

Joseph K., Kenny Rogers, and Me:
My Experience in an American University
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“Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K., he knew he had done nothing wrong but, one morning, he was arrested.” So begins Franz Kafka's classic book, *The Trial*.¹ *The Trial* was written exactly one hundred years ago at this writing, in 1914, although it wasn't published until 1925.

“And why am I under arrest?” Joseph K. inquired of the men who had appeared at his door.

“That’s something we’re not allowed to tell you. Proceedings are under way and you’ll learn in good time.”

As it turns out, Joseph K. never learns what he is accused of doing. No one would tell him. He doesn't have access to court records, including the indictment. There are never any written charges. He is told that the charges and reasons for them will come out, or can be guessed at, while he is being questioned at the trial, which will not be public. He can give his side of the matter at that time, they tell him, but the witnesses against him will not be present at the trial, and he won't be allowed to question them at any time, and he won't be allowed to bring witnesses in his favor to the proceeding.

One of the saddest parts of the book is Kafka's description of one particular strategy Joseph K. contemplates employing since he doesn't know what he is supposed to have done wrong and can't find out. “He had often wondered whether it might not be a good idea to work out a written defense and hand it in to the court. It would contain a short description of his life and explain why he had acted in the way he had in any way important, whether he now considered he had acted well or ill, and his reasons for each.”

The Trial is compelling reading--the prose is remarkably contemporary--and while chilling, it makes the reader grateful for being an American. This is Eastern Europe of a century ago. It is the kind of thing that went on there at that time, and under Stalin and in Germany under the National Socialists in the 1930s, and in China under Mao, and in Eastern Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall (with this last example, see the film "The Lives of Others"). Certainly nothing like this could happen here in America.

The Sixth Amendment of our Constitution affirms that an accused person will be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, be able to confront the witnesses against him, and be afforded a process by which he can obtain witnesses in his favor. Of course, the Sixth Amendment is in reference to criminal prosecutions, but it is more than that. It articulates a central element in the American creed, what this nation is about, what distinguishes us from authoritarian, totalitarian societies and cultures; this is who we are as a people, this how we treat people here.

My faith in that comforting and re-assuring assuring thought has been shaken over the past few months.

I'm a professor of education near the end of a forty-year career. Things went well for thirty-five years of that time--tenure, full professor, no trouble--but the last five years have been increasingly conflict-ridden. Two factors account for that: my outlook and expressions changed, including around race, and the university became increasingly hostile to people of the sort that I've become.

Over the last fifteen years or so, my views have shifted from an acceptable liberalism, which had been in place since my doctoral studies, to an unacceptable mix of conservatism and libertarianism. I began advocating traditional and individualistic schooling approaches. Since 2001, I have written under my own name about race from the perspective of European, white, people, particularly in my home country, the United States. I have analyzed and assessed the status and wellbeing of whites from a position of respect and concern for them, and in some places I have advocated for them.² Expressions, written or verbal, along these lines do not play in today's colleges of education and, the race part of it, in universities generally; they are akin to sticking your head up out of a foxhole.

On April 14th, 2014, I received a letter from the office at my university that handles discrimination complaints informing me that it had "received information that you may have discriminated against students in [the name of a course I taught in the fall semester, 2013]." "The complainant is [the name of a first year undergraduate woman student in the class, heretofore referred to as the complainant]."

I'll refer in this writing to this office as the Office rather than its official title. I'm not going to use names in this writing. While what I'll describe happened in a particular place and involved

particular people other than me, I don't want this piece to be about this place or these people. It is about what is going on with me, and it's about a general trend I see in American universities in our time. While what follows is indeed personal, I am using the personal as a vehicle for a scholarly analysis of something I consider to be of significant general importance in this culture and society. I see this as an academic article.

Attached to the April 14th letter from the Office were the university policies related to discrimination and the procedure for investigating and resolving discrimination complaints. The Office has two options for dealing with complaints of discrimination, informal resolution and formal investigation. The letter made clear that this was a formal investigation and indicated that "[the investigator's name, a mid-thirties man heretofore referred to as the investigator] has been assigned to the case."

I immediately read over the policies on discrimination. They said that the university is committed to equal educational opportunity and therefore prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or gender identity or expression. They define harassment is a form of discrimination involving verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based or motivated by a student's race, color, and the rest of the list, which creates an intimidating, hostile, and offensive environment that objectively and substantially interferes with a student's educational performance or access to educational resources.

Note that the test of discrimination, including harassment, is that it denies educational opportunity, and that it does so objectively and substantially. It doesn't make your case as a complainant that someone said something you didn't agree with or that didn't set well with you. An anecdote won't do. You have to establish that your educational opportunity was restricted objectively and substantially.

As I read over the policy, per Joseph K., I couldn't for the life of me think of how I had discriminated against anyone in that course, or in any other course, for that matter. My long career, my life, has been in opposition to discrimination (including against white people in school admissions and job applications and contracts and so on). But whatever I was alleged to have done must have seemed pretty bad to the Office. The Office had the option to

pursue informal resolution and it passed, choosing instead to conduct a formal investigation resulting in a report circulated to university administrators at least; perhaps it will be placed in my personnel file, I don't know for certain about that. Certainly the word will get around among both students and faculty that I've been hit with a discrimination allegation.

Speaking of harassment, I wondered about whether this charge was an example of the harassment of me by the university because of my philosophical and racial outlook and expressions. Or perhaps something about my person—my manner, my persona, something along those lines--set people off.

Whatever was going on this, it was serious business. I could lose my job over this (one of the possible punishments listed in the policy). I took a pill to get to sleep that night.

The policy directing the formal investigation states that the respondent (me) is to be provided a written notice of the filing of the complaint; the identity of the complainant; and the general allegations of the complaint. After that, there's an interview of me by the investigator (he has already spoken to the complainant) in which I am to have the opportunity to respond fully to the complainant's allegations. Then, and last, the Office submits a report on its findings.

The April 14th letter from the Office didn't get into any of that. It merely contained attachments of the university policies related to discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation and expression, and so on, and incidents of harassment within these categories. I asked myself the obvious question, what am I supposed to have done somewhere in all of that? Is this about racial discrimination? Gender discrimination? Sexual harassment? Have I ever talked to the complainant alone in my office? No, I haven't, which was a relief to realize, but what if she said I did and that I made a sexual advance? This case could be about anything! What in the world did I do? So far, Joseph K. has nothing on me.

In retrospect, I should have gotten back to the Office that very day and said in effect, Hey, what's going on here? But I didn't do that. Instead, I went directly to my apartment where I live alone (I believe my social isolation has played a role in all of this) and read the *USA Today Sports Weekly* cover-to-cover and munched on pita

chips and then took a nap. For weeks that basic strategy of dealing with this crisis prevailed. Maybe if I hide out all this will just all go away.

Of course, it didn't just all go away. Does anything ever just all go away? Six weeks later, on June 2nd, I received an email from the investigator.

Hi Professor Griffin,

I am writing to see if you are available to schedule an interview for the [Office] process, regarding the notice of investigation issued to you on April 14. [He listed some times and places for the interview.] The interview will probably take about an hour. Thanks very much.

My first thought about going directly to Hannaford's supermarket to get the *USA Today Sports Weekly*, but June 2nd was a Monday and the *USA Today Sports Weekly* doesn't come out until Wednesday and I'd already read last week's issue from cover to cover.

My next thought was to take note of the informality of the investigator's message. "Hi." "Thanks." As the case proceeded, signatures were invariably nicknames. Face-to-face contacts were smiley and chatty. This jumped out at me, because from my side this was a deadly serious matter. This wasn't about, or at least shouldn't have been about, whether I marked a paper or exam too low or gave somebody a grade they didn't deserve; there is a grade grievance policy and process for that. This was about discrimination against a person because he or she falls into a particular category. My reputation, my honor, was on the line. I could be out on the street looking for employment. And yet it was, both literally and metaphorically, "Hi" all the way through in this case, as it has been in other issues I've had to deal with in the university over the past few years, since I've become so villainous.

To put it bluntly, or is it sharply, they all smile while they stick it to me. What's this about? I asked myself. My assumption is that any pattern that predictably repeats is about something if you take the time to look at it. It serves someone's ends, whether they are fully, consciously, articulately, aware of it or not, and it helps to understand both them and your dealings with them if you figure out how it does that from their angle.

I'll take a stab at it. I think this smiley-friendly-it's-me-Tom (or Vicky) manner might serve three purposes from Tom and Vicky's perspective:

First, it keeps Tom and Vicky's intellectual challenge and workload down. If this is just us smiley-face-chitchatting, I (Tom or Vicky) don't have to take on a heavy load of formalities and complexities, stay up all hours of the night studying and pondering things, and putting in all kinds of prep time; and if we get around to whatever it is next month, or the month after that, that's OK too, we don't have to feel rushed about anything. If we are getting into something that supposedly happened over six months ago and the policy says a written report is normally issued within sixty calendar days following the complaint (which it does) and it's June, no problem, you know?

Second, it lowers the chances of Tom or Vicky having to, as it were, fight up close. If deep down—or maybe right there on the surface—Tom and Vicki know they are messing over somebody, that somebody could get real sober, and even irate, and go after them, and that's no fun to deal with. Better if they can get the person they are working over to mirror their smiling faces.

And third, I speculate that that there is an empathy issue with Tom and Vicky. If, however it happens, they can objectify someone, make that person into a category--say, as an old, privileged, white male university professor--whatever they do to him isn't doing it to a mortal human being who feels pain. It's like in World War II and the Japanese: You drop an atomic bomb on woman and children in Hiroshima. So what? They're Japs. The enemy. You kill the enemy. The same basic principle held true if someone were labeled a Communist in the McCarthy years, and holds true today with white supremacists. They aren't people like your sister or something.

My best guess is that neither the complainant in this matter, nor any faculty or administrators that encouraged or orchestrated her actions, nor the Office that chose to conduct a formal investigation, really, truly, saw me as a human being like them--mortal, with a mother and father, and with hopes and feelings--or really, truly, knew, experienced with all of their being, that this process might well cause me hurt and grief, and that they needed to be careful and considered about what they were doing to a fellow human being. I simply wasn't human enough to prompt that posture toward me. To them, I don't bleed. But of course I do

bleed, and I have bled over the course of this process, and I'm bleeding now.

All to say, I hope it never happens to you, but if you ever get categorized as the enemy, be prepared for otherwise good and decent people, without hesitation, to figuratively, or even literally, line you up against a wall and kill you and never bat an eye. It's early August as I write this and I'm hurting bad, and if anyone at the university cares about that fact you couldn't prove it by me.

In response to the investigator's email about scheduling an interview, I emailed him back saying I would be happy to participate in an interview, but that there were three due process guarantees spelled out in the applicable university policy that need to be honored prior to the interview. They are that I be informed of 1) when the complaint was filed, 2) the identity of the complainant, and 3) the general charge against me.

Whether this case goes forward at all is contingent on when the complaint was filed. The semester during which time I am alleged to have engaged in discrimination as defined by university policy ended on December 18th, 2013. The university policy having to do with the process of formal resolution of complaints states that the complaint must be submitted to the Office within 90 calendar days. That was March 13th, 2014. I want hard evidence, I said, showing the date of this complaint's filing in order to make certain that the deadline was met. In an aside, I added: why am I not simply given a copy of the complaint? It seems to me an obvious thing to do. Are charges to be kept secret from the accused anywhere in the United States of America?

Who exactly is/are the complainant(s)? Who are the victims of my alleged actions? The April 14th letter from the Office refers to my discriminating against students plural, and then there is the name of the complainant. Am I defending myself against actions against the complainant solely, or against multiple students in that course? And if it is multiple students, do they include the complainant, or is she merely making allegations of what I did to other students? Clearly, the policy regarding discrimination assumes complaints that will be made by the individual alleging discrimination against him- or herself. If nevertheless this is somehow a group complaint, what are the names of the individuals in the group? There were twelve students in that class. Is it

alleged I discriminated against all twelve without exception? A subset of the twelve? In any case, provide the identity or identities of the student(s) I discriminated against.

What are the general allegations? The April 14th Office letter from the Office doesn't say. It merely attached the university policies related to discrimination, all the possible forms it can take. What am I supposed to have done somewhere in all of that? Are we talking about racial discrimination here? Gender discrimination? Sexual harassment? What? If it is a group complaint, did I do the same thing, whatever it is, to everybody? Whatever I'm supposed to have done, it needs to fall within the purview of the Office. It should be about discrimination. I suspect that this discrimination action against me is a cover for attacking and shutting down my ideological or political expression, that this was really a thought police action. Discrimination is indeed an important concern, but so too are academic freedom and freedom of expression, time-honored and cherished values in a university, which have been relentlessly attacked in recent decades.

I requested that the Office honor the three due process guarantees and provide me this information.

Now we get into Kafka territory. The investigator's terse emailed response ignored my requests to be informed of what I was alleged to have done and to whom and when the complaint was filed. Instead, it said simply:

The [Office] investigative process is voluntary, and it is up to you whether or not you would like to participate. If you choose not to participate, however, please know that my report will be based on information provided to me by the complainant and any other participating witnesses.

Nowhere in the university policy is it stated, or implied, that my participation in the interview, or any part of the process, is voluntary. The Office obviously made that up out of thin air to threaten me: if I continue to insist that my rights prior to the interview be honored before I participate in the interview, that will be taken as choosing not to participate in the interview. Thus, not only is the Office going to deny me the rights that are to be granted

prior to the interview, if I don't shut up and do the interview absent the provision of those rights, it stands ready to deprive me of the right to the interview itself.

In an emailed reply, I reiterated my demand that my procedural rights prior to the interview be granted. In this same email, I noted the policy stipulates that during the interview I am to be given the opportunity to respond fully to the specifics of the allegations. It is self-evident, I contended, that I should know those specifics before the interview so that I can prepare a full response--jog my memory, review relevant materials and records of the correspondence, prepare evidence or documentation to present at the interview, and so on. Surely, I shouldn't be expected to show up at an interview cold and just wing it, so to speak. And there seems something very wrong about being in a room alone, not being able to question or challenge those who are making charges against me.

The interviewer's response to all that was to tersely reiterate that the process was "strictly voluntary." They aren't telling me when the complaint was filed, or the nature of the complaint, or exactly who the complainant(s) is/are, and they aren't telling me what the specific allegations are prior to the interview. And why aren't they telling me this? They aren't saying. Kafka lives.

Here's where I did something that in retrospect I shouldn't have done. I caved and went forward with the interview. I should have stopped my involvement in the process right then and there. The Office wasn't even bothering to provide a justification for what they were doing, and they were clearly and blatantly violating policy. The ethical thing, the American thing, the manly thing, for me to have done would have been to take them up on their notion that the process was voluntary and shut down my participation at that point. Provide the Office with a brief rationale for my decision for the record and to let them do what they please with my case. Whatever would have come out of that, I would feel a lot better about myself sitting here typing this than I do now, I'm sure of that.

So why didn't I stop playing my part in something I had come to see as unworthy of my involvement? I'll make some guesses as to why I kept going.

Fear. It's scary to get accused of something, especially when it seems serious and you don't know what it is and don't know what's going to result from it. Joseph K. was afraid, and so was I (so am I).

Joseph K. asked his questions, made his pleadings--What did I do? I didn't do anything wrong?--and so did I, but when it came down to it, Joseph K. played along with the process because, at least in part, he was afraid not to, and so did I. I hope the next time something like this happens to me, if it does, that I do the courageous thing. I didn't do the courageous thing, and I regret that now. I need to work on my character.

Isolation. Joseph K. felt alone, was alone, and I felt alone, am alone. I live alone. I am socially isolated. I'm avoided (and, I believe, denigrated, including to students) by my colleagues these days. There seemed no one to help me. I'm not good at soliciting support, and anyway, I'm not sure there was any support anyplace for me to find. When you are alone and unsupported, you are more likely to buckle under.

That said, even if I was alone and no one had my back, I still needed to do the honorable thing. I needed to act with integrity no matter what. Again I came up short in character. I hope my character is better next time, if there is a next time. I keep saying "if there is a next time" because I'm geriatric old and suspect I'm just about out of time if not completely out of time. We all need to keep in mind that there are a finite number of opportunities in our life to do what's honorable, and if we come up short on one of those opportunities, that opportunity is gone forever, and at some point the opportunities run out, life's over.

"Nice-guyness." Since my earliest memory, my training, my socialization, certainly in every school I attended, and in the university work, has been to always be a nice guy, and that's been my pattern. Mr. Nice Guy. Mr. Reasonable Guy. Mr. On-Time-You-Can-Count-On-Me Guy. Indeed, there are times to be that kind of person. But there are also times to be a raging badass. From now on, I'm going to work on having a full repertoire of responses to the world that I can employ, including smoldering and in-your-face anger. I hope I employ all of these alternatives wisely, rationally, but I want them all to be there as possibilities, and I want to get it across to the people I deal with in my life that, indeed, that all of them are there, locked and loaded, as it were.

Curiosity. It was gnawing on me: What am I supposed to have done? As it turned out, I did the interview in mid-June, over two months before I needed to. As a professor, I am a nine-month employee and not on the university payroll in the summer. I could

have waited until the fall (or gone with the fantasy that my participation was voluntary and not done it at all). I now wish that if I hadn't stopped participating in the process completely I would have waited until the fall, because when I finally did hear the specific charges I was literally sickened, and it hasn't gone away, and it has hurt my summer.

Came the day for the interview, mid-June of 2014. I didn't know what I would be accused of and thus had no chance to prepare a defense. I brought the syllabus for the course in question and copies of email correspondence with the complainant, the one name provided me in the April letter from the Office, and I brought a copy of a final paper she had written containing my comments and a grade. I'm sad to report that, ala Joseph K., I had rehearsed a list of good things I had done in my courses over the years that I was prepared to recite at the interview.

So there I was in a closed room, just the investigator and me. I flashed on Joseph K.

Both Joseph K. and I could give our side of the matter at the trial/interview, but the witnesses against us would not be present and we would not be allowed to question them in any context.

There was no provision for either of us to bring witnesses to speak in our favor.

Like Joseph K., my trial would not be made public, though in my case, I'm not sure about Joseph K.'s, the results of it would: the Office's final report would be distributed to my dean in order for her to impose or initiate punishment.

I don't remember that it came up in the book, but I'm sure Joseph K. had no right of appeal. I have no right of appeal that I can discern; at least it is not specified in the policy. As far as I can tell, the Office is the Voice of God in this matter.

Joseph K. wasn't provided with written charges or access to court records or a copy of the indictment, and neither was I. I found out very early in the interview why I didn't get a copy of the complaint. Because it didn't exist.

I also found out quickly why I wasn't informed of when the complaint was filed (remember, by policy the complaint has to be submitted within 90 calendar days). The Office didn't know when it was submitted. Perhaps at the end of last year, perhaps later. There was no formal record of it.

I also learned why I was never informed of the general charge.

It was never formulated.

There was no paperwork on this case at all.

Like Joseph K., the charges and the reasons for them would have to come out in the trial--the interview was my version of the trial--or I could guess at them.

I never learned why I wasn't informed of the specific charges prior to the interview so that I could prepare a full response to them as called for in the policy.

The interview took almost two hours. During that time, I was subjected to fifteen or so allegations and negative characterizations of me, some extremely upsetting to listen to, and I did my best to respond to the assertions that were sprung on me. It was certainly not my finest performance. But then again, you try responding off-the-cuff to charges you didn't know were coming.

I'll do my best here to take on the task laid before Joseph K.: discern, or guess at, the discrimination charges from the particulars that surfaced during the interview. Something to keep in mind as I go through these allegations: every last one of them, relevant to this case or not, made it into the final report.

As it turns out, the complainant wasn't even alleging that I discriminated against her in a way prohibited by university policy.

The complainant says she has been diagnosed with ADHD.³ Discrimination against people who are disabled that denies them equal educational opportunity--opportunity, not guaranteed results --is prohibited by university policy. However, she states that she doesn't identify herself as learning disabled, nor does she believe I viewed her as disabled or discriminated against her on that basis. So nothing related to learning disabilities had any business being part of this case or in the final report.

But it was. The complainant alleged that in a private meeting outside the classroom prior to the beginning of a class session, when she informed me she had ADHD, I dismissively replied, "We all have our problems." What I actually said was, "Don't let it get you down, we've all got something. I can't hear. What you have to do and what I have to do is figure out what the problem is and take it on and not let it defeat us. Yes, everybody has something. Don't see yourself as less capable, or that you can't perform." I was trying to support and encourage her, and I think any reasonable person would agree with that. But again, she wasn't asserting that I

discriminated against her on the basis of her disability, and this exchange should not have been part of this case.

The complainant contended that I discriminated against her because her ideas differed from my own. She provided no argumentation or documentation (comments on papers and tests, etc.) to support that contention. Simply, her allegation was false. Regardless of whether it was true or false, discrimination on the basis of belief is not one of the prohibited categories in the university policy, and thus this claim should not been part of this investigation.⁴

The complainant reported that I said to a Hispanic student, a woman, around 22-years-old, a senior, "You are doing a good thing for your people being in a university." The complainant found my comment inappropriate and offensive. She didn't link it to any pattern of behavior, or to the denial of educational opportunity, which is the test of discrimination. What I actually said to the Hispanic student, after she had several times referred to her ethnicity, is, "I'm glad you are here. [There was no reference to doing a good thing for your people that she was there, anything of that sort.] This university is for everyone. I wish there were more black people here [there are very few in my university]. I wish there were more poor kids from North Street here [the low income white part of the city in which the university exists]. I want everybody here. Welcome to the class."

After the interview with me, the interviewer spoke with the Hispanic student and she said she found my comment "highly offensive." However, and this is crucially important, she did not see it as discriminatory toward her, and she did not report that it deprived her of academic opportunity.

Offending or putting this student down was the last thing in my mind. I was trying to make her feel welcome in the class when she identified herself as a minority student. I believe any reasonable observer would agree that I wasn't going after her. I feel very bad to learn that it was offensive to her. I spent a year of my life teaching Hispanic students in an East Los Angeles high school, and there has not been a more gratifying and rewarding experience in my professional life. I cared deeply about those Los Angeles kids, and I think they cared deeply about me. I cared very much about this Hispanic student in my education course and wished her well, and in a private conversation with her right after a class session

ended told her that.

That said, whether or not she found what I said offensive, her inner, or subjective, experience should not be the sole measure of whether it was or not. There is also what actually happened, what I said and the context in which I said it. Outer, concrete, reality matters greatly. Indeed, anything at all can be experienced by someone as offensive or inappropriate. The question is, was that response a reasonable, justifiable, reaction to what occurred? In this case, no, it wasn't.

And anyway, the Hispanic student is not contending I discriminated against her or denied her educational opportunities. Whether or not my "you are welcome in this class" comment was offensive is worthy of consideration in some setting, but not within the confines of a formal investigation of discrimination.

The complainant said that it was her impression that I called on two Jewish students in the class less frequently than the others. That was it: no elaboration, no documentation. I didn't even know there were Jewish students in the course. No Jewish student ever identified him- or herself as Jewish in the class, and no reading or class discussion, and certainly nothing I ever said, made any reference to Jewishness, anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, anything along those lines. I learned of the identity of one of the two Jewish students from the interviewer; I still don't know the name of the other. Neither of them has alleged discrimination against them because of their religion or ethnic identity. If I had known that anti-Semitic-based discrimination was going to be charged, I would have brought extensive unsolicited positive correspondence from Jewish students I have received in the past.

The complainant told the Interviewer that she went to my web site and saw that I am anti-Semitic. She offered no examples to support that contention, which is flat-out not true. Since there was no assertion that I used anti-Semitic materials in the class, this false charge had no business being part of the interview and included in the final report.

Charges of anti-Semitism based on an impression by a non-Jewish student and an undocumented assertion of anti-Semitism in my public writings are inflammatory, irresponsible, and cruel. I'm convinced that this kind of thing would not have gone on even five years ago in the university. There is a climate in American universities in our time that encourages it.

What I've reported thus far is the closest I can come to discrimination against anyone in that course, and none of it falls into the category of discrimination as defined by university policy. The rest of what was alleged by the complainant was professional and personal attacks against me.

- The complainant said my web site was "pro-white." She acknowledged that there weren't any of what she terms pro-white materials in the course, and thus this assertion was irrelevant to this case. The only purpose it served in the report was to smear me and damage my reputation. Indeed, my web site writings, which are voluminous and on a wide variety of topics, include those that analyze racial matters from a European, white prospective, and in places I advocate for white people. It is telling that in today's university being pro-white is an allegation of misconduct. Imagine if a black professor had to deal with the charge that his or her public writings are pro-black, or a Hispanic professor that his or hers are pro-Hispanic. That this "charge" is included in a formal proceeding against me says much more about the circumstance in the American university in our time than it does about me. You can be pro anything in today's university except pro white.

- She said I told the class, "If any student ever tried to report me I would have them expelled." Untrue. Imagine, if you will, anyone--not just me, anyone--saying this.

- She said I told the class that my nine-year-old daughter is interested in playing the trumpet and made a comment along the lines of "What would a guy think of that?" Absolutely untrue.

- She said I told the class, "My daughter's mom doesn't like me and doesn't agree with me." Absolutely untrue. Speaking of offensive.

- She said that I told the class that since I have tenure I could grade papers when I wanted to and not have to give an explanation for my grades. Absolutely untrue. In fact, without exception, I returned all writings and tests with grades and comments the very next class session.

- She said I yelled at students and shouted people down. I'm hearing impaired and can't hear the volume of my voice well. I tell all my classes that I may well speak louder than necessary, and that sometimes I can't tell when people end their point and I unintentionally interrupt them, and to let me know if I do any of

that. Until this case, no one has ever twisted my hearing impairment into yelling and shouting at students.

Every one of these damning and embarrassing, and totally fallacious, assertions was part of the report. The report made it clear that it did not take a stand on whether or not they were true, leaving the impression that they very well might be.

What did the report conclude? Nominally, it absolved me. In fact, it crucified me.

"Complainant's allegations cannot sustain a hostile learning environment claim." The case wasn't about whether I created a hostile learning environment per se. This was a case about discrimination. Reference to a hostile learning environment in the policy was as one of a number of possible outcomes of harassment, with harassment being a form of discrimination resulting in the limitation of educational opportunity. In this case, everything needed to be related to the charge that I discriminated against particular students in that class in such a fashion that I objectively and substantially restricted their educational opportunity. Cherry-picking and highlighting a hostile learning environment--did he create a hostile learning environment?--shifts the nature of the charge and opens the door to legitimizing the inclusion of every "this is a bad guy" slur anybody can dredge up.

"Complainant's allegations of discrimination in violation of UVM policy are not sustained under a preponderance of the evidence standard." *Preponderance of the evidence?* Where did that standard come from? The university policy says you can't discriminate against anyone in the university community that falls into certain designated categories, period. The question in this case was did I do it or didn't I do it, yes or no. And if I did it, to whom and how? Adopting a preponderance of the evidence standard leaves the option of simply declaring that the preponderance of the evidence doesn't establish I discriminated against anyone and leaving it at that, which is what the report did. It never takes a stand on what precisely I did and didn't do. If I were an outsider reading that the preponderance of the evidence said somebody didn't do something, I would infer that there was evidence against the accused--and possibly a lot of it--but it just didn't add up to the 51% it would take to convict.

There was *no* evidence that I discriminated against anyone in

that class. But I feel certain that university administrators and others reading this report are going to conclude that this jerk got off on a technicality. It didn't reach a high enough threshold to convict him, as it were. We know what's going on here, they'll think. This is a racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, boorish bully pushing around university undergraduates. He tells them that if anybody goes up against him he'll have them expelled from school. He shouts people down who disagree with him. He goes on inappropriately and embarrassingly about his personal life, including his antiquated beliefs about what girls are supposed to do, and he brings his problems with his daughter's mother into the classroom. If you disagree with this fascist he sticks you with a bad grade.

An indication that my speculations might have some validity is that this coming semester I was scheduled to teach this same course that drew this complaint. I have taught it for many years without incident. I learned of my removal as the instructor of the course from the published course schedule.

Word about this case will surely get out to advisors and students and find its way into those rate-your-professor online lists. He's bad news, stay away from his classes. My enrollments will go down.

I didn't win this case, I lost it. And even more, I can't see how I could have won it. Under the current circumstance in universities, you are guilty if charged. I must admit I have a grudging respect for how the system operates. If they don't like you, they can get you, and there's not a thing you can do about it.

Pieced together from the last pages of *The Trial*:

It was about nine o'clock in the evening, the time when the streets were quiet--two men came to where Joseph K. lived. They waited only until the front door before they took his arms in a way that K. had never experienced before. They kept their shoulders close behind his, did not turn their arms in but twisted them around the entire length of K.'s arms and took hold of his hands with a grasp that was formal, experienced and could not be resisted.

Whenever they passed under a lamp, K. tried to see his companions more clearly, as far as was possible when they were pressed so close together. "The only thing I can do now is keep my common sense and do what's needed right till the end. I always wanted to go at the world and try and do so much, and do it for something that was not too cheap."

There was a quarry, empty and abandoned, near a tall building. Here the men stopped. The moonlight lay everywhere with the natural peace that is granted to no other light. As he looked round, K. saw the top floor of the building. He saw how a light flickered on and the two halves of a window opened out, somebody, made weak and thin by the height and the distance, leant suddenly far out from it and stretched out his arms. Who was that? A friend? A good person? Somebody who wanted to help? Would anyone help? Was he alone?

One of the gentlemen opened his frock coat and from a sheath hanging on a belt stretched across his waistcoat withdrew a long, thin, double-edged butcher's knife which he held up in the light. The hands of other gentleman laid on K.'s throat while he pushed the knife deep into K.'s heart and twisted it there, twice.

Joseph K.'s case ended in his physical death. I'm of course still alive, but something in me--my spirit, my vitality, my resolve--has died, it's been killed. In the next section I'm going to try to figure out what went on in this case, including what accounts for its devastating effect on me. I hope writing it out, putting words to it, will give me some measure of clarity and direction. As it is now, I just want to go to sleep.

What went on in this case and what's going on with me and what should I do about it? My assumption is that whatever is happening is the outcome of an interplay of public and private, or personal, factors, so I am going to consider both in trying to make sense of my circumstance. As I go along, I'll refer to a number of my own writings and thoughts on my web site, which you may want to read in their entirety.

Let's start with how the university context contributed to what happened.

Increasingly over the past couple of decades, what psychiatrist and scholar Robert Jay Lifton has termed totalism has become prevalent to the point of pervasive in American universities, at least in the social sciences, humanities, social work, and education.⁵ Totalism involves the fervent commitment to get everybody working harmoniously together in alignment with your particular vision and

in service to your particular ends. A totalist outlook goes beyond simply arguing for your position and agenda, trying to persuade people, making your case to them, selling them on your ideas and ways, that kind of thing, and accepting the idea that individuals and groups might not buy your product, so to speak. Totalism supports arranging people's lives, managing and controlling their circumstances and experiences and rewards and punishments so that they *will* see the light, your light, and enthusiastically get with the program, your program. Part of this is making sure competing "products" to yours are demonized, marginalized, and silenced to the point that you can in effect operate a monopoly.

Totalism in our time takes the form of the left-of-center concept of social justice.⁶ Another concept, organizer, for this thrust is the idea of diversity.⁷ Its intellectual roots are in the neo-Marxist ideology of critical theory.⁸ The basic assumption behind this movement is that Western culture and society and the white race have been on the wrong side of history, and something needs to be done about it. With America as the referent, the idea is to de-Europeanize this country (which includes de-Christianizing it), denationalize it, collectivize it (make the group, not the individual, the salient reality), equalize it, and democratize it (empower the group, especially the government, over the individual--constitutional republics, we pledge allegiance to one, don't go far enough in that direction). This involves bringing minorities up a peg and white people down a peg (at least), and using the government to confiscate resources from people who have too much and redistribute them to people who have too little. A central element in all of this is to get hold of white children and young people in schools and clean out their racism, sexism, ethnic bias, and sense of entitlement and superiority, and get them busily working on setting the world straight (that is, making social justice a reality). In my field of education, the doctrine is progressive education, whose patron saint is John Dewey (1859-1952), a socialist enamored of the schooling reform being instituted in the Soviet Union.⁹

These beliefs take the form of a secular religious creed. Its adherents view themselves as bound to a mission to spread the Word and rid the world of heretics (like me), denouncing them and relegating them to pariah status.¹⁰ The job of educators is to preach the gospel to students, and the job of students is to take it to heart and give testimony to it, which includes publicly expressing a

fervent commitment to become missionaries spreading the Word and cleansing the world of ignorance and evil. The challenge of scholarship within this frame is not so much *knowing*—really, what needs to be known is obvious when you look at things from the right angle—as *believing*, accepting the faith and living the faith and professing it and disseminating it and defeating the forces of darkness that oppose it

In 2013, I wrote an article for my web site called *An Educator's 10 Concerns About Social Media*.¹¹ Nothing characterizes young people in this time more than their emersion in social media, all day, everyday. One of the concerns I listed was a “let me tell you what I think” predilection.

Social media are centered on off-the-top commentaries and self-references. They are about what I think, what I prefer, how the world looks to me. They are about telling my story and letting people know what somebody else’s story brings up for me. Subjective truth, what’s true for me, my opinion, my reactions, takes precedence over the search for the truth outside myself. Social media prompt engaging other people’s ideas just enough for them to prompt what I want to say about myself with regard to whatever, whoever, it is. Social media-shaped people aren’t interested in what you think but rather what they think. And what they think is what’s been put into their heads by the schools and mass media and politicians and clergy since at least kindergarten, and by their parents and peers who have had the very same things put into their heads.

Students who are already conditioned to see courses in education, which mine was, as a places to share your opinions on some matter are reinforced by their involvement with social media in going in that direction and expecting instructors to accommodate it.

Back to the main line of argument in this section, if you are a totalist university administrator or faculty member and students come to you with reports of the sinful behavior of one of their professors, you aren't about to encourage dialogue and a meeting of the minds between them and the professor. You are going to, in effect, hand the students spears and tell them to carry forth the righteous crusade against the infidel. And if you are students who have accepted the Word, you are going to do just that, no holds

barred. The ends are just, there isn't a shred of doubt about that; any means to achieve those good ends are just; zealotry is just. Onward!

The course in this case had a unique enrollment demographic. It is an introductory education course designed for first and second year students in the arts college (that is, they aren't education students in training to be teachers). I've taught it for many years, and very occasionally a senior might enroll. This time, however, there were five 22-years-old-or-so seniors, three of whom had gone through the entire teacher education program; that is to say, they had had heavy exposure to what I'm calling the Word. I'm not certain, but I believe at least four of those five seniors were involved in this complaint. The complainant, who I believe was the only one other than a senior involved in this matter, basically signed off on a group complaint.

The final report quoted the complainant as saying the group took their issues to unnamed college of education administrators. How it got from those administrators to the Office as a formal discrimination complaint I don't know for certain. I suspect that the administrators encouraged the students to pursue discrimination charges, and that both the administrators and students were propelled to take this action to an extent they wouldn't have been, say, five or ten years ago, and that is because the university has become politicized, or the direction my thinking is going, "religicized."

What else could account for the way students conducted themselves in this matter? I'll list a series of ideas that come to my mind, which may overlap, complement, and contradict one another--I haven't worked it through completely in my own mind. I'll set out the ideas and invite you to see what you can make of them.

What particularly intrigues me is that I believe the majority, perhaps the vast majority, perhaps even all, of the students in that course, with some variation in degree but not significantly different from one another, were in accord with the complainant's perspective: yes, they'd say to her, you've got him pegged, that's who he is, and absolutely, something needs to be done about it. At the same time, I taught this very same course with this very same syllabus the previous year with, I believe it is fair to say, the

opposite reaction from the class; they were highly positive toward me and the course. And I honestly believe that an objective outsider, a fly on the wall, would attest that what was attributed to me in the course involved in this discrimination case simply wasn't objectively there. I also don't believe these complaining students were bad seeds. It was a small class and I got to know students quite well, and these were solid, upstanding young people, and I personally liked every one of them, no exceptions, the complainant included.

But did they go after me! Never in a university class have I had to deal with such disruption. I couldn't get some of them to raise their hands to speak, and they would go on and interrupt me and other students, and students were complaining to me that they were being cut off and telling me to do something about the free-for-all in the classroom. One day I gave a group assignment and students went to the back of the room and put on a DVD of comic Louis C.K. on a screen used for classroom presentations. Never have I had to deal with anything like what went on that class, including in high schools I've taught in the inner city.

And there I was on my own with it. I had no one to go with my problem. When there were, call them, discipline problems in secondary schools I have taught in, I could send students to counselors or the administrative office; there were processes in place to support me. The prevailing ideology of today's university focuses on power imbalances and inequities and defines me the professor as being all-powerful (and thereby more or less the enemy) and students as powerless. If there is one thing I'm certain about it's that students--at the pre-university as well as the university--are very powerful, and that they know how to wield their power. The students who decided to bring the class, and me, down, were highly effective at doing it. And they were in a system that was on their side in doing it.

Anyway, I had a group of young people, none of whom had devil's horns that I could see, who virtually all, or all, saw something really bad going on that I don't believe went on. Keeping that quandary particularly in mind, here are some things I've thought about that could help explain this mystery:

Rudolf Dreikurs (1897-1972) was a psychiatrist and educator and the medical director of the Community Child Guidance Center in

Chicago. Not anymore, but at one time his theories directed educators dealing with classroom management, or discipline, problems.¹² He identified four goals that motivate student misbehavior: attention getting; power and control; revenge; and the desire to counteract feelings of their own inadequacy.

These students got attention in spades: from college administrators, a university office, and from me certainly.

They wielded power to be sure and got in control of the action—or pretty much they did; I think that they might have assumed that they were going to get their less-than-stellar grades changed, which didn't happen.

As for revenge, and back to grades, I suspect that at least some of what went on was payback for getting low grades from me. These days, there is a deal struck in universities: from faculty to students, don't give us any trouble and we throw high grades at you; to faculty from students, give us good grades or we'll give you trouble, and we know you don't like trouble.

As for counteracting feelings of inadequacy, a web site thought I wrote back in 2007, "On Victoria's Dogs" might speak to this.¹³ Victoria is Victoria Stilwell, a transplanted Brit to the United States, who had a PBS show called "It's Me or the Dog." Victoria would go into people's homes and teach them how to manage their unruly dog(s) and then come back later to check on how things were coming along. I decided that Victoria's insights and strategies related to dealing with unruly dogs had a lot of application to dealing with unruly people. Victoria pointed out that a dog giving you trouble is many times one who feels inadequate and insecure. I extrapolated that understanding to people, and took some comfort in the realization that grief coming at me very often stems from people's deficits, not assets, and that messing over me may be just about the only thing they are good at doing.

As I was going through this Office process, it struck me that more than just salve people's feelings of inadequacy, it actually set them up as my superior. Everyone in this case was one up on me: the complaining students, anyone in my college they went to see, and the Office, including the investigator. There they were on the high ground talking about me, judging me, looking down at me, and there I was looking up to them pitching my case for their assessment and approval. Back in 2011, I wrote a web site thought called "On Jerry Lewis' Socks" (I won't explain the title here), which set out

what I see as a potentially profitable line of inquiry: how people who aren't superior to other people get themselves in a place where they have that status.¹⁴ Bringing a discrimination charge in a university isn't a bad strategy in this regard.

And then there is psychologist Abraham Maslow.¹⁵ Maslow (1908–1970) posited that there is a pattern to human motivations or needs that compel human thought and action in a particular direction. People's first order of business, according to him, is to satisfy their fundamental needs for safety, sustenance, sex, social acceptance and inclusion, and self-esteem.

Students could attack me from long range; they stayed safe and secure, that's for sure. They could make their charges and scoot off into the brush. They never had to stand up and be counted and answer questions or defend what they said about me. They never even had to be in my presence. Anybody in the college who counseled or encouraged the students involved in this case to go after me could do it anonymously. My mother used to tell me, "If you have something bad to say about somebody, Robert, say it to his face." You don't have to do that in a university. I may not respect the way people who came at me did it, but I have to acknowledge that it was a safe thing to do; it served a basic Maslow need for them.

To continue with Maslow's list of needs, I assume this action against me, which was basically a group undertaking, contributed to a sense of social acceptance and inclusion of the students involved.

And I assume it contributed to their self-esteem: any problem in that class, including the low level of their academic performance, was my fault and has nothing to do with them.

Nicholas Chritakis and other contemporary social scientists point out that human beings have the tendency to conform to what others around them are thinking and doing, whatever it is.¹⁶ A principal way they do this is through contagion: they absorb memes, ideas, and behaviors from each other that's akin to the way somebody would catch a cold. So whatever conception of me some people have--in my college, in a class--will be "catching."

In the web site article "An Educator's 10 Concerns About Social Media, I contended that social media breeds groupthink.

Social media breed a collective, identity; you become a member of a virtual community and absorbed into it. Membership in any community comes at the cost of autonomy and true individuality. That is particularly the case with the social media because in that community you are never private. You are always on display: nine o'clock on a Thursday night, there you are, they can see you. Your life becomes increasingly transparent. You live perpetually in public. A life in public contributes to an increased need to belong, and the way to belong is to go along with the crowd, conform. Social media involves self-disclosure. The more you talk about yourself--in any context, not just the Internet--the more you reveal about yourself, especially negative self-disclosures, the more subject you are to control by others. Social media breeds a kind of networked intelligence: accepted, and acceptable, thought is whatever the wisdom of the collective happens to be. Morality becomes shared morality. Truth, proof, becomes social, what is in the wind, or better, what is in cyberspace.¹⁷

Who I am, this professor, this individual, me, what I am, what I'm worth, is an immutable social truth in the university context. I am a racist—or the more common parlance these days, a white supremacist--and I am an anti-Semite, and a sexist, and a punitive grader, and an all-around bad person. I have become an abstraction, and nothing that happens in the real world, nothing I could ever do, is going to change that. That's a hard realization that's hitting home to me in a big way.

Although it doesn't take a modern day social scientist like Chritakis, or me if my scholarship amounts to anything, to point out the tendency of people, and not just young people, to march to whoever the drummer happens to be. Way back in the 1950s, horror writer Richard Matheson, got at this predilection in his short story, "Lemmings."¹⁸

Two policemen were standing on the coast highway. As far as they could see there was nothing but cars. Thousands of cars were jammed bumper to bumper and pressed side to side. The highway was solid with them.

The two looked at the crowd of people walking toward the beach. Many of them talked and laughed. Some of them

were very quiet and serious. But they all walked toward the beach.

As the two policemen watched, the crowd of people moved across the gray sands of the beach and walked into the water. Some of them started swimming. Most of them couldn't because of their clothes. The policeman saw a young woman flailing at the water and dragged down by the fur coat she was wearing.

In several minutes they were all gone.

One policeman said to the other, "You go. I'll wait a while and see if there's anyone else."

"All right."

They shook hands.

The policeman stood smoking his cigarette and watching his friend walk across the gray sand of the beach and into the water until it was over his head. He swam a few dozen yards before he disappeared.

After a while the policeman put out his cigarette and looked around. Then he walked into the water too.

So much more to be said, but one last point, and it relates to social media and the Internet. *Time* magazine in the current issue as I write this quotes an author of parenting books as saying that the Internet creates a culture in which "slander, backstabbing and libel are normal parts of human interaction. It normalizes the dehumanization of others. It promotes the tendency to look for someone to blame."¹⁹ At the same time that students these days are good folks, there is also, just beneath the surface—or is it on the surface?—a darkness, a capacity for cruelty and propensity to look for someone to blame and attack, that I don't remember in times past. Or is it that human beings have always been nasty creatures and the Internet has helped to unleash their nastiness. I don't know, but my stomach churned in front of that class, and it's churning now.

And then there's me. This case was brought against me and not someone else. How did I contribute to what went on? How was I a player in all this?

I violate the rules of show business.²⁰ I did it in the course in question, and I do it in every other public context in my life that I

can think of. And when anybody violates the rules of show business, me or anybody else, there are dues to be paid for it.

By show business I'm not referring to the conventional meaning of that term, the entertainment industry, movies and television programs, and so on. I mean show business in a broader, more literal, sense that includes entertainment but goes beyond that. I'm talking about the business of showing, and about the people whose business it is to show. Film directors of fictional material show things to people, images and dialogue and stories; they are in show business in this literal sense; they show as a business. Novelists do too. And so do documentary filmmakers. Because people deal with nonfictional material doesn't mean they aren't in show business; they show that material to us in a particular way. Similarly, journalists and--the focus here--teachers at all levels of schooling are in show business, the business of showing.

There are four rules that contribute to success in show business. By success, I mean having your audience—whether it be in a movie theater, in front of a television set, in a classroom, or reading your words--like and approve of you and accord you credibility and come back for more of what you have to show, and having them respect you and think you've got talent and give you awards and ask you to speak at their meeting or graduation ceremony or sign up for your courses. And my point here, right down the line I violate these four rules, and to think for a minute I'm going to get away with doing that simply isn't reasonable.

Rule number one is to confirm to your audience's preconceptions. Tell them what they already know and prefer. Do it in an engaging way and add a new wrinkle here and there, but the basic message to people is "You've got it right already." And stay within their frame of reference. Don't come on with topics and ideas that are foreign to people. The message to the audience needs to be, you know enough, you have it wired, you are on top of things, you've got it figured out already. Talking up the virtues of traditional education or bringing up the downside of diversity is like telling Baptists that Christ wasn't divine and expecting them to throw you an award dinner.

Rule number two is to make your audience feel good about themselves. Somebody else is dumb, wrong, out of it, misguided, malevolent, anachronistic, and so on, but not your audience. They are cool and on the side of the angels. They are better than those

yoyos over there, and there isn't anything they have to change about themselves, do differently. They can pat themselves on the back and have a restful night's sleep. Telling students that an introductory education course isn't just about sharing their off-the-top opinions on various educational issues, and that they need to at get better at understanding and analyzing other people's ideas, and giving them Cs and Ds is not making them feel good about themselves, and don't be surprised if what you are doing results in payback.

Rule number three is to keep things simple, clear, and unequivocal. No complications. No ambiguities. No contingencies—this if this happens and this other thing if that happens. No loose ends, no contradictions, no uncertainties, no dilemmas. No equally weighted competing claims. Nothing unresolved. Certainty. A course structured around the analysis of highly sophisticated and competing educational perspectives and proposals, as mine was, is looking for trouble.

Rule number four is to be personally appealing. In all honesty, I think I rub a lot of people, including college undergraduates, the wrong way.

I wore a "kick me" sign around my neck in that class.

Victoria Stillwell, the PBS show dog trainer I referred to earlier, makes the point that when you are having trouble with your dog--and I'm extrapolating here to people--you very likely have some work to do on yourself. You might need to get yourself closer to being an alpha dog in bearing and manner. An alpha dog (person) is calm, confident, in charge, no nonsense, direct, and action-oriented. When you come on as an omega, or bottom, dog--reactive, whiny, flitty, overly expansive, shifty-eyed, and nervous--as unfortunately, and for reasons I'm not going to get into here I am prone to do when I feel rejected or disconfirmed--it compounds your problem. I would do well by myself, and not just in education courses, if I would figure out what's between me and becoming more of an alpha dog and moving myself in that direction.

Also, I didn't feel well physically in that class and it showed. For as long as I can remember, I have had what could be called chronic fatigue syndrome symptoms (symptoms; tests have never shown anything)--I'm pale, exhausted, and sickish and looking to take a nap every waking moment of my life.²¹ Trying to teach

students who are basically antagonistic, as these students were, is akin to being a lion tamer in the circus, and that's a tough act to pull off with what feels like a case of the flu. For one thing, you can look to the lions as if you are prime for the kill.

Too, I think I came off isolated and unsupported in that class, because, well, I was isolated and unsupported. They could accurately agree among themselves that there'll be no cavalry coming to the aid of this guy. In fact, we'll get medals for chasing him down. So let's get to it.

And last, and most important for me right now, I have come to realize that I should have listened to the singer Kenny Rogers. Kenny's best-known song, "The Gambler," includes these lyrics:

On a warm summer's eve
On a train bound for nowhere
I met up with the gambler
We were both too tired to sleep
So we took turns a-starin'
Out the window at the darkness
The boredom overtook us, he began to speak

He said, "Son, I've made a life
Out of readin' people's faces
Knowin' what the cards were
By the way they held their eyes
So if you don't mind me sayin'
I can see you're out of aces
For a taste of your whiskey
I'll give you some advice"

So I handed him my bottle
And he drank down my last swallow
Then he bummed a cigarette
And asked me for a light
And the night got deathly quiet
And his face lost all expression
He said, "If you're gonna play the game, boy
You gotta learn to play it right

Every gambler knows
That the secret to survivin'
Is knowin' what to throw away

And knowin' what to keep
'Cause every hand's a winner
And every hand's a loser
And the best that you can hope for
Is to die in your sleep"

You've got to know when to hold 'em
Know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away
And know when to run
You never count your money
When you're sittin' at the table
There'll be time enough for countin'
When the dealin's done

I should have folded them in the university before that course even started. And if I didn't know enough to walk away and run back then, there's no excuse for not knowing it now.

Notes

1. Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (Tribeca Books, 2011).
2. To learn more about my public expressions, see my web site, www.robertsgriffin.com. It contains references to my books, and I divide my short pieces into two sections, writings and thoughts.
3. I make no determination whether or not the complainant has ADHD, and anyway it is moot in this case. I know I have never seen any documentation from a medical source or university office that attests to her ADHC. Dr. Richard Soul, M.D., a professor, clinician, and researcher has authored a new book at this writing book entitled *ADHD Does Not Exist: The Truth About Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder* (HarperCollins, 2014). Soul points out that an ADHD diagnosis is the result of a self-report. If you check off things like you fail to pay close attention to details, have difficulty organizing and sustaining attention to tasks, don't follow through on instructions, avoid or dislike tasks requiring sustained mental effort, or, as a student, leave your seat when remaining in it is expected, you've got ADHD. It's not a problem with your intellectual capability or your character; you're disabled. And if you are disabled, that shifts the burden responsibility from you having to perform up to accepted standards to others', including teachers', responsibility to accommodate your disability. And woe be to anyone who questions the validity of your disability; certainly today's universities would never do it.
4. I wish discrimination based on belief were prohibited. Knowing my reputation for being a critic of political correctness, students surreptitiously (they are afraid

of retaliation) tell me they are put down, shut down, and marginalized if they dare to question the leftist ideological creed being imposed on them by their professors.

5. See, Robert Jay Lifton, *Witness to an Extreme Century: A Memoir* (Free Press, 2011).

6. See, Maurianne Adams, editor, *Readings in Social Justice* (Routledge, 2013).

7. See, Peter Wood, *Diversity: The Invention of a Concept* (Encounter Books, 2004).

8. Critical theory has its roots in what is called the Frankfurt School of Intellectuals. Among the prominent members of the Frankfurt School were Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. These men were active from the 1940s to '60s and their prose is as dry as dust, and just about nobody these days has heard of them, but their ideas have powerfully filtered through to our time. In short, they are the forefathers of political correctness. To get you started, see Stephan Eric Bronner, *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

9. For a negative critique of Dewey's impact, one I agree with, see, Henry Edmundson III, *John Dewey and the Decline of American Education* (Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2006).

10. I got at this in a September, 2009 web site thought entitled "On Being a Modern Day Spinoza." www.robertsgriffin.com

11. "An Educator's 10 Concerns About Social Media," www.robertsgriffin.com, in the writings section.

12. See, Rudolf Dreikurs, *Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom: Classroom Management Techniques* (Taylor & Francis, 1998).

13. "On Victoria's Dogs," July 2007 web site thought. www.robertsgriffin.com

14. "On Jerry Lewis' Socks," March 2011 web site thought. www.robertsgriffin.com

15. See my discussion of Maslow in "Are Whites Pathological? Yes and No" in the writings section of www.robertsgriffin.com, 2012; in the webzine *The Occidental Observer*, June, 2013; and in *The Occidental Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 2, Summer 2013.

16. See, Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives . . .* (Back Bay Books, 2011)

17. *An Educator's 10 Concerns About Social Media*, op. cit.

18. "Lemmings," can be found in Richard Matheson, *Steele and Other Stories* (Tor Books, 2011).

19. "The Anti-Social Network: Inside the Dangerous Online World Kids Can't Quit," *Time*, Vol. 184, No 1, July 14, 2014, pp. 43.

20. I go into detail about this in a 2007 writing for my web site, "Ken Burns' Show Business." www.robertsgriffin.com

21. I've written about my health issues in web site thoughts: "On Personal Health," August, 2007; "On Personal Health II," March, 2008; and "On Personal Health III," June, 2009. www.robertsgriffin.com

