

# Third Rail

The Award-Winning Political Arts Magazine  
of the College of Staten Island/CUNY  
Spring 2008 | [www.ThirdRailMag.com](http://www.ThirdRailMag.com)



**GOD DAMN  
AMERICAN  
APARTHEID**

CSI

COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND CUNY

# Look Who USED TO Teach at **CSI** **CU NY**

## Dr. Chalmers Clark

Formerly of the CSI Department of Political Science, Economics and Philosophy. His background is in the naturalized epistemology of W. V. Quine. His interest is to extend Quine's scientific holism into the domain of moral and political thought. The result has been research and publication in several interdisciplinary forms. Current work is on trust relations in the professions (medicine especially), the professions as stewards of public trusts, and the role public trusts play in the basic structure of a free society.



**CSI**  
**WORLD CLASS**  
*right here!*

[www.thldrailmag.com](http://www.thldrailmag.com)

Dr. Chalmers Clark was denied tenure by former CSI President Marlene Springer for, among other reasons, a "lack of academic research standards". After being denied tenure at CSI, Dr. Clark was quickly grabbed up by Yale University's Institute for Social & Policy Studies. Apparently Yale University has inferior research requirements compared to the WORLD CLASS standards at CSI.

CSI's loss was Yale's gain.



# CSI's *ONLY* student publication website is

# THIRD RAIL MAG com

- Read the latest news on CSI & CUNY
- Send a Letter to the Editors
- Respond to any article, poem or photograph
- Request an Issue to be snail mailed for *FREE*
- Read select back issues online
- Stay informed about Third Rail events
- NO intrusive corporate ads
- Read CSI's only award-winning journalism from the comfort of your home!



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PRESS

**The Nation.**  
Ten Papers  
We Like





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**FDR's Plan for Segregating America & Its Lasting Effects**



**Booze & Brains**

Nikki Saint Bautista infiltrates Union Hall's *Secret Science Club* in trendy Park Slope



**Phony Soldiers?**

Mike Gualtieri asks why Rush Limbaugh receives tax payer monies to denigrate Iraq war veterans

CSI's *only* award-winning student publication



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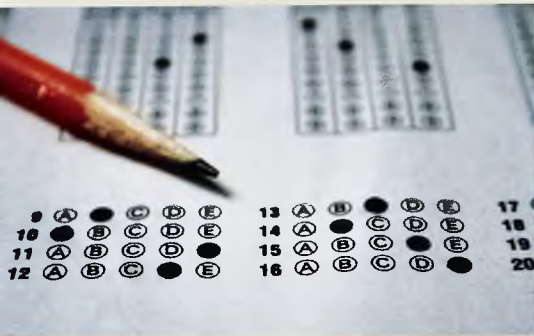
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## CUNY Chancellor Raises SAT Math Admission Scores to CSI & CUNY



**CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has unilaterally raised the SAT math admission score without the consent of CUNY faculty.**

**C**ity University of New York (CUNY) Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has recently announced plans to raise the minimum SAT score for freshmen entrance to CUNY senior colleges (including CSI) to between 480 and 510 on the math section. This plan is to go into effect in the Fall of 2008, according to Goldstein.

Many experts fear the increase in SAT score minimums at CUNY schools would exclude many African Americans from the opportunity to pursue an education at a CUNY senior college. The average math SAT score for African Americans in New York is 431. Experts point out that lower SAT scores for African Americans are not surprising when one takes into consideration that the SAT is a better predictor of household income than college success. One major reason for this is that SAT preparatory courses (like The Princeton Review or Kaplan) increase student's scores by 150 points (on average), but the courses cost around \$800. The companies that design and teach SAT preparatory classes earn about \$300 million a year.

The SAT consistently over-predicts the performance of white males in college and constantly under-predicts the performance of minorities and women in collegiate environments. For example, high school girls score 33 points lower than boys on the math section of the SAT (on average), but earn higher math grades in their freshman year of college. The College Board admits that high school grades and courses taken in high school

provide a better forecast of future college performance than does the SAT.

The Educational Testing Services (ETS), a private, not-for-profit company, develops and administers the SAT, but the College Board, a not-for-profit consortium of member colleges sponsors the test and decides how it will be constructed, administered and used. The College Board collects more than \$150 million annually from student test fees.

The SAT design is based on the model of the early U.S. Army examination. The Army examination was the brainchild of Lewis Terman and Robert Yerkes, both of whom were executives in the American Eugenics Movement. They designed the Army examination in an attempt to exclude blacks and immigrants from the army.

Critics argue that CUNY Chancellor Goldstein's plan misuses the SAT according to the recommendations put forward by both ETS and The College Board, both of whom contend that the test should never

be utilized as cutoff scores, especially for high stakes decisions. According to the test designers, any use of the SAT that treats scores as precise measures are seriously flawed. The test-makers admit two students' scores must differ by at least 125 points before they can reliably be said to be different, due to measurement rather than error.

Critics of Goldstein's plan cite the startling statistic that since the end of remediation in 1999, the number of African American students attending the top five CUNY senior colleges had fallen from 20 to 14 percent, with African American enrollments at City College dropping by a full 12 percent.

Critics also charge that there are alternatives to the SAT: 740 accredited, bachelor-degree granting colleges do not use the SAT to make admissions decisions for a substantial number of their applicants. This includes highly competitive institutions such as Bates College.

The SAT is a three hour multiple choice and essay test that purports to measure verbal and mathematical knowledge and skills. Colleges have implemented it as part of the admissions process for close to a century. Just shy of 3 million students take the test annually.

## CUNY Trustee Randy Mastro Dropped

**M**ayor Michael Bloomberg has opted not to re-appoint Randy Mastro to the CUNY Board of Trustees. Appointed in 1999 by then Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Mastro had been one of the more anti-student/faculty trustees of the last half decade. Mastro proposed ending bilingual education for NYC immigrants when he was head of Giuliani's task force on bilingual education. One of his more contentious moves as



a CUNY Trustee was in 2001, when he introduced a motion at a CUNY Trustee meeting endorsing CUNY Chancellor Goldstein's criticism

regarding an anti-war teach-in organized by the faculty and students of CUNY. The motion passed unopposed. Mastro is replaced by Charles A. Shorter of Ernst and Young LLP.



# CSI PRESIDENT MORALES GETS PAY RAISE,

# CSI STUDENTS MAY PAY MORE



**After receiving a \$10,000 a year pay raise, CSI President Tomás Morales quickly announced his support for a CUNY plan that would raise CSI tuition.**

The CUNY Board of Trustees recently awarded huge raises that ranged from \$10,000 to \$26,000 per year to top CUNY officials. CSI President Tomás Morales received a \$10,000 per year raise after less than two months on the job. This brings his monetary salary up to \$230,000 per year. In addition, CSI President Morales is further compensated with a mansion in an exclusive Staten Island neighborhood, a personal chauffeur, a car and other amenities, bringing his total approximate annual compensation to above \$300,000. The increases were justified by the CUNY Board of Trustees as “performance based”, but Morales had only been President of CSI for a little over one month at the time of the increase.

By contrast, the real wages of CSI and CUNY faculty and professional staff have declined 40% on average since 1971 (when adjusted for inflation), and there have been numerous tuition increases for students since the ending of Open Admissions. Shortly after

receiving his \$10,000 raise, CSI President Morales announced his support for the *CUNY Compact*, a plan that would raise tuition for CSI & CUNY students on an annual basis. According to the *CUNY Compact*, tuition could rise by as much as \$160 per year, for every year one registers as a student.

While the State University of New York’s (SUNY) funding from New York State has increased 35 percent since 1990, CUNY’s has actually dropped by 17 percent. That has left state funding-per-student at \$5,846 at CUNY, down from \$7,023 in 1990. SUNY’s per-student funding has risen from \$7,855 in 1990 to \$10,677 today.

Ironically, those CSI and CUNY students who are receiving less support are paying far more—205% more since 1991. Tuition and student fees now represent 43.8 percent of CUNY’s revenue, up from 21.4 percent in 1991.

## Is CUNY Going Green?

So claims a new website at [www.GreenCUNY.org](http://www.GreenCUNY.org). Run by CUNY’s Sustainability Coalition, the website encourages student initiatives to develop sustainable practices that benefit CUNY campuses.

So far however, the website seems to mostly be a public relations effort by CUNY Central to inform the public how “green” CUNY is becoming.

One of the more prominent posts on the site seems to be a link to an article in *CUNY Matters* (a CUNY Central controlled public relations newspaper) which discusses the major sustainability projects of CUNY and faculty research. Still, the site looks

promising as more and more students are beginning to post tips. One post suggests how students could transform their CUNY campus cafeteria into more environmentally sound and friendly eateries.

The CUNY Sustainability Coalition’s stated mission is for “students and affiliates from all 23 campuses [to] organize, take action and share ideas to forward the endeavor.” This latest round of CUNY PR began last June when CUNY agreed to Mayor Bloomberg’s plan to cut college emissions by 30 percent.

## Mayor Bloomberg’s Budget Cuts CUNY

Mayor Bloomberg has proposed cutting CUNY’s budget by \$29.8 million. In response, City Councilman Charles Barron, the chairman of the Committee on Higher Education and a CUNY alumnus stated, “This budget is going to devastate [CUNY].” Barron voiced concern at the possibility of axing several key CUNY programs, including scholarships such as the \$11.2 million Peter Vallone Academic Scholarship Program, awarded to NYC high school students who graduate HS with at least



a B average and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 at CUNY. The scholarship has helped thousands of students, including many at CSI realize their dream of a college education.

Ernesto Malave, CUNY’s Vice Chancellor for Budget & Finance added that the CUNY Prep and ASAP programs, both funded from the NYC poverty commission were not included in Bloomberg’s budget proposal. Thankfully, Bloomberg’s budget is not expected to pass the City Council without any modifications to the CUNY cuts.



*Ty Riley*

# Rimbaud

Show no low,  
Rimbaud.

Show no low,  
Rimbaud.

St-st-st-stuttering,  
Muttering,  
Fluttering,

In my mind lately.

With a deadly smirk,

Under the clock,

Pipe in hand,

Coat pop a lock –  
Stock crock tick-tock.

Let the falling leaves weep.

Tick-tock.

Angles of corners flutter, move under shafts  
of light.

Tick-tock.

Grind and gnash subtle poetics breath.

Tick, Tick, Tick, Tick.

Mock the flock of sheep prop

Tick, tick, tick, tick.

Flick or kick the prick.

Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock.

Crucifix Gaul down under you -

Time takes its toll.

Show no low,  
Rimbaud.

*I believe that I am  
in hell, therefore I am there.*



# ENLIGHTENMENT | HAYUKO

Over the peak spreading clouds,  
At its source the river's cold,  
If you would see,  
Climb the mountain's top.





# CSI PEACE WEEK

Join us throughout

## Peace Week

as we remember those who sacrificed their lives in both the Global War on Terror and the War in Iraq

Help us shed light on the need for a peaceful solution to these deadly conflicts.

Monday April 30th  
9:00 - 5:00  
9/11 Memorial on Campus  
between 2A-2N

Club hours:  
Wednesday 2:30 - 3:20  
Thursday 1:25 - 3:20

Stop the racist war on Arabs and Muslims  
socialistworker.org

ARREST BUSH FOR MURDER

Fallen Soldiers

PHOTOGRAPHY \* THOMAS GOOD





NEWS COMMENTARY BY MICHAEL GUALTIERI

# PHONY SOLDIERS?

Why is Rush Limbaugh receiving **TAX PAYER** monies to denigrate **ANTI-WAR** Iraq Veterans?





# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## PHONY SOLDIERS?

You've heard a number of times from Jon Soltz, co-founder of VoteVets.org. Do you consider him a phony soldier? According to Rush Limbaugh, Jon Soltz, an Iraq war veteran, is a phony soldier. Media Matters, a not-for-profit, progressive research and information center dedicated to comprehensively monitoring, analyzing, and correcting conservative misinformation in the U.S. media, reports that Rush Limbaugh said that troops who return home from Iraq and criticize American involvement in Iraq's religious civil war are "phony soldiers."

**BELOW:** Veterans of various American wars flagged by supporters protest in Times Square against the current war in Iraq this past March.

**OPPOSITE RIGHT:** Iraq war veterans march in New York City last April demanding the withdrawal of US combat troops from Iraq. CSI student Ghanin Khalil marches second from right.



Would Rush Limbaugh make these outrageous and offensive comments to Jon's face? Apparently not, because Limbaugh has ignored over 10,000 emailed requests from individuals like retired U.S. Army four-star General Wesley Clark to invite VoteVets.org's Jon Soltz to his show - and repeat these same insults to an Iraq war veteran's face.

I support Rush Limbaugh's right to free speech. The problem is that his show is aired on Armed Forces Radio, which is funded by taxpayer's dollars. This money is not intended for radio show hosts to spout insults at our soldiers. These "phony soldiers" have simply exercised their right to free speech, as Rush Limbaugh does on a daily basis.

Rush Limbaugh has never worn the uniform in his life, yet he's got the moral standing to pass judgment on the men and women who risked their lives for this nation?

Polls have shown that the majority of troops on the ground in Iraq, and those who have returned, do not back the President's failed policy. Does Rush believe then, that the majority of the US Armed Forces are "phony?"

Major Generals John Batiste and Paul Eaton left the military and have spoken out against the Bush Administration's failed policies. These are former commanders in Iraq, and they have challenged the Administration for its stubborn refusal to listen to those commanders on the ground who have sent up warning after warning. Finally, recall the members of the 82nd Airborne in Iraq who wrote



a New York Times op-ed urging for a change in course in Iraq, and suggesting it was time to figure out an exit strategy. Two of them just died.

Does Rush believe these young troops are "phony soldiers?"

Horribly enough, the insults against Iraq war vets did not stop there. Rush Limbaugh denounced a recent ad by VoteVets.org which featured Iraq war veteran Brian McGough, calling the ad "a blatant use of a valiant combat veteran,

lying to him about what I said, then strapping those lies to his belt, sending him out via the media in a TV ad to walk into as many people as he can walk into." The rest of his comments can be found at [mediamatters.org](http://mediamatters.org).

A writer for *Daily Kos* published Brian McGough's reply by email: "I stood in the sand, snow, dirt, mud and dust of both Afghanistan and Iraq. I spent over a week on a side of a mountain in Afghanistan during Operation Anaconda. I received

The Bronze Star medal for my actions during that battle. I crossed the border into Iraq with the first wave of the 101st Airborne...I sustained an open head injury on the streets of Mosul after a vehicle borne IED exploded next to the vehicle I was riding in. I have seen the aftermath of a real suicide bomber. I had loved ones who died in the 9/11 attacks. I have friends and colleagues who returned from the war in body bags...How dare you call someone like me a phony soldier



# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## PHONY SOLDIERS?

and a suicide bomber? In the commercial I just taped, I told you unless you had the guts to say something to my face, stop telling lies about my service. Well you haven't had the guts to say it to my face, but I am waiting and the offer is still on the table."

In case you're wondering about these lies that Rush refers to, after he called service men and women who don't support the war phony soldiers he insisted he really was speaking of only "genuine phony soldiers" at the time. He then proceeded to expand his roster of "genuine phony soldiers" to include Rep.

**MIDDLE RIGHT:** Brian McGough injured during his tour of duty in Iraq.

**BELOW:** Iraq veterans against the war and their families rally in Los Angeles this past January.

Jack Murtha, Pennsylvania Democrat, a retired Marine colonel, decorated and wounded veteran of the Vietnam War who served for 37 years and was awarded the Bronze Star.

**Rush, the shrapnel I took to my head was real. My traumatic brain injury was real. And my belief we are on the wrong course in Iraq is real. Until you have the guts to call me a phony soldier to my face, stop telling lies about my service.**

- Former Army staff sergeant Brian McGough, 31, a veteran who opposes the war in Iraq.

Eventually, Congress passed a resolution officially condemning the MoveOn.org "Betray us" ad, a resolution that Rush supported. Yet Congress continues to use tax dollars to fund Rush's offensive comments about our soldiers. I urge everyone reading this to contact the offices of their Representative through

the House switchboard (225-342-6945) and their Senators through the Senate switchboard (225-342-2040). Tell them



that Rush Limbaugh should not make these comments and still have a show on a publicly funded station such as Armed Forces Radio. Your representatives can also be contacted through their websites.





Rush Limbaugh for OxyContin

# “I couldn't get through my day without it!”

Being a best-selling author and a nationally syndicated radio host isn't easy. Day after day I have to go on the air, attack short-haired feminazis, berate environmental wackos, complain that black football players get a free ride from the media, support the drug war, demonize drug addicts like the late Kurt Cobain and condemn illegal drug use. More recently I've had to demonize returning Iraqi war veterans who criticize President Bush's war on the Middle East. How do I spew all this nonsense and still sleep like a baby at night? I take **OxyContin**, or as I like to call it, “little blues.” It numbs my hypocritical conscience, soothes my guilt and makes things the way they ought to be!

## NO Prescription or Doctor's Visit Necessary!

Here's what Rush really said about illicit drug use on October 5, 1995: “Too many whites are getting away with drug use. . . . the answer is to go out and find the one's who are getting away with it, convict them and send them up the river too.” [Based on an ad parody from Hustler magazine.]

**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:** Excessive use of OxyContin may turn you into a Republican and make you prone to irrational statements and political views like “anti-war veterans are phony soldiers.”



# IRAQ WAR INDEX

FACTS ABOUT THE GENOCIDE IN IRAQ THAT YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO READ ABOUT BUT NEED TO KNOW



American soldiers killed:  
**4,012**

Iraqi civilian war casualties:  
**1,200,000**

(Source: Opinion Research Business (ORB), an independent polling agency located in London)



Soldiers seriously injured:  
**29,203**

Does not include psychological impairments



Estimated Cost of War:  
**\$600,000,000,000**

That's 600 BILLION for those who can't count.  
Bush has requested an additional \$200 BILLION for 2008.



Private Contractors (Mercenaries)  
in Iraq working for the U.S. Army  
**180,000**



Iraqi unemployment rate  
when curfew is not in effect:  
**27%–60%**



Third Rail will be updating this page every issue  
until this cruel & illegal war is over.



# LOVE POEMS

TJ ROBEY



IT'S TOO HARD TO CREATE LOVE POEMS IN THIS MODERN ERA.  
FOR THE CONFUSED LOVE:

"MY IS HEART IS AN IPOD THAT SHUFFLES A DIFFERENT TUNE."

FOR THE FRUSTRATED LOVE:

"MY BLOOD SPEAKS TO ME FOR YOU  
LIKE ALLIANCE FIGHTING IN ALTERAC VALLEY IN  
WORLD OF WARCRAFT  
SINCE PATCH 2.3."

FOR THE UNFAITHFUL LOVE:

"MY LOVE IS LIKE A  
SCHOLAR LOOKING ON THE INTERNET  
FOR DIFFERENT LINKS TO CONNECT  
TO."

FOR THE EPIC LOVE:

"MY HEART SCREAMS FOR YOU  
LIKE TAILORMADE'S LOVE FOR NEW YORK."

FOR THE SIMPLE LOVE:

"I HEARTZ U 4 REALZ."

FOR THE PAINFUL LOVE:

"MY LOVE FOR YOU BYPASSES THE PAIN  
OF UNDERGOING GASTRIC BYPASS."

FOR THE EXCITED LOVE:

"MY BLOOD RISES LIKE A PHALLUS WITH VIAGRA  
WHEN I CATCH  
A GLIMPSE OF YOU."

FOR THE TRAGIC LOVE:

"YOUR INATTENTIVENESS LEAVES ME FEELING  
LIKE BRITNEY  
IN A MENTAL INSTITUTION,  
BARE-HEADED."

FOR THE CLASSIC LOVE:

"DO YOU LOVE ME?"

CIRCLE ONE:

YES OR NO OR MAYBE."

YES OR NO OR MAYBE."

CIRCLE ONE:

"DO YOU LOVE ME?"

FOR THE CLASSIC LOVE:

BARE-HEADED."

IN A MENTAL INSTITUTION,

LIKE BRITNEY

YOUR INATTENTIVENESS LEAVES ME FEELING



# Tainted Love

The skies eyes bleeding bloody pearl droplets,  
as each pulsating beat slowly simmers,  
from the rose dagger you shoved through my chest.  
The soil- ground with newly plants growing,  
absorbs the blood pooling out of my heart.

You said the moon burns lesions on your face,  
when looking into my bluish-green eyes.  
You never understood why the moon did.  
Then it shattered both your arms, legs and feet,  
when a bud began to blossom inside,  
the iced, Arctic, crystallized heart you have.

The stars smiled gleaming across the mid-  
night black- blue sky as we walked beneath it.

A blossom grew deeper inside of you.  
The demons within you fought against me,  
as you said, light illuminates off me.

The red beady eyed demon controlled you,  
as the skies eyes were bleeding blood droplets,  
when you shoved the rose dagger through my chest,  
whispering tenderly | love you dear.



# AMERICAN



# APARTHEID



## FDR's Plan for SEGREGATING America AND ITS LASTING EFFECTS

IN THE 1960 ESSAY, "THE ORIGIN OF THE WORK OF ART," THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER MARTIN HEIDEGGER SUGGESTS, "WHAT SEEMS NATURAL TO US IS PROBABLY JUST SOMETHING FAMILIAR IN A LONG TRADITION THAT HAS FORGOTTEN THE UNFAMILIAR SOURCE FROM WHICH IT AROSE."<sup>1</sup>

Heidigger's quote is an apt description concerning the residential segregation that is evident in cities across the United States. Many view our residential housing patterns as a "natural" result of the "free market" rather than the consequence of government intervention. Yet through an historical examination it becomes evident that government, and not the so-called "free market," was the primary impetus in constructing the post-WWII modern housing market. As a direct result

A THIRD RAIL SPECIAL REPORT  
BY JEFF MCGRAHAM



# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## AMERICAN APARTHEID

government intervention greatly exacerbated African American segregation and created a discourse that denied its own impact by emphasizing the “free market” as the primary causal agent. This process had dire social consequences for many African Americans who were socially, economically, and politically isolated from the rest of society.



### GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN HOUSING

In 1933, in the throes of the Great Depression, a thousand foreclosure procedures were initiated daily as the housing market was collapsing.<sup>2</sup> To help alleviate the housing crisis, the FDR administration created the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) in June of 1933. HOLC provided “long-term, self-amortizing mortgage[s] with uniform payments spread over the whole life of the debt.”<sup>3</sup> This new practice was counter to the prevailing historical wisdom that people should completely pay off their homes soon after purchasing them. It was not until the 1920s that even short-term five to ten year mortgages became popular. These mortgage plans were often renewed for seven more years, “...but if a mortgage expired at a time when money was tight, it might be impossible for the homeowner to secure a renewal, and foreclosure would ensue.”<sup>4</sup> HOLC completely transformed the structure of the housing market and enabled homebuyers greater security in their purchase. In an effort to assist those who had lost their homes due to foreclosures, the HOLC provided loans to buy back their property.<sup>5</sup>

The HOLC mushroomed into an enormous bureaucratic network of investigators, whose primary duty was to determine the worth and feasibility of individual homes and the overall neighborhoods in which they resided. The HOLC investigator’s appraisal techniques relied on a census style questionnaire that mixed personal demographic information with data about the condition of the housing stock in a given neighborhood. This was not new in appraisal systems; the originality “...lay in the creation of formal and uniformed system of appraisal, reduced

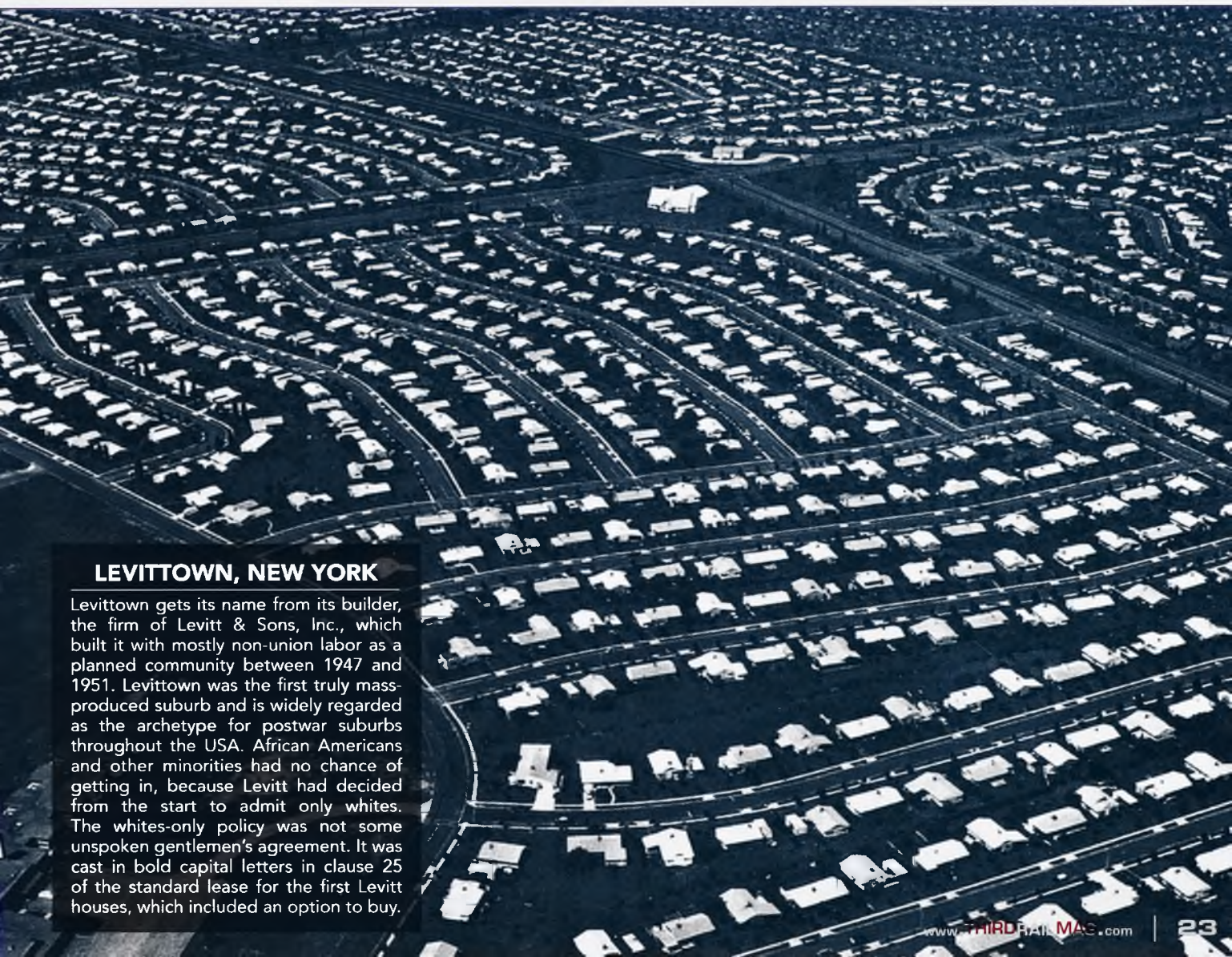
to writing, structured in defined procedure, and implemented by individuals only after intense training.”<sup>6</sup> The appraisers’ written statements were not made in objective isolation, but rather in a larger cultural paradigm or discourse that induced racial prejudices which influenced their decision-making. As a result, “**redlining**” was implemented on a massive scale and received government sanction.<sup>7</sup>

The HOLC codified a complex number, letter, and color coded system that rated neighborhoods based on socioeconomic criteria. This criteria was then utilized in real estate appraisal decisions based on the desirability of providing loans. White, wealthy “racially” homogenous neighborhoods received the highest rating on the four scale rating system. Jewish neighborhoods, even affluent ones, were never able to receive the highest rating. Black areas were deemed undesirable and consequently were given the lowest rating. HOLC applied information from their databases and created color-coded “Residential Security Maps” which were utilized in their offices all over the United States.<sup>8</sup> These maps provided HOLC appraisers with detailed information on where Blacks currently resided and where they may be encroaching on white enclaves. Even a small minority of African Americans in an overwhelming Caucasian neighborhood would cause HOLC appraisers to designate the area with a low rating, and thus would be an impediment to its residents securing high-quality loans.<sup>9</sup>

Although the HOLC favored neighborhoods that were white and wealthy, its real damage was in systematizing and universalizing a racist discourse in the housing market. HOLC’s well-crafted racialized maps were adopted by private lenders and subsequent governmental housing programs that heavily utilized “**redlining**” techniques as part of their modus operandi.<sup>10</sup> This is not to claim that racial and ethnic discrimination did not exist in the housing market prior to government intervention, but only to argue that it created a uniformed standard supported by the most influential financial and regulatory entity in the United States at the time—the federal government. Prior to governmental intervention, racial and ethnic discrimination in housing was propagated at the localized level, and “anti-racial agitation was checked by the prevailing spirit of public policy and no ready liaison could be effected between federal officialdom and bigotry.”<sup>11</sup>

HOLC’s racist classification techniques had its most powerful influence on a subsequent New Deal program that adopted these methods and expanded them enormously: Columbia





## LEVITTOWN, NEW YORK

Levittown gets its name from its builder, the firm of Levitt & Sons, Inc., which built it with mostly non-union labor as a planned community between 1947 and 1951. Levittown was the first truly mass-produced suburb and is widely regarded as the archetype for postwar suburbs throughout the USA. African Americans and other minorities had no chance of getting in, because Levitt had decided from the start to admit only whites. The whites-only policy was not some unspoken gentlemen's agreement. It was cast in bold capital letters in clause 25 of the standard lease for the first Levitt houses, which included an option to buy.



# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## AMERICAN APARTHEID

historian, Kenneth T. Jackson, noted (in 1985), “no agency of the United States government has had a more pervasive and powerful impact on the American people over the past half-century than the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).”<sup>12</sup> The program’s genesis was inscribed in the National Housing Act of 1934. The FHA worked in conjunction with the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (GI Bill), which was initiated by the Veterans Administration (VA).<sup>13</sup> The FHA provided mortgages for prospective homeowners through commercial lending agencies. The lending institutions provided mortgage loans on a massive scale without the risk of losing money in the case of default, because the FHA completely insured the loans. This program created a major transformation in the housing market. Down payments for homes went from the lowest rate of 30% to only 10%, and were completely amortized with long-term lower monthly payment plans and interest rates. The effect reduced foreclosures “from 250,000 non-farm units in 1932 to only 18,000 in 1951,” and generated a national house-building boom that created more homeowners and new suburban developments than ever before: “between 1934 and 1969 the percentage of families living in owner-occupied dwellings increased from 44% to 63%.”<sup>14</sup> Yet the FHA had an inverse effect on the development of urban inner cities, by greatly exacerbating, what in the vernacular is termed “white flight.”

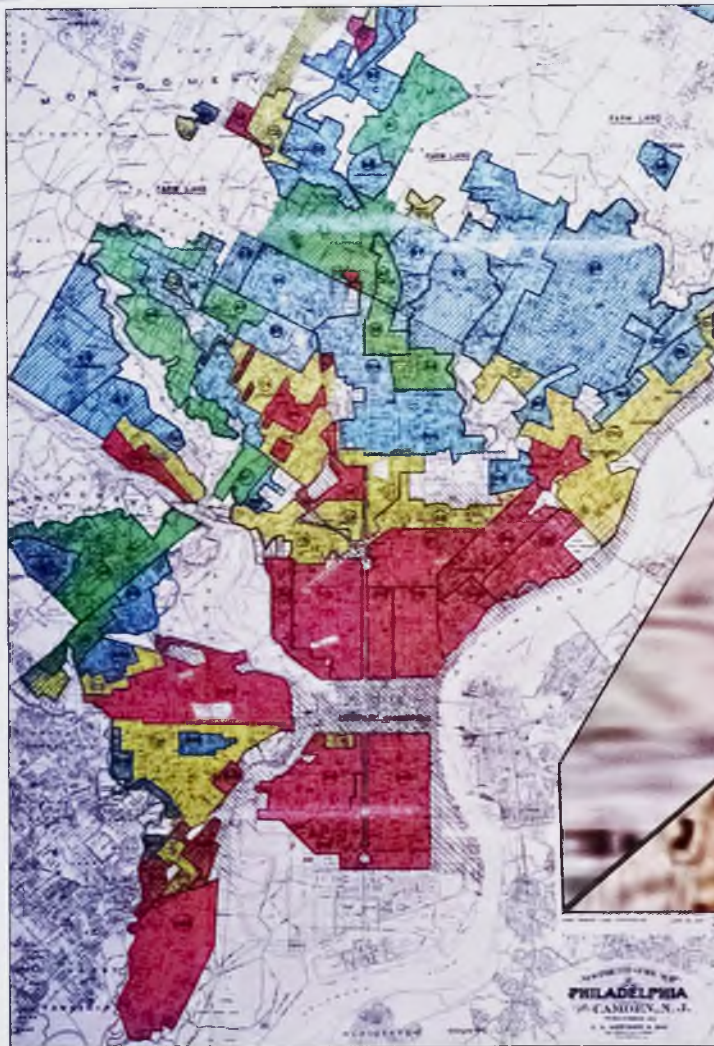
The FHA favored new all-white suburban developments over older racially mixed urban housing stock, thus it became less expensive for white families to move out to the suburbs than live in urban localities. The FHA *Underwriting Manual* explicitly restricted real estate developers “from introducing ‘incompatible’ racial groups into white residential enclaves.”<sup>15</sup> The *Manual* emphasized racial and class homogeneity as a way of maintaining a stable housing market in a given venue. It further advised residents to create “covenants, which were legal provisions written into property deeds,” to exclude African Americans from purchasing property.<sup>16</sup> The FHA produced even more elaborate maps than did the HOLC. These sophisticated maps pinpointed where blacks currently lived and predicted future movement into white areas: “In a March 1939 map of Brooklyn, for example, the presence of a single, non-white family on any block was sufficient to mark that entire block black.”<sup>17</sup> The racial separation policies promoted by the FHA were so strict that an apartheid fence had to be constructed between a black neighborhood and a white area before mortgages would be approved in the Eight Mile road section of Detroit (made famous in the Eminem film, *8 Mile*).<sup>18</sup> The FHA’s policies



concretely cemented homogenous neighborhoods across the country where class, race, or cultural differences were viewed as a threat to real estate value. At the same time, the policies destroyed many urban heterogeneous neighborhoods where different groups lived side by side, or at least in close proximity to each other. From 1935 to 1952 “less than 1 percent of new dwelling construction was for the nonwhite families who comprise[d] 10 percent of the population.”<sup>19</sup> In cities that were composed of a large African American presence, the FHA often provided no assistance. Harvard scholars, Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton illustrate the ramifications of this policy:

*[As late as 1966] . . . the FHA had no mortgages in either Paterson or Camden, New Jersey, both older cities where the non-Hispanic white population was declining during the 1950s . . . Given the*





**LEFT:** HOLC's 1936 security map of Philadelphia showing redlining of minority neighborhoods. People who lived in the red zones could not get mortgages to buy or improve their homes. The HOLC maps are part of the records of the FHLBB (RG195) at the National Archives II.

**FAR LEFT:** At the same time, the FHA advertised to millions of white middle and working class Americans to apply for mortgages, loans and other financial arrangements.

*importance of the FHA in the residential housing market, such blanket redlining sent strong signals to private lending institutions, which followed suit and avoided making loans within the affected areas. The lack of loan capital flowing into minority areas made it impossible for owners to sell their homes, leading to steep declines in property values and a pattern of disrepair, deterioration, vacancy, and abandonment.<sup>20</sup>*

This encouraged remaining whites to vacate urban areas for suburbia and take their capital with them, leaving blacks with little resources. In fact, by 1970 whites represented a small minority in both Paterson and Camden.

The people who were in the most need of assistance in securing a long-term low interest mortgage, the poor and working-class

minorities, were excluded in favor of white middle-class citizens who received the bulk of \$119 billion the FHA spent insuring homes between 1934 to 1974. Close to 50% of suburban homes in the United States from 1950 to 1970 received federal government assistance in acquiring a good mortgage, and as a direct result, by the late 1960s, the majority of white American families owned their own home.<sup>21</sup> What had been the exclusive privilege of the wealthy, had become the norm in white American society, due to huge government expenditures that disproportionately benefited them. In 1955, in the aftermath of WWII, Columbia urban planner Charles Abrams described FHA policies:

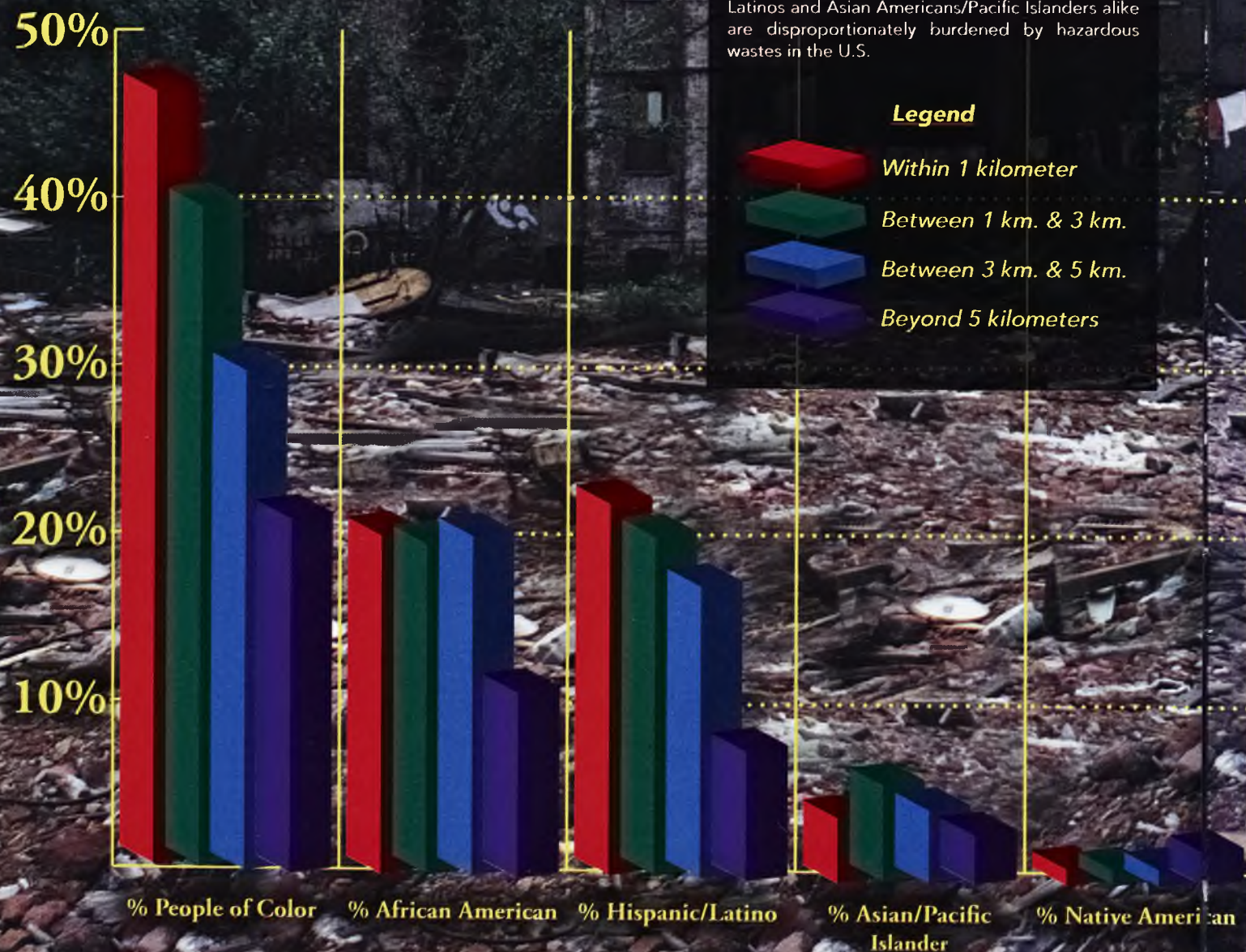


# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## AMERICAN APARTHEID

### Percentage of People of Color Living Near Hazardous Waste Facilities

Source: *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: 1987-2007*, United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice



### ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

People of color and persons of low socioeconomic status are still disproportionately impacted and are particularly concentrated in neighborhoods and communities with the greatest number of Hazardous Waste Facilities. Race continues to be an independent predictor of where hazardous wastes are located, and it is a stronger predictor than income, education and other socioeconomic indicators. People of color now comprise a majority in neighborhoods with commercial hazardous waste facilities, and much larger (more than two-thirds) majorities can be found in neighborhoods with clustered facilities. African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders alike are disproportionately burdened by hazardous wastes in the U.S.

#### Legend

- Within 1 kilometer
- Between 1 km. & 3 km.
- Between 3 km. & 5 km.
- Beyond 5 kilometers

*FHA adopted a racial policy that could well have been culled from the Nuremberg laws. From its inception FHA set itself up as the protector of the all-white neighborhood. It sent its agents into the field to keep Negroes and other minorities from buying homes in white neighborhoods. It exerted pressure against builders who dared to build for minorities, and against lenders willing to lend mortgages . . . It not only insisted on social and racial 'homogeneity' in all of its projects as the price of insurance but became the vanguard of white supremacy and racial purity—in the North as well as the South.*<sup>22</sup>



### PROPAGANDIZING A GOVERNMENTAL MYTH

The government housing programs assisted Caucasians in believing that the racial spatialization patterns in suburban and urban areas were not a product of government intervention, but rather a “natural” development of the “free market.” Historian David M.P. Freund claims that most historians also downplayed the impact of FHA programs in fostering racial apartheid and transforming the housing market. These historians make two points: Firstly, they argue that racial discrimination existed in the housing market prior to governmental intervention; and, secondly, they admit that the government greatly expanded and improved mortgages, but that mortgages did exist before government involvement and are an inherent part of the “free market.” In contradistinction, Freund points out that housing economists view FHA programs as having completely transformed housing policies in the United States vis-à-vis financing and racial discrimination. These housing economists argue that the market was not responsible for the long-term amortized mortgage with low interest rates, but rather

it was the government’s policies that resulted in these conditions. Freund notes that the “consensus” belief of housing economists is that the housing market would be completely unrecognizable if government intervention had never taken place<sup>23</sup>: “...the state did not merely revive and expand existing housing markets—or awaken ‘hibernating’ capital, as many contemporaries liked to say—but rather was instrumental in creating new supply, new demand, and new wealth.”<sup>24</sup> One could argue that the government invented the modern housing market, and in so doing, transformed the way millions of Americans lived for the better, or, in the case of poor blacks, for the worse.

Racial discrimination had also previously existed in the private housing market, but it was not an institutional, universally unified policy until the government, through the HOLC and FHA programs, forced private lenders to adopt a system of racial segregation.<sup>25</sup> Initially, in the early 1920s, the largest lobbying organization for real estate interests, the National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB), promoted a strong anti-racist agenda in housing.<sup>26</sup> Of course, the membership of the NAREBA had conflicting viewpoints. For instance, in 1923 a high-ranking NAREB official produced a document that argued that people of certain races might lower the home value in a given community; this was not NAREB’s official policy, but rather one member’s view outlined within a discourse of opposing views.<sup>27</sup> But by 1927, NAREB publications openly promoted the idea that whites and blacks had the right to exclude each other from buying their property. NAREB official documents did not explicitly target blacks as a primary cause of home depreciation until 1943,<sup>28</sup> four years after the FHA codified this belief in their *Underwriting Manual*. After 1943, with the government’s backing, NAREB produced manuscripts, college courses, and trained brokers that promoted the idea of racial segregation as good real estate policy.<sup>29</sup> Racist ads created by real estate companies proliferated in mainstream culture: “builders began to advertise the ‘absolutely restricted’ neighborhood (no Negroes, Jews, or other minorities), and ‘reasonably restricted’ neighborhoods (Jews, etc., but no Negroes).”<sup>30</sup> The FHA promoted and legitimized a totalizing racist



## AMERICAN APARTHEID

discourse surrounding the issue of housing by invoking the “free market.”

The FHA propagated a narrative based on the myth that the “free market” was the primary deciding factor in housing sales, home financing, and residential living patterns in the United States. This narrative pushed forward the premise that government only slightly assisted the “free market” in these activities. Simultaneously, the government narrative disseminated the belief that racial segregation was based on well-founded scientific economic principles, and not on racism *per se*; the market, not racist human beings determined these policies. The New Dealers promoted market forces as the creative energy in the new housing market because they had to phrase their programs in an appealing fashion to make it politically digestible to the “free market” proponents in Congress and private industry.<sup>31</sup>

The FHA sponsored a huge marketing campaign utilizing radio, film, newspapers, fliers, conventions, and live speakers to promote their programs cloaked in “free market” rhetoric to a largely white audience. During the first week of the campaign, the FHA sent close to 30,000 lending agency documents outlining its procedures, and spent around \$200 million in its first four months. Over half of the country’s daily newspapers provided sections, sometimes totaling over 30 pages, detailing the “free market” housing programs the FHA offered.<sup>32</sup> In 1941, an official for FHA, Abner Ferguson, spoke to black business leaders and crystallized the propaganda his agency promoted in claiming that the FHA does not discriminate, but by law cannot interfere with the “free market” in deciding what types of residents are desirable.<sup>33</sup> As Freund points out, “on the issues of homeownership, neighborhood integrity, and race, federal programs helped popularize the story that suburban growth and prosperity, as well as racial segregation and poverty that accompanied it, owed nothing to the state’s own efforts.”<sup>34</sup>

The FHA propagandized a racist discourse that permeated throughout society from media representations to formal FHA conventions to a simple conversation with a neighbor over a white picket fence. This created what Michel Foucault referred to as a “normalizing” discourse which promoted and legitimated racist attitudes: “suburban residents, realtors, and elected officials defended racial restrictions by pointing to the racial compatibility guidelines from FHA appraisal manuals. Private sector publications continued those guidelines—if in a

more muted form—well into the 1960s,”<sup>35</sup> and the FHA “continued to encourage the use of privately published appraisal standards that identified racially ‘mixed’ occupancy as an actuarial risk.”<sup>36</sup> This message had such an impact that even today white suburbanites often justify racial exclusion in their neighborhoods by stating that property values would decline. This discourse provided Caucasians with an ontological justification for segregation and an accompanying myth of how they succeeded in the “free market” at much higher rates than minority groups.

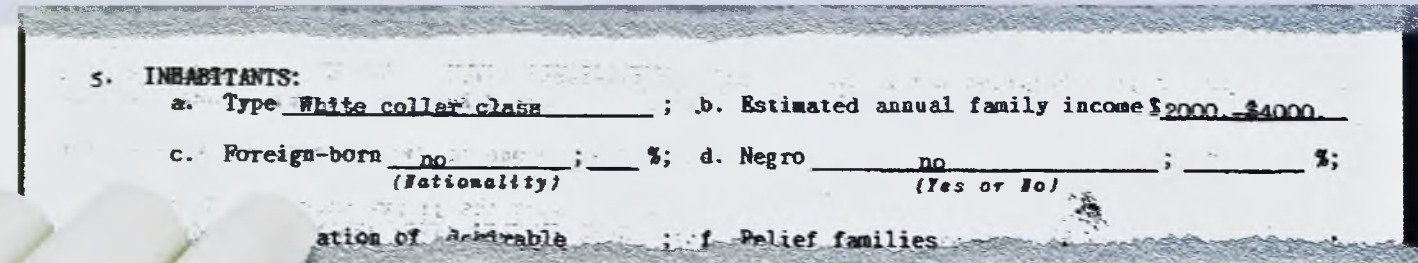


**PUBLIC HOUSING:  
A PROGRAM OF APARTHEID**

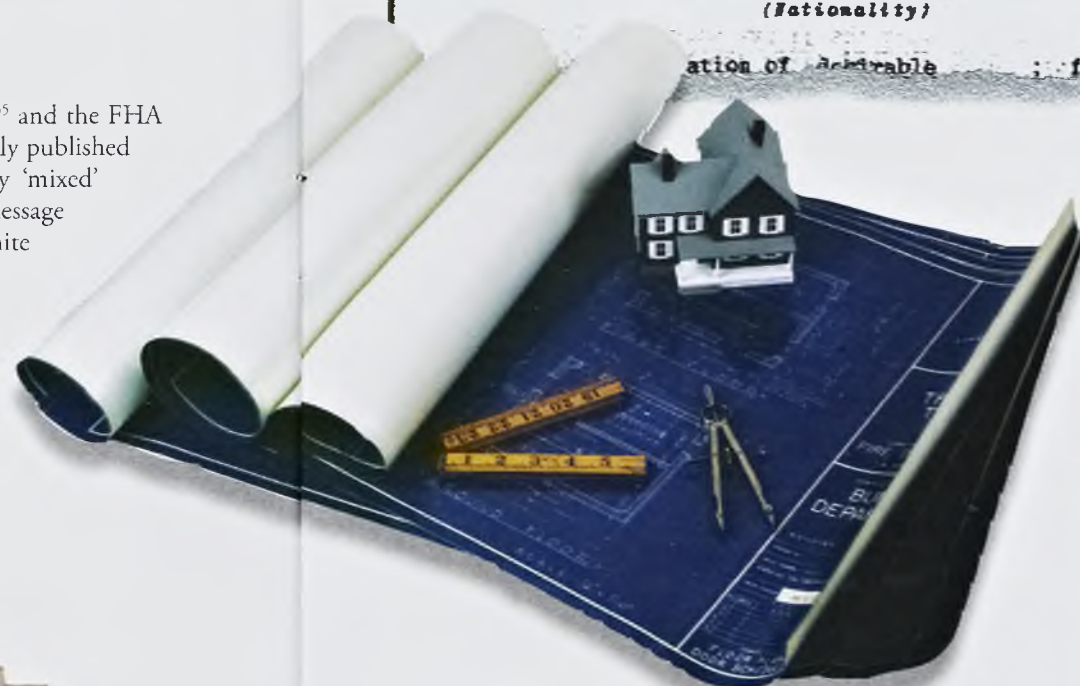
In the absence of mortgages that were long-term, self-amortizing, and with structured uniformed low interest payment plans, the poor, largely black, urban residents in the United States were provided public housing. Kenneth Jackson delineates the effects of public housing:

*The result, if not the intent, of the public housing programs of the United States was to segregate the races, to concentrate the disadvantaged in inner cities, and to reinforce the image of suburbia as a place of refuge from the problems of race, crime and poverty. By every measure, the Housing Act of 1937 was an important stimulus to deconcentration.*<sup>37</sup>

The 1937 Housing Act (Wagner-Steagall Act) created the United States Housing Authority (USHA), which provided funds to local municipalities to set up housing agencies responsible for the constructing, maintenance, and management of public housing projects. The USHA deposited long-term loans and



**ABOVE:** An HOLC property assessment form requiring the ethnic composition of assessed neighborhoods, including foreign born and “Negro” inhabitants.



right to refuse public housing funds. This exacerbated segregation: white middle-class communities often refused the government’s funding, thus keeping their municipalities project free and often minority free too. As a consequence of these actions, projects were usually built in poor, socially and economically isolated sections of urban America (ghettos). This process resulted in dichotomous images in many citizen’s minds: suburbs are safe, white havens from societal ills; while inner cities are black, dangerous places filled with “social pathologies.”<sup>39</sup>



**CONSEQUENCES OF APARTHEID**

subsidization to local governments for initial building costs. These large developments provided jobs for an underemployed construction workforce, but as soon as the post-War recovery was in full swing, the USHA was badly under funded.<sup>38</sup>

Due to a Federal Court ruling in 1935 that prohibited the government from exercising eminent domain in creating land for public housing, every individual community had the

The social and economic isolation of the projects often resulted in depressing and dangerous living conditions for its occupants and for those residents within the adjacent neighborhoods. Although these conditions were not an accident, but rather the cause of racist social policies, nonetheless, many in the middle-class blamed the poor residents. A common, but completely erroneous belief, propagated by the federal government, was that white middle-class people succeeded on their







*supposed paradise*



*or virtual prison*



own accord without the assistance of government, so why can't these poor residents achieve the same success? Kenneth Jackson makes it clear that the effect, if not always the intent, of housing policy in the United States greatly enhanced the opportunities for one group and greatly diminished the life chances for another group:



are the norm in poor urban areas, resulting in significantly lower life chances for these pupils. This had a dramatic effect in stabilizing the status quo: the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu suggests education replicates and reproduces the class structures.

*American housing policy was not only devoid of social objectives, but instead helped establish the basis for social inequities. Uncle Sam was not impartial, but instead contributed to the general disbenefit of the cities and to the general prosperity of the suburbs.*<sup>40</sup>

Because of government policies the cities became largely black and poor, while the suburbs were affluent and white. As opposed to being checked and restricted by the federal government, racial discrimination in housing was actually promoted by the government. This gave racists like the Levitt brothers the ability to create enormous apartheid housing developments where no African Americans resided: "In 1960 not a single one of the Long Island Levittown's 82,000 residents was black."<sup>41</sup>

Segregation implemented from the federal government had a wide-effect: it set a tone of racially exclusive tactics as acceptable governmental policy that was mimicked at the local level across the country. Suburbanites often utilized covenants, zoning ordinances, and FHA backed polices to deny poor urban residents the opportunity to move into their neighborhoods, while at the same time, accepting no responsibility for the array of problems in the inner city. For example, city zoning laws were utilized as a tactic by local governments to keep out certain undesirables from living in suburban neighborhoods: "apartments, factories, and 'blight,' euphemisms for blacks and people of limited means, were rigidly excluded."<sup>42</sup> This also meant that heavy industry was often placed in urban localities, and the effect of these environmentally racist zoning laws can be seen in the high rates of asthma among inner-city children. Another consequence is the inequitable nature of school funding in the United States; the local tax base often determines the amount of funding a school district receives. Thus, a system was created where inferior educational opportunities

One reason most citizens do not make a connection between governmental policies and the array of problems that exist in the inner cities is the lack of an historical analysis. To speak of historical relationships and complexities as a cause of the social position of many poor African Americans today is often considered taboo. The historical relationships have been diffused, left without much of a trace. Rather, talk of social dysfunction is mired in patronizing discourses of self-responsibility (Bill Cosby), or the resurgence of eugenics (*The Bell Curve*). This relegates most of the responsibility to those who have been the victims of historical government sanctioned oppression. The same government used its power of hegemony to propagate an ahistorical discourse of the "free market" as the primary cause of segregation in housing patterns. Yet an historical examination yields us knowledge of the unfamiliar source from which those circumstances we consider natural and familiar arose. 🍷

## FOOTNOTES:

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5. Massey, Douglas S, and Nancy A. Denton. American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, pg. 51.
6. Jackson, Op. Cit. pg. 197.
7. Ibid., pg. 197.
8. Ibid., pg. 199.
9. Ibid., pg. 201.
10. Massey and Denton, Op. Cit. pg. 52.
11. Abrams, Charles. Forbidden Neighbors. A study of Prejudice in Housing. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955, pg. 151.
12. Jackson Op. Cit. pg. 203.
13. Ibid., pg. 203.
14. Ibid., pg. 204, and Massey and Denton, Op. Cit. pg. 53.
15. Freund, David M.P. "Marketing the Free Market: State Intervention and the Politics of Prosperity in Metropolitan America." In The New Suburban History, edited by Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, University of Chicago Press, 2006.
16. Jackson. Op. Cit. pg. 208.
17. Ibid., pg. 209.
18. Ibid.
19. Abrams. Op. Cit. pg. 172.
20. Massey and Denton. Op. Cit. pg. 55.
21. Jackson Op. Cit. pg. 215.
22. Abrams. Op. Cit. pg. 229-230.
23. Freund. OP. Cit. pg. 18.
24. Ibid., pg. 20.
25. Ibid., pg. 18-19.
26. Abrams. Op. Cit. pg. 154.
27. Ibid., pg. 155.
28. Ibid., pg. 156.
29. Ibid., pg. 157.
30. Ibid., pg. 171.
31. Freund Op. Cit. pg. 21-23.
32. Ibid., pg. 24.
33. Ibid., pg. 30.
34. Ibid., pg. 32.
35. Ibid., pg. 29.
36. Ibid., pg. 31.
37. Jackson. Op. Cit. pg. 219.
38. Ibid., pg. 224.
39. Ibid., pg. 227.
40. Ibid., pg. 230.
41. Ibid., pg. 241.
42. Ibid., pg. 242.



a poem

by [CHRISTOPHER ANNE](#)

When I was a child I used to read  
the words of the poet  
and I used to read  
the words of the poet

RAIL



Q:

What's  
the #1  
cause of  
Global Warming

?

I AM ALICIA SILVERSTONE, AND I AM A

VEGETARIAN



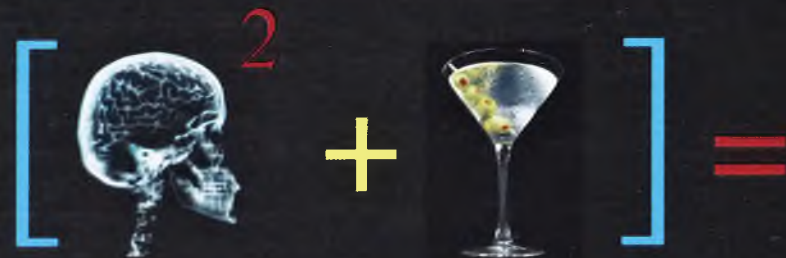
PETA GOVEG.CO

A:

Meat

The United Nations concluded in a study on Global Warming that raising animals for food generates **more** greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined. Senior U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization official Henning Steinfeld reported that the meat industry is "one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems."





## A Weeknight Out on the Town for Booze and Brains



BY NIKKI SAINT BAUTISTA

On the first Wednesday of every month, guests might get turned down at the door up to half-an-hour before the stage opens in the underground bar at the trendy Park Slope yuppie hang out, Union Hall. A crowd of asymmetrical hairstyles, retro shoes, 90s styled black-framed glasses, tight pants-wearing young people pour into every open space available in the basement, not to swing their hips or bob their heads to the latest underground music phenomenon, but to hear scientists speak for two hours.

The bevy assembled on February 6, 2008 to hear Bruce Stillman give a two-hour talk on the future of molecular medicine.

Bruce Stillman is the president of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, CSHL, which is dedicated to molecular biology research and scientific outreach dedicated to educate the community and collaborate with scientists around the world about DNA. The lab is known for its groundbreaking research in cancer, plant-genetics, neurobiology, and bioinformatics, and has engaged with 85 Nobel Laureates over the course of a century. In the

1940s and '50s lab, Barbara McClintock's discovery of genetic transposition, and its role in the repression and expression of physical characteristics in maize, earned her the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1983. James D. Watson won a Nobel Prize in 1962 for discovering the double helix structure of DNA, and for noting that nucleic acids carry genetic information. He did his work at the CSHL and attracted Bruce Stillman in 1979. At that time, Dr. Stillman was a post-doctorate student from Australia looking to further investigate his own genetic research, originally only for a year or two.

"However," he affably told his audience after finishing his third Double (Make that a triple!) Helix, "I met an American and stayed for the next 29 years."

Dr. Stillman very clearly navigated his listeners through the history of genetics beginning with Gregor Mendel and Charles Darwin, to unraveling the code written in the 6 feet of coiled DNA, and ending with the future of genetics and its increasing

prevalence in how we approach medicine. Within this narrative, he neatly wove the results of CSHL research to the concepts and theories behind what might cause autism, schizophrenia, and cancer. He mentioned that he was not a genetic determinist and emphasized the importance of everyone keeping themselves informed, especially when it comes to their own health and how doctors would treat it. He wants people to understand that the environment, like smoking and asbestos, play a critical role, too.

When a member of the Secret Science Club asked Dr.

Stillman who is responsible for the privacy of one's own DNA scan results, he replied, "You are responsible." Dr. Stillman points out that a DNA map, which can point out any genetic markers, like mutations, indicating what diseases the individual is susceptible to, is just as private as the results to a blood test, or any lab test.

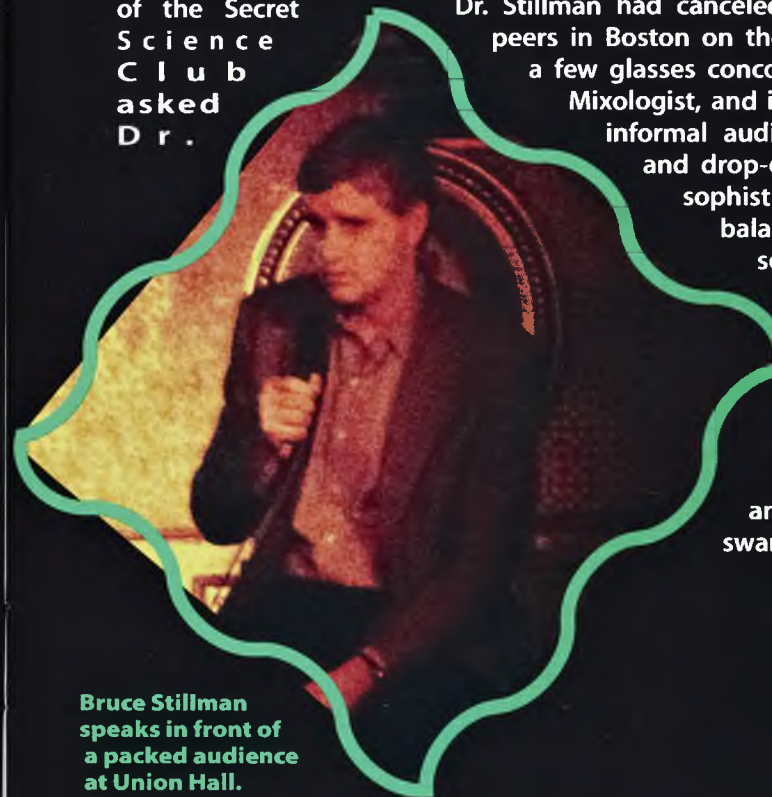
Dr. Stillman had canceled a trip to speak with scientific peers in Boston on the latest in DNA studies to enjoy a few glasses concocted by the Secret Science Club Mixologist, and instead chose to speak to a more informal audience of students, professionals, and drop-outs alike. It was, nonetheless, a sophisticated audience—a comfortable balance of non-isolating (and rather sociable) intellectuals and hipsters who were not too repulsively hip.

The Union Hall Secret Science Club acknowledges that being intelligent, imaginative, fun, and open-minded makes for a swanky profile. Their meetings bring

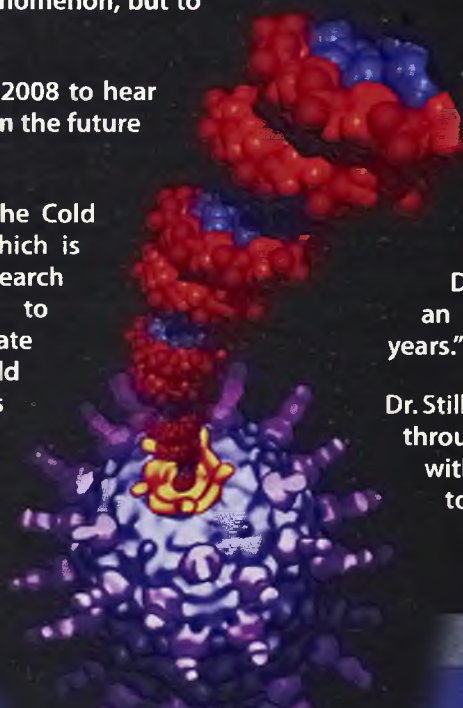
together experts in the hard sciences with people who are not experts in the field, without any pretense. Past guests in this free science lectures and arts series included an NYU neuroscientist by the name of Joseph LeDoux and his band, the Amygdaloids, and some Nobel

Prize winners, such as Dr. Harold Varmus and Eric Kandel.

The club's MySpace page insists, "Just bring your own smart self."



Bruce Stillman speaks in front of a packed audience at Union Hall.





# Serpentine Magazine

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# Join Third Rail

OK. So maybe we lied when we said we can guarantee you'll get laid by joining *Third Rail*. But while we can't guarantee you that, we CAN guarantee that you'll have lots of fun writing, photographing, designing, poeticizing (that's our made up word for creating poetry), investigating, debating, drawing and, oh yeah—criticizing the CSI Administration (they don't get enough of that). And if you're really lucky, maybe you won't just write about the news—you'll be the news! So join *Third Rail*! Our meetings are in the Campus Center (1C) during Club Hours. To find out when our next meeting is visit our website at [www.ThirdRailMag.com](http://www.ThirdRailMag.com), or give us a call at 718-982-3105. And who knows, you just might get laid.

# Get Laid!





# R THE FOURTH ESTATE & THE REVOLUTION

In France, before the Revolution of 1789, there was the *Ancien Régime* and the *États Généraux*; translated as the 'Estates General, which was a legislative body of the different classes (called estates) of the French people. Jeffrey Archer, in his book *The Forth Estate* describes the *Ancien Régime* and quotes Edmund Burke as saying, "In May 1789, Louis XVI summoned to Versailles a full meeting of the 'Estate General. The First Estate consisted of three hundred Clergy. The Second Estate, three hundred nobles. The Third Estate, six hundred commoners. Some years later, after the French Revolution, Edmund Burke, looking up at the Press Gallery of the House of Commons said, 'Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, and they are more important than them all.'"

Even Napoleon once said, "...seven angry newspapers are more dangerous than a thousand legions." The Press wields power like no other, it shapes the way we think, and what we learn and how we view the world and ourselves. Yet their power goes unchecked; the capitalist system has turned them into propaganda machines. The biggest and best-known example is FOX News and anything owed by News Corporation, the company that is owned and operated by industrialist Rupert Murdoch. News Corp. owns so many companies and subsidiaries that it is disgusting: four publishing companies, over one hundred fifty newspapers worldwide, thirty-five magazines, at least four radio or music studios and so many television stations both regular, cable or satellite. There is no

other word for it but disgusting.

Just open up your daily newspaper, and take a look at how many advertisements there are in it. Just page after page after page of advertisements with stories buried between them, just thrown and forgotten among the many ads, newspapers are more about advertisements than the news. Look at your local news provider, whether it is NY1, CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, MSNBC or even God forbid FOX News. Look at all the ads, and if there is a negative story about one of these advertisers it's just about a guarantee the story won't run. It should be a bit disturbing to us all that a news organization would put its profits ahead of its solemn duty to inform the public.

There used to be a thing called journalistic integrity. It has become obvious to me after watching the nightly news, these twenty-four hour news channels and reading what passes for newspapers in this day and age, that it is dead. During the height of the Cold War, there was a respected journalist named Edward R. Murrow who during the London Blitz of 1940 reported live as the bombs did fall. But after World War II, during the 1950s at the height of the Cold War paranoia and the burden of McCarthyism, it was only he that stood up to Senator Joseph McCarthy while all others bent, before him in fear about a list of Communists that didn't exist. But Edward R. Murrow stood up to this bullying. Now all of the old guard is gone and has been replaced over the last twenty years.

There are others of integrity, great men



**TOP:** Edward R. Murrow on the cover of TIME magazine

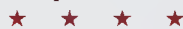
**BELOW:** White House Correspondent Helen Thomas



of journalism such as Walter Cronkite and Dan Rather. Walter Cronkite became instrumental in the end of the Vietnam War. Forty years ago this past January marked forty years since the Tet Offensive in which North Vietnamese Army units and rebel Viet Cong guerrillas launched attacks all over South Vietnam, including the seizure of the American Embassy in Saigon (modern day Ho Chi Min City). The Tet Offensive was a failure in that it only succeeded in taking the old Imperial City of Hue. But after the fighting, Cronkite, the head anchor of CBS Nightly News, announced that he believed that the war in Vietnam could not be won. As President Lyndon Johnson would say, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost America." And never in the last twenty years could I recall any news anchors with the dignity, and most importantly, the integrity of a Dan Rather or a Walter Cronkite. These were men cut from the same cloth and it is a travesty that there are no longer any men like them.

But for as much praise as I give Dan Rather, he is but a man and has his flaws. After September 11th, he was asked why people around the world hated America. He replied that he "didn't know" but later he revealed to the BBC that he had lied so that people would not question his patriotism. I would hope that this is something that Edward R. Murrow would not have done. Murrow would have told the truth and stood up for what he believed. But we must forgive Dan Rather's failings, for the world is a very different place today than from that of the 1950s.

Some may wonder why I have not mentioned any women, and the truth is that there was one woman who I believed was equal to them all—Barbara Walters. But I feel sadness and regret for her now, to have fallen as far as she has, to have gone from one of the most respected people in journalism to a host of *The View* on daytime television. There is one more prominent female journalist with integrity. Helen Thomas, a White House correspondent, has been shaking Presidents in their boots for the past several decades.



Nowadays, one must ask the question: Has any journalist stood up to the Bush Administration? Has anyone demanded that those in the Administration be brought to justice for the

various crimes that have been committed? If so, why aren't those voices louder? What happened to this being a "Nation of the People, By the People and For the People"? Today, we are a nation of the special interests, by the few, for the privileged. Why have we allowed this? This is the state of America today because we have allowed the few and the privileged, those with old money to run everything. As seen above, if a company wants a story buried and forgotten, it is easily accomplished. Added to the fact that for all intents and purposes, journalistic integrity is dead, the nightly news does not feature journalists—they feature anchor men and women who care about being on TV and reporting the slop that they say is news.

What passes for news on TV is not. Instead, they push fear and paranoia onto the people. They tell you what household item might kill you, more at 11; they glorify murders and others of that ilk; its celebrity gossip and noise; noise, its all just white noise. Domestic news is downplayed and major coverage of overseas happenings is almost non-existent. Americans go about their lives barely aware of actions taken by other countries around the world. In a way, Americans are blissfully ignorant of the rest of the world, but the actions of September 11, 2001 should have shown us that the old adage, "what you don't know can't hurt you" is wrong and that what you don't know can get you killed.

It may seem that all is doom and gloom, but there is a shred of hope out there. NPR, PBS and the British BBC all provide actual balanced news reports of home and abroad, sans the fake filler they put in your nightly news. But the sad thing is NPR and PBS (which are publicly funded) keep having their budgets cut by Congress because Republicans don't want an educated public. Hence, why the travesty that is No Child Left Behind got passed. But that is a subject for another edition of *Comrade X* (that's if the fascists don't spirit me away in the middle of the night).

There is also now with the dawning of the internet (which is probably the second or third greatest invention man has ever come up with, after the wheel) which has revolutionized global communication. The internet allows anyone, anywhere on the face of this here planet Earth access to any type of information



## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



that twenty years ago was almost impossible to do. And this is relevant because in the last couple of years, news websites and “blogs” (I hate that word, and podcast, I just hate them, there have to be better words for it!) have increased in popularity allowing people to have more independent news sources. The downside to this is the questionability and accuracy of the news source (which in mainstream news is bad enough). However, it is a step in the right direction, which hopefully will spread to the mainstream media. For if the last eight years is any indication, the mainstream corporate media have failed us utterly in allowing our once great nation to degrade into what it is today.

★ ★ ★ ★

How can we have accurate news? Well the first thing to do would be to provide public funding to all newspapers and TV news; that way they wouldn't have to worry about offending an advertiser that was committing crimes and denying workers their rights and poisoning their customers. We need to liberate the media from corporate ties so that they can freely report on the issues without financial consequences. Or short of that, the American public should demand more funding for PBS and NPR and should watch and listen to the great programs on them; maybe, just maybe, the American public at large will learn something—something that too many people in this nation have a vested interest in stopping.

But I must admit, that PBS and NPR have their downsides. It has been shown by various think-tanks that PBS and NPR have far more guests on their respective shows from the political Right than the political Left. It has further been shown that PBS and NPR have far more radical right-wingers on their respective shows than radical left-wingers (see [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)). So maybe it is wrong to say that they are completely fair and balanced, but they are more so than regular mainstream corporate news, which is at least a start. We must also ask ourselves why these publicly funded programs are shifting to the Right? Well, the reason is

## # News Corporation's EMPIRE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twentieth Century Fox Film</li> <li>Fox Music</li> <li>Twentieth Century Fox Home Ent.</li> <li>Fox Television Studios</li> <li>FOX Broadcasting Company</li> <li>MyNetworkTV</li> <li>MYSPACE.COM</li> <li>FOX News Channel</li> <li>FOX BUSINESS Network</li> <li>FX</li> <li>Fox Movie Channel</li> <li>Fox Regional Sports Networks (15 owned and operated)</li> <li>Fox Soccer Channel</li> <li>SPEED</li> <li>FSN</li> <li>Fox Reality</li> <li>Fox College Sports</li> <li>Fox International Channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big Ten Network 49%</li> <li>Fox Sports Net Bay Area 40%</li> <li>National Geographic Channel – International 75%</li> <li>National Geographic Channel – Europe 25%</li> <li>Direct Broadcast Satellite</li> <li>The DIRECTV Group 39%</li> <li>New York Post</li> <li>Wall Street Journal</li> <li>The Times UK</li> <li>The Sunday Times UK</li> <li>The Sun UK</li> <li>The Australian (Australia)</li> <li>The Daily Telegraph (Australia)</li> <li>The Sunday Telegraph (Australia)</li> <li>Herald Sun (Australia)</li> <li>Sunday Tasmanian (Australia)</li> <li>The Sunday Times (Australia)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogue Australia</li> <li>GQ Australia</li> <li>News America Marketing</li> <li>In-Store</li> <li>FSI (SmartSource Magazine)</li> <li>The Weekly Standard</li> <li>TV Guide International 41%</li> <li>HarperCollins Publishers</li> <li>Fox Mobile Entertainment</li> <li>Fox Interactive Media</li> <li>IGN Entertainment</li> <li>FoxSports.com</li> <li>Fox.com</li> <li>AmericanIdol.com</li> <li>Jamba 51%</li> <li>National Rugby League 50%</li> <li>News Digital Media</li> <li>Rugby Union</li> <li>...and MANY MANY MORE!</li> </ul>
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that over the last ten years the Right has controlled this country. So if something offended them on PBS or NPR, they would simply cut their budget. So we must ask ourselves where is a good place to get news?

Well, an even better choice of news than PBS or NPR would be the Pacifica News Network, whose most famous show is *Democracy Now!* with Amy Goodman as its host. I highly recommend listening and watching this broadcast, available on CUNY TV, Free Speech TV, Link TV, and at [www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org). *Democracy Now!* has amazing news coverage and manages to cut through all of the Right's agitprop in order to tell the people the Truth! The unenviable Truth, not “versions” of the truth or the downright lies that are sold to us day in and day out in our colorless lives, which the market has created and transformed us all into mindless zombies. *Democracy Now!* gives us the dirty hard Truth that makes you open your eyes and look around and realize how much is wrong with the world and why no one in power tries to change it. If I may quote Edmund Burke one more time, “Evil prevails when good men do nothing.” And that is why we

must open our eyes to the lies that are floated before us everyday. Barbara Bush used to tell school children to read a book everyday; what we should be telling children and ourselves is to *question what we read*. For then, and only then, once the eyes of the people are opened, change will follow.

So what about the Fourth Estate and the Revolution? From this inaugural edition of *Comrade X*, we can come to the conclusion that the Revolution will *not* be televised, and that the mainstream corporate media will be counter, if not completely anti-revolutionary. So we cannot rely on them when the revolutionary times come. But afterwards, when We The People are victorious they will have to answer for the crimes they have helped commit and have covered up so that ONE percent of the population of this country can have 40 percent of the wealth! As for NPR and PBS, let us hope that this November that a liberal will enter the White House and remove the Sword of Damocles, that is the fear of budget cuts from above their head, and allow them to bring the Truth to the people as well. 🐞

*L'internationale sera le genre humain!*





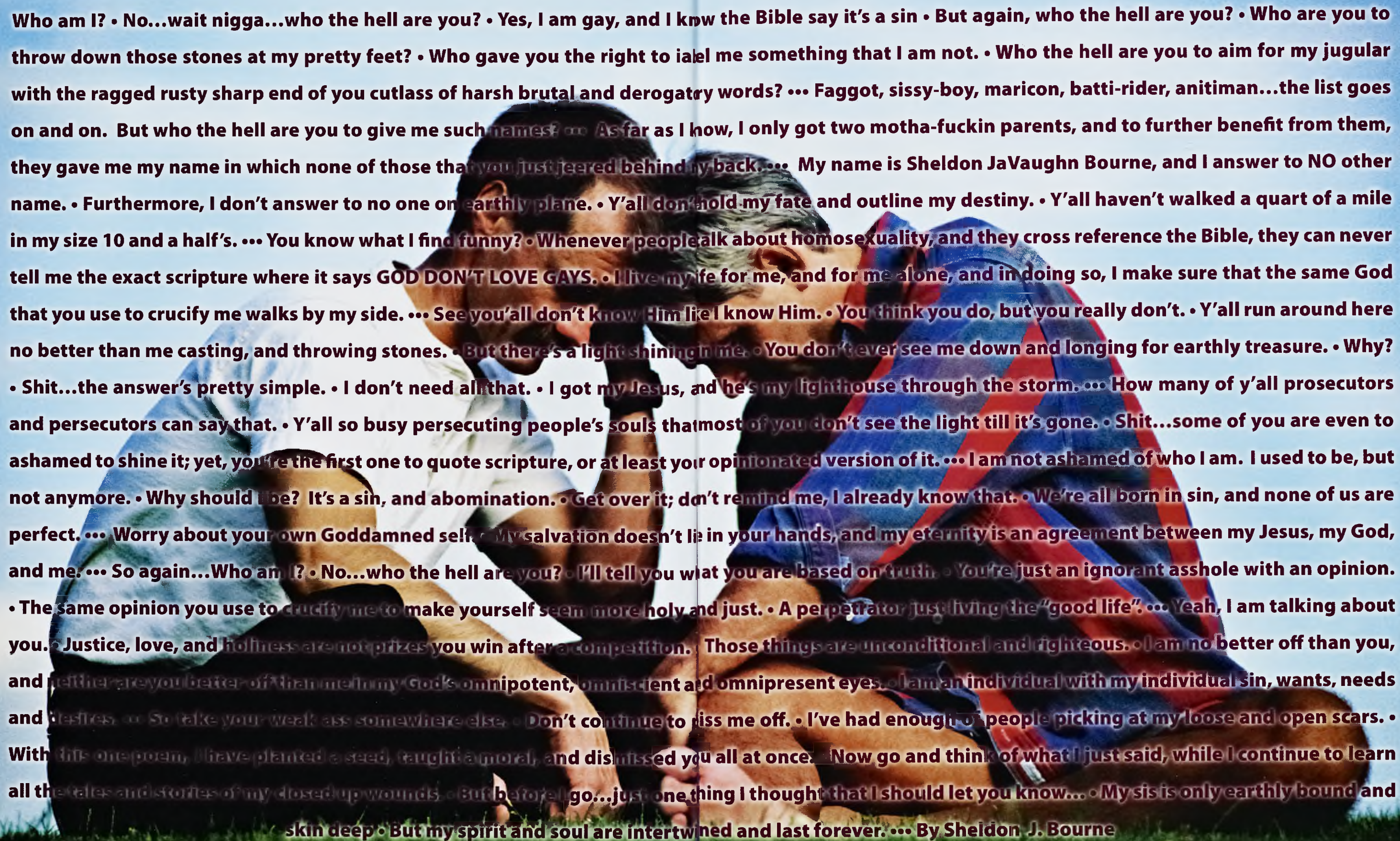
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Who am I? • No...wait nigga...who the hell are you? • Yes, I am gay, and I know the Bible say it's a sin • But again, who the hell are you? • Who are you to throw down those stones at my pretty feet? • Who gave you the right to iael me something that I am not. • Who the hell are you to aim for my jugular with the ragged rusty sharp end of you cutlass of harsh brutal and derogatry words? ... Faggot, sissy-boy, maricon, batti-rider, anitiman...the list goes on and on. But who the hell are you to give me such names? ... As far as I how, I only got two motha-fuckin parents, and to further benefit from them, they gave me my name in which none of those that you just jeered behind my back. ... My name is Sheldon JaVaughn Bourne, and I answer to NO other name. • Furthermore, I don't answer to no one on earthly plane. • Y'all don't hold my fate and outline my destiny. • Y'all haven't walked a quart of a mile in my size 10 and a half's. ... You know what I find funny? • Whenever people talk about homosexuality, and they cross reference the Bible, they can never tell me the exact scripture where it says GOD DON'T LOVE GAYS. • I live my life for me, and for me alone, and in doing so, I make sure that the same God that you use to crucify me walks by my side. ... See you'all don't know Him like I know Him. • You think you do, but you really don't. • Y'all run around here no better than me casting, and throwing stones. • But there's a light shining in me. • You don't ever see me down and longing for earthly treasure. • Why? • Shit...the answer's pretty simple. • I don't need all that. • I got my Jesus, and he's my lighthouse through the storm. ... How many of y'all prosecutors and persecutors can say that. • Y'all so busy persecuting people's souls that most of you don't see the light till it's gone. • Shit...some of you are even to ashamed to shine it; yet, you're the first one to quote scripture, or at least your opinionated version of it. ... I am not ashamed of who I am. I used to be, but not anymore. • Why should I be? It's a sin, and abomination. • Get over it; don't remind me, I already know that. • We're all born in sin, and none of us are perfect. ... Worry about your own Goddamned self. My salvation doesn't lie in your hands, and my eternity is an agreement between my Jesus, my God, and me. ... So again...Who am I? • No...who the hell are you? • I'll tell you what you are based on truth. • You're just an ignorant asshole with an opinion. • The same opinion you use to crucify me to make yourself seem more holy and just. • A perpetrator just living the "good life". ... Yeah, I am talking about you. • Justice, love, and holiness are not prizes you win after a competition. • Those things are unconditional and righteous. • I am no better off than you, and neither are you better off than me in my God's omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent eyes. • I am an individual with my individual sin, wants, needs and desires. • So take your weak ass somewhere else. • Don't continue to piss me off. • I've had enough of people picking at my loose and open scars. • With this one poem, I'll have planted a seed, taught a moral, and dismissed you all at once. • Now go and think of what I just said, while I continue to learn all the tales and stories of my closed up wounds. • But before I go...just one thing I thought that I should let you know... • My sis is only earthly bound and skin deep • But my spirit and soul are intertwined and last forever. ... By Sheldon J. Bourne

# Sin Is Only Skin Deep





## RE: WHAT KIND OF CARD IS RACE?

DEAR THIRD RAIL,

We often wonder as people of color why we are so victimized in today's society. Why children in lower income housing are "ghetto" and already labeled failures. We blame the "white" society and everyone else; however never do we stop and see who is really to blame. It is us. The black race that wallows in pity—the confined mentality of this free world. The catastrophic time period of slavery has caused a crusade of ignorance often referred to as racial discrimination. The illusion of color has branded tags of societal grief upon individuals; especially in the African American race. The physical constraint of slavery led to a semi-permanent emotional state of blindness. The everlasting battle of obtaining freedom for those once captured has become in vain. The Emancipation Proclamation has unquestionably backfired and caged the once desire of freedom in

irresponsibility and ignorance, and is in dire need of rehabilitation. History has unquestionably repeated itself just with opposite ends of the spectrum. Ownership of the external has stormed into a conflict between mind and body. The detainment of African Americans during the eighteenth century has unequivocally formed an acceptable insanity given the title—racism, in which this race so proudly stands upon. The wall of discrimination has radiated waves of unconscious blame on others rather than individuals facing reality. The chains and whips that scarred the black race in the eighteenth century has relived its birth through a present day mentality. The incorruptible chains that once

prey. This psychological defect of being brainwashed into believing that an individual of African American descent is a target for "white society" has hypnotized people of color into believing it to be true. Many people today are entrapped in the mindset that slavery has hexed upon the minds of African Americans.

The mishap of African American families unknowingly hindering their children because of something that happened centuries ago is undeniably forming a lethal hindrance. The imbalance of trying to modify this world into a vicinity in which the past is a fog memory into a place of modernity and technological advances

will never be in royal pursuit due to the grudges of society. The greatest fault of one is to proudly wear the badge of ignorance and continuously walk with the staff of accusation rather than run with armor of accountability. The seemingly inescapable views of mankind stands as a narcotic in the form of media, radio, etc suffocating and luring the dependents of society—children and teenagers into their world of perception and illusion.

had the binding power of limiting movement of the wrist, hand and feet are no longer adhesive to the body, yet remains unbreakable on the mind, inflicting the heritable trait of being



the eighteen hundreds into the mental handicap of victimization today. This plague of ignorance has manifested itself into the minds of most African Americans, causing a generation of

Societies forceful yet impaired ideology of trying to shape one with the molding of race is the avalanching effect of awakening the implantation of one's dormant belief of inequality. The belief that one must undermine another because of race or in a workplace choose another because the law says so; not because of credentials but because of color, proves how injustice still remains. The challenge that should be brought to one's attention is: who is being discriminated against? Society has glued the black race on a throne of greatness, and given schools the ingredient of diversity. Affirmative Action has boldly lessened the workload for 'blacks' and carried it over to the 'white' population. Now where's the public rioting and marching?

Nowhere, because of this worldly insane asylum that has bred a community of charity rather than allowing equality to be achieved. Citizens sit on giving back what was once

taken rather than just giving the truth of opportunity. Once again it is the spellbound mind that still must regain full consciousness and inhale reality. The effort put into schools having diversity has led to the racism of non-minorities. Qualifications no longer are important, yet the color of one's skin is.

Why can't everyone be color blind and think of people as human beings measuring one's ability on intellect and experience rather than the insignificance of color. African Americans might as well put the chains back on because this is what we are doing figuratively. The captivity of the mind will never allow the body to reach its full capacity.

Thank you for your time in advance.

Sincerely  
Grace McMillan

## JEFF McGRAHAM, NON-FICTION EDITOR RESPONDS

Sociologist Stephanie Coontz in her excellent book, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (Basic Books, 1992), elucidates how political mythology is created by an author who is ideologically charged: "*The Little House on the Prairie* book series based on the memoirs of Laura Ingalls Wilder, were extensively revised by her daughter as an ideological attack on government programs." Laura Ingalls Wilder's daughter excised out of her mother's manuscripts any mention of governmental assistance and thus proliferated a myth that her ancestors were "rigged individualists" who thrived in isolation from the aid of government. This myth was achieved by reducing complex social and historical realities into simplistic narratives of self-reliance.

Grace McMillan employs a similar reductionistic line of reasoning in her letter blaming African Americans for their plight as a people. McMillan utilizes a familiar tactic of those who are ideologically bent on ignoring the pervasiveness of racism: she ignores historical and contemporized racist structures by reducing racism to the institution of slavery, and thus proposes that racism is a mental illness that blacks need to get over: "The detainment of African Americans during the

eighteenth century has unequivocally formed an acceptable insanity given the title – racism, in which this race so proudly stands upon." McMillan also refers to those who believe racism is real as being "brainwashed." One of McMillan's most audacious and stupefying claims is that real discrimination is being perpetrated against whites due to affirmative action programs and this has resulted in a racist backlash: "the effort put into schools having diversity has led to the racism of non-minorities. Qualifications no longer are important, yet the color of ones (*sic*) skin is." Admitting that racism does exist, no matter the supposed cause, is in complete contradistinction to what McMillan claimed as being a chimera based on mental illness in the first part of her letter.

Contradictions aside, McMillan exhibits either purposely or genuinely a profound ignorance of the racist structures of American society. Perhaps she should have read *What Kind of Card is Race?* by Tim Wise and *A Long History of Racial Preferences—for Whites* by Larry Adelman (both published in *Third Rail*, Volume 2007, Issue 9) in a more careful and attentive fashion to gain some understanding of the racist society she resides in (she should also read my article on post-war governmental housing discrimination in *this* issue).

In response to McMillan, I will list some basic facts (although, one could list evidence of post-slavery racism that



The opinions expressed in responses by Third Rail members are solely representing their own opinions and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Third Rail Magazine or its staff.



# LETTERS

would fill volumes of tomes): firstly, from Jim Crow and lynching to sentencing discrepancies for identical crimes (i.e. crack cocaine versus powdered cocaine and the death penalty) to racial profiling to child poverty, racism is a key factor in American society. Secondly, it is a well-documented fact that formal affirmative action programs have aided white women more than any other demographic group. Of course, wealthy well-connected white men (i.e. President Bush) have benefited more than any other segment of the population from the extensive preference programs practiced at elite universities. Thirdly, as Jonathan Kozol has exhaustively documented in his books, schools in the United States are highly segregated based on racial demographics. In most places in the United States, school funding is based on the housing tax structure. In other words, wealthy districts receive far more funding per pupil than do poorer districts. Due to the isolation of many poor African American communities, as opposed to many poor whites who often reside in small towns and attend economically heterogeneous schools, a black child has a much greater chance of receiving an inferior education in our society. Fourthly, McMillan consistently asserts that slavery was an



18<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon, but of course, slavery did not officially end until 1865. And as historian Eric Foner has demonstrated, the *de facto* conditions of slavery were present long after this period.

Finally, McMillan's account, like much of the idiocy that is considered political discourse in our society, rests upon reductionistic formalizations that allow the most ignorant among us to engage in a debate that should require its participants to at least have a rudimentary knowledge of black history. One cannot imagine individuals engaging in a debate about physics, astronomy, or English literature without having done some preparatory work. But with racism—the most uninformed, “proudly wear the badge of ignorance and continuously walk with the staff of accusation rather than run with armor of accountability”.

## CSI PARKING VIOLENCE COVER-UP?



### DEAR THIRD RAIL,

I really enjoy reading your material and I thought of writing to you due to an issue that I think the campus is hiding. I was assaulted on campus over parking and received stitches. CSI has so many disputes over parking every day and something must be done. They provide, I mean, charge us for parking passes and do not provide enough parking spaces. I have a black eye and stitches over a spot for class. I won't go down

without a fight and I know that your magazine has the the fire I need. I must use discretion because a lawsuit is pending. Please help me to raise awareness....they pretend this isn't an issue.

*[Student's name withheld by request]*  
CSI Student

## RE: CRITICAL MASS

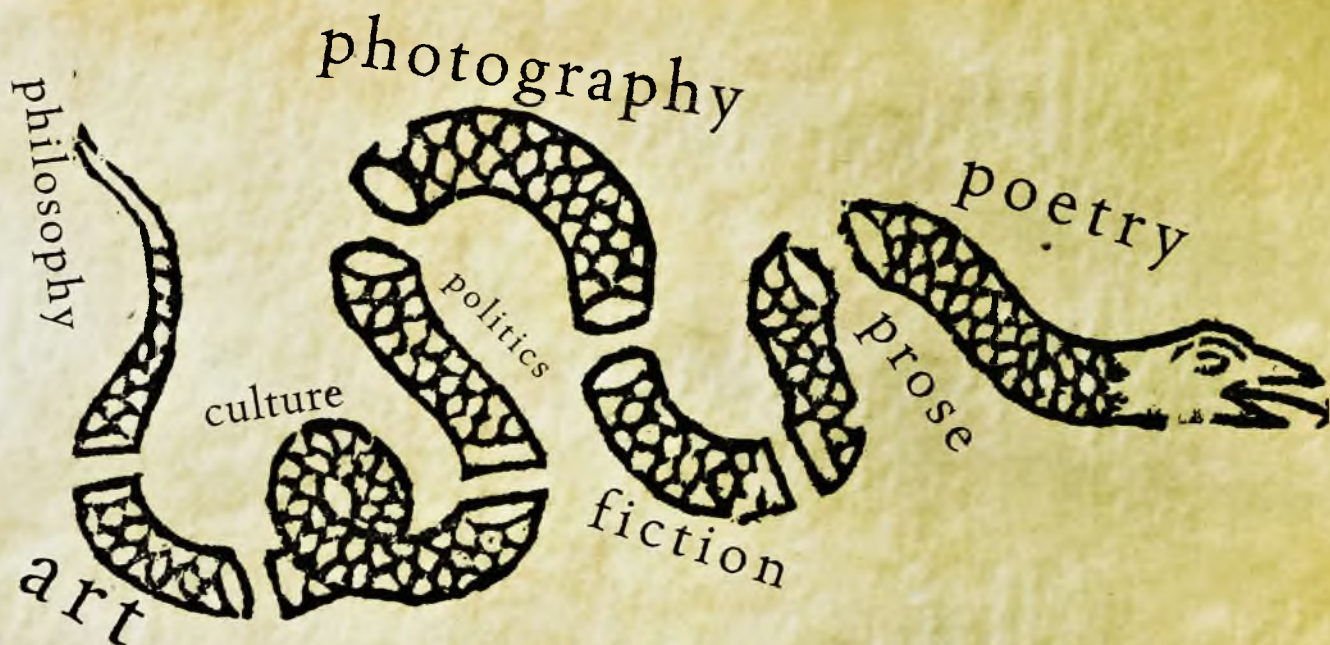
### DEAR THIRD RAIL,

Bikes! I was so happy when, last year as I was wandering around CSI campus looking for a friend of mine who was a student at the time, I came across your magazine. It makes me rest a little easier at night to know that there are other socially and politically conscious Staten Islanders around.

*Solidarity!*  
Joe







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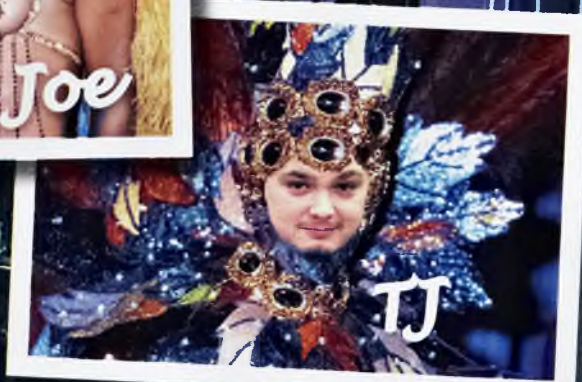
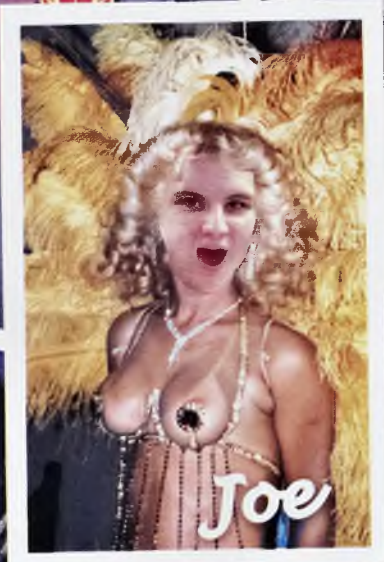
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