



Discrimination:

The Right of The Individual To Discriminate on the Basis of Race or Sex

By: David McDonagh

Liberalism is a moral paradigm. In judging whether it is suitable or not, the facts do have to be taken into account. But behind the factual debates in which liberal propagandists engage, we have the essence of their message, and that is the purely moral one that all individuals should have the most extensive freedom compatible with a similar liberty for all. This includes, of course, the right to reject people on any basis at all and, most certainly, on the basis of race and sex should that be the wish of the individual.

Equality in aim but privilege in result

In recent years there has been a great deal of fuss over what has been labeled 'racism' and 'sexism'. This moralising has often been held to be liberal but is, in fact, very corrupt from a liberal point of view. It usually is a prologue for a demand for female or black privilege. Privilege means the law coerces to get favouritism; making the excluded under-privileged in the sense of their having to honour the privilege. In doing this, freedom has to be scotched by the state.

From a liberal point of view the demand for privilege embodied in the laws

against sex and race discrimination is a corrupt one. That it has been made such a fetish in the USA, the UK, and elsewhere (since 1945, if not before), seems to bear this judgement out. For the propaganda, both to get the laws enacted and to enforce them, has been done in less than sober terms; indeed done in terms often approaching hysteria. This is more the case with race than sex, but neither have been calm.



It is a fact that some people hate others just on grounds of race or sex. The reasons for this phenomenon may not be simple or uniform, but some have held their hatred so dear that it has led them to suicide. Otto Weininger wrote that 'no men who think really deeply about women retain a high opinion of them; men either despise women or they have never thought seriously about them.' At 24 he resigned from life on that note, as it was surely his right to do. In *Misogynies* (1990) Joan Smith assumes that hating women is, somehow, immoral in itself. Well, that's a possible view, but it is no more liberal than Weininger's or its opposite, that women are marvellous. This is the opinion that most men hold, contrary to what Joan Smith attempts to show in her book. The liberal moral is for the most extensive tolerance for both extremes, as long as that is compatible with not harming others.

Similarly, many hold miscegenation to be totally immoral. Some hold that it is

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so because the scions of such mating will find a home in neither race. Others hold that it does damage to the gene pool of an aesthetic nature and that, in future, people may not be able to tell from the phenotype of their mate what their offspring will look like. In contrast to this, many feel that physical appearance is irrelevant, or rather that it should be. As we can't help what race we are born into, they feel that it's downright immoral to discriminate on that basis. Well, neither of those views is the liberal creed, though many mistakenly feel the latter notion is near the essence of liberalism. What liberalism really holds is that there should be tolerance for the most extensive discrimination, on any sort of criterion that the chooser thinks fit.

All have the right to attempt to canvass, but those they attempt to win over do not even owe them the attention of a polite refusal. They can ignore them *in toto*; a practice attractive young females exercise regularly with their admirers. Indeed, most people clearly understand liberal rights when it comes to problems arising when boy meets girl. Here discrimination is tolerated by most people to the proper extent that liberalism also holds should be allowed in employment, with neighbours, and in other aspects of social life.

Apartheid can be freely chosen

Apartheid came to be held to be state-imposed apartheid *ipso facto*, and as such it is quite illiberal, but no more so than other acts of coercion. But the phenomenon we see in US cities like Chicago, Atlanta and the like, where blacks keep to one side of town, is apartheid free of the state. And while those who love the intermixing of peoples should be free to moralise for their longed-for ends, it is not one iota a liberal stance that they are advocating. And when the state backs them up in an attempt to brainwash the public at the

tax-payers' expense, it could hardly be more illiberal.

There is an obvious area where the modern fad of opposing discrimination on the basis of race and sex emerges as illiberal: the attempt by those who stand for such black or female privilege to ban free speech on the issue. Here even the Nazis are more liberal than, say, the 'Young liberals' showed themselves to be in the 1970s. No doubt the tolerance of the 'Nazis' of the '70s was only a prelude to the sort of intolerance that the 'Bolshevik'-left display out of power as well as in it (though in this ploy they are that bit less thuggish than the Leninists). The idea seems to be that it is fine to abuse physically and verbally those we disagree with on some issues. Those who attacked Eysenck, Powell, Wilson (the socio-biologist), and Tebbit, surely know they are in aid of privilege rather than that of freedom, for they are directly curbing the freedom of the victim. The sort of bad manners they display on those occasions shows, among other things, a lack of self-respect. They give us evidence that they are even more illiberal than the Nazis. They oppose racism and sexism on the grounds that it's cruel and yet they show themselves willing to be cruel to the racists.

They themselves ensure we get the sort of bad behaviour they claim to detest.

Slavery and discrimination not contrary to great religions

The United Nations recently threw out the notion - which it had held for a few years - that Zionism was racist. But the notion was factually right, even if it was not quite fair to single out Israel more than other states. Indeed, if the U.N. want to hunt down the racists they may have to take on God Himself, for the Bible tells us that Jews ought to discriminate on the basis of race. They should not make bondsmen, or slaves, of

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Jews but they should do so of others, and those others, and their families, should be kept in bondage forever:

And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your Children, to inherit them for a possession: they shall be your bondsmen forever: but over your brethren the children of Israel ye shall not rule one over the other with rigour. (LEVITICUS 25:46)

Islam and Christianity did not reject this in their early years, and it may well be that all the attacks the Jews have suffered over the years could be down to their enemies envy just because they accepted the notion that the Jews are the chosen race.

Wilberforce got it wrong when he held slavery to be alien to Christianity. And the Black Muslims of the USA celebrate a religion that endorsed the slavery of their African ancestors. A Catholic friend of mine, Owen Morgan, once said to me fiercely, 'Most people are ignorant of the nature of Christianity. They think it is nice and comfortable. They confuse it with the bourgeois ethics of John Stuart Mill.' It is liberalism that disapproves of slavery, not the great western religions of Judaism, Islam, or Christianity. In the East, Hinduism set up the caste system that was the first apartheid. But should the U.N. set out to ban the great religions? Surely it would be folly to attempt to do so.

It is well to remember that the first slaves in the West Indies were not black slaves from Africa but white ones from Ireland. Cromwell sent many Irish to be slaves in the wake of his victory over them. When they won their freedom, they often passed on their names to the slaves from Africa. Another fact is that although the slaver ships lost many lives crossing the Atlantic ocean, they, nevertheless, had a far better survival rate than did the British Navy, and most of the sailors in

the Navy were there only owing to the press-gang system. So slavery in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries is not unique to blacks. It was the emerging liberal creed that ended it for one and all.

Los Angeles and earlier riots

A major factor in the riots recently in Los Angeles, and the earlier ones in the USA and Britain, has been the laws set up against the elementary civil liberty to be able to discriminate on the basis of race and sex; particularly so on race. If Rodney King had been white then there would have been no excuse for looting. (For many whites do suffer at the hands of the police; not only has the writer thus suffered but so have his close friends. That the police do abuse the public is typical of state monopolies. We all suffer abuse from state monopolies.) As things were, the rioters felt justified in rioting by tit-for-tat, because of the element of racialism that may have featured in King's beating. But the rights and wrongs of King's case could not so easily be held as an excuse for attacking the Koreans' shops (itself quite obviously racist) if we did not have black privilege. For we may note that in both the USA and Britain, the Asians from India and China have been far less corrupted by this privilege. And their shops are often burnt in riots.

The riots were fun for the looters in the short run, and they have even paid off in terms of extra taxpayers' money in the long run. Mr. Bush has already promised extra taxpayers' money for Los Angeles. Thus the state forces us to reward rioting. Riots become a celebration of racist violence by the privileged blacks on the other underprivileged races, who are later taxed to add insult to the injury.

Many hold that this is the result of perverse liberalism, but that is a complete misunderstanding, for liberalism is out to repeal all privilege, including the laws on race and sex.

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Racist muggers

If the riots are a celebration of black privilege then mugging is a routine activity, with the same tit-for-tat motive.

In my area of Birmingham, every week some eleven women, usually over 60, get beaten up and robbed (of what few pounds they have) by black youths. I got this statistic from the police after my own mother had been so robbed.

If the blacks really want equality, then the removal of their privilege will put them nearer to that end. As it is, they are answering mere discrimination with real violence, and they feel they are winning lots of respect. If this is so, it is a respect they do not deserve.

A quest for female privilege

It is folly to hold, as Mrs. Gorman has recently done, that because we only have six per cent of women MPs in the House of Commons, they thereby must be facing discrimination in the process. Similarly, it does not follow that there is a special barrier to entry for women to go on to be professors in the academic world simply because only three per cent of them are now professors. The fact is that not only are most women not career-minded but most men are not so either. For most workers a job is a means to an end, not a career. The fuss that feminism makes over careers lets us see that it is not a mass movement but an attempt to build up minority privileges for special interest groups. Mrs. Gorman's recent bill, which Clare Short and Edwina Currie have backed, will privilege the few women who are keen to become MPs vis-à-vis the bigger minority of men who desire to become MPs. As such it could hardly be more illiberal, for liberalism is against all privilege: special rights for a few that the state enforces by coercion. Harriet Martineau rightly said,

in criticism of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Rights of Women* (1792), that the world is always willing to accept what we have to offer, whether we are male or female. Most people never want to be MPs or professors, and fewer women do than men. Oddly, while women are in such a minority, it may well be easier for them to become professors or get into the House of Commons: when Bernadette Devlin put her mind to it in the late 1960s, she became an MP before she was 23; novelty may be an advantage.

Liberal heresies

Liberalism has had many heresies, all to be tolerated of course, but all tending to grow to be intolerant of liberalism itself (in fact, if not explicitly). Democracy is, perhaps, the major heresy today but equality, and its scions of anti-racism and anti-sexism, are certainly rivals to majority-rule; they are knowingly, and perhaps bravely, set on brain-washing the majority out of their sinning ways of discriminating on the basis of race and sex. Yet this ideal of equality has many faults in practice and therefore it is a poor ideal. Moreover, it is hypocritical, for no one really wants it. We all discriminate and we all want to discriminate. To see evidence of this we only need to take a look at the phenomenon of friendship, which is inherently based on discrimination. Indeed discrimination on the basis of race and sex may well be more obvious but it is not more arbitrary than the many other criteria that we all use, day in, day out. It is merely part of the inequality and social discrimination habitual to all our minds, and it even crops up in fiction: whenever we read a novel or watch a film, we, perhaps unwittingly, latch onto a hero or leader to carry us through the story. It may well be folly to feel we are special, but it's folly that is almost part of the human condition.

Equality Is Insincere

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But even if we were sincere in the quest for equality, the state is hardly up to getting this end for us. When the state goes for equality it usually promotes privilege. All the state does with taxpayers' money, it does at the expense of other people. Not only is Peter is robbed to aid Paul, but to administer the process of giving some benefits to Paul, Peter has to be taxed a little more than the benefits Paul gets, and often a lot more. It is not a zero-sum game but a negative-sum game. The market, by contrast, is a positive-sum game: we only buy things when we gain thereby more than the worth of the money we pay out for them; they are only sold to us when the seller gains more in the money than the good was worth to him at the time of sale. Thus both sides gain and trade itself is quite productive of utility to both sides in the transaction. Unlike state action where the cost of administrative logistics are an extra tax on the tax-payers, the logistics of the market are polycentric and are not extra to the price. So the state can only act at the expense of others and can only give privilege and victims of privilege-and that's contrary to equality. It's true that the market does not make for equality either but, in fact, it does so more than any other institution (though there are aspects of the market that ensure that Equality will never quite be attained).

With complete free trade (and this means trade free of the state, not free of how people choose to discriminate), we will tend to get people following high wages which go into the lines of production where there is greater public demand. It's odd how the politicians tend to forget, if they ever knew, that 'market forces' are just people buying and selling. As this process of adjustment goes on, the result tends to equalise wages for one and all. This is offset by barriers to entry, and race and sex may form those - as may trade unions. Those barriers may be

illiberal when they result in violent assaults on foreigners or blacklegs or scabs, etc, but they are not illiberal in themselves; for unlike the state, coercion is not of their essence. But a bigger source of inequality on the market is innovation and changes in demand. These are the major reasons wages will never be quite equal.

On the market we are free to choose. There can be nothing illiberal in free choice between consenting adults. But discrimination is of the essence of choice.

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