

The New York Times Reveals Its Bias Yet Again

The New York Times published a sensational “investigation” on September 11, 2022, trashing the New York Regional Hasidic Yeshiva Schools. The place to start, in understanding the expose, is to review the background of the reporters. One reporter brags about her background working for Politico and the Daily Beast. Her mother is a high ranking official at the New York Times itself. The other reporter has a similar background, claiming in his Pulitzer Prize acceptance speech that his job as a reporter is to help those, at least in his opinion, who need his assistance. Neither reporter makes any pretense at an impartial examination of Yeshiva School education.

The major gripe of the reporters is nothing new. Jews, especially religious Jews, keep themselves separate, are not part of the integrated society sought by the reporters, are insular and do not have respect for the liberal values that the “investigators” espouse.

Most of the article deals with the type of education that the Hasidic Yeshiva students do not get. They do not learn what the investigative reporters believe that they should learn. Never mind that the rates of drug use, family dissolution and mental illness are far less in the so-called “black hat” community than virtually any other structural unit in this country.

The investigation is based upon thin evidence, to say the least. Aside from the small number of people interviewed, the reporters give the story of those who they identify as having suffered from mental illness. It is clear that the reporters would like to blame the Yeshiva School environment for the mental illness, but that certainly is not provable from the information given in the newspaper article.

What makes these reporters even more angry is that, like many private schools, the Yeshivas are receiving money for providing an education that the New York Times does not approve of. No doubt it is better to give 8 year old’s a choice as to gender, than to teach them religious values. Yes, that is actually happening in many public schools around the country. In some jurisdictions, gender choice is all the rage.

There is no question that the Hasidic Yeshiva community is very concerned with modern American values, and seeks to direct their students in a different direction. That seems very annoying to the reporters, who also claim excessive corporal punishment in the Yeshiva School environment. Everyone that the reporters talked to decried any violence, even if it is one student. Nevertheless, based upon a small number of interviews, the reporters are convinced that this a problem of a major component in the Yeshiva School environment.

The New York Times shows its bias when speaking of other groups as well. Lubavitch is the fastest growing denomination of Judaism, with well over 4,500 Chabad Houses around the world. The New York Times reporters gleefully claim that these Hasidim do teach their children proper English, because they are “missionaries.” Nothing can be further from the truth and, in fact, it is a blatant defamation. The Chabad environment exists to educate and to provide a Jewish opportunity for people who are receptive to it. Every Lubavitch Rabbi that I have ever met assiduously avoids anything that appears to be missionary. It is that kind of comment in the New York Times article

that shows the mindset of the reporters and the total lack of credibility in an article such as this. An apology should be forthcoming, and sooner or later it will be.

What of modern Orthodox and other Jewish schools that are akin to the highest-level prep schools? The article deals with those institutions by a snide swipe. The authors preferred to focus on the lifestyle of the Satmar Hasidim, who they have particular distain for. In all candor, I am not crazy about the Satmar myself, because of their stand on Israel as being a nation which only deserves to come into being when the Messiah comes. I do not see politics the way the Satmar do, but I respect their right to educate their children privately, as the family sees fit.

Perhaps what is wrong with American education is that we do not have more schools controlled by parents with strong societal values. The New York Times, in its expose, attempts to compare the Hasidic communities with the poorest, African American community schools in the New York metropolitan area, writing that the Jewish schools are even worse off than the poverty stricken African American schools. However, the New York Times does not compare what happens to those students both in the school and outside the school; the comparative rates of crime, divorce, alienation and mental illness. The New York Times would never make such a comparison, and it should not. However, to use the comparison of Hasidic schools with poor African American schools, demonstrates the repulsive bias of the newspaper and its reporters, and the level to which they will stoop to insult multiple groups, sometimes simultaneously, in the interest of leftwing elitism.

The reporters rail against the inability of Hasidic Yeshiva students to get the kind of jobs that the reporters apparently believe they should have. Yet, there is little to no data in the article about the financial difficulty these Yeshiva School graduates face, because the community largely takes care of their own. It is too bad we do not have more of that in America.

Perhaps the most clear indication of the bias of the Times is not in the article itself, but what follows. The authors and the newspaper pointedly acknowledge that because of a paucity of information and the fact that the Yeshiva high schools would not practice self-immolation by cooperating with the New York Times, those who read the article should contact the newspaper and the authors with more ugly stories. In other words, the newspaper realizes that it is on very thin ice, and hopefully it can drum up some additional angry, irrational and probably false support.

The paper bragged that they have translated the article into Yiddish. Therefore, in addition, the newspaper and its authors are doing their best to undermine the community structure, to cause a rift within the Jewish community and to cast aspersion upon those with whom the writers profoundly disagree.

Regardless of whether the authors of the New York Times expose like it, the leaders of Hasidic Judaism are going to pursue their own value system. That value system will not be a leftwing, politically acceptable path endorsed by the New York Times. The article makes clear mention of the political differences that the Hasidic groups have with the New York liberal left, and the fact that they use their political power to benefit the community. And what is wrong with that? Sounds like America to me.

A thread bear mention is made about anti-Semitism, but there is a clear implication that it is the fault of the Hasidic Jews for the way they dress, appear and fail to mingle in a way which the New York Times finds acceptable.

The so-called expose is a crass, ill-informed swipe at a community whose value system, educational beliefs and religious duties are directly opposed to the policymakers at the New York Times. Thank goodness more and more people are beginning to realize that the New York Times engages in what used to be called yellow journalism, to attack and undermine those with whose view the editorial board disagrees.

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