

HETERO DOXY

ARTICLES AND ANIMADVERSIONS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES



WHY DID AIDS HAPPEN TO GAY MEN?

According to researchers, the AIDS epidemic is like all epidemics: an ecological disturbance that resulted when human behaviors created a niche for a particular microbe. To understand why AIDS struck a given population, we have to study how that population's behavior patterns changed in ways that provided HIV with its ecological opportunity.

If the history of sexuality indicates anything, it is that human sexual behavior is not a constant. Humans possess powerful biological impulses that propel our sexual desires, but those impulses are shaped by social forces in very significant and often completely unconscious ways. A man who has, say, an intense attraction to women's lingerie may consider this wholly natural and certainly involuntary, and it is. But if that man had been raised in a Neolithic culture where lingerie did not exist, such an attraction would not be possible. Not only are sexual desires and behaviors shaped by culture, they change over time within cultures. Anyone living in our anorexic era who strolls through an



art museum is aware that a revolution in male taste has occurred since plump young beauties posed for Rubens.

In the case of gay men and AIDS, were there significant changes in gay behavior in years before the epidemic that might explain the rise of the epidemic? And, if so, what were they and how did they interact with the virus to produce an epidemic? In short, why did AIDS happen to gay men?

Evidence convincingly argues that before the middle of the century gay sexual behavior was vastly different from what it later became, that from mid-century onward there were fundamental changes not only in gay male self-perceptions and beliefs, but also in sexual habits, kinds, and numbers of partners, even ways of making love. These revolutions reached a fever pitch just at the moment that HIV exploded like a series of time bombs across the archipelago of gay America. It appears that the simultaneous introduction of new behaviors and a dramatic rise in the scale of old ones produced one of the greatest shifts in sexual ecology ever recorded.

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School House*

*History Betrayed
(Again)*

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THE KARL MARX OF THE ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT ANIMAL INSTINCTS

By Cristopher Rapp

Mention the animal rights movement to most people, and chances are they'll think of the folks who trash medical labs in the middle of the night, throw blood on women wearing furs, or launch national campaigns to save the snail darter, the gnatcatcher, and the kangaroo rat. Or they might think of organizations like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), whose national director was once quoted as saying, "A rat is a pig is a dog is a boy."

Most people, having made this mental picture, would conclude that animal rights is largely the domain of looney left-wingers, but Gary Francione, professor at Rutgers University School of Law, sees things differently. He says PETA and the like are part of a "a profoundly bourgeois, very very reactionary

right-wing movement," which ought to become even more "extremist" in its fight against "speciesism."

Francione is no mere armchair philosopher propounding critical animal rights theory. He is an activist who directs the nation's only law clinic devoted to the idea that animals—dogs, cats, chickens, pigeons, rats, salmon, sea bass, et cetera—have substantially the same rights as humans.

The son of a meat broker, Francione converted to vegetarianism and to what he terms the "animal movement" after once visiting a slaughterhouse as a law school student. Later he served as a clerk for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, in whose chambers he housed stray dogs until the District's animal control people could pick them up. His next stop was New York's prestigious Cravath Swaine law firm, a stint he found frustrating because he was kept too busy to pursue animal rights work: "It seemed like every time I wanted to take a case, we either represented the person

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Clone Rangers

Heterodoxy's "Gay Clones"(April/May, 1997) report by Cristopher Rapp was by far the most comprehensive and accurate description of the new Cloning Rights movement to date.

My main objection to the article was its overemphasis on the "gay" aspect. The Cloning Rights movement, even though its founder and early activists have mainly come from the gay community, is really about everyone's right to exercise what Rapp has so astutely categorized as "reproduction without compromise."

Mr. Rapp's perceptive analysis of the division within the gay community on the Cloning Rights movement. . .was right on target. However, in reporting that only 10% of the community thought cloning was an important gay rights issue while 38% said it was "immoral and impractical," he failed to note that 52% were unsure but felt it wasn't necessarily a gay issue. Compare these figures with polls of the general public which find 89% feeling human cloning is "immoral" and only 7% being really positive. Frankly, we were surprised the figures were as good as they were and they indicate, so far as I am concerned, that the gay community—despite its reservations—is light years ahead of the general public in understanding and supporting this movement. . . .

Indeed, Chandler Burr's "seeing the light" and publicly changing his position after a little more serious and deep thought. . .is a perfect example of what will be happening on an individual and mass scale in the months and years ahead.

We all sometimes stick our feet in our mouths. . . . In the middle of the night, being interviewed by an old friend [Jack Nichols], perhaps slightly impaired by alcohol, I confess. . .that I gave in to the urge for rhetorical excess and did in fact say: "Heterosexuality as a route to reproduction is now historically obsolete."

Factually it is a stupid and inaccurate statement which has haunted me ever since. Heterosexuality will never become "historically obsolete" and will doubtless be the predominant mode of reproduction as long as most men and women seethe with sexual desire for one another. I'll restate the essential idea buried under that inflammatory rhetoric: "Cloning renders heterosexuality's historic monopoly on reproduction obsolete."

Finally, I'd like to point out that Jack Nichols' speculation about some future time when massive overpopulation would necessitate forced sterilization at birth, followed by massive selective cloning as the major means of reproduction, is the kind of overdone scientific nightmare the likes of which has fueled the public's current misunderstanding and hysteria about his issue. . . . Likewise, Jack speaks strictly for himself about the "devaluing through Dolly of the entire concept of virginity."

I discovered for the first time upon

reading Mr. Rapp's report that the anti-cloning bill in the New York Senate is given little chance of passage by those most intimately involved. . . . Even if this is so, we have many more rounds to go. I only wonder if the first trial and conviction for the "crime" of cloning oneself or another human being will be the last notorious trial of the 20th century or one of the first of the 21st.

Randy Wicker
Clone Rights United Front
New York, NY

HETERO DOXY

ARTICLES AND ANIMADVERSIONS ON POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND OTHER FOLLIES

WRITE TO US

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

Send your comments to Letters Editor, *Heterodoxy*, by mail (Box 67398, Los Angeles, CA 90067) or by fax (310)843-3692 or by e-mail (76712.3274@compuserve.com).

A word first, please, to Director Felicia Park-Rogers of San Francisco's international organization, Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. She is quoted as saying "It is a very dangerous precedent to start reproducing ourselves and calling that 'family.'" Dear Ms. Park-Rogers, must we now join the fundamentalists by giving out "the only true definition" of family? First they told us no gays allowed in their definition of family. Now a major gay organization is saying no clones allowed in our definition? Each immigrant group arriving in America scorned the groups that came afterwards. Is there a parallel here? Or am I just free-associating again?

Cristopher Rapp's engaging article in *Heterodoxy*, has, to date, best captured the pioneering energies, colorful characters, funny stories, and well-researched facts that have emerged with Randolfe Wicker's founding of the Clone Rights movement.

The spontaneous speculations I indulged were about a growing problem, overpopulation, that "conceivably" could result in some burdened future and in forced sterilization. This thought finds Randy Wicker, my old friend and gay movement comrade-in-arms, freaking. But he need not. He and I represent simply two specific directions from which to approach cloning. Wicker's is based on his desire to play Twin-Brother-Pop and he's a libertarian, while my approach is, in fact, concerned with ecology, with a possible need for a future social poli-

cy, especially since currently there are 1 billion people who go to bed hungry each night. . . . By speculating on such matters [I mean] only to suggest that future overpopulation has its awful price. Why not, therefore, draw attention to this high "populating" price in strong an shocking terms each time an occasion arises?

I have no interest in reproducing my own physical apparatus. To me, the best kind so reproduction is that of certain attitudes—survival-values—leading to a more affectionate world community. If there is such as thing as the "eternity" mentioned in the *Heterodoxy* article, that eternity will be much improved by values, not bodies.

Wicker also says he fails to get my point about the importance of devaluing virginity. To make this clear, let it be noted that most post-adolescents—male and female—are no longer able to call themselves virgins. Are they less valuable? Does it damage the cause of cloning to devalue virginity? Doesn't making virginity a divine body-state also promote an anti-sexual culture?

And one last word to *Heterodoxy's* Cristopher Rapp. Can you be absolutely certain this whole thing *isn't* just a subplot to *Les Cage Aux Folles*? Somehow, just somehow, I think, if you only really knew. . . .

Jack Nichols, editor
Gay Today
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Arming Enemies

While perusing the April/May issue of *Heterodoxy*, I was perplexed to read, in the article about China, "Arming the Enemy," the name of Nelson Mandela with Havel, Walesa, and Pope John Paul II as democratic icons. I find it difficult to comprehend why Dr. Bryan and Mr. Ledeen would include the hand-picked candidate of the Communist front African National Congress among "the prophets and followers of democracy". Mandela played Che to South African Communist Party boss Joe Slovo's Fidel, and the fact that the U, S. government played a key role in helping Mandela seize power should be a lasting blot of shame upon our history. But, as their otherwise compelling article shows, a nation whose government indulges in the treasonous commerce of building up its own most dangerous enemy is already past mere shame.

Incredulously,
G.J. Krupey
North Huntingdon, PA

Weird Science Journalism

A more accurate title for John Horgan's book *The End of Science* would be *The end of Science Journalism*

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HETERODOXY (ISSN: 1069-7268) is published by the Center for the Study of Popular Culture. The Center is a California 501(c)(3).
Editorial: (916)265-9306. Fax: (916)265-3119. Subscription: 12 issues, \$25. Send checks to Center for the Study of Popular Culture,
P.O. Box 67398, Los Angeles, California 90067. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

Inquiries: (800)752-6562

Heterodoxy is distributed to newsstands and bookstores by Bernhard B. DeBoer, 113 East Centre Street, Nutley, NJ 07110.

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

PAIN AND BLOOD: The concept of female genital mutilation is one that pits the lunacies of feminism against the lunacies of multiculturalism. To admit that what these foreigners do to little girls is barbaric is to also admit that we Americans are more civilized. This creates a tough problem for the girls over at *Ms. Magazine*, one it's fun to watch them try to solve.

In the most recent issue, editor Marcia Ann Gillespie has a go at it: "This winter, to celebrate their imminent return to their Liberian homeland, hundreds of women refugees in Sierra Leone gathered their girl children to take part in a ceremony of pain and blood. The girls went into the bush in the company of their mothers and female elders and were held down by their female relatives while other women with sharp knives cut away their clitorises to keep them chaste and ensure their marriageability." Barbarians? The average American would think so. But who are we to judge? "What would the mother who took part in those ceremonies think of us?" Gillespie asks. "What would they say about a custom that involves women entering their daughters in contests that reward little girls with titles and crowns for being dressed up and made up and sexualized all in the name of beauty?" Yup. Putting little girls up in frilly dresses has the same weight as mutilating their genitals with knives. This is the sort of thinking that gives moral equivalence a bad name.

ALL THE FINE OLD CANNIBALS: We all have been hearing for years about how all the PC cultists want a "multiculturalism education," one that suppresses the Eurocentric bias of the white male ruling class. PC make-pretend history has taught us how the Europeans are selfish, materialistic, environmentally unfriendly, violent, brutal, racists, whereas all the others—and ESPECIALLY the Indians and Native American tribes in North and South America—were always nothing but sweet, pacific, protectors of the environment until corrupted by Columbus and his ghouls. Now comes a reissue of *Pan Americanism*, a book on Latin America by Professor of History at New York University John Edwin Fagg, which describes at length the Native American tribes before the arrival of Columbus. These were characterized by cannibalism (the Caribbean is named after the Carib tribes, whose name means cannibal in Spanish), human sacrifice, and warfare. But Fagg's description of the Aztec tribes is particularly interesting: "The Aztec religion was truly a horrifying affair by the standards of any time. In centers all over Mexico prisoners waited in cages until the grim Aztec officials arrived to send them to Tenochtitlan. In that spectacular city, at least every twenty days groups were dragged or forced up the pyramid steps while yelling, drunken Aztecs danced gruesomely about the base. The usual method of sacrifice was for the priests to throw the victim on his back upon a large stone, break open his chest with a dull obsidian blade, and tear out his heart. The heart might then be eaten by the clergy, the victim's skin taken and used for dress in

jest, mockery, or even in reverence, and his skull placed in a hideous collection that grew to monstrous proportions. . . . Sometimes the victim would have to fight with feathers against armed warriors until they killed him by degrees. One particularly cruel celebration involved roasting the victims before they were finally killed. Some of the victims were children, a few were women, a still smaller number were honored persons, but by far the most were anonymous prisoners of war. They died by the thousand. In the reign of

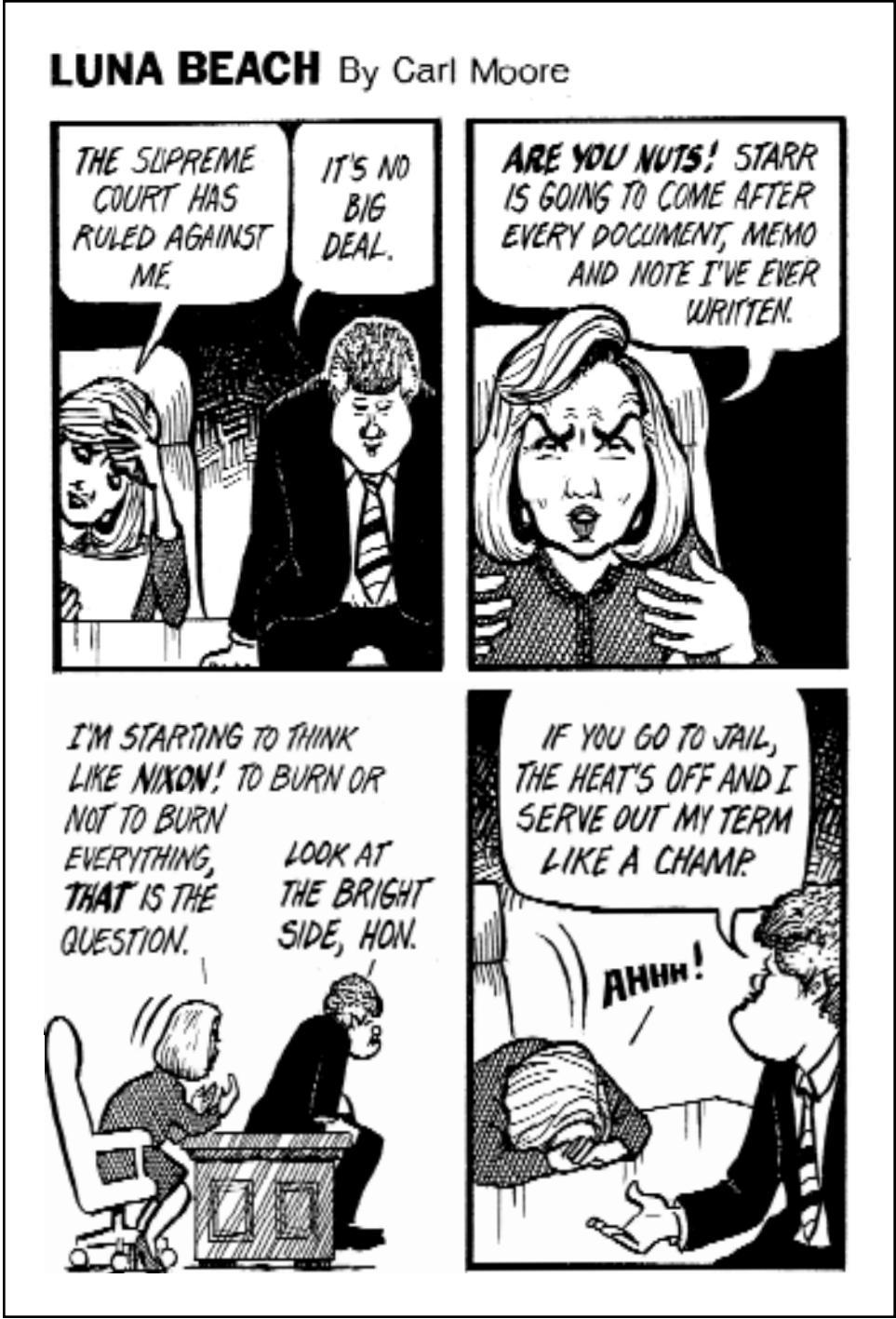
American Studies, Harvard University, upon receiving an honorary degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University's Teaneck-Hackensack Campus.

ANIMAL HOUSE: The Smithsonian continues its free fall into self parody. Now, it seems, after mastering the subtleties of race/class/gender, the museum has turned its thought police onto the subject of zoology, giving it a feminist touch that might surprise even Gloria Steinem. For example, a label in the Museum of Natural History now alerts visitors from Iowa that "Female animals are being portrayed in ways that make them appear deviant or sub-standard to male animals." A presentation of a male lion standing and the female reclining also gets blasted for reinforcing sex-role stereotypes, and a Bengalese tiger proves too predatory for PC curators. At times it is necessary to keep reminding oneself that this is not The New Age Counterculture and Animal Rights Museum of Santa Monica, but our self-described national treasure.

PULLING A FAST ONE: Howard Fast (born 1914) is a one-time literary poster boy for the Communist Party USA who made his reputation during the Party's heyday in the 1940s. Of all the Party's eager "artists in uniform," Fast, at his best a kind of leftist Danielle Steele, enjoyed the most commercial success with agit-prop works such as *Spartacus* and *Citizen Tom Paine*, written when the Party was portraying Communism as "twentieth-century Americanism." He joined others party liners in denying or defending the Ukraine Famine, the purge trials, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, post-war Soviet anti-Semitism, and the military occupation of Eastern Europe. And of course he remained silent while the Soviets kangaroo-courted his fellow writers in the USSR into the gulag. Such was the fidelity of Fast,

who in 1952 ran for Congress with the American Labor Party, that he got the Stalin Peace Prize in 1954. Khrushchev's 1956 revelations of Stalin's mass murder prompted *The Naked God*, Fast's renunciation of communism, but in later years Fast renounced his renunciation and his pendulum swung left again. This on again, off again politics has not been without its rewards. In Greenwich, CT, where the affluent flee New York, Fast's novel *The Hessian* is the only assigned book for eighth-grade. The good burghers of Greenwich even picked Fast to judge the political essays of high-school students, which is a little like asking Jack Kervorkian to check for vital signs.

CUBA WINS: The United Nations development agency has ranked Cuba, whose people are starving and whose economy is slouching into the stone age, as the world's second-best nation at combating poverty, ahead of Chile, Singapore and Costa Rica, which are all economic success stories. The winner? Trinidad and Tobago. How can nations eliminate poverty? Narrow differences between the genders and social classes, says the U.N.



Montezuma II, twenty thousand were said to have been killed in a single ceremony. . . . Oh yes, and the Indians gave Europeans syphilis and not the other way around.

GRADUATION BLOVIATION: "Even in this moment of celebration and jubilation, let us be clear that the tradition I am talking about is one in which each and every one of us aspired to be, in the words of the great John Coltrane, a force for good. But if you aspire to be a force for good, you have to keep track of evil, of unjustified suffering and unmerited pain and unnecessary misery. And there is no doubt in my mind that there is still too much suffering and pain and misery not just in America, but around the world. . . . and don't think that somehow it is somebody else and somewhere else. Look closely at yourself. That white supremacy in you, the male supremacy in you, the homophobia in you, that proud arrogance in you, that national haughtiness in you yes, that evil in you. And recognize the historical forces that shape and mold us. Our education is but part of our existential and moral weaponry to be force for good." Excerpt from the speech by Cornel West, Professor of Religion and Afro-



Where the U.S. and Mexico Come Together and Come Apart

The View from the Border

By K.L. Billingsley

Out in the Pacific, beyond where the gulls and pelicans soar above the surf, Coronado island is visible in the middle distance. So is Point Loma to the north and the skyline of San Diego, California's second-largest city. This peaceful scene at Border Field State Park, however, belies what goes on at the most breached border in the world, a place that lifts key issues from the comfy realm of theory and plunks them into a reality as rocky as the terrain here.

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become fashionable to talk of a global village where humankind is one, a politically correct new world order, where the nation-state will fade, and where borders are scorned as meaningless and divisive lines drawn by retro-politicians. Those enchanted with this notion, and they include some on the Right, might try a visit here, the only place in the world where the Third World bumps up against the First World.

On the actual borderline stands a rusting fence made of military landing mats, extending from some 50 yards into the sea to a point roughly 14 miles inland. On the other side of that fence lies Tijuana, a sprawling city of two million. A few yards to the south stands the Bullring by the Sea where crowds cheer as sequined matadors torment and kill bulls. Whatever one thinks of this ritual, it remains a treasured part of Mexican culture. Mexican TV even reviews the proceedings like ESPN summarizing the NBA playoffs. "¡Que linda esa maniobra!" The matadors currently lead in the series.

North of the border, bull-baiting and cockfighting are not treasured cultural rites. In fact, they are strictly banned and any attempt to legalize them would spark a revolt. But the issues go deeper than blood sports. Take, for example, the rule of law. Academics and politicians are fond of discussing *lex rex* as a necessary condition for democratic government and civil society. But down here it's an object lesson.

For years the rule of lawlessness held sway here largely because, under previous policy, agents remained back from the border leaving a kind of no-man's land which, like nature, abhorred a vacuum. In scenes shown endlessly on local news, thousands poured across, both at night and in broad daylight, in the levee area of the Tijuana river, where an easy run of several hundred yards lands the illegal crosser in San Ysidro, California, replete with trolleys, taxis, and protective cover. Entire mobs of crossers would crash through the port of entry and dash down Interstate Five. Worse, the no-man's land became a free-fire zone for killers, thieves, and rapists preying on poverty stricken people who had traveled hundreds of miles just for a shot at crossing and the prospect of a better life.

In one incident, captured on video by the Border Patrol, bandits set upon a group of potential crossers with a savagery that makes the cops who beat Rodney King look positively tame. Once the attackers had pummeled their victims into submission they bombarded them with rocks. For the most part, the thugs plied their bloody trade with impunity, and there was a spillover effect across the border.

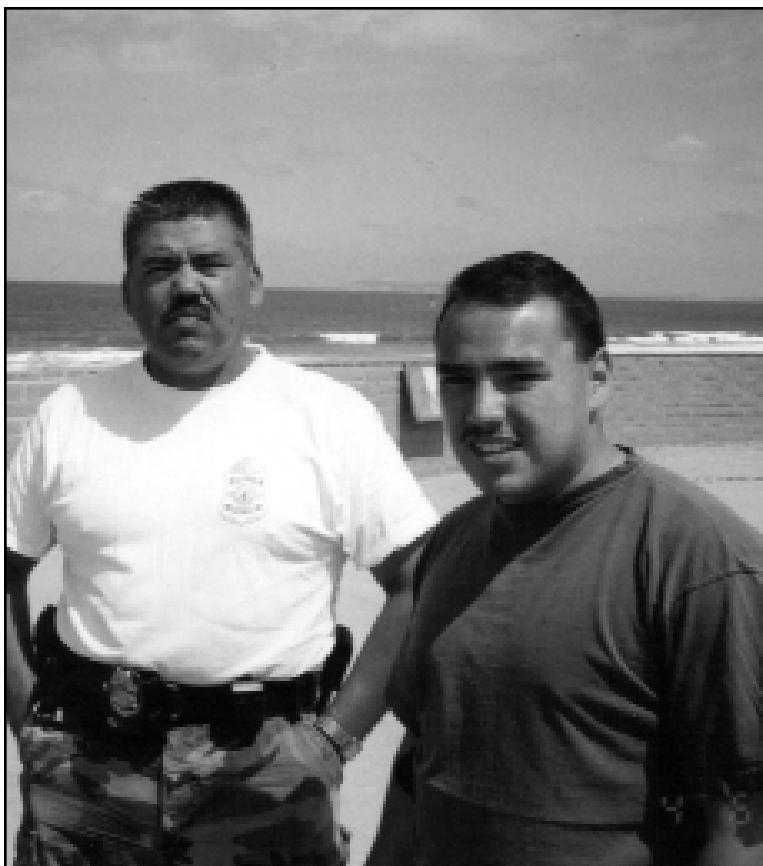
Car thefts skyrocketed and many of the stolen cars—especially luxury, four-wheel-drive vehicles—wound up being driven by Mexican police and government officials. Last year, immigration-related felonies made up 57.9 percent of the total criminal cases in Southern California, with Border Patrol agents on the front line.

"One night I was standing by the light and this rock the size of a softball flew in out of nowhere," says agent Pete Niebla, a stocky, muscled man with flecks of gray in his short, dark hair. "They throw rocks, bricks, anything. These guys are not fooling around. They are trying to take you out." He shows me the dents incoming rocks have made in the door of his Ford Bronco. If you take one

of these in the head, he says, it's all over.

The "rocking" happens almost every night, says Niebla, who in his camos and T-shirt, with 9mm Beretta strapped to his side, has the confident, all-business bearing of a special forces soldier. And, when one considers his daily duties, the comparison seems remarkably apt.

In PC boilerplate, the gun-ridden United States is the most violent society in the world, but conditions here challenge that assumption. Crime is down nationally, and, in San Diego, District Attorney Paul Pfingst gives much of the credit to the border crackdown of Operation Gatekeeper. On the other side, it's a different story, with



BORDER PATROL AGENTS PETE NIEBLA AND RENE VALENZUELA

U.S. Attorney Alan Bersin comparing Tijuana to Chicago during Prohibition, part of the "Colombianization of Mexico."

Just over the hill in the affluent Las Playas district, strategically located right on the border and topped with sparkling green tiles, stands the mansion of reputed drug lord Antonio Reynoso, who once masterminded a drug-smuggling tunnel between Tijuana and San Diego and was involved in a recent bust of several tons of cocaine in nearby Tecate. The Arellano Felix family also holds court in Tijuana, where 175 of 200 murders last year were cartel-related. In Baja California last year, eight senior law enforcement officers were killed, including Hodin Gutierrez in January, whose assassins, after riddling his body with bullets, ran over him with their van.

At present, Mexico's four cartels export an annual 300 tons of cocaine, 150 tons of methamphetamine and between 12 and 15 tons of heroin to the United States. From 1994 to the present, Border Patrol agents in the San Diego sector alone (the southern border stretches nearly 2,000 miles) seized more than half a ton of cocaine, worth \$86 million, and nearly 100 tons of marijuana, worth some \$147 million.

The drug smugglers thrived in the chaos of the former no-man's land and are not amused at the successes of Pete Niebla and his fellow agents at controlling the border. Lately gunmen have been trying to assassinate Border Patrol agents, shooting from the Mexican side with military rifles, and injuring one agent. Border Patrol brass won't go on record about the shooters, but word is that Mexican drug kingpins are behind it and have offered \$10,000 bounties to those who can lead them to an agent's home.

When illegals crossed with impunity, they ran roughshod over the property of local residents who used to hold "light up the border" events, training their headlights on the fence. Vilified as cranks and bigots by local activists, Chicano radicals, and even some politicians, time

has proved them right and the Border Patrol credits them for making the conditions a public issue. Before Operation Gatekeeper fewer than a thousand agents tried to stem the tide. At present 2,100 agents patrol right up to the border where, with powerful stadium-style lighting, illegals can run but can't hide.

Besides the lights, the Border Patrol now deploys a network of underground sensors, eleven aircraft including three infra-red equipped helicopters, night-vision scopes, military-style global tracking and positioning equipment, and a network of roads that gives the agents constant visibility. Agents also patrol, around the clock, in boats, on mountain bikes, all-terrain vehicles and horses. With electronic fingerprinting, they save precious time and resources.

"It's a pro-active strategy rather than reactive," says agent Jim Pilkington, a criminal justice graduate of Niagara University, who did post-grad work at the University of Rochester. Morale is up, he says. With the new equipment and personnel, crossings are down and one day last month saw zero apprehensions, something unthinkable even two years ago. During my morning patrol with agent Pilkington, I see the grand total of one illegal, Julio Cervantes, from the state of Michoacan, a genial but sad-eyed man in his 50s, who is willing to speak with me.

"Fewer are crossing now," he says, adding that the word has gotten through deep into Mexico that the border is no longer a walkover. Though arrested, he does not look worried. In Mexico police have been known to torture captives by squirting carbonated water spiked with hot peppers into their nose. Julio knows that won't happen here.

The crackdown has quadrupled the fees of smugglers, or "coyotes," who have crammed 17 people into a portable toilet, locked 50 into a U-Haul truck, stuffed a dozen into a sealed box under a truck, and stuffed others like sardines into car trunks. Illegals working in Harrisonburg, Virginia, a state where the number of illegals has increased 60 percent since 1992, say they paid smugglers \$3,500 for a 40-hour ride in a windowless trailer with three dozen others. But Julio will not put himself in the hands of these "malos."

"They take your money and leave you in the desert with no food and water," he says.

The smugglers have been pushed into San Diego's mountainous east county, where increased traffic of illegals has touched off wildfires, prompted an outcry from environmentalists, and even caused the shutdown of parts of the Cleveland National Forest. Such is the load of garbage that convoys of llamas have been pressed into service to pack it out. In this rugged terrain, agents are called on to perform duties that get little publicity. Many crossers from the interior of Mexico arrive unprepared, and, last winter, some froze to death in the higher altitudes. Many others would have perished but for help from the Border Patrol.

"We provide food and water, even diapers and infant formula," agent Pilkington says. Recently Rene Valenzuela, an articulate younger agent, came across a twenty-something Salvadoran woman wrapped in a garbage bag and lying in a pool of vomit. "She couldn't even move her finger," says Valenzuela, who with another agent carried the woman out, saving her life.

By all standards, the smugglers who exploit the poor and helpless for profit should bear the brunt of criticism. But in the scale of values surrounding the border, the smugglers receive little criticism and immigration activists and Chicano radicals vilify the Border Patrol as a "green Gestapo," staffed by racist "anglos" and treasonous Latino *vendidos*—sellouts.

When *The Border* came out in 1982, local Chicano activists denounced it as "Border Patrol propaganda." Ironically, the film starred Jack Nicholson as a gallant agent, sympathetic to those trying to cross, and fighting corruption among his colleagues. When a TV reporter asked a member of the Brown Berets, a Chicano militia, if he had actually seen the movie, he replied he had not. The same no-nothingism disinforming politically

correct locals, fond of comparing the modest border fence to the “Berlin Wall.” But one should not expect a nuanced approach from this crowd.

Shortly after my visit agent Stephen Starch fell to his death. When the same thing happened in 1995 to agent Luis Santiago, a native of Puerto Rico, Chicano radicals celebrated. *Voz Fronteriza*, a Chicano paper at the University of California at San Diego, ran “Death of a Migra Pig,” an editorial smearing Santiago as a vile race traitor. “We’re glad this pig died” they wrote, wishing that “more pigs had died with him.” But the hatemongering author did not have a set of *cojones* big enough to sign his name.

In 1995 Border Patrol agents nationwide made 1.3 million arrests, more than any other law enforcement agency. Fifty percent of these arrests took place in the San Diego sector and 250,000 in the Imperial Beach area. But with such a tide of humanity being handled, in dangerous conditions, the cases of abuse or corruption by agents are remarkably few. Police officers being pelted with rocks regularly return fire, but Border Patrol agents seldom discharge their weapons. Their professionalism and restraint stands as a stark contrast to Mexico’s rough, sometimes brutal treatment of impoverished Guatemalans and Salvadorans who dare to cross its southern border. But this double standard has not stemmed the attacks on the Border Patrol from immigration activists and indifference from the public.

“The worst thing about this job is the lack of respect for us,” says senior agent Miguel Osuna. “People say ‘he’s just a Border Patrol agent.’ The public is being misinformed. They have no idea what we do.” Agents do not, for example, man the ports of entry. Their course of study includes cross-cultural communications, ethics and conduct, interviewing, Latin American culture, victim and witness awareness, crowd control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and trauma management. There is little chance of unstable, loose-cannon types making any progress here. The current force is truly multicultural and all agents must speak Spanish. Most switch from Spanish to English with an ease and fluency that would be the envy of academics. And besides upholding the law, agents say they also play an educational role.

Besides being the most breached border in the world, San Diego is also the most crossed, with thousands of legal crossings daily. As the steady stream of cars with Baja California plates confirms, Mexicans can, after all, get visas and work permits. Agent Valenzuela says he sometimes asks those he arrests if they have ever considered trying to cross legally.

“They look perplexed. They have never thought about it,” he says.

“They don’t consider crossing to be something illegal,” adds Niebla, who says agents are offered bribes on a daily basis, along with pleas to let them go out of ethnic solidarity, something they reject as automatically as a Caucasian cop would refuse the appeal of a white bank robber to let him get away for the sake of racial brotherhood. Forty percent of local agents are Hispanic and they belie the stereotype, sometimes found on the Right, that hyphenated status translates to decreased patriotism or duty.

“We have a sworn duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States,” agent Niebla casually notes. His encounters with illegals provide evidence that not all nations hold the rule of law in equal esteem.

“Every Mexican is taught in school that part of our country was violently taken from us,” says Pedro Armendarces of *La Jornada* of Mexico City. “So for many people it is almost legal for Mexicans to go and work in the United States because it is Mexico,” (his emphasis).

Actually, a case can be made that Mexico, then a more formidable power, was the aggressor in the conflict of 1848. Historically Mexico has been the regional imperialist, with the Spanish-speaking peoples of Central America, like the Californios and Tejanos, also resenting autocratic rule from Mexico City and breaking away, just as earlier tribes had resisted the imperialism of the Aztecs. But Chicano radicals do not push for a *reconquista* of Guatemala. Only the places where non-*raza* “anglos” live must be ethnically cleansed. But Mexico’s statist-socialist economy and accredited victim status make it off-limits to criticism from the politically correct, including the current American president.

Mexico is a vast country of abundant natural resources, fertile land, and a favorable climate. As a trip to the border or the bustling factories of Monterrey will verify, Mexicans are a creative and hard-working people, and will undergo great hardship and sacrifice to provide for their families. So why isn’t Mexico the Japan or

Taiwan (both of which, like tiny Hong Kong, do better with far less territory and with practically no natural resources) of Latin America? While PC academics might argue that it is because America “stole” their land, ordinary Mexicans know better. I ask Julio Cervantes about the source of his country’s economic woes.

“*El gobierno*,” he says.

The oxymoronic Partido Revolucionario Institucional, or PRI, wants to be both revolutionary and institutional at the same time. The PRI has held sway for some 70 years, the longest span of uninterrupted rule in the world and an arrangement Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa called a “perfect dictatorship.” North of the border, where rule of law still prevails and most officials are honest, everybody knows that after the next general election there will be a different government. South of the border, where *caciquismo*—rule by party bosses—still prevails, and where many officials are corrupt, everybody knows that the outgoing PRI leader, having looted the national treasury, will appoint a PRI successor. Journalists running afoul of the PRI may expect to be bumped off, likewise political opponents, inside or outside of the PRI. Pedro Armendarces, who writes for an opposition paper, says that “Mexico is still in a very painful, long and uncertain transition from a totalitarian regime.”

Since January 19, eight members of the left-wing opposition Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) have been killed in the state of Oaxaca, party activist Vargas Carro among them. Evidence points to state judicial police, acting on the orders of local PRI *caciques*, as the killers. “It’s a dirty war by the government so it can avoid losing the elections,” said Saul Vincente Vasquez, head of PRD in Oaxaca. In the state of Guerrero there have been 149 political killings since 1989. In 1995 Mexican police killed 17 unarmed peasants and wounded 23. Many of the dead were PRD members.

One might imagine the outcry in the United States if members of the Democratic or Republican Party, or even a fringe group like the Peace and Freedom Party, were regularly gunned down by opponents before elections. Interestingly enough, Mario Aburto Martinez, the Mexican national who in 1994 assassinated PRI candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio in Tijuana, had been living illegally in the United States, where he was registered to vote, also illegally. And as evidenced by voter fraud in the Dornan-Sanchez election, “vote early, vote often” habits have spread north.

When the United States recently passed tougher immigration laws, Mexican officials compared it to an act of war. That comes as a curious position for a nation that openly meddled in U.S. affairs during the 1994 election, in which Californians passed Prop 187, a bill that had nothing to do with immigration per se and only limited public services that illegal immigrants could receive.

It is PRI’s statism, corruption, and cronyism that makes Mexico dependent on the \$3 to \$6 billion that its citizens working in the United States send home every year—an amount rivaling Mexico’s income from tourism. Further, a trip to the border further dispels the notion that the U.S. “owes” Mexico anything. While criticizing the U.S. as a bully, Mexico relies heavily on American aid and services, of which I witnessed a parable.

Just across the border near the levee flies a Mexican flag the size of a volleyball court, a huge overstatement of national sovereignty. But the flag proved so heavy that a crane had to be brought in—from San Diego—to hoist it. The U.S. even processes a good part of Tijuana’s sewage. The city provides no trash pickup in Colonia Libertad and residents heave it by the ton over the fence, adding sanitation duties to the Border Patrol’s job description.

“We have to take a bulldozer through here,” agent Pilkington explains.

If residents of Imperial Beach were to heave their garbage over the fence it would prompt a national outcry in Mexico, likewise if American politicians and police were found driving cars stolen in Mexico. And if shadowy Americans were attempting to assassinate Mexican government agents from U.S. territory, the outrage would likely reach the U.N.

Immigration activists and critics of the Border Patrol are fond of decrying the “militarization of the border,” implying that current American efforts are responsible for such militarization. While the Border Patrol has been beefed up, it remains a thinly spread, lightly armed force. Except for recent surveillance patrols by Marines, there are no U.S. military forces patrolling that border, despite the call of some politicians for such action and a June 20 vote authorizing the deployment of up to 10,000.

There are, however, Mexican army units deployed along the other side.

“We’ve seen them shaking down immigrants for money,” an agent tells me. The presence of Mexican troops on the border raises other questions since Mexico’s biggest drug baron enlisted corrupt army brass such as Gen. Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, Mexico’s top drug enforcement official. Mexican soldiers have been spotted guarding drug shipments. In 1994 Deputy Attorney General Mario Ruiz Massieu, then Mexico’s chief narcotics enforcement official, began shipping suitcases of money to the U.S. Raul Salinas, elder brother of former president Carlos Salinas, is alleged to be among the associates of drug lord Juan Garcia Abrego and has transferred \$120 million to Switzerland. The Arellano Felix cartel pays off hundreds of government officials, and, across the border in Baja, 16 prosecutors have been investigated for drug connections.

The cartels offer Mexican federal judges a choice of *plomo o plata*, lead or silver, an offer they can’t refuse. On June 9, a federal court slashed the weapons charges of Hector “El Guero” Palma, reputed head of the Sinaloa cartel, to two and a half years. Two years ago Palma was arrested with 33 Federal Judicial Police agents, who were on his payroll. Since then his homicide and kidnapping charges were also dismissed.

In April, a three-judge federal panel overturned the 40-year sentence of drug boss Rafael Caro Quintero for the 1985 murder of U.S. Drug Enforcement Agent Enrique Camarena. A Mexican doctor in the pay of Quintero kept Camarena alive so Quintero’s thugs could torture him more.

Given those conditions, the term “narcodictatorship” for Mexico’s current PRI junta is perhaps not out of line. One does not deal with such a place with the appeasement and sycophancy shown by the current administration. Despite revelations, President Clinton maintained Mexico’s certified status, qualifying it for continued aid.

The politically correct line on drugs is that the root cause is U.S. demand, not Mexican supply. When the suspected supplier, however, is the CIA in league with Nicaraguan contras, as in leftist mythology, then it becomes entirely a problem of supply. But one does not find journalists like the *San Jose Mercury News’* Gary Webb investigating the social effect of 300 tons of cocaine crossing the border from Mexico every year. Neither does the PC dialectic allow Maxine Waters to accuse Mexican drug lords of making huge profits by exploiting the black youth of America’s inner cities.

The responsibilities of democratic government, national sovereignty, and the rule of law demand that the United States control its border. Operation Gatekeeper here, along with Operation Hold the Line in El Paso, Texas, and Operation Safeguard in Nogales, Arizona, refute the notion that controlling the border is an impossible task, as PC orthodoxy contends. It would be interesting to see what the Border Patrol could do if it had the massive resources of the IRS, the only domestic agency that violates the Geneva Convention. But though grateful for new support and any acknowledgment of their dangerous and demanding job, agents concede privately that massive illegal crossings continue through new corridors. Some say there is little if any change in the overall numbers. Since 1986 there have been more than 8 million apprehensions. But there is another side to that story too.

From 1990 to 1997, Border Patrol agents in the San Diego sector have detained thousands of illegal crossers from more than 100 countries, including Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, France, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Vietnam, Yemen, and Yugoslavia.

According to the ’60s vision now prevailing in the academy, the left wing of the Democratic party, and much of the media, America is a laissez-faire nightmare of “late capitalism,” ruled by a greedy conservative political gang and faceless, fascist corporations, a sexist, racist, classist quagmire where the gap between the haves and have-nots grows wider by the day. By these standards, millions should be stampeding out of America. The trouble is, people from all over the world still vote with their feet to come here, often fleeing the few remaining bastions of socialism to do so.

The border is another reminder that simple human experience refutes political correctness every time.



“All the crap they taught in high school” Elisabeth Irwin Looks Back

By Ronald Radosh

High school reunions are typically the time for reflection and melodramatic questions. How far have we come? (And how far is left to go?) Have my classmates realized their dreams and ambitions, or are they frustrated and unaccomplished? Will we recognize our once closest friends, or will they have changed beyond recognition? What exactly was the impact of those critical years so long ago on our lives? Was it—as Paul Simon said in one of his ballads—a matter of “all the crap they taught in high school,” or did we learn something that has reverberated creatively in all the time since then?

In my case, the issue is more complex because the institution I attended was Elisabeth Irwin High School in New York City—the famed high school of the “progressive” elementary school, the Little Red School House, located in the heart of New York’s old bohemia in Greenwich Village. This past May, EI, as we called our high school home, celebrated its 75th anniversary, and the school noted the occasion with all the necessary hoopla. Highlighting the celebration was an expensive dinner show honoring distinguished graduates, a series of concerts over the year featuring alumni and current performers, including Mary Travers and Patti Smith, among others; and a glossy remembrance book sent to all alumni, “A Chronicle of 75 Years, 1921-1996,” featuring excerpts from the collective recollections sent in by scores of graduates.

What was special about the high school was that it was a repository for black-listed teachers in the 1950s—i.e., fellow-travelers and actual Communist Party members who had been booted out of New York’s school system by the Fineberg Law. That law required teachers to affirm that they were not Communists, and those who refused to sign such a loyalty oath, or who had been subpoenaed to appear before HUAC and who refused to answer the committee’s questions, found that they had quickly lost their jobs. The lucky ones got to teach at EI, albeit for a lower salary. As a result, the student body was composed to an astonishingly large degree by the children of other Communists and fellow-travelers—it was not for nothing that we all called the institution “the Little Red School House for little Reds.” As a recollection by one alumni from the 1940s puts it, “In January of 1945, we voted to finish history with Russian History instead of the last two years of American history. We were all pretty much left-leaning ‘progressives’ and thought Russia was great and Communism a noble experiment. Many flirted with Communism as an alternative.”

Having attended such an institution during the height of what so many continue to remember as the most repressive period in recent history—the so-called McCarthy era—does indeed reveal a lot about America. But it is not necessarily what some of the graduates of EI think. If there was a “Red Scare,” as so many alumni still believe, it wasn’t very effective in its intimidations. Elisabeth Irwin—so openly on the far left-wing of American culture and politics—thrived during these years, and succeeded in sending its graduates to the very best of America’s elite colleges. While the school’s faculty proclaimed that America was either on the verge of fascism or already had become a semi-fascist state, the school was never closed down, and its reputation and enrollment held steady, and eventually soared. Indeed, it was not until the 1980s, long after the end of the “repressive” ’50s, that the school almost

folded, and enrollments began to sink as other schools took up the cause of educating the children of modishly leftist parents who wanted them to be able to go Harvard, Yale, or Princeton.

My own years at the school—1949-1955—came during the thick of McCarthy’s influence in America. And my experiences at the school afford an indication of the kind of education we had. The year of my graduation, my class created a ruckus of its own. We picked as our graduation speaker none other than W.E.B. DuBois, the famous black intellectual who in effect began the modern civil

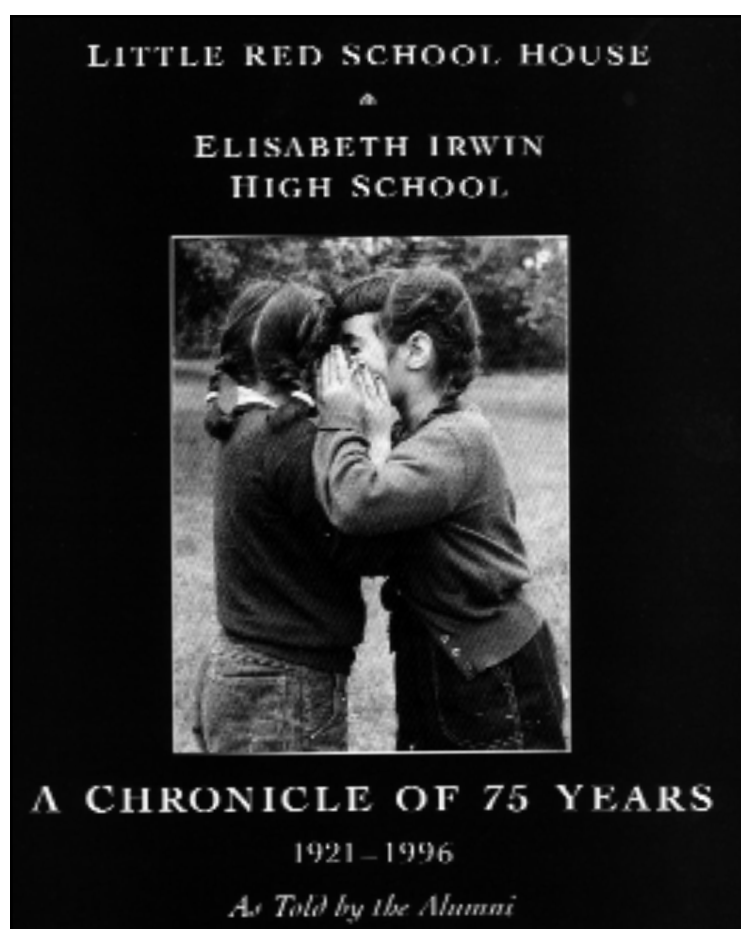
tion ceremonies, they told Rank Smith, if the school allowed DuBois to appear as the commencement speaker.

I still remember our somber mood when Smith came into to tell us the news. The school would not allow DuBois to appear at our graduation. Instead, he offered a compromise, which we had no recourse but to accept. DuBois would appear at an all-school special assembly, where he would address the entire student body. But that would be an occasion just for the students. Our class, however, had what we thought was a superb second choice. It was Arthur Miller, the most noted American playwright, whose play *The Crucible* became a parable for what we all thought of McCarthyism. Miller accepted, and as I recall, his message was a simple one. As we head into life, he admonished, we should never “accept half a loaf.” Looking for the political subtext, we all took that message to mean that he stood with us in our decision to insist upon DuBois, and that the school was wrong to capitulate to pressure and not allow him to appear. But a short time later, we learned what Miller was really thinking about. He was leaving his wife, Mary, for none other than Marilyn Monroe, who was the whole loaf incarnate.

If one thinks that strident anti-Communism has colored my remembrances of EI, the official anniversary book makes it clear that my recollections are accurate. “We served coffee to the Phelps Dodge strikers,” an entry reads, “and worked hard for Henry Wallace in the 1948 presidential election.” One must wonder—wasn’t there anyone in the school who just possibly had worked for Harry Truman, not to speak of the unmentionable Tom Dewey? As for the McCarthy period, an entry reads that it “was a child’s nightmare. Pete Seeger was blacklisted. One father who refused to testify before the McCarran Commission was fired from his U.N. job. Another was blacklisted in 1947. . . . Some of our teachers were victims of McCarthyism and could teach nowhere but at Little Red and Elisabeth Irwin. Many of us could not have attended other schools. . . . we were the embattled ones, fighting for righteousness and the First Amendment.”

Actually, it was the dreaded Trotskyites who were the embattled ones. I recall the famous incident of a student named Bob Burke, an avowed follower of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party—a dedication that led to his continually being shunned by the school’s majority Stalinists. Burke, who was a grade or so ahead of me, relentlessly held fast—standing in front of the school entrance trying to peddle *The Militant*. Then he seemed to disappear. Finally, I bumped into him at some event, where he was plying his intellectual wares as usual with little success. He told me that he had dropped out of the school and gone elsewhere, since his anti-Stalinism had made him a pariah with both fellow students and especially the hostile faculty. Years later, sometime in the late 1970s, I was speaking on the fate of American socialism at a panel with Irving Howe, and, lo and behold, there was Burke in the audience—dressed in a cleric’s garb. What happened, I asked him incredulously. Burke, born Jewish, told me that he had converted and gone to theology school. But, he assured me, “Although in religion I’m a Christian, in politics I’m still a Bolshevik.” Chalk another one up for old EI!

My own immersion in activist left-wing politics, as I have described in the introduction to *The Rosenberg File*, began with the Rosenberg case. As a student at EI, my friends and I threw ourselves wholeheartedly into the campaign for



rights movement, and whose own most famous book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, we read for English class in the 10th grade. But our class did not choose DuBois only because of his outstanding role in the cause of Negro freedom, as we called the struggle then. We knew DuBois primarily as a trustworthy pro-Communist of great merit, the man who was arguing that the cause of black people in America lay in alignment with the Soviet Union. He had even been indicted for his views on “peace” by the United States government, which tried DuBois for failing to register as a foreign agent. For us this was a subject of disgust. And it is true that in the technical sense, of course, DuBois was not a foreign agent of the USSR, although as chairman of a Communist front that sought to gather support for Soviet foreign policy, he was as much of an agent of the Soviets as any Communist.

The announcement of our choice to speak at graduation 1955 created a crisis for the school. The school’s principal, Randolph B. Smith—a wonderful libertarian soul who looked and spoke like a Boston Brahmin—had already been called before HUAC, and other teachers were on the verge of being called. In that atmosphere, the institution obviously felt that the attention DuBois would bring to the school, could be its downfall. Moreover, there were prominent liberal parents who were aghast at the choice. The late Max Lerner, then perhaps one of the most prominent representatives of liberal anti-Communism—he wrote a regular column for James Wechsler’s *New York Post* and had a daughter who attended the school—was appalled, as were others like him, and some of the parents of my own classmates who sent their children to the school simply because they thought it was a first-rate private school—protested bitterly. They would boycott the gradua-

clemency. I became an active member of The Youth Committee for the Rosenbergs and Sobell, and gave out leaflets in the streets of New York, traveled to the nation’s capitol to picket the White House (along with my friend and classmate Mary Travers,) and on the night of the Rosenberg’s execution, I stood amidst thousands of other New Yorkers who had gathered on East 17th Street—since the police had closed off Union Square—for our protest and vigil. Of course, many of the Elisabeth Irwin faculty were involved in the campaign. The school’s librarian, Isabel Suhl, was married to the left-wing novelist and Rosenberg activist Yuri Suhl. To all of us at the school, it was simply a given fact that the Rosenbergs were innocent progressives being hounded for their political dedication to peace.

Half a lifetime later, there is no indication in the school’s anniversary book that there is an alternative to this old reaction. The book states: “Hunting Communists was a major issue of the times. Most vivid are the emotion-filled discussions of the trial and execution of the Rosenbergs. We sat in circles with our classmates talking about it, and continued outside around the corner from Little Red behind the newsstand. Only later did some of us learn that the Rosenbergs’ sons attended our school. [The two boys came only after their parents had been executed and they were adopted by Abel and Anne Meeropol.] School was closed the day of the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg execution as all the teachers were in Washington protesting. We were affected by the school’s democratic humanistic and altruistic spirit. It was an idealistic environment.”

The above sentence, of course, is both ludicrous and inaccurate. The Rosenberg’s execution took place on June 19, 1953—way after EI had already closed for the summer. The protest took place only in New York City; only their lawyers were in the capitol trying desperately to attain a last-minute stay of execution. But of course, the school would obviously like to have it appear today that it was so much on the right side of events, that it closed down so that all the teachers could protest. As for the school’s “democratic humanistic” spirit—that seemed to have been reserved only for the “victims” of McCarthyism, and for the legions of Joe Stalin’s followers.

Indeed, my own dogmatic Marxism was a product of the EI education. My earliest intellectual influence, sadly, was the esteemed 11th grade homeroom and history teacher—an austere authoritarian man who taught us—I still remember him proudly stating it—that “Marx taught us that History is the queen of the social sciences.” He also taught from the perspective of Soviet textbook-style “dialectical materialism,” which was portrayed to us as the unifying philosophical framework that explained everything. When he taught “earth science,” the class I opted to take for a science requirement instead of physics, he again explained the earth’s development in terms of the proven principles of dialectical materialism. The entry in the anniversary book states that this teacher “could make a complex era intelligible, without oversimplifying. He involved us by injecting strong opinions and controversy in every class. He was a compact, very intense and very stern man who loved history and gave us a wide perspective that most don’t get until college.” How typical of the outlook of those who masked their Stalinism under the euphemism “progressive” to describe crude Marxism-Leninism as a case of “strong opinions” and an example of a “wide perspective.” One might say, unfortunately, that the author of the entry was right about one thing—nowadays, too many get just such a perspective when they attend college.

My experience also helps me to confront the issue the late Sidney Hook had raised in his famous article and later book, *Heresy, Yes; Conspiracy, No*. Hook argued that the right of heretics had to be protected, but that Communists had no inherent right to a teaching job. As good Communists, they were sworn to use their pulpit for propaganda, and as a matter of principle they did not adhere to the established tenets of academic freedom and individual rights. At the time it was first made, Hook’s argument had few supporters, even among members of the democratic Left. They argued, with some merit, that teachers should be judged by their performance in class, and not dismissed for their political ideas. Moreover, most of those on the Left argued that there was no evidence that Communists ever used

Meeting coal miners’ union head, John L. Lewis, was an unforgettable moment. So was riding in the elevator down the long coal mine shaft into the total black, the daylight disappearing above us. In the pitch dark at the bottom we sang ‘Dark as a Dungeon’ to keep from being afraid.” As I remember the incident, in fact, led by Bob DeCormier, our class insisted on singing a score of left-wing miner’s songs to the coal miners—who seemed both bemused as well as totally unaware of what we were singing. The incongruity of a bunch of middle-class New York school kids singing “Which Side Are You On?”—the most well-known of the Communist anthems of the 30s—to actual coal miners who probably envied our chances in life and yet were thankful they were paid a good wage, simply did not occur to us. I also remember the great embarrassment felt by the teachers when during our trip, they took us to a local working-class Catholic church, to meet some of the priests who regularly tended to the spiritual needs of their congregation. The problem was that the priest told us about the Miracle of the Lady of Fatima, who appeared to the local Polish populace to warn them about the threat of Communism. I can still remember the sheepish grins of our Stalinist teachers, who bit their tongues and said nothing.

The discussion in the anniversary publication of EI reads like a sentimentalized agit-prop overview of the various decades of America’s past. In the 1930s, we learn that “there were May Day parades in Unon square, bread lines, race riots and sitdown strikes.” Those were the days. Under a photo of a student funds drive is the caption, “we supported the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. In class we read and talked about the war—

what we had heard on the radio, whose older brother or cousin was fighting for freedom in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade—and we sang the songs—*Freiheit, Los Cuatro Generales, Wir Sind die Morrsoldaten*.” The school does not seem to know that the picture accompanying the text is of my class, and obviously, could not have been raising money for the Loyalists—long since defeated by the time we were in 6th grade. As for the Lincoln Brigade—no one would know from the EI anniversary book that this Comintern army was created by Stalin for his own sinister purposes, and that had his side won, Spain would have been the first European “People’s Democracy,” less friendly to democratic development, even, than Franco’s authoritarian rule.

And then there was the atmosphere of the Popular Front and its culture, which seemed to be a key part of the EI experience. EI, in fact, was a living example of PopFront culture in practice. While most of my brethren in New York public schools worshipped at the shrine of Elvis and were energized by the early days of rock and roll—standing in line for hours to attend Allen Freed’s sessions at the Paramount or the Brooklyn Fox—my classmates’ musical interests stopped and started with Pete Seeger and the Weavers. As an entry in the book says, “Bob Dylan and Peter Paul & Mary led the folk scene from right outside our doors on Bleecker Street.” Indeed, when Dylan moved to the Village, he sent his kids to Little Red School House.

In fact, the emphasis on folk music as “the authentic music of the people” was inbred at EI. Over the years, the music program was led by a series of Old Left artists—including Bob DeCormier, a wonderfully charismatic man who clearly loved music, and who went on to lead and arrange the Belafonte Singers as well as working with Peter, Paul and Mary. At that time, DeCormier was also the musical director of the Jewish Young Folk-Singers, the youth chorus of the International Workers Order, the Communist fra-



STUDENTS AT ELISABETH IRWIN PERFORM AGIT PROFT DRAMA

the classroom for political advocacy, whatever the Party’s bosses instructed them to do. Yet it was clear that some of our teachers at EI did just that, and proudly so.

I should stress that there were good and dedicated teachers at EI. Our English teacher, Ed Stillman—who although also a solid man of the Left and a founding member of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, the left-wing alternative to the then anti-Communist ACLU—taught us to love and respect literature. A tough and demanding taskmaster, he made us read the classics of literature and taught us to love them. The recollection in the anniversary book, this time, is true. Stillman “made the writings of Thoreau, Emerson, Hawthorne and Melville alive for us as we visited the sites were they lived and the places they wrote about.” At our school trip to New England, we read Thoreau on the shores of Walden Pond; we then visited the whaling villages Melville wrote about in *Moby Dick*, which we had just finished reading. When I wrote a Leninist oriented tract opposing “bourgeois” freedoms, Stillman, to his merit, criticized it mercilessly and had me read Milton and Locke on the necessity of intellectual freedom.

Of course, there were other more politically correct class trips. The senior class trip always went to the coal fields and steel towns of Pennsylvania. Indeed, I had written my 12th grade term paper on the Great Steel Strike of 1918, led by the future Communist leader, William Z. Foster. An entry in the school’s anniversary book from one of my classmates reads:

“Anthracite and bituminous coal mines, slag heaps, steel mills. The containers of molten steel overhead were frightening. The nighttime view of open hearth steel mills in Pittsburgh was unforgettable. At the Bethlehem Steel mill the whole class climbed into the gargantuan steam shovel used for strip mining. [I guess we didn’t realize strip mining was anti-environmental, then.] One classmate exclaimed, ‘this must be God.’

ternal order that allowed Jewish Communists to not have to deal with the social-democratic Workmen’s Circle. Later, after the blacklist ebbed and DeCormier went on to commercial success, his replacements at EI included the Communist composer and folk-singer Earl Robinson, and Victor Fink (the father of singer/songwriter Janis Ian).

Aside from the usual amount of classical choral music, we performed folk cantatas, like Robinson’s “Lonesome Train” and his most famous “Ballad for Americans.” And since I was taking banjo lessons from Pete Seeger, I put together a singing group from my classmates that recorded two albums with Seeger, under the name “The Song Swappers.” A sort of amateur junior version of The Weavers, the group was composed almost exclusively of EI students.

Among the folk luminaries who graduated from EI the most well known is Mary Travers. Although the school continues to honor her, and she regularly performs concerts for them, Mary actually did not graduate. She may be the rare case of a student who was expelled—in the 11th grade, I recall, for various serious infractions of the rules of decorum, and who transferred to public school. But Mary Travers continues to be called a “distinguished” alumni, and in their own little rewriting of history, she has been retroactively readmitted and graduated.

Like so many others, Mary came from an established left-wing family. Her father was a little known “proletarian novelist” named Robert Travers, and she continued, with her music, to honor the cause. Unlike Joan Baez, who took up the struggle of Soviet dissidents and Vietnamese boat people—Mary preferred to sing the praises of the Salvadoran revolutionaries and the Sandinistas during the Central American wars of the ’80s. My last exchange with Mary took place, in fact, during this period. I had just returned from a human rights mission to Central America, and had written a report, and an article for *The New Republic*, on the hidden human rights abuses of the Sandinistas. I was invited to a taping of a PBS show hosted by Robert MacNeil on human rights and Central America. As fate would have it, I was seated next to Mary Travers. Giving her the benefit of the doubt—that she was really interested in human rights, and not simply shilling for the Sandinistas—I told her of my mission, and asked her to read my *TNR* article. She looked at me and said, “I know what you think of me. You think I’m a pawn of Daniel Ortega.” I did not respond, and asked only that she consider acting on the information I gave her. She promised to get back to me, and of course never did.

The names in the Little Red and EI alumni book are a virtual Who’s Who of left-wing, pro-Communist and cultural leftists, many of whom who have gone on to make their mark in the culture at large. The list includes Victor Navasky, editor and publisher of *The Nation*; black Communist leader Angela Davis; Kathy Boudin, now in prison for life for her role in the Brinks Weather Underground murders; the author, singer and playwright Fred Gardner; book editor and author of *The Old Left*, Daniel Menaker; the wives of Harry Belafonte and Pete Seeger; Julia Belafonte and Toshi Aline Ohta Seeger, the sons of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, Michael and Robert Meeropol; the outstanding banjo player and guitarist, formerly of The Tarriers, Eric Weissberg; the famed choreographer Julie Arenal Primus; Joady and Nora Guthrie, two of Woody’s children who carry on their father’s legacy in their own work, as well as scores of children of prominent ’50s and ’60s left-wing figures. It is not too much to argue, in fact, that no single institution in the United States has had so many veterans of the political and cultural Left within its walls.

There are, of course—and obviously to the school’s shame and embarrassment, from its point of view—the few dissidents. Beside myself, these include two prominent names associated today with neo-conservatism, Elliot Abrams and Abigail Thernstrom. Abrams, as most readers of this magazine know, is CEO of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., author of a few books, and formerly Assistant Secretary of State for Latin-America in the Reagan administration who was indicted on a blatantly political charge during the Iran-Contra imbroglio, as even his arch-nemesis Aryeh Neier admitted when reviewing his book in *Dissent*. But EI, which has in past years honored the late William Kunstler, regularly toasts Navasky at its functions, and regularly includes him and Mary Travers on the list of their distinguished graduates, somehow never seems to find the space or time to say a word about Abrams. Certainly, its administrators and teachers don’t share his politics, but he is one of the school’s most distinguished graduates. Somehow, his credentials don’t seem to ever lead the school to cite him in its publicity.

As for Thernstrom, she has emerged as one of the leading critics of official Establishment policy on race relations in America. An outspoken critic of affirmative action, Thernstrom might be singled out as an example of how a consistent opposition to racism has led one of EI’s graduates to hold out for commitment to actual color blindness in making racial policy. Certainly, Thernstrom would undoubtedly argue that her support of the

1964 Civil Rights Act is consistent with her support of Proposition 209 in the recent California election. But her position is undoubtedly a minority one among the EI faculty, students, and alumni, and despite her continued visibility on the issue, the school also never seems to mention that she is a graduate. Indeed, Abby was one year ahead of me at EI, and I did not realize she was the Abby Mann I remembered from school until I saw her name in the new Alumni Directory. Recently, I saw Abby at the Independent Women’s Forum testimonial evening for Ward Connerly, the leader of the fight to end affirmative action. We talked a while about our years at EI, and our respective experiences at our respective class alumni reunions. Abby told me that classmates asked her incredulously whether she was really a conservative. She told them that in fact she had registered as a Republican, which produced a state of complete shock. “Not one of them had changed since the ’50s;” Abby said to me. “I’m the only one.”

As you might expect by now, my own experience was somewhat similar. In fact, my own class had never had a reunion, even though we graduated in 1955. Finally, in the past few years, one was scheduled. It was a bittersweet occasion. On the one hand, it was wonderful to renew old acquaintances and finally meet up with old friends. Indeed, I was able to renew my friendship with my three closest teenage friends, even though they were the offspring of well-known Communist Party families. Politics, this time, did not come between old cherished friendships. But the brother of one of these friends, the children of the most prominent CP psychiatrist, chastised his brother for getting together with me. “What do you want to see him for?” he bitterly complained. Another classmate would not talk to me, and made it clear to others that I had, in his eyes, betrayed the traditions of EI. Of course, this man was last publicly seen accompanying Communist Party hack Gus Hall in his last Presidential race. Another, the African-American writer and activist Jean Carey Bond, looked at me and asked, “Why are you a conservative?” I could have answered for hours about the meaningless of so many of today’s labels, about the irrelevancy of so much of what she and I believed decades ago, and about how the world had changed. But I didn’t. Why bother?

Ronald Radosh is co-author with Joyce Milton of *The Rosenberg File, 2nd edition* (Yale University Press, 1997).



Why Did Aids Happen, Continued from page 1

There is convincing evidence that this shift had a decisive impact on the transmission of virtually every sexually transmitted disease, of which HIV was merely one, albeit the most deadly.

THE ECOLOGY OF THE CLOSET

The very idea that defines gay men—the idea that people are naturally divided into homosexuals and heterosexuals—is now thought to be a recent cultural creation. In *Gay New York*, his brilliant examination of New York City homosexuals from the 1890s to the 1930s, George Chauncey describes a pre-liberation culture in which this distinction did not yet exist. For most working-class Americans, Chauncey writes, “homosexual behavior *per se* became the primary basis for labeling and self-identification of men as ‘queer’ only around the middle of the twentieth century; before then, most men were so labeled only if they displayed a much broader inversion of their ascribed gender status by assuming the sexual and other cultural roles ascribed to women.” In other words, only men who acted and dressed effeminately were presumed to be, as they often called themselves, “fairies” and “queers.” It apparently did not seem logical, or even possible, that a man could be masculine and homosexual at the same time, and so a desire for same-sex relations was considered just one facet of a much larger complex of effemi-

nate characteristics that caused men to be labeled deviant.

This particular “social construction” of same-sex desire influenced not just the way straight people viewed gays, but the way gay men viewed themselves and the ways they had sex. For one thing, homosexuals back then did not necessarily seek or desire sex with each other. Instead, they often sought sex with those whom they themselves termed “normal” men.

“Many fairies and queers socialized into the dominant prewar homosexual culture,” writes Chauncey, “considered the ideal sexual partner to be ‘trade,’ a ‘real man,’ that is, ideally, a sailor, a soldier, or some other embodiment of the aggressive masculine ideal, who was neither homosexually interested nor effeminately gendered himself but who would accept the sexual advances of a queer. The centrality of effeminacy to the definition of the fairy in the dominant culture enabled trade to have sex with both the queers and fairies without risking being labeled queer themselves, so long as they maintained a masculine demeanor and sexual role.”

For many “fairies” and “queers” of this era “looked down on having sex with other gay men,” writes Allan Berubé, another prominent gay historian. “They had learned to prefer ‘servicing’ straight men in semipublic places,” and they often considered the masculinity and butchness of their partners one of the most appealing assets of sex.

Among young, working-class straights, there appears to have been little or no stigma attached to such activity, as long as you remained sexually disinterested in your “fairy” partner and were never penetrated. Whereas today anyone engaged in male-to-male sexual activity is suspected of being homosexual, in those days the stigma was entirely attached to the partner who relinquished his masculinity by adopting the sexually receptive role.

Not only did the ideal object of gay desire differ from today’s, there is also considerable evidence that there was a different emphasis on sexual acts themselves. Most accounts of male-on-male sex from the early decades of this century cite oral sex and, less often, masturbation as the predominant forms of activity, with the acknowledged homosexual fellating or masturbating his partner. Comparatively fewer accounts refer to anal sex.

This question must be approached with caution, since there are no studies comparing the practices. Nor should this suggest that anal sex was unknown or even rare. Many gay men in long-standing couples had anal sex, and from at least the late nineteenth century onward there was a nascent gay community in New York and possibly other cities within which men had affairs that certainly included anal sex. But long-standing gay male couples were relatively rare in an era when few men lived openly as homosexuals, and, from

the scarce evidence, it seems that gay sex was more likely to occur on a lark in a big city, often with a sailor or workingman and in dangerous circumstances, than with a long-term lover or another gay-identified partner.

HOW EPIDEMICS WORK

If this general description of homosexual activity prior to World War II is reasonably accurate, such activity would not have been very efficient in spreading most STDs, especially a difficult-to-transmit virus like HIV. To better understand why, we need to take a brief look at the theory of how epidemics spread.

By definition, an epidemic is any disease that is increasing in size within a population. This can happen with sexually transmitted diseases only if the average infected person infects more than one other person. The rate at which one person infects others is called the “reproductive rate” of the disease, or *r*. When *r* is precisely at one, each infected person infects precisely one other person, and the disease is said to lie on the “epidemic threshold” or “tipping point,” at which it neither grows nor shrinks. But when *r* exceeds one, even just by a fraction, the disease “tips” into epidemic growth. If *r* exceeds one for an extended time, the epidemic can grow until eventually virtually all the “susceptibles” in the population—those whose behavior or biology puts them at risk—have become infected.

Whether or not an STD will rise above the epidemic tipping point is governed by several factors, the most basic being infectivity, prevalence, and rate of partner change. Infectivity describes the likelihood that a particular microbe will be transmitted under particular circumstances. Both gonorrhea and chlamydia, for example, have an estimated 20 percent chance of being passed from an infected woman to her male partner in a single act of unprotected vaginal intercourse, but a 90 percent chance of passing from an infected man to his female partner in a single act, since both microbes have a much easier time penetrating the membranes of the vagina than the penis. Infectivity forms the basis of many public health interventions and safer-sex strategies. In the context of AIDS, for example, the central purpose of condoms is to reduce infectivity per sex act by blocking the exchange of infectious fluids.

Prevalence is defined as the percentage of a population that is currently infected, and it also affects risk in a basic way. If people choose their partners from a population with a gonorrhea prevalence of 0.001 percent, for example, their risk of getting gonorrhea is vanishingly low regardless of gonorrhea’s infectivity, whether condoms are used, and whether they have lots of partners. If, however, they choose their partners from a population with a 50 percent prevalence of gonorrhea, they may have a much higher risk of infection even if they use condoms and have few partners, since condoms provide less than complete protection and since there’s a much higher chance that any partner will be infected.

Level of partner change, or contact rate, is the third significant factor that influences risk. Simply put, without partner change no STD can spread. Partner A may infect partner B, but things will end there. In a thoroughly monogamous population there would be no STDs at all, no matter how infectious certain microbes might theoretically be. Conversely, the higher the level of partner change, the more likely that even microbes that are relatively hard to transmit will have an opportunity to spread.

A crucial point about epidemics is that not all members of a given population behave in a uniform way. There are sexual ecosystems in every population consisting of groups of people who generally choose their sexual partners from among people very similar to themselves. Princes do not often marry paupers. Physicists do not generally choose their mates from among subsistence farmers. For that matter, blacks rarely marry whites, Moslems rarely mate with Presbyterians,

and twentysomethings don’t generally mate with octogenarians. Within each society, each city, each town, distinct sexual cultures—sexual ecosystems—live side by side.

There might be dozens of discreet sexual ecosystems in any city or town—the college campus, the military base, the gay neighborhood, the retirement home, the adult singles scene. Each “lifestyle” in the population is mirrored by an invisible but very real sexual ecology. These social communities form the critical “populations” of sexual ecology, and the invisible pools they form constitute the critical “sexual ecosystems” that matter most in terms of STD transmission.

CORE GROUPS



By far the most significant sexual ecosystems in terms of epidemics are the ones researchers call “core groups” or “risk groups.” In epidemiological terms, a core group or risk group is a collection of people who, because of a variety of circumstances, suffer from and transmit STDs at very high rates. Researchers have long noticed, for example, that as much as 80 percent of certain STDs can be concentrated in fewer than 20 percent of the people who contract them, while the remaining 20 percent of infections are widely diffused among the remaining 80 percent of those who get the disease. In the 1970s researchers developed models that seemed to confirm that core groups can, by themselves, generate or sustain diseases that would otherwise never have a chance to maintain themselves in the wider population. In examining gonorrhea transmission in Denver, for example, field investigators discovered that the vast majority of infections were focused in just four small neighborhoods: around a military base, in an African-American neighborhood, in a largely Hispanic neighborhood, and in a gay neighborhood. Similar patterns have since been observed around the world. Groups that form self-sustaining cores of STD infection include college students, gay men, crack cocaine users, people who live in pockets of urban poverty, and prostitutes and their customers, who often include cores of military men and long-distance truck drivers.

There are a number of factors that many core groups have in common. First and foremost, people in cores have significantly higher numbers of partners than those outside. Second, and perhaps equally importantly, those partners also have significantly higher numbers of partners within the core, creating a kind of biological feedback loop that is primed to magnify disease. Finally, members of cores also tend to suffer from what researchers sometimes call the “synergism of plagues,” a complex of health problems related to poverty, substance abuse, lack of adequate medical care, heightened exposure to diseases like tuber-

culosis as well as repeated STD infections. This synergy lowers the “group immunity” of people in the core, so that not only are they more frequently exposed to infections, they are also more likely to become infected when exposed. The triple whammy of having a large number of partners, who themselves have a large number of partners within a high prevalence group, and of suffering heightened susceptibility because of a synergy of other factors, can multiply risk tremendously. Because of this, pathogens that are difficult to transmit and might never gain a foothold in a healthy population can enter and become entrenched in a core group relatively easily.

Of course, it’s impossible for people in cores to spread infection beyond their immediate group unless they have sex with people outside. So, after a disease becomes endemic in a core, the key factor that influences its outward spread is how much sexual mixing or bridging goes on between core group members and those outside. The amount can vary greatly from population to population. Within disadvantaged inner-city neighborhoods, for example, crack cocaine users and injection drug users sometimes engage in significant sexual mixing with neighbors who don’t take drugs, which has contributed to a serious HIV crisis among people in the inner-city who are not themselves drug users. But there appears to be very little mixing between drug users and middle-class suburbanites, a fact that has sharply limited the spread of HIV outside of minority populations.

Throughout the AIDS epidemic the very existence of such groups has been hotly disputed by activists who argue that there are no such things as risk groups, just risky behaviors. This is an understandable defense against blame, but it is dangerously misleading. No sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of the AIDS epidemic is possible without noting the crucial role that core group dynamics play.

BEFORE STONEWALL.

Returning to the historical evidence, it seems unlikely that homosexual men in the early part of this century formed very efficient core groups. While some men had multiple partners, few seem to have had multiple partners within their own circle of gay-identified men, and fewer still seem to have had multiple partners who themselves also had multiple partners within the same circle. Instead, many of the most sexually active gay men tended to concentrate their attentions on so-called “normal” partners who themselves had few male sexual contacts.

Second, most of those who did have multiple partners seem to have engaged more often in oral than anal sex, and oral sex is considerably less conducive to transmission of many STDs, including HIV. It seems telling that some people at the time assumed that promiscuous homosexuals were less likely to transmit disease than comparable heterosexuals. Chauncey reports, for example, that after World War I the chief of New York’s vice squad halted a crackdown on homosexual activity because he “grew concerned that the campaign had diverted too much attention from the squad’s efforts against prostitutes, who, he apparently feared, posed a medical, as well as moral, danger to their customers. . . . Telling his men that ‘one prostitute was more dangerous than five degenerates,’ he ordered them to give more attention to the former. . . .” One elderly gay man interviewed in 1980, for whom the word sex automatically meant oral sex, may have been fairly typical when he reported that he had “never had any form of VD, never contracted a sexually related disease.”

There is at least one further bit of evidence that bolsters the idea that gay men did not form efficient cores. For most of the century, records from both public and private medical sources indicate that there was a rough balance in STD rates between males and females. If gay men had been forming efficient cores, this would almost certainly not have been the case. Indeed, once gay men in the ‘60s and ‘70s did create effi-

Many Thousands Gone

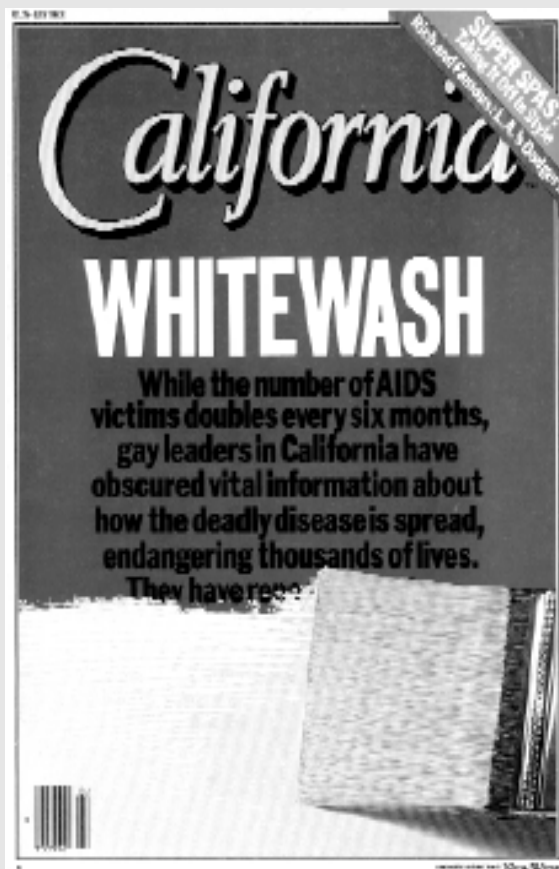
Back in 1983, when Ryan White, Kimberly Bergalis, Rudolph Nureyev, Arthur Ashe all the others were still with us and the residue of that '60s sexual liberation was still in the cultural air, we wrote one of the first stories about the AIDS epidemic in the city of San Francisco. The piece appeared in *California* magazine and showed that the crisis was behavioral rather than providential in its origins and proposed that disaster could still be averted if public health officials closed the bathhouses and otherwise treated the virus as an epidemiological, not a civil liberties crisis. We quoted Michael Callen, Bill Kraus and other iconoclastic gay leaders who were regarded as Cassandras in the gay community, and were urged on by Randy Shilts, then covering AIDS for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, who felt that he couldn't yet do the full story himself because of the intimidating atmosphere in which he worked and lived.

Perhaps naively, we thought that what we had written would be regarded as a call to action. It was, although in ways we hadn't foreseen. Gay radicals picketed the offices of *California* magazine and showed up en masse whenever we made a public appearance. They denounced us as homophobes and waved pink triangles in our faces. They accused us of trying to destroy liberated gay culture and trying to stuff liberated gay men back into the closet. Turning up the volume on their already successful pressure campaign against the San Francisco public health establishment, they told us that the bathhouses would be closed alright—over their dead bodies.

In this, at least, they were right. Today, more than 300,000 deaths later, it is clear what a pivotal moment 1983 was. At that time there had been only 3,000 fatalities nationally. There were many things the public health establishment didn't know about the disease, but it was clear that it was a retrovirus, that there might never be a cure, that AIDS cases among gays were doubling every six months and that there would be a cataclysm if behavioral patterns did not change. Public health officials knew the right course to take, even then, but were already too intimidated by gay radicals to speak out in behalf of all the young men who would be consumed by AIDS in the years to come. Back in 1983, the public health establishment had allowed its own intellectual immune system to become compromised, so compromised in fact, that where AIDS was concerned, it had virtually ceased to exist as a force for the control and eradication of this disease.

In normal circumstances, the minimal public health response to an epidemic such as the one then gathering dreadful momentum would have been to identify the carriers of the disease by mandatory testing of at-risk communities, to reduce breeding sites of the epidemic, and to warn those in the path of the epidemic by contact-tracing and truthful public education about the dangers of promiscuous anal sex among gays and needle sharing among drug addicts. But what we discovered in writing this early story was that none of these measures was acceptable to a powerful lobby of gay activists with their own agenda who were intent on controlling the public dialogue and controlling too public officials whose responsibility it was to deal with the epidemic. These standard epidemiological health responses were labelled "discriminatory" and "homophobic" in a campaign whose objectives involved the preservation of gay liberation rather than the eradication of AIDS. The success of gay liberationists was so far-ranging that public health officials who proposed to fight this disease like other epidemics did so at the peril of their careers.

In a shameful dereliction of duty, doctors



and epidemiologists at the highest of levels of government, including the much-praised Surgeon General Everett Koop, failed to raise public health issues that could have affected the survival chances of hundreds of thousands of Americans. During the entire course of the epidemic, there has not been, in fact, a serious public discussion of testing or contact-tracing, or truthful public AIDS education for high risk populations. Even today, federal AIDS education monies are wasted warning against the discredited notion of a "breakout" in the heterosexual population. Even today, testing—the first line of defense—is so tepidly applied out of deference to gay "civil liberties" groups that in some states spouses of individuals who died from AIDS are not notified that their husbands or wives were HIV infected; and in other states mothers whose newborns have been shown to be HIV positive in "blind" tests are sent home not knowing that their child has a fatal disease.

Instead of treating AIDS like any other epidemic, as we discovered 14 years ago to our sorrow, pressure from the gay community had created "AIDS exceptionalism." Politically correct ideas about the disease and "community approved" policies for dealing with it became the only measures feasible for political leaders to advocate, for the media to promote and for public health agencies to pursue. These ideas included a number of emotionally comfortable but medically misleading myths: that AIDS is an "equal opportunity" virus; that the budget for medical research was the crucial issue in fighting the epidemic; that "safe sex" with condoms and government-promoted "needle-exchanges" would do the work of mandated cultural restraint.

These myths were endlessly repeated by an irresponsible press which huddled like millenarians waiting—and hoping—for "explosions" of the virus outside the gay community. The misleading reports they spread about heterosexual breakouts were based on statistics deceptively interpreted by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta which was one of the agencies whose public health mission had been subverted early on by the AIDS lobbyists. It is true, for example, that from time to time the percentage of heterosexuals contracting the virus has increased. But this is because the gay population has been so saturated with the disease that the percentage of new cases among gays relative to the total of new cases has declined. Moreover, the heterosexuals who are infected are the wives and girlfriends (mostly black, Hispanic, and poor) of drug users and who are, in epidemiological language, "dead ends," meaning that they do not have the hyperactive and promiscuous sex life require to infect significant

numbers of other heterosexuals.

Gabriel Rotello's new book, *Sexual Ecology: AIDS and the Destiny of Gay Men* confirms what we discovered at the onset of the epidemic and what other villified writers like Michael Fumento amplified as it progressed. Without quailing at the evidence, Rotello, himself a gay activist, summarizes what epidemiologists have learned from nearly two decades of grim data, and explains in lucid prose what an "epidemic" is and how it is sustained, and thus what the necessary conditions are to end it.

Rotello's book is not only important but extremely courageous because of the politicized atmosphere surrounding the discussion of AIDS, particularly in the gay community itself. Until now, the only view of the AIDS epidemic acceptable among gays was that the epidemic's occurrence among gays was merely an accident and would soon strike the heterosexual community as well. When Michael Fumento challenged this thesis in *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, he was stigmatized as a homophobe and copies of his books were literally removed from bookstore shelves. It is all the more remarkable that Rotello—without surrendering his political identification with the gay community or his view that Fumento has a negative view of homosexuality—praises the science of *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS* and endorses its thesis. In fact, Rotello explains why only the post-Sixties gay community in the U.S. could have created the conditions in which infections from the AIDS-virus could reach epidemic proportions, a hard-won and politically incorrect conclusion.

Multiple concurrent partners, "versatile" anal sex, promiscuous group behavior in the anonymity of commercial sex establishments, widespread recreational drug abuse, repeated waves of sexually transmitted diseases and constant intake of antibiotics, sexual tourism and travel—these factors were not "accidents" but rather considered a central component—political as much as sexual—of gay liberation. Core group behavior in baths and sex clubs was deemed by many the quintessence of freedom. "Versatile" anal sex, relatively rare in a prior homosexual generation, was declared a political imperative. Analingus was pronounced the champagne of gay sex, a palpable gesture of revolution. These developments defined the very foundation of what it supposedly meant to experience gay liberation.

The second thoughts that brought Gabriel Rotello to these conclusions were prompted by his recognition that a long, historical view of the epidemic utterly refutes the fundamental premises that governed official approaches to AIDS. But while his book establishes a bottom line (as well as a profit and loss statement) in defining why AIDS took hold in the gay community and why the "cultural" response to the disease increased its virulence, he has a melancholy view and feels that this unlearned history may be doomed to repeat itself. The development of new drugs and the "safe sex" campaign among gays have failed to stem the tide of infection and have led instead to the emergence of a "second wave" of the epidemic among the younger gay population—a generation fully aware of the threat of AIDS to its health and survival. A 1991 study to predict the future course of AIDS infection among gay men, in fact, found that more than half of all uninfected gay males were likely to become HIV positive by age 55, which is exactly the proportion that was infected during the "first wave" of the 1980s, before the tens of millions of dollars spent on education.

An equally disturbing conclusion from the accumulated AIDS-data is that the epidemic will not be ended by anti-viral medical fixes. This is not only because of the nature of the HIV retrovirus, which has a greater power to mutate than any previously known microbe, but because of the history of drug interventions in combating other sexually transmitted diseases. The discovery of penicillin, which unlike current AIDS drugs is 100% effective, was once thought to herald the eradication of syphilis.

But because it created a false sense of invulnerability, and its repeated use led to the emergence of drug-resistant strains, more than fifty years after its discovery than there were when no medical remedy existed.

There is no medical cure for AIDS, but new drug-resistant strains of the HIV virus have already been identified in Thailand, raising the specter of an even more dangerous phase of the crisis on the near horizon. In these circumstances, the only way to arrest the AIDS epidemic and prevent it from becoming a permanent feature of gay existence is the remedy that was available 14 years ago when we wrote our article and broke the tripwire of outrage among gay radicals—to change the behaviors that feed it. Chief among these is core group sex. As the epidemiological studies show, the existence of these groups of aggressively promiscuous gays is the key to epidemic’s progress in the United States.

But these core groups and their institutional support system—public bathhouses and sex clubs—are as active as ever and are still defended by gay radicals and their liberal political allies as a “civil right.” They are still defined by gay leaders as the institutions of “gay liberation.” Thus far, all interventions to decrease gay promiscuity, whether by public education against it or by closing the commercial sex parlors, are viewed by gay leaders (and their legal battalions in the ACLU and the Lamda Legal Defense Fund and other left-wing task forces) as “homophobic” and violations of civil rights. Rotello is dismayed by the renaissance of risky behavior in supposedly “safe” oral sex establishments, which may become the petrie dishes for the next wave of infection. He is dismayed too by the attitudes he sees in gay activists. One of them, unfortunately a representative voice, quoted by Rotello, wrote: “Gay liberation means sexual freedom. And sexual freedom means more sex, better sex, sex in the bushes, in the toilets, in the baths, sex without love, sex without harassment, sex at home and sex in the streets.” In these circumstances, it also means death.

Larry Kramer, for years America’s angriest and most radical gay spokesman, agrees with Gabriel Rotello’s conclusions and like him sees this as a watershed moment in the history of the fight against AIDS. In a recent issue of *The Advocate*, Kramer writes: “I want to say this again: We have made sex the cornerstone of gay liberation and gay culture, and it has killed us. . . . We have been the cause of our own victimization. . . . We knew we were playing with fire, and we continued to play with fire, and the fire consumed monstrous large numbers of us and singed the rest of us, all of us, whether we notice our burn marks or not. And still we play with fire.”

That a book such as Gabriel Rotello’s can be published to the enthusiastic endorsement of one of the guiding spirits of ACT-UP shows how far we have come since those portentous days of 1983, when all the deaths yet to come were still in the balance. But have we come far enough? The answer to this question will come later this year when Congress considers The HIV Prevention ACT of 1997, introduced by Oklahoma congressman Tom Coburn. This bill would do now what should have been done and what was considered and rejected as a strategy 14 years ago when we first wrote about AIDS: require states to inform anyone exposed to HIV; require all people accused of sexual offenses to be tested for HIV; allow health care workers to test a patient before an invasive medical procedures. In other words it would treat AIDS for what it has been all along: an epidemiological nightmare.

We are still playing catch-up with this disease because of decisions made all those hundreds of thousands of lives ago. It is just one more aspect of the AIDS tragedy that we must now begin once again at the beginning—identifying those places where the disease is most infectious and notifying the people who are infected and at risk, whether or not they want to hear the bad news.

—Peter Collier & David Horowitz



cient cores, the STD rates for men showed enormous increases while those for women rose very slowly. Eventually some diseases afflicted men at rates of from ten to one hundred times higher than they afflicted women, a discrepancy caused almost completely by men having sex with men in highly efficient core group situations.

THE MID-CENTURY SHIFT

By the mid-century, however, the very idea of homosexuality began to undergo an evolution. The old idea, that the temptation to commit sin was inherent in all individuals, and that certain people simply chose to give in to that temptation, was slowly replaced with the new idea that there are two basic “sexual orientations” in the world, homosexual and heterosexual, defined by whether one is attracted to the same or the opposite sex. Originating among Germans such as jurist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs in the 1860s and Magnus Hirschfeld at the turn of the century, this concept was reinforced by Freud and his successors, and made major inroads in American popular consciousness in the ’30s, ’40s, and ’50s. According to the popular version, any man who desires sex with another man is inherently “homosexual” no matter what role he plays during sex and regardless of his gender identity or outward mannerisms. “Only in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s,” Chauncey writes, “did the now conventional division of men into ‘homosexuals’ and ‘heterosexuals,’ based on the sex of their sexual partners, replace the division of men into ‘fairies’ and ‘normal men.’” This represented a sea change in the public perception of homosexuality. In Foucault’s famous phrase, “The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species.” And a deviant and diseased species as well.

Just as this new idea was gaining currency, World War II threw vast numbers of gay men and lesbians together in the military service, which enthusiastically embraced the medical view of homosexuality, and used it to detect, punish, and discharge service members. Yet even as they faced humiliation and discharge, lesbian and gay service members participated in an unparalleled experience of self-discovery, evolving a new pride and self-awareness from which the modern gay world would coalesce. After the war, discharged by the tens of thousands into cosmopolitan cities such as San Francisco, communities of lesbian and gay veterans formed the rudiments of a new culture.

Amid these social and demographic shifts, gay male sex life began changing as well. As the distinction between straight and gay solidified in the popular imagination, working-class straight men who had once felt no stigma being serviced by “deviants” now started worrying that participating in such liaisons might indicate that they themselves were homosexual. As a result, they drew away, helping to precipitate a profound change in gay sexual patterns. Chauncey writes that by the ’60s and ’70s the category of trade had “virtually disappeared as a sexual identity (if not a sexual role) within the gay world, as men began to regard anyone who participated in a homosexual encounter as ‘gay,’ and, conversely, to insist that men could be defined as ‘straight’ only on the basis of a total absence of homosexual interest and behavior.” Eventually the lines were “drawn between the heterosexual and the homosexual so sharply and publicly that men were no longer able to participate in a homosexual encounter without suspecting it meant (to the outside world, and to themselves) that they were gay.”

At the same time, and largely based on the same developments, nascent gay liberationists began calling on gay men and lesbians to throw off the shackles of shame and to feel pride in their sexual orientation. An ideological pillar of gay liberation was that gay men should stop playing the effeminate weakling begging sexual favors from straight icons of masculinity. In other words, they should stop idealizing straights and begin idealizing each other.

Unfortunately, just as gay men began to build genuine communities and distinctive cultures and began turning more and more to each other for sexual partnership, they faced a steep rise in stigmatization and official repression. The

moral crusaders of the McCarthy era sought to stamp out the gay “lifestyle” that was emerging in large cities by targeting its visible manifestations. Raids of gay bars increased, and sexual entrapment by plainclothes police became a growing occupational hazard for gay men. You could be arrested for wearing drag, arrested for dancing with members of the same sex, arrested for holding hands in public. As a result, the sexual culture of the emerging gay communities in many respects developed as an outlaw culture. Having gay sex was seen by many as an act of defiance. Gays were considered, and often considered themselves, sexual renegades. To be sure, plenty of homosexuals rejected this characterization, just as many had rejected the earlier characterization of sin. But it permeated both gay and straight society and had a profound impact on the forms that gay male sexual relations took. The central institutions of emerging gay male culture were bars and bathhouses where community-building, self-esteem, and sexual self-discovery were closely associated with alcohol and drug consumption, sexual adventurism, and sensation-seeking. Many gay men rejected these connections and found long-term partners, often away from the hubbub of the emerging gay fast-lane. But for many others, sexual freedom became synonymous with adventure and conquest.

Then, in June 1969, came the acknowledged turning point, the Stonewall Riots. In their aftermath a vastly different gay society arose on the foundations of the closeted, semisecret past. At the psychic core of this new world was the bold idea that Gay Is Good, and the bolder imperative to Come Out and proudly proclaim your homosexuality. Lesbians and gay men, utilizing the political savvy garnered in the anti-war, women’s, and civil rights movements, quickly succeeded in creating zones of safety around gay social and sexual spaces where at last people could assemble without harassment.

The securing of such freedoms was liberation’s first, and for many activists its primary, focus. From the point of view of sexual ecology, it is significant that these demands met with a significant degree of success almost immediately in cities with large gay populations, particularly San Francisco and New York. The number of openly gay businesses exploded, the most visible among them were bars, discos, and sexually oriented enterprises like baths, sex clubs, and porn shops whose primary function was to profit from the newly released sexual energies of gay men. Not only were these the most visible enterprises in the gay world, they became the very embodiment of gay male liberation for many of their patrons and for much of society at large.

Some gay thinkers, particularly those most closely associated with the left-wing and hippie movements, argued for a non-consumerist approach to gay sexual life. Others, however, accustomed to secrecy and furtive sex, easily convinced themselves that liberation involved not the abolition of furtiveness, but the freedom to be as furtive as possible. These thinkers argued that if liberation meant rejecting constraints, then to be more liberated meant to reject even more constraints, and the most liberated (meaning the most gay) were those without any constraints whatsoever. “Promiscuity,” trumpeted one prominent gay newspaper, “knits together the social fabric of the gay male community,” and, as such, it was to be celebrated and defended.

The post-Stonewall philosophical division was mirrored in very real divisions in gay male patterns of behavior. Many men, for whom love and companionship seemed more important than sexual freedom, settled down with long-term lovers in monogamous relationships. Others, however, raced to test the limits of their newfound freedoms in bedrooms and bathhouses, in discos and sex clubs, parks and alleys. Still others, perhaps the majority, vacillated between these two worlds, sometimes committing themselves to relationships, sometimes indulging in the intoxicating freedoms that beckoned in the large gay communities. But, whatever their opinions or behaviors, most gay men tended to presume that this grand experiment in human liberation was unaffected by the

wider web of nature around them. Just as economists often analyze industrial activity without a thought to its impact on the environment, gay theorists analyzed the new economy of sex without a mention of ecological or microbial perils. Most, if they gave such perils a thought, probably believed they had been conquered long before.

SCALE IS EVERYTHING

And so, without most gay men noticing it, a revolution in disease transmission began almost as soon as the steady disco beat filled the air. The rise of gay core groups in which men combined anal sex with very large numbers of partners profoundly altered the microbial landscape and created entirely new opportunities for a host of diseases that until then had been held in check.

Scale is crucial to ecology. Behaviors that are safe on a small scale can become catastrophic on larger ones. For gay men, behaviors that were once engaged in on a limited scale by a few participants appeared to have been either harmless or produced problems that were so minor they passed unnoticed. But the mass adoption of those behaviors by large numbers, particularly in concentrated core groups, created an entirely different situation.

Perhaps the most significant change was the fact that some core groups of gay men began practicing anal intercourse with dozens or even hundreds of partners per year. Also significant was a growing emphasis on “versatile” anal sex, in which partners alternately played both receptive and insertive roles, and on new behaviors such as anilingus, or rimming, that facilitated the spread of otherwise difficult-to-transmit microbes. Important, too, was a shift in patterns of partnership, from diffuse systems in which a lot of gay sex was with non-gay-identified partners who themselves had few contacts, to fairly closed systems in which most sexual activity was within a circle of other gay men. Also important was a general decline in “group immunity” caused by repeated infections of various STDs, repeated inoculations of antibiotics and other drugs to combat them, as well as recreational substance abuse, stress, and other behaviors that compromised immunity.

But of perhaps greatest significance to epidemiologists later on were two salient facts about the way gay male sexual culture was emerging. One was the fact that these behaviors were not spread evenly throughout the gay world, but were concentrated in relatively small but biologically significant subsets of gay men who formed intensely active core groups that could readily amplify any disease that entered them. The other was that there was a very high level of sexual mixing or bridging between gay men in those cores and the rest of the gay population. The net result was that gay men created almost laboratory conditions to both amplify STDs within highly active cores of individuals, and then spread those diseases throughout the gay population, including to those who were not particularly active at all.

THE GAY CORES

Both core group activity and mixing were facilitated by a new institution that became central to gay life in the '60s and '70s. As early as 1903 New York City boasted a gay bath house, which we know about because when the authorities got wind of it, they promptly shut it down. But throughout the first half of the century baths remained rare, and since scale is so crucial to ecology, it seems doubtful that these scattered institutions had much biological impact. After Stonewall came a relaxation of persecution and a subsequent surge in demand as gay men realized that the baths now constituted truly safe sexual spaces. By the early '80s there were more than 200 major baths across the nation, and they had spawned a \$100-million-per-year industry. As they increased in popularity they proved immensely significant in the development of a new gay sexual ecology.

The baths maximized sexual partnering and sexual mixing in a way no other institution could possibly match. People had sex in virtually all areas of the baths, from private cubicles to the showers, saunas, hallways and rec rooms. In the communal spirit of the Summer of Love in 1967,

“orgy rooms” were installed in some bathhouses to facilitate group sex. Soon orgy rooms, mazes, and other spaces devoted to communal sex spread to most institutions, providing venues for the easiest kinds of anonymous encounters.

The baths were not the only institutions that commercialized sex and encouraged a connection between pride and promiscuity. There was also a proliferation of sex clubs, peep shows, movie theaters, and bars with dark back rooms that provided patrons a safe haven and simultaneously encouraged them to enjoy anonymous sex on the premises. And the bar scene greatly expanded in the '70s as well. By the middle of the decade even many medium-sized cities had at least a few gay bars, and they too were crucial venues for gay men to socialize and build a sense of community. Still, the level of sexual partner-change made possible by the existence of gay bars was dwarfed by the number of partners most men could have at the baths. You might spend all night at a bar and end up with nobody; at best, you'd likely end up with a single partner. But nobody ended up with nobody at the tubs, unless of course they wanted to. On the contrary, it was quite possible to have sex with a dozen or more partners in a single visit. In one study of gay male New Yorkers in the pre-AIDS era, for example, the average man had five partners per year at home, which was not that different from the average young heterosexual on the singles scene. But the average gay man also had 36 additional partners per year in baths, back rooms, and cinemas. And since this average includes occasional attendees and even people who never went to baths, the numbers for the most sexually active core group members would be vastly higher.

During the heyday of the '70s it is estimated that 15,000 men visited the baths every weekend in San Francisco, and probably far more in New York. Since many gay men in each city never attended these institutions at all, and since most of those who did seem to have visited them rarely, these huge numbers imply that many of the men who frequented baths were repeat customers, creating intense core groups. Someone who patronized the baths several times a week could easily rack up as many as a thousand partners per year. It was among this core that AIDS first appeared. According to CDC interviews, the first several hundred gay men with the disease had an average of 1,100 lifetime partners, which means that some reported far more. For most, this level of activity was possible only because of commercial sex institutions.

We have already seen that STD epidemics often begin, and often remain, in small cores of people who suffer from multiple risk factors. In many societies, small subsets of people are burdened with high levels of sexually transmitted disease without contributing to a wider epidemic. The factor that most often prevents a disease from bridging from a core to the rest of the population is, quite baldly, prejudice and stigma. People in cores tend to be members of poor, oppressed minorities who are often marginalized and visibly ill—and therefore often shunned as sexual partners by the majority.

In the gay world, however, almost the opposite was the case. Among the majority who did not participate in the extremes of the gay fast-lane, there was very little or no stigma against having affairs or brief encounters with those who did. This was, after all, a relaxed era in which many men—including many in relationships—prided themselves on being more open-minded and tolerant about the occasional tryst than heterosexuals. As a result, there appears to have been a tremendous amount of sexual mixing between the most highly active (and infected) gay men and the rest of the population. Men who had only one extracurricular partner a year mixed freely with those who had hundreds. Someone involved in a long-term relationship in which he himself chose to remain monogamous might often assume, or know for certain, that his lover had dalliances with other casual partners, sometimes lots of them. Because of this, any disease agent becoming endemic within the sexual core of gay men had ample opportunity to radiate out efficiently through the rest of the gay population.

This kind of mixing happened throughout the gay landscape and was facilitated by all sorts of institutions, but some experts believe that bathhouses played a particularly crucial role in this process. In the first place, the virus took advantage of the baths to exploit the fact that people with HIV tend to be highly infectious for a couple of months right after they become infected themselves. What likely occurred (on a massive scale) is that a regular bath-goer would become infected one night at the tubs and then, during the next couple of months when he was extremely likely to transmit infection, would return many times and have perhaps dozens of partners, infecting several. Many of those partners would also frequent bath houses and they would repeat the process, primarily using the medium of baths and sex clubs to accumulate large numbers of partners in the limited window of maximum transmission. While those who habituated baths quickly became saturated with HIV, there were tens of thousands of additional men who went to the baths much less often—from once every few weeks to once a year or less. These men were spread out all along the behavioral continuum. Some might even be in fairly monogamous relationships, for whom the baths were simply an occasional treat. But once there, they ran a high likelihood of having sex with the very people whom, from a biological standpoint, they most needed to avoid. So it appears that the baths both created the conditions for the most sexually active core to become quickly infected, and then created the ideal conditions to bridge the resultant epidemic rapidly across the gay landscape.

Some researchers now believe that under these conditions HIV spread almost like measles or chicken pox in its original, explosive phase in the early '80s. It has been estimated that in the early '80s the average infected gay man infected an average of five additional gay men. Such a mindboggling reproductive rate for a virus that's relatively difficult to transmit would require several conditions: that infected men had very large numbers of partners, that they engage in the most transmissible form of fluid exchange, and that they had those partners very quickly, during the brief initial period of high infectiousness at the outset of their own infection. Commercial sex establishments are obviously not the only ways that people can engage in such behavior, especially in urban populations where much of social life centered around cruising and bars. But bathhouses and sex clubs clearly fulfilled those conditions in extraordinarily efficient ways, causing some researchers to believe that they played the vital role that schools and movie theaters play for diseases like measles and chicken pox. A 1989 epidemiological survey of AIDS transmission in the gay world noted that “gay bath houses and sex clubs functioned for gay men in the same way that ‘shooting galleries’ have functioned for drug injectors in establishing the AIDS epidemic and the spread of HIV infection.”

So precipitous was the rise in the numbers of partners among the most sexually active core of gay men that researchers had to keep revising the definition of multipartnerism to keep up. Author Laurie Garrett reports that Dr. June Osborn, an NIH researcher who was one of the first to sound the alarm about STD transmission in gay core groups, had a hard time maintaining a handle on the level of multipartnerism. “Every time we do an NIH site visit the definition of ‘multiple sex partners’ has changed,” Osborn said in 1980. “First it was ten to twenty partners a year. That was 1975. Then in 1976 it was fifty partners a year. By 1978 we were talking about a hundred sexual partners a year and now we’re using the term to describe five hundred partners in a single year.”

“I am,” pronounced Osborn, “duly in awe.”

This essay is adapted from *Sexual Ecology: AIDS and the Destiny of Gay Men* (Dutton, 1997) by Gabriel Rotello.



Animal Instincts, Continued from page 1

I wanted to sue or there was an indirect conflict.”

His crusade began in earnest after he joined the faculty at University of Pennsylvania law school, where he represented animal rights activists charged with destroying research laboratories. More famously, he led a successful attempt on behalf of PETA and other organizations to shut down an animal research facility at Penn’s medical school. For these good deeds, says Francione, the university put him under surveillance, and asked local police officers to surreptitiously take pictures of him at a local animal rights rally. When administrators at Rutgers recruited him by making it clear that they would welcome his animal rights work, Francione jumped at their offer, and in 1990 the Rutgers Animal Rights Law Center was born.

At Rutgers, as at most law schools, law clinics play an important role, giving students the opportunity to earn credit working on real cases and get the kind of practical experience not found in textbooks. As a result they tend to be among the most popular courses on campus. Clinics often focus on relatively specific areas of the law—environmental law, women’s rights, tax law, or consumer law, for example—and are sometimes essentially the pet projects of individual faculty members. Not surprisingly, clinics are usually of an activist bent. Still, they generally conform to current trends in legal thinking, something that can’t be said about Francione’s Center.

Between ten and 15 students sign up each semester to assist Francione and staff attorney Anna Charlton (his wife) for between 18 and 24 hours a week doing research and writing legal briefs. Despite its unorthodox mission, the Center has had notable success, particularly in representing medical- and veterinary-school students who want to opt out of the dissection and vivisection components of their training. In a famous 1993 case, the Center lobbied on behalf of Taro, a 110-pound Akita who had been scheduled to be put to death after biting a young girl and killing or wounding several other dogs. After hard argumentation, Francione eventually convinced Governor Christine Whitman to grant Taro a reprieve. While for most this outcome might not have carried quite the same weight, say, as getting an innocent human off death row, the Center does not totally ignore members of its own species. In fact it is currently putting together an information packet informing prisoners of their right to vegetarian food while in the slammer.

In addition to the hands-on work, students attend a weekly two-hour seminar focusing on the theory of animal rights, which is primarily elucidated by Francione in two books, *Animals, Property, and the Law* (1995), and *Rain Without Thunder: The Ideology of the Animal Rights Movement* (1996), and in his numerous essays, which are posted for public consumption on the Center’s Internet Web page and occasionally broadcast on a New York radio station. It is in these writings, where Francione is unencumbered by the practical restraints of docket, precedent, and judge, that his philosophy is revealed.

Francione argues that because animals are “sentient and conscious,” they are rights holders and morally equivalent to humans. Any use of animals for food, clothing, medical research, or even as pets is an unconscionable violation of their rights. Hamburgers, tuna fish sandwiches, frozen yogurt, work boots, and animal-developed medical treatments like insulin, penicillin, and organ transplants all confirm our complicity in the “institutionalized exploitation of nonhumans.” And even the self-described defenders of

the oppressed share in this guilt. “The reality is that we progressives like to think that we have eschewed all vestiges of slavery from our lives,” writes Francione in one essay, “but the reality is that we are all slave owners, the plantation is the earth, sown with the seeds of greed, and the slaves are our nonhuman sisters and brothers.”

Both Francione and his wife practice veganism, a kind of hyper-vegetarianism whose adherents do not eat meat, dairy, or anything made or prepared with animal products, and do not wear or use any items constructed from animal materials. A similar purism is reflected in Francione’s contempt for “welfarist” animal protection measures which stop short of total aboli-



tionism. For example, he says that laws mandating better living conditions and more humane treatment for cattle and lab animals “don’t do anything other than make people generally feel better about exploiting animals,” the equivalent of providing slaves with longer chains.

PETA is generally considered the radical standard-bearer of the movement and as recently as 1994 provided more than half of the Center’s \$125,000 annual budget, but Francione now says he refuses to work with the group, calling it “very conservative, very reactionary” because of its willingness to accept incremental change. “Groups like PETA,” he explains, “would like to see all of this abolished, but their view is that we ought to pursue very very moderate welfarist reforms on the way to getting there. And my view is that simply won’t work.”

For most within the movement, an animal rights activist calling PETA moderate is like a gay activist calling ACT-UP conservative. Ingrid Newkirk, PETA’s president and co-founder, who several years ago uttered the infamous a-rat-is-a-boy comparison, says peevishly, “It’s very easy to say what everyone else does falls short of the ideal, but it’s very hard to come up with a concrete plan that achieves the ideal. When Gary has a good idea, I hope he implements it, rather than just writes about what’s wrong with everybody else. . . . He doesn’t tend to see much gray, and in a complex world that must be comfortable.”

But Francione doesn’t think life’s complexities are what is holding back PETA and other groups. For him, they’ve just sold out. “They are large organizations that have a lot of money and are trying to get larger and more popular,” he explains. “It’s rather hard to be revolutionary and radical when you bring in \$14 million a year.” And as he sees it, revolutionary and radical is exactly what the animal rights advocates need to be. “I see this as a movement of the Left,” he says. “I see this as a rights movement, and rights movement, are, by definition, left-wing.”

Qualifying animal rights as a leftist cause requires equating speciesism—discriminating on the basis of species—with the liberal trinity of racism, classism, and sexism, and giving animals status as one of the Left’s victim groups. In *Rain Without Thunder*, he makes all the appropriate connections by attacking the “racist imagery” in

an advertising campaign by the American Humane Association, which promoted its programs against abuse of both children and animals. Appropriately enough, the ads juxtaposed half of a child’s face with half of a cat’s. Francione’s complaint? In one ad the child was black. He quotes an angry New York radio announcer who said the photograph “not only tended to reinforce the idea that that African-Americans are closer to being animals, but, more importantly, it reinforced the notion that it is African-Americans who are abusing both their children and their animals.” Furthermore, the ad “demonstrated that lurking right below the surface are some pretty traditional and reactionary attitudes.”

But Francione is a true leftist at heart in that he reserves his harshest criticism for his would-be comrades, whom he sees as schismatics and doctrinal renegades. He is particularly hostile toward PETA’s anti-fur campaign, which features nude celebrities such as Kim Basinger, Cindy Crawford, and model Christy Turlington. Francione says he understands the thinking behind the campaign—“if they have people standing there naked, it gets attention”—but says the publicity it generates is outweighed by the damage done to both animals and women. “I think the sexism-speciesism connection in many ways is even closer conceptually

than the racism-speciesism connection,” he explains. “The conceptualization of animals as property and the conceptualization of women as whatever we conceptualize them as—coke bottles that are receptacles for our semen, or whatever—is very close.”

Francione is also offended by PETA’s continued association with *Playboy*, though his complaint is different than, say, Jerry Falwell’s. After her 1994 *Playboy* photoshoot, former presidential-daughter Patty Davis gave half of her \$100,000 fee to PETA, and a nude pic taken with one of Hugh Hefner’s dogs was made into a poster for the movement. A 1995 campaign, designed to encourage organ donation and thereby discourage the transplantation of animal organs, featured Hefner’s wife Kimberly, who is a *Playboy* model, and the slogan “Some People Need You Inside Them.” But where some see vulgarity and lasciviousness, Francione sees naked oppression. “As long as the objectification of women is an integral part of the culture,” he writes in an essay, “as long as we treat women like meat in our advertising, films, and in our personal interactions, we will continue to treat meat like meat.”

During our interview he used a more vivid image. “Pornography in many ways is the commodification of women,” he explained. “In other words, we reduce women to body parts. We don’t look at them as whole beings, but as tits, ass, legs, or whatever body part we are focusing on. In many ways, it’s similar to going to your store and purchasing a chicken leg or a chicken breast, where the animal is no longer there, and what we have is a piece of the animal that we’ve commodified.”

This linkage between feminism and animal rights takes an interesting twist in Francione’s discussion of abortion. Outsiders often assume that since animal rightists regard finches and rats as “persons,” they logically must extend this same courtesy to human fetuses. But for all his talk about animals being “on a continuum” with people and really no different from them, gestating humans are left out of Francione’s Circle of Life. In an essay posted on the Internet, he explains that “it is wrong to assume that fetuses have rights just because some animals do.” When asked specifically whether human fetuses deserve legal

protection, Francione, who is otherwise absolutely certain of the personhood of animals, posed as an agnostic and rattled off a litany of questions meant to be rhetorical. "Is a fetus a human being? Yes. Is it a person? I have doubts. Do I like abortion? Nobody does. Am I concerned that current thinking about abortion in this country is pathologically sexist? Yes, I am very concerned."

The concerns of pro-lifers and the heresies of fellow animal rights activists may be annoying to Gary Francione, but for him the true root of the sickness of our world is the deeply ingrained and, in his view, pernicious idea that humans are special, which he dismisses as "a normative myth made up and pushed by humans." The source of this villainy isn't hard to spot. He explains that "Judeo-Christian philosophy has for a long time, in most of its strains, been profoundly anti-animal." But if only people would read their Bible through his eyes, says Francione, they'd find out that God is really a vegetarian, and the story of the Fall is a classic example of the "sexism-speciesism connection." He says: "If you look at the Bible, it appears that there was only the eating of vegetables in the Garden of Eden. When there is a breach of the Covenant as the result of a woman and an animal, snake and Eve, man is cast out of the Garden of Eden. It is only then that men begin to eat animals." After presenting this classy aperçu, of course, Francione is quick to stress that he does not "believe any of this because I don't believe in that sense of God."

Having pronounced God dead, Francione not surprisingly declares animals' solidarity with the world proletariat. "Rejecting speciesism requires the rejection of the exploitation of all who are oppressed under capitalism," he writes. This is no easy task, because "this country and other industrial countries are deeply dependent on animal exploitation to sustain their present economic structures."

One would think that the rejection of socialism and embrace of democracy and free markets all around the world would give Francione pause, but he dismisses these develop-

ments as simply the result of "U.S. military actions and covert cold-war tactics." Indeed, why would Russia, Poland, or Namibia want to emulate the U.S., when "to the extent that you associate personal freedom with things like health care

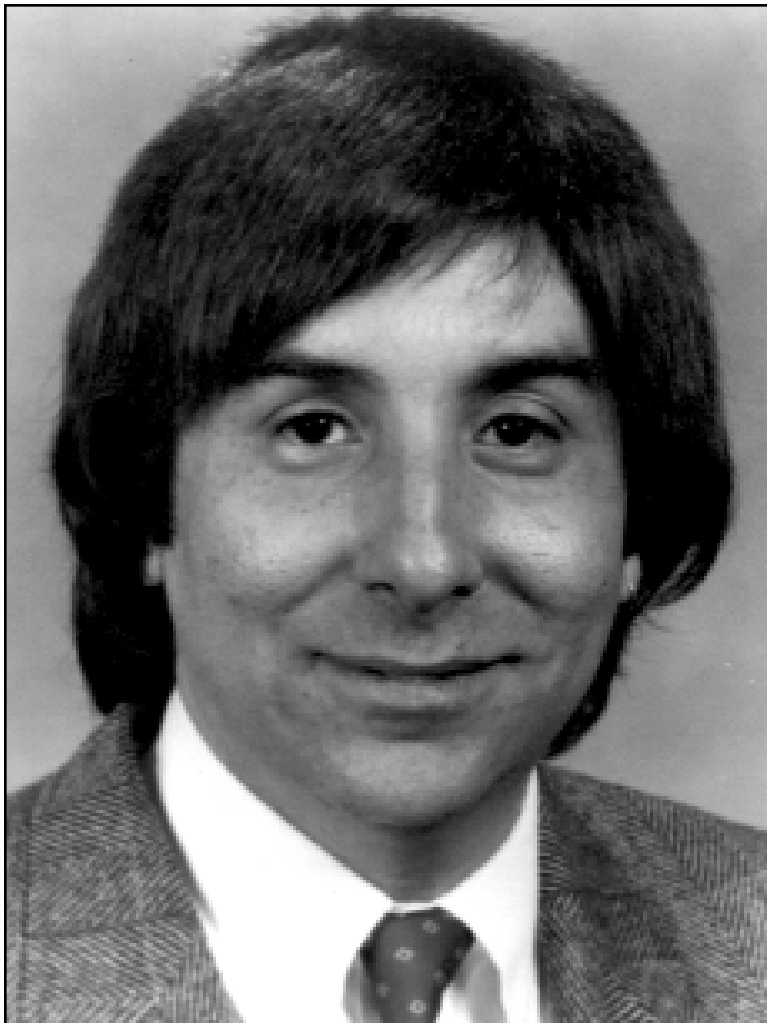
to say, "It is very difficult—if not impossible—to show that any clear causal link between the use of animals in research and finding cures for human diseases," particularly given the significant role of animal experimentation in the development of treatments for afflictions like tuberculosis, meningitis, rabies, cancer, and AIDS, and of surgical techniques such as those used for open heart surgery.

Some people on the Rutgers campus take issue with Francione's outlook, though fewer than one might expect. According to a 1997 graduate and member of the Rutgers chapter of the conservative-leaning Federalist Society, "In the academic world, especially in law school, it's better to be a Marxist than a Republican. The problem with Marxism, of course, is that it never took place in the First World, where it was intended to take place, it failed in the Second World, and it has been and is increasingly being rejected in the Third World today. So all that's really left is the animal kingdom."

But a few Young Republican-types aside, the Rutgers community has been supportive of Francione and he has been named the "Nicholas de. B. Katzenbach Scholar" in honor of his work. "People seem to always have great things to say about him as a law professor and about a lot of the work that he's done," comments one of his students. "He's a pioneer in the animal rights movement, and I don't know how many other professors are pioneers in their fields." A recent graduate added that Francione is "way cool."

Perhaps more significantly, the students are listening. Francione says that almost all of those who enroll in the clinic become vegetarians or vegans, and several

have done pro bono animal rights work since graduating. And it must please him to note that his students leave the Center having gotten the message. As one long-time student explained, "Speciesism is just another form of -ism, like racism."



ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST GARY FRANCIONE

and education, one might say that maybe Cuba is a more free place"?

While his international views might seem a little quirky, Francione's opposition to animal research seems comparatively reasonable. After all, C.S. Lewis, someone who well understood the uniqueness of man, opposed vivisection, and generally speaking even those who countenance the practice do so only with the understanding that the animals be treated humanely. Still, it seems a bit much for Francione



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Ebonics at Cornell

By Kenneth Lee

Last winter, the Oakland Unified School District kindled a national furor when it claimed that African-American students have a genetic predisposition towards black English and proposed incorporating Ebonics into the school curriculum. Oakland school officials and a handful of sober academics from prestigious universities like Stanford solemnly argued that Ebonics is a distinct, pan-African language. Most people, however, would have none of it. Late night comics like Jay Leno had a field day lampooning the zany idea. Even Clinton Education Secretary Richard Riley refused to disburse any federal funds for the teaching of Ebonics as a second language in public schools.

It was no surprise, therefore, when the student editors of *The Cornell Review*, a conservative fortnightly at the Ivy League school, decided to get into the fray. (In the interest of full disclosure, I must admit that I served as the editor in chief of the *Review* when I was an undergraduate at Cornell.) The paper had no shortage of targets: If the Oakland School Board provides politically correct, feel-good nonsense to poor urban blacks, Cornell University does the same for middle-class and affluent blacks. The university has justly garnered a notorious reputation for championing racial group-think and multicultural dogma. (Cornell provides a dormitory called Ujaama for its black students, offers politically tendentious Africana Studies courses and even publishes a separate yearbook for minority students.)

Always chaffing at the politically correct atmosphere on campus, and feeling a bit mischievous, several staff members of the *Review* penned a humor piece in the April issue that translated Africana Studies course descriptions into Ebonics. For the course, “History and Politics of Racism and Segregation,” this description was given: “Dis gotsta do wif racism and segregation in America and Souf Africa. Is like d other classes, but we be goin into tryin to justify separate livin units but da same drinkin fountins. What it is, big momma?” The course called “African American Social and Political Thought” got this translation: “Dis an intro class dat discusin really important people dat represent us, like Malcolm X, Al Sharpton, and Farrakhan. Yo also be studin lots about nationalism (das mean people like Black Panthers), socialism, an opression (how we stil bein opresed). We also be practicing how to accuze any bro toutin ideas dats conservative of being a sellout. Black be socialist, ya dig?”

The article on “Racism in American Society” (“Da white man be evil an he be trying to keep the brotherman down”) was, like the other pieces, rather puerile. (Sophomores, alas, are apt occasionally to do sophomoric things.) Yet the authors were in fact hard pressed to parody discredited Marxist claptrap about oppression and class struggle which comprises the real course description. For example, the one for “Racism in American Society” goes like this: “Particular attention will be paid to the political economy of racism and the sociological and the psychological aspects of race relations in America, with specific reference to the differences and intersections of race, class, gender, and ethnicity.”

But when the minority student activists read the *Review* article, they became apoplectic. “The current dilemma with one of the articles in *The Cornell Review* is a prime example of fascism in today’s society,” one student activist wrote to the *Cornell Daily Sun*. Applying the oppression cant that he had learned in his courses, the letter writer ranted on: “This [oppression] shouldn’t be

any surprise, since the wealthy white heterosexual male has been making us pay for him to insult us throughout history. But it is time for this inhumanity to stop. It is time for this tragic farce called today’s capitalist, racist, heterosexist and sexist society to end.”

For several days, minority activists, along with white leftist students and professors, met to plan their next action and denounce the *Review*. One Africana Studies professor excoriated the staff writers of the *Review* as “mental midgets.” And the staff director of Ujaama, the black dormitory, claimed, “the *Review* consciously singles out the black community, the gay community, immigrant community, Latino community for mean-spirited, malicious, racist homophobic and sexist harassment.”

All of this invective came as a surprise to the members of the *Review*, who received numerous anonymous death threats and hate mail. Contrary to what Ujaama’s director said, the *Review* has been and continues to be one of the most diverse groups on campus: it has had blacks, Asians, Latinos, Jews, and immigrants in leadership positions in recent years. Indeed, the *Review* would be the multicultural model that administrators love to talk about except for one thing: the paper is conservative, which is taboo in the stifflingly leftist haven at Ithaca.

The *Review* editors realized that they might have made an editorial blunder, but the harshness of the attacks was nevertheless unanticipated. “In retrospect, I can see that it might have been offensive to some people. But I don’t think it’s particularly out of the ordinary,” said senior editor Michael Capel. Added Edward Newton, the editor in chief: “It was intended to poke fun at the preposterous idea of Ebonics, not ‘disrespect’ blacks.”

In hopes of defusing the tension, the *Review* offered a panel discussion with the staff of the newspaper to air any grievances that students may have had. The incensed student activists, however, had no desire to talk peacefully. They had other plans.

On April 29, Tom Jones, one of the more notable members of Cornell’s board of trustees, was slated to come to the Ithaca campus to present an award. As an undergraduate at Cornell during 1969, Jones, along with several other aggrieved African-American students, made national headlines by forcibly taking over the student union. After making several demands from the university (which were later granted), Jones and the others exited the building brandishing shotguns. His actions during that tumultuous spring in 1969 had helped establish Ujaama and the Africana Studies Center.

Since then, Jones has gone on to become the president of TIAA-CREF, and though hardly a conservative, he has moderated his views on racial politics. In the same issue containing the Ebonics parody, in fact, the *Review* had interviewed Jones, who said he wanted the school to promote a “common freshman experience.”

Minority student activists construed that statement as antagonistic to the existence of racially segregated dormitories, and thus they decided to target him, along with the *Review*, for their outrage.

Several hundred irate students waited outside the Johnson Museum, where Jones was presenting an award. Once he stepped outside of the building, students started to taunt him with the chant of “Uncle Tom.” One graduate student yelled to him, “You are the enemy of the people.” When Jones tried to address the crowd with a microphone, the protesters quickly stripped him of it and continued their harangue. A peeved Jones later said, “They’ve got to figure out who their friends are. By disrespecting me, I don’t know what they expect.”

After jeering Jones, the throng of student protesters moved to one of the busiest intersections on campus and blocked traffic for more than three hours. At the rally, the protesters continued their diatribe against the *Review*, against whites and virtually anyone else. “Black and Latino students who are not here with us [on the street intersection] are enemies of our people,” yelled one graduate student. “If you are black and Latino and are not sitting down, we don’t need you.”

Other speakers repeatedly called on the administration to shut down the *Review*. “If 99% of the campus disagrees with what the *Review* says, then it should be shut down,” said one protester. When *Review* president Ying Ma tried to address the crowd, she was immediately verbally assaulted with profanities and drowned out by the chanting. She later said: “It’s up to people to decide if the article is funny, outrageous or what. But it’s a different thing to censor a newspaper and decide it no longer has the right to freedom of speech.”

Protesters then, invoking the specter of 1930s Germany, collected several hundred copies of the *Review* and proceeded to burn them. “The *Review*, the *Review*, the *Review* is on fire. We don’t need no water, let the mothef***er burn!” they chanted. Several university administrators and Cornell Public Safety officers quietly watched as the students proceeded to burn the stacks of the *Review*. (The administration has since refused to take any action against this destruction of private property.) Stephen Rockwell, the president of the Student Assembly, then promised to defund and decertify the *Review*: the paper would not only have its funding cut, but it would no longer be able to even exist as an official organization on campus. Rockwell defended his actions by claiming it was not a matter of free speech because the *Review* was guilty of “racial harassment.”

The student protesters completed the usual litany of demands: the enactment of a speech code; mandated sensitivity seminars for all incoming students; more affirmative action programs and the strengthening of racial program houses. Administrators piled on Cornell President Hunter Rawlings III. Rawlings, who said nary a word about the newspaper burning, impugned the *Review* as an “exceptionally despicable” newspaper that engages in “race-baiting, stereotyping and intentionally degrading attacks on Cornell’s African-American community.” (Rawlings even went as far as to denounce the *Review* again in a rambling speech at graduation. In a speech that praised, inter alia, deconstructionism and multiculturalism, he described the *Review* as “offensive” and “disgusting.”)

President Rawlings’ harsh denunciation of the paper stands in stark contrast to his muted response to the racism of left-leaning minority student activists. While the *Review* may have engaged in a satire of questionable taste, minority groups at Cornell have repeatedly espoused unabashedly anti-Semitic and racist views without fear of censure. *Umoja Sasa*, a university-funded black newspaper, has routinely printed anti-Semitic tripe such as “The Secret Relationship Between Slavery and Jews.” And minority groups have used school funds to invite hate-mongering speakers such as Leonard Jeffries, Sister Souljah and Nation of Islam speaker Conrad Muhammad.

The members of the *Review* staff have had their lives threatened, and the future of the paper is bleak as funding for the paper will possibly be cut next year. But they are determined to press on. *Review* president Ying Ma, a Chinese immigrant who has lived under a totalitarian, communist regime, is defiant. “Like it or not,” she says, “we’re here to defend something called freedom of speech.”



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REVIEWS

The National Standards Take Hold

United States History: In the Course of Human Events

West Publishing Company, St. Paul, MN
1997, 1198 pages

REVIEWED BY WALTER A. McDOUGALL

As Lynne Cheney, President Bush's director of the National Endowment for the Humanities, now confesses, national standards for history and other elementary and high school subjects seemed like a good idea at the time. No one denied that educational "reformers" had erred since the 1960s by abolishing rigorous, required survey courses in U.S. history in favor of vague and often voluntary social studies curricula. No one denied either that the result was a generation of children ignorant of the basic narrative of American history, the principles and institutions on which our republic was founded, and the methods good historians use to understand the past, including respect for facts, chronology, objectivity, the logic of cause and effect, and a sensitivity for the very different times, places, and circumstances in which historical actors found themselves.

But when the National Standards of United States History, funded by President Clinton's Goals 2000: Educate America Act and composed under the direction of Gary Nash and Charlotte Crabtree at UCLA, finally appeared in 1994 they sparked a firestorm of controversy. The introduction to the standards paid lip service to the methods and goals of good history, but according to conservative critics the authors exploited the project to advance a highly politicized agenda. Their "three worlds meet" interpretation depicted the United States as a more or less equal amalgam of (innocent and admirable) Amerindian and West African cultures and a (predatory) European culture. They downplayed the philosophical and religious origins of the American Revolution and Constitution, emphasizing instead the degree to which the ruling white males exploited and suppressed marginal ethnic groups and women. And they portrayed U.S. foreign policy, at best, as morally equivalent to that of its enemies (the Cold War was denounced as mere "sword-play") or, at worst, as violent imperialism. The 2,600 study lessons were especially controversial inasmuch as they gave short shrift to "great men" such as George Washington and Thomas Edison, but asked students repeatedly to ruminate on the Ku Klux Klan, McCarthyism, and the rapacity of industrialists, corporations, and conservatives (for instance, by staging a mock trial of John D. Rockefeller and dubbing Ronald Reagan a "cheerleader for selfishness"). Defenders of the standards insisted that criticisms came only from a handful of ignorant right-wing journalists, but the Senate nonetheless condemned them by a vote of 99-1, forbade the use of federal funds for their implementation, and insisted that any future recipients of taxpayer dollars "have a decent respect for United States history's roots in Western civilization."

In my own review of the standards, which appeared in *Commentary* in May 1995, I decided that some of the criticisms were exaggerated. The standards did not ignore traditional political and diplomatic history, but achieved a defensible balance between them and social and cultural history. Nor were the nation's founding and Constitution shunted aside, as some critics claimed. But it was obvious that the authors had also filtered American history through a distorting ideological lens. For instance, the standards and lessons painted uniformly hagiographical portraits of Amerindians, African Americans, and women (as if they, too, have been an undifferentiated "victim group"), and uniformly exposed

the behavior of white males to relentless assault. Thus, if European men braved the unknown to discover a new world, it was to kill and enslave the indigenous peoples. If the Founding Fathers invoked human rights, it was to deny them hypocritically to others. If American businessmen built the most prosperous nation in history, it was to rape the environment and keep workers in misery. Hence, the true and only legitimate American "agenda" (the very word appeared over and over again in the standards) has been the gradual overthrow of the white male establishment by liberation movements struggling in the name of social justice and equality as defined by contemporary left-liberal, multicultural, post-modernist academics. One need not be a flag-waving, bigoted Know-Nothing to conclude that such a history flies in the face of the facts, distorts cause and effect, mocks the ideal of objectivity, and judges the deeds and thoughts of our ancestors according to a blatantly presentist yardstick.

In an effort to save their project and make it a



genuine "standard" for curricula and texts nationwide, Nash and Crabtree hastily issued a revision which, they claimed, expunged the offending features of the original. So I reviewed the revision as well, in the July 1996 issue of *Commentary*, and gave it about one-and-a-half cheers. It was true that the "in your face" feminism of the original version was no longer so evident, and that students were no longer goaded so obviously into condemning U.S. conduct in World War II and the Cold War. But the major ploy the authors used to defuse criticism was simply to delete those 2,600 often tendentious lesson plans (and then promise to make them available under separate cover).

By that time, mid-1996, many of the protagonists in the debate over history standards, including Diane Ravitch and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., were calling for an end to the acrimony so that educators and officials could get back to the task of improving the schools. I sympathized in part with that attitude. The debate had indeed reached the point of diminishing returns when university professors were reduced to quarreling over which precise adjectives ought to be used to characterize the Progressive Era or Containment strategy. "Just give me a textbook to review," I muttered, since the bottom line would be found in the pages that publishers and school board members placed in the hands of American students.

Well, now I have one: West Publishing's *United States History: In the Course of Human Events*. By all appearances it has been patterned consciously and closely on the Nash/Crabtree project, and thus represents the publisher's gamble that that those much-maligned standards will indeed influence purchasing decisions across the country.

In the Course of Human Events, a 1,200 page tome glittering with color illustrations on virtually every page, 123 "feature" insets, 97 maps, and 91 tables and graphs, must have been unusually costly to produce. So glitzy is its layout, in fact, that the reader who wants to follow the narrative must make an act of will to block out

the ubiquitous pictures and sidebars. But the reader who succeeds in doing so soon discovers that the text follows every slant of the UCLA standards, and does not even realize their rough balance between the common experiences of Americans on the one hand and the social histories of victimized groups on the other.

I was disappointed to observe that imbalance, because the front material of the book gives reason for hope. The Statue of Liberty graces the cover and the introductory "Greeting" boldly affirms the old-fashioned idea that history differs from other subjects in that it tells a story. What is more, the main themes of the story are said to include Democracy and Citizenship, Geography and the Environment, Multicultural Society, Everyday Life, Arts and Humanities, Economics, Technological Developments, and Global Interactions—a laudable list. The authors also stress the importance of primary sources, and their numerous study aids are designed to help students learn to analyze statistics, visual and documentary evidence, interpretations, and propaganda. Those study aids are often splendid, such as the color-coded maps summarizing the results of every presidential election. But the preface also reveals that this textbook, in line with the Standards, is "as inclusive as possible" in the recognition that "the history of the United States is a multicultural and multiracial history," privileges social history, and is "especially concerned with the forces and events that affected the everyday lives of ordinary people since the best way for us to put our lives into historical perspective is to know what happened in the past to people like us." In sum, this is history from the bottom up, informed by a bias toward groups rather than individuals or the nation as a whole, and by a perspective not on what people did, but on what happened to them. People "to whom things happen" are implicitly victims.

The chronological breakdown of *In the Course of Human Events* is similar, but not identical to that of the UCLA standards. The latter divided American history into ten eras while this text has eleven. Where Nash and Crabtree allocated three units to the settlement and growth of the American colonies, the war for independence, Constitutional Convention, and early national period, the West Publishing text rushes through all that in just two units and 230 pages (26 of which are devoted to an annotated text of the Constitution). This skimping pays off later, because it enables the writers to devote almost four units to the post-World War II era where the UCLA standards were content with two.

Why this short-shrifting of early American history in favor of the more recent past? In order, it seems, to give full treatment to various "liberation movements" and contemporary topics presumed to be of interest to young people today, such as immigration, homelessness, drugs, AIDS, and the Internet. Indeed, the "last word" in the text comes from Bill Gates.

Now, a detailed discussion of the recent past is not bad in itself. But because a high school course in American history may be the only chance that many students will have to learn about their nation's origin and essence, the meager space given to earlier periods is disturbing. Disturbance turns into alarm when the reader discovers that the discussion of those earlier periods is filled with lacunae. The first unit, "The Settling of America to 1750," closely mimics the UCLA document's "Three Worlds Meet" and dotes on the Amerindians and Africans, who are described in reverential but often unhistorical detail. The Europeans, however, are dismissed in a few pages, and they seem to have no traits beyond their skill in shipbuilding and lust for spices and gold. Thus, we learn that Native Americans had "complex" societies and vast trading networks, that most Indian societies accorded women "a degree of equality with men unknown in other lands," and that many were matrilinear. We learn that most Indians were animists who believed that "everything in nature had to be treated with care and respect." There is nothing about the vivisectionist religion of the Aztecs, whose only role in the book is to be victimized by the Spaniards, and the only reference to Native American ceremonial killing is this: "Like other cultures of the time, the Olmecs may have practiced human sacrifice." In other words, they may not have—and even if they did, they were merely

behaving like many other (unnamed) cultures. Likewise, we are told that 15th-century Africans lived in diverse cultures boasting “great luxury,” displayed the animists’ respect for nature, and boasted of a university at Timbuktu that “attracted students from all over North Africa.”

No mention is made of the fact that Europeans had by 1492 founded 60 institutions that can be called universities. But then, no mention is made of any of the values, institutions, or achievements of Western civilization save for some bits of technology. The Renaissance gets seven lines of text, the Reformation none, and the Enlightenment—that taproot of American political philosophy—six short sentences. Judging by the information provided in this book, the European settlers of the Americas might as well have come from Mars.

One need not endorse imperialism to grant that the Europeans, too, were real people with a rather “complex” civilization. But motives or belief-systems other than plunder find little place in this book. One need not defend Spanish conquests or English colonization to grant that Europeans, too, had rather “diverse cultures.” But here Europeans have few interests or motives other than trade and plunder. Particularly striking is that the book has virtually nothing to say about European religious and intellectual life. Luther and Calvin, Erasmus and Loyola, Bacon and Newton do not appear in the index. Missionaries are invariably predatory and intolerant, and the authors seem clueless in matters of theology. We read, for instance, that thanks to the first Great Awakening in the 18th century “people began to realize that they could make choices about how to practice religion”—as if Europeans had not been fighting for two centuries over precisely those choices! Several denominations are mentioned briefly—Anglicans, Quakers, Methodists, and Presbyterians—but no information is given about what these people believed, how they differed from each other, or what influence their beliefs may have had on the evolution of American politics and society. The only fact we are given about the Baptists is this: “Baptist women threatened a floor fight at a national convention [in the 1970s] if a woman was not included in the hierarchy of the church.” That the writers’ neglect of religion is not inadvertent is evident from this passage:

When told of FDR’s death in April 1945, Harry Truman asked Eleanor Roosevelt if there was anything he could do for her. Mrs. Roosevelt replied, “Harry, is there anything we can do for you, for you are the one in trouble now.”

Truman’s reply—“Pray for me”—is omitted.

Secular influences on the United States are, if anything, even more rudely treated. The account of the origins of the American Revolution beats the issue of taxation to death, but says almost nothing about representation. Suffice to say that the Magna Carta, the English revolutions, John Locke, and the Whiggish philosophy that inspired Thomas Jefferson are absent in a book otherwise subtitled *In the Course of Human Events*, and the *Federalist Papers*, perhaps the greatest body of political philosophy Western Civilization has produced, are dismissed in two short quotations and valued only for their role in promoting the Constitution. George Washington merits a box as one of fifteen “People Who Made a Difference,” but he is described as a cold man of “ordinary talents” who was a symbol more than a hero and “not completely successful as a military man nor as a president.” The book suggests that the honor accorded him was a form of “self-congratulation” on the part of white American males, and that “the idea of George Washington, not always the man himself, was what counted.” By contrast, Susan B. Anthony, Harriet Tubman, “Mother Jones,” Cesar Chavez, and other “People Who Made a Difference” not only get unqualified praise, but more space than Washington.

Diplomatic history is my own specialty, so I was especially vexed to discover that this text deems foreign policy to be of minimal importance. Washington’s Farewell Address merits one short paragraph and the successes of John Quincy Adams (including the Monroe Doctrine) less than a page. A little more space is devoted to 20th-century diplomacy, but without any context by which a student might make sense of things. Fascism, for instance, just “happens” when in 1933 Germany “elected [sic] a new chancellor, Adolf Hitler,” whose Nazi Party “capitalized on the discontent and suffering caused by the harsh peace settlement imposed by the Treaty of Versailles.” (Hitler was appointed, not elected, and no mention is made of the impact of the Depression or of

the suicide of the Weimar Republic.) Japan, too, just appears suddenly in 1937 as an expansionist power. For the writers of this text, fascist (and Communist) ideology and totalitarianism do not seem to exist. The world of the 1930s is just described as “unstable,” U.S. entry into World War II is brushed over in three pages, and the spare chapter on the war itself devotes more attention to labor and ethnic strife, and women and African Americans in the workforce, than to the military operations in which millions of (overwhelmingly white male) Americans risked their lives to destroy fascism. For instance, internment of the nisei commands as much space as D-Day and all the campaigns in the Pacific through 1944 put together.

The Cold War, like World War II, just “happened” according to these writers. The Soviets found themselves in occupation of many foreign lands in 1945, but then, so too did the Americans. Stalin had his peace aims, including “reducing the size of the Soviet military,” “rebuilding its war-torn economy” (so much for his January 1946 postwar Five-Year Plan speech), and “establishing Soviet-dominated spheres of influence,” but so did the Americans intend to combat spheres of influence and promote universal free trade. Truman’s feistiness and lack of experience in foreign affairs, and the Americans’ failure to “inform” Stalin about their atomic program, are to blame here for the fact that “Soviet-American relations cooled, sliding eventually into the . . . Cold War.” Nowhere are we told that thousands of Soviet agents entered the United States under the aegis of Lend-Lease, that it was public knowledge as early as February 1946 that Soviet spies had infiltrated the Manhattan Project, or for that matter that Stalin’s USSR was a murderous police state and the United States and its allies were democracies.

The only two mentions, in fact, of domestic Communist activity focus on the paranoid reaction of American officials to “alleged” infiltration, not to the known (and today richly documented) presence of Communists in American media, unions, universities, and government. Thus, we read that “People were also affected by growing rumors about Communist spies, disloyalty, and subversion,” and that Truman’s Attorney General, Thomas C. Clark, saw “a sinister and deep-seated plot” to take over labor unions and disrupt society. A few pages later, under the rubric “Red Scare,” we learn of the House Un-American Affairs Committee, whose “investigations alleged that Communists and Communist sympathizers had been active in the movie industry, labor unions, and [government].” The importance of the Alger Hiss case is summed up in the fact that “In the public’s mind, his conviction [for perjury] forged the link between high government officials and Communist subversion.” The importance of the atomic spy cases is that the conviction of “alleged accomplices” Julius and Ethel Rosenberg “seemed to prove that the nation’s problems resulted from disloyalty, subversion, and espionage.” And the importance of Senator Joseph McCarthy lies in the facts that “None of McCarthy’s charges was ever proven, but many Americans believed him anyway,” and thus he “had a devastating effect on the nation’s political atmosphere.”

In short, alleged American Communism, like Olmec human sacrifice and cannibalism, may or may not have happened, but even if it did, the critical thing to know is that the real superstition, the one that really endangered the country, was anti-Communism. Add it up: Stalin’s goals were limited, understandable, and irenic, and Communists in America existed mostly in the heads of Tom Clark and Joe McCarthy. Why then, students may ask, did the United States wage the Cold War? They are all but invited to surmise that perhaps other genuinely sinister groups—the military? big business? the patriarchy?—had their own reasons for picking this fight. But perhaps the most representative sentence, graced by a dangling modifier and impenetrable syntax, appears in a sidebar describing the prosecution of twelve CPUSA members in 1948: “Although not guilty of any overt activity, the Supreme Court upheld their conviction, agreeing with a lower court that there was a probable danger of such activities taking place, since the Communist Party already existed.” So there were real victims in the Cold War—the Communists.

Feminist perspectives appear on cue in almost every chapter of *In the Course of Human Events*, just as they did in the UCLA standards. Women are rarely presented as wives and mothers who worked alongside their fathers and husbands and sons and generally shared their values and opinions, but rather as a beleaguered minority comparable to slaves or Indians. The authors

highlight disparities of income between men and women, but make no effort to explain why they might have existed historically for reasons other than sexism. A chart illustrating the gap between male and female earning power in 1970 contains a caption with this gratuitous leading question: “What is especially significant about this difference [in pay] in a field such as teaching?”

Historical distortion becomes especially heavy when the writers turn to Ronald Reagan. Though they grant that he was “popular” and “able to accomplish many of the things he set out to do,” they cannot find one positive thing to say about him (and by implication, those dupes who supported him). According to this text, Reagan won elections because he was a professional actor in league with big business and the New Right (a constant, looming presence in the last chapters). His economic policies and “slashing” cuts in welfare had “profound negative effects on the economy and government services.” His military buildup and covert operations were dangerous and illegal, and led to “worsened relations” with the Soviet Union. That Reagan’s policies might have contributed to the unravelling of the Soviet Union is not even suggested here. Worse yet, “Reagan’s legacies would continue to shape the nation in years to come.”

Judging by this text, the critics of the UCLA standards were right. A book that presumes to explain U.S. history by ignoring Lockean individualism, disparaging George Washington, and devoting as much space to the Internet as to America’s entire religious and intellectual heritage, is simply a fraud. But let the writers speak for themselves in a sentence from the book’s final paragraph: “The application of the ideas of liberty, equality, and justice on which this democracy is founded are [sic] constantly evolving in response to changing times.”

A truism masquerading as wisdom graced by a subject/verb disagreement. Just the product one would expect to see peddled to American schools today.

The culture war rages on, and few theaters in the war are of more immediate and passionate interest to American women and men than the classrooms of American schools. On one side are those who believe that freedom is the core value of Americans and that liberal democracy is so fragile and rare a thing that young people must be taught to revere it or it will not survive. We on this side of the barricades honor individual rights and responsibilities, and readily grant that at the dawn of American history our ancestors honestly believed that some groups were not endowed by nature with full and equal rights. The story of American history, therefore, has been the struggle to extend rights and responsibilities to all, and so do away with “group” thought. On the other side of the barricades are those who believe that equality, even uniformity, among people ought to be the core value of America, and that if the government founded in 1776 and 1789 cannot be employed to enforce that belief then it does not deserve praise, or even longevity. To them the story of American history has been the struggle to establish group rights and entitlement against those who hide behind individualist legislation and jurisprudence, and the mission of education is to raise the consciousness of youth lest they fall prey to the myths of white patriarchy.

Thanks to the critics of the UCLA project and the resolution passed unanimously by the Senate (the lone dissenter held out for a harsher condemnation) there are to be no National Standards, and anyone who refers to those UCLA standards as “national” now tells a fib. Instead, the battles will be fought in all fifty states as each chooses its own standards for history curricula, and in thousands of local school boards as each decides which textbooks to purchase. In one sense this dispersal of the struggle is a wonderful thing: thanks to our federal system no self-appointed elite of whatever political persuasion can impose its vision of America’s past (hence present and future) on all of our children. In another sense, the diffusion of conflict is vexing, for it means that all American—from professors in ivory towers to parents in Hometown, America—must be vigilant and ready to fight. For those “National Standards” not only aren’t dead, they are being cloned at this moment by publishers throughout the nation.



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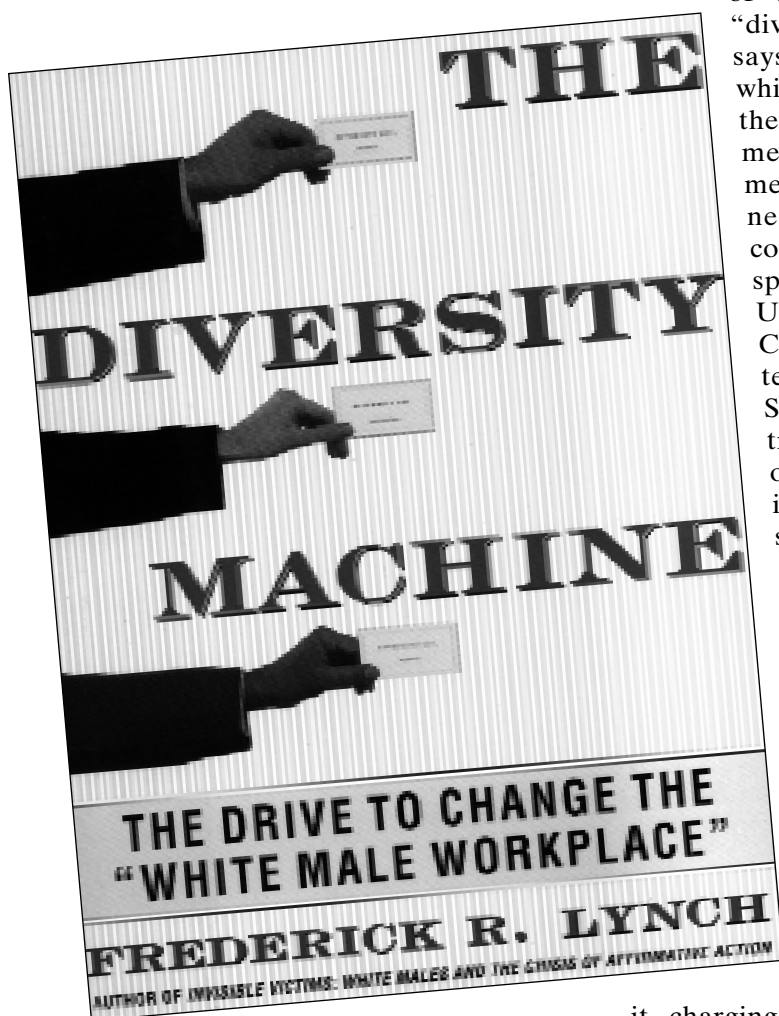
REVIEWS

Attacking the White Male Workplace

The Diversity Machine: The Drive to Change the "White Male" Workplace

by Frederick R. Lynch. Free Press, 1997. \$27.50.

REVIEWED BY GLYNN CUSTRED



A couple of years ago, Willie Brown, former speaker of the California State Assembly and now mayor of San Francisco, announced on national television that the California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209) would be defeated by corporate money. A year later it seemed that Willie's prophecy was about to come true when World Savings and Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the nation's largest shareholder utility, came out in opposition to the initiative. It was also reported in the press that California's other utility giant, Southern California Edison, was ready to join PG&E along with such corporate behemoths as Hewlett Packard and Atlantic Richfield, each reportedly willing to contribute a quarter of a million dollars apiece to the anti-209 campaign.

What stopped this corporate move was an outcry from PG&E customers and shareholders, a street demonstration organized by supporters of 209, muscle flexed by the governor (a supporter of the initiative and a player in the regulatory process in which utility companies must operate), and an article in the September 9, 1996, issue of *Forbes* magazine that told the story of preferences in plain language which corporate managers could clearly understand and ponder. As a result, PG&E ended up making no contribution to the opponents of the initiative nor did any of the other purported members of the corporate coalition to kill 209.

Why would big business even consider getting involved in an initiative which would have no effect on its operations, tax status, the environment which in it does business, and

the all important bottom line? Indeed why would corporations, normally so cautious, go out of their way to oppose a popular measure which was leading in the polls by a margin of two to one and which clearly asserted principles which for the vast majority of the American people constitute the very definition of fairness and justice?

The answer is that corporate behavior is determined not only by business needs and government action, but also by the demands of what Frederick Lynch calls the "diversity machine." This machine, says Lynch, is a social movement which had its origins in the university, then spread outward to the government, the major foundations, the media, and eventually to big business. Although Lynch focuses on corporations he also examines three sprawling public institutions, the University of Michigan, the California Community College system, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, thus illustrating how the diversity machine operates across institutional lines in both the public and the private sectors.

This machine (which can also be described as the diversity industry) is represented in corporations by "diversity" managers, affirmative action officers, and consulting companies whose task it is to root out racism and sexism hidden in corporate cultures, and to adjust corporate standards and practices to accommodate women and minorities, not the other way around. For these services "diversity" engineers rake in a handsome profit, charging \$2,000 for a one-day workshop and \$200,000 for a complete cultural overhaul.

Lynch's study took place over a five-year period during which he gathered data from the "diversity" industry's own literature. He also attended "diversity" industry workshops and conventions, observed industry-conducted "sensitivity" and reeducation sessions, and interviewed "diversity" managers and consultants, as well as business leaders and employees.

Diversity agents, says Lynch, believe that assimilation has not worked, and that society is so irredeemably sexist and racist that women and minorities can never succeed without permanent top-down coercion and employee retraining. The ideology underlying all this rests on three basic premises: cultural relativism, proportional representation, and identity politics.

Cultural relativism asserts that no cultural pattern is better or worse, nor more effective nor more aesthetic, than any other. Identity politics is the doctrine which holds that thought patterns of individuals reflect those of their racial, ethnic or gender category, so that Hispanics or blacks as groups can be represented by a Hispanic or a black within an organization or a profession. And proportional representation means that both sexes and all racial and ethnic groups must be represented in all occupations and in all walks of life in direct proportion to their raw numbers in the population as a whole.

Such perfect symmetry, however, is never the case for a variety of reasons which, says Lynch, cut across ethnic and racial lines. Diversity engineers, however, deny this complexity, reducing everything to the single factor of discrimination which they summarize in the phrase "institutional racism." When workplace standards are violated by hiring workers according to race and ethnicity rather than according to ability, which sometimes happens under such conditions, or when employees are mismatched with jobs in an effort to achieve

the desired proportionality, then the doctrine of cultural relativism is evoked in order to neutralize criticism by calling into question all standards and all workplace procedures.

It takes very little reflection, however, to see how shallow these formulations really are. For example, common sense and simple observation show that some ways of perceiving and doing things are more effective, more flexible or more harmonious than others. Moreover, racial and ethnic groups are internally varied, consisting of individuals whose experience, interests, etc., overlap with those of people from other groups. This means that a black from the upper-middle class on the board of directors no more represents all blacks, many from the working class, than can a white board member represent working class whites. To insist that color or ethnic affiliation is uniform in that manner, as "multiculturalists" do when advocating identity politics, is to indulge in the very kind of stereotyping for which they condemn others.

Even worse, the "diversity" crowd actively exploits racial and sex tensions in order to advance its agenda. This is seen in their attack on the "white male workplace" where the workplace is reduced to strictly racial and gender terms, and whereby members of one sex and race are singled out as the exploiters of everybody else.

"Yet," says Lynch, "the portrait of a modern workplace dominated by white male culture blurs when one observes that many of the cultural traits and interpersonal styles identified with white males are also those of wider cultural and social systems that transcend particular groups and individuals." Indeed "what is often critiqued as 'white male culture' is nearly identical to the work-driven, ambitious, highly individualistic values and norms of the upwardly mobile middle classes found in many nations throughout the world."

"Multiculturalism," therefore, is nothing more than the most recent incarnation of something very Western which dates back to the advent of modernity, namely an animus against modern middle-class society on the part of alienated groups whose members make their living off the society which they wish to destroy. In the nineteenth century this attitude was seen among artists, literati and other "intellectuals." Eventually, it crystallized into Marxist ideology, and now that Marxism has lost its luster it has mutated into "multiculturalism," which is now firmly embedded in formal institutions and thriving in the shape of the lucrative "diversity" industry.

It is easy to see why such thinking would have appeal in the postmodern university. But why would hard-headed, bottom-line-driven captains of industry buy into such a reductionist, shoddily constructed, and hostile ideology; an ideology which makes no economic sense, which is socially divisive and downright sexist and racist? The reason is that the diversity industry successfully employs the same manipulative strategies as do managers themselves. This strategy is commonly known in business as "rewards and punishment," or as the CEO of one large corporation put it, the manipulation of employees by playing on their fear, greed, and pride. Thus the diversity industry employs the threat of punishment and the promise of rewards to achieve their ends, thereby playing the fear, greed, and pride of CEOs and managers like a fiddle to the tune of millions of dollars annually.

The driving force here is fear inspired by the constant threat of government enforcers, class action suits, and federal judges, as well the ever present specter of racial violence which casts its baleful shadow over the calculations of nervous business leaders. And then there is political correctness which Lynch defines as "a radically, intolerant ideology emphasizing race and gender determinism." PC, he says, employs not only censorship but also the "mobilization of social

pressure to make individuals publicly praise and acknowledge falsehoods that privately they know not to be true.” Thus, everyone else is forced into the same pattern of mendacity necessarily practiced by diversity agents.

The term “political correctness,” notes Lynch, “was originally coined during attempts to force adherence to 1930s Stalinists’ orthodoxy, in spite of massive contradictions and inconvenient facts, such as Stalin’s prewar nonaggression pact with Adolph Hitler.” Indeed any program of aggressive social engineering, like Stalinism or diversity, which is clearly out of line with reality must depend on such methods in order to survive.

Political correctness, coercion, and the specter of violence explain the punishment component of the diversity industry’s success. Since there is no material reward which diversity change masters can provide, there is thus little they can do to manipulate the greed of managers and CEOs. They can, however, promise benefits, thereby softening coercion with an appeal to self-interest. One such appeal came to be known as the “demography as destiny” argument which claims that demographic changes would soon render whites a minority, and that diversity strategies were necessary to enable companies to cope with this new situation and to manage it in order to increase their productivity and profits. However, like almost everything else peddled by the diversity industry, this assertion has proved false and is thus losing some of its persuasive force. Yet, as Lynch points out, despite the lack of any evidence to support the claims that such diversity management can deliver

the benefits it promises, the diversity machine rolls on. In examining why, Lynch addresses one of the central features of race and ethnicity in America today, namely its class dimension.

Despite the demonization of white males, it is in fact white males who have not only implemented the present regime of racial, ethnic and sex preferences, but who are now stubbornly defending them. Thus, when the diversity mob decries “white males” one should ask, which white males? The answer being, of course, those from the working and middle classes.

This is quite easy to understand when we observe that white male elites earn high salaries, live in gated communities, enjoy golden parachutes, and send their children to private schools. They are thus shielded from the effects of preferential policies which working- and middle-class people must endure. But don’t the elites see the immorality of such policies? Lynch says that increasingly they do not because increasingly they are drifting away from the values which characterize the majority of the American population in a process which Christopher Lasch describes as “the revolt of the elites.” In regard to business elites, Lynch cites David Reiff who says that “no serious player in the business world has anything but the most vestigial or sentimental interest in Western Civilization,” thus leaving them open to the aggressive sales pitch of the diversity crowd.

This has been greatly facilitated, says Lynch, by the rise of global capitalism and the increasing awareness on the part of business

leaders of the importance of cultural differences when doing business around the world. Indeed, says Lynch, the speeches of global businessmen and those of academic “multiculturalists” reveal a similar world view. Thus global capitalism has become “multiculturalism’s silent partner.”

Given the aggressiveness of the diversity industry on the one hand, and on the other the traditional intellectual shallowness of business elites together with their need to manage and control, and increasingly, their alienation from their own cultural moorings, the diversity machine has found fertile ground in a domain otherwise noted for its pragmatism.

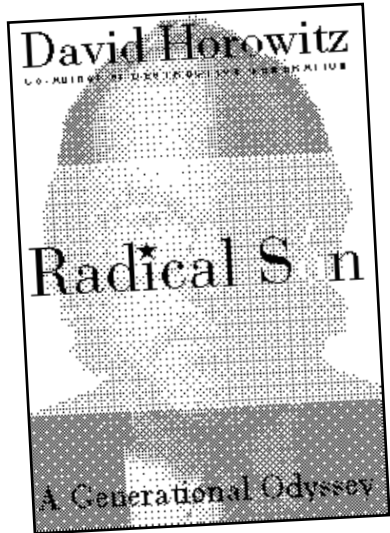
Yet Lynch tells us that the diversity industry is neither static nor monolithic, for it too must respond to changes in society. Moreover, it has suffered setbacks and is characterized by a division within the movement—between moralists on the one hand and pragmatists on the other. Yet the diversity machine persists and with it the continued spread of the corrosiveness which it generates. The task before us, therefore, is to expose this industry and the fraud it perpetrates in order to isolate and eventually marginalize it. Frederick Lynch’s book is a welcome first step in this effort.

Glynn Custred teaches at California State University at Hayward. He co-authored California’s Proposition 209.



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Student Faces Graduation Ban

By Judith Schumann Weizner

Walter Freiwilleg, a senior at Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Glenview Township, New York, learned today that unless he completes his school's four-year community service requirement within the next three months he will not be allowed to receive his diploma. He has been accepted at four Ivy League colleges contingent upon his satisfying the requirement.

The eighteen-year-old honor student insists that he has more than met the requirement, having spent more than 300 hours after school and 120 hours during summer vacations tutoring an experimental after-school fourth-grade chemistry class whose members have taken first prize in the New York Pre-College Science Expo two years in a row.

Eleanor Roosevelt High requires that every student earn at least 280 points in an approved program of community service in order to graduate. Requirements for the program are based on the Federal Mandatory Community Volunteer Program (FMCVP) Guidelines and must be met in order for the school district to receive federal funds.

Freiwilleg's dilemma is that although he has earned over 420 points, his tutoring can not count toward the requirement under the revised FMCVP Guidelines because fewer than fifty percent of his "pupils" came from underprivileged families.

Freiwilleg originally sought to teach his course at a school in the Bronx, but was turned down by the local school board which felt that a course in chemistry for fourth graders would encourage young children to experiment with dangerous substances and might lead them to create new drugs as they sought ways to make their newly acquired knowledge relevant to their lives. When offered the option of giving demonstrations in the use of condoms as an alternative to teaching chemistry, Freiwilleg declined.

His second choice, the Long Island Elementary Learning Center for Culturally Challenged Children, initially approved Freiwilleg's proposal, but withdrew its approval when he explained that the children would be expected to do homework as part of his tutoring arrangement. The school then offered him the position of volunteer Civic Responsibility

Coordinator with the duties of training children in techniques of voter registration, but he declined this position as well.

Due to a "three strikes" provision of the Federal Mandatory Community Volunteer Program Guidelines for 1992, Freiwilleg was now obliged to accept his next offer regardless of what it might be, or receive a grade of uncooperative in his social services dossier. Having been assured of an eager and substantial enrollment in his own

Services was triggered by a complaint from the U.S. AIDS Project. The USAP, which had expected to gain more than 50,000 volunteers through the program, charged that due to ignorance about the disease, many parents were forbidding their children to volunteer in AIDS hospices. At the same time, the American Correctional Society Reform Program found that its plan to bring 63,000 high school students into the nation's maximum security rehabilitation facilities as literacy counselors could not meet its goal because many parents expressed an irrational fear of allowing their children to spend their after-school hours in prison.

The revised Guidelines specify that the volunteer activity must meet the approval of both the school board and the Federal government and that at least 50 percent of the beneficiaries of any volunteer project be economically, culturally, or environmentally disadvantaged, of black or Latino descent, or victims of AIDS or breast cancer. Approved projects still include such activities as tutoring and bringing meals to the housebound, but with the additional stipulation that the person receiving assistance must now belong to one of the above groups.

The president of the Glenview Township school board suggests that if Freiwilleg had placed his chemistry background in the service of working toward a cure for AIDS his position might have been strong enough to prevail, as he could have argued that one hundred percent of his volunteer effort had been to help the victims of this disease, but his insistence on teaching basic science to middle-class children has left him in his current

predicament.

Freiwilleg says he is not at all distressed by the situation. Although he had hoped to attend an Ivy League college, he notes that his second choice school, Northern East Tennessee College, will accept him without a diploma as long as all his academic work is in order.

"This might turn out for the best after all," he told a reporter for the *Northchester Sun* this morning. "I've always dreamed of playing college football, but when I applied to the Ivy League schools, I figured I'd have to give up that dream because I'd never stand a chance of maintaining a 4.0 grade point average and making the team too. But I'm sure I can handle the work at N.E.T.C., and my coach says I might even be a starter on defense."



WALTER FREIWILLIG

district when he first presented his idea to his advisor, Freiwilleg applied there, where he subsequently made his mark.

The 1992 FMCVP Guidelines specified only the number of hours a student must devote to community service and that the activity receive the approval of the local school board, both of which stipulations Mr. Freiwilleg met. The requirement having to do with the characteristics of the beneficiaries of a candidate's volunteer efforts was only put into effect at the beginning of this academic year, but it was made retroactive to 1993 for any student who had not graduated as of June 21, 1996.

The Guidelines were rewritten by the President's Commission on Volunteerism after a study by the Department of Health and Human

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