their methods to music, movies, television and anything they encountered. They found that they could remove the meaning from all cultural phenomena and substitute the values of whichever group they preferred. For example, homosexual analysts could remove the truth from the Bible and instead interpret it as full of homophobic hate – God’s truth was torn down, and a human political agenda was inserted.

This example is not particularly outrageous, as Derrida’s stated goal in deconstructionism was to remove the idea of what he called the “transcendental signified.” Standard models of linguistics operate with respect to a signifier-signified pair. The signifier is the word, and the signified is that which the word represents. When differance enters the picture, the thing signified is deferred continually until it can be deferred no longer – that is, until it reaches into the realm of metaphysics. The final meaning reached by any word is God, as He is the ultimate meaning of traditional

Western thought.² The “transcendental signified” of which Derrida is trying to rid himself and the Western world is in fact God. Derrida labels belief in God a product of deficient Western thinking, and in true Nietzschean fashion he claims that God is a construct of language rather than the other way around.

Naturally, Derrida quickly became the darling of the American university establishment. He lectured at universities along the Eastern seaboard, and grew to love that area of America. Soon America returned that affection by granting him a position in the English department of Yale University. Yale then began to draw to other deconstructionists and postmodernists; J. Hillis Miller, Geoffrey Hartman and others. Another European, Paul DeMan, also came to America and began teaching deconstruction. DeMan’s history provides yet another reason why deconstructionists sought so avidly to remove meaning from language. In pre-World War II Belgium, DeMan had worked for an explicitly pro-Nazi newspaper. DeMan’s detractors note that removing the meaning from language was an excellent way to dismiss his pro-Nazi writings.

Through deconstruction the cultural critics adopted a tool that turned literature, philosophy and culture into nonsense. For instance, in his own writing, in order to remain true to his own philosophy, Derrida eschews all forms of the verb “to be.” In deconstructionist terms the verb “to be” implies meaning; thus, it cannot exist. Derrida therefore goes back and crosses out all “to be” verbs, making his writing all but incomprehensible. In beginning to attack the signifier-signified construction, Derrida writes “the sign ~~is~~ that ill-named ~~thing~~, the only one, that escapes the instituting question of philosophy: ‘What is...?’” At the same time Derrida is attempting to communicate his ideas about traditional linguistic models, he is forced by his own philosophy to scratch out the very words that allow him to communicate.

If Derrida were to follow the logic of his own theories he would find that the very concept of communicating his ideas by written or spoken word should be impossible. If deconstructionist theories were even remotely accurate, all verbal communication – and by extension all other forms of communication – would be impossible. As New Critic Dr. M. H. Abrams of Cornell University states, “I hope that Derrida remembers that words do mean things next time someone warns him of an oncoming bus.”

Not only does the embrace of deconstruction harm logical philosophy, it also renders the creation of literature virtually impossible. If words mean nothing, then they are nothing more than sounds. True, Lewis Carroll did create a well-known poem using nonsensical but pleasant-sounding words, but how many poems like “jabberwocky” can be created before we reach the saturation point? (Some would argue that we have already reached that point.)

² A simple way to comprehend this concept is this: If you ask any question and when given an answer ask “why?,” then you ask “why?” of that answer and so on, you will ultimately arrive at the answer “God.” The answer to “why God?” is also “God.”

As university literature departments “progress,” the divide widens between those who produce literature and those who analyze and teach it. While Samuel Taylor Coleridge, T.S. Eliot and an entire cadre of great authors were well-educated men, it seems that a literary education in an American university actually *hinders* one’s ability to write well. As professors of literature embrace the philosophy of deconstruction they lose the ability to write beautifully because meaning is necessary for beautiful writing. As a result, a distinction has emerged within English departments between M.F.A. (Master of Fine Arts) and Ph.D. programs – to the extent that they now have distinct faculties. America’s greatest hope for good literature today lies not in the universities, but in the “amateurs” writing after their nine to five work days or while the kids are at school. The intelligentsia has forgotten its literature in its haste to promote its politics.

Already there is a backlash against deconstructionism. Just as the current thriving generation of critics looked upon New Criticism as passé, so the students of today are beginning to look upon deconstruction as obsolete. Derrida still lectured up to his recent death (he spoke in Washington, D.C. as recently as 1995), but, like their forebears, today’s literature students are beginning to rise up and tell their predecessors that they had it all wrong. A primary factor in this backlash is the difficulty that lies in communicating deconstructionist ideas (note that what is offered here is merely an outline, not the actual methods of deconstructing a literary work). As a result of this difficulty, today’s MTV generation has stumbled upon a positive side effect of their fifteen-second attention spans: They lack the patience to wade through Derrida’s nearly unintelligible syntax and decipher his terminology.

Unfortunately, that has not stopped the cultural critics from indoctrinating this new generation in feminist interpretation, Marxist philosophy and so-called “queer theory.” Requirements for reading Shakespeare, Milton, Chaucer, and other dead white males are disappearing to be replaced by options to take studies in “the Roles of Women in the Renaissance” (an excuse to lament the sexism of the past) or “The Bible as Literature” (a course designed to denigrate the Bible as cleverly crafted fiction instead of God’s truth).

Deconstruction has succeeded in destabilizing the traditional meanings of texts. What happens next remains to be seen, but there are indications that its influence is waning. Already we see Shakespearean plays revived in the cinema; “Much Ado About Nothing,” “Hamlet,” and “Romeo and Juliet” – all recently adapted for the screen – have long since been abandoned by the American academy in favor of lesser works. Jane Austen’s novels, once highly touted by the intelligentsia as undiscovered works of a female author, are now derided in our universities as being too conservative because of their themes of love and marriage. The popular culture has, in a moment of taste, seen the worth of these and revived them as cinema adaptations.

But the real death knell for deconstruction will sound when the next generation of literary critics realizes that the very nature of what it does – read, think, analyze – is antithetical to deconstruction’s philosophical goals. The reliable savior of the intelligentsia is the common man and his common sense. Common sense dictates that

words do mean things, and as deconstruction posits otherwise it will be relegated to the margins of society. Sadly, its effects will linger on – it has given a sense of validity to cultural criticism and established a marketplace for its ideas.

The deconstructionists are already abandoning their enclave at Yale as their school of thought is eclipsed by trendier, simpler and narrower ideologues. These are the feminists, Marxists and queer theorists – none of whom are leaving their tenured offices peacefully. Instead, they have begun to recruit and train new graduate students to take their places. Applications for graduate and teaching degrees are at an all time high as these campus establishment “radicals” encourage the next generation to help them enshrine their ideology permanently in the American university system.

Chapter V

Radical Feminism and Political Correctness

by

Dr. Gerald L. Atkinson

Perhaps no aspect of Political Correctness is more prominent in American life today than feminist ideology. Is feminism, like the rest of Political Correctness, based on the cultural Marxism imported from Germany in the 1930s? While feminism's history in America certainly extends longer than sixty years, its flowering in recent decades has been interwoven with the unfolding social revolution carried forward by cultural Marxists.

Where do we see radical feminism ascendant? It is on television, where nearly every major offering has a female "power figure" and the plots and characters emphasize inferiority of the male and superiority of the female. It is in the military, where expanding opportunity for women, even in combat positions, has been accompanied by double standards and then lowered standards, as well as by a decline in enlistment of young men, while "warriors" in the services are leaving in droves. It is in government-mandated employment preferences and practices that benefit women and use "sexual harassment" charges to keep men in line. It is in colleges where women's gender studies proliferate and "affirmative action" is applied in admissions and employment. It is in other employment, public and private, where in addition to affirmative action, "sensitivity training" is given unprecedented time and attention. It is in public schools, where "self awareness" and "self-esteem" are increasingly promoted while academic learning declines. And sadly, we see that "a woman's right to choose" leads many fellow Americans, including many with stewardship of public law and culture, to believe it is "the right thing to do" to allow the most helpless to be put to death.

While it is the theme of this essay that the radical feminist movement is embraced by present day Political Correctness ideology, derived from cultural Marxism, feminism as such does have earlier roots. Feminism was conceived and birthed in America in the 1830s, in the generation experiencing the first stage of the industrial revolution. Women, who for centuries had shared the challenges of surviving in an agrarian life, were becoming part of a middle-class gentry with more time and energy to spend writing newspaper articles and novels for their "sisters." The initial stages of the feminization of American culture had started.¹

These feminists, radical in their time, became a staple of the idealistic Transcendentalists, who included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and many radical Unitarian ministers of the day. They were also abolitionists, bent on destroying slavery and Southern culture as well. Spurred by the rhetoric of Harriet Beecher Stowe (author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), Julia Ward Howe (author of the words to

¹ Douglas, Ann. *The Feminization of American Culture*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”), and Margaret Fuller (the first radical feminist newspaper columnist), the men and women of this idealist Transcendentalist generation propelled our nation toward Civil War.

Who were these Transcendentalist idealists, and why should we be reminded of them today? They were the precursors of today’s idealistic Boomer generation. While we cannot draw a continuous link between the Transcendentalists and today’s Boomers, their characteristics are very similar. We may glimpse where the elite Boomers are leading us by reviewing the history of the Transcendentalists and their causes.

The Transcendentalists supported abolition of slavery, women’s rights, temperance, pacifism (but not in the anti-slavery cause), and other causes which we now observe in New Age popular culture. They developed into spiritualism (talking with the dead), Eastern mysticism and phrenology (discerning personality by the shape of one’s skull). They would be right at home in today’s New Age milieu. Luther George Williams points out, referring to women’s groups and civil rights groups that:

Freed slaves secured the vote only after the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments (ratified in 1870), but women fared worse. They did not receive the vote until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. However, the substantial political victories that these groups achieved (during the Civil War period) guaranteed that they would remain allies. Today, their political organizations dominate every aspect of society, politics and education in America – including the military.²

Indeed, the present-day radical feminist assault on VMI and the Citadel has a political parallel to the Transcendentalist activism of the Civil War period. This current assault is in part a continuation of a century-old effort to destroy Southern culture.

In contrast to today’s radical feminists, social feminists of the 1890s and early 20th century were of a less totalitarian character. They stood for women’s suffrage but also advocated the strengthening of the family.

Today, the feminization of American culture, moving rapidly since the 1960s continues to intensify. Radical Feminists demand that women be allowed to “choose” entry to the infantry, artillery, special forces and combat engineering positions in the Army and Marine Corps. These demands follow the Feminization of combat aviation in the U.S. Navy, Air Force and Army since 1993.

The feminization of American politics was advanced in the 1996 presidential election, when parties produced “feminized” conventions featuring soft, emotional, Oprah Winfrey-type orations and sentimental film clips of the presidential candidates. Both candidates were portrayed as soft, gentle, emotion-driven creatures sufficiently in touch with their feelings that all women across America would feel “comfortable” in their

² Williams, Luther George. *A Place for Theodore: The Murder of Dr. Theodore Parkman*. Holly Two Leaves, 1977. p. 161.

care.³ With 60 million female votes at stake, both parties pandered to America's "feminine" side.⁴

There is no doubt in the media that the "man of today" is expected to be a touchy-feely subspecies who bows to the radical feminist agenda. He is a staple of Hollywood, the television network sitcoms and movies, and the political pundits of talk shows.⁵ The feminization is becoming so noticeable that newspapers and magazines are picking up on it. For example, the *Washington Times* and *National Review* magazines combined to tell us that "behind the breezy celebration of 'guy stuff' in today's men's magazine lurks a crisis of confidence. What does it mean to be masculine in the 90s?" It is revealed that today's men's magazines (*Esquire*, *GQ*, *Men's Health*, *Men's Fitness*, *Men's Journal*, *Details*, *Maxim*, *Men's Perspective*) "are all geared to a new feminized man..."⁶ Some examples? The old masculine attitude toward personal appearance is disappearing. If memory serves, our fathers' acts of personal upkeep were mostly limited to shaving and putting on a tie. According to Lowry:

[I]t's hard to imagine [them] interested in articles on 'A Flat Belly for the Beach' (Verge), or the three new men's fragrances for the fall season (GQ), or even 'The New Fall Suit' (Esquire). But somewhere along the line men became less concerned with being strong and silent, and more worried about making themselves pretty.⁷

Indeed the feminization of American culture is nearly completed. And the last bastion of male domination, the U.S. military, is under assault.

If this "feminization" trend were driven only by radical feminists seeking to pull down a perceived male-dominated hierarchy, there would be more hope that the cycles of history would move America toward a stable accommodation between men and women. But the drive is deeper, and it will not be satisfied by any accommodation. The radical feminists have embraced and been embraced by the wider and deeper movement of cultural Marxism. For dedicated Marxists, the strategy is to attack at every point where an apparent disparity leaves a potential constituency of "oppressed" persons – in this case women, who are the largest of all constituencies. Cultural Marxists, men and women, are making the most of it, and the theory developed by the Frankfurt School provides the ideology.

The Frankfurt School theorized that the authoritarian personality is a product of the patriarchal family. This idea is in turn directly connected to Engels's *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, which promotes matriarchy. Furthermore, it

³ Kristol, Irving. "The Feminization of the Democrats." *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 9, 1996. Kristol reported that 50% of the Democratic convention delegates were women. Women were described as tending to be more sentimental, more risk-adverse, and less competitive than men, and also more permissive and less judgmental.

⁴ Blair, Anita. Independent Women's Forum. "Mitchells in the Morning," NET-TV, Dec. 5, 1996.

⁵ Cladwell, Christopher. "The Feminization of America." *Weekly Standard*, Dec. 23, 1996.

⁶ Culture, et Cetera. "Sissifaction." *The Washington Times*, Oct. 17, 1997.

⁷ Lowry, Rich. "Ab Nauseum." *National Review*, Oct. 13, 1997

was Karl Marx who wrote in *The Communist Manifesto* about the radical notion of a “community of women.” He also, in 1845, wrote disparagingly in his *The German Ideology* of the idea that the family was the basic unit of society.

The concept of the “authoritarian personality” is not just to be interpreted primarily as a model for the conduct of warfare against prejudice as such. It is a handbook for psychological warfare against the American male, to render him unwilling to defend traditional beliefs and values. In other words, the aim was to emasculate him. Undoubtedly the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt University meant this, as it used the term “psychological techniques for changing personality.”

The “authoritarian personality,” studied in the 1940s and 1950s by American followers of the Frankfurt School, prepared the way for such psychological warfare against the male gender role. The aim was promoted by Herbert Marcuse and others under the guise of “women’s liberation” and under the New Left movement in the 1960s. Evidence that psychological techniques for changing personality are intended to focus in particular on the emasculation of the American male has also been provided by Abraham Maslow, founder of “third force humanist psychology” and promoter of psychotherapeutic techniques in public school classrooms.⁸ He wrote that “the next step in personal evolution is a transcendence of both masculinity and femininity to general humanness.”⁹

Cultural Marxist stalwarts apparently know exactly what they want to do and how they plan to do it. They have actually already succeeded in accomplishing much of their agenda.

How did this situation come about in American universities? Gertrude Himmelfarb has observed that it slipped past traditional academics almost unobserved until it was too late. It occurred so “quietly” that when they “looked up”, postmodernism was upon them with a vengeance. “They were surrounded by such a tidal wave of faddish multicultural subjects such as radical feminism, deconstructed relativism as history and other courses” which undermine the perpetuation of Western civilization.¹⁰ Indeed, this tidal wave slipped by just as Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School had envisioned – a quiet revolution that could not be resisted by force.

The Frankfurt School had devised the concept of designating the opponents of the Marxist cultural revolution as “authoritarian characters.” According to available accounts:

There was a meeting of American scholars at a conference on religious and racial prejudice in 1944. Over the next five years, a Frankfurt School team under the

⁸ See “Hidden Danger in the Classroom” Pearl Evans, Small Helm Press, 1990. The authors of this classroom approach have since disavowed it, but it continues on in public and other schools.

⁹ Raehn, Raymond V. “The Roots of Affective Education in American Schools.” March 1995. p. 17.

¹⁰ Himmelfarb, Gertrude. Panel on “Academic Reform: Internal Sources.” National Association of Scholars, Sixth General Conference, May 3-5, 1996.

direction of Max Horkheimer conducted in-depth social and psychological profiles of Americans under a project entitled “Studies of Prejudice.” One of the results was a book entitled “The Authoritarian Personality” by Theodor Adorno, et al, that summarized one of the largest public opinion surveys ever undertaken in the United States. It was published in 1950, and conformed to the original Critical Theory in every respect. As a document which testified to the belief system of the Frankfurt School revolutionaries it was essentially anti-God, anti-Christian, anti-family, anti-nationalist, anti-patriot, anti-conservative, anti-hereditarian, anti-ethnocentric, anti-masculine, anti-tradition, and anti-morality. All of these are elements in critical theory.¹¹

“Cultural Marxism,” as preached by the Frankfurt School alumni in the U.S., is being implemented by the elite Boomers. This has laid the foundation for and spurred the widely popular and destructive concepts of “affirmative action,” “multiculturalism” and “diversity.” One can’t escape these terms today. They have grown from the study of anti-Semitism and discrimination by the Institute for Social Research during the 1940s and the systematic infusion of the language of “discrimination,” “civil rights,” “women’s rights,” and other “minority rights” into American culture.

According to Raehn:

Critical Theory as applied mass psychology has led to the deconstruction of gender in the American culture. Following Critical Theory, the distinction between masculinity and femininity will disappear. The traditional roles of the mothers and fathers are to be dissolved so that patriarchy will be ended. Children are not to be raised according to their biological genders and gender roles according to their biological differences. This reflects the Frankfurt School rationale for the disintegration of the traditional family.¹²

Thus, one of the basic tenets of Critical Theory was the necessity to break down the traditional family. The Frankfurt School scholars preached:

Even a partial breakdown of parental authority in the family might tend to increase the readiness of a coming generation to accept social change.¹³

The transformation of American culture envisioned by the cultural Marxists goes further than pursuing gender equality. Embodied in their agenda is “matriarchal theory,” under which they purpose to transform American culture to be female-dominated. This is a direct throwback to Wilhelm Reich, a Frankfurt School member who considered matriarchal theory in psychoanalytic terms. In 1993, he wrote in “The Mass Psychology of Fascism” that matriarchy was the only genuine family type of “natural society.”

¹¹ Raehn, Raymond V. “Critical Theory: A Special Research Report.” April 1, 1996.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Jay, Martin. *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research, 1923 – 1950*. University of California Press, 1973.

Erich Fromm, another charter member of the Institute, was one of the most active advocates of matriarchal theory. Fromm was especially taken with the idea that all love and altruistic feelings were ultimately derived from the maternal love necessitated by the extended period of human pregnancy and postnatal care:

Love thus was not dependent on sexuality, as Freud had supposed. In fact, sex was more often tied to hatred and destruction. Masculinity and femininity were not reflections of “essential” sexual differences, as the romantics had thought. They were derived instead from differences in life functions, which were in part socially determined.¹⁴

This dogma was a precedent for today’s radical feminist pronouncements appearing in newspapers and in TV programs, including TV newscasts. For its promoters, male and female roles result from cultural indoctrination – an indoctrination carried out by the male patriarchy to the detriment of women.

Indeed, cultural Marxism has, in the 1990s, melded with radical feminism in the elite Boomer generation, that throwback to the dangerous Transcendentalists of the early 19th century. A cauldron of discontent is forming in our nation, a discontent which has the potential to dismantle American civilization.

Destructive criticism of primary elements of American culture inspired the 1960s counter-culture revolution. Idealistic Boomers coming of age strove to transform the prevailing culture into its opposites, in the spirit of social revolution. Now the elite Boomers are in positions of power, and they are working to destroy the nation’s historic institutions. They aim to destroy as well the heritage we call “Western Civilization.”

Richard Bernstein has written in his book on multiculturalism, “the Marxist revolutionary process for the past several decades in America has centered on race and sex warfare rather than class warfare” as in earlier times.¹⁵ This reflects a scheme more total than economics to restructure American society. As the social revolutionaries readily proclaim, their purpose is to destroy the hegemony of white males. To accomplish this, all barriers to the introduction of more women and minorities throughout the “power structure” are to be brought down by all means available. Laws and lawsuits, intimidation, and demonizing of white males as racists and sexists are pursued through the mass media and the universities. The psycho–dynamic of the revolutionary process aim for psychic disempowerment – decapitation – of those who oppose.

Steve Forbes has emphasized:

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Bernstein, Richard. *The Dictatorship of Virtue: Multiculturalism and the Battle for America’s Future*. Knopf, 1994.

This country's founders recognized three primal values in the Declaration of Independence, and they ranked them properly: Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.¹⁶

Forbes observes that if the order of these fundamental human rights is switched – with happiness before liberty or liberty before life – we come to moral chaos and social anarchy.

This very condition is what Judge Robert Bork describes as “modern liberalism.” He defines its characteristics as “‘radical egalitarianism’ (equality of outcomes rather than of opportunities) and ‘radical individualism’ (the drastic reduction of limit to personal gratification).”¹⁷

Judge Bork also identifies radical feminism as “the most destructive and fanatical” element of this modern liberalism. He further describes radical feminism as “totalitarian in spirit.”

Most Americans do not realize that they, through their institutions, are being led by social revolutionaries who think in terms of the continuing destruction of the existing social order in order to create a new one. The revolutionaries are New Age Elite Boomers.¹⁸ They now control the public institutions in the United States. Their “quiet” revolution, beginning with the counter-culture revolution of their youth, is nearing completion. A key, or even a dominant element because purportedly it represents that largest political and social constituency among their potential followers, is feminism. The Marxist movement in its “quiet” cultural latter-day phase is seemingly sweeping all before it. With its sway over the media, fully in the grip of feminism, it is hard to discern the stirrings of a counter-culture. Are the elite Boomers, the New Totalitarians, the most dangerous generation in America's history? William Strauss and Neil Howe suggest so, in their book *Generations: The History of America's Future – 1584 – 2069*.¹⁹ James Kurth writes:

The United States itself has become a great power that opposes much of what was once thought of as Western Civilization, especially its cultural achievements and its social arrangements. The major American elites – those in power in politics, business, the media, and academia – now use American power, especially the “soft power” of information, communications, and popular entertainment, to displace Western Civilization not only in America but also in Europe.²⁰

¹⁶ Snow, Tony. “Moral of the Story: Forbes Virtue Stance.” *The Washington Times*, Oct. 27, 1997. Mr. Snow reports on an article by Forbes in the November 1997 *Policy Review* magazine.

¹⁷ Bork, Robert H. *Slouching Towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline*. Harper Collins, 1996.

¹⁸ Atkinson, Gerald L. *The New Totalitarians: Bosnia as a Mirror of America's Future*. Atkinson Associated Press, 1996.

¹⁹ Strauss, William and Neil Howe. *Generations: the History of America's Future*. William Morrow & Co., 1991.

²⁰ Kurth, James. “NATO Expansion and the ideas of the West.” *Western Civ in World Politics, Orbis Magazine*, Fall 1997.

Will American men, of every race, and more traditionalist women of every age and circumstances – who may well be a silent majority of their sex – rise to challenge Political Correctness? Or will American men continue in voluntary submission toward a future of peonage under a new American matriarchy? Would that be a precursor to a condition of anarchy, and an end to America's experiment with democracy? It may well be that the fate of American civilization depends on American men steadfastly resisting Politically Correct feminism. Even more, they must resourcefully oppose the wider grip of Political Correctness, the cultural Marxism for which radical feminism is only one avenue of attack.

Chapter VI

Further Readings on the Frankfurt School

by

William S. Lind

This is the sixth and final chapter in the Free Congress Foundation's book on Political Correctness, or – to call it by its real name – cultural Marxism. It is a short bibliographical essay intended not as an exhaustive resource for scholars but as a guide for interested citizens who want to learn more about the ideology that is taking over America.

As readers of the earlier chapters in this book already know, to understand Political Correctness and the threat it poses it is necessary to understand its history, particularly the history of the institution most responsible for creating it, the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School, or the Institute for Social Research as it was formally known, was established at Frankfurt University in Germany in 1923. This fact alone is important, because it tells us that Political Correctness is not merely a leftover of the American student rebellion of the 1960s.

Another fact from that long-ago year, 1923, is equally significant: the intended name for the Frankfurt School was the Institute for Marxism. The Institute's father and funder, Felix Weil, wrote in 1971 that he "wanted the Institute to become known, and perhaps famous, due to its contributions to Marxism as a scientific discipline..."¹ Beginning a tradition Political Correctness still carries on, Weil and others decided that they could operate more effectively if they concealed their Marxism; hence, on reflection, they chose the neutral-sounding name, the Institute for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung). But "Weil's heartfelt wish was still to create a foundation similar to the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow – equipped with a staff of professors and students, with libraries and archives – and one day to present it to a German Soviet Republic."² In 1933, this disguised "Institute for Marxism" left Germany and reestablished itself in New York City, where in time it shifted its focus to injecting its ideology into American society.

The most readable English-language history of the Frankfurt School is Martin Jay's book, The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research, 1923 - 1950 (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1973 – new edition in 1996). This book is in print in paperback and can be ordered through any bookstore. The reader should be aware that Jay's book is, in the words of

¹ Martin, Jay. The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research, 1923 – 1950 (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996) p. 8.

² Rolf Wiggershaus, The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance, trans. by Michael Robertson (The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1995) p.24.

another work on the Frankfurt School, a “semiofficial’ history³, which is to say that it is largely uncritical. Like virtually all other English-language authors on the Institute, Jay is on the political left. Nonetheless, the book provides a solid factual introduction to the Frankfurt School, and the reader should have little trouble discerning in it the roots and origins of today’s Political Correctness.

In his first chapter, “The Creation of the Institut für Sozialforschung and Its First Frankfurt Years,” Jay lays bare the Institute’s Marxist origins and nature, and equally its efforts to conceal both: “The original idea of calling it the Institut für Marxismus (Institute for Marxism) was abandoned as too provocative, and a more Aesopian alternative was sought (not for the last time in the Frankfurt School’s history).”⁴ Of the Institute’s first director, Carl Grünberg, Jay writes, “Grünberg concluded his opening address by clearly stating his personal allegiance to Marxism as a scientific methodology. Just as liberalism, state socialism, and the historical school had institutional homes elsewhere, so Marxism would be the ruling principle at the Institut.”⁵ Jay’s first chapter also introduces the Institute’s critical shift that laid the basis for today’s Political Correctness, a.k.a. cultural Marxism: “if it can be said that in early years of its history the Institut concerned itself primarily with an analysis of bourgeois society’s socio-economic substructure, in the years after 1930 its prime interest lay in its cultural superstructure.”⁶

The second chapter, “The Genius of Critical Theory,” gets at the heart of the “Critical Studies” departments that now serve as the founts of Political Correctness on American college campuses. All of these are branches and descendants of the Critical Theory first developed in the 1930s by the Frankfurt School. The term “Critical Theory” is itself something of a play on words. One is tempted to ask, “OK, what is the theory?” The answer is, “The theory is to criticize.” Jay writes, “Critical Theory, as its name implies, was expressed through a series of critiques of other thinkers and philosophical traditions...Only by confronting it in its own terms, as a gadfly of other systems, can it be fully understood.”⁷ The goal of Critical Theory was not truth, but praxis, or revolutionary action: bringing the current society and culture down through unremitting, destructive criticism. According to Jay, “The true object of Marxism, Horkheimer argued (Max Horkheimer succeeded Carl Grünberg as director of the Institute in July, 1930), was not the uncovering of immutable truths, but the fostering of social change.”⁸

The central question facing the Institute in the early 1930s was how to apply Marxism to the culture. The title of Jay’s third chapter gives the answer: “The Integration of Psychoanalysis.” Here, Jay’s book falls down to some extent, in that it does not offer a clear understanding of how the Institute integrated Marx and Freud. The answer appears to be that Freud’s later critiques were made conditional on a capitalist, bourgeois order: a revolutionary, post-capitalist society could “liberate” man from his Freudian repression.

³ Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, ed., The Essential Frankfurt School Reader (Continuum, New York 1997) p. vii.

⁴ Jay op. cit., p. 8.

⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

⁷ Ibid., p. 41.

⁸ Ibid., p. 46.

Here again one sees key aspects of Political Correctness emerging, including a demand for sexual “liberation” and the attack on “patriarchal” Western culture.

If the precise nature of the blending of Marx and Freud is left open by Jay, his next chapter makes the blend’s application clear: “The Institute’s First Studies of Authority.” The Institute left Germany for New York in 1933 because the Nazis came to power in Germany. Not surprisingly, one of the Institute’s first tasks in New York was to oppose Nazism. It did so largely by concocting a psychological “test” for an “authoritarian personality.” Supposedly, people with this authoritarian personality were likely to support Nazism. Both the concept and the methodology were doubtful at best. But the Institute’s work laid down an important tool for the left, namely a notion that anyone on the right was psychologically unbalanced. And it marked a key turning for the Institute in the birth of Political Correctness in America, in that the empirical research the studies demanded was done on Americans. Ultimately, the result was Institute member Theodor Adorno’s vastly influential book, The Authoritarian Personality, published in 1950.

Jay’s fifth chapter, “The Institute’s Analysis of Nazism,” continues the theme of the “authoritarian personality.” But his sixth, “Aesthetic Theory and the Critique of Mass Culture,” provides an answer to the question of why most “serious” modern art and music is so awful. It is intended to be. Theodor Adorno was the Institute’s lead figure on high culture – he began life as a music critic and promoter of Schönberg – and his view was that in the face of the “repressiveness” of bourgeois society, art could only be “true” if it were alienating, reflecting the alienated society around it. Jay quotes Adorno: “A successful work...is not one which resolves objective contradictions in a spurious harmony, but one which expresses the idea of harmony negatively by embodying the contradictions, pure and uncompromised, in its innermost structure.”⁹

Adorno despised the new mass culture – film, radio, and jazz – in what seems to be a case of missed opportunity: today, the entertainment industry is the single most powerful promoter of Political Correctness. Another key Frankfurt School figure, Walter Benjamin, did see the potential: “he paradoxically held out hope for the progressive potential of politicized, collectivized art.”¹⁰ At some point, someone – the question of who lies beyond the boundaries of Jay’s book – put Benjamin’s perception together with the Frankfurt School’s general view, which Jay summarizes as “the Institut came to feel that the culture industry enslaved men in far more subtle and effective ways than the crude methods of domination practiced in earlier eras.”¹¹

In the remainder of the book, Jay traces the (sort of) empirical work of the Institute in the 1940s, which was beset by the same problems as their earlier survey “research,” and follows the Institute in its return to Frankfurt, Germany after World War II. But by this point, the reader will already have the picture. He will have seen how Marxism was translated from economic into cultural terms; discerned the themes of

⁹ Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 211.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 216

sexual liberation, feminism, “victims” and so on that make up today’s Political Correctness; and found in Critical Theory the origins of the endless wailing about “racism, sexism and homophobia” that “PC” pours forth. One key piece of history is missing: “an analysis of Marcuse’s influential transmission of the Frankfurt School’s work to a new American audience in the 1960s,”¹² as Jay puts it in his epilogue. Also, Jay curiously passes over with only the most minimal discussion the effective move of the Institute, in the persons of Horkheimer and Adorno, to Los Angeles during the war. Did the connections they built there play any role in injecting the Frankfurt School’s philosophy into American film and, after the war, television? Jay does not touch upon the subject.

But for the reader new to the Frankfurt School as the source of today’s Political Correctness, Jay’s The Dialectical Imagination offers a solid base. The book concludes with an extensive (though not annotated) bibliography of works by and about the Frankfurt School.

As to other accessible works about the Frankfurt School, the definitive modern work in German has recently been translated into English: The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories and Political Significance by Rolf Wiggershaus, (translated by Michael Robertson, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, first paperback edition 1995). This covers much of the same ground as Martin Jay’s book, although it also follows the Institute from its post-war return to Germany up to Adorno’s death in 1969. Wiggershaus is more detailed than Jay, and, although he too is on the left politically, he is more critical than Jay. In the book’s Afterword, Wiggershaus offers a brief look (and a hostile one) at some German conservative critiques of the Frankfurt School. A picture emerges that will seem familiar to Americans entrapped in the coils of Political Correctness:

Since the publication in 1970 of his book The Poverty of Critical Theory, Rohrmoser has promulgated, in constantly varying forms, the view that Marcuse, Adorno, and Horkheimer were the terrorists’ intellectual foster-parents, who were using cultural revolution to destroy the traditions of the Christian West. Academics such as Ernst Topitsch and Kurt Sontheimer, who saw themselves as educators and liberal democrats, followed in Rohrmoser’s footsteps. In 1972 Topitsch, a critical rationalist who was Professor of Philosophy in Graz, had stated that behind the slogans of “rational discussion” and “dialogue free of domination” there was being established at the universities “a distinct terrorism of political convictions such as never existed before, even under Nazi tyranny.”¹³

¹² Ibid., p. 287; Herbert Marcuse joined the Institute for Social Research in 1932.

¹³ Wiggershaus, op. cit., p. 657.

Additional works on the Frankfurt School include:

- The Frankfurt School by T.B. Bottomore (Tavistock, London, 1984). Another history written by a sympathizer; you are better off with Jay or Wiggershaus.
- “The New Dark Age: The Frankfurt School and ‘Political Correctness’” by Michael Minnicino, in *Fidelio*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter 1992 (KMW Publishing, Washington, DC) One of the few looks at the Frankfurt School by someone not a sympathizer, this long journal article explains the role of the Institute for Social Research in creating the ideology we now know as “Political Correctness.” Unfortunately, its value is reduced by some digressions that lack credibility.
- Angela Davis: An Autobiography by Angela Davis (Random House, New York 1974) Angela Davis, a leading American black radical and Communist Party member, was described by Frankfurt School member Herbert Marcuse as “my best student.” She also studied in Frankfurt under Adorno. This book shows the link between the Institute for Social Research and the New Left of the 1960s through the eyes of a key participant.
- The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism by Andrew Arato (Seabury Press, New York, 1979). The author is, as usual, a sympathizer, but this work shows the key role Lukacs played in the thinking of the Frankfurt School and, later, the New Left.
- The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt Institute by Susan Buck-Morss (Free Press, New York, 1977). An important book on the relationship of the Frankfurt School and Critical Theory to the New Left.
- Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas by David Held (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980). Yet another history by a fan of the Frankfurt School, but valuable for its discussion of the impact of Nietzsche on key Frankfurt School figures.

Beyond these secondary works lies the vast literature produced by members of the Frankfurt School itself. Some key works were written in English, and many of those written in German are available in translation. As is usually the case with Marxist works, the prose style and vocabulary are often so convoluted as to make them almost unreadable. Further, the refusal of the Frankfurt School to make its own future vision plain led many of its members to write in aphorisms, which adds yet another layer of impenetrableness.

One work, however, is of such importance that it must be recommended despite its difficulty: Eros and Civilization by Herbert Marcuse (Beacon Press, Boston, first paperback edition in 1974 and still in print). Subtitled A Philosophical Inquiry into

Freud, this book holds center stage for two reasons. First, it completes the task of integrating Marx and Freud. While the Marxism is *sotto voce*, the whole framework of the book is in fact Marxist, and it is through the framework that Freud is considered. Second, Eros and Civilization and its author were the key means of transmission by which the intellectual work of the Frankfurt School was injected into the student rebellion of the 1960s. This book became the bible of the young radicals who took over America's college campuses from 1965 onward, and who are still there as faculty members.

In brief, Eros and Civilization urges total rebellion against traditional Western culture – the “Great Refusal” – and promises a Candyland utopia of free sex and no work to those who join the revolution. About two-thirds of the way through the book, Marcuse offers this summary of its arguments:

Our definition of the specific historical character of the established reality principle led to a reexamination of what Freud considered to be universal validity. We questioned this validity in view of the historical possibility of the abolition of the repressive controls imposed by civilization. The very achievements of this civilization seemed to make the performance principle obsolete, to make the repressive utilization of the instincts archaic. But the idea of a non-repressive civilization on the basis of the achievements of the performance principle encountered the argument that instinctual liberation (and consequently total liberation) would explode civilization itself, since the latter is sustained only through renunciation and work (labor) – in other words, through the repressive utilization of instinctual energy. Freed from these constraints, man would exist without work and without order; he would fall back into nature, which would destroy culture. To meet this argument, we recalled certain archetypes of imagination which, in contrast to the culture-heroes of repressive productivity, symbolized creative receptivity. These archetypes envisioned the fulfillment of man and nature, not through domination and exploitation, but through release of inherent libidinal forces. We then set ourselves the task of “verifying” these symbols – that is to say, demonstrating their truth value as symbols of a reality beyond the performance principle. We thought that the representative content of the Orphic and Narcissistic images was the erotic reconciliation (union) of man and nature in the aesthetic attitude, where order is beauty and work is play.¹⁴

Marcuse continues after this summary to lay out the erotic content of the “reality beyond the performance principle,” i.e., a new civilization where work and productivity were unimportant. “The basic experience in this (aesthetic) dimension is sensuous rather than conceptual,”¹⁵ that is, feelings are more important than logic: “The discipline of aesthetics installs the *order of sensuousness* as against the *order of reason*.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (Beacon Press, Boston, 1955), p. 175-176.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 181.

“In German, *sensuousness* and *sensuality* are still rendered by one and the same term: *Sinnlichkeit*. It connotes instinctual (especially sexual) gratification...¹⁷ No longer used as a full-time instrument of labor, the body would be resexualized... (which) would first manifest itself in a reactivation of all erotogenic zones and, consequently, in a resurgence of pre-genital polymorphous sexuality and in a decline of genital supremacy. The body in its entirety would become an object of cathexis, a thing to be enjoyed – an instrument of pleasure. This change in the value and scope of libidinal relations would lead to a disintegration of the institutions in which the private interpersonal relations have been organized, particularly the monogamic and patriarchal family.”¹⁸

This in a book which Marcuse dedicated to Sophie Marcuse, his wife of fifty years!

It is easy to see how this message – “If it feels good, do it” – published in 1955 resonated with the student rebels of the 1960s. Marcuse understood what most of the rest of his Frankfurt School colleagues did not: the way to destroy Western civilization – the objective set forth by George Lukacs in 1919 – was not through abstruse theory, but through sex, drugs, and rock ‘n’ roll. Marcuse wrote other works for the new generation that spawned the New Left – One Dimensional Man (1964), Critique of Pure Tolerance (1965), An Essay on Liberation (1969), Counterrevolution and Revolt (1972). But Eros and Civilization was and remains the key work, the one that put the match to the tinder.

Other central works by members of the Frankfurt School include:

- The Authoritarian Personality by Theodor Adorno (Harper, New York, 1950). This book is the basis for everything that followed that portrayed conservatism as a psychological defect. It had enormous impact, not least on education theory.
- Dialectic of Enlightenment by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (trans. by John Cumming, Verso, London, 1979). A complex philosophical work written during World War II largely in response to Nazism (and extensively devoted to discussions of anti-Semitism), this work seeks to find a kernel of “liberating” reason in the ruins of the Enlightenment.
- Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life by Theodor Adorno (trans. E.F.N. Jophcott, New Left Books, London, 1974). A book of aphorisms, almost entirely incomprehensible, but the effective conclusion of Adorno’s work.
- Escape from Freedom by Erich Fromm (Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1941, still in print in paperback) Fromm was the Institute’s “happy face,” and this book was often required reading at colleges in the 1960s. The thesis is that man’s nature causes him to throw his freedom away and embrace fascism unless he “masters society and subordinates the economic machine to the purposes of human happiness,” i.e., adopts socialism. At this point Fromm was in the process of

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 182

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 201.

breaking away from the Institute and his subsequent works cannot be considered as part of the Frankfurt School corpus.

- Eclipse of Reason (Oxford University Press, New York, 1947). Essentially a sequel to Dialectic of Enlightenment, the book is heavily the work of Adorno and other Frankfurt School personages, although only Horkheimer name appeared on it. Its contents are based on a series of lectures Horkheimer gave at Columbia University in 1944. The prose style is surprisingly readable, but the contents are odd; there is throughout a strong nostalgia, which was normally anathema to the Frankfurt School. The key chapter, “The Revolt of Nature,” reflects a strange Retro anarchism: “The victory of civilization is too complete to be true. Therefore, adjustment in our times involves an element of resentment and suppressed fury.”
- Critical Theory: Selected Essays by Max Horkheimer (trans. Matthew O’Connell, Seabury Press, New York, 1972). The essay, “Traditional and Critical Theory” is especially important.
- The Essential Frankfurt School Reader, ed. By Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (Continuum, New York, 1982, in print in paperback) Not an introduction to the Frankfurt School, but rather a reprinting of Frankfurt School essays not available elsewhere, this book is more useful to the specialist than the novice. Nonetheless, both the editors’ lengthy introductions and some of the essays are useful (once again, the editors are solidly on the Left politically, and their style is as heavy as that of the Frankfurt School’s members).

This small bibliography will be enough to get an interested reader started; the full literature on and by the Frankfurt School is immense, as the bibliographies in Jay’s and Wiggershaus’s books attest. What has been missing from it, at least in English, is a readable book, written for the layman, that explains the Frankfurt School and its works in terms of the creation of Political Correctness. This short volume is at least a start in filling that gap.