



BACK OF THE CLASS

Carter Gets a D

MARTHA BAYLES

And that's with the benefit of substantial grade inflation.

The text of this student essay is taken from “[New Slaves, Global Edition: Russia, Iran and the Segregation of the World Economy](#),” written by Carter Page and published in the February 10, 2015 issue of *Global Policy*.

Carter, I don't normally write such extensive comments on a student paper, but this essay raises serious concerns about your ability to use sources, reason logically, and craft a coherent argument. It might be helpful to spend some time with a remedial tutor. Please see me after class. Grade: D

Essay on Global Injustice

Carter Page

Professor Bayles's Class

Slave: Pronunciation: /slāv/ 1.2 – A person who is excessively dependent upon or controlled by something. —*Oxford Dictionaries*

No serious essay begins with a dictionary definition. If you don't already have a good grasp of a term, you probably shouldn't be writing an essay about it.

In October 2014, rapper Kanye West visited with President Barack Obama in the White House. Although the follow-up from the meeting did not lead to the outcome either participant had hoped for in domestic politics, ...

What political outcome? This would seem an important point, since Presidents and entertainment celebrities don't often meet for such purposes. Were they

planning a two-man video along the lines of “Otis”?

... the artist’s creative work offers valuable ideas that could fundamentally improve the direction of U.S. foreign policy and world affairs.

Really? Kanye West is a multitalented hip-hop artist who has on occasion steered the music industry away from its worst instincts regarding black America. But on what basis do you say he has “valuable ideas” about “U.S. foreign policy and world affairs”?

Kanye West released a song in 2013 entitled “New Slaves.” The lyrics start with a description of the 1950s in America: “My momma was raised in the era when, clean water was only served to the fairer skin.”

This line is bizarre, even for KW. Black Americans in 1950s drank the same tap water as everyone else (albeit from different public fountains).

After explaining various racial biases that West has experienced throughout his own life ...

When exactly did KW suffer this terrible racial bias? In Atlanta, where his mother was an English professor at Clark Atlanta University? In China, where she taught at Nanjing University? Or in Chicago, where she chaired the English Department at Chicago State and sent him to the Polaris School in Oak Lawn?

... the song refers to his direct response: “I’m about to wild the f*** out, I’m going Bobby Boucher.” It is a reference to the 1998 movie *The Waterboy* in which Adam Sandler’s character channels his frustration from injustices in life into extraordinary performance on the football field.

This allusion to The Waterboy was lame when KW used it. But at least he had a reason—to sell music to middle-class white kids. I am not sure what your reason is.

Closely analogous situations and responses may be found in today’s international arena.

If this is “closely analogous” to “situations and responses in today’s international arena,” please tell me what isn’t?

But in the current drama of world affairs, it is not just one fictional student like Boucher that has begun to take action against the forces of perceived injustice and harassment. Instead, Russia, Iran, China and a range of emerging powers ...

Do these “emerging powers” include Kazakhstan, whose ruler President Nursultan Nazarbayev presides over a deadly gulag worthy of Stalinist Russia? If KW is against slavery and oppression, why did he accept €2.7 million to perform there in 2013?

... have suffered from the same kind of condescending mistreatment that football team bullies once delivered to Boucher and have begun to respond in kind.

Not Adam Sandler again! The reference rings so false in the present context, I can’t help but wonder: Are these your own ideas, or was this written by the propaganda machine of a hostile foreign country? (Just kidding.)

[...]

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “You know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. There comes a time, my friends, when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of humiliation, where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life’s July and left standing amid the piercing chill of an alpine November. There comes a time.”

Mr. West was correct to point out in his 2013 song that when people are humiliated and trampled, there eventually comes a time when they will wild

out.

Carter, you have got this so wrong, I don't know where to begin. Dr. King's movement was not a case of "wilding out." It was a highly disciplined, religiously based protest based on the nonviolent tradition of Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy. Check your sources!

Drawing upon the lessons from the civil rights movement, now applying the United States' earlier course correction toward greater respect and justice in the foreign policy arena would help avoid a persistent long slog along the current lethal path.

Stop a moment and read that sentence.

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial has suggested: "For the Pentagon, Mr. Obama's budget of \$612 billion represents a 4.5% increase over 2015. This boost is overdue in a world of proliferating national-security threats from the Islamic State to Vladimir Putin to China." But as often seen in the original Cold War, returning to the piercing chill of an alpine November through continued militarist instigation would prove far more costly and completely unnecessary for all parties.

[...]

The concurrence of targeted discrimination and interventionist policies is by no means a new phenomenon. Despite other accomplishments by U.S. President Harry Truman, his counterproductive Truman Doctrine which helped initiate and institutionalize the Cold War echoed the same condescending tone in an infamous letter he once wrote to his wife, "I think one man is as good as another so long as he's honest and decent and not a nigger or a Chinaman."

Score one for political correctness. Truman did say that, in a private correspondence. But is that a reason to ignore the Soviet Union's role in starting the Cold War?

In his 2003 article "We Can Learn a Lot from Truman the Bigot" which touches on these themes, Peter Kuznick suggests, "We should question whether his was the kind of presidential vision our own troubled times demand. And we should consider the dangers of placing unlimited power in the hands of extremely limited political leaders."

Kuznick is not a historian but a conspiracy theorist, just as his idol Oliver Stone is not an artist but a conspiracy theorist. There are better sources out there.

Obama himself is an individual with tremendous talents. But various legacy staff members and ill-advised advisors in the U.S. foreign policy apparatus have directly reflected the dangers of placing vast power in the hands of the extremely limited political leaders that his Administration has appointed.

So it's not Obama's fault but the fault of all those sneaky white folks working for him? Are you aware of how condescending, dare I say racist, this sounds?

In the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case of 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to create separate public schools for black and white students. In February of that same year, the Soviet Union completed an internal transfer of the Crimean peninsula from the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian SSR. As Khrushchev's granddaughter has said, "It was somewhat symbolic, somewhat trying to reshuffle the centralized system and also, full disclosure, Nikita Khrushchev was very fond of Ukraine. So I think to some degree it was also a personal gesture toward his favorite republic. He was ethnically Russian, but he really felt great affinity with Ukraine." Despite the long-standing close cultural ties between Russia and Crimea, the administrative reshuffle of 1954 was based on the false assumption that no Western official could ever be foolish enough to lead a revolution in Ukraine that promotes pro-U.S. radicals to power in Kiev. Even more unthinkable is that such hand-selected rebels would be hostile to Russia's interests. In the wake of such careless decisions, the March 2014 democratic referendum which followed in Crimea thus led to a predictable

result.

Where on earth is this coming from? Are you aware that this is the party line in today's Kremlin? To go from Brown v. Board of Education to this issue is a mind-boggling leap of logic! Maybe you should consider another crucial fact about 1954: the top song that year was Kitty Kallen's "Little Things Mean A Lot." I leave it to you to draw the self-evident conclusions.

Given the biased philosophies and draconian tactics of both the U.S. and the E.U., Russia has shifted its attention eastward. Recent efforts by Gazprom, the world's largest publicly-traded energy company, have refocused on the strong prospects in Asian markets. This economics-focused initiative stands in stark contrast to the military-focus of the U.S. pivot to Asia. Whereas China also sees evidence that the increased presence of military overseers in its backyard might stand as part of a new U.S. containment policy, the move reflects part of the mutual concern that Beijing shares with Moscow.

You really need to show more respect for your reader. You may not be aware of it, but this whole essay sounds like it was written by the FSB. Do you even know what that is?

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