

Why I Write (Or Wrote) on White Racial Matters

by Robert S. Griffin

In May of 2023, I received an email.

I read many of your thoughts and writings a few months ago, including about John Kasper and many others. I am a white male in my 20s. What I wanted to ask you was how you got interested in white people like John Kasper, who is seen by most to be very dubious if not altogether immoral. I found out about your writing on him through his Wikipedia page.

Thank you,

[his name]

I assumed I'd reply briefly, a short paragraph, and that would be it, but I found myself going on, and it was for me, not him. What I was writing was getting at the question of what has propelled the extensive amount of writing on white racial matters I've done the last couple of decades—three books, ninety or more short writings. Over the years I've read a lot of “why I write” statements and as I went along, I realized I was putting together my version of one. While it doesn't matter to anyone but me why I do what I do, writing or anything else, I share my reply to this correspondent here because it may surface some principles, approaches, possibilities, standards, that can be applied to any kind of work and encourage you to look at the place work has in your life: what it is now, what it could be, what it should be. I've spent the last couple of days fleshing out what I wrote this young man, so this isn't my email to him exactly; it's what I want to share with you in the form of an email to someone else.

[his first name],

Thank you for taking the time to contact me. How I came to write about someone like John Kasper—good question, I’ll see if I can get at it here.

Back in the mid-1990s, I read an article in the newspaper about a rabid white racist who lived in a compound in West Virginia by the name of William Pierce, whose book *The Turner Diaries*, so the article said, inspired Tim McVeigh in 1995 to bomb the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The article referred to Pierce as “the most dangerous man in America.” *The most dangerous man in America*. I was intrigued. Who is this Piece? I’d never heard of him. I checked to see if there were books about him and browsed periodicals and what little there was about him was from long range, nothing was based on close contact with him. Hmm.

I read Pierce’s book the article talked about, [*The Turner Diaries*](#), which is a novel about an organized revolt against a Jewish-dominated regime that had seized power in America and was bent on disarming and pacifying its white citizens. Wall-to-wall violence—shootings, hangings, and bombings, including one of the FBI Building in Washington, D.C. that, yes, was very much like the one McVeigh pulled off in Oklahoma City—interspersed with National Socialist-inspired analyses and theorizing. Who thought this up? I read that Pierce had been a tenured physics professor in a university and had given it up to live in West Virginia and do things like write this *Turner Diaries* book. What?

At the time, I was looking for a book to write that considered American society and culture in an overall, integrated way—my last one had been about kids and sports—and beyond the pale as it came off, in *The Turner Diaries*, Pierce did that. A good way to make sense of anything is to hold it up against a stark contrast with it. Plus Pierce—the most dangerous man in America!—was an interesting character; what makes this guy tick? I mentioned my intrigue with Pierce to the woman I was living with at the time (we later married) and she said, “You’re so fascinated with this Pierce, why don’t you write a book about him?” Yes, why don’t I?

I was able to find a mailing address for Pierce and wrote him a letter expressing my interest in meeting him and exploring the possibility of writing a book about him. He promptly responded that he was up for that and I traveled to a remote part of West Virginia—nearest town, population 150—and navigated bumpy dirt roads and went past what looked like unworked farms to meet him. He and I hit it off well—I was a university academic as he once was and we had similar personal styles. After hours of discussion over a couple of days, he proved to be as compelling in person as I could have hoped for and I became invested in writing about him and his world.

I spent a month with Pierce on his ninety acres of rugged land with a building that housed the organization he formed and headed, The National Alliance, a trailer he lived in with his Eastern European wife, and a few scattered houses, one of which was occupied by an aide of his I stayed with. I conducted a series of audio-taped interviews with him and traveled with him to Europe where he spoke at far-right gatherings and I looked into people and writers who had inspired him and shaped his outlook and approach, a diverse group including the playwright George Bernard Shaw and the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. The result was a book published in 2001, [*The Fame of a Dead Man's Deeds: An Up-Close Portrait of White Nationalist William Pierce*](#).

Writing the Pierce book resulted in a racial consciousness I had never possessed in the least before, and I came to the conclusion that white people are my people and that they are being unjustly attacked and hurt, especially children and young people in schools (my career was in education). For the first time in my life, I felt a personal responsibility to speak up about something I thought was deeply wrong.

I felt the urge—it was physical, compelling, insistent—to break my lifelong silence and invisibility. Over the years, this urge took the form of what could be called a positive compulsion. I'd feel a strong itch—the next thing to write on the racial topic—and scratch it. I had no grand plan, no big ambition, no sense that what I was doing mattered for much of anything to anybody.

From my side, I was expressing what was inside me at a moment in time the best I could. If at any point the itch had gone away, that would have been OK with me.

I haven't, per Emily Dickenson, put my expressions in a drawer. I have put all of my writings, no exceptions, on public display, as it were, in books and on the internet. I've used my own name and paid a price for it, but damned if I was going to use a pseudonym and be in hiding.

I have used the writing on race to develop, to expand myself, to become clearer, stronger, more the person I uniquely am, more efficacious, more caring and decent, a better human being. As well as being about whatever person or topic I was dealing with, all of my writing (including this email) has been about who I am and what I am becoming.

I read about Kasper in a biography on the poet Ezra Pound. Kasper was an admirer of Pound and Pound became a mentor of sorts to him. I was taken by how this young man, Kasper, 26-years-old, all alone, no support from anybody, drove his beat-up old car to Tennessee to take on no less than school integration because he thought it was wrong. He knew he'd get hurt bad for what he was doing and he did get hurt bad, but he did it anyway. How about that. Those doing the talking in America at the time—they have been replaced by people just like them—called him an “interloper,” a “meddler,” a “preening cock,” an “emotional idiot,” and a “screwball,” and described his appearance as “rodent-like.” I felt a kinship with Kasper. I have felt alone (and have consistently driven beat-up cars) and gotten the word that I was unappealing and off-base and that what was going on in the world was none of my business.

As I wrote about Kasper, the French journalist and philosopher Albert Camus's reference to the Sisyphus myth popped into my mind and I went with it. That exemplified a pattern with me: once I engage a topic, the writing is as much about reacting—in this case to the Camus reference, however it got into my awareness—as acting. It's as if I'm writing down what is dictated to me. I attentively wait to be told what to do next.

As I put it in the [Kasper piece](#):

The French journalist/philosopher Albert Camus wrote about the Greek myth of Sisyphus. Sisyphus rolled a large rock toward the top of a mountain only to have it fall back down the mountain—he didn't get the rock to the top, he didn't succeed. Sisyphus rolled the rock back up the mountain, and it rolled back down again. And he rolled it back up the mountain . . . and again . . . and again . . . and again . . . and again. Camus saw the Sisyphus myth as symbolic of the absurdity and futility of our lives. I'll put it in a more positive light.

One way to look at the Sisyphus myth is as a metaphor for our existential challenge as human beings: what makes us human, what makes us a man (or woman) is to roll our rock—the right things for us, the most important things—up the mountain even if we never get it to the top. And indeed, we may never get it to the top. We are not omnipotent. Circumstances are often bigger than we are. And sometimes there are few who will help us, and sometimes no one will help us. But still, we can still keep rolling our rock as long as we can. That's what makes us a man. John Kasper was a man.

I was consciously aware when I wrote this that I was writing about myself as well as John Kasper. I've rolled my rock up the mountain and feel good about that, and late in life—it's taken way too long—I have concluded that I am worthy of being called a man.

The last few months the urge, compulsion, itch to, metaphorically, paint my pictures and hang them on the wall, persistent for over two decades, hasn't been there. I'm very old now, eighty-three, and I've had serious health issues this past year; perhaps that accounts for it. At the moment, I am not writing anything and just have something partially written about an email exchange I had with a newspaper reporter from Maine doing a story on white nationalist activities in his area. [I finished it and posted it in *The Occidental Observer* online on July 28th, 2023 as "[An Exchange with a Newspaper Reporter](#)."] I have the sense that it may well be my last public

expression. Or will it be this email to you made public? I'm let whatever happens happen.

In any case, so near the end, it's strongly coming home to me that, indeed, all things pass, including life itself, and that whatever matters to us, whoever matters to us, we need to get on with it the best we can while we still have the chance. I wouldn't, couldn't, write the Pierce book or Kasper article now, and I'm grateful that I did when I had the opportunity. I hope that you do whatever most needs to be done in your life before your encounter with eternity, including becoming yourself to the fullest extent possible and manifesting it honestly and honorably in the world and being loving and supportive to the people in your life.

Thank you again for getting in contact. My best wishes go to you.

Yours sincerely,

Robert