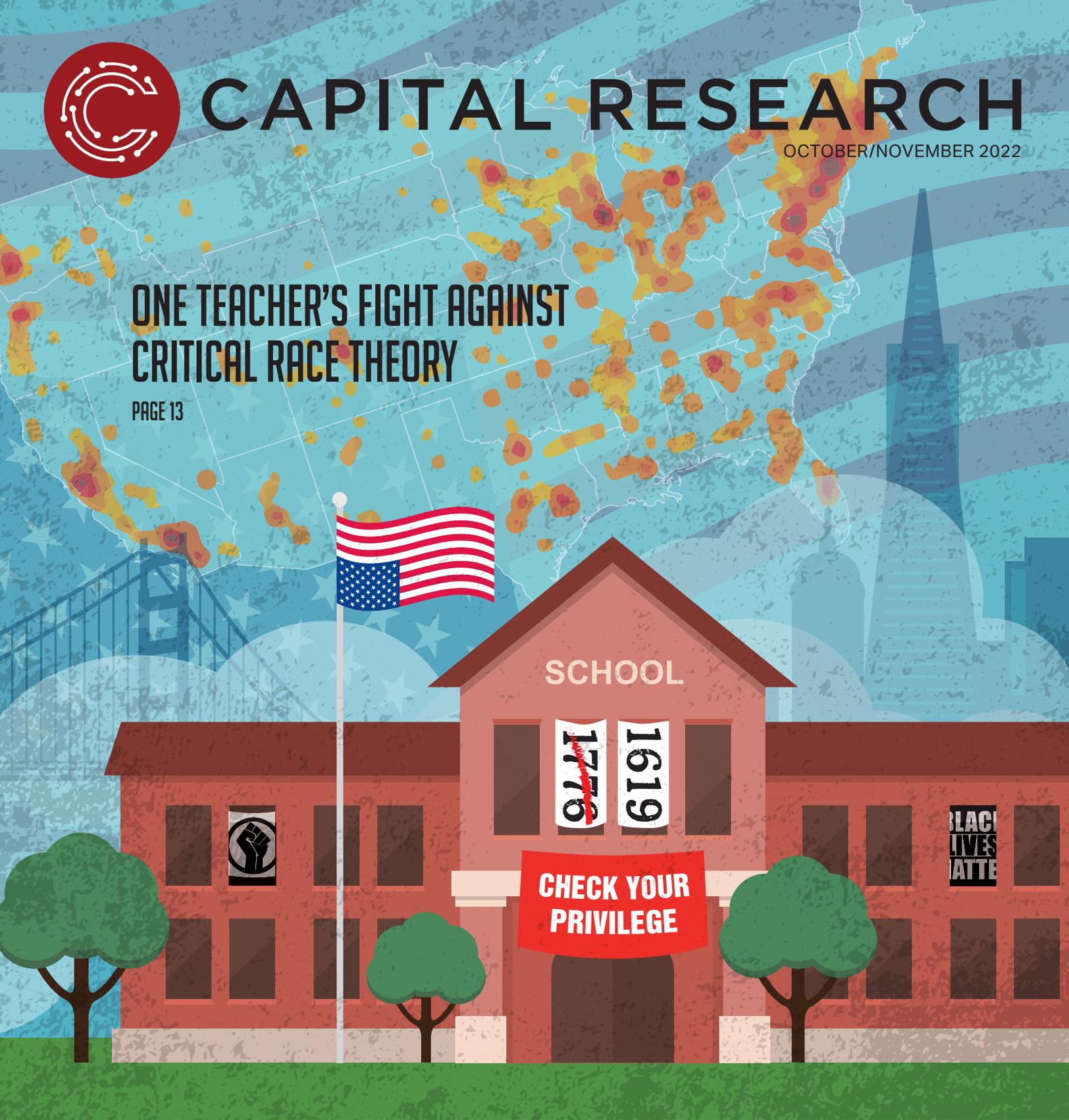




## ONE TEACHER'S FIGHT AGAINST CRITICAL RACE THEORY

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# BLM

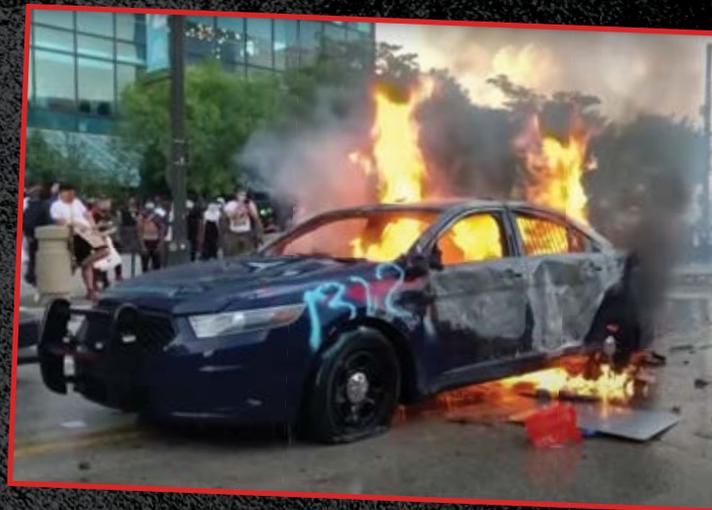
## AFTERMATH

In perhaps one of the greatest messaging coups of all time, the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation—an international effort funded by some of the most powerful and wealthy leftists admittedly steeped in the Marxist playbook—took the true statement that black lives matter and used it to create chaos and destroy the livelihoods of the very people it was professing to help.

*BLM Aftermath* documents the consequences of the protests and riots and asks local residents for their perspectives.



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### CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER

1513 16th Street NW  
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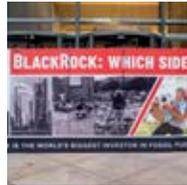
[CapitalResearch.org](https://www.CapitalResearch.org)

Contact@CapitalResearch.org

Internship inquiries are welcome.

Publisher, Scott Walter  
Editor-in-Chief, Kristen Eastlick  
Editor, Jon Rodeback  
Photo Editor, Gayle Yiotis

Cover design: Dawn Winter-Haines



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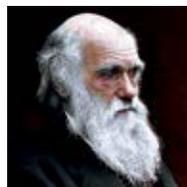
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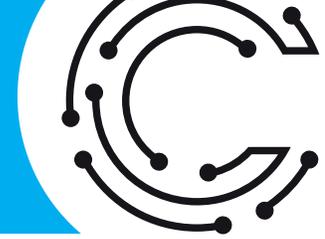


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**MAPPING SOROS'S**  
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AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK



## ARE WE ALLOWED TO TALK ABOUT GEORGE SOROS?

*The Left's intimidation tactics are starting to lose their sting. And we have Soros himself to thank.*

By Parker Thayer

George Soros, the “man behind the curtain,” at 92 years young, is still making headlines, although arguably not very positive ones. The mere mention of his name last week by Republican Senator Marco Rubio unleashed a flood of baseless allegations of anti-Semitism on Twitter and in the media. Soros, it seems, still inspires the left to defend his behavior in often despicable ways.

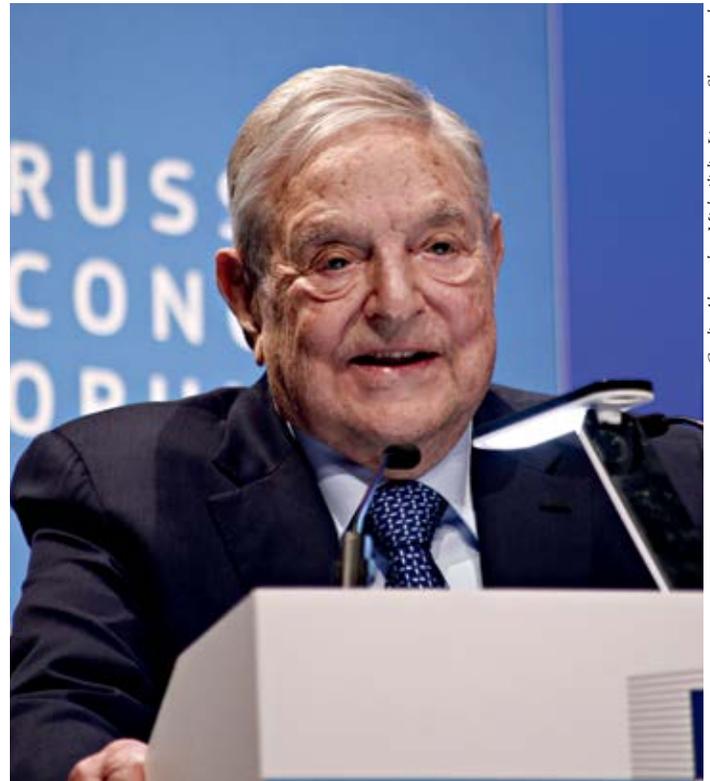
“What is a Soros backed prosecutor?,” progressives demanded to know, before immediately labeling it an anti-Semitic dog whistle.

False allegations like these have cheapened the meaning of anti-Semitism and have long been used to silence any talk of the Hungarian-born billionaire’s political expenditures, particularly his funding of left-wing “reform” prosecutors. The stifling effect was so strong in 2020 that former House Speaker Newt Gingrich was abruptly cut off on Fox News for daring to attribute the spread of riots across the country to the inaction of Soros-funded prosecutors. Fox later apologized, but it was clear, as Gingrich observed at the time, that the topic of George Soros was inexplicably “*verboten*.”

Thankfully, the Left’s intimidation tactics are starting to lose their sting. And we have Soros himself to thank.

An op-ed written by the man himself early last week titled “Why I Support Reform Prosecutors” severely decimated the Left’s attacks. It’s hard to make allegations of anti-Semitic conspiracy theory stick when the man under fire admits he’s doing the thing he’s accused of (although that didn’t stop many from trying).

☞  
*Soros confesses he’s the godfather of the progressive prosecutor movement and declares he’ll keep the funding coming.*



Credit: Alexandros Michailidis. License: Shutterstock

*George Soros, the “man behind the curtain,” at 92 years young, is still making headlines, although arguably not very positive ones.*

In the article, Soros confesses he’s the godfather of the progressive prosecutor movement and declares he’ll keep the funding coming. Give credit where credit is due: Soros is clear about his intentions.

Left-wingers, however, willfully ignored the article, preferring instead to use the taboo they placed on Soros’s name long ago to shut down discussion of policy issues that make them look bad.

*Parker Thayer is an investigative researcher at CRC.*

Support for Soros-backed prosecutors has left Democrats vulnerable, and they know it. Democrats boosted these officials' campaigns, cheered for the reforms they promised, and marched hand in hand with the defund-the-police movement during summer 2020. Now that voters see the consequences of "reform," Democrats are backpedaling as hard as they can, but they can't succeed if people won't shut up about the prosecutors they supported.

The solution: Go on the offensive. Label any mention of George Soros anti-Semitic. But there's a problem: Soros is so much a part of the radical prosecutor movement that talking about it without talking about the man behind it is like talking about the war in Iraq without mentioning George Bush. It's simply not possible without grinding the conversation to a halt.

"Only anti-Semites are curious about what George Soros does with his money," they claim, and nobody wants to be an anti-Semite, so nobody ever looks. Simple, but effective.

Even those willing to discuss Soros and the nationwide crime spree he's funding must do it in a veiled way, with no guarantee of cover. Senator Rubio, for example, didn't actually speak the name "Soros" at all (the reference to "Soros backed prosecutors" only appeared in a subsequent tweet). Instead he talked about rising crime rates, the flawed arguments left-wing prosecutors make, and actions that Justice Department could take to reign them in. None

of that ever made the headlines. Yet Rubio's speech was written off completely and buried under an avalanche of disingenuous smears because he had the audacity to name the man responsible.

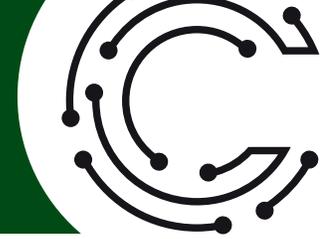
That's not to say that criticism of Soros is *never* anti-Semitic. There are certainly anti-Semites who obsess over George Soros and make him a punching bag for their hate. But the fact that hateful people *also* talk about something should not disqualify it from civil discussion entirely. This rule doesn't seem to apply equally to figures like billionaire Sheldon Adelson and commentator Ben Shapiro, who are arguably more hated by anti-Semites than Soros. The Left holds nothing back when criticizing conservative Jews, and even makes a point of criticizing them for their support of Israel, yet somehow just saying Soros's name in reference to something he admits doing is a bridge too far?

The progressive left is dedicated to canceling and censoring people and things that might deter the success of their preferred narrative: that they have the country's best interests at heart.

But if George Soros keeps talking about his support of progressive prosecutors, the Left may be forced to censor Soros himself. One wonders how the man behind the curtain would respond to that. ■

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*Read previous articles from the Commentary series online at <https://capitalresearch.org/category/commentary/>.*



## GREENWASHING BLACKROCK

By Ken Braun

**Summary:** “Greenwashing” is defined as “an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company’s products are environmentally friendly.” Depending on one’s appetite for cynicism, greenwashing is either the mortal enemy or the duplicitous ally of the environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) movement. BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, is ostentatious in its genuflecting to the woke ESG energy agenda.

“Greenwashing” is “an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company’s products are environmentally friendly,” according to a March 2022 report posted at Investopedia. Depending on your appetite for cynicism, greenwashing is either the mortal enemy or the duplicitous ally of the environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) movement. ESG was created by activists aiming to force corporations to adopt and invest in their left-leaning political objectives.

Crowned the “King of ESG” in a recent Daily Caller headline, BlackRock—the world’s largest asset manager—is ostentatious in its genuflecting to the woke ESG energy agenda. The top of the main page of the BlackRock website currently shows a statement giving carbon emissions co-equal billing with inflation and market volatility on a listing of the firm’s three largest mid-2022 investment concerns. In a 2021 letter to CEOs, BlackRock Chairman and CEO Larry Fink claimed: “No issue ranks higher than climate change on our clients’ lists of priorities. They ask us about it nearly every day.”

### Public Indifference Toward ESG

A November 2021 Quinnipiac University survey asked respondents to name their most important issue. “Climate Change/Environment” was ranked the top issue by just 4 percent, one point higher than vaccine and mask man-



Credit: Sundry Photography. License: Shutterstock.

Crowned the “King of ESG” in a recent Daily Caller headline, BlackRock—the world’s largest asset manager—is ostentatious in its genuflecting to the woke ESG energy agenda.

dates, and only half as concerning as the 8 percent registered for “Immigration/Border Security.” Not surprisingly, a basket of concerns listed as “Net Economic Problems” scored 25 percent.

In a May 2022 survey the Heartland Institute and the polling firm Rasmussen Reports measured the opinions of Americans regarding the ESG investment movement and asked this question:

Many publicly traded investment managers like BlackRock and Vanguard use these non-financial ESG scores to influence corporations to change their policies, products, and business practices. Do you support or oppose this practice?

Of those with an opinion, 43 percent “strongly” or “somewhat” opposed ESG, against just 29 percent that supported it. Many respondents (27 percent) answered

*Ken Braun is CRC’s senior investigative researcher and authors profiles for InfluenceWatch.org and the Capital Research magazine.*



*Ceres may have been the maiden voyage of the ESG movement. BlackRock has become its flagship. Both are drenched in greenwashing.*

“not sure,” which is not surprising because an earlier poll question demonstrated 60 percent hadn’t yet learned what ESG was.

Asked about a hypothetical law prohibiting publicly traded investment firms such as BlackRock from using ESG scores to pressure corporations to change policies and business practices, 38 percent supported, 31 percent opposed, and 31 percent weren’t sure (again, likely due to most of them having just learned what ESG meant).

Another May 2022 poll from Echelon Insights took a stab at measuring ESG popularity. Asked if corporations should use their influence to advance political or social agendas, 58 percent were opposed and just 29 percent were in favor. If anything, these responses were from a left-leaning audience, as 47 percent reported voting for Joe Biden in the 2020 election, versus 43 percent for Trump.

So, contrary to what Larry Fink said in that letter to CEOs, an average sample of BlackRock’s 44 million American customers will likely show that relatively few are bombarding his office with emails worrying over climate change. They are—at best—indifferent to BlackRock’s woke agenda and perhaps hostile to it.

How committed is BlackRock?

It is difficult to underestimate BlackRock’s potential influence over public policy. Midway through 2022 the firm reported \$8.4 trillion in customer assets under management. This amount exceeded the *combined* market capitalizations of five of the largest corporations in the world: Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet (parent company of Google), Amazon, and Meta (formerly Facebook).

Its portfolio of investment funds is one of the 10 largest owners of a dizzying number of major corporations. Some current examples include the second-largest ownership stake in Amazon, Costco, Ford, Microsoft, PepsiCo, Proctor & Gamble, Unilever, and Wal-Mart; and the third-biggest stake in Alphabet (Google), Apple, Coke, Danone, Johnson & Johnson, JP Morgan Chase, Meta, Morgan Stanley, Tesla, and 3M.

This stash gives the giant money manager enormous ESG leverage if it cares to use it, particularly when it votes the shares of one of those firms on behalf of its investment clients. BlackRock has the power to accomplish what left-leaning federal politicians cannot.

## Ceres and BlackRock Climate Partnership

In 1989, decades before “ESG” was in common media usage, the nonprofit Ceres Inc. was founded to promote left-leaning climate and economic governance at major investment firms and corporations. Ceres remains a major force in the ESG movement, reporting \$24.6 million in total revenue for 2020.

Ceres may have been the maiden voyage of the ESG movement. BlackRock has become its flagship. Both are drenched in greenwashing.

In 2015 BlackRock and Ceres announced they had teamed up to create a “how to” manual to help individual shareholders bully corporations into adopting ESG positions. In 2020, BlackRock announced it had also signed up for the Ceres’s Climate Action 100+ program. A Ceres news release boasted: “BlackRock will be under greater pressure to help achieve the initiative’s goals and align their shareholder votes with resolutions filed by Climate Action 100+ investors.”

Ceres operates on a membership model and annually collects millions in membership fees from hundreds of participants in the Ceres Company Network and the Ceres Investor Network. The Ceres board of directors is controlled by representatives from the member networks.

In addition to BlackRock, the investor network includes more than 200 firms, labor unions, left-wing advocacy groups, left-wing donors, and government officials. Examples include the AFL-CIO, AFSCME, LUINA, Teamsters Union, SEIU, As You Sow, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Park Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Skoll Foundation, the California Public Employees’ Retirement System,

California State Teachers' Retirement System, New York City Pension Funds, Engine No. 1, and Al Gore's Generation Investment Management.

The company network includes Amazon, Apple, Ben & Jerry's (a division of Unilever), Best Buy, Bloomberg, Coca-Cola, Ford, General Motors, Levi Strauss, PepsiCo, Pacific Gas & Electric, Starbucks, Walt Disney, and dozens of other well-known brand names.

In its tax filing covering the year prior to October 31, 2020, Ceres reported receiving \$3.1 million in membership dues from the firms in its networks, and \$1.3 million in conference fees and sponsorships.

The membership dues are just a small part of the resources under the control of Ceres. FoundationSearch, a charitable foundation research tool, shows at least \$41.8 million in donations to Ceres since 2016 from dozens of prominent left-wing advocacy foundations. The largest examples include the Gordon E. and Betty I. Moore Foundation (at least \$10.2 million in grants given to Ceres since 2016), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (\$7 million), the Skoll Fund (\$4.5 million), the Sea Change Foundation (\$2.2 million), the Energy Foundation (\$1.9 million), and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (\$1.2 million).

But despite the avowed commitment to conservation and carbon reduction, the Ceres networks and their donors are responsible for advising big investments in land-gobbling wind and solar energy. A 2021 analysis by Bloomberg News found that producing energy from weather-dependent wind turbines required 370 times more land than producing energy using a natural gas power station, and 123 times more land than using a zero-carbon nuclear energy plant.

Ceres has also repeatedly criticized what is—by a big margin—the nation's largest source of carbon-free electricity. In 2016 Ceres issued a news release praising Pacific Gas & Electric (a Ceres network member) for its plan to shut down the Diablo Canyon nuclear power station in California and “replace the plant's output with a combination of zero-carbon resources, including energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy storage.”

Nothing of the sort was possible. By August 2022, facing the prospect of power outages and spiking carbon emissions without Diablo Canyon in service, California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) had cooked up a plan to keep it running.

These big “replace the nuclear with renewables” promises have reliably come off as well as the Detroit Lions planning to win a Super Bowl.

Local affiliates of Ceres members, such as the AFSCME and SEIU labor unions, also supported the closure of the Indian Point nuclear plant, which once provided 25 percent of New York City's electricity.

Another enemy of Indian Point, the Natural Resources Defense Council—which apparently doesn't consider the earth and airspace above it as “resources”—issued an April 2021 news release with this absurd headline: “Indian Point Is Closing, but Clean Energy Is Here to Stay.”

Replacing Indian Point with wind generation would devour an estimated 500 square miles, versus the less than the half square mile the nuclear plant needed. Not surprisingly, the *New York Times* reported that for the foreseeable future most of the lost electricity will be replaced by carbon-emitting power sources.

## BlackRock's Other Green Partners

Promoting wind and solar in place of carbon-free nuclear power is the opposite of conservation. Ceres and the firms in its membership are collectively engaged in making unsubstantiated claims that “deceive consumers into believing that a company's products are environmentally friendly.” They may call it “renewable energy,” but it's really greenwashing.



Credit: World Economic Forum. License: <https://bit.ly/3jfsEst>.

*Mindy Lubber (CEO of Ceres). In 1989, decades before “ESG” was in common media usage, the nonprofit Ceres Inc. was founded to promote left-leaning climate and economic governance at major investment firms and corporations.*

The advocacy nonprofit Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) is another BlackRock partner with an anti-nuclear, anti-conservation agenda. In 2021, CDP named BlackRock a “supplier engagement leader” and gave the investment firm an A-minus rating on the 2021 CDP Climate Change Survey.

Applying its own home-cooked values and criteria, CDP grades the supposed climate friendliness of corporations and governments. For example, in 2018 the nonprofit publicly praised 40 cities across the world for “operating on 100% renewable energy” and more than 100 for obtaining 70 percent of electricity from renewables.

But rather than a few dozen cities meeting the “100%” criteria, there should have been hundreds (probably thousands) doing so if CDP merely praised every town running on carbon-free power. This didn’t happen because the CDP considers electricity obtained from nuclear power to be co-equally dirty with burning coal in a century-old furnace. According to CDP, “renewable energy in CDP’s city data is defined as electricity from solar; wind; hydro; wave power; biomass; geothermal and other **non-nuclear** or non-fossil fuel sources” (emphasis added).

Another BlackRock ally on the nonprofit left is Ellen MacArthur Foundation (EMF). Promoters of a “circular economy” concept that will supposedly consume fewer resources, EMF is in practice another cheerleader for the landscape inhaling interests of big wind and solar energy corporations. BlackRock is listed as one of EMF’s “Strategic Partners,” an exclusive group at the top of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation support network that includes the group’s “main philanthropic funders.”

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s opposition to plastic production also exposes it and its members (such as BlackRock) to greenwashing claims.

The EMF’s so-called “circular economy for plastic” is promoted as a utopian plot that by 2040 will supposedly add 700,000 jobs, save \$200 billion annually, cut 25 percent of the world’s carbon emissions, and eliminate 80 percent of the annual volume of plastic pollution reaching the ocean.

The sales pitch includes this guilt trip:

We must change how we design, use, and reuse plastics. We cannot simply recycle or reduce our way out of the plastic pollution crisis. If we don’t act now, by 2050 there could be more plastic than fish in the oceans.



Credit: JHVEPhoto. License: Shutterstock.

*In June 2022, President Joe Biden accused Exxon specifically of profiteering from high gasoline prices, charging that the firm had “made more money than God this year.”*

Plastic trash harming precious creatures on the high seas is a serious problem. But plastic use by consumers with access to modern waste management is not.

According to Our World in Data, the United States, Canada, all of Europe, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Australia, and New Zealand **combined** are responsible for less than 2 percent of plastic pollution reaching the ocean. On the other side, Brazil alone is credited with almost 4 percent of the total trash in the water. And tiny Costa Rica, land of supposed conservation superheroes, annually dumps almost as much plastic into the oceans (450 tonnes) as the Russians (542 tonnes).

In 2019 the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, a partnership of Dow Chemical, Exxon-Mobil, Shell, and dozens of other big corporations committed at least \$1.5 billion over five years to a plastic waste cleanup program, with most of the money targeted at Asia and Africa. Of the 28 projects listed thus far, 23 are in Africa and Asia, compared to three combined in North America and Europe.

The alliance shows 10 projects for India, the Philippines, and Malaysia. The planet’s 10 worst rivers for plastic pollution are in these three nations.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation may use the ocean plastics problem to sell its circular economy, but the focus of the nonprofit’s agenda appears to be elsewhere.

Under a webpage tab for “Circular economy examples,” the EMF has 165 entries: 102 are tagged North America or Europe, and just 17 combined are tagged to Asia, Africa,



*BlackRock was ranked in second place on a list of the planet's 20 largest "institutional asset managers investing in single-use plastic waste."*

and China. Furthermore, one of the Asia tags is for a project in Japan, another rich industrial power that is not a major source of ocean plastic trash.

When BlackRock joined the Ellen MacArthur Foundation as a partner in 2019, the investment firm created a "circular economy" fund to help advance EMF's agenda.

But their joint commitment to the cause has been criticized by other advocates on the anti-plastic Left.

Although making grand use of images of plastic floating in the water, the Minderoo Foundation doesn't address the actual source of and reason for nearly all plastic in the ocean. Instead, the Australian nonprofit makes this claim: "Single-use plastics—the cheap plastic goods we use once and then throw away—epitomise the plastics crisis."

Minderoo's 2021 report, *The Plastic Waste Makers Index*, attempted to identify and shame the firms responsible for "enabling the single-use plastics crisis." BlackRock was ranked in second place on a list of the planet's 20 largest "institutional asset managers investing in single-use plastic waste."

Then there is *Talking Trash: The Corporate Playbook of False Solutions to the Plastic Crisis*, produced in 2020 by the Changing Markets Foundation, another lefty plastic-prohibitionist group. The authors concluded the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment was being used for "greenwashing purposes" by corporations trying to "boast to consumers and decision makers about their (non-binding) commitment to a circular economy."

## BlackRock's Black Gold

BlackRock's investment funds are collectively one of the largest shareholders in most of the nation's biggest publicly-traded natural gas and petroleum companies: Exxon-Mobil (BlackRock funds are third-largest owner), Chevron (fourth-largest), Marathon (third-largest), Phillips 66 (third-largest), ConocoPhillips (third-largest), Valero (third-largest), and Devon Energy (third-largest).

BlackRock chairman Larry Fink has defended these ownership positions in carbon-fuel firms. Speaking at an MIT conference last summer he said: "Keep in mind, if a foundation or an insurance company or a pension fund says, 'I'm not going to own any hydrocarbons,' well, somebody else is, so you're not changing the world." Instead, Fink argued that by continuing to hold big stakes in such firms, shareholders could "have a loud voice with companies to move forward" toward decarbonizing.

As he said this, BlackRock had just used that "loud voice" to help stage a minor leadership coup at Exxon-Mobil.

In May 2021, Engine No. 1, a tiny hedge fund few had then heard of won three seats on the 12-member board of Exxon. These new board members arrived with a mandate from Engine No. 1 to push Exxon into a "more significant investment in clean energy" and to treat carbon emissions as "a fundamental threat to long-term shareholder value." The



*BlackRock chairman Larry Fink has defended Blackrock's ownership positions in carbon-fuel firms. Fink argued that by continuing to hold big stakes in such firms, shareholders could "have a loud voice with companies to move forward" toward decarbonizing.*

Credit: World Economic Forum. License: <https://bit.ly/3SuVRIL>

largely successful proxy battle (Engine No. 1 had initially set out to win four board seats) was opposed by the management of Exxon-Mobil.

Engine No. 1 is also an investment partner with Ceres.

When Engine No. 1 began its quest to impose anti-carbon ESG energy investments onto the obviously carbon-intensive petroleum company, the hedge fund held just a tiny 0.02 percent stake in the \$250 billion energy firm. According to a Reuters report, winning over BlackRock was central to the little hedge fund's plot for an ESG boarding action against the carbon energy boardroom.

BlackRock had already signaled its willingness to engage one year earlier. At Exxon-Mobil's May 2020 annual meeting BlackRock voted against two management-supported board members. Among the official reasons given, BlackRock cited "insufficient progress" regarding Exxon's adherence to the ESG reporting requirements of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board.

In May 2021, BlackRock agreed to support three of Engine No. 1's four board choices. After losing BlackRock, Exxon-Mobil management scrambled to hold the support of the Vanguard Group and State Street Global Advisors. A Reuters report noted: "BlackRock has been more willing than Vanguard and State Street to back dissident investors, analysts have said." Put together, the three largest asset management firms controlled 20 percent of Exxon-Mobil ownership shares.

Exxon management failed to hold off the ESG alliance. Vanguard and State Street decided to vote with mighty BlackRock, giving the critical lift to Engine No. 1's slate.

The Exxon proxy battle was just one example of BlackRock's activism. BlackRock's proxy vote report for the year preceding June 2021 made this boast:

In the 2020–21 proxy year, BIS [BlackRock Investment Stewardship] voted against 255 directors and against 319 companies for climate-related concerns that could negatively affect long-term shareholder value. For example, we voted against the Board Chair—as the director most responsible for oversight of the company's strategy—at a utility because we believed that the company could better articulate to its shareholders how its long-term value proposition would be impacted by the anticipated decline in demand for coal-based energy.

BlackRock promotes ESG politics as good for investors. And Exxon-Mobil stock did shoot up 60 percent in the 12 months immediately after the May 2021 victory of the three ESG-obsessed board members.

But what this isolated case means about ESG investing and BlackRock is the opposite of what it may appear. The big run-up in Exxon value did not coincide with a hasty decision by the energy firm to repent of its carbon sins, sell its oil positions, and quickly plow all that capital into wind turbines, electric vehicles, and solar panels.

To the contrary, the sharp rise in paper wealth for Exxon shareholders coincided perfectly with an identical rise in oil prices over the same period. Similarly, Chevron shares also increased 60 percent.

Exxon grew fat again because it was still acting like an oil company.

## Drill, Baby, Drill!

In June 2022, President Joe Biden accused Exxon specifically of profiteering from high gasoline prices, charging that the firm had "made more money than God this year." Apparently unaware that Exxon was supposed to be investing more in renewable energy, Biden accused the firm of investing too little in *oil production*: "Exxon start investing and start paying your taxes."

In its response to Biden a few days later, Exxon boasted that it had "been investing more than any other company to develop U.S. oil and gas supplies" and that this included "investments in the U.S. of more than \$50 billion over the



Credit: Parrish Jackson. License: Shutterstock.

*Exxon boasted that it had "been investing more than any other company to develop U.S. oil and gas supplies" and that this included "investments in the U.S. of more than \$50 billion over the past five years, resulting in an almost 50% increase in our U.S. production of oil during this period."*



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*Apparently unaware that Exxon was supposed to be investing more in renewable energy, Biden accused the firm of investing too little in oil production.*

past five years, resulting in an almost 50% increase in our U.S. production of oil during this period.” The statement concluded by placing the onus on Biden to remove impediments to oil production:

Longer term, government can promote investment through clear and consistent policy that supports U.S. resource development, such as regular and predictable lease sales, as well as streamlined regulatory approval and support for infrastructure such as pipelines.

The Exxon news release was not headlined “Drill, Baby, Drill,” but that enthusiasm was in the message. None of the carbon, climate, or other concerns worried over by BlackRock and the others in the Exxon-Mobil proxy war just one year earlier were referenced in the statement.

Another indicator of BlackRock’s commitment (or lack thereof) to using ESG to transform the energy sector is its “Company Scorecard” from Ceres. Benchmarked against a “universe average,” presumably the other dues-paying members of the Ceres networks, the lefty nonprofit gave BlackRock below-average grades for categories relating to its sustainability reports and renewable energy progress. BlackRock also received a merely average grade progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

But the report card didn’t portray BlackRock as weak on all ESG points. Fink’s firm received above average or exceptional scores for categories titled “Management Accountability,” “Executive Compensation,” “Investor Engagement,” “Human Rights Policies,” and “Policies & Codes.” Those last two were praising the firm for its friendly policies toward organized labor.

If there was greenwashing going on at BlackRock, it seemed to be focused on the energy sector alone.

More fuel for that theory arrived on July 26, 2022, in a Reuters report that led off with this:

BlackRock Inc, the world’s No.1 asset manager, reported on Tuesday a sharp drop in its support for environmental and social-related shareholder

resolutions, saying many were too prescriptive, while its backing for directors and executive pay held steady.

BlackRock had warned in May it would back fewer shareholder resolutions because many were too constraining, requiring banks, for example, to stop funding energy companies, or directing their climate lobbying activities.

Context is important. Just five days earlier this was big news: “BlackRock lost \$1.7 trillion of its clients’ money since the beginning of the year—the largest sum ever lost by a single firm over a six-month period.”

As all that was going on, Wall Street was still digesting proposed ESG-related rules the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) had announced in May 2022.

A *National Law Review* report explained the proposals:

[T]hese two proposed rules are intended to combat “greenwashing.” The practice of “greenwashing” refers to when firms or companies claim they are abiding by ESG principles, **especially environmental**, when in fact they do not so comply. Here, the newly proposed rules provide that only funds with an ESG purpose would be permitted to label themselves accordingly, and a new set of mandatory disclosures for ESG-focused funds would enable outside parties to confirm whether such a purportedly ESG-focused fund is in compliance with its stated investment purpose [emphasis added].

BlackRock responded to the SEC proposal in mid-August, one month after announcing it had lost more money over a six-month stretch than anyone in the history of money.

According to Reuters:

The world’s largest asset manager BlackRock Inc. (BLK.N) warned the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) this week that its proposed rules aimed at fighting “greenwashing” by fund managers will confuse investors.

Indeed. If nothing else about greenwashing is clear, it’s at least understandable how investors at BlackRock and elsewhere might be easily confused.

*Caveat emptor* (Let the buyer beware). ■

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*Read previous articles from the Green Watch series online at [CapitalResearch.org/category/green-watch/](https://www.CapitalResearch.org/category/green-watch/).*

*A project of Capital Research Center*

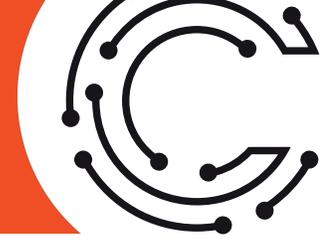


# CLIMATE DOLLARS

HOW ONE FLAWED STUDY FOOLED THE MEDIA AND  
POISONED THE DEBATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

In a widely cited 2014 study, sociologist Robert Brulle purportedly exposed a “climate change counter-movement” of center-right groups “distort[ing] the public’s understanding of climate change.” He calculated that from 2003 to 2010, these nonprofits recorded revenues averaging “just over \$900 million” annually—a number that led to media claims that “Conservative groups spend \$1bn a year to fight action on climate change.”

A Capital Research Center study cuts Mr. Brulle’s calculations down to size: Not only is Brulle’s assessment off by 93 percent, the resources of environmentalist groups and government agencies overwhelmingly dwarf those of skeptics. To learn more about the climate debate, visit [www.ClimateDollars.org](http://www.ClimateDollars.org).



## ONE TEACHER'S FIGHT AGAINST CRITICAL RACE THEORY

By Kali Fontanilla

Two years ago, I decided to take a public stance against the divisive critical race theory (CRT) when I saw lessons containing CRT in a required ethnic studies class for 9th grade students at the high school where I worked at in Salinas, California.

The reactions were disturbing:

“You and all these white people literally don’t know what CRT actually is.”

“I guess she identifies as being white. Claims her district is teaching Critical Race Theory but don’t know about the one drop rule.”

“So sorry that you’re a white-washed house negro.”

“The left knows what CRT is, conservative dumbsh\*ts like you don’t.”

“Why are you fighting so hard against progress? You like the taste of boots? Stomping in your face.”

“CRT is teaching college students and high school students about structural racism. You may be black but your policy positions are pasty white and rotten just like the white men you seek to please.”

“Critical Race Theory isn’t taught in schools below the post-graduate level you lying psycho.”

These racist and hate-filled comments are real examples of the treatment I have received as a black teacher speaking against critical race theory.

I decided to expose these lessons publicly because the majority of the mainstream media and the two largest teachers unions in the nation—the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers—were being dishonest with the American people about CRT in our K–12 schools. Rather than be transparent about what is happening in American classrooms, they demonized parents speaking against CRT being taught to their children. The NEA recently adopted a \$56,000 measure to “research the organizations attacking educators doing anti-racist work.” If there



*Kali Fontanilla*

is no critical race theory in our K–12 schools, why are they fighting so hard not to get it banned from the classroom and targeting parents speaking against it?

### Exposing CRT Teaching

How did I find these divisive lessons being taught in my district? Rewind to March of 2020 when there were rumors that our schools would shut down because of the COVID-19 virus. I was content teaching my 9th and 10th-grade students at Rancho San Juan High School in Salinas, California. In my 15-year career as a teacher, it is rare to shut down the entire school on a regular school day. Usually, it takes some

*Kali Fontanilla is a former public school teacher of 15 years. Her rebuttal statement to Proposition 16 in California helped to stop the push for legal reverse racism and a new extreme version of affirmative action in 2020. She is the co-founder of Exodus Institute, a K–12 online school with a nationally accredited program: Thinkexodus.org.*



*It usually takes some sort of natural disaster or tragic event on campus to shut down the entire school on a regular school day.*

sort of natural disaster or tragic event on campus. In one incident, we had no working toilets, and portable toilets were delivered so the regular school day could continue. Another time there was a gas leak, and the school day continued despite teaching in potentially very hazardous conditions. When we were told that the schools were going to shut down for two weeks to “slow the spread,” you can imagine that all the teachers and students were in shock over the shutdowns. Two weeks eventually turned into 14 months. My district did not reopen the school for students to attend in-person classes until May of 2021.

I taught English language learners and students severely behind in reading. It was a challenge to deliver instruction online to a population of students who struggled in regular in-person classes. I went from blissfully walking around my classroom while watching my students complete well-thought-out group projects and activities to all of us glued to the computer screen at the mercy of our internet connections. I had some students attending their Zoom classes

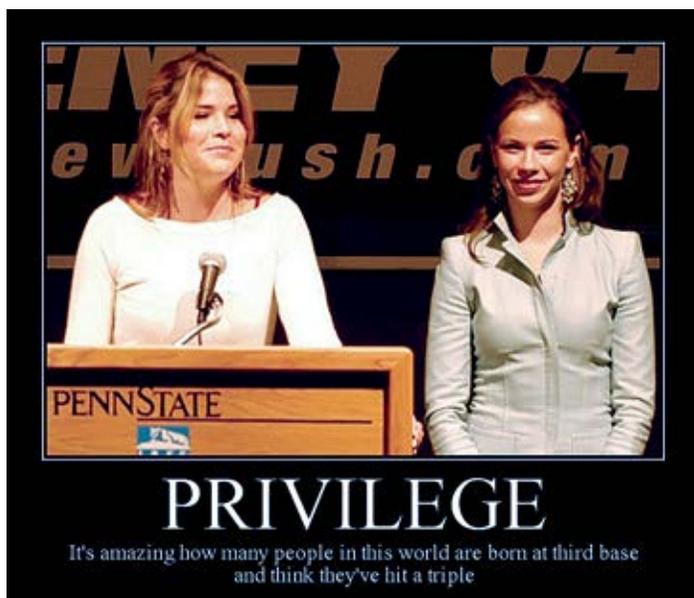
with their young siblings in their laps because many became babysitters for their working parents. We are just now seeing the detrimental effects of the school shutdowns.

While teaching online, I noticed a pattern in my home-room students’ grades. Every week I had them check all their grades in every class. Since I was teaching the English learners, many of whom were behind in reading skills, I wanted to ensure they were successful in their other classes as well as mine. In checking their other class grades, I saw that about 50 percent of them were failing their newly required Ethnic Studies course. Gov. Gavin Newsom had recently signed into law that all high school students were required to take an ethnic studies course to graduate. Several of my homeschool students had Fs in the course. When I asked them why they were not doing well in that particular class, they told me that they thought the class was “stupid” or “a waste of time.”

When you hear the words “ethnic studies,” you may have visions of a course where students learn about other cultures. Perhaps they would be learning about their various histories, music, cuisine, etc. Well, get that picture out of your head because that is not even remotely what the required class in California is like, regrettably.

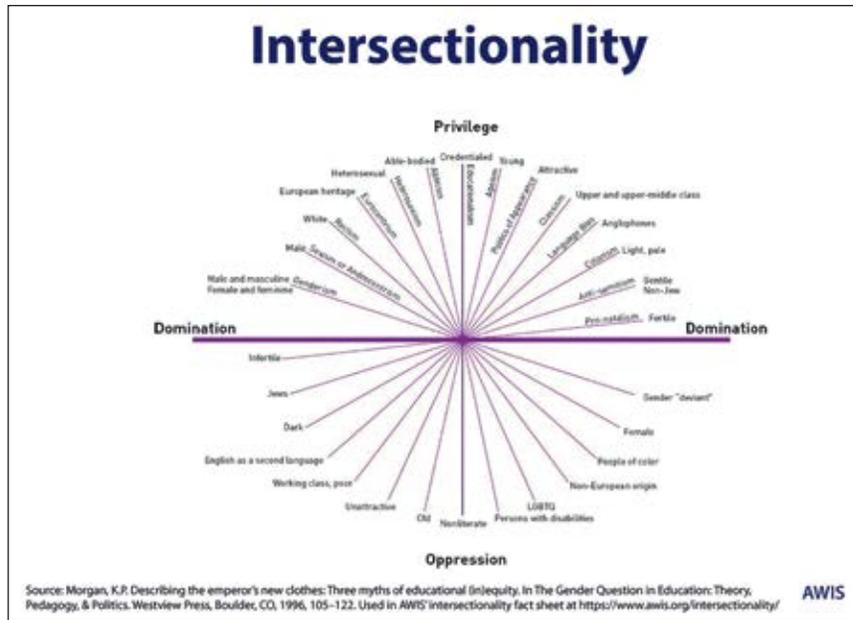
I decided to look at the course materials since I shared the same online platform with the Ethnic Studies teachers. I was shocked by what I found. The course introduction stated that students would learn how to “be woke.” The students were then instructed to take a privilege quiz and asked to reflect on their privilege compared to their classmates. They were taught about “white privilege” and shown a meme with two white girls graduating college with the caption, “Some people are born on third base and think they hit a triple.” Imagine those words spoken about any other race and the outrage that would cause. The words “critical race theory” appeared several times as I continued combing the class materials. Not only were students taught the definition of CRT, but they were also taught why it was important and to analyze school policy through the CRT lens. They were taught its key tenets like intersectionality, hegemony, the four Is of oppression and dominant ideologies. A whole class period was dedicated to the Black Lives Matter movement, including a video glorifying the self-proclaimed Marxist founder Patrisse Cullors. This wasn’t education; this was indoctrination!

While investigating these lessons in my district, I noticed that CRT had become a hot topic in the mainstream news. I saw several news programs telling the American people that CRT is not in our K–12 schools. Then, I saw



Source: Rancho San Juan High School, Ethnic Studies, 2020.

*Students were taught about “white privilege” and shown a meme with two white girls (Jenna and Barbara Bush, daughters of President George W. Bush) graduating college.*



Credit: Rancho San Juan High School, Ethnic Studies, 2020.

*Students learned about the concept of intersectionality, a fancy word for “counting your oppressions.” Intersectionality is “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.”*

the campaign by the two largest teachers unions to silence parents speaking against it. Even the National School Board Association wrote a letter to the Biden administration requesting that concerned parents be investigated as domestic terrorists.

Imagine my shock hearing this “it’s not in our K–12 schools” narrative in the news while at the same time witnessing my students failing their Ethnic Studies course containing CRT! I had to do something.

America currently has a literacy crisis, which was only exacerbated by the shutdowns of our schools. My former district in Salinas had only 47 percent of its high school students reading at or above grade level. That means that over half the students were reading below grade level. Why do we spend precious classroom time on these woke theories when our students struggle to read?

I decided to defy the teachers union and expose the lessons with critical race theory in my district online. I knew that I would receive hate from the left for exposing, but I had no idea that they would threaten my career, with some even contacting my district to get me fired. How counterproductive is that? Those in favor of CRT believe that America

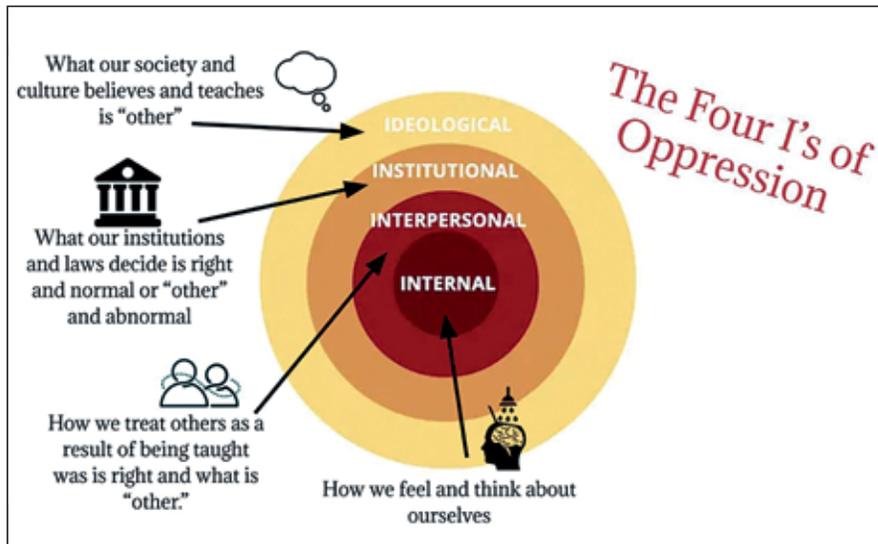
is systemically racist and want to push critical race theory lessons in our schools while actively trying to get a black teacher fired just for exposing their narratives.

So why is there this effort to hide the truth about critical race theory in our schools from the public? Because when you look closely at what is being taught to our impressionable young minds, most sane Americans would be against it. That’s why I am against it.

## Key Tenets of CRT

I mentioned earlier the key tenets of CRT being taught to the 9th grade students in my district but let’s examine them a little more closely.

They learned about the concept of intersectionality, a fancy word for “counting your oppressions.” Intersectionality is “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.” The students were asked to write down or analyze their various forms of oppression or lack thereof based on their race, sex,



Credit: Rancho San Juan High School, Ethnic Studies, 2020.

*Then came the “4 I’s of Oppression,” where students were taught about four different ways they could be oppressed.*

sexual orientation, religion, etc. They were shown charts that ranked every trait as either in a place of “power and privilege” or in a place of “oppression and discrimination.” Heterosexual, white male Christians were shown as receiving no oppression and always in a place of domination or power. How ironic, as it’s hard to think of any other group with a government-funded forced curriculum demonizing them more to children than white men. But a black, lesbian female has multiple oppressions and is always heavily marginalized. Students were asked to reflect on their intersectionality and bask in their various forms of oppression. Too bad if they are white males in the class, they are left out of the oppression Olympics; they don’t even qualify.

Another core tenet of CRT the students were taught about was hegemony, the domination by one country or group over others. They were taught that all systems in America were built to benefit the white male and oppress people of color. Of course, the history of various Native American tribes oppressing each other, like the Aztecs, is conveniently left out. This lesson on hegemony was when Marxist concepts were introduced. Yes, you heard that right, Karl Marx for 9th graders. They were given a presentation on “Marxist Philosophy” and introduced to a “two-class society” and “the ruling class.” This included learning about the oppressive “dominant ideologies” of the ruling

### FOURTEEN YES/NO QUESTIONS

- English is your first language?
- Either one of your parents graduated from college?
- You have visible or invisible disabilities?
- You were encouraged to attend college by your parents and family?
- Your family has health insurance?
- Your religious holidays are celebrated in this country?
- You studied the culture or the history of your ancestors in elementary school?
- You have been bullied or made fun of based on something you cannot change (gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, etc.)?

- You have been stopped or questioned by the police because they felt you were suspicious?
- You are a citizen of the United States?
- There are more than 50 books in your house?
- You have felt unsafe walking alone at night?
- You have felt uncomfortable about a joke or statement you overheard related to your race, ethnicity, gender, appearance, or sexual orientation but felt unsafe to confront the situation?
- Your teachers look like you?

### REFLECTION

- How did it feel to be one of the students at the bottom?*
- How did it feel to be one of the students on the top?*

Credit: Rancho San Juan High School, Ethnic Studies, 2020. Quiz was reformatted for space and clarity. “Fourteen Yes/No Questions” header and question marks were added for clarity.

**RANCHO SAN JUAN** **Graffiti as resistance**

**Graffiti is also a vehicle of resistance. ... social actors engage in a resistance movement whose main weapon is written words and images. It is a form of intervention in public spaces.**



Credit: Rancho San Juan High School, Ethnic Studies, 2020.

*This class also included a lesson on “Graffiti as Resistance,” teaching students that graffiti can often be “protest art” and should be normalized.*

class, like capitalism, family, the patriarchy, the gender binary, and marriage. Yep, marriage is labeled as an oppressive dominant ideology of the “ruling class.”

Does this sound like a fun class to you? It is no wonder so many of my traditional Mexican students were failing this course! These kids don’t want this garbage.

Then came the “4 I’s of Oppression,” where students were taught about four different ways they could be oppressed. Again, heterosexual white males are left out of this one, too. In fact, when you see the words “dominant group,” it refers to them.

All the concepts were classic Marxist class warfare rhetoric, repackaged for our American tastes and force-fed to my innocent students. “Ideological oppression” is the *idea* that one group is somehow better than another and has the right to control the other group. “Institutional oppression” is the societal structures that benefit the *dominant group* while suppressing or mistreating the nondominant groups. “Interpersonal oppression” is the personal negative interactions or disrespect from the *dominant group* toward those in the more marginalized groups. Notice how white men can’t be victims of interpersonal oppression because they are the dominant group. This is also part of the left’s attempt to redefine racism as only toward those that don’t have power. Lastly, they were taught about “internalized oppression.” This means that those who are in marginalized groups will begin to internalize the dominant group’s unjust messages, leading to unconscious beliefs about themselves. Marginalized groups are always placed in the role of *victim* to the dominant group,

even in their own internalized feelings about themselves. The students were given a list of oppression examples and asked to reflect on their own ways they are oppressed.

And let’s not forget the privilege quiz. On Day 5 of their lessons, the students in the Ethnic Studies class were given a quiz of 14 questions to rank their privilege against their other classmates. Afterward, they were asked these reflection questions:

How did it feel to be one of the students on the bottom? How did it feel to be one of the students on the top?

How has your identity impacted you? What are some privileges and disadvantages you have because of your identity?

Imagine having 14 loaded questions be what determines if you are privileged or not against your own classmates!

This class also included a lesson on “Graffiti as Resistance,” teaching students that graffiti can often be “protest art” and should be normalized. They were shown examples of various graffiti art on the boarded-up stores whose windows were busted out during the George Floyd protests. The assignment that went with the lesson was to create their own art as a protest piece. Did you think ethnic studies would include a pro-graffiti lesson?

There has been an effort to hide the fact that critical race theory is being taught to our students in K–12 schools. These woke teachers have found ways to teach the theory

without saying the actual words shown in the many examples from the lessons I saw in my district. But the lessons I saw were introduced in early 2020, right before the media covered the theory. The 9th grade students in my district were taught critical race theory explicitly. They were taught the definition, told of its importance, and asked to analyze school policy through the CRT framework. There was even a KQED article where our social studies curriculum specialist admitted that CRT is included in the lessons in an interview. Most of the mainstream media and the teachers unions lied about CRT in our schools, but I have the smoking gun.

Even if critical race theory isn't explicitly taught in your city or state like it was in my district (16 states have banned the theory from the classroom) the essential ideas and concepts of the theory are still there. In fact, 5,000 teachers vowed to continue to teach critical race theory in their states where it is banned. The National Teachers Association and the American Federation of Teachers have given them their support. "The backlash [to teaching about race] that you see in these radicalized circles is going to hurt kids," said American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten in an interview. "I felt the need to make it crystal clear to teachers ... that I honor their professional responsibilities and that their union will have their back." Not only are they waving the banner of support for teachers who want to include CRT pedagogy in their classroom, but they are also introducing measures to include CRT in the fight to eradicate institutional racism. One measure will support and lead campaigns that "result in increasing the implementation of culturally responsive education, critical race theory, and ethnic ... studies curriculum in pre-K–12 and higher education." First, they deny that CRT is in our schools and then spend over a half million dollars on measures that ensure it will be in the K–12 classroom.

When I first took a public stance against critical race theory, I prayed if it was the right thing to do. I had a sneaky suspicion that God doesn't want us to solve racism with more racism, and I was seeking His blessing in this fight. Even if you aren't a believer, I think we all desire a colorblind, equal society, like Martin Luther King's dream. That same day, I was scrolling through social media when I saw a video of a middle school-aged white girl tearfully speaking to her school board. "How can a child born into an abusive drug and alcohol home, who lost her entire biological family, and has experienced all forms of abuse, be privileged? When I was told that, I was so upset, I cried myself to sleep." She spoke about when her teacher told

her she had *white privilege*. This was the sign I needed to carry on and fight.

It isn't enough to prove that CRT is in our schools; we must make an effort to get this divisive theory out of the classroom and keep it out. But what do we do?

I recommend focusing on these three strategies:

- **Academic Transparency.** Academic transparency laws require the district to post all curricula on a public website for parents to see what is taught in the classroom. This may not stop woke teachers from having these divisive race-based conversations with their captive audience in the classroom, but it will slow them down.
- **School Choice.** Think about the students in my district who were required to take the Ethnic Studies class to graduate. School choice allows just that choice. If a parent doesn't want their child in a school that pushes critical race theory, they have the option to pull them out and have the financial support through state vouchers to do that. This is why I founded Exodus Institute, to give parents another option.
- **Fight the Teachers Union.** Continue to support organizations like the Capital Research Center that expose the teachers unions' one-sided interests. It has become clear that the unions' priority is not the safety and well-being of the students or even the teachers. Their priority is to fund and promote far-left woke ideologies and teachers, ensuring that they continue in the classroom.

It's shocking the amount of racist hate I have received since I have exposed the lessons containing CRT. Do you think that proponents of CRT are justified in telling a black teacher that she is a "white-washed house negro?" You would think that those in favor of CRT in our schools would rejoice to see evidence that it is in our K–12 classrooms, but instead, they attack the messenger. Even if you favor critical race theory being taught to our young people, no one deserves the racial abuse and threats I have received since exposing the lessons in my district and the lies being pushed by the media. But it should be no surprise that a theory full of "reverse racism" leads its defenders to lash out with racial slurs when exposed.

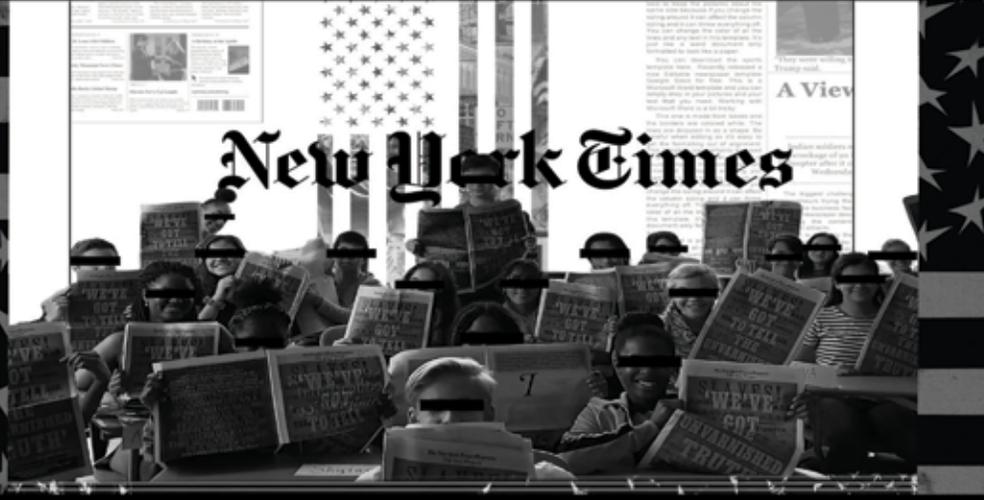
If anything, judge the theory by its fruit. ■

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*Read previous articles from the Special Reports series online at [CapitalResearch.org/category/special-report/](https://CapitalResearch.org/category/special-report/).*

# ARCHITECTS OF WOKE:

## The 1619 Project's Fake History



## STOKELY CARMICHAEL



## & RACISM WITHOUT RACISTS

## SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK & THE ROMANCE OF REVOLUTIONARY TERROR



CRC's Architects of Woke series takes aim at far-left post-modernist and Marxist thinkers and activists responsible for the spread of identity politics on college campuses and in society at large.

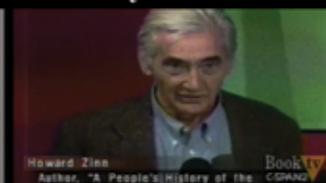
The series is hosted and directed by award-winning filmmaker Rob Montz, whose online documentary work has attracted millions of views and coverage in major outlets, including *The Economist*, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and The Adam Carolla Podcast.

Subjects of the Architects of Woke include the fake history of the 1619 Project, the wildly popular radical socialist podcast *Chapo Trap House*, far-left political activist Howard Zinn, University of California at Berkeley feminist gender theorist Judith Butler, highly influential Marxist-Leninist philosopher Slavoj Žižek.

**Watch the entire series at [DangerousDocumentaries.com](https://DangerousDocumentaries.com).**



Howard Zinn, Hollywood, & the Fairy Tale of American Evil



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# THE LEFT'S VOTING MACHINE



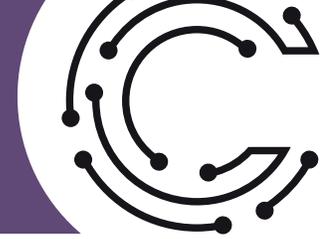
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Left-wing activists understand the power of nonprofit advocacy groups as agents of social change. To empower the Left, its donors and activists have quietly built a vast network of allied PACs, voter registration nonprofits, litigation organizations, and Census “get out the count” groups to win battleground states. If successful, this will help the movement implement many of its socialist policies—from the Green New Deal to Medicare for All to the union-backed PRO Act.

This report examines the ways in which the Left, armed with torrents of mostly 501(c)(3) cash, has increased the Census count of traditionally left-leaning constituencies, attempted to win left-wing majorities in state legislatures, and tried to control the 2021 redistricting process to draw congressional maps favoring the Left.

Read *The Left's Voting Machine* at <https://capitalresearch.org/publication/the-lefts-voting-machine/>.





## THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES

By Robert Stilson

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**Summary:** *Institute for Policy Studies is not only an important brick in the ideological foundation of the modern Left, but also one of the very first of its now-ubiquitous public policy nonprofits. It was among the earliest entrants into the now massive (and largely left-leaning) world of ideologically oriented public policy 501(c)(3) nonprofits. Today, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) probably doesn't make the shortlist of finalists for most influential left-of-center think tanks in the country. But IPS still remains very much active and relevant, at least within its particular slice of the contemporary Left, and "the story of the American Left cannot be told without discussing the contributions of IPS."*

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The Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) is a left-of-center think tank and advocacy group that is active on a variety of public policy issues. It operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, with 2020 revenues totaling approximately \$6.9 million. Since 2021, its executive director has been Tope Folarin.

IPS was founded in 1963 by former members of the Kennedy administration who were interested in critically analyzing American foreign policy, particularly as it related to the Cold War. Widely seen as an institutional outgrowth of the New Left movement, a number of those associated with the radical Students for a Democratic Society were connected to IPS, and the institute soon became deeply involved in anti-Vietnam War activism.

During the 1970s, the institute shifted its focus more toward geopolitical and development issues in the Third World, particularly Latin America. Events in Chile during the mid-1970s brought considerable attention to the institute, especially after IPS fellow Orlando Letelier was assassinated in 1976 by operatives of Augusto Pinochet's regime in Washington, DC.

IPS developed a reputation for anti-capitalist views that stood at the far left of the American ideological spectrum. A number of prominent institute personnel were noted for their positive portrayals of communist and other leftist governments, including (at various points) those of North Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua, Chile, and others. Author Joshua Muravchik coined the term "communophilism" in



Credit: David. License: <https://bit.ly/3c1c980>.

*Events in Chile during the mid-1970s brought considerable attention to the institute, especially after Institute for Policy Studies fellow Orlando Letelier was assassinated in 1976 by operatives of Augusto Pinochet's regime in Washington, DC.*

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1984 to describe the ideology of IPS's leadership. At least one individual associated with the institute publicly questioned the Cambodian Genocide perpetrated by the communist Khmer Rouge regime during the late 1970s, both in print and before Congress.

While generally less sympathetic toward the Soviet Union, IPS broadly minimized the Soviet threat during the Cold War and tended to be much more critical of the actions of the United States. It advocated for nuclear disarmament and opposed American military interventions overseas. Those at the institute also opposed certain American governmental institutions, particularly those involved with national security and intelligence such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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*Robert Stilson is a research specialist at CRC who runs several of CRC's specialized projects, including a series on federal grants and nonprofits.*

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More recently, IPS has been highly critical of United States foreign policy in the Middle East generally, and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict specifically. It vigorously opposed the actions of the George W. Bush administration during the War on Terror and was one of the few American think tanks to openly argue against American military intervention in Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Those associated with IPS have long been connected to a wide variety of other movements, organizations, and politicians, and have influenced the Left's ideological and structural development over the decades. Historian Brian S. Mueller wrote in 2021 that "the story of the American Left cannot be told without discussing the contributions of IPS."

As of 2022, IPS focuses on five principal issue areas: economic inequality, race and gender considerations, climate change, foreign policy, and leadership development. Its personnel generally advocate from a left-wing or far-left perspective on such issues.

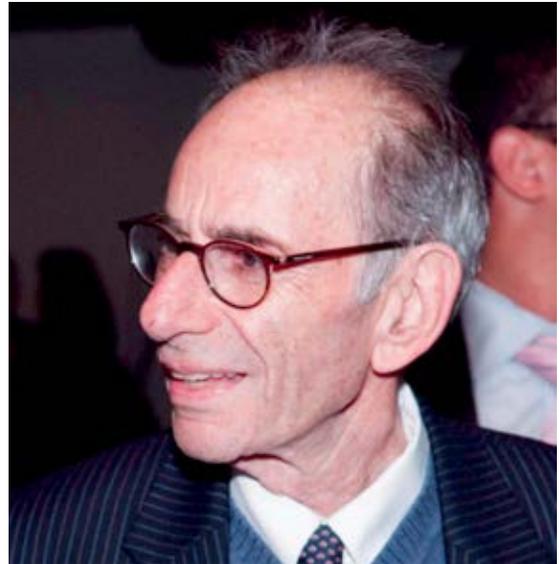
IPS opened on November 3, 1963, with former Kennedy administration staffers Marcus Raskin and Richard Barnet serving as co-directors. According to the institute's website, the two had concluded that the "systemic change" that they sought for the United States could not be accomplished from within the government and decided to found an independent think tank in order to promote that change via the power of "social movements."

## Philosophy and Ideology

IPS has consistently been placed on the left-wing, often the far or radical Left, of the American ideological spectrum. The institute has been particularly critical of American foreign policy and governmental institutions, and of global free-market capitalism. Author Joshua Muravchik coined the term "communophilism" in 1984 to describe the particular form of left-wing ideology advocated by prominent IPS personnel.

IPS has always been highly critical of free-market capitalism, particularly on a global scale, viewing it as "the primary impediment to a more democratic and equitable international economic order," according to historian Brian S. Mueller.

Mueller noted that IPS's anti-capitalism was not rooted "in strictly Marxist terms," but rather in its belief that human rights should be extended beyond political and civil protections to encompass various economic, social, and cultural



Credit: IPS/Jeremy Bigwood. License: <https://bit.ly/3dWuKJl>.

*Marcus Raskin considered the United States to be a "modern tyranny" for the way it maintained "organized power in the hands of the state, its military and bureaucratic apparatus, and its corporate system."*

rights. IPS developed a view that the international capitalist system led by the United States was the cause of various human rights abuses. According to Mueller, "IPS sought to topple the liberal international capitalist order."

Those at IPS became highly critical of capitalism's impact on global development. IPS chairman Peter Weiss called for dispensing with the "utterly foolish notion that capitalism can bring about economic and social justice to the Third World." Michael Moffitt, director of IPS's International Economic Order project, wrote in 1978 that "we begin from the perspective that the current economic, political and social situation in the Third World countries is a product of the historical development of the international capitalist system."

Mueller wrote, "IPS set out to demolish the capitalist system," and became highly supportive of Third World socialist politicians such as Tanzania's Julius Nyerere and Jamaica's Michael Manley.

**Communism and "Communophilism."** S. Steven Powell wrote in his 1987 book *Covert Cadre* that it would be more accurate to describe IPS as Marxist rather than liberal. A number of individuals associated with IPS expressed support for Eurocommunism, a form of communism in Western Europe that emphasized independence from Soviet influence.

In the early 1980s, then-IPS director Robert Borosage characterized the institute's personnel as coming "almost completely" from "a liberal, pragmatic philosophical basis," while those at the affiliated Transnational Institute came "almost completely" from "a Marxist or at least a liberation basis."

In a 1984 article for *World Affairs*, author Joshua Muravchik argued that IPS's ideology was best encapsulated in the term "communophilism," which he considered to be distinct from other manifestations of leftism such as communism, socialism, and liberalism. As defined by Muravchik, "communophiles" shared the following characteristics: They believed capitalist democracies like the United States needed to be fundamentally transformed, rather than reformed; were generally sympathetic toward international communist movements; and were not beholden to a specific model of communism as implemented by any state and were least sympathetic toward the Soviet model.

To Muravchik, IPS's ideology evidenced "a general attitude that the future of mankind lies, as it should lie, with the communist world," while at the same time adopting an "unremittingly hostile" attitude toward the political system of the United States, which it viewed as "fundamentally flawed." Though admitting that IPS's leadership held a spectrum of views, Muravchik argued that it was a narrow one: "all are on the left; few, if any, are liberal; most, if not all, are anti-anti-Communist."

**Power and the "National Security State."** According to IPS, by 1972 most institute fellows "had concluded from their work that a concentration of vast power in the hands of a few had become typical of the American policy, economy, and culture," and that this concentration of power was itself responsible for sociopolitical ills including racism, deforestation, militarism and the Vietnam War, and "the exhausting workplace and the exhausted family." Raskin considered the United States to be a "modern tyranny" for the way it maintained "organized power in the hands of the state, its military and bureaucratic apparatus, and its corporate system."

Those at the institute—especially Barnet and Raskin—blamed unelected foreign policy bureaucrats whom they termed "national security managers" for giving rise to a "national security state" that favored militaristic foreign interventions and was responsible for numerous harmful domestic impacts, all while being largely unaccountable to the American people. Raskin defined the "national security state" as "the actualizing mechanism of ruling elites to implement their imperial schemes and misplaced ideals." According to Brian S. Mueller, "IPS found in these two

concepts an explanation for America's frequent intervention abroad to suppress ideological pluralism and to suffocate democracy on the home front."

Mueller used the example of IPS's anti-Vietnam War activism to highlight the institute's tendency to point to "participatory democracy as the panacea for all of America's ills," while at the same time failing to fully appreciate that sometimes "Americans supported ideas inimical to IPS's worldview."

## The Cold War

IPS broadly opposed the foreign policy of the United States toward the Soviet Union and the communist-controlled Eastern Bloc during the Cold War. The institute was particularly critical of American military interventions and installations overseas, which IPS co-founder Richard Barnet argued served to compel responses from the Soviet Union. In *An American Manifesto*, Barnet and IPS co-founder Marcus Raskin wrote that "Americans believe that the world must be made safe for America, but for the sake of survival itself, America must be made safe for the world."

In his 2021 book *Democracy's Think Tank: The Institute for Policy Studies and Progressive Foreign Policy*, historian Brian S. Mueller wrote that IPS personnel generally adhered to a revisionist interpretation of post-Second World War relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, placing significant blame on the U.S. for bringing about the Cold War and the resulting nuclear arms race. Gar Alperovitz, a prominent Cold War revisionist historian well-known for his 1965 book *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, was a founding IPS fellow.

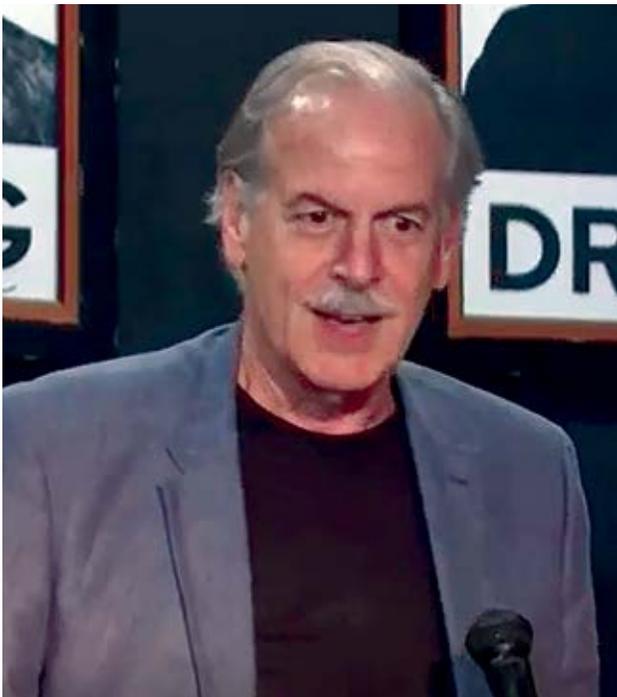
During the Cold War, IPS was accused of promoting a perspective on world affairs that was favorable toward the Soviet Union and its interests. Though individuals associated with the institute held varying opinions, IPS personnel broadly minimized the Soviet threat and were much more critical of the actions of the United States.

In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, IPS began to devote significant attention to the Third World, particularly on human rights and the policy of the United States government toward Latin America and the Caribbean. Historian Brian S. Mueller wrote that those at IPS "tended to mark off certain regions of the world as more important than others when it came to demanding protection of human rights," and the institute's primary targets were U.S.-backed authoritarian governments in Latin America. IPS co-founder Richard Barnet would later acknowledge that it was "a fair criticism" to say that IPS became "overly-concerned with the Third World."

IPS was broadly sympathetic toward leftist revolutionary movements in these countries. Writing in 1984, journalist Joshua Muravchik characterized the views of IPS leadership toward “Third World communist movements” as ranging from “hesitating approval of at least some to enthusiastic approval.” In 1976, while a fellow at IPS, Eqbal Ahmad described the governments of China, Cuba, and North Vietnam as “the forces of liberation” in the journal *Race & Class*.

## The Post-Cold War Era

In its 30th Anniversary Report for 1993, IPS forecast that the 1990s promised to be as “turbulent” as the 1960s and suggested that the end of the Cold War and Democratic Party control over both the presidency and Congress presented “unprecedented opportunities to enact progressive ideas into law and policy.” The report quoted Rep. George Miller (D-CA) as saying that “the ’80s belonged to the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute. The ’90s belong to IPS.” It also explained how the institute had reoriented itself toward younger activists, with most of its personnel at that time being in their 20s or 30s.



Credit: C-SPAN. License: <https://bit.ly/3rqWnpQ>

*In the early 1980s, then-IPS director Robert Borosage characterized the institute’s personnel as coming “almost completely” from “a liberal, pragmatic philosophical basis.”*

During the early 1990s, IPS proposed cutting American defense spending by 50 percent and dismantling the country’s nuclear weapons stockpile “as part of an international disarmament regime.” It also advocated for new and expanded taxes to pay for left-wing social programs such as a national single-payer health care system and government employment guarantees for all those “who want to work.” The institute also supported abolishing “most of the CIA and other parts of the now obsolete ‘national security state.’”

In early 1993, IPS fellow (and former director) Robert Borosage wrote that newly elected president Bill Clinton’s campaign slogan of “Putting People First” should be expanded globally, and that the administration needed to “join [its] commitment to high-wage jobs at home with a policy designed to bolster Third World wages, environmental standards and living conditions.” Borosage argued that significant cutbacks to defense spending could be used to “pay for this global investment.”

IPS opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which took effect in 1994. A July 1993 institute report entitled “NAFTA’s Corporate Cadre” suggested that the agreement “would advance certain narrow individual corporate interests, often to the detriment of communities, states and North America as a whole.” It also argued against international economic integration unless it was paired with measures to “address the inequalities between our nations and that uphold worker rights and environmental standards.”

**The War on Terror.** IPS opposed the American-led military interventions in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the institute released a statement entitled “Justice Not Vengeance” on behalf of more than 150 signatories. The statement supported “bringing [the terrorists] to justice under the rule of law—not military action.” IPS later commented that it had stood “virtually alone” among Washington, DC-based think tanks in opposing military action in Afghanistan in the immediate aftermath of the attacks.

In 2003, IPS played a key role in organizing United for Peace and Justice, which became the largest coalition of organizations opposing the Iraq War. Phyllis Bennis, now director of the institute’s New Internationalism Program, and former IPS director Jon Cavanagh co-authored an article in *The Nation* in April 2003 in which they argued that the United Nations must become “the legitimate replacement for the United States empire we seek to disempower.” Bennis was instrumental in founding United for

IPS describes itself as “a progressive organization dedicated to building a more equitable, ecologically sustainable, and peaceful society.”

Peace and Justice, and historian Brian S. Mueller observed that she and Cavanagh “used arguments nearly identical to those their predecessors [at IPS] espoused” during the Cold War.

John Feffer, associate fellow at IPS and director of its Foreign Policy in Focus project, wrote in 2021 that the presidency of George W. Bush was a “disaster,” characterized by numerous foreign policy failures. Feffer argued that the only reason Bush’s relative position had improved between 2009 and 2021 in a C-SPAN poll of historians that ranked United States presidents was because he was being compared to Donald Trump. In Feffer’s view, “George W. Bush, No. 29 in the historians’ ranking, has no moral standing to lecture people—with one exception. And that’s number 41, Donald Trump.”

After Bush administration Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld passed away in June 2021, Bennis published an article in *The Nation* entitled “War Criminal Found Dead at 88.” In it, she wrote that “unlike the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, Afghans, and so many others killed in the wars he launched and in the torture cells he oversaw, Donald Rumsfeld died peacefully.”

**The Obama Administration: *Mandate for Change*.** In early 2009, after the election of Barack Obama as president, IPS published *Mandate for Change: Politics and Leadership for 2009 and Beyond*. Edited by IPS associate fellow Chester Hartman, the book contained 47 essays written by 70 different contributors including Marcus Raskin, Robert Borosage, John Cavanagh, Chuck Collins, Saul Landau, Eric Mann, Miles Rapoport, Dorian Warren, Katrina vanden Heuvel, U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), and former U.S. Rep. Barbara Kennelly (D-CT). The essays made numerous left-wing policy recommendations on both domestic and international issues.

Contributors recommended major federal spending in areas such as infrastructure and transportation, education, housing, and the environment, alongside significant reductions in defense spending. New or expanded taxes were proposed on financial transactions, inheritances, capital gains, wealth, and other forms of income. Contributors also advocated

for universal health care, expanded privileges for organized labor, mandatory paid time off, racial reparations, mandatory federal charters for corporations, and automatic universal voter registration.

On international issues, contributors proposed ending the then-ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, removing sanctions on Iran, eliminating nuclear weapons, halting all military aid to Israel, lifting restrictions on travel to and trade with Cuba, and closing the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base and other overseas American military installations.

## Activities and Positions

IPS describes itself as “a progressive organization dedicated to building a more equitable, ecologically sustainable, and peaceful society.” Its website identifies five primary issue areas on which it works: economic justice, racial and gender justice, climate justice, peace & foreign policy, and leadership programs. It generally promotes a left-wing policy perspective on these issues.

**Economic Issues.** IPS believes economic inequality should be addressed by “lifting up and building power at the bottom and breaking up concentration of wealth and power at the top.” The objective of its Global Economy Program is to “speed the transition to an equitable and sustainable economy while reversing today’s extreme levels of economic and racial inequality and excessive corporate and Wall Street power.”

The institute’s Program on Inequality and the Common Good promotes left-of-center policies that it believes would reduce income inequality and “extreme wealth concentration.” Chuck Collins directs the program, and co-edits the website [Inequality.org](http://Inequality.org), which has been a project of IPS since 2011. [Inequality.org](http://Inequality.org) publishes reports and commentary from a left-of-center perspective in response to the question: “What can we do to narrow the staggering economic inequality that so afflicts us in almost every aspect of our lives?” It supports policies such as estate, gift, and wealth taxes, as well as other “CEO-worker pay ordinances and progressive tax and revenue initiatives.”

Since 1994, IPS has published the “Executive Excess” report, which examines the compensation paid to corporate executives and its impacts. Among the proposals supported in the 2021 report was the Tax Excessive CEO Pay Act, which would levy progressively increasing taxes on corporations based upon the difference between what the company paid to its highest-paid employee and its median employee. Companies at which the ratio was less than 50 to 1 would not be taxed, while those at which the ratio was more than 500 to 1 would be subject to a 5 percent tax.

Senator and former candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination Bernie Sanders (I-VT) has utilized IPS’s economic research and reports. A 2019 article in *The Nation* observed that “Sanders gets some of his sharpest talking points about inequality from the Institute for Policy Studies, a more radical outfit that is usually ignored by the mainstream of the Democratic Party.” During the 2020 election cycle, Sanders based some of his arguments regarding wealth inequality on a 2017 study produced by IPS. At a Democratic presidential debate in South Carolina, Sanders cited an inaccurate figure regarding the wealth of United States billionaires, which IPS had provided him. IPS took responsibility for the error and released an updated number.

IPS also operates the National Priorities Project, which publishes information about the United States federal budget and advocates for spending “that prioritizes peace, economic opportunity, and shared prosperity for all.” The project broadly opposes spending on military and defense, which it argues serves only to enrich “corporate profiteers” without actually preventing armed conflict. It supports redirecting defense spending toward housing, education, health care, energy, and other social programs.

In 2020, the National Priorities Project supported a proposal to cut the federal defense budget by 10 percent, approximately \$74 billion. It claimed that this money could instead be used to accomplish any one of 10 other preferable objectives, such as purchasing a year’s supply of N95 face masks for 55 million “essential workers,” conducting two billion additional COVID-19 tests, powering “almost every household” in the United States with “renewable energy,” or hiring 900,000 new public elementary school teachers.

In July 2022, IPS released the *Gilded Giving 2022* report. Among the report’s findings were that the proportion of American households who gave to charity dropped from 66 percent to 50 percent between 2000 and 2018, while “mega-gifts” of \$450 million or more combined to total

nearly \$14.9 billion in 2021. It also found that gifts made to private foundations and donor-advised funds combined to account for 30 percent of all charitable giving.

The *Gilded Giving 2022* report recommended a number of changes to “the rules governing philanthropy,” including three-year payout requirements and increased transparency for donor-advised funds, increased payout requirements for private foundations, a lifetime cap of \$500 million on charitable tax deductions, and a wealth tax of 2 percent on donor-advised funds and private foundations with assets of over \$50 million if those entities “are managed by founders or their family members.”

**Racial and Gender Issues.** IPS views its work across all issue areas through the context of dismantling “systemic racism and patriarchy.” The institute argues that “the criminalization of poor people happens at the intersectional oppressions of race, class, gender and gender identity.”

The Black Worker Initiative at IPS “operates under the belief that black workers hold a key role in union revitalization.” The initiative’s “flagship report” is *And Still I Rise: Black Women Labor Leaders’ Voices, Power and Promise*, which seeks to promote labor organizing specifically among Black women, as well as “to advance economic justice within organized labor and the broader progressive movement.” The Black Worker Initiative is directed by IPS associate fellow Marc Bayard.

In May 2022, Bayard co-authored an article with Saqib Bhatti of the Action Center on Race and the Economy, in which they advocated for racial equity audits at prominent American corporations like Starbucks, Facebook, Airbnb, and JPMorgan Chase. The authors wrote that because of “the immense harm these corporations continue to cause to communities of color,” such an audit was a necessary “first step of many to hold these companies accountable.”

In 2020, IPS associate fellow Dedrick Asante-Muhammad wrote that “the hard truth is that the United States—and its economy—is based on a white supremacist concentration of wealth and resources,” and that “a massive redistribution” of both was necessary. He argued that the United States government should pay reparations of \$20,000 per year for 20 years to every African American who is descended from an enslaved person and calculated that this would cost approximately \$16.5 trillion. He characterized that amount as “not a serious obstacle.”



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*IPS believes that “to build peace, we must dislodge the economic and political foundations of war.”*

**Environmental Issues.** IPS has expressed the view that the use of coal, petroleum, and natural gas will cause “a climate catastrophe.” It also opposes nuclear energy, waste incineration, biofuels, and large-scale hydroelectricity, calling these sources of energy “false solutions.”

The institute views climate change as being linked to various economic and social issues, and argues that it “is caused by an economic model that values the short-term financial gain of a few over the rights of most of humanity, and especially indigenous peoples, people of color, and poor people.” Though the institute’s work in this area has both domestic and international components, its Climate Policy Program is primarily focused on the United States.

In January 2019, IPS signed an open letter entitled “Legislation to Address the Urgent Threat of Climate Change.” The letter asked Congress to adopt Green New Deal legislation that met certain “minimum” requirements, including transitioning to “100 percent renewable power generation by 2035 or earlier,” halting all oil and gas exports, and holding energy companies liable for “damages caused by climate change.” The letter specifically excluded nuclear energy from its definition of “renewable.”

In November 2020, IPS Climate Policy Director Basav Sen signed an open letter in opposition to S. 4897, the American Nuclear Infrastructure Act of 2020. The letter stated that nuclear power “amplifies and expands the dangers of climate change” and denounced it as an example of “false solutions to the climate crisis that perpetuate our reliance on dirty energy industries.”

In April 2022, Lorah Steichen, outreach coordinator for IPS’s National Priorities Project, wrote an article for *The Progressive* in which she argued for cutting \$350 billion from the United States’ defense budget, suggesting that “putting even a portion of that toward protecting our planet would make us far safer than buying more missiles, jets and bombs.”

**Foreign Policy Issues.** IPS’s foreign policy work is based on a fundamental opposition to the use of military force and support for international law and diplomacy. The institute believes that “to build peace, we must dislodge the economic and political foundations of war.”

The institute’s New Internationalism Project focuses on shifting “U.S. policies away from militarism and towards the goals of human rights, equality for all, and peace with justice—a policy that chooses diplomacy over war.” It also works to challenge the influence that the United States exerts within the United Nations. The project is directed by Phyllis Bennis.

IPS personnel have spoken strongly in favor of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, better known as the Iran Nuclear Deal. Bennis has argued that the deal “was the Obama administration’s top foreign policy achievement,” and that the Trump administration’s decision to withdraw from it represented a “reckless abandonment of diplomacy.” She also called the Trump administration’s decision to designate Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization a “blatantly political move” designed to “make it politically much harder for the U.S. to rejoin the deal,” which “unfortunately...seems to have worked.”

Individuals affiliated with IPS have been highly critical of Israel. Bennis has written that Palestinians in locations such as the West Bank and Gaza live under a system of “oppression, dispossession and apartheid,” and argued that the significant amount of military aid that the United States provides to Israel annually “makes the U.S. complicit in Israel’s criminal wrongdoing.” She has advocated that the Biden administration relocate the United States embassy from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv and “acknowledge the clear reality that [Israeli] settlements [in the West Bank] are illegal.”

Established in 1996, Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) is a project of IPS that seeks “to make the United States a more responsible global partner.” It advocates for “peace, justice, and environmental protection, as well as economic, political, and social rights,” which it believes are the most effective methods of advancing stability and security in the world. FPIF is edited by IPS senior editorial manager Peter Certo and directed by IPS associate fellow John Feffer.

**Congressional Progressive Caucus People’s Agenda.** In collaboration with the Kairos Center, Repairers of the Breach, and the Poor People’s Campaign, IPS published a fact sheet to support the Congressional Progressive Caucus’s 2021 People’s Agenda. The agenda contained left-wing legislative priorities

to be pursued in the aftermath of the 2020 United States elections, and the fact sheet explained the purported benefits of such legislation. Nearly every proposal was justified at least in part on the basis of racial or ethnic considerations.

Specific proposals included providing \$2,000 monthly stimulus checks to everyone (including illegal immigrants), raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour, and canceling medical debt and up to \$50,000 of student loan debt. The fact sheet also argued that minority-owned businesses should be prioritized for direct assistance, partly because COVID-19 pandemic-related closures at Asian-owned businesses had been exacerbated by “xenophobia stoked by President Trump.”

The fact sheet blamed “corporate concentration” for being “a significant factor behind many pressing problems,” and supported higher taxes on both corporations and higher-income individuals. It also advocated for conditioning all government funding to large corporations on the recipient adopting policies to “reduce economic, gender, and racial inequality.”

The IPS fact sheet also supported proposals designed to benefit organized labor, promote public investment in weather dependent wind and solar energy, loosen election laws, implement a public campaign finance system, ban all semi-automatic firearms, and establish commissions on reparations and on “truth, racial healing, and transformation.” It also argued that “immeasurable benefits” would result from reducing defense spending and foreign military aid and opposed utilizing economic sanctions as an alternative to military action—describing them as “largely ineffective.”

**The 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine.** While IPS personnel universally condemned Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, some of those affiliated with the institute argued that the United States and NATO were the ultimate cause of Russia’s aggression and opposed both economic sanctions on Russia and military aid to Ukraine.

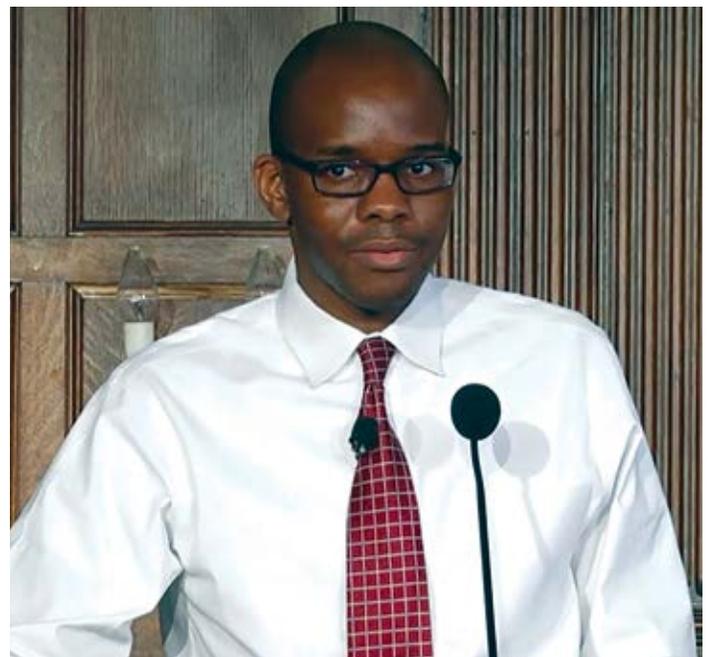
John Feffer, director of the FPI Foreign Policy in Focus project at IPS, called Russia’s invasion an example of “an imperialist aggressor ... destroying another country in order to ‘save’ it,” and commented further that “peace and diplomacy and negotiations all sound like fine things right now. But there’s a big difference between just a ceasefire and a just ceasefire. Peace at any cost is not true peace.” In Feffer’s view, “Ukrainian resistance must stop Putinism” before such a “just ceasefire” could be concluded. He also argued that if Russia succeeded in its war

against Ukraine, it might embolden a hypothetical future “Trumpist president” of the United States to attack Iran, Venezuela, or Cuba.

In February 2022, IPS project director Phyllis Bennis wrote that while she agreed that the invasion was “unjustified,” she disagreed that it was “unprovoked.” Pointing to the enlargement of NATO to include former Warsaw Pact countries in Eastern Europe during the 1990s and 2000s, she argued that Russia was “certainly” provoked into launching its invasion “not so much by Ukraine, but by the United States.”

Bennis later expressed opposition to “broad-based sanctions” targeting Russia, and argued that Western military aid to Ukraine could threaten peace talks. While she acknowledged that it made “perfect sense” for Ukraine to request weaponry to combat Russian forces, Bennis argued it also made “perfect sense” for Western countries to deny those requests. She has advocated for humanitarian and refugee assistance to Ukraine, rather than military aid.

Khury Petersen-Smith, a fellow at IPS, wrote that while there must be “a clear condemnation of Putin’s Russia,” the United States and NATO were themselves “guilty of militarizing the region,” and that “the story of how Russia came to invade Ukraine requires looking at what the U.S. and NATO have been doing in Europe over decades, and



*Tope Folarin has been IPS’s executive director since 2021, when he took over from John Cavanagh, who had led the institute for more than 20 years.*

Credit: 2014 Lannan Symposium. License: <https://bit.ly/3SQt6ns>.

especially in recent years.” Petersen-Smith criticized both military aid to Ukraine and economic sanctions on Russia, describing the latter as essentially “an act of war.”

## IPS Today

IPS remains very much active and relevant today, at least within its particular slice of the contemporary Left. During the 2020 election cycle, an article in *The Nation* observed that while IPS was “a more radical outfit that is usually ignored by the mainstream of the Democratic Party,” Bernie Sanders got “some of his sharpest talking points about inequality” from the institute. Sanders, the democratic socialist standard bearer for the furthest-left reaches of the Democratic Caucus, has made use of IPS research and reports on multiple occasions.

IPS also receives substantial funding from some of the most prominent left-of-center foundations in the country. Major funders in recent years include the Ford Foundation, the JPB Foundation, the NoVo Foundation, the Foundation to Promote Open Society, the Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund, and the Wallace Global Fund.

Tope Folarin has been IPS’s executive director since 2021, when he took over from John Cavanagh, who had led the institute for more than 20 years. Notable IPS board members include singer Harry Belafonte and actor Danny Glover, alongside Ford Foundation vice president Sarita Gupta and Code Pink co-founder Jodie Evans. Katrina vanden Heuvel, editorial director and publisher of *The Nation*, is also a longtime institute board member.

Mueller wrote in *Democracy’s Think Tank* that “the story of the American Left cannot be told without discussing the contributions of IPS.” The institute therefore represents not only an important brick in the ideological foundation of the modern Left, but also one of the very first of its now-ubiquitous public policy nonprofits. ■

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*This article was adapted from the “Institute for Policy Studies” entry on [InfluenceWatch.org](https://www.influencewatch.org). Full citations, omitted here, are available there.*

*Read previous articles from the [Organization Trends](https://www.capitalresearch.org/category/organization-trends/) series online at [CapitalResearch.org/category/organization-trends/](https://www.capitalresearch.org/category/organization-trends/).*



# BIG MONEY IN DARK SHADOWS

Arabella Advisors' Half-billion-dollar  
"Dark Money" Network

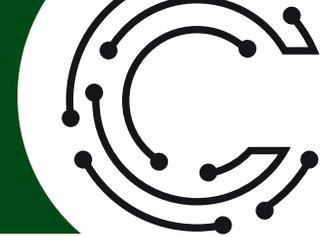
Hayden R. Ludwig

According to media personalities and politicians, nameless, faceless donors wield outsized influence over the American political process due to the so-called "dark money" they use to fund think tanks and advocacy groups. But that's far from the whole story. "Dark money" exists on both sides of the aisle. In fact, the Left seems to have deeper and darker pockets of cash than anyone suspected.

Learn more about liberal "dark money" in CRC's original report.



**CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER**  
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK



## GOING GREEN FOR WHITE SUPREMACY

Review of *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant*

By Hayden Ludwig

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*Part of our series on books that we read so you don't have to.*

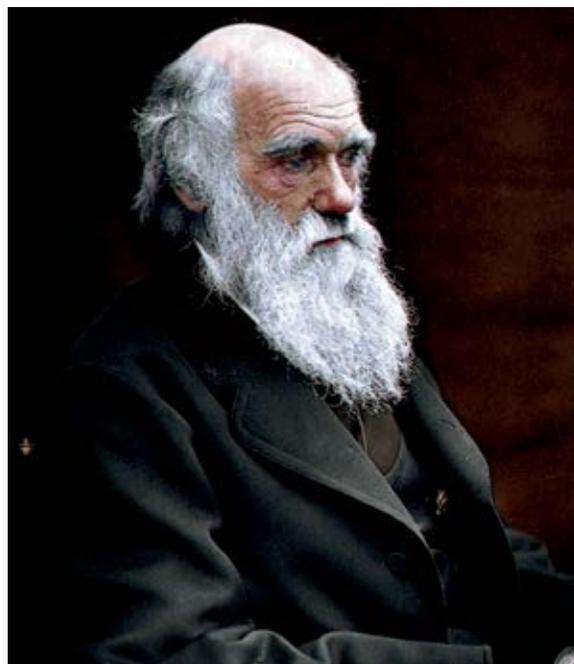
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Many of the worst ideas of our century can be traced back to pseudoscience in the last century. Eugenics, phrenology, and innate racial disparities may be debunked, but their ghosts are still with us today thanks to the influence of one fascinating, despicable, and complex man: Madison Grant.

In *Defending the Master Race* (University Press of New England, 2009, 487 pages) Castleton University Professor Jonathan Spiro immortalizes Madison Grant, one of history's forgotten giants and one of the lost founding fathers of the eugenics movement. This is a breakthrough book, not least because so little information about Grant's life remains today. We have his family to thank for that, who destroyed many of Grant's personal papers after his death in 1937, by which point eugenics and racial pseudoscience were entering their final freefall. Add to that erosion by time and weather, and there's not much of this once-influential man's life left to examine.

As a result, Grant is frequently *mentioned* as a leading racist and eugenicist, yet extraordinarily little work has been done on his own misdeeds. Reconstructing Grant's life, in other words, is a monumental feat, and Spiro treats his subject with respect while pointing out Grant's ugly support for some of the 20th century's ugliest experiments.

Grant—an irreligious, forward-thinking, science-minded “progressive”—was certainly a product of his age. Born in New York City in 1865—just seven months after Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse, ending the Civil War—Grant was the quintessential Yankee patrician: an unmarried, politically active bachelor from an old-money family descended from English Puritans. He was a Northeastern Republican, which entailed a serious interest in solving social problems—such as alcoholism, urban crowding, and use of natural resources—with government action. Like his peers also descended from America's founders, he considered himself a proud father of the nation at a time when mass immigration from eastern and southern Europe was transforming the country's ethnic makeup.



Credit: Julius Jääskeläinen. License: <https://bit.ly/3rrmRHZ>.

*The solution, Madison Grant believed, was a rational application of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution to American society.*

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The solution, he believed, was a rational application of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution to American society.

By the turn of the 20th century, Western science had long since overthrown biblical categories in favor of natural selection. Applying Darwinian ideas to “fit” and “unfit” animals was one thing; applying them to humans led to some uneasy conclusions.

Spiro is no Grant admirer—quite the opposite—which makes his deft handling of this tricky subject so admirable. To put it in perspective, most modern Americans struggle to examine the past fairly. For many, postmodern assumptions have colored their view of past generations, making past generations out to be rubes who weren't as knowledgeable or wise as we are today. Presented with the horrors of slavery,

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*Hayden Ludwig is a senior research analyst at CRC.*



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*Applying Darwinian ideas to “fit” and “unfit” animals was one thing; applying them to humans led to some uneasy conclusions.*

National Socialism, or race-based immigration quotas most moderns will wonder how people of those generations could have tolerated such self-evident evils. Many will assume that now we know right from wrong better than they did. Regrettably, this kind of thinking, which treats living in the past as a sort of sin, makes it all but impossible to grasp how past generations thought.

To that end, Spiro provides remarkable insight into Grant’s mindset. He lets the man speak for himself, and the results are fascinating and disturbing in equal measures.

Grant, for instance, was one of the pioneers of the modern environmental movement. He loved nature and sought to use federal law to preserve America’s natural beauty and wildlife—the genesis of the national parks and many of the zoos we enjoy today. Grant practically saved the bison with help from his close friend Theodore Roosevelt. He also helped preserve Northern California’s endangered redwood trees. One tree, the “Madison Grant Tree,” was even dedicated to this fierce conservationist. The tree was removed in 2021.

But he also wanted to use government force to preserve “Nordic” racial supremacy in America. Grant led the campaign to exterminate sickly infants, forcibly sterilize the “unfit,” enact race-based immigration laws, and deport black Americans to Africa. As with many of his contemporaries, Grant was convinced that conservation and eugenics—the Darwinist pseudoscience of “beautifying” the human race through selective breeding—“were two sides of the same coin.”

Saving the “master race” from extinction was merely an extension of saving plants and animals.

## Preserving the Frontier

Grant, a prolific hunter, was horrified by the destruction of America’s frontier and wildlife at the close of the 19th century. Channeling medieval European nobility, he saw the nation’s vast forests as the aristocrat’s private domain whose animals must be preserved—so that they could be shot.

Grant was something of a “gentleman’s man,” an aristocratic hunter who enjoyed long, arduous expeditions to America’s wild interior to kill big game. Traveling to the Dakotas or

Yosemite was expensive and time-consuming. Men who could afford to hunt out West reaped high honors back East and naturally came to view animal conservation as part of their patrician duties.

The advent of the railroad was both a blessing and a curse to this mission. Affordable mass transit encouraged vacations to the interior, which gave Americans a grasp on the importance of preserving the wonders they saw for future generations. On the other hand, it encouraged thousands of amateur hunters to flock to the wilds and shoot everything they saw, exactly what Grant *et al.* hoped to avoid.

The answer was “conservation,” a word coined by one of Grant’s close allies in 1907. It entailed balance: Too *few* animals left in the wild meant conservationists had failed to preserve what they’d found; too *many* encouraged profligate hunting by ordinary folk.

In 1887, Grant helped organize the Boone and Crockett Club with future President Theodore Roosevelt; National Audubon Society founder George Bird Grinnell; Henry Fairfield Osborn, later president of New York’s famous American Museum of Natural History; and other science-minded patricians who aimed to preserve the West. These were the cosmopolitan philanthropists of their day, active in progressive politics and cutting-edge science. Osborn, for instance, sponsored expeditions which discovered the *Tyrannosaurus rex*—his name for the terrible lizard dug up in Montana—and popularized dinosaurs across America.

Amazingly, this small, elite organization almost single-handedly established America’s national parks system and saved the 19th century’s most endangered species, the buffalo. It helped found the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, the nation’s first big game preserve, to replenish the buffalo population that had dwindled from untold millions to less than 600 by the turn of the century. The club also had a role in founding Denali and Glacier National Parks in Alaska, Florida’s Everglades National Park, and the Olympic National Park in Washington, among others.

Naturally this meant lobbying for legislation in Washington, DC, to save the West, even where westerners didn’t care to be saved. The Boone and Crockett Club’s members had the influence to accomplish that mission and

funding from railroad magnates Collis P. Huntington and Cornelius Vanderbilt, the Rockefellers, Andrew Carnegie, and J.P. Morgan.

With an eye to frontier mining and agriculture still springing up in the West, Grant predicted that mass destruction of wetlands and forests in the twentieth century would do more harm to native animals than hunters could. His ideas soon evolved from conserving wild game to preserving animals because they have an “inalienable right to exist” (the earliest origins of today’s animal rights movement), marking a split with the traditional conservationist movement.

He wasn’t alone. By the early 1900s, conservationism had branched into preservationism, competing ideologies whose adherents bickered over exactly how to treat the animals they sought to protect. Some radical preservationists, for example, sought the wholesale extermination of wolves, coyotes, eagles, and other predatory “vermin” to protect game animals.

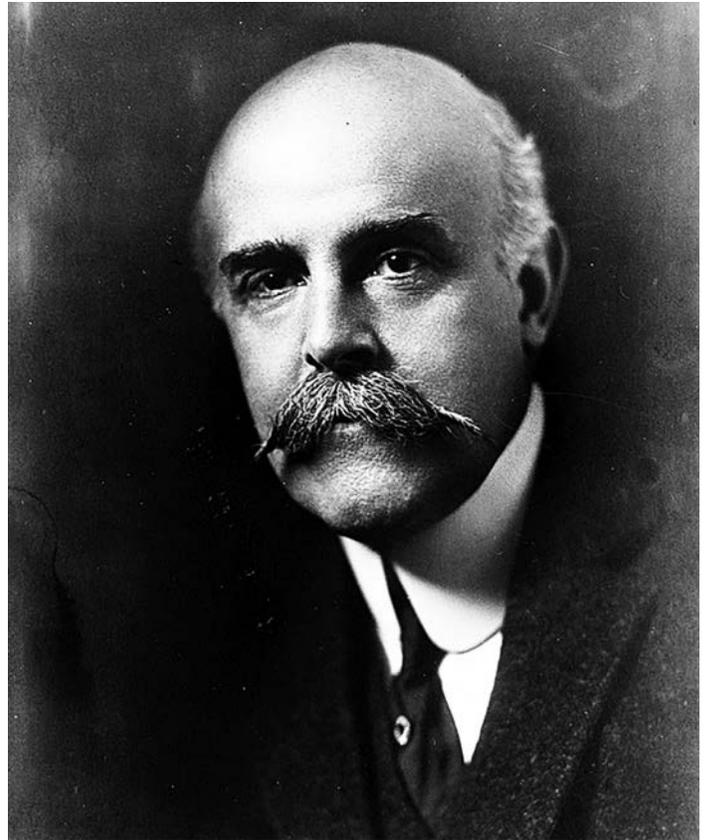
Congress agreed—and in 1915 authorized \$125,000 to fund a research commission that declared a virtual continent-wide war on “undesirable” predators, which “no longer have a place in our advancing civilization” and so were to be shot or injected with strychnine *en masse*. Millions of animals died. Grant, to his credit, opposed this practice and convinced many preservationists to halt it.

Blunders aside, the Boone and Crockett Club encouraged multiple presidents, most famously its own Teddy Roosevelt, to set aside vast wildlife reserves in the west in the 1890s, the origins of our national parks system. This jived both with paternalistic sensibilities about conserving the past for future benefit as well as progressives’ “enthralment with ‘scientific management,’ rational use of resources, and large-scale and long-term planning,” Spiro notes.

In short, it was the country’s first step toward social engineering and a reliance on government to solve all problems.

We’re still living with the good and the bad it produced. Preservationism, for instance, grew up into the modern environmentalist movement when Rachel Carson launched a war on pesticides with her book *Silent Spring* (1962). Her crusade abolished DDT, a problematic pesticide, and inaugurated a wave of crop failures, famines, and malaria plagues in the developing world that killed millions.

Since then eco-activists have moved on to ozone layer depletion, global cooling, and global warming. But a glance at this history shows that nature-conscious conservatives don’t have to; they can support genuine conservation without falling for environmentalism and the “green” movement’s mania.



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*Madison Grant—an irreligious, forward-thinking, science-minded “progressive”—was certainly a product of his age.*

## Scientific Racism on Display

Preserving the frontier was only half the battle; to win the war, Grant aimed to bring the frontier to the East.

Zoos were all the rage in the Victorian age. Every major city had one, but they were small and limited in scope. Grant aimed higher with the creation of New York’s Bronx Zoo in the late 1890s, purposefully built to attract urbanites who could become educated about the plight of America’s endangered species. Spiro observes that the zoo was the modern, democratic descendant of Europe’s old aristocratic hunting grounds—in other words, a perfect match for Grant and his contemporaries. And ever the progressive, Grant specifically designed the zoo to be vastly larger than its cramped contemporaries in Philadelphia and Europe. (It’s still the largest metropolitan zoo in the United States.)

Interestingly, Spiro observes that even here “there was a tension between” Grant *et al.*’s “genuine desire to uplift and educate the masses and ... their lingering sense that the zoo was their own personal fiefdom” invaded by interlopers.



*Leading Darwinists concluded that the various human “races” are actually unrelated and must remain so to avoid degenerating into mules.*

The Victorian age’s scientific racism loomed large in the zoo. One of its oddities was an African Pygmy tribesman, Ota Benga, brought from the Congo as a chimpanzee caretaker. There was probably nothing nefarious about the original decision to import an African caretaker to tend to the chimps. But someone encouraged poor Benga to enter their cage, causing crowds to hoot and jeer at the sight of a small (4’11”, 103 lb.) “savage” from “darkest Africa” caged like an animal, doubting whether “he was a human being” at all because he resembled the chimps he was supposed to take care of.

Leading scientists explained it away to the *New York Times*: “It is absurd to make moan over the imagined humiliation and degradation Benga is suffering” because “pygmies are very low in the human scale” and unfit for education.

Not everyone was amused, however. One group of black Baptist clergymen demanded New York Mayor George B. McClellan, Jr.—son of the famed do-nothing general of the Civil War—end Benga’s degradation but were ignored. Grant, however, relented and released the poor man. Unable to return to Africa due to the outbreak of World War I, a depressed Benga tragically shot himself in 1916.

## From Animals to Men

Spiro speculates that Grant began to shift attention to the evolutionary theory’s application in human society when he was introduced to a series of lectures on “the migration of the races,” delivered by famed economist William Z. Ripley as part of a patrician adventurers’ club called the “Gentleman Adventurers of the Half Moon.” The lectures themselves are now lost, but Spiro brilliantly reconstructs their teachings from Ripley’s other talks and writings.

Like other social Darwinists of his age, Ripley wanted to ascertain the ideal European “type,” the ultimate stage of human evolution, using traits like eye color, build, and skull shape. He theorized that Europeans could be divided into three categories: Central “Alpines,” southern “Mediterraneans,” and northern “Teutons” or “Nordics” (known as “Aryans” among European scholars), the last of which was responsible for Europe’s greatest civilizations. Left to themselves, each of these groups worked alright. But

when they were imported into American cities in huge numbers (as was then happening) they threatened to mix and “mongrelize” into devolved primitives, the way that horses and donkeys produce mules when interbred.

Obviously no serious evolutionary biologist holds these views today. Racial pseudoscience was largely debunked by World War II and Aryan supremacy theories finished the job. But it’d be a mistake to consider these ideas silly accidents from a simpler time.

To Grant, Ripley, and countless other evolutionists of the age these were the profound, unavoidable conclusions drawn from nature’s inner workings, which Charles Darwin had only *begun* to expose. In their day, science had revealed powerful racial categories that Bible-bound generations were blinded to. It’d proven that humans were nothing more than a higher form of animal. With this evidence, leading Darwinists concluded that the various human “races”—a word they couldn’t agreeably define—are actually *unrelated* and must remain so to avoid degenerating into mules.

The most obvious example of this process, Ripley taught, was that of the Jews, a group both physically and mentally degenerated by centuries of unnatural urban life. Now, to Ripley *et al.*’s terror and despair, they were bringing those attributes to the United States in ever-greater numbers and threatening to cause America’s original Teutonic race to go extinct.

Preservationists like Grant brought to this conclusion their own experience in saving animal species from being outcompeted by Man. Now they were duty-bound to save superior men from committing “race suicide”—being swamped by their unfit inferiors. In short, “Ripley had done for the white race,” Spiro writes, “what Grant had done for the large mammals.”

The key to this bizarre theory is an oft-heard and misunderstood term: Aryanism. Because of Hitler and the Nazis we usually think of it as German, but Aryanism was actually birthed by a Frenchman, Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882), the father of racial pessimism and supremacy theories.

Gobineau was a product of the mid-19th century’s nostalgic fascination with the Middle Ages, a reaction against the Enlightenment’s optimistic outlook and contempt for the so-called Dark Ages. These “romantics,” reacting against the

march of progress, saw industrial modernity as a wrecking ball that had destroyed Western Man's inner vitality, leaving him decadent and lethargic. These cultural ideas soon extended to the idea of "race," a new term that was increasingly used to explain how cultural differences result from human biology.

To Gobineau and his allies, race was what class struggle was to Karl Marx: The key to unlocking all mysteries.

They theorized that the world's greatest civilizations, from China to Greece and modern Germany, were all descended from primordial Aryan super-men who were responsible for everything "great, noble, and fruitful in the works of man on this earth." Gobineau's followers drew up a human taxonomy which put Europeans on top and Africans at the bottom. But it wasn't so simple as black vs. white; the key was distinguishing between "barbarian" peasants and Aryan-descended nobility (as Gobineau fancied himself). The latter created civilization by subjugating the former—until inevitably destroying themselves through miscegenation with the lesser races they ruled. (The nasty exception, of course, were Jews, who were few in number but the most cunning at keeping the Aryans down while enriching themselves.)

The Roman Empire, with its millions of imported non-Aryan slaves, was the great object lesson of how a powerful nation waters itself down and eventually collapses.

Fast forward to the modern era and the problem seemed even worse. Imperialism and democracy, both of which Gobineau loathed, were stagnating Europe's Aryan elite. ("Mongrelized" America, which he wrote off as the home of the "detritus of all the ages," was already a lost cause.) Heroic Aryans may have been the *best* of humanity, but they weren't the *fittest*—a zoological term now annexed to anthropology—for industrial democratic civilization, which was constructed by the lesser races to keep them in charge through sheer numbers. In other words, civilization was spiraling out of control because there was no longer a place for vivacious supermen.

For some, this led to despair. For egalitarians it meant the opposite. As Arthur Herman put it in *The Idea of Decline in Western History*:

the chief appeal of racism in the nineteenth century was its politically progressive, even liberal message. If all whites ... were equal by race, there was no excuse for social or economic discrimination between them. Race theory shattered the claims of an aristocratic class to privilege and authority .... And even as European society itself was moving in this happy, egalitarian direction, so must white cultural power

naturally extend itself over the nonwhite world. In short, the whole direction of racial thinking in Europe was one of liberal egalitarian optimism, even self-satisfaction.

Gobineau's most obvious heir was Adolf Hitler's National Socialists, who considered his writings their original inspiration and made them assigned reading in German schools. But the patterns of pseudoscientific thought established by Gobineau also shaped eugenicists like Madison Grant and anti-Semites such as Houston Stewart Chamberlain (called "Hitler's John the Baptist" for mentoring the future *Führer*), Jim Crow-era white supremacists, far-left organizer Herbert Marcuse, and even black nationalists like W.E. DuBois and Marcus Garvey.

## Eugenics Is Born

According to Spiro, Grant drew three lessons from Gobineau's race theory: First, to apply zoological concepts (e.g., dangerous crossbreeding) to Man; second, that class struggle explains all of human history; and third, that mental traits and abilities vary by race.

Together they formed a vile cocktail: Eugenics ("well-born" in Greek), the pseudoscience of promoting a healthy human gene pool. If traits like eye color and nose shape



*Margaret Sanger herself is oft-remembered for her colorful, offensive phrases, virtually all of which she borrowed from the eugenicists: "unfit," "human weeds," "irresponsible procreation," a "race of morons," "feeble-minded," "racial degeneration," and (channeling Marx) "indiscriminate charity."*

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were heritable, why not intelligence and ability? Scientists like Darwin's own cousin, Francis Galton, the brilliant statistician who coined the term, certainly thought they were. It was time that Man recognized this fact and took control of his destiny. As the logo of the Second International Eugenics Congress declared, "Eugenics is the self-direction of human evolution."

Perversely, that meant grappling with modern medicine and abundant food supplies which were interfering with the laws of natural selection, leading the "unfit" to reproduce instead of dying off as they used to. The result—echoing Gobineau—was obvious: European civilization would breed itself into oblivion if left unchecked.

What followed this revelation was an amazing explosion of eugenics leagues across Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. "If religion was the opium of the people," Spiro notes, "eugenics was the religion of the aristocrats."

Their ideas varied greatly, though. For example, Theodore Roosevelt and Winston Churchill both expressed mild eugenic ideas, but devotees like Clarence Gamble (heir to the Procter & Gamble soap fortune) and Margaret Sanger wanted to establish a federal population bureau to license would-be parents. This was the height of social engineering: Remaking the entire world's population by controlling who has children.

Spiro theorizes that eugenics especially appealed to Grant's Northeastern sensibility that old America was in decline and could only be saved by a firm patrician hand. Less convincing is how Spiro attributes so much of eugenics' appeal to latent Puritanism and postmillennial eschatology, since so many of its prominent adherents were New Englanders. To be sure, there's a nugget of truth in this claim. But this writer would point to eugenicists' universal characteristic: A trust in designated experts to solve the world's most pressing concerns, a belief incompatible with any notion of original sin. Eugenics is gone in 2022, but social engineering and a dogmatic belief in Scientism is as strong as ever—and its most faithful disciples are Silicon Valley tech elites.

Regardless, Grant took to his new religion with a zeal, founding the Galton Society to propagate the works of Darwin, Galton, and other early eugenicists.

As a conservationist, Grant wanted to separate people into the "producing classes" and the "worthless types" in order to preserve the entire Nordic race. Alcoholism, insanity, idiotism, poverty, and even criminal behavior could be eradicated through selective breeding—with help from an activist government.

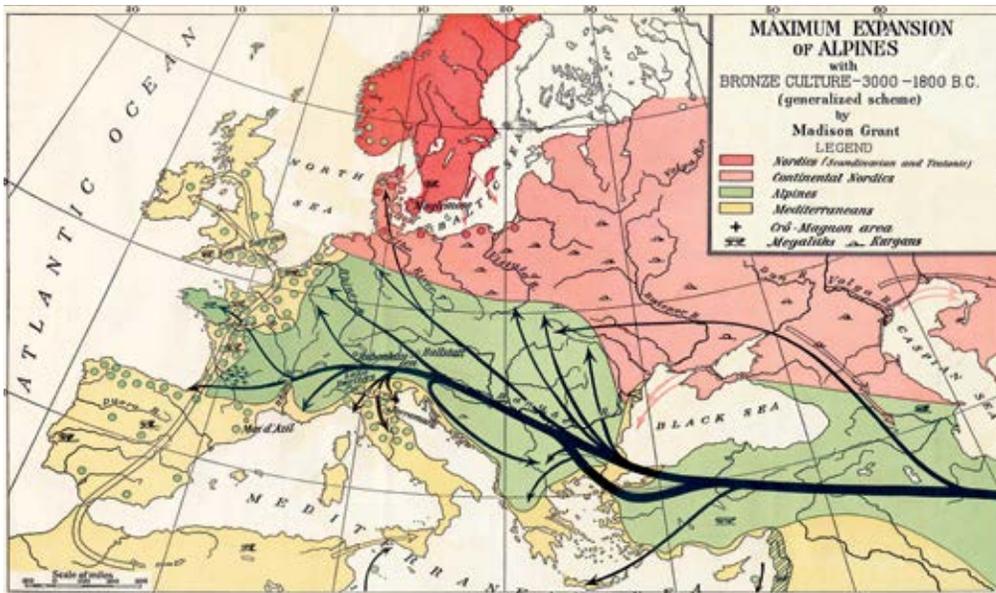
By the early 1920s there were three major eugenics organizations in the country working toward this goal. Grant was involved in all three. In 1922 he founded the Eugenics Committee of the United States, a lobbying group with board members drawn from influential groups such as Sanger's American Birth Control League, the direct predecessor of Planned Parenthood. The committee aimed high: Saving America from "race suicide" by "indiscriminate immigration, criminal degenerates," and other "unfit" individuals. One of its first acts was to circulate literature proving that eugenics was perfectly compatible with Scripture. It even rewarded pastors who encouraged the fittest members of their flocks to outbreed the rest.

One of Grant's staunchest allies was Charles Davenport, a zoologist-turned-eugenicist and founder of the infamous Eugenics Record Office on Long Island, itself bankrolled by the Rockefellers and Carnegie Institute. Few individuals deserve greater credit for spreading eugenics worldwide. One of his top employees was Harry H. Laughlin, future president of the American Eugenics Society and a close friend of Margaret Sanger. Amazingly, Laughlin proposed legislation enacting forced sterilization that formed the basis of the Nazis' 1934 sterilization law, which sterilized 400,000 people by 1945 to the approval of numerous eugenicists, Sanger among them.

Grant was a board member of a Davenport spin-off group, the Eugenics Research Association, which brought together eugenicists in an annual conference. Davenport helped Grant write the latter's magnum opus, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), a popular examination of Bronze Age immigration and theoretical Aryan anthropology through the ages that formed a new "racial history of Europe."

As mentioned before, race was the lens that could explain everything from the collapse of Alexander the Great's empire (mixing pure Macedonian and corrupt Asiatic blood) to Mexico's interminable problems with effective governing (Spanish interbreeding with Indians). Grant theorized that harsh European winters made the Nordic race hardy and powerful, equipping them to conquer their swarthy, "stunted" southern neighbors to form the best of modern European aristocracy.

But now Nordic America was being swarmed with "worthless races" who could never be properly assimilated because of their inferior genes. Black Americans were the proof: "It has taken us fifty years to learn that speaking English, wearing good clothes, and going to school and to church, does not transform a negro into a white man," Grant wrote.



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## Two Sides of the Same Coin

Eugenicists' fear of racial intermixing made them natural allies with the feminists of the powerful birth control movement. While contraception is widespread today, few people are aware that in the 1920s "birth control" doubled as an ideology of women's liberation from childbearing. This put it squarely between the two other reigning ideologies of the day: Eugenics and socialism, which themselves occasionally overlapped. Sanger's father, for instance, was a radical socialist and amateur phrenologist while her husband was close to leading communists and

syndicalists (a strain of labor union-led socialism).

Sanger herself is oft-remembered for her colorful, offensive phrases, virtually all of which she borrowed from the eugenicists: "unfit," "human weeds," "irresponsible procreation," a "race of morons," "feeble-minded," "racial degeneration," and (channeling Marx) "indiscriminate charity."

Sanger maintained a "Selected Reading List on Sterilization" that included Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race*. At one point she even declared that eugenics and birth control "should be and are the right and left hand of one body" since both movements were concerned with *who* reproduces and *how often*.

The American Birth Control League's board was filled with eugenicists from the Right and Left, among them Lathrop Stoddard and Georges Lapouge, a close friend of Grant who argued that France should replace its revolutionary slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" with the decidedly colder "Determinism, Inequality, Selection." (Amazingly, Lapouge predicted in the 1880s that people in the twentieth century "will slaughter each other by the million because of a difference of a degree or two in the cephalic index," a prophecy that came true *because* of his racial theories.)

Eugenicists (including Grant, Davenport, and Laughlin) joined birth control advocates such as Marie Stopes (whom I've called Britain's Margaret Sanger) at the 1935 World

A map from American eugenicist Madison Grant's 1916 book, *The Passing of the Great Race*.

The book was a smash hit among critics, though it only sold modestly. It proved extremely useful in advocating for race-based immigration restrictions. The book also paved the way for eugenics to become mainstream in American universities, 75 percent of which offered eugenics courses by the late 1920s.

Unsurprisingly, *The Passing of the Great Race* also struck a chord with the leaders of the Third Reich, who agreed with Grant that "force and not sentiment" were the true basis of government and were prepared to do something awful about it. At the Nuremberg Trials following World War II, Waffen-SS Major General Karl Brandt actually cited Grant's book as part of his defense for torturing, mutilating, and euthanizing concentration camp victims—an American, after all, had come up with the idea first and called it "science." Brandt was merely putting it into practice! (Damningly, later revised editions removed embarrassing references to power and dropped from the bibliography Chamberlain and Gobineau, who'd become liabilities after the U.S. declared war on Nordic, Aryan Germany in 1917.)

Grant's book had a tremendous effect on another rising eugenics popularizer, Theodore Lathrop Stoddard, who term "under-man" (in German, *Untermensch*) in books such as *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy* (1920) and other pseudo-scientific/historical books.



*Mass immigration transformed the entire character of Boston from old-stock English Puritanism to the “Irish Riviera.”*

Population Conference in Berlin, two years after Hitler took power. The conference unabashedly called for government restrictions on reproduction and the need for eugenics to carve a path for the future.

## Stemming the Immigrant Tide

Grant and his allies soon turned to halting the flow of new “inferiors” to the country. Immigration to the United States was nothing new in the 1890s; what *was* new was the scale and origin. While concerns about Italian, Jewish, and Polish immigrants seem quaint to us today, recall that in Grant’s era there was no example for this kind of assimilation.

The period between 1880 and 1920 experienced an unprecedented surge of immigration in human history, with the percentage of foreign-born Americans averaging an incredible 14 percent of the total population. (For reference, it dropped to under 8 percent in 1990 and rose again in 2020 to 13.5 percent). The short-term effect was to destabilize much of the country’s eastern half as millions of new Americans jostled with native-born citizens. For example, mass immigration transformed the entire character of Boston from old-stock English Puritanism to the “Irish Riviera.” New York practically exploded with Jewish ghettos—an import from Italy and eastern Europe—and ethnic slums and neighborhoods (Chinatown, Little Italy, Little Poland, etc.).

With the benefit of over a century of hindsight—and two world wars behind us—it’s easy to recognize many of our own ancestors in this “melting pot” (a term eugenicists scorned) and think that their assimilation into it was inevitable. American culture didn’t break down, it flourished and expanded. Still, the nation at the turn of the century also needed time to absorb its recent millions before it could take in more. Yet it’s next to impossible to separate anti-mass immigration hawks’ genuine concerns from racial motives.

Grant and his contemporaries saw that America’s proud colonial past was inexorably slipping away. His skepticism of unbridled immigration was founded both on Aryan theo-

ries as well as a sharp knowledge of how ancient Rome was brought down: The entrance of huge Germanic hordes who failed to uphold the empire’s language, customs, or law.

More mundanely, many Americans feared that the nation would be swamped with people coming from authoritarian states who didn’t understand (or care) for its republican political traditions—a belief confirmed when they watched new immigrants sell their votes to the Democratic political machine at New York’s Tammany Hall. Few of these immigrants spoke English or grasped English Common Law, the mortar holding the country together, nor were they Protestant, the religion of practically all of the founders.

Even sympathetic observers could reasonably ask how so many millions could be assimilated in a few generations. Grant and his allies were certain they couldn’t be. They declared that it was only a small step from Ellis Island to drowning the country in foreigners who couldn’t possibly continue the spirit of the American founding.

Grant and the Eugenics Committee launched a lobbying campaign to enact severe immigration restrictions against “lesser” races in Europe and Asia. Congress responded by enacting a literacy test in 1917, an emergency racial quota in 1921, and a near-halt to all immigration in 1924, which it justified using *The Passing of the Great Race*.

## Forced Sterilization

But that was just the start. With immigration curbed, the eugenicists turned to sterilizing the “unfit.” They found an ally in the Supreme Court’s “progressive” majority, which upheld Virginia’s forced sterilization law in *Buck v. Bell* (1927). That decision allowed states to sterilize prison inmates deemed too “feeble-minded” or “imbecilic” for their own good.

As justice and “progressive” icon Oliver Wendell Holmes famously explained, “three generations of imbeciles are enough.”

Of course, eugenicists wanted to go much further—one supporter applauding the decision called for all Christian “fundamentalists” to be sterilized as well, reflecting the battle between liberals and orthodox Evangelicals raging at the time. A few more aimed to deport black Americans to Africa as part of a proposed “Racial Integrity Act.” Amazingly, they found support in a radical black nationalist and segregationist: Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican immigrant to the United States who believed integration with whites to be “race suicide” for the “new Negro.” (Garvey also anointed himself provisional president of the united Africa he proposed to build.)

## The End of an Era

Yet for all its might it was clear by the mid-1920s that eugenics was losing its powerful influence in government and the scientific community. It’d taken decades to build—only to collapse in a scant few years.

One cause was the scientific community’s shift from attributing behavior and culture to nurture, rather than biology. Spiro also points out major demographic changes—black Americans’ mass migration to northern cities, the growth in Jewish scientists and scholars, even the Great Depression’s equalizing effects in the bread line—that undermined the eugenicists’ vision of strict, unequal social strata. By the 1930s, many of the supposedly unassimilable groups (Italians, Greeks, Poles) considered themselves as white as anyone of German or British stock, and few could seriously disagree.

But the silver bullet that slew eugenics was, of course, the Third Reich, where sterilization measures reached their high-water mark. Britain and the United States may have originated the idea, but the Nazis took eugenics and Darwinism to their natural conclusions. “National socialism is nothing but applied biology” was a slogan among Nazi leadership, Spiro rightly reminds us.

To go further, Hitler’s empire should be seen as the ultimate experiment in eugenics, state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, and racial pseudoscience, never to be repeated in a God-governed world. Even in Grant’s day there were some who attributed much of Hitler’s obsession with “cleansing” and “purity” to *The Passing of the Great Race*, which is probably only a modest exaggeration—though Hitler was also an avid vegetarian and conservationist who shunned alcohol and cigarettes. Eerily, Grant’s

last major endeavor was to co-organize an International Hunting Exposition in Berlin to foster goodwill among hunters, the brainchild of *Luftwaffe* chief and Reichstag president Hermann Goering. It was a fitting end for the complex man who both saved the redwoods and empowered National Socialism.

After 1945 Americans couldn’t separate the image of the concentration camps from eugenics. But the death of Nazism was hardly the end of sterilization.

Many of the eugenicists’ underlying assumptions were absorbed by the population control movement in the 1950s, with its theory of “race betterment” through contraception and sterilization (now “family planning,” a term coined by Margaret Sanger to sell her theory of women’s liberation through birth control). After 1945, eugenics merely dropped the lab coat for a tuxedo and rebranded itself “philanthropy.”

I’ve documented how so-called philanthropists representing the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations encouraged India’s socialist government to forcibly sterilize millions of men and women in the 1950s and ‘60s. Those who resisted had food and employment withheld. Others were beaten or even shot. It got so bad that the country’s northern provinces were colloquially known as the “vasectomy belt.” At one point President Lyndon Johnson refused to provide food to the famished country until it agreed to incentivize sterilization. The World Bank even loaned India \$66 million for sterilization efforts in the 1970s before the idea (thankfully) petered out.

(Don’t think these philanthropoids have changed—Ford, Rockefeller, and others still fund a frightening array of anti-human causes, from (often illegal) abortions in Africa, to second- and third-trimester abortifacients, and “green” apocalypse fanatics.)

Madison Grant didn’t live to see even any of this. He died in 1937, two years before the outbreak of World War II and eight years before most of the West discovered the horrors of the Holocaust. We’ll never know how he would’ve reacted to his theory put into bloody practice.

But like so many so-called progressives, Grant never had to live with the consequences of his own ideology. Only “lesser” people did. ■

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