

Carlsbad 1819

Like another Chouannerie

Woke racism

July 30, 2018 by Nulle Terre Sans Seigneur

Durant Drake (1878-1933) was one of many minor American pragmatists who is remembered only in specialized bibliographies, being obscure to an extent that there is an article about him on the French Wikipedia, but not in that of his native tongue. I don't know why. In any event, his punditry is as interesting a time capsule as any, in *America faces the future* (<https://archive.org/details/americafacesthef00drakiala>) (1922).

The book's stated goal is described: "Many books have been written to explain to foreign peoples what we are; such books naturally tend to self-congratulation and eulogy of our virtues, for it is an instinct to speak highly of ourselves to others. This volume takes a graver and more critical attitude; it has been written not as a description of what we are but as a reminder of what we ought to be. Its readers are asked to consider in these pages what our priceless heritage of American ideals actually is, and how far we are being faithful to our inheritance."

For the most part, it is the standard Eastern seaboard progressivism one would get from *The Nation*, *Harper's*, *The New Republic*, *McClure's* and similar tripe — until we get to race. As always, that's a very fascinating subject.

What you have is a very interesting transitional state between racial egalitarianism and exclusionism, quite the chimera. Actually it probably wasn't that unusual a view in its day. However, it quite blatantly violates the common assumption that accepting racial inequality as natural translates to a commitment on inequality in general. Far from it here, the synthesis of opposites has a weird elegance in its obliviousness.

One could regard it as the precursor to Quillette-style liberalism. Just enough biorealism to keep the white cockades indifferent while mobilizing the agenda of "skeptical inquiry" that instrumentalizes human experience in the service of technocracy. A particular example I have been revisiting recently is the flip-flopping in the American liberal press in the build-up to WWII, as extensively documented in James J. Martin's *American Liberalism and World Politics, 1931-1941*.

p.88-9:

The crux of the negro problem lies in the fact that, on the one hand, we do not want to assimilate them biologically, and, on the other hand, the presence of an unassimilated race so different from our own creates an unhappy social situation. The situation seems permanently unsatisfactory, with no way out. We can, and must, insist on fair treatment for the negroes ; we must respect them and cease to look upon them as inferiors. But we should learn the lesson of our fathers' blunder in bringing them to our shores, and make sure that another such situation does not arise.

Yet just such another situation might arise if the Chinese or Japanese or Hindus were to be allowed to enter our country in any considerable numbers. It is not, again, that these are inferior races. The Chinese and Hindus were civilized while our Caucasian ancestors were still savages; and the Japanese have already shown a capacity for modern methods that everyone admires. It is likely that within a comparatively short time, as history goes, these nations will all be as civilized as our own.

But do we want to intermarry with these races? Are we sure that it would be wise? Certainly most of our people would vigorously repudiate the idea; and these Orientals would form a separate race in our midst, not so ignorant, and let us hope not so ill-treated as the negroes have been, but still aliens, separate, and made to feel their separateness. Candidly, we cannot count on our courtesy to such an alien race living in our midst. Race-prejudice rests on deep-seated human instincts, and it is Utopian to expect it to disappear. It is far wiser to avoid situations that inflame it. We can respect and admire the Orientals in their own homes; we can gladly learn from them and have a happy interchange of students and scholars, travellers and technicians. But occasions for friction and race-wars will be best averted by restrictions which will, in general, keep each race to its own continent.

The policy of Oriental exclusion, then, does not, or should not, rest on any denial of the doctrine of human equality. It rests on the obvious fact that the hybridizing of races, once done, can never be undone. And the complementary fact that another unassimilated race in America would be a constant source of friction and a danger to democracy. These sources of friction we must be wise enough to avoid, whenever possible.

"With the two races physically on different sides of the ocean, we can develop our common national and international interests. But with any considerable immigration to this side, causes of friction would inevitably develop. They might be our fault, but we could not prevent them. Our people have learned their racial lessons in a dangerous school. . . . We have dealt unjustly with the Negro and he submits. We have dealt unjustly with the Indian and he is dead. If we have many Japanese, we shall not know how to deal otherwise than unjustly with them, and very properly they will not submit. The only real safety is in separation."

With the various Caucasian races ("white men") the situation we have discussed will not arise, or, at least, be permanent; for they are all assimilable, and rapidly being assimilated into the American stock. But the question may still be raised whether for other reasons some further restriction of immigration is not desirable.

Many would think this is inconsistent or paradoxical, but it is nothing of the sort. All such seeming paradoxes come from the ignorance that equality is multidimensional, and that one can reject some equalities while accepting others, and accept them very zealously and devotedly.

Anyway, I expect that publications like Quillette will incrementally capture the attention of that segment of woke journalists and pundits who still have a modicum of sense in them, becoming popular as "edgy" things you read secretively and drop unattributed tidbits from. At some point they will achieve

critical mindshare and you will start reading “The behavioral-genetic case for IQ deficit reparations payments.” Then there will emerge another backlash against the new Darwinism involving some sort of pseudo-spiritualized humanism, and the cycle will repeat.

This entry was posted in [Historical insights](#), [Liberalism](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

One thought on “Woke racism”

1. Daniel Gomes says:

August 3, 2018 at 11:00 pm

How could some many have not readily predicated liberalism with the acceptance of race denial? And some of those racialist will even say they reject “blank-slate liberalism”. Surely they must know, however, that the existence of this entity is just an artefact of the rise of Boasian social science conjoined with the great plan to make Nazism the absolute bogeyman and manifestation of evil in reality. It turns out that you can still be for free speech, against nobility and traditional economy even if you discover the blacks have lower IQ and more violent tendencies due genetic dispositions.

But ideas will ultimately circulate in the mainstream according to what is most useful in the moment. Hence this makes for an interesting subject, but the chances of “race” being the operative of counterrevolution is almost as likely as a male birth control pill being a weapon against feminism. Admittedly, the latter idea (which I have read somewhere in the manosphere) is more foolish.

It seems the world is filled with the provincialism of the specialist.

(Also, you haven’t mentioned eugenics in this post. Does that feel like you are beating a dead horse?)

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