

The Public Eye

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William Strode/Woodfin Camp, Getty Images

An Aryan Nations family displays its colors.

Politicized Science

How Anti-Abortion Myths Feed the Christian Right Agenda

By Pam Chamberlain

David Hagar, an OB/GYN physician and a graduate of evangelical Ashbury College in Kentucky, is famous as a man with a mission. Hagar believes emergency contraception (EC) is abortion by any other name, and he refuses to administer it in his own practice, based on his religious beliefs. Like other pro-lifers, he maintains that EC terminates a pregnancy by preventing implantation of a fertilized egg despite the absence of any research that supports such a claim.

A Bush appointee to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review committees, Hagar wrote a minority opinion in December 2003 that argued against making EC available over-the-counter, arguing that access to the drug would encourage teens to have sex. And as the media has

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White Power Cyberculture Building a Movement

By Pete Simi and Robert Futrell

My bro NI went to our first Aryanfest this last weekend in Phoenix. It was just mind blowing on the amount of brothers and sisters out there all living, breathing, and working for the cause. And here I thought we were alone LOL. The bros from Volksfront were not only helpful, but very professional as well. Living in today's society it's nice to know that at any time I can log onto Panzerfaust and be connected to my brothers and sisters, and speak our minds on the cause at hand. For me it's all of us getting together and fighting for the same common goal "THE PRESERVATION OF THE WHITE

*RACE." Once again thanks to Azvolksfront and Panzerfaust Records for the weekend with my new family.
—Proudwhiteman (Panzerfaust.com 3/24/04).*

This chat room posting is just one of many in the days following the 2004 Aryanfest—a two-day concert that brought together white power activists from around the country. Today, with a simple keyword search such as "Aryan" or "white power," web surfers can easily find a growing number of similar white power websites where acidly racist and anti-Semitic themes replete with visions of racial separation or even vio-

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— COMMENTARY —

Modern-Day Crusader

By Adem Carroll

As director of the provocative Jihad Watch website, as well as author of *Islam Unveiled* and *Onward Muslim Soldiers*, Robert Spencer seems to see himself as a commander in a struggle. His enemy is not a specific group of Muslims with particular aims and aspirations but instead a monolithic and unchanging Islam. On scores of radio and TV shows, he fulminates against the religion as a self-appointed expert, despite a lack of serious credentials or even, apparently, interest in the richness of his subject matter. In his intolerance and literalism, Spencer is remarkably like those extremists he condemns.

Regnery, a conservative publisher, has seen fit to publish another Robert Spencer book, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*¹. Perhaps some readers will consider this spiteful and rather vile book a camp classic, a hoot. But we Muslims will not. These assaults hurt, not because they hit home, but because they are so wildly off the mark. Spencer's reckless, scattershot approach harries the Muslim American community and leaves very little ground for moderates and humanists, as I will explain. Of course such hateful assaults predate 9/11, but now they inspire quite a troop of know-nothing reactionaries who cheer each new fusillade. Do I need to add that this does nothing to make us safer as a nation?

The politics of fear has its own military-industrial entertainment component. A growing cottage industry of self-appointed experts and researchers spews hate from its sinister tall smokestacks. Rather than prejudice their political motivation, it may be sufficient to note a few characteristics of the rhetoric they produce.

While working with a Muslim American organization (though differing with it in some respects), I saw how often statements of Muslim leaders are taken out of context to appear alarming. Mr. Spencer is no stranger to this baiting game, as he tries to depict religious preference as something more sinister, like the threat of world domination—the domino theory of evangelical Islam.

First, perhaps for its entertainment as well as its propaganda value, Robert Spencer shows

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Back to the Future

GOP Revives Anti-Gay Marriage Campaign for '06

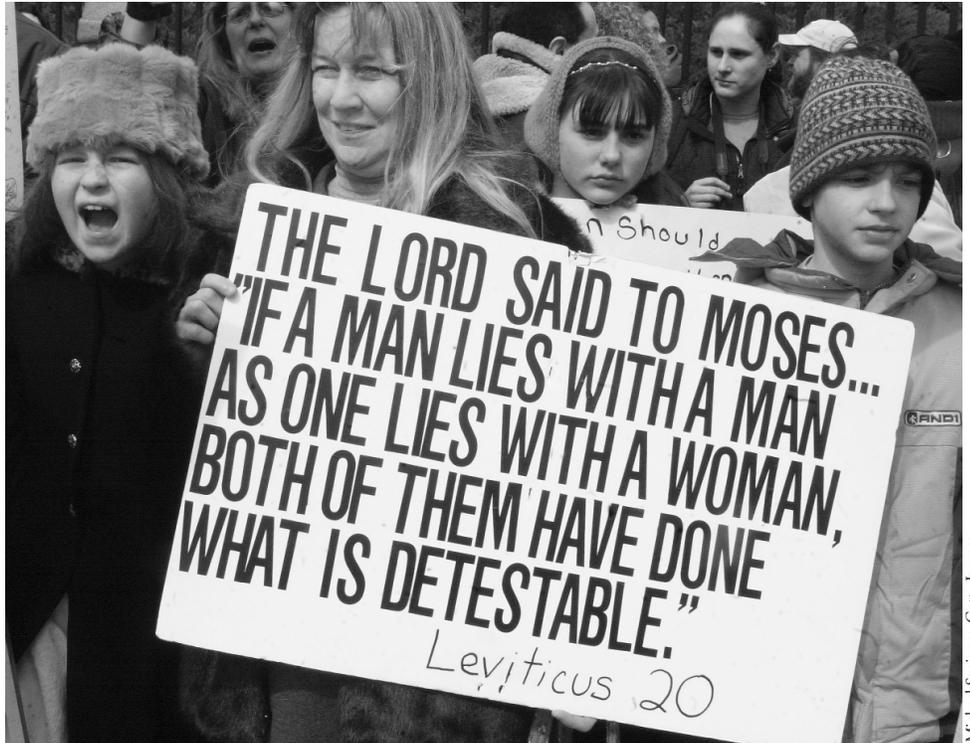
By Doug Ireland

As George Bush's approval ratings on the Iraq war and the economy continue their slide downward, the Republican Party is determined to use the gay marriage issue and other punitive anti-gay measures to retain control of Congress in the 2006 mid-term elections, and defend their one-state control of state legislatures. Why revive the anti-gay marriage fight? Because it works.

Along with homeland security, electoral gay-bashing was key to the Republicans' 2004 sweep of the presidency and both houses of Congress. As former Clinton campaign strategist and CNN talking head James Carville summed up the Republicans' message in his post-election analysis, "I'm going to protect you from the terrorists in Tikrit and the homos in Hollywood."

The lynchpin of Karl Rove's anti-gay strategy in 2004 was to increase turnout by social conservatives through a crusade against gay marriage. Surfing on the huge anti-gay backlash after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the "sodomy" laws that made gay sex illegal, the GOP and its Christian Right shock troops mobilized. They placed referenda to ban gay marriage on the ballot in 11 states, including four of the "battleground" states.

Not only did the anti-gay marriage forces make a clean sweep of all eleven states, they succeeded in using the issue to drive up turnout among both Evangelical and Catholic voters, overwhelming the Democrats' best-ever get-out-the-vote drive. Even in supposedly "liberal" Oregon, the ban on gay marriage passed by a whopping 14 points. And in Ohio (the state on which the presidential race turned), two-thirds of those who came to the polls voted against gay marriage—including not only the 24 percent of the state's voters who self-identified as "born again," but majori-



An anti-gay marriage protestor in Boston.

ties of the nominally Democratic ethnic and largely working-class Catholics who are the swing vote in the Buckeye State's cities and suburbs. That's how John Kerry lost Ohio.

In Washington, the GOP proposed a constitutional amendment banning same sex marriage. It failed, but four of the Democratic senators who helped defeat it were themselves defeated at the polls that fall. Florida, South Dakota, Louisiana and South Carolina all sent Republicans to Washington instead.

This year, the GOP is rolling out the same strategies—and also trying out some new ones.

Anti-Gay Tactics in Washington

First off, the Republican leadership has revived the Federal Marriage Amendment to the Constitution to ban same-sex unions, with Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist scheduling a vote for June. Once again, the objective is not so much to pass

it as to get Democratic Senators on record as voting against it, so that the vote can be used to help defeat them.

The GOP is well aware of just how frightened the Democrats are of the gay marriage issue. For example, centrist Dems like California Senator Diane Feinstein have blamed the Democrats' '04 defeat on gays who wanted "too much, too fast, too soon," as she put it. Another example: well-known Democratic party operative Paul Yandura—who served in the Clinton White House as well as on the staff of the Clinton and Gore presidential campaigns—created a stir among party activists, both gay and straight, by sending an open letter on April 20 to gay Democrats criticizing Democratic National Chairman Howard Dean and the party for not getting involved in state ballot measures seeking to ban gay marriage. Dean's response? Less than a week later he fired the party's gay outreach advisor Donald Hitchcock—

Michael Springer, Getty Images

who was Yandura's domestic partner (a move Yandura described as "retaliation, pure and simple"). Knowing the Democrats won't stand up to defend gay marriage from electoral and ballot attacks has encouraged the Republicans in their insidiously clever anti-gay strategy.

Moreover, since '04, the Bush Administration has strengthened the GOP's electoral hand, and its anti-gay strategy, beyond electoral tactics by funneling huge amounts of political patronage to allies in conservative churches. These "faith-based initiatives" underwrite proselytizing campaigns by the Christian Right and tear down the wall separating Church and State.

Even better for electioneering purposes, faith-based initiatives widen the power and local visibility of recipients, which helps conservatives during campaign season. Religious groups now play a huge role in public housing, receiving 24 percent of grant money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's housing subsidies. A quarter of the \$15 billion the White House originally pledged to fight AIDS was diverted to sexual abstinence programs run by religious organizations. And this year, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) upped that earmark for abstinence-only-until-marriage education to 33 percent. The deficit reduction bill that Bush signed in February channels \$500 million into programs to promote and strengthen heterosexual marriage.

In Bush's five years in the White House, he has reshaped the bureaucracy to institutionalize these patronage flows to religious groups. Eleven government agencies have set up religious offices, ostensibly to help coordinate the provision of social services by faith-based organizations. In reality they channel the money to Republican allies among the religious. In early March of this year, the President even established a religious office in the Department of Homeland Security—with churches and church-related institutions getting a majority share of the monies allocated for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

This massive ladling out of religious patronage by the Republicans guarantees that churches, priests and preachers will be oh-so enthusiastic in carrying the anti-gay message to their flocks and in encouraging parishioners to vote on the basis of "moral" and "family values"—the prime target, of course, being gay-friendly Democrats.

Beltway Tactics Beyond the Government

We now know that in 2004, a GOP front group in Washington also proved innovative in directing strategy—and money flows—to the grassroots. A study released in January by the Institute on Money in State Politics, "The Money Behind the 2004 Marriage Amendments," showed that of the \$6.8 billion filed as legal campaign contributions to support referenda banning gay marriage, "contributors affiliated with conservative Christian organizations gave \$2.2 million. Nearly \$2 million of this amount, or 89 percent, came from members of the so-called 'Arlington Group,' a coalition with close ties to the Bush White House."

The Arlington Group—so secretive it doesn't even have a website—was formed in 2003 by a key White House Christian Right ally, the Rev. Donald Wildmon. Wildmon is head of the Tupelo, Mississippi-based American Family Association, which—through its broadcasting arm, American Family Radio—runs a network of more than 200 Christian radio stations and affiliate groups. The Arlington Group was formed in response to the Supreme Court's ruling striking down the sodomy laws, and in expectation that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court would hold gay marriage to be a civil right (as indeed it did in 2003).

It is unknown to the public and rarely surfaces in the press, but the influential Arlington Group's membership includes not only such well-known Christian Right groups as James Dobson's Focus on the Family, Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Foundation, and the Family Research Council, but also a raft of 57 other little-known but

potent entities like Catholicvote.org, the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families, the American Association of Christian Schools, the Coalition of African-American Pastors, the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board, the National Religious Broadcasters Association, and the National Association of Christian Evangelicals. The last is headed by the Rev. Ted Haggard, pastor of the immense, 11,000-member New Life Church in Colorado, who—as Jeffrey Sharlet reported in a May 2005 *Harper's* magazine profile of the powerful preacher—personally talks to Bush or his advisers every Monday. Many of the Arlington Group's members have benefited from the Bush administration's religious patronage.

Politicians are also in the Arlington Group circle, including Ohio's Republican Secretary of State, Kenneth J. Blackwell. Blackwell not only served as co-chair of Bush's 2004 campaign in Ohio, he was the public servant responsible for an election system which pushed Bush to victory by depressing the black, pro-Kerry vote in the state. A 2005 study confirmed that black voters waited three times longer than whites to vote and were more likely to be asked—illegally—by poll workers for identification.

In a December 2004 column, Weyrich—a key ideological leader of the Christian Right—boasted that "the effort to put marriage on the ballot in eleven states emanated from the Arlington Group. And the resources to go full-tilt in Ohio were raised from participants in the group." The Institute for Money in State Politics report notes that, "campaign contributions from member groups of [The Arlington Group] went most heavily to Ohio, totaling \$1.18 million, nearly all of the money given to support Ohio's amendment and 59 percent of the \$1.99 million in contributions given by organizations or individuals connected with the Arlington Group." Not only did Arlington Group member organizations funnel financial resources to Ohio, but they also gave heavily in two other states considered to be presidential battle-



grounds—\$546,600 in Michigan and \$138,360 in Oregon.

The direct contributions required to be filed by state election laws for the anti-gay marriage referendum campaigns represent only the tip of the iceberg. Not included are many in-kind contributions. For example, the *Washington Post* reported that leaders of the Arlington Group had jointly hired or loaned several full-time staff members to work on the gay-marriage issue in '04. Moreover, Arlington Group members undertook advertising campaigns targeting House and Senate candidates on the marriage issue in at least six of the states with ballot measures on the issue: Arkansas, Louisiana, North Dakota, Michigan, Ohio and Oklahoma. But this advertising was not included in the referendum campaign filings.

Complete records of contributions aren't available until after elections, but rest assured the Arlington Group will work the money flows equally well in 2006.

The Church is in the Fight

The role of Catholics in the anti-gay marriage crusade has been seriously under-reported. But one of the most successful Arlington Group associates in the '04 referenda was the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP), founded in 1973 by American Catholics. C. Preston Noell III is on the TFP board of directors and is editor of *Crusade*, a TFP magazine. He also is a member of the Arlington Group. TFP was behind the Traditional Marriage Crusade ballot committees formed in nine states in '04; as its website proclaims, it is already gearing up for this year's election cycle.

In the battleground state of Michigan, \$1 million for the '04 referendum campaign came directly from seven Roman Catholic dioceses in Michigan. Their contributions to a committee supporting the same-sex marriage ban represented 36 percent of the total contributions raised by the anti-gay marriage amendment

committees in Michigan.

The Catholic Church's role in the anti-gay marriage fight is sure to strengthen in 2006 under the new Pope Benedict XVI (formerly the anti-gay zealot Cardinal Ratzinger). In February, theologians and jurists, including many Americans, took part in a five-day seminar on how to legally ban gay marriage, organized by the John Paul II Institute for Studies of Marriage and the Family at the Vatican's Lateran University in Rome. And when the Pope made an American and long-time ally—San Francisco Archbishop William Levada—a cardinal and gave Levada his old job as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it signaled that the fight over gay marriage in the United States will be getting a lot more Vatican attention.

One Church's Example

Rarely do the efforts of local churches and pastors to turn out the anti-gay vote attract the scrutiny of state election

Mike Keefe, The Denver Post

authorities. One of the rare instances is in Montana.

There, as the Associated Press reported this March, Montana State Commissioner of Political Practices Gordon Higgins ruled that Canyon Ferry Road Baptist Church in East Helena violated state law by not reporting, to his office, the church's in-kind support of a state constitutional ban on gay marriage. The church held meetings and collected signatures to put the ban on the ballot, becoming, according to Higgins, an "incidental political committee." The gay marriage ban passed by a 2-1 margin in '04.

Multiply that Montana church by thousands of other churches across the country whose anti-gay organizing is not legally reported and is off the media radar screen, and one begins to get a truer picture of the role of religious institutions in the anti-gay marriage fight. The pulpit is a powerful forum for getting out the anti-gay vote.

Tactics for 2006

Anti-gay organizing for the '06 election is well under way. Months before Congress voted on the anti-gay marriage amendment to the US Constitution, the Alliance for Marriage announced it will organize retribution against those who oppose it.

In Iowa, Arlington Group member Focus on the Family ran full-page newspaper ads targeting Democratic state legislators for blocking debate on a proposed state constitutional ban on gay marriage, preventing Iowans from voting on the amendment. The ads' demagogic slogan? "Iraqis Have the Right to Vote, Why Don't Iowans?"

Legislatures in Maryland, West Virginia, and New Hampshire all blocked Republican attempts to put anti-gay marriage amendments to their state constitutions on the fall ballot. But Republican propagandists are gearing up to use those votes against the amendments to beat Democrats. And in Washington, Colorado, Wisconsin, Virginia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Illinois, and a half-dozen other states, constitutional same-sex marriage bans either have been or are being

put on the ballot for this fall by the legislatures or by petition.

In Minnesota—which already has a law on the books defining marriage as between a man and a woman—St. Paul-Minneapolis Catholic Archbishop Harry Flynn has urged his priests to participate in a statewide campaign by Minnesota for Marriage to activate religious leaders in support of a constitutional ban on gay marriage and civil unions. At the same time, a church-based group called Minnesota Citizens in Defense of Marriage ran radio, print and direct mail ads all Spring targeting a dozen state senators who oppose the ban.

In February, Catholic theologians and jurists took part in a five-day seminar on how to legally ban gay marriage.

Minnesota is also the testing ground for a new GOP tactic: a CD-ROM devised by the Minnesota Republican Party to build support for the constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. Featuring clips from born-again GOP Gov. Tim Pawlenty and other statewide office-holders, the mini-documentary has another purpose: building up a voter database. To watch the video, a person has to go to an Internet site and punch in an ID code that tells the Party who is viewing it. Once the video is going, viewers are asked questions on subjects like abortion, gun control and Party preference. But it contains no warnings saying that data is collected and transmitted to the Republican Party, nor does it indicate what other data about the user is being collected once the Party is connected to one's home computer.

Electronic privacy groups have condemned this covert data-collection as "sneaky" and "dangerous."

In Congress, the Republicans have more arrows in their quiver than just the Federal Marriage Amendment. They introduced House bills saying no state constitution can be construed to require legalization of anything but "normal" marriage between a man and a woman. And even before the Defense of Marriage bill is passed, let alone ratified by the states, the House Republicans introduced a bill that would safeguard from judicial review its provision allowing states to refuse recognition of same-sex marriages performed in other states. Finally, they sought to ban same-sex marriage in the District of Columbia.

Another anti-gay innovation for the 2006 campaign: In Ohio and 12 other states, the GOP has introduced legislation to ban adoptions by same-sex couples.

After a March 2006 Pew Poll purported to show a decline in opposition to gay marriage from 63 percent to 51 percent, some in the gay community waxed optimistic, and some Democrats began to surmise that the gay marriage issue was losing its hot-button status in electoral behavior. But, as Jeff Soref, a former Democratic National Committeeman who chairs the Empire State Pride Agenda in New York, commented when it was released:

That's in the absence of any sort of very focused and negative advertising campaign about gay rights and marriage equality. When the Republicans start to really organize around it—through the pulpit and churches and advertising and people on the ground—you will probably see opinion move again.

Moreover, a subsequent Gallup Poll released in April this year reported that opposition to gay marriage had actually risen to 68 percent, as compared to 55 percent in a poll Gallup had taken the year before. So, there is little cause for optimism; 2006 is shaping up as yet another dangerous year in the anti-gay culture wars.

Doug Ireland, a veteran political journalist, can be reached through his blog, DIRELAND, at <http://direland.typepad.com/direland/>

CYBERCULTURE *continued from page 1*

lent racial extermination are the norm.

But more than supporting virtual communication among often isolated members, the web has proved invaluable for organizing real-world gatherings of Aryans that cultivate and nurture a sense of community.

After more than eight years of studying white power activism in the United States—research that includes more than 100 interviews with movement leaders and members, observation of a wide range of Aryan activities, and extensive analysis of the white power movement's cyberpresence—we see the Aryan cyberculture as a critical piece in explaining how this marginalized and highly stigmatized movement continues to retain its members and cultivate new ones. Activists deploy cyberspace to expand their opportunities to interact with comrades beyond the “real world.” They find the social supports crucial to sustaining and building the movement.

Community and Cyberspace

In cyberspace, constraints of time and place are diminished and information flows freely, creating additional ways for people to connect. Skeptics, however, claim the relationships in cyberspace can only approximate true community. Without face-to-face contact, they say, people cannot establish the strong social ties and solidarity needed for robust community bonds.¹

Those watching the ominous expansion of the White Power Movement's presence in cyberspace similarly ask: Is the Web a useful space for sustaining members' commitments to the movement or does the spatial distance and relative anonymity of cyberspace diminish organizers' capacities to build solidarity and recruit new members?

The way these questions are asked typically treats virtual interaction and face-to-face interaction as separate social worlds with little connection between them. But community-building and cyberspace experts Barry Wellman and Minea Gulia point out, “people do not neatly divide their worlds into two discrete sets: people seen in person and people contacted online. Rather, many community ties connect

offline as well as online. It is the relationship [between virtual and real-world contexts] that is the important thing.”² The Internet does not replace face-to-face interaction, but rather adds on-line interaction to social relationships. If anything, cyberspace may allow for more social interaction than would otherwise occur.

The more relevant question then is: what is the relationship between the White Power Movements' cyberpresence and its real-world movement contexts?

The White Power Movement

White power activists are drawn from a network of overlapping groups, most notably the Ku Klux Klan, Christian Identity groups, neo-Nazis, and Aryan

**The web has proved
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skinheads. While there are differences among them, they all agree on fundamental doctrines. Foremost is a commitment to white power and defending the “white race” from “genocide.” They envision a racially exclusive world where “non-whites” are vanquished, segregated, or at least subordinated to Aryan authority. Adherents are also strongly anti-Semitic; support Aryan militarist nationalism; oppose homosexuality; and denounce inter-racial sex, marriage, and procreation. The Southern Poverty Law Center estimates that more than 750 white power organizations are active in the United States, the most notorious being the Klan, Aryan Nations, National Alliance, Hammerskins, and

White Aryan Resistance.³ But the number of groups is not a wholly reliable measure of white power activity and no one knows just how many actual members there are.

Real-world Spaces of the White Power Movement

What is this “real world” that the white power cyberpresence supports? For many activists, the heart of the movement is the rather benign, everyday life of the home. The home is a place of refuge from the stigma and tension that Aryans face regarding their beliefs. It is also where white power parents indoctrinate their children into Aryan worldviews. In short, it is space in which their movement activities can go relatively unchallenged because of the control and anonymity they enjoy there.

Rearing ideologically aligned children is seen as essential for the vitality of the movement, and so the home becomes an ideological shelter for Aryan resistance. According to a member of the Southwest Aryan Separatists, “We all know the movement begins with the family so if you can't save your family then what's the point? The family is what we fight for—it is the struggle—keeping your families pure and raising your kids among your kin so you don't have to worry about the ‘nons’ (nonwhites) coming in.”⁴

Aryans are creative in the ways they imbue the home with racial politics. They name children and pets with symbols of Aryan ideology, create racist and anti-Semitic family rituals such as racialized birthdays complete with Hitler, Klan, or swastika cakes, or offer pre-meal prayers that stress redemption through the struggle for white power. Homes display the movement's cultural paraphernalia, such as Aryan-themed posters, clothing, wall hangings, books, flags, jewelry, hats, and even g-strings.

Homeschooling is the most systematic form of political socialization in white power families. As an Aryan mother and homeschooler explains, “European culture is fading and our tradition is being stripped away, so we have to do something to fight the assault. With the public

schools just promoting filth and hypocrisy I can't imagine sending my kids there so I teach them here and I know the more we do this we will be ensuring our children have the tools to preserve our culture."⁵

Small independent churches and racist Bible study meetings assemble between five and 20 members in activists' homes where they openly practice what they believe is the "true" Biblical insight: whites that are the "true" Israelites and Jews are the seed of Satan. Worshipers say these house meetings offer them a great deal of autonomy and support for elaborating white power ideals. Similarly, informal house parties provide space for people to explore and openly act out their white power ideology. With 15 to 50 Aryan sympathizers gathered at any one time, they freely discuss Aryan ideas and enact Aryan relationships. A Southern California skinhead told us:

When you live in a world like we do, you have to find places where you don't have to hold back on being racist; where other people feel and act the same way you do. The parties are definitely part of it. . . You get a chance to come together in a small setting where it's easier to know people and build friendships.⁶

Taking this to a grand scale are white power music concerts and "congresses" that draw smaller movement networks into more extensive webs of white power culture. The congresses are very prominent and celebrated locales for fellowship and support among Aryans. The Aryan Nations Congress, Christian Identity Conference, and White Christian Heritage Festival all stress the "normality" of extreme racism and create the space to express their white supremacy in a supportive face-to-face context with other Aryans. Those gathered sing racialized hymns and wear white power regalia, while also solemnly performing sacred cross lightings and commitment ceremonies. As an Aryan Nations member explained, the crosscutting networks and the inspirational character of participating in racist rituals are crucial to sustaining participation.

I'm so glad to see folks from all over the U.S., and even comrades from Europe. . . It's during these congresses that we really get to share in fellowship and white solidarity. . . It's a great sight when you have your racial brothers show up for an event like this. . . and when it's time to light the swastika: well, that's what really inspires me.⁷

**White supremacists
envision a racially
exclusive world where
"non-whites" are
vanquished, segregated,
or at least subordinated
to Aryan authority.**

Since the late-1990s, white power music concerts have become the largest and most prominent real-world gatherings for the movement. Racist music hotspots include Southern California (especially Orange County and San Bernardino County), Portland, OR, Detroit, and the corridor between Philadelphia and Harrisburg, PA. Every year, 150 to 600 activists go to Hammerfest, which is sponsored by the skinhead group Hammerskin Nation; Nordic Fest, organized by Imperial Klans of America; or VolksFront's Aryan Fest.

Eight to 12 bands perform, white power leaders declaim from the stage and white power merchandise vendors surround the performance space. Government authorities and counter-protestors often lurk, so organizers hold concerts on remote, private lands, the exact location of which is announced via movement websites only days before the event. They also limit

attendance to sympathizers as a way to insulate themselves and create the private movement space devoted solely to white power ideals that allows fellowship to flourish. As a band member observed,

When you're at a show you get to do things you normally can't do [like *sieg heiling* during the performance] and it just feels great to let go and be what you are. You know, be a racist with everyone else who's here. We're all here because. . . we want to be somewhere where. . . you don't have to be ashamed. . . It's hard to find places where you can do that.⁸

Music events are especially important as one of the few real-world settings where white power activists participate in face-to-face collective relationships anchored in Aryan ideals. Here they can experience a large, all-white, extended community that exemplifies the qualities of the "racially cleansed" society they imagine. "Don't listen to what they say," sings Youngland "Don't ever fall away / Don't listen we'll have our day / When our nations have their way."

Along with the home, concerts and congresses are the real-world contexts where Aryan community is built and sustained.

Virtual Movement Spaces

Even as white power concerts have grown in popularity, activists are using cyberspace more and more to enjoy virtual freedom and to connect with one another. Here members can network in a way that is relatively unconstrained by limits of time and space and the pressures of the government and anti-racist groups. The sites supply online links to an array of members and groups, offer information about movement ideology and activities, and serve as repositories for movement culture.

Listening to activists, you learn that the white power movement's web presence directly connects them to much larger networks of activists than isolated activists would otherwise be aware of or able to contact.⁹ An Aryan Front member captures a common sentiment when he observed:

It [the Web] keeps me connected. I don't have much free time to attend as many rallies or festivals as I'd like but emailing and the chatrooms and just the websites make me feel a lot less alone.... The Internet just makes it easier to be a racist when you know what's out there and how many other people all over the world are fighting for pretty much the same thing you are.¹⁰

A Southeastern Aryan activist referred to it as "something larger that's out there."¹¹ That "something larger" is a sense of a collective movement community that can be tapped in ways that were once impossible. Information about the movement travels quickly and unimpeded across these cyber-networks. Visitors report on activities across movement branches and real-time communication in chatrooms create links among individual members.¹²

Lyrics from two popular white power bands

Race and Nation

Skrewdriver

I believe in the White race,
A race apart,
we've got a mile start,
I believe in my country,
It's where I belong,
It's where I'll stay,
Chorus:

For my race and nation,
Race and nation,
Race and nation,
Race and nation.

Hate Train Rolling

Bound For Glory

Chorus:
Hate Train Rolling on the rails of an
insane world,
Hate Train Rolling a non-stop collision
undeterred,
Hate Train Rolling leaving wreckage in
our path,
We're Bound for Glory,
Hate Train Rolling, Built to forever last.

The ties created are increasingly international. A Northern Hammerskin told us, "Since we've been able to access the Internet and email Hammers in other countries it's changed everything. We really see ourselves as part of an international movement... We knew about [skinheads in other parts of the world], but it was more word of mouth and now we're actually working together."¹³

The cultural life of white power activism is on display on the websites of the major organizations—National Alliance, Aryan Nations, and White Revolution—making them virtual storehouses of the movement's cultural materials. There members create and preserve movement traditions and nourish support for their beliefs. Photo galleries are filled with pictures of infants adorned with movement regalia such as baby Klan robes or children posing for family portraits saluting Nazi-style wearing symbols of the movement. Also common are photos of activists' tattoos composed of Aryan symbols such as the German iron cross, Confederate flag, portraits of Hitler, and slogans such as, "Supreme White Power." If you want to buy a racist video game like "Ghetto Blaster" and "Racial Holy War" for your teen, turn to an Internet catalog. Dolls, games and other toys for kids are easily accessed along with a variety of adult movement paraphernalia such as racist clothing, music CDs, books, magazines, flags, patches, and stickers.

A SoCal skinhead told us, "It's really cool how you can get all this shit off the net now. Ten years ago there really wasn't that much stuff you could get...but now you've got all the music, the clothes... I mean you can get pretty much anything you can think of. I bought my daughter a toy figure of Hitler from a movement website."¹⁴

Music is arguably the most popular aspect of movement culture accessed through the Web. Music-based websites are prevalent and provide easy access to racist songs like "Hate Train Rolling" (see box) through MP3 downloads, CDs, and streaming radio and video. Resistance Records and Free Your Mind Productions (formerly Panzerfaust) have the most

prominent and elaborate Internet presence. Hundreds of titles from white power bands can be ordered through each organization's website along with access to 24-hour streaming radio, chatrooms for listeners, and racist books, videos, jewelry, and clothing. The websites display activist Aryan lifestyles which viewers are encouraged to assimilate and reproduce. Resistance Records markets their own fanzine—"Resistance"—and clothing brand—"Aryan Wear." These racist cultural displays help people reproduce the look and sensibility of the movement.

Unknown or inaccessible national and regional concerts and other gatherings suddenly become available through the web, with information conveniently categorized by locale. For instance, concertgoers for Aryan Fest 2004 were instructed to gather at a meeting place several miles from the event at times set by festival organizers where they were first scrutinized and then led to the site. The web also provided information about hotels, restaurants, and carpools to help concertgoers.

Once back home, music-based websites like that of Resistance Records offer fans chat rooms where they enter activist networks that intersect around the white power concerts or other events they have attended. This means that contact among members does not have to end when a concert is over, a congress closes, or a party concludes. White power music companies and concert organizers are also starting to provide real-time web access to the events that include live video streams, photos, and sound clips for those who cannot attend or those wanting to relive the experience.

Online fanzines also report in great detail on Aryan music festivals and concerts offering coverage of the bands, fans, and movement leaders who attended. These virtual dimensions of white power music culture help activists feel a part of the real-world experience without physically being there. They participate vicariously by attending to reports from those involved in movement music, by listening to broadcast performances and recordings, and by consuming CDs, symbolic apparel, and

other merchandised accessories that represent white power music and the wider movement. In these ways, access is spread beyond the concrete setting of a particular show to the virtual realm and back into real-world contexts of the home or parties.

These real-world-cyberspace connections can make even the solitary experience of listening to songs, surfing music web pages, or reading fanzines feel part of the broad collective “community out there.” One Midwest Aryan explained:

I listen to white power music and I still have that feeling of being involved with something as a whole.... I can sit at home alone and even though I know the whole world is against me I can pop in a...CD and listen to it and go. Not only is this uplifting me but I know the band's behind it and there are people who have the same CD that forms a community and gives us strength.¹⁵

The fact that this movement community can be accessed both virtually and in the real-world settings of festivals and concerts appears to help intensify members' sense of belonging and identification with a wider “we” of the movement.

Other Real-world and Virtual Connections

Beyond the music scene, the white power cyberpresence is becoming an essential part of other real-world activities, even racial socialization in the home. The website of Women for Aryan Unity (WAU) offers parenting advice and a space for parents to discuss strategies for indoctrinating their children into the movement. There are also several cyber-newsletters, downloadable textbooks, and discussion groups organized around home schooling. For kids, racist crossword puzzles, coloring pages, and children's white power literature are posted on sites designed explicitly for children (and even, ostensibly, by children, as in the case of Stormfront.org creator Don Black's 12-year old son who fronts Stormfrontkids.org). Parents use the coloring books,

children's literature, and workbooks as a way to integrate and normalize radically racist ideals in their daily life.

The Internet also allows organizers of established groups to quickly respond to those searching for offline connections. In a typical chat room exchange, a nascent member asked, “Do any of you guys ever meet up in the real world? I live in Farmington. If any of you guys would like to get together, please feel free to contact me.”¹⁶

Shortly thereafter, a membership coordinator for a statewide white power group responded with, “White Revolution members actually get together quite often.

Aryans imbue the home with racial politics by naming children and pets with Aryan symbols, and creating racist and anti-Semitic family rituals such as birthdays complete with Hitler, Klan, or swastika cakes.

Sometimes for cookouts...but mostly for our meetings... White Revolution members will be having a meeting later on in the month... If you feel comfortable enough to send me your email... I can put you on our email list so you can stay up to date on what we are doing.”¹⁷

It is also common for Aryans moving to a new area to ask about potential off-line connections. “i (sic) am a skingirl planning on moving to south city in the middle of april and i dont know many people there. it would be good to meet some like minded folk. email me if you get some time. Hail Victory!!”¹⁸ As is typical, activists responded to this posting in a quick and inviting way, congratulating the “skingirl” on her new move and offering a number of ways to establish real-world connections once she

arrived. Activists make similar use of e-mail lists to organize small, regular local gatherings such as Bible study meetings, campouts, and house parties.

Cybertalk

“When did you realize you hated niggers or what made you hate niggers?” The freedom to express hardcore racist beliefs is a key element of on-line interaction among white power members and parallels the talk in real-world settings. Virtual conversations abound with talk of violence against “racial enemies” and an Aryan future “cleansed” of homosexuals, “non-whites,” communists, and other “villains.” These conversations identify the social, physical, and moral boundaries that mark the white power community against its foes. They offer support to members' virulent racism.

If members lose faith that they will ever prevail, stories both online and in the real world celebrate the movement's power and persistence, championing its inevitability and righteousness in the struggle for Aryan dominance. Morality tales focusing on the personal trauma that led members to their “racial awakening” are popular and draw some of the most emotion-laden discussion among forum participants.

Dear Abby-style advice is sought and given on topics ranging from ways to spread the movement's messages, to more personal concerns such as parenting strategies, financial investments, or relationship problems. For instance, a young Aryan wrote:

“Hi my name is Stan and I am 18 and I been in the movement for almost a year but I've always been racially aware of what's going on... Any ways I wanted to get your opinion on a problem I have. See my girlfriend is mad as hell at me for being racist because i just told her and she said if I stay racist she will break up with me... so I just wanted to get some

peoples opinion...” (PainlessBrutality, 1/14/05)

He received 16 quick responses, most offering sympathy and support—“Hey man that’s a bad problem, I’ve been in the same situation myself many times...” “Same deal with me mate, my girl is German and very anti nazi’s. but talk to her, try to educate her. my girl is slowly coming around now” (red neck nzzr, 1/16/05).

The fraternal quality of these types of exchanges highlights the moral support, empathy, and camaraderie found both in

real-world free spaces and on-line, particularly by veterans seeking to encourage new members. This veteran’s encouraging response to a query is typical:

Mike, you are so welcome here. We have a lot of good people here, all happy to meet you, and converse with you... There are people of all ages...and we are all of one mind... enjoy your participation on this forum.... Lucy¹⁹

Members questioning their “faith” are often met with empathy and appeals to stay committed in the face of pressures to change their racist politics. But activists can also scrutinize each other for depth of feeling and commitment to movement ideals. Just like in real-world spaces, participants in on-line chats attend closely to how they present themselves. They rely upon shared expressions of racial authenticity to determine each other’s true allegiance to the movement.

Since skin color cannot be directly observed in cyberspace, signals of racial loyalty become even more crucial. Several codes are apparent. Messages often begin or close with phrases like “88” (8 stands for “h,” the eighth letter of the alphabet; 88 symbolizes “Heil Hitler”) or “Sieg Heil” to mark their connection to Aryanism. People invariably use pseudonyms that bear the mark of movement membership, such as “Aryan Warrior,” “White Resistance,” or “Mudslayer.” Also, cybertalk is imbued with expressions of fraternity and kinship, with terms like “brother” and “sister” used to evoke a sense of solidarity that is at the core of white power culture.

Extended Interaction and Support

Cyberspace increases the potential for participants to boost their involvement in both virtual and real-world movement activities to the point of making Aryanism central to their daily life.

It is unclear just how Aryan cyberpresence has affected recruitment, although many members certainly perceive it as crucial to their recruitment activities.

Discussions both on and off the web reflect the sense that new, young members are gravitating to the movement through the Web. As this Southeast Aryan said, “You should see from the load of e-mails I have gotten in the last few days how many new kids are coming to the new site... We have just started, and between the board and the site, we will have loads of new educational resources for the newbies in the coming weeks.”²⁰

We think that most effective recruitment still relies on face-to-face contact. To the extent cyberspace helps organize and coordinate real-world activities, and promotes face-to-face contact, it plays an important role in drawing new converts into the fold.

Sociologist Steven Buechler has said that simply maintaining a cultural community of activists is an indicator of success for highly marginalized movements.²¹ As Aryans develop virtual spaces that parallel the real-world free spaces where the unconstrained expression of radical racism is encouraged and supported, they provide an important bridge among members whose participation might otherwise be very limited and whose commitment to the cause might be tenuous. Participating in both virtual and real-world movement contexts appears to help sustain a members’ involvement and ultimately to sustain the movement in ways that neither would on its own.

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Songs for Aryan Heritage

Geile Macker (Keine Kacker)

Max Resist

Freikorps for Deutschland,
And the love of the fatherland,
Max Resist for brotherhood is the
reason we exist,
Standing together with our strength
and pride,
Our true feelings for us it’s hard to hide.

Chorus:

Skinhead unity, it’s the way it should
always be,
Friends from all over the world that’s
you and me,
Aryan brothers hands across the sea,
Skinhead pride - White unity.

It’s Okay to Be White

Aggressive Force

It’s okay to be White,
Strength through pride,
You have inside,
It’s okay to be White,
It’s okay to be White,
Loyalty within you,
Have with your kin.

Stand One, Stand All

Youngland

Stand one, stand all, stand up, stand
proud
and raise the white man’s flag,
Cause I’m for you and you’re for me,
and unity is what we have.
Don’t listen to what they say,
Don’t ever fall away,
Don’t listen we’ll have our day,
When our nations have their way.

End Notes

¹ Cyberspace theorist Howard Rheingold thinks that the Internet introduced a new community form as people gather together on-line around shared values and interests, and create ties of support. Sherry Turkle, a pioneer in studies of identity and interaction on the Internet, claims that the virtual realm offers “a dramatic new context” in which to think about human interaction and how people make connections. Howard Rheingold, *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1993); Sherry Turkle, “Cyberspace and Identity,” *Contemporary Sociology* 28:643-648 (1999).

²Barry Wellman and Milena Gulia, "Virtual Communities as Communities," in M.A. Smith and P. Kollock, *Communities in Cyberspace* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 167-194.

³"Active U.S. Hate Groups in 2004," <http://www.tolerance.org/maps/hate/>.

⁴Interview, January 22, 1997.

⁵Interview, June 20, 2004.

⁶Interview, September 7, 2002.

⁷Interview July 23, 1998.

⁸Interview July 15, 2002.

⁹David S. Hoffman, *The Web of Hate: Extremists Exploit the Internet*, (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1996).

¹⁰Interview, June 27, 2004.

¹¹Interview, December 15, 2002.

¹²Also see Val Burris, Emory Smith, and Ann Strahm, "White Supremacist Networks on the Internet." *Sociological Focus* 33: 215-234 (2000).

¹³Interview, July 13, 2002.

¹⁴Interview, June 14, 2004.

¹⁵Interview, September 2, 2001.

¹⁶www.whiterevolution.com, January 24, 2005.

¹⁷www.whiterevolution.com, January 21, 2005.

¹⁸www.panzerfaust.com, May 22, 2004.

¹⁹www.whiterevolution.com, July 29, 2004.

²⁰www.panzerfaust.com, January 11, 2004.

²¹Steven M. Buechler, *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

COMMENTARY *continued from page 2*

a manly and consistent disregard for cultural, historical, and textual context. No need for "sissified" academic nuance. Therefore, how interesting that he has constructed his book like a textbook (perhaps to rival the far superior "for Dummies" franchise) with such text-box features throughout as: "Jesus vs. Muhammed," which cherry-picks bits of scripture and compares them out of context in order to show the superiority of the Christian message; "A Book You're Not Supposed to Read," which scatters an annotated bibliography of Muslim and anti-Muslim radical views throughout the pages; and "Just Like Today," which purports to prove the consistent and unchanging threat of Islam, e.g. Girls Die for the Burqa; Child Marriages; Wife Beating; Paradise Still Lures Young Men, etc.

We read one unfounded (or ungrounded) assertion after another, on every subject. "It is not easy to find Muslim leaders who have genuinely renounced violent jihad." The Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) "has Saudi oil money... They essentially have infinite funds." Muslims are still expected to have three or four wives. The nonsense is on every page! The mind reels!

I should note that there are serious intellectual and identity issues in the Muslim community world-wide. The level of education is often not very good and traditional scholarship is lacking, permitting the popularity of unbalanced and reactionary interpretations. But there have always been diverse interpretations, despite the claims of this or that school of thought. Spencer will have none of this: "America's foe in the War on Terror is not a bunch of

hijackers of Islam, but people who are working from core Islamic teachings." He urges us to recognize that the Clash of Civilizations is real and inevitable, and must be fought to the death.

Either for us or against us. There are indeed some Muslims who think this way. Yes, there are jihadis, and there are neocrusaders. Their language is inherently divi-

Perhaps progressives
should be reminded
that we Muslims are
not all lovable victims.

sive and full of name-calling. So is their thinking. President Bush (and Thomas Friedman), for example, have now adopted the term "Islamofascism" from extremist-hunters Steve Emerson and Steven Schwartz. This is not a good sign.

Militant Islam is not the same as fundamentalist Islam; Islamist ideologies differ in many important respects; religiosity has no necessary link to extremism. Spencer obscures these differences. He even claims that moderates do not exist in Islam that they are simply less informed about their religion because they do not speak Arabic! Good people must be bad Muslims!

To differ with Mr. Spencer; most terrorists are not Muslim; Islam itself does not nurture cruelty and fanaticism. Particular interpretations may arise that do promote

conflict. Jihad is a complex notion and not to be used simply to denote violent revolutionary action. Contrary to Mr. Spencer's assertion, the Crusades were not simply a "defensive war" as neoconservatives may see the War on Terror. And the Muslim adaptation of Greek arts and sciences was not simply theft nor is it proof of cultural inferiority.

What can one say? Is all this really necessary to "recover pride in Western Civilization?" Similarly, is it necessary to follow Hizb ut-Tahrir's dreams of a new Caliphate spanning continents in order to recover Muslim self-respect? Is fanaticism of any kind really necessary?

Certainly not, but it is apparently attractive to enough people to make the rest of us uneasy. And Spencer makes me uneasy. But can I find something redeeming? Could this uneasiness prompt new questioning of received wisdom? Perhaps some on the left have too easily ignored the pervasiveness of tribalism, negativity, and anti-Semitism throughout the contemporary Muslim world. Perhaps they should be reminded that we Muslims are not all lovable victims.

But Spencer is not interested in complexity and questioning. He provides no basis for respectful dialogue, and offers only rationalizations for escalating conflict, the "crusade we must fight today." No, it is no laughing matter.

Adem Carroll is a New York based writer and radio host.

End Note

¹ Robert Spencer, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*, (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2005).

POLITICIZED SCIENCE *continued from page 1*

repeatedly reported, his opinion mysteriously influenced the agency's decision to block over-the-counter access to EC, even though the committee's experts voted 23 to 4 in favor of access.

Hagar appears to see himself as a mere vehicle for divine intervention. "God took that information," he reported in a speech at his alma mater, "and He used it through this minority report to influence the decision."²

But it was politics not divinity that blocked FDA approval. The Southern Baptist Convention, Concerned Women for America, and the Family Research Council were busy lobbying the agency and Congress about EC, and some FDA officials revealed that the agency decided not to approve the drug for over-the-counter use long before the its own staff finished reviewing the application.³ The Right's victory spurred the resignations of at least two government physicians: Susan Wood, the head of the FDA's Office of Women's Health and Frank Davidoff, a consultant to the drug approval process.

Hagar's role made visible the quasi-scientific industry that peddles faux research about the harmful effects of abortion to a willing audience of the Christian Right and Bush Administration. Although legitimate researchers consistently refute their scientific "evidence," B.A.D. or "Biased, Agenda-Driven" science, as junk science is more accurately called, retains its power and contributes to the organizing might of a movement determined to make abortion—and premarital sex and condom use—somehow disappear. Abortion's link to breast cancer and depression are two of the more influential claims of B.A.D. scientists.

"The anti-abortion movement says there is an association between abortion and negative things but never determines an underlying cause because none is plausible," says Kelly B. Blanchard, president of Ibis Reproductive Health, a research center based in Cambridge, MA. "It may be true that women with less education and less money are more likely to have abortions and it might be true that women with

less education and less money are more likely to be depressed. But the depression may have nothing to do with the abortion," she explains, in response to the overly general B.A.D. claim that abortion causes depression.

The Bush Administration is a master at exploiting such B.A.D science. In the past, it was largely oil, drug, and other corporate giants deploying junk science to head off regulation that could interfere with their profits. Their allies—carefully placed in agencies and on advisory committees—have worked under the radar to alter pub-

**Although refuted by
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lic policy using industry generated "data." The Center for Science in the Public Interest has a program dedicated solely to scrutinizing such industry-influenced science and promoting disclosure of conflict of interest when scientists publish in journals, are quoted in the press, or testify before legislative or regulatory agencies (see box).

"Science is not a pure endeavor," says Merrill Goozner, director of the project. "You can hire scientists to manipulate protocols of studies, if they had a mind to, so that companies can get the results they are looking for. Or, if the scientists get different results than the desired ones, they can make sure the report never sees the light of day." In deploying B.A.D. science to change policy, the Christian Right merely borrows a tactic perfected by these other power brokers.

How It's Done

Creating B.A.D. science is simple. In the anti-abortion movement, a handful of scientists with conservative political agendas first publish articles, studies and commentaries in scientific journals, generating scientific "knowledge" about the dangers of abortion with unsubstantiated claims using problematic approaches.

In the 1980s, they tagged onto a scientific debate about abortion and breast cancer that appeared in the journals beginning in the 1950s.⁴ By repeatedly making the same claims in a variety of publications, they create the appearance of a body of scholarship that can be used to support a political goal of presenting apparently legitimate scientific evidence to influence the abortion debate. Then B.A.D. scientists create their own advocacy groups which in turn inspire new grassroots organizations with an agenda based on the scientists' claims. Newcomers join online or at the local level, and a movement with serious policy influence is born.

This tactical trajectory mimics the path of researchers who generate their own studies to support a reproductive rights agenda. The Alan Guttmacher Institute, for instance, has generated research on reproductive and sexual health since 1968 by publishing in its own journals, supporting the activist work of many reproductive rights advocacy groups. However, these journals are refereed, meaning the articles are vetted by other scientists.

But the most important issue to consider about researchers on both sides of this polarized issue is not that scientists may have agendas. It is that the quality of the science produced by B.A.D. scientists is unmistakably shoddy. In the case of anti-abortion B.A.D. scientists, their strongly held Christian Rightist beliefs have interfered with their ability to practice reputable science. Despite this deficiency, and despite vehement challenges by mainstream researchers, the "knowledge" that abortion harms women has successfully become part of the vocabulary of anti-abortion activists.

B.A.D. Scientists

Joel Brind, Ph.D.

In his off-work time from teaching general biology and endocrinology at Baruch College in New York, Brind has focused on showing that having an abortion increases a women's risk of getting breast cancer.



ABORTION INCREASES THE RISK OF BREAST CANCER

Jesse Cougle, M.Sc.

Cougle, a co-author with Reardon and Coleman on nine published papers, has been a clinical psychology doctoral student at University of Texas at Austin since 2001 in the Laboratory for the Study of Anxiety Disorders.



Priscilla Coleman, Ph.D.

A frequent coauthor with David Reardon, Coleman lists "post-abortion emotional sequelae" on her list of interests in her vita for Bowling Green University, where she is Assistant Professor in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences.



Philip G. Ney, M.D.

Ney is a child and family psychiatrist Victoria, British Columbia. His early work on the connection between abortion and child abuse has been quoted in the *Pro-Life Encyclopedia* and regularly cited by other B.A.D. researchers.



David Reardon, Ph.D.

Author of numerous books on PAS, Reardon founded the Elliot Institute in Springfield, Illinois, to oppose abortion by demonstrating that it is harmful to women.



Vincent Rue, Ph.D.

The founder of the now-inactive Institute for Pregnancy Loss, Rue has written about PAS with Anne Speckhard. His 1987 paper cowritten with Speckhard and Wanda Franz, the head of the National Right to Life Committee, was presented to Congress as a white paper in 1987. He has made a living as an independent consultant and expert witness for anti-abortion issues.

Anne Speckhard, Ph.D.

A scholar of psychological trauma, Speckhard wrote an article in the *Journal of Social Issues* in 1992 that defined PAS as a form of post-traumatic stress disorder. She has also done studies interviewing Russian women who have had abortions, finding a high percentage (80%) of her interviewees had PAS.



Abortion Breast-Cancer Syndrome

The most prominent advocate of the position that abortion is linked to breast cancer is a good example of an agenda-driven scientist. Joel Brind, a Baruch College professor, identifies his conversion from Judaism to Christianity as the turning point in his career which until that time had been focused on general endocrinology. After his conversion experience, he joined the National Right to Life Committee.⁵ "With a new belief in a meaningful universe, I felt compelled to use science for its noblest, life-saving purpose," he wrote in a magazine published for a medical audience by the Christian Right group Focus on the Family.⁶

By entering into the Christian Right's anti-abortion philosophy, Brind embraced religious beliefs rooted in Catholicism, Calvinism, and the modern Evangelical movement. This theology identifies abortion as a sin, because it is the willful murder of a person; but it can be forgiven by the grace of God. To warn against sin and to forgive transgressions are two hallmarks of Christian thought, and they translate into simultaneously condemning and showing apparent compassion for women who have had abortions. While the Christian Right is committed to opposing abortion, its anti-abortion campaign has the added value of bolstering the power of politicians who also find raising the topic beneficial.

To come to his conclusion linking breast cancer and abortions, Brind undertook an epidemiological study measuring the level of risk for contracting disease across groups of people. Although not an epidemiologist himself, Brind reviewed existing studies on abortion and breast cancer, which as a collection were inconsistent. To mainstream scientists, this suggests there is no relationship. According to Phyllis Wingo, chief of the cancer surveillance branch for the Center for Disease Control, "In epidemiology, if there's a true relationship, you'd expect to find the majority of studies would show some consistency."⁷

While Brind does not conduct basic research himself, he reviews data collected and analyzed by others, while adding his own analysis. With the help of co-authors, he reviewed the studies statistically and concluded there was a relative risk of 1.3 on a scale where 1.0 means no risk of breast cancer and 2.0 means demonstrated risk. Even though 1.3 is too low to show risk by generally accepted standards, Brind felt this justified his hunch, and he published the results, claiming that having an abortion puts a woman at risk for breast cancer.⁸ In his mind, this evidence would some day prevent women from making the wrong choice, either through deterrence or by legal prohibition.

Within months, Danish authors issued a better study that refuted his conclusions, at least to most of the scientific community.⁹ By 2003, the National Cancer Institute concluded that, "Having an abortion or miscarriage does not increase a woman's subsequent risk of developing breast cancer."¹⁰ But Brind's prior belief in the link was fervent, and he energetically brought his message beyond the world of scientific journals by placing no less than nine popular articles in *The National Right to Life News*.¹¹

In an additional review of studies published since 1996, Brind displays his uncompromising tone in criticizing what he sees as their methodological flaws:

It is only reasonable to conclude, from all extant evidence, that induced abortion is indeed a risk factor for breast cancer, despite the strong and pervasive bias in the recent literature in the direction of viewing abortion as safe for women....It is deplorable that in an era in which women's rights appear so prominently on the political and public health landscape, women should be denied the right to know about the breast cancer risk-increasing effect of such a common matter of choice as induced abortion.¹²



For over 20 years Brind has waged his campaign to make the abortion-breast cancer link (ABC) common knowledge with an approach he calls “woman-centered.” He has written letters to medical journals, contributed to nonscientific publications such as *National Review* and testified in many courtrooms and statehouses. He appeared before a Pennsylvania court in support of a billboard campaign by one of the advocacy groups he has nurtured that wanted to broadcast the message of the abortion/breast cancer link; in his testimony before state legislatures from Alaska to Massachusetts, he called for laws requiring clinics to warn women of the risks of abortion. He founded the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute and his name has become a household word among anti-abortion advocates in groups like the National Right to Life Committee, the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer, and Christ’s Bride Ministries.

If increased restrictions on abortion access are any indication, the results of his campaign are impressive. By 2005, lawmakers in every state legislature in the

country have filed bills that either require women to receive biased counseling about the risks of abortion or impose mandatory waiting periods. Thirty-one legislatures have passed such laws, which state courts in seven states have found unconstitutional.¹²³

Uncertainty is built into scientific inquiry, but Brind is very certain he is right. Polly Newcomb, a cancer researcher has said, “Circumspection, unfortunately, is what you have to do to practice epidemiology. That’s something Brind is incapable of doing. He has such a strong belief in the association that he just can’t evaluate the data critically.”¹²⁴

Post-Abortion Syndrome

David Reardon, founder of the anti-abortion Elliot Institute in Springfield, Illinois, joins Brind in analyzing impressively complex statistics to support his anti-abortion stance. Reardon has been the most outspoken advocate of “post-abortion syndrome,” or PAS, the idea that women who have abortions suffer socially, psy-

chologically, and physically from their after effects.

Beginning in 1987, he has written seven books for a general audience and dozens of scientific articles in both agenda-driven and more reputable publications claiming that abortion is linked to higher rates of mental illness, traumatic stress, and death. He says he hopes that exposing the prevalence of PAS will convince the courts to reverse *Roe v. Wade* because the case was decided in part on medical facts known at the time of the decision—that a first trimester abortion does not pose a health risk. “A demonstration that key factual assumptions in *Roe* were actually false might justify a complete repudiation of *Roe*,” he wrote.¹⁵

Trained as an electrical engineer, Reardon decided to pursue further education in biomedical ethics, receiving a doctorate in 1995 from Pacific Western University. Reardon apparently hoped that he would gain credibility in the field he saw as hostile to his work—even though Pacific Western is an on-line, unaccredited institution.

“I was advised by several university professors that I would face tremendous obsta-

cles in pursuing my research interests at most of the large universities where cultural biases against any researcher who dares to question ‘the sacred right to abortion’ would provoke hostility, harassment, and obstruction,” Reardon explained.¹²⁶

Rather than trying to enter academia, he founded the Elliot Institute which specializes in generating papers on PAS and advocating compassion for women who are “abortion survivors.” His also calls his approach “woman-centered.” Other organizations now champion the cause of post-abortion syndrome, including the Catholic Project Rachel, the Evangelical Operation Outcry, and Christian “crisis pregnancy centers” affiliated with networks like Heartbeat International and Carenet that offer post-abortion counseling.

Reardon often is at odds with the peer review process in scientific publishing that is designed to maintain standards and further the discovery of scientific truth. The process involves a sometimes lengthy give-and-take between authors and reviewers before a study or article is accepted for publication. Then subsequent review, commentary, and new research add to a shared understanding of the topic at hand. While not perfect, peer review depends on the scrupulous critique of fellow researchers, especially ones in the same field.

Like Brind, Reardon places similar material in different journals, referring back on his own previous articles or even letters to the editor, generating the conversation almost single-handedly. Most scientists are not convinced, describing his work as marred by unwarranted claims and methodological shortcomings.

In a 2004 letter to the editors of the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, two researchers critiqued a paper by Reardon and his associates Phyllis Coleman and Jesse Cogle. “We believe that Cogle, et al., operate with strong political views regarding abortion, and unfortunately their biases appear to have resulted in serious methodological flaws in the analysis published in your journal,” they wrote. Of Reardon and his colleagues they added: “All are involved in building a literature to be used in efforts

to restrict access to abortion.”¹⁷

Anti-abortion advocates produce data they insist are persuasive. They are aided in their beliefs by the structure of science itself. For instance, it is impossible to design an ethically acceptable study that shows definitively there is no harm. Researchers would have to prove the “null hypothesis”—that something *cannot* happen—a notoriously tough challenge. B.A.D. have taken advantage of this lack of definitiveness and jumped into the opening, filling the gap with their own conclusions.

Yet B.A.D. scientists ignore a vital caution in statistics that demands researchers to show a link between two trends, say breast cancer and abortion. Merely showing that two trends exist parallel to one another does not prove they are related. Researchers need to take the next step and identify the data that demonstrates the causal link.

The methodological problems of B.A.D. science go beyond this fallacy. In the parlance of basic statistics courses, they don’t “control” for other things that might influence their results, like economic, social, or

Corporate Junk Science

Junk Science runs rampant in the Bush Administration. Merrill Goozner, director of the Integrity in Science project of the Center for Science in the Public Interest tracks the problem. First, the 200-plus science-based advisory committees that support such federal entities as the Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration and Occupational Safety and Health Administration are being stacked with people Goozman dubs pro-corporate “scientists for hire.” This means that people with overt conflicts of interest are being allowed to foment public policy, potentially undermining our health and safety.

Take hexavalent chromium as an example. When the chemical’s safety was being evaluated in New Jersey, pro-industry Environmental Toxicologist Dennis Paustenbach, a man described by the *Star Ledger* as someone who “rarely met a chemical he didn’t like,” was called in as an expert. Although OSHA once classified hexavalent chromium as a “potential lung carcinogen” and warned users that exposure could cause permanent eye damage and irritation to the nose, throat and lungs, Paustenbach told a state EPA panel that the chemical poses no risk to human health.

As a result, by 2004 the New Jersey EPA had relaxed its limits on the toxin, from 10 parts per million in soil to 6100 parts per million. In addition, the chemical companies were able to walk away from numerous polluted sites without doing any clean-up whatsoever.

While this is a particular heinous example, Goozner says that similar scenarios are becoming increasingly common. “It comes up all the time in medicine, too. A drug company goes to the FDA to get approval for a new drug. The drug company funds a trial to prove that the drug is safe and effective and it then goes before an FDA advisory committee. What they don’t disclose is that some of the specialists on the committees are in the pay of the companies whose products are being evaluated or are working for their competitors. In the last two years alone there have been several dozen examples of these types of conflicts of interest.”

Three of the nine members of an FDA panel currently evaluating an insulin inhaler for use by Type I diabetics have direct ties to either Pfizer Pharmaceuticals or its technological partner, NEKTAR Therapeutics. The Cox-2 inhibitor scandal in 2004, in which the FDA pulled the anti-inflammatory drugs Bextra, Celebrex and Vioxx from the shelves after first overlooking evidence of cardiovascular risk, seems to have had little impact on the agency or the drug masters that fill electoral coffers.

The distortion of drug research goes beyond the FDA. Goozner cites the National Academy of Sciences, a supposedly independent body that provides data to a host of federal agencies, as an offender. “Very often the people on evaluation panels have consulting jobs with the companies they are going to evaluate. When they are reviewing something like the level of pollution we should tolerate, the health and safety of the American people is put at risk.” One example: the National Academy of Sciences was told to study the safety of mercury levels in fish and one of the panelists was discovered to have previously worked for the fish industry. Although the exact extent of his influence is unclear, warnings on albacore tuna now tell pregnant women to reduce their intake of the mercury-containing fish to 12 ounces per week. Prior to 2001, pregnant consumers were told to avoid tuna completely.

—Eleanor J. Bader

psychological factors. They set up faulty “apples and oranges” comparison groups such as comparing the mental health of women who give birth to those who have abortions, instead of looking at women who had abortions and comparing them to those who, through lack of access, carry unwanted pregnancies to term. They also overlook problems with self-reporting of stigmatized events like abortions and ignore studies that refute their claims.

Although professional epidemiologists may succumb to such mistakes, the peer review process usually points these shortcomings out, and further work in the area benefits from their scrutiny. B.A.D. scientists take advantage of this drawn out process to move the debate into public view before they are discredited by scientists.

At times, Reardon and his co-authors acknowledge the limitations of some of his data, visible in one paper suggesting a link between previous abortion and substance use during pregnancy.

“All of the above interpretations [substance use using pregnancy is the result of grief, remorse and depression over a past abortion] are speculative at this point.”

“The data were derived through the exclusive use of self-reported interview data, and subsequent research should incorporate information derived from other sources of information.”

“The generalizability of the findings is necessarily limited,” and “The limitations of the design preclude causal assumptions.”¹⁸

Still, Reardon insists that his analysis demonstrates that abortion is harmful to women. He spends a good deal of time refuting his critics in the journals, responding to criticisms of his work and challenging the results of others, which on one level looks as if he were following the protocol of peer review. Nevertheless, many scientists continue to dismiss his work as biased and agenda driven.¹⁹ But in propelling the debate off the pages of scholarly publications into a more receptive public forums by public speaking and popular writing directed at anti-abortion audiences, he in some ways makes the failure to pass peer

review irrelevant.

Scientific inquiry is a highly specialized form of scholarship, and only a very few are trained in the rigor of the scientific method as it is practiced with today’s standards. Many of us cannot follow the arguments raised and countered by B.A.D. scientists and their critics, and we rely on others to explain what is going on. Most scientific writing is highly technical, with its own vocabulary, tone, and style, and it is not intended for a general audience.

The inaccessibility of much scientific writing has several effects. It reinforces the

The “knowledge” that abortion harms women has successfully become part of the vocabulary of anti-abortion activists.

notion that its content is too difficult for the average person to grasp. While it increases the value of science and the stature of scientists in our culture, the necessary posture of uncertainty renders the process vulnerable to papers that appear to challenge that uncertainty but which embody bias. This has become highly problematic for the cause of abortion access.

Mainstream media coverage of Reardon and Brind’s contentious claims often describe them as part of legitimate scientific debate. The general public then harbors some vague awareness of a possible controversy. Critics of B.A.D. science are irritated that their scholarly arguments have little influence in the court of public opinion. Reproductive rights advocates become incensed that logic and science have not served them well. And the anti-abor-

tion audience eagerly accepts what they see as proof to reinforce their beliefs that abortion must be stopped. Through the positioning of ideological beliefs as supported by what appears to be scholarly research, B.A.D. science can be uncannily effective. Arkansas, Nevada, and Wisconsin all require pre-abortion counseling about abortion’s psychological effects, and South Dakota’s counseling law was overruled in court.²⁰

Anti-abortion advocates like Brind and Reardon, ones who wear the lab coats but not the respect of scientists, have not been deterred by the response of the scientific community. Even though a panel at the National Cancer Institute has concluded, “Induced abortion is not associated with an increase in breast cancer risk,”²¹ and the American Psychiatric Association does not recognize PAS as a legitimate syndrome, such high status pronouncements are irrelevant to the followers of B.A.D. scientists. The success of their performances relies on volume before a general audience, not on the fidelity of their technical merits.

In the eyes of many anti-abortion followers, challenges to their spokespeople’s credentials and professionalism are beside the point. Those who count, the grassroots voters, financial supporters and government officials of the movement, may value this work more for its zeal and impact than for its legitimacy, especially if it can further the anti-abortion cause. Eventually B.A.D. scientists will be repudiated in the public sphere, not just in the halls of science, but meanwhile their voices carry a lot of weight. These men (and some women, see sidebar) can readily be cast as crusaders in a righteous war, one their supporters are convinced they will win. The reluctance of many to engage in dialogue with B.A.D. scientists has only served to allow their biased claims to be broadcast without interference. “There has never been a debate on the ABC link,” claims the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer, “because our opponents know they would lose.”²²

B.A.D. science seems to invite sarcasm among its critics, which is both under-

Politicized Science continues on page 20

Book Reviews

*Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism:
A Woman's Crusade*

Donald T. Critchlow

Princeton University Press

438 pages, \$29.95, hardcover, 2005

Reviewed by Abby Scher

If you are under 40, you may never have heard of Phyllis Schlafly. Now in her 80s, she is a woman of relentless energy who ghostwrote Barry Goldwater's 1964 campaign book, *A Choice Not an Echo*, while organizing her deep network of Republican women to support the ultra-conservative for the Republican presidential nomination. She ran for Congress twice, first in 1952 when she was only 27 years old, and again in 1970. And, while deriding the New Deal as incipient socialism that was a threat to the Republic, she championed anti-communism in the McCarthy Era. As the search for internal enemies dried up in the early 1960s, Schlafly cowrote books "proving" that the new threat was the fearsome missile gap with the Soviets (a gap later acknowledged to be wholly false).

Despite her syndicated radio shows and prominent role as national vice president of the National Federation of Republican Women in the 1960s, many Americans first glimpsed her power when she championed the Stop ERA movement in the 1970s and early '80s. She was impossible to ignore as she mobilized conservative ground troops state by state—seemingly out of nowhere—to blister the Republican and Democratic establishments and block the enactment of an Equal Rights Amendment for women.

Schlafly drove feminists crazy, both because she out-organized them, and because she should have been one of them. How could a public figure of her accomplishments—a woman in the limelight, constantly traveling, while her husband and six children stayed at home—defend the idea that a wife should be subservient to her husband? How could an activist who built women's power to anchor the conservative wing within the Republican Party and who demanded that women be treated equally in that arena ultimately overlook the struggle for equality in other areas of life? To add to the confusion, she once publicly admired suffragists for their "moral obligation to public life."

Although he never quite illuminates the conundrum that is Schlafly, Donald Critchlow, a professor of history at St. Louis University, has written a worthy biography of the woman and her times. While some of his interpretations of the rise of the Right might rile—he discounts the role of racial divisions, for instance—the sweep of his book is admirable, and he maintains a respectful dialogue (albeit mainly in his footnotes) with those who would disagree.

By focusing on Schlafly and the grassroots conservative

world she helped build, he challenges the knee-jerk idea that conservative foundations and think tanks wholly powered the resurgence of the Right.

"Schlafly's talent, in part, was her ability to translate conservative ideas to grassroots activists and motivate them to achieve political goals," writes Critchlow. She is not an intellectual, he says, but a partisan.

Different moments brought out and energized different parts of her politics, he asserts. Her embrace of divine authority, anti-abortion politics, and a traditional home moved into the foreground in reaction to feminist gains and the Supreme

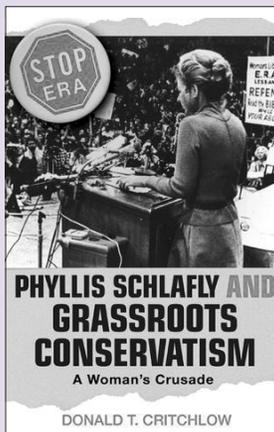
Court's endorsement of secularization and pro-choice in the 1960s and 1970s. But it was there when she earlier argued that anti-communism was a battle on behalf of Christianity against the godless and that limited government rested on "God's grace." In the 1960s, she argued that Americans were losing the cold war and were too easily led by their (liberal) leaders due to growing hedonism and materialism, a charge she laid on feminists a decade later.

Her greatest accomplishment may not have been the defeat of the ERA, but her ability to imagine and forge new coalitions. During that struggle, she reached out to conservative evangelicals for the first time, trained them in public speaking and advocacy, and had them work

hand in hand with the conservative women of her base. She mobilized new women from outside of the party structure while brokering a peace with the stalwart conservative women loyalists. Throughout these periods, Critchlow observes, she maintained a populist anti-elitism, whether against the moderate East Coast Republicans linked to financiers and free trade who she fought for control of the party, or against the feminists who she successfully portrayed as out-of-touch intellectuals who scoffed at the protection of the home so valued by other women.

She also remained (and remains) a GOP loyalist, even though the party's power brokers kept her out of the inner circle, and even after her suspicious defeat as president of National Federation of Republican Women in 1967. The federation's membership dropped by half after her defeat, as her loyalists left in droves.

More than Critchlow, perhaps, I now see Schlafly an innovator who departed from pre-war conservatism in key ways. A Catholic, she was active in her local chapter of the National Conference of Christian and Jews, and rejected the anti-Semitism that tainted many conservatives after the war. Nor was her ecumenicalism universally popular. She was spurned by Fred Schwarz after approaching him to create a joint Catholic-Protestant anti-communist organization because Schwarz believed it would be suspect among his evangelical base. She was



less rabidly anti-New Deal than some, continuing to embrace Social Security, public housing and other social programs in the 1950s.

An attractive, photogenic, and skilled public speaker who kept her cool under fire, she represented a fresh new image of a level-headed conservative.

Schlafly was also creatively multimedia, building on the power of radio, print and eventually video to reach the grassroots. It was in print that she flicked on the incendiary high beams; through her syndicated columns, monthly newsletters, and books, she helped shape the politics of millions who read them. To defeat the Democrats in 1988, instead of writing her usual campaign book, she commissioned a popular video on Willie Horton, a convicted murderer who committed rape while on furlough in Massachusetts, the state governed by Democratic candidate Dukakis.

Schlafly also admirably kept her cool as a tactician. For example, in the ERA battle, she held at bay those who wanted to denounce the amendment as a form of socialism or UN-style consolidation of power at the top; her more reserved strategy ultimately proved effective. This was in contrast to some pro-ERA forces, who linked the issue to abortion rights by insisting that equality under the law meant states had to pay for abortions, a tactic that might have contributed to the defeat of the amendment.

Crafting arguments that focused on family values and the necessarily different roles of men and women, Schlafly managed to enlarge the coalition opposing the ERA. The coalition included Mormons and Orthodox Jews, not just Catholics and Protestants. It included political novices, but she trained her troops to act like her: smile when being attacked, be groomed and poised for TV, and, especially, be a lady. As Critchlow points out, this approach spoke volumes to the male, middle-aged state legislators who controlled the fate of the ERA, in sharp contrast to the message sent by outspoken feminists exuding the counterculture.

Critchlow argues that Schlafly's political training ground was in the Republi-

can Party. But he overlooks the way her tactics emerge directly from the middle class women's club movement with roots early in the century. Like other middle class club women, Schlafly marshaled facts and figures, displaying charts and maps in her talks. Her focus on education—creating anti-communist reading lists and materials for women to use in self-guided study groups, for example—is straight out of the women's club playbook with roots early in the century. My own research on women's groups during McCarthyism found such grassroots

**Schlafly drove feminists
crazy, because she
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one of them**

expertise embraced by conservative women as much as liberal ones. All these women legitimized their claim on a place in public life by developing their expertise, showing a faith in reason that Critchlow overlooks in arguing that Schlafly rejects the Enlightenment.

Nor does Critchlow fully value how Schlafly's rhetorical choices contributed to her eventual power and credibility. By mixing the language of liberty and the early documents of the Republic, rights language and values language, Schlafly spoke in a way that connected with many of those at the grassroots who were struggling to find their own voice. It made her arguments sound reasonable within American discourse.

The separation of church and state is a time-honored pillar of an American Constitution and culture... but it was never meant that religion should be excluded from public life or from our schools and colleges.

And:

Our policy should be to eliminate discrimination against women and to achieve equity for women without sacrificing traditional women's rights.

And:

Liberal policies all require government to take over the functions of the family and reduce family rights.

Looking back, Schlafly has said she had a role in launching the Christian Right—even though, as Critchlow argues, she is not totally of that movement. While embracing traditional family values against the corrosion of materialism and feminism, Schlafly and her supporters are more leery of big government and encroachment on civil liberties. And the Christian Right has a decidedly Protestant cast, unlike Schlafly's ecumenical, family values campaigns. By 1979, Beverly LeHaye had founded Concerned Women of America (CWA) as an evangelical Protestant organization.

As family values advocates sitting between the wings of the party, her network could potentially have been a bridge between them. Ironically, with the rise of the Right, Schlafly's power seems to have diminished. With 50,000 members at its height (compared to 600,000 in CWA), the Eagle Forum and Schlafly never found a powerful foothold in the party.

While southerners angry that the federal government (eventually) defended the civil rights of blacks arguably played a bigger role in generating disgust at big government than Schlafly. And the fight against the New Deal produced new intellectuals who popularized free market arguments, enlarging the GOP's base. As the Right grew, Schlafly's voice became less important. Yet her leadership in the 1970s ERA battle, building on her experiences in the decades before, was invaluable in helping create a rupture of the status quo and a sense that the liberal juggernaut could be stopped.

Abby Scher is editor of The Public Eye and a sociologist.

POLITICIZED SCIENCE *continues from page 17*

standable and unfortunate. The agenda-driven quality of their scholarship coupled with their sometimes nontraditional resumes may seem laughable or infuriating to some. But to dismiss these advocates as cynics or dispassionate tacticians who crassly manipulate unthinking anti-abortion masses would be a mistake. It might be better to see them as efficient cogs in the machinery that drives the current movement to limit women's reproductive health and freedom.

Pam Chamberlain is a Research Analyst with Political Research Associates and a member of the Public Eye editorial board. Eleanor J. Bader contributed reporting to this article.

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.....Reports in Review.....

REPORT OF THE MONTH

Blacks and Same-Sex Marriage

Jumping the Broom: A Black Perspective on Same-Gender Marriage

By the Equality Maryland Foundation, Inc. and the National Black Justice Coalition, November 2005.

The Equality Maryland Foundation, Inc. and the National Black Justice Coalition have issued a reader-friendly pamphlet calling on African Americans to realize how important the Same Sex Marriage movement is to vital members of their community, Black gays and lesbians.

In *Jumping The Broom: A Black Perspective On Same-Gender Marriage*, the groups take on key objections to same-sex marriage, explaining: marriages don't have to be religious services; gay marriages were forced to exist behind closed doors in the past—even among well-known community activists and celebrities; nurturing families are not only for heterosexuals; and, the word "marriage" carries more tax, insurance and other legal protections for a couple than the words "civil union" or "domestic partnership."

But the main point the pamphlet wants to hammer home is that the opportunity to marry someone you love should be an individual's choice and not necessarily sanctioned by the government.

This, they argue, is a civil right. The pamphlet explains that

"civil rights" are "the protections and privileges of personal liberty given to all US citizens by the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights."

Unfortunately, *Jumping The Broom* also relies too heavily on comparing the Same-Sex Marriage Movement struggles with the African American Civil Rights Movement:

Some blacks are offended when gays and lesbians equate the same-sex marriage movement with the African American civil rights movement. When white gays and lesbians overshadow the voices of black gays and lesbians and discuss the ability to marry as a matter of "civil rights," some blacks may feel like the comparison diminishes the stain on our nation that has resulted from centuries of slavery, lynching, and segregation. We should remember, however, that many gays and lesbians are members of our community, the black community, and were an integral part of our black civil rights movement. (p.12)

As the writers themselves appear to note, the two movements are not equal—and have no need to be. If anything, the Same-Sex Marriage Movement can be inspired by the African American Civil Rights Movement without being a new version of it.

—Karen Carillo

Other Reports in Review

Taking over the Courts

Turning Right: Judicial Selection and the Politics of Power

by Melody Barnes, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, July 2004.

This report is a good primer for how the Republicans have managed to "pack" the courts in the last two decades.

The courts constantly make decisions that either strengthen or undermine the right to be free from discrimination, to organize a union, or the right to clean air and water. However, don't look to this report for an examination of the differences in ideology between Right-wing and mainstream judges. This report is about how the Right has subverted the Constitution's checks and balances in the selection of judges.

Article II of the Constitution gives the President the power to nominate federal judges,

subject to the "advice and consent" of the Senate. By having the executive and legislative branches share power, the founders intended for the judiciary to be the third branch of government. Implied is the desire to nominate judges who can count on broad or bipartisan support. Over the centuries, a complex process developed to meet this mandate, including the President's consultation with the two Senators of the state where the appointment would take place, known as the "blue slip" process.

Republicans have completely subverted the balanced approach that developed over the centuries while controlling the presidency and Congress. It started in the 1980s and early '90s when the Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations made decidedly one-sided appointments. The Clinton Administration reverted to the old practice of nominating consensus candidates, but it was thwarted even in those

efforts when the Democrats lost the majority in the Senate in 1995. Mostly through delaying tactics, the Senate Republicans managed to avoid the nomination of many judges, consensus candidates or not.

Bush Jr. took these efforts one step further by nominating candidates who were even further Right than Reagan and Bush Sr.'s nominees. Once the Republicans obtained the majority in the Senate in 2002, they began rushing nominations and sidelined the "blue slip" process in maneuvers that leave a bad taste in anyone's mouth. Only one check remained to stop the flow of right-wing ideologues: the filibuster. To eliminate this final obstacle, Senate Majority Leader Frist proposed a dramatic alteration of long-standing Senate rules to bypass the filibuster, referred to as a "nuclear option." This option was eventually avoided by a compromise,

which further eroded the voice of the Democratic minority.

As a result, today the dealings between the White House and the Senate regarding judicial selections are a far cry from cooperation. The Leadership Conference report ends with an impassioned plea to take the politics out of the process again. This way we may one day realize the promise of the Constitution: a truly independent judiciary “free from political winds and popular beliefs, that blindly dispenses justice.” — *Ursula LeVelt*

Save the Children

Youth in the Crosshairs: The Third Wave of Ex-Gay Activism

Jason Cianciotto and Sean Cabill, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute, New York and Washington, D.C., March 2006. <http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/crosshairs.pdf>

There's a new wrinkle in the Christian Right's use of homophobia: an ex-gay movement targeted at youth. In response to teens coming out at earlier ages and finding new support in many schools and faith communities, groups like Focus on the Family and Exodus International have developed programs to “convert” gay and lesbian adolescents to heterosexuality. This 100-page report skillfully analyzes the trend.

The authors identify three waves of the Christian Right's ex-gay activism: early attempts to “cure” adult homosexuals, appeals to gay men and lesbians to make lifestyle changes themselves in a Christian context, and now a focus on Christian youth (and their parents). Challenging the concept of a “cure,” the authors' review of the available research on the ex-gay movement's “conversion therapy” and other tactics shows these strategies do not accomplish their intended goal. A key 2002 study by Shidlo and Schroeder instead found people suffered even greater depression, suicidal thoughts, sexual dysfunction, and rejection of religion after the “therapy.”

The report focuses on several of the groups that have proliferated in recent years. Focus on the Family runs a traveling ex-gay roadshow called Love Won Out. Exodus International now hosts Exodus Youth. Love in Action, the oldest program, runs Refuge, a substance abuse and “sexual addiction” treatment program for teens. And PFOX, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays, modeled directly from PFLAG, Parents and Friends

of Lesbians and Gays, provides advocacy for family members worried about what they see as dangerous cultural influences.

They are all closely networked and heavily influenced by strict Biblical interpretations of homosexuality as a sin and discredited psychological theories on its causes. The report chronicles the history of the ex-gay movement from its beginnings in 1973, the same year the American Psychiatric Association stopped describing homosexuality as a mental disorder. The report also notes that the waves of ex-gay activism were crafted in response to the gains of the LGBT movement.

Their discussion of an ex-gay conference illustrates the movements' tactics: targeting Christian families and church communities, presenting testimony of conversion and redemption in a highly charged religious atmosphere, and promoting the pseudoscience of anti-gay research. Among them: clients will feel better after conversion; homosexuality is caused by dominant mothers, passive, unemotional fathers, and sexual abuse; and homosexuality is linked to alcoholism, drug addiction, and suicide.

— *Pam Chamberlain*

Still Fighting for the Vote in Louisiana

Voting Rights in Louisiana 1982-2006: A Report of RenewtheVRA.org

By Debo P. Adebile, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, Washington, D.C., March 2006. <http://renewthevra.civilrights.org>.

Louisiana's failure to help displaced voters from New Orleans vote after Katrina only highlights a longstanding scandal: it is harder for African Americans in Louisiana to exert political power today than it was 125 years ago. Although almost one-third of Louisiana's population is African American, no African American has ever been elected to a Louisiana state court or the U.S. Congress, or joined the bench of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

First enacted under Lyndon Johnson in 1965, the Voting Rights Act is the primary lever for whatever political power African Americans have achieved in the state; it is scheduled to expire in 2007. By revealing how officials with stubborn supremacist attitudes sought to block Black voting power, this report shows why it is vital to renew the Voting Rights Act.

Among the stealth tactics Louisiana whites

use to maintain power are exclusionary backroom decision-making and gerrymandering that dilutes or concentrates black's voter strength, whichever is most damaging. Both are considered discriminatory by the Voting Rights Act, and, according to the report, the US Department of Justice has issued objections to Louisiana voting changes 96 times since 1982.

The examples of whites pouring “old poison into new bottles” to preserve power—drawn primarily from court records—are shocking. For instance, then-Governor Treen resisted any redistricting plan in the 1980s that included a majority Black district for New Orleans, arguing a hypocritical race-neutral position: “districting schemes motivated by racial considerations, however benign, smacked of racism.”

Similar reports are available for Florida, Alaska, and New York. — *Pam Chamberlain*

Bush without Warrant

Presidential Authority to Conduct Warrantless Electronic Surveillance to Gather Foreign Intelligence Information

Elizabeth B. Bazan and Jennifer K. Elsea, Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., January 5, 2006.

J. Edgar Hoover and other government spies rarely made any pretense to legality. They just did what they wanted. But Bush and Co. seem to enjoy sprinkling legal justifications here and there for such misdeeds as warrantless spying on Americans and mistreatment of Guantanamo prisoners. They create a quasi-legality that thumbs its nose at the law and dares the courts to answer back.

This was a brief written at the request of a Congressperson about whether President Bush could bypass the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court and spy on people in the US without a warrant. They patiently expose the cynical legal ploys of the Bush Administration, including the claim that it can bypass the court because of Congress' “declaration of war” (legal permission for Bush to use force). No, they say, Congress revised the act that created the court right after September 11th and made no such exception. The Bushites also refer to court cases decided before the law was enacted to justify their scheme. The staff lawyers strip away such legal fig leaves shrouding Bush's lawlessness but it remains to be seen whether Congress heeds this report.

— *Abby Scher*

Eyes RIGHT

MOVE OVER, CHRISTOPHER REEVE

Warner Brothers' new movie, "Superman Returns," brings the action hero back to Earth as a Christ figure who has returned from heaven (Krypton) to save the world from the devil (Lex Luthor, played by Kevin Spacey). At least that is the interpretation of Stephen Skelton, author of *The Gospel According to the World's Greatest Superhero*, who encourages using the film as a way for evangelicals to witness to their friends this summer.

Source: Stephen Skelton, "The Gospel According to the Man of Steel," *New Man*, May/June 2006, 21.

TEAM AMERICA (NOT THE CARTOON!)

Team America, the anti-immigration advocacy group, sure doesn't pull any punches while mobilizing the troops. That's not surprising given who is at the top: Bay Buchanan (Pat's sister) and Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO), the two-fisted guy who put the anti-immigrant movement on the map.

As the Senate was deliberating on a new immigration bill in May, Buchanan cried out (via email) to her Team America members: "It's still a national suicide pact!" and "The vote to legalize and massively increase the invasion into this country is coming in the next 7 days!! The organization is at war!"

Lest you think Team America is a stream of negativity and warlike metaphors, Buchanan also called on supporters to buy Dunkin' Donuts since the company announced it will only hire documented workers. A little sugar to go with the spice. Source: Bay Buchanan, "U.S. Senate races toward national suicide...but there is a glimmer of hope," TeamAmericaPac listserv email, May 19, 2006.

A DOG-LOVER SPEAKS

"To speak a bit fancifully, the FBI agents are like dogs, and the CIA officers like cats. The pointer, the retriever, the hound has a definite target, and goes for it. The cat is furtive, slinks about in the dark, pounces unexpectedly at the time and place of its choosing."

Source: Judge Richard A. Posner (U.S. Court of Appeals, 7th Circuit), "The Reorganized U.S. Intelligence System After One Year," National Security Outlook, *American Enterprise Institute*, April 11, 2006.

BATTLE OF THE REVS

TV preacher Pat Robertson sounded like he was time transported from the 1950s in claiming that Americans United for Separation of Church and State was part of a secret conspiracy.

Robertson's ire was raised by the group's opposition to federal funding for prison

ministries, and he covered the issue on the May 11th broadcast of his "700 Club." He said the American Civil Liberties Union and the Communist Internationale "pulled a secret takeover" of Americans United.

He continued with another faux fact: "[AU director and minister] Barry Lynn is so extreme, he has said that if a church is burning down, the city shouldn't bring the fire department and trucks to spray water on the church because that violates separation of church and state."

First calling for the Venezuelan president's assassination, now this. You can sure say anything when you control your own TV network.

Source: "TV Preacher Pat Robertson Launches Bizarre Attack On Americans United," *Americans United for Separation of Church and State*, May 11, 2006, www.au.org.



RJ Matson, Roll Call

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