

A Rejoinder to “The ABC’s of the Alt-Right: A Guide for Students” by Thomas Dalton, Ph.D.

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I read with interest Professor Thomas Dalton’s article posted in the online magazine *The Occidental Observer* on December 8th, 2019, “The ABC’s of the Alt-Right: A Guide for Students.” As has Professor Dalton, I have spent many years on American university campuses (I recently retired)—in my case, 42 years as a professor, plus an additional five years at the instructor rank early in my career. And as has Professor Dalton, I have written extensively on white racial matters. My experiences and analyses have led me to different conclusions and proposals than Professor Dalton expresses in his article, however. Different doesn’t necessarily mean better—readers will make that judgment. I hope what I set out here in response to Professor Dalton’s article will prompt reasoned dialogue and debate.

I’ve decided that the best way to get across my take on things is to comment on the last section of Professor Dalton’s article, which he entitles “How to Organize.” In this section, he addresses his university student audience (“I now shift my focus to you, the student reader, and your efforts to make a positive impact on this troubled world.”).

I’ll begin this rejoinder with a quote from my writings that gives a sense of my concept of what white university students are like:

I spent my working life around white university students, and of course I'm generalizing here, but based on my experience with them, their most central motivating impulse is to be characterized, by others and themselves, as decent and fair and just—which, by the way, is why the idea of social justice, prevalent in today's universities, resonates so well with them. They don't want to be great, they want to be good. And they don't want to be on one end or the other of a social/political spectrum. Rather, they want to be secure and accepted and respected in the middle of wherever they are, in the dorm or in the community. They very much want to belong; they fear being marginalized. In sum, they want to be seen, and to see themselves, as OK people. Political correctness in universities—at least as it is pitched to them, as *the* way to be OK—is very attractive to them.¹

If you are going to attempt to win over the hearts and minds of white university students, you had best take their basic posture, what they are really like, into account. Those on the left who have gotten themselves center stage in universities have done that extremely well. White advocates and activists could learn much from how they went about it.

Now to my comments on quotes (in italics) from the section of Professor Dalton's article, *How to Organize*:

You have more power than you think. In a university, you are the paying customer.

It's important to distinguish between collective and individual power. True, collectively students have power as paying customers, to use that term. But students don't live their lives collectively; rather, they live their lives one at a time, as separate individuals. They live inside and direct the being that looks back at them in the mirror.

From the perspective of an individual student—let's call her Mary Smith—she's not a paying customer. Mary's application was accepted by the university and she feels really good about that, and her parents are proud of her for getting admitted; they drove her to campus just before classes started and helped her move things into her dorm room, and they met her roommate, who seemed very nice. Being in the university setting is a big adventure for Mary, and it is a test to see if she can make a go of it on her own for the first time.

Yes, Mary could quit school and take her (or her parents') tuition money with her. To the university, the loss of a single tuition wouldn't matter; it would simply admit somebody on the waiting list, no problem. But to Mary, dropping out of school and perhaps transferring to another university would be a disruptive and, very possibly, upsetting, experience. It's no small matter for her to move out of her dorm room or apartment, say goodbye to her friends, break off her connections with her favorite professors and courses, and to end her school activities. And what will this mean to her parents? They've been telling all the relatives how well Mary is doing in the university, and now she's checking out. Will Mary see herself as letting her parents down? Will she look upon herself as a failure? You see where I'm going with this: it's a more complicated

matter than students being paying customers who can take their money elsewhere, and if we are going to do well by students, and by universities as a whole, we need to take that complexity into account.

You have the right to speak up and make yourself heard. As long as you stay within the broad rules of the university, they can't punish you.

The university can't punish you? Really? How about verbal disconfirmation and looks of disdain, and never calling on you in class, and giving you bad grades? How about turning down your application to be a residence hall advisor or teaching assistant? You say you need a recommendation for foreign study, or for employment or graduate school? Go somewhere else for it, loser. Keep in mind that it's not just university faculty and administrators that punish; fellow students do it too, and they are exceedingly good at it, they've been doing it since grade school. Put-downs, smirks, snubs, rejection, exclusion, social media badmouthing. Think that can't hurt?

Thomas Dalton is a pen name, and I assume that he hasn't personally taken shots from his university. I have expressed my racial views under my own name, and trust me, universities can and will punish, and they will do it no-holds-barred. And, indeed, it inflicts personal and professional bruises and scars. I would never advise students, or faculty, to assume that they can go public with white advocacy or form white organizations in a university with the

idea that they aren't going get hit hard where it hurts for doing it.

Create a student group or club that explicitly advocates for alt-right views.

To my way of thinking, white advocacy is best positioned as a centrist movement; there is nothing inherently right, or left, about it. The left-leaning people who now control the universities have successfully gone for the center, where the action is. They may at times refer to themselves as progressives, but by-and-large they have stayed away from political self-labeling. They avoid calling themselves leftists or liberals because of the negative connotations those identities have for many of the people they are seeking to influence. Instead, they associate themselves with a cause—blacks, women, gays, etc.—or simply portray themselves as the good people in life's drama waging a righteous battle against the bad people perpetuating unfairness, oppression, and injustice. I'm not about to encourage students to assume an alt-right identity. Taking on that label with all its negative loadings is akin to declaring yourself a communist during the McCarthy years. People aren't going to listen to you or join up with you; rather, they are going to attack you.

Don't make it a "guy's club."

If there has been anything the alt-right thrust has been good at doing, it's spooking young women. Professor Dalton's article includes what he calls "A Brief Manifesto" with references to Whites (capital

W) being under global threat, the repatriation of minority peoples to their native lands, and confronting and undermining Jewish power, which plays decidedly better to 30-year-old male readers of this magazine than it does to 19-year-old women enrolled at State U.

A rule of thumb: match up to where people you are trying to influence are now, start there. Be patient about getting your message out. It could be a year up the line, even more, before you get into some concerns. First things first: get your foot in the door. Whatever Martin Luther King eventually wanted to get across, whatever he ultimately wanted to achieve, he rooted himself initially in ideas, values, and tangible outcomes that resonated well with the mass of people, including woman: freedom, fairness, equality, human dignity, the promise of America, racial integration. Other movements—women, gays—have done the same kind of thing. These groups have been particularly good at tugging at our heartstrings, making us feel sad about their plight, getting us to empathize with them, feel for them, which has worked particularly well with women. The strident alt-right tugs at nobody's heartstrings.

Here's an example from my writing of the kind of thing I think we should be doing more:

Our children are hearing their race and heritage denigrated in schools, and they are being deluged with crude and vulgar images and messages from the lowest rung of black culture, and they are the victims of racial discrimination when they apply for college or a job, and even more basically, their race is steadily

disappearing from the face of the earth. I received an e-mail yesterday from a father who told me that his daughter, who had worked incredibly hard in school and had graduated at the top of her high school class, had been rejected by all the Ivy League schools she had applied to while many of her black classmates, with far lower academic achievements and test scores, had been admitted. He said his daughter “cried and cried.” After reading what this father wrote, I cried and cried. A white narrative should be broadcast that includes this girl and the countless others like her, along with the invitation to young white people to expel their fear and come together to put a stop to the injustice and cruelty against whites that is going on. Doing that isn’t about being against anyone or tearing anyone down. Rather, it is about racial self-love and self-preservation and self-determination, which are the rights of every race of people.²

Stay agnostic on religion. Keep religious ideas safely to the side. Be particularly wary of fundamentalists, who tend to be too irrational to be much good. The same holds for so-called Christian Zionists. Beyond this, there are good reasons to believe that Jesus, for example, is a Jewish construction, and serves Jewish purposes (read Nietzsche). And in truth, all Christians (and all Muslims) worship the Jewish God, albeit with a different name.

America is my focus, and whites have historically done very well for themselves in this country with Christianity being a central element of the dominant culture. It’s been since World War II that whites have gone downhill here, and that has coincided with the

successful attacks against Christianity. Don't be too quick to distance yourself from Christianity, or even go so far as to root for its demise. As I put it in an article:

Assume your adversaries know what they are doing. People who have it in for white people also tend to be the most bent on pulling the props from under the Christian religion.³

It's a good general strategy to look for ways to use everything to your advantage. With the example here, rather than staying agnostic about religion—and keeping in mind that a large percentage of the people you are trying to attract to your cause are Christians—ask yourself, how can I/we use Christianity to achieve my/our purposes? See what you come up with.

Name names. In other words, be specific and detailed in your critiques. Use facts, and check your facts. Instead of saying “the Jews in the Sociology department are complaining about us...” say “Jewish faculty like Bob Greenberg and Joel Baumgarten in Sociology are complaining...”

That may be a good idea in some instances, but be very cautious about doing it, especially if you are a 20-year-old student. Why? Because professors Greenberg and Baumgarten are very likely to retaliate against you, and they might well get students to work you over as well. After you graduate, they could text a potential employer or graduate school advisor warning him to stay clear of

this Nazi. We need to think hard about what we tell twenty- or twenty-two-year-olds to do. Because it isn't us that's going to take any grief that comes out of it, it's them.

Insults are a badge of honor. Don't take it personally when your enemies start calling you names. In fact, welcome it; it's a sign that you are succeeding.

Based on an unfortunately large amount of personal experience, the idea that insults are a badge of honor and a sign that I'm succeeding has proved to be of little—and most often, no—comfort to me at eight at night when I was alone and really hurting and anxious as hell and wishing it were eleven o'clock so I could go to bed and blot out the distress but knowing that wouldn't work because all the shit coming at me has led to a bad case of insomnia.

Learn about the real Nazis. Since it's inevitable that you will be called this, you might as well learn something. 'Nazi' is short for National Socialist, and there is nothing inherently evil about either nationalism or socialism. Adolf Hitler was arguably the first major alt-righter of the twentieth century.

The late white activist William Pierce once shared with me that he wished he were respected and accepted by prestigious mainline intellectual and cultural figures and invited to conferences and to speak at universities. My immediate reaction was to think, does he really believe he can tangle himself up with Hitler and National

Socialism as he has and expect anything other than to be trashed and ostracized? Perhaps I should have been honest with him, but at that moment he looked alone and diminished and unwell (he died soon after this), and I replied something along the lines of, “It is a shame that you aren’t honored highly and welcomed among the very best in this country. You certainly deserve that.” Which was true; Dr. Pierce was a great man. But it was unrealistic to expect or hope for what he wanted to happen the way he presented himself to the world. My advice to white advocates is to keep your distance from Adolf Hitler.

Be visible. Take some time to get organized, but once you are up and running, get the word out. Put articles or ads in the school newspaper. Post flyers around campus, or leave them loose on desks in random classrooms. Scribble messages on blackboards/Whiteboards. Go on the school radio. Talk to local media.

And be prepared to take shots for it. Take shots if you want, but don’t kid yourself, they can do major damage. I’m reminded of lyrics from an old Simon and Garfunkel song, “The Boxer”:

In the clearing stands a boxer
And a fighter by his trade
And he carries the reminders
Of ev'ry glove that laid him down

I can personally relate to those lyrics. I carry reminders.

Being visible isn't an imperative, it's an option. I decided twenty years ago to be visible—use my own name—with my expressions around race, because damned if I was going to be silent and invisible like my dear father was all of his life. But I knew I would have to pay heavy dues for going public as me, and indeed I have paid heavy dues. I'm fine with how I've come at it, I'd do it again, but it's not the only legitimate way to proceed. I can envision an honorable life staying completely invisible. The great writer Albert Camus stayed invisible in his activities for the French resistance during World War II, and he has my utmost admiration and respect. As with just about everything, the best thing to do depends on who you are and what you are trying to accomplish and your particular circumstance. There isn't *a* right way, there is *your* right way.

An effective group will get attention, and a really effective group will get a lot of attention. At some point, they—the university bureaucracy—may well concoct some reason to shut you down, even if you've broken no rules.

My bet is if you come on as an alt-right, the university will never give you the chance to organize in the first place. They will paste one of their firmly established epithets on you—racist, white supremacist, white nationalist, neo-Nazi, anti-Semite—and that will be the end of it. If somehow you get organized, it won't be *may well* concoct some reason to shut you down, it will be *will* concoct some

reason to shut you down. Back to Albert Camus, rather than forming a conventional student organization, you might be better off if you see yourself in circumstances akin to those of the French resistance during World War II. Secret meetings, pseudonyms, coded communications, the whole bit. The French underground organizations were very effective.

Note that it is “*might* be better off,” not “*will* be better off.” You’re one of a kind and your circumstance is one of a kind. What’s best for you to do should be determined by what you and your reality are like, and I don’t know what that is. I’m not telling you to form an organization or not form an organization. You have to make that call informed by a clear understanding of your purposes and capabilities and a rigorous assessment of the possible implications, both short- and long-term, of the various options you are considering.

Don’t get too stuck on ideological labels. “Right” and “left,” like “liberal” and “conservative,” are vague terms, and arguably are more harmful than helpful. In reality, they don’t allow for much subtlety of definition. Yes, you are alt-right, but don’t hang everything on this one label. Many liberals have some conservative opinions, and many alt-righters hold some traditionally liberal views.

My best advice on how to avoid getting stuck in ideological labels is not to use them. Say what you think, propose what you prefer, do what you do, but don’t tack a label on yourself or what you are

doing; or at least be very considered when doing that. A label can set your proposal up for failure (“That idea is coming from an alt-right type; can’t be any good”); set you up for attack (“Oh, he’s one of *them*—stone him!”); make you a candidate for guilt by association (“One of his crowd shot up the Holocaust Museum”—I got that one); and put off everybody who doesn’t define him- or herself by that particular label.

Don’t be “woke.” “Woke” is one of those truly stupid labels that you should avoid. It comes from Black slang (appropriately), and refers to a heightened sensitivity to racism, black interests, oppressed minorities—in other words, all those traditional leftist views. It represents political-correctness run amok.

That woke has a black origin doesn’t discredit it for me; jazz has a black origin, and I think jazz is fine. That being woke involves a heightened sensitivity to racism, black interests, and oppressed minorities doesn’t give me a problem either. Caring about the fate of white people doesn’t preclude caring about other groups as well. Being woke is associated with a radical left outlook, but whether young people adopt that perspective is their decision, not mine. While I’m opposed to “wokeness” being propagandized, as it is these days by the media and schools, I am also opposed to telling anyone it is stupid and to reject it out of hand. I want young people of all races to choose the frame of reference that guides their way forward in the world freely, autonomously, in a thoughtful, considered way, from various options, and I want to help them do

that.

Speak the truth. Sometimes these days, just saying the truth out loud is a revolutionary act, one that calls for real courage. The truth is on your side. Be strong, be confident, and speak the truth.

You can be strong and confident and speak the truth . . . and get your head shot off. My thinking, be grounded in your goals, which I presume have to do with living a happy and productive life, looking out for the people close to you who need you, and making the world a better place because you have lived for a time on this earth. If speaking the truth in a particular circumstance serves those ends, by all means, do it. If it doesn't, either keep quiet (for now at least) or express yourself anonymously.

Don't give up, don't apologize, don't surrender.

I can think of occasions in life where the best thing to do is give up (on dead-end undertakings), apologize (when you've mucked up), and surrender (sometimes that's the best way to live to fight up the line when and where the odds will be more in your favor). Almost always, the opposite of a good thing is also a good thing; it depends on the circumstance. The ideal is to have a wide range of contrasting capabilities in your personal repertoire, and at each moment to employ the one that best serves the life you've chosen to live.

You have justice and truth on your side. Your cause is just. You have

the weight of history behind you. Many great thinkers of the past and present stand at your side, ready to help. There are people around who can help with questions, problems, or advice.

Making the world good for white people won't be the outcome of having justice and truth on our side. It will be the result of what we successfully get done, here and now. We need to work on ourselves so that we become insightful, savvy, results oriented, and efficacious. We especially need to appreciate the worth of small things, because small things add up to big things. I'm writing this up, a small thing, on a Monday night when I could be watching a film on the Criterion Channel because I consider it the most productive racial action I can take right now. It's not that I feel the weight of history being in my favor, anything like that.

It's reassuring to think that there are people who stand ready to help their racial kinsmen, including when they run into problems, but I'm not going to tell young white people that they can count on support when the going gets tough. Seek it out, but don't depend on it being there. And understand that even if it is there, it may well not alleviate your difficulties. Bottom line, I see the world as a dangerous place for racially conscious and committed young white people. If that's you, the best advice I can think of to offer you is to cover your ass.

Endnotes

1. Robert S. Griffin, "Don't Give People a Club to Hit You Over the

Head With,” *The Occidental Observer*, posted March 11, 2017. 2.
Robert S. Griffin, “A Message in the In-Box,” 2010, in the writing
section of www.robertsgriffin.com.

3. Robert S. Griffin, “Why I Owe Jim Bakker an Apology and Thank
You,” *The Occidental Observer*, posted October 26, 2019.
