

[SELF-DECEPTION] VALUES AND DOUBLE STANDARDS

We hear much from the neocons about American values. We are supposed to invade Iraq (and then, "the next day" Iran) they say, to promote American values. (The weapons of mass destruction rationale for preemptive war is sounding a bit strained in light of the Korean crisis.)

Of course no one opposes promoting American values. But the concept tends to break down under closer scrutiny, which is one reason much of the world hears hypocrisy when Americans talk about promoting their values. Within the United States, a criminal suspect is entitled to every sort of legal protection and a jury trial—one of the great achievements of civilization. In dealings with the outside world, the United States metes out death more indiscriminately.

The American-enforced sanctions against Iraq have killed thousands of Iraqi civilians, virtually all of them innocent. Ariel Sharon's government regularly resorts to collective punishment in its war against the Palestinians, bulldozing entire blocks of homes to punish a single terror suspect. While the ugliness of suicide bombings makes extreme Israeli measures understandable, it is worth asking why the United States has continued to allow the West Bank and Gaza occupations—the root cause of the terror—to fester so long. Why not a more forceful effort to promote American values—including, we would think, democracy and self-determination—to the Israel/Palestine conflict? No invasion would be required, just the judicious use of dollar diplomacy.

Such questions, uncomfortable as they are, underlie the likely Muslim response to an American invasion of Iraq and any subsequent effort to turn the country into a democracy. Any native of the Mideast will tell you that



Iraq is not the only regime in the region that possesses weapons of mass destruction and regularly flouts UN resolutions. The likelihood is a war against Saddam's regime will be perceived—by millions throughout the Arab world—not as a liberation but as a hypocritical effort to impose an alien regime on an Arab country, carried out primarily for Israel's benefit. Some will resist by dreaming up ways to hit back at us when and where we are most vulnerable. Americans who claim otherwise are deceiving themselves.

[POLITICAL CORRECTNESS] COLD WHITE MEN

Warning: The onset of winter may have caused you—or worse, your unwitting youngsters—to construct a sexist symbol right in your own front yard. So says Tricia Cusack, an art historian at Britain's University of Birmingham, after five years of extensive research. Writing in the *New Formation*, Ms. Cusack exposes the snowman, long considered an innocent figure incarnated by an old top hat, as a far more sinister character—"white, invariably male and generally adult." Its "mas-

culinity and its ritual position in the semi-public space of the garden or field arguably help to substantiate an ideology upholding a gendered spatial-social system marking women's proper sphere as the domestic-private and men's as the commercial public," she writes. And if patriarchal placement isn't disturbing enough, consider Cusack's revelation that the snowman's "bulbous body, phallic carrot-nose and blank, unindividualized eyes have obvious elements of the grotesque." The lone positive development: since corn cob pipes have fallen out of fashion, Frosty is saved from the further sin of endorsing tobacco use.

[NEOCONS] THE PERILS OF (SELF-) PROMOTION

Matt Drudge reports that feelings in the White House are not all warm and cuddly towards David Frum. The Canadian neoconservative is out on the talk show circuit flogging his book about W's presidency, based on his stint as a Bush speechwriter. The Bushies are evidently fearful that Frum's well-honed instinct for self-promotion, in conjunction with

his ultra-hawkish views, will complicate American diplomacy during a tense period.

Frum, as all the world knows, helped write the "axis of evil" phrase in Bush's State of the Union speech and was important in giving a neoconish tinge to the Bush presidency. As Norman Podhoretz writes, "What counts nowadays is the words a President permits to be put into his mouth" and for the neocons, the president has proved permissive indeed.

The problem is that the Bush agenda and that of neocons' are far from identical: while the latter want a wider war against much of the Muslim world (and strive to give the impression that such war is inevitable), many in the Bush administration, including, we hope, the president himself, want Saddam disarmed and contained, and the war against terror kept in focus against the terrorists who actually threaten Americans. That requires diplomacy as well as muscle. It is a sign of their wisdom that the Bushies see in the Frum book tour a potential loose cannon complicating their tasks.

[IMMIGRATION] **SHARPTON OF THE SOMALIS**

Last fall, Roger McGrath wrote in these pages about the arrival of large numbers of Somali Bantu refugees in an unlikely location: Lewiston, Maine. Now comes this update: Omar Jamal of the Somali Justice Advocacy Center of St. Paul, Minn. is setting out on a "National Tour Against Hate." High on this Somali Sharpton's list, Maine, where he will meet with the governor to discuss "hate activities in that state against Somali immigrants." According to Jamal, Lewiston's Somalis called him in October to report "hate crimes." (Of course, nothing can justify genuine bigotry, but it comes as no surprise that a

sudden mass influx of people with an alien language, culture, and religion into a homogenous small town should cause unrest.)

Having learned from the American ethnic grievance lobby, Jamal will pose for the cameras in Lewiston while calling for "understanding and tolerance."

His visit to Lewiston will be followed by a rally led by Matt Hale, founder of the explicitly racist World Church of the Creator. Just as the British National Party attempted to exploit immigration-driven race riots in the English post-industrial towns of Oldham and Burnley two summers ago, again an extremist group is using cultural balkanization for its own benefit. Such a resentful situation is not fair either to Lewiston's residents or to the Somalis.

[CULTURE] **LIGHTS OUT**

Taking up where *National Review* left off, VDARE.com has made an annual event of documenting the campaign to abolish Christmas. Nativities toppled, "Silent Night" silenced, Santa rebuked for being insensitive to minorities.

Though too tardy to compete, we offer an entry of our own: Every Christmas season since 1952, a 12-story cross created by the lighted windows of the New York Central Building has shined over Park Avenue. By tradition, it has been lighted the first Sunday in December, but this year the windows went dark after just one week. According to a spokeswoman for Max Capital, the company that owns the building, the cross was turned off as a security measure. But Charles Bierman, a chiropractor who wrote to protest, claims that Max Capital's CEO told him he was calling lights out for religious reasons. The PC proprietor failed to specify which faith was offended by the suggestion that Christmas has something to do with Christ. ■

The American Conservative

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The American Conservative, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 27, 2003 (ISSN 1540-966X). AC is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for double issues in January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 120, Arlington VA, 22209. (703) 875-7600. Periodicals postage pending at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 10829, Riverton, NJ 08076-0829.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$69.97 other foreign (U.S. funds). Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds). For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries—by mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 10829, Riverton, NJ 08076-0829. By phone: 1-800-579-6148 (outside the U.S./Canada call 1-856-786-9042). Via the web: www.amconmag.com. When ordering a subscription please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue and all subscription transactions. This issue went to press on January 9, 2003. Copyright 2003 *The American Conservative*. Inquiries to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com.

COMPASSIONATE INDIGNATION

The essay by your correspondent J.P. Zmirak (Jan. 13), attacking the "Trotskyism" of the neoconservative movement, was skillfully written in its way, and I have no particular quarrel with its doubtless compassionate indignation on behalf of American-born black citizens.

However, in your unsigned editorial three pages earlier, you describe the victims of the Central Park "jogger" frame-up as "a pack of feral Third World youths." They seem like Americans to me, as they seemed even then. Do please advise.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS
Washington, D.C.

The Editors respond:

The phrase was intended ironically. Though that sentiment was implicit in the editorial, it was perhaps not clearly expressed.

FRIES WITH THAT DEMOCRACY?

J.P. Zmirak's article, "America the Abstraction," has given your readers a great deal to chew on, and I stand with him in the "un-American" column as someone whose background and faith wholly oppose much of what is deemed American these days.

To say that democracy can somehow be exported to any nation willing to buy it is like saying that American democracy has not cost what it has—that somehow we just up and inherited these great ideas apart from the reality of experience. Our life as a nation is not an abstraction. Our experience of democracy is not an ideology.

My grandfather did not watch his friends around him die in the South Pacific for an abstraction so that intellectuals could trivialize the price they paid. Let us not cheapen their sacrifice

by neatly packaging and marketing democracy around the world as an "extra value meal" that can be chosen off the menu of political philosophies and digested for a couple of bucks.

DEREK KARCHNER
Arlington, Va.

CHUA CHAMPIONED

Paul Craig Roberts owes it to Amy Chua (Jan. 13) to re-read her thesis, for while free market capitalism and democracy are intimately related, and both are closely tied to American history, culture, and institutions, this is not so in countries to which capitalism and democracy are exported. In most situations, free market capitalism and democracy are adopted as separate entities which are not complimentary but antagonistic toward one another. In such a situation, the markets favor the wealthy minority while democracy favors the majority who feel themselves oppressed by the wealthy minority. Since capitalists usually ally with the wealthy minority, they suffer a backlash against the market while the minority creates a backlash against democracy. There is a third and even worse scenario: a violent backlash against the minority peoples which leads to mass slaughter.

Nowhere does Chua suggest that globalists create market dominant minorities; however, globalism introduces itself into a pre-existing situation and makes it worse. She exposes the folly of trying to export America piece by piece with the hope that eventually our uniquely American culture will supplant an indigenous culture that has evolved over centuries.

JOHN DENTE
Wilmington, Del.

MORE OF THE SAME

Clyde Wilson makes a number of interesting assertions and useful observations in his review of *Democracy: The*

God That Failed (Jan. 13). However, he dismisses Hoppe's conclusion that monarchy is preferable to democracy as irrelevant and then asserts, albeit with some hand-wringing, that the only cure for the increasing social destructiveness of democracy is—more democracy. He reminds me of all those now forgotten books published in the last third of the twentieth century in which, after articulating awful excesses the erstwhile conservative author would develop a curious form of amnesia regarding the contents of the first nine-tenths of his own book, ending it with a lame claim that all that was needed was better mass education.

After viewing the horrific social destruction and amoral wreckage that mark the trail of liberal democratic governance's path over the past half-century, all Mr. Wilson can come up with is a wistful sigh and a call for more democracy? I respectfully suggest that none of us should hold our breath while we await yet another reinvention of Demos.

MARVIN E. OGLE JR.
via email

TRUE CONSERVATISM

I am someone with an odd mix of views (liberal on environment, women's issues; conservative on defense—imagine my conundrum during Reagan's years). I have noticed for years that the level of political dialogue has become more of an ideological free-for-all than a reasoned exchange of ideas. At present, the prevalence of right wing (I intentionally use this term, rather than "conservative") ideologues on talk radio has made their side and style of discourse ascendant—conversion rather than reason, personalizing political disagreements, applying a double standard of morality depending on one's views, etc. I miss the "old days," when conservatives took a measured, reasoned, and rational

approach to dialogue, exemplifying through their manner of discourse the principles they espoused, not tied to any one party's agenda.

Imagine how happy I was to discover your magazine. While I may not agree with many of your positions, I admire and respect the manner in which they are presented and that you remain true to your principles regardless of which party you are discussing. I will continue to read your magazine. Thanks for reminding me that true conservatism is alive and well.

ANDY KOGERMA
via email

READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL

I have just read William S. Lind's irrational rant, "Rage Against the Machine" (Jan. 13) and am astounded by the thesis that men have little or no control over the machines they operate. I have little problem with the 60 channels of garbage on my TV cable because I seldom glance at most of them. Put another way, I try not to step in droppings. I will admit that even the best of these channels are seldom of high intellectual quality, but this problem is not technology related.

The same is true of computers. As with other tools, they can be used incorrectly or expertly, for good or for evil. If "young college grads ... cannot think," the problem isn't Mr. Lind's ludicrous contention that "... they cannot think because of information, not because of a lack of it." If bank tellers cannot make change, it is not the fault of Charles Babbage, a calculator, or too much information. Such problems are caused by a lack of intellect and several years in our institutions of planned ignorance.

Mr. Lind seems to be obsessed with the term "virtual reality," but applies it, incorrectly, to TV. By definition, the "reality" part of virtual reality is under

control of the user. If Mr. Lind is trying to say that TV is manipulated by the producers, I agree, but this is also true of the written word and spoken language and is neither unique to machines nor particularly new. All information is subject to distortion, and misinterpretation due to the humans involved should not be attributed to current technology.

More often than not, our machines exhibit, in operation, many characteristics of the operator. Often this is the result of inadequate education, poor parenting, lack of discipline, incompetent schooling, low IQ, faulty assumptions, not reading the operating manual, misconceptions, or other human foibles. I've always considered myself to be master of the machines I own and operate. Mr. Lind apparently hasn't mastered this skill.

ROD SMITH
Niceville, Fla.

PAT TOO KIND

Just got the Jan. 13, 2003 issue and, as usual, *The American Conservative* is full of interesting commentary and intelligence unique to its pages. But Pat Buchanan's column, "Ariel Sharon's Shakedown" is way too conservative in describing Israel's ripoff of the American taxpayer.

A Dec. 9, 2002 *Christian Science Monitor* story notes that since 1948, in current U.S. dollars, direct payments to Israel total \$240 billion, not including another \$139 billion to Egypt and Jordan to pay for their separate peace with Israel. Other indirect economic costs of Washington's blank check support since 1973 total over \$1 trillion. If the Israel Firsters get their way with a series of wars to make the Middle East safe for Israel's monopoly on deliverable nuclear weapons and imperial expansion, future costs will include the restoration of the military draft, but don't expect the Bush-Clinton-Wol-

fowitz crowd to pay that blood tax.

THOMAS DRAKE
Munster, Ind.

GOD'S CREATURES

Until I read your excerpt of Matthew Scully's book, *Dominion* (Dec. 16), I had no idea of the extent to which we condemn billions of sentient, intelligent, emotive beings to lives of the utmost horror and pain. Certainly man's "dominion" over nature does not include subjecting other living beings to the mechanized madness of today's modern factory food farms. It's time we added the "e" to human and claim "humane" as a human behavior that reflects our image as created in the likeness of God.

DIANA ARTEMIS
Washington, D.C.

IGNORANT APPETITES

Impressive is Matthew Scully's understanding of how the human mind and conscience works. Society has become numb to feeling compassion for beings other than human. The lonely calf wandering the fields searching for its mother kindles a soft spot in many a person's heart. But chain that calf in a crate, lined up with hundreds of other calves, their fate to end up on our plates as veal picatta and all we can do is salivate. We have become a nation in which "ignorance is bliss" defines our reaction to the pain and suffering we inflict daily on animals. This book, hopefully, will open some eyes to the atrocities we excuse as research, entertainment, and satisfying our palates.

LAURA FRISK
Encinitas, Calif.

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The Apologists

After his fifth apology, on Black Educational Television, and his promise to honor Martin Luther King Day and support affirmative action forever, Trent Lott packed it

in. That was the signal for the pogrom.

From the Clintons to the Black Caucus, the Left howled that the GOP must now own up to its sins and exorcise the demon of racism that has inhabited the party soul since Nixon.

From all sides, evidence was thrown in Republican faces. Had not Reagan used the code word "states rights" in beginning his 1980 campaign in Philadelphia, Miss., the town where civil rights workers Schwerner, Cheney, and Goodman were martyred in 1964?

Had not Jesse Helms won on a racist ad showing a pair of white hands crumbling a rejection letter for a job lost because of affirmative action? Had not Bush I won the White House with his Willie Horton ad? Had not Pete Wilson won re-election as governor of California running on that "anti-immigrant" Proposition 187? Yet, rather than defend their past, Republicans reeled and groveled: "It wasn't us!" "We're not like that!" "We're modern Republicans!"

The great failing of conservatives, said Whittaker Chambers, is that they do not retrieve their wounded. But the Trent Affair reveals a greater failure. Modern conservatives are a deracinated lot, unrooted in history, unwilling to defend their kinfolk or forebears. Confronted with a charge of "racism" or "bigotry," their natural reaction is to imitate the wildebeest of the Serengeti and light out for the tall grass.

With neoconservatives, this is understandable. After all, they are transients; they never belonged to the tribe. When

the great battles of the 20th century were fought, they or their fathers were AWOL or on the other side. From the fight to kill Wilson's surrendering of sovereignty in the Treaty of Versailles, to America First in the early 1940s, to the postwar fights over Soviet subversion, to the Goldwater movement, Nixon, Agnew, and Vietnam, they were with Trotsky, Truman, and LBJ.

Thus, as the Left rewrites the history of the 20th century to make itself heroic and the Right the racist villains, neocons declare neutrality. As for Republicans, many take the attitude epitomized by old Henry Ford: "History is bunk." And who cares about yesterday?

But as Trent Lott learned, ignorance has consequences. People who never heard of the 1948 Dixiecrats before December were soon howling for Lott's head. Uneducated to think, the new generation has been conditioned to respond with precise political correctness.

But rather than apologize for its past, the Right should be demanding apologies. In World War II, liberal icon FDR appeased Stalin at Tehran and Yalta in a fashion so supine as to make Neville Chamberlain at Munich look like Stonewall Jackson at First Manassas. When his bumbling heir, Harry Truman, left office, all the nations for which Britain and America had gone to war—Czechoslovakia, Poland, China—were in the iron grip of a barbaric, anti-Christian tyranny worse than any threat Hitler had ever posed, Americans were dying by the thousands in Truman's "no-

win war" in Korea, and the U.S. government had been honeycombed with spies and traitors to such an extent—as the Venona transcripts now prove—that Joe McCarthy had badly understated his case.

Liberals today wail and whine about the "anti-Communist hysteria" and "McCarthyism" of the era, but the American people loved the pounding that Nixon, Mundt, Jenner, and "Tailgunner Joe" gave Truman, Acheson, and Marshall, and Americans repudiated the liberal squish Adlai in two huge Eisenhower landslides without a single regret.

As for LBJ's Great Society, it gave us deficits, crime waves, race riots in 100 cities, campus rampages by over-privileged brats, and another "no-win war" into which a failing, incompetent liberal establishment had plunged the United States. Between 1968 and 1988, Nixon, Agnew, and Reagan hammered the Party of Humphrey, McGovern, Mondale, and Dukakis so relentlessly that liberals now all call themselves "progressives."

Why is the GOP ashamed of this record of victory? There was nothing wrong with the tactics that gave the party those 49-state landslides. Simply because states rights were once used to sustain segregation does not invalidate that founding principle of the Republic.

Jesse Helms was right to spotlight a victim of the racist policy of reverse discrimination, as was Bush to highlight the consequences of the ACLU idiocy of Dukakis in handing out weekend furloughs to crazed killers like Willie Horton. When conservatives start apologizing for the campaigns that gave them their greatest victories, they become, as in 1992 and 1996, what Sam Francis aptly calls them: "Beautiful Losers." ■