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Gay Rights and Political Correctness: A Brief History

By

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The Gay Rights Movement, according many observers, is the latest permutation of political correctness. Therefore, in order to understand the Gay Rights Movement, one must understand political correctness. What exactly is political correctness and where did it come from?

Political correctness is more than ideology. It is a culture in and of itself, a lifestyle, a way of viewing the world that asserts that some people are oppressors and some people are oppressed, some people are prejudiced and some people are victims of prejudice, some people are guilty and some people are innocent. The oppressed are urged to unite and rebel against the forces of oppression, whatever they are, to take control and obtain power over the latter (who due to their misguided natures cannot be trusted with power), and to feel entitled (due to their suffering at the hands of the oppressors) to special privileges as compensation.

The philosophy of political correctness further asserts that only the thoughts and feelings of the oppressed should be listened to and respected; the thoughts and feelings of oppressors (or anyone associated with them) are seen as suspect--the defensive utterances of abusers who want to hold on to their power.

Finally, the philosophy of political correctness asserts that only the negative feelings of oppressors toward the oppressed may be viewed as prejudice, while any negative feelings of the oppressed toward the oppressors are reasonable reactions to the abuse of the oppressors and therefore not considered prejudice. Moreover, only the acts of the oppressor are regarded as discrimination, while the acts of the oppressed toward those termed as oppressors, no matter how hostile, are considered to be justified by their long suffering. This final premise ensures that only oppressors can be blamed and held responsible for their feelings and actions, while the oppressed may feel free to feel and act however they desire toward the oppressor.

There have been many points in history when one group's ideology became dominant and even dictatorial; however, political correctness probably got its formal start in about 1848, when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto, in which they advocated a class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, urging workers to unite and rebel against what they described as capitalist exploiters.

Here was, if not the first, then perhaps the most formal, instance of a philosopher becoming a moralist and an activist. Marx, who had once been a follower of Hegel, broke with the philosophical tradition of neutrality.

The Industrial Revolution brought along with it a new class, the middle class of workers, and Marx decided that this new class was being victimized. Thus began the idealization of the underdog (oppressed) and the demonization of the top dog (oppressor). Workers were depicted as innocent babes who were being manipulated

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and exploited by evil industrialists and deprived of their humanity. The human rights movement also got its start at this same time.

Marx made it seem as if there could be no other way of viewing the situation, and anybody who had any other way of seeing the situation suffered from the same bias as the bourgeoisie. This, too, has become one of the main attitudes of political correctness: Anyone who is critical of any of the tenets of political correctness must be misguided and hence evil; and labels such as "bigot," "racist," "sexist," "misogynist" and "homophobe" are used to demean and punish them.

Marx Created A Win-Lose Situation For Everyone

Marx was an absolutist. Actually, there is always at least one other point of view, and often many, of any situation. For instance, one could see the bourgeoisie in a positive light, as a group that created a whole new class people that had never existed before; one that provided them with a steady income, an income higher than any they had ever had before; one that gave them options, such as the ability leave feudal systems that were much harder than the life of a worker. If looked at from a different perspective, one could see the industrial revolution as a transitory phase in human history and economic development without putting a moral stamp on it.

One can always look at human events through a moral lens if one chooses, but it is questionable whether doing so is productive. It is somewhat like a family therapist who looks at family interactions through a moral lens. Let us say that a father is the head of a household and he is asking each member of the household--his wife and three sons--to work at his candy store. Each is required to put half their salaries into the company account, which is used to maintain the business.

A family therapist would not view the father as an evil exploiter and the wife and children as innocent victims; rather, he would try to understand how this family got that way; why some members are happy and others not so happy; and how the system might be revised so that all members could feel happy. This would be done without moral judgments, without demeaning or idealizing anybody.

If the family therapist treated the father as if he were an evil oppressor and urged the wife and children to unite and rebel against him, the wife and children might indeed succeed in overthrowing the father and take over the business. They might feel morally self-righteous in doing so. However, family discord would be heightened, the family would probably fall apart and all members of the family would most likely suffer after-effects of this trauma.

Marx apparently did not care about doing things in a way that would be most beneficial for all involved--what we would call a win-win situation. Instead, he advocated a win-lose scenario. The Marxian system does not consider the gray area: It does not recognize the good and bad in each human being, does not attempt to see both sides of a conflict, and does not ponder the diverse sources of a conflict. Instead, it takes an arbitrary and absolute position: one side is all-good (the oppressed) and one side is all-bad (the oppressor). One side must be right and the other side must be wrong. One side must be knocked down so the other side can feel triumphant. One side must win and the other must lose. These were the seeds of political correctness.

Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist who charted stages of intellectual development in his landmark book, *Origins of Intelligence in the Child* (1936), noted that most people do not reach the fourth stage, the stage at which people can do abstract thinking, can make fine distinctions, can see the complexity and the interrelatedness of all things. Marx apparently did not reach the fourth stage of development, nor have his followers in the Human Rights Movement.

Class Warfare Applied To Racial Issues

Subsequent to Marx, various human rights groups began using his ideology to rationalize their movements, primarily in America. First came the Civil Rights Movement, which began in the 1850s and was one of the causes of the Civil War. In this case, European-Americans (Caucasians) became the oppressors and African-Americans became the oppressed; European-Americans were demonized, and African-Americans were idealized; European-Americans who had practiced slavery or segregation were viewed as all-bad and African-Americans were seen as all-good.

African-Americans were urged by various leaders to unify and rebel against European-Americans and to demand special privileges as compensation for their suffering at the hands of the latter. Civil rights leaders, like Marx and Engels before them, believed that their way, and only their way, was *the* valid way to look at the issue. In the 1950s, the Civil Rights Movement went into high gear, and the leaders of the movement, just like Marx and Engels, began to punish anybody who was in any way critical of the movement or had any other point of view with respect to solving racial discrimination by labeling them "racists" and "bigots" and attempting to isolate and ostracize them.

This is not to say that the Civil Rights Movement was or is wrong. Of course, racial discrimination does exist and many horrible things have happened to

African-Americans; the question is not whether or not it exists, but how one interprets it and how one reacts to it. Civil rights leaders insist there is only one meaning and one way to react. The Marxist view is superimposed on the race issue: Only an absolute and simplistic view of the issue is allowed--one which divides people into good guys and bad guys--either you're with us or you're against us.

There is no attempt by civil rights leaders to see both sides of the conflict, to understand the complex sources of the problem, to view people on both sides as having both good and bad in them. There is no attempt to negotiate a win-win situation that would benefit all society; instead a win-lose scenario is forced on all of society, whether they like it or not. All whites are guilty of what was done to blacks, particularly all white males, and all must pay.

With all due respect, there is another way, or other ways, to look at the race issue in America. It could be pointed out, for example, that Africa at the time of slavery was still primarily a jungle, as yet uncivilized or industrialized. Life there was savage, as savage as the jungle for most people, and that it was the Africans themselves who first enslaved their own people. They sold their own people to other countries, and those brought to Europe, South America, America, and other countries, were in many ways better off than they had been in Africa. But if one even begins to say these things one is quickly shouted down as though one were a complete madman.

If one tries to analyze race relations in America and point out that the liberal solution to racial discrimination tends to reinforce victimhood--again one is quickly shouted down. *We are not allowed to reason about civil rights.* In fact, our whole approach to civil rights in America has been decided not by reasoned debate at all, but instead by a kind of mob rule and the hysteria of mob rule. It is the kind of mob rule described in such classic novels as *The Oxbow Incident*, in which a crowd of angry men are fueled by their growing hysteria to lynch an innocent man. The irony is that the Civil Rights Movement has been vehement about pointing out the hysterical lynchings that took place in the old South, but completely blind to its own hysterical tactics.

Marxism Applied To Feminist Thinking

Following on the heels of the Civil Rights Movement was the Women's Movement, which intensified in the early 1900s over the issue of giving women the right to vote, and then flared up again in the 1950s over a myriad of issues. Feminists complained of economic oppression of women, domestic slavery, laws that banned "a woman's right to choose" abortion; and other matters.

Engels, who was the son of an industrialist, set the stage for feminism when he wrote in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) that the goal of Marxism was to get women out of the home and into the work place, comparing home work to domestic subjugation. According to Engels, *"The emancipation of women will be possible only when domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant portion of her time."* Now, it was men who became oppressors and women became the oppressed--men who were evil and women who were innocent--men who were prejudiced and women who were victims of prejudice. It was men who were discriminatory and women who were discriminated against.

Following Marx and the Civil Rights Movement, feminists sought not to negotiate but to wage a verbal war against patriarchy. To their way of thinking, the only valid point of view with regard to the issue of sex and sex roles was their point of view and the only solution was their solution; any other point of view or solution was shouted down and labeled as "sexist."

Only the thoughts and feelings of women (victims) mattered, while the thoughts and feelings of men (oppressors) were tainted by their innately patriarchal (evil) natures.

Again, this is not saying that equal rights for women is wrong. The desire for equal rights, whether for African-Americans or women, is a reasonable goal. The question is, how should we interpret matters of race and sex? There is another point of view on matters of sex roles. Feminists could have advocated for the right to vote without demonizing men; and they could have pressed for abortion rights without making abortion tantamount to a divine right: "A woman's right to choose." What they are saying is that women and only women should choose whether or not to have a baby, since the baby is in their body and therefore is their possession. Another point of view is that fathers should also have a say in that decision if they will share the responsibility for the child. Also, the state should have a say in that decision if the fact of abortion or excessive abortions (abortion done casually as a substitute for birth control) might have an effect on societal morale, parenting attitudes, and the like. But if one begins to say any of this, one is quickly shouted down, as if one were uttering insane nonsense.

Karl Marx's Class Warfare Linked To Gay Rights Movement

The latest instance of the use of these same Marxian tactics (that is, the latest version of political correctness) is the Gay Rights Movement. In this latest schema, straight people, particularly those who harbor the notion that homosexuality is a sexual disorder (which includes some gays), are characterized as oppressors and gay people are the oppressed; straight people are prejudiced and gay people are the victims of prejudice;

straight people are evil and gay people are innocent.

Gay rights organizations point to the Stonewall Riots that began on June 27, 1969, when police raided a Greenwich Village gay bar called the Stonewall Inn and gays began rioting for three nights as a milestone in the formation of gay rights. Accounts of this incident by gay rights groups typically glorify it as a brave revolt against homophobia. For example, the journal, *Socialism Today* (July/August 1999) notes, "The word 'Stonewall' has entered the vocabulary of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people everywhere as a potent emblem of the gay community making a stand against oppression and demanding full equality in every area of life." But an article by David Bianco on the website, PlanetOut.com, asserts that the Stonewall Inn was a Mafia-owned private club and the police raided it and several others bars for selling liquor illegally. Bianco described how gay men held hands, kicked their legs like Broadway dancers and sang to police: "We wear our hair in curls./We have no underwear./We show our pubic hair."

In the Gay Rights Movement, the oppressed (homosexuals) are urged to unite and rebel against the forces of oppression (homophobes) wherever they are, to take control and obtain power over the latter (who due to their misguided natures cannot be trusted with power). They feel entitled, due to their suffering at the hands of the homophobe oppressors, to special privileges as compensation.

The "Gay Revolution Party Manifesto," found on the website, wordiq.com (2005), is a striking transference of Marxism to Gay Rights. It notes that,

The original social expression of straightness was gender: the division of humanity into the castes of woman and man on the basis of the biological sexes, female and male. In this process, females were deprived of their subjectivity and their erotic energy was suppressed, while males developed roles involving aggression and search for power and dominance. Since gays, roleless relations acted in opposition to this process, they were suppressed.

The "Manifesto" goes on to conclude that, "Gradually these straight societies came to dominate the entire planet since their nature led them continually to seek conquest and colonialization of other peoples."

Such writings characterize straight males as oppressive by "nature" and the philosophy of political correctness adapted to the Gay Rights Movement further asserts that only the thoughts and feelings of the oppressed should be listened to and respected--only gays know what it's like to be gay, so only they can truly speak about gay issues; the thoughts and feelings of homophobe oppressors (or anyone associated with them) are seen as suspect--the defensive utterances of abusers who want to hold on to their power.

Finally, the philosophy of political correctness, (the gay radical variation) asserts that only the negative feelings of oppressors--those designated homophobes because of their errant belief that homosexuality is a sexual disorder--may be viewed as prejudiced, while any negative feelings of the oppressed (radical gays) toward the oppressors are reasonable reactions to the abuse of the oppressors and therefore not considered prejudice. Moreover, only the words and actions of the oppressor are regarded as discrimination, while the words and actions of the oppressed toward those termed as oppressors, no matter how hostile, are considered to be justified by their long suffering at the hands of homophobes.

This final premise ensures that only straights can be blamed and held responsible for their feelings and actions, while the gay radicals are free to feel and act however they desire to the oppressor.

Like Marx and Engels, the Gay Rights Movement did not care about doing things in a way that would be most beneficial for all involved--what we previously referred to as a win-win situation. Instead, this movement, like Marxists, advocated a win-lose scenario.

The gay rights brand of political correctness does not consider the gray area: It does not recognize the good and bad in each human being, does not attempt to see both sides of a conflict. It does not ponder the diverse sources of a conflict. Instead, it simplifies the world, dividing it into evil homophobes and innocent gays. It is almost as if they live in their own Hollywood Western where there are only stereotypical good guys and bad guys.

There are numerous examples of this contentious and absolutist way of thinking. Many years ago radical gays began protesting that they weren't allowed to march in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York. They began protesting before they had even tried to meet with parade officials and to work something out. When officials invited them to a meeting, they came not to negotiate but to contend.

According to a report in the *New York Post*, radical gays refused to discuss any compromise under which they could march in the parade without carrying placards which lobbied for gay rights. "We don't want to turn the parade into a political rally,"

officials said. The radical gays booed the officials and treated them with disdain (i.e., evil homophobes), and so the meeting broke down. It seems obvious that the radical gays did not want to find a solution. They wanted to set up a situation where they could make a public outcry against the evil homophobes and attempt to rally the public behind them ("Look what those mean St. Patrick's homophobes are doing to us!").

Winning Through Mob Rule

Another example of the way the Gay Rights Movement utilized Marxist tactics was how it forced the American Psychiatric Association to normalize homosexuality. Dr. Charles Socarides reports in *Homosexuality: A Freedom Too Far* (1995) how the Gay Rights Movement, through a series of political maneuvers, intimidated the APA in to taking homosexuality off the *DSM* category of sexual disorders. Here again were the usual elements of political correctness: The American Psychiatric Association was now the evil oppressor and gays were the innocent victims who needed to take arms against this modern evil and conquer it.

As usual, the issue was seen only in the most simplistic and absolute terms, the terms of Gay Rights Movement. Only their view was the right view and no other view could be tolerated. The "normalization" of homosexuality was gained not through reasoned debate, but through mob rule.

At present, the Gay Rights Movement has taken over nearly all professional organizations not only in America but also in the United Nations and throughout the world. The entire planet has now been forced to agree that it is normal for one man to insert his penis into another man's anus--that this is exactly what nature intended. Either they must agree to this, or they will be attacked, ostracized and stigmatized by the Gay Rights Movement and the so-called liberal community.

A striking example of this is what happened to Dr. Laura Schlessinger. Dr. Laura, as she is known, a well-known radio personality whose talk show was at one time the most popular talk show on radio, made the mistake of speaking out about homosexuality in 2001, calling it a "biological error." What she was commenting on is an article that appeared in an American Psychological Association journal that suggested that pedophilia--specifically sex between a man and a boy, could be beneficial to the boy and that men who have sex with boys should not be stigmatized.

Indeed, the American Psychiatric Association even went so far as to modify its stance on pedophilia, changing the designation in the *DSM* to "ego-dystonic pedophilia"--meaning that pedophilia would only be considered a disorder if the pedophile considered it a problem for himself. When Dr. Laura was critical of this article and of the Gay Rights Movement, she became the target of one of the most vicious character assassinations in American history.

She had just launched a new television show and within months the show closed down, largely due to a nationwide letter-writing and telephone calling campaign by radical gays, who quickly set up websites such as "stopdrlaura.com" to wage war against her. Soon, one sponsor after another was pulling out and Dr. Laura was being described in various liberal columns as a "religious bigot," a "homophobe," and much worse. Today, the popularity of Dr. Laura's radio program has dwindled considerably.

The Gay Rights Movement achieved a major victory and sent a shivering message to all others who would say anything critical of the movement, even when it clearly becomes irrational as it did when it advocated a positive attitude toward pedophilia and when, more recently, it demanded that the APA pass rules outlawing so-called "reparative therapy" that would require a therapist to refuse to help those gays who want to be straight.

Political Correctness: Revolution By Emotional Intimidation

Political Correctness is a revolutionary movement. Revolutions gain power by force. Sometimes the force is violent and bloody force; sometimes it is emotional force. The Gay Rights Movement has achieved an emotional revolution through a huge propaganda effort accompanied by a hysterical us-against-them wave of sometimes vicious intimidation. The propaganda repeated day after day, week after week, year after year, is that homosexuality is normal, people are born homosexual, homosexual is simply another variant of normal sexuality, and anybody who says differently is evil.

The hysterical wave of intimidation is a relentless tidal wave that seeks to punish and even annihilate anybody who stands in the way--that is anybody who utters even a word that can be construed as suggesting that homosexuality is a disorder, that homosexual values may be to some degree detrimental to society, or that AIDS is sometimes a result of homosexual dysfunction. Anybody who even starts to utter these things must immediately be shot down and made an example of. The big irony of political correctness is that it often accuses the right of being bigoted and cites McCarthyism as an example of right-wing totalitarianism, yet McCarthyism lasted only a few years while political correctness has been around over a century and its bigotry far outweighs anything that happened under McCarthy.

We have many social problems in America. We have the largest illiteracy percentage of

all industrialized nations, and it is growing in leaps and bounds. We also have the highest divorce, crime, and drug addiction rate of all industrialized countries. Human rights are important, but what may be more important are human responsibilities--the responsibility to be good parents, for example. You don't hear the human rights groups talk of such things very often. Yes, there are inequalities in our system, and they should be addressed, but in proportion to their relative social importance and in a manner that does not continually fan the flames of conflict and replace one kind of inequality with another.

Additional Reading: ["The Roots of Gay Oppression,"](#) *International Socialist Review*, September-October 2004; ["The Overhauling of Straight America,"](#) *Guide Magazine*, November, 1987.

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