

The Wages of Ignorance
How the Press Attacks White Advocacy
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Just a few days after James von Brunn killed a security guard at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, a couple of journalists tried to link my activities and writings to the killing. This is hardly the first time the press has come after me (see “A Knock on the Door,” *American Renaissance*, December, 2006). I have been writing about race from a white perspective for years, and some people think that is reason enough to remove me from my position at the University of Vermont. These recent newspaper articles have only reminded me how banal and ignorant professional journalists usually are.

The first piece appeared in a Vermont paper called the *Times Argus*. The reporter had tried to reach me by e-mail but I was out of the office, so he went ahead without me (Daniel Barlow, “Professor Linked to White Pride,” *Times Argus*, June 14, 2009). He quoted Heidi Beirich of the Southern Poverty Law Center declaring that I am a “neo-Nazi” and am “a major player in the white supremacist and neo-Nazi movements.” She couldn’t say whether I was pals with Mr. von Brunn but was sure I “ran in the same circles.” The author concluded that my writing “resonates with both religious and secular hate groups who probably feel like their own world is ending.” Liberals can write this stuff in their sleep.

Two days later I heard from a Washington, DC, publication called *Inside Higher Ed*. The reporter said she noticed my “personal voice seems to be missing from the article” the *Times Argus* ran, and said she wanted to hear from me. I set her straight on Heidi Beirich’s rubbish, and suggested that she read several things I have written. A lengthy piece came out the next morning (Stephanie Lee, “The (Pro)-White Professor,” *Inside Higher Ed*, June 17, 2009). It had the same angle as the *Times Argus* story—“There’s a monster in the back yard!”—and while it wasn’t as sophomoric, it demonstrated that, as my late mother would have put it, what the reporter knew about me you could put in your eye.

It would have been astonishing if either article had approached my work in any other way. Like so many Americans, reporters have been taught to believe that non-white racial identity

and organization are good, but these same impulses among whites are evil. Both articles essentially posed the question: “Is this professor a racist, and if he is—and he probably is—what do we do about him? Should we get rid of him?”

It is true that both articles quoted university spokesmen who defended the importance of free speech—and I very much appreciate the university’s position on this—but their purpose was to raise suspicions about my right to keep my job. Both let Heidi Beirich belch venom without questioning her credentials or motives. The *Times Argus* called the Southern Poverty Law Center “a civil rights organization that also tracks hate groups across the country,” so it was pretty clear what the reader was supposed to think of me. It is basic journalism to check your sources, especially when what they say is pure invective, but reporters have no doubt been taught to think someone on the “right” side of a question has to be OK. Miss Beirich is smoking out bigots, after all, so how could anyone doubt what she says?

What angle might these stories have taken instead? They might have looked into what I actually write. What are my analyses, my claims, my prescriptions? But, no. An out-of-context line or two is all they offer the reader. And why not? I suspect young people think they already know everything they need to know about race, and since it’s clear I don’t fit in, why even bother trying to understand what I write?

Another possible angle: My academic freedom as a professor. That probably didn’t occur to them either because part of the indoctrination is that good ends justify any means. Anything that gets in the way of racial justice, “gender” equality, and economic and political redistribution has got to go. Freedom of conscience leaves room for people to think the wrong things, so we can’t have that. Freedom of expression just confuses people, and since academic freedom is part of this, it has to be dumped.

How could these reporters understand that teachers don’t represent students; they teach students? Teachers challenge students to look at the world with new eyes. There really is a marketplace of ideas, and academic freedom and tenure protection are crucial to a university’s role.

A third angle for the story would have been to look into one of my own areas of interest: how are white students faring in today’s universities? Countless articles and books are written about how

minority students are doing, but there is no way it would have occurred to journalists to write how whites are doing.

What can those who care about the status and fate of white people do in the face of this kind of constant hostility?

One thing we can all do is pay attention to language—that was the purpose of last month’s cover story (“What We Call Ourselves,” *American Renaissance*, August, 2009). I find it helpful to divide words into “cleans” and “dirties,” that is to say, whether they have positive or negative associations. Clean terms help a movement and dirty terms hurt its opponents.

The “anti-racists” (there’s a “clean”) have been very good at this, and we need to get better. Some cleans we can use are white consciousness, white concerns, white interests, white commitment, white solidarity, white scholarship, white advocacy, white activism, white civil rights, white preservation, white self-determination, white racial and cultural integrity, white heritage, and white destiny.

“Diversity” gets an undeserving pass as a clean in our time. The word is a cover for hostility toward whites and officially sanctioned racial discrimination against us. There is no better example of racial discrimination in our time than the diversity movement, but to see that you have to get beyond its clean rhetoric.

The anti-whites (which is what they are) leave concepts vague so they can tack anything on to them. “Racism” is not just irrational animus or abuse of another race. Whites are now “racists” if they note racial differences or prefer to live among their own people—no freedom of association for them. It is “racism” simply for whites to notice black or Hispanic collective behavior, including such things as illegitimacy and crime rates, violence against women, education and work performance, welfare dependency, demands for racial preferences, and a tendency to neglect property.

It is now “racism” or even “white supremacy” to suggest that whites have accomplished much of anything, much less more than some other races. Most whites know that if a community is white—anywhere in the world—it is likely to be orderly, safe, and livable, and the same cannot be said for a black or Hispanic community. Whites know that an infusion of blacks or Hispanics will change this. These are empirical facts, but the anti-racists never try to refute them; they just call us names. Whites must state the facts calmly and forthrightly, and never back down in the face of name-calling.

We must also make explicit what everyone understands implicitly. A few days ago, I was sitting with a friend at the lakefront in Burlington, Vermont. There were hundreds of people there: parents and children, young couples, older people. There was gentleness, a peaceful flow, a grace to them. I mentioned to my friend how impressed I was with the architecture on the lakefront and in the downtown just behind us, and how everything was kept up so well.

After a moment of silence, she said, “You know what I’m thinking? Everybody here is white. This is what they built, this is what they created; this is how they live when they are among their own.” It is vital that whites understand the importance of race and acknowledge what it means in their daily lives. White people have the right to be proud of their race and what it has achieved.

The other day I heard from a father who told me that his daughter, who had worked incredibly hard in high school and had graduated at the top of her class, had been rejected by the Ivy League schools while black classmates with far lower qualifications had been admitted. He said his daughter “cried and cried.” I cried. The story of his daughter is the story of all of us. We have to stress that white solidarity, advocacy, organization, and activism are morally impeachable. This is not “hate” but self-preservation and self-determination that are the right of every race.

As for me, this last media flap has convinced me I should throw their own ignorance back into the faces of these reporters: “Have you actually read anything I have written? Name one fact or idea that was wrong or unjustified.” I’ll ask them: “Which of my activities and expressions exactly would you suppress?” To the question, “Are you a racist?” my answer is, “Don’t waste my time.”

Finally and most importantly, we must live honorably. We are outnumbered and out-armed, but however things turn out for ourselves and for the things we love, we can live with honor. We should strive always so that our actions—day-to-day and moment-to-moment—align with the highest understandings and convictions of our people. It takes courage to do what is right, regardless of the consequences. You and I can live with honor for the rest of today, and again tomorrow, and for all the tomorrows that follow.