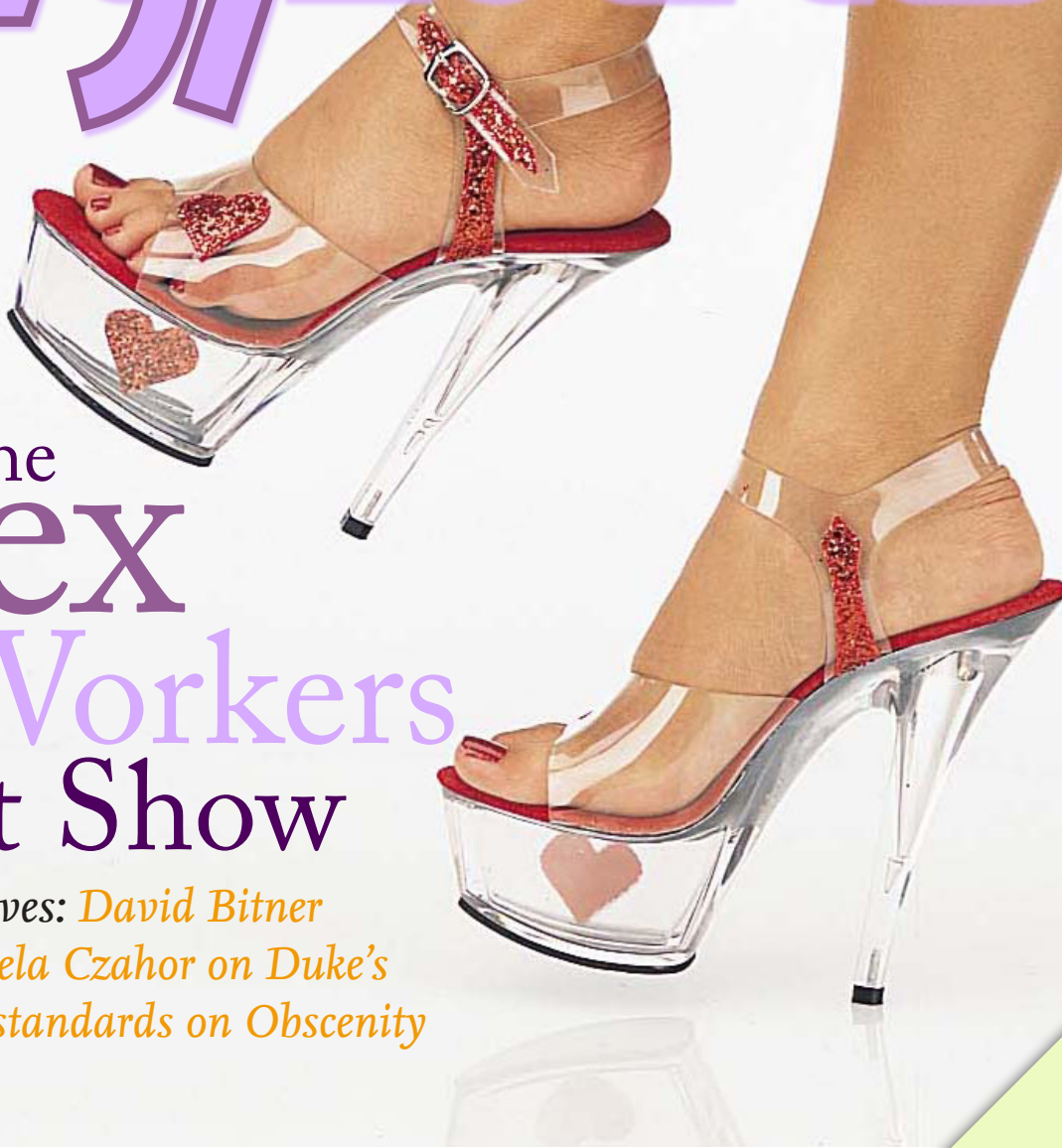


NEW  
RIGHT  
REVIEW

# Hypocrisy?



## the Sex Workers Art Show

Perspectives: *David Bitner*  
and *Angela Czahor* on Duke's  
*Double-standards on Obscenity*

ALSO:  
What Sort of Diversity  
Should Duke Pursue?  
(Page 16)

# NEW RIGHT REVIEW

New Right Review is edited and compiled by Duke students, and printed in Alpharetta, Georgia. Opinions expressed in these pages do not represent the views of New Right Review, or those of its staff members. All stories and features, including the In Review, commentaries, news analysis pieces, and cartoons, represent only the views of their authors. New Right Review is funded by the Leadership Institute and the John Spencer Bassett Memorial Fund.

**Editor-in-Chief**  
*Vikram Srinivasan*

**Managing Editor**  
*Wheeler Frost*

**Production Editor**  
*Andrew Tutt*

**Staff Writers**  
*David Bitner*  
*Joanna Bromley*  
*Natalie Figuereo*  
*Ken Larrey*  
*Rachel Stern*

The New Right Review accepts inquiries, letters and submissions. Please send them to [DukeNewRightReview@gmail.com](mailto:DukeNewRightReview@gmail.com).

Cover Photo: Model Poses in Maya Shoes

The New Right Review thanks the John Spencer Bassett Memorial Fund for its assistance in helping to fund this publication. We also thank the Leadership Institute for their consultation and advice throughout the production process.

## insidethisissue

### Cover



- 11 Perspectives: Sex Workers Art Show**  
*David Bitner and Angela Czahor reflect on how the rules of decency are breakable if the cause is political*

### Commentary

- 3 InReview: Recently @ Duke**  
*In his column, Wheeler Frost takes a look at recent events at Duke.*
- 4 Learning from LAX**  
*Ken Larrey reviews the new legal action against Duke.*
- 6 A New Elitism**  
*Wheeler Frost explains the threats to a liberal arts education.*
- 9 Against the Day**  
*Joanna Bromley explains why Duke needs to celebrate more than just one holiday.*
- 14 Book Review: Female Chauvinist Pigs**  
*Rachel Stern reviews Ariel Levy's commentary on raunch culture.*
- 16 Define: Diversity**  
*Natalie Figuereo discusses the problems in how Duke construes diversity.*
- 18 The New Face of Racism**  
*Vikram Srinivasan challenges the assumptions underlying the university's ideological commitment to racial "diversity."*

# Recently @ Duke

by Wheeler Frost

Recent indications are that President Brodhead will keep his job. This, despite his handling of the lacrosse affair, and despite (or, rather, because of) his educationally irrelevant initiatives into financial aid and Duke Engage. Sadly, throughout the tenures of Presidents Keohane and Brodhead Duke has seen a continuation of its trendy academic mission and its push for a campus culture modeled on the progressive-liberal consensus of American colleges and universities. Will the day come when Duke finally purges the ubiquitous drive to achieve everything new under the sun except better education than its peers?

The Sex Workers' Art Show came to Duke on February 3rd. The student who brought the show to Duke, junior Martha Brucato, recently defended the "artistic" elements of the show. What Ms. Brucato fails to realize is that the audience itself, of which I was a member, delighted more in the sex workers qua sex workers rather than actually sympathizing with the workers' lot in society. Ms. Brucato herself, in approbating the "art" element of morally dubious exercises, threatens to tacitly excuse perverted behavior despite the fact that she makes valid points.

A sign hangs on the Residential Quad advocating "democracy" for Burma. Recently, the junta has decided to hold a constitutional referendum in May of this year with the possibility of elections in 2010. Yet *The Economist* reports that the opposition called this a "rejection of any compromise." One sees, here, the problem of westerners attempting to hold dictators responsible by advocating sweeping, yet empty liberal changes for countries with little in the way of democratic traditions. This allows dictators the world over to introduce ostensible "reforms" that both pacify the West and allow repression at home. Perhaps this time the West, Duke included, will realize that "democracy" may not be the easy answer to all that ails the developing world.

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) has sent letters to several Duke students asking for settlement payments of around \$3000 for copyright infringements. Declining this settlement exposes the student to a federal lawsuit—with a far higher possible fine. Many have argued that the RIAA selectively targeted a relatively small number of students at prestigious universities only to make a point. Yet Duke students are, en masse, committing felonies while downloading music illegally. In spite of this fact, Duke students are angry at the university for not "defending them" and angry at the RIAA for prosecuting the very people who actually support the music industry by purchasing music and paraphernalia and attending concerts. How about just not downloading the music illegally?

"Darwin day '08 is here," proclaimed a recent sign. This is, of course, a perfect time for the science departments of Duke, to make presentations on worthwhile academic subjects. It is as good a time as any to exhibit the great discoveries of science. Yet

I found the gist of this sign worrisome. It extolled the benefits of scientific knowledge for the advancement of humanity—in the name of Darwin, no less, a man who seriously doubted the moral significance of his scientific findings. Paeans to long-dead historical figures in the name of contemporary ambitions and yearnings are always inappropriate because false appeals to authority bolster arguments speciously. But in science the danger is increased. For it is not yet clear whether the discoveries of science will lead to a truly better world or a destruction of humanity as we have known it.

The "Smart House", a project in environmental sustainability, has opened on campus to general acclaim and enthusiasm. Unsurprising. The project designers wanted to build a house that "will...become a link in the ecological web that emanates from the place it resides" as opposed to the buildings "simply built to code." It is claimed that properly designed buildings have a far better impact on the environment and also allow people to live with better ventilation and more natural light so as to increase productivity. Undoubtedly. Yet the "Smart House" itself was built to its own code, the "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" rating system. Small wonder, then, that the building is horrendously ugly. It is a good thing that the architect who built Duke's West Campus did not have an environment to be saved and productivity to be increased.

The library recently exhibited the literature of women coming to terms with their sexuality. A book entitled "c\*\*\*\*" was prominently displayed outside of the Rare Book Room for all to see. The Women's Studies department held a discussion of "raunch," the new trend for women to objectify men and take delight in this. The "Sex Workers' Art Show" came to Duke. One woman (billed as having the "best body in burlesque") retrieved dollar bills from her rectum on the stage in Reynolds. "Healthy Devils" has been handing out condoms, as usual. Yet they also recently sponsored a sex toy program for people to learn how to properly employ "vibrators" and "dildos." There is no shame at the Utopia. Why is this bad? Such a focus on sex tacitly elevates the orgasm over the personal relationship.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day came and went. As every year, the man is praised only to affirm the same consensus the ivory tower has enforced for four decades now. I offer an example: a pamphlet proclaimed, in light of the festivities, "one person one vote." What this means I do not know. Not only is it evident that American citizens were never intended to have equal votes (citizens of Delaware have more say than citizens of California in electing US senators) but it is also clear that enfranchising eighteen year olds has markedly not improved the quality of government since 1971. Yet it is indicative of the general aura of breathless extrapolations of Dr. King's real accomplishments: more equality, more equality, more equality, more equality, more equality, and more and more...—even at the expense of Constitutional principles.

⌘



# *Still* Learning From LAX

*What do these lawsuits mean  
for Duke students?*

By Ken Larrey

On November 2nd, 2007 in Love Auditorium, *Until Proven Innocent* author Stuart Taylor spoke of Duke faculty and administrators and of the Duke Lacrosse Affair: “What these people did here is even darker than what we portrayed in this book,” he said. “As it unravels, I believe it will just get uglier and uglier and uglier.”

You might not have known this because *The Chronicle* decided not to cover Taylor’s speech. They instead published an article essentially asserting that the lacrosse affair was over, followed by an editorial the next day asserting that Brodhead “should and must stay.”

Two devastating civil lawsuits have since been filed against Brodhead and numerous other Duke administrators. The facts revealed and alleged are numerous, but when boiled down, the facts that matter most are these:

Highly regarded D.C. attorney Charles Cooper, whose firm boasts “victories in every case that has gone to trial,” has just put that record on the line in making allegations against Duke University and several administrators nearly identical to those made in the lawsuit previously filed by local attorney Bob Ekstrand. The facts alleged, if proved - and there is already substantial proof on the public record - would implicate Brodhead and other top Duke administrators in conduct so shameful it would prove them unfit for any position of responsibility at any respectable university.

The nature of the allegations is a complicated matter, but the most alarming of them pertain to the alleged intimate involvement of Duke administrators and officials in manufacturing a complete hoax. Allegations include the suppression and discrediting of exculpatory evidence, the manufacturing of evidence, and countless violations of federal law in efforts to help Durham investigators frame three innocent Duke students. Each lawyer obtained most of the relevant and highly important facts through their own, separate investigations, which provides troubling corroboration.

There are a number of factors that would seem to stand in the way of settlement, most notably, the severity of the allegations against Duke. If Duke were to settle, it would require an astronomical figure, undoubtedly in the eight figure range or greater. A settlement of that size would not remain confidential for long and would essentially be an admission of guilt, defeating the purpose of settlement. The shocking amount of the previous settlement between Duke and the Evans, Finnerty and Seligmann families has already leaked substantially. One has to wonder exactly what Duke could have done to amass that much liability.

Similarly, if the players were to settle before discovery or trial, they would surely walk off with an unspeakable amount of Duke’s money before the truth of their allegations is ever established. It could be awfully hard for them to save face having stated so assertively that this case is about “answers,” “healing,” “accountability,” “responsibility,” and “change.” Worst of all for the players, that would allow Duke administrators to keep perpetuating

## learningfromLAX

the lies and outrageous exaggerations about the players' characters that they have all along. Sources tell me that Vice President of Student Affairs Larry Moneta, as recently as the last few months, is still up to his old tricks spreading rumors of a "secret file" of unspeakable horrors committed by the lacrosse team that has yet to be revealed. Asked about the issue and about spreading the rumor, Moneta declined to comment, as did Director of Judicial Affairs Stephen Bryan.

It is worth remembering that of the people directly involved in the lacrosse affair, the lacrosse players and their coach, Mike Pressler, are just about the only people who have told the truth

charges, it would not only be difficult to prove but is politically unlikely. There seems to be a moratorium on criminal justice in Durham. After all, Nifong has only spent one day in jail so far. And to the best of my knowledge, no one in the University of Pennsylvania's administration spent any time in jail for the "water buffalo" framing. As Kristin Butler thoroughly investigated and reported in December, the federal investigation was rather peculiarly and almost unjustifiably blocked last fall by local authorities. Durham's Whichard Committee to investigate the lacrosse frame was similarly thwarted. Even Duke's own Judicial Affairs Review Committee was recently axed.

“ With the blocking of the federal investigations and every other potential law enforcement remedy to establish the full truth, the burden of justice has been placed squarely on the shoulders of the lacrosse families, and their lawsuits represent the last line of defense.”

and nothing but the truth from the very beginning. That does not bode well for Larry Moneta, his rumors of "secret files," his "water buffalo" history (Google that), or his ridiculous defenses of the February 3rd Sex Workers Art Show held on campus. With regard to the latter, gender studies, queer theory and academic doublespeak don't exactly fly in a courtroom, and the gender-and-race-based "power dynamics" involved probably will not constitute meaningful distinctions to justify Duke's double standards in dealing with the lacrosse players' stripper party.

Nor does it bode well for the rest of the Duke administration that truth has been almost exclusively on the side of the lacrosse players to date. Things certainly do not look good for President Brodhead, who has something of his own history of blindly throwing people under the bus from his tenure at Yale (Google James Van de Velde). The Cooper Lawsuit takes dead aim at Brodhead, and it seems clearer than ever that unless he can come up with some extraordinary explanations (or incriminating photos of several trustees), his tenure as president is in real jeopardy, renewed contract or not.

After all, President Brodhead and Duke administrators have consistently claimed that they were "concerned that if Duke spoke out in an overly aggressive fashion, it would be perceived that a well-connected institution was improperly attempting to influence the judicial process." As alleged, it seems their solution, therefore, was to get as involved as possible in attempts to improperly influence the judicial system to incarcerate three innocent Duke students, thereby dispelling any doubt that Duke University has not only the willingness but the capability to do so in extraordinarily overt fashion.

So might any administrators actually be prosecuted criminally? Not exactly. Though some legal sources suggest that these allegations, if proved, could theoretically constitute criminal

One has to wonder if a well-connected institution is improperly attempting to block judicial processes. If my analysis of the likelihood of trial is on target, perhaps we can all look forward to Brodhead and Duke "proving their innocence at trial" in civil court.

If Duke can get away with what is alleged, then anyone can. And if Duke were to get away with this now, who knows how many more would suffer the same fate as the lacrosse players? What will happen the next time shameless administrators sacrifice students for their own personal gain or job security? With the blocking of the federal investigations and every other potential law enforcement remedy to establish the full truth, the burden of justice has been placed squarely on the shoulders of the lacrosse families, and their lawsuits represent the last line of defense.

For that matter, how much longer will lynch mob professors advance their careers at the expense of their own students, their institution and all who support it, and worst of all, the truth? We should all look forward to the ugliness behind some of this behavior being exposed and all parties either held to account or vindicated.

To those who assume the Duke Lacrosse affair was a complete anomaly and nothing similar will ever happen again, that everyone here and elsewhere has learned their lessons, you are wrong. This wasn't the first time. Not for a prestigious university, not for Larry Moneta, and as it would seem in the case of James Van de Velde, not even for President Brodhead.

Duke Students for an Ethical Duke has been condensing the parts of these lawsuits that pertain to Duke to help simplify the substance of these allegations. Visit [ethicalduke.blogspot.com](http://ethicalduke.blogspot.com) to learn more. ☘

# A New Elitism

*An Antidote to Duke's Campus Culture*

By Wheeler Frost

Over five decades ago William F. Buckley published *God and Man at Yale*, a book chronicling the abyss into which his alma mater was sinking. He lambasted Yale's institutional indifference to its erstwhile mission of liberal and Christian education. Academic freedom was, in Buckley's mind, an excuse for nihilism; the doctrine merely allowed faculty members to denigrate the American system of democratic free-enterprise and to sheath Christian teaching in a patina of skepticism.

Principally, I think, Buckley wanted to show that the regnant liberal ethos of non-belief in anything important was destroying the traditions of Yale. For as a matter of fact, a new tradition was emerging, one that would ultimately tell undergraduates that there is, in fact, nothing worth believing in, no tradition worth subscribing to, and nothing academic truly worth achieving.

In an introductory piece to the 50th anniversary edition of that same book, Austin Bramwell argued that the northeastern "WASP" elite capitulated in this increasing liberalization (by which I mean anti-tradition, pro-"academic freedom", lukewarm acceptance of communist economics, etc.) of Yale—this process not only signified the growing irrelevance of the WASP elite in academic matters but also the continuing elimination of an American upper class prepared to fervently defend what it had long believed in.

I believe that Duke itself is suffering from the same suffocating ethos that Buckley identified all those years ago; the cure is nothing short of a commitment to a new academic elitism. Allow me to explain.

In my article last issue, "Under the Microscope: Examining Campus Culture," I discussed the inability of the administration both to eschew platitudes and to actually confront the mission of the university: to engage students in serious learning. As it stands, the administration instead created a meaningless document, altered some rules a bit, gave bikes to the students and continued doing their jobs.

In their defense, the Campus Culture Initiative was (and is) largely a publicity measure; it cannot be counted on to even attempt to effect serious change. But that does not alleviate the broader culpability; simply put, the Duke administration has not seriously attempted, as far as I can tell, to try to establish an undergraduate education that far supersedes the attempts of any peer American universities.

There is a consensus among American universities. Core courses, if any, are few in number. Subjects are not to be mastered, but to be specialized in. Culturally, universities support a broadly progressive and liberal agenda through support for the orthodoxies of total free speech (what amounts to a failure to make a conceptual distinction between liberty and license), "academic freedom", experiential and service learning, and sexual indulgence—in sum, the much-approated process of self-discovery. Absent is the focus on attempting to acquire an understanding of the Western cultural inheritance or on what it means to live in a tradition—for it is only within a tradition in which true freedom can be exercised since mere self-discovery is mere solipsism. Totally absent are any attempts to make learning more difficult, especially in the humanities. Absent are any administration-led initiatives to make Duke a real community of scholars.

The campus culture broadly reflects this ethos.

It is alleged, not without merit, that Duke students are preoccupied with "getting the grade" more so than they are concerned with actual learning beyond course requirements. Duke students endure bad weather for basketball tickets; again, it would not be untrue to say that Duke students are in large part more animated by the prospect of watching fellow teenagers exert themselves on the hardwood than they are by learning. Hook-up culture dominates; who can doubt it? Students are encouraged to design their own curricula so that "their needs" can be more adequately met. In politics, students are told to be activists—what often amounts to becoming unthinking skills for increasingly irrelevant ideologies. High art—classical music, the old masters, ancient literature—is a hobby rather than something in which all are expected to participate. People just do what they want.

## *anewelitism*

The campus culture suffers from a shortage of what I shall call daring judgment. It is my belief, and I expect hardly anyone to agree, that the university must attempt to discover a basis for casting judgment. Rock and roll music; egalitarian politics; empty and ineffectual curricula—all of these are not judged in the eyes of the university. Duke's President Brodhead only makes moral stands inasmuch as he perceives a possible threat to the status quo. For their part, students are unable to cast judgment upon their selves and to criticize each other's mores. Do not expect a student to fight against the depredations of the sexual revolution; if anything, the student will encourage this. Do not expect students to stop listening to rock and roll (I myself have not). Do not expect students to proclaim openly a love for serious and intense learning; some believe this, but they are muted.

People do what they do, and they do not criticize; this is a paralyzing combination. Instead of confronting this reality people throughout academia laud it. It all amounts to a

question their core assumptions; research in these fields consists of "feminist" readings of books, conceptual forays into disproved Marxist ideology and other pursuits immune to dispute or being disproved. In critical (literary) theory the leaders in the field have even denied the existence of truth.

Universities always have traditions. But today it is not a tradition of truth, but one of nihilistic egalitarianism.

**W**here does this egalitarian ethos come from? I think that the answer lies in the overall view American society holds of what the college campus is for. Everyone assumes that it is good to go to college, that college is fun, and that on top of it all college is a step to a lucrative career. Basically, college is viewed as a fun and exciting means to a future career, which, it is only fair, ought to be opened up to all capable students—regardless of the capability to pay.

Duke is stereotypically (and quite truthfully) viewed as a

“ We have come to a time where college is no longer viewed as an end in itself—i.e. as a place for a worthwhile educational experience wholly removed from life after college—but as a means to a future career. ”

pathetically egalitarian campus culture. John Kekes believes that egalitarianism is essentially a false view in the equal moral worth of all persons. His basic argument, if I am not mistaken, is that the sheer complexity and dynamic nature of achievement, moral or otherwise, is such that any egalitarian philosophy ignores to some extent the inherent differences between people. For his part, the modern youth, engrossed as he is with egalitarianism, is not inclined to argue or assert the superiority of some over others. This youth does not dare peer into complexity in order to find truth; no, with "equality" he can paint the rainbow whatever color he wants.

The university elites—the administration and faculty and even donors—do not denigrate this ascendant ethos but applaud it. They cheer on "transgressiveness" and other bogus virtues even with smugness. Their college experiences centered on revolution—so who's going to blame a few narcissistic youths for smoking some weed? It's not like they haven't done it! These elites' virtues are "free speech or free inquiry"—whatever you want to research, whatever you want to say, there are no bounds.

Now we see the basis for believing that the overwrought "academic freedom" mantra is an excuse of the degradation of the university. Academic freedom refrains from judgment; as a result it implicitly denies tradition in favor of an "anything goes" approach to research. Marxist studies, feminist studies, and even hip-hop studies—each exemplifies what happens when the unrealistic ideal of academic freedom, a marketplace of ideas where no idea is inherently greater than another, degenerates into a license for trendy and "relevant" disciplines. These fields are not prepared to

playground for the rich. College is indeed expensive. Herein lies the guilt: the wealthy students are able to use college as a means to a future lucrative career without too much financial burden. Yet poorer students are, without aid, unable to. People want to extend the university to less wealthy students on the grounds that it is only fair that poor students receive the same means to become productive and successful citizens.

I do not quarrel with that feeling; it is undoubtedly the case, in my mind, that capable students ought to be provided an opportunity to study at the top-tier universities. People hesitate, with very good reason, to say that rich students are more deserving of an education. I am inclined to agree. Yet it is an egalitarian feeling that prescribes this remedy for disadvantaged students.

There is a very big danger in this feeling—a danger that I think we have found whether or not we care to recognize it. The danger is this: when college is viewed as an opportunity that everyone should be able to partake of, people are far less prepared to say that the university's greatest and most redeeming qualities do not, in fact, lie in its ability to grant careers to all students. We have come to a time where college is no longer viewed as an end in itself—i.e. as a place for a worthwhile educational experience wholly removed from life after college—but as a means to a future career. This attitude, caused as it is by the not inappropriate egalitarian desire to offer opportunity to all capable students, nonetheless is eating the university from the inside out.

## anewelitism

**B**asically, the emphasis on “opportunity” and righting the world’s wrongs through the university implicitly supports a liberal philosophy while at the same time destroying the very outlets that could constructively criticize that worldview. Our reasoning is conducted wholly in terms of “equality”; this is the spirit that has been driving the campus culture, the academic freedom fraud, and the increase of “opportunity.” Our very conception of what the university does is through the lens of equality. All of the major political initiatives on college campuses are driven, in small or large part, by the liberal obsession with equality.

This obsession has destroyed any notion that a superior education is the greatest boon to individuals. Gone is any attempt to seriously grapple with our intellectual inheritance and discuss its positive and negative qualities. Gone is the public “disputation” whereby academics and students alike could argue over important points. Erased are the tinctures of philosophical seriousness which for so long held the university as the greatest bastion of serious and important thought.

Rather, there exists a mere immersion into what George Kennan called “a semi-religious cult [made] out of emotional-political currents of the moment...particularly [bad] when . . . these currents are ones exclusively negative in nature, designed only to appeal to men’s capacity for hatred and fear, never to their capacity for forgiveness and charity and understanding.”

Of course, students on financial aid at Duke recognize that education is important (otherwise they would not be at Duke), and their families largely do as well. But the administration should not be sending the message that the reason for valuing education is so that they can get an opportunity for a lucrative career or study disciplines unconcerned with truth, rather than for pursuing education as its own eminently worthwhile endeavor.

In fact, it used to be that liberals in the late 19th and early 20th century publicly expressed desires to bring the value of education for its own sake—rather than merely as a means to wealth—to the masses of people living in the lower segments of society. Furthermore, throughout history aristocrats and wealthy people have patronized those with lesser means who have shown an aptitude for the liberal arts. Would that we return to this emphasis in lieu of the education-as-means consensus, which prevails nowadays.

For it is in fact the case that education pursued for its own sake is a far greater boon to upwardly mobile individuals. A proper education is important for imparting to the next generation a more resilient love of learning. Learning pursued only for the sake of a job—as is the case in Duke’s engineering school, the epitome of education-as-means—leaves people with nothing else than their training. They are not able to communicate effectively with their children except through the channels of popular culture or other academically irrelevant topics. In my case, I know that were it not for my parents’ love of classic books like *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* I would have valued education far less and been less able to see the distinct advantages to be had from acquiring a truly liberal education.

**I**n America, the great colleges and seminaries, Yale, Harvard, Princeton, etc. created centers of learning for aspiring seminarians and theologians to achieve academically and spread the Word thoughtfully and intellectually. Perhaps it was inevitable that these academic institutions were to become to some extent liberal; but that would not be so bad provided that the academy recognizes that its own importance lies in defending a tradition of excellence in education, rather than defending the passing and manufactured traditions of its own—in themselves only of parochial interest. Yet today it is a fact that the academy defends “diversity” and “service” learning and “inter-disciplinary” study and sundry progressive ideologies.

Socrates lived his life disputing and arguing in search of truth. Yet he avowed time and again that he had never found it. He felt the search so important, in spite of its utter fruitlessness, that he called himself a gadfly who would prod the Athenian horse

out of its moral stupor even on pain of death. He staked his life on searching for a truth that he was equally convinced was nearly impossible to apprehend.

The fads will pass with time. Will we, in the future, have more fads, more pretensions to the truth? Or will we return to the elitism of the liberal arts—an elitism of truth, which stresses that anyone of superior intelligence is ready to grapple with the deepest questions and where, as Socrates understood it, even failure is better than not trying? ☘



*The University of Southern California openly states its goals in a five word creed instilled in every student. A Trojan is Faithful, Scholarly, Skillful, Courageous, and Ambitious. Which of these qualities does Duke value? (Photos: USC)*

# Against <sup>the</sup> Day

*MLK Day is just one part of Civics Education*



by Joanna Bromley

This past Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Duke University took a look into Dr. King's life and the justice he so fervently promoted. His letter from a Birmingham Jail and "I Have a Dream" speech reveal an intimate knowledge of the United States' founding and the Constitution. America observes MLK Day to celebrate the life of a man whose struggle represented the fulfillment of the promises of America's Founding Fathers.

In order to appreciate Dr. King's sacrifice, we must understand what he sacrificed for and how he understood those sacrifices in light of American history. Introducing official Presidents' Day and Veterans Day holidays off from school would be a symbolic step to help promote critical civics knowledge, which is declining among college youth.

Indeed, Duke promotes MLK Day, yet does not celebrate the equally important national holidays of Veterans Day and President's Day. Celebrating MLK Day alongside these two other holidays can make our remembrance of King all the more

was among those at the bottom of the list because the disparity between freshman and senior test scores showed a decline in overall civics knowledge.

What is even more surprising is that less prestigious schools, such as Concordia University in Nebraska and Eastern Connecticut State University, performed better than the most selective colleges, including Duke. Here's the frightening part: at the bottom of the list of 50 schools are Cornell, Yale, Princeton, and yes, Duke. The rankings on the chart provided by the ISI indicate the overall net gain or loss of civics knowledge between freshman and senior year. These aforementioned schools are at the bottom because there was an overall net loss of civics knowledge between freshman and senior year. In other words, when Duke parents fork out \$50,000 per year to attend Duke, they can rest assured that their kids will graduate with no more understanding of the privilege of being an American than if they had received a scholarship to attend a state school.

Why is this study significant? After all, isn't America lagging behind other countries in other subjects, such as math and science?

“An equal emphasis on Veterans and Presidents' Day would set the stage for a more multi-faceted approach toward American civics knowledge, and may evoke a more passionate interest among the Duke student body in the life and successes of Dr. King.”

meaningful by fostering greater civic pride and knowledge of America's founding principles.

A recent study by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) on civics knowledge among college students may provide a reason for college students' astounding lack of interest in national and world affairs and illustrate the paradox of promoting MLK Day without educating students on Dr. King's significance in American history. In 2003, ISI, in conjunction with the University of Connecticut's department of Public Policy, announced a new survey to determine whether colleges and universities are imparting basic knowledge about American civics to their students. Each subsequent year, ISI has released a report on the status of degree-seeking students. Its findings, to put it mildly, have been appalling.

According to the 2007-8 report, Duke performed among the worst of all the schools surveyed, along with other elite institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, Yale, Princeton, and Cornell. This year, as well as past years, about 14,000 randomly selected college freshman and seniors received an F, or 52.4%, on a civics test administered by the ISI. Duke fared somewhat better, with a "D" overall. However, the average freshman score, 65.66%, was higher than the average senior score of 63.41%. Duke

Although this is true, our math and science education need not come at the expense of a solid foundation in American civics. If a student leaves college without an adequate understanding of his rights as a citizen as well as an appreciation for the sacrifices borne by our predecessors, he or she will be less invested in American democracy as a whole. This is not a debate about whether or not Duke students are learning enough. It is a debate on the importance of basic civics knowledge.

The ISI study reveals a growing disinterest with America's democratic system and its key founding documents. The greatest defense against government corruption is an understanding of America's roots and its Constitution. American citizens will not be able to identify the proper role and limits of government if they have no conception of government's proper role in protecting freedom.

Traditionally, one of the goals of education is to create better, more informed citizens. Every student leaves Duke with a concentrated knowledge in a particular subject matter, yet, according to the ISI study, our democracy rests on the participation of an engaged and interested public. Anything less threatens the functioning of our society and system of government.

*against the day*

If this occurs, the divide between politicians and non-involved citizens will continue to widen. Most citizens don't bother to participate in policy debate, let alone vote in elections, because they feel that the policies do not affect them and that their vote does not count. In political science classes, most college students learn that their vote realistically will not sway the direction of an election. This attitude permeates both college campuses and American society, evidenced by shockingly low voter turnouts. Yet citizens still complain about government corruption and wasted tax dollars. This trend is alarming simply because our Founding Fathers, as both early "politicians" and concerned citizens, dedicated themselves to the welfare of early America. Obviously it is unrealistic to expect a complete subordination of private interests to America's interests. However, Americans are all invested in the future of the United States, whether they think so or not. Each person who does not plan to enter the "public sector" per se will still encounter American politics and policy, regardless of his or her field of choice. Future doctors will have to face health care controversy, while future investment bankers will confront recessions and inflation, both of which carry huge implications for Congressional action (or inaction). It is crucial that these future leaders understand what role the Constitution outlines for America government, or else special interest groups can manipulate politicians to promote their agendas, without repercussions from properly informed citizens. Duke certainly imparts extensive knowledge on any of these topics, but given that American citizens live in America, perhaps these issues are best appreciated through the lens of civics.

Although MLK Day may seem to be completely irrelevant to this study, one of the ISI's additional alarming findings explains why it is not: although college students as a whole fared poorly, on average, minority seniors fared significantly worse on the exam,

and had no overall gain in civics knowledge from freshman to senior year. In fact, white students gained six times as many civics-knowledge points as their minority counterparts. Given the terrible performance of college students as a whole, this statistic is certainly a wake-up call. An integrated, plural society demands civics awareness among all segments of the population, not just select groups.

MLK Day is one of many culminations in America's struggle to become a more equitable democracy. Thus, the civil rights movement is best understood through a birds' eye view of American history. An equal emphasis on Veterans and Presidents' Day would set the stage for a more multi-faceted approach toward American civics knowledge, and may evoke a more passionate interest among the Duke student body in the life and successes of Dr. King. By retaining the current programming and implementing a similar emphasis on Veterans and President's Day, Duke students may gain a better understanding of Dr. King's fortitude and the importance of his movement in terms of the fulfillment of our Constitution.

When students think of America's values of liberty and equality for all men, Dr. King should certainly come to mind. But they must not forget George Washington, James Madison, and Benjamin Franklin either, the great men who shaped our founding documents. This would ensure that students have an equal appreciation of America's founding and its civil rights movement, with the understanding that the latter fulfills the former and does not exist in a vacuum. With an adequate understanding of what Dr. King was fighting for, namely upholding the ideals set forth in our founding documents, students will understand that Martin Luther King, Jr. was not simply a revolutionary or prophetic leader, but the quintessential American. ❧



While Dr. King worked to bring real equality throughout American society, the United States grappled with the stakes of the Cold War, the conflict in Vietnam, and steps toward establishing the Great Society. Above: President Lyndon Johnson meeting with Dr. King in the oval office (Photo: Library of Congress)

# Hypocrisy?



## the Sex Workers Art Show

### *Did it Violate University Policy?*

*By David Bitner*

I never had blind trust in the competence of the Duke University administration. Rather, the handling of the lacrosse case made it unequivocally clear that during my four years here I would be forced to bear witness to an administration that handles controversy through utilitarian damage control along rather than principle and argumentation based on truth claims. This was confirmed for me when I submitted a complaint to Judicial Affairs that the Sex Workers Art Show (SWAS) violated standing University policy.

The stock e-mail response reveals an administration that defends its policies in highly problematic ways. I should now like to take the opportunity to address a few of the justifications of bringing the SWAS made in the e-mail.

Claim 1: The SWAS “does not constitute the hiring of a ‘stripper’ as intended under the policy banning the invitation or hire of strippers by students either individually or as part of a group”

It is useless to consider this issue without first defining the relevant terms. In this case, the argument hinges on what “stripper” means. A stripper is one who strips. There is also the added implication in this word that stripping is a profession. Consider the men and women who performed in SWAS: they included present and former strippers and prostitutes. Moreover, according to eyewitnesses, six out of eight segments involved the removal of clothing. If strippers constituted the show, and as a central element in their segments proceeded to strip, we must conclude that what we have in the case of SWAS are strippers (those who strip in a professional capacity) coming to campus having been invited by a student group.

But there is a fairly natural argument to be made against this understanding: the strippers were not functioning in their normal capacity (i.e. at a strip club or for a private party with the purpose of sexual enjoyment), and on these grounds, it may be argued that we should not apply the current policy to SWAS. This, I assume,

## judicialaffairsandpolicy

is what Judicial Affairs meant when they said that my proposed usage is not the intended. The problem, however, lies in the nature of the statute.

Observe that the judicial code nowhere discriminates between improper and proper hire of strippers; moreover, it gives us no reason to think that it is referring to strippers in any way other than the normal English meaning as defined above. Consequently, the rule demands that we enforce it as written—which clearly identifies the performers at SWAS as strippers and consequently prohibits them from performing for any student individually or as part of a group.

Claim 2: The content of the SWAS can be justified on the

on campus. The only way such a claim could be justified is if we used the word “free” in its distinctively modern sense. The idea that freedom is unqualified is a conception unique to our current age. Previously, no one ever spoke of freedom or of liberty without reference to a complementary idea of responsibility, which was in turn grounded in cultural, philosophical, or religious criteria.

Indeed, a critical distinction has traditionally been made between liberty, freedom with responsibility, on the one hand and license on the other. We, today, have allowed license to make a pretense of liberty, and in no matter is this true as much as it is in the free speech debate. To take the current predicament: if free means nothing other than that there is no restriction, then surely,

“ I submit that it is rather difficult if not impossible to render an idea of education that has more substance than the mere collection of facts and the practice of inferential and deductive reasoning. Thus, to deny the role of a University in making moral claims necessarily prohibits the University from having a reason for its own existence. ”

grounds that “it was clearly advertised as a ‘performance’ and in the context of a cultural event.”

The more substantial claim is that SWAS may be justified because it is a cultural event. I concede that SWAS is an expression of a certain culture. But with only a little thought, we can see that expressing culture cannot justify the event per se.

There are innumerable examples of cultural expressions that are entirely inappropriate to appear at a University, let alone receive University sanction and considerable funding. For example, many Muslim countries practice female genital mutilation as a means to control female sexuality; it is a cultural practice. Would it be appropriate to hold a live mutilation of an infant girl simply because it is a cultural practice? How about stoning a rape victim? Infanticide has been an important part of many cultures: should we out of historical interest in that culture, host advocates of the practice or worse still, observe an infant being bashed against the stage at Page Auditorium. Surely, SWAS is in no way as repugnant as any of these practices (indeed, it inhabits an entirely different legal status as well) but the essential point is that status as a cultural event is not a sufficient justification.

Claim 3: Support of the SWAS is a consequence of a commitment to a “free and open exchange of ideas”.

One could assume that the SWAS falls under the purview of free speech and therefore the University must permit SWAS to appear

SWAS should be protected (or rather permitted).

However, if there is such a thing as immoral or obscene or lewd speech and speech of this sort is irresponsible on those selfsame moral grounds, then SWAS most certainly should not only be prohibited from appearing on campus but the university should also take steps to inculcate in students a disdain for this licentiousness. One might object that the University has no business making moral distinctions and that is the crux of the problem because if the University has no business making moral distinctions whatsoever, then it must be prohibited from making any normative or qualitative claims. I submit that it is rather difficult if not impossible to render an idea of education that has more substance than the mere collection of facts and the practice of inferential and deductive reasoning. Thus, to deny the role of a University in making moral claims necessarily prohibits the University from having a reason for its own existence.

Some might say that the University should not be in the business of prioritizing some moral theories over others, and instead, ought to expose students to implications of different theories in practice so they can make their own judgments.

Yet if everything can be somehow ethically justified to someone, then nothing on the face of it is immoral and everything should be shown without restriction. Is there any doubt we have reached this juncture? ☞



Would Washington Duke have approved of the Sex Worker's Art Show?

# Do As We Say, **Not** As We Do

## *Sex Workers Grace the Stage at Duke*

By Angela Czahor

In the wake of the lacrosse rape hoax, the Duke community discovered many things about the Duke administration. First, students learned that even using one's own money to legally hire strippers to perform at one's own off-campus residence was still considered "illegal" in the minds of many. (Phrases like "bad enough" and "wholly unacceptable" come to mind here.) Second, administrators learned that a rule—"strippers may not be invited or paid to perform at events sponsored by individual students, residential living groups, or cohesive units" (now updated to "individual students or groups")—had been inadvertently removed from Duke's Bulletin of Information & Regulations, only to be hastily replaced in the 2006-2007 issue.

But this month, students are learning that strippers are actually completely acceptable, as long as an event is cloaked in politically correct terms such as "sex workers" and "educational." On February 3rd, the "Sex Workers' Art Show Tour" came to perform on Duke's West Campus, billed as "offering scathing and insightful commentary on notions of class, race, gender, labor, and sexuality!"

By now, many have heard of the lewd actions that occurred in Reynold's Theater that night. However, as an audience member, I must admit that some performances did offer some "commentary" on these issues. For example, Kirk Read, a male prostitute and former sex phone operator, did temporarily discuss issues of masculinity—but then went into vulgar detail about douching his rectum, how a sex phone customer gratified himself to a description of gonorrhea, and which body parts have been inside his own anus. Likewise, "Mistress" Keva I. Lee, an Asian dominatrix, briefly expressed how she found humor in her customers' Asian fetishes, and how she used these stereotypes for her own entertainment during her work—but then proceeded to adorn herself with a strap-on dildo and pretend to masturbate it as if she were a man. I can only guess that these latter parts of the performances had less to do with "commentary" and more to do with an attempt to "*epater la bourgeoisie*." Other performances seemed only to bash America and religion—by insulting President Bush, mocking patriotic songs, and ridiculing Saint Brigid, for example—while offering absolutely no logical reasoning for their dislike of these things. The audience eagerly cheered for these unfounded opinions.

On Fox News' February 8th showing of "The O'Reilly Factor" with Laura Ingraham, the Sex Worker's Art Show's founder Annie Oakley claimed the show helps people "engage politically and socially." Unfortunately, the audience was composed of people who without hesitation yelled in unison, "I take it up the butt!",

and recklessly applauded any negative portrayal of America without any further explanation. It is unclear how the show teaches viewers how to intellectually participate in politics any deeper than emphatically agreeing with the sentiment "F\*\*\* Bush."

Although people could argue forever about the show's educational value, and whether or not it qualifies as obscenity (Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's "I know it when I see it" argument applies here), there is no room to equivocate about the show's violation of the "no strippers" rule. The show was sponsored by the University and Cultural Fund, Campus Council, Healthy Devils, the Duke Women's Center, the Women's Studies Department, Baldwin Scholars, the Program for the Study of Sexualities, Sexual Assault Support Services, Students for Choice, and the Duke Student Health Center—many of which are funded by student's own tuition fees, and the rest of which certainly can be described as the "groups" that are forbidden to invite or pay strippers to perform at Duke. The student who worked to bring the show to Duke, Martha Brucato, claimed the rule doesn't apply to this performance, "because they're not being hired as strippers, they're being hired as artists"—yet six of the eight "artists" removed their clothing. (Of course, we must remember that this was not just "a group of strippers"; there were prostitutes, too!) When this ratio was pointed out to Brucato, she replied that noting that the strippers stripped is just "defining them based on their profession," which is something we should not do. Yet every single performer (with the exception of Krylon Superstar, a transvestite who stripped off a tutu, hopped in a kiddie pool of glitter to "America the Beautiful," and lit a sparkler in his/her anus), primarily focused on his or her sex worker status during the performance. This makes it hard to understand, then, how Annie Oakley could claim that the point of the show was to "humanize" and "demystify" sex workers and "show the experiences of people behind the [industry]," if all they are doing is using their moral flexibility to shock the audience with descriptions of their work. One guess, though, is that they were simply pandering their audience—an audience who eagerly encouraged such degeneracy.

It is curious how the voice of Duke administration has changed. Originally, the associate dean of students Stephen Bryan said, "It's a moral choice. ... We made a decision that a stripper at a campus event is something that we don't want to support." Now, the vice president for student affairs, Larry Moneta, claims the show is "evidence that Duke continues to be a community filled with diverse people and opinions, and one committed to academic freedom and free speech." It certainly takes a great deal of moral doublethink to chastise hiring strippers one semester, but then embrace them for their diversity the next. ☘

# A Pop Lit. Look at Duke

*Ariel Levy's Female Chauvinist Pigs* examines how twenty-first century American society perceives sex and women, and shares her view that the increasing exploitation of women is due to their newfound participation in their own exploitation...

By Rachel Stern

Although not generally courageous enough to venture into Women's Center reading material, I picked up Ariel Levy's *Female Chauvinist Pigs* after learning that the Women's Center was featuring it in their series, "A Pop Lit Look at Duke". I was genuinely intrigued by the description of Levy's book, in which she purported to explain how the feminist movement of the sixties and seventies contributed to the rise of the culture of sex obsession that is so pervasive today.

Levy devotes a great deal of space to increasingly disturbing anecdotes illustrative of the complete perversion of society. Girls Gone Wild. Middle school oral sex orgy parties. Ubiquitous public sex in high schools. "CAKE" parties which purport to further the feminist cause by removing everyone's inhibitions in a nice party where men and women can come watch paid female sex workers perform. Etc. The length of the litany of examples drove Levy's point home.

Levy eventually moves on to provide a fascinating account of the heyday of the feminist movement. *Roe v. Wade* was their great triumph, but the fight went downhill from there. Pornography, the next big issue, did not prove to be such a unifying issue as abortion had been. Old fault lines widened, and new ones formed. According

to Levy, there had always been tensions within the movement due to a radical lesbian wing that proposed that all women become lesbians and separate themselves from men entirely (One wonders how these ladies intended to exercise their abortion rights, let alone perpetuate their feminist Utopia.) These and other radical feminists had little respect for women like Gloria Steinem, who sought to effect change through legislation. Conflict arose between feminist supporters of the free love movement (and pornography) and those who distrusted men and execrated pornography as a sort of commercialized form of rape. Some of the latter even went so far as to team up with local conservative organizations to fight pornographers – a move seen by many feminists as unforgivable.

Levy believes that this polarization within the feminist movement helped to establish today's "raunch culture" as the severe, lesbian separatist wing repelled women into the arms of the free love advocates.

Another important component of today's strange notions of sexuality is the commercialization of sex, a topic to which Levy devotes a chapter or two, but which could fill an entire book on its own. Levy observes that, in their efforts to make sex marketable, pornographers and other purveyors of all things sex-related have reduced the indefinable sexual chemistry that arises between a man and a woman to a mass-market, one-size-fits-all image of "sexy". The quality of being sexy is now personified by the unnaturally buxom platinum blonde sporting skimpy attire. This universal set of attributes of the "sexy" woman allows sex industries to represent the idea of sexual prowess with a single image. The reduction of sex appeal to these superficial attributes may also have contributed to the rampant promiscuity that exists in some parts of our culture (on college campuses, for example).

The idea that women regard sex as a performance for the benefit of men, rather than as a pleasurable experience for themselves, recurs throughout the book. Society has made the stripper the model for female sexuality, sending a very clear message to women that their sexual behavior should begin and end as performance art. When the personal dimension has been removed from sex,

## *femalechauvinistpigs*

there ceases to be a point to waiting around for – or limiting oneself to – anyone in particular. For men, as long as the women involved share a certain set of attributes, they may as well be interchangeable. Although the idea of the “sexy” male has perhaps not been as clearly defined, many women seem to have embraced this notion of interchangeable sex partners. Levy despairingly described interviews with many young women who claimed they sought to acquire sexual encounters as “notches on their belt”. Levy

she recognized the influence of celebrities on these ever-younger adventurers, she failed to focus on one of their most highly-placed inspirations, our 42nd president. (The book’s sole mention of President Clinton and his predilections came in the form of a quote from an article by feminist Andrea Dworkin suggesting that Hillary kill her husband as punishment for his offense with Monica Lewinsky. This quote was included as an example of the off-putting extremes to which some feminists have gone. While it

“ Levy’s overarching theme was the problem with women’s efforts to become more like men (and thus, presumably, gain some sense of control) by adopting what Levy considered to be stereotypically masculine attitudes towards sex: embracing a lifestyle of empty promiscuity, cultivating an appreciation for “Playboy” and pornography, and idolizing the stripper as the embodiment of female sexuality.”

was horrified that these women had no idea of seeking pleasure from their sexual encounters, but this (admittedly prudish) reader was just horrified, period.

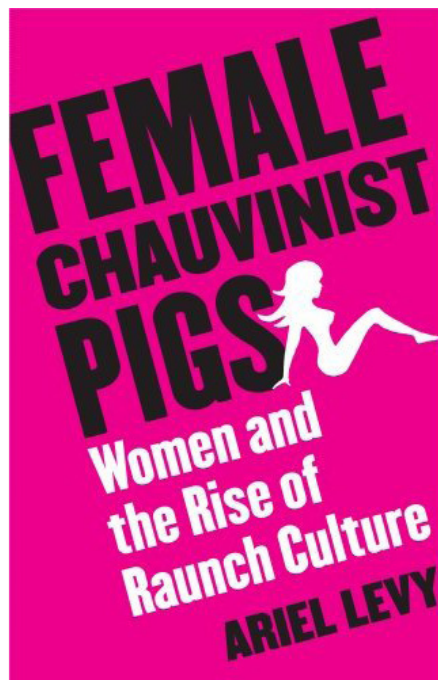
Levy finds that the aforementioned aggressively sexual women share another important attribute of modern “sex appeal”: actively inviting sexual attention. Certainly, most women identified as “sexy” among our acquaintance or by society at large earn the distinction in part by behaving as though sex is their goal. Levy describes the way high-school and even middle-school girls vie for the distinction of most scantily clad in the latest incarnation of the never-ending quest for popularity in school. Before these girls are remotely interested in sex itself, they strive to appear “sexy” via barely-there miniskirts, revealing tops, and, of course, thongs. Not surprisingly, girls who participate in this culture tend to engage in sexual activity before they even feel ready to. None of it – the clothes, the sex – is for their own enjoyment; it is all a performance to get boys’ attention. This is depressingly ironic when one considers that, as one boy Levy interviewed put it, “guys always want girls,” whether they prance through school in the guise of miniature strippers or just show up in “casual” attire. The difference, presumably, lies in the kind of male attention that each style of dress invites.

Levy’s discussion of the rampant promiscuity among high-schoolers and middle-schoolers predictably ignored an important contribution to the meteoric rise of oral sex among American teens. Although

is undeniably extreme, it is impossible to avoid wondering whether the feminist community would have received such a comment about a Republican president in the same manner.) Levy’s failure to acknowledge Clinton’s contribution to the increase in popularity of oral sex was an interesting omission, but not a surprising one, from a feminist and leftist writer. She laid much of the blame, reasonably enough, at the stiletto-clad feet of Paris Hilton and her admirers instead.

Levy’s overarching theme was the problem with women’s efforts to become more like men (and thus, presumably, gain some sense of control) by adopting what Levy considered to be stereotypically masculine attitudes towards sex: embracing a lifestyle of empty promiscuity, cultivating an appreciation for “Playboy” and pornography, and idolizing the stripper as the embodiment of female sexuality.

I would like to think better of the male population than Levy seems to (although she occasionally does give men some credit), and I hope that the majority of men share Levy’s hope of putting an end to the cultural phenomenon of emulating strippers. It is a phenomenon that bears some discussion here at Duke, where rampant promiscuity, whether mythical or not, has replaced casual dating as the norm, and where the drinking, partying culture provides no encouragement to women to try to take themselves seriously in the hope that men will view them accordingly. ☘



# Define: Diversity

*Duke needs to make clear the diversity it seeks*

By Natalie Figueroa

Universities have all too eagerly embraced diversity as a panacea. Whether in response to on-campus social tensions, faculty unrest, or controversy in general, academic institutions have increasingly placed their faith in this universal savior, and Duke is no exception. From *Chronicle* news articles and columns to a substantial portion of the 2008 Campus Culture Initiative (CCI), Duke's new mission is clear.

Yet, amid the commotion surrounding diversity's virtues, many seem to have skipped over defining what exactly diversity is, let alone whether it merits the attention it is given. In all its gilded glory, the excesses of "diversity" and its emphasis on race continue to foster self-segregation at Duke along racial lines, rather than promoting an environment where "different religions and political viewpoints, different races and classes" are actively engaged, as Duke University President Dick Brodhead explains at [diversity.duke.edu](http://diversity.duke.edu).

Diversity in and of itself, however, is not the problem: diversity of thought is crucial to an invigorating academic experience. Without diversity of opinion, of belief, and of conviction, innovation and creativity suffer. Differing perspectives are strengthened, adopted, and modified at the university through vetting and discourse.

While Duke's new mission statement recognizes the educational necessity of diversity of thought and background on paper, the university has yet to put it into practice. "With regard to increasing diversity, the admissions office has had a transformative impact," The 2008 CCI informs the Duke community, "as reflected in the 41% students of color in the Class of 2010." Yet this supposed "transformative impact" is solely attributed to race and is strictly a surface-level measurement. Diversity of race does not imply diversity of thought: the color of someone's skin does not suggest necessitate an inherent identity.

Still, Duke continues to emphasize this form of external diversity over internal diversity. And it is this mistaken and artificial notion

of diversity that has *impeded* Duke in its mission of meaningfully diversifying its academic environment.

Much of the Duke community has also absorbed these notions of diversity, as consistently exemplified through coverage and commentary in *The Chronicle*. In the article "Leveling the Playing Field," written on December 6, 2007, the author claims that Duke "has a stark lack of diversity at the top of its programs," since it has "never employed a black head coach."

Yet, this writer's claims are mistaken. Duke has employed extremely well-rounded and diverse coaches—from a Hollywood actor to coaches with extensive military backgrounds to athletic prodigies. One of the most prominent was Lawrence "Crash" Davis, who coached the men's baseball team. He was a Duke alumnus and professional baseball player, was drafted during WWII and even starred in a movie.

Duke's programs are not lacking in diversity—distinct experiences and backgrounds define diversity, not race. Duke has employed unique and talented coaches who continue to bring new strategies and perspectives to the athletics program, making it among the best in the nation.

A similar assumption surrounded the controversy over the appointment of Andrew Tutt as Duke Student Government representative to the President's Council on Black Affairs. The issue uncovered further mistaken notions of the relationship between race and diversity on campus, and more importantly, revealed its underlying impact on our community.

In *The Chronicle* article "DSG Disappoints with Tutt Appointment," written on October 23, 2007, *The Chronicle* Editorial Board claims DSG "failed the student body" in its appointment of Tutt. He "drew criticism because he is a white student with little knowledge of the black community at Duke," *The Chronicle* reports. Moreover, the board contends that "a black student" may have "more personal experience to draw upon for PCOBA," yet they acknowledge that a "white student" would be just as qualified for the position if they were "well-versed in black

## definediversity

issues and well-connected to the black community.”

*The Chronicle's* assertions uncover precisely the negative effects of a race-centered view of diversity. The conclusions are particularly disquieting because they divide the Duke community into racial groups, specifically the black community and the white community. Rather than promoting a general and united Duke community, they fundamentally differentiate between the racial groups to such an extent that Tutt is considered an outsider to one community. And although Tutt embodies the archetypal active and involved

that has swept through the Duke administration and the Duke community is both damaging and counterproductive. Duke should thus drastically modify their means of achieving diversity on campus.

In seeking to promote actual diversity, the university can begin by doing away with numerous programs. Pre-orientation multicultural weekends promote communities drawn along racial lines. Furthermore, they are harmfully exclusive. Pre-orientation programs, if they should exist at all, should consist of groups of

“ Pre-orientation programs, if they should exist at all, should consist of groups of incoming students with common issue or activity passions, not just a shared skin color.”

member of the Duke community, the overall implication is that he is too far removed from the black community to provide any productive insight.

Yet the notion of community identity is the very same notion that results in increased segregation—without such a concept Tutt would not have been inveighed against (nor would the PCOBA exist in the first place). Self-segregation is based on perceived rather than substantive difference. Therefore, Tutt's eventual appointment represents an opportunity to transcend and challenge the traditional, simplistic and largely illegitimate boundaries of communal identity.

This self-perpetuating and erroneous perception of diversity

incoming students with common issue or activity passions, not just a shared skin color.

In addition, during freshmen orientation week, separate multicultural luncheons and events are just as counterproductive to a truly diverse academic environment. Again, rather than focusing on the entire freshmen community, and promoting a cohesive and united community, they emphasize divisions based on race.

A former CFO of Pepsi and Wal-mart Executive discusses the “market research at Pepsi and other CPG [consumer packaged goods],” which aims to find more effective ways to market to large groups of people. He demonstrated that “people or consumers are more similar by income categories than by any other measure,

including religion, ethnicity, etc.” Although racial and cultural targeting by companies does occur however, racial identities are not innately more influential than others—this is a constructed notion. Thus, more diversity can be achieved across different socioeconomic statuses than any other characteristic.

At Duke, diversity must be redefined. It is not found in race, and promoting this notion of diversity is not only damaging to true diversity, but divides communities among racial lines. An academic community exists to foster learning through exposure to and testing of different ideas and points of view. Reducing the richness of individual ideas and identities to racial classifications fosters a dialogue where superficial, rather than substantive differences, dominate the academic consciousness and learning experience. ☘



*These children are diverse, but not for the reasons you probably think. They are diverse because they are individuals, not because they are of different races. Policies that suggest otherwise perpetuate race-consciousness and self-segregation..*  
(Photo: State of Michigan Website)

# The New Face of Racism

*Distinction by race in any form,  
for any purpose,  
cannot be condoned*

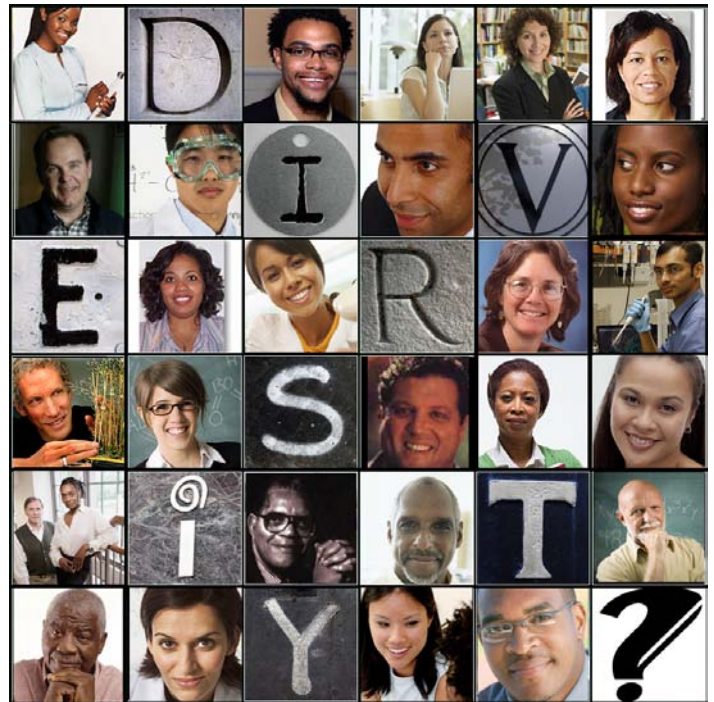
By Vikram Srinivasan

Spend an hour in a campus seminar on the purpose of a college education and you'd likely come away thinking that the University prepares its students to critically challenge, evaluate, and weigh all the assumptions guiding the world around them. All assumptions, that is, excepting one: "diversity." This unassailable belief in the wonderful, value-laden richness of race and ethnicity is beyond allowable dispute in most university forums.

Listening to all the diversity talk uncritically might lead one to believe that diversity would be the one, magical cure to the ills of racism. Then again, nearly any idea can be made to sound appealing with a right combination of tone, inflection, ambiguity, word choice, and censorship of the opposition. Oddly enough, if you actually think about what this "solution" entails, the University finds itself in a rather uncomfortable paradox: to fight what it believes is an ever-present racism, the University is calling upon a racism of its own making.

Many will bristle at the suggestion that "diversity" is racism. If diversity is racism, this clearly implies that those who subscribe to its doctrine are racists. Unfortunately for diversity-adherents who come to this conclusion, that is exactly what I am saying. This latest racism is just more subtle, more unwitting and inadvertent—yet similarly dangerous. Many try to distinguish between the diversity of the present and the racism of the past, characterizing the former as "benign," and the latter as malicious. But this distinction ignores why, as humans and as Americans, we find racism offensive in the first place.

America is a proudly individualistic society, placing great emphasis on the ability and desire for individuals to self-define and to be perceived by others as individuals. We find the manifestations



of racism—violence, hate speech, and property damage, among other things—deeply wrong, but these manifestations themselves are not the essential crime of racism. Nor, as some might posit, is racism at its root immoral because of its implication of racial superiority, though that too affects how we react to it.

No, racism is offensive because of how it ignores the individual and assumes he does not exist. Racism reduces individuals, in all their complexity and richness of their identities, to a superficial locus of physical characteristics. It strongly correlates their personhood to stereotypes and endows those who exercise it, black or white, with the arrogant and dehumanizing attitude that they can treat others as if they already know who they are, simply by looking at them.

Taking a step back, it appears that this racialization of the individual is exactly what the diversity regime has produced, if not intended. Minorities, as well as white students, are valued primarily along racial lines. We are told to "celebrate [the] difference" of our minority peers, never mind where the notion that minorities are different at all came from. In truth, the very idea that the minority or majority status of individuals in the population can be cleanly delineated by race presupposes race's primary significance as a determining factor in individual identity. The "diversity" crowd, with its mantra of ethno-cultural exoticism, has defined the "minority" by his ethnicity, rather than allowing him to flourish as a self-defining individual.

The greatest tragedy in this debate may be that so many minorities have bought into the notion of their essential difference and become agents to their own dehumanization. The establishment, rise and subsequent success of ethnic organizations reflects this trend. Ethnic organizations and the events they sponsor cultivate, either explicitly or implicitly, a consciousness of viewing minorities as ethnics first, individuals second (if at all).

## thenewracism

The diversity regime has been so successful that its leaders have created the expectation among many minority individuals that they must be ethnic to be “true to themselves.” Yet simultaneously, the regime reinforces a social perception that the individual minority is the manifestation of stereotypical cultural practices and behaviors. As a result, a political correctness exists such that minorities are assumed to be purveyors of and authorities on cultural knowledge. This confluence of coercive cultural expectations, the institutionalization of the foreignness of persons of color, and the promulgation of cults of “ethnic values” has likely set back the creation of a color-blind society by decades.

This is not to say, however, that students must fully dissociate themselves from ethnic practices, such as an appreciation of ethnic food, music, or art. To the extent that these stereotypes are correlated with perceptions of ethnic individuals in a pluralistic society, the dissemination and sharing of ethnic practices (provided that individuals expose themselves to other types of food, music and art) can weaken the perceived identity association between such practices and individuals.

At the same time, minorities must not be inculcated into an ethnic narcissism that glorifies ethnicity at the expense of all else. The vague and, frankly, rather obscure notion that there are specifically ethnic “values” in a pluralistic nation such as ours is

what the diversity regime has done.

Especially at a university like Duke, it is a shame that the administration and the ideological establishment have chosen to value diversity as they have. The Duke community of students and faculty scholars is a rich patchwork of individuals with amazing life stories and wonderfully insightful perspectives. A race-centric dialogue encouraging students to identify peers superficially and based on their “cultural difference” glosses over the enormous potential for what could be a phenomenally and genuinely educational experience where students can engage each other intellectually and in a much more substantive way.

Why so many in positions of power choose to perpetuate a system that so clearly has adverse consequences, in terms of ethnic self-segregation and the increasingly racialized perceptions of group and individual identity, is beyond me. I can only speculate that many who claim to fight the vestiges, subtle and not-so-subtle, of social racism have a vested interest in its permanence, as it allows them to agitate for influence in perpetuity. The day that racism no longer exists is the day that the race studies departments at Duke and other universities are out of a job.

But the administration and faculty are not alone in their culpability—campus actors ranging from *The Chronicle*, to the Duke Student Government, to campus cultural groups have all

“ The diversity regime has been so successful that its leaders have created the expectation among many minority individuals that they must be ethnic to be “true to themselves.” Yet simultaneously, the regime reinforces a social perception that the individual minority is the manifestation of stereotypical cultural practices and behaviors.”

nothing short of self-indulgent tribalism. This is where the cult of ethnicity reaches much too far, defining individuals in a more than superficial way, and in so doing, oppressing many minorities who wish to self-define by setting expectations of how they ought to be socially perceived. Furthermore, the cult of ethnicity generates a false consciousness of primordial ethnic predestination that lulls minorities into a blind allegiance to an ethnic farce.

In a pluralistic society such as ours, we are inevitably subject to innumerable and disparate influences, whether they can be conceived of as ethnic or otherwise. These influences shape our childhoods and day-to-day lives in such diverse ways that the individual is necessarily distinct. Given the free and abundant exchange of knowledge and information, to suggest that ethnicity defines the individual to the exclusion of countless other identities is to reduce the individual to his ethnicity. Most, I imagine, would find it objectionable to be considered first and foremost for their ethnicity. Yet by making race and ethnicity the preeminent campus windows through which individuals are understood, that is exactly

engaged in the unthinking, uncritical espousal of this ideology. As a society, it will be difficult to disengage a race-centric ideology that has deeply seeded itself in the consciousness of so many prominent private actors. But those who wish to advocate for change can take spirit in the fact that a massive social revolt against racism was orchestrated just fifty years ago.

At the time, the leader of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr, said much of the promise of a color-blind society. He famously said that he hoped for the day when his children would “not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” It seems that since that time, many of those who initially fought alongside him have long since abandoned his dream. Those who remain committed to it must be vigilant, challenging the ideological establishment’s chokehold on discourse regarding racial issues. Otherwise, we may find ourselves victims of a new racism (indeed, many of us already do) eagerly foisted onto us by self-serving ideologues. ☘

# NEW RIGHT REVIEW

a new generation on the right.

For information on joining New Right Review, advertising opportunities, donations or submissions,  
please e-mail [DukeNewRightReview@gmail.com](mailto:DukeNewRightReview@gmail.com).

*funded by*



The Bassett Fund



The Leadership Institute