The Decline of National Review

NR was once a voice for whites.

by James P. Lubinskas

The October 11, 1999, cover story of National Review was a piece by Senior Editor Ramesh Ponnuru called “A Conservative No More,” which argued that Patrick Buchanan has abandoned conservative principles. The article complained about Mr. Buchanan’s isolationism, opposition to free trade, and support for certain government programs, but the most serious charge appeared in the subtitle: “The tribal politics of Pat Buchanan.” According to Mr. Ponnuru, “Buchananism is a form of identity politics for white people—and becomes more worrisome as it is married to collectivism.” Any expression of white identity is now apparently a betrayal of conservatism. It was not always so.

National Review is considered the flagship publication of post-World War II conservatism. William F. Buckley started it in 1955, declaring that it “stands athwart history yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it.” Mr. Buckley was yelling “stop” to the spread of communism abroad and liberalism at home. That it should now attack Mr. Buchanan for supporting protectionism and market intervention is consistent with founding principles and no surprise. But few would have thought that after 44 years of publication, a senior editor with an Indian surname would condemn a popular white conservative for speaking up for whites.

In fact, the National Review of the 1950s, 60s and even 70s spoke up for white people far more vigorously than of the NR message it now dismissed as illegitimate “white identity politics.”

“Why the South Must Prevail”

A famous example of the early NR stance on race was an unsigned editorial of August 24, 1957, titled “Why the South Must Prevail.” It was almost certainly written by Mr. Buckley, since he uses similar language in his book Up From Liberalism. The editorial argued against giving blacks the vote because it would undermine civilization in the South:

“The central question that emerges... is whether the White community in the South is entitled to take such measures as are necessary to prevail, politically and culturally, in areas in which it does not prevail numerically? The sobering answer is Yes—the White community is so entitled because, for the time being, it is the advanced race. It is not easy, and it is unpleasant, to adduce statistics evidencing the cultural superiority of White over Negro: but it is a fact that obstructs, one that cannot be hidden by ever-so-busy egalitarians and anthropologists.”

“National Review believes that the South’s premises are correct. . . . It is more important for the community, anywhere in the world, to affirm and live by civilized standards, than to bow to the demands of the numerical majority.”

“The South confronts one grave moral challenge. It must not exploit the fact of Negro backwardness to preserve the Negro as a servile class. . . . Let the South never permit itself to do this. So long as it is merely asserting the right to impose superior mores for whatever period it takes to effect a genuine cultural equality between the races, and so long as it does so by humane and charitable means, the South is in step with...”

Continued on page 3

Pat Buchanan would ever dare to today. The early National Review heaped criticism on the civil rights movement, Brown v. Board of Education, and people like Adam Clayton Powell and Martin Luther King, whom it considered race hustlers. Some of the greatest names in American conservatism—Russell Kirk, Willmore Kendall, James Kilpatrick, Richard Weaver, and a young Bill Buckley—wrote articles defending the white South and white South Africans in the days of segregation and apartheid. NR attacked the 1965 immigration bill that opened America up to Third-World immigration, and wrote frankly about racial differences in IQ. There were always hints of compromise, but passages from some back issues could have been lifted right out of American Renaissance.

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from some back issues could have been lifted right out of American Renaissance. Not so today. NR still supports immigration reform and is not afraid of the IQ debate, but Mr. Ponnuru’s article is just one example of its complete abandonment of the interests of whites as a group. What used to be an important part
Letters from Readers

Sir – Sam Francis is a brilliant historian and writer, but he should have expanded his July article on the “war on white heritage” to include more than the NAACP. The attack on white Americans is being waged almost entirely by the non-religious left, the cultural communists, the ACLU, big business, the federal government, and a host of other front organizations. The NAACP is just another front organization founded by the non-religious left in 1915, and has never had a membership in excess of 400,000 people. The assault on the Confederate flag in South Carolina was not really inspired by blacks. Likewise, most blacks were not in favor of school desegregation in 1954 or other measures to promote forcible integration.

To an American who happens to be black, the article written by Sam Francis gives the impression that we as a group are attacking white (Christian) culture on our own. We are not. I suggest that Mr. Francis spend more time writing about the people who really run America, and leave the powerless blacks alone.

Name withheld, Dallas, Texas

Sir – In the July issue Samuel Francis points out that liberals insist team names like “Indians” and “Redskins” are insults to Native Americans. Aren’t these the same liberals who say team names like “Rebels” (now only found in high schools, alas) glorify the Confederacy? It is difficult to prove John Hanson, who served as President of the Continental Congress, was not black. I might point out that some time around 1981, the post office issued a 20-cent commemorative stamp with a likeness of William Hanson—who was clearly not black.

Fred Hooper, Mussel Shoals, Ala.

Sir – I will not be renewing my subscription to American Renaissance. The first six pages of the April, 2000, American Renaissance are devoted to the virtues of liberals, with an invitation to cozy up to them in order to preserve the white race! Suppose for one moment we joined up with them in their voracious quest for more powerful central government and their myriad twisted moral values. What would we have gained, even if we should succeed in stopping the assault on whites? How can you embrace homosexuals as people with whom we could work for something of value? We may be losing the struggle for our race but we strive to preserve a morally upright way of life!

Having taken your first step, how soon can we expect you to examine the goodness of Lenin, Marx, Mao, Hitler and perhaps even Satan himself? After all, we’re already familiar with God’s position, so in fairness to the Devil perhaps we should give him equal time to explain how misunderstood he is. It is unlikely you understand to what extent the April issue damaged your image as a responsible publication. Doing it once makes it likely you’ll offer us another similar piece in the future, and I don’t want to waste my time looking for trash articles in a publication I once regarded as atop the moral high ground. We can get the perverted view of vital issues in any daily newspaper.

George Shyrock, Englewood, Fla.

Sir – If I thought it would make one iota of difference, I would subscribe to your magazine, but I entered the fray of battling illegal immigration while others had their heads in the sand, and it did not stop one illegal from crossing the border. We must do as the blacks did to gain rights and then preferential treatment. I mean street action, with thousands of Americans protesting. All this gentlemanly writing letters to Congress, the President, and editors of newspapers who seldom print them is futile. Watching the Republican convention last night with its emphasis on “inclusion” only convinces me that well-behaved methods have failed.

Sonya Jason, Woodland Hills, Calif.

Sir – I am 64 years old and cannot recall when there was more black hatred of whites. We find this not only in anti-white violence but in rap music, the rhetoric of Al Sharpton and other so-called “black leaders,” the anti-white diatribes of black comedians, and the black celebration of the O.J. Simpson verdict.

Oddly, blacks have never had it better. Since the mid 1960s we have spent trillions of dollars to grant them not just equal rights, but preferential treatment. They have gotten gerrymandered voting districts and many political appointments. Add to this the over-representation of blacks in sports, entertainment, and all forms of advertising and one would think whites, while perhaps not receiving thanks, would at least be spared hatred.

In my opinion we are hated because we have deprived blacks of their remaining excuse for failure: “racism.” Until 40 years ago they could, with some justification, blame failures on oppression, prejudice, exclusion, etc., but no longer. Although they have received much white largess, by nearly every measure they rank last, even in some cases trailing newly-arrived immigrants who do not speak English.

In other words, our generosity has exposed their inferiority and they resent it. Blacks have made an industry out of victimhood and they will raise the stakes forever to keep it going.

Rex White, Adell, Wisc.

Sir – In his July article “Blacking the Profession” William Blasi writes that it is difficult to prove John Hanson, who served as President of the Continental Congress, was not black. I might point out that some time around 1981, the post office issued a 20-cent commemorative stamp with a likeness of William Hanson—who was clearly not black.

Charles Howard, Fayetteville, Ark.
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Continued from page 1

civilization, as is the Congress that permits it to function."

The final passage about “genuine cultural equality between the races” can be read either as a last-minute loss of will or as a description of a criterion for the black franchise that could never be met. In any case, the editorial recognizes a principle NR would never articulate today: the right of a civilized minority—racial or otherwise—to impose its will upon an uncivilized majority. NR Contributing Editor L. Brent Bozell disented from the editorial on constitutional grounds but still admitted, “It is understandable that White Southerners should try to have it both ways—they can’t know what would happen should Negroes begin to vote, and they naturally want to cover their bet.”

Needless to say, even in the 1950s, when the interests of whites were more openly recognized, the editorial called down the wrath of the liberals. Prof. William Muehl of the Yale Divinity School wrote: [I]n that vicious and wholly amoral thesis you exposed again the basic savagery of the reactionary mentality at bay.” Would anything NR publishes today evoke such fury from established liberals?

But Mr. Buckley’s magazine stood firm. A book review from the July 13th issue of the same year—1957—by Richard Weaver was called, “Integration is Communication.” Mr. Weaver found Carl Rowan’s Go South to Sorrow “a sorry specimen of Negro intellectual leadership,” and went on to express deep suspicion about the whole integrationist enterprise:

“‘Integration’ and ‘Communization’ are, after all, pretty closely synonymous.

In light of what is happening today, the first may be little more than a euphemism for the second. It does not take many steps to get from the ‘integrating’ of facilities to the ‘communizing’ of facilities, if the impulse is there.”

He concluded with a restatement of the principles of voluntary association.

“In a free society, associations for educational, cultural, social, and business purposes have a right to protect their integrity against political fanaticism. The alternative to this is the destruction of free society and the replacement of its functions by government, which is the Marxist dream.” Government’s current “civil rights” powers to limit freedom of association have, indeed, brought virtually every corner of our lives under bureaucratic control, but would NR dare say so today?

Likewise in 1957, Sam M. Jones interviewed segregationist Senator Richard Russell of Georgia. In a Q&A format, Mr. Jones asked, “Do the people of the South fear political domination by the Negro or miscegenation or both?”

Senator Russell replied, “Both. As you know, Mr. Jones, there are some communities and some states where the Negro’s voting potential is very great. We wish at all costs to avoid a repetition of the Reconstruction period when newly freed slaves made the laws and undertook their enforcement. We feel even more strongly about miscegenation or racial amalgamation.

“The experience of other countries and civilizations has demonstrated that the separation of the races biologically is highly preferable to amalgamation.

“I know of nothing in human history that would lead us to conclude that miscegenation is desirable.”

Sam M. Jones wrote another article that year criticizing integration in the Washington, D.C., public schools. Titled “Caution: Integration at Work,” he accurately predicted that “the problem of school integration in the nation’s capital may be eventually solved by the steady migration of the white population out of the District of Columbia.”

Jones criticized school integration on the grounds of IQ differences, citing “a white average ranging from 105 to 111 and a Negro average of 87 to 89. (An intelligent quotient of 85 is generally considered the minimum for receiving education.)” He went on to note:

“Data on juvenile delinquency . . . revealed a marked increase in truancy, theft, vandalism and sex-offenses in integrated schools. Dances and dramatic presentations have been quietly given up by most high schools. Senior and junior class plays have been discontinued. Inter-racial fights are frequent and constant vigilance is required to prevent molestation or attempted molestation of white girls by Negro boys or girls. In contrast, the schools outside the integrated neighborhoods have no more such problems than they had four years ago.” Mr. Jones concluded that “the record shows . . . that the problems of integration are extremely serious and that no solution is in sight.”

The September 28, 1957 issue contained a piece by James Kilpatrick called “Right and Power in Arkansas,” in which he endorsed Arkansas Governor

“Brown . . . was bad law and bad sociology. We are now tasting its bitter fruits. Race relations in the country are ten times worse than in 1954.”

Orval Faubus’ call-up of the National Guard to prevent forced integration at Little Rock’s Central High School. Defending a community’s right to keep the peace, he wrote that “the State of Arkansas and Orval Faubus are wholly in the right; they have acted lawfully; they are entitled to those great presumptions of the law which underlie the whole of our judicial tradition.” Predicting a “storm” of white resistance he wrote, “Conceding, for the sake of discussion, that the Negro pupil has these new rights, what of the white community? Has it none?”
An unsigned editorial in the September 21, 1957, issue put the blame for the whole incident squarely on the Supreme Court:

"Under the disintegrating effects of Brown v. Board of Education, the units of our society are forced into absolute dilemmas for which there is literally no solution within the traditional American structure.

"Violence and the threat of violence; base emotions; the cynical exploitation of members of both races by ruthless ideologues; the shameful spectacle of heavily armed troops patrolling the lawns and schoolyards of once tranquil towns and villages; the turgid drags of hatred, envy, resentment, and sorrow—all these are part of the swelling harvest of Brown v. Board of Education."

On the tenth anniversary of Brown, NR offered this June 2, 1964, editorial:

"But whatever the exact net result in the restricted field of school desegregation, what a price we are paying for Brown! It would be ridiculous to hold the Supreme Court solely to blame for the ludicrously named 'civil rights movement'—that is, the Negro revolt . . . . But the Court carries its share of the blame. Its decrees, beginning with Brown, have on the one hand encouraged the least responsible of the Negro leaders in the course of extra-legal and illegal struggle that we now witness around us . . . ."

"Brown, as National Review declared many years ago, was bad law and bad sociology. We are now tasting its bitter fruits. Race relations in the country are ten times worse than in 1954."

In the 1960s NR continued to oppose the civil rights movement and the assumption that race could somehow be reduced to irrelevance. A July 2, 1963, editorial declared: "The Negro people have been encouraged to ask for, and to believe they can get, nothing less than the evanescence of color, and they are doomed to founder on the shoals of existing human attitudes—their own included." Race, as AR continues to point out, cannot be made not to matter, and NR once understood that.

An article by James Kilpatrick in the September 24, 1963, issue argued that the Civil Rights Bill (eventually passed in 1964) should be voted down. He wrote, "I believe this bill is a very bad bill. In my view, the means here proposed are the wrong means . . . . In the name of achieving certain 'rights' for one group of citizens this bill would impose some fateful compulsions on another group of citizens." After it passed, an editorial declared: "The Civil Rights Act has been law for only a little over two months, yet it already promises to be the source of much legalistic confusion, civic chaos and bureaucratic malpractice."

Mr. Kilpatrick also took aim at the 1965 Voting Rights Act in the April 20, 1965 issue. "Must We Repeal the Constitution to Give the Negro the Vote?" he asked, accusing the bill's supporters of "perverting the Constitution." He thought certain blacks should be given the right to vote but notes, "Over most of this century, the great bulk of Southern Negroes have been genuinely unqualified for the franchise." He also defended segregation as rational for Southerners. "Segregation is a fact, and more than a fact; it is a state of mind. It lies in the Southern subconscious next to man's most elementary instincts, for self-preservation, for survival, for the untroubled continuation of a not intolerable way of life."

Mr. Buckley softened his position on civil rights in the 1960s but to a point that would still be intolerable for conservatives today. In a column written five months before the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and called "The Issue at Selma," he called for giving blacks the vote but perhaps restricting the franchise to high school graduates.

He sympathized with the Southern position writing, "In much of the South, what is so greatly feared is irresponsible, mobocratic rule, and it is a fear not easily dissipated, because it is well-grounded that if the entire Negro population in the South were suddenly given the vote, and were to use it as a bloc, and pursuant to directives handed down by some of the more demagogic leaders, chaos would ensue." He also warned of "a suddenly enfranchised, violently embittered Negro population which will take the vote and wield it as an instrument of vengeance, shaking down the walls of Jericho even to their foundations, and reawakening the terrible genocidal antagonisms that scarred the Southern psyche during the days of Reconstruction."

MR. BUCKLEY EXPRESSED SIMILAR DOUBTS ABOUT MULTIRACIAL DEMOCRACY IN HIS 1959 UP FROM LIBERALISM: "DEMOCRACY'S FINEST BLOOM IS SEEN ONLY IN ITS NATURAL HABITAT, THE CULTURALLY HOMOGENOUS COMMUNITY. THERE, DEMOCRACY INDUCES HARMONY. HARMONY (NOT FREEDOM) IS DEMOCRACY'S FINEST FLOWER. EVEN A POLITICALLY UNSTABLE SOCIETY OF LIMITED PERSONAL FREEDOM CAN BE HARMONIOUS IF GOVERNED DEMOCRATICALLY, IF ONLY BECAUSE THE MAJORITY UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES TO BE LIVING IN THE HOUSE THAT THEY THEMSELVES BUILT."

NR loathed the "Black Power" movement, which it described in a July 19, 1966, editorial as a natural outgrowth of the civil rights movement:

"It isn’t surprising when you come to think of it, that the militants in the civil rights movement should move to a new concept—they call it Black Power—at this stage, the movement having come into doldrums. What made it inevitable was the ravenous rhetoric of the past few years, whose motto 'Freedom Now' called for nothing less, when analyzed, than the evanescence of color. Since no such thing could be brought about, it could be brought about, there is a sense of disappointment among those civil rights workers who somehow permitted themselves to believe that the passage of a few bits and pieces of legislation would transform the life of the American Negro. . . . It never followed that Negroes would suddenly cease to be poor, that whites would cease to prefer the company of whites, that the overwhelming
criticization of the American Civil Rights movement was not the only way in which NR used to promote “identity politics for white people.” It wrote articles about South Africa clearly endorsing apartheid as the only workable system for the country. In the March 9, 1965, issue Russell Kirk decried court-enforced black voting rights as “theoretical folly” that the US would nevertheless survive, but declared prophetically that the same dogma in South Africa, “if applied, would bring anarchy and the collapse of civilization.” For Kirk, civilization required apartheid: “In a time of virulent ‘African nationalism,’ . . . how is South Africa’s ‘European’ population . . . to keep the peace and preserve a prosperity unique in the Dark Continent?” White rule, he answered, is a prudent way, “to govern tolerably a society composed of several races, among which only a minority is civilized.” He called for humane treatment of South African blacks but dismissed their leaders as “witch doctors” and “reckless demagogues.” He wrote frankly about the “‘European’ element which makes South Africa the only modern and prosperous African country.”

NR also used to understand immigration. A September 21, 1965, article by

David Brudnoy observes: “Black power has stood for nationalism, oppression, and barbarism.” He called for humane treatment of South African blacks but dismissed their leaders as “witch doctors” and “reckless demagogues.” He wrote frankly about the “‘European’ element which makes South Africa the only modern and prosperous African country.”

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Ernest van den Haag called “More Immigration?” took on the impending reform [signed into law on October 3, 1965, by Lyndon Johnson] that would open up America to the Third World. Mr. van den Haag, who is still listed as a contributing editor to NR, argued that our then-sound immigration laws should be made even stricter, not looser. Rejecting the charge that the laws were “racist,” he wrote: “one need not believe that one’s own ethnic group, or any ethnic group, is superior to others . . . in order to wish one’s country to continue to be made up of the same ethnic strains in the same proportions as before. And, conversely, the wish not to see one’s country overrun by groups one regards as alien need not be based on feelings of superiority or ‘racism’.” He goes on to say, “the wish to preserve one’s identity and the identity of one’s nation requires no justification . . . any more than the wish to have one’s own children, and to continue one’s family through them need be justified or rationalized by a belief that they are superior to the children of others.”

A September 26, 1975, review of Jean Raspail’s The Camp of the Saints makes much the same point. Prof. Jeffrey Hart, who is currently listed as a senior editor, called the book a “sensation” that rocked liberal sensibilities. He wrote: “Most people . . . are able to perceive that the ‘other group’ looks rather different and lives rather differently from their own. Such ‘racist’ or ‘ethnocentric’ feelings are undoubtedly healthy, and involve merely a preference for one’s own kind. Indeed—and Raspail hammers away at this point throughout his novel—no group can long survive unless it does ‘prefer itself.’ . . . The liberal rote anathema on ‘racism’ is in effect a poisonous assault upon Western self-preference.”

Mr. van den Haag took a thoroughly sound position on IQ differences. In the December 1, 1964, issue—a full thirty years before The Bell Curve and five years before Arthur Jensen’s celebrated article in the Harvard Educational Review—he interviewed an unnamed “eminent sociologist” (who happened to be himself). Under the title “Intelligence or Prejudice?” and the subtitle, “An eminent sociologist discusses Negro intelligence and accues certain of his colleagues of prejudice against logic and discrimination against facts,” the article took on the ever-trendy nonsense that intelligence cannot be tested and that the concept of IQ is meaningless. The “eminent sociologist” defended IQ testing by citing the work of Hans Eysenck and research on identical twins. He claimed intelligence is largely heritable and that environmental factors cannot improve it by much. Mr. van den Haag wrote that integrated education impairs whites and that pregnancy might be a consequence of sexual intercourse. Equally striking evidence of intellectual capacity is provided by the many peoples that never discovered how to kindle a fire or plant a seed. But Dr. Montagu, after making a great show of cautious objectivity, proclaims that ‘anthropologists are unable to find any evidence’ of ‘significant differences in mental capacity’ between ‘ethnic groups.’ If you can tell such whoppers with a straight face, you too can ask the ‘United Nations’ to recognize your right to largesse from the pockets of American taxpayers.”

No Longer Yelling “Stop”

Clearly, the early National Review was often a voice for white Americans. It not only defended their culture, it defended their race. White Southerners had a right—both constitutionally and morally—to protect themselves from black rule and black incivility. White South Africans had the same right. The nation as a whole had a right to defend its European heritage and racial identity by closing its borders to non-whites. As Mr. van den Haag wrote, this policy needed no justification. And if low black intelligence and high crime rates hindered white students from learning, that was sufficient reason for separate education.

Today’s NR has not yet abandoned every subject of interest to whites qua whites. It is solidly against affirmative action and multicultural education. It defended The Bell Curve and has published reviews of J. Philippe Rushton’s work. It still advocates immigration reform, though its position now is that a pause in immigration will make it easier for the non-whites who are already here to assimilate. Even that stance could crumble. In 1998 Mr. Buckley demoted the two men most responsible for the magazines anti-immigration tone, editor John O’Sullivan and senior editor Peter Brimelow. Filling their places are people like Mr. Ponnuru and John Miller, who like immigration and are afraid of “identity politics for white people.” Today’s NR is no longer the brave journal that fought integration and tried to keep America European. It is not yelling “stop” to multiracialism and the displacement of the country’s founding stock by aliens. That, as Mr. Ponnuru explains, would be to play “tribal politics.”
How a determined minority can thwart science.

reviewed by Thomas Jackson

Humankind, like individual and group differences, has a genetic basis. There is such a thing as human nature, and it has deep roots in human biology. These views were common at the turn of the century, but were more or less banned from Western intellectual discourse, beginning in the 1930s. Only within the last several decades has a genetic understanding of human behavior and human variation made an uncertain and much-resisted return to respectability.

Defenders of the Truth, written by a native of Finland who studied chemistry at the University of Helsinki before getting a PhD in sociology of science at Harvard, is an account of this return to respectability. Its story begins with the publication in 1975 of Edward O. Wilson’s Sociobiology: The New Synthesis, and goes on to recount the unremitting hostility that met both the book and the scientific school to which it gave rise. It is a long, dense book that, aside from a few obvious gaps, examines the controversy in enormous detail and from virtually every angle. It is a book for specialists, in that Prof. Segerstråle, of course, is careful not to put it quite this way. It is a book for historians, who carry the same genes. It is a book for understanding behavior. His motives for this important achievement may have been surprisingly personal. He is a Southerner who was reared as a Baptist, and was “born again” at age 15. However, he soon fell away from the faith, and Prof. Segerstråle suggests that it was his desire to find a biological, non-theological basis for morality that drove his interest in sociobiology. She says that for him, the chief riddle for understanding behavior in genetic terms was altruism—self-sacrifice for others—which seems contrary to the Darwinian struggle for survival. It was the Englishman William Hamilton and his theory of inclusive fitness through kin selection that gave Prof. Wilson the solution to the riddle.

The New Synthesis

Just as Arthur Jensen can take the credit for resurrecting the study of racial differences after the World War II-era blackout, Harvard biologist Edward O. Wilson can claim the most credit for reestablishing the scientific connection between genes and human behavior. His motives for this important achievement may have been surprisingly personal. He is a Southerner who was reared as a Baptist, and was “born again” at age 15. However, he soon fell away from the faith, and Prof. Segerstråle suggests that it was his desire to find a biological, non-theological basis for morality that drove his interest in sociobiology. She says that for him, the chief riddle for understanding behavior in genetic terms was altruism—self-sacrifice for others—which seems contrary to the Darwinian struggle for survival. It was the Englishman William Hamilton and his theory of inclusive fitness through kin selection that gave Prof. Wilson the solution to the riddle.

(For the simplest terms, inclusive fitness suggests that genes for altruistic behavior can spread through a population if those who benefit from the altruist’s sacrifice are closely enough related to them to carry the same genes. A man who dies to save his kin or tribe can therefore act to ensure the continuation of his own genes because his relatives, who carry the same genes, will survive to reproduce. Obviously, this effect is lost when altruists act for the benefit of strangers and aliens.)

Taking a position that went directly against mainstream social science, Prof. Wilson argued not only that humans have a biological nature but that it is vital to understand it because technology may be running ahead of our natural abilities to cope with it. In direct opposition to the Franz Boas-Margaret Mead-B.F. Skinner view that culture is infinitely variable, Prof. Wilson argued that the moral and cultural choices a society makes are limited by the way we have evolved. In his famous metaphor:

“The genes hold culture on a leash. The leash is very long, but inevitably values will be constrained in accordance with their effects on the human gene pool. The brain is a product of evolution. Human behavior . . . is the circuitorous technique by which human genetic material has been and will be kept intact. Morality has no other demonstrable ultimate function.”

This passage, written three years after the publication of Sociobiology but entirely consistent with it, greatly offended spiritually-oriented people who saw in morality the spark of the divine rather than a chance mechanism to keep genes in circulation. It was not they who launched the attack on Prof. Wilson, though, but materialists of a different camp: Marxists who had to assume people were infinitely malleable if they were ever to be shaped into happy members of the classless society.

Leading the attack was biologist Richard Lewontin, who was also at Harvard and had an office in the same building as Prof. Wilson. Prof. Lewontin, an avowed Marxist, was active in forming lefty groups like Science for the People and the Committee against Racism. He was joined in the United States most notably by another avowed Marxist at Harvard, Steven Jay Gould, and in England by Steven Rose.

Although Prof. Segerstråle tries her best to make Prof. Lewontin sound reasonable, what she tells us makes him appear almost a caricature, an ideologue driven by his own politics who is convinced everyone else operates in the same way. He argued that students of IQ simply could not be motivated by genuine scientific interest, and “proved” that Arthur Jensen’s research was only a reflection of racist bias. He agreed with fellow lefty and psychologist Leon Kamin that scientists “sometimes tell deliberate lies” in order to advance larger political purposes. With co-author
group differences in achievement were caused by deliberate oppression. As Prof. Lewontin wrote: “If human social organization, including inequalities of status, wealth, and power, are a direct consequence of our biologies, then, except for some gigantic program of genetic engineering, no practice can make a significant alteration of social structure or of the position of individuals or groups within it.” In other words, Marx would be wrong and Marxists dupes—an unacceptable conclusion no matter how powerful the scientific evidence.

At the outset arguments like this, which did not even deal with the biological evidence, were enough for most people. Prof. Segerstråle writes that she was a lefty herself, and was won over by strictly political arguments. (She gives something of the flavor of the times when she describes one of the earliest meetings she attended, with a group of anti-racists all sitting in a circle on the floor. Prof. Lewontin looked uncomfortable and had nothing to say when one of the women complained that it was sexist for the men to be taking over the fight against sociobiology.)

It was great sport to accuse Prof. Wilson and other sociobiologists of “racism” and other crimes. As Prof. Segerstråle points out, any investigation into the genetic causes even of individual differences was “racist” because it opened the door to similar causes for group differences. The lefties were on a crusade and, as Prof. Segerstråle explains, it meant they could cut corners. Perhaps some of them even told deliberate lies. “Within the critical camp,” she writes, “there appeared to exist an attitude of ‘anything goes’ in regard to criticism of sociobiology…” She goes on to note “the critics’ astounding disregard for the original context of their citations,” and describes an assignment she gave her students in 1984. She asked them to compare a critical commentary by S. Chorover of Prof. Wilson’s writing with what Prof. Wilson actually wrote. The students—all prepared to hate sociobiology—“were shocked and angry with Chorover, whom they were originally disposed to admire.”

As always, “racism” was impossible to define, much less refute: “People [being attacked] could not afford to be very technical about the ‘true’ definition of racism—even to discuss it would seem racist!” Likewise, people who were privately appalled by name-calling as a substitute for debate were afraid to defend Prof. Wilson and his circle: “Defend someone as not being racist and you automatically come under suspicion for racism yourself.”

Prof. Segerstråle makes the interesting point that in science, if you are not able to offer solutions of your own, there is not usually much reward for pointing out the errors of others. Criticism of sociobiology was different. It offered no solutions—its purpose was pure destruction—but lefties did it because the evils it represented were so monstrous even a purely negative enterprise had great moral rewards: “One reason why the critics were so hectically construing Wilson as a racist, sexist, IQ meritocrat—anything maximally undesirable—was that this would increase the prize awarded the revealer of such miscreants.” It is in this context that Prof. Lewontin cheerfully admits to Prof. Segerstråle that his criticism of Prof. Wilson was deliberately “nasty.” He tried to strengthen flimsy scientific arguments by wrapping them in the language of contempt.

There was considerable irony in attacking Prof. Wilson as a politically-motivated lackey of the ruling class. First of all, it should have been an empirical question as to what sort of politics he and other sociobiologists pursued, but the critics had no interest in this. Driven as they were by ideological frenzy, they could not imagine any other motive. Another irony is that the Marxists, who were so obviously wearing political blinders, thought Marxism freed them from political bias and gave them a unique tool with which to detect the biases of others.

In fact, Prof. Wilson and Richard Dawkins, a British sociobiologist whom the Marxists attacked with equal vigor, are committed liberals. In Sociobiology, Prof. Wilson downplayed IQ and even took an early lead in promoting the view that race is not a biologically valid concept. He referred to William Shockley as “the notorious racist.” He claimed that even if there were genetic predispositions for unfashionable behavior, genetic knowledge would help us combat it:

“If there is a possible hereditary tendency to acquire xenophobia and nationalist feelings, it is a non sequitur to interpret such a hypothesis as an argument in favor of racist ideology. It is more reasonable to assume that a knowledge of such a hereditary basis can lead to circumvention of destructive behavior such as racism . . . .”

It is, of course, a non sequitur for Prof. Wilson to jump from hereditary xenophobia to whatever he means by “racist ideology,” but nothing Prof. Wilson himself said could possibly shield him from obloquy. At the same time, Prof. Segerstråle makes a strong case for the view that Prof. Wilson had no idea how much shrieking would greet his views. He certainly appears to have had no personal zeal for defending patriarchy, propping up capitalism, or any of the political sins with which he was charged. Not surprisingly, during the 1980s he went back to studying ants, his true love—though he once more turned to humans in his 1998 book Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge.

In the mean time, there was so much power in the genetic and evolutionary explanations of human behavior that the left, try as it might, could not strangle the infant science in its crib. It made such a stink over the name sociobiology, though, that people following in Prof. Wilson’s footsteps tried to take cover under different names: evolutionary psychology, behavior genetics, behavioral ecology.

As the field gained momentum, the critics were forced to attack it not just on political but scientific grounds. Prof.
Segerstråle describes some of these battles but shows that many critics were never able to separate politics from science. People like Professor Lewontin and Stephen Jay Gould have insisted on impossibly high scientific standards exclusively for genetic explanations of behavior. Prof. Lewontin has even argued that such explanations cannot be considered valid or even plausible unless there is proof “at the molecular level.” Such proof will eventually come, thanks to human genome research, but it is pure obscurantism to insist until then that behavior genetics must be false. As Prof. Segerstråle delicately puts it: “[S]o perhaps might we interpret the critics’ unusually strict criteria for ‘good science’ as an attempt to hold back potentially undesirable results.”

It is impossible to avoid the suspicion that the most hysterical critics were simply afraid of the truth. Like media operatives who consistently downplay any news that doesn’t fit their politics, Marxists are like the famous early critic of evolution who said, “I pray that it not be true; and I pray that if it be true it never become widely known.” Prof. Wilson was of the traditionalist school that believes knowledge is always better than ignorance, and that truth should be pursued no matter where it leads. This is an essentially democratic view: “I trust the common man,” he once said. “These ideologues, even if they talk about fighting for the masses—they don’t trust anybody. They don’t trust democracy, they don’t trust the judgment of educated citizens—they really are elitists.”

So, what is the status of the controversy today? Prof. Segerstråle, again delicately, writes about “a relative vindication of the sociobiologists unfairly accused at the beginning of the controversy.” She even quotes Max Planck’s famous 1949 dictum: “New scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.”

However, her excessively even-handed approach is reflected in the title of her book, Defenders of the Truth. “The characters in my story,” she writes, “are all defenders of the truth—it is just that they have different conceptions of where the truth lies.” This is not only unscientific, it is just plain silly. She does it as gently as possible, but Prof. Segerstråle makes it clear that one side of the controversy was not only wrong, but underhanded, mean-spirited, and politically driven. To talk of “different conceptions of where the truth lies” is spineless.

Prof. Segerstråle offers a half-hearted defense of the critics’ political and moral criticisms by saying that a moral perspective is always useful and that criticism helped sharpen the sociological argument. This completely ignores the incalculable damage caused by years of intellectual bomb-throwing. There is probably no better way to silence or terrify an opponent than to accuse him of “racism,” or “Nazism,” which was done freely and recklessly by the opponents of sociobiology. Prof. Segerstråle makes it clear that these accusations caused much suffering, but the people who made them were “defenders of the truth,” after all, and it would be wrong to hold them to account.

Prof. Segerstråle attended the famous 1978 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at which Edward Wilson was to speak: “Just as Wilson is about to begin, about ten people rush up on the speaker podium shouting various epithets and chancing: ‘Racist Wilson you can’t hide, we charge you with genocide!’ While some take over the microphone and denounce sociobiology, a couple of them rush up behind Wilson (who is sitting in his place) and pour a jug of ice-water over his head, shouting ‘Wilson, you are all wet.’”

How many people kept their “racist” opinions to themselves for fear of similar treatment? How much science did not happen because so many people—just as Prof. Segerstråle admits happened to her—were convinced by name-calling alone that sociobiology was bad science? How much nurturist nonsense is still circulating because of the incendiary tactics of its promoters? Scientists, like everyone else, want quiet lives and may trim their views and shift their research in order to get them. This hobbles science in terrible ways but Prof. Segerstråle doesn’t seem to recognize this.

Another defect in Prof. Segerstråle’s analysis is that despite an otherwise exhaustive account of the controversy that attempts to examine it from every perspective, she ignores the ethnic one. Is it pure coincidence that the most vocal opponents of sociobiology—Richard Lewontin, Stephen Gould, Steven Rose, Leon Kamin—were Jews? She notes it was common to claim that any recognition that humans were not completely free actors but constrained by human nature could be used as an exoneration of the Nazis, who had to be held fully accountable for their acts. Who would have come up with this labored argument? Prof. Segerstråle mentions that Steven Rose was worried sociobiology could lead to a “repetition of the tragedies of the 1930s,” but might Jews have a particular interest in wishing that they not be repeated? For a book that seeks to explore every ramification and implication, this one must have been deliberately omitted.

Finally, Prof. Segerstråle lets the Marxists off too easily. What, in Heaven’s name, would a Marxist science of the kind Profs. Lewontin and Levins wanted look like? How could it be anything but a blinkered, blundering waste of time? Marxists believe in the labor theory of value, the inevitable triumph of the proletariat, scientific socialism, the withering away of the state, and all sorts of other goofiness. Lysenkoism is the perfect example of Marxist science. Given what we now know about the direction in which genetic research has progressed, as well as the total wrongheadedness of all of Marx’ predictions and the failure of everything built in his name, it takes a curiously simple mind not to express some doubt about the intellectual foundations of biologists who continue to call themselves Marxists.

This said, Defenders of the Truth is an extremely valuable book. It is a pity it tries so hard to excuse villainy, but Prof. Segerstråle gives us so many facts her occasional lapses in judgment need not obscure our view. The war against science is far from over, and this is a live dispatch from a battle that, at long last, is verging on victory.
What the double standards tell us.

by Jared Taylor

Double standards on race are so commonplace it is almost tedious to point them out, but some are impossible to ignore. Violent death takes on a different coloring, shall we say, depending on the races of the actors, as two recent incidents demonstrate.

On June 16, a black 17-year-old named Raynard Johnson hanged himself from a tree in front of his house in Kokomo, in southern Mississippi. His father came home while the body was still warm and rushed him to the hospital but doctors could not revive him. Just half an hour earlier, he had been watching television inside the house with a cousin. His body showed no signs of a struggle, and two separate autopsies concluded the death was entirely consistent with suicide.

His father insisted the boy had been lynched by whites angry about his reported friendship with two white girls. He claims to believe that during the half hour Raynard was outside, a lynch mob strung up the boy so skillfully and so noiselessly they left no mark, and the cousin never heard a sound. There was, in short, no evidence of murder; only accusations.

This was enough for Janet Reno, who has met with the parents, and set the FBI on the trail of the racists. It was enough for Jesse Jackson, who charged around town leading demonstrations, accusing whites of murder, and claiming local authorities could not possibly investigate the death fairly. It was enough for black congressmen like John Conyers of Michigan and Maxine Waters of California who also met the family and have considered calling for a congressional investigation. And it was enough for the Washington Post, which printed a worried cover story about the possible lynching as well as a long, page-three followup. It was almost enough for Al Sharpton, who was supposed to come to Kokomo but changed his plans.

It required no less a personage than Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove finally to hold a press conference on July 26 and announce that the official conclusion was suicide. Col. L. M. Claiborne, commander of the Mississippi Highway Patrol and himself black, said the state had “exhausted all rumors and exhausted all leads,” and pronounced the case closed. Along the way, it turned out that two hours before the boy killed himself, his black girlfriend told him she was in love with someone else. Jesse Jackson still thinks it was murder, and says the investigation must continue, but there is probably not much mileage for him left in this story.

It is impossible not to notice the contrast with the murder of a 10-year-old white boy, Kevin Shifflett, which we mentioned in the previous issue’s “O Tempora” section. On April 19, a black man walked up to Kevin as he played at his great-grandparents’ home in a quiet residential area of Alexandria, Virginia, and slit his throat. Witnesses told police he said something about hating whites as he killed the third-grader, but investigators did not release this information to the public and actually told the press they thought race had nothing to do with the killing.

After an extensive manhunt police now think 29-year-old Gregory Devon Murphy is the killer. Among his possessions when he was arrested on a different charge, was a note including the words “kill them raccess whiate kidd’s anyway.” Until just 12 days before the attack on Kevin, Mr. Murphy had been in jail, where he spent several years for calling a stranger “whitey” and attacking him with a hammer.

The Kevin Shifflett case has all the makings of the purest form of racial hate crime. Mr. Murphy did not know Kevin; he appears only to have wanted to “kill them raccess whiate kidd’s.” The murder of a child is particularly loathsome, and the entire neighborhood was horrified. But for some reason Janet Reno has not met Kevin’s parents. There is no FBI hate-crime investigation, and the Washington Post covered the story only because it is local news. Needless to say, there have been no demonstrations by angry whites demanding death for the killer or denouncing his motive.

Why are the cases so different? The press reaction reflects a media routine that is now so old even “conservatives” take it for granted: Play up white mischief but play down black mischief. This is supposed to be good for America because our country is full of bigoted whites looking for an excuse to vent their prejudices and mistreat blacks. Therefore, if at all possible whites must never hear or see anything that could justify a low opinion of blacks. To publicize black crime, especially anti-white black crime, might provoke whites to all manner of mayhem and is like letting children play with dynamite.

At the same time, whites must be reminded over and over just how racist they are, so they will feel guilty and stop being racist. This is why it is a public service to turn a black teen-ager’s suicide into one more reason to hectored whites about their wickedness. As Samuel Francis pointed out in a July 18 column about these two cases, “if the right hate crimes don’t exist, the newspapers will have to invent them.”

Let us be charitable and assume that editors and bureaucrats who distort the news are merely stupid. They sincerely believe that blacks are so noble and long-suffering they could not possibly be provoked to anti-white violence no matter how often they are told how bad whites are. Whites, on the other hand, are more volatile, which is why the dynamite must be kept from the baby. There is no telling what whites might get up to if they hear bad news about blacks, but blacks can hear endless dirt about whites and still love and forgive.

Of course, public reaction shows how wrong this is. It is blacks who are hair-triggered, bellowing about “racism” on the flimsiest grounds and demanding investigations, punishment, reparations, and apologies. Jesse Jackson had no trouble rounding up 1,000 demonstrators in Mississippi in the blazing heat—demanding “justice” for the imaginary killers of Raynard Johnson. Whites never do this. Not even the most gruesome, obviously hate-driven outrage.
against a white elicits the slightest quiver of public indignation. On the contrary, reporters invariably find plenty of whites warning about the dangers of overreaction and making excuses for black criminals. There could be no greater contrast to the accusations, demonstrations, threats, and even riots blacks serve up whenever they see a threat to their racial interests. And that, of course, is the crucial difference. Blacks know they have racial interests but whites do not. Blacks act instantly and noisily to redress “injustice” to their fellows but whites do not. They show no solidarity for other whites because they feel no solidarity—or are ashamed of themselves if they do. No white preachers or congressmen have made an issue of the Shifflett murder, or tried to keep it in the spotlight and ensure the racial angle never disappears from view. It is easy to blame the media for its invariably slanted coverage of race, but the deeper fault lies with whites as a group. It is true that their mentality has been molded by consistently hostile media but it is their catastrophic loss of any understanding of their own interests that gives rise to these double standards, and to the innumerable tragedies that follow.

O Tempora, O Mores!

Bad to Worse in Zimbabwe

The situation for whites in Zimbabwe goes from bad to worse. On August 2, at a joint press conference with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, President Robert Mugabe promised an end to the invasion of white farms—only to renge the next day. Now he has announced a plan to seize 3,000 more white-owned farms in addition to the 804 already designated for “redistribution.” The army is reportedly planning to provide transportation to settle some 500,000 black families on the farms, which represent about two-thirds of the land owned by whites.

Farmers hoped the electoral success in June of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) would rein in some of Mr. Mugabe’s anti-white excesses. To protest violence against farmers and political opponents, the black-run MDC even sponsored a one-day general strike on August 2, which halted activity in the country’s cities. This appears only to have provoked Mr. Mugabe and the “war veterans” occupying the farms. Although no whites have been killed in the past month—the death toll since the occupations began remains at five—threats, beatings, and intimidation continue.

On the same day as the strike, occupiers held 17 farmers prisoner overnight after they went to rescue another farmer who was about to be driven off his land.

“They punctured 10 to 12 of our vehicles and we were slapped around,” one farmer said later. “We shared a fire with the veterans and slept in cars.” He also noted that the squatters are extremely volatile: “They are friendly one minute and very hostile the next.”

An official for the largely white Commercial Farmers Union now says, “the safest thing for white farmers is just to look for alternative business opportunities elsewhere in the world and leave Zimbabwe.” An estimated 100 have already fled. Increasing numbers of whites believe Mr. Mugabe will keep up the pressure on them at least until the 2002 presidential elections, which are months away.

Other southern African countries are squarely in Mr. Mugabe’s corner. On August 7, leaders of the 14-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) gave unanimous support to Zimbabwe’s land redistribution program, calling it “just and equitable.” South Africa is a member of SADC, and President Mbeki’s endorsement of naked expropriation terrifies South African whites.

Mr. Mugabe appears not to know or care that without whites, the land he plans to parcel out to blacks will not be nearly so productive as it is now. Zimbabweans blacks who have already taken over white farms show little talent or inclination for modern farming, and driving out whites will seriously damage the country. Agriculture makes up three fifths of the national economy and tobacco—grown almost exclusively by whites—by itself accounts for nearly a third of foreign currency earnings. The disruption already suffered by commercial farmers could well lead to food shortages. Western nations, including the United States, have shown little interest in what amounts to ethnic cleansing of whites. Humanitarian interest in the country will no doubt become fashionable only if blacks begin to starve.

Rewards of Candor

In June, Andy Dott gave the annual president’s report to the South Africa Tourism Services Association, which represents the country’s largest travel businesses. He argued that one of the reasons the country’s tourism receipts are down may be because of a mistaken advertising appeal that emphasizes how African the country is:

“Maybe we should be telling the world that we are not like the rest of Africa, that we are civilized,” he said. “Africa in general, quite honestly, is a basket case. What does Africa conjure up in the mind of any American or European, for instance?” He offered the following answer:

“A starving child on the dry breast of a woman with eight fly-infested children in tow, while the husband looks on with beer bottle in hand and AK-47 on the shoulder.

“And, to complete the picture, his president travels in limousines and Lear jets to check up on his Swiss bank account, while negotiating with civilised countries to try and borrow more money on the one hand, and yet write off his unpaid debt on the other.”

Mr. Dott cited another reason tourism is down: “We have a rampant lunatic across our border in Zimbabwe. He is costing our country, especially our industry, millions of rands daily and our president has yet to publicly condemn him.”

Mr. Dott also blasted racial preferences: “We are under pressure as to whom we must employ and what we must pay them and yet the workforce...
seem to go out of their way to be unemployable.”

The address was met with agreement and much praise for its candor. The group went on to re-elect Mr. Dott as its president, and when Tourism Minister Valli Moosa spoke later at the conference, he left Dott’s statements unchallenged. But as in America, any white who speaks truthfully about race takes his career in his hands. Pressure from blacks began to mount and although Mr. Dott groveled, he was soon out of a job. (Murray Williams, Tourism Chief Ousted for ‘Basket-case’ Speech, Sunday Independent (South Africa), July 8, 2000.)

Problem to be Solved Soon

The inmate population in the sprawling Pitchess prison complex in Castaic, California, is overwhelmingly black and Hispanic in about a 40:60 ratio. When either group heavily outnumber the other it goes on the attack, and in the June issue we reported that guards had resorted to segregation to keep inmates from murdering each other. After several weeks of peace, the authorities re-integrated the prison, though they did develop special computer programs to track the racial balance throughout the complex to make sure it never gets too far out of line.

It did not take long for the violence to resume. On July 8 blacks launched simultaneous attacks in three different dormitories to retaliate for the beating they took during the April riots that led to segregation. The next day, Hispanics in three other dormitories rioted or “jumped off,” in prison parlance, furious at once more having to share quarters with blacks. Twenty-two men were hurt and two were hospitalized with deep facial cuts.

Sheriff’s Chief Taylor Morehead, who runs the county jail system, says there have been more than 150 black-Hispanic brawls at Pitchess since 1991 and that the 10,000-inmate complex is always seething with tension. He agrees that segregation would be an improvement but says it would be too expensive to provide separate housing and activities.

The solution? The Sheriff’s office is working with the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission to make a video to explain to people of different races how to get along. The video, which might include appearances by inmates, would be broadcast over jailhouse television. (Jeffrey Gettleman, Hatred Persists Among Pitchess Inmates, Los Angeles Times, July 16, 2000.)

Kick the Hand That Feeds

South Africa is one of the most sports-mad places on earth and would dearly love to host the 2006 soccer World Cup. Its bid to do so was very nearly successful—it lost to Germany by only one vote. President Thabo Mbeki says the decision had nothing to do with whether South Africa can manage the job of hosting the World Cup, and attributed it to the “globalization of apartheid.” (Sue Thomas, Mbeki Calls World Cup Loss “Globalized Apartheid,” Reuters, July 12, 2000.)

Mr. Mbeki must have a short memory. When there actually was apartheid one of the most effective ways to pressure South Africa was to keep its sports teams out of international competition. Some have argued that the sports boycott was even more important than economic sanctions in breaking the will of the South Africans. Now Mbeki is accusing the organizations that helped end apartheid of promoting its “globalization.”

Calling the Kettle Black

One of the jobs of the U.S. Marshals service is to provide security at federal courthouses. A government investigation has just concluded that the former head marshal of the federal court at Norfolk, Virginia, “fostered a racist atmosphere.” Floyd Dugger, who is black, is said to have given black employees preferential treatment and to have encouraged racial division. He has also reportedly “betrayed the confidences of white employees” and told other blacks that several whites were “racists.” This is only the second time in the last ten years racial discrimination has been officially detected in the Marshals Service.

Mr. Dugger also stands accused of introducing Jim Crow coffee pots. When blacks pulled out of the office coffee fund because of complaints about Mr. Dugger, he encouraged the use of separate pots, one for whites and one for blacks. This practice went on for several months until John W. Marshall, head of the service’s Virginia Eastern District, bought the office a new pot and ordered all the employees to use it. Mr. Marshall, now national director of the Marshals Service, is the son of former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. He concedes that Mr. Dugger made race a factor “in some of his conduct,” and has been implicated in the report’s claim that upper management knew about Mr. Dugger’s sins but did nothing.

The investigation of Mr. Dugger began when a white woman named Judith Hitchhikes complained about him in 1997. She has now sued the Marshals Service claiming she suffered $3 million worth of agony. Mr. Dugger has been transferred to the Newport News office, where he has no subordinates, but the service insists that this is not punishment. (Marc Davis, Report Faults Ex-Supervisor for Racism by Marshals, Virginian-Pilot (Hampton Roads), May 11, 2000.)

Joys of Diversity

Three Arab employees have successfully filed a discrimination suit against Azteca, a chain of approximately 30 Mexican restaurants in Oregon and Washington state. “The managers at these Azteca establishments made it very clear, by their verbal abuse and physical actions, that they did not want anyone other than those of Hispanic descent working in their restaurants,” says the plaintiff’s lawyer Tony Shapiro. Habib Sidani, Karam Slim, and Luaye Khatib complained they were called “Saddam Hussein,” “the terrorists,” and camello, which is Spanish for camel. They also said Hispanics got first choice when it came to overtime, leaves of absence, and scheduling options. Azteca settled the suit for an undisclosed sum. (Hagens Berman Attorney Settles Racial Discrimination Lawsuit Against Azteca, PRNewswire, May 26, 2000.)

Literacy is Discriminatory

The longshoreman’s union used to require anyone who wanted to work on the Los Angeles docks to pass something called the Test for Adult Basic Education, a seventh-grade level test many employers use to screen applicants. Not any more. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sued the union, claiming the test was
biased because non-whites failed it more often than whites. A federal district court in Los Angeles ordered that the failed non-white applicants be given another chance at employment under a procedure that no longer requires them to take the test. Those who get jobs will share a cash payment of $2.8 million. (Bill Mongelluzzo, Union, Maritime Assoc. Lose Appeal in EEOC Case, Journal of Commerce, June 13, 2000.)

**Fighting For His Race**

George P. Bush is the son of Florida Governor Jeb Bush and his Mexican-born wife Columba—which makes him the nephew of the Republican candidate for President. At a recent Republican rally he spoke in fluent Spanish about how his mother had instilled in him the values of Cesar Chavez, the Chicano who organized farmworkers. “She told me we have to fight for our race, we have to find the leaders who represent us,” he said. About his uncle the candidate, he said, “This is a President who represents the diversity of our society, who we can count on to change the Republican Party to represent our views.” (Reuters, Aug. 2, 2000.)

**Pardon Our French**

The French interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, says Europe should accept millions of immigrants over the next 50 years to offset declines in population. He said the continent should become a place of racial mixing (metissage) and that governments should make efforts to persuade Europeans to accept this. Mr. Chevènement made his remarks at a July 28 meeting of European interior and justice ministers at Marseille. (French Call for ‘Controlled’ Immigration, BBC News Homepage, July 28, 2000.)

**Compelling the Public**

Britain’s Department for International Development, the government body that hands out foreign aid, says the British media must improve their coverage of poor countries. The department “found a marked imbalance in the way developing countries are portrayed,” noting that most of the news about the Third World is “disasters, bizarre events or visits by prominent westerners.” This causes “a serious problem with audience understanding of development issues,” which is another way of saying the British are not eager to give money to these places. The department called for more “compelling” coverage that would change people’s minds. (Wanted: More ‘Compelling’ Third World News, Reuters, July 27, 2000.)

**Crippling the Language**

Stockport College in Greater Manchester, England, has banned more than 40 “offensive” words, and will admit students and hire staff only if they promise not to use them. “Lady” and “gentleman” are off limits because they have class implications. “History” is sexist (though one wonders what replaces it). “Mad,” “manic,” or “crazy” could offend the mentally ill and “cripple” upsets the handicapped. “Slaving over a hot stove” is no good because it “minimizes the horror and oppression of the slave trade.” Even the expression “normal couple” is out because it might anger homosexuals. (Martin Bentham, “Offensive Words are History, says British College, Daily Telegraph (London), June 13, 2000.)

**Mysteries of the Dark Continent**

The following item appeared on the June 5 Reuters news wire:

A businessman has confessed to sending ghosts to attack schoolgirls in eastern Kenya, a newspaper reported on Monday. The unnamed businessman was arrested over the weekend after the pupils of Itokela Girls Secondary School marched to the district commissioner’s office to protest against an invasion of ghosts at the school, the *East African Standard* said. The girls said the man had hired the ghosts to torment them after his daughter left the school. The man apparently agreed to meet the cost of exorcising the spirits—who seem to delight in pushing the girls to the floor—and hired a ghost buster named Ntingili who “retrieved shells and other witchcraft paraphernalia” from the school grounds. (Man Admits Sending Ghosts to Attack Girls, Reuters, June 5, 2000.)

**Deconstructing Uncle Ned**

Stephen Foster (1824-1864), who wrote such favorites as “Oh Susanna,” “Old Black Joe,” and “Camptown Races,” was originally from Pittsburgh, and in 1900 the city honored him with a statue. The statue is supposed to commemorate the song “Uncle Ned,” and shows Ned, a slave, sitting at Foster’s feet. Robert Perloff is a professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh who thinks the statue must be reinterpreted for the new century. “I am offended by a man sitting at the feet of another man,” he says. He is part of a movement demanding that a plaque be attached to the statue explaining that it is quite proper to be offended, and pointing out that racism was so widespread back in 1900 that people then found nothing wrong with the statue. (Andy Lefkowitz, Stephen Foster Statue Stirs Debate, AP, July 13, 2000.)

Some historians reportedly consider Uncle Ned one of the first anti-slavery songs, but the message, to judge from the lyrics, is a subtle one:

1. Dere was an old darkey, dey called him Uncle Ned, He’s dead long ago, long ago! He had no wool on de top ob his head, De place whar de wool ought to grow. 

Chorus: Den lay down de shubble and de hoe Hang up de fiddle and de bow: No more hard work for pool old Ned He’s gone whar de good darkeys go.

2. His fingers were long like de cane in de brake, He had no eyes for to see; He had no teeth for to eat de corncake So he had to let de corncake be. 

Chorus

3. When Old Ned die Massa take it mighty bad,
Fighting Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is making a comeback. Antibiotics nearly wiped it out in Western countries but Third-World immigration brought it back and is spreading it mainly to bums, drug users, other immigrants, and AIDS carriers. These people often do not follow medical instruction and are both spreading the disease and making it harder to treat.

Samantha Ornelas, a Cambodian living in Stockton, California, is a good example of the first problem. When health workers discovered she had the infectious and sometimes deadly disease they ordered her confined to home isolation until she was cured. She was to stay at home alone and was always to wear a surgical mask when she left the house. Her two children were to stay at her ex-husband’s house and visit her one hour each day, during which time she was to wear the mask. She was not allowed visitors other than immediate family members.

Mrs. Ornelas repeatedly violated quarantine, entertained children and neighbors in her house, and didn’t bother with the mask. The Stockton authorities showed surprising backbone. They charged her with two misdemeanor counts of refusal to comply with a tuberculosis order—she now faces a year in jail—and locked her in a quarantine cell. It is too early to tell if she has infected anyone. (James Gordon Meek, Woman Charged With Exposing People to TB, APBnews.com, July 12, 2000.)

The current crop of TB carriers is making the disease worse because they often refuse to follow a complete course of treatment. A few initial doses of antibiotics usually clear up the symptoms, but the tuberculosis bacterium is still in the body, and it may take several months of continuous medication to eradicate it. The sort of people who are now getting the disease often throw the rest of the medicine away as soon as they feel better, and then get sick again. At the same time, half-eradication of the bacterium stimulates mutation, and carriers become breeding grounds for new strains of TB that resist ordinary antibiotics. Doctors worry they could soon be faced with raging new forms of TB that no drug can cure. The dangers from new mutants are so great that some jurisdictions practice “directly observed treatment,” which means they round up infected skid-row bums and watch them take their pills. In some cases, they keep them in custody until they are completely cured.

Back to their Evil Ways

In 1996, in what has become known as the Hopwood decision, the federal district court prohibited racial preferences in admissions to Texas universities. The next year, the number of blacks at the competitive University of Texas at Austin (UT) dropped from four percent to three percent, a decrease the state legislature made haste to reverse. It passed what is called the “10 percent law,” which requires public universities to accept all students who graduate in the top ten percent of their high school classes. Because many schools are essentially segregated, the new law ensures that many poorly qualified non-whites get preference over well-qualified whites.

At the better universities, the disparities in black-white preparation levels may now be even more striking than in the days of outright racial preferences. At Worthing High School in central Houston, for example, most of the students in the top ten percent of the class of 1999 had SAT scores only in the high 800s but were still eligible for automatic admission to any public university. By contrast, at overwhelmingly-white Belaire High School in suburban Houston, George Mitzer graduated 67th out of a class of 640 and missed the top 10 percent by three places. He had combined SAT scores of 1470 and a grade point average of 4.49 (it is possible to do better than 4.0 by taking advance placement courses), but wasn’t admitted to UT and went to college out of state. Bruce Walker, director of admissions at UT, says, “It’s unbelievable when you look at some of the students who didn’t get in this year. I know last year they would have gotten in.”

Which is to say the law has worked exactly as planned. In 1999, when it took effect, admissions of blacks and Hispanics to UT rebounded to pre-Hopwood levels. Of the students admitted under the 10 percent rule, 8.5 percent had combined SAT scores below 1000.

Some of the Texans angriest about the new law are parents who spent a fortune to send their children to top-flight private schools. The 10 percent law applies to all schools, so only a handful of graduates may now qualify for Texas universities from private schools that until last year prepared almost all of their students to that level. Many students who were counting on attending good Texas schools—often intending to follow in their parents’ footsteps—are furious. Some administrators at good high schools fear that many of their rising seniors will defect to mediocre public schools for their last year to be sure of getting into the top 10 percent.

California and Florida have followed Texas’ example and passed similar laws. (Ron Nissimov, Students Run Into ‘Top 10 Percent Law,’ Houston Chronicle, June 3, 2000.)

Young Murderer

In June, Chicago may have set some kind of record for youthful violence when a three-year-old boy killed another child (initial reports put the boy’s age at four). Quinetta Thomas was in her welfare apartment looking after the boy as a favor to a friend, when she left him alone with her two daughters, a three-week-old and a two-year-old. When she came back after just a few minutes, the infant’s head was smashed and she was not breathing. She died later at a children’s hospital. Both the newborn and the two-year-old also had fresh bite marks on them. The boy, whose name has not been released, was known to be an aggressive, angry child and had been expelled from a day care center for “rage problems.” Police reported that when he was talking to his mother about what happened he picked up a doll, banged it
around the room and threw it against a wall. (Frank Main and Michael Sneed, Boy, 4, Beat Girl to Death, Police Say, Chicago Sun-Times, June 6, 2000, p. 3. John Carpenter and Frank Main, Lathrop Moms Don’t Blame Boy for Baby’s Death, Chicago Sun-Times, June 7, 2000, p. 12.)

Cook County will not lodge delinquency proceedings for homicide. It has already grappled with the question of the age at which children can be held accountable for crimes, and has set it officially at ten. A special commission decided this in 1998 after a seven-year-old and an eight-year-old killed a boy by throwing him out a window. Common law has traditionally recognized criminal responsibility at age seven, the age at which church fathers decided a child could take communion. (Adrienne Drell, No Murder Charge for Kids Under 10, Chicago Sun-Times, June 7, 2000, p. 12.)

Call in the Consultants

The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora, just outside of Chicago, is a three-year, state-run high school for gifted students. Its charter requires its student body to reflect the state, but the usual minorities didn’t get enough of the latest batch of 230 acceptance letters. Fifteen percent of the state is black, but only eight percent of the letters went to blacks. For Hispanics, the figures are nine and three percent. The admissions director LuAnn Smith is distressed by this and wants to hire a consultant to evaluate the school’s recruitment policies. If she does, the consultant will have a few other things to explain: Why do Asians, who are only three percent of the state’s population, account for 32 percent of the acceptances? And does anyone care that although whites are 72 percent of the state, they make up only 53 percent of the acceptances? (LeAnn Spencer, Academy Struggling to Recruit Minorities, Chicago Tribune, June 6, 2000, Sec. 2, p. 5.)

51st State?

The annual government budget of Puerto Rico is about $20 billion, with some $13 billion of it coming from Uncle Sam. Federal bureaucrats estimate that every year about 10 percent of the $20 billion glimmers away through corruption and Caribbean bookkeeping. Recently, however, losses have gotten out of hand.

Puerto Rico has the second largest public housing authority after New York City. In July, the inspector general of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) accused the Puerto Ricans of “flagrant fraud, waste, and abuse,” and recommended that the authority be put under judicial receivership to safeguard the $1 billion in HUD grants still outstanding.

Last year, the former mayor of the town of Toa Alta went to jail in connection with the cleanup after Hurricane Georges in 1998. He demanded $2.5 million from Mississippi-based JESCO Construction in exchange for a contract. The American company alerted the FBI, which recorded the mayor offering to inflate the damage estimate so JESCO could get more money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This was supposed to compensate the company for the kickback. (Puerto Rican Ex-Mayor Sentenced, AP, July 6, 1999.) Also last year, eleven policemen on the island of Vieques (where there has been a fracas over the use of an American live-fire military training ground) were caught with their hands in the till and fired. The ringleader got 24 years in jail.

In another recent incident, a dozen prominent citizens of the capital San Juan got hold of $2.2 million that was supposed to help treat AIDS patients. They used some of it for the usual indulgences—one paid his maid with the money—but they spent most of it on “contributions” to politicians, including an embarrassed mayor of San Juan. And now two ex-directors of a social services agency are on trial for allegedly stealing $5.8 million in federal money forbums, poor children, and old people.

In August, a grand jury indicted 18 people on corruption charges in connection with a $56 million contract to computerize the island’s system for collecting property taxes. Government workers, including two city mayors, allegedly accepted $800,000 in cash, gifts, and political donations in exchange for awarding the contract. Entec Corporation and Hector L. Rivas and Associates, which greased their palms, are also in the dock. (Chris Hawley, 18 Indicted in Puerto Rican Scandal, AP, Aug. 9, 2000.)

Inquisitive Yanquis smell fraud at the Puerto Rico police department, the ports, the Puerto Rico National Guard, and among the people who lade out money for roads and pollution control. They have also discovered that Puerto Rico is the leading Caribbean transit point for cocaine on its way to North America, and have just designated the island a “money laundering hot spot.” Needless to say, Puerto Rico’s delegate to Congress Carlos Romero Barcelo says all this investigating is just “prejudice against the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico.” (James Anderson, Puerto Rican Corruption Sparks Probe, AP, Aug. 7, 2000.)

In the mean time, Puerto Rican judges have decided to make up for deficiencies in the Constitution and American legislation. In a case called Gregorio Igartua de la Rosa v the United States of America, U.S. District Court Judge Jaime Pieras has decided Puerto Ricans should be able to vote for President. “The inability to vote represents a form of slavery,” says he. Two days earlier, U.S. District Court Judge Salvador Casellas ruled that the death penalty for federal crimes does not apply in Puerto Rico because its people have no vote in federal elections. The federal government has not executed anyone since 1963 and local law prohibits the death penalty, but in January the U.S. Justice Department authorized prosecutors to seek the death penalty against Oscar Acosta Martinez and Joel Rivera Alejandro. These two rulings are both contrary to legal precedent and are likely to be overturned on appeal. (Dan Perry, How American is Puerto Rico? AP, July 21, 2000.)

Hispanic TV Too White

Hispanics know a good thing when they see one and often copy the shake-down tactics blacks have perfected. Last year, activists led a short boycott of the four major television networks because of what they called a “brownout,” or not enough Hispanic actors. ABC, NBC,
CBS, and Fox duly agreed to color some of their programs brown.

The same activists are not sure what to do about the two major American Spanish-language networks, Univision and Telemundo. The actors are Hispanics, all right, but not the right kind. Juan Figueroa of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund complains that “if you looked at the [Spanish-language] soap operas without knowing better, you would think they came from Scandinavia or somewhere like that with the blond, blue-eyed people you see.” Indeed, news anchors and just about everyone else are white. Telemundo and Univision officials explain that they buy most of their programming from production companies in Mexico and Venezuela, where brown people are rarely seen on television.

Dark Hispanics are coming to the United States for work. A recent survey of 4,000 Hispanic members of the Screen Actors Guild found they thought their chances for roles were better in English-language, American-made programs than in Latin American productions. Elpidia Carrillo, a Mexican-born actress, complains she was always cast as a peasant or a prostitute when she worked in Mexico, but got major roles with Jack Nicholson, Richard Gere, and Arnold Schwarzenegger after she came to America. (Michael Fletcher, The Blond, Blue-Eyed Face of Spanish TV, Washington Post, Aug. 3, 2000, p. 1.)

All of which raises an interesting question. Mexico, Venezuela, and most other Latin American countries have far fewer whites than the United States, yet their television programs are whiter than American programs and no one seems to complain. Why is it only in the United States and Canada, where there are still substantial white majorities, that producers feel compelled to lard their programs with brown and black faces?

What Would Martin Say?

In November, 1998, Stacy Hesrud, who is white, became the executive director of Spokane’s, Martin Luther King Family Outreach Center. The center offers counseling and other uplift for poor people. There was opposition to giving a white person the job, but Miss Hesrud says she accepted with the best of intentions. She has now filed a racial discrimination complaint with the state. “I was subjected to an abusive and harassing environment from the board of directors and staff because of my race,” she says, claiming that she was denied reimbursement of expenses, and was evaluated more often and more harshly than her black predecessors. She also says she was required to take a drug test, something no other director ever had to do. (Rob McDonald, Ex-MLK Center Director Files Racism Complaint, Spokane Spokesman-Review, May 23, 2000.)

Breaking the Color Barrier

Marcus Jacoby was the only white on the football team at a black college from 1996 to 1998. Throughout that period he told reporters he was well accepted and was enjoying his experience as a minority. Now he has decided to tell what it was really like.

Mr. Jacoby was the star quarterback at Catholic High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and badly wanted to play in college. Nearby Southern University, a football powerhouse in the African American Southwestern Academic Conference, badly needed a quarterback, so Mr. Jacoby accepted a full scholarship. There had never been a white starting quarterback in the history of the league.

Except for his coaches, Mr. Jacoby was completely isolated. In the locker room and at lunch, his teammates shunned him. A black former teammate says that even in the huddle, where the quarterback is supposed to have authority, players showed little respect. The season started badly with two losses. “I heard the entire stadium booing me. Fans were yelling ‘Get the white boy out,’” Mr. Jacoby recalls. Defensive players for the other teams hit him harder because he was white, and after his first game he went to the hospital with a concussion. One black teammate recalls that opponents said, “That’s what you all get for bringing white boys on the field.”

An editorial writer in the student newspaper wondered whether some of Mr. Jacoby’s own teammates were deliberately letting opponents slip by and tackle him. After Southern’s second loss, a fan threatened Mr. Jacoby, and after that he always had a police escort when he played.

Southern went on to win six of the next seven games, and there was less booing. Mr. Jacoby actually began to be friends with one of the players, whom other blacks called “white lover.” When Mr. Jacoby went off the field after bobb ling the final and crucial pass in a championship game he heard things like “You screwed up real bad this time, whitey,” and “You’re as dumb as they come.” After the game the defensive coordinator Mark Orlando, who is white, got a call saying, “If Jacoby ever plays for Southern again, we’ll kill him—and you.” He says he got about a threat a week that season. Some time later, as Mr. Jacoby and Mr. Orlando were leaving the locker room they noticed nooses hanging from all the surrounding trees.

Amazingly, Mr. Jacoby came back the next year, and led the team to a 11-1 season that made Southern the league champion. He was still a complete outsider, though, and a few weeks into his third season, he could stand it no longer and quit. When reporters asked why, he told them he was “burned out,” though he was beaten up with race, not with football, as he led reporters to believe. Mr. Jacoby still tries to think of his time at Southern as a valuable sampling of a different culture but concedes that it was “two-and-a-half years of a personal hell.” (Ira Berkow, Race: Keeping Score in Louisiana, The Oregonian, Aug. 1, 2000, p. A6.)

Embarrassed Redskins

Pilar Regge Paulsen is an art student at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. Last year, the college displayed a work of art she painted with her own menstrual blood. What whites thought apparently didn’t matter, but Indians said the blood offended them, so Miss Paulsen immediately apologized and took down the painting. (Student Withdraws Art Due to Cultural Taboo, Arizona Republic, Dec. 12, 1999.)