

The Public Eye

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Students rally at a State Board of Education meeting, Austin, Texas, March 10, 2010

Basta Dobbs!

Last year, a coalition of Latino/a groups successfully fought to remove anti-immigrant pundit Lou Dobbs from CNN. Political Research Associates Executive Director Tarso Luís Ramos spoke to *Presente.org* co-founder Roberto Lovato to find out how they did it.

Tarso Luís Ramos: Tell me about your organization, *Presente.org*.

Roberto Lovato: *Presente.org*, founded in May 2009, is the preeminent online Latino advocacy organization. It's kind of like a *MoveOn.org* for Latinos: its goal is to build Latino power through online and offline organizing. *Presente* started with a campaign to persuade Governor Edward Rendell of Pennsylvania to take a stand against the verdict in the case of Luis Ramírez, an undocumented immigrant who was killed in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, and whose assailants were acquitted by an all-white jury. We also ran a campaign to support the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court—we produced an “I Stand with Sotomayor” logo and poster that people could display at work or in their neighborhoods and post on their Facebook pages—and a few additional, smaller campaigns, but really the

Basta Dobbs! continues on page 12

From Schoolhouse to Statehouse

Curriculum from a Christian Nationalist Worldview

By Rachel Tabachnick

The Texas Curriculum Controversy

On May 21, Texas School Board member Cynthia Dunbar opened the board's meeting with an invocation: “Whether we look to the first charter of Virginia, or the charter of New England, or the charter of Massachusetts Bay, or the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, the same

objective is present—a Christian land governed by Christian principles.”¹ The board then voted nine to five, along party lines, to adopt new standards that will be used to teach the state's 4.8 million students—resisting the pleas of educators, historians, and even Rod Paige, a former U.S. secre-

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— EDITORIAL —

I've been lucky in my career. For most of my adult life I've worked both for pay and as a volunteer at vital if underfunded publications, where I've done meaningful jobs and been surrounded by smart, politically committed colleagues, many of whom have been quite eccentric, and many of whom have become life-long friends. I haven't gotten rich, but I've learned a lot. So, when I heard that the position of editor of *The Public Eye* was open, I could not resist applying.

The Public Eye has been on my regular reading list for years. As a source of information about the activities, ideas, and influence of the Right, it's sometimes been very scary—not bedtime reading—but it is also a source of hope, a link with the many like-minded people courageously doing good, progressive work, persisting in even the bleakest of times.

It's an honor to join the knowledgeable, experienced staff of PRA. Preserving the legacy and high quality of *The Public Eye*, and the unique service it provides by reporting with accuracy and sophistication on the Right, is a great responsibility—especially since *The Public Eye* is in a transitional period. The potential of the Internet combined with financial pressures are forcing us to evaluate whether printing and mailing the magazine still makes sense; or whether online publication would be more timely, energy-efficient, and inexpensive. The optimism many of us felt at the election of the country's first Black president has dissipated in the ensuing toxic political environment. The Tea Party movement has people on both the Left and the Right flummoxed. Anti-immigrant organizing has revived traditional American racism and xenophobia.

But no matter what the day's headlines, and whether it's in this format or another, *The Public Eye* will continue to publish vital, original research and analysis of the Right: in future issues, you can look for articles about New Orleans five years after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; how the U.S. Christian Right promotes homophobia in Africa; strategies for the reproductive justice movement since healthcare reform; green jobs and greenwashing; and many others. We also plan more reporting on resistance movements—the interview in this issue with Roberto Lovato about the successful *Basta Dobbs!* campaign to remove the anti-immigrant newscaster Lou Dobbs from CNN is just one example of this focus. In the face of today's challenges, it's as important as ever for progressives to understand the opposition; but we must also celebrate and learn from our victories.

— Amy Hoffman

Read the best analysis of the Christian Right on Talk2Action.org!

Talk2Action is a group blog led by Public Eye writer and editorial board member Frederick Clarkson. Read weekly contributions from Fred, Political Research Associates researcher Chip Berlet, and the rest of the best thinkers about the Christian Right.

Visit Talk2Action.org.

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ISSUE 67

Is Abortion “Black Genocide”?

By Kathryn Joyce

This February, a highly provocative series of 65 billboards went up around Atlanta, which featured an African American infant and the proclamation, “Black Children Are an Endangered Species.” The signs directed viewers to a website, TooManyAborted.com, created by the Radiance Foundation—a vague anti-abortion and “personal transformation” nonprofit founded by biracial advertising executive Ryan Bomberger—with funding from Georgia Right to Life.¹

At the unveiling of the billboards, Georgia Right to Life Minority Outreach Director Catherine Davis explained their justification: “Planned Parenthood’s Negro Project,” she said, “is succeeding.”² She was referring to a 1939 project begun by Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger that has inspired decades of claims that family planning is a racist plan to wipe out populations of color. It’s an old argument, with roots in the Black Power and Black Nationalist movements. But in recent years it has become the province of anti-abortion groups who are selectively co-opting civil rights rhetoric to present abortion and even contraception as eugenicist plots disguised as voluntary reproductive choices, which are leading to a slow “Black genocide.”

Recent studies by the Guttmacher Institute found that abortion rates are indeed higher among women of color.³ African Americans, in particular, are thirteen percent of the population but account for 37 percent of all abortions. However, Guttmacher determined, this is due to their greater incidence of unwanted pregnancies, resulting from economic inequality and poor access to contraception and education. Nonetheless, the anti-abortion



One of the Georgia “Black Children Are an Endangered Species” billboards, “corrected” by activists.

movement holds that Black and Brown populations are being targeted by abortion providers who deliberately place clinics in inner-city, low-income neighborhoods.

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For the past several years Black History Month has brought an onslaught of anti-abortion activities related to this “Black genocide” strategy. This year was no exception. At the same time that the Georgia billboards appeared, white Republicans Representative Barry Loudermilk and Senator Chip Pearson introduced the so-called Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act (SB 529

and HB1155) into the state’s legislature. The bill, which the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports⁴ was crafted to pose an immediate challenge to *Roe v. Wade* before the composition of the Supreme Court changes, would criminalize race- and sex-selective abortions and has been fast-tracked through Georgia’s legislature. The Senate passed it on March 26, and although the original House bill floundered in the House special judiciary committee, SB529 quickly replaced it and is currently before the House Judiciary Committee.

The bill, which rests on the assertion that many women are coerced into abortions as a result of race or gender biases, goes on to establish “the offense of criminal solicitation of abortion” and to require doctors to prove patients have not been pressured into abortion. On April 15, Georgia Right to Life launched a series of robocalls that featured 2008 presidential candidate and Fox talk show host Mike Huckabee, stumping for the bill on the grounds of its “powerful implications for the sanctity of human life nationwide.”⁵ The Network of Politically Active Christians has made a similar pitch, and Focus on the Family may soon join the fight.

Kathryn Joyce is a freelance journalist and the author of Quiverfull: Inside the Christian Patriarchy Movement (2009).

Reproductive-rights advocates of color have been appalled by these campaigns, with their implicit accusation that women of color are either dupes or agents of genocide against their own people. (Not to mention that the language of the billboards implies a tone-deaf comparison between Black children and animals.)

“We’re calling the bill the OB/GYN criminalization and racial discrimination act,” says the director of the women-of-color organization SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW, Paris Hatcher.⁶ She notes that the burden of proof the bill puts on doctors would greatly impede healthcare delivery. In an email campaign that has generated hundreds of complaints about the “endangered species” billboards to the owner of the signs, CBS Outdoors, SPARK tweaked a common refrain in the pro-choice community—“trust women”—calling on people to “trust Black women” over those demonizing their decisions. “I think what you have here is tokenized leaders within a White movement floating an agenda,” says Hatcher. “You see White organizations capitalizing off of Black bodies and the shaming and blaming of Black women.”⁷

Civil Rights Rhetoric and “Black Genocide”

The token leaders to whom Hatcher is referring are a small but busy cadre of Black activists working in White-run anti-abortion organizations. For example, in late 2008, Pro-Life Unity hired a Black vice president, Samuel Mosteller,⁸ and in January 2009, after years of failed attempts to reach out to African Americans, Georgia Right to Life hired Davis to spread the word that reproductive healthcare providers such as Planned Parenthood have a “mission to eliminate blacks from America.”⁹

Most visible of these leaders is Alveda King, the niece of Martin Luther King Jr., whose full-time position with Priests for Life was the first funded role for a “Black genocide” activist. Her main strategy—and critics say her sole qualification—has been capitalizing on her uncle’s legacy, often asking, “How can the dream survive

if we murder the children?”¹⁰ She takes frequent aim at a speech delivered on behalf of Martin Luther King Jr. by his wife, Coretta Scott King, in acceptance of the 1966 Margaret Sanger Award. The speech includes a lament about the number of unwanted children among poor Blacks. Alveda King suggests that Martin Luther King didn’t write the speech—to her ears, it sounds like it was written by a woman—and that his wife’s delivery of it was due to a marital disagreement. On Alveda King’s website,¹¹ she annotates the speech with quotations from the Rev. King that she believes refute his apparent support for the birth-control movement.

**“In the African
American community,
if you shout conspiracy,
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the history they’ve had
in this country.”**

Alveda King and other “Black genocide” spokespeople make ample use of imagery that aligns the anti-abortion cause with the Civil Rights Movement. There is no shortage of high-emotion analogies. The Rev. Johnny Hunter, the president of the Life Education and Resource Network (LEARN), talks often about “womb lynchings.”¹² The president of LEARN’s Northeast chapter, the Rev. Clenard Childress, who founded the website BlackGenocide.org, frequently partners with the California-based group Genocide Awareness Project, which hosts “photo-mural” demonstrations on university campuses, comparing abortion to the Rwandan genocide.¹³ In 2007, 10,000 pamphlets published by the Waco, Texas-based anti-abortion group Life Dynamics Incorporated were mailed to inner-city neigh-

borhoods to publicize an appearance by the Black right-wing radio personality, the Rev. Jesse Lee Peterson. The pamphlets denounced “Klan Parenthood” and juxtaposed images of lynchings with those of aborted fetuses, under the slogan “lynching is for amateurs.”

Anti-abortion activists have long compared *Roe v. Wade* to the 1857 *Dred Scott* decision, which opened the territories to slavery. They have also pointed to the Constitutional mandate to count Blacks as 3/5 of a person to further their “abortion as slavery” analogy. Their strategy now includes merging this rhetoric with the wave of fetal “personhood” amendment campaigns in place in eight states—and building in dozens more. In January, the American Life League and Father Frank Pavone, the national director of Priests for Life, hosted a meeting about overturning *Roe v. Wade*, which focused both on recruiting supporters in Black communities and passing fetal personhood bills. “There’s a lot of personhood legislation nationally,” agrees Childress, “and that’s going to remind most African Americans that there was a question about our personhood with *Dred Scott*.”¹⁴

In an email interview, Pavone said¹⁵ that the language of the Civil Rights Movement lends itself seamlessly to the anti-abortion cause. After visits to Martin Luther King’s Ebenezer Baptist Church with the King family, Pavone said, “I have thought to myself, the message is exactly right. Nothing has to change except to include one more group of people—the unborn.” Pavone and Alveda King both sample civil rights language in their outreach to Black pastors, explaining that the “beloved community” must include the unborn, and “that nonviolence includes nonviolence to children in the womb”¹⁶—messages they are furthering this summer through a series of “freedom ride” bus tours kicking off in Birmingham on April 27, led by Alveda King and a host of “Black genocide” leaders.

The apparent success of such rhetoric has encouraged mainstream anti-abortion groups to ask their donors to support out-

reach to Blacks, arguing that these converts to the anti-abortion cause have the potential to revive the movement. Last December, Pavone told his donors, “With your help today we will help African Americans take their rightful place in the pro-life movement . . . men and women who know what it means to be persecuted and treated as ‘non-persons’ . . . men and women who will re-energize the movement.”¹⁷

Promoting Conspiracism

In 1999, Childress helped lead 1,500 people, mostly Black activists, on the “Say-So” anti-abortion march from Newark, New Jersey, to Washington, D.C., where they laid 1,452 roses—the number of abortions black women were then having daily—on the steps of the Supreme Court. Childress, a 2007 candidate for the state assembly who often says that “the most dangerous place for an African American to be is in the womb of their African American mother,” was recruited to the anti-abortion movement by a White Catholic activist who convinced him to attend a 1994 conference featuring the Rev. Johnny Hunter.¹⁸

While other organizations contribute money or materials, Childress supplies bodies for protests from his 200-member, Montclair, New Jersey, congregation, New Calvary Baptist Church. His young “zealots” frequently volunteer for high-commitment activism, such as a bus trip to Birmingham in 2003, where they crashed a mainstream Civil Rights Movement celebration, and recent trips to NAACP conventions to protest the exclusion of “Black genocide” concerns.

Childress is featured in *Maafa 21: Black Genocide in 21st Century America*, a 2009 film produced by Mark Crutcher, a White Texan who runs Life Dynamics Incorporated—the producer of the “Klan Parenthood” brochures. *Maafa* is a Swahili word that refers to the African holocaust of abduction and slavery. The film argues that the *maafa* didn’t end with slavery but rather continues in a plot to exterminate the black population through ongoing eugenics programs created by “wealthy

white elitists.” Its chief villain is Planned Parenthood founder, Margaret Sanger.

“In the African American community, if you shout conspiracy, they’ll listen, because of the history they’ve had in this country,” Childress told me.¹⁹ “I come from the conspiracy tone whenever I’m speaking, especially to African Americans, so they understand you’ll have to do some digging, you’ll have to go beneath the veneer.” (Apparently operating under the same philosophy, Alveda King dismisses the studies citing higher rates of unwanted pregnancy among Black women as the cause for high abortion rates by suggesting that Planned Parenthood intentionally distributes faulty contraception to minor-

**Intellectuals in the
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ity teens so they’ll need abortions.²⁰) Childress’s loose attitude toward historical accuracy seems representative of the broader “Black genocide” movement. Thus, *Maafa 21* sidesteps historical hurdles to suggest that Sanger’s support for sterilization on mental illness grounds (see sidebar) was a coded effort to target Blacks; that a eugenics movement mobilized to legalize abortion to market it to Black women; and that the government “hired Planned Parenthood” to continue eugenics programs.

The film, which received support from Priests for Life, premiered at the United States Capitol Visitor Center last year on Juneteenth, an African American holiday that marks the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. The host was the White Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ)—a

steadfast ally of the “Black genocide” cause. Later, Alveda King and others held a screening of the film for congressional aides. In early March, *Maafa 21* was the feature presentation at the Jubilee Film Festival at the 45th anniversary of the “Bloody Sunday” attacks outside of Selma.²¹ The film has been shown at numerous Black churches and colleges. In April, Childress, sponsored by the Christian student group Every Nation Campus Ministries, discussed the film at Florida A&M, the largest historically black college in the country—an event he predicts will exponentially spread his message into the Black community.²²

In a March fundraising appeal seeking support to fill requests for the film, Crutcher claimed that 13,000 copies had already been distributed. He triumphantly announced, “Life Dynamics has hit pay dirt” with *Maafa 21*, as the film rages “like a wildfire” through the Black community. The film, he said, is “the stone our pro-life movement would use to bring the abortion Goliath to his knees.”

“Black Genocide” and Healthcare Reform

For close to fifteen years, the “Black genocide” movement has drummed up publicity by capitalizing on discussions of race or Black history in the media and promoted the posturing of White anti-abortion activists laying claim to Rosa Parks’s legacy. But from these awkward origins, the movement has grown enormously over the past year. In January, Lou Engle, the White founder of the anti-abortion group Bound4Life as well as of a group that campaigned to pass California’s Proposition 8 forbidding same-sex marriage, convened a Martin Luther King Day march on a large Planned Parenthood clinic under con-

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MARGARET SANGER AND EUGENICS

“The argument has always been there,” says Alex Sanger,¹ Margaret Sanger’s grandson and the chair of the International Planned Parenthood Council—echoing other leaders who can’t remember a time when accusations of racism weren’t made against reproductive-rights activists.

Over the years, the name of the early twentieth-century birth-control advocate Margaret Sanger has become toxic. Recently, when Secretary of State Hillary Clinton received the Margaret Sanger Award, anti-abortion stalwart Senator Chris Smith (R-NJ) raised such a stir that Clinton asked Ellen Chesler, the historian and author of *Woman of Valor: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement in America* (1992), to submit testimony regarding Sanger’s history to the *Congressional Record*.² Likewise, Gloria Feldt, the author of *The War on Choice* (2004) and a former president of Planned Parenthood, recalls that when Sanger was nominated for the Arizona Women’s Hall of Fame, the debate was so heated that the Arizona legislature de-funded the entire Hall of Fame.³

Much of the ire comes from epic misrepresentation of Sanger’s work, especially her ideas about eugenics, or human “selective breeding,” explains Alex Sanger. “Her discussions of eugenics are very complex and nuanced. She said a lot of stuff that nobody at Planned Parenthood agrees with today, but she’s also quoted as saying things she never said.”⁴ Among the quotations frequently and incorrectly credited to Sanger is, “More children from the fit, less from the unfit—that is the chief issue of birth control.” It is so widely misattributed to her that it appeared on the wall of an International Center for Photography exhibit on eugenics. Another common offender showed up in a recent fundraising letter from Priests for Life: “Colored people are like human weeds and have to be exterminated.” The historian Esther Katz, director of the Margaret Sanger Papers Project at New York University, explains that Sanger never said anything of the sort.⁵

According to the “Black genocide” movement, Sanger worked in cahoots with the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis to advance a theory of White supremacy and forced sterilization. The truth is more complicated than this caricature. Sanger did embrace ideas about eugenics that were popular in the 1920s; the eugenics movement offered her legitimacy, says Chesler, adding that

Margaret Sanger had no choice but to engage eugenics. It was a mainstream movement, like public health or the environment today. It was to sanitize birth control and remove it from the taint of immorality and the taint of feminism, which was seen as an individualistic and antisocial group that addressed the needs of women only, and immoral women at that.⁶

This was an era when President Teddy Roosevelt condemned birth control as immoral, fearful that it would lead to the “race suicide” of white Protestants.⁷ Like the president, most eugenicists didn’t believe in birth control and were hostile to the idea of women’s bodily autonomy. Sanger, conversely, derided what she called “cradle competition”⁸ by leaders angling for higher birthrates among the White upper class and said women’s first procreative duty was not to the state, nor to their race, but to themselves. She believed women’s reproductive choices

should be voluntary and individualistic. Eugenics is unquestionably at odds with today’s reproductive-rights principles, says Chesler, but Sanger was ahead of her time in an era when the majority of people believed in forced eugenic sterilization.⁹

One of eleven children, Sanger was motivated by her experience of growing up in crowded tenements with high rates of infant and maternal mortality. “She believed women were natural eugenicists,” explains Alex Sanger, “and that birth control, which could limit the number of children and improve their quality of life, was the panacea to accomplish this.”¹⁰

When Sanger began her work, Black communities were ignored by the medical establishment. So, from early on, Sanger’s clinics in Harlem were welcomed by esteemed black leaders of the day including W.E.B. Du Bois and Mary McLeod Bethune, the founder of the National Council of Negro Women. In 1939 Sanger founded the Negro Project, a birth control campaign for southern Blacks. As soon as it secured funding, the project was wrested from her control by the White men running the Birth Control Federation of America—a merger between Sanger’s Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau and the American Birth Control League—and by Robert Seibels, the chairman of the Committee on Maternal Welfare of the South Carolina Medical Association.¹¹ The new leadership dismissed Sanger’s plan to introduce the project with a widespread educational campaign that would be run by Black experts and leaders. It was in this context that Sanger had written, “We don’t want word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population, and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of their more rebellious members.” Sanger meant that she didn’t want rumors to spread of nefarious intentions behind family planning¹² (a key reason, Alex Sanger adds, why she never allowed herself to profit from her birth control innovations). However, generations of activists have presented Sanger’s remark that she didn’t want word to “go out” as proof that she secretly intended genocide. Sanger had nothing to do with the project’s implementation, and indeed, as the Margaret Sanger Papers Project holds, it was a failure, enacted without regard for Black needs and in terms that today sound blatantly racist. Nevertheless, her early involvement is still cited by the Black genocide movement as evidence that she supported coercive programs.

In years past, says Esther Katz, these arguments spread slowly, as only zealots sought out materials like the lurid 1979 pamphlet, *Margaret Sanger: Father of Modern Society*, which paints Sanger as a promiscuous Nazi sympathizer.¹³ But starting in the mid-1990s, the Internet enabled accusations to fly farther and faster, and unsourced, unchecked material built a mountain of false allegations and attributions, with Wikipedia a key battleground. “It fits in with the tendency to use the Big Lie as a tool. You can take the smallest phrase and make a whole industry out of it. It’s a deliberate refusal to address the complexity of our past and its figures,” says Katz.¹⁴

In fact, Katz says, Sanger was among the few family planning activists who sought to partner with those Black leaders who believed uncontrolled reproduction was harming their communities. Not all of them did. Du Bois envisioned a “talented tenth”—a Black elite made possible

by family planning in poor Black communities, but Black separatist figures such as Marcus Garvey opposed birth control. Sanger was also opposed by many mainstream churches, both Black and White. The Catholic Church called Sanger an antisemite when she opened a clinic in a Jewish neighborhood, despite her marriage to a Jew, and alleged she was trying to eliminate the poor during the Depression, despite her own roots in urban poverty.

Of course, serious abuses sprang from the eugenics movement with which Sanger was allied, including forced or coerced sterilizations of tens of thousands of women, mostly Black or Latina. Although Sanger opposed racially based eugenics and generally believed that sterilization should be voluntary, she made an exception in the cases of people she thought were unable to parent their children, such as the mentally ill—a position upheld by the Supreme Court in its 1927, eight-to-one *Buck v. Bell* decision concerning an allegedly “feeble-minded” White woman. But while this is downplayed in biographies of the judges involved, Sanger’s association with eugenics has been so overemphasized it often eclipses her role in promoting birth control.

Reproductive rights advocates have successfully refocused population-control programs from abusive tactics such as sterilization to women’s choices. Yet we’re too close historically to the abuses of eugenics to ignore them—especially since the abuses aren’t all in the past. Most recently, in 2008, John LaBruzzo, a Republican member of the Louisiana House, proposed paying poor women \$1,000 to sterilize themselves. Alex Sanger concludes that his grandmother’s attempt “to co-opt eugenics in a bid for respectability” was a resounding failure, with dangerous fallout that continues to this day.¹⁵

End Notes

¹ Interview with author, February 15, 2010

² Interview with author, January 5, 2010

³ Interview with author, February 5, 2010

⁴ Interview with author, February 15, 2010

⁵ Interview with author, January 14, 2010

⁶ Interview with author, January 5, 2010

⁷ “Eugenics, Race, and Margaret Sanger Revisited: Reproductive Freedom for All?,” Hypatia (http://www.kintera.org/atf/cf/%7B4FA48DB8-CE54-4CD3-B335-553F8BE1C230%7D/AlexanderSanger_Hypatia.pdf)

⁸ Alex Sanger Interview with author, February 15, 2010

⁹ Interview with author, January 5, 2010

¹⁰ Interview with author, February 15, 2010

¹¹ “Birth Control or Race Control? Sanger and the Negro Project,” Margaret Sanger Papers Project (http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/bc_or_race_control.html)

¹² “Birth Control or Race Control? Sanger and the Negro Project,” Margaret Sanger Papers Project (http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/bc_or_race_control.html)

¹³ “The Demonization of Margaret Sanger,” Margaret Sanger Papers Project (http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/demonization_of_ms.html)

¹⁴ Interview with author, January 14, 2010

¹⁵ “Eugenics, Race, and Margaret Sanger Revisited: Reproductive Freedom for All?,” Hypatia (http://www.kintera.org/atf/cf/%7B4FA48DB8-CE54-4CD3-B335-553F8BE1C230%7D/AlexanderSanger_Hypatia.pdf)

struction in Houston, calling it an “abortion supercenter that targets the minority community.”²³ The march drew prominent White anti-abortion leaders, including the Family Research Council’s Tony Perkins and the president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, Richard Land.

The stage had been set earlier in the year,

as the abortion debate overwhelmed healthcare reform. In mid-July, the White congressional representative Todd Tiahrt (R-KS) argued against President Obama’s healthcare bill on “Black genocide” grounds, suggesting that Obama’s mother might have aborted him if she’d had the option of “taxpayer-funded abortions.”²⁴ Tiahrt was backed up by a series of five

op-ed essays in the conservative *Washington Times*, written by prominent Black leaders of the “abortion as genocide” cause, which urged Republicans to adopt the issue in their fight against healthcare reform. At press conferences throughout the summer, Alveda King and her colleagues kept the rhetoric heated, telling the media that “genocide is not healthcare.” In an open letter to President Obama in August, a writer for the creationist Discovery Institute implied that John Holdren, Obama’s pick to head the Office of Science and Technology Policy, was a eugenicist targeting people of color in developing nations.²⁵

Sex- and Race-Selective Abortion

At the end of February, Representative Franks upped the ante in the “Black genocide” debate, telling a blogger that with “half of all black children” being aborted, “Far more of the African American community is being devastated by the politics of today than were devastated by the policies of slavery.”²⁶ After his statement, a lineup of leaders from the “Black genocide” movement came to his defense. Alveda King declared that any critics of Franks shared “the slave owner’s mindset.”²⁷ Day Garder of the National Black Pro-Life Union said Franks “should be revered as a great modern day abolitionist.”²⁸

Franks’ activism on the subject is longstanding. In 2008, he said a “Black genocide” protest in Washington, D.C., inspired him to sponsor a bipartisan House bill that would prohibit “discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex or race, and for other purposes.”²⁹ The bill, which benefited from the collaboration of “Black genocide” leaders like King and Childress, was reintroduced by Franks last spring as the Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act of 2009. It has 42 sponsors.

Intellectuals in the anti-abortion movement have long counseled linking abortion with female infanticide and sex-selective abortion, as a method of converting moderates who would recoil at the thought of reproductive choice as

a weapon of gender inequality. This argument is making the rounds in states as well. Oklahoma passed a law banning sex-selective abortion in 2009 (it was struck down this February on technical grounds). Expanding the strategy to race may be even more potent. In addition to Georgia, with its Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act, Arizona, Mississippi, and New Jersey have proposed bans on race- and sex-selective abortions.

When Franks first introduced his bill in 2008, the Catholic anti-abortion and anti-contraception group, Population Research Institute, mused that the bill's premise—that there is discrimination through abortion—could be as powerful as the campaign against so-called partial-birth abortion. “Even those who believe in the absolute right to destroy a child under any and all circumstances, it is safe to predict, will be uncomfortable defending such an extreme position,” PRI President Steve Mosher suggested.³⁰

There's a clear sense among abortion-rights activists in Georgia that the campaigns there are deliberate efforts to splinter alliances between reproductive-rights and racial-justice organizations, as well as to lay the groundwork for a national push. During a March press call³¹ organized by the blog Reproductive Health Reality Check, Loretta Ross, the national coordinator of Sister Song: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, explains that because Georgia has the highest number of Black elected officials in the country, the anti-abortion movement is using the state as test case for enshrining the “Black genocide” argument into law. The issue has been deployed, she says, in classic wedge-politics fashion, to draw Blacks and South Asians—who are allegedly the targets of providers promoting sex-selective abortions—into the conservative base.

“I actually see this as an opening salvo,” says Ross, “because if the Right can deliver this bill in the state of Georgia as a successful trial balloon, I think it will embolden them to believe that around the country they can drive a wedge into the African American community and into

other communities of color.” In fact, Sister Song has heard reports that a Republican legislator in Arizona may soon introduce a bill on race- and sex-selective abortion aimed at finding support among the Latino community.

SPARK's Paris Hatcher agrees:

We know Georgia is a testing ground for harmful legislation. It started with the “personhood” amendment in 2008. We know that if it happens here in Georgia, it will happen in other places, and if there is a victory here in Georgia, it will increase the momentum in other states where bills are located.³²

“Not allowing women of color to have access to medically accurate information and health-care is itself part of a mass plot to hold back communities of color.”

Anti-Abortion Movement Cynicism

On the basis of their past votes on issues of concern to Black voters, says Ross, the Georgia bill's sponsors are not convincing advocates for civil rights. She notes that

It's really hard to persuade African American women in the city of Atlanta [that this bill], headlined by rural White Republicans, is truly about saving Black or South Asian children. These are the same legislators who, when we look at their voting records, when it comes to improving schools or getting guns off the streets, are not people whose

votes indicate that they care about children of color once they're here.³³

Indeed, during the three hours of debate preceding the passage of SB 529 in Georgia's Senate, Black Democratic Senator Vincent Fort indicated his skepticism³⁴ by introducing an amendment to it addressing racial profiling—an issue tackled in an earlier Senate bill that never made it out of committee. His amendment was ruled unconstitutional.

While in recent years conservative Christian groups have made efforts, both calculated and sincere, to address racism, the Religious Right has an undeniable history of antipathy to civil rights and minority concerns. The quasiprogressive language of “Black genocide” rings hollow when politicians such as Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC), a Confederate flag defender, sign on to Franks's bill; when Tony Perkins, who managed the Louisiana Senate campaign that famously bought White supremacist David Duke's mailing list,³⁵ protests Houston's Planned Parenthood on antiracist grounds; or when Pro-Life Radio's Stephen Peroutka calls for “the defunding of the racist agenda of Planned Parenthood,”³⁶ while he and his brother and law partner Michael are the principal sponsors of the Institute on the Constitution³⁷: a thinktank closely tied to the far-right Constitution Party, which calls for repealing the Voting Rights Act.

Alfred Ross, the founder and president of the Institute for Democracy Studies, which researches antidemocratic movements in the U.S., studied right-wing organizations in the early 1990s for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. He tracked ties between the anti-abortion movement and fringe groups such as the Taxpayer Party (now the Constitution Party) that, he says, represented “the first underground movement that justified the creation of a militia.” These groups promoted antisemitic conspiracy theories that condemned legal abortion as a Jewish plot.

More recently, attacks on Planned Parenthood have found ammunition in the work of the anti-abortion ingénue Lila Rose, a White University of California

Los Angeles student who gained fame for a “sting operation” that caught several Planned Parenthood clinics accepting donations targeted to fund abortions for Black women. (Rose was inspired, boasts Childress, by reading his BlackGenocide.org website.) Rose’s collaborator in the scheme was James O’Keefe, the right-wing activist behind a similar 2009 sting against the community organizing group ACORN, in which O’Keefe posed as a pimp. In phone calls to Planned Parenthood, O’Keefe claimed he was donating out of concern that affirmative action would harm the prospects of his (fictitious) child. However, complicating the “gotcha” appeal of his script are revelations that O’Keefe’s racist playacting isn’t far removed from his college history of holding an “affirmative action bake sale” or his later involvement in a 2006 Race and Conservatism conference, sponsored by the Robert A. Taft Club, a paleoconservative organization affiliated with a network of racist groups, which drew an audience of noted anti-semites and White supremacists. O’Keefe was arrested this winter for breaking into the office of Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA).

Alfred Ross warns, though, that overstressing the relationship between the anti-abortion movement and racism may be missing the mark. “Some people who make that argument aren’t from the racist right, they’re just using an opportunistic moment to recruit supporters,” he says. From the late 1980s on, right-wing groups such as Ralph Reed’s Christian Coalition attempted to recruit Black churches using social issues such as LGBT rights, on which these churches took conservative positions. “In spite of the barbarism of their agenda,” says Ross, “they’re marginally creative enough to make up reasons why people who aren’t allies should become allies. They’re bottom feeding; whatever bait they can throw up, no matter how rancid, they use.”³⁸

Kevin Alexander Gray, an African American civil rights leader and the author of *Waiting for Lightning to Strike: The Fundamentals of Black Politics* (2008), sees

White fundamentalist outreach to the Black church as destructive. It has shifted the Black church away from liberation theology, he says, and toward conservative social action, particularly through the prosperity gospel movement, which has flourished in Black churches by promising financial rewards to the faithful.

Likewise, the organizations screening *Maafa 21* for black audiences, such as the Frederick Douglass Foundation, Global Outreach Campus Ministries, and the Network of Politically Active Christians (NPAC), which is now lobbying for Georgia’s “Black Genocide” bill, “have close ties with religious right powerhouses Focus on the Family and Family Research Council,” says Sarah Posner, the author of *God’s Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican*

The “Black genocide” argument has remained a male-driven conversation that shuts out women of color and ignores the role they have played in the reproductive justice movement.

Crusade for Values Voters (2008). Some groups, like the NPAC, which shares offices with the Family Research Council, were created specifically “to bolster Religious Right and Republican outreach to Blacks,” Posner says.³⁹

The Power of Rumor

Maafa 21, says Posner, argues “that Blacks have been ‘hoodwinked’ by diabolical, eugenics-promoting family planning advocates.” The film, she says, “is intended to tap into anger about the Tuskegee syphilis experiment and involuntary sterilizations of the early- to mid-twentieth century.”⁴⁰ NPAC Executive Director Dean Nelson told Posner that *Maafa 21* screenings have been successful

because they reinforce Black people’s historically justified sense that they’ve been lied to.

But the comparison between the Tuskegee experiment and abortion is a false one, says Faith Pennick, the director and producer of *Silent Choices*, a 2007 documentary about Black women and abortion. The Tuskegee victims had no opportunity to give informed consent—unlike women seeking abortions. Nonetheless, says Pennick, who is African American, the genocide argument “hits a nerve with Black people, particularly those who are uncomfortable with abortion, because they say, here’s another example of us being messed with.”⁴¹ The sad reality is that rumors about eugenics experiments keep many young women of color from accessing what’s often the only affordable medical care in their communities.

Pamela Merritt, an African American blogger and the statewide e-organizer for Planned Parenthood affiliates in Missouri, witnessed this firsthand in 2003, when she volunteered in a transitional home for teen mothers in St. Louis. In a discussion about where the women could obtain affordable HIV/AIDS tests, their first reaction was, “Not the Planned Parenthood!” When Merritt asked them why, they told her that at Planned Parenthood, women are given shots that will keep them from ever having babies. “It wasn’t the same thing as the prolife rhetoric that you shouldn’t even walk through the door,” says Merritt. “It’s the sense that, if I walk through that door, they’re going to do something to make me not have this baby.”⁴²

The big issue, for Merritt, is sex education. She has met a stream of young women in her community who have been taught so little about reproduction that a number aren’t really sure where children come from, and there is a vicious cycle of STD re-infection among the St. Louis population. Into this knowledge vacuum come out-of-state groups such as Lou Engle’s Bound4Life, which tour local churches to promote the idea of Planned Parenthood’s

“Black genocide” agenda. “Call me militant,” Merritt says, “but from my perspective, not allowing more women of color, without fear or dogma or this crazy conspiracy theory, to have access to medically accurate information and health care, is itself part of a mass plot to hold back communities of color.”⁴³

“Dupes” and “Sell-Outs”

In the 1990s, when Alex Sanger, Margaret Sanger’s grandson and the chair of the International Planned Parenthood Council, ran Planned Parenthood New York City, he observed that the Black escorts working at the city’s clinics were particular targets of protesters, who would single them out and accuse them of committing genocide against their own people. Sanger sees the problem as originating in older splits in the various Black rights movements, which, he says, were often along gender lines, as Black women leaders demanded the ability to control their fertility while male leaders were more concerned about “the genocide issue.”⁴⁴

Co-opting this old fight, anti-abortion groups claim that Blacks who support choice are either genocidal elitists or dupes. Alveda King suggests that a White-led birth control movement “cultivate[d] Black leaders” to coerce them into targeting other people of color.⁴⁵ Day Gardner likewise refers to the Black politicians, ministers, and community organizers who worked with Margaret Sanger in Harlem as Judases “who sold their souls for ‘thirty pieces of silver’” when they were hired to enact “ethnic cleansing.”⁴⁶

Childress and *Maafa 21* focus on mainstream Black organizations, such as the NAACP, and leaders such as Jesse Jackson, who at one time opposed abortion rights, depicting them as formerly principled advocates who bought into Planned Parenthood lies in exchange for campaign support. In *Maafa 21*, the Dallas, Texas, pastor Stephen Broden, a leader in the “Black genocide” movement who has addressed Tea Party conventions, remarks of Jackson, “There’s never been a shortage of Black leaders willing to sell us down the

river.” (Gray, who was Jackson’s South Carolina presidential campaign manager in 1988, instead suggests that Jackson’s understanding of the issue evolved.)⁴⁷

The argument leaves Black women facing the accusation that they are either fools or murderers—and either way complicit in what Mark Crutcher says is Planned Parenthood’s sinister plan for “convincing the target group to commit mass suicide.”⁴⁸ The accusation cuts to the heart of an intersection of sexism and racism for Black women, who have historically been pressed to choose allegiance between two aspects of their beings: their gender and their race.

It continues today. Maame Mensima-Horn, an African American activist based in Miami who consulted for Sister Song, says that the “Black genocide” argument has remained a male-driven conversation that shuts out women of color and ignores the role they have played in the reproductive justice movement. Mensima-Horn sees a new generation of male activists relegating women to “breeder” status and blaming them for a deficit in the Black population.⁴⁹

It seems a neat return to the 1920s debate in the Black community about how to best uplift the race. W.E.B. DuBois argued for “quality versus quantity,” saying that Black interests were best met by family planning that allowed parents to invest more in fewer children, not by simply birthing greater numbers. In 2010, Catherine Davis of Georgia Right to Life seems to take the latter position, saying that if Black women hadn’t had abortions, “we would be 59 million strong.”⁵⁰

The emphasis underscores a history of sexism in the Civil Rights Movement and its institutions, says Gray, in which Black women’s intellectual and physical labor was the backbone of the movement yet was rarely acknowledged. Today, “Black genocide” movement leaders, such as Childress and King, emphasize male leadership in both the movement and church—not surprising in conservative circles, but the destructive effect on women of color continues.

For Gray, this kind of sexism is a result of White fundamentalist outreach as well as a symptom of a larger problem: the

breakdown of political education in Black politics. He says,

The result of it is that we have people claiming that the *maafa* is the abortion of black kids, instead of what it really is: the great catastrophe related to the slave trade. It means a bunch of frauds can rewrite your history and make it everything that it’s not. The freedom movement, which is what civil rights is about, is about the freedom of citizens to determine their lives for themselves and make their own opportunities.

And not, Grays says, to become a mother “because these people think you ought to be a mother.”⁵¹

Women of Color at the Intersection

The question of how to counter the “Black genocide” argument is almost as complicated as its history. Ellen Chesler, historian and author of *Woman of Valor: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement in America* (1992) says that, after one hundred years of variations on the argument, she’s not sure what the response should be.⁵² Alex Sanger says it’s the same dilemma that faces the larger prochoice movement, of boiling down a complex argument to a catchphrase, to counter anti-abortion slogans that claim abortion is murder, or now, genocide.⁵³

Gloria Feldt, author of *The War on Choice* (2004) and a former president of Planned Parenthood, says that many reproductive-rights activists who came out of the Civil Rights Movement are so horrified by accusations of racism that they haven’t been able to look at their history.

We’re not pure in this country, but Margaret Sanger was probably on the leading edge of those looking for a different way. It does take a certain amount of energy and research to put the truth out there, but the truth is that for any woman of any race, ethnicity, or economic level, the first and most important thing she must have is the right to make her own repro-

ductive decisions. “To own and control her own body,” as Sanger herself says.⁵⁴

Part of the answer could be more discussion of the issue led by women of color. Feldt notes the need for more diversity in the reproductive-rights movement, and more women of color in visible leadership roles. Faith Pennick agrees that inadequate outreach by prochoice groups to women of color, and insufficiently direct attempts to address the complicated history of Sanger and eugenics, has “left a door open for pro-life organizations to come in and say, ‘they don’t care about you, but we do.’”⁵⁵

“That’s my motivation for addressing it, because this is what makes someone feel not comfortable in joining a movement we need more women of color joining,” says Pamela Merritt.⁵⁶

Another part of the solution, many activists agree, must be more discussion of sexuality and reproductive issues in communities of color. Gray says that’s a problematic absence in the Black community, which avoids discussions of abortion just as it has shunned talk of AIDS and gay issues.

When you don’t talk about it, it gives all these other folks who have their own political agenda room to step in and shape the argument as they have with the Black church, as it relates to gay rights and women’s rights. Nothing is being said, so they’re filling up the space.⁵⁷

“There is a need to have more conversations,” agrees Paris Hatcher. She points out that the Georgia billboards and legislative campaign have had the unintended, positive effect of drawing hundreds of people into the debate—to rallies, email campaigns, and public comment on media stories about the issue. The conversation itself affirms a long unacknowledged truth: that abortion is a Black issue. “There is ample silence in our communities, and it’s important that we are vocal about what’s going on and talking about what’s going on with our bodies,” says Hatcher. “If we’re not talking about them, they’re being divvied up by other people.”⁵⁸ ■

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BASTA DOBBS! *cont'd from page 1*



Roberto Lovato, co-founder, *Presente.org*

one that put us on the map was the *Basta Dobbs* ["Enough with Dobbs"] campaign.

Of all the anti-immigrant individuals, organizations, and media pundits out there, why did you decide to target Lou Dobbs?

Lou Dobbs probably had the broadest reach of any anti-immigrant pundit in the United States. Every day at 7:00 pm, prime time, on CNN, he would spout anti-immigrant sentiments and provide a platform for the most extreme elements, like the Federation for American Immigration Reform [FAIR] and the vigilante Minutemen organization, whose members were responsible for killing Raul Flores and his nine-year-old daughter Brisenia during a home invasion in May 2009.

CNN has aspirations of being a serious news organization, and most people there really resented being affiliated with a network that was showcasing Lou Dobbs. We also had some internal intelligence from people at CNN telling us that the network was concerned about a drop in Dobbs's ratings.

Tarso Luís Ramos is the executive director of PRA. Before joining PRA, he served as the founding director of the Western States Center's racial justice program and as director of its Wise Use Public Exposure Project.

What was your personal interest in this?

I'm a journalist, and I came out of retirement as an organizer to do this campaign. During the 1994 campaign against California's anti-immigrant ballot initiative, Proposition 187, I was the head of the country's largest immigrant-rights organization, in Los Angeles—the Central American Resource Center, CARECEN. So I know who's who in the immigrant-rights movement. [Proposition 187 passed but was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. District Court.]

I took on this campaign for a few reasons. First, I wanted to get Lou Dobbs out. Our campaign called him the most dangerous man for Latinos in the United States. He had a website, a radio show, columns, public appearances, books—a multimedia empire dedicated to the hatred of immigrants and Latinos. We had to do something, if only for our own self-respect.

Number two, it was important to show how to win. You don't build movements without victories.

Number three, I wanted to complement the organizing that was being done online. If you're only online, you're bloodless. Organizing in many ways is about linking personal, cultural, and other narratives to the larger political narratives of our time. Stories are what move people. As a writer and organizer, I'm ecstatic when I see two things that I love to do—strategy and storytelling—combined. I mean, they have always been combined—look at the Zapatistas—but I never saw it as clearly as I do now. The *Basta Dobbs* campaign was a great story—a community rising up to defend itself against a powerful media adversary. It's the combination of online and on-the-ground organizing that will become the central mode of organizing in our time.

Any other reasons for targeting Dobbs and CNN?

During the campaign, people would tell me, "*Yo siento mucho odio hacia Lou Dobbs*"—"I feel a lot of hatred for Lou Dobbs." But I would say, "We have to work not from a place of hatred but from a place where we love ourselves enough to say, 'Stop! *Ya basta!* No more!'" It's like that moment when a woman who's being abused steps up and says, "I love myself enough to protect myself from abuse"—and her life changes. Our campaign had everything to do with love.

Others also targeted Dobbs. How did *Basta Dobbs* relate to those campaigns?

Sure, other groups had tried it, but they weren't national, they weren't online, and they didn't really have a broad strategy. They threatened a boycott, but they never fulfilled that promise. If you make a threat and don't back it up, you're doing us all harm.

A couple of campaigns—one called Drop Dobbs and another called Enough is Enough, organized by Democracia USA—were launched at the same time as ours, and there was some level of coordination. But, we were the only one that focused on organizing the people most affected by Lou Dobbs: Spanish-speaking immigrants. If you don't reach out to the people most affected, what kind of an impact can you have?

So, we stayed very focused. Our group's confluence of strategy, skills, intelligence, passion, and disposition to fight not only contributed to the demise of Lou Dobbs but also defeated one of the most powerful media companies on earth. Because at the end of the day, our target was not Lou Dobbs; it was CNN. That was another big difference between *Basta Dobbs* and other campaigns.

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What are the most dangerous lies Dobbs told about immigrants?

Where do I start? Lou Dobbs explained all kinds of social problems by pointing at immigrants. He claimed that one of every three people in the U.S. prison system is an immigrant—a fabrication. On the *Democracy Now!* television and radio show, the host, Amy Goodman, confronted Dobbs with the fact that fewer than six percent of prisoners are immigrants, and even fewer are undocumented. [Dobbs responded that he “misspoke.”] He’s said immigrants are responsible for a rise in leprosy in the United States. That’s something anybody with access to the Centers for Disease Control website could show is a total fabrication.

Anti-immigrant groups like the Federation of Americans for Immigration Reform [FAIR] have invested a lot of money to create a cultural meme that equates “immigrant” with “criminal,” a falsehood that Dobbs promoted. When he wasn’t doing it himself, he brought on groups such as FAIR or the Minutemen to lie for him. Actually, that may be his biggest and most dangerous lie: giving these groups a national media platform, as if they had some expertise, as if they were anything but the bearers of marginal, extremist, dangerous messages.

What was the *Basta Dobbs* campaign strategy?

From the beginning we knew we were going to target CNN, and we actually opened up a front inside of CNN. We had the audacity, the ambition, and the ability to develop networks of journalists and other sources to gather information about CNN and Lou Dobbs’s position there. We got a lot of *inteligencia popular*, popular intelligence, from CNN employees. The decision to let go of Dobbs was up to CNN President Jon Klein, so we knew he was the one we had to go after, more than we were going after Lou Dobbs. At one point during the campaign, Klein told someone close to him—and to us—that

he felt like he was being surveilled or that there was a leak of information. And he was right.

At the center of our strategy was online organizing and getting people to use their computers, cell phones, video, and social networks to become politically engaged. Something like ninety percent of the population has a cell phone. When everybody has a movie house, television set, computer, Internet, and a radio in their pocket—and that’s only going to grow—you have an opportunity to organize and tell stories like never before.

I’m recording this interview on my cell phone.

Exactly—it’s a new era. But alongside of the online organizing, you still have to deal with

We have to work not from a place of hatred but from a place where we love ourselves enough to say, “Stop! *Ya basta!* No more!”

people in the streets. Some people think, “Now that there is online organizing, we don’t need to do offline organizing”—a stupid and dangerous idea if ever there was one! We worked with groups that had a base offline to complement our work.

Another component of our campaign was public relations. I appeared on Spanish-language radio and television all over the United States. We live in a media age, and the private media is no less predisposed to censorship than a totalitarian state is. It is not going to put out your message for you, especially when you’re criticizing it. I believe the media promotes violence against women and, in the case of Lou Dobbs, against entire communities. And one of the great pleasures of the campaign for me was being able to plant a little seed

of disruption to the cultural system behind the violence.

How did you put your strategy into action?

Initially, we planned to create a credible threat, in the form of 100,000 signatures on a petition, which would allow us to target advertisers—just as our sister-organization Color of Change did last year, when it successfully persuaded companies like Wal-Mart, CVS, and Best Buy to pull their ads from the Glenn Beck show. We had reached the magic number of 100,000 when Dobbs was ousted.

We knew, and CNN knows, that in the future, no media company will survive without capturing a segment of the 50 million-strong Latino market. So, a major tactic was to threaten the CNN brand. The

network was previewing its *Latino in America* documentary, hosted by Soledad O’Brien, in cities around the country. We organized in the top 25 Latino cities in the United States, and everywhere the show went, we’d give it a “welcome.” CNN realized that it was going to be trashed on a regular basis—daily if possible. The network sent cameras to many of the cities where we mobilized, but the demonstrations never appeared on any CNN program. CNN people told me that the network was trying to figure out how massive and effective our movement was.

Organizing in the streets matters as much as ever. Your adversaries won’t tell you that they’re watching you, but they are. They care because their brand is being crushed with every step that you march.

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By Thomas Cincotta

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We were also planning to hit CNN beyond U.S. borders. We were ready to launch *Basta Dobbs en América Latina* in ten Latin American countries on November 13th, but Dobbs was fired on the 12th. We had been in discussions with partners in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and other Latin American countries. We'd also been in discussions with Latin American media outlets. They were hungry to go after CNN, because it's the number-one network in Latin America—their primary competitor. So we would have received massive coverage in Latin America along with support on the ground in what would have become a hemispheric fight between U.S. Latinos and Latin Americans, on the one hand, and one of the most powerful media companies on the planet, on the other.

I really regret that we didn't get to do that. Increasingly, our adversaries on any given issue are of a global nature—global corporations. Let's not even mention BP! If you're going to take on a global adversary it makes strategic sense to mount a global or at least a hemispheric campaign.

Was CNN aware of your plans?

At the end it was. I don't know if that was the deciding factor, and *Basta Dobbs* can't take total credit. There were the other

campaigns, the internal discontent at CNN, and Dobbs's drop in ratings. But we knew that our pressure helped CNN President Jon Klein make the right decision.

What was the campaign's relationship with its organizing partners and to what extent did Presente build its own base over the course of the campaign?

Basta Dobbs was a unique coalition of immigrant-rights organizations from across the United States—the Florida Immigrant Coalition, the Dolores Street Mission, Derechos Humanos, Centro Presente, and others—and media justice groups like Magnet, New Mexico Media and Literacy

In the future, no media company will survive without capturing a segment of the 50-million-strong Latino market.

Project, and the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. We wouldn't have been able to do it without them. At the local level these groups provided spokespeople, ideas, access, and people power. Also, a bunch of bloggers were posting regularly about our issues and hitting their audiences.

We got support from Latino groups like the Willie Velasquez Institute, the National Hispanic Media Coalition, and the Latino Policy Institute, and we got solidarity from non-Latino groups like AlterNet, Credo Mobile, MoveOn, Democrats.com, and Color of Change.

Also important were our friends in the media, especially inside CNN. Lou Dobbs made a lot of enemies.

Any particularly unusual partners in your coalition?

We got a call from a mostly Latina troop

of Girl Scouts who said they were ready to march from their home in southern Georgia to Atlanta, to take it to CNN. We were gearing up to do that when the campaign ended. Maybe that's really what caused the demise of Lou Dobbs—the invincible force of the Girl Scouts!

What about the people who signed the *Basta Dobbs* petition—were they newly activated or had they been involved in other campaigns?

I don't have statistics, but I have an anecdotal sense about the tens of thousands of people who signed on via text messaging: the majority had probably never been organized before—on- or offline. They were working people, Spanish-speaking immigrants.

When I would appear on Spanish-language radio, we would run a public service announcement. All we had to do was let Lou Dobbs speak. That was the beauty of our campaign. We gave Lou Dobbs the platform to do what he does best: hate! Then I'd get on and say, "Okay, if you don't like what he's saying, and you want to do something about it, take out your telephone, text 30644 with the word "*Basta*," and deliver a jab to the ribs of Lou Dobbs and CNN." Each time, we would get between 500 and 1,000 people messaging. That gives you some sense of that disposition to fight, that spirit. You also saw it in people's willingness to come out and march in 25 different cities.

Presente's public service announcements implied that Lou Dobbs was morally responsible for anti-immigrant violence such as the Minuteman killings. How did CNN react to that?

We attached CNN's brand to the hateful speech of Lou Dobbs. We said that as long as CNN continued to employ someone who was telling dangerous lies, and promoting hate groups and ultimately violence against Latinos and immigrants, the red in the CNN logo would stand for blood, which was staining "the most trusted name in news." We didn't even have to make the

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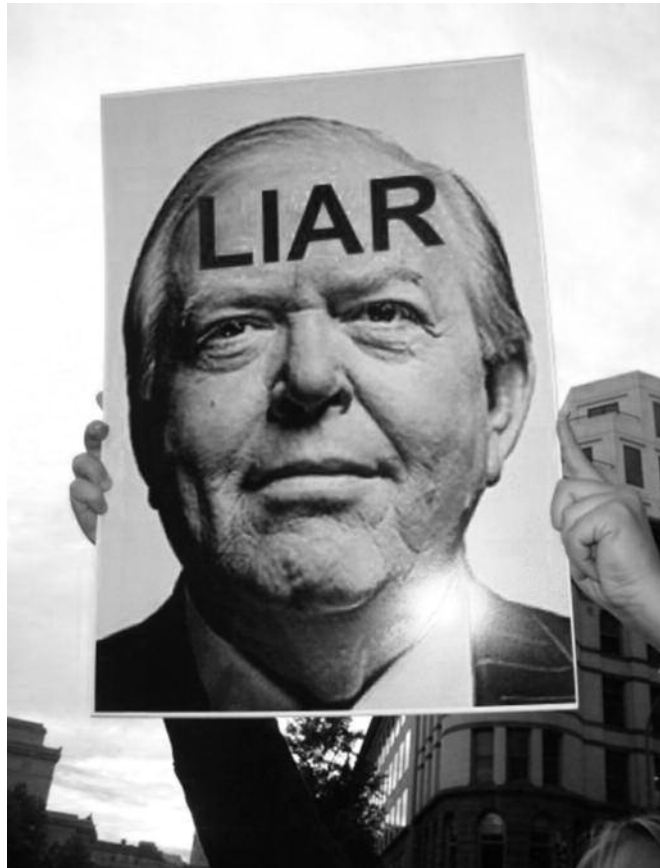
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case. Lou Dobbs made it himself. All we had to do was connect the dots. It was an easy campaign at that level: Lou Dobbs was the gift that kept on giving.

CNN's own personnel were complaining, and their complaints were amplified by an external echo chamber. The combination of internal and external pressure made the life of Jon Klein impossible. Klein may never admit that *Basta Dobbs* had any part in his decision to get rid of Lou Dobbs, but he knows in his heart of hearts that we forced him to confront the issues of Dobbs's hate speech and promotion of violence.

Dobbs is not the only high-profile media figure to contribute to a climate in which acts of violence against targeted communities become more probable. I'm mindful of Bill O'Reilly's recurrent "Tiller the baby killer" refrain in the months preceding the 2009 assassination of George Tiller, one of the only doctors in the country who provided late-term abortions. Still, as you point out, the situation with Dobbs at CNN was different from that of the anchors at Fox, because CNN was concerned about maintaining its image as a reputable news organization. So, are any of the lessons from your campaign applicable to other situations?

The principles of organizing, of political warfare, apply in all situations. You have to align your resources, human and otherwise, with your ultimate objectives. You have to disarm your adversaries to the degree possible—or even better, to make them disarm themselves, from within. But the primary factor in war, politics, and love is spiritual. By spiritual, I mean the psychological, the emotional, the aspirational—the things that help us deal with fear. We need to stir peoples' passions. Just look at the United States in Iraq and in Vietnam. Throughout history, even the most



An anti-Lou Dobbs protester

that insurgent energy—not because of any moral authority, but because of their financial authority and media access.

The Washington groups promoting comprehensive immigration reform have spent tens of millions of dollars—perhaps hundreds of millions—yet they've failed to energize the movement in a way that could bring us victory. We can't just blame the Republicans for obstructing legislation. There's no excuse, and this is a mission-critical issue. We have to win. I'd like to see a change of heart. Recently, some of the D.C. leaders were arrested for civil disobedience. That's a positive development.

A lot depends on foundations. I challenge them to evaluate the results of the tens of millions they've invested inside the Beltway. I challenge them to reconsider and start spending some of that money elsewhere. There's a lot of talent, ability, and even political genius out there, and I encourage our friends in philanthropy to start distributing

money to grassroots immigrant and media-justice groups.

Where did Presente get its funding for *Basta Dobbs*?

When you build an online organization like MoveOn, with a massive list, you don't have to depend on anybody except your members. That's where Presente has to go. We receive funding from our members and private individuals; we're just now starting to get a little foundation support.

How much did *Basta Dobbs* cost?

I don't know precisely, but I can tell you it didn't cost a million. It didn't cost half a million. It didn't cost all that much for what we got. Small, tightly focused organizations with clear strategies often more efficiently deploy resources and are better investments than organizations with massive infrastructures, multiple issues, and rudderless direction.

powerful militaries have been defeated by highly motivated forces.

The immigrant-rights movement should really think about that. Look at the condition of immigration policy right now, with Barack Obama and the Democrats becoming even more aggressive and right wing. Obama is militarizing the border; Homeland Security is targeting immigrants with increasing fervor and continued impunity—and yet Washington, D.C.-based immigration groups are still largely uncritical of Obama. Their decision to bring immigrant rights under the control of the Democratic Party has had a devastating effect on the morale of our communities, which have not been allowed to unleash the power we saw on May 1, 2006—the largest simultaneous marches in U.S. history! The groups in D.C. had pretty much nothing to do with those massive marches. Yet, in the media, the Washington groups are asked to speak for

Mary Moreno Montejano, Center for Community Change



Presente.org pro-Sotomayor poster

Are grassroots campaigns like *Basta Dobbs* and comprehensive immigration reform complementary, or are they pulling the immigrant-rights movement in different strategic directions?

The anti-Dobbs campaign provided a victory to a movement that, thanks to failed leadership, had been stuck in a profoundly defensive and dangerous position. *Basta Dobbs* created a channel for the expression of frustration, anger, and aspiration for a new direction. In so doing we delivered a devastating blow to the anti-immigrant organizations in this country—FAIR and the others—who in Lou Dobbs had had a daily platform for their hateful messages and their lies.

The beyond-the-Beltway groups in the network that *Basta Dobbs* mobilized are not necessarily part of the current comprehensive immigration-reform coalition. Reform is failing right now. If you read immigration-reform proposals you'll find that out of 800 pages or so, fewer than 100 are about legalization; the other 700 are about prosecution, incarceration, deportation, border militarization, and so on. This is a bad bargain for immigrants.

Since Dobbs was dislodged from CNN, the situation for immigrants in this country has arguably worsened, with the passage of Arizona's SB1070 being the clearest indicator. What's next for Presente, and what lessons and resources from the *Basta Dobbs* campaign will it bring to the broader struggle?

I don't have all the answers to that. Right now Presente is supporting the Trail of Dreams. We're providing media and strategy support to four undocumented students—Felipe Matos, Gaby Pacheco, Carlos Roa, and Juan Rodriguez—who walked from Miami, Florida, to Washington, D.C., to educate people about the importance of passing the Dream Act, which would create a path to citizenship for undocumented youth who complete a college degree or two years of military service. In April, another group of six

We didn't even have to make the case. Lou Dobbs made it himself. All we had to do was connect the dots.

undocumented students began a second walk, from New York City.

All these students are heroic figures. The original Dream walkers met with President Obama on June 16 to demand that he issue an executive order stopping deportations of Dream Act-eligible students. Depending on his response, we'll either celebrate another major victory for the immigrant rights movement, or we will have to push harder, this time not against Lou Dobbs but against the president of the United States, the commander in chief of the war on immigrants.

As the head of the government, Obama has

the final authority over the activities of the Department of Homeland Security and ICE, Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He's made no statement about the cold-blooded murder of fourteen-year-old Sergio Hernandez by a U.S. Border Patrol agent outside Ciudad Juarez on June 7th. He's been silent about human-rights violations by ICE, the most militarized component of the federal government except for the Pentagon. When ICE terrorizes adults and children in its raids, it's ultimately President Obama—not Arizona Governor Janice Brewer or Sheriff Joe Arpaio—who is responsible. Across the United States, the flood of trauma that is destroying the lives of immigrants is ultimately caused by President Obama. Presente is planning a campaign to educate the larger community about this, in conjunction with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.

Are you working on SB1070, the Arizona law that encourages the racial profiling of Latinos as suspected criminals?

SB1070 must be defeated at all costs. There are a lot of actors involved in fighting it. We thought we could make a contribution by doing what other communities have done around race issues in Arizona, which is to get a major sports event to pull out. [When Arizona rescinded Martin Luther King Day in 1991, the National Football League moved the 1993 Super Bowl site from Phoenix to Pasadena, California.] Presente has started a campaign to persuade Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig to pull the 2011 All-Star Game out of Arizona. In one week we gathered 100,000 signatures, and about a million people have signed up on Facebook. There have been actions in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and San Francisco. So far, Selig has simply pointed to the racial diversity of Major League Baseball as a reflection of his commitment to civil rights. Still, we're confident that we'll persuade him to do the right thing, just as we persuaded Jon Klein to do the right thing. ■

SCHOOLHOUSE TO STATEHOUSE *continued from page 1*

tary of education under President George W. Bush. The new standards represent a shift toward a Christian nationalist history worldview, which can already be found in numerous textbooks for homeschooling and private schools. The outcome is not surprising, since the appointed advisory board included one of the nation's most active promoters of this brand of revisionist history, David Barton. (See sidebar.)

A *New York Times* editorial pointed out that the Texas board did back down on a few of its “most outrageous efforts”—such as renaming the slave trade, the “Atlantic triangular trade”—but it nevertheless managed “to justify injecting more religion into government.” According to the *Times*, the curriculum differentiates between the Founders’ protection of religious freedom and “separation of church and state,”² which it deplors. Other states will feel the effects of the Texas decision, since the state is the second-largest purchaser of textbooks in the United States (behind California) and, as the *Chronicle of Higher Education* noted, “national publishers often tailor their texts to [Texas] standards.”³ A California state senator responded by introducing a bill that would ensure his state would not be using any of the new Texas guidelines.⁴

The historian Eric Foner says that the problem with the changes in the Texas standards is not the inclusion of the role that modern conservatism has played. His own textbook, *Give Me Liberty!* (2004), includes a chapter titled “The Conservative Resurgence.” Rather, he says, the problem is “what the new standards tell us about conservatives’ overall vision of American history and society and how they hope to instill that vision in the young.”⁵ Foner explains,

The standards run from kindergarten through high school, and certain themes obsessively recur. Judging from the updated social studies cur-

Rachel Tabachnick is an independent researcher and contributor to Talk2Action.org, the group blog about the Christian Right.

DAVID BARTON

In addition to serving as an appointee on the Texas State Board of Education advisory board on social sciences curriculum, David Barton founded and leads Wallbuilders, based in Aledo, Texas. The organization produces media promoting a Christian nationalist view of history and removal of the traditional wall of separation between church and state. Wallbuilders has regular television and radio broadcasts, and host conferences for legislators and pastors.



Recently Barton has been a frequent guest on Fox News and is one of the instructors for Glenn Beck’s online “university.”

Barton spoke at Beck’s American Revivals, which drew thousands to stadiums in March and April. The rallies were described by the conservative publication *Human Events* as “creating a pathway to enable Americans to walk away from the nightmare of government control and back to the freedom-loving founders of the United States and the Constitution.”⁴⁴ Barton led his own Great Awakening Tour this summer, in which participants traveled for ten days meeting special guests including former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, former Senator Rick Santorum, Family Research Council President Tony Perkins, and “Seven Mountains” campaigner, Lance Wallnau.⁴⁵

People for the American Way (PFAW) calls David Barton “the Right’s favorite pseudo-historian.”⁴⁶ The Texas Freedom Network has described him as a “professional propagandist,”⁴⁷ while Senator Arlen Specter, when he was still a Republican, said that Barton’s “pseudoscholarship would hardly be worth discussing, let alone disproving, were it not for the fact that it is taken so very seriously by so many people.”⁴⁸ Rob Boston of Americans United for Separation of Church and State described Barton’s right-wing classic, *The Myth of Separation* (1989), as “riddled with factual errors, half truths and distortions.” Boston, along with other researchers and historians, has debunked many of Barton’s claims.⁴⁹ In 1995, Barton was forced to admit that more than a dozen quotes in his book could not be reliably confirmed. More recently Chris Rodda has challenged Barton’s writing in her 2006 book.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, Barton has become an increasingly potent political force. Barton served as the vice chair of the Texas Republican Party from 1998 to 2006, during which time, in 2004, the Texas GOP platform asserted that “America is a Christian Nation” and referred to the “myth of separation of church and state.”⁵¹ That same year, the Texas Freedom Network reported, “Barton served as a political consultant for the Republican National Committee, traveling the country and speaking at about 300 RNC-sponsored lunches for local evangelical pastors ... and encouraged pastors to endorse political candidates from the pulpit.”⁵² Barton teamed up with Newt Gingrich in 2008 to bring together economic and social conservatives through Gingrich’s organization, Renewing American Leadership, whose mission is to promote religious conservatives’ political activism “to preserve America’s Judeo-Christian heritage by defending and promoting the three pillars of American civilization: freedom, faith and free markets.”⁵³

The State of the First Amendment 2007 national survey found that “65% of Americans believe that the founders intended America to be a Christian nation and 55% believe that the Constitution establishes America as a Christian nation.”⁵⁴ Barton can claim some credit for this. In an affidavit posted on his website from a case in Kentucky he says,

I work as a consultant to national history textbook publishers and have been appointed by the State Boards of Education in States such as California and Texas to help write the American history and government standards for students in those States. Additionally, I consult with Governors and State Boards of Education in several other States and have testified in numerous State Legislatures on American history.⁵⁵

riculum, conservatives want students to come away from a Texas education with a favorable impression of: women who adhere to traditional gender roles, the Confederacy, some parts of the Constitution, capitalism, the military and religion. They do not think students should learn about women who demanded greater equality; other parts of the Constitution; slavery, Reconstruction and the unequal treatment of nonwhites generally; environmentalists; labor unions; federal economic regulation; or foreigners.

He continues,

Students in several grades will be required to understand the “benefits” (but none of the drawbacks) of capitalism. The economic system, however, dares not speak its name—it is referred to throughout as “free enterprise.” Labor unions are conspicuous by their absence... Clearly, the Texas Board of Education seeks to inculcate children with a history that celebrates the achievements of our past while ignoring its shortcomings, and that largely ignores those who have struggled to make this a fairer, more equal society.

Expanding the Reach of the Fundamentalist Worldview

Of course, children who learn from textbooks that teach these ideas grow up to be adults who vote, hold office, and make public policy; the curricula they are taught have a broad impact. Significant numbers of homeschooled students, many raised on creationism and Christian nationalist history textbooks, have already entered professions such as law, education, and politics. In a 2007 article in the *New Yorker*, Hanna Rosin described Patrick Henry College, the first college founded specifically for the advanced education of Christian homeschooled students. It “trains young Christians to be politicians,” Rosin writes. During the George W. Bush administration, when the article was written, Rosin stated,

Of the school’s sixty-one graduates through the class of 2004, two have jobs in the White House; six are on the staffs of conservative members of Congress; eight are in federal agencies; and one helps Senator Rick Santorum, of Pennsylvania, and his wife, Karen, homeschool their six children. Two are at the F.B.I., and another worked for the Coalition Provisional Authority, in Iraq.⁶

A recent poll indicated that nearly a third of Texans believed that humans and dinosaurs walked the earth at the same time, and skepticism about evolution has become widespread and mainstream throughout the United States.⁷ The website of Rick Warren’s Saddleback megachurch used to

The Texas board did back down on a few of its “most outrageous efforts”—such as renaming the slave trade, the “Atlantic triangular trade.”

state unequivocally that “Man and dinosaurs lived at the same time,” and that man was given dominion over dinosaurs, but after the statements drew attention from the press, the site was revised.⁸ During the most recent presidential election, three Republican candidates—Sam Brownback, Tom Tancredo, and Mike Huckabee—raised their hands during the first GOP primary debate to indicate that they do not believe in biological evolution.⁹ Texan Ron Paul, a medical doctor, did not raise his hand, but later clarified his beliefs in a campaign appear-

ance, stating, “It’s a theory, the theory of evolution, and I don’t accept it as a theory.”¹⁰

Creationist instruction has a direct impact on public policy. Increasingly sophisticated “young earth creationist” texts and museums,¹¹ which claim that the earth is only a few thousand years old, describe coal, gas, and oil as formed in the relatively recent past, not over millions of years. Social science texts written from this biblical point of view, which are widely used by Christian homeschoolers, teach that the availability of natural resources to a nation depends on its righteousness or lack thereof. For example, the textbook *America’s Providential History* tells students,

A secular society will lack faith in God’s providence and consequently men will find fewer natural resources... The secular or socialist has a limited resource mentality and views the world as a pie (there is only so much) that needs to be cut up so that everyone can get a piece. In contrast, the Christian knows that the potential in God is unlimited and that there is no shortage of resources in God’s earth. The resource are waiting to be tapped.

...All the five billion people on the earth today could live in the state of Texas in single family homes with front yards and back yards and be fed by production in the rest of the United States.¹²

David Barton serves on the board of the Providence Foundation, publisher of *America’s Providential History*, and the book’s co-author, Stephen McDowell, serves on the board of David Barton’s Wallbuilders.

The worldview described in *America’s Providential History* is being expressed and acted upon in statehouses around the United States. Florida State Representative Charles Van Zant, during questioning on a bill that would allow offshore drilling as close as three miles to the Florida coast, said, of the idea that the world’s petroleum supply is limited:

Some people would like to think that. Estimates might show that. But

that doesn't mean that at all. We happen to worship a God who made it all out of nothing anyway. And if we ran out, I certainly believe he could make some more.¹³

(Van Zant is the same legislator who proposed a sweeping anti-abortion bill in the Florida House this year, which would make any attempt to induce an abortion a first-degree felony.)¹⁴

State Senator Sylvia Allen of Arizona was captured on video by the *Arizona Guardian*, during a hearing about opening up uranium mining, claiming that "the earth has been here 6,000 years, long before anybody had environmental laws, and somehow it hasn't been done away with."¹⁵ In a statement in which Allen twice says the earth is 6,000 years old, she adds, "It is time to focus on the technology that we have and look forward to the future." What was once considered obscure revisionism by little-known Religious Right propagandists can now be heard regularly from politicians.

The Battle for the Social Sciences

Chris Rodda, a senior researcher at the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, who has challenged the revisionist histories of Barton and other Christian nationalists, has collected hundreds of examples of their "faux history" quotes being repeated on the floor of the U.S. Congress. Like creationism, the Right's revisionist history is a not only a religious phenomenon but also an effort to control public policy. Evangelical and fundamentalist children are indoctrinated into what is sometimes referred to as "biblical capi-



talism,"¹⁶ the teaching that an unregulated market system is mandated by God and dictated in the Bible. The Reconstructionist theology of the late Rousas J. Rushdoony and his son-in-law, Gary North, merges the

Homeschooled students raised on creationism and Christian revisionist textbooks have already entered professions such as law, education, and politics.

"free market gospel" with biblical law to form the foundation for biblical capitalism. Many fundamentalist textbooks are based on this foundation and promote political activism to achieve the biblical mandate.

As Frederick Clarkson points out in his article "History is Powerful," in the Spring 2007 issue of *The Public Eye*,¹⁷ "the contest for control of the narrative of American history is well underway." Rushdoony, Clarkson says, believed that "God actively intervenes in and guides history, and that God's role can be retroactively discerned, from creation to the predestined Kingdom of God on Earth." In Rushdoony's 1965 book, *The Nature of the American System*, he claims that the Founding Fathers were not men of the secular Enlightenment but rather were planning a "Christian nation."

Considered the father of modern Christian homeschooling, Rushdoony believed that children should be removed from public schools and raised in pure environments, where they could be trained for a holy war against liberalism and secularism, which he viewed as a competing religion. North explains the strategy's ultimate goal:

So let us be blunt about it: we must use the doctrine of religious liberty to gain independence for Christian schools until we train up a generation

of people who know that there is no religious neutrality, no neutral law, no neutral education, and no neutral civil government. Then they will get busy in constructing a Bible-based social, political, and religious order which finally denies the religious liberty of the enemies of God. Murder, abortion, and pornography will be illegal. God's law will be enforced. It will take time. A minority religion cannot do this. Theocracy must flow from the hearts of a majority of citizens, just as compulsory education came only after most people had their children in schools of some sort.¹⁸

Undermining Public Education

Although parents may decide to homeschool their children for any number of reasons, the proportion of parents who homeschool in order to “provide religious or moral instruction increased from 72 percent to 83 percent” between 2003 and 2007, says the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).¹⁹ Such homeschooling has begun to take a bite out of the budgets of state education systems, because state support is based on number of enrolled students. As *Time* reported in 2001, “The state of Florida has 41,128 children (1.7 percent) learning at home this year, up from 10,039 in the 1991–92 school year; those kids represent a loss of nearly \$130 million from school budgets in that state.”²⁰ And the percentage of students homeschooled in Florida at the time is actually well-below the

national average, according to the latest statistics: NCES estimates that the number of homeschooled students in the United States has increased from approximately 850,000 in 1999 (or 1.75 percent of the school-age population) to 1,508,000 in 2007 (or 2.9 percent).

The Alliance for the Separation of School and State,²¹ whose stated goal is the elimination of public education, claims that the numbers are even higher, with almost

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two-million students being homeschooled. Signatories of the alliance's proclamation, “I publicly proclaim that I favor ending government involvement in public education,” include such conservative notables as Rep. Ron Paul; Don Hodel, the energy secretary under Ronald Reagan; Dinesh D'Souza, a policy analyst under Reagan; Tim LaHaye, minister and the author of the apocalyptic *Left Behind* novels; Howard Phillips, the founder of the U.S. Taxpayer's Party (now the Constitution Party); Joseph Farah, the editor of the conservative website *Worldnet Daily*; and John Rosemond, a syndicated columnist on child rearing.

The effect of all this? The *Time* article quotes Ray Simon, the director of the Arkansas Department of Education (later appointed U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education), who said,

A third of our support for schools comes from property taxes. If a large number of a community's parents do not fully believe in the school system, it gets more difficult to pass those

property taxes. And that directly impacts the schools' ability to operate.

Looking at the Textbooks

In 2003, Frances Paterson, an associate professor at Valdosta State College in Georgia and an expert on religion and education, conducted a study of the texts published by A Beka Press, Bob Jones University Press, and the School of Tomorrow/Accelerated Christian Education,²² which are used by Christian homeschoolers, in adult education programs, and in “as many as 10,000 evangelical and fundamentalist Christian schools. (And you may be paying for them with your taxes. Paterson found that vouchers were being used to subsidize private schools in Milwaukee and Cleveland that used the texts she studied).²³

Paterson describes the message of the texts: “Democrats are deluded, liberals are villains, and conservatives are heroes. This is part of a pattern where descriptions used for people, groups, and movements clearly imply that some are unacceptable.”²⁴ Another theme she identifies is that “the lack of material progress in various Third World countries and among indigenous peoples can be attributed to their religious beliefs... All the texts are imbued with an arrogance and hostility toward non-Western religions that is truly breathtaking.”²⁵ Paterson explained in recent correspondence with me that she now hears politicians repeating the fundamentalist teachings of the texts she studied. “No doubt they strike a resonant note with individuals who read the same ideas in their school books,” she said.

The A Beka texts are particularly popular for homeschooling and private schools teaching a fundamentalist Christian worldview. They are published by Pensacola Christian College, founded by Arlene and Beka Horton, who later added their publishing arm after becoming disgruntled with what they viewed as the secularization of teaching techniques by Bob Jones University.²⁶ A Beka curricula are carefully written: “Entire lessons were scripted so that no open-ended discussion leading to ques-

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Title/Author	Publisher	In Use Since	Number in circulation	Themes	Quotes
<i>Economics, Work and Prosperity in Christian Perspective</i> ²⁹ Russell Kirk	A Beka	1989	Approximately 90,000	Economics blended with a literal biblical interpretation that God mandates unregulated markets; U.S. losing sovereignty to globalism, U.N. and E.U., perhaps leading to Antichrist; global warming is a myth; national healthcare and other programs presented as having failed in Sweden and Canada.	<p><i>“Global environmentalists have said and written enough to leave no doubt that their goal is to destroy the prosperous economies of the world’s richest nations.”</i>³⁰</p> <p><i>“What communists achieve through revolution and bloodshed, socialists accomplish through gradual legislation.”</i>³¹</p>
<i>United States History: Heritage of Freedom</i> ³²	A Beka	1982	Approximately 160,000	The damaging influences of “Liberalism in American Life” described as beginning in the 1920s, including the social gospel, socialism, progressive education, secular humanism, the doctrine of evolution, and then a national moral decline after the removal of prayer from schools.	<p>The Depression is described as exaggerated by socialists, including in John Steinbeck’s <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>, in order to enable the New Deal.</p> <p><i>“Other forms of propaganda included rumors of mortgage foreclosures, mass evictions, and hunger riots and exaggerated statistics representing number of unemployed and homeless people in America.”</i>³³</p> <p>The Taft-Hartley Act removed <i>“certain labor abuses...to curb the growing power of labor unions over individuals and employers.”</i>³⁴</p>
<i>What Would Thomas Jefferson Think about This?</i> ²⁵ Richard J. Maybury	Bluestocking Press	1994	The Uncle Eric series (11 titles including this one) advertised as 300,000 copies sold	Christian Libertarian text used widely for home schooling, attacking “statist myths” of those whom the author claims have made government their “de facto God.”	<p><i>“Unions did not bring better lighting to the factories, Thomas Edison did.”</i></p> <p><i>“Statist writers accept the so-called benefits of child labor laws without question and without examining the cost.”</i></p>
<i>America’s Providential History</i> Mark A. Beliles and Stephen K. McDowell	Providence Foundation, which also provides adult education in “biblical world-view” in the U.S. and other nations with publications and articles in German, Russian, Spanish, and Chinese.	1989	Approximately 150,000	<p>Three ways of looking at history are the “pagan view,” in which the state rules the people; the “modern Christian view,” in which God rules the church but has nothing to do with politics; and the “biblical view,” in which God “is sovereign over man, out of which flows the government of the state and the church and the home.”</p> <p>Void left by Christian abdication of leadership filled by the conspiracies of men : ACLU, big bankers, World Council of Churches, homosexuals, feminists, the Communists, the Democrats, the pope.</p>	<p><i>“There may come a time when we must resist unlawful authority.”</i>³⁹</p> <p>The Revolutionary War is called the “American Christian Revolution” and Confederate troops are described as in a constant religious revival, <i>“with up to 150,000 Southern troops saved.”</i>⁴⁰</p> <p><i>“After the [Civil][W]ar an ungodly, radical Republican element gained control of the Congress. They wanted to centralize power and shape the nation according to their philosophy.”</i>⁴¹</p> <p><i>“Foreign policy in this Christian world order will be conducted by missionaries and members of Christian businesses and trade community who know how to represent the cause of Christ abroad.”</i>⁴²</p>

tions that might challenge the Truth would occur,” said one critic.²⁷ A Beka advertises that 40,000 homeschool students were registered in their A Beka Academy programs in the school year 2009–2010. (This number does not include the homeschoolers who use A Beka texts but not its service program, which provides a structure for grading and transcripts; nor does it include private schools that use A Beka texts.²⁸)

Building on Paterson’s research, I examined U.S. history and economics textbooks published by A Beka and others. Although most were originally published in the 1990s or earlier, they are still very much in use. A sample of my study, summarized in the accompanying chart, provides a window into the narratives of the Christian nationalist worldview and how these are echoed in the new Texas curriculum standards; the purposes that these narratives serve in determining public policy; and a warning of what we can expect in future battles over public school curricula.

Progressives watching Tea Party and anti-healthcare rallies may find it easy to poke fun at misspelled signs and racist outbursts, and to disregard the social and political potential of Christian nationalism. However, the warriors against secular public education are sophisticated, disciplined, persistent politicians, who have moved their battle from the schoolhouse to the statehouse and are continuing to expand their reach. They are working to transform the United States to fit the images found in their textbooks, and their recent success in Texas has brought them closer to their goal. ■

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Book Review

The War Against the Panthers

The Assassination of Fred Hampton:

How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther

By Jeffrey Haas

Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 2009, 424 pp., \$26.95, paperback

Reviewed by Thomas Cincotta

I was born in 1971, two years after the death of the Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton. Working as a union representative in Providence, Rhode Island, I first took an interest in the Black Panther Party in the summer of 1995 to fill a gap in my political education. My curriculum included David Hilliard's book *This Side of Glory: The Autobiography of David Hilliard and the Story of the Black Panther Party* (Lawrence Hill Books, 2001); Mario Van Peeble's 1995 film *Panther*; and a play about the Panthers followed by a rousing talk by Bobby Seale. For all this schooling, however, I never bought into the line that "the FBI murdered Fred Hampton." Although I would feign assent when activists mentioned Hampton's assassination, on the inside I assumed (or hoped) this rhetoric was exaggerated. I should have known better.

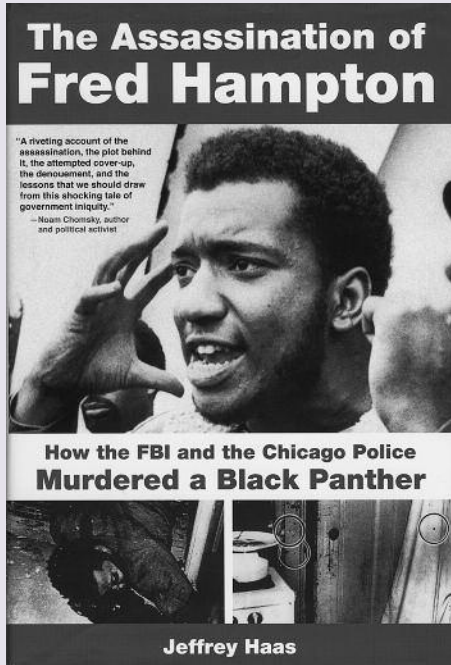
Jeffrey Haas is a trial lawyer who started representing Panther cases at Hampton's request soon after law school. Now retired in New Mexico, Haas has mined deep through trial records and his own memories of the late sixties and seventies to tell the story of what the FBI and the Chicago Police Department did to Fred Hampton, a community organizer with a revolutionary political consciousness. As you would expect from a trial attorney, Haas methodically demolishes the myth that Hampton died in a shootout in his Chicago apartment. He confronts the reader with undeniable physical and direct evidence that the Chicago police mur-

dered Hampton at the behest of the FBI. Haas tells the story chronologically, peeling back the layers of truth in the same order that Haas and the heroic legal team at his People's Law Office (PLO) discovered it during an epic, thirteen-year-long civil rights lawsuit.

Although Hampton was very young, many in Chicago recognized his unique leadership potential. He was born in Chicago and grew up in Maywood, a suburb just west of the city. At age seventeen, he started the West Suburban Youth Chapter of the NAACP, which grew to more than 200 members in less than a year in 1965. Haas writes that under Hampton's leadership, young Black people in Maywood accelerated the campaign for a public pool and ultimately a recreational center. One member of the Maywood Village Board wrote, "Fred was a master orator. His rhetoric was stunning as he confronted his White audience with a picture of America's unjust society that most had never imagined before."

In 1968, Hampton joined the Black Panther Party (BPP), which had begun its rise to national prominence, and founded the party's Illinois chapter with a downtown office. As a Panther leader, Hampton organized food pantries, free breakfasts for schoolchildren, educational and recreational programs, and a free medical clinic. Significantly, he helped to make peace among the city's rival street gangs. He viewed the provision of these social services as opportunities for political education. Then in 1969, he was convicted and sentenced to two-to-five years in prison for the strong-arm theft of \$71.00 worth of Good Humor ice cream bars, which he allegedly gave away to neighborhood children. The decision was overturned, but the experience made him more militant. By the age of twenty, he had become a respected community leader among Chicago's Black

population. By all accounts, he was on the way to becoming one of the most articulate and persuasive African American leaders of his time.



FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was determined to prevent the formation of a cohesive Black radical movement in the U.S. "by any means necessary."

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However, to the Chicago police and the FBI, Hampton's talents as a communicator and organizer marked him as a major threat. Bureau Director J. Edgar Hoover was determined to prevent the formation of a cohesive Black radical movement in the U.S. "by any means necessary." Believing that coalitions among the Panthers and street gangs, such as that forged by Hampton, were frightening stepping stones toward the creation of a revolutionary body, Hoover initiated a covert program, COINTELPRO, whose stated goal was to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" individuals and organizations the Bureau characterized as national security threats. Local FBI offices were encouraged to devise creative means for undermining the BPP, including promoting violence. For instance, Chicago's Special Agent in Charge sent a memo to Hoover in 1969 suggesting that he send a fake letter to Jeff Fort, the leader of the Blackstone Rangers street gang, accusing the Panthers of planning a hit on Fort, in the hope that it would incite the Rangers to "take retaliatory action" against Hampton and the Panthers. (The Fort memo was revealed to Haas's cocounsel, Flint Taylor, in November 1975, by a staff member for the U.S. Senate's Church Committee, which was investigating illegal surveillance of U.S. citizens.)

In 1968 and 1969, the Chicago police launched an all-out assault on the Panthers and their allies, treating them as criminal gangs. Cook County State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan organized a special prosecution unit to which police officers were permanently assigned, and an FBI informant, William O'Neal, achieved the position of security chief in the Panthers. On November 13, 1969, two Chicago police officers were murdered in a shootout with alleged Panthers. In response, O'Neal provided his FBI handler, Agent Roy Mitchell, with a floor plan of the apartment where Hampton and other Panthers lived, so detailed that it showed all the furniture, including the bed where Hampton and his fiancé, Deborah Johnson, slept. Mitchell gave the floor plan to Hanrahan and his unit, with whom he met regularly.

At 4:45 a.m. on December 4, fourteen police officers from Hanrahan's unit entered 2337 West Monroe Street to search for illegal firearms. The police chose that time even though O'Neal had told the FBI that at 8:00 p.m. no one would be home, and the police could easily search for the firearms then. An early morning raid made sense only if they wanted to provoke a fire. The police claim that the Panthers began firing at them the moment they knocked on the door. However, forensic evidence shows that no shots were fired into the door from inside the apart-

ment. A single shot fired at the intruders by Hampton's roommate Mark Clark did not damage the door but instead struck the wall outside the door above the officers' heads, suggesting that the door was already open. The bullet's trajectory indicates that Clark fired from below, probably while he lay on the floor, fatally wounded. His was the only shot that could have been fired by a Panther. No other occupants had weapons in their hands. The police, who were uninjured, fired 90 to 99 shots into the apartment with a .45 caliber submachine gun, shotguns, pistols, and a rifle.

Two officers found Hampton in his bed, wounded in the shoulder. Harold Bell, one of the Panthers, reports that he heard one say, "That's Fred Hampton."

"Is he dead?" asked the other. "Bring him out."

"He's barely alive; he'll make it."

Then Johnson heard two shots, and an officer said, "He's good and dead now." The shots were later discovered to have been fired point blank into Hampton's head.

Hampton's body was dragged to the doorway of the bedroom and left in the pool of his own blood, as the surviving Panthers—Johnson, Blair Anderson, Doc Satchell, Harold Bell, Verlina Brewer, Louis Truelock, and Brenda Harris—hid in another bedroom. Police fired at them and then abandoned the scene in a hurry. Haas writes,

A police photo showed Fred's body... in polka dot underwear and a T-shirt, with blood pouring from his head wounds. Another photo showed the uniformed police officers carrying Fred's body down the front steps on a stretcher. They smiled for the police photographer. Their grins reminded me of the spectators' smiles in the lynching photos from the South.

...

Haas, along with Flint Taylor and other lawyers from the newly formed People's Law Office collective sprang into action to defend the survivors from criminal charges and to hold others responsible for the deaths of Hampton and Clark. Satchell, Brewer, Harris, and Anderson had been shot and wounded by the police. The county grand jury indicted each of the Panther survivors on at least one count of attempted murder, as well as on armed violence and numerous weapons charges. Haas interviewed the survivors at the jail and in their guarded hospital rooms. He examined the paths of the bullets and discovered that they converged on the bed where Hampton had been sleeping that morning. An autopsy taken shortly after Hampton's death showed the pres-

A federal grand jury eventually did investigate, but it found Hampton's death to be "justifiable homicide" and indicted no one.

ence of barbiturates in his blood, although he never used drugs. According to Johnson, Hampton never moved during the entire siege.

In a brilliant tactical move, the legal team filmed the cataloging of all evidence at the apartment, which they opened for tours to the media, community leaders, and the public. The tours not only prevented police from returning to manipulate the scene but also built popular support and exposed the nonsensical claim of a “shootout.” People witnessed the blood stains on the bed and observed that there were no bullet holes in the door. It seemed obvious that the police had broken in and killed Hampton. Civil rights and community groups—even the African American Patrolmen’s Association—united in demanding an independent probe.

The tours were emblematic of the confrontational style of the PLO attorneys, who aggressively countered government lies through the media and seized any opportunity to mobilize public opinion and apply pressure against an unjust legal system. A federal grand jury eventually did investigate, in 1970, but it found Hampton’s death to be “justifiable homicide” and indicted no one. (A document eventually surfaced showing that the FBI had made a deal with Deputy Attorney General Jerris Leonard, who led the grand jury investigation: the FBI agreed to drop its criminal charges against the seven Panther survivors, and in return, the grand jury ruled in favor of Hanrahan and the police raiders. The deal insured that the FBI’s role and the classified COINTELPRO program would remain concealed for several more years.)

Haas then takes us through years of civil rights litigation to hold the police, Hanrahan, and the FBI accountable for Hampton’s murder. Lawyers and legal workers with less political commitment would surely have given up or gone broke. As a lawyer myself, I was awestruck by the legal team’s poise, perseverance, and tenacity in the face of enormous obstacles. The attorneys for the police were paid by the government, while the PLO had scant resources in what became a war of attrition. Defense lawyers representing the police and public officials made a deal with the clerk of the court to pay three times the normal cost for daily transcripts, as long as the clerk agreed to charge PLO the same rate. The Panthers were also up against a federal judge, Joseph Sam Perry, who openly stood against them. When a police sergeant swore that he had not relied on the FBI plant’s information, Perry refused to compel the police to name the person who had been their informant. When the jury seemed deadlocked, Perry directed a verdict for the defendants.

Throughout the long ordeal, Haas and the legal team over-

came problems of missing information and discovered proof of perjury and conspiracy. At the same time, the PLO took on additional important cases of political repression, defending Attica prisoners, Puerto Rican *independistas*, other Panthers, and more.

Haas’s account of the lawsuit would make for a John Grisham-style legal thriller but for its unsatisfying ending. True, the underdogs confronted corrupt officials, a villainous judge, lying cops, and a team of arrogant, well-funded lawyers. They achieved a victory because of the confluence of many factors: the larger political struggle outside the courtroom; the 1971 liberation of FBI files by activists in Media, Pennsylvania, which revealed COINTELPRO; the U.S. Senate Church Committee hearings on the illegal domestic surveillance; the reinstatement of the case by appellate judges who overturned

the verdict for the police; and a lot of luck along the way. Against all odds, the PLO forced the city, county, and federal government to settle for \$1.85 million. However, that’s a modest sum. In the words of Hampton’s mother, Iberia Hampton, “They got away with murder.”

The anthropologist Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world.” However, Haas’s book is a reminder that we should also never doubt the lengths to which the state will go to defend the *status quo*. The COINTELPRO documents detail official efforts to subvert the Panthers. Because these documents predate the Freedom of Information Act, they were

written with the expectation that they would never be revealed to the public.

The story of Hampton’s murder is a reminder of the nature of domestic intelligence and policing institutions. Today, political repression is likely to be even more sophisticated and hidden, but no less disruptive. For example, in October 2009, police and FBI agents raided the warehouse of Detroit Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah due to firearms charges, shooting him eighteen times and killing him. Just as Hanrahan did, the U.S. attorney used Abdullah’s militant rhetoric to justify the police tactics, as if revolutionary rhetoric justifies the serving of a warrant by FBI agents and local cops with guns ablaze. In many terrorism prosecutions, the FBI has paid con-artists to act as informants who hatch outrageous plots, not unlike William O’Neal, whose role as a provocateur Haas documents. Unfortunately, since 9/11, consent decrees and FBI guidelines that were enacted to prevent abuses such as COINTELPRO have been seriously weakened or undone in the name of counterterrorism. This reaction provides all the more reason for us to follow PLO’s example of tirelessly confronting power to expose the truth and defend political freedom. ■

**In 1968 and 1969,
the Chicago police
launched an all-out
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.....Reports in Review.....

REPORT OF THE MONTH

Apply the Brakes

Anti-Immigrant Co-Optation of the Environmental Movement

A Report from the Center for New Community, July 2010

The Center for New Community's report on a newly hatched organization, Apply the Brakes, shows how this supposedly environmental group disguises its true anti-immigrant agenda, snaring moderate environmental leaders and their organizations in the anti-immigrant organizing web. A basic tenet of environmental thinking holds that humanity must become increasingly united in its efforts to survive with the limited quantities of food, water, and land available on the planet. This idea, however, is being perverted by a White nationalist philosophy called Neo-Malthusianism.

Neo-Malthusianism links immigration and environmentalism using a theory first proposed in the eighteenth century by the political economist Thomas Malthus. Malthus noted the difference between the rate of population growth and the rate of agricultural growth, which he concluded would ultimately lead to chronic, worldwide food shortages. This led him to the idea that population control was the major factor in environmental health. Extrapolating from Malthus's ideas, ATB maintains that immigration into this country creates undesirable population growth, leading to urban sprawl, congestion, pollution, waste generation, and increased water and food consumption.

While ATB openly advertises its concern over "domestic population growth," its racist, anti-immigrant ideology may be more difficult to discern. The Center for New Community exposes the backgrounds of ATB's leaders to demonstrate that this group is the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing. William G. (Bill) Elder, the content editor of its website, has links to numerous prominent White nationalists. Before he joined ATB, Elder served as a chairperson and

spokesperson of Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization (SUSPS), which was dedicated to attempting to shift the Sierra Club's platform on immigration from neutral to one of advocating strict restrictions. [See the review of the *Greenwash* report in this issue.] It supported candidates for the Sierra Club board who were involved with racist organizations, including John Tanton's Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) and the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), Virginia Abernethy's Carrying Capacity Network, and Californians for Population Stabilization.

The study identifies Don Weeden as the driving force behind ATB, funding ATB through his Weeden Family Foundation. The financial connections between the Weeden Family Foundation and other White nationalists are extensive: the group provided close to \$700,000 in grants to John Tanton's organizations, all of which have well-documented links to White nationalist movements. Moreover, the foundation's leadership occupies high-level positions within the anti-immigrant groups NumbersUSA and FAIR.

The information presented by the Center for New Community is especially useful in exposing the troublesome connections between seemingly legitimate environmental activists and White nationalism. The report emphasizes a need for caution within the environmentalist movement, because prejudice and discriminatory ideologies can easily be obscured by subtle distortions of influential theories regarding human society and the environment.

The report includes profiles of sixteen environmental leaders who have direct or indirect ties to ATB, a reminder that it is important to investigate the past involvement and associations of an organization's leadership thoroughly before granting that group any authority or influence within the larger movement.

—James Huettig

Other Reports in Review

Greenwash: Nativists, Environmentalism and the Hypocrisy of Hate

A special report from the Southern Policy Law Center by Heidi Beirich (Montgomery, AL: SPLC) July 2010

Many of us have come to rely on the research that regularly emerges from the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) investigative magazine, *Intelligence Report*. *Greenwash* is the latest addition to this important service, and the report provides useful information for both activists and the public.

Nativists, who mask their true agenda with environmentally friendly language, argue that the "carrying capacity" of the U.S.

ecosystem is threatened by a deluge of immigrants who contribute to environmental degradation by overpopulating the country—adding to urban sprawl, traffic congestion, and a general overconsumption of resources. Greenwashers correctly assess that overtly racist rhetoric would not work with a liberal audience. Instead they use language familiar to environmental advocates to scapegoat immigrants for complex problems and to gain environmentalists' support for racist, anti-immigrant policies.

Greenwash lays out the history of this strategy in detail. Its mastermind is John Tanton, who is also a major funder of anti-immi-

grant groups such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform, Numbers USA, and Americans for Immigration Control. A longtime Sierra Club member, Tanton privately circulated memos in 1986, which suggested to his organizations that a carefully constructed approach to environmental groups could help build the anti-immigrant movement. For the next two decades, debates about "overpopulation" and the proper response to it raged within mainstream groups such as the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society, although ultimately the nativists lost. The report includes a narrative chronicling this

Reports continues on next page

Eyes RIGHT

RADIO HOST GIVES LOUSY ADVICE TO LGBT YOUTH

The call-in show *Dawson McAllister Live*, which provides advice to young people who have questions about addiction, eating disorders, parents, sexuality, and other issues, airs on Sunday nights on more than 160 radio stations nationwide, including on Boston's popular KISS-108. On April 10, Greg Kimball, an openly gay, 22-year-old college student, called the show because, he told the Boston, Massachusetts, LGBT weekly *Bay Windows*, as a fan, he was curious about how the host would deal with a gay caller. Posing as a sixteen-year-old questioning his sexuality, Kimball was advised to contact Exodus International, a Christian organization that claims it can "reverse" homosexuality through prayer and therapy.

"My jaw hit the floor," said Kimball. "How many gay or questioning youth has [McAllister] hurt? It's sickening."

Kimball said that an adviser off the air told him that homosexuality is a sin that is as bad as murder. "The reason why God does not want us to be gay is if everybody was gay there'd just be two people in the whole world," the adviser said. "If Adam and Eve were gay, that'd be all there'd be. That's why

He made women and He made men."

Although McAllister does not identify himself as a right-wing Christian on his radio show, his identity is clear on his website, www.dmlive.com. He lists as "partners" several pregnancy "crisis centers," which steer girls away from abortion and reproductive health services, as well as Christian-based addiction-recovery websites. After protests from the LGBT community, McAllister removed Exodus from his website. Exodus immediately released a statement expressing its "distress" that McAllister had yielded to pressure from LGBT activists and Clear Channel, which produces the show.

LGBT callers are now referred to Focus on the Family—hardly an improvement.

WHAT HARRY REID IS UP AGAINST

Sharon Angle, the Tea Party-endorsed Nevada Republican who is challenging Senator Harry Reid, belonged to the Christian conservative, libertarian-style Independent American Party for seven years during the 1990s, until joining the Republican Party in 1997 in order to make a credible run for statewide office. The Independent American Party supports passage of a Liberty Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that, according to Talking Points Memo (TPM.com), aimed to "compel the federal government to halt its unconstitutional programs and wasteful expenditures such as foreign aid and welfare corruption. It will prohibit the financing of the New World Order with American taxes." The party also opposes what it calls the "debt-money system" and the "Marxist graduated income tax."

The fringe party placed a sixteen-page insert in the state's newspapers in 1994 that portrayed so-called sodomites as "child molesting, HIV-carrying, Hell-bound freaks," according to TPM. The insert also included an article claiming that HIV lived in water and could be transmitted in swimming pools.

"Angle's campaign did not respond to a request for comment about her time in the party," said TPM.

Angle may be a Scientologist, according to her opponent, Sue Lowden, who published ads to that effect during the Republican primary. Lowden pointed to Angle's promotion of a Scientologist-supported proposal that would subject drug-addicted prisoners to cold-turkey withdrawal, aided by massages and saunas. Lowden is widely believed to have sealed her loss to Angle when she suggested that healthcare reform was unnecessary and that patients could barter with their doctors, exchanging, say, a chicken for a physical.

Eye

LASHES

"Yeah, we waterboarded Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. I'd do it again to save lives."

—President George W. Bush

June 2, 2010

In a speech to the Economic Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan

REPORTS *cont'd from previous page*

history and a useful timeline that clarifies the involvement of more than two dozen organizations in the greenwashing strategy.

As the current debate about immigration reform takes shape, Tanton's groups are at it again. *Greenwash* author Heidi Beirich reports on three new developments. In 2008 a series of expensive, full-page ads appeared in liberal publications warning "progressive thinkers" that the future of American natural resources depends on blocking further immigration. In the pipeline is a Tanton-inspired film series, "Tomorrow's America," which will expose the "negative impacts" of immigration. But per-

haps most troublesome is the emergence of a new organization, Progressives for Immigration Reform, www.progressivesforimmigrationreform.org, which examines what it calls the "unintended consequences of mass migration," highlighting environmental issues. Sensitive to the racist history of Tanton's brand of anti-immigrant organizing, this group is headed by an African American woman, Leah Durant, who is trying to distance herself from Tanton despite SPLC-documented connections.

A particularly useful part of the report is Hampshire College Professor Betsy Hart-

mann's analysis of race in the population control movement and her response to their anti-immigrant claims. Activists should check out "The Greening of Hate: An Essay" for helpful talking points.

Reports such as *Greenwash* remind us that "once silenced" does not guarantee "always silenced." Nativist hate groups' strategies continue to proliferate, but with the help of groups like SPLC, we can identify and challenge them early, before they get a chance to cause lasting damage.

—Pam Chamberlain

The Public Eye

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