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The Problem of Labelism
By A. White

The words "conservative" and "liberal" seem to have run amok in recent years, eating away at rational discourse like twin tumors in a vital organ. "Right," "left" and sometimes "Republican" and "Democrat" are doing the same. At one time, these were understood to be only rough terms of convenience. Now they seem to have become substitutes for thinking through an issue with an open mind. The first thing many people ask isn't, "Is this a good idea?" but "Is it conservative or liberal?" People seem to select one or the other of these labels and, by that single act, adopt a complete set of positions and arguments on every issue of the day -- an intellectual "package deal."

Thought shrinks to the single, brief process of choosing one's label-- hence my term (label?) "labelism." Not only does the labelist of whatever persuasion no longer have to think through each position separately, he or she no longer has to listen to and ponder the positions of anyone wearing the other team's uniform. Discussions between labelists become shouting matches -- a vocal pugilism that tramples civility.

Along with civility, we lose the search for common ground. Gridlock is the result because our Constitution was designed to force us to make exactly such compromises. Another loss is a healthy caution towards extremists on our own side of the divide. Conservatives should be the first to denounce G. Gordon Liddy and liberals the first to object to university speech codes. Instead, each side indulges its own lunatics -- much as Russian socialists indulged Lenin until they found themselves sent away to camp.

I'm sensitive to the problems of labelism because I don't even slightly fit either label. I could write an essay in all my most "liberal" positions and alienate all conservative friends.

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Election Forecasts, 1996
By A. Young

Colin Powell has decided not to seek the Republican presidential nomination, and the race has suddenly become murkier than ever. Everyone knew that Colin Powell was a sure thing for the Republican spot. The Clinton Staff, anticipating a Powell candidacy, studied video tape searching for a way to attack him. They found none. A senior Clinton staff coordinator characterized a Powell-Clinton race as certain failure for the President.

Now that Powell is no longer a factor, Sen. Bob Dole has stretched out into a comfortable lead in the New Hampshire primaries, but he has not regained all of those supports drawn away by the possibility of Powell's candidacy. This shows that most Republican voters settling for Dole still feel the need for a candidate they can be exited about rather than settle for. The other half-dozen Republican hopefuls don't seem to have a very good chance of filling this role. While Dole remains the man to beat for the nomination, he lacks the invulnerable luster commanded by Powell.

The powerful Republican aggressiveness and solidarity, demonstrated in the '94 elections, seems to be fizzling. Powell's potential candidacy and later withdrawal illustrated the sharp division between the far-Right and moderate Republicans. Even Newt Gingrich's once king-like support has begun to cleave off from the left and right. This is not to say that the Republican machine has fallen into total disrepair, but it is not as well oiled as it was one year ago.

If it is indeed true that the Republican steam engine has already peaked, a non-Powell Republican candidate may be able to win the election by sheer force of momentum. But it will be very close. Recent polls show Bob Dole and Bill Clinton to be in a virtual dead-heat. Polls pitting Bill Clinton against any Republican nominee besides Dole, put
Clinton ahead by a slight margin.

Although the general posture and attitude of the American electorate seems to have shifted to the Right, as illustrated by the mid-term elections, no one can ever count Bill Clinton out. If he does one thing well, it is running a successful campaign. President Clinton was born to be a candidate. Anyone expecting to beat him must possess this same level of overall campaign competence and sheer political savvy. Powell had that, no question.

The name of the game is Republican unity. If they can manage to fully get behind any moderately convincing nominee, a Republican presidency will be likely possibility. This election will not be easily won by the President, but it can be easily lost by the Republicans.

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Democracy and The Resurrection of the Confederacy
by William Barrousse
A sight in Crowley as well as throughout the rest of Acadiana has troubled me a great deal. You may have seen it.
Many cars now display a bumper sticker with a Confederate flag and the motto "Keep It Flying." Aside from that, I have seen several Confederate flags lately, flying from people's front yards or from the back of their trucks.
These displays have me troubled for two reasons. Firstly, I wonder why someone would openly support the Confederacy. The CSA was a wartime enemy of the United States. It is ridiculous to support our one-time enemies (whose relations have not since been mended.) We may be seeing, in Acadiana, a microchasm of the internal threat building across the South.

Although I am a strong supporter of the first amendment, its invocation in this manner is inappropriate. It should not be legal for someone to openly support the enemies of the United States. It is a scary thought that our Constitution can be used in this manner.

I support free speech and believe in the democracy of the United States, that is why I feel so strongly. As Plato believed: democracies, if unchecked, have a strong tendency toward self-destruction. If too
many freedoms are granted, a democracy will eat itself.

Labelism cont. from page 1...

On most issues, I can see a half truth on each side of the divide yearning for its sister half on the other side. My system of values isn't related to either label. I would call it "Christian" except that people now think that means Jerry Falwell and Creation in six days discovered my problem a few years ago when I tried to start a movement to block imposition of "politically correct" orthodoxy in independent schools. Immediately, I found that people who wanted to arm the citizenry with assault rifles and put David Duke in office were counting me as an ally. Opponents assumed that if I thought Europe had more to teach us than the Maldives, then I must want to send black people to Africa, women to the kitchen, and homosexuals to the moon. The labels made it impossible for anyone to distinguish what I was actually saying from what they assumed I must mean.

People have stopped listening to each other past the first sentence because they assume that everything else will match whichever label they put on those first few words.

The "conservative" and "liberal" labels would be less destructive if either represented a coherent, self-consistent philosophy constructed logically from first principles. In fact, each is a self-contradictory jumble based on the alliances of interest groups. Conservatives, for example, speak as if minimizing government interference were their first principle -- but they apply it to major corporations, not to homosexuals or pregnant women. The Liberal principle of helping the poor and downtrodden is one I share, but it hardly helps the poor to defend failed programs merely because they were originally intended to be beneficial.

And so I come to my modest proposal. It is that we indulge in some "politically correct" speech policing and voluntarily swear off the words "conservative" and "liberal" and their various avatars, resolving to consider each issue on its merits, to seriously look for the truth in an opponent's arguments, and to search for new solutions whose only label might be, "None of the above." We might at least achieve a few moments of originality.

How To be Cool...

In the Nineties.

By Lori Humphries.

Wandering through a chat room on America On-Line entitled "STR8 PUNKS ONLY" made me realize how sick our generation has become. This room, consisting of America's teens, could only manage to talk about one thing--drugs.

The Parents of our generation, and even our older siblings, lived in a day where teens generally respected their parents, received less freedoms, and were less malicious. True, some teens exhibited reckless, self-destructive and disrespectful behavior, but most looked down upon them. Today's Society expects delinquency among teens. Our generation's new attitude caused drug use to skyrocket among today's teens. How could it be possibly for teens to respect drugs and not exploit them.

My brother attended high school in the mid-to late eighties. Among his sphere, habitual drug users were absolute losers. Health-as-fashion struck the nation. Remember every woman trying to be like Jane Fonda? Remember Kirk Cameron and Michael J. Fox plastered on the wall of every teenage girl? Just think how Alex Keaton and Mike Seaver differ from Trent Reznor and Kurt Cobain! In the eighties taking care of yourself and being responsible was cool.

The habitual users of the sixties, through the casual use of marijuana, people hooked themselves on harsh heroin and cocaine. The rising generation saw how "uncool" the users of the seventies were, and rebelled creating the glorious health wave of the eighties.

The eighties spawned relatively few
examples of habitual users (John Delorean); however our generation lacks the advantage of having addicts to look down upon. Suddenly, being healthy and popular became utterly unpopular. The standard of "cool" went from being accomplished, to being unclean, abusing yourself, wearing dirty clothes, and hating everything.

No vast war plagues America now. We endure no great suffering. We combat only our society and well being. We bring down no one but ourselves and the young and impressionable Americans. What is "cool" always has, and always will, shape the young. What damned fool decided to make drugs "cool?!" Why did they give their lives, and encourage the young to give their lives, to the false purpose of drug exploitation? Why have they misguided the souls of our generation?

The concept of "Europe" is accompanied by doctrines of historical inevitability. This can take several different forms: a utopian belief in inevitable progress, a quasi-Marxist faith in the iron laws of history (involving the withering away of the nation-state), or a kind of cartographic mysticism that intuits certain large areas on the map to be crying out for geopolitical representation.

So much for the economic benefits of European unity. This is not a money-grubbing enterprise, say the advocates of unified Europe, to be scoffed up in terms of profit and loss. They say, "Europe" - a unified federal Europe - is a political ideal, a spiritual adventure, a new experiment in brotherhood and cooperation. These prevarications are no more based in reality than any typical diatribe of the insatiable.

R. M. Goudelocke.

The truth is that the "Europe" mentality has not made war unthinkable. It is not the natural next step for mankind. And it does not show any abolition of old-fashioned national feeling, with all its hostilities, prejudices and resentments. The argument that the EC is responsible for the lack of war in post-1945 age is hard, if not impossible, to substantiate. A glaringly obvious reason is the Cold War. The fact that Western European nations were able to cooperate in the EC is more of a symptom of lack of belligerent tensions in post-war Europe than a cause.

The idea of "Europe" is based upon the obsolescence of the nation-state. It is no use pointing out that the most successful countries in the world are nation-states. European Federalists somehow believe that "Europe" can be the first multi-national state in history not to collapse under its own weight or require military action to force union. There is no example of a peaceful nation-state that is centrally cohesive and functions well without standing paramilitary campaigns. The European tradition of mutual tolerance and civilized behavior evolved within fairly stable nation-states. It cannot last indefinitely under a new condition of multinational politics in a supranational entity.

This is a technocratic vision of
decaffeinated politics, of which real politics has been carefully extracted. European Federalists do not realize that it will be inevitable for real politics to operate at the European level. European policy will become the child of federation-wide democratic politics. From this will come European parties, operating across Europe, as the Republicans and Democrats operate across the United States. That is, if this union can hold itself together long enough!

The mentality behind the drive for a "European" superstate is motivated by juvenile logic. "Think how strong and effective we will be if we are all added together!" it says. Similarly, one might say: think what beautiful color we can make if we mix all the colors of the paint box! The result, inevitably, is a muddy shade of brown.

***SPECIAL THOUGHT***
The sauce is very greasy. Someone tilted his lunchbox slightly, and it leaked a puddle upon the ground which resembled vomit.

My Mystery Lunch
by Caleb Doise

Whoever picked the hot lunches last quarter made a mockery of our once exemplary system. Our class sponsored it, but we did not pick Food'n'Fun. I have written previously about how bad Fatima lunches were, and the Food'n'Fun lunches are almost within that level. I did not pay money for cafeteria food. This year hot lunches are no more than a sham.

Last quarter was plagued by Pizza Hut's inedible greasy sponge excuse for a pizza. It is beyond me why the half-pizzas were not ordered again. And this quarter, all four days are Food'n'Fun days! How could this have happened?

I would wager that Food'n'Fun was picked by the same person responsible for the catering scam a few years back (I remember the meat surprise all too well.) I ordered two of the lunches: spaghetti and meatballs and a grilled chicken sandwich--boy am I a schmuck.

I do not know who made the spaghetti, but it is rank. The noodles resemble earth-worms covered with some kind of oily sludge (I did notice, recently, that most of the roadkill has been removed from the highway near Food'n'Fun.)

The chicken sandwich is completely non-digestible. It makes Tyson's frozen chickens sandwiches look like a gourmet chicken dinner from an exclusive restaurant. I would have asked for a refund if chips had not been included in the meal, although even those contain about seven or eight chips.

More evidence that I am not the only one who dislikes the lunches is that lunches are being left unclaimed in record-breaking numbers. At the end of the lunch period, there is usually a stack of lunches being handed out for free.

***SPECIAL THOUGHT***
The school is guilty of fraud, since the lunch letter did not even tell where the food was from. I assume that it would probably come from a variety of restaurants as usual. It appears that I was deceived. Who ever keeps trying to bring healthy lunches for hot lunch should stop. Half of a Domino's pizza is safer to eat than Food'n'Fun's grilled puke sandwich.

***SPECIAL THOUGHT***
The unused portion of food can be used as dog food. Dixie inhaled the spaghetti, although cared little for the mushy green sticks of soggy bread.

Editorial Note:
For the reader's own protection, all SPAM jokes were graciously omitted.
Reviews:

Blackwell Vs. Television (TV. Wins!)

I tried to write a fall TV. preview. I tried really hard. I watched all the new shows. I took notes. But, despite all my precautions, the shows eventually ran together. I couldn't make any sense of my notes, my mind was like a runny egg, my grades suffered, and I lost my socks. Several pairs. So, when I sat down to write this article, wearing socks I'm sure aren't mine, I decided to eschew the traditional TV. Guide format, and substitute my own. The following drawing is what's on TV. this season:

Which is not to say that there isn't anything worth watching this fall. Only that there is an overwhelming amount of bad programming which seems to eclipse the few good shows.

There seems to be a growing trend of shows named after their leads. Some are extremely good (Drew Carey Show), and some are disgustingly bad (Jeff Foxworthy Show). Drew Carey is a ridiculously funny comic who recently made a jump from the stage to starring in his own sitcom. Unfortunately, it's on ABC, and will probably only last another three weeks. So watch it while you can.

Foxworthy's show is based on an old premise: somebody out there actually wants to watch this peon for thirty minutes every week. This sitcom follows the tired and boring pattern of every other family sitcom, with a bonus of one Redneck joke every week. Conclusion: watch ABC only once a week.

The other network's new shows are so bland they don't deserve mention. The only exception is the WB network's Wayan Bros. This show, for the most part, is rather funny. Definitely worth watching. This season, TV. makes its purpose clear: bore the viewer into looking forward to the commercials.

Wall Street
by Richy Baudouin

Genre: Drama
Rating: ***
Starring: Charlie Sheen, Martin Sheen, Michael Douglas

If you enjoyed the social criticism of Oliver Stone's Salvador and Platoon, you may also want to see his 1985 film Wall Street. It is a story of a rookie stockbroker, Bud Fox (Charlie Sheen), and his rise to power and wealth in the sly world of the New York Exchange. Gordon Gekko (Douglas) is the multimillionaire investor who gives Fox the break he needs to make it to the top. As always, with wealth comes greed and corruption, and Fox, by all means, does not escape this. The story eventually comes down to a struggle between his blue-collar father (M. Sheen) and the extremely corrupt Gekko. It is chucked with complex "broker lingo." However, by ignoring the gibberish, it turns out to be semi-enjoyable.

The problem with this film is the horrible writing. It also consists of your typical Hollywood, low-rate acting that contrasts to the passionate acting of Stone's other films. I'll give credit to Oliver Stone for exposing the corruption that comes with capitalism. However, this does not make up for its other serious failures.

Showdown with Showgirls
by Nathan Frazier

I have heard a lot of controversy about the movie Showgirls. Even though I have not and never will see the movie, I have read enough reviews that I believe I can write an accurate review of it. Showgirls is a movie about a girl who is destitute and willing to do anything to get a
job. Very unlikely and improbable, she luckily happens to meet a woman who, for no apparent reason, takes her in as her roommate. Then the woman, who works in a sleazy strip bar, offers the girl a chance to work with her as a stripper and to teach her the ways of the "real world." But when the girl catches the eyes of some executives of an illustrious strip club in Las Vegas, her roommate gets jealous and plots to destroy her position and turn her friends against her. This movie lacks a decent plot. In an effort to compensate for a seemingly dull plot, there is excessive sex and nudity. The major controversy in this movie deals with its explicit NC-17 rating [means you have to be 17 or older to be allowed to watch]. It is the first large scale Hollywood movie that is allowed to play in regular theaters with the NC-17 label. NC-17 is like a 2nd degree of the PG-13 rating, but much worse. It is like a kissing cousin to an X-rated film. And X, XX, XXX are ratings meaning extreme nudity and sex. These types of movies are the lowest, trashiest, most obscene, perverted junk and filth you can watch. Watching a NC-17, X, or XXX - rated movie is like a "Chernobyl-type nuclear meltdown" of your mind and morals. Just as real Chernobyl nuclear meltdown in the Ukraine produced irreparable damage to the ecology and the people, the exact same "value-meltdown" happens to your mind and morals when you allow yourself to watch filth like Showgirls or any other pornographic movie or video. Pornography is a really sad sign telling you of a deteriorating society.

A more subtle way to prove this point is to just watch what's on TV. As a whole, mankind likes to blame our problem on other things. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. We consistently blame our problems on other things. For example, do the following phrases sound familiar: guns kill people, TV. is bad. None of these have motives or intent. TV. is not bad, it is the human intent to putand air the trash that is on TV. Sadly, man is naturally sinful, and corruption and blame are in his nature. This problem lies within all of us. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:26, KJV) The real prevention behind evil and perverted movies like Showgirls is not countless restrictions, but must come from an inward source. YOU have to make the decision not to do it. There has to be responsibility and not blame. As the motto of Showgirls goes -- "leave your inhibitions at the door", instead, just plain leave and don't bother watching this film.

BOB DYLAN  
(Revisited)  
Mike Barry

Who could imagine what was in Bob Dylan's head when he put a stop in Thibodeaux on his tour? Yes, on the night of Oct. 15, Dylan played at the Thibodeaux Civic Center in what could only be described as one of the most surprising and entertaining performances I've ever seen. Despite his age, Dylan was mind-blowing. Backed by a suited rhythm section that had the style and sound of a red-hot Texas blues band, Bob Dylan gave his all to drive the audience to a frenzy. After only a few songs, most of the crowd rushed to the base of the stage and pressed in uncomfortably tight just to get a few feet closer to the man.

His electric sets were vivacious and precise, and his guitar soloing (which I've never held in great esteem) was impressive. And who could discount the Dylan's remarkable talent on the blues harp? When he reached for his harmonica, the audience roared.

Perhaps the most stirring part of the show was the acoustic sets. They were played soulfully and were just a bit hazy, sort of in imitation to the incense that burned backstage and breezed into the auditorium. To stand but a few feet away from an artist of such magnitude as Bob Dylan, while he performs songs that have shaped the philosophy and the standards to many generations, and not leave feeling just a bit more understanding of life, is impossible. The man was and is and will be one of the greatest and most powerful artists to ever take America's folk soul by
storm, and this concert was direct proof.

**MAN... OR ASTRO MAN?**

*Project Infinity - Live Transmissions From Uranus - Intravenous Television Continuum*

*By Gabe Blackwell*

**Five Stars!!!**

What's this? Three albums? Is Gabe reviewing their entire catalog? No. These three albums were released in the past three months, to little fanfare. If you've never heard this band, you've never heard truly great music. It is a travesty that so few people know that this band exists. But, now to the actual review. I do not treat these stars lightly, and neither should you. These are three of the best albums released. Ever. (The other three are their other three albums). Project Infinity is a collection of what they've been doing lately. "┅┅ (Classified)", "Max Q", and "Tomorrow Plus X" are so good, you'll eat breakfast. This album also contains their rendition of the Pixies "Manta Ray". Live Transmissions is just that: a live album. Having seen them live, I can honestly say, they're better live. This recording captures their live energy and hilarity, but there is no substitute for seeing them live. Intravenous is a British import that shares some songs with Infinity, and two remakes of songs from their first album. Standouts are all covers appearing on this album. I hope these guys never change.

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**SEVEN**

*By Beau Fleming*

**RATING:** ****

**STARRING:** Morgan Freeman and Brad Pitt.

Morgan Freeman plays Detective Somerset, a rather cynical cop who seems like he could have been so much more. He works homicide in some big city, who's name is never mentioned. Brad Pitt plays his headstrong young partner, Detective Mills, who asked to be assigned in this horrible precinct. Their first day, they arrive at the crime scene where an obese man has been fed at gunpoint until he literally ruptured.

As the movie continues, Freeman and Pitt develop a predictable relationship of brains and brawn. As time progresses, the murders follow a pattern pertaining to the seven deadly sins: greed, gluttony, lust, wrath, envy, sloth, and pride. Each victim is killed through his/her sin.

The movie is very dark and abrasive from the opening scene to the last. I personally like John Doe (David Spacey), who plays a kind of super genius Hannibal Lector. Some of the plot is a little unbelievable (such as the victim of sloth being a living corpse). The routine idea of old cop with experience and intellect, and young cop with ideals and action is somewhat routine. The plot is fast-paced and the twists and turns it takes are unexpected. If you want to see a real thriller in the tradition of *The Silence of the Lambs*, **Seven** is a perfect choice.
New You Might Meet Someone
Look Before You Leap!

The Meal Is:

Okay, that's not my name... Generic Character. Ha Ha! I'm Jackus, Mr. Generic Character. But revealed, never is whose name Character. Generic Character. Hey, Mr. Jackus! Hey, Jackus. By William B. Kacvusse.

Big Jackus

Today's Episode:
The Adventures of Jacques

By: William A. Barousse

Today's Episode: Cobb (Cousin)

Hey Jacques!
Very Painful!
My Cousin is Back and living in my Summer!
Why was that so painful? He lives in there every summer!
He bought his car this year.
That Must Hurt!

Yes it does. But not as much as this will.