

Huntington and James Schlesinger as representing the “avatar of particularism” and “the last gasp of the oldest ethnic lobby in America: the WASP establishment, which is losing its prerogatives and privileges but never really had a monopoly on foreign policy wisdom in the first place.” According to Heilbrunn, these angst-ridden WASPS are now engaging in anti-Semitic, nativist gestures when they deny that the “policies espoused by a particular ethnic group may coincide with U.S. interests.”

As explained by Heilbrunn, Huntington, Schlesinger, and other critics of the “unruly workings of democracy which guarantees all citizens the right to petition their government” are on the wrong side of history—as well as AIPAC. But equally clear at least to the neocons, who commissioned and disseminated this screed about their straying brethren who complained about “excessive influence” from ethnic lobbies, is the incompatibility between respectable conservatism and opposition to the American Zionist lobby. This is the one position that neocons can take without having to worry about offending the liberal establishment. Though Heilbrunn is an enthusiastic, albeit inconsistent multiculturalist, he and the neocons stand together in their desire to turn the American military into an instrument of Israeli foreign policy. And even a lifelong neocon vassal like Samuel Huntington is denounced as a nativist bigot as soon as he expresses reservations about the shenanigans of ethnic lobbies.

One final observation about the Heilbrunn screed as it appeared in

the *New York Post*: it conveyed an unsettling sense of doctored McCarthyism. From the decorative pictures of George Kennan and Alger Hiss (set next to a photo of Jonathan Pollard) to the headline about a “whining WASP elite,” the screed was meant to show that the real enemy of the American people is not the “Jewish spy Pollard” but the bigoted weak sisters of the WASP establishment. The anti-Semitic defeatist George Kennan and the Communist spy Alger Hiss have now given way to a new WASP decadent, the moral “relativist” who opposes the American mission to spread democratic morality. This point, belabored by Heilbrunn, may be intended to appeal to the mystical chords of conservative memory and to recall Joe McCarthy’s attacks on WASP traitors “born with silver spoons in their mouths.” But Heilbrunn’s variation on a rightwing theme is clearly inferior to the original. Whatever may have been McCarthy’s failings, unlike Heilbrunn, he did do a credible job as an anti-Communist. **RRR**

## SEX, LIES, AND THE UNDERPREPARED

Michael Levin

**E**verybody has chewed over brain teasers, those apparently impossible puzzles that can be solved only by viewing some situation in a new way. You know: “The

## Racism: Minority students in short supply at high schools for the gifted.

sheriff rode into town on Monday, solved all the corruption, and three days later rode out on Monday. How did he do it?” Answer: Monday was the name of his horse, not the day of the week.

Many incidents in our increasingly strange society amount to cultural brain teasers. Cascading from the media, given predictable spins by the usual experts, they circle in well-worn grooves around the public mind when they should be the occasion for dropping old assumptions. Three such incidents occurred recently in New York City and State.

The first concerned Public School 41, facing the loss of a 4<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher because of budget shortfalls. Her dismissal would have meant larger classes for many students (a tragedy, at least according to modern pedagogic mythology), so the PTA began a campaign to fund the teacher’s salary privately. Parents were asked to contribute a few hundred dollars each, and, since the school district in question is affluent and liberal, this did not exactly seem like Mission Impossible.

But a number of parents refused—even though, in their eyes, this meant disadvantaging their own

children—since private contributions somehow cheat parents in poorer areas who cannot supplement their children’s education similarly. Naturally the *New York Times* took up the cause of these noble dissenters. One of them, Katherine Jason, was given Op-Ed space for a piece entitled “Our Unfair Share”: “public education [she wrote] has become a two-tiered system of schools that have and schools that have not.... I won’t reach into my own pocket to hire a classroom teacher, even to keep my daughter’s class from growing, even knowing that the quality of teaching and learning could be eroded.”

So, Brain Teaser #1: Should parents be allowed to contribute privately to public schools? This leads naturally to Brain Teaser #2: What should be done about egalitarian fanatics who put ideology ahead of their own children’s welfare?

The second incident involved New York City’s two high schools for the gifted, Stuyvesant and the Bronx High School of Science. (BHS alone has produced five Nobel laureates.) Admission to these schools is determined by performance on what amounts to an IQ test. Competition is fierce, almost desperate; each year tens of thousands of 8th-graders apply but only 1500, or about 5%, make the cut. And, as anyone familiar with the IQ data will expect, half the students at these schools are Asian while virtually all the rest are white; blacks and Hispanics are in short supply.

Predictably enough, this state of affairs prompts endless cries of racism. To some extent the Board of Education has heeded them: it now

admits 100 blacks and Hispanics who score “below but near the cut-off,” and it runs a tutoring program to ready “bright but underprepared” black and Puerto Rican 7th-graders for the admissions test. To fend off reverse-discrimination lawsuits, the Board generously allows white families to apply for this program as well—but it has cleverly sited the tutoring centers in Harlem, where whites are unlikely to let their children venture. At the same time, most officials are reluctant to compromise standards further, since these elite schools are one of the few remaining incentives keeping the white middle class in New York City.

This fall, though, when the admissions test harvested its usual crop of Kims, Lees and Schwartzes, a civil rights organization named ACORN went into action. It revived the cries of “elitism” that went up over Stuyvesant’s new \$140 million building; isn’t it unfair, they asked, to spend so much money on just the highly able? ACORN invaded the office of the principal of Bronx Science, demanding that admissions standards be made “fairer” and that the school itself undertake “outreach” efforts. (To his credit, the principal pointed out that outreach efforts cost money, and invited ACORN to put up that money: see Brain Teaser #1). The New York State Legislature in reaction to similar demands in the 1960s, had made it a matter of law that admission to Stuyvesant and Bronx Science be by

test only, but education officials appear to be weakening.

Hence, Brain Teaser #3: How to justify elite public schools, especially when they exclude the favored minorities who tend to be less intelligent?

The third incident, the one that received widest national attention, was a conference run by the Women’s Studies Program at the New Paltz campus of the State University of New York, entitled “Revolting Behavior: The Challenges of Women’s Sexual Freedom.” I was about to describe the goings-on at this conference as unbelievable,

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but then I remembered that feminists were in charge, and nothing is beyond them.

“Revolting Behavior” featured workshops on “How to Get What you Want in Bed,” “Challenging Compulsory Heterosexuality from the Sixties to the Nineties,” “Sex Toys for Women,” and “Safe, Sane and Consensual S/M: An Alternate Way of Loving” (at which, evidently, student participation was solicited). A work of art (?) entitled “Vulva’s School” was exhibited in conjunction with the conference, and its creator, after having smeared her face with ketchup, lectured in a red cape with horns.

You can imagine the resulting uproar. The Republican governor of New York denounced the expenditure of tax money on this lunacy, and a conservative trustee of the university called for the resignation of New Paltz’s president, Roger Bowen.

Bowen for his part immediately raised the banners of academic freedom and free speech. "If you can't have groups on the margin here," he said, "where can you have them?" Very few academics were eager to rally around his first flag: here were feminists up to their usual moronic garbage, which could have and should have gotten the lot of them fired for simple incompetence. (Bowen couldn't buy an ally: Stanley Fish, the incorrigible Grand Panjandrum of deconstructionism, scolded him for hiding behind academic freedom and free speech, on the grounds that feminist scholarship is the cutting edge.)

But Bowen did have a good First Amendment case. SUNY, as a public university, cannot make invidious distinctions between opinions by sponsoring conferences on some topics while forbidding others. After all, lesbians and sado-masochists pay taxes too. And that leads to Brain Teaser #4: How do you keep public universities from collapsing into dens of degenerate idiocy while respecting the rights of degenerate idiots?

Now for the surprise solutions. Questions 1, 3, and 4, as posed, cannot be answered. Those who see public education as a force for leveling will oppose any difference in funds for different schools, and in a democracy they can enforce their conviction by vote. This right will always clash with the right of better off parents to spend more of their own money on their own children. Likewise, some people think bright children have a right to be stimulated while others think dull child have a right to be educated up to

their more limited capacities. Meeting either consumes scarce resources, and who is to say which should come first?

Finally, it is wrong to tax citizens who despise perversion to fund perversion conferences, and wrong to tax perverts while censoring their views. There is no way to make both parties happy.

What makes these dilemmas both insoluble and inevitable is not the competing values they represent, but pitting these values against each other in the public arena. If New Paltz were not a public university, no problem would arise. Students who did not mind their tuition supporting S&M workshops would happily go there; students who objected would go somewhere else. If nobody wished to volunteer funds for such workshops, New Paltz would disappear. Nobody's rights would be trampled.

Likewise, if Stuyvesant and Bronx Science were private, parents who for whatever reason wished to support bright students could direct their money there; parents of students able enough to get in almost certainly would choose to do so. At the same time, parents who felt that dull students should have first dibs on scarce resources would be free to back their convictions with their own money. Similarly, parents favoring equality could donate to poor schools all over the planet, while parents who thought

that attitude crazy could enrich their own children's schools. Nobody would complain of funds being forcibly routed in the "wrong" direction, since no force would be involved.

Remember the original rationale of public education when it was invented in the 19th century: that young people had a *duty* to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for future citizenship. Unless forced to go to school, many of them would remain on farms, knowing little of the wider world. Whatever one thinks of this argument (advances in communication have obviously made it passé), it said nothing whatever about any right to an education. Parents who didn't

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want to send their kids to school at all did not dream of lobbying for "good" schools. All the trouble started when public educational "rights" came along—rights that, demanding resources, put groups of parents at odds. Eliminate these rights and you end the conflicts.

And what of B.T. #2, the Katherine Jasons of the world who prefer abstract equality to their own children? Ending public education might simply select them out, in favor of people more loyal to their own children. More likely, though, these altruists-with-other-people's-money would experience a sudden change of heart.

For I didn't tell you how the saga of P.S. 41 ended, did I? What happened was, Ms. Jason and friends lobbied the Board of Education so

hard that funding was eventually restored to the school, enabling it to retain the fired teacher after all. She got to have her ideological cake and eat it too, posturing moralistically but not actually having to make any sacrifices, or, as she summarized the lesson: "If parents can learn anything from P.S. 41, it is that they don't have to reach into their pockets to save their schools. Instead, they can march on City Hall to demand what all New York City school children deserve."

You can bet that, once liberals are no longer able to make other people finance their crusades, and must reach into their own pockets before helping anyone, they will somehow discover that their own children are somehow especially deserving. The real brain teaser for conservatives is how to hasten the day when liberals, like the rest of us, must face this choice. **RRR**

## MYSTERY-ON-HUDSON

Greg Pavlik

**S**trange things have been going on in the lily-white town of Irvington-on-Hudson, New York. Don Boudreaux, the new president of the Foundation for Economic Education, has made the venerable institution an advocate of unrestricted third-world immigration of all things. And this while it is being projected that by the year 2050, people of European descent (already a minority of 15 percent globally), will become a minority in the United States.

Now is the time for asking hard questions about the implications of this cataclysmic change, brought about by our own government. As Ludwig von Mises reminded us, liberty was the child of Western civilization and the chief division between the high civilizations of East and West: what separates us "is first of all the fact that the peoples of the East never conceived the idea of liberty."

In 1927, as Ralph Raico points out in the Spring 1996 issue of *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, Mises dealt with the peculiar problem of multi-racial immigration to Australia. Fears of whites being "reduced to a minority in their own country," he wrote, and thereby being subjected to persecution by new arrivals from China and Malaysia, are "justified." Mises concluded that such immigration can be tolerated provided there are massive amounts of uninhabited land, no welfare or government intervention, and separate local political authorities for separate peoples. Even from Mises's perspective, then, the proper libertarian attitude toward immigration (as versus free trade) depends in part on time, place, and existing government policy.

But at the new FEE, these are not considerations. Boudreaux began the shift in the October 1997 "Notes from FEE," a message included in each issue of the *Freeman*.

He seeks to deal with an argument put forward by Hans-Hermann Hoppe (oddly, never identified) questioning the left-libertarian line on unrestricted immigration. It is not my intention to deal with Boudreaux's arguments, or lack thereof, in any depth; interested readers may consult David Gordon's excellent commentary in the winter 1997 issue of *The Mises Review*.

## The proper libertarian attitude toward immigration depends in part on time, place, and existing government policy.

It's worth mentioning, though, that the October piece contains some odd claims: for example, that the government may do nothing to restrict "speech" of any kind on public property. To illustrate by example, when I was a student at Penn, a nudist organization demanded the right to walk around unclothed

in public on "free-speech" grounds. Is this *ipso facto* their right? Must the public really endure a man shouting obscenities at the top of his lungs in the public square? A smelly bum in the children's section of the public library, as in the famous New Jersey case? Panhandling on street corners? Or someone setting off an air horn at a civic-center symphony concert?

Worse than providing a weak argument, Boudreaux's piece was couched in ad hominem attacks on those whom he criticizes for their views on immigration. Those "who claim to be friends of liberty" include who? Murray Rothbard, Ralph Raico, Hans Hoppe, John Hospers? Or Peter Brimelow, who, I would wa-