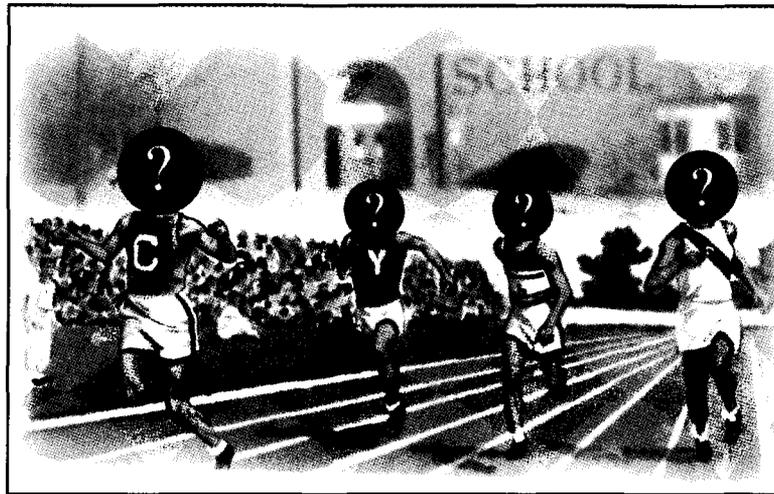


Not Separate and Not Equal

The San Fernando Valley

by Roger D. McGrath



Oh I'm packin' my grip and I'm leavin' today,
'cause I'm taking a trip California way
I'm gonna settle down and never more roam,
and make the San Fernando Valley my home.

I'll forget my sins, I'll be makin' new friends,
where the West begins and the sunset ends.
Cause I've decided where yours truly should be
and it's the San Fernando Valley for me.



So sang Roy Rogers in the 1943 Western *San Fernando Valley*. The song, sharing its name with the movie and written by Gordon Jenkins, became a hit the next year when it was recorded by Bing Crosby. Small wonder: GIs were preparing to land at Normandy, and Marines, at Saipan. The song evoked the kind of images a war-weary nation dreamed of, and no one could bring emotions to lyrics better than Crosby. It may have helped that, in those days, Crosby lived in the Valley, as did Bob Hope, Roy Rogers, Walter Brennan, John Wayne, Clark Gable, and Gary Cooper. In the Valley, they could own acres of rural land, stable horses, and ride into the sunset.

After World War II, the rush into the San Fernando Valley began. By 1950, the Valley's population had more than doubled, reaching 400,000. Much of the Valley, especially its western reaches, still consisted of wide-open spaces. I had an uncle who, for a time, kept a horse with a trainer in the far western end of the Valley. Occasionally, I would tag along with him. We would drive from home in Pacific Palisades, a coastal community lying between Santa Monica and Malibu, inland through Topanga Canyon to the stables. It was as if we were slipping back through time into the Old West. The western end of the Valley was still mostly horses, pumpkin patches, cornfields, and walnut ranches. There was even a dairy farm that produced

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goat milk.

By 1960, the Valley's population had more than doubled again, to a million. My sister and her husband bought a house in that same far western end of the Valley in 1961, on what had been a walnut ranch. Old properties in the area were still horse-zoned, but, when they were resold, new zoning went into effect that prohibited the keeping of horses. This was not popular among Valley residents, but zoning decisions were made "over the hill" in the city.

By the 1950's, the Valley teemed with children—white children. The Valley gained a reputation for its lack of racial diversity, as those living in Los Angeles proper were quick to point out. It was the "white suburb," and from it came the "conservative white vote" in Los Angeles city elections. Except for a few pockets of Mexican-Americans, especially in the incorporated east Valley community of the City of San Fernando, and a very small number of blacks in the same area and in nearby Pacoima, the Valley was very white indeed. The whiteness of the Valley high schools contrasted sharply with those in East, Central, and South-Central Los Angeles. From the mid-50's through the mid-60's, high schools could not be built fast enough in the Valley—Birmingham, Reseda, Monroe, Taft, Cleveland, Grant, Sylmar, Chatsworth, Granada Hills, Kennedy, El Camino. All soon had 3,000 or more students, and these were only three-year schools.

Along with the older Valley high schools (such as Canoga

Park, Van Nuys, Polytechnic, North Hollywood, and San Fernando), these schools began flexing their muscles among the more than 50 high schools that made up the Los Angeles district. Suddenly, Valley schools were vying for city championships in football, basketball, baseball, and track. A kid at Van Nuys High grew six inches and gained 40 pounds in one year and, all of a sudden, was throwing fastballs that approached 100 m.p.h. He terrified batters. His name was Don Drysdale. A 5' 11" basketball player at Polytechnic High developed a fall-away jumpshot that was unstoppable and led his team to the championship against the best the inner city had to offer. His name was Gail Goodrich. A dozen other such Valley athletes began appearing in the sports sections of Los Angeles newspapers.

Birmingham High developed a football program that resembled a big-time college athletic factory. The school had 120 or more players turn out each fall just for the varsity squad. Nearly every year from the late 50's through the late 60's, the Braves were in the city playoffs. The 1963 team not only won the city championship but was untied and undefeated. The Braves crushed their opponents. Their linemen looked like they belonged at USC where, in fact, several of them later played. Their running back, Mike McConaghy, burst through holes that sometimes were several yards wide. McConaghy, now a school principal in the Valley, recently remarked on how different it is today: The school spirit, discipline, and work ethic are lacking to produce such a team. But back then, Birmingham's stadium was packed with thousands of students and parents for Friday night games. Their cheerleaders included Sally Field, and their drill team featured a couple hundred girls, each one in an Indian princess outfit complete with braided hair and a feather. Athletes, cheerleaders, students in the stands: They were all Birmingham Braves and proud of it.

By the 1950's, Valley high-school track teams were producing city, state, and national stars. It is nearly impossible to exaggerate the importance of track in California in those days. It vied with football as the top high-school sport. Duel meets often had crowds of a thousand or more. L.A. City Finals regularly attracted more than 20,000 fans, including hundreds of "track nuts," the aficionados of the sport who were never without a clipboard and a stopwatch. They knew every time, distance, and height recorded by the top athletes. Rivalries among the old city schools were fierce. Out of University ("Unihi") in 1943 came Melvin "Pell-Mel" Patton, who later set world records in the 100 and 220 and won gold medals at the London Olympics. From Washington High came Hugh McElhenny, who ran a 14.0 in 120 high hurdles in 1947 and went on to become an All American and an All Pro football star. Southern California was a hotbed of track: Charley Paddock, Frank Wykoff, Parry O'Brien . . .

When Valley schools began producing track stars, they had, in a sense, arrived. In 1953, Ron Morris of Burroughs High in Burbank cleared 14 feet in the pole vault to set the national prep record. Quick, muscular, and explosive Dave Davis of Canoga Park High put the shot nearly 63 feet in 1956 to break the high-school record, although later the same season another California shot-putter surpassed Davis's mark. Throughout the 50's, other Valley tracksters recorded impressive times in the 440, 880, and mile. Then, in 1960, Forrest Beaty, a 15-year-old sophomore from Hoover High in the extreme eastern end of the Valley, stunned track fans when he won California's southern

section title in the 220. To do so he had to beat another young Valley speedster, Ralph Turner, a junior from a neighboring high school, Burroughs.

In 1961, Beaty and Turner scorched tracks in the Valley and beyond. Suddenly, the valley had the two fastest sprinters in the nation. Sprinters from South-Central L.A., from Compton, and from other black communities in Southern California, accustomed to excelling in the dashes, could not touch the white boys from the Valley. In the southern section finals, Ralph Turner ran the 220 in 20.5, tying the fastest time ever run by a prep. It was only good for second place. Beaty ran a mind-boggling 20.2, a national record and only two-tenths shy of the world record. He was all of 16 years old. In the state finals, Beaty won the 100 in 9.5, and Turner was second in 9.6. The 220 was run into a strong headwind, and, although the solidly built Beaty won easily, the tall, lean Turner was nosed out for second. Turner's high school career was over, but Beaty, the swiftest prep in the nation, had another year left.

Nearly 60 percent of voters in the Valley now support secession. Surprisingly, 49 percent of voters in the rest of the city also support Valley secession.

Beaty got off to a fast start in 1962. By mid-March, he had already run the 100 in 9.5 and the 220 in 20.6, the best times in the nation. Then, on the last day of the month, he ran the 100 in 9.4 to tie the national prep record set by Jesse Owens in 1933 and tied by Jim Jackson in 1954. When Owens set the record, he was nearly 20 years old, and Jackson was a month shy of 19 when he tied it. Beaty was 17-and-a-half. In meet after meet, Beaty blistered tracks and smoked the competition. He ran the 440 once on a lark and recorded a 47.3, the third-fastest time in the nation. He took the southern sectionals in 9.5 and 20.4 and then, after a horrible start, won the state 100 in 9.5. Most observers thought a good start would have given him a 9.3.

Thousands of spectators now waited anxiously for the 220 final. The field included several other runners who had broken 21 flat. "This kid Beaty just might break the world record" was the comment heard throughout the stands. When the gun went off, the crowd was on its feet, and nearly everyone was holding a stopwatch. At 70 or 80 yards, Beaty began pulling away from the field. At 110 yards, he was six or seven yards ahead and still accelerating. He was demolishing the finest 220 field in state history. Then it happened: His hamstring ripped. Richard Stebbins, from Fremont High in South-Central L.A., went on to win in 20.9. Knowing how powerful Beaty was in the second half of the 220, everyone thought he would have beaten Stebbins by 10 yards or more and run a world-record sub-20 flat. The track nuts estimated 19.7 or 19.8. Nonetheless, Beaty's 20.2, run 41 years ago, is still the fastest 220 ever by a prep.

By the early 60's, a dozen Catholic high schools (separate schools for boys and girls in those days) had been built in the

Valley. Crespi was already a powerhouse in track. In 1964, Crespi senior Steve Caminiti, half Italian, half Irish, and all thoroughbred, tied the national prep record in the 120 highs when he ran 13.7 and broke the record in the 180 lows with a blazing 18.1. He also ran the 100 in 9.6. He was incredibly quick over both high and low hurdles, made all the more amazing by his relative lack of height. He stood something under 5' 11", far less than ideal, especially for a high hurdler.

The athletic prowess of the Valley kids was making it more difficult for those in the rest of Los Angeles to sneer at the basin on the north side of the Santa Monica Mountains. We surfers on the coast still did so when we found the "Valley kooks" in the water during the summer at our favorite spots such as Topanga or Malibu, but we stopped laughing when we ran onto the football field against them in the fall or competed with them in track in the spring.

My sister's three boys, growing up in the Valley during the 60's and 70's, had an almost idyllic childhood. Their neighborhood was filled with a bunch of kids like themselves, the schools were good, and crime was something that happened in L.A. However, most of the Valley, although many did not seem to recognize the fact, *was a part of the City of Los Angeles*. This was made abundantly clear when forced busing for the purpose of racial integration came to the Valley in the mid-70's, courtesy of the courts and the Los Angeles school board. My sister's two older boys escaped being shipped across the city, but her youngest was chosen to be used by the social engineers for their nefarious experiments. My sister started thinking about her little blond-haired, blue-eyed son being shipped into the inner city, and suddenly he had a new address—mine. My wife and I had just bought a new house in Westlake Village, far to the west of the Los Angeles city line and in another school district.

Overnight, thousands of Valley kids disappeared from the school system. Some, like my nephew, used addresses of relatives outside the L.A. district. Others had a renewal of faith, returned to the Church, and enrolled at the parish school for a good Catholic education. Catholic schools began to include Protestants—an ecumenical spirit prevailing! There had been almost no private Jewish schools in the Valley, but they, too, began springing up. Operation Bus Stop, organized for the sole purpose of putting a halt to forced busing, was established by a Jewish mother, Bobbie Fiedler.

Although the idea of a separate Valley city had been talked about earlier, it began to take on real meaning now. Had the original busing plan not collapsed, secession may have been attempted right then. So many white children fled the district, in one manner or another, that busing became a one-way operation—blacks and Latinos from the inner city were shipped out to Valley schools. This quieted the secessionists somewhat, and the movement waned. It began waxing again by the early 90's, much of its renewed vigor inspired by a sharp rise in crime in the Valley and a precipitous decline in the quality of the schools, both attributable to the arrival of tens of thousands of illegal immigrants from south of the border.

I remember a cop buddy of my older brother telling me in 1964 that he was retiring. I asked him how he could possibly retire with only ten years on the force. He chuckled and said, "No, I'm not really retiring. I've been transferred to the Devonshire Division in the Valley." The division was in Chatsworth, in the northwest corner of the Valley. There was so little for the police to do that they called duty there "retirement." Not so to-

day. Although Chatsworth is still relatively quiet, crime has risen dramatically in the Devonshire Division. In pockets of the Valley with large numbers of illegal aliens, crime statistics rival the worst parts of the inner city.

Part of the rise in crime preceded the recent illegal invasion. With the inner-city blacks being bused to the Valley came inner-city gangs. They began driving through the quiet and relaxed neighborhoods surrounding the Valley high schools, searching for targets of opportunity. Some of these targets were teenage girls, who were plucked off the street and taken to safe-houses in L.A., where they suffered multiple rapes. A few of these black gangs took root in the Valley through another destructive policy invented by social engineers. The county decided that it would be good to move a certain portion of welfare recipients out of South-Central Los Angeles to the Valley. The process was simple: The county contracted with the owner of rental property to lease an apartment or house. The owner was guaranteed payment from the county for a long term. The county then moved welfare recipients into the rental. Cheaper housing in the Valley began to fall prey to the practice.

According to polling data, most people in the Valley feel they have no control over their destiny—that the Los Angeles City Council pays little attention to them. Nearly 60 percent of voters in the Valley now support secession. Surprisingly, 49 percent of voters in the rest of the city also support Valley secession. Strong support for secession comes from other areas of Los Angeles now beginning to talk about separation, including San Pedro and Hollywood. Talk of secession in San Pedro is particularly galling to the mayor of Los Angeles, James Hahn. Not only does he live in San Pedro, but the leader of the small but growing secession movement there is one of his neighbors.

For years, the powers-that-be in Los Angeles have been saying that the Valley could not sustain itself should it break away—that its tax base was inadequate. Several exhaustive studies released in May revealed the opposite. Los Angeles has been sucking tax revenues out of the Valley and not returning an equal amount in services. The most recent numbers suggest that loss of the Valley would cost Los Angeles dearly and that a new Valley city would be required to pay L.A. "alimony." The first payment would be \$128 million. Over 20 years, the annual payments would gradually decrease. Another blow to Los Angeles came when the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) decided that the question of Valley secession should go on the November ballot.

Mayor Hahn, who had issued dire warnings that the Valley could not support itself and had employed every political tactic imaginable to prevent LAFCO from allowing the question of secession to go before the voters, immediately announced the formation of an anti-secession campaign committee. Former mayor Richard Riordan and other downtown power brokers jumped on board. Within days, more than two million dollars had been pledged to the committee. Mayor Hahn hopes to raise five million. With his Valley-can't-go-it-alone argument exploded, he has been claiming that secession is highly problematic—that there are too many variables. His fear tactics have not yet made much headway in the Valley, where the consensus can be summed up by an exchange in the movie *Paint Your Wagon*. A Mormon husband warns the second of his two wives that, if she agrees to be auctioned, she will simply go to the highest bidder, and "you don't know what you'll get." Unfazed by the warning, she replies, "I know what I've had."

Communitarians, Liberals, and Other Enemies of Community and Liberty

Scaling Back the Enlightenment

by Donald W. Livingston



I remember a time when the terms “community” and “virtue” had almost disappeared from philosophical discourse. Working on a doctorate in philosophy at Washington University in the mid-60’s, I took a seminar in ethics from Prof. Herbert Spiegelberg, who had written the definitive history of phenomenology. One day, he observed that philosophers no longer even spoke of virtue. He was not entirely right, because Catholic universities, where Thomism was strong, still explored the meaning of virtue. But elsewhere, in Anglo-American as well as in Continental philosophy, the language of virtue had entirely disappeared. Spiegelberg had no view on the matter—he merely mentioned it as a curiosity.

Moral virtue had vanished because Enlightenment liberalism had come to dominate the Western intellectual classes. The ethics of liberalism was either utilitarian or Kantian, explicitly rejecting the traditional moral conception of virtue. I myself (I am ashamed to say) was a Kantian at the time and had no idea what Spiegelberg meant when he spoke of virtue. It was only years later that I came to see how serious the matter was. By rejecting virtue, the liberal tradition was not merely substituting one ethic for another but—as astonishing as this might sound—rejecting morality altogether.

Morality, as traditionally conceived, supposes, first of all, a

metaphysical vision of the nature of man and the sort of life that is good for man. Virtues are cultivated dispositions of character that enable the soul to live out the life that is good for man. A virtuous soul, with much training and over a long period of time, may come to love those things that are truly good as opposed to those that merely appear to be such. Second, morality presupposes a community. A man cannot know what the good is independent of a concrete way of life, lived in community with others, in which the good is exemplified. A man becomes good through emulation and by apprenticing himself to a master craftsman in the art of human excellence. In a word, morality is *soulcraft* that touches every aspect of life: excellence in character, style of dress, manners, architecture, the form cities should take, the way gardens should be laid out, the preparation of food, what is worthy of remembrance, and so forth. Morality is an adventure, a whole way of life lived out in community with others across generations in pursuit of a common—though never fully comprehended—vision of the human good.

Communities are important because, like the family, they are the natural bearers of a valuable way of life. The 18th-century Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico argued that man is transformed from an animal into a human being only when he can sustain the institutions of religion, marriage, and burial. The marks of a genuine community are the temple, the graveyard, and the wedding celebration. The favorable connotations that attach to this essential structure of human life are inappropriately applied to associations that are not communities at all—for instance, the “business community,” the “entertain-

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