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UC Berkeley Study: Conservatives are Nuts!

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Friday, August 1, 2003

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Not all inhabitants of Berkeley are leftists. Our friend Phil Johnson has retired from a prestigious chair at the university's law school and represents an island of sanity in an ocean of liberalism. Generally, however, the city lives up to its reputation, as does its university. At one of the city's main bookstores, mainstream conservative political and Christian periodicals were found under the category "alternative press." Alternative indeed.

Well, just in case you missed the news, researchers at Berkeley have recently released the findings of a study that defines the psychological makeup of political conservatives. It's not pretty. After culling through "50 years of research literature about the psychology of conservatism," the researchers have decided that we are paranoid nuts who are infatuated with inequality. But, as the university's press release [see the release] states: "They also stressed that their findings are not judgmental." Of course, those who think this claim is silly are paranoid nuts. So there.

The research team claims that political conservatives are driven by deep psychological factors including fear and aggression, dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty avoidance, need for cognitive closure, and terror management. "From our perspective, these psychological factors are capable of contributing to the adoption of conservative ideological contents, either independently or in combination," they summarized.

These Berkeley scholars performed "ten meta-analytical calculations" on samples of articles, books, and conference papers by—guess who?—other psychologists and researchers. They then illustrated their 'findings' with a look at Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Ronald Reagan—all supposedly famous conservatives.

Aha! Berkeley gets its revenge on Ronald Reagan at last, grouping him with the fascist dictators. Reagan ran against the campus radicals when he was elected governor of California in 1966, putting an end to Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown's coddling of campus rioters. Based on my own "meta-analytical" study, liberals have long memories. I'm not being judgmental—honest.

These Berkeley 'researchers' are a parody of themselves, producing a slanderous profile of political conservatives under the guise of academic research. Refusal to go along with the homosexual agenda is just a reflection of "conservatives' penchant for accepting inequality." Belief in absolute truth and enduring moral values is rooted in dogmatism and fear. Clear convictions are explained by "a need for cognitive closure," which means a closed mind.

Conservatives are also simple-minded, because "they don't feel the need to jump through complex, intellectual hoops

in order to understand or justify some of their positions.” President George W. Bush’s willingness to use a word like ‘evil’ in the aftermath of September 11 shows just what a simpleton he is. But have sympathy for him, for he and his fellow conservatives are just exercising their need for “terror management.”

This is what passes for serious scholarship in the liberal academy. Californians pondering their almost \$40-billion deficit should remember that this represents their tax dollars at work. But, of course, anyone who complains about this study is no doubt intolerant of ambiguity and less “integratively complex” than right-minded liberals. But remember –they’re not being judgmental.

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