

Am I a Racist?

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Yesterday, while checking the “hits” on my <http://www.churchofnature.com> website, I noticed a “hit” from a link in an archive for debating materials. The piece was entitled, “Caldwell on Caldwell.” Unfortunately, it was truncated. Here, just for the record, is the entire e-mail from which the piece was taken.

My e-mail was a response to the following e-mail, from a reader:

23 March 2004

Dr. Caldwell:

Over the past few months, as I've attempted to talk to people about your writings, the same complaint is recurrent. It seems, in my experience, that a lot of the academics that I've talked to don't have problems so much with claims of survivability of nuclear war or negative effect of industrialization, as much as they have problems with things like your "\$100 immigration solution" or the part in *Can America Survive?* where you talk about how women have no place in combat.

People often call you a racist. Personally, I don't think this to be true, but my question to you is this: What do you mean by these types of things in your writing? What would you say to those who would label you a racist?

Much Obligated,
[Name given, but deleted here]

Here follows my reply:

24 March 2004

Dear [Name deleted]:

Thank you for writing about your concerns. I will try to address them.

I have a number of comments with respect to the issues you raise. Let me begin by saying that it does not really bother me that people may call me a racist. All I am concerned about is that they read my material, and think about the important issues facing the planet – and act.

I have been called more than a racist. A few months ago, a reviewer called me a “racist, sexist, bigot.” What did I say in response? Nothing. These are ad-hominem attacks, and they are of no significance. Ad-hominem attacks are the customary last resort of someone who cannot refute the logic of a writer's arguments, and decides to attack the writer instead.

Suppose that someone presented you with a statement or logical argument from someone, and asked your opinion of it. Suppose further that, after you rendered your opinion, he told you that the statement had been made by Jesus Christ. Would that change your opinion? Then, suppose he told you that he was wrong, that the statement was in fact made by Adolf Hitler.

Would that change your opinion again? It is, in my view, the arguments themselves that are important, not the source. (There are exceptions to this, such as asking someone who has just visited Rome what it is like – his views are likely of more value than those of someone who has never visited Rome.) Whether the author is a racist or a sexist, or a bigot, is not relevant. The issues of importance are the truth and utility of the assertions.

Am I a racist? I wrote about that at length in *Can America Survive?*. I do not have ill feelings for any race, but I have no problem with loyalty to one's family, tribe, race, religion, or nation (or any other arbitrary grouping into which one is born). Most people don't. They have no problem with the fact that if you do not stand up for your nation, you may be executed as a traitor. From one very important point of view, most human beings are extreme racists – they will kill any other species, to the point of extinction, solely for the gratification of the human race. What do these people say, when I label them as racist? Am I a racist? As I mused in CAS – does it matter?

Am I a sexist? I love women, and the profound experience of the male/female duality. And I recognize that the roles of men and women are somewhat different – radically different from a biological viewpoint, less so in many areas, and hardly different at all in some areas. In a primitive society, I see the utility of a clearly differentiated division of labor – women making clothes and cooking, and men hunting and killing animals for food, and defending from attack from other tribes. In today's modern industrial society, with both men and women in the competitive labor market, most jobs can be done by either sex, and it does not matter (to me or to economists) whether it is a man or a woman doing the job. But I do have a problem with sending a woman into battle to be bayoneted, blown to bits, or raped. If this position makes me sexist, then the "shoe fits."

Am I a bigot? Let's look at the definition: "One who is strongly partial to one's own group, religion, race, or politics and is intolerant of those who differ." I am certainly strongly partial to my own group, religion, race, or politics. With respect to religion and politics, I have very strong views (e.g., founder of the Church of Nature at <http://www.churchofnature.com> [or <http://www.foundationwebsite.org/CNMain.htm>] ; American Independence Movement (<http://www.foundation.bw/Platform.htm> [or <http://www.foundationwebsite.org/Platform.htm>]); New Age Party <http://www.foundation.bw/PositionStatement.htm> [or <http://www.foundationwebsite.org/PositionStatement.htm>]). With respect to "group" and "religion," I was essentially born into these, and accept them, as most people do. I stand up for my family and nation, as is expected of any real human being. (Cf. Johnny Cash, "Highway Patrolman": "A man turns his back on his family, he ain't no good..., he ain't no friend of mine.") I recognize, however, that this is a very arbitrary choice (perhaps "circumstance" is a better word here). If I were a German in the Second World War, I would fight with passion for Germany. If I were a Russian or a Briton or a Frenchman, I would take a life-and-death stand with Russia, Britain, or France. As a member of a privileged race, I don't have strong emotional views on that issue, but if I were a member of an oppressed race, I certainly would. But that is not the hand that God dealt me in this life. As I see it, the key to "bigotry" is whether one "is intolerant of those who differ." With respect to most issues, I am not intolerant. With regard to the issue of destroying the planet, however, I am quite intolerant. If you view this issue as a religious or political issue (as I do), then I am in fact strongly partial to my own views (stopping the Sixth Extinction), and intolerant of those who differ (i.e., those who would continue the destruction of the biosphere and the extinction of mankind). From this viewpoint, the definition certainly applies.

Your last question was, "What do you mean by these types of things in your writing?" What I mean is to stop the destruction of the biosphere and the extinction of the human race.

George