

Dinnertime Conversation

(06/03/21)

Finally, we can have people over for Friday night dinner. One of the fellows is quite an erudite man. Aside from being a professional geologist, he writes a number of blogs on historical events. He is articulate and he seems to consider every issue with sincere thoughtfulness. I thought he would be the perfect person to explain to me what is going on in current academic and other social circles. The names have been changed to protect the guilty. At the table were Mark, John, Karen and Clint.

Clint: So, what does this mean “intersectional”? I hear that word all the time, and it shows up a lot on Facebook. The other term I hear is “critical race theory”. What is that, Mark?

Mark: “Intersectional” means if there are two things that come together such as race and gender, this creates a greater entitlement from society.

Clint: And “critical race theory”?

Mark: That white people are automatically bigots and that other colors are good. It is about determination of entitlement or goodness based upon racial theory. This, of course, was utilized by the Nazis to separate the good from the evil, and was rejected by the 50 million or more who died in World War II.

John: Would you please pass the wine?

Karen: Wow, that is really heavy-duty.

Clint: So, these theories are used to create a template for who is entitled and who is bad?

Mark: Simplistic, as you tend to be, but essentially true.

Karen: What about the spectrum of colors? People are not necessarily Black or white, but there is intermarriage, and different people around this planet come in a variety of colors. When is a person no longer white?

John: Hey, isn't anybody going to listen to me? I said please pass the wine.

Clint: John, unless you contribute something to this conversation, you cannot have any more wine.

John: Okay, it just sounds to me like more of the same old same old. Now we are justifying bigotry and racism against people who are too white or who are defined as some other undesirable color.

Clint: Okay John, you can have another glass of wine.

Karen: No, seriously, who is going to decide the haves and the have-nots based on color? When a white person and a Black person have a child, is the child and the Black parent good and the white parent bad?

Mark: Karen, I did not say any of this was rational. I am just telling you how these concepts work in the real world.

Karen: I am not going to let you get away with that. I want to know, whether we are creating a new kind of bigotry to replace the old one?

John: Of course we are. That is why I would rather drink than have this discussion any longer.

Mark: Listen, the reality is that in making up for past bad behavior of white folks in Europe, the Americas and other places, it is sometimes necessary to create demons and devils. The people who are mistreated, some of them just want equality, and others want to beat down their opponents.

Clint: Did anybody here ever read Animal Farm by, was it Huxley? Who was it who wrote that book?

Mark: Clint, you are so erudite. Yes, Animal Farm was a satire of the Soviet Union. The animals threw out the farmer, took over, and were ruled by the pigs. The pigs wound up being worse than the farmer, just like the Soviets were worse than the Czar.

John: Wow, cool. I knew this would all come down to communism somehow.

Karen: What about Jews? Are Jews white or Black, or something in between? I have seen that Miss Israel is Ethiopian, Black. Is she really white?

Mark: There are all kinds of inconsistencies, Karen. Yes, in the counter-culture, which now wants to become the majority rule, Jews are white regardless of what color they are and whether they are from Yemen, Arab countries, Ethiopia or anywhere else. They are automatically privileged because they are Jews and therefore they are white, regardless of their color.

Karen: Now that makes a lot of sense. Can I say that any more sarcastically?

Clint: I still think replacing one kind of bigotry with another is not going to do society any good.

John: I'll drink to that!

Well, that was basically the conversation, but notwithstanding the addition of an alcoholic lubrication, it is difficult to understand the current mythology being pedaled by those who are angry at those of us who have nothing to do with the prejudice and unfairness that has plagued America and every other society. Try being a Christian in a Muslim nation or a white dude in most sub-Sahara African countries. Muslims in China get kicked around, and Hindus in India have been known to be unkind to their opponents.

It reminds one of the old Kingston Trio song, "They're Rioting in Africa." It ends with the line, "And I don't like anybody very much!"

Substituting hate for hate or stereotypes for bad behavior is not going to remunerate anyone for past wrongs and ills.

In fact, the current debate only makes Martin Luther King more accurate when he said that content of character is more important than color of skin. Instead of intersectional politics and critical race theory, perhaps we should be talking about the tried-and-true concepts of “mutual respect” and “equal opportunity”. Somehow, those latter phrases have become *der rigueur* in a world controlled by social media wonks. Whether it was the industrial revolution, the steam engine, radio, TV or the wireless, there was somebody who attempted to exploit those new technologies to undermine the pillars of civilization. We all know what happened when the nuclear genie was released on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Social media is being utilized today to form and reform public opinions. Unfortunately, the most negative forces have found social media a convenient way to create devils, demons and enemies based upon a checkered and often complicated past.

Perhaps it is time to apply the antitrust laws and laws concerning free speech to social media in order to create a more perfect union.

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