

# NBC-TV argues: 'Women are inferior'

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

A news slug in the Aug. 4, 1996 edition of *Executive Intelligence Review's* Daily Morning Briefing for its staff, alerted this reporter to an inside story on NBC-TV coverage of the 1996 Olympics, as it appeared in the Aug. 5 edition of the *New Yorker* magazine. The gist of the matter, is that, according to the *New Yorker*,<sup>1</sup> NBC-TV spokesmen Dick Ebersol and Nicholas Schiavone make an argument which implies that women are inferior to men, both morally and intellectually. Although this writer is not a feminist, himself, he is nonetheless qualified to parody the words of Shakespeare's Marc Antony: Respecting the NBC-TV sports division's Ebersol and Schiavone, this reporter comes here not to praise them, and not to lynch them, but to bury them under a heap of richly deserved humiliation.

According to the *New Yorker's* account, NBC-TV's coverage of the 1996 Olympics was designed to address, and, ostensibly, to insult a pro-feminist audience. Yet, the *New Yorker* writes, "the NBC creed does not depart so much in spirit from a range of feminist theories about differences in gender and narrative." These include Carol Gilligan's 1982 book, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*,<sup>2</sup> and also other feminist writers, including Tania Modleski<sup>3</sup> and French radical feminist Hélène Cixous.<sup>4</sup> The gist of the doctrine is summed up in the referenced Morning Briefing slug: "... men based their thinking on moral reasoning and on abstract, universal principles of law and behavior, while women are more attuned to human relationships and context."<sup>5</sup>

That argument, respecting alleged feminist preferences, parodies the racist sophistries, against African-Americans, by Harvard University's Education Department. In the latter instance, the Harvard professors argue, that African-American

are poorly equipped to deal with those cognitive modes associated with Caucasians' thinking. The professors propose, that African-Americans are suited, by heredity, to an emotional, associative mode of thinking, but not well equipped for cognitive thinking. The professors' argument is: Do not oblige African-Americans to submit themselves to the cognitive education more appropriate for non-African-Americans.

Arthur Jensen wrote in the *Harvard Education Review* in 1969: "There seems to be little question that racial differences in genetically conditioned behavioral characteristics, such as mental abilities, should exist, just as physical differences. . . . There is an increasing realization among students of the psychology of the disadvantaged that the discrepancy in their average performance cannot be completely or directly attributed to discrimination or inequalities in education. . . . So all we are left with are various lines of evidence, no one of which is definitive alone, but which, viewed all together, make it a not unreasonable hypothesis that genetic factors are strongly implicated in the average Negro-white intelligence difference."

From this, Jensen concludes that the "post-Sputnik era" educational "emphasis on cognitive and conceptual learning" is "to the disadvantage of many children whose mode of learning is predominantly associative. . . . It may well be true that many children today are confronted in our schools with an educational philosophy and methodology which were mainly shaped in the past, entirely without any roots in these children's genetic and cultural heritage. . . . Educational researchers must discover and devise teaching methods that capitalize on existing abilities for the acquisition of those basic skills which students will need in order to get good jobs when they leave school."<sup>6</sup>

The logic of NBC-TV's feminists, is identical to that of the Harvard racialists. If lack of what is described as a manly disposition, for use of cognition, is deemed characteristic of women, as the Harvard Education Department has alleged to be the case for African-Americans, then, women are being described as intellectually inferior to men. Apparently, the sources upon which the NBC-TV sports division has relied,

1. David Remnick, "Letter from Atlanta: Inside-Out Olympics, NBC Finds Its Feminist Side," *New Yorker*, Aug. 5, 1996, p. 26.

2. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 184.

3. Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women* (New York: Routledge, 1984); *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture* (Bloomington, Ind.: University of Indiana Press, 1986).

4. Hélène Cixous, *Coming to Writing & Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991); *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

5. *New Yorker*, op. cit., p. 27.

6. Arthur Jensen, "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" *Harvard Education Review*, Vol. 39, No. 1, Winter, 1969, pp. 80, 82, and 116-17.

also believe that women are inferior morally, as well as intellectually.

In fact, NBC-TV is not to be noted for such qualities as passion for the truth, in any matter. We must not pretend to be surprised by the fact, that its proposition, as to women, is just as false as the obvious racialism of the Harvard professors. To the degree that many women, or numerous African-American individuals, have heretofore lacked the confidence to develop and express their natural cognitive powers, this exhibited lack of confidence is the result of oppressive discrimination against them during past and present generations.

True, some feminists and so-called "black nationalists" seem to have adopted such insulting views of themselves, as in what is termed a "reaction formation." As the famous, late Bruno Bettelheim would have concurred, the fact that the victim of oppression puts his master's shackles upon himself each morning, does not make him less his master's slave, or his imposed condition of life less cruel.

One might shrug one's shoulders, and drop the subject, muttering, "What better might we expect of a half-witted pair of NBC-TV grandstand jocks?" But, the NBC-TV argument implies that all major television broadcasting, especially "soap operas," is based upon the same assumption, that these networks presume that the women in their audiences are inferior to men, intellectually and morally. This suggests, in turn, that not only "soap operas" and mass-media product marketing are an insult to women, but that most of the leading candidates and their political-campaign advisors, such as the Richard Morris who tumbled out of Roy M. Cohn's family closet, are the types who share the NBC-TV Sports Division's opportunistic view of the "feminine mystique." If so, then, the conclusion must be, that the political campaigns of the principal successful candidates, are based upon an appeal to intellectual and moral backwardness.

However extensive the view expressed by Ebersol and Schiavone, it, like the occasional outbreak of cholera epidemics, is a problem of which the public must be made aware. The *New Yorker* has performed a public service in reporting this disgusting behavior of NBC-TV sports division. Much remains, urgently, to be said. What must be said, goes much deeper than that connection to Harvard racialism which we have already pointed out above. The nature and role of the individual cognitive processes, is a matter beyond the competence of any among today's mass media, the *New Yorker* included. However, it is a matter which lies within the present writer's relatively unique, professional expertise as a working physical economist.

### What is 'cognition'

The demographic history (and pre-history) of the human species demonstrates most forcefully, that there is a fundamental difference between the individual person and the member of that species of higher ape which Britain's Duke of Edinburgh claims himself to represent. Were man, with his

physique, representative of any species of higher ape, the human population's ecological potential (under conditions existing during any part of the recent two millions years of the presently continuing Ice Age cycles) could never have exceeded several millions living individuals. The rise of the human population to the level of several hundred millions, prior to the Fifteenth Century, and to more than five billions presently, is the outgrowth of an accumulation of willful discoveries of principles of nature.

Through using these discoveries to effect willful changes in human productive and other behavior, man has increased our species' mastery of the universe, and thus our *potential relative population-density*.<sup>7</sup> Not only has mankind's potential population-density (per square kilometer of the Earth's surface) grown; the rate of infant mortality has declined, the life expectancy at all levels has been increased (until the introduction of "post-industrial" utopian policies, about thirty years ago), and the physical productive powers of labor per capita have been increased.

The rate of progress since the middle of the Fifteenth Century exceeds qualitatively (hyperbolically) all discoverable rates existing at earlier times in history, in any part of the planet. The establishment of the modern form of nation-state, the movement toward universal education by such states, and the fostering of investment in relatively vast public infrastructural development, and in scientific and technological progress, are the chief reasons for the recent qualitative improvement (until a decline introduced to government policy-shaping, as pro-Malthusian axioms, about thirty years ago).

The most important of those discoveries in mathematical physics, by means of which we are presently better able to understand this distinctive superiority of the human species, is the contribution of Bernhard Riemann, in his famous, 1854 habilitation dissertation.<sup>8</sup> If we examine the entire history of extended modern European civilization, since A.D. 1461 France, under Louis XI, applying Riemann's discovery to the physical-economic facts, we gain, thus, the standpoint for understanding all of the demographic advancement of humanity throughout the span of our knowledge of combined pre-history and history of human existence.

By applying Riemann's discovery to study of the role of scientific and technological progress over the period 1461-1965, we are able to uncover the efficient connection between cumulative discoveries of principle, and the increase of the relative physical-productive powers of labor, per capita, per

7. For an "engineering level" definition of the term, "potential relative population-density," see the second English edition of the present writer's textbook: *So, You Wish to Learn All About Economics?* (Washington, D.C.: Executive Intelligence Review, 1995).

8. "On The Hypotheses Which Underlie Geometry" [*Über die Hypothesen, welche der Geometrie zu Grunde liegen, Bernhard Riemanns gesammelte mathematische Werke*, H. Weber, ed., reprint of the Stuttgart, Teubner edition of 1902, (New York City: Dover Publications, Inc., 1953), pp. 272-87].

household, and per square kilometer of the Earth's surface.

Each of the experimentally validated discoveries of principle, has the quality of a "dimension" in Riemann's modified form of physical geometry. It is the density of the accumulation of such "dimensions," which correlates with the way in which mental potential occurs in a form translatable into increase of productive potential. This is the aspect of the process of human mental activity, in which we locate the activity known as "cognition." The expression of such "cognition" in respect to validatable discoveries of principle in Classical art-forms, is identical with the occurrence of cognition in scientific discovery.

The question which the reader must pose to himself, is: What is different about those mental processes in which a validatable act of discovery of principle occurs, from other qualities of mental phenomena? The answer is most easily identified by including reference to pre-John Dewey forms of what is termed the Platonic "Classical humanist education," such as that fostered by the Brotherhood of the Common Life, the Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts Bay Colony, the development of the co-thinkers of our Benjamin Franklin, or Wilhelm von Humboldt's brilliantly successful educational reforms for Nineteenth-Century Germany.

The characteristic feature of a Platonic form of Classical humanist education, is located in the fact that the student is never asked merely to learn the leading discoveries in science and Classical art-forms. Education is centered around prompting the pupil to relive the experience of re-making the relatively valid discoveries of principle, as those discoveries were actually experienced by the original discoverer. It is the repeated experience of reenacting such discoveries of principle in the pupil's own, sovereign, internal mental processes, which is key to the absolute, and vast superiority of a Classical humanist form of education over any other which has ever existed. This mode of education is that which is uniquely designed to develop the pupil's conscious mastery of his, or her own cognitive powers.

It is through the repeated experience of remaking valid original discoveries of principle, within the sovereign precincts of the pupil's mind, that the student becomes conscious of the special quality of phase-shift in mental state, which distinguishes creative from both irrational and merely logical thinking. This quality of thinking is associated with a distinct emotional state, which Plato and the St. Paul of the Christian Epistles identifies by the Classical-Greek term, *agapē*. This is the special emotional state which Plato identifies by a quality usually banned from today's U.S. courtrooms: love of justice, and love of truth; for the Apostle Paul, it is the key to the absolute authority of rational morality ("natural law") over positive law, as we may find this in the exemplary *I Corinthians* 1:13.<sup>9</sup>

9. The inseparable relationship between the two, cognition and *agapē*, is key both to understanding Classical art-forms, and to identifying, for example,

In general, since the relevant Classical-Greek works, the distinction between cognition and the qualitatively inferior, merely logical thinking, or the dionysiac-Romantic quality of emotional-associative irrationalism, is correlated with the distinction between *agapē* and *eros*. Whereas, the erotic emotional state is characteristic of all sense-perceptual object-fixation (not only sexual impulses); *agapē* is the distinctive passion associated, in scientific work, with either original, valid types of discovery of principle of nature, or with the reenactment of the original act of discovery within one's own mind. It is sometimes described as "a light turning on" within the features of the person experiencing that insight.

Such a discovery in natural science, or in artistic composition, can never be derived by formal-logical methods of "proof" at the blackboard, for example. Such discoveries in science can never be competently presented within the precincts of generally accepted mathematics; no great artistic composition can be comprehended from the standpoint of grammatical or analogous formalisms. Cognition is transmitted from one person to another, only through those recognizable paradoxes, called "metaphor," which defy pre-existing doctrines of a generally accepted mathematics, defy logical-grammatical, or analogous standards for interpreting mere "information." The paradoxical form in which valid discoveries of principle are communicated, in science or art, is, thus, *metaphor*, in contrast to the *symbolism* of the logician, grammarian, or Aristotelean.<sup>10</sup>

*Eros* is the quality of Romantic, or merely symbolic art-forms, whereas *agapē* is the characteristic of those art-forms, and those scientific discoveries premised upon the principle of metaphor.

Restated appropriately, *eros* is the quality of passion associated with sensory objects; *agapē* is the quality of passion associated with *Platonic ideas*. By Platonic ideas, one signifies a mental object which has demonstrably necessary, and efficient existence, such as a demonstrably efficient principle of physical science, but which belongs to the type of mental object which can not be perceived directly as a distinct object by the senses. Restated: A Platonic idea, is a demonstrably, efficiently existing object, which can be accessed for knowledge only through the sovereign individual mind's act of cognition. Such acts, otherwise identified as *Platonic ideas*, are the set of mental objects which is commonly subsumed under

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the root of those tendencies in folk-music which lead into the Classical compositions of J.S. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, et al. Contrary to the doctrine of Thomas Hobbes, and also that sterile Aristotelean, Immanuel Kant, it is the yearning for metaphorical conceptions which evoke the *agapic* mood, which inspires the artist and audience to seek out those pathways of artistic development which lead from such qualities of folk music into the emergence of the Classical forms. It is the same for all forms of Classical art, as distinct from the erotic quality of hatefulness inhering in the dionysiac, the Romantic, and the Modernist, for example.

10. See Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "On the Subject of Metaphor," *Fidelio*, Fall, 1992.

the proper use of the interchangeable terms *reason* and *cognition*. *Love of truth* and *love of justice*, are among the exemplary *Platonic ideas* which exist only in the domain of *cognition*.

It is the mental quality called *reason*, or *cognition*, which NBC-TV's Sports Division (and soap-opera division) deny to the women who are credulous enough to take pleasure from NBC-TV's product. Such are the mental qualities which the racist Harvard professors seek to ban from the education of African-Americans, just as the authors of the treasonous Confederacy made it a capital crime, that a slave-owner should permit an African-American slave to learn to read.

For centuries, the degraders of women sought to keep them in the status of virtual household chattels, by denying women access to efficient development of the cognitive powers, just as the U.S.A.'s "southern slave-owner aristocracy" sought to brutalize their slaves. Today, that function of oppression of women has been assumed by a virtual *Gestapo* of "political correctness," otherwise known either as the radical feminists, or Dick Morris-like hucksters, such as NBC-TV's Ebersol and Schiavone.

One might recall an amusing, instructive incident, from 1969, when a New York City group of ultra-leftist, feminist women drafted a manifesto proclaiming "feminine nationalism," in reckless parody of varieties of "black nationalism" promoted by McGeorge Bundy's Ford Foundation and similar institutions at that time. After a brief interval, the group of women responsible for that momentary aberration, reflected on where the legendary Amazons might have gone, and withdrew the ludicrously disgusting reference to "nationalism."

### Cognition and society

The crucial feature of the increase of life-expectancy and condition of individual and family life, which radiated from western Europe, in the wake of the 1439-1440 Council of Florence and 1461-1483 monarchy of France's Louis XI, has been the increased emphasis on efforts to establish universal cognitive education, and the nation-state's fostering of investment in scientific and technological progress. Excepting the contrary impulses introduced by the anti-Renaissance forces known as the French and English "Enlightenment" of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, the civilizing impulse radiating from the Fifteenth-Century Golden Renaissance, has been associated with a hyperbolic increase in both the rate of scientific discoveries, and in the fostering of advancement in the human condition through investment in the use of those discoveries as advanced technologies.

Within western Europe, and also elsewhere, the principal political opposition to the Renaissance's fostering of the progressive modern nation-state, has been, inevitably, the ruling oligarchical forces whose interests have been most threatened by the transformation of children of formerly brutalized subjects of feudalism into educated modern citizens. These pro-oligarchy opponents of progress, have been chiefly two: the

landed feudal aristocracy, and the landed aristocracy's sometime allies, but also rivals, the financier aristocracy of the type which ruled Venice then, and the British Empire and Commonwealth from the 1714 accession of George I until today. The banning of state-promoted technological progress, and banning of Classical forms of education in cognition and metaphor from the general population, as Thomas Hobbes exemplifies these policies, has been a leading feature of the oligarchy's efforts to maintain, or to regain the degree of power it enjoyed in the feudal past.

The European oligarchy's anti-Christian, Venetian, racist policy of relegating all "black" Africans to the category of actual or prospective slaves, was a reflection of this oligarchical reaction. Keeping women, the mothers of the population, dumbed down, was critical for the oligarchical reactionaries. The best way to enslave a population, is to inculcate in the victim the passion to defend his "right" to cling to the roots of his "cultural tradition" of being a "dumbed-down" victim. Such slaves, who put their own shackles on each day, are merely typified by those who object to studying the contributions of "dead white European males," and those who espouse the feminism of NBC-TV's jocks Ebersol and Schiavone. A nation which cultivates such disgusting practices, reeks of a doomed civilization, one which has lost the moral fitness to survive.

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