

The Uniformity and Exclusion Movement

“The Ministry of Peace concerns itself with war, the Ministry of Truth with lies, the Ministry of Love with torture and the Ministry of Plenty with starvation.” -George Orwell, 1984

Earth houses a multitude of political movements vastly worse than the “social justice” (or “wokeness”) crusade. North Korean and Chinese communism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Russian nationalism all have far worse intentions and have done far more harm than wokeness ever will. Even in the United States, anti-immigrant conservatism has unjustly ruined far more lives in the last four years than Social Justice Warriors are likely to ruin in my lifetime. Still, there is one way in which “social justice” stands out from the competition: Out of all the major political movements on Earth, none is more *Orwellian* than “social justice.” No other movement is so dedicated to achieving the opposite of what its slogans proclaim – or so aggressive in the warping of language. While every ideology is prone to a little doublethink, “social justice” is doublethink at its core.

To see what I’m talking about, picture North Korean and Chinese communism. Their official story is that totalitarian rule by the Communist Party is wonderful – and they impose totalitarian rule by their respective Communist Parties. The official story of Islamic fundamentalism is that fanatical Muslim theologians should enforce the teachings of a 7th-century book – and when in power they do so. The official story of Russian nationalism is that authoritarian Russians should rule Russia with an iron hand and sadistically dominate neighboring countries – and they do so with gusto.

In contrast, the official story of the social justice movement is that we should swear eternal devotion to “diversity and inclusion.” Yet in practice they strive to achieve *uniformity* via *exclusion*. The recent University of California scandal is an elegant example. In affected departments, job candidates had to write a “diversity and inclusion statement.” Unless candidates vigorously supported the social justice movement through word and action, the faculty never even got to see their applications. How vigorously? To reach “the next stage of review,” applicants needed a minimum average score of 11 on this rubric. Since a rank-and-file dogmatic ideologue would probably only score a 9, this cutoff predictably causes ideological uniformity of Orwellian dimensions.

More generally:

1. The diversity and inclusion movement is nominally devoted to fervent “anti-racism.” In

practice, however, they are the *only* prominent openly racist movement I have encountered during my life in the United States. Nowadays they routinely mock and dismiss critics for the color of their skin – then accuse those they mock and dismiss of “white fragility.” Just one prominent recent case:

The signatories, many of them white, wealthy, and endowed with massive platforms, argue that they are afraid of being silenced, that so-called cancel culture is out of control, and that they fear for their jobs and free exchange of ideas, even as they speak from one of the most prestigious magazines in the country.

2. The diversity and inclusion movement doesn’t just bizarrely redefine racism as “prejudice plus power.” Since their movement combines explicit racial prejudice with great power, they neatly fit their own Newspeak definition.
3. A popular social justice lawn sign includes the plank, “Be kind to all.” Yet the movement greets even mild criticism from friends with hostility, and firm disagreement with rage. Plus the harshest punishments they can arrange, especially ostracism from high-skilled employment.
4. While we’re on the subject of “being kind to all,” let me point out that making harsh, ill-founded accusations against any large, unselective group – such as a race, gender, or age bracket – is the opposite of kind.* Yet the “social justice” movement hasn’t just heaped collective guilt on whites, males, and “the old.” It has heaped scorn on even mild pushback like “Not all men are sexist.” Basic kindness, in contrast, enjoins you to (a) calmly investigate the validity of your accusations before voicing them; (b) carefully distinguish between misunderstandings and malice; (c) reassure innocent bystanders before you call out the demonstrably guilty.
5. The “Love is love” slogan is comparably Orwellian. Thanks to #MeToo, almost every person who values his job is now too terrified even to meekly ask a co-worker out on a date. Where is the love there? When faced with compelling evidence that male managers were responding to the climate of fear by avoiding mentoring and social contact with female co-workers, the #MeToo reaction was not to mend fences but to make further threats.
6. “Science is real” would also bring a grim smile to Orwell’s face. The diversity and inclusion movement shows near-zero patience for the pile of scientific research that estimates the share of group performance gaps that stem from discrimination versus other factors. Instead, they (a) ignore the science; (b) speak as if science shows the share is

100%; and (c) treat people who discuss the actual science as if they're personally guilty of discrimination. The same goes for any unwelcome scientific conclusions about gender, sexuality, academic performance, etc. Either embrace the foregone conclusions of "social justice," or risk the wrath of the movement. Just beneath the propaganda lies uniformity via exclusion.

7. What's the relationship between Orwellian language and the motte-and-bailey fallacy? Quite distant. Orwellian language amounts to saying the *opposite* of the truth. Motte-and-bailey, in contrast, is about strategically toggling between moderate and extreme versions of your creed. E.g., sometimes feminism is the moderate view that "Women should be treated as fairly as men"; yet the rest of the time, feminism is the extreme view that "Women should be treated as fairly as men, but totally aren't in this depraved sexist society."

8. If all this is true, how come I'm not too scared of Big Brother to write it? Tenure is a big part of it. The official point of tenure is to make professors feel free to voice unpopular truths – and I'm all about unpopular truths. Still, I'm no martyr. If I were looking for an academic job, I would shut up. I hope many tenure-seeking readers feel the same yearning to voice unpopular truths with impunity, though I fear your numbers are few.

9. What's the least Orwellian feature of the "social justice" movement? Support for illegal immigrants, of course. First World countries really do treat illegal immigrants like subhumans, and to its credit the social justice movement offers them moral support with the poetic slogan, "No human being is illegal." Yet sadly, the *volume* of this moral support is barely audible, because the movement has so many higher priorities. If its activists took the immense moral energy they waste on costumes, jokes, and careless speech, and redirected it toward the cause of free migration, I'd forgive their Orwellian past today.

10. Meta-question: Why do Orwellian movements exist at all? Why doesn't each movement say what it means and mean what it says? "Marketing" is the easy answer: When your true goals are awful, you resort to deceptively pleasant packaging to keep forward momentum. While this story makes sense, it's incomplete. The most Orwellian movements actively *revel* in the contradiction between word and deed – and even in the contradiction between word and word. The best explanation is that submission to an Orwellian creed is a grade-A loyalty test. Insisting that all your members admit that "The sky is blue" doesn't weed out the doubters and fair-weather soldiers. Insisting that all your members admit that "The sky is *green*" or "There is no sky," in contrast, selects for fanatics and yes-folk. And sadly, those are the sorts of people movements like "diversity and inclusion" appreciate.

* "Social justice" is of course a *selective* movement. You can disaffiliate anytime you like – and if you don't want to be blamed for poor behavior of your compatriots, you should.