

From Greatness to Whiteness

They see great men founding a great country.

If you ask recent graduates of almost any American university what they see when they look at these paintings, chances are that they see something entirely different.

They are apt to see rich, white males who are not great and who did not found a great country. And for many, it is worse than that. These men are not only not great; they are morally quite flawed in that they were slaveholders and/or founded a country that allowed slavery. Moreover, they were not only all racists; they were all sexists, who restricted the vote to males. And they were rich men who were primarily concerned with protecting their wealth, which is why they restricted the vote to landowners.

In the past, Americans overwhelmingly saw pictures of greatness. Increasingly only conservatives see pictures of greatness. More and more Americans – that includes the entire left and many universities attendees who were indoctrinated by left-wing professors – now see rich, white, self-interested males.

The left-wing trinity of race, gender and class has prevailed. The new dividing lines are no longer good and bad or excellent and mediocre, but white and non-white, male and female, and rich and poor. Instead of seeing great human beings in those paintings of the Founders, Americans have been taught to see rich, white, (meaning – by definition – selfish, bigoted, racist, sexist) males.

In colleges throughout America, students are taught to have disdain for the white race. I know this sounds incredible, or at least exaggerated. It is neither.

For example, from the day they enter college, many students

are taught about white privilege – how innately advantaged white students (and all other whites are). Last week, the president of Western Washington University posed the question on the university's website: "How do we make sure that in future years we are not as white as we are today?"

Imagine if the president of the University of California at Berkeley had posed the question, "How do we make sure that in future years we are not as Asian as we are today?"

Inner city young blacks who work hard in school are routinely chastised by other black youth for "acting white."

Regarding white privilege, last year, three academics at the University of Rhode Island wrote in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*:

"The American Psychological Association's educational goals for the psychology major include sociocultural and international awareness, with learning outcomes regarding mastery of concepts related to power and privilege. Other professional organizations, including the American Sociological Association, have developed similar learning goals for teaching in higher education. Instructors have been charged with teaching their white students to understand their own privileged positions in society relative to those of marginalized groups."

The key point here is that the word "values" never appears. Instead of asking what values made America's Founders great, the left asks what race, gender and class privileges enabled those men to found America. Instead of asking what values does the white majority (or, for that matter, on some campuses, the Asian majority) live by in order to succeed, and how can we help inculcate those values among more less successful people of all racial and ethnic groups, the left asks what privileges do whites have that enable them to get into colleges and graduate at a higher rate than blacks and Latinos.

The undermining of the very concept of values was starkly made clear last month at a national inter-college debate tournament.

As reported in the Atlantic last week:

“On March 24, 2014 at the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) Championships at Indiana University, two Towson University students, Aameena Ruffin and Korey Johnson, became the first African-American women to win a national college debate tournament, for which the resolution asked whether the U.S. president’s war powers should be restricted. Rather than address the resolution straight on, Ruffin and Johnson, along with other teams of African-Americans, attacked its premise. The more pressing issue, they argued, is how the U.S. government is at war with poor black communities.”

In the final round, Ruffin and Johnson squared off against Rashid Campbell and George Lee from the University of Oklahoma, two highly accomplished African-American debaters with distinctive dreadlocks and dashikis. Over four hours, the two teams engaged in a heated discussion of concepts like ‘nigga authenticity’ and performed hip-hop and spoken-word poetry in the traditional timed format. At one point during Lee’s rebuttal, the clock ran out but he refused to yield the floor. ‘F-- the time!’ he yelled.

In a national intercollegiate debate contest, a black debating team won by transforming the topic of the debate, one that had nothing to do with race, into a race question.

But to object to this, or to argue that a team might be disqualified for yelling “f-- the time” when told it had gone over the time limit, or to ask what performing hip-hop has to do with the topic “whether the U.S. president’s war powers should be restricted” – is now deemed to act white.

This is another victory for the left. And another defeat for standards, for truth and for the values embodied by the men in

the paintings of the Founders.

Dennis Prager's latest book, "Still the Best Hope: Why the World Needs American Values to Triumph," was published April 24, 2013 by HarperCollins. He is a nationally syndicated radio show host and creator of PragerUniversity.com.

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