

from The Lord's Resistance Army say they are forced to mutilate and kill fellow youngsters who are insubordinate or try to escape. Mr. Kony occasionally breaks into the Western press as he did in April 2002, when his men attacked a funeral party, and made the mourners eat the corpse before slaughtering them. Whenever President Museveni's men close in on him he reportedly slips across the border into Sudan. However, last year, after Mr. Kony's men started killing and raping Sudanese civilians, the Sudanese announced they would join the hunt for him.

Academic Prejudices

Prof. Behrend has provided us with a fascinating glimpse of all this, but her book is a frustrating, confusing piece of work. First of all, she is an out-and-out lefty who laces her book with observations like: "Today, wars take place be-

cause the enormous war economy necessitates the testing of new and the scrapping of old weapons technologies." This book is translated from German, so it is hard to know exactly whom to blame, but she appears to love jargon. Every idea, explanation, thought process, or discussion is a "discourse," and when she really hits her stride, it may even be a "semantic field." Her book is also a jumble of repetition and events out of chronological order.

Prof. Behrend is terrified she might feed stereotypes. She writes that before she went to Uganda to do research, she thought the Holy Spirit Movement was a peasant revolt against a heartless government. She discovered that the fighters were mostly in it for thrills, loot, and revenge, that many of them had fought in one civil war or other, developed a taste for killing, and would not go back to being peasants. She nearly dropped the project, she writes, "since I saw no

possibility of depicting the Holy Spirit Movement and its history except by idealizing it unjustifiably or repeating stereotypes that would have been too close to colonial images of warlike, 'violent' savages." She admits that given a choice, she has succumbed to "a certain tendency to idealization," but concedes that in Africa, war often has very little political content and is hard to distinguish from large-scale crime.

One wonders what a brutally frank account would be like. Prof. Behrend strains to avoid passing judgment, but it seems there is just about nothing the Acholi cannot be made to believe. This book is an account of credulity of a nature entirely different from the horoscopes, channeling, or pyramids in which white people sometimes dabble. Much as she would deny it, Prof. Behrend has written a portrait of the African mind—perhaps even the African soul—a portrait that is to us disturbingly alien. **[E]**

O Tempora, O Mores!

Coming to a City Near You

The first of 12,000 Somali Bantu refugees will start arriving this spring. The US State Department plans to resettle them in 43 cities, including Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City. This is the most ambitious resettlement since thousands of primitive Laotian Hmong were shipped in after the



Never saw a flush toilet.

Vietnam War, but it still represents a small percentage of the 807,000 refugees admitted to the US over the past ten years.

The Bantu were originally from what is now Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania, but were taken to Somalia as slaves in the 1800s. They were freed by European colonists but remained at the bottom of Somali society, performing the most menial tasks. Other Somalis call

them *adoon* (slave), *gosha* (foreigner), or *jareer* (which refers to their kinky hair). When civil war broke out in Somalia in 1991, many Bantu were massacred and raped. Thousands fled to refugee camps in neighboring Kenya, where they have lived ever since. The UN High Commissioner of Refugees originally planned to resettle them in Mozambique, one of their ancestral homes, but when that country turned them down in 1997, the State Department volunteered to bring them here.

The Somali Bantu are extremely primitive. Hardly any speak English, and most are illiterate in their native tongue. Until they began receiving 10-day instruction classes in American culture, most had never seen telephones, flush toilets, or clocks. They have a very elastic view of time, and refer to important events by whatever natural phenomena were occurring at the time. Sasha Chanoff, who works with the Bantu for the International Organization for Migration, wrote recently about trying to bring them into the 21st century:

"How does one begin to teach the relevance of time and dates and schedules? What about sensitizing people to the nuances of shopping and cooking and eating, when they won't recognize food in the supermarket? How does one pre-

vent children from sticking a finger into an electric socket or garbage disposal, falling down stairs, scalding themselves with a faucet or straying into the road?"

"Do not assume they open a door just because it has a doorknob," he adds.

People in the cities the State Department has chosen have no say in the matter. Last fall, the city council of Holyoke, Massachusetts, one of the lucky towns, voted to reject a \$320,000 federal resettlement grant, saying that even with the money it could not house and educate Bantu (see AR, Nov. 2002). Cities cannot legally prevent people from moving in, so the vote was only symbolic. [Mark Bixler, *New World Awaits Bantus Seeking Refuge in Atlanta*, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Feb. 23, 2003, p. B1.]

The Enemy Within

"Fragging" is Vietnam-era military slang for the murder of (usually) officers by enlisted men, and comes from the preferred weapon for the job: a fragmentation grenade. Between 1969 and 1972 there were reportedly 788 fraggings, which killed 86 soldiers. Fraggings usually occurred in rear-area units that had high levels of drug use and racial tension. In many cases the officers were white and the murderers black. The prac-

tice came to public attention in 1971 with the trial of Billy Dean Smith, a black soldier charged with fragging two white officers. Mr. Smith managed to turn his trial into a forum on military racism and was ultimately acquitted.

On March 23, black American Muslim Sgt. Hasan Akbar revived the practice of fragging when he rolled hand grenades under three command staff tents of the 101st Airborne Division while it was stationed in the Kuwaiti desert preparing to invade Iraq. He then opened fire with a rifle, shooting an officer in the back. The attack killed two white officers—Army Captain Christopher Scott Seifert and Air Force Major Gregory Stone—and wounded 14 other soldiers.



Captain Seifert is carried to his grave.

As he was being led away by MPs, witnesses heard Sgt. Akbar shout, “You guys are coming into our countries, and you’re going to rape our women and kill our children,” but Army officials say they have not found a motive for the attack. They do admit Sgt. Akbar appears to have had an “attitude problem,” and that the five-year veteran had recently been disciplined for insubordination.

Sgt. Akbar was born in Louisiana with the name Mark Fidel Kools, but legally changed it after he converted to Islam. His family says military racism was too much for him. William Bilal, his stepfather, says Sgt. Akbar resented the military and complained that it was difficult for blacks “to make rank.” “Everybody’s got a breaking point,” explains Mr. Bilal. “If he did this, he was driven.”

Sgt. Akbar faces the death penalty for murder. [Attitude Problem? Family: Soldier Accused in Grenade Attack Troubled over Race & Religion Issues, ABCNews.com, March 25, 2003. Rene Sanchez, Few Clues to Grenade Incident, Washington Post, March 25, 2003. Earl Ofari Hutchinson, Return Of ‘Fragging’ Echoes Earlier War, Pacific News Service, March 25, 2003. Suspect

in Attack on Army Returns to US, ABCNews.com, March 30, 2003. Akbar Charged in Grenade Attack on 101st, AP, April 4, 2003.]

Perhaps not coincidentally, support for war with Iraq differs sharply by race. According to a *Washington Post*-ABC News poll, only 35 percent of blacks support the war, with 61 percent opposed. Whites support the war 78 percent to 20 percent. In a separate poll, Hispanic support was found to be midway between that of whites and blacks, with 61 percent supporting the war and 27 percent opposed. [Darryl Fears, For Blacks, the War Is Another Divide, Washington Post, March 25, 2003, p. A22. Darryl Fears, Hispanics Split Over War in Iraq, Washington Post, April 9, 2003, p. A33.]

Air Farce

In March, Albuquerque police arrested four active-duty airmen from nearby Kirtland Air Force Base on charges stemming from an alleged cross-burning. Officials at Kirtland used the incident to remind base personnel of the importance of diversity. Capt. Kimberly Adamski, Kirtland’s Equal Opportunity Officer, wrote, “Diversity poses unique challenges, but it is also what has made our nation so successful and our Air Force the most formidable in the world.” She adds that it is not (yet) illegal to display a Confederate flag, but doing so will “get you looked at!” She continues: “If I know you are a card-holding member of a supremacist organization or I know you have confederate [*sic*] flags displayed in your home or on your vehicle, I will likely draw the conclusion that you are a racist—whether you are or not.”

Lt. Col. Neil Whiteman, Staff Judge Advocate, suggests that anyone not keen on diversity is an enemy of the Constitution. Military personnel, he wrote, “are expected to conform to and support the core values of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence: all people are created equal . . .” The colonel adds that “active participation” in “racist” organizations—marching in rallies, recruiting, fundraising distributing literature—is prohibited, and though “passive” participation is not prohibited, it can ruin a career. [Kimberly Adamski, Air Force Does Not Tolerate Supremacist Behavior, Nucleus (Kirtland AFB), March 21, 2003. Neil Whiteman, JAG Emphasizes Rules on Rupremacist (*sic*)

Activities, Nucleus (Kirtland AFB), March 21, 2003.]

Cool Killer

On October 24 last year, Lee Malvo was arrested along with his mentor John Muhammad for the series of sniper killings that terrorized the Washington, DC, area and left ten people dead. Police interviewed Mr. Malvo at length in the days after the arrest, but the transcripts have only now been made public. They show Mr. Malvo, now 18, to be a cool, contemptuous killer, who regrets nothing.

He said the purpose of the killings was to sow terror and extort \$10 million in return for calling them off, adding that



Lee Malvo and John Muhammad.

he shot whatever victims came into his sights. He preferred “head shots,” he explained, because of their “horrific effect:” presumably the shocking appearance of an exploded head. He graphically described the ways in which victims fell when they were hit, pointing eagerly to where bullets entered their bodies. “He was hit good,” he said of one victim; “Dead immediately.” He described another killing as “a perfect shot.” He bragged that he and his partner, Mr. Muhammad, never missed, and were always careful to fire only once: “One shot means I’m in control.”

He said the two men sometimes stayed on the scene to watch how police and the media responded. More than once he asked police officers what had happened, and that they sometimes asked him if he had seen anything suspicious. He said the two men went in and out of police road blocks several times to test police behavior.

Like so many black killers, Mr. Malvo shows no regret. “I wouldn’t change my life a bit,” he said. “I’d do the exact same thing.” And like so many blacks, he does not lack self esteem. “If I’m in jail, I

won't be there all my life," he said. "You can't build a jail strong enough to hold me."

Mr. Malvo's lawyer, Michael Arif, says he will challenge the admissibility of the statements in court. [Sari Horowitz and Josh White, From Malvo, Hubris and Contempt, Washington Post, April 6, 2003, p. A1.]

German Democracy

Last month we reported on the Vlaams Blok's victory in a lawsuit filed to ban the Belgian nationalist party. Germany's National Democratic Party (NDP, or NPD in German), a small, nationalist party, which its detractors say incites hatred against immigrants and minimizes the Holocaust, has just had a similar proceeding thrown out of court.



In 2000, the German government together with both houses of parliament petitioned the Constitutional Court—the country's highest judicial body—to declare the party a threat to democracy and disband it.

The government's case fell apart when judicial investigators discovered that some of the most extremist and fanatical members of the NDP were government plants. The authorities later admitted that between 1997 and 2002, it had at least 30 informers among the 200 top national and state party leaders, but the government refused to disclose who its people were and what they did.

On March 18, presiding judge Winfried Hassemer noted that since the government made it impossible to know which were the actions and positions of the NDP and which were those of agents of the government, the most common refrain on the seven-judge panel was, "We have problems with the facts—how can we arrive at the truth?" "The proceedings" he said, "have been dismissed."

Since the Second World War, the Constitutional Court has banned only two parties: a successor to the Nazis in 1952 and the Communist Party in 1956. The Schroeder government invested a great deal of moral capital in this case, which has only served to raise the profile of the NDP and highlight the lengths

anti-nationalists are prepared to go to quash dissent. The NDP has never won more than 4.3 percent of the vote—this was back in 1963—but as a recognized political party it receives state funding and is permitted to hold public rallies. Supporters have pointed out the hypocrisy of the larger parties in claiming to defend democracy by trying to snuff out an electoral choice for the German people. [Tony Czuczka, Germany Throws Out Bid to Outlaw Party, AP, March 18, 2003. German neo-Nazi Ban Rejected, BBC News, March 18, 2003.]

No Pigs, No Buns

Sixty percent of the pupils at Park Road Junior Infant and Nursery School in Batley, West Yorkshire, England, are from Pakistan or India, and 99 percent of this group are Muslims. The head teacher, Barbara Harris, has decided to ban storybooks that mention pigs, because they might offend Muslims, who do not eat pork. The ban affects only those classes for children age six and under, since teachers read out loud to them. Pig books will be permitted in classes for older children who can presumably choose their own books. "I very much regret that anyone should find this controversial," says Miss Harris, "as all we are doing is trying to ensure that all of our children are awarded the respect that all human beings deserve." [Pig Tales Ban is 'About Respect,' Daily Post (London), March 5, 2003.]

School children may also soon do without hot cross buns, even though the British have been eating them for nearly 2,000 years. In pagan times, the cross represented the moon and its four quarters, but Christians claimed the buns in 1361 when Father Thomas Rockcliffe started distributing them to the poor of St. Albans, and hot cross buns have long been traditional Easter fare at schools. Local governments are now ordering schools not to serve them for fear they will upset non-Christians. The Liverpool local council, for example, banned them because they have the "potential to offend," although the schools cook up special dishes for such exotic festivals as Chinese New Year, Italian National Day and even Russian Independence Day. York, Wolverhampton, Wakefield, and some of the London boroughs have joined the bun boycott.

"These people are silly asses," says Conservative MP Ann Widdecombe: "It

seems that anything that comes from an ethnic minority is fine, while anything Christian is wrong." A spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain calls the bans "very, very bizarre." "I wish they would leave us alone," he says, adding:



"We are quite capable of articulating our own concerns and if we find something offensive, we will say so. We do not need to rely on other people to do it for us. British Muslims have been quite happily eating and digesting hot cross buns for many years and I don't think they are suddenly going to be offended." He suggested that if the British were really concerned about offending Muslims they might reconsider the war with Iraq. [Chris Hastings and Elizabeth Day, Hot Cross Banned: Councils Decree Buns Could be 'Offensive' to Non-Christians, Telegraph (London), March 16, 2003.]

No Free Speech for 'Racists'

Ralph Crow, a Spanish teacher at Evarts High School in Harlan County, Kentucky, has been fired because of an e-mail message he sent to about 40 members of the school staff. He wrote that achievements of whites are ignored so "non-achieving minorities can have the spotlight," that the main accomplishment of Martin Luther King was the "introduction and promotion of communism," that blacks commit "about 90%" of violent crime, and that students were being taught about King and Rosa Parks at the expense of the Founding Fathers. "The truth isn't necessarily kind," he wrote. "If Martin Luther King Jr. were white, would there be a holiday for him?" The superintendent of the district promptly fired Mr. Crow, saying he had violated county and school regulations against harassment and discrimination, and that his letter could cause "great harm" to the district. The ACLU is considering defending Mr. Crow, who says his right to free speech was violated.

Erma Murphy, 71, a black whose grandson was in Mr. Crow's Spanish class several years ago, says she is surprised by the fuss. "He and I have conversations on the phone until 12 o'clock at night," she says. "We talk about cooking and all sorts of things. If he's a racist, that's news to me." [Alan Maimon, Fired for Racial Remarks, Courier-Journal (Louisville), March 8, 2003.]

Arab-killer Caught

Larme Price, a 30-year-old black man, has been arrested for a series of killings in February and March, in which all but one of the victims were Middle Eastern. His mother says the Sept. 11 attacks unhinged him. Mr. Price, who prowled Brooklyn and Queens with a handgun, killed four people and wounded several more. One day when he could not find any Middle Easterners, he decided to kill someone who was "not good." This turned out to be a 32-year-old Russian immigrant named Albert Kotlyar who worked at a laundromat where Mr. Price was loitering. Mr. Kotlyar asked him to leave and got a bullet in return.

Mr. Price turned himself in to police on March 29, explaining he had been reading the Bible, and was moved by the injunction, "Thou shalt not kill." [Larry Celona Et. Al., 9/11 Made 'Psycho' Slayer Go Nuts: Mom, New York Post, March 31, 2003.]

Blacks Good, Whites Bad

The Smithsonian's American History Museum in Washington, DC, has opened an exhibit on West Africa that will run through the end of August. The exhibit is titled "Captive Passage: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Making of the Americas," and includes the following explanation: "Slavery had existed in Africa as it had in other parts of the world, for centuries, but it was not based on race and it did not result in dehumanization and death, as did transatlantic slavery. . . . Because the economies of Africa did not depend on slave labor, the number of enslaved people was small until European traders arrived." When a reporter asked Julia Hotton (race unspecified), curator of the exhibit, why African slavery was not "dehumanizing," she said it would not be wise "to concentrate on that particular phrase." When pressed, she conceded, "I can't

guarantee that somewhere along the way a slave somewhere did not die because of mistreatment." [Marc Morano, Federal Museum Denies Slavery in Africa Was 'Dehumanizing,' CNSNews.com, March 6, 2003.]

Border Banditos

Anapra is a notorious Mexican slum just across the border from New Mexico. The tracks of the Union Pacific railroad run right by Anapra, and for years residents have made a practice of robbing trains. They come through a hole in the border fence, hop onto the slow-moving freights, and trip the emergency brakes that stop the train. Then they break into containers and carry the loot back to Mexico.

The FBI, in cooperation with the Mexican police, decided to catch the



Easy target.

crooks. About 70 agents and border patrol officers took part in a raid on Sept. 12, some hidden in containers on the train, others waiting near the track. On the other side of the border there were about 70 Mexican police and customs agents. The bandits attacked in their usual way, and about 20 men broke into a container in which three FBI agents were hiding. They got into a fight with the agents, one of whom was a woman (what fool gave her that assignment?). Samantha Mikeska managed to get handcuffs on the ringleader, Eduardo Calderon, before one of the robbers broke one of the bones in her face with a baseball bat. She held on to Mr. Calderon, while his accomplices dragged both of them through the fence

into Mexico. Another agent, who also got a skull fracture in the fight, went across the border to get Miss Mikeska back, and the two bleeding agents staggered back to US territory while the Mexicans escaped. Later, Mexican authorities rounded up ten people and turned them over to the Americans.

The aftermath has been as much a fiasco as the raid. Of the ten arrested Mexicans, eight were released by a judge who ruled there was not enough evidence to hold them, and only two still face charges. But the worst of it is that the Mexican press has reported widely that FBI agents crossed the border that night and made arrests in Mexico. This is hotly denied by the Americans, but firmly believed in Mexico, where it is known as "the FBI invasion." In March, a federal prosecutor in nearby Juarez even called for the arrest *on charges of treason* of the Mexican agents who turned over the ten suspects, and a judge is reportedly considering issuing arrest warrants.

The residents of Anapra are likewise in high dudgeon. Some can look from their hovels across the border at the pleasant American community of Sunland Park, with its well-tended country club. "I don't think it is fair for us to have so little," says one slum-dweller. The people of Anapra think the train robbers are Robin Hoods. They argue that if the railroad put up with robbery for so long, it was because it could afford the losses. A spokesman for Union Pacific will not say how much the company lost to bandits, but points out that there have been no successful robberies since the September incident. [Mary Jordan, Legacy of Jesse James Survives on Border, Washington Post, March 10, 2003, p. A18.]

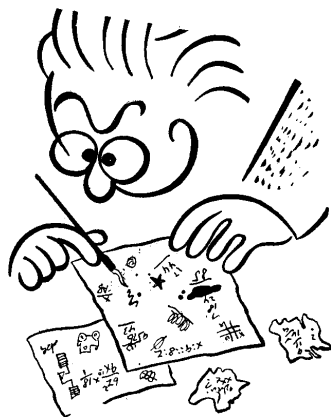
Crisis of Succession

Nigeria has hundreds of traditional local monarchs who once had absolute power and still have considerable influence. On March 7, the "Oba" or king of Lagos Island died at age 92. Adeyinka Oyekan II was monarch of the part of Nigeria's capital city that includes the high-rise financial district as well as a number of poor, densely-packed residential neighborhoods. He ruled from a set of 19th-century colonial-era bungalows, where traditional chieftains met on March 14 to plan his burial and succes-

sion. Neither was likely to be uneventful. Lagos state governor Bola Tinubu declared a dusk-to-dawn curfew to keep warring Yoruba tribal factions from coming to blows over the succession. Many residents of Lagos stayed home voluntarily because they didn't want to become part of a different Yoruba practice: human sacrifice. Traditionally, the Oba does not go to his grave alone, but must be accompanied by freshly killed slaves. Oyekan II is not known to have had slaves, and the locals were taking care not become substitutes. [Dulue Mbachu, *Nigerian Capital Mourns Death of Monarch*, AP, March 14, 2003.]

Blame the Test

Like 18 other states, California requires high school students to pass an "exit examination" in order to graduate. The language section of the test is at a 10th-grade level and the math section requires a knowledge of basic algebra,



which many students learn in 9th grade. The test is given several times a year, and students can retake any part they fail. Of the current crop of 459,588 juniors in the state, only 48 percent have passed both parts. 271,300 have either failed the math portion or not yet taken it, and 103,300 have failed it twice. The figures for the language portion are a little better: 140,000 and 48,800. Needless to say, blacks and Hispanics fail the test far more often than whites and Asians, and are complaining about bias. They have organized demonstrations in Los Angeles, San Jose, San Diego, and elsewhere, and Assemblywoman Loni Hancock of Berkeley (race unspecified) introduced a bill in February to let students graduate without taking the test.

Here are some sample questions:

1) Stephanie is reading a 456-page book. During the past seven days she has

read 168 pages. If she continues reading at the same rate, how many more days will it take her to complete the book?

A. 12; B. 14; C. 19; D. 24

2) A bag contained four green balls, three red balls, and two purple balls. Jason removed one purple ball from the bag and did not put the ball back in the bag. He then randomly removed another ball from the bag. What is the probability that the second ball Jason removed was purple?

A. $\frac{1}{36}$; B. $\frac{1}{9}$; C. $\frac{1}{8}$; D. $\frac{2}{9}$

3) The musician played Wendy's favorite waltz for her husband and ____.

A. I; B. he; C. she; D. her

[Jenifer Ragland and Erika Hayasaki, *State Exit Exam Gets Poor Grades*, Los Angeles Times, March 4, 2003.]

Black or Not?

The Democratic Party of Florida has officially recognized the establishment of a new Caribbean Caucus—to the fury of members of the Black Caucus. American blacks don't want Haitians, Jamaicans, and other black islanders forming a group that could dilute black power and black solidarity. As the president of the Black Caucus Dorothy Jackson explained: "We think this doesn't unify us as black people. Even though they are Caribbean, they are [first and foremost] people of color." Samuel Jackson of Miami, also a member of the Democratic Black Caucus, puts it bluntly: "Once you come to these shores you are black."

Caribbean blacks say they want a group that will attract more attention to the issue they care about but that American blacks ignore: immigration. There are now 300,000 blacks from the Caribbean living in south Florida, and they want to consolidate their power and make it easier for yet more of them to immigrate. [Toni Marshall, *Caribbean Blacks Aim to Sway Party*, Orlando Sentinel, March 31, 2003.]

Oops!

This correction recently appeared in a college newspaper: "A typo in a headline on page 17 of the February 28 issue mistakenly conveyed the wrong meaning for the article. Instead of 'Relevant yet expendable: the ideals of Black History Month,' the headline should have read, 'Relevant yet expandable . . .'"

[Chimes (newspaper of Calvin College), March 7, 2003.]

Insane Asylum . . .

Last year, 111,000 asylum seekers entered Britain, an increase of 20 percent over the previous year. Over the last two years, asylum seekers have cost British taxpayers the astonishing sum of £3.5 billion pounds in direct and administrative costs—a figure that could rise. In February 2000, a Libyan man arrived in Britain seeking asylum. His claim was delayed because the government sent forms to the wrong address, but the problem was eventually straightened out and he won asylum in May 2002. He is now suing the government, saying the uncertainty caused by the "long and troubling" delay gave him what a psychiatrist says was a "major depressive disorder." He wants £30,000, and Mr. Justice Stephen Silber of the High Court has ruled that the suit may go forward. The government is appealing the ruling. [John Elliot, *Depressed Refugee Gets Right to Sue*, Sunday Times (London), March 9, 2003.]

. . . Sane Solution

On April 1, the British government passed a law that will let it revoke the citizenship of immigrants who got it by fraud or who act against Britain's vital interests. The first person likely to be stripped of citizenship is Abu Hamza al-Masri, a radical Muslim clergyman who believes the Sept. 11 attacks were a Jewish plot, and that the Space Shuttle Columbia was destroyed by God because it was carrying Christians, a Jew, and a Hindu. "He wants to turn Britain into a Taliban-style state, and has no place in this country," says Labor MP Andrew Pismire. "He fulfills the requirement of this legislation for his nationality to be removed and then for him to be removed." [Jane Wardell, *Britain Can Revoke Immigrant Citizenship*, AP, April 1, 2003.]

Gap Gaff

Teachers are under great pressure to narrow the racial gap in test scores, and Terri Dieker, principal of Nettle Heartnett Elementary School in Leavenworth, Kansas, thought she would give black students a pep talk. Just before the state assessment tests were to be administered

in February, she called about 20 black fourth- and fifth-graders to her office in small groups to explain that because minority students often score lower than whites, they should work hard and do their best.

Miss Dieker is white, so was of course misunderstood and pilloried. "She said black kids are dumber than white kids," says ten-year-old Spencer Hildebrandt. "I thought it was appalling that they would even consider doing this without the consent of the parents," says his father George. "They actually assume those kids are dumb to start with, when they haven't even taken the test."

Miss Dieker formally apologized to parents and students, but she says she felt she had to do something about the performance gap: "If we are to help all kids learn better, the information had to be put on the table. I apologize for doing it the wrong way." [Dawn Bormann, *Pep Talk to Black Pupils Lands Principal in Dispute*, Kansas City Star, March 15, 2003, p. B-1.]

'A Pretty Bad Thing'

On March 22, white 17-year-old Dana Marie Pliakas went to a party in the Pittsburgh-area apartment of Rodney Burton, a 21-year old black man. She spent the afternoon drinking 151-proof rum and smoking marijuana, and at one point got into an argument with Mr. Burton's black girlfriend, 19-year-old Brittany Williams. The argument turned violent when Miss Williams punched Miss Pliakas and tore her clothing. According to an eyewitness, Miss Williams was then beaten and tortured for several hours while she begged for her life. It is not clear whether Mr. Burton took part in the assaults, but Miss Pliakas was reportedly stripped, whipped with a belt, and hit with a plastic bottle. According to the witness, Miss Williams threatened her with a gun, and at one point put a plastic bag over her head, saying, "You could be dead." Miss Pliakas tried to run out the front door, but Miss Williams and Mr. Burton caught her.

Late that night, the two eventually let Miss Pliakas get dressed, left the apartment with her, and returned shortly afterwards without her. Residents report hearing a single gunshot at about three a.m., and at about seven in the morning, a passerby spotted Dana Pliakas' body lying at the bottom of a flight of concrete stairs near a viaduct. She was wear-

ing only jewelry and socks, and had been shot once in the back of the head. Her body was to be tested for evidence of sexual assault.

On March 25, police arrested Mr. Burton and Miss Williams. They think Mr. Burton fired the fatal shot, since their witness says he heard him say he shot her in the head so she would not tell police what happened. At a news conference, Police Superintendent Kenneth Fulton said Miss Pliakas "probably spent eight or nine hours under the hand of these two individuals. For young people, this ranks right up there. To be tortured, stripped, beaten and shot in the back of the head is a pretty bad thing for a junior in high school." [Karen Zapf, *Teen Slaying Victim Begged for Her Life*, Tribune-Review (Pittsburgh), March 26, 2003.]

Decent Blacks Speak Out

Over the first weekend in April, the city of Daytona, Florida, braced for the 150,000 black revelers expected to attend this year's Black College Reunion. Daytona police assign more officers to this event than to any other, and many residents leave town to escape the drunkenness, mayhem, and lewdness.

Black spring break started in 1984, when Grady Irvin, then-student body president of black Bethune-Cookman College (BCC), invited students from rival Florida A&M to a beach party to try to soothe tensions that arose from a dispute over ticket sales from their annual football game. The next year BCC and Florida A&M invited other black schools, and within a few years students from 50 colleges were showing up for the party.

By 1989, appalled by the behavior of the partygoers, BCC withdrew. Then-student body president Gerald Yancey, now an assistant school principal, says he thinks most of those who attend are just looking to drink, fight and take drugs, and are not even students: "[I]f there's any violence, if there's anything negative, it always sounds like it was black students. It sickens me. They should change the name."

The founder, Mr. Irvin, agrees: "That function as it exists today puts black college students in a bad light. Those who participate in the event don't have the principles that were initially espoused." [John Wolfson, *Black College Reunion's Founders Decry Changes*,

Knight Ridder Tribune News Service, March 30, 2003.]

Hijacking Hip-Hop

According to David Mays, founder of the Hip-Hop magazine *The Source*, "For over 20 years, Hip-Hop culture has been this country's single most powerful force in the battle to improve race relations and destroy the racism and racial profiling that continues to pervade our society." Mr. Mays credits Hip-Hop with helping "make sure that myself and my generation of white youth had a better understanding and respect for the struggles of African-Americans in this country." Now all this is under threat from unscrupulous whites. As evidence,



White boys are taking over.

Mr. Mays cites a letter from a schoolteacher who was telling her class Martin Luther King paved the way for Hip-Hop by "promoting freedom of expression for all races," when a white boy butted in and said, "What are you talking about? Eminem created Hip-Hop and he's better than any rapper out there." The teacher adds: "It is sad that it appears mainstream America has embraced Eminem as Hip-Hop's creator and king, just [as it did] with Elvis Presley when he stole the credit for Rock 'n Roll from Chuck Berry."

Today, says Mr. Mays, Eminem's marketing machine "is actually allowing white youth to dismiss the historical and current existence of racism, while embracing a so-called new form of 'Hip-Hop' as their own." If Eminem is not stopped, Hip-Hop will be "co-opted," and discussing this threat will force people to "take a real honest look at ourselves and the way racism is programmed into our society." [Who is White, *Globe Times* (Philadelphia), March 20, 2003.]

