

HERMIT HERALD

ISSUE 119

JULY 2, 2021

QUOTE FOR THE DAY

“The contemporary Civil Rights movement under the banner of ‘Black Lives Matter’ is deeply unserious, catering to an old form of victimization that has accomplished nothing to uplift black people.” Dr. Shelby Steele

WHO IS THIS GUY? HOW DARE HE!

Dr. Steele is black and, no, he isn’t Uncle Tom. He is a Senior Fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. His specialty is racism and multiculturalism. Having been raised in humble circumstances, he and his brother, Claude, who is Provost at U.C. Berkeley, are very much on the national stage. I wrote of Dr. Steele’s opinions just a year ago in issue 40. We will return to some of his thoughts later in this issue.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY (CRT)

Many believe CRT grew out of Black Lives Matter and perhaps the ' "1619 Project", a NY Times sponsored piece that won the Pulitzer Prize, but has been roundly criticized by Liberal and conservative historians alike. None of the above represent the parentage of CRT.

The father of CRT was Dr. Derrick Bell who, in 1971 became the first black professor to receive tenure at Harvard Law School. He accepted that position with the proviso that he was only doing so because Harvard promised they would hire more black faculty. Finding that Harvard was slow in doing so, Dr. Bell left in protest in 1990 and finished his career at NYU Law School. Reading this, one might ponder why it took Dr. Bell 19 years to realize Harvard was moving too slowly.

In 1992 Dr. Bell wrote, "Faces at the Bottom of the Well", a book consisting of nine fables that communicated his pessimistic sense of, "The permanence of racism."

According to Adam Kirsch, writing in the WSJ, Dr Bell's writings led him to the theory of,

“interest convergence”, which essentially holds that white Americans will only act in the interests of black people if it also serves their own interest. When the interests of whites and blacks are opposed, whites will always choose to put their own interest first. Kirsch notes that Dr. Bell suggests that nothing has changed in the relationship between blacks and whites in 400 years. Kirsch writes, “At the heart of the debate over CRT, then as now, is whether such a view is justified.”

The political scientist Adolph Reed, Jr., whose work focuses on race and inequality, strongly disagrees with Dr. Bell (now deceased). He speaks of a Harvard Law conference he attended in 1991 led by Dr. Bell. “I heard Dr. Bell declare on a panel that blacks made no progress since 1865. I was startled, not least because Bell’s own life as well as the fact that Harvard’s black law students’ organization put on the conference, so emphatically belied his claim.”

Mr. Kirsch concludes, “To the journalist and historian James Traub, who profiled Bell for the New Republic magazine in 1993 (Bell’s

philosophy) amounted to a recipe for paralysis: 'If you convince whites that their racism is ineradicable what are they supposed to do? And what are blacks to do with their hard-won victim status?'"

Fast forward to where we are today and how CRT has morphed to its current state. CRT is now all about the oppressors and the oppressed/victims. Everyone hurls the "R" word at everyone else. It gives a sense of power or absolution to the hurler as in, "Because I'm calling you a racist, I'm not." That's where the other big buzz phrase comes in, "Systemic racism", and that's why white children, from the earliest age have to be inoculated with the knowledge that they are products of and participants in, "systemic racism." It's all so sad and non productive. It further builds barriers instead of taking them down.

Exacerbating all of this are the "woke wars" - more name calling, calling out, cancel culture events and just stupid, inane edicts. I've hit on several in the past, but just to keep you up to date: Claire Tisne Haft, a graduate of Spence

School reports her kindergartner, now a Spence student, tells her mom, “Thanksgiving is an act of Euro-American aggression” – she’s
4. An anonymous group called Prep School Accountability is sponsoring a media program, the message, “Diversity, not indoctrination. Teach HOW to think, not WHAT to think.”

Oh, and then the wheels come off the wagon at distinguished Brandeis College as their supposedly private (college only) “Oppressive Words list” comes into the public light: “Picnic”, that word has to go, as a bogus claim ties picnicking to black lynchings in the south. Feminist, Joyce Oates derides the fact that Brandeis eliminates “picnic” but not the word, “lynch” itself, or many other racist terms. But don’t stop there, banned also is the term, “rule of thumb”, the canard being that supposedly, in England, men were encouraged to not hit their wives with a rod thicker than their thumbs.

Also to be left on the cutting room floor, phrases/words never to be used again, “ladies and Gentlemen”, “you guys”, “prostitute”, “addict”, “mentally ill”,

“homeless”, “wheelchair-bound”, and even, “victim” and “survivor” on the dubious grounds, “they are hurtful.”

Reverting back to Ms. Haft’s commentary for a moment, she makes a statement that the Oregon Department of Education, “recently claimed math is racist.” If so –wow!! That is the most racist statement I have ever heard. It is the advocacy of the vilified and discredited term, “eugenics” i.e. blacks are just not mentally up to the challenge.

So that’s where we are folks – just charges and countercharges flying every which way, driving people further apart and not doing a single thing to move the ball down the field.

BACK TO DR SHELBY STEELE

Dr. Steele doesn’t just come forth with commentary about what he thinks are the problems with black America, he backs it up with statistics:

For starters, Dr. Steele is critical of the status of black families in America, “To truly reduce

racial disparities, we must acknowledge, black fathers matter.”

He goes on to point out that 83% of black youth are suffering the loss of a parent or the instability of a split home, a likely causative factor that only 17% make it to high school graduation. As an aside here, perhaps I should rethink my earlier criticism of inner city schools, as it appears from this statistic that 83% of black students are missing some or all of their high school years.

In any event, Dr. Steele’s belief that the lack of a father in this huge percentage of households is the major cause of racial disparities is 100% echoed by Candace Owens, founder of #Blexit, Kweisi Mfume, former NAACP president and Barak Obama.

A rather lengthy quote follows, but important to be read directly from Dr. Steele. “Why are blacks so dependent on white America, on the government, that all they can think of is themselves as victims which of course deflates themselves as human beings, undermines their best energies, their best intentions, and

so, after 50, 60 years now past the Civil Rights Bill, we are worse off in many socioeconomic categories than we were.”

Dr. Steele goes on to explain, “that this African-American dependency emerged out of white Americans desperately seeking to prove themselves as non-racist. They live under this accusation that they are racist and they need to prove that they’re not racist. In order to prove that you’re not racist, you need to take over the fate of black people and say, ‘ go with us, we’ll engineer you into the future, we’ll engineer you into equality’.” Dr. Steele concludes, “Life doesn’t work like that. We have to engineer ourselves. Period. There is no other way.”

Dr. Steele states that he models himself from that aspect of Malcolm X’s philosophy that called on blacks to engage in self-determinism.

AND, IN CLOSING

Here I take off my hat to president Biden. He is trying to do something transformational with the societal infrastructure legislation he has

pushed, the Marshall Plan I have advocated since March, 2020 .

To change over the family make up, as advocated by Dr. Steele, dramatically improve health care, education, housing and give every boy and girl an opportunity to go to a Boy's or Girl's Club or YMCA, YWCA after school is the key to creating the equity/equality everyone is calling for. Problem- this is a 15 to 30 year program. Politicians are only interested in the next election. Therefore, like Nero fiddling while Rome burned, cancel culture, wokeness, CRT continue to divide and distract us. The blame game is the default mode - a lot of noise - no action.

Happy fourth of July, if I'm allowed to say so- after all we have to work through the Francis Scott Key thing.

Don't drink a fifth on the fourth or you may not come forth on the fifth.

**Your faithful scribe,
PB**

