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Sentimentalizing Resentment: How Taylor Caldwell Set the Mood for the Far Right • Exodus or Transformation: Christian Homeschooling and R.J. Rushdoony's Legacy in the Age of COVID • Roundtable: Mobilizing for Reproductive Freedom in the Battle Over Bodily Sovereignty • Sowing the Seeds of White Supremacy Through Education • *A Wider Type of Freedom*: Author Q&A with Daniel Martinez HoSang

The main organizers of the January 6 “Stop the Steal” rally that preceded the attack on the U.S. Capitol were Women for America First. That news might have been surprising to some, but not to Carol Mason, author of the first feature in our Fall issue: “Sentimentalizing Resentment: How Taylor Caldwell Set the Mood for the Far Right” (page 3). Though less well-known than her contemporary, Ayn Rand, Caldwell, a prolific author of mid-20th century historical bodice-rippers, arguably did more than any writer of her time to induct middle-class White women into right-wing politics. Her work fed anti-Communist conspiracy theories, mobilized right-wing women into political action, and directed them to oppose racial justice movements at home and abroad. Most importantly, Mason writes, Taylor “conferred the all-important *feeling* of tenderness, betrayal, longing, and belonging—the emotional affect we call sentimentalism,” which, along with resentment, is the engine powering today’s global rise of right-wing populism.

In our second feature, “Exodus or Transformation: Christian Homeschooling and R.J. Rushdoony’s Legacy in the Age of COVID” (page 9), Clint Heacock considers how the longstanding aspiration of conservative homeschoolers to inspire a mass defection from public schools has found new traction amid an era of pandemic school closures and right-wing attacks on public education. Harried parents trying to fill the gaps in spotty remote instruction, as well as those seeking to escape either school vaccine and mask mandates or curricula they disagree with, have found their way, wittingly or not, into a homeschooling movement that still draws its most significant inspiration from a deeply theocratic ideology.

Our third feature is a special roundtable discussion, moderated by Koki Mendis, on “Mobilizing for Reproductive Freedom in the Battle Over Bodily Sovereignty” (page 15). As Texas has passed a law deputizing citizens to sue anyone involved in almost any abortion, and the Supreme Court may be poised to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, PRA gathered a number of reproductive justice and rights leaders for a wide-ranging talk about the Right’s strategies to eliminate bodily autonomy. “The whole concept of liberal democracy is under attack from outside and within,” says roundtable participant Loretta Ross. “And those of us who are concerned about that, with the world order of neoliberalism collapsing, need to be clear on what’s next.”

In “Sowing the Seeds of White Supremacy Through Education” (page 20), Jasmine Banks investigates how the rash of chaotic and sometimes violent anti-critical race theory protests at local school boards find some of their roots in a familiar source: the right-wing billionaire networks of Charles Koch. It’s an extension of the Koch brothers’ longstanding situation of public education as an arena for influencing U.S. policy and culture, but taken to new extremes, as Koch grantees launched a full-court press in 2020 to spread talking points rooted in White supremacy, culminating in this year’s war against teaching accurate racial history in U.S. schools.

Finally, in our author Q&A, Harini Rajagopalan talks with author Daniel Martinez HoSang about his recent book *A Wider Type of Freedom: How Struggles for Racial Justice Liberate Everyone* (page 22). Taking the long view across three centuries, HoSang considers how liberation movements—from the fights against forced sterilizations, for domestic workers’ rights, and to address environmental degradation—illustrate the limitations of liberal ideas of freedoms and show how a broader dismantling of failed systems is necessary to build a truly equitable society.

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Kathryn Joyce

**POLITICAL
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ASSOCIATES**

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PUBLISHER
Tarso Luís Ramos

EDITOR
Kathryn Joyce

COVER ART
Anna Jannack

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Tarso Luís Ramos, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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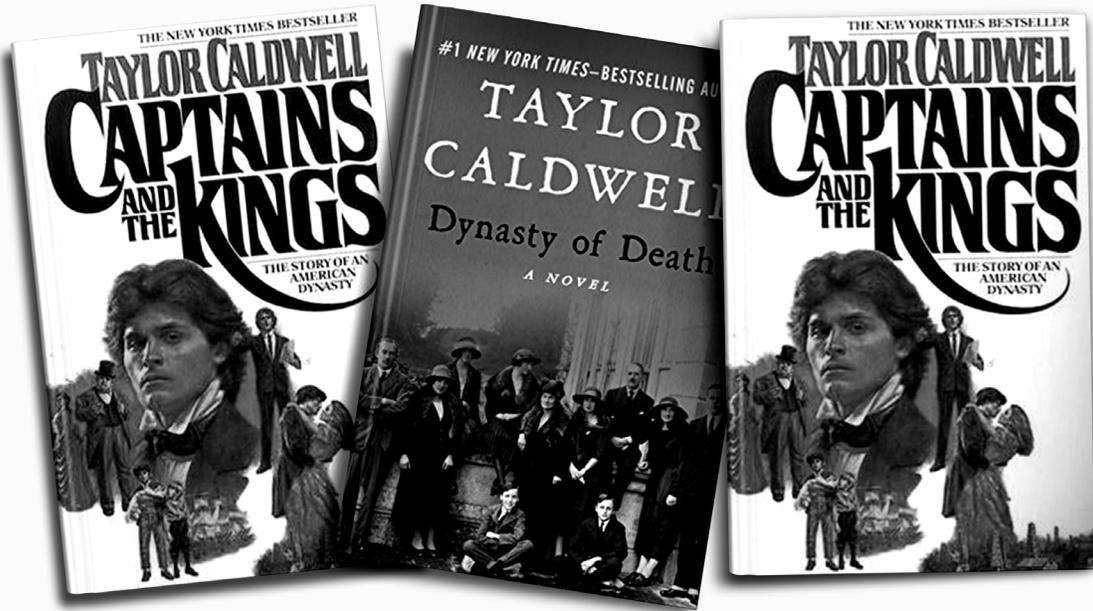
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BY CAROL MASON

Sentimentalizing Resentment

How Taylor Caldwell Set the Mood for the Far Right



Captains and the Kings and Dynasty of Death by Taylor Caldwell (Credit: PRA)

If you were a middle-class White mom in 1976 with copies of lifestyle magazines piled in the corner of a green-shag-carpeted room designed by a Dorothy Draper protégé, you probably also had a few thick Taylor Caldwell novels tucked in the bookshelf by the hi-fi stereo.¹ Chances are you subscribed to a book club as well as those magazines—some of which promoted Caldwell paperbacks.² Because you loved those books, you were one of the millions enticed by that new programming phenomenon, the miniseries, which brought fiction bestsellers to life on network television. A new miniseries based on Alex Haley's *Roots* would soon be broadcast, and you might tune in because the first miniseries you watched, a few months back, was so good.

That one was called *Captains and the Kings*, a nine-hour series broadcast over eight days, which was adapted from Taylor Caldwell's fiction for NBC and aired

only four months prior to Haley's more famous program. Both miniseries told epic family stories of coming to America and the generational struggles that followed. But while *Roots* brought the horrors of slavery into family living rooms and was deemed a national reckoning on race, *Captains and the Kings* was a bodice-ripping saga of the political rise of America's first Irish Catholic presidential hopeful. The program obviously recalled John F. Kennedy, but with a rightward twist. The Irish Catholic men of *Captains and the Kings* endured discrimination and degradation, but through their individual entrepreneurial grit they persevered until a spooky cabal undermined them. *Captains and the Kings* was a story in which White folks could see their historical roots as a supposedly subjugated people under the tyranny of liberal policies and so-called international bankers. If you were a middle-class White mom in 1976, you probably loved watching *Captains and the Kings*

alongside celebrations of the nation's bicentennial. That was 1976.

As we in the current day consider the actions of Women for America First—the main organizers of the January 6, 2021 rally that preceded the attack on the U.S. Capitol—or the number of middle-class White women who perpetuate QAnon conspiracism, we can benefit from studying Caldwell's writing and activism. Caldwell was prolific in her political writings as well as her fiction. She wrote for right-wing periodicals including the John Birch Society's *American Opinion*, the *Dan Smoot Report*, and Liberty Lobby's *The Spotlight*. She published 40 novels, most of them bestsellers, and she collaborated with conservatives and far-right strategists from the 1960s through the '80s. She is probably the most overlooked important Cold War writer. She was highly influential because of not only what she wrote but also how she wrote it. She spun conspiracy-theory straw into bestselling

gold. The middle-class White moms may not have known that they were soaking up far-right perspectives as they turned those many pages of the latest Taylor Caldwell. But that was, according to those right-wing strategists who admired and worked with her, the very point.

Willis Carto, the influential antisemite of the Far Right, gushed to Caldwell in a 1977 letter: "Your reputation over the years has been and is tremendous. By your art you educate. Your books have surely created a proper 'mood' in millions of people. I am sure that your persuasiveness has touched many more people than those who read *The Spotlight*, and you've done it with only yourself whereas we have 40 hungry people on the staff. I'd write a novel myself if I knew how!"³ Knowing how to write a novel, Caldwell not only conveyed the basic plots of conspiracy theories that people such as Carto espoused. She also conferred the all-important feeling of tenderness, betrayal, longing, and belonging—the emotional affect we call sentimentalism—to her readers. This sentimentalism is crucial for us to understand today.

Sentimentalism and resentment are twin engines of populism, which is currently sweeping the globe.⁴ While scholars of right-wing movements—mainly sociologists and political scientists—have for decades elucidated the politics of resentment, humanities scholars have paid more attention to the powers of sentimentalism.⁵ To understand how White nationalism is emerging via

called "mommy novels" full of "maudlin gushings," Caldwell was a master at crafting stories through which readers feel that being White in America is a heroic effort.⁶ Her work exemplifies how, as scholars have argued, "sentimental fiction not only seeks to 'move' its readers affectively through a highly emotional appeal but also uses the display, creation, and calibration of feelings as a means to emphasize its strong claim to moral truth and authenticity."⁷

In the analysis that follows, we see how Caldwell breathed life into anti-Communist conspiracy theories and anti-statist by-the-bootstrap plots; motivated right-wing women to take political action; and supported efforts to oppose racial uprisings at home and abroad, specifically in Rhodesia, the southern African country now known as Zimbabwe. In these ways, Caldwell is less remembered but arguably more influential than her contemporary Ayn Rand, both of whom wrote novels that promoted the optimistic cruelty characteristic of a burgeoning neoliberalism and White nationalism.

THE OPTIMISTIC CRUELTY OF CALDWELL'S FICTION

In 1907, at six years old, Taylor Caldwell emigrated from Manchester, England, to Buffalo, New York. The child of Scots-Irish parents who did not sentimentalize childhood or poverty, she grew up testing and championing the values of her family, and by age 18 moved to eastern Ken-

pulpy fiction marketed as epic narratives about biblical figures and multigenerational family sagas in which invented personas and historical figures interact. Although she was a remarkable commercial success, critics trashed her work in reviews, faulting it for historical inaccuracies, sensational plots, and preachy internal thoughts of characters who clearly represented different aspects of political debate, winners of which skewed Right, and sometimes Far Right.

Some may object that Caldwell's ideas, like Ayn Rand's, were "too crude and derivative to matter,"⁸ as Lisa Duggan put it in *Mean Girl: Ayn Rand and the Culture of Greed*. Although they both might be regarded as peripheral hacks who churned out cartoonish mouthpieces for political propaganda, they should not be underestimated. As Duggan writes, Rand's "core contributions to neoliberal political culture do not consist of ideas," but rather "are conversion machines that run on lust. They create feelings of aspiration and desire in readers," providing "a structure of feeling... that morphs throughout the twentieth century and underwrites the form of capitalism on steroids that dominates the present."⁹ The culture of greed Rand reflected, Duggan argues, is built on a kind of "optimistic cruelty"¹⁰—a feeling that propels aspirational will at all costs to others, allowing for ruthless capitalism that exacerbates poverty, exploits labor, and dominates the weak in a vision quest for wealth and power.

That same sensibility drives many of Caldwell's novels. Her characters and plot-lines promote an aspirational entrepreneurialism and an ascendant ethno-nationalist optimism that demonstrate how to subordinate weaklings and amass fortune. As I detail below, *Captains and the Kings* is a great example; it chronicles one protagonist's decision "to become a 'ruthless Entrepreneur' as soon as possible."¹¹ Reviewers who dismissed Caldwell's fiction as hack writing because it is circuitous, repetitious, or abrupt were missing the point of how Caldwell's work exemplified the conventions of right-wing fiction, and sometimes set their standard. Examining "heroes on the right," literary scholar Jack Sattel notes that within right-wing fiction, "the

Sentimentalism and resentment are twin engines of populism...Caldwell was a master at crafting stories through which readers feel that being White in America is a heroic effort.

populist campaigns, we need to follow the lead of humanists, narratologists, and scholars of affect in recognizing the role of sentimentalism. Whiteness is a *felt* identity that is narrated through cultural practices rather than dictated or learned through religious/philosophical principles or ideological doctrine. While she disdained women and what she

tucky with her first of four husbands. In 1938, she published her first book, *Dynasty of Death*, a novel about a Pennsylvania family producing and selling munitions from just before the Civil War to just before World War I. This book, and the subsequent two novels that continued *Dynasty's* familial trajectory, launched a long career of producing fat tomes of

most important literary quality of these novels is their density and attention to concrete detail of day-to-day life.”¹² Rejecting “the abstract and theoretical,” right-wing writers champion “what is already known,” and their novels “serve to repeat and reflect the material conditions of life in the rightist movement.”¹³ What reviewers in mainstream presses faulted Caldwell for—like overwrought description and heavy-handed didacticism—were actually assets for conservative readers. “The moralism of the didactic style, easily dismissed by the intellectual or the avant garde, strengthens the appeal and validity of the literature to the rightist reader.”¹⁴ In this way, Caldwell’s novels, like Rand’s, provided “a model set of values which serve to guide the rightist political actor.”¹⁵

Because Caldwell was more prolific and mainstream than Rand, her influence was arguably greater, and not only for the fact that Caldwell was writing for new audiences through 1980 while Rand stopped producing novels after 1957 and ceased her philosophical writings around 1976. Caldwell’s writing career spanned the late ‘30s to 1980, a period during which the conservative movement began embracing what they called absolutist truths and then evolved into a neoliberalism increasingly described as “post-truth.” Caldwell’s imaginative works of fiction sometimes rewrote history and sometimes speculated the future—but always it was with emotional force, manufacturing feelings for generations of readers and moving them to take political action.

THE DEVIL’S ADVOCATE AND MOTHERS OF CONSERVATISM

According to historian Michelle Nickerson, women in the 1950s who garnered support for anti-statist issues and against liberal policies of the New Deal were the forebears of the modern conservative movement, playing a great but often unacknowledged role in shaping the postwar Right.¹⁶ These “mothers of conservatism” accomplished much of this influential organizing through the written word in print material and book culture. They excelled at letter writing campaigns, created meeting spaces in patriotic bookstores



Taylor Caldwell (Credit: James Seneca/Wikimedia Commons)

that they staffed voluntarily, and read the latest by subscribing to book clubs that would select the next new thing and send it directly to your house. They organized study groups and activist organizations to keep “patriotic” women alert. Groups in Southern California such as Minute Women USA and American Public Relations Forum (APRF) were especially influential, and they kept women there abreast of “a national conversation raging through conservative newsletters.”¹⁷

Nickerson paints a picture of what these spaces looked like, with Minute Women bulletins stacked on coffee tables, reading rooms displaying anti-Communist magazines and APRF newsletters, and, most intimate of all, “on nightstands across Los Angeles County sat a novel by the English best-selling writer Taylor Caldwell—perhaps *The Devil’s Advocate*, a dystopian thriller about communist world domination.”¹⁸ Indeed, Caldwell’s plots, especially that of *The Devil’s Advocate*, not only promoted the free enterprise, anti-Communist thinking that spurred “patriotic” book culture—they also spoke specifically to these “suburban warriors” and “kitchen table activists” who used them as direct enticement for people to get involved in protest campaigns.¹⁹

APRF formed the same year that *The Devil’s Advocate* was published, 1952,

when anti-Communist fears were at a fever pitch. Thanks to the 1951 publication of Edward Hunter’s *Brainwashing in Red China: The Calculated Destruction of Men’s Minds*, which was heavily promoted through networks of “patriotic” newsletters and reports, the women of APRF were especially concerned about brainwashing as a military technique supposedly migrating to civilian society.²⁰ In *Mothers of Conservatism*, Nickerson provides a detailed account of how these women organized to thwart legislation that appeared to impose “psychopolitics” on ordinary Americans.

In 1955, according to Nickerson, representatives of the U.S. territory of Alaska proposed a long-sought-after measure to roll back an “archaic federal civil code of procedure” and allow local government, rather than federal government, to oversee care of patients in need of psychiatric care. The goal was to stop wasteful and harmful processing of the mentally ill, which, before that time, could entail actually shipping patients off—that is, on a boat—in straightjackets to the Lower 48 where institutions could provide appropriate care. The lawmakers penning the bill inadvertently supplied vague descriptions for who could be admitted as a mentally ill patient, what counted as a psychiatric disease, and why they were asking for “one million acres from the public lands of the United States in Alaska...to lease and make conditional sales of such selected lands.” Their reasoning for this last request was expressed well enough: they wanted to use the proceeds from such sales or leases to foot the bill for creating institutions there in Alaska so they would not have to move psychiatric patients down to Oregon. The patriotic women of APRF jumped on all these aspects of the bill, arguing that nefarious neighbors and family members could institutionalize people against their will, that anything could be deemed a disease to justify such institutionalization, and that the request for public lands was to create a gulag-type concentration camp on the frozen terrain of Alaska. Noting the geographic proximity of Alaska to the Soviet Union and building on fears of brainwashing and other “psychopolitics” coming to America from “Lenin,” they

claimed that passing this bill in the name of mental health was actually granting permission for the creation of "Siberia, U.S.A."²¹

The campaign against this bill in 1955 was swift and surprisingly effective, testifying to the political power these women wielded via networks built through "patriotic" print culture: the bookstores, the book clubs, the newsletters, magazines, reports, and bulletins produced by and for these mothers of conservatism. Ultimately the fight against the Alaska bill was defeated, but it took a heavy hitter—Barry Goldwater himself—to quash the far-out, far-right theory that this particular mental health legislation was a Soviet conspiracy.²² Nickerson's careful excavation of historical records demonstrates that far from being a "lunatic-fringe," these women were builders of a conservative movement in its ascendancy. These housewife populists, as she calls them, used the privileges of suburban life to combine "postwar domestic ideology [with] postwar conservative anti-statism in newsletters, speeches, and organizations" that monitored and shaped proposed legislation, school curricula, and electoral politics.²³ APRF and other opponents of mental health legislation, Nickerson makes clear, were not irrational alarmists but methodical and highly effective organizers. So, when other bills regarding mental health measures emerged in California a few years after the approved Alaska bill, the APRF responded quickly. And one weapon deployed against "mental health"—which they saw as a euphemism for Communist mind games, brainwashing, and psychopolitics—was Taylor Caldwell. In 1959, they invited her to speak and utilized excerpts from *The Devil's Advocate* in their bulletin.

Set nearly 20 years in the future, *The Devil's Advocate* takes place in 1970, decades after a Russian takeover of the United States, and deep into the life of protagonist Andrew Durant, a dissident just old enough to remember how the world used to be in the 1930s, before Roosevelt's New Deal led to a Communist overthrow by a tyrannical power called The Democracy. Caldwell's imagining of how Russian Communists toppled the U.S. is cartoon-

ishly heavy-handed. As a *New York Times* reviewer scoffed in 1952, the novel is full of "downright offenses to common sense. For example, we are told that in the monstrous third and fourth world wars only the United States used atomic weapons—and was itself untouched by a single bomb."²⁴ But Caldwell's military acumen was unimportant, since *The Devil's Advocate* asserts that Russia didn't engineer its victory through military might, but rather through psychopolitics.²⁵ To APRF, *The Devil's Advocate* was less fiction than exposé, as the organization promised that Caldwell

has documentation of the plot to overthrow this nation under the guise of "mental health." She can prove to you that many of the people at the top in this movement which is sweeping the country are subversive and are carrying out Lenin's orders to the letter. They are getting legislation passed on a wholesale scale that will incarcerate the sane minds of our nation, including our trusted representatives that stand out against communism.²⁶

In the same 1959 bulletin, APRF excerpted *The Devil's Advocate* as prophecy but also as a reflection of the kind of legislation that they had unsuccessfully worked to destroy in 1955. The four-page APRF bulletin insisted that the novel spoke of the very recent past even though it is set in the future:

So much of this book has come to pass now. In fact, most of it, and upon re-reading it, one can immediately see why "they" made it almost impossible for the author to get it published, and then more difficult for the American citizen to obtain it. She had been able to expose their plans in the formation, and it was extremely important that the sleepy citizen never see it. She saw that America would become a slave nation under a military dictatorship.²⁷

The Devil's Advocate therefore palpably shaped history for the women whom Caldwell's work spoke to, even though it was set in the future. Moreover, the back-to-the-future temporality involved in APRF's stated fear that "America would become a slave nation" points to Caldwell's ability to speak simultaneously to a variety of White anxieties about sup-

posed Communist psychopolitics, about racial integration contemporary to that anti-Communism, and about who was and could be a slave.

WRITING WHITE PLIGHT

Caldwell deploys the idea of slavery in the same way that many White writers did in the 1950s and '60s. Depicting New Deal progressivism as the enslavement of White people, conservatives often compared slavery with liberalism.²⁸ *The Devil's Advocate* warned readers about becoming slaves in the future. Years later, Caldwell's *Captains and the Kings* used the recent past to warn readers of a nefarious international cabal of spooky, subhuman, supernatural financiers.

Published in 1972, *Captains and the Kings* is an epic describing the White familial saga of the first potential Catholic American president. The protagonist, Rory, is clearly modeled after John F. Kennedy; his Irish immigrant father is, like Kennedy's father, named Joseph. Joseph's story represents the first generation of Irish immigrants whose assimilation in America expanded the idea of Whiteness as a social and racial category. Joseph's son, Rory, represents a more synthetic Whiteness that homogenized ethnicities that were, prior to World War II, more distinct.²⁹ Irishmen and Jews in particular "became" White throughout the 19th and 20th centuries,³⁰ a fact that informs *Captains and the Kings*, in which Rory's story builds on Joseph's experiences of White victimization and rugged individualist perseverance. Again and again, Rory and Joseph withstand discrimination, epithets, and violence as White Irish. While there is no denying the anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic degradation and discrimination that Irish Americans suffered historically, *Captains and the Kings* expresses a feeling of White peril, a racial resentment that is affectively narrated.³¹ As the plot moves forward, Joseph's wealth and Rory's political ascendancy are rewards for overcoming White subjugation with shrewd and often cruel business practices.

Moreover, *Captains and the Kings* promotes a vision of the past that mainstreams three related White supremacist ideas.³² Through didactic speeches and dramatic dialogues, Caldwell's characters

assert an understanding of slavery as “a choice” and a mere “stigma” that people can “live down” if they have the “fortitude” to do it, as did the “English who were slaves also.”³³ The novel also perpetuates the antisemitic idea that world events are puppeteered by an international secret cabal of financiers.³⁴ Caldwell pairs examples of prejudice against Jews and the Irish to neutralize allegations of antisemitism in a way similar to how her redefinition of slavery neutralized allegations of racism. Repeatedly Caldwell’s fiction and essays deny blatant bigotry, using sentimental themes to evoke sympathy for her explanations of why White people can amass wealth and power when other groups cannot, and how White people are therefore heroic in their besieged state.

In addition to Caldwell’s 1972 novel and the 1976 miniseries based on it, other right-wing fiction written around the same time, such as William Pierce’s *The Turner Diaries* and Jean Raspail’s *The Camp of the Saints*, equated liberalism with “slavery”—by which, of course, they meant not the real legacy of U.S. chattel slavery, but the decimation of civilization, implicitly or explicitly understood to be White and Western. Although

ularly the struggle in Rhodesia, which to the U.S. Right symbolized a dual contest against both racial uprising and spreading Communism. Taylor Caldwell was the president of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence, a group supporting White minority rule in Southern Africa.

According to historian Gerald Horne, the 1968 election of Richard Nixon owed as much to the Southern African Strategy as to the Southern Strategy. Playing “to the racial fears of Euro-Americans discomfited by the pace of racial change, be it south of the Mason-Dixon line or at the southern tip of Africa,”³⁶ both strategies were grounded in Cold War hysteria that depicted Black people on both continents as Communist agents or dupes. Colonized in the late 1890s by Britain’s Cecil Rhodes, Rhodesia in 1965 became a hotbed of concern for anti-Communists when Prime Minister Ian Smith issued a unilateral declaration of independence from Great Britain. A White man of British descent born in Rhodesia, Smith sought independence while intending to maintain White minority rule. Insurrection erupted when indigenous Africans sought majority rule. The United Nations and the United States officially supported

in political organizing with mainstream Republicans as well as more radical right-wingers such as Carto and his Liberty Lobby. She was seen as a prominent intellectual articulating rationales for helping White regimes in Katanga and Rhodesia “illegally evade decolonization under left-leaning African nationalists,” according to historians.³⁸ It was Southern congressmen who supported Rhodesia, backed by “groups associated with *The National Review* magazine,” according to historian Josiah Brownell, who also noted that these mainstream conservatives were sometimes at odds with “the more radical groups linked with the John Birch Society and the Liberty Lobby.”³⁹ Caldwell clearly belonged to the latter sort, but she avoided the in-group fighting that Carto could not.⁴⁰ Her work with the Conservative Party of New York in the pro-Rhodesia effort, for example, demonstrates the versatility she had to operate in a variety of right-wing registers. So, too, does her involvement as advisory board member to Billy James Hargis’ Christian Crusade, which also promoted Rhodesia. She moved in and out of anti-Communist and conservative circles to grease the various wheels of the pro-Rhodesia machine. Regardless of the variety of Rightist inclination, many pro-Rhodesian forces supported the White nationalism Ian Smith meant to entrench in Southern Africa.

Moreover, they deployed a rhetoric of global settlerism in which U.S. citizens, nostalgic for their own past glories of conquest and independence, saw Rhodesia as a frontier.⁴¹ Taylor Caldwell excelled at this rhetoric, which sentimentalized White resentment of Black uprisings in Rhodesia as well as in the U.S. by tugging on the heartstrings of American patriots who treasured narratives of pioneering and revolution. A newsletter written during Caldwell’s tenure as leader of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence attests to the colonialist allure with which Americans should seek investment in Rhodesia, deploying that optimistic cruelty of exploiting the “virgin land” and “friendly natives.” “Almost anything can be purchased in Rhodesia, usually at prices under those in the U.S. ...Rhodesia today resembles nothing so much as the American West of a hundred years ago.

As President of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence, Caldwell participated in political organizing with mainstream Republicans as well as more radical right-wingers such as Carto and his Liberty Lobby.

Caldwell’s work is categorically different from these underground, militant books, many of them partake in the portrayal of White victimhood as a matter of national belonging and promote fears of America succumbing to tyrannical minority rule in which Whites occupy the bottom rung of racial hierarchy.³⁵

FRIENDS OF RHODESIAN INDEPENDENCE: EXPORTING WHITE NATIONALISM

One important geopolitical backdrop to these fear-mongering fictions of the 1970s was the decolonization of Africa, partic-

majority rule. Smith enlisted mercenaries, including many U.S. veterans who had served in Vietnam, to prolong the conflict. Some of them were members of the John Birch Society and neonazi groups who were using their military or paramilitary training to build a White power movement.³⁷ For many on the U.S. Right, the fight for White rule in Rhodesia became analogous to the fight against integration in the States. Some also saw it as a United Nations invasion, another piece of evidence of creeping globalist Communism.

As President of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence, Caldwell participated

There are fantastic reaches of virgin land; incredible untapped natural resources; new cities springing up and wild beasts and friendly natives aplenty.”⁴² Indeed, Rhodesia was routinely depicted as an American frontier so much so that a Rhodesian-born White soldier recalled playing cowboys and Indians as well as Boers versus Brits in his youth.⁴³ In casting Rhodesia as “Apache country,”⁴⁴ the various factions of the U.S. Right redeployed colonialist logic in a way that bolstered the “law and order” rationale for opposing civil rights at home.

Caldwell’s colonialist fantasy of “friendly natives” apparently appealed to U.S. women who traveled to the Rhodesian capital city of Salisbury as part of a tour organized by Friends of Rhodesian Independence, advertisements for which featured Caldwell’s name and photograph.⁴⁵ Such trips were organized by both the American Far Right and Southern segregationists who orchestrated the tours with overt symbolism that equated Rhodesia’s present with America’s past. The gift of a Liberty Bell, lavish Independence Day celebrations, and ubiquitous references to “pioneer country” and the American Revolution made the visits “deeply emotional” encounters for U.S. citizens who felt themselves to be patriots rooting for Rhodesian freedom fighters.⁴⁶

One account of such a tour reveals how narrating Rhodesia as the American West worked hand-in-hand with narrating White victimhood in the midst of U.S. racial unrest of the mid-1960s. Having “just entertained in Salisbury twenty-three women from the US Friends of Rhodesian Independence chapter,” their escort reported that “two of the elderly ladies confided to me (after two Martinis) that they really were delighted to be here as it gave them a month away from the ‘terror of our racial riots!’”⁴⁷ Such trips to Rhodesia were advertised in publications from Hargis’s organization, *The Christian Crusade*, and in other print media that those mothers of conservatism consumed and fed to their families and friends. Like the women’s networks that were so effective in opposing mental health legislation, women networking transnationally were active in the fight against decolonizing Southern Africa.

The political work of these pro-Rho-

desia endeavors eventually faltered. As the ‘70s rolled on, with the armed struggle against Ian Smith most intense in 1974 and thereafter, President Carter repeatedly refused to lift sanctions, much to the outrage of conservatives in Congress.⁴⁸ Those sanctions played a large part in Smith’s defeat in 1980, as Rhodesia became Zimbabwe and ended White minority rule, and it did not help Carter with his doomed re-election effort the same year.⁴⁹ The political ties that we see in Caldwell’s serving as president of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence demonstrate the ideological and membership links among different factions of an ascendant U.S. right-wing. She cross-pollinated the far-right Liberty Lobby with the emerging Christian politics foreshadowed by Hargis’s *Christian Crusade* and the establishment electoral politics represented by the Conservative Party of New York.⁵⁰

In addition to this political activism, the cultural work of Caldwell’s narrating a *transnational* White supremacism that right-wing forces could mobilize, ironically, in the service of White *nationalism* had lasting impact. Prime Minister Smith failed because he could not embrace and deploy a U.S.-style “synthetic whiteness” that transcended “tension between and among those of European descent” in the service of uniting against people of color, according to historian Gerald Horne.⁵¹ He contends that “the forces from the United States—not just soldiers but films and the entire U.S. ethos—symbolized a synthetic ‘whiteness’ that Smith’s regime could not achieve because Smith’s foes were not only Black Africans but White Europeans.⁵² Summarizing decades of critical studies of Whiteness, Horne reminds us that throughout the 20th century, “in the United States such tensions among various Europeans were mediated by a construction of a ‘white’ identity that was grounded in antipathy toward those of a darker hue.”⁵³ The mercenaries in Rhodesia “were a living symbol that ethnic antagonisms could be overcome in the interest of ‘whiteness.’”⁵⁴ For the folks at home, especially White middle-class women, Caldwell’s characters symbolized something similar. Her work as a political actor fighting for Rhodesia as well as

her relentless work as a novelist forged a White American patriotism that contributed to “transnational networks in which such nationalist movements cooperate, somewhat paradoxically, in the name of isolationism and nationalism with clear imperial underpinnings.”⁵⁵ To recognize the longevity of this deadly colonialist legacy, one need only recall that the White supremacist who murdered a prayer group in 2015 at the Charleston, South Carolina, Emanuel AME Church titled his webpage “The Last Rhodesian.” Since then, racist nostalgia for Rhodesia has swept the internet, appealing to militant White nationalists around the world.⁵⁶

Caldwell’s voice spoke to soldiers of fortune as well as to ladies of book clubs, to Christian anti-Communists as well as Holocaust deniers. Her novels immersed a wide readership in validating affect, a feeling of belonging and entitlement, however imperiled by evil forces plotting to eradicate it for White people whose individual grit and entrepreneurial determination would save them from tyranny. Creating “a proper mood,” as Willis Carto fawningly wrote, for the Far Right for more than half a century, Caldwell mainstreamed conspiracist fears about international cabals, illegitimate governments, nefarious curricula, and White subjugation. Except when packaged as fiction, such conspiracism was considered “extreme” when Caldwell was alive. It has since proliferated as the global Right gains power, and as the granddaughters of kitchen table activists, suburban warriors, and housewife populists work like their grandmothers to organize—with feeling—along anti-statist lines.

Carol Mason is the author of Killing for Life: The Apocalyptic Narrative of Pro-life Politics. Mason is an associate professor and Director of Gender and Women’s Studies at Oklahoma State University. She received her PhD from the University of Minnesota.

BY CLINT HEACOCK

Exodus or Transformation

Christian Homeschooling and R.J. Rushdoony's Legacy in the Age of COVID



A bannister at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building (Credit: Ad Meskens/Wikimedia Commons)

On a March 2021 episode of the popular Christian radio show and podcast *Stand in the Gap Today*, a former Pennsylvania legislator exhorted Christian parents to “leave Egypt behind” and seek out the “Promised Land.”¹ Although the narrative framework may have been familiar, in this retelling of the Exodus story, “Egypt” signified public schooling (or “government schools,” in the language of the host), and the “Promised Land” represented Christian education designed to equip children with a “biblical worldview.”

Historically, the notion of “leaving Egypt” by abandoning public schools

isn't a new message. But it's taken on new force this year, as parents faced an uncertain return of their children to public schools amid a resurgent COVID-19 pandemic and widespread anti-mask and anti-vaccine disinformation campaigns, as well as explosive new conflicts at school board meetings around the country. In that context, for some parents, homeschooling suddenly began to appear like a more logical choice, and others were targeted by homeschooling advocacy organizations pushing a retreat from public schools as a means of avoiding both public school health requirements and supposedly liberal curricula on issues

like history and race. But what many parents opting out of public schools might not understand is what they would be opting into.

For decades, the image of evangelical Christians “fleeing Egypt for the Promised Land” has been a staple of drives both to launch Christian day schools and encourage parents to begin homeschooling. Michael Farris, a pillar of the 1980s homeschooling movement and co-founder of the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), described his fellow pioneers as belonging to the “Moses Generation,” which “celebrates the fact that it left Egypt.”² In 2004 and 2005,

two separate resolutions were submitted within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), calling on Southern Baptists to remove their children from “officially godless” “government schools.” While neither resolution passed, then-SBC President Albert Mohler wrote a response that sounded the same themes, warning that Southern Baptists should begin formulating an “exit strategy” from public schools.³ In 2006, Christopher Klicka, an attorney for the HSLDA, the evangelical homeschooling lobbying and legal advocacy group, called upon homeschoolers “to continue to cry out the warning not to go back to Egypt.”⁴ And all of these

ect, with a mission to evaluate current events “from a biblical and Constitutional perspective.” In practice, these days, that means an unswervingly pro-Trump, conspiracy theorist,⁹ anti-vaccination, and Christian nationalist perspective. And, most lately, a far-right vision of Christian education too.

In their April homeschooling episode, Rohrer, along with his co-host Dr. Gary Dull, a board member of the APN, and guest Jeff Keaton, founder and president of the Christian education resource and curriculum publisher “Renewanation,” argued for an exodus from public schools on a variety of grounds. Rohrer charged

hosts or their guest. And as the COVID-19 pandemic has swelled the ranks of U.S. homeschooling families to an unprecedented degree, that pattern has played out repeatedly, with homeschooling increasingly promoted on large new platforms, to large new audiences, without any reference to the ideology at its core.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY

Before the COVID-19 global pandemic, homeschooling in America was already on the rise. While accurate numbers are difficult to come by, as of 2019, the federal government estimated that about 2.5 million U.S. children, representing about 3.3 percent of the student population, were being homeschooled.¹⁵ By March 2021, analysis from the National Home Education Research Institute estimated that 4.5 to 5 million children were being homeschooled, which represents roughly 8-9 percent of all U.S. schoolchildren.¹⁶ A U.S. Census Bureau survey found an even higher rate of increase, from roughly 5.4 percent of American households homeschooling in the spring of 2020 to 11.1 percent by the fall of 2020.¹⁷

Parents turn to homeschooling for different reasons. Many have to do with perceptions, either real or imagined, of a negative school environment: 34 percent cited safety, drug use, or negative peer pressure. Others may be dissatisfied with their children’s academic performance. As of 2016, around 16 percent of parents expressly said their motivation was to provide their children with specific religious instruction, but a far larger proportion of homeschooling families—about two-thirds as of 2009—identify as Christian.¹⁸

Over the last year-and-a-half, though, with the advent of COVID-19, the ranks of homeschoolers grew dramatically, as schools closed around the world and huge numbers of parents became desperate to keep their kids on track. By September 2020, a *USA Today*/Ipsos poll found that roughly 60 percent of American parents were contemplating some form of homeschooling. According to Susan Page of *USA Today*, “A separate poll of parents with at least one child in grades K-12 finds that 6 in 10 say they would be likely to pursue at-home learning options instead of sending back their

Over the last year-and-a-half, with the advent of COVID-19, the ranks of homeschoolers grew dramatically, as schools closed around the world and huge numbers of parents became desperate to keep their kids on track.

advocates, whether they acknowledge it or not, were echoing the teachings of 20th century evangelical theologian R.J. Rushdoony, founder of the theocratic Christian Reconstructionist movement that sees Christian education and homeschooling as a necessary first step toward fulfilling God’s kingdom on earth, governed by biblical law.

But none of that was made clear in the April episode of *Stand in the Gap Today*, which, despite its obscurity outside Christian circles, has a huge evangelical audience: broadcast live each weekday on over 400 radio stations; streamed on major podcasting platforms like iTunes; and boasting a TV edition with a wide reach.⁵ The show’s host, former Pennsylvania state Rep. Sam Rohrer, is president of both the American Pastors Network (APN) and the Pennsylvania Pastors Network,⁶ both closely connected to the Christian nationalist organization Let Freedom Ring,⁷ which aims “To strengthen the Biblical relationship between pastors and elected officials, through various private and public meetings for prayer, study, and policy discussion.”⁸ *Stand in the Gap* serves as APN’s main media proj-

ect, with a mission to evaluate current events “from a biblical and Constitutional perspective.” In practice, these days, that means an unswervingly pro-Trump, conspiracy theorist,⁹ anti-vaccination, and Christian nationalist perspective. And, most lately, a far-right vision of Christian education too.

that public education, from elementary school to college, has been “hijacked with a rewriting of history, a redefining of truth and now a generation with less than two percent holding to a biblical worldview”¹⁰; that the U.S. government has not just usurped God’s rightful place, but has used public schools to indoctrinate generations of impressionable schoolchildren into believing that government, not God, will save them¹¹; that Christian children who attend public school will suffer an intellectual and spiritual bifurcation as parents and pastors lose the “battle for their minds”¹²; and that homeschooling and Christian education are essential planks in the broader Christian mission to “take dominion” of the land.¹³

To those familiar with the Christian homeschooling movement over the last several decades, these claims would likely be recognizable as the bedrock arguments of Rushdoony’s Christian Reconstructionism and Dominionism—the theocratic idea that God has called conservative Christians to exercise dominion over society by taking control of political and cultural institutions.¹⁴ But that deep influence went unnamed by the broadcast’s

children this fall. Nearly a third of parents, 30%, say they are 'very likely' to do that."¹⁹ Furthermore, *The Atlantic* reported that "Homeschooling organizations and consultants have faced a deluge of panicked parents frantic to find alternatives to regular school."²⁰

For homeschooling advocates who've long sought to evangelize their methods, the pandemic was a golden opportunity. When harried parents went looking for teaching materials, they were glad to discover there were ready-made curricula available for purchase on homeschooling websites. But as reporter Elena Trueba of *Religion & Politics* points out, much of it had been created by conservative, and often fundamentalist, Christian organizations, and the curricula constituted "their own form of indoctrination."²¹

They also encouraged prospective homeschooling parents to become HSLDA members, which in addition to providing legal and academic support, brings with it a specifically fundamentalist Christian point of view, marked by hostility to non-conservative perspectives and state oversight or regulation. In other words, as Trueba points out, many existing Christian homeschooling materials come with a very specific agenda, of which unsuspecting parents may be unaware.²⁵

THE DOMINION MANDATE

Almost all of that agenda can be traced back to R.J. Rushdoony, a leading proponent of both Christian day schools in the 1960s and the organized Christian homeschooling movement in the late 1970s and '80s. As religion scholar Julie

children attending government schools suffer from a state of mental bifurcation, or "intellectual schizophrenia," when their secular humanist teachers teach them the exact opposite of what they learn at home and in church, thus undermining those cultural agencies. He therefore argued that "Education in this sense is anti-human and schizophrenic."²⁷ In his 1963 book, *The Messianic Character of American Education*, Rushdoony maintained that "the public school is the established church of today and a substitute institution for the medieval church and dedicated to the same monolithic conception of society."²⁸

Thus in his 900-page 1973 book *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, which laid out the principles of Reconstructionism, Rushdoony argued, "There can be no neutrality in education. Education by the state will have statist ends."²⁹ Abandoning a family-oriented education in favor of a statist one, he warned, would lead to the destruction of masculinity and teach children to be reliant on the state. By contrast, Rushdoony maintained that, according to Deuteronomy 6:6-7, God charged parents with the sole responsibility both for the discipline and education of their children. Since the family is the first and basic school of man, he argued, the truest and best educators of children are godly parents.³⁰

In the foreword of a 2002 rerelease of *Intellectual Schizophrenia*, the late Reconstructionist author Samuel Blumenfeld credited Rushdoony's "incisive indictment of secular humanist education" with convincing "Christian parents of the urgent need for Christian education."³¹ Blumenfeld, who also worked at Rushdoony's think tank the Chalcedon Foundation, continued that this was the main reason for founding the first Christian day schools, closely followed by the homeschooling movement.

As a postmillennialist—believing Christians must establish Christ's millennial kingdom on earth prior to his return—Rushdoony also saw homeschooling and Christian education more broadly as the first steps toward Christians achieving dominion at some point in the future. Rushdoony's program of Christian Reconstructionism was founded on the

Given enough generations of godly children, raised in a Christian educational context, and furnished with a "biblical worldview," Rushdoony predicted that Christians would inevitably achieve victory in establishing a "theonomic" society—governed according to "divine law"—in place of a pluralistic democracy.

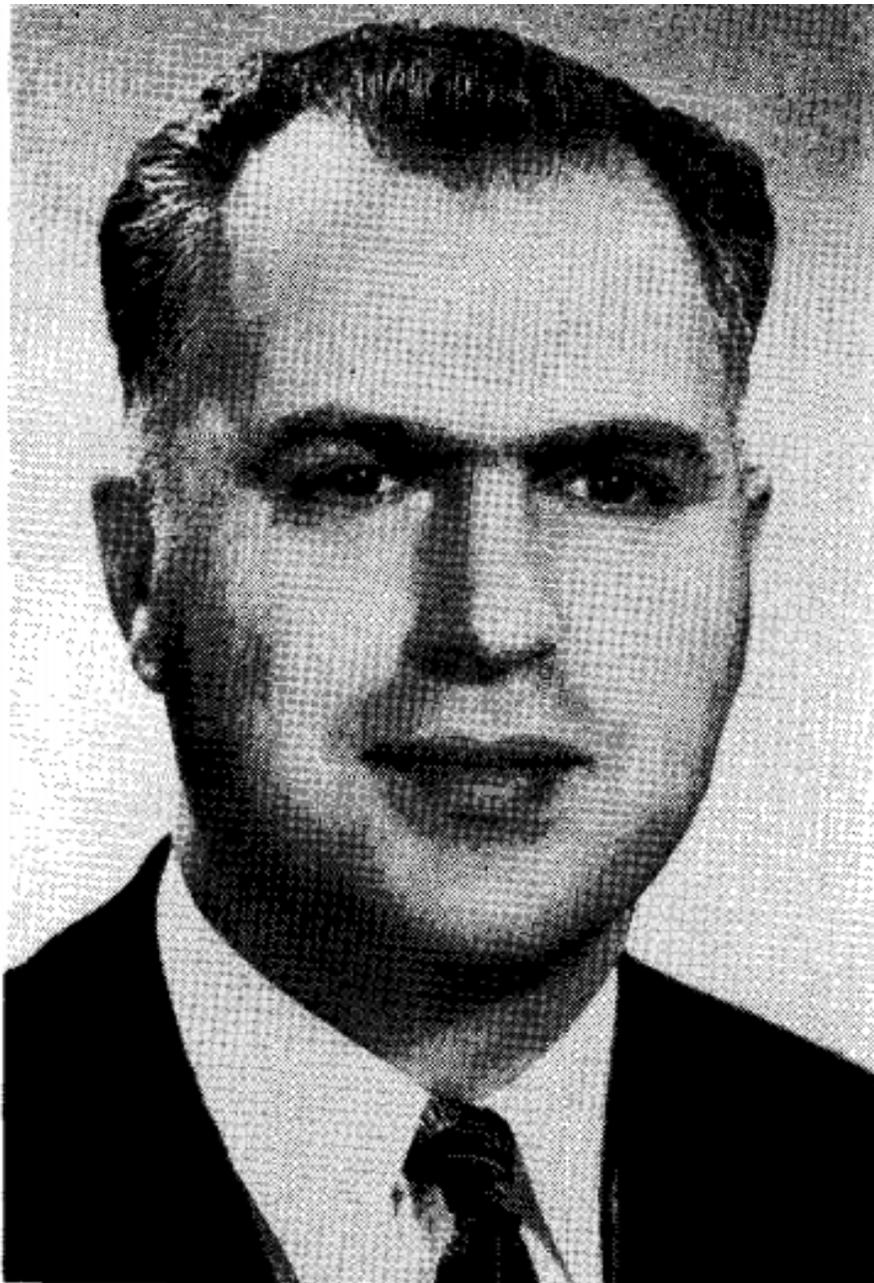
As a result, unsuspecting parents could end up purchasing, and delivering, material to their children promoting very specific worldviews: conservative Christian, fundamentalist, Quiverfull, Christian Reconstructionist, and Dominionist. As journalist Katherine Stewart pointed out in 2013, parents looking for homeschooling curriculum options can easily "get sucked into the vortex of fundamentalist home schooling because extremists have cornered the market—running the conventions, publishing the curricula, setting up the blogs."²²

In March 2020, the HSLDA launched a "Quick Start" guide to homeschooling,²³ recommending that parents new to homeschooling should choose a curriculum and explore their child's unique learning style, but also network with other nearby homeschoolers and research their state's laws regarding homeschooling—both avenues that are likely to expose them to a conservative-dominated community.²⁴

Ingersoll, author of *Building God's Kingdom: Inside the World of Christian Reconstruction*, notes, Rushdoony was among the first Christian Right leaders to mount a sustained attack on so-called "government schools," laying "a philosophical and theological basis for dismantling public education in favor of Christian education" decades before the appearance of shows like *Stand in the Gap Today*.²⁶

One of the cornerstones of Rushdoony's ideology was the conviction that education is above all a *religious* activity, whether it's undertaken by Christian institutions and families or a secular government. Following this, he believed that all secular education is necessarily a *secular humanistic* education, inculcating in students a belief system he called "statism": a system of governance whereby the state comes to be viewed as God, and thus ultimately supplants the God-ordained spheres of church and family.

In his 1961 book *Intellectual Schizophrenia*, Rushdoony argued that Christian



The Rev. R. J. Rushdoony

Portrait of Rev. Rousas J. Rushdoony taken from the Presbyterian Guardian newsletter, dated 1958. (Credit: Orthodox Presbyterian Church/Wikimedia Commons)

notion that God mandated Christians in Genesis 1:26-28 to take dominion over the earth. The entire Christian education project he helped to found involved a slow but inevitable march to this end, given his postmillennial belief that Christianity would experience a progressive advance and, ultimately, increasing influence and

eventual victory. Given enough generations of godly children, raised in a Christian educational context, and furnished with a “biblical worldview,” he predicted that Christians would inevitably achieve victory in establishing a “theonomic” society—governed according to “divine law”—in place of a pluralistic democracy.

While not calling for a theocracy technically, Rushdoony’s vision was that one day, biblical law would be the standard for all of humanity.³²

As Blumenfeld writes, “Christian Reconstruction preached an uncompromising belief in ultimate victory. The growth of the Christian homeschool movement was a clear indication that victory was not only possible but inevitable if Christian parents took up their responsibilities as educators of their own children, for it was the control of children that determined the shape of the future.”³³

Although Rushdoony died in 2001, others had already taken up his mission. In 1997, minister and former military chaplain E. Ray Moore founded Exodus Mandate as a Christian education and homeschooling resource organization. According to the organization’s vision, “the time has come for a coordinated commitment by the national Christian leadership, pastors, and the larger Christian community to support the effort to withdraw Christian children from the government school systems and place them in existing Christian schools and/or Christian home schools.”³⁴ According to Rushdoony scholar Michael McVicar, author of *Christian Reconstruction: R.J. Rushdoony and American Religious Conservatism*, groups like Exodus Mandate popularized Rushdoony’s broader ideology by “bringing Reconstructionist themes to America’s homeschooling culture.”³⁵

That was true even when it wasn’t obvious. As Ingersoll writes, Rushdoony’s arguments about Dominionism have seeped into the everyday language of mainstream evangelicalism in “subtle, implicit, and hidden” ways. And yet, she continues, “the popular translation of Reconstructionist ideas to the broader conservative Protestant subculture is so consistent, often even including the obscure terminology and phrasing used by the Reconstructionists, and the evidence of ties between the Reconstructionists and the early leaders of the religious right are common enough, that the influence is undeniable.”³⁶

GENERATION JOSHUA

Reaching a post-Exodus “Promised Land,” however, brought with it a new set of problems. As Ryan Stollar of the

now-archived *Homeschoolers Anonymous* blog points out, the early homeschooling pioneers—sometimes called the “Moses Generation”—“wanted to create an isolated bubble in which to raise kids untouched by the chaos and depravity of the American world.”³⁷

But living in a bubble is unsustainable if one takes seriously any aspect of the Dominion mandate. In other words, it's not enough for Christians simply to vacate the government schools, since Christians isolated in homeschooling or Christian school bubbles have less chance to impact the world. So in 2005, HSLDA co-founder Michael Farris made the argument that homeschoolers would have to return to re-engage with the broader culture. That year, Farris published a book, *The Joshua Generation: Restoring the Heritage of Christian Leadership*, predicting that the relatively small numbers of homeschooled students in the U.S. “will grow into a large percentage of the highest leaders of the next generation who take seriously the Christian assignment of redeeming culture,” and will “turn America back to the spirit of the founding fathers.”³⁸

Patrick Henry College to channel “the best and brightest” homeschool graduates into legal and political leadership positions. The college's mission statement reflects both Christian nationalism and Rushdoony's concept of Christians taking dominion: “to prepare Christian men and women who will lead our nation and shape our culture with timeless biblical values and fidelity to the spirit of the American founding.”⁴¹

The same spirit informs a different approach taken by some Christian education proponents. Back when the Southern Baptist Convention was debating the 2004 and '05 resolutions for its members to leave “government schools” en masse, one member of the SBC Resolution Committee, Tony Beam—vice president for student life and Christian worldview at North Greenville University—maintained that “calling for an exodus from the public schools is not the answer. The solution is not retreat but a recommitment to retake public schools for Christ.”⁴² Or, as he wrote in an op-ed for the Christian publication *Crosswalk* at the time, “While I fully support and commend any believer who home schools or sends their children to a

curriculum; “peer-to-peer evangelism”; forced prayers by coaches or chaplains at school athletic competitions; and evangelicals running for seats on local school boards in an attempt to “Christianize” their local public school.

A similar tension—between exodus and transformation—was evident in *Stand in the Gap Today's* March homeschooling episode, as the hosts and guest called for a public school exit and, implicitly, seemed to suggest that Christians should run for seats on their local school boards in an effort to “Christianize” those government schools. Jeff Keaton shared the story of how he'd moved to rural Virginia to pastor a new church, and asked his new church board to recommend the best local Christian school for his children. The answer he received, Keaton said, surprised him: “One of my board members was a County Board of Supervisors member, and he looked at me and said, ‘Why would you waste your money on a Christian school? ... Jeff, our public schools here are Christian schools. They have Christian teachers and administrators.’”⁴⁴

It was a Generation Joshua update to the Dominionist mindset: that installing Christian teachers and administrators in a government school could transform it into a Christian school; that Christians could take dominion over education not only by bringing school into the home, but also by taking control of public school institutions that then allow them to shape policies, textbooks, staffing choices, and educational philosophy.⁴⁵

Today, the California-based network “Mamalitia” is capitalizing on the flood of misinformation and mistrust of government when it comes to the COVID-19 vaccine to promote a faith-based, pro-homeschooling, anti-vax, and survivalist agenda.

Homeschooling's “Moses Generation,” argued Farris, should not rest on its laurels in celebrating its victories in the battle to establish homeschooling. The battle would not be finished, he maintained, until the next generation—the “Joshua Generation”—had taken back the land. “In short,” he writes, “the homeschooling movement will succeed when our children, the Joshua Generation, engage wholeheartedly in the battle to take the land.”³⁹ To achieve that end, Farris founded a Christian youth organization he called “Generation Joshua,” with the express aim of training generations of homeschooled teens to get involved in the political process at a grassroots level,⁴⁰ and founded

private Christian school, I also fully support and commend Christians who serve as salt and light in the public school system. We should always choose transformation over retreat.”⁴³

Such efforts to “transform” public schools, as journalist Katherine Stewart writes in *The Good News Club: The Religious Right's Stealth Assault on America's Children*, could take many forms: school-sponsored “Good News Clubs” or “See You at the Pole” events; efforts to change public school textbooks to reflect Christian nationalist and revisionist historical perspectives (a la David Barton); “Bible literacy” and “creation science” courses taught as part of public school

RECRUITING THROUGH THE CULTURE WARS

While one worrying aspect of the sudden rise of homeschooling is that unsuspecting parents seeking help amid the pandemic may end up teaching their children curricula that subtly introduces Christian nationalist concepts, the movement is also increasingly entwining itself with existing right-wing factions, from anti-vaccination activists to conservatives seeking to whitewash how public schools teach the racial history of the U.S.

Currently, it appears some parents may be turning to homeschooling, among other things, to avoid the possibility of mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for

staff or eligible students older than 12. As one New York parent told *The Atlantic* in 2020, she would rather homeschool her daughter than subject her to a vaccination that hasn't been "rigorously tested."⁴⁶

Anti-vaccination groups have long suggested that homeschooling can enable parents to avoid vaccinating their children. In 2019, after a measles outbreak led New York State lawmakers to elimi-

chapters in California as of this writing⁵¹ and claims to have hundreds of members nationwide, describes its current mission as "pooling together to educate our children Little School house style given families still need to work and have various reasons for not keeping their kids in public schools."⁵²

A second potential avenue for homeschooling recruitment plays on the

schools and into private schools or homeschooling environments. In what may or may not have been a conscious echo of homeschooling advocates before him, McIntosh threatened, "Schools that continue pushing critical race theory even though most families reject it can expect to see a mass exodus of children."⁵⁷

The calls for Christian parents to either pull their children out of public schools,

The president of the conservative Club for Growth declared that parents who are "sick of the indoctrination occurring in our public schools but don't have the resources to send their children elsewhere" should be allowed to redirect their tax dollars away from public schools and into private schools or homeschooling.

nate all student vaccination exemptions on religious grounds, the anti-vax group New York Alliance for Vaccine Rights hosted a four-hour "Homeschooling 101" workshop in Long Island. Several hundred parents attended the conference, with a number telling reporters that homeschooling seemed the only viable option to avoid mandatory vaccinations.⁴⁷ A similar dynamic unfolded in California in 2015, following a major measles outbreak at Disneyland that led the state to pass a strict vaccination law that eliminated most vaccine exemptions. Anti-vax parents without valid medical excuses were left with just one option: to homeschool their children.⁴⁸ By 2019, *The Los Angeles Times* reported that parents were increasingly exploiting this loophole, and the number of unvaccinated, homeschooled kindergartners had quadrupled since the law went into effect.⁴⁹

Today, the California-based network "Mamalitia" (that is, "Mama Militia," although the website attempts to clarify that they are not a militia) is capitalizing on the flood of misinformation and mistrust of government when it comes to the COVID-19 vaccine to promote a faith-based, pro-homeschooling, anti-vax, and survivalist agenda. An all-female prep movement founded and led by pro-gun and anti-vax activist Denise Aguilar, the group started out protesting vaccine mandates in general, and now focuses more specifically on opposing COVID-19 vaccinations.⁵⁰ The group, which has 30

anger of parents worried that "critical race theory" (CRT)—however inaccurately defined—is being taught in public schools. While a number of Republican-controlled state legislatures have responded to this right-wing outrage *du jour* with bills promising to outlaw curricula that deals honestly with U.S. racial history,⁵³ parents in other states have stormed their local school board meetings to demand that CRT not be taught.⁵⁴ Some parents loudly declared that they'd turned to homeschooling to avoid critical race theory, such as Gloria Vindas, who argued against CRT and mask or vaccine mandates at a Utah school board meeting this May on behalf of the advocacy group Utah Parents United.⁵⁵

Homeschool graduate Sarah Weaver, writing at the *National Review*, similarly suggested that homeschooling gives parents a means of avoiding CRT, through absolute control over what their children learn. Her own parents, she noted, had taught her "history, and not collective guilt...I tried to imagine the tenets of CRT being taught in my own home classroom. It's almost unthinkable."⁵⁶

And in a June op-ed at *Fox News*, David McIntosh—president of the Club for Growth, a conservative free-enterprise advocacy group—declared that parents who are "sick of the indoctrination occurring in our public schools but don't have the resources to send their children elsewhere" should be allowed to redirect their tax dollars away from public

or to "transform" those schools, are two sides of a decades-long assault on public schools by the Christian Right. The legal and movement successes of the "Moses Generation" have helped create a world where homeschooling is both a lure—for parents to avoid lesson plans or health requirements they oppose—and a cudgel—through threats to redirect funds from public schools. But the Dominionist ideology at the heart of so much Christian educational philosophy led to a "Joshua Generation" that sees its mission as transforming America and the world. Whether these two tracks exist in tension with each other, or are running parallel to the same ends, remains to be seen.

Either way, Ingersoll's assessment seems correct: that "little slivers of Rushdoony's work seem to be everywhere."⁵⁸

Dr. Clint Heacock is the host of the Mind-Shift Podcast. The show is dedicated to raising awareness of the dangers posed by cults and other high-control religious groups; the agenda of the Christian Right and Dominion theology; and providing resources to those suffering from religious trauma syndrome.

BY KOKI MENDIS

Roundtable: Mobilizing for Reproductive Freedom in the Battle Over Bodily Sovereignty



Protesters at a rally organized by the Moral Monday Movement in Raleigh, NC, in February 2014. (Credit: Stephen Melkisetian/Flickr.com)

In May 2021, Texas passed a law deputizing citizens to sue anyone who aids another in obtaining an abortion after six weeks, and rewarding those whose court challenges are successful with \$10,000 in attorney fees. This clever and destructive law is the newest development in the ongoing war against legal abortion. At the same time, President Biden's administration signed into law the American Rescue Plan, including an expanded child tax credit that provides families a modest monthly payment, which, while insufficient to reduce the financial burden of parenthood altogether, at least acknowledges that raising the next generation should be a shared social responsibility. These two laws can tell us

something about the state of reproductive justice today: limited, hard-fought progress for any family support, on one hand, versus unprecedentedly broad attacks on bodily and family autonomy on the other.

In July, PRA communications director Koki Mendis was joined by National Network of Abortion Funds organizing director Adaku Utah, PRA research analyst Cloee Cooper, SisterSong cofounder and Smith College professor Loretta Ross, and NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina executive director Tara Romano for a wide-ranging talk about the Right's strategies to eliminate reproductive justice. This is an edited excerpt of their talk.

PRA: I'd like to start our conversation with a clear understanding of what reproductive justice encompasses.

Loretta Ross: In 1994, the Clinton administration thought if they omitted reproductive healthcare from healthcare reform, they could slide it by their Republican opponents. I was one of 12 Black feminists paying attention to these discussions, and this strategy made no sense to us, because reproductive healthcare is the main driver of women to the doctor. So we met in a hotel room in Chicago that June to discuss what was wrong with the plan. Another thing we problematized was how abortion is always isolated from other social justice issues. Because when a woman needs an abortion, she's going

to be worried about whether she has healthcare, housing for a potential child, whether she can stay in school, or keep her job. And when you isolate abortion from those other social justice issues, you're treating her as if the pregnancy is the only thing she's worried about in her life. So we spliced together the concept of reproductive rights with social justice and created the term "Reproductive Justice." We used it to place a full-page ad in *The Washington Post* calling ourselves Black Women for Healthcare Reform. Then SisterSong was founded three years later with reproductive justice as our organizing platform, and that's where history was made.

"That's reproductive justice: the right to have children, the right not to have children, the right to raise your children, and the right to self-determination of gender identity and bodily autonomy."

Reproductive justice is a human rights-based framework. It starts with our overlap with the prochoice movement and fighting for the right to not have children. But because this was a theory being created by Black women, we had to fight equally hard for the right to have the children that we wanted to have, because we are always resisting eugenics and population control, which are foundational stances of the White supremacist movement, and part of our public discourse about blaming the fertility of women of color in general, and Black women in particular, for the ills of society. The third tenet is once you have the child, you have the human right to raise that child in safe and healthy environments. And that brings us into conversation with housing policy, tax policy, gun violence, the environment, disability rights, trans rights, all those other issues that aren't necessarily considered part of the prochoice agenda. And then about a decade or so after the original framing happened, a fourth tenet was added, around bodily autonomy and the right to sexual pleasure.

That's reproductive justice: the right to have children, the right not to have children, the right to raise your children, and

the right to self-determination of gender identity and bodily autonomy.

Cloe, you've done some incredible recent work, with Tina Vasquez, documenting the rise of the far-right "abortion abolitionist" movement, working to pass local and state policies that ban abortion, criminalize providers and people seeking abortion care, and block pro-choice groups from operating within those jurisdictions. Can you tell us about the impact this movement is having?

Cloe Cooper: In some ways, the contemporary abortion abolitionist movement is drawing heavily on the 1990s

radical anti-abortion movement, which worked closely with neonazi organizations and the militia movement.

I came across this movement while looking at Patriot movement organizations' work at the local level to nullify gun rights laws. I noticed these anti-abortion groups were also working at the local level, and cities, and counties, to nullify reproductive rights laws. Abortion abolitionists not only believe that anybody who is a part of an abortion should be tried for murder, but they also are essentially trying to use abortion to push for theocratic governance at the local level.

We started seeing groups with some sway, like Free the States and End Abortion Now, coalescing in 2020 with their first-ever national conference. That conference had a particular agenda of trying to get city and county legislation passed that would ban abortion altogether, and also shifting their strategy from just agitating outside of abortion clinics to working with state legislators to try to get state legislation introduced. At the time we were reporting, six states had introduced "abortion abolition" legislation. And during the 2020 elections, the abolition networks in Oklahoma actu-

ally ran a candidate, Warren Hamilton, for state legislature. Soon after he won, Hamilton introduced a state abortion abolitionist bill. It didn't pass, but it helped essentially open the Overton Window in the state, and another bill that pushed a bunch of restrictions did pass. Hamilton also introduced a statewide "Second Amendment sanctuary" bill, which did pass, which to me demonstrates that he has legitimacy within the Republican Party and that he is in some ways holding these relationships between both the radical end of the anti-abortion movement and Patriot militia-type groups.

Tara, you've written a lot about the narrative and institutional strategies deployed by the Right to weaken reproductive freedom. How do they create an atmosphere of stigmatization and disinformation around abortion?

Tara Romano: Mis- and disinformation is absolutely how the anti-abortion movement works. When I came to North Carolina in 1999, it certainly wasn't a haven for abortion access, but it was considered more progressive for the South. And then there was backlash to the election of President Barack Obama. North Carolina's general assembly in 2010 had a conservative make-up it hadn't had in over 100 years. And we started seeing more restrictions passed in North Carolina in

Illustration of Tara Romano (Credit: Harini Rajagopalan, PRA)



the 10 years since 2010 than in the first 35 of abortion being legal.

All these restrictions are about creating a narrative. They want to say that abortion is dangerous; that it's not healthcare; that it's uncommon. They really want to paint this picture of what abortion access is about and to separate it from all the healthcare, safety, and economic issues that go into decisions we make about family planning. Creating this narrative is how they get these bills passed.

And when they pass these restrictions bit by bit, they're really attacking people who have less power to resist what's going on. When they have parental consent for minors, that's young people; when they say Medicaid can't cover abortion, it's people of low income; when they close down clinics, that's rural communities.

Prior to *Roe v. Wade*, if you were wealthy and White, you were able to find and access relatively safe abortion. It's becoming that way again. And that really painted a picture of who accesses abortion, who provides abortion, who supports abortion. Like, the only people who access it are people who don't want



Illustration of Adaku Utah (Credit: Harini Rajagopalan, PRA)

ism and how does the challenge to bodily autonomy relate to the steady creep of authoritarianism?

Ross: In the early 1990s, PRA joined me at the Center for Democratic Renewal and pointed out the porousness between the hate movements we were monitoring

“Prior to *Roe v. Wade*, if you were wealthy and White, you were able to find and access relatively safe abortion. It's becoming that way again. And that really painted a picture of who accesses abortion, who provides abortion, who supports abortion.”

to “suffer consequences for their actions.” The people who provide abortions are “not actual medical doctors,” they're incompetent, they're greedy. And then the people who support abortion access hate families or they're immoral, not religious. I mean, we see the data, and the majority of people who support abortion access also are people of faith. It's a lazy narrative, but we have a media that repeats those things. If people understood abortion better, it would be harder to pass these restrictions. But it really depends on them having this mis- and disinformation out there.

How does the struggle for reproductive freedom intersect with anti-rac-

and the anti-abortion movement that was becoming much more dangerous. In 1992, I wrote a report showing there was a lot of crossover between the anti-abortion movement and the White supremacist movement. And six months after that report was written, the first doctor who provided abortions was murdered. We can see the direct adoption of hate movement strategies into the anti-abortion movement. But it's been a long haul trying to get other groups to be intersectional and to understand that we're dealing with a broad-based, neo-fascist movement, that has delegated different things to focus on. They have people that focus on the LGBT movement; on oppo-

sition to women's rights; opposition to the separation of church and state; and of course, the whole White supremacist movement and the attack on critical race theory. They're practicing the politics of divide and conquer and they want us to deal with things individually, in a very siloed way, as opposed to seeing them as having a strategy for overthrowing democracy in America.

So it wasn't a surprise to me, 30 years later, to see that a large number of people at the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol were also well known in the anti-abortion movement. This was a coming-together for them, like Charlottesville in 2017. Let's be clear, we're dealing with the same kind of resurrectionists that Ulysses S. Grant dealt with after the Civil War. People who want a slaveocracy, even though they may not use that term now, where only White people—and even only a certain kind of White people—matter. It's long overdue for us to recognize that White supremacist opposition to abortion actually is very racially specific. What they're trying to do is prevent White women from accessing abortions, and they could care less if women of color have them.

What I'm mostly concerned about, though, is those of us on our side who don't use an intersectional analysis and understand how these things are all connected, because that is going to be a fault-line where we're very vulnerable, as illustrated by a lot of horizontal hostility, instead of uniting under the banner of human rights and fighting these people as the neo-fascists that they are.

Adaku Utah: I currently work with the National Network of Abortion Funds. We've been around for 26 years and for 24 years we specifically focused on direct service. We had to ask ourselves: is this the path to freedom that we want to keep going on? If we keep only centering direct service, will this shift the conditions that are making reproductive oppression a reality? Most of the folks who call our abortion funds are Black folks, queer folks, trans folks, folks who are undocumented, and they say to us that direct service is not enough.

Our four core values now are compassion, bodily autonomy, intersectionality



Illustration of Cloee Cooper (Credit: Harini Rajagopalan, PRA)

and collective power. We have been looking at what are the systems, practices, policies of how we are structured as a network that fall into White supremacist rhetoric. Whether it's not believing Black women when we say that we've been harmed by clinics where we've accessed abortion care, or not supporting trans folks because of not believing in an expansive universe of gender, or not funding some people because they've been incarcerated. And simultaneously asking ourselves how we hold ourselves accountable, because we know that in this work, harm has also occurred in how we have chosen to serve and work with our communities.

How has the U.S. immigrant community suffered as a result of anti-reproductive justice organizing?

Cooper: Loretta brought up this important tension earlier: that on the one hand, you have White Christian groups doing everything they can to limit and criminalize abortion, but on the other hand, you have the professional White nationalist movement, like the anti-immigrant movement and the Tanton network, that have this long history of being deeply concerned with the reproduction of women of color.

There is also this long history of White nationalists working closely with Planned Parenthood, and of ongoing ties, unfortunately, between the Tanton

network and FAIR and Planned Parenthood. But also there's deep overlap of them trying to work within the environmental movement and pushing people to blame environmental catastrophe on overpopulation, which inevitably falls on women of color. I think what we've seen most recently in terms of ongoing issues of forced sterilization in ICE detention facilities, with amazing reporting by Tina Vasquez, is a symbol of how this is multitered and how this tension is flanking both sides of the question of bodily autonomy right now.

Ross: One of the things that the reproductive justice framework does—and I'm writing a book with Marlene Fried and Namrata Jacobs on this—is that it actually decolonizes the prochoice movement. To insist that it deal with White supremacy, neoliberal capitalism, settler colonialism, and all of these issues that are embodied in people, but at the same time speak to a larger framework of world domination politics. So reproductive justice is not just expanding to talk about the right to have a child, but it's demanding accountability within our own movement to use a decolonizing and abundance framework.

A through-line of dismantling the White supremacist state is thinking through viable community alternatives that provide necessary services in lieu of state support. Adaku, can you talk us through the role that community plays in reproductive care?

Utah: A lot of our movement building and organizing is really focused in our community, whether it's building the leadership of Black, Indigenous, folks of color across movements, or cultivating regional spaces. Two-and-a-half years ago, we developed a Network Movement Building Lab—a container of folks within our network who have been experimenting with what it looks like to hold building power at the core of the work. One of the barriers in doing work outside of the state is not being able to match our vision with the skills, competence, and relationships necessary to make those visions real. And so having collective spaces where people come together to build

up their skill set, build up strategy that's connected to what's happening geographically, connected to what's happening with the base of callers who are calling into abortion funds, with clinics, with folks who are doing practical support, really helps us in outlining a much more serious strategy that our community can buy into, because they see themselves reflected inside of it.

If we understand that gestation, child rearing, familial care, and socialization function largely as an undervalued, uncompensated process of producing socialized workers for capitalist production, is there an argument for reproductive justice as a form of due compensation for labor?

Ross: For me, the whole concept of reproductive labor has a particular poignancy and irony, because as a descendent of Africans kidnapped for our reproductive and labor capacity, there's no way of even constructing a version of American racialized capitalism without understanding the power and the exploitation of reproductive labor. Obviously reproducing workers for exploitation and extraction is foundational to capitalism, whether it was in the 1800s when Marx was first writing about it, to where people are talking about it now.

What's interesting, though, is that too many people who take that radical analysis underperform the role of race, citizenship, gender identity, and all those other things. I would like people who are radical, and into imagining a post-democratic future, to imagine what that would

Illustration of Loretta Ross (Credit: Harini Rajagopalan, PRA)



look like. Because the whole concept of liberal democracy is under attack from outside and within. And yet those of us who are concerned about that, with the world order of neoliberalism collapsing, need to be clear on what's next. I'm not sure that the theories of dead White men that haven't worked for the last 200 years is the pathway forward. I think we need to search for something new, which may in fact be something quite ancient: which is pre-European philosophy about human interdependence.

Returning to the immediate course of action, where should we focus our attention, organizing efforts, and coalition building in the months and years to come?

Utah: I'm going to keep coming back to the people: how we are centering our base, folks who are most impacted by reproductive oppression, and not just

"I'm going to keep coming back to the people: how we are centering our base, folks who are most impacted by reproductive oppression, and not just listening, but really cultivating the leadership and co-creating strategy alongside our folks."

listening, but really cultivating the leadership and co-creating strategy alongside our folks. We need to create more spaciousness for political study that can fortify our strategic thinking.

Over the last year-and-a-half, with the increase in abortion bans, we saw an increase in folks wanting to join our fight. Yet their values and analysis were lacking and we had to cultivate a political education series. We've now had over 30 sessions, studying things like the intersections of abolition and reproductive justice, gender justice and reproductive justice, the intersections between abortion access and White nationalism. And creating some level-setting around our network that can support us as we build the world we desire.

Cooper: On the one hand, I think this could be a really tough year. *Roe v. Wade*

might actually be overturned. And all the preparation that has been happening at the state and local level from abortion abolitionists could go from, "Oh, they've introduced bills in six states," to them actually moving, which is terrifying—just imagining that people could be tried for murder for undergoing abortion, or being the partner of somebody who undergoes an abortion. I think continuing to track groups like Free the States, End Abortion Now, and some of the coalitions they're creating in their legislative strategy will be important.

I also see the possibility of greater opportunity for the intersectional analysis that people on this call have been trying to build. The kind of Christian theocrats pushing these abortion abolitionist bills really also want to put anybody involved in the LGBTQ community on trial. But their goal is such a narrow vision of what our society should be that I think there

are a lot of opportunities for greater intersection in terms of not just pushing back against them, but pushing for a society where we would actually want to live, love, and work free from fear.

Ross: I want to start with the particular and go large. I think that women will always take care of themselves, no matter what the law, church, or state says. That's what we always do. I am deeply concerned about the increasing criminality of everything that is pro-democratic in this country, whether it's protesting, seeking an abortion, or teaching critical race theory. But people still are going to do what they need to do to save their lives. I mean, I represent a people who could be put to death for learning to read. So fighting against the law is what we do when the law is unjust. We understand that in all of our hearts and souls.

It's getting the newly woke to understand that as well: that if you put all your hope in the law, the law will only be as strong as we make it. It doesn't lead. It follows. And that's something we have a shift of perspective on.

Because that's what I think is going to happen. We're going to have to close the gap between direct services and political mobilization. As women try to take care of themselves and seek the services they need, and provide for themselves through self-managed abortions, where's the building up of our legal muscle to defend them? Where's our building up our underground muscle, our transportation? Where is the underground railroad we're going to obviously need? Those are the kinds of things we need to put into place to close the gap between fighting at the legislative or legal level, and making sure people don't die.

My last comment is around how we use the concept of intersectionality, because I've said this from the minute we created reproductive justice. Intersectionality is our process. Human rights is our goal. You use intersectionality to expose vulnerability: what are the oppressive forces based on someone's identity that will keep them from enjoying their full human rights? But we're not working just to get everybody's intersectional identity acknowledged. We're working so everybody has full and undivided human rights. That's the goal. And I don't want us to substitute process for outcome.

Koki Mendis is the communications director at PRA with a background in outreach, communications, development, and graphic and brand design. As a graphic designer, she is committed to enhancing nonprofits with vibrant design and iconic branding that builds awareness, strengthens fundraising and communicates mission. As a communications professional, she works to underpin strategic partnerships with the interpersonal relationships that drive ongoing collaborations and mutual support. A former researcher in far-right political parties, critical race theory, intersectionality and refugee studies, Koki holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Florida.

BY JASMINE BANKS

Sowing the Seeds of White Supremacy Through Education



A protester at the Milwaukee Teach the Truth Rally (Credit: Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association)

School board meetings across the country have seen an influx of parents and community members over the last few months, many there to fight critical race theory (CRT)—something that the majority of primary and secondary schools don't teach, and a term many Americans hadn't even heard of until recently. Some of these meetings have become chaotic and rowdy, even leading to an arrest in Loudoun County, Virginia, where parents protested violently, despite repeated confirmation that the district's curricula don't include CRT.¹ The story of how this obscure term came to dominate public discourse—and school board meetings—underscores the strong influence of billionaire networks, especially that of Charles Koch, over the public conversation.

Only a year ago, most Americans were entirely unaware of the existence of critical race theory (CRT), a scholarly and

legal framework that discusses systemic racism, and which is typically only taught in higher education. But now, thanks to right-wing operatives who have misrepresented and demonized the term, any approach to education or policy that acknowledges the existence of historic and structural racism in this country is under attack. Mentions of CRT on Fox News grew exponentially from the beginning of this year to reach over 900 references on various Fox News shows in June.² This spike wasn't an accident or coincidence, but rather part of a coordinated dark money campaign using tools of white supremacy to further an agenda.

Since its conception, the Koch network has worked to undermine the rights and liberties of non-white demographics, starting with an anti-civil rights crusade that challenged *Brown v. Board of Education*. The Koch network has made no se-

cret about how it views public education as a critical arena for influencing U.S. policy and culture. Through a variety of tactics—including charter schools and vouchers; influence on curriculum, textbooks, and trainings; and using state politicians to engage in culture war against progressive ideas—they're attempting to reshape education to ensure the spread of their regressive ideas. Between June 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021, the Koch network of think tanks and political organizations published 146 articles, podcasts, reports, and videos critical of CRT.³ Some affiliates, including the Heritage Foundation, FreedomWorks, and the Manhattan Institute, among others, used their influence to generate and spread talking points rooted in white supremacy (such as the denial of systemic racism and white privilege⁴), briefed state and federal legislators on model policy,⁵ and

attempted to generate grassroots mobilization against local school districts.

And the influence works. State politicians were almost entirely silent on the topic of CRT until Koch-funded entities started pushing the issue earlier this year. Now, more than 25 states have introduced legislation or taken other action that, backers claim, is aimed at banning CRT from schools and government programs.⁶ Several are already law. In addition, there has been an influx of candidates running for school boards on anti-CRT platforms.⁷

The Arizona state budget passed this June includes language that bans any instruction that infers that one race is inherently racist, should be discriminated against or feel guilty because of their

whether consciously or unconsciously.¹² In doing so, Arizona became one of the first states in the nation to ban CRT at all levels in the government, showing the immense power and influence that outside interests have on the state.

The push to prevent CRT from being taught at schools goes beyond the state level. Koch-backed U.S. senators like Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) have reintroduced the Saving American History Act, first proposed in 2020, in an effort to block federal funds from going to schools that use curriculum inspired by the 1619 Project—an educational *New York Times* project about the history of slavery in the U.S.¹³

As a queer, Black woman with Indigenous kinship in the South and children in Arkansas' public school system, I'm not

the seeds of a false campus free speech "crisis" on behalf of white, conservative students, while simultaneously advancing anti-protest legislation intended to further disempower those most impacted by historical limitations on free expression.¹⁵ Sometimes it's very overt, as when we discovered that many scholars involved with the Koch network have also become fellows of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, which has been flagged as a group with "strong neo-Confederate principles" by the Southern Poverty Law Center due to its intimate ties with the League of the South—a group best known for its racist and antisemitic rhetoric and which advocates for Southern secession and the creation of an independent, white-dominated South.¹⁶ Other Koch-affiliated scholars have disseminated white supremacist ideas through college and graduate school programs¹⁷ (like George Mason University's Institute for Humane Studies¹⁸), under the guise of promoting "Western" or "American" civilization.

Today, the network continues such efforts by advancing policy initiatives that strengthen the private prison industrial complex and suppressing the voting rights of minority groups.¹⁹

A white supremacist is not just the outwardly hateful individual in a white robe burning crosses on people's lawns. He can also be a Koch-funded economics professor in a thousand-dollar suit, preaching that governmental equity measures are harmful, the regulation of business is destructive, and racial inequality is overblown.

Jasmine Banks is the executive director of UnKoch My Campus, a national organization that is dedicated to pulling back the curtain on dark money donations and their impact on higher education. As executive director, Jasmine has spoken with students and faculty at a number of higher ed institutions about donor transparency and academic freedom. Organizing students, staff, and faculty to fight against Koch-funded influence, Jasmine has helped launch numerous campaigns across the country. As a first-generation high school and university graduate, Jasmine understands the critical role that all education plays in shaping our democracy. Jasmine is a mother of four, eternal fan of Beyoncé, and a passionate supporter of her queer Black community.

The Koch network and its affiliates within higher education have been advancing an agenda that directly harms our country's most marginalized groups for over 50 years.

race.⁸ In early July, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey—who has long received support from the Koch network, including a staggering \$1.4 million donation to his 2014 gubernatorial campaign⁹—signed a second bill into law. The two bills together could levy \$5,000 fines on schools, or the revocation of teachers' licenses, if instructors even broach so-called controversial subjects, or teach that "one race, ethnic group or sex is in any way superior to another, or that anyone should be discriminated against on the basis of these characteristics," according to a press release from the governor's office.¹⁰ There's no precedent of any Arizona school district ever having implemented CRT in their curriculum before, but the vague wording of the bill has left many educators in the state fearful of how it might impact the way they teach historical events like the Civil Rights movement or the Trail of Tears.¹¹ The second bill Ducey signed "prohibits the state and any local governments from requiring their employees to engage in orientation, training or therapy that suggest an employee is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive,

surprised by how the Right is attempting to foment a moral panic to further their agenda of privatizing education. I'm also not shocked to learn that there are people eager to prevent their children—and mine—from learning an accurate and full account of their ancestors' history. As someone who has worked toward pulling back the curtain on how the Koch network uses its money and influence to further an anarcho-capitalist political strategy laser-focused on property owner supremacy and minority control of all levels of government, I know that the material outcomes of the Koch network's strategy are anti-Black and further embed our society in white supremacy.

A 2018 report from UnKoch My Campus, *Advancing White Supremacy Through Academic Strategy*, details the history of the Koch network's contributions to white supremacy, in both its explicit and more hidden forms.¹⁴ The Koch network and its affiliates within higher education have been advancing an agenda that directly harms our country's most marginalized groups for over 50 years. Sometimes that's subtle, like spreading

BY HARINI RAJAGOPALAN

A Wider Type of Freedom

Author Q&A with Daniel Martinez HoSang



Protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone XL Pipeline in San Francisco on 26 January, 2017 (Credit: Pax Ahimsa Gethen/Wikimedia Commons)

In the last year, a record number¹ of people took to the streets in protest of systemic racism and police violence. But over the same time period, women were sterilized without their consent² at a detention center in Georgia; Amazon, with the help of anti-union consultants,³ sabotaged its workers' attempts to unionize; and Black and Brown com-

munities died in record numbers⁴ due to a mismanaged pandemic. These events bring into sharp question what equality really means in the U.S., and whether true freedom can be achieved within its existing systems.

In his forthcoming book, *A Wider Type of Freedom: How Struggles for Racial Justice Liberate Everyone* (University of Cal-

ifornia Press, September 2021), Daniel Martinez HoSang looks at movements across the last three centuries—from fights against forced sterilizations, for domestic workers' rights, and the environmental justice movement today—that illustrate the need to dismantle failed systems in order to rebuild an equitable society.

HoSang talked to PRA this June about the limitations of liberal ideas of freedom, and what a wider conception of liberation means.

PRA: The U.S. has always prided itself on its promotion of freedom and democracy. But you argue that the U.S. version of both is limited. What does “a wider type of freedom” look like?

Daniel HoSang: Freedom is a contested concept, and it’s meant different things at different periods. Struggles against racial domination have yielded forms of freedom that aren’t just rooted in rights, access, inclusion, or even equity, but the transformation of systems. In that sense, freedom is a kind of process, a verb, that people are trying to work out and work through. But what links all of these cases together is the ways in which the participants, leaders, thinkers, and artists [within freedom struggles] understand that liberal conceptions of freedom are always limited—rooted in another person’s, nation’s, or community’s subordination. Freedom at someone else’s expense.

I’m drawn to movements where people rejected that, and thought about how the freedom that’s produced from any one person’s struggle can’t be limited to their own conditions.

Essentially, that true equality isn’t gained by oppressing one community over another.

Yes, and beyond that, to ask what are the terms under which we want to live? We could imagine equality under militarism, in which everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in militarism, or in market domination, or in bodily domination. Abolition [wasn’t about] “we want an equal right to own someone else.” It’s that no one should be owned. So it’s about transforming these institutions, not merely trying to be represented.

How did you choose the book’s four main themes: the body, democracy and governance, internationalism, and labor?

What’s at work across all [the movements I focused on] is they’re not just trying to figure out how to escape for themselves, or join the dominant formation,

but about how the terms of that dominant formation change.

One example is the Black auto workers in Detroit in the mid- to late-1960s. They really saw, before many others, that this is a race against machines, and workers competing for the right to be exploited is going to end badly for everyone. That’s a much more common insight now in the days of Amazon, and DoorDash, and apps that control everyone’s movement. But then, it was a minoritarian perspective. Many others, certainly most White workers and their unions, said, “No, the good life is the right to work for General Motors.” But because of the histories of racialized labor exploitation, the Black auto workers saw this is not going to end well.



They had a vision that technology could govern our lives in ways that we don’t have freedom over, so we have to change our relationship so that technology provides the basis for our liberation rather than for our further restraint. That’s a very pressing issue today, but it’s not surprising that workers of color, and Black workers in particular, had those insights first.

Your book shows how the U.S. was built on a colonial imagination, for oppressors to build and retain power. What are the vestiges of this in today’s society, and are they only vestiges or still our core logic?

I think it’s both. The fact that we have the largest military in the world [in terms of spending], with [military presence in at least 150] countries, and our nationalist orientation—that the U.S. has an imperative to exercise domination and control over other nations—are all directly derived from colonial logics.

On the other hand, those logics have changed. Indigenous people within the U.S. have borne the brunt of colonialism as profoundly as anyone. Yet the incorporation of native peoples into the military, into contracting, is not a marginal issue. This is true everywhere the U.S. exercises influence. People are incorporated into these systems. And this is important because it means that simply denouncing them and saying that they only represent forces of domination, exclusion, and limitation, and they don’t generate, is wrong. Because militarism is generative in partial ways for many subordinated people.

We run into this in terms of “defund the police” as well. People are capable of holding both things: seeing the violence policing causes, but also being socialized into the sense that that’s where your safety, protection, and jobs are derived from. You can’t just denounce it without thinking about what you’re trying to build as an alternative.

Do you think that we’ll ever see true equality without dismantling our current systems and rebuilding them from scratch?

No, certainly not. I think that’s the premise of the book. Seeking equality within systems rooted in domination is always going to be at someone’s expense. The only equality that’ll orient us toward is equal debasement or equal denigration.

You begin and end the book by looking at liberal responses to systemic racism in the U.S., from President John F. Kennedy’s idea of racial justice to the way people today are reading books on how to be anti-racist. What’s missing from those analyses?

What the liberal account doesn’t offer is: what is the basis—the actual material resources, structures, and relations—that we all need to live a free life? Which

includes freedom from violence and coercion, but also freedom to be able to eat, to reproduce, to have kin, etc. The liberal account has nothing to say about any of that. I mean, they're very clear, in fact, that none of that is guaranteed. So that's partly what it is. That these abstract freedoms have never spoken to the material

or a dynamic that falls along strict racial lines. Once you've created the notion that human life is not precious, that it's disposable, far fewer people are safe than we might think.

Think about all the folks in long-term care facilities and nursing homes, many of whom are White, and even middle

lots of struggles. And not just struggles between elites and masses, but between people.

You can see that in public education, where there's been slow but steady work against the simplistic narratives spoon fed to students around U.S. history and U.S. exceptionalism, and wanting more

Seeking equality within systems rooted in domination is always going to be at someone's expense. The only equality that'll orient us toward is equal debasement or equal denigration.

conditions of people's lives.

And then the "how to be anti-racist" vision is always about psychological orientations, as if a shift in mindset would necessarily produce the new structures that support free and full lives. Again, that's just not the case. You could shift your mindset and still be fully enmeshed in all of the prevailing structures.

There's a big difference between being aware of microaggressions and seeing that everything needs to change in order to truly address systemic racism.

Yes, that's absolutely right. And the [focus on] microaggressions is based on the assumption that in a liberal society, the baseline condition is people treating each other fairly. But that's not the baseline. Because a competitive, militarized society produces aggression. So when we see aggression in one another or feel humiliated, that's to be expected. And in fact, it would be profoundly surprising if that wasn't the baseline of all of our interactions. We live in a formation that encourages people to get joy from other people's humiliation and degradation. That's long been part of our history. That's another reason why these liberal ideals are so limited.

COVID-19 has revealed many kinds of internal injustices, including about who gets protected. But this isn't the first pandemic we've seen. Why did COVID reveal these disparities in ways other pandemics might not have as clearly?

One thing that it reveals for those of us thinking about anti-racist work is that disposability is not just a phenomenon

class. They were disposable as well because they were enmeshed in systems that focused on profit and limited their connections. Showing how much more vulnerable many of our social positions are pushes back against the very thin account of Whiteness that imagines it as a simple binary between vulnerability and protection. It's never worked that way.

So many of these structures are failing the people that they purport to protect. If we think about the opioid epidemic and the companies that preyed on what were mostly White folks in the last 20 years, they were indifferent to their lives and suffering. I don't know what kind of possibilities that emerges. People's investment in these prevailing systems and the consent they offer to them is perhaps under more crisis and unraveling.

How do you see us using the momentum that we have in the current moment?

I don't want to overly romanticize the mobilizations that happened last summer, because we saw how quickly they were countered and depleted. But what's notable is the slow and steady work around abolition and mass incarceration. The very notion that "defund the police," or alternatives to prison, are thinkable is itself the product of dozens of years of work. Or Standing Rock and Indigenous environmentalism. It's long-term work.

Part of what [late Detroit-based activist and author] James Boggs said, is that, because so many of us are invested in prevailing systems, there's no easy way out of them. And as we orient ourselves away from them, it's going to mean lots and

critical thinking. It's not just that there's a backlash to it, it's that so many people have been socialized into it that it seems unnerving to imagine a different form of education. I don't even think of it as backlash as much as the necessary tumult that's going to happen when people are compelled to rethink new possibilities.

Even with Amazon, the workers that voted against the union aren't doing it because they think Amazon is so amazing, but because they're afraid about the other option. I think that notion of "You have something here, are you ready to lose it?" will always haunt and undermine our efforts. That proposition—are you ready to lose something?—is not easy for anyone to answer. I think that's what the possibility and the challenge is.

Harini Rajagopalan is the senior communications coordinator at Political Research Associates. She reviews books for the BI-POC Book Critics Collective. She has an MA in publishing and writing from Emerson College.

Sentimentalizing Resentment

1 The author gratefully acknowledges use of archives at the Berkeley Center for Right-Wing Studies, research assistance from Kendall Sewell, and feedback on drafts from Alan Nadel, Michelle Nickerson, and Srimati Basu.

2 Caldwell's books were featured in several book clubs, the most mainstream of which was the Literary Guild, which in the 1970s advertised their selections in magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, *American Home*, and *Ladies Home Journal*. According to reports on book club publishers, Literary Guild embraced a female readership: "while the Book-of-the-Month-Club offered more nonfiction to a more heavily male audience, the Literary Guild featured more fiction choices for a membership dominated by women." See Doreen Carvajal, "Well Known Book Clubs Agree to Form Partnership," *The New York Times*, March 2, 2000. Ads for Caldwell's *Captains and the Kings* are obviously geared for women, as you can see in a yellow double-page spread featured in the article "Take Your Pick from These Vintage Book Clubs" posted July 17, 2017, on the website Flashbak: <https://flashbak.com/take-your-pick-from-these-vintage-book-clubs-383182/>.

3 Correspondence from Willis Carto to Taylor Caldwell, February 27, 1977. Willis A. Carto Library, <http://willisacartolibrary.com/2017/06/25/taylor-caldwell/>.

4 Heike Paul, "Authoritarian populism, White Supremacy, and Volksskorper-Sentimentalism" in *The Comeback of Populism Transatlantic Perspectives*, edited by Heike Paul, Jürgen Beghardt, and Ursula Prutsch (Heidelberg, Germany: Universitätsverlag Winter 2019), 137.

5 Exemplars in the first case are Jean Hardisty, *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999) and, in the second case, Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

6 See George F. Smith's 1978 interview with Taylor Caldwell, <http://georgefsmith.blogspot.com/2009/08/interview-with-taylor-caldwell-1978.html>.

7 Katharina Gerund and Heike Paul, "Sentimentalism," *Handbook of the American Novel of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Christine Gerhardt, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2018, pp. 17-33, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110481327-002>. Key resources for sentimental literary studies in the 20th century include: Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (Durham: Duke UP, 2008); Janice Radway, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Rebecca Wanzo, *The Suffering Will Not Be Televised: African American Women and Sentimental Political Storytelling* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009); Jennifer Williamson, *Twentieth-Century Sentimentalism: Narrative Appropriation in American Literature* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2014).

8 Lisa Duggan, *Mean Girl: Ayn Rand and the Culture of Greed* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 5.

9 Duggan, 5.

10 Duggan, 5. Riffing on literary critic Lauren Berlant, who devised a concept of "cruel optimism" to recognize the conundrum of wanting what will only harm you in a time of sustained crisis, Duggan described Rand's fiction as promoting "optimistic cruelty." See Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

11 *Captains and the Kings* (1972): 80. Readers receive recurring free market lessons as they follow the protagonist Joseph on his ascent. In the same vein, Karl Marx is repeatedly dismissed with explanations such as, "Remove profits and you remove incentive, and barbarism results. It is human nature to work for rewards" (233).

12 Jack W. Sattel, "Heroes on the Right," *Journal of Popular Culture* XI, no. 1 (1977): 124.

13 Sattel, 124.

14 Sattel, 124.

15 Sattel, 111.

16 Michelle M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton University Press, 2012). This line of scholarship is indebted to Jean Hardisty, *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999). See also Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Marjorie J. Spruill, *Divided We Stand: The Battle Over Women's Rights and Family Values That Polarized American Politics* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

17 Nickerson, *Mothers*, 50.

18 Nickerson, *Mothers*, 50.

19 McGirr; Hardisty. While it is clear from advertisements from the 1970s that Caldwell's novels were marketed to middle-class, middle-aged women explicitly, the author proudly claimed that her readership expanded well beyond that demographic. "At least 50% of my readers," she boasted in 1978, "now are young people, especially young men between the ages of 18 and 30." See Smith's interview with her: <http://georgefsmith.blogspot.com/2009/08/interview-with-taylor-caldwell-1978.html>.

20 These fears percolated for several years in different forms and formats, a key transformation being a pamphlet secretly penned by scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard and titled "Brain-washing: A Synthesis of the Russian Textbook on Psychopolitics." The pamphlet summarized purported Soviet plans to infiltrate U.S. minds, fears about which crystallized when new mental health legislation was proposed. APRF circulated this pamphlet to its members. American Public Relations Forum, Inc., *Bulletin*, no. 38 (November 1959) in Freedom of Information Act FBI file, "American Public Relations Forum."

21 Nickerson, Chapter IV, "Siberia U.S.A." in *Mothers*, 103-135. See also Michelle Nickerson, "The 'Lunatic Fringe' Strikes Back: Conservative Opposition to the Alaska Mental Health Bill of 1956," in *The Politics of Healing: Histories of Alternative Medicine in Twentieth-Century North America*, 117-152. Edited by Robert

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22 Nickerson, *Mothers*, 104.

23 Nickerson, *Mothers*, 34.

24 Charles Lee, "Minute Men of 1970," *The New York Times*, May 4, 1952.

25 Much like today's manufactured panic over critical race theory—which recently has morphed into an alarm sounded by concerned parents against "emotional and mental health initiatives" in schools—Caldwell and her fellow Minute Women and APRF members in the 1950s warned that incorporating mental health measures into school curricula and social programs was a nefarious plot to overwhelm vulnerable minds and undermine traditional values. The history of education and curricular disputes in the U.S. reveal many variations on this theme of manufacturing panic and mobilizing concerned parents with it. One of the most important disputes contemporary with Caldwell's writing was the West Virginia textbook conflict of 1974, in which the left-leaning protest culture of Appalachia moved rightward as parents shifted their opposition to a multiethnic language arts curriculum from race-based arguments to arguments about secular humanism. See Carol Mason, *Reading Appalachia from Left to Right: Conservatism and the 1974 Kanawha County Textbook Controversy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009). See also Mike Hixenbaugh's Twitter thread documenting current objections to mental health initiatives in schools: https://twitter.com/mike_hixenbaugh/status/1460294798800302081?s=12.

26 American Public Relations Forum, Inc., *Bulletin*, no. 38 (November 1959) in Freedom of Information Act FBI file, "American Public Relations Forum."

27 American Public Relations Forum, Inc., *Bulletin*, no. 38, 3 (emphasis added).

28 William F. Buckley Jr.'s 1959 book, *Up From Liberalism*, directly puns on Booker T. Washington's 1901 autobiography, *Up from Slavery*, for instance. Using slavery as analogy has a dual function; it both (1) imagines racial injustice slaves in the U.S. suffered and (2) displaces the political and historical reality of living as a slave. For a sustained discussion of the logic of using slavery as analogy, see Yogita Goyal, *Runaway Genes: The Global Afterlives of Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 2019).

29 The term "synthetic whiteness" is from Gerald Horne, whose discussion I take up later. The concept of Whiteness as an identity that is amalgamated from a variety of ethnicities is the historical basis of critical studies of Whiteness. See, for example, David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1999); David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

30 Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

31 Although Irish immigrants certainly endured extreme prejudice, Caldwell does not examine the plights of her Irish

characters amid the overarching anti-immigration laws and attitudes at the turn of the 20th century. Nor does she compare the Irish, for example, to the Chinese, who were at the time targeted by legislation such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Avoiding these comparisons, she instead exploits Irish victimization to evoke feelings of injustice in her contemporary readers, and repeatedly links Joseph's plight to that of Black people, who came to America through coerced enslavement, rather than purposeful immigration. Even in expressing sympathy with descendants of Africa enslaved in the South, Joseph understands their situation in the context of his Irishness: "To deal in flesh and blood, even if it were 'black,' had always seemed to Joseph to be the vilest and most unpardonable of crimes. Oppressed, himself, from birth, his rare cold sympathies had been with the fleeing slaves, who could now be captured and returned to their owners in the South [for pay]" (56-57). Despite his sympathy, however, Joseph sells munitions to the Confederacy during the Civil War as a matter of entrepreneurship; see for example chapter 24.

32 Taylor Caldwell, *Captains and the Kings* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972).

33 In a "discussion of racial origins," Caldwell's protagonist in *Captains and the Kings* explains that "The British... are composed of the Celtic races, the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh, who are really one race. The English, on the contrary, are not British. They are mere Anglo-Saxons, who were brought as slaves to England by their masters and slaveowners, the Normans." He continues to assert that "there is hope for the Negro, too, that he will live down the stigma of once being a slave. After all, Colonel, he has just to remember the English who were slaves also," (209-210).

34 Although Caldwell defended herself against accusations of being an antisemite, *Captains and the Kings'* depiction of the men comprising the worldwide cabal, those members of the Committee for Foreign Study and the Scardo Society, dog-whistles to the tune of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the forged antisemitic tract Henry Ford used to popularize for Americans the false idea that an international secret society of financiers regularly conspires to shape world events. Having been married to a Jewish businessman in Buffalo, Caldwell was very tempered in her deployment of typically antisemitic tropes implying a Jewish-Communist conspiracy of "globalists." Although she believed that, throughout the ages, those in power changed, she felt that the conspiracy perpetuated. Her 1958 exchange of letters with Willis Carto suggests that she was sympathetic with his sentiment that he "[doesn't] blame Jews individually" while nevertheless seeing a vast Jewish network, consisting of the Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith, retail moguls, Hollywood producers, and news media reporters and owners, that works particularly against them. As recently as 2018, conservative journalists praise Caldwell's seeming exposure of the supposed secret international cabal: "The organization that served as the chief front for the one-world coterie, and that effected [sic]

many of its designs, was (and is) the Council on Foreign Relations, which Caldwell exposed in her 1972 novel *Captains and the Kings* under the fictional names of the Committee for Foreign Studies and the Scardo Society." William F. Jasper, "Deep State Subversion: 'A Murderer Is Less to Be Feared,'" *The New American* 34, no. 10 (2018): 44. See also Warren Mass, "Taylor Caldwell: She Taught the World to Learn from History," *The New American* 29, no. 16 (2013): 34-38.

35 William Pierce created *The Turner Diaries* as a serialized potboiler published in the neonazi tabloid *Attack!* beginning in 1975. Later published as a novel, *The Turner Diaries* describes a dystopia much like that of *The Devil's Advocate*; both fictions feature macho members of a secret order withstanding torture and tests of loyalty to stave off an illegitimate government subjugating White people. Now notorious as the blueprint for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and an inspiration for the January 6, 2021, insurrection, *The Turner Diaries* echoed for the paramilitary Right the anti-statist ideology that Caldwell promoted to a mainstream readership. Also exemplifying such anti-statism in the 1970s is Jean Raspail's *The Camp of the Saints*, a xenophobic novel that presents unregulated immigration as the reason for his dystopic depiction of enslaved White Europeans. Today often cited as an inspiration for numerous Trump supporters and Alt Right influencers, *The Camp of the Saints* is another 1970s fiction that spread fear of a White race subjugated by non-Christians and non-Whites. For more on *The Camp of the Saints*, see <http://www.politicalresearch.org/2020/08/31/battle-bullet-advancing-vision-civil-war/>.

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37 For more in addition to Horne on the role that far-right mercenaries played in building a transnational White Power movement, see Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

38 Horne, 105. Josiah Brownell, "Diplomatic Lepers: The Katangan and Rhodesian Foreign Missions in the United States and the Politics of Nonrecognition," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 2014, Vol. 47, no. 2: 209.

39 Brownell, 2014, 232.

40 Brownell notes that scholars have too easily conflated the different U.S. pro-Rhodesia groups, recognizing that the more "radical" or far-right organizations were seen as embarrassments to conservatives who nevertheless worked with them in political solidarity. See Brownell 2014, 232. But even among those Brownell deems radical there was in-fighting. In particular, the Friends of Rhodesian Independence (FRI) actually changed its name to the American Southern African Council (ASAC) according to FBI records. Carto, who founded FRI officially as the National Coordinating Committee of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence, named Caldwell as president in 1966. But the group in 1967 changed its name to ASAC and distanced itself from Carto, who received a blistering condem-

nation in the group's 1970 newsletter. Caldwell escapes any mention. Friends of Rhodesian Independence. FOIA file. HG 105-153080. The Berkeley Center for Right-Wing Studies, University of California, Berkeley, California.

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42 Horne, 105.

43 Horne, 35-36.

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45 "Rhodesia Tours Planned", *Liberty Letter* no. 107 January 1970

46 Brownell, 2017, 819.

47 Horne, 81.

48 Horne, 6.

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50 For more on Hargis's relation to the rise of the Christian Right, see chapter 4, "Billy James Hargis: Sinister, Satanic Sex" in Carol Mason, *Oklahoma: Lessons in Unqueering America* (SUNY Press, 2015): 81-111.

51 Horne, 26. Luise White's research is consistent with Horne's analysis on this point. Whiteness in Rhodesia, she attests, never functioned as "an immutable fact" as it eventually did in the United States, and "being white in Rhodesia was never in and of itself the right to rule or to do much else." See Luise White, *Unpopular Sovereignty: Rhodesian Independence and African Decolonization* (University of Chicago Press, 2015): 34-35.

52 Horne, 26.

53 Horne, 36.

54 Horne, 26.

55 Heike Paul, "Authoritarian Populism, White Supremacy, and Volkskörper-Sentimentalism," in *The Comeback of Populism: Transatlantic Perspectives*. Edited by Heike Paul, Jürgen Gebhardt, and Ursula Prutsch. (Heidelberg, Germany: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2019). 127-156.

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Stand in the Gap

1 Transcripts of the show can be found on the *Stand in the Gap* Today site: "Train up a Child: Leave Egypt Behind," April 6, 2021, <https://standinthegapmedia.org/2021/04/train-up-a-child-leave-egypt-behind/>.

2 Michael Farris, *The Joshua Generation: Restoring the Heritage of Christian Leadership* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman 2005), 11.

3 R. Albert Mohler Jr., "Needed: An Exit Strategy," *The Christian Post*, June 17, 2005, <https://www.christianpost.com/news/needed-an-exit-strategy.html>.

4 Christopher Klicka, *Home School Heroes: The Struggle & Triumph of Home Schooling in America* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman 2006), 292.

5 According to the cable listings for *Stand in the Gap* TV programs, which are broadcast in PA, DE, and NJ on the WPBH, VCY American, and Upliftv Network, they have an estimated household reach of over 2.5 million homes. For more on this, see <https://standinthegapmedia.org/cable-listings/>.

[ble-listings/](https://standinthegapmedia.org/cable-listings/)

6 Pennsylvania Pastors Network claims to represent "the largest national network dedicated to equipping pastors to be a voice for truth in the public square." For more information see <https://papastors.net/2020/12/18/america-weve-been-warned/>.

7 Operating on a nearly \$1 million annual budget, "Let Freedom Ring" bills itself as a nonpartisan, public policy organization, but one that pushes a Christian nationalist, conservative political agenda. According to their "About" page, they claim that, "We have equipped individuals and churches to hold voter registration drives and created award-winning television and radio commercials, Public Service Announcements and broadcast and written commentaries." See <https://letfreedomringusa.com/about/> for more information.

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9 It is worth noting that since January 2021, SIGT has devoted numerous episodes dedicated to promoting misinformation and conspiracy theories about both COVID-19 vaccines and the so-called "Covid Passport," which they argue is a government plot designed to restrict the freedoms of Christians.

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Sowing the Seeds of White Supremacy Through Education

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A Wider Type of Freedom

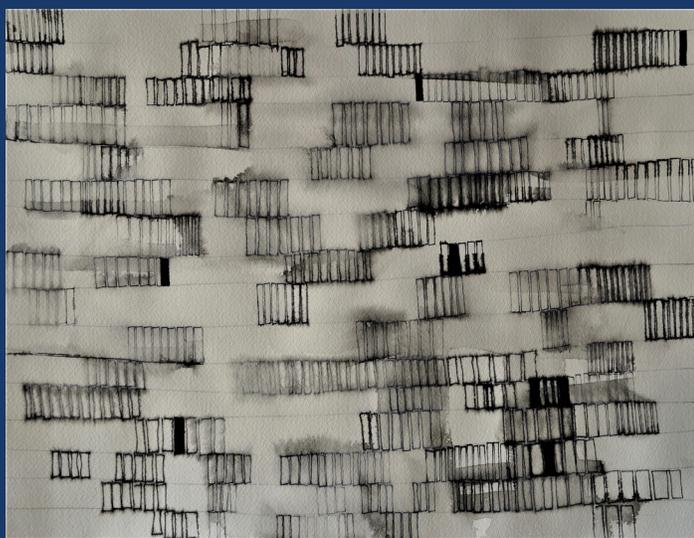
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The Art of Activism: An Interview with Cover Artist Anna Jannack



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Tell me about your artistic practice.

I am a psychotherapist/painter living in Seattle. I spend half of my time tending to the experiences of others, and the other half tending to my own experience. I love to get lost in these two very different practices. They require me to be disciplined in very different ways. I think both allow me plenty of room to wander, discover, and integrate the information I encounter.

How has the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic affected the way you produce art?

I have a deep friendship with trauma and despair, and this always colors what interests me. I was a bit obsessed with the idea that I needed to discover a new theme, path or idea, but I kept going back to my usual themes. I then decided to focus on different materials and started playing with concrete. The experience of being illiterate using the material was equal parts refreshing and irritating, but it gave me the sense that new experiences are still possible and worth pursuing.

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