

GOOD GUYS OR BAD GUYS?

Contemporary Voices of White Nationalism in America

Edited by Carol M. Swain & Russ Nieli
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002
298 pp.

\$55.00

Reviewed by Louis Andrews

In July 2002, the Cambridge University Press released Carol M. Swain's book *The New White Nationalism in America: Its Challenge to Integration*. The book is based on a series of interviews of so-called "white nationalists" conducted by her associate, Russ Nieli. The promise was that a book of the interviews themselves would be released within several months, but the release date by Cambridge University Press kept being bumped back a few months at a time. *Contemporary Voices of White Nationalism in America* finally appeared in March 2003. One wonders why there was a delay at all, since the interviews had been completed long before. A quick examination shows that the first 83 pages, fully thirty percent of the book, are actually an introductory essay telling the reader why the interviewees are not only wrong, but dangerous, an obvious effort to reduce the impact of the 192 pages of interviews that follow. This reviewer suspects that the delay in the release date was due to the fine-tuning of this introductory essay to provide as good a foil to the white nationalists as possible. (While the term white nationalist is not perfect and carries a lot of baggage, it is nevertheless the one used to identify those whites concerned about white survival in a pro-integrationist world, so we will use it here.)

This book contains ten interviews, all conducted by phone between November 1999 and May 2000, by Nieli, a lecturer at Princeton and co-editor of the book. As Robert S. Griffin noted in his review of Swain's *The New White Nationalism* in the Fall 2002 issue of *The Occidental Quarterly*, there is no evidence that prior to publication of that book Swain had actually met face to face with any white nationalist figure of regional or national importance. One might say the same of Nieli. Again, one wonders why. The national

conferences held by the first interviewee, Jared Taylor of *American Renaissance*, are open affairs which at least half of those interviewed in *Contemporary Voices* have attended several times or more; three of them have been conference speakers. The issue of race would not have been a deterrent since non-whites have attended all five *American Renaissance* (AR) conferences held to date. Despite their lack of direct personal contact with any of their subjects, Swain and Nieli have no difficulty in spending 83 pages discussing why all of them are not only bad, but dangerous, people.

The ten range from the well known and readily available, such as Jared Taylor, who has appeared on Crossfire, Donahue, Buchanan and Press, and elsewhere on television, to the obscure, such as Lisa Turner or Reno Wolf, with neither of whom this reviewer was familiar.

In noting the differences between what they call “the older white nativist” organizations of prior years and those of the interviewees, the editors make the following remarkable statement:

What makes some of the newer organizations so dangerous, we believe, is that they address many important issues of race and nationality that are often ignored in polite company, and they do so with a degree of candor and openness not found in more mainstream discourse.

One hardly knows what to say. Addressing issues with candor and openness makes organizations dangerous? A few sentences down the page we learn that it is not the *white nationalists’* “candor and openness” that is the problem, but the lack of candor and openness of the mainstream media that makes them dangerous. Why? Because the mainstream refuses to address these issues with the same degree of honesty, the editors wrongly infer that the result is a closed group or groups of white activists to whom systematic refutation of false information is unavailable. A little attention to detail would have informed the authors that Jared Taylor invited a newspaper publisher hostile to *American Renaissance* to address the 1996 AR conference in Louisville, and that participants there and elsewhere have often been critical of one another’s ideas on race. In addition, a review of the over 150 issues of AR published to date would have revealed AR’s readiness to give space to criticism and opposing views on a variety of topics touching on race.

The editors’ real problem is that their vision for America and the world is at odds with the more realistic views on race of the interviewees.

We think it of utmost importance that many of the topics that are now discussed openly only within the province of the racist right be taken up and seriously addressed by more moderate voices who have not lost faith in the older ideal of an integrated America.

Older ideal? Their “older ideal” is a profoundly new idea, one increasingly doubted or even rejected as possible even by mainstream writers. Benjamin Schwarz, writing in the May 1995 *Atlantic Monthly*, observed, “[T]he struggle to make one nation of America’s original two ‘black and white’ is an enterprise that might never succeed, and that America’s founders did not believe was

possible." (So much for the "older ideal.") Tom Wicker, a lifelong integrationist and longtime *New York Times* political columnist, in the mid-1990s wrote a book entitled *Racial Integration: The Tragic Failure*, in which he reviewed the last forty years of race relations in the United States. Wicker noted

[V]irtually all black leaders of the fifties and sixties and Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Nixon and Carter assumed that if African-Americans were assured the vote and of their right to hold public office, all else would follow. As a journalist I shared that idea; full political citizenship for African-Americans would make a reality of the ideals of economic and social equality.

With overwhelming sadness, Wicker now admits that they were all wrong, that the expected results simply did not come to pass. Racial integration was and is a tragic failure. We are still, as described by Andrew Hacker's memorable title, "two nations, black and white."

Rather amazingly, Swain and Nieli write that the reason the white nationalists "have such little exposure to alternative viewpoints is because of the overall feebleness and self-censorship that continues to dominate discussion about controversial racial issues in America." Are we to believe that the white nationalists are somehow cut off from radio, television, and the print media – all of which are 99.999 percent in support of the editors' integrationist dreams? No, this can hardly be the case. The integrationist arguments are there for everyone; it is only the white nationalists' arguments that are not heard by the mainstream. So the editors have things exactly backwards: It is the egalitarian, integrationist arguments that go untested by the mainstream, not the white nationalist arguments by their proponents.

The editors, to be sure, do acknowledge that, whatever the causes, group differences in abilities do exist.

America as a cohesive, multiracial, multiethnic society can only endure if group differences...like individual differences, are perceived as a natural and inevitable result of diversity and freedom.... If differential achievement of this kind is allowed to become the basis for intergroup bitterness, hostility, and resentment, or if it gives rise to widespread paranoia and conspiracy thinking among the less-successful groups, then a pluralistic, multiracial, multiethnic society cannot endure. Under such circumstances, the pessimistic conclusions offered by ethnic separatists become inescapable....

As expected, the editors argue that these differences in abilities are probably not genetic, but at least they acknowledge them, as well as the logic of the white nationalists' arguments given the nationalists' view of human nature.

What we are saying is that important data and evidence is available that is more supportive of an environment-dominant view of black/white racial differences than of any genetic-based theory, and that this evidence is rarely if ever given its due in white nationalist discourse on these matters.

One wonders what planet the editors inhabit. As one who has studied race differences and ethnic conflict for forty years, I cannot recall any such "data and evidence," important or not, from Stephen J. Gould's "reification" to the

“Flynn Effect,” that hasn’t been considered and thoroughly dissected by race-realists. The editors cannot have read interviewee Michael Levin’s *Why Race Matters: Race Differences and What They Mean* and make their claim while maintaining a straight face: Levin spends page after page addressing every conceivable piece of “important data and evidence” that the egalitarian integrationist folks have put forward.

The editors then address the supposed widespread anti-Jewish bias of many white nationalists (two of the ten interviewees are Jewish professors). They asked Levin, of the City College of New York:

You are a Jew, and the views you express on race are most usually expressed by whites who dislike Jews as much as they dislike blacks. Does this make you uncomfortable?

LEVIN: No, no. I get a little impatient with Jews myself. After all, egalitarianism has been mostly an idea associated with Jews in the twentieth century, and if you look at those who attack the current data on race and try to pooh-pooh it and dismiss it, it tends to be almost entirely Jewish.

The editors note that Jews “would virtually dominate what became known in the mid-1970s as the ‘neo-conservative’ movement” in addition to their widespread support for egalitarian leftist causes, such as immigration, and end their essay with a comment that Jews do not all “speak in a single voice.” This is another case of the editors setting up a straw man to demolish, as there is no claim by anyone interviewed that Jews speak in a single voice.

Swain and Nieli group the interviewees into four sections. The sections are designed to move from the “White Rights Advocates” – Jared Taylor, Reno Wolfe, and Michael Levin – to the “White Nationalism and White Separatism” group including Don Black, David Duke, and Michael H. Hart, and then finish with the “White Supremacy and Neo-Nazism” group, containing Matt Hale, Lisa Turner, and the late William Pierce. A section on “White Christianity” includes a single interview, with Dan Gayman. A number of the interviews are of interest and worth reading, and there is a surprising unanimity of views on many topics, considering the wide range of individual beliefs.

The editors give the most space (about 15 percent each) to Jared Taylor and Dan Gayman. Their focus on Taylor is understandable as he is the most influential of those interviewed, but Gayman is a mystery. I suspect that Swain, as a recent convert to evangelical Christianity, found his vision of Anglo-Israelism particularly interesting, even though he is virtually unknown and has little influence outside of his church, the Church of Israel in Schell City, Missouri.

Contemporary Voices begins with the Taylor interview. The editors seem particularly interested in Taylor’s monthly periodical *American Renaissance* and its philosophy, mission, and the type of people who write for and read

it. Taylor notes that “the major assumption that underlies the positions that *American Renaissance* takes is that race is important and race matters, and it’s folly to try to build a society on the assumption that it can be made not to matter.” After telling Nieli that *AR* has a number of black subscribers, Taylor observes:

When I talk to Americans about racial consciousness and about the legitimacy of racial consciousness, blacks understand this much more readily than whites because they themselves *have* racial consciousness, and they have group interests that they make no bones about expressing and advancing. It’s whites for whom the idea of racial consciousness has been turned into something that is, if not irrelevant, then even loathsome. Because blacks understand their own racial interests, they find it much more straightforward to imagine that whites can have racial interests, and I think that gives them an interest in what racially conscious whites may be thinking.

AR readers tend to be male, mostly in their forties, college educated, and to have above-average income. Most are conservative and about half are Christians. The monthly has been published since November 1990, beginning in Menlo Park, California, then migrating eastward until finally settling in Oakton, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C.

Taylor sees multiracialism as inherently flawed, and thus inevitably beset with race problems.

I think the greatest set of problems having to do with race is simply inherent to multiracialism. There has never been a multiracial society on the face of the earth in which there was not racial friction, and in fact the most stable multiethnic . . . societies that I can think of have been ones in which there was some kind of quite firm hierarchy of different groups . . . once that hierarchical relationship disappears, you find them in conflict. This is a fairly reliable pattern that you see around the world.

He argues that society is actually teaching blacks to hate whites since blacks are constantly being told that the reasons for their relative lack of success are rooted in white oppression or white maliciousness. Taylor also emphasizes what he calls “one of the essential rights of an Englishman,” the right of the refusal to deal with someone or the freedom of association. Once whites gave that up (in the name of superior morality), it was all downhill.

After Nieli suggests that many people would consider *AR* “a racist publication,” Taylor notes that the views on race expressed in *AR* are very much like those of every president until John Kennedy, and thus there is no good word (and certainly not a pejorative one) to describe the views, since they were just a matter of common sense and virtually universally held.

Almost every interviewee was asked about Martin Luther King, Jr., and their responses were remarkably similar in many respects. Taylor suggests that King is “as close to a secular saint” as we have. And in an interesting comparison he notes:

I don’t know if you recall when it was learned that he had plagiarized his Ph.D. thesis and in fact plagiarized quite a few things that he had written. This fact was sedulously kept from the public, and even when the press learned of this,

American newspapers refused to publish it. . . . Now contrast that, if you will, with the ill-concealed glee with which the press reported on the DNA analysis that reported that Thomas Jefferson could well have been the father of Sally Hemmings's third son. I think the contrast is astonishing.

In Taylor's opinion, Martin Luther King was a black hero, not a national hero. King did what he did because he was looking out for the interests of blacks, not of whites, and cannot be faulted for that. Whites can and should be faulted, however, for buying into a system that will inevitably result in a nation where whites "lose their majority and their culture."

Concerning social systems in multiracial societies, Taylor is clear about the relationship of justice to such systems.

Now, I do not defend the hierarchical arrangement that prevailed in the United States before the civil rights movement. I think it was an inevitable consequence of trying to build a society that was multiracial and a society in which this biologically salient fact had to be dealt with. Slavery was unjust, apartheid was unjust, Jim Crow was also unjust, but I think our prevailing situation is likewise unjust.

Nieli points out that many whites supported King, and Taylor responds that this was because they found appeal in a belief that race could be transcended, just as the communists found appeal in the belief that self-interest could be transcended. Yet both attempts at transcendence are contrary to human nature, and nothing but problems will come from attempting either.

The next interview is with Reno Wolfe, who founded the National Association for the Advancement of White People in 1998. It is apparently an Internet-based organization of little current importance. We will skip over that interview, to move to Michael Levin, the last of the "white rights advocates" interviewed.

Levin is the author of *Why Race Matters: Race Differences and What They Mean*, published by Praeger in 1997 (not 1998, as Swain and Nieli state). Anyone who has spent time with this book will recognize that Levin, a philosophy professor, is a power to be dealt with on race differences. Levin's central point, which he makes early on, is that

[T]he reason whites do better than blacks, and all such judgments are comparative, is simply that whites are more intelligent and have certain traits of temperament which conduce to long-run success, and these differences are genetic in origin. These differences are not the fault of whites, they're not something that whites did to blacks, and they are not something for which whites owe blacks compensation.

Michael Levin also argues that whites and blacks differ in their relative levels of fairness and cooperation and that this attribute, like most race differences, is based in biology and related to the climate and conditions under which the separate races developed. Thus there is an essential difference in moral outlook between the two groups, which shows up in social issues such

as illegitimacy. In addressing the claim that he is a “white supremacist,” Levin responds that he doesn’t believe that whites have a God-given right to rule, but just that, given the race differences, they will. The interview is a good introduction to Levin’s thought but doesn’t hold a candle to his book.

The next section is about a group Swain and Nieli call “white separatists,” and consists of interviews with Don Black, David Duke, and Michael H. Hart. While the interviews with Black and Duke are interesting, the one with Hart is the longest and the only one that actually lays out a specific proposal on how and why separate nations for whites and blacks in the United States should and could be accomplished (see <http://LRAINC.COM/swtaboo/taboo/mhhart01.html>).

Michael H. Hart is something of a polymath, with advanced degrees in law, astrophysics, and computer science. He has authored several books on a variety of topics, from astronomy to perhaps the most interesting, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, which has been translated into numerous languages.

Hart’s interest in racial matters grew out of both his Jewishness and his being classified as a white American.

[I]n my earlier years I was frequently discriminated against. Some institutions had quotas against Jews.... But later, when I became older, I was told that in order to make up for the privileges I had in the past there should be a new set of quotas and preferences put in operation against me. Quite naturally, I grew to resent this. In addition ... I – and the whole group to which I belonged – was ... being attacked as relentlessly racist.

Also, as a scientist, he was appalled by the censorship and self-censorship regarding any discussion of race differences. Hart makes the same point as Levin: that blacks are taught to hate whites by white support of claims of damage.

This resentment is partially fueled by the message that blacks receive from the mainstream communication media. What the blacks hear from the media is essentially this: “You are inherently equal to whites in ability; however you are visibly much poorer. You have very few positions of power, and very few high-ranking jobs. This has been going on forever. It is completely unfair, and it is the result of white racism....” How can blacks possibly overcome hostility and resentment for past injustices when they are told that these injustices are continuing and are harming them drastically all the time?

Hart sees no way out other than partition. His proposal is unique in that it calls for not only separate white, black, and Hispanic states, but also for an integrationist state for those who continue to adhere to the dream of what has become Wicker’s “tragic failure.” Hart reasons that maintaining a white state would be impossible with a large number of white integrationists constantly trying to destroy it; thus having the integrationist state serves both the integrationists and the separatists. Better we adopt something like Raymond Cattell’s Beyondist vision, in allowing numerous “experiments in living,” many of which will fail, rather than running the risk or danger of losing everything because of some universalistic imperative.

Hart notes that a multiracial state damages whites in particular. Taxes are high to support the social problems of non-whites, schools and school standards are poor because of the non-whites who attend, and crime is far higher than it would be in an all-white state.

Michael Hart began as a liberal and notes that today there is far less freedom on campuses than even during the McCarthy era. Our racial tensions are not being reduced, but our liberties have been.

On diversity as a strength, Hart notes, "When newcomers assimilate, it is the *unity* which provides the strength, not the diversity. If they do not assimilate, all that diversity leads to is quotas, preferences, and interracial hostility and violence. And diverse groups most often do not assimilate." Nieli raises the point that some blacks are committed to transcending race, and so integration might work. Hart quashes this with a scene from the movie *Gandhi*.

India is going to get its independence from England at long last, but the Muslims, led by Ali Jinnah, want a separate Muslim state, and Gandhi confronts him and says, "Why do you want a separate Muslim state?" And Ali Jinnah said, "Moslems will not be treated fairly in a country with a Hindu majority. There is too much resentment, and we will be discriminated against." Gandhi turns to him and says, "Ali Jinnah, you have known me for thirty years. Surely you don't think that I would discriminate against you or anyone else just because you are Moslems." And Ali Jinnah replies, "The world is not made up of Mahatma Gandhis."

Hart maintains that past non-partition strategies to handle multiracial states failed because they have tried to change human nature to fit the needs of government instead of changing government to fit human nature. Thus we should accept the inevitable and plan on partition, as a number of other countries he describes have already done to address ethnic conflict or even just to satisfy ethnic desire.

The last section of three interviews is entitled "White Supremacy and Neo-Nazism." The first two interviews are with Matt Hale, the *pontifex maximus* of the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC), and his associate Lisa Turner. Ben Klassen, who invented the electric can opener, founded the WCOTC in the 1970s and later committed suicide. Hale is now in jail, the WCOTC in disarray, and Turner is no longer associated with it, so we will skip ahead to William Pierce, who is far more interesting and important. The late William Pierce earned a Ph.D. in physics and was a college professor for years. (Robert S. Griffin's *The Fame of a Dead Man's Deeds*, a book-length introduction to the man, was reviewed in the Winter 2002/2003 issue of *The Occidental Quarterly*.) Pierce's transformation from physics professor to racial activist seems to have been the result of two trends of the 1960s that gave him a sense of alarm: first, the open expression of pro-Vietcong sentiment by many on campuses across America, and second, the civil rights revolution, i.e., the drive to integrate blacks into white society. To counter these trends, which he saw as destructive, as well as to get his own writings published, Pierce founded the National Alliance in the early 1970s. Its main goal was short term, education. He recognized that nothing could be accomplished toward his long-term goals of restructuring society without first changing the state of mind of thinking white people about their coming dispossession and eventual extinction.

In order to accomplish his educational goals, Pierce used the National Alliance to develop a monthly magazine, a weekly radio broadcast (today distributed via the Internet in both audio and text form), a publishing and book distribution enterprise, as well as a recent music recording business geared to his largely young clientele. Pierce is also well known as the author of several novels, including *The Turner Diaries*, written under a pseudonym. Whatever one might think of his views, Pierce is clearly a man who dedicated, at great personal cost, much of his time and talent to what he believes in strongly. While he was often accused of advocating violence, that is not really the case. In the interview he condemns violence, not because it is violent, but because it is counterproductive. If circumstances were different, then violent actions might be warranted. While some try to make much of this, it is not really different from the policy that has guided American patriots since the Boston Tea Party.

While the National Alliance is composed largely of the young, Pierce claims that it has about "seven times the percentage of academics...as exist in the general population." When asked about his vision for the future, he makes several points. First, he wants a white European America; second, one with strong nuclear families where mothers raise their own children. He supports immigration, as long as the immigrants are European (the same view our founding fathers held). Leftists will be surprised, but he does not support a segregated society as existed before the civil rights revolution.

I think segregation is ultimately bad for society. I think we ought to cut our own grass, wash our own dishes, carry out our own garbage, take care of our own kids. I do not approve the separate but unequal societies that we had. I think blacks have to solve their own problems in their own parts of the world. So I certainly do not approve of the civil rights movement or the effect that it has had on our society.

In the summer of 2002, William Pierce discovered that he had terminal cancer and quickly organized an orderly transfer of leadership for the National Alliance. He died in late July 2002. It remains to be seen if the new divided leadership can continue, but after almost a year they seem successful.

Good guys or bad guys? Those interviewed range from brilliant promoters of race-realism and white nationalism to immature flakes whose existence only brings discredit to their movement and support for groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center. Buy the book; read the interviews; and follow your instincts as to who will likely be correct. Cambridge has also released a \$20.00 paperback edition, so this might be a good book to buy for your friends and acquaintances whose knowledge of race-realism and white nationalism is derived from the one-sided presentation they find in the media.

*Louis Andrews is a businessman and creator of the **Stalking the Wild Taboo** website. He is also web editor/publisher and business manager of **The Occidental Quarterly**. Mr. Andrews has written for **Right Now!** as well as other publications and lives in Augusta, GA.*

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BRIDGING THE RELIGION-SCIENCE DIVIDE

Darwin's Cathedral

Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society

David Sloan Wilson

Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2002

\$25.00 US

268 pp.

Reviewed by Richard Faussette

The preview on the inside cover of *Darwin's Cathedral* reads:

One of the great intellectual battles of modern times is between evolution and religion. Until now, they've been considered completely irreconcilable theories of origin and existence. David Sloan Wilson's *Darwin's Cathedral* takes the radical step of joining the two, in the process proposing an evolutionary theory of religion that shakes both evolutionary biology and social theory at their foundations.

The key, argues Wilson, is to think of society as an organism, an old idea that has received new life based on recent developments in evolutionary biology. If society is an organism can we then think of morality and religion as biologically and culturally evolved adaptations that enable human groups to function as single units rather than mere collections of individuals?

David Sloan Wilson says we can. In his introduction, titled "Church as Organism," Wilson writes,

"The purpose of this book is to treat the organismic concept of religious groups as a serious scientific hypothesis...."¹

THE VIEW FROM EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

Reading Wilson's avowed purpose and the claim on the inside front cover of his book that religion and science have been considered "completely irreconcilable theories of origin and existence," I wondered what had happened to make it so. As early as 1876, Herbert Spencer had written, "The social structure adapted for