

Revising O'Neil's definition of PC

by Jeffrey D. Spencer
I write to clarify certain distortions and misrepresentations of the PC "movement" which Mr. Daniel E. O'Neil aired in the March 14 edition of The Campus.

I am gravely concerned by those who attempt to become the martyrs of a misconceived notion of free speech and intellectual freedom.

Mr. O'Neil's comments are, as such arguments tend to be, not founded so much on a genuine intellectual interest in preserving diversity as they are on a wish to be able to openly advocate bigotry.

The cross Mr. O'Neil is bearing is not one which will heretofore represent the poor, abused Middlebury College students whose lives have been dictated to them, but rather it is one which he has crafted and placed on his back in order to divert people's attention from the real issues of sexism, racism, homophobia and heterosexism, etc.

Mr. O'Neil hastily finds labels such as "radical," "extremist" and "nonsensical" to describe what is, in fact, a way of thinking descended from traditional liberal thought. Mr. O'Neil might be well advised to dust off his political spectrum and find out exactly where "radical" fit on it. He then should find an example of a truly radical movement. In suggesting this, I am not attempting to value liberalism more than other political beliefs. I am suggesting that the right, in order to alienate

Liberal arts

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rely entirely on education to provide for a well-informed, socially-conscious populace. Education stimulates curiosity. The enlightened student is quick to question authority. It is the intelligentsia, the professors and students who populate this nation's universities and colleges, who are commonly at the forefront of the liberal cause.

In addition, we cannot allow administrators or faculty to fool students into passively accepting the courses which the college offers. If we are to study Middle East culture, we should begin with the Koran. If we are going to read women authors, we should probably include Virginia Woolf and Emily Dickinson. But it is crucial to maintaining high academic standards that we not study politically-influenced works which are a part of the curriculum simply because the people who wrote those works were "victims" of an ethnocentric, male-dominated society.

The current revolution in higher education has not yet invaded the Middlebury campus. With less press coverage than our Ivy League counterparts, Middlebury remains relatively secluded. Nonetheless, we are not immune to the threat of those who will call themselves politically correct. If we are to preserve traditional, Western education, we must make a concerted effort today to reject all forms of political incursion within the curriculum.

many people from multi-culturalism and cultural democracy, is trying to propagate the myth that these concepts are radical and anti-intellectual. Multi-culturalism and cultural democracy merely mean first, having access to one's own culture, tradition, and history, and second, learning about and respecting the multitude of other cultures, traditions, and histories around us.

These ideas might seem radical to those who wrongly use and subsequently hide behind other liberal principles such as freedom of speech. Freedom of speech does not mean that anyone has the right to intimidate me because of my sexual orientation, nor does it mean that anyone has the right to spread extremely dangerous misinformation and stereotypes about, and hostility towards, gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals. Jokes and negative comments do just that and are certainly not "peaceful and minimally confrontational."

I would try to refer Mr. O'Neil to a similar situation so that he could know exactly how it would feel to sit in his room and hear "f---ing faggot" shouted at him.

Straight, white males, however, are neither hated nor persecuted in any way which is comparable to the ways in which African-Americans, gays and

lesbians, etc. are hated and, often, attacked. Moreover, I resent the exploitation of the fraternity issue as an attempt to present privileged students as victims of discrimination. Clearly, no matter how difficult it is for fraternity members to accept the changes made in that system, this issue is not and will never be on par with racism, homophobia, and sexism. The issues are completely different.

Finally, though sometimes

the majority of the student body. However, the faculty still takes part in the making of school policies even though they don't have a clue what it's like to be a college student in the 1990s. Furthermore, those students who do not feel the immediate effects of a particular issue continue to bash those who do, from

7 issue of The Campus, I too feel that Middlebury College bears little resemblance to the one that I attended freshman year and especially to the Middlebury College to which I applied.

Students are now being controlled by the administrative thought police who regulate our social lives, our beliefs, our words, and our freedom of basic rights. Not only are students not able to think for themselves, and make important individual choices, but the school has decided which beliefs and rights are found acceptable for students to hold. This is not to say that all walks of campus life are being stunted by the school's new policies. There are many organizations that the school not only supports, but for whom they bend over backwards.

Consequently, many students may not feel any of the devastating effects of the school's almighty oligarchy and most of the faculty could probably care less either way because it does not affect them as it does



it appears that checking our speech and choosing non-offensive terms merely serves to put a nice face on deeply-rooted prejudices and beliefs, PC serves a necessary function in the ongoing struggle against oppression. Obviously, the elimination of bigotry from our society must begin somewhere. Eliminating offensive terms from our vocabularies makes us think about whether or not we actually believe that females over the age of 21 are "girls." Regulations against negative comments concerning sexual orientation (read: hate speech) should cause us to think about our society, which teaches us to dislike people for certain traits. This brand of teaching — teaching hatred — is the true danger to American society, and those who disguise their bigotry with desperate, melodramatic, sensationalist whining for intellectual freedom are the ones who are truly "condemnable," "extremist," and "disgusting."

choices without being denigrated by selective liberal rhetoric or smug self-righteousness. An opinion or a belief is sacred and should be respected, but try to instill your beliefs in others who do not want them is harassment. As a non-militant liberal, I believe that educating the masses on social issues is one thing, but force-feeding students selective liberalized topics defeats the purpose of free choice. Showing a lack of respect for the beliefs and values of others is prejudice and therefore antithetical to the fight against prejudice concerning, among other things, the gender and racial issues. Students who

Four years later; same student, different school

by Patrick Berry
As a freshman (as I was called when I arrived) at Middlebury College I was enthralled with the freedom that I was given to subscribe to my own political and social set of beliefs and values. However, just as Eric Robert Mendelson suggested in his opinions article in the March

point of view that is detached and often ignorant. For instance, in the last issue of The Campus there was an opinion expressed by Anne Elizabeth Pellet concerning DKE's choice not to change to a co-educational organization. To say that DKE has a social responsibility to change is a reargulation of a new school policy that does not affect Ms. Pellet nearly as much as it does the members of DKE. And I do not imagine that Ms. Pellet has any intention of joining DKE in light of her scathing article, so I am led to assume that her remarks represented a specific principle regarding gender rights. However, the gender policy of the school is one with which Ms. Pellet agrees and the concept of an all-male organization is one that she feels should be persecuted. I have nothing to do with DKE and I am a proponent of gender rights, but I realize that gender is not the only core issue involved here.

Who's to say that the

gender issue takes precedence over the basic right to assemble? Yes, the school has laid down a law that all-male organizations should cease to exist, but this is an example of the school telling students what they can and cannot do. Ms. Pellet may one day be an alum who will be lending her support to the administration on issues that affect her life, but she should distance herself from the situation and realize that what is happening here goes beyond the issue of gender rights. This issue touches on the rights of all students involved.

Students who continue to show this... selective open-mindedness end up reinforcing the school's egocentric views on what is right and wrong.

shove it down our throats. It is easier for Ms. Pellet to jump behind the guard of the administration when the new policies do not directly affect her life. Whether or not DKE decides to go coed won't amount to a hill of beans after Ms. Pellet has graduated. Therefore I urge Ms. Pellet to have respect for the basic rights of other people so that we may be free to make our

already begun to regulate our weekend social lives to such an extent that the next step will be chaperones and curfews. The first step was shutting off the alcohol at one o'clock. The next step was shutting off the music at one thirty. But perhaps the greatest infringement upon our social lives is the new rule that live bands will not be allowed in

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Quoth the Raven...

by Bruce Bender
The other day, while watching television, my buddy George Herbert Walker Bush appeared to give a speech at Fort Bragg in which he congratulated himself on the successes of Operation Desert Shield/Storm. He noted that during the six months the troops spent in the desert, very few US servicemen lost their lives. Fewer, in fact, than if those 500,000 had spent their six months in a major US city.

Something is wrong here. The President of the United States, who has received the highest approval rating ever, admitted free of coercion that our streets are less safe than a war zone. Not just any war zone, but a war zone in which armed forces from over 30 nations served. A war zone which to this day continues to utterly dominate the national media, bringing me to my next point.

President George Herbert Walker Bush has no domestic policy. Over the past six months that has mattered little, as the eyes of the world have been focused on the Middle East. But the fact still remains that someday no one will worry about the Kuwaiti situation, about the fact that they are torturing foreign nationals who may or may not have been Iraqi sympathizers. Someday people will wonder why it is not safe to walk the streets after mid-afternoon, and maybe then George Herbert Walker Bush will have to answer. Since George brought the topic up, let us specifically discuss violent crime.

I read the letter of a priest from the Middle ages in which he complained bitterly and at length of the atrocious crimes committed in the streets of London. He wrote of kidnappings, murders, con men and pick-pockets run wild, making the entire city wholly unsafe for any who entered. This was back in the Middle ages, when there was no real central authority, and no organized full-time police force as we have today. The rate of violent crime in London at that time was less than one half the going rate in New York or Los Angeles.

I shall bet if George cancelled the order on one of those \$800,000,000 B-2 Stealth Bombers (which, incidentally, are too valuable to ever fly non-nuclear payloads) and spent it on reducing crime we would all be a lot safer. Let me just check my calculator here — if he distributed the cost of one B-2 among, say, the twenty most populous cities in the country, that would be \$40 million dollars per city. That is mucho deniero, amigo. True, we would all be a bit more vulnerable to the Communist hordes encroaching from every direction, but at least I would be able to step outside my door at night.

There are other issues left untouched by the Bush administration over the past thirty months. Education, the environment, the Savings and Loan "industry," the annually ballooning budget deficit. Come on, George. Impress me with your new domestic order before you