

# Virginia Scholar

Newsletter of the Virginia Association of Scholars

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Number 7

ISSN 1073-7235

January 1996

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**EDITORIAL ..... A FUTURE COMMENCEMENT**

*until lately ... written words appeared only on hotel doormen, railway porters and signboard men.  
Today this has changed. Now one cannot meet anyone without having to read some message or logo  
— inscribed across the nipples, stitched across the buttocks, sewn into the fabric,  
printed across the underwear crotch, or other wise displayed  
on any body-surface capacious or else attention-getting enough to earn a hieroglyph*

*Malcolm Bradbury, UNSENT LETTERS*

**I**t was the usual festive, crowded graduation scene. The school colors of blue and black were everywhere: painted over the grass, the draperies over rails and stairways, the stadium seats themselves; even the street signs had been painted in those colors and bore the Institution's Seal.

The lights on the scoreboard twinkled and its Vugraph flashed the usual academic exhortations:

HAVE A COKE!  
GIVE MORE MONEY!  
GO BLACK AND BLUE!

Relatives and friends were already seated. The to-be-graduates were just filing in. First came the Engineers, their black gowns studded with labels, badges, tags on arms and chests: AT&T; BOEING; CON ED; DEERE; DU PONT; EASTMAN KODAK; EXXON; FORD; and so on. Then came the Business students: AVON; BANCONE; CHEMICAL BANK; DISNEY; EASTMAN KODAK; FEDERAL EXPRESS; and so forth. BAYER; GENENTECH; SCHERING; SEARLE; LILLY and the like must have been the chemists and molecular biologists. GEORGIA PACIFIC no doubt were foresters. The large cohort of MICROSOFT will have been from computer science, peppered as they lightly were with a few armbands imploring SAVE APPLE or TAKE A NEXTSTEP.

Accompanying the students were the marshals, whose armbands proclaimed their most significant achievements: \$1.3M ENDOWED VALUE FULLER & NUTTER CHAIR; 30 BOOKS & 350 ARTICLES, DISTINGUISHED IN-SERVICE CHAIR IN EDUCATION; \$10M GRANTS OVER 3 YEARS, P.I., NSF CENTER-OF-EXCELLENCE; etc.

When all these too were in their places, the stage party began its procession from the 0-yard line to the platform near the other end of the field. There were several mace-bearers: first came a rather small, nondescript wooden totem representing the Institution's humble beginnings, dwarfed by the others – gold or silver bowls, cups, winged victories and the like with pennants streaming behind them: NIT 1999; \$15M USED-CAR-DEALERS-ASSOCIATION-OF-AMERICA CHAMPIONSHIP BOWL 2005; and more. Most remarkable was what looked like a faux-granite memorial draped with a faux-academic gown and mounted on a faux-bronze casket, whose pennant read SCHEV RE-STRUCTURING AWARD 1996.

Following the trophy-bearers came the chief administrators. First the Coaches in their battle dress, alternately jogging in place and taking a few shuffles forward to keep pace with the rest of the procession. No student and no marshal was as festooned with insignia as were these panjandruns. They wore emblems not only of the more familiar names but also such proud tokens as NCAA PARDON 1998; GRADUATION RATE 100% WITH SAT AVERAGE 745; NO PLAYER SENTENCED TO MORE THAN DEFERRED SUSPENSION. Their footwear was a sight to behold, especially perhaps the four who kept strictly in line and in step, the first one's shoes bearing a large vertical N, the next an I, then a K and then of course an E.

The other executives followed, in multi-colored robes with multi-colored neck-wear and funny-shaped hats, most of their insignia being like those of the Engineering or Business students but embodying more

**The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil  
is for good men to do nothing**

detail: CHEVROLET (THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE); FIRST CHICAGO (YOUR ONLY BANK); KNIGHT RIDDER (YOUR ONLY NEWS); MANVILLE (YOUR HEALTH IS OUR AMBITION); PHARMOR (YOU CAN TRUST US); and more. The President's garb featured the school colors, but little of that was visible between the long strings or chains that hung from all around his neck, bearing little cards that those with binoculars could decipher as showing the names of the school's benefactors on the outside and on the inside the nature of the honor accorded in view of the benefaction: H. SAMSON EDGEBASTER, JR., V — 6 GUARANTEED SEATS ON THE 50-YARD LINE; PETER HAROLDS — named professorship — WILLIAM HAROLDS & FAMILY CHAIR IN SWINE PRODUCTION; SUSAN ESPOSITO — named facility — MENENDEZ HISPANIC DIVERSITY STUDY ROOM; MORTON CORNELL — named facility — O.J. MEMORIAL RESIDENCE HALL. On the President's head rested a stove-pipe hat proudly proclaiming on the front the Institution's name: TOBACCO-GROWERS-ASSOCIATION UNIVERSITY OF OLD VIRGINNY; and on the back a vertical set of four exhortations: ENJOY! PUFF! CHEW! SPIT!

Once the stage party was seated, the Head Coach approached the lectern, pushed aside the microphone which his stentorian voice didn't require, and started to speak, but even his bellow was submerged by the cheers that had erupted from every part of the stadium. It was several minutes before he could proceed.

"Well, folks!" he was finally able to be heard to say; but that only brought another episode of deafening applause.

At last the audience was ready to listen as Coach welcomed everyone to this celebration of the Graduating Seniors whom everyone wished so well in their continuing athletic careers. They should occasionally take time from their forthcoming busy training and performing schedules, he would remind them, to come back and visit our training camps and share their physicalism and quickness and athleticism with those who would be trying to fill their boots. Unlikely that they ever could, of course, after a season of so many TV appearances that had brought in unprecedented millions and had made possible a large addition to the Stadium, including sky-boxes and a series of dining, drinking, and reception rooms for big contributors, as well as major assistance to the academic side of the Institution — yet another named chair in Athletic Academic Advising.

Then the Graduating Athletic Seniors bounded onto the field, again to hearty general applause, and ran up toward the stage where they were fitted with laurel crowns and given gilded cardboard tubes containing their diplomas.

So then it was time for the other graduations. The President did not fail to begin by referring to the School's unparalleled success in Intercollegiate Athletics, which reference again brought down the house. But then he launched into a recounting of the Institution's many glorious academic achievements

especially during the year just past:

We've done a whole lot, lot more with a whole lot, lot less, I'm happy and proud and privileged to tell you. We're at the very forefront of cutting-edge, efficiency-producing, money-saving information technology. Our philosophy department has successfully used artificial-intelligence logic-tutoring software in upper-level classes that can handle well over 50 students at a time. The software for English composition is even more advanced: we've gone to classes of 100 students, a productivity increase of several hundred percent over pre-computer days. There are not only "smart" grammar- and syntax-teaching programs but also interactive creativity packages that any novice can use to create a writing idea and develop it through to a finished product.

Do we have objective measures of our success? We sure do. Student GPAs have reached an all-time high, and so have student evaluations of the few

### VASNET

The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.  
Vigilance must translate into action.  
VAS exists to make action possible.

VAS members and friends can now communicate via the electronic bulletin board, VASNET, set up by Steven Eagle.

**To subscribe**, send the following message to **listproc@gmu.edu**:

**subscribe vasnet {your full name}**

To unsubscribe, send the following message to listproc@gmu.edu:

unsubscribe vasnet

VASNET should enable us to act promptly, by letting each other know what's happening and what needs to be done.

Join up now. You may not need to use the list often, but if and when you do, it may well be invaluable.

**IN LIFE AS IN GOLF !!**

The harder I practice, the luckier I get

Gary Player

*Alumnus Chronicle* (Univ. St. Andrews)  
#86, June 1995, p.29

remaining teachers. But we're not going to rest on these laurels. Eventually we'll have computerized the whole curriculum, and we'll have converted all the faculty positions into computer-technician slots, with enormous savings not only in the payroll but also in recovered space on the campus – not to speak of the fact that we've begun to disband our library holdings, making excellent use of the old materials by sending them to Third World areas where information technology is still too expensive for general use. Once all the books and periodicals have been disbursed, we plan to convert the building into that long-needed recreation facility that we hadn't been able to fund for these many years.

We've discovered that this computerized mode of knowledge transfer is much better adapted to the visual-image-oriented students now coming to us from the high schools. As an influential educator recently pointed out, it used to be that the schools prepared students for the demands college would make on them; but since the dramatic education reforms in the schools of the 1980s and 1990s, it is now the colleges that are having to adapt to the much better product that the high schools have started sending us<sup>1</sup>.

These innovative information-education technologies are also well suited to distance learning, and we've begun to truly make the whole State our very own campus, beaming into every home that has a cable connection or a satellite dish – today the State, tomorrow the Region, and then The World. The time is not too distant when we'll be able to graduate students within two years of enrolling them, perhaps with even more credits than before; and we will award doctorates to people who will not need to visit the old main campus until they come to receive their hoods and diplomas.

So we've well and truly broken that hoary old lecture-hour-per-credit-hour mold. There's no longer any relationship at all between the number of credits awarded and the amount of work done in any given course or curriculum. Instead, expert advisors negotiate with each individual student for the amount of work they wish to do, the amount they wish to pay in fees, the amount of time they wish to

have access to a live professor, and so forth.

The tutoring-time process is one that we're particularly proud of. It's quite simple, but interesting and maybe eye-opening to those who haven't come across it. It's modeled on the system already used for a long time for meal plans. Each student gets a magnetized card that entitles to a certain dollar amount of tutoring time. Each tutoring cubicle has a little machine that deducts from the amount on the card according to the time used – quite automatically, once the counter has been set to show the level of instruction being obtained, the payment rate being naturally greater per minute for full professors than for assistant professors or instructors or graduate students. When this scheme was first introduced, we found that some students were uncomfortable talking face-to-face with live teachers and so were too shy to use the tutoring they had paid for. We solved that when someone pointed out that membership in the Catholic Church has decreased markedly in recent decades – so we made them a deal, we went out and bought up a whole bunch of used confessional cubicles so now every student can talk to a teacher without them having to look at one another.

We've done so much innovating! Starting two years from now, we'll be able to give each graduate a set of CD-ROM discs containing everything they've learned here, so anything they forget they can recover immediately.

And we're far from running out of innovative ideas, we have plenty more, like giving graduates vouchers good for sample follow-up adult-education distance-learning courses.

Now if there's something that anyone at all would like from us that we're not yet offering, they just have to let us know and we'll do a marketing survey and see whether we can add that to our portfolio of educational offerings. We're here to serve whoever wants us to serve, wherever they are and whatever they want, just so long as the price is right, of course.

And that brings me to what you all know it's my bounden duty to mention, that despite all our efficiency and productivity we still always need more money for all the good things we do and want to do. Keep that green stuff rolling in to us, any way you can. Nothing is more valuable than Education, especially Higher Education, and we'll do *anything* to get the money we need to develop, package and deliver it.

Go BLACK! Go BLUE! Go GREEN-BACK!

<sup>1</sup> Janice Weinman, "The challenge of better-prepared students", *Chronicle of Higher Education* 95:10:27, B1,2

## **GREMLINS, PART II**

by *Theophilus Whiteman*

### **The Visitor**

In the movie “Gremlins,” a mysterious Chinese shop-owner gives a warm, fuzzy teddy-bear-like creature to a customer seeking a gift for his son. The creature wins the hearts of the customer’s family, but to their horror it spawns a horde of violent, death-dealing gremlins. Virginia Tech received its own oriental visitor during the first week of November. His gift, like the one in “Gremlins”, appeared warm and cuddly – and may turn out to be every bit as lethal for America.

Tech’s guest was Dr. Ronald Takaki, Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, and author of *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. Takaki is considered by some to be America’s foremost spokesman for multi-cultural education, which he once referred to as “intellectual affirmative action.”

Takaki owed his invitation primarily to his important role in the creation of Berkeley’s American Cultures requirement. Under this rule, Berkeley students must take courses that include substantial material about at least three of five designated racial groups. The specially created courses are scattered throughout university departments, mostly in the humanities. The ostensible purpose of the courses is to promote tolerance and to insure that the curriculum reflects Berkeley’s racially diverse student body.

### **Multi-Culturalism’s Hidden Agenda**

Like Tech’s other recent “diversity” speakers, Takaki avoided controversy in his prepared remarks. His lecture mostly chronicled Berkeley’s acrimonious struggle to create a multi-cultural curriculum. Takaki injected vignettes unfavorable to his ideological opponents, and entertained the audience by describing an interview he gave to *The Today Show*. What Takaki omitted from his lecture, however, is far more interesting than what he chose to reveal.

Multi-culturalism claims that it seeks only to include heretofore neglected groups and to promote tolerance. This is certainly consistent with traditional American concerns for fairness. Who doesn’t believe in the value of teaching young Americans that their country is an amalgamation of many cultures? And certainly promoting tolerance was a goal of American civil and religious life long before it was discovered by multi-culturalists.

But anyone who has spent time observing multi-culturalism’s proponents knows that encouraging ethnic understanding and tolerance are not their real goals. Instead, they have shown time and again that

they are mostly interested in advancing political and personal agendas. As with most bad ideas, multi-culturalism’s devil (or gremlin) is in the details.

### **Victims and Victimizers**

Multi-culturalists’ primary weapon for advancing their agendas lies in dividing Americans into groups of victims and victimizers. Along this line, Dr. Takaki chose not to explain that implementing Berkeley’s ethnic-studies program required the drafting of a list of university-approved racial categories. The number of groups seeking admittance to the list startled the steering committee. Its chairman said, “We didn’t quite anticipate the degree that people felt that the suffering of their group was not being acknowledged”.

At first, Armenians, Jews, Mormons, Italians and even white Southerners were considered for individual membership. Then they were merged into the all-purpose category of “Europeans”. This, of course, transformed Oriental Jews and Armenians into Westerners, robbing them of their ethnic heritage. By the time the list was fine-tuned, Berkeley had created five major categories – European-white, African-American, Asian-American, Latino, and American Indian.

To the unwary, dividing Americans into racial categories might seem only distasteful. What inevitably follows with multi-culturalism, however, is even worse: the designation of some groups as victims and other groups as victimizers. This is usually accomplished with a sleight of hand that leaves most

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*Theophilus Whiteman is what his name implies. He is also one of VS’s most faithful supporters in numerous ways – helping with chores, providing material for the Newsletter, making donations. When the time comes that honest people need no longer fear retribution because their opinions are not the Established ones, we hope he will be publicly honored under his work-place name.*

faculty feeling uneasy but unable to articulate what is wrong. For example, no one objects to teaching the contributions of minorities to America. But multiculturalists subtly shift the focus from historical knowledge to emphasis on a zero-sum ethnic struggle among Americans. Consider a question from Berkeley's multicultural curriculum: "How have power relations between groups been manifested in such matters as racism, economics, politics, environmental design, religion, education, law, business and the arts?"

### **A Recipe for Ethnic Strife**

**M**ulti-culturalism encourages students to see themselves not as individual Americans cooperating to create a country of opportunity, but as separate groups fighting for a share of an economic pie that is static, like land (think Bosnia). Indeed, while Berkeley was establishing its ethnic-studies requirement, some of its minority students wrote that the student body was becoming more racially polarized and less tolerant. And in the wake of California's decision to end affirmative action, Berkeley students have recently begun showing disgust with the entire system of multi-cultural apartheid prevailing on their campus.

The worsening campus atmosphere comes as no surprise, however, since multi-culturalists ultimately create a dish of ethnic strife. Here is the recipe. When insecure young minority students arrive on campus, tell them they feel uneasy because of an invisible, unconscious racism surrounding them. Encourage them (even those from affluent households) to view others as privileged oppressors trying to thwart their success. Then tell white students that notwithstanding their individual characters, they are unconsciously racist and privileged. Tell them that anything they accomplish is only because of their privilege, not their effort. Heat the situation with rhetoric, baste the white students occasionally with guilt, and let everyone simmer until they boil with frustration. Then put these groups, "oppressed" and "oppressor", into classrooms and dorms together.

When the tension multi-culturalists have created inevitably erupts in conflict, they express shock and outrage. Indeed, Takaki became agitated when one student asked him to respond to critics' charges that multi-culturalism caused the students to segregate themselves socially. In a righteous tone, Takaki said the word "segregate" should never be used in such a fashion because it meant forced separation while modern "clustering" was voluntary. Takaki obviously

wanted to avoid the underlying issue, which is whether any type of government-fed racial separatism is good for America.

### **Virginia Tech's Intellectual Integrity**

**T**hough several Tech faculty were in the audience, all sat quietly as Takaki fielded questions. This recurring lack of honest challenge to "diversity" speakers is one of the surest signs that political correctness has chilled the intellectual climate at Virginia Tech. Academics who gleefully beat up on graduate students in oral exams cower when called upon to intellectually engage politically correct doctrine. One reason the American Cultures requirement was adopted at Berkeley was that three quarters of the faculty failed to participate in the debate or vote on the issue. Many were simply unwilling to be shouted down as racists. As one English professor said, "Most people are not heroes in real life".

Multi-culturalists claim that intimidation by political correctness is a phony issue. But if that is true, why does so much tension surround issues like multi-culturalism and affirmative action? If political correctness doesn't exist, why did the Virginia Tech Department of Agricultural Economics remove from its bulletin board, newspaper clippings praising affirmative action (displayed for months) as soon as they were joined by articles challenging that policy? Why did Virginia Tech's campus police react so violently when several newspapers revealed that its proposed "Sensitivity Police" endangered free speech? If political correctness is a big joke, why isn't anyone laughing?

Anyone responsible for Virginia's higher education must ask whether Dr. Takaki's appearance is evidence that Virginia Tech is failing in its primary educational mission. Tech has sponsored several speakers this year who have urged students to think of themselves as racial groups rather than as American individuals. It is not wrong that Tech has hosted Dr. Takaki, Lani Guanier (the "Quota Queen"), and Dr. Ali Mazrui (who wrote "it is in the interest of humanity that [the decline of Western civilization] take place"). What is disturbing is that no one with opposing views is welcome. Is Tech educating students or indoctrinating them? (Speakers such as Dinesh D'Souza and William Kristol have been sponsored not by the university but by an under-funded and beleaguered little group of students known as "Students for the Reopening of the American Mind".)

Another disturbing question is, how are these events, which have a clear political agenda, financed?

As budgets are trimmed and students threatened with increased tuition, money abounds to pay for race- and gender-consciousness-raising activities. Tech finances not only politically correct speakers but also a black cultural center, several women's centers, a bimonthly women's insert into the university newspaper and numerous other pseudo-scientific gender and race programs and publications. As an enormous national debate occurs over appropriate government spending, taxpayers may legitimately ask who is paying for Tech's victims' activities. Indeed, perhaps it is time to ask if declining public support for higher education may not somehow be linked to the public's perception of universities as places where American unity is destroyed rather than encouraged.

### **Gremlins II?**

In his lecture Dr. Takaki encouraged students to view themselves as ethnic groups and suggested they pressure Tech's administration to enact a multi-cultural curriculum. During the question-and-answer session, Asians asked how to inject more Asian history into the curriculum. Blacks asked for their share, also. No one seemed to notice that if multi-culturalism promoted ethnic understanding, Asian students would have asked questions about Hispanic culture and blacks about Asians. Instead, the students' questions illustrated just how multi-culturalism undermines the one thing that has held this incredibly diverse nation together – a massive shared commitment to the ideal of becoming American.

I came away from Dr. Takaki's lecture with only one question – "What's the gestation time for a gremlin?"

## ***SOUTH-WEST VIRGINIA SCHOLARS GET TOGETHER AGAIN***

*abstracted from Minutes prepared by Secretary - Treasurer AI Mandelstamm*

On 28 November 1995, the SWVa Association of Scholars met on the Tech campus (in a seminar room of Cowgill Hall, courtesy Hans Rott).

There was a consensus for more frequent get-togethers, underscored by lively discussion of:

- anonymous student evaluations of professors; to be discussed at greater length at a future meeting;
- suspicion that improper criteria (such as race) are used in selecting recipients of state teaching awards;
- a report that an opponent of a certain affirmative-action hire was told that his evaluation "might be changed" as a result of his stance against affirmative action;
- non-tenured people on faculty personnel committees at both Tech and Radford, a blatant conflict of interest.

Other possible topics for discussion at subsequent meetings include the *Collegiate Times* response to President Torgersen's statement on affirmative action, anti-gay messages on the Internet, and the sexual-harassment advisory committee to the Virginia Tech Police Force.

The NAS initiative on curricular matters was mentioned and the successful introduction at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee of a new

"Great Books" course, available as a substitute for the usual diversity courses. Wherever the opportunity presents itself, we should try something along those lines; the potential availability of funding from outside sources ought to carry a great deal of weight in these times and might perhaps bring otherwise unlikely allies.

Tom MacAdoo (just deceased: see p. 14) mentioned several appearances on a new talk-show hosted at a radio station located between Radford and Dublin. Anyone interested in appearing on the program should contact Ray Roberts at 639-6397.

The meeting adjourned after more than 2½ hours. Too short notice and other engagements limited the attendance to a small but dedicated and congenial group – several members had sent regrets. It was resolved that earlier notice would be given for future meetings. We are indebted to Seth Williamson for agreeing to shoulder that burden.

### ***NEXT MEETING OF SWVA SCHOLARS***

**Wednesday, February 21, 7:30 p.m.  
Radford University, Heth Student Center  
The Blue Ridge Conference Room  
(in the basement of Heth, essentially the same  
place we had our last meeting at Radford;  
see map on back cover)**

## P O T P O U R R I

### **Anti-PC News from Va. Tech!!!**

A group of students had asked that a conservative columnist for the *Collegiate Times* be dismissed because his written words constituted harassment under Va. Tech's Student Handbook. The Dean of Students ruled, however, that the columns could be construed as harassment only if they were directed at a specific individual.

Let's have more and more such sensible actions and decisions, please. Who knows, in time the environment might become no longer hostile to free speech, and thoughts might be bandied around as freely as though McCarthyite PC had never existed, and just as though it were the business of a university to bandy thoughts around.

### **Sensitive Crime**

Quite a few people told us that they liked our story about the Sensitive Crime Unit. We were gratified that the well-wishers included Tech alumni and even a former member of the

#### **IN A NUT-SHELL:**

No matter how often quotas are disavowed, they always reappear, because comparison to demographic percentages is what affirmative action is all about

John Ellis, "Class-based affirmative action"  
*Heterodoxy*, May 1995 p.1

Board of Visitors. One of them e-mailed,

What would an *insensitive* crime be? Reminds me of Mort Sahl, when he quoted from the report that a man had been "robbed of \$10 and killed today in a senseless mugging on 57th St." Sahl continued, "Meanwhile, on Park Avenue, there was a very sensible robbery of \$5,000".

Your "open letter" put me in mind of a prominent (& militant) black activist whose name escapes me at the moment, whom I saw on TV years ago, remarking that "after I moved up North from the Deep South, I learned the difference between white Northerners' & Southerners' attitude toward blacks: "Down South, they don't care how close we lives to them, as long as we don't 'git uppity'. Up North, they don't care how 'uppity' we gets, as long as we don't move in near them".

### **Laundries & Loyalties**

Well-meaning people (as well as others) periodically deplore such ventures as *Virginia Scholar* that seek to shine light into murky places. I refer anyone who feels that way to the Editorial, "On Loyalty and Whistle-Blowing", in our 2nd issue (March 1994).

I agree that dirty linen shouldn't be washed in public. But what choice is there when your own washing-machine is broken?

### **Is more always better?**

An admirer – yes, again at Virginia Tech – sent us some bumf about the "Multicultural

Diversity Committee" in the College of Business at Virginia Tech.

More buzz-words, it seems, are always thought to be better, even if they add nothing to the meaning. Thus a Multicultural Diversity Committee is obviously better than merely a "Diversity Committee" or a "Multicultural Committee". Just so long as you don't wonder, what would a *non-diversity* Multicultural Committee be? Or a *non-multicultural* Diversity Committee? Or could we perhaps envisage an *anti-diversity* Multicultural Committee or an *anti-multicultural* Diversity Committee?

For those who dreamed up that Committee, we'd prescribe one of those newly popular courses in Critical Thinking.

But maybe the folks who set up these Committees would rather *not* think about what they're doing. We could certainly understand that.

### **It started a long time ago!**

Moving offices, taking the opportunity to throw stuff out – or, rather, pretending to throw it out while actually spending a lot of time reading it – I came across this letter dated December 31, **1981**:

Shortly after the year started, [the Dean of Arts & Sciences] circulated to all Dept. Chairmen a listing of the major Jewish Holy-days (Holidays?) & their dates for the next 6 years. Asked that tests & other important things not be scheduled on those days. This, of course, resulted in any number of

comments about Moslem, Hindu, Shinto, etc. holydays. I was for it. I've wanted the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) and Ascension Thursday (40 days after Easter) off for years.... [The Dean] banned all Christmas decorations within his bailiwick ... Separation of Church & State, possible offense to non-Christians. Even Santa Claus was classified as a Christian figure!

The fine friend (at the University of Kentucky) who had sent us that is, as illustrated by the examples he gives, of Roman Catholic heritage. That reminded me of a statistical question that pops into my head periodically. Why doesn't anyone seem to care about the under-representation of Roman Catholics on the faculties of public colleges? Or of Mormons, for that matter – they form an authentically Native American group if ever there was one.

### **Accountability?**

The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (95:11:28, p. A8) had an editorial, "Harassing Taxpayers":

if Virginia's colleges and universities are truly suffering, why do they never seem short of funds for foolishness? Consider VCU's recent edict that faculty and administrators must attend a training seminar on sexual harassment (presumably on how *not* to harass, although the memo is unclear).

Only three such incidents were reported at VCU last year. At least one was of dubious merit; another was the infamous spanking case. Nonetheless, taxpayers will fund thousands of faculty man-hours this month so VCU can sensitize and re-educate instructors regarding a problem they don't seem to have.

One shudders to think what schemes schools could dream up with even *more* money on hand.

Well, they might, say, for exam-

ple, print up thousands of posters a foot or two square, on heavy glossy paper, with nifty slogans like

## S EX UAL HARA SSMENT

### **If it's visible to you, let us know**

What could give me such an idea? I confess that I don't have that sort of creativity, I'm just reporting actual events at Va. Tech, which was plastered with such posters during Fall 1995.

What was *really* neat and clever was that the posters came in two styles: white on black, and black on white. No discrimination there! Though, come to think of it, I can't be sure that equal numbers of the two kinds were printed.

### ***Please help The Cause***

**Share Virginia Scholar** with as many people as you can. Pass it around. Tell us to whom or where to send complimentary copies.

We have extras of most of the back issues. Ask us for a bunch and **send them to the Departments on your campus** with a request that they be circulated among the faculty.

### **How to Re-Structure**

Mon, 14 Aug 95 13:04:57 EDT  
Originally-From: "Fredrick G. Prah" <prahlf@ccmail.orst.edu>  
apparently-to: <hhbauer@vt.edu>

HENRY: – This came in over the network. Substitute Dean for Quality Assurance Manager and Chairman for company chairman and you have a plausible scenario.

A company chairman was given a ticket for a performance of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*. Since he was unable to go, he passed the invitation to the company's Quality Assurance Manager. The next morning, the chairman asked him how he enjoyed it, and, instead of a few plausible observations, he was handed a memorandum which read as follows:

1. For a considerable period, the oboe players had nothing to do. Their number should be reduced, and their work spread over the whole orchestra, thus avoiding peaks of inactivity.
2. All twelve violins were playing identical notes. This seems unnecessary duplication, and the staff of this section should be drastically cut. If a large volume of sound is really required, this could be obtained through the use of an amplifier.
3. Much effort was involved in playing the demi-semiquavers. This seems an excessive refinement, and it is recommended that all notes should be rounded up to the nearest semiquaver. If this were done, it would be possible to use trainees instead of craftsmen.
4. No useful purpose is served by repeating with horns the passage that has already been handled by the strings. If all such redundant passages were eliminated, the concert could be reduced from two hours to twenty minutes.

In light of the above, one can only conclude that had Schubert given attention to these matters, he probably would have had the time to finish his symphony.

### **A Prediction: How money will NOT be saved**

**A**t Virginia Tech (yes, *again*; please, please send us stuff from the other miscreant Institutions in our Commonwealth!)

The Commission on Research has recommended that the six-year-old Women's Research Institute

be 'deauthorized' in its current format.... The WRI was established with an anonymous \$75,000 gift <sup>1</sup> over a three-year period .... The university has contributed an additional \$432,669 to support the institute since it began.<sup>2</sup>

Privately, a member of the Commission flatly described WRI to us as a boondoggle.

Our prediction: Even as academic departments continue to be shorn not only of their fleece but also their blood, skin and bone, the WRI will continue to be funded despite this recommendation.

Negroes are supposed to write about the Race Problem. I was and am thoroughly sick of the subject. My interest lies in what makes a man or a woman do such-an-so, regardless of his color.

Zora Neale Thurston  
*Dust Tracks on a Road*

[Ah for those good old days!  
Not even "his or her"!] ]

## A Provocation

The Faculty of the University of New Mexico affirm that the only valid parameters for judging an individual are character, intellect and personal skills and that evaluations based on group characteristics, such as race or gender, are inherently wrong and misleading and consequently ought

<sup>1</sup> Reminds us of the "cold fusion" fuss at the University of Utah. The president announced an anonymous gift to the Fusion Institute. Later it became known that the "gift" came from unrestricted donations to the University that the president had decided to use in this fashion; but he had not had the courage of his decision

<sup>2</sup> Susan Trulove, "COR recommends WRI deauthorization", *Spectrum* (VPI&SU) 95:9:28, p. 8

not to be employed in selection processes such as hiring and admissions.

Just what a right-thinking academic group might have affirmed during the struggle against racial segregation in the United States in the 1950s, say, or in opposition to Nazi practices in Germany in the 1930s. Who could possibly oppose such a resolution<sup>3</sup>?

The Faculty Senate at the University of New Mexico, in October 1995, that's who. Among all such brain-addling influences as alcohol, LSD, and the like, there may be nothing quite as permanent and potent as a politically correct excess of good-hearted super-"liberalism".

### Circumstances alter cases

The University of California's new President, Richard C. Atkinson, "consistently has supported affirmative action, and he reiterated that position during the Internet discussion with students".

On the other hand when it comes to federal funding of research, Atkinson **opposes** affirmative action: "we not only put forth truly excellent proposals, but the California Congressional delegation insures that people are being treated on the basis of merit and not on the basis of pork-barrel politicking". <sup>4</sup>

### The Leaders of our Proud Profession

So a Faculty Senate refuses to agree that individuals should be

<sup>3</sup> The resolution had been submitted by Richard Berthold, History, President of the New Mexico Association of Scholars

<sup>4</sup> Kit Lively, "California's new president assumes the hot seat", *Chronicle of Higher Education* 95:10:20, p. A29

judged on their individual merits; and a University President goes both ways on the matter depending on which side of the bread has his butter on it. Here's how the Association of American Colleges & Universities stands on excellence and the inherent value of liberal education, as illustrated by the titles of sessions from its forthcoming meeting<sup>5</sup>:

*The High-Tech Workplace: **What It Needs from Liberal Arts Graduates***

*Practice, Projects, Presentations: **Liberal Education as Rehearsal for the Professional World***

*Redefining Excellence: **Experiential Learning Comes Into Its Own***

*Recovering the Lost Liberal Art: **Oral Communication Proficiency*** (If that Art ever is recovered, then such a session might simply be entitled "Speaking Clearly" or "To Speak Clearly", would it not?)

In case anyone doubts that PC has captured the spokes-person tier of higher education (I can't somehow bring myself to call them "leaders"):

- At the Presidents' Breakfast, there will be discussed the deplorable fact "that, at the current pace of change, campuses will be equitably diverse by the year 2070".

Anyone check the assumptions on which that statistical forecast is made, or what the definition of "equitably diverse" might be?

- The National Panel guiding AAC&U's initiative "American

<sup>5</sup> 82nd Annual Meeting, January 11-13, 1996, The Grand Hyatt, Washington DC; held in cooperation with the 52nd Annual Meeting of the American Conference of Academic Deans; details from the Preliminary Program

Commitments: Diversity, Democracy, and Liberal Learning” *urge[s] the higher education community to initiate on every one of our campuses American Commitment Community Seminars – open study-dialogues that explore the experiences of inequality, struggles to expand the application of democratic principles and the future of United States cultural and democratic pluralism* [italics in original].

But as a naturalized immigrant to the USA, I know that it is the experience of **equality** that distinguishes the USA from all but a handful of other countries; as also the extent of cultural and democratic pluralism here.

- A Spring 1996 Workshop “will look at some of the cutting-edge intellectual questions that are causing scientists to rethink their disciplines, especially in terms of feminist critiques of the sciences, questions about the relation of science and race, and new scientific paradigms like chaos theory”.

Far from “rethinking their disciplines”, the attitude of scientists towards the feminist critiques is better illustrated by Gross & Levitt’s total dismissal of them in *Higher Superstition*<sup>6</sup>.

The books reviewed in this issue make a strong case that the Establishment position, that AIDS is caused solely by HIV, is not well supported by the available evidence; and that in any case the standard treatment with AZT is iatrogenic death. The AAC&U, nevertheless, is launching an “education” effort to propagate the

Establishment view: “With major sponsorship from the Centers for Disease Control, AAC&U is launching a new multiyear effort to ... examine how ... health and HIV – can be integrated into undergraduate education”; that effort will be featured at the meeting’s Presidential Forum as well as at a regular session.

### **More leadership**

In a letter to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*<sup>7</sup> I asked: will progressively minded people take the same attitude toward those who propose massively resisting the Supreme Court’s ruling against race-based scholarships, as they did toward those who practiced massive resistance against the Supreme Court’s ruling on race-based school assignments three decades ago?

Our educational “leaders” are wasting little time in answering that rhetorical question<sup>8</sup>:

The Education Department and a coalition of higher-education associations sent separate letters this month to all colleges, urging them to stand by their race-specific scholarships and other affirmative-action programs.

‘Despite recent legal setbacks and political controversies, affirmative action enjoys widespread support within higher education ...,’ said the letter from the American Council on Education and 21 other college groups.

That last assertion is a fine example of the typical administrator’s belief that<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Virginia Scholar* #6, p. 16

<sup>8</sup> Scott Jaschik, “Colleges get conflicting messages on affirmative action”, *Chronicle of Higher Education* 95:9:29, p. A57

<sup>9</sup> Henry B., “A sabbatical tale”, *AAUP Bulletin*, 60 (1974) 296-298

Intelligence is the mental capability of emitting contextually appropriate behavior at those regions in the experiential continuum that involve response to novelty or automatization of information processing as a function of metacomponents, performance components, and knowledge-acquisition components

Robert J. Sternberg,  
*Beyond IQ: A Triarchic Theory of Human Intelligence*,  
Cambridge U. P. 1984, p.128;  
cited in *Science* 230:60, 85:10:4

### **SAYING SO, MAKES IT SO**

Let’s put it to the vote of all faculty in all colleges, and see just how widespread the support really is for affirmative action as currently practiced.

Marsha N. Adler, director of government relations for the American Association of University Professors, said her organization was lobbying against the Senate bill that would eliminate some affirmative-action programs....

‘I think it’s cynical and unwise to take these very important issues into politics,’ Ms. Adler said.

Quite right, Ms. Adler. There you are, “director of government relations” which means lobbyist, deploring that some issue has been treated as a matter for political negotiation.

And explain to me, please, exactly why affirmative action should **not** be an issue of politics. Isn’t politics the way we handle issues in a democratic society? Was not the imposition of affirmative action an issue of politics?

<sup>6</sup> Paul R. Gross & Norman Levitt, *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and its Quarrels with Science*, Johns Hopkins 1994

## **More Communication Proficiency**

WOMSt ... has also experimented with new pedagogical methods such as 'tandem teaching,' in which two faculty teach different sections of the same courses on an alternating basis at the same time in different locations, one of which is large enough to accommodate both classes

[Source withheld purely as a matter of kindness]

## **Modern communication proficiency**

In the Soviet Union, they used to rewrite their history books to keep them up-to-date with Party ideology. In the United States, we have to rewrite our literature to keep it up-to-date with non-sexist communication-proficiency. A recent article<sup>10</sup> had as an epigraph the following:

*The intellectual function of trouble is to lead men [and women] to think*

JOHN DEWEY

I'm awfully glad the author was good enough to remind us that talk about "men" often means "humans" or "people" and not just specifically males. The blathering shenanigans of the gender-feminists could easily make one forget it.

## **More Local PC**

Dear Editor:

Thank you for my copy of your newsletter. I appreciate the fact that there is a non-politically correct source of news for Virginia's academic community.

<sup>10</sup> Frank Press, "Needed: coherent budgeting for science and technology", *Science* 270 (95:12:1) 1448

I recently observed a bit of political correctness I thought you'd appreciate. For months the bulletin board in Virginia Tech's Agricultural Economics Department has displayed the full text of President Clinton's speech announcing his review of affirmative action. This was accompanied by a newspaper column by David Broder which applauded the President's remarks. Again, these have been posted for months.

Not too long ago two other columns appeared on the bulletin board. One column revealed the inconsistency between Clinton's remarks and what his administration continued to do to promote "diversity." Another column, by Jack Kemp, opined that both Democrats and Republicans should revise their affirmative action stances to create an opportunity society based on recognition of individuals, not groups.

Within days of the second group of columns being posted, all of these articles were removed from the bulletin board. I guess in Ag Econ there is room for only one set of arguments.

Sincerely,

[Name withheld by request]

## **And more**

To: "Henry H. Bauer"  
<hhbauer@vt.edu>

Date: Mon, 30 Oct 95 08:00:00

Were you aware that last week on campus we were supposed to wear white ribbons to symbolize our disapproval of domestic violence? It was such a flop that I don't think everyone heard about it. A friend of mine received a letter from the organizing committee. It very subtly suggested all males who oppose gender preferences are like the guy who murdered those coeds in Canada and said he'd done it because women had taken opportunities from him.

I was thinking of suggesting to

some of our students that they organize an "equality week" where everyone wears clear, colorless ribbons to symbolize their desire for a society without racial prejudice. The theme could be "content of our character, not the color of our skin."

Now **there's** a nice idea. But then some fellow-traveler of Derrida, Foucault, or Paul de Man would only explain why Martin Luther King's dream is no longer operative.

## **Money really isn't everything in education**

Patrick County ... was No. 1 in Virginia this year in the percentage of its sixth-graders who passed the state Literacy Passport Test, beating affluent suburban school systems in Northern Virginia that traditionally rank at the top in student academic achievement....

Patrick spent \$4,552 per pupil [while] Arlington spent \$8,898 ... and Falls Church spent \$8,745.

Educators are calling to find the secret of the county's success. But [Lois] Kloock [director of instruction for Patrick County] said there is no secret – just dedication and hard work.

But in fact it **has** been a secret, for decades, to our progressive education experts, that the necessary conditions for learning include dedication and hard work, most particularly on the part of the students.

Just imagine, if instructors found students to be dedicated and hard-working. My mind boggles.

## **Information please:**

Quite a lot can be understood about the state of higher education from what job advertisements say.

Take for instance the ad for a Chancellor at the University of

Illinois at Chicago<sup>11</sup>:

Particular sensitivity to and skill with multi-racial and multicultural relations is required.

That sort of phrase, like the ubiquitous “an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer”, easily rolls off the mind without leaving an imprint because we’re so accustomed to it. But stop for a moment to consider **what specific realities** this requirement might call for. What **actions** might one expect of a successful candidate?

Let us know what you think and we’ll share your thoughts in the next Newsletter.

### **More Schadenfreude**<sup>12</sup>

Robert J. Wickenheiser, President of St. Bonaventure University, got a lot of publicity for dismissing only male professors in the face of financial crisis<sup>13</sup>:

He says he felt a bit abandoned by the female faculty members. He had expected them to make a public statement in support of his stance, but they have not.

### **Bumf survey**

*Spotlight 95* ... was created as a supplement to your *Spotlight on Benefits* newsletter. Each issue has highlighted certain components of your benefits choices to

help you select the plan that’s best for you and your family. We’d appreciate your feedback as to whether these issues have helped you better understand the many exciting choices you have this year.

The feedback was requested on an attached form. But it was not reply-paid, so we give our feedback here:

NO! Those *Spotlights* didn’t help me one little bit. Give me back the money – my money, my State taxes – that was spent on producing them.

And I didn’t find those choices “exciting” (unless rage qualifies as excitement). **What I would like is for the Commonwealth to stop wasting my money creating and distributing bumf.** My accumulation for this year includes 3 issues of the Virginia Retirement System’s *Memo to Members* (vol. 19 nos. 2 & 3, 8 pages each, plus a 4-page Special Edition in the Summer), **not one word of which was of any interest or use to me**; and vol. 1, nos. 1-4 of *Commonwealth Currents*, each with 4 newspaper-size pages, claiming to be “published for Commonwealth of Virginia Employees by the Department of Personnel and Training”, **not one word of which was of any interest or use to me.** Except, perhaps, as an illustration of the sorry state of literacy among the editors of these publications, who tell us that *Commonwealth Currents* “will replace the familiar *Personnel Communiqué* as the principle [sic] source of statewide policy and personnel information”.

Oh waste-eliminating Republicans and others! Where are you when we could really use you?

### **Another reason to wipe the bumf:**

Fri, 12 May 95 14:15:48 EDT

From: Provost’s Office

To: “Deans, Directors, etc.”

Subject: PAPER! PAPER!

Due to a combination of economic and production capacity situations, there is a paper short-

age throughout the United States. This is affecting both process and deliveries from suppliers. You can help by making renewed efforts to conserve paper, recycle paper, and use double-sided copies if possible ...

We wager, however, that:

1. The volume of memos from the Provost’s Office and from other administrative offices will remain unchanged.
2. Newsletters and other bumf will continue to appear at the same rate as before this memo.
3. Indeed, *new* newsletters will come into being.

### **And sure enough, MORE AND MORE bumf:**

Amid re-structuring, cut-backs, buy-outs, etc. we can still find money and time to invent, create, print, and distribute stuff that no one needs to read:

**Advisor’s Newsletter**, Spring 1995 & Fall 1995, with information that is *all available elsewhere*. Cheap, though, probably no more than \$1000 or \$2000 in person-time and materials.

**CNS News** (A Telecommunications Newsletter) self-proclaimed as vol. 1, no. 1 in February 1995. But those who don’t remember the past are doomed to repeat it: VTLS reveals that volumes 1-4 were actually published between 1984 and 1987 – at a time when we were flush with funds, unlike at present. 5 issues during 1995 had such indispensable information as that “On August 1, 1994, the United Kingdom began using a new permissive dialing pattern associated with major changes in their telephone numbering system”. But again this is a cheapie, surely costs just some thousands of dollars.

<sup>11</sup> *Chronicle of Higher Education* 95:11:3, B74

<sup>12</sup> Editorial, VS #5, April 1995

<sup>13</sup> Denise K. Magner, “Men on the firing line”, *Chronicle of Higher Education* 95:10:20, A17

**Connecting Through Writing**, 1600 copies of 12 semi-gloss pages. Lots of sleep-inducing reading, including "Notes from the Director" which heading, however, woke me up to search the whole 12 pages to find out who the Director is. Eventually discovered it with the help of a by-the-way remark on p. 11. This one must have cost in the 5 figures if you count the person-time.

**Continuing Education** contributed a 16-pager in Summer and a 20-pager in the Fall, 3400 copies of each, glossy paper, photos, graphics, 2-color: now we're climbing toward the 6-figure mark in dollars.

No doubt to ensure that mark was reached, the Provost also sent us, courtesy of the Division of Continuing Education, a little booklet of 12 or 18 pages (depends on whether you open the folded-over ones or not) plus covers, 3500 copies, that informs us of the services available to help us put on successful continuing-education programs, for example: "Develop and Test Program Idea, Shape Program/Product, Implementation Program, Evaluate, and Wrap-up".

If they can do all that, what do they need us faculty for? Especially when they can

#### Define Program Ideas

- Conceive ideas
- Brainstorm ideas

and so on.

**The Enabler** 1 #4 came to hand in June 1995, 4 pages and 6000 copies, just a 5-figure cost. But we haven't seen another issue since. Has it ceased publication? Could this at last be a success for our anti-bumf campaign?

Perennially short of money to buy scholarly periodicals, the li-

brary has again canceled lots of subscriptions this year. But it can still afford to produce **Library Friends** (vol. 1 no. 1 in Summer 1995), 8 glossy pages with photos, 3500 copies, again just a 5-figure cost – equivalent to a few dozen subscriptions to serials, say, or a couple of hundred books.

#### IN MEMORIAM

**Tom MacAdoo**  
1922-1996

**A man of true faith,  
passionate conviction,  
great honesty,  
superb integrity**

**A man of many talents,  
unstintingly deployed  
to the benefit of others**

**International authority  
on bacterial nomenclature**

**A man  
worth having known**

**Quality Improvement in Action** continues, 4 issues this year, with "information" about as useless and uninteresting as the "Factoids" on CNN Headline News. **Why is the Academic Assessment Program permitted to waste time and money distributing this junk? Is it really the case that they have nothing better to do?!** We could save thousands a year by putting a stop to it.

**The University Abroad** also continues, 4-page 2-color newsletters at 3,400 copies a time, with such essential and late-breaking news that we couldn't get from anywhere else as, in the Spring

1995 issue, "Peggy Meszaros appointed Provost at Virginia Tech". Let's cut it out and save \$10,000 or more a year.

**Spectrum** (VPI&SU) had another 8-page, newspaper-size parasitic **Women at Virginia Tech** supplement, some of it repeating data about faculty diversity that had, for some reason, been earlier sent only to Women Faculty in a memo from the AA/EEO Office.

As usual, the really expensive item came in the form of **Virginia Issues & Answers**, 32 glossy 2-color pages with photos, a full-color cover, printed "on acid-free, chlorine-free, recycled paper with soybean ink", 6000 copies; several \$10,000 sums there.

Winter 1995 brought vol. 1, no. 1 of **DIVERSITY NEWS**, 20 pages, 3-color (black, white & purple) with photos, 5000 copies distributed. We hope to comment on this more fully in the future.

**Virginia Tech could save itself hundreds of thousands of dollars per year** by declaring an end to bumf. Every Office or Unit that distributes a pamphlet, bulletin, newsletter or the like that has no purpose other than self-advertisement, should have the corresponding cost deducted from its budget for subsequent years. The money thus saved could go into, say, getting a copying machine for some of the Departments that don't have serviceable ones, or to pay for some copying for class use which some academic Departments cannot now afford.

In the meantime, our thanks and congratulations to the Director of the Virginia Tech Museum of Natural History whose **Newsletter** (vol. 1, no. 1 in Spring 1955) is paid for by **NationsBank**.

*Book Reviews:****COULD POLITICAL CORRECTNESS BE MAKING THE TRAGEDY OF AIDS EVEN MORE TRAGIC?***

*Rethinking AIDS: The Tragic Cost of Premature Consensus* by Robert S. Root-Bernstein, New York: Free Press, 1993, xvii + 512 pp.

*Why We Will Never Win the War on AIDS* by Bryan J. Ellison & Peter H. Duesberg, Inside Story Communications (190 El Cerrito Plaza, Suite 201, El Cerrito, CA 94530), 1994, x + 292 pp. ISBN 0-9646475-0-8 [available from Inside Story Communications, 1512 E. Noble, #102, Visalia, CA 93292, at \$19.95 (p) plus \$3 s&h].

Two books could hardly be more different than these while still carrying the same message. The first is a heavy scholarly tome that would – were it not for its central hair-raising points – be difficult to wade through as it ceaselessly cites supporting data. It had taken reading the other book, an outright polemic, to make me read the first, which had been part of my to-be-read-when-I-have-time pile for a couple of years.

The major difference between the books: For Ellison (and Duesberg), HIV is (certainly) an irrelevance, not even a contributory cause of AIDS. For Root-Bernstein, HIV is (probably) only one among several viruses that can induce AIDS in people whose immune system has already been stressed in other ways.

The common message: The apparent unanimity that AIDS is caused solely and entirely by the virus, HIV, is a mistake or illusion induced by some combination of wishful thinking, scientific ignorance, self-interested researchers, Establishment-gulled media, cure-demanding activists, and other such features of human science and society. Many things about AIDS seem inexplicable or farfetched under the HIV-only hypothesis. Many of those things are explicable under other hypotheses. If the HIV-only theory is wrong, then current treatments are even less effective than they appear – they may be killing people iatrogenically, prematurely, unnecessarily. And if that is the case, then political correctness will be partly to blame, for it has conspired to silence unorthodox views.

Why would PC do that? Because it always opposes opinions that, simplistically interpreted, might seem to offer rationalizations for unwarranted discrimination against groups at risk of victimization. If intelligence has a significant hereditary component, so goes the PC substitute for thought, then *groups* of people having significant heredity in common might be stigmatized as inferior. What the PCers forget, of course, is that it is they themselves, as much or more than others, who demand that people be treated not as individuals but on account of the groups they belong to. Regarding AIDS, the misguidedness is that victims will be thought to have brought it on themselves if life-style or behavioral factors play a role in causing the sickness. Yet if that does happen to be the case, untold numbers of victims and potential victims could be saved if they learned in time what those life-style or behavioral factors might be.

There is never a satisfactory substitute for truth, and there is never a satisfactory substitute for treating all people individually.

**R***ethinking AIDS* has all the proper scholarly apparatus: the 373 pages of text are supported by 102 pages of notes and references, a 6-page glossary and 25 pages of index, and it gives names, addresses and telephone numbers of 6 organizations that seek a re-examination of the HIV-only hypothesis.

Preceding the *Table of Contents*, the reader encounters aphorisms from Pasteur, John Stuart Mill, James Clerk Maxwell and others, all warning against dogmatism. And the *Preface* begins plainly enough: “We do not understand AIDS. By *under-*

*stand* I mean something very specific: having sufficient knowledge to intervene in or control the disease process”; continuing that “our theory of AIDS is full of glaring holes, confusing contradictions, and outright discrepancies. I am saying nothing more than what the medical literature itself says about AIDS. The only difference is that I am willing to say this in public, whereas most practitioners are not.”

That is accurate. Throughout the book Root-Bernstein respects what the professional literature delivers in the way of data; but he consistently points out how those data do not yield, let alone de-

mand an HIV-only explanation.

Chapter 1, "Anomalies", gives chapter and verse for these and other contentions:

- "HIV and AIDS are older than we think", with relevant data going back more than a century.
- HIV is neither necessary nor sufficient to cause AIDS: There have been numerous patients with typical symptoms of AIDS from whom no HIV could be isolated *and who even show no sign of exposure to it* (i.e. who lack antibodies).
- HIV is transmitted with far greater difficulty than are such typical STDs as gonorrhea, syphilis, or hepatitis B virus:

Early reports of HIV in semen, indicating a ready means of transmission, have not been confirmed by subsequent studies. "Less than 15 percent of women infected with HIV transmit their infection to their infants in Western nations.... women who have been artificially inseminated with sperm from donors who were subsequently identified as being infected with HIV almost never become infected" (35-6).

Many people are exposed to HIV without becoming infected, let alone developing AIDS. "Prostitutes who do not abuse intravenous drugs almost never become infected with HIV" (40), whereas they usually do become infected with syphilis, gonorrhea and herpes (42). A break-out of AIDS into the general heterosexual population, predicted long ago on the HIV-only-cause presumption, has not occurred. Sex with prostitutes, in absence of other risk factors, led to HIV infection in instances that "can be counted on the fingers of one hand. *Sex with a prostitute is not even listed as a risk category by the American CDC [Centers for Disease Control]*" (40 – emphasis added).

HIV infections in the general population in America, Britain and Canada "are no more common in 1992 than ... in 1985" (43). Health workers have become infected in only a few dozen cases despite many thousands of instances of accidental exposure to HIV-carrying blood. A surgeon runs a 1-in-4 risk of infection by hepatitis B after accidental skin puncture but only a 1-in-1000 risk with HIV. "HIV is extremely difficult to transmit to a healthy individual" (44-5).

Chapter 2 concerns "The Role of HIV in AIDS". The CDC's definition of AIDS in 1982 was opportunistic infection by any of 14 diseases with "no identified cause of immune suppression" (59), a most nec-

essary caveat since those diseases were a known danger to transplant patients, to people who had had cancer chemotherapy or chronic treatment with corticosteroids, or to those born with defective immune systems. But since 1984, when Gallo's discovery of HIV was announced, the presence of HIV or antibodies to it has been part of the definition of AIDS; *so that other people who die of those opportunistic infections nowadays are **not** considered part of the AIDS problem even though they were so considered up to 1984*. Thus many people diagnosed prior to 1984 as having AIDS *have since then **not** been so labeled*. And people who would **not** have been labeled "AIDS" in earlier years because of the presence of some known immune-suppressive factors **are** now labeled "AIDS" after another revision of the definition in 1985 (61-2).

A further oddity of the manner in which AIDS is now officially defined is that no cure is possible. Once having tested positive for HIV, people living in apparent good health a dozen years later remain classified as sufferers doomed to develop AIDS. In all other diseases, by contrast, such long survival is taken as evidence of successful treatment or cure (67-8): the antibodies are then taken as evidence that the immune system encountered the virus and defused it.

A powerful analogy to which Root-Bernstein periodically returns is that of a drowned man. There is too much CO<sub>2</sub> in his blood, yet it would be perverse to call that the cause of death – it is "an epiphenomenon, a secondary or additional symptom" (65). The real cause of death was inability to breathe, a lack of available oxygen just as much as the excess of CO<sub>2</sub>. The cause of that cause in turn might have been inability to swim, or a cramp while swimming, or a heart attack, or an accidental or deliberate blow on the head, or any of many other possible events.

HIV is like the CO<sub>2</sub> in that analogy. "The existence of the full range of AIDS symptoms and opportunistic infections in both HIV-free and HIV-infected transplant and cancer patients" should warn us that HIV could be epiphenomenal – which is what Root-Bernstein in fact believes.

*Rethinking AIDS* presents the strongest evidence for HIV as the sole cause of the disease and then points to apparently fatal flaws in that evidence. It is shown over and over how AIDS is defined, discussed, and researched in a manner that no other plague or virus is – ignoring, for example, the long-standing criteria (Koch's postulates) for identi-

fyng the cause of an infectious disease.

Root-Bernstein's favored hypothesis is that AIDS is a multi-factorial, synergistic disease: multiple stresses and insults to the immune system eventually allow it to succumb completely to otherwise innocuous infections. Root-Bernstein has proposed a similar cause for auto-immune disease, and this is consistent with the auto-immune symptoms often seen in the later stages of AIDS.

Among many eye-openers in *Rethinking AIDS* is its enumeration of the many ways by which immune systems may be stressed. Premature infants and elderly people "incur demonstrable immune deficiencies associated almost completely with their age" (146). Between 1930 and 1960, "the vast majority of *Pneumocystis* cases in children ... [were those who] had been severely malnourished in the early years of life" (136). In 1947 came one of the earliest reports of an adult with *Pneumocystis* and disseminated cytomegalovirus infection, two opportunistic infections very commonly found in AIDS sufferers – the patient was found to have severe vitamin-A-deficiency. "The limited information that does exist suggests that all addictive drugs probably have significant effects on the immune system" (121). A wide variety of pharmacological agents including anesthetics, steroids, aspirin [!], cancer chemotherapeutics and more, are immunosuppressive (129 ff.). So is the trauma associated with surgery.

Exposure to the cells of other human beings produces an immune response. That is why blood donors are "matched" as closely as possible to recipients, and why organ transplants require the recipients to be given immunosuppressive drugs. Yet despite "matching" of blood, "blood transfusions directly suppress T cell-mediated immunity in both animals and humans in a dose-dependent fashion resulting in inverted T4/T8 ratios similar to those seen during the early stages of AIDS" (143); "hemophiliacs, like people with sickle cell disease and people who receive massive transfusions, are often immunologically deficient in the total absence of HIV infections".

As with components of blood so with semen, which is "One of the oldest identified alloantigens known to cause immune suppression ... if it obtains access to the bloodstream or lymph" (115) – as is likely through receptive anal intercourse, "the most hazardous sex practice associated with the development of AIDS for both men and women" (115-6).

Support for the multi-factorial hypothesis of AIDS genesis comes copiously from the medical lit-

erature. Synergy is often observed: simultaneous infection with *several individually innocuous viruses* can have disastrous consequences to the immune system. "People with AIDS and most of those at risk for the syndrome have multiple concurrent infections and many non-infectious causes of immune suppression" (184). Striking are bar graphs (Figures 3-7, pp. 165-9) showing the prevalence of serum antibodies to various infectious agents in various groups of people. European and North American hemophiliacs show high frequencies of antibodies to eight common opportunistic infections and appreciable frequencies of active infection by five of those. Intravenous drug users show even higher frequencies, 11 for both. *Equally high frequencies are found in **HIV-sero-negative** North American and European homosexual men*; and the profile of people with AIDS is very similar to the latter, the chief difference being the additional presence of HIV antibodies and HIV infection in the latter group. By stark contrast, European and North American heterosexuals show very low frequencies of any active infections and marked frequencies of antibodies to only 6 or 7 of those diseases.

The clearest apparent support for the HIV-only theory of AIDS causation is the fate of people infected by HIV through blood transfusion. Root-Bernstein points out, however, that these people had already suffered multiple immunosuppressive stresses *from whatever led to the need for transfusion* (238 ff.). Moreover, the rate at which HIV-infected hemophiliacs develop to AIDS is much slower than the HIV-only possibility would predict (221, 244 ff.)<sup>1</sup>. The multiple-factors theory, on the other hand, explains the finding of immunosuppression in **the majority of HIV-negative** hemophiliacs and homosexual men (chapter 7).

Root-Bernstein also offers plausible reasons why multi-factorially induced AIDS might have become so prevalent when it did (chapter 8). He notes the vast difference between African and Euro-American conditions in terms of AIDS-risk factors (chapter 9): the frequencies of antibodies and of active infections

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<sup>1</sup> A recently published study of essentially all hemophiliacs in Britain concluded that HIV is responsible for a considerably increased death-rate within a few years of infection; see Darby et al., *Nature*, 7 September 1995, 377: 79-82. But since no data were given on co-infections or treatments, it would seem likely that Root-Bernstein could accommodate these data too to the multi-factorial hypothesis.

in African *heterosexuals* (302) rather exceeds that in European and American intravenous drug users! That AIDS is a heterosexual disease in Africa, then, would not be a basis for predicting a similar outbreak in Europe or America if the multi-factorial explanation is correct.

Chapters 10 and 11 should be read even by those who skip much of the detailed material in the middle chapters of this book. Chapter 10 is a careful comparison of several hypotheses of AIDS-causation in the light of the amassed evidence. Clearly the best explanation is Root-Bernstein's view that AIDS is a multi-factorial, synergistic syndrome to which HIV contributes, but contributes in all probability no more than do several other viruses and non-infectious insults to the immune system. Root-Bernstein specifically separates himself from the view propounded by Peter Duesberg that HIV is *entirely and always* harmless.

Chapter 11 addresses the conundrum, "How could so many scientists be so wrong?", and the crucial questions, "What can be done to prevent the spread of AIDS that is not being done now? What can be done for people with AIDS that has not yet been tried?"

To the first question, there are "several answers, each of which sheds light on a different aspect of how science is performed". First, all data have more than one possible explanation. Second, the one-cause, HIV-only theory is the simplest and thus indicated to those who rely on Occam's Razor. Third, there is over-specialization: AIDS calls on immunology, virology, biochemistry, pharmacology, epidemiology and other fields whose practitioners are not used to working together. Each has different criteria of plausibility, different criteria for judging which data should be heeded and which set aside. None – no field of science – pays special attention to anomalies (until they have become unbearably numerous and weighty). Fourth, gullibility or wishfulness and the weight allowed to authority are as much in evidence within science as elsewhere. Fifth, "Priority, patent rights for AIDS tests, national honor, and political and social exigencies all played their role" (353); after 1984, all American funding agencies affirmed and promoted the HIV-only hypothesis.

On the second, most pressing questions, Root-Bernstein shows that there are a number of sensible things to be tried on the basis of the multi-factorial, synergistic model. **Moreover some at least of these would do no harm even if the HIV-only theory is**

**correct.** But current dogma is so strongly held and so widely diffused that those who, like Root-Bernstein, are seeking open debate find few willing to listen. It is worth noting that among the groups urging re-examination of the whole problem are several whose constituents include AIDS sufferers and AIDS activists. Nothing Root-Bernstein says is substantively or potentially damaging to AIDS victims or potential victims or members of high-risk groups; thus he is at pains in several places to point out that homosexuals who avoid risky sex practices and eschew other immunosuppressive factors are at little risk for AIDS **even should they contract HIV** – though becoming so infected tends to indicate that co-infections and other risk factors are likely to be present as well.

This book deserves to be widely read and widely discussed. It is enlightening about the main issue and reveals other little-known facts, for example the limited efficacy of such standard, vaunted high-tech medicine as kidney transplants, blood transfusions and the like. Thus the probability of death within 3 years after kidney transplant is 20 percent in absence of complications and 40 percent with complications (60). Hemophiliacs had, in 1970, a life expectancy of only 33 years (247). Improved treatments since then have raised that to 55 years – which still falls some 20-25 years short of the general population, indicating that hemophiliacs still suffer a diminished efficacy of the immune system. In one study, recipients of blood transfusions had a mortality rate of **about 50% in the year following transfusion**, whether or not they were infected with HIV by the transfusion. In another study of people who received on the average a 70% smaller amount of blood, the death rate was still 21% in the first year and 30% by the end of 3 years (242-3). One wonders whether those numbers were included on the informed-consent statements the patients or their relatives had doubtless been required to sign.

**E**ven having read Root-Bernstein one can gain useful information from Ellison, for example to realize that non-infectious ailments can simulate **and have simulated** outbreaks of infectious disease. If one has read Ellison, one ought also to read Root-Bernstein for its broader scientific grounding<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> One should of course take note of as many differing viewpoints as possible; but (p. 20) the orthodox Establishment has failed to provide detailed (and promised) answers to one of its chief critics, Peter

Ellison's book initially makes an unfavorable impression on account of its unbridled tone; its heavy reliance in the body of the text on citations from such ephemeral sources as newspapers and popular magazines; its suspicion-inviting ambivalence as to authorship. Yet if Ellison is largely correct, then his passion is understandable; and the end-of-chapter footnotes are supplemented by an 8-page *Selected Bibliography* that cites solid stuff.

The front cover and title page of this book say "Bryan J. Ellison and Peter H. Duesberg". So does the copyright note following the title page. The back cover says "Bryan J. Ellison and Peter H. Duesberg ... have written this blockbuster book". On p. 47 we read "Peter Duesberg (one of the authors of this book)". Yet the Preface is signed by Ellison alone and contains the sentence: "Although Duesberg himself did not actually write it, his previous research on HIV and other viruses, and on AZT and other drugs, has been incorporated into parts of several chapters" (vii). (An explanation for this inconsistency in terms of difficulties among publishers and authors is given in *The Skeptic* <sup>3</sup>, 3 (1995 #2) 42-58. Duesberg's version, *Inventing the AIDS Virus*, is to appear<sup>4</sup> from Regnery Publishing Inc. in February 1996.)

Chapter 1 is stunning. For 15 years, we learn, Japanese medical science chased a phantom virus presumed responsible for epidemic outbreaks of SMON (Subacute Myelo-Optic Neuropathy) – whose real cause turned out to be the drug cloquinoxil (Enterovioform). AIDS too is partly iatrogenic, says Ellison: AZT can cause it.

Success against microbes (with antibiotics) and viruses (through vaccination) led medical science to invoke them routinely as causes of disease. Yet history reveals other cases besides SMON where a high incidence of disease in certain localities was **wrongly** taken as evidence of an infectious agent at work: scurvy, for instance (22 ff.), or beriberi (25 ff.) or pellagra (17, 27-33).

In Ellison's view, the preoccupation with viruses as causes of disease led to the belief that *all* viruses cause disease. Since numerous new viruses were discovered in healthy people, virologists came to postulate "slow viruses" that remain in the body for long "latent periods" before awakening and doing their

damage. But this happens only in people whose immune systems have been weakened, according to Ellison; there is no evidence for the infection of people with healthy immune-systems by viruses that remain latent for long periods and then become deadly.

In arguing against that widely accepted view, even though his case seems to make sense Ellison is likely to repel some readers through his *ad hominem* approach. By smear and innuendo he attacks (among others) Carleton Gajdusek who was "awarded ... the 1976 Nobel Prize for medicine, for the kuru and Creutzfeld-Jakob viruses he has still never found" (53).

Chapter 3 also recounts how the direction of scientific research became subservient to federal funding after W.W.II; how the National Institutes of Health (NIH) came to dominate research in biology; and how virus hunting became the central interest of public-health activities and clinical research. "Many of the leading scientists in the war on AIDS ... launched their careers in the wake of the NIH war on polio" (49). Chapter 4 recounts the hunt for phantom cancer-causing viruses and the discovery of retroviruses. Chapter 5, "AIDS: The Virus Hunters Converge", points to self-interest at the root of current AIDS research: a public-health establishment that believes "a healthy lifestyle is not a matter of personal responsibility, but of government management" (94). The CDC [Centers for Disease Control] became "increasingly desperate for public health emergencies" (97) and invented swine flu, the vaccine against which killed more people than the disease did (99 ff.). AIDS-guru Robert Gallo "has a long history of false claims thinly veiled as timely scientific discoveries" (110).

Chapter 6 begins to cover much the same ground as Root-Bernstein's book. Against the HIV-only theory, "we have already uncovered in the scientific literature some 4,621 confirmed cases of HIV-free people dying of AIDS diseases" (125). "The official HIV-AIDS hypothesis declares a 50 to 100 per cent probability of death from infection ... antibodies against HIV as a sure sign of imminent doom. This notion, of antibodies as a prognosis of death, defies all classical experience with viruses and bacteria; virtually every microbe causes disease only in a minority of infected individuals, since the majority are usually healthy enough to mount a rapid immune response. Certainly no fatal viral disease is known to cause death in nearly all infected people – except the paradoxical

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Duesberg

<sup>3</sup> P. O. Box 338, Altadena, CA 91001; skepticism@aol.com

<sup>4</sup> Larry Neumeister, "Scientist attacks prevailing AIDS theory with book", *Roanoke Times* 95:12:3, A5 (AP)

'AIDS virus'" (126). More than 100 chimpanzees, inoculated with HIV as early as 1983, developed antibodies after a month as humans do but none of them has developed symptoms of AIDS. No scientist has offered answers to the questions raised by Duesberg in his 22-page review paper of March 1987 (131) and in later papers, one of which "was printed on the express condition that another virologist would respond ... Gallo himself promised such, but did not deliver" (132).

As with many anti-orthodoxy polemics, Ellison cites other anti-orthodox sources, for example John Lauritsen, author of *Poison by Prescription: The AZT Story*, self-published in 1990.... the most comprehensive critique of AZT available today" (154) and such mavericks as Serge Lang (242, 255) to the effect that "CDC hostility to any such reports" [of HIV-free AIDS cases] has intimidated people from publishing. But he also points to entirely respectable Establishment figures who second Duesberg's doubts about HIV: Albert Sabin (158); Nobelists Walter Gilbert (159), Manfred Eigen (162), and Kary Mullis (169); Luc Montagnier who was the actual discoverer of HIV (162); Root-Bernstein; Harry Rubin (167).

Ellison like Root-Bernstein believes that a multitude of drugs and infections can cause AIDS. As use of nitrite "poppers" by gays in San Francisco decreased, Kaposi's sarcoma dropped "from half of all AIDS reports in 1981 to only 10 percent by 1991" (182). Perhaps the most chilling possibility among all the chillers in this whole story is the likelihood that otherwise healthy people with HIV antibodies **contract AIDS through "treatment" with AZT** (Chapter 9). AZT had been invented in 1964 in the search for cancer chemotherapeutics. It "was the perfect killer of dividing cells" (203) but failed to act against cancer in mice and in fact killed the mice since "it so effectively destroyed healthy growing tissues" (204).

Chapter 10 is a discussion of how the AIDS establishment conspires to obfuscate, and Chapter 11 points to some breaking of the ranks and claims that "12 of the 13 million HIV positives" live absolutely normal lives; "those who stay off of [sic] recreational drugs and avoid AZT will never die of 'AIDS'" (269).

Some of the deficiencies of this book are common enough among unorthodox works. Having made an ample, soundly documented case that diseases of malnutrition have been mistaken for infectious diseases on a number of occasions, Ellison then weakens his case by treating leprosy as another example

("Leprosy cannot be an infectious disease", p. 35) even though the last word on that one remains to be said; and by being counter-orthodox also in suggesting that Legionnaire's disease was **not** caused by *Legionella* microbes but by people at risk for pneumonia indulging in too much carousing (35 ff.). The polemical tone of the book lessens its credibility, as does the citing of other maverick works. But just as with some other unorthodox works, these deficiencies should not obscure the fact that there are some important underlying truths here.

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### POSTSCRIPT

Alerted to the possibility that HIV may be far from the whole AIDS story, I find myself wanting to know, what comments Ellison or Root-Bernstein might have on the steady stream of news items that implicitly accept the HIV-only notion: the British hemophiliac study (see footnote on p. 17); that different HIV-1 strains are responsible for the epidemics in Africa and South-East Asia than in Europe and America<sup>5</sup>; that NIH has issued a 61-page pamphlet summarizing the case that HIV causes AIDS<sup>6</sup>; that a genetic defect in the HIV genome might be the reason for certain HIV-infected long-time survivors<sup>7</sup>.

A brief look at the Internet turned up <http://www.aidsauthority.org/> which has recent information along those lines, entry to a *Rethinking AIDS* discussion list, and archives. Among the latter was a report on a symposium held in 1994 to bring together critics and defenders of the HIV theory, at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. That report provides further evidence of PC-type attempts to suppress alternative views. It is written by John Lauritsen, whose book on AZT was cited by Ellison. I have not yet located a copy of that, but I did find Lauritsen's *The AIDS War*<sup>8</sup>, a collection of essays that I heartily recommend and plan to review in the next issue.

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<sup>5</sup> Jon Cohen, "Differences in HIV strains may underlie disease patterns", *Science* 270 (6 October 1995) 30-1

<sup>6</sup> Constance Holden, "RANDOM SAMPLES - All about AIDS", *Science* 270 (10 November 1995) 919

<sup>7</sup> Jon Cohen, "New clues found to how some people live with HIV", *Science* 270 (10 November 1995) 917-8

<sup>8</sup> John Lauritsen, *The AIDS War: Propaganda, Profiteering and Genocide from the Medical-Industrial Complex*, New York: ASKLEPIOS, 1993

## OTHER READING

**SAFS** – the Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship – is Canada's counterpart of the National Association of Scholars. We exchange newsletters, and I always read theirs with admiration for their struggle and dismay at the intensity of PC pressure in Canada and the excesses perpetrated there.

SAFS newsletter #11 (July 1995) carries a review (by Philip G. Davis) of *Moral Panic: Biopolitics Rising* by John Fekete (1994, Montreal & Toronto: Robert Davies Publishing [1-800-481-2440]):

The first part ... provides a detailed examination of the statistics on sexual violence ... bandied about in the media and ... taken seriously by both lobby groups and policy makers.... The cliché about 'lies, damned lies, and statistics' seems insipid by the time Fekete is done ....

The second part ... covers no fewer than seventeen cases in which Canadian professors have fallen foul of racial and sexual politics. ... The advocates of biopolitics have not merely undermined due process and the presumption of innocence; they have explicitly rejected ... these hard-won rights.

SAFS is "Open to all persons sharing our goals, whether working in a university or not". Those goals are:

1. Maintaining freedom in teaching, research, and scholarship.
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Dues are \$20 (\$10 for retirees and students), Canadian currency. If you can spare that modest amount to support our colleagues to the North, and at the same time get yourself some stimulating reading, contact SAFS at [safs@psych.utoronto.ca](mailto:safs@psych.utoronto.ca); or Box 581 Station "P", 704 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5S 2T1; (416) 978-7062, fax 4811.

The federal government took racism away from school boards, unions, sheriffs, employers, local governments and so on. Then the courts redistributed it under names like "affirmative action", "equal opportunity", "hiring goals" and "diversity". We could have done worse, but I'd like to think we could have done a lot better

Henry Allen, "Black Unlike Me",  
*Washington Post* 94:5:29, C1,4

## North America was not the first in PC!

In a review in *VS* #5 (p.12) we noted that Britain had been temporally ahead of the United States in Multi-Culti Sensitivity and all that. Our office clean-up turned up a clipping<sup>1</sup> from 1985 illustrating that:

the library of a small Roman Catholic School ... had to be closed after an inspector ordered the removal of its books.... [after a] check of each book ... for 'classism, sexism, racism and ageism.' ... *Tom Sawyer* ... [was] 'racist,' *Robinson Crusoe* ... not only 'racist' but also 'sexist' and 'imperialist' ... Mrs. Pamela Pullen, divisional primary inspector for the Inner London Education Authority ... told the headmaster that any book over ten years old would have to be removed;

and from 1986 <sup>2</sup>,

a Leeds school ... has now changed Baa-baa black sheep to Baa-baa white sheep ... Goldilocks And The Three Bears has been changed to Jackie And The Three Frogs. The headmistress ... thinks it is racially insensitive to glorify a white little girl with blonde hair in a school which includes so many Asian and West Indian children.... Perhaps the best comment came from a parent ... 'Won't the French take exception to Jackie and the Three Frogs?'

## More books to burn

Among the authors I had enjoyed in my adolescence was Sax Rohmer. Looking back, I'm quite clear that the message I absorbed from his *Fu-Manchu* books – as from Leslie Charteris' *Saint*, Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes*, and others – was that crime doesn't pay *and shouldn't pay*. True enough that the villains were often Orientals or Middle-Easterners or Eastern Europeans, but somehow that reading never seems to have imbued in me any belief that people from those places are *inherently* villainous. But few if any of those books would obtain a *nihil obstat* from today's censors.

I was reminded of how times have changed in that respect when, some years ago, I glanced at a Dr. Dolittle book to see whether it might be suitable for a grand-child. Quickly I saw that its portrayal of Africans would never do. More recently I came across *The Fires of Fu Manchu* by Cay Van Ash, a novel written *à la Rohmer*. What a nostalgic! I cringed, and worried that someone might see me reading it,

<sup>1</sup> Albert Morris, "Brought to book", *The Scotsman* 1985:4:2

<sup>2</sup> "Goldilocks is shorn", *Yorkshire Evening Press* 1986:12:6

at the typical derogation, in British Imperial style, of Egyptians and other non-Europeans. I came across phrases I hadn't encountered for a long time, like "blood will tell", and "French leave".

Who is this racist Cay Van Ash, I wondered?

Turns out that he teaches English Literature at Waseda University in Tokyo and expresses gratitude to his wife Okchon. Maybe he's not a racist after all?

### **VIVE LA FRANCE!**

Those besotted by Derrida, Foucault, Lacan and other high-falutin obscurantists ought to be aware of the following:

Wed, 6 Sep 1995 16:44:27 EST

THE MAGAZINE & JOURNAL READER: — A glance at this week's issue of "The Village Voice": "Political correctness" has made its way across the Atlantic to France, where it is decidedly not "en vogue." France's anti-P.C. movement has taken root in recent years because it confirms the negative image of the United States that many left-leaning French people have formed, Judith Warner writes in the New York newspaper. "What French intellectuals say they despise most in American political correctness — the identity politics associated with multiculturalism and feminism — rests on an idea of the political subject that is totally at odds with France's most sacred principles of universalism and integration."

### **AND THE INDEPENDENT-MINDED FEMINISTS:**

Thu, 31 Aug 1995 13:38:45 -0400

Subject: Great Quote

from one of the truly sharp thinkers in the PC morass of academia, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese. Discussing the Citadel and the demise of single-sex education, she said, "The destruction of the Citadel is but a step in a comprehensive political and cultural revolution.... As American society becomes ever more centralized and ever more regulated, celebrations of diversity proliferate. Most of our institutions, especially the academy, promote programs to implement and safeguard an ostensible diversity that in fact spells a vicious conformity" (cited in Defense Media Review, vol. IX, #7/8, July/August 1995, from an article in National Review, 1 August, 1994).

### **Other subversive stuff**

can be found in the oddest places, like *Science* magazine<sup>3</sup>:

In attempting to explain why disproportionately few black students choose to major in science, some ... have suggested that an 'inhospitable' environment — or even 'institutional racism' — is to blame. But Dartmouth psychologist Roger Elliott and colleagues at Dartmouth, Yale, Cornell, and Brown universities have evidence that precollege achievement is enough to explain the ethnic disparities in college science.

### **A cri de coeur**

In "The sad state of Virginia's colleges" <sup>4</sup>, Tim Poland (Associate Professor of English at Radford) surely spoke for a great many of us when he said that what goes on between teacher and student

cannot be assessed quantitatively. It cannot be perceived in the language of short-term profit. You cannot affix a dollar amount to the ongoing benefit either to the individual student or to the community in which that student will come to reside.

You can, however, most certainly affix a dollar amount to what is necessary to create that environment in which such ... [productive interaction] may occur. And on this score, the administration ... [at both state and university levels] is sadly deficient....

The current administrations ... seem determined to offer a cut-rate, discount version of education based primarily on a corporate model that seeks a maximum of short-term gains with a minimum of investment....

... [they] work not for ... quality and depth ... but rather settle for the mere warehousing of students, emphasizing the flow of inventory and disregarding the substance of the product ....

... there appears to be an abundance of money for the surfaces of a university while ignoring the substance....

... the quality of work that is and could be done by both students and faculty is shamefully matched by the lack of quality in the support provided them ....

<sup>3</sup> Constance Holden, "No hostile climate found for minorities", *Science* 269 (95:8:25) 1047

<sup>4</sup> Tim Poland, "The sad state of Virginia's colleges", *Roanoke Times* 95:12:17, p. F3

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believes that rational discourse is a necessary foundation of academic life and of a democratic society. So we seek to foster and protect

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