

## Political Correctness and the Destruction of Social Order Chronicling the Rise of the Pristine Self Howard Schwartz

Interesting angle, if not widely read

Howard Schwartz accomplishes something that I took at the outset to be impossible. He uses classical Freudian psychiatry, the kind that shrinks were spouting in the 1950s and Woody Allen used in his movies, to analyze political correctness. It works extraordinarily well.

As he says in his introduction, political correctness presents us with a new outrage every day. He has been working the subject for a long time – this is his third book. He has chosen a wonderfully broad and representative selection of instances that most readers will find familiar:

- The anti-bullying movement in K12 schools (and universities)
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- The Microaggression crisis at Columbia University
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- The racism hoax at Oberlin College
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- The subprime loan debacle in the crisis of 2008
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- The British race riots of 2011
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- The Occupy Wall Street movement
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- The Halloween nonsense at Yale University

Here are a couple of quotes

As I have said, the core of the paternal function is objective self-consciousness, which means learning to see yourself as an object, the way others would see you who are not connected with you. In other words, we, as well as all the other members learn a framework of meaning, for understanding people, that is common to all members of the society.

When we say that the mother hates the father, and that we join her in her disdain, what we are implicitly saying is that we have contempt for the social rules that tell us that we have to do things even if we don't want to do them. Instead, we choose a vision of the world in which we can do exactly what we want, without being subjected to constraint. Seeing ourselves as joining mother's disdain means that our safety will be guaranteed by the mother, the most powerful figure in the psyche. This, at the deepest level, is what anti-Oedipal psychology, the repudiation of society, which is exactly that limiting frame of reference, comes down to. From this analysis, we can understand its appeal. It leaves us with the sense of being the center of a loving world that we began life with in the condition of primary narcissism. We are of cosmic significance, not because of what we have done, but simply because we are who we are. Who would give that up? And who would not hate the father for trying to get us to give it up? But what we need to see is that, without giving it up, we foreclose the possibility of society.