

Prejudice

Fight for human equality gets silly and stupid over language

Discrimination, be it racist, sexual, or otherwise, is always a hot topic (as some recent letters to the editor aptly demonstrate). For example, the Feb. 18 *The New Republic* ran a cover story on the issue of race on campus.

That issue contained excerpts from the *Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases*, a real book that warns journalists not to use such taboo words as "Oriental" for Asian-Americans and "Jew" for Jewish person.

More recently, *U.S. News and World Report* ran a hilarious parody of anti-discrimination gone amok, warning about a variety of prejudices, including "speciesism," where a person thinks humans are better than animals.

Where the fight against prejudice goes wrong is when it tries to censor things as "racist" or "sexist." When the city of Sacramento stops calling manholes "manholes," that is getting ridiculous. *Huckleberry Finn*, one of the greatest works of American literature, is criticized for the use of the word "nigger" (which is especially ironic when Twain meant the book to be against the slavery and racism of his time).

The latest fad sweeping American universities is multicultural education. While not yet a policy on our campus, many institutes of higher learning are moving away from a "Eurocentric" curriculum.

While certain texts do put too much emphasis on European culture and too little on African and Asian culture, it can not be denied that Europe and those countries that have inherited European culture (including the United States, all of Latin America and even Japan to an extent) are the most powerful nations on Earth. If African societies had discovered the New World, history would be undoubtedly "Afro-centric."

Being prejudice against a person for their skin color, gender, sexual preference, weight, or age is a terrible thing; however, it is unfortunately natural to human beings. The only way to cure such ills is with communication between different groups of people, not by force-feeding Third World culture or changing "mankind" to "humankind."

Black people can be friends with white people, and vice versa. Gay males can be friends with straight males without hitting on them. Men can respect women and treat them as equals. All that is required is a little effort and understanding.



Political parties to blame for recession

This one was going to be blamed on supply-siders even if the recovery had lasted 20 years — Paul Gigot, *The Wall Street Journal*.

The 1990s' recession has so far escaped the kind of publicity that the 1982 downturn enjoyed. Far more compelling events in the Middle East have temporarily diverted most of the media's attention from its perennial harping on the alleged failings of the private sector.

After Desert Storm's successful conclusion, however, economic issues will again move toward center stage. It's only logical that the Democratic Party and its allies will attempt to make the recession the Achilles' heel of an otherwise popular President Bush in the 1992 election. As a political strategy, it is unlikely to work, but it does raise the interesting question of who, or what, is to blame for the recession.

Trying to understand the recession without an appreciation of what caused the preceding expansion is a wasted exercise. Against the backdrop of 1970s stagflation, President Reagan reinvigorated the private sector's creative energies through a partial, if unspectacular, restoration of growth incentives and property rights.

Tax cuts and deregulation were the driving forces of the new policy, and the Establishment could never reconcile them with its political calculus or its econometric models.

Many Democrats and financial journalists never managed to credit the Reagan initiatives with the economic growth of the 1980s. Instead, they ignored Reagan's failure to make meaningful real budget cuts, and saw deficits caused by "irresponsible" tax reductions.

They ignored the rising share of the tax burden borne by wealthy taxpayers, and saw

ARTHUR C. MAYER

Financial Columnist

"greed" and "excess." They ignored publicly available data showing rising real wages, and perceived a "disappearing" middle class.

They ignored the entrepreneurial revolution financed by high-yield debt and screamed at Michael Milken's "obscene" \$500 million income. Whatever their motives, they determined that the expansion was probably a bad thing, worthy of denigration and denial.

It's no surprise that this recession has been predicted since 1982, when we were assured that large budget deficits would prevent a recovery. When the recovery began in 1983, it was supposed to be "anemic" and short-lived. When economic growth surged in 1983 and 1984, it was argued that inflation would be reigned and would strangle the expansion.

Despite weakness in the manufacturing sector, the Federal Reserve slammed on the monetary brakes and thereafter accommodated only modest GNP increases in what would become its quest for a soft landing. Throughout the 1980s, the benefits of the 1981 tax reductions were being relentlessly eroded away with Social Security tax increases and other "revenue enhancements."

More specifically, the current downturn finds its immediate roots not in August 1990, but in the mid-1980s. Driven by booming commercial and residential real estate markets, a vibrant fi-

nanial services sector and the high-tech defense electronics industry, the economies of states like Massachusetts, New Hampshire and New Jersey surged ahead of the nation in income and employment growth.

Then, the Tax Reform Act of 1986 raised the capital gains tax rate to an historically high level and eliminated most commercial real estate tax incentives. At the same time, defense expenditures had peaked, with the Gramm-Rudmann crash of October 1987.

The combined effect of these events was to reverse the fortunes of the Northeastern states, where the recession first took hold. The ruins of the Bank of New England and the wrecked career of Michael Dukakis stand as grim testimony to the changed landscape.

The recession affords us a lot of blame to spread around. There's Saddam Hussein, who gave us a nasty spike in oil prices. There's Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, for maybe not easing credit sooner. There are the advocates of a weak dollar, who invite higher inflation and restrict the Fed's options. There's Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, for blocking pro-growth measures because someone might end up getting rich.

There's Congress, relentlessly pushing federal deregulation of the economy. There's Budget Director Richard Darman, who "negotiated" a massive tax increase in the name of "deficit reduction." But contrary to what you're likely to hear on a nightly newscast or on Capitol Hill, the recession cannot be blamed on the Reagan expansion, nor on the policies of tax reduction or deregulation which sparked it a decade ago.

"YOU THINK THE WAR MIGHT RESULT IN SOME KIND OF VIOLENCE OVER HERE?"



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Animal testing unnecessary

To the editor:

I am appalled at the recent letter written by USC veterinarian Edmund L. Fountain (Feb. 18). What nerve and hypocrisy to be in the business of helping and saving animals and at the same time promote their use in research experiments — experiments that are often painful and always lead to death.

Why aren't veterinarians required to swear an oath, as do human doctors, to give priority to the interests of their patients, rather than to society?

In any case, Dr. Fountain cites the Animal Welfare Act and its three amendments as the policing force for animals in research. This is true, but what he conveniently fails to mention is that this act mainly regulates housekeeping standards, not actual experiments, activities and procedures.

The Act sets minimum standards for cage sizes, feeding, watering and basic care. Animals specifically excluded from the Act are rats, mice, birds, farm animals and all cold-blooded animals. Furthermore, the Act allows experimenters to withhold anaesthetics at their discretion.

The unfortunate truth is that the Animal Welfare Act is a joke and takes low priority at the USDA. A 1985 study showed most animal research facilities were inspected only once-a-year and some were not inspected at all. Why doesn't

Dr. Fountain cite how many times the USDA has come to inspect USC research facilities in the past year?

Dr. Fountain further jeopardizes his credibility by espousing Dr. John Orem's cat experiments as valuable. If this were true, why doesn't he cite specific examples of how this research has helped in the understanding of AIDS? The fact of the matter is that Orem's research, like most animal research, is a fraud.

While researchers may not be innately cruel, they have become conditioned to thinking of animals as "tools." Donald Barnes, a former vivisector and scheduled speaker on March 19 at the Russell House Ballroom, attributes the cruelty which his former colleagues perpetrate to "conditioned ethical blindness."

The training, the example of peers and the entrenched habits of the scientific community cause researchers to become desensitized to the pain they are causing.

Finally, Dr. Fountain criticizes Ms. Eastergard for not citing specific examples of animal cruelty on campus. This is hard to do when the university refuses to open its lab doors to the public. On several occasions I have requested permission to tour the research facilities only to be told "as a layperson, I would not understand what was going on."

Therefore, I would like to publicly request at this time that Donald Barnes, an authority on vivisection, be admitted into the research laboratories during his visit.

Catherine Frisch
SETA President

Soldiers died without cause

To the editor:

The 29 soldiers who were killed by a Scud missile attack on Feb. 25 were from my hometown of Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Among the list of dead were names of people who I grew up and went to school with.

To those who fill these pages with regurgitated administration rhetoric, I can assure you, no reason you have yet advanced for this war can explain why these men are gone. No king's throne was worth the life of a single one of them. No patriotic slogan or song can cover the bitter taste of their deaths.

They did indeed choose to wear the uniform and accept the associated risks. That does not give, however, a president license to place them in unwise peril; they were not cannon fodder.

Those supporting this war have labeled war opponents as "flag burners, hippies, or left wing." I am none of these. Until recently, I proudly considered myself a conservative Republican. America was founded by a great group of men who opposed war, debt, taxation, big government and governmental pomp.

In three short years, Bush has forced upon us the two inevitables in life: death and taxes. George Bush has betrayed the conservative movement and must go in 1992.

Pax Americana leads neither to peace or stability. Rather, Bush's war only plunges our nation deeper

into bankruptcy while it steals the lives of its youth.

John C. Adams
USC law student

Columnist has ego problems

To the editor:

I would like to address Mr. Tige Watts, author of the editorial "People should not be persecuted for ideas" printed in the Feb. 27 issue.

Mr. Watts, you are a disgrace to progressive idealism. You are as close-minded as the people who you criticize for being reactionaries. In your black-and-white reality, those who don't agree with you are simply dismissed as "pucker-butt conservatives."

I would figure that a person with a high level of social awareness such as yourself would have more depth, but I guess I am wrong. You childishly label groups of people to place yourself on one side of some self-conceived bipolar political world to make yourself feel important.

If you are truly concerned about society's problems, then you have better things to do with your time than to parade your face on the pages of newspapers and tell people how proud you are to be different.

I'm sorry, Mr. Watts, but you cannot serve society and your ego at the same time. Until you grow up and realize this, don't call yourself a liberal.

Philip Powell
Economics senior

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