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Dear President Azocar

May 9, 1992

In this article called "The Forbidden Topic" a point near the beginning I underlined says "The exemplary figures of American history have been excised from school textbooks, replaced by obscure minorities and women." This article from Phyllis Schlafly's "Education Reporter" called "What are teachers expected to know?" is about how Western culture has been removed from our schools and replaced with what the white liberals call "multiculturalism." I see nothing multicultural about multiculturalism though. What I see is a curriculum of anti-white racial politics.

I believe that America has already ceased to exist as a country. We no longer have a common culture and the country has become so warped in so many ways that it no longer is the same country I grew up in (I'm 42). Our education system has been leveled to insure "equality" among students. Race laws have been passed to promote "diversity" which have totally destroyed the essence of what America once was, and religion, tradition and morality have been subverted by white liberals intent on promoting "tolerance." They dislike things like religion, tradition and morality because these things discriminate between right and wrong and discrimination causes hurt feelings. I believe though that the destruction of these values is a major factor in the massive social breakdown occurring all throughout American society.

The "European Right" has become a regular story in the liberal news media in this country. Men like Jean-Marie Le Pen and Franz Schonhuber are continuously condemned and called "fascists" for saying that they have the right to maintain the racial and cultural identity of their countries. The liberal media in America finds such feelings quite intolerable. What's interesting though is that these very same feelings of racial and cultural pride which are so vigorously condemned as fascist when displayed by whites in Europe are lavishly praised and encouraged when displayed (as they often are) by blacks and Hispanics in America. I often write to men like Jean-Marie Le Pen and Franz Schonhuber and send them articles like these so they are quite aware of what's happened to America. Their opposition to multiculturalism isn't caused by xenophobia or bigotry. They're opposed to it because they're aware that it's nothing but a racist fraud which has ruined this country. The obvious truth is that no sensible person in Europe could be in favor of it after seeing what it's done to America. Being in favor of multiculturalism is like being in favor of suicide.

The European Right is not the problem. The American Left is. They're the ones attacking Western culture and Christianity. They're the ones who've broken down objective standards in order to advance their ideals. This article from Society magazine called "Has Modernity Killed Objectivity" is a very interesting article about how objective standards have been subverted in the universities. This abandonment of objectivity is spreading all throughout this society and is obviously destroying it. After all, without objective standards civilization could have never come into being. Certainly Western civilization would have never come into being without Christianity. A society which abandons the objective standards which made civilization possible cannot remain civilized.

The subversion of objectivity for the sake of equality is a betrayal of civilization and in the deepest sense it is a betrayal of truth itself. As far as I'm concerned nothing could be more radically subversive than that.

Sincerely, *Michael Flanagan*
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THE FORBIDDEN TOPIC

Some conservatives don't want to know about the link between multiculturalism and immigration.

LAWRENCE AUSTER

ACROSS the country, America's mainstream identity is being dismantled in the name of "inclusion." Half of last summer's New York City Shakespeare Festival was given over to Spanish and Portuguese translations of Shakespeare. Christmas has been replaced in many schools by a non-denominational Winterfest or by the new African-American holiday Kwanza, while schools in areas with large Hispanic populations celebrate Cinco de Mayo. The exemplary figures of American history have been excised from school textbooks, replaced by obscure minorities and women. Despite massive additions of material on non-Western societies, school texts are still being stridently attacked as "Eurocentric," and much more radical changes are in the works.

Yet even as the multiculturalist revolution rolls through the land, there is still profound disagreement about its meaning, its aims, and most of all its origins. Mainstream media and educationists describe the diversity movement as, in part, an effort to be more inclusive of America's historic minorities; in its larger dimensions, however, they see it as a response to the prodigious changes that are occurring in America's ethnic composition. America is rapidly becoming multiracial and white-minority, and, these observers say, our national identity is changing in response. If that is true—and it is stated or implied in almost every news story on the subject—then it is also true that the massive Third World immigration is itself the ultimate driving force behind multiculturalism.

Virtually alone in resisting these as-

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sumptions is the conservative establishment, particularly the neoconservatives. Liberals, who support both unrestricted immigration and multiculturalism, do not hesitate to point out a causal link between the two; indeed, they appeal to the inevitability of continued Third World immigration as an unanswerable argument for multiculturalism. Traditional conservatives like Pat Buchanan, who with equal consistency oppose both multiculturalism and Third World immigration, also have no difficulty in seeing the causal connection. Neoconservatives, by contrast, have dissociated these two issues, leading the fight against multiculturalism while passionately clinging to the ideal of unrestricted immigration. Their pro-immigration stand, based on a conviction of both its economic necessity and its political morality, compels them to ignore—or ritually dismiss—the mounting evidence that the sea-change in America's ethnic identity is fueling the cultural-diversity movement. To keep immigration from coming under attack, they are forced to hunt for alternative explanations for multiculturalism.

This approach was brought into focus last summer in articles by Irving Kristol in the *Wall Street Journal*, by Nathan Glazer in *The New Republic*, and by Midge Decter in *Commentary*. Despite wide differences on the effects of multiculturalism (Kristol thinks it's a threat to the West equal to Nazism and Stalinism; Glazer thinks it's no big deal), they reached startlingly similar conclusions about its causes.

Multiculturalism, they argued, has essentially nothing to do with America's increasing ethnic diversity; at bottom, it is a desperate, misguided attempt to overcome black educational

deficiencies—an effort that radicals have opportunistically seized upon to advance their separatist and anti-West agenda. "Did these black students and their problems not exist, we would hear little of multiculturalism," Irving Kristol declared. Assimilation, he believes, is proceeding apace: "Most Hispanics are behaving very much like the Italians of yesteryear; most Orientals, like the Jews of yesteryear." Nathan Glazer agreed: "[I]t is not the new immigration that is driving the multicultural demands."

Down with Eurocentrism

IRONICALLY, on the same day Irving Kristol was denying that Hispanics are pushing for multiculturalism, the *New York Times* ran this typical item: "Buoyed by a growing population and by a greater presence on local school boards, Hispanic Americans have begun pressing textbook publishers and state education officials to include more about Hispanic contributions in the curriculums of public schools," as well as to correct "stereotypes"—a familiar code for the elimination of Eurocentrism.

A spate of letters to the *Wall Street Journal* protesting Kristol's view offered a revealing glimpse into mainstream opinion on the subject. The chief factor in multiculturalism, wrote Martha Farnsworth Riche of the Population Reference Bureau, is that "racially and ethnically, America's school-age population is increasingly unlike its past generations. . . . This ensures that the school-age population will become even less a product of what we call 'Western civilization' in the future." Multiculturalism, said another correspondent, "is not an attempt to address the social problems of African-Americans. Latin Americans and Asian-Americans have been equally involved." From the cultural Left, Gregory K. Tanaka said that as a result of the increasing proportion of non-whites in America, "it is becoming clear that our Western 'common' culture no longer works. What Mr. Kristol overlooks is that this decline of Westernism leaves us no surviving basis for social order."

While it might be tempting to dismiss these views as multiculturalist propaganda, the clincher is that Nathan Glazer himself, after at first denying that the increase of non-Euro-

pean groups is propelling multiculturalism, turned around and admitted it: "I do not see how school systems with a majority of black and Latino students, with black or Latino leadership at the top . . . can stand firmly against the multiculturalist thrust . . . demographic and political pressures change the history that is to be taught." (Italics added.) It was in this same article that Glazer, to the great consternation of his neoconservative allies, announced his reluctant support for Thomas Sobol's radical curriculum reforms in New York state. That Glazer subscribed to the demographics-multiculturalism link in the very act of surrendering to the new curriculum supports my point that once multiculturalism is accepted, the key role of immigration and ethnic diversity in driving multiculturalism loses its stigma and can be freely acknowledged.

To this, conservatives reply that Glazer is not admitting a forbidden truth but is simply adopting the multiculturalists' fallacious "demographic inevitability" argument. In *The New Criterion*, Heather MacDonald agrees that demographic changes are "fueling" multiculturalism, but criticizes Glazer for "[mistaking] the actual for the inevitable." In other words, neo-conservatives will concede that multiculturalism has been adopted because of our society's increasing diversity; but, they insist, this was not "logical." Since immigration is only the "actual" cause and not the "logical" cause, we should leave immigration alone.

One can't help being reminded of the people who say that the failures of Marxism do not prove its theoretical unsoundness. Just as one cannot persuade a devoted Marxist that Marxism must lead to tyranny and poverty, one cannot logically demonstrate to an open-borders conservative that precipitately changing an historically European-majority country into a multi-racial, white-minority country must result in a breakdown of the common culture. Nevertheless, whether logical or not, that is what is happening.

Here neoconservatives fall back on the familiar argument that it is only the ethnic activists, not the great bulk of the immigrant groups, who are pushing for multiculturalism, a case advanced most recently by Linda

Chavez in *Out of the Barrio*. But as Tamar Jacoby has pointed out, Miss Chavez's own evidence suggests quite the opposite conclusion: that Hispanics of all classes are eagerly embracing the call to cultural separatism. According to one study cited by Miss Chavez, a large and rising percentage of Hispanics describe themselves as "Hispanic first/American second"—a preference made clear by the Hispanic majority in San José, California, who



"Nice report, Allingham, but change all the he/she's to she/he's."

angrily protested, as a "symbol of conquest," a statue commemorating the raising of the American flag in California during the Mexican War.

But even if it were true that most of the new ethnics didn't "want" multiculturalism, it is undeniable that their swelling numbers empower the group-rights movement by adding to its clientele. Scott McConnell has pointed out in the *New York Post* that as soon as minority immigrants arrive in this country, they become grist for the affirmative-action mill, eligible for an elaborate web of preferences. To imagine that we can turn back the multiculturalist and group-rights ideology by persuasion alone, while continuing the large-scale immigration that feeds that ideology, is like pouring liquor down a man's throat while "advising" him to stay sober.

Apart from ideology, it is important to understand that massive deculturation is occurring as a direct result of the demographic changes themselves. Commenting on the impact of the huge Hispanic presence in California, an Hispanic academic tells the *New York Times*: "What is threatened here is intellectual life, the arts, museums, symphonies. How can you talk about preserving open space and establishing museums with a large undereducated underclass?" The program director of the Brooklyn Academy of Music speaks matter-of-factly about the inev-

itable displacement of Western music as the Academy gears its programs to the cultural interests and traditions of Brooklyn's intensely heterogeneous, Third World population.

Another consequence of this profound population shift is an intensification of white guilt. Since in our emerging multi-racial society any all-white grouping is increasingly seen as non-representative (and presumptively "racist"), the same assumption gets insensibly projected onto the past. The resulting loss of sympathetic interest in Western historical figures, lore, and achievements creates a ready audience for the multiculturalist rewriting of history. When we can no longer employ traditional reference points such as "our Western heritage" because a critical number of us are no longer from the West; when we cannot speak of "our Founding Fathers" because the expression is considered racially exclusive; when more and more minorities complain that they can't identify with American history because they "don't see people who look like themselves" in that history, then the only practical way to preserve a simulacrum of common identity is to redefine America as a centerless, multicultural society.

Multiculturalism, in sum, is far more than a radical ideology or misconceived educational reform; it is a *mainstream* phenomenon, a systematic dismantling of America's unitary national identity in response to unprecedented ethnic and racial transformation. Admittedly, immigration reform aimed at stabilizing the country's ethnic composition is no panacea; the debunking of multiculturalism must also continue. But if immigration is not cut back, the multiculturalist thrust will be simply unstoppable.

What explains the conservatives' refusal to face the demographic dimensions of multiculturalism? Martha Farnsworth Riche believes the reason is psychological: "The older white academics are facing a shift in power. They're denying that reality by saying, in effect, that minorities 'should' assimilate; they don't want to face the fact that their world is disappearing." More to the point, they are evading the uncomfortable necessity of dealing with the racially charged immigration issue.

Indeed, the conservatives' greatest reason for not allowing a fundamental debate on immigration is their understandable fear of opening up a forum for racist attitudes. But as last year's election in Louisiana suggests, the establishment's refusal to take seriously Middle America's legitimate concerns about cultural displacement only makes it more likely that those concerns will be taken up by extremists. If opposition to racism is not to become a destructive ideological crusade, then racism must be defined according to a norm of racial justice that is rationally achievable in this world. Understood in a non-utopian sense, racial justice means that the majority in a country treats minorities fairly and equally; it does not mean that the majority is required to turn *itself* into a minority. If it does mean the latter, then nation-states, in effect, have no right to preserve their own exist-

ence, let alone to control their borders.

The immigration restrictions of the early 1920s, discriminatory though they plainly were (and against the group to which this writer belongs), reduced ethnic hatreds, greatly eased the assimilation of white ethnics, and kept America a culturally unified nation through the mid twentieth century. The falloff in cheap immigrant labor also encouraged capital-intensive investment and spurred the great middle-class economic expansion of the 1920s. It is ironic, therefore, that our open-borders advocates constantly appeal to the turn-of-the-century immigration as a model for us to follow today, since one of the key reasons the earlier immigration turned out, in retrospect, to be such a remarkable success was that it was *halted*. The same caveat applies even more strongly to our present, uncontrolled influx from the Third World. □

social workers, and spiritualists), and, inevitably, large aggregations of media people. It is easy to envision the grandstanding that will take place at such a jamboree. For example, activist organizations hope to get women from the Rio slums to surround the conference hall and bang cooking pots. The cacophony will represent the "reality" that governmental delegates should respond to in their deliberations.

Security is likely to be one of the key problems facing Earth Summit; reportedly, this area will receive 60 percent of the budget. Logistical arrangements will be a related challenge. Only 12,000 suitable hotel rooms are estimated to be available, and embassies are already battling over who stays at the Sheraton and who gets the Crazy Love Motel. The greens have vetoed the installation of air-conditioning for the conference because the equipment emits CFCs. An "authentic" Indian village is being built for the Indigenous Peoples' Conference. However, the Indians do not desire to stay in the grass huts being built for them, but want the same modern hotel rooms accorded the other participants.

Three of the four preparatory sessions have been held already. The fourth, and presumably crucial, advance meeting is taking place in New York City. (It is heartening to learn that the official United States delegation is considered to be among the best prepared and also the most difficult to negotiate with.) The tone for the deliberations is being set by Maurice Strong, the secretary general of the conference, who warns of "the environmental crisis which threatens the collapse of the planet." His Big Brother attitude is hardly veiled. As he states the matter, "We need to hold governments accountable and they need to be told what we want."

The conference secretariat is proposing an impressive array of global goals: eradicating poverty, reversing the destruction of renewable resources, and changing the system of incentives and penalties that motivate economic behavior. The careful reader will note that environmental concerns are sandwiched in between two proposals for fundamentally changing the distribution of economic resources.

The idea is to make available to developing countries the financial resources and environmentally sound

One Green World

LEVIATHAN IN RIO

The UN is gearing up for its massive 'Earth Summit' in June. Batten down the hatches.

MURRAY WEIDENBAUM

IT IS IRONIC that, while the world hails the abandonment of totalitarian government in Eastern Europe, an ambitious but overlooked effort is under way to expand governmental power on a global scale. In the guise of cleaning up the environment, the first UN-sponsored "Earth Summit" is scheduled for Rio de Janeiro in June.

At Earth Summit, the various national governments will be asked to endorse both an unprecedented "Earth Charter" and a more operational "Agenda 21." The Earth Charter, we are told, will embody the basic princi-

ples which "must govern the economic and environmental behavior of peoples and nations to ensure our common future." Agenda 21—presumably covering the twenty-first century—is "a blueprint for action in all major areas affecting the relationship between the environment and the economy." That covers a lot of terrain, as we will see.

Officially known as the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the ten-day Earth Summit is expected to be the largest conference ever held. Planners expect anywhere from ten thousand to one hundred thousand participants—official government representatives, supporting technical experts, officials of non-governmental organizations (including ecologists, architects, scientists, business executives, feminists, student leaders, indigenous Indians,

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FOCUS: What Are Teachers Expected To Know?

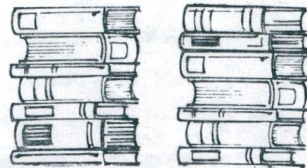
Since 1988, a teacher certification test (state board exam) has been required of all teachers in Illinois, as well as in many other states. I took this test this year, and I'm giving you an eyewitness report on its content.

The Basic Skills test *must* be passed by anyone who wants to teach in Illinois in any grade (K-12). It consists of 150 multiple-choice questions and one essay question. It's pretty elementary.

This year's test included a few propaganda items — for example, a reading passage about John Dewey and Horace Mann and their philosophies of education, with the stress on John Dewey's idea that the purpose of education is to foster social change. The passage said that we live in a democracy and that our democratic system of government means majority rule.

The test included emphasis on trendy ideas about self-esteem and reinforcement of the notion that self-esteem begins with looking inward, taking care of self, and learning to like yourself first (which supposedly then progresses naturally to liking other people). After reading the passage, the student had to answer a few multiple choice questions.

The English test *must* be passed by anyone who wants to teach English in the 6th through 12th grades in Illinois. It consists of 125 multiple-choice questions and no essay questions. It is pure propaganda for the Political



Correctness movement.

Many of the questions were amazingly simple, appeared to be oriented to the lowest possible level of scholarship, and tested skills that should have been learned in junior high and high school.

These questions used short, noncontroversial statements to test the student's ability to spell, punctuate, use correct grammar, identify parts of speech, select pronouns that agree with subjects, and choose verbs and nouns that agree with each other, etc. Many of these simple, routine skills were tested not once but several times in the same test. For example, the difference between *it's* (it is) and *its* (the possessive) came up more than twice.

The test included roughly 15-20 passages (a paragraph to a page each) of selections from various works of literature to test the student's familiarity with certain authors' works and their dominant themes. The works selected were almost all from the writings of black authors, feminist authors, Asian authors, South American authors, one American-Indian author, and two authors from Africa whose names were totally unfamiliar. Among the

authors referred to (sometimes more than once) from these multi-cultural subgroups were Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Scott Momaday, Sylvia Plath, and others. The questions asked about these authors' selections often dealt with the Politically Correct social themes that predominate in their works.

Three questions were on *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, subtitled *An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, which is about a feminist socialist Marxist. (Dinesh D'Souza's new book *Illiberal Education* [reviewed in *Education Reporter*, June 1991] explains in detail how *I, Rigoberta* is just a propaganda tract for the current attack on Western culture.)

The test included a long, emotional quotation from Frederick Douglass which bitterly criticized the United States and condemned us for celebrating freedom and the Fourth of July when blacks were not free.

Another long passage blamed the Great Depression on America and emphasized that global misery resulted instantly from the stock market crash. Other passages featured pollution and environmentalism issues.

Keeping in mind that this test was given to English majors (not political science majors) who had presumably spent at least part of their college years studying literature, one might assume the test would at least mention some major U.S. and British authors. Wrong. Al-

though minor Politically Correct authors were well represented on the test, there was no mention on this test of any of the following U.S. or British authors: Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, John Donne, Francis Bacon, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Johnson/James Boswell, William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Browning, Alfred Lord Tennyson, or Charles Dickens. Nor was there any mention of other European authors who might have been considered for inclusion, such as Anton Chekov, Cervantes, Victor Hugo, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, or Henrik Isben. It was as though these writers didn't exist.

The certification test is irrelevant for those who hope to be real English teachers in Illinois. Because most of it is so simple that almost everyone should be able to pass, including even the most inept and those not politically correct who made the mistake of studying Shakespeare instead of Sylvia Plath. What this test really accomplishes is to provide all prospective teachers with one last heavy dose of propaganda before they move into the classroom.

The author of this Focus is a writer known to the editor of the Education Reporter but whose name is withheld in order not to jeopardize her candidacy for teacher certification.

DECEMBER 1991

Has Modernity Killed Objectivity?

Aaron Wildavsky

The debate over multiculturalism is rooted in two major conflicts over values, the more obvious being the difference between equal opportunity and equality of result, and the less obvious, between modernity and objectivity. The suggestion that education should be multicultural contains the scarcely veiled supposition that race, gender, and (sometimes) sexual orientation matter more than knowledge. Objections arise on the grounds that the use of ascriptive criteria in the selection of teachers would lead to a decrease in knowledge. Of course, if universities merely privilege the appearance of knowledge by calling it "objective," when there is no such thing, then it is no great loss or may even be a gain to de-privilege this false objectivity. Multiculturalism is linked to interpretivism and deconstruction in that all of these require an end to claims of objective knowledge.

Has objectivity become passé? Has the increased sophistication brought by modern understanding revealed objectivity to be a "noble lie," useful in driving mankind to its first scientific understanding but revealed to be domination? Are the social sciences especially blameworthy for having failed to acknowledge the biases that are revealed through the study of the social sciences as struggles for power rather than for knowledge?

Subjectivity already has considerable standing in social science. It is widely acknowledged that individuals do not necessarily make decisions on the basis of the way the world is, but rather on the way they

perceive it to be, a subjective state if there ever was one. It is further agreed that all perception is selective; no one sees it all or can get it all; the human mind is not a swivel operating at the speed of light that can see in all directions seemingly simultaneously. Rather, the opportunity cost, as an economist might say, of what is selected in is all the rest that is selected out of a particular vision. Indeed, it is said to be a singular virtue of scientific theories that they leave out so much in order to make what is included narrower in range but more powerful in prediction. All sorts of biases, moreover, whether material or ideological or based on class or gender or race or region—the list is as long as our considerable capacities for distortion—influence our perceptions. Given all this and more, where is the place for objectivity? Put this way, is it not amazing that anybody ever believed in objectivity?

It is one thing to say, following the religious, that we see through a glass darkly of necessity, and quite another to say that there is no underlying truth or reality to be perceived. A belief in the importance of subjectivity does not necessarily negate the existence of objectivity, that is, the effort to come to a closer, better, less subjective understanding. Subjectivity, in short, has its limits and these need to be understood.

It is important to demonstrate that different people in different social contexts who adhere to different ways of life often perceive the same or similar objects or behaviors or situations in a markedly different way. Nowadays, for instance, we witness estimates of dan-

ger from technology that vary thousands of times over, not merely by a few percent here or there. This is bedrock. We observe these differences as sure as anything and they do call out for explanation. But differences in perception, however deep they may run, are not the same as differences in manipulative ability. Stating your subjective opinion or even explaining the subjectivity of yourself and others is not equivalent to making the world and the people in it do what you want or turn out the way you wish. To claim that the human mind can transport itself and the body in which it is encased to distant planets is one thing, getting there is something else again. Only by being in touch with the way the world really is, at least in part, can such transport be made. Communists and their supporters praised the Soviet-style command economy for decades, to take another example, but they could not make it work.

**Against the view of the progressiveness
of scientific theories stands the contention
that science is inevitably politicized.**

The natural sciences proceed in significant part by way of "impossibility theories" devoted to stating what cannot happen according to known principles. Social science ought to do more of this. If we did, the feeling of theoretical déjà-vu, nothing is ever refuted, every fool's notion comes back, would not be ever-present. In the 1920s and the 1930s Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich von Hayek, adherents of the subjectivist Austrian school of economics, which they helped create, argued negatively that no economy based on central command principles could grow over time and positively that only economies based on spontaneous interactions, as found in markets, could grow over time. For decades their ideas were largely rejected because command economies did grow. So far as we know now, Mises and Hayek have been proven correct, though, as is only proper, all theories are conditional in the sense that they may be overtaken by still better ones.

The integrity of science, as Michael Polanyi noted in his seminal essay on "The Republic of Science," does not depend on the integrity of individual scientists but on a competitive system that separates the best from the worst independent of any single person's will. By insisting that no one's authority is final, and by demanding the replication of experiments, far-flung and dispersed communities of scientists are able to do

better for science than anyone can do alone. Polanyi did not say, no doubt because he could not imagine anyone would contest the point, that science would do better if scientists sought truer conceptions of the way the world works rather than seeking falsehood. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how scientists could keep a straight face with one another or even bother to do their daily craft work if they assumed there was no truer reality to be discovered. Of course, even if they were on track as judged by their peers and by the use of their ideas in practical work, it is always possible, indeed likely, that there are deeper conceptions of the underlying reality that will one day take the place of existing theories. But the absence of a final truth does not mean there is none at all.

Conceiving of science as competition over ideas, science is also about conflict and therefore about power. Recall Robert K. Merton's law to the effect that, in any biography or autobiography of a scientist, after it is first stated that he cared not for precedence, it would take no more than twenty pages to find him engaged in a battle royal over that very thing. Fame is a spur. Over time, however, we know of few scientific ideas that have been accepted against increasingly negative evidence. For as long as diverse groups of independent scientists exist, there is no way to control them all.

Against this view of the progressive improvement of scientific theories stands the contention that science is inevitably politicized and that to contend otherwise is sheer rubbish. On the contrary, it is the view of inevitable politicization that reflects trashy thought. It is equivalent to the famous old joke about the child who kills his parents and then claims the mercy of the court because he has become an orphan. As Martin Landau teaches:

... all classifications, no matter how natural they appear, are invented. They are constructs which permit us to take a *first glance*, to engage in a search to make observations. If we permit them to congeal, if we reify them, if we fail to make the necessary distinction between class and object, between category and assignment, then we rob ourselves of the opportunity to take a second glance (research). One needs to emphasize that category-informed observation takes the form of a search and that the concept of a re-search constitutes an error-correcting device.

For nothing in and of itself or by itself is either politicized or unpoliticized. The quality of being political is not something natural, as if it could be plucked like a fruit from a tree; it rather is something imposed,

a social rather than a natural construction of knowledge. Everything governments do, for instance, be it waging war or imprisoning its citizens, has been done at some time, somewhere privately, and whatever has been done privately, including raising children, has been done publicly. In short, what should be private or public, political or nonpolitical, is what we contest about. When disagreements are large and deep among political activists, as is now true in the United States, then one side makes greater efforts to politicize and the other to resist politicization. Ground more finely, parties and factions may want to politicize this (say, decisions about hiring faculty) and depoliticize that (same-gender sex). This is not to say that one cannot legitimately argue about the consequences of politicizing family life or sports or social science. The record does not speak kindly of such efforts from Lysenkoism in the Soviet Union to experiments on live human beings claiming to prove racial superiority as did the Nazis. But "the political," as some loosely call it, is not a fixed quality or quantity, known independently of the human will, it is a product of social interaction to gain agreement.

Being political is a social rather than a natural construction of knowledge.

The question to ask is not "What is political?" but "What do we want to make political?" In the humanities, especially in literature, the urge to combine subjectivism with politicization has reached new heights under the name of "deconstruction." At one level, deconstruction is a form of literary critical art that has been practiced for a long time. Virtually everyone will agree that rich and varied texts, like the Bible and Greek tragedies, are subject to more than one interpretation in that good arguments can be put forward on behalf of various perspectives. On this basis alone, however, few would have been interested in pursuing deconstruction further. It is radical deconstruction, the denial that texts have meaning or that authors can control them—the straightforward avowal that the purpose of literary criticism is to be, as they put it, perennially subversive—that has converted what was first a fad into a movement. Yet, if all there is to literary criticism is already present in the critic, there is good reason to ask why this salaried exercise is necessary.

Let us ask a simple question: Can anyone think of a single deconstructionist who is a political conservative?

There may be a very few but the preponderant number must be liberal-cum-political radicals. What is the essence of this radicalism? It is a belief in greater equality of condition as a desirable norm for regulating social interaction. From this norm of radical egalitarianism comes immense hostility to existing authority as redolent of oppressive hierarchies and inegalitarian markets.

To the purveyors of 'multiculturalism' variety means uniformity.

Applied to literature, radical egalitarianism requires radical deconstruction, that is, an unceasing attack on authority—in the case of literature on the authority of words, sentences, paragraphs, and entire texts, as incoherent, indeed, as meaning exactly the opposite of whatever appears to be their meaning. The advantage for literary critics is that they can pursue a radical egalitarian agenda without joining a party or overtly adhering to a particular ideology other than apparent nihilism that is actually a form of radical egalitarianism. The disadvantage, as John Ellis demonstrates in *Against Deconstruction*, is the risk of incoherence.

The subject of subjectivity is something of a sport among intellectuals. It is, however, a game with a deadly purpose: the delegitimation of authority in democracies on the ground that these are mere covers for unconscionable inequalities, all the worse in that the ideologues of democracy profess exactly the opposite. Combatting such criticism is not an easy task in a democracy that prides itself on being open to different viewpoints and that cannot cut down on discourse without violating its fundamental principles.

Democracy is based on a belief that people are able to make reasoned judgments of opposing viewpoints. When scientific issues become impossible for the public to understand, because those who speak as scientists do not even agree on how to frame the questions, an important part of democracy in action is lost. Worse, when "noble lies" are told in the belief that the system is so bad any argument against it can only counteract a small part of its falsehoods, the task of the citizen is made much more difficult. As the German communists used to say, "Nach Hitler, uns!" (after Hitler, us!), only something infinitely worse came after they had helped to delegitimize the constitutional Weimar government.

"Multiculturalism," as it is called today, is a misnomer. To the people who purvey it, variety means uni-

formity. This is why we see faculties (where virtually every single member is left of center) who claim they are achieving variety when they hire people who are like them ideologically except for their gender and skin color. Using the term "multi," which implies that ordinary social science and humanities teach only one way of life while the proponents of multiculturalism teach a number of different ways, when their purpose is to inculcate a single way, takes some doing.

The proper use of subjectivity depends on widespread commitment to objectivity.

It runs counter to knowledge to claim that race or gender or class represent forms of culturalism in that people of the same race, class, or gender live the same way of life. In my courses on political cultures I show that among American Indian and black African peoples can be found hierarchical, individualist, and egalitarian cultures, as anthropologists have known for a very long time. When a single form of cultural expression, egalitarianism, is imposed in the name of cultural pluralism, discourse has been debased.

Subjectivism is a necessary aspect of science, social science, and the humanities; it is also a snare if it becomes a substitute for seeking truth. Hypotheses may be proposed in all our subjectivity, but testing and tentative acceptance followed by retesting, requires institutions that are plural, independent, and competitive but their members must share criteria requiring continuous resort to evidence. The proper use of subjectivity, in sum, depends on widespread commitment to objectivity.

As Martin Landau summarized this position so succinctly in his *Political Theory and Political Science*:

Science does not require that observers exhibit the pristine purity of total detachment. No one, save perhaps a tyro, suggests that a scientist be chaste, or that 'scientific habits of mind' are

incompatible with 'passionate advocacy, strong faith, intuitive conjecture, and imaginative speculation.' All of us, scientists included, are subject to countless influences so well hidden as to be uncoverable either by socio- or psychoanalysis. To transform a scientist into that fully aseptic and thoroughly neutral observer of legend is a virtual impossibility. There is no doubt that 'there is more to seeing than meets the eyeball'; that what we see is 'theory-laden' or 'field-determined.' We can admit out of hand that there is no such process as 'immaculate perception.' Arguments, therefore, which seek to sustain objectivity by predicating neutrality are doomed to fail. They are also irrelevant. . . . The crux of this concept rests on the fact that men, even scientific men, are not angels. Indeed, the entire system of science is based on a variation of Murphy's Law—he prime assumption that any scientist, no matter how careful he may be, is a risky actor; that he is prone to error; that he is not perfectible; that there are no algorithms which he can apply so perfectly as to expunge any and all biasing effects. Accordingly, all his proposals must be subject to error-correcting procedures. The goals of the enterprise demand a network of highly redundant and visible public checks to protect against the inclusion of erroneous items in the corpus of knowledge. Such networks are institutionalized control procedures which continually subject 'all scientific statements to the test of independent and impartial criteria': not men, but criteria, for science recognizes 'no authority of persons in the realm of cognition.' This is the decision rule that is called objectivity.

Aaron Wildavsky is Class of 1940 Professor of Political Science and Public Policy and a member of the Survey Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley. Among his writings are *Searching for Safety; Risk and Culture; Speaking Truth to Power; and The Beleaguered Presidency.*

This is a copy of a response I received from the editor of an Austrian newspaper called "Die Presse." I had sent him four articles. One was "The Tragedy of Multiculturalism" by Irving Kristol which was about how multiculturalism has ruined our schools.

Another was called "Popular culture and the war against standards" by the film critic Michael Medved which was about poisonous our popular culture has become. The third article was "The God of Abraham and the Enemies of Eurocentrism" by a professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard Divinity School. That was about how religion is being subverted in America and how the underlying logic of multiculturalism is no different than the ideology of Nazism.

The last was an article from Commentary about the ideas of the conservative scholar Philip Rieff. In this article it pointed out Rieff's belief that "The proper role of those most versed in the culture's creed - intellectuals - is primarily to aid in the educative process by which our culturally acquired character keeps us from sliding individually or collectively into the 'abyss of possibility.'"

America has been betrayed by its cultural elites. Instead of honoring and promoting our culture they have debased it. This article spoke of Rieff's belief that modern culture has become not higher but lower and that much of higher education in America has a lowering effect on our culture. The cultural elites responsible for this are the white liberals. As Aaron Wildavsky pointed out in the Society article which I've sent you, no conservative professor has ever taught deconstruction to college students.

Dr Chorherr said that these articles "really gave me quite a lot to think about." I'm sure they did.

Die Presse

Unabhängige Tageszeitung für Österreich

DER CHEFREDAKTEUR

Mr.
Michael Flanagan

3629 N. Christiana
Chicago, IL 60618 USA

Vienna, 14th of April 1992
Dr. Ch/kl

Dear Mr. Flanagan,

thank you very much for the articles you sent me, and, please, excuse my late answer. I have studied the material thoroughly, it really gave me quite a lot to think about.

Sincerely


Dr. Thomas Chorherr