

Eakman: The Alinsky Method; The Obama Phenomenon: Shiver: Obama, Protégé of Alinsky & J. A. Wright; Carl Prince on Black Homiletics & Liberation Theology

Eakman, *Cloning of the American Mind*, 202:

"Tolerance is a virtue. Your religion reaches tolerance, doesn't it? Only intolerant people decline to recognize homosexuality (or "sexual freedom") as a viable lifestyle. So just how religious are you?"

In no case is the student being given a choice to debate. The child is never aware that there is a choice. The two contradictory beliefs, loyalties or values are internalized as a conflict rather than a choice. They function more like subliminal orders than value judgments and frequently involve a conflict among the child's parents, religious teachings, and the wisdom of pop psychologists.

Once the youngster is sufficiently confused, a teacher may "empower" the child by "resolving" the crisis for him or her, but in so doing what is actually happening is that a new value or belief is being inculcated. The child never realizes he has been manipulated. The parents aren't around, so they certainly don't know what's going on. The teacher may use a canned lesson, so that he or she may not be aware, either, that a powerful psychological technique is being employed to mold the student's feelings and viewpoints.

The techniques we have just observed by Progressive educators have demonstrated how "change agents" operate in the classroom. The central objective that motivates these agents' is change. And the person who provided the format for the process is one whose writings have instructed both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Ibid., 248-49:

The Alinsky Method. A special application of this technique [i.e., the function of change agents] applied specifically to teachers is called the *Alinsky Method*, a staple of the *National Education Association*. Saul Alinsky penned *Rules for Radicals* in 1971 in which he asserted that "any revolutionary change must be preceded by a passive, affirmative, non-challenging attitude toward change among the masses of people." The radical organizer, he said, must be "dedicated to changing the life of a particular community." To accomplish this, the organizer must:

Fan the resentments of the people of a community; fan the latent hostilities of many of the people to the point of overt expression. He must search out controversy and issues. An organizer must stir up dissatisfaction and discontentment. He knows that values are relative ... truth to him is relative and changing.

Alinsky specifically trained the NEA's top staff in these techniques. (p. 248)

Make no mistake: the *Alinsky* approach to "consensus-building" works. It works with adults, and teachers, and schoolchildren. It works with students in college classrooms, community leaders, and even church groups. Change agents walk in with a smile, a pleasant demeanor and a handshake. The targets rarely, if ever, know they are being manipulated. (p. 249)

Alinsky was the subject of Hillary Rodham's senior honors thesis at Wellesley College, "There Is Only the Fight: An Analysis of the Alinsky Method." Rodham commented on Alinsky's "charm," but rejected grassroots community organizing as outdated. Once Hillary Rodham Clinton became First Lady of the United States, the thesis was suppressed by the White House for fear of being associated too closely with Alinsky's ideas.

Alinsky also had a significant influence on Barack Obama, who is a United States Senator and candidate for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination. Obama particularly used Alinsky's techniques while participating in Chicago community organizations in the 1980s.

III. The Obama Phenomenon:

On the subject of Alinsky's influence on Barack Obama, Kyle-Anne Shiver has written an instructive article for the *American Thinker*:

Shiver, Kyle-Anne. "Obama's Alinsky Jujitsu." *The American Thinker*, January 8, 2008, http://www.americanthinker.com/2008/01/obamas_alinsky_jujitsu.html:

Barack Obama seems to have effortlessly achieved voter adoration, fresher, younger, at ease within his own skin. It may appear to a great many observers that Barack Obama is just one incredibly audacious, even lucky, albeit frighteningly charismatic dude.

These personal qualities are not the sole reason he is where he is, and I suspect the wily Mrs. Clinton knows this full well. I suspect it *must* bother her that Obama also appears to have mastered the playbook used by her own political teacher, the legendary amoral guru of left wing activism, Saul Alinsky.

Hillary has met not only her *match* in Alinsky tactics, she has met the *master* of bloodless socialist revolution, in my opinion.

Obama's Alinsky Lessons. Barack Obama had just graduated from Columbia and was looking for a job. Some white leftists were looking for someone who could recruit in a black neighborhood in the south side of Chicago.

Obama answered a help-wanted ad for a position as a community organizer for the Developing Communities Project (DCP) of the Calumet Community Religious Conference (CCRC) in Chicago. Obama was 24 years old, unmarried, very accustomed to a vagabond existence, and according to his memoir, searching for a genuine African-American community.

Both the CCRC and the DCP were built on the Alinsky model of community agitation, wherein paid organizers learned how to "rub raw the sores of discontent," in Alinsky's words.

One of Obama's early mentors in the Alinsky method was Mike Kruglik, who had this to say to Ryan Lizza of *The New Republic*, about Obama:

"He was a natural, the undisputed master of agitation, who could engage a room full of recruiting targets in a rapid-fire Socratic dialogue, nudging them to admit that they were not living up to their own standards. As with the panhandler, he could be aggressive and confrontational. With probing, sometimes personal questions, he would pinpoint the source of pain in their lives, tearing down their egos just enough before dangling a carrot of hope that they could make things better."

The agitator's job, according to Alinsky, is first to bring folks to the "realization" that they are indeed miserable, that their misery is the fault of unresponsive governments or greedy corporations, then help them to bond together to *demand what they deserve*, and to make such an almighty stink that the dastardly governments and corporations will see imminent "self-interest" in granting whatever it is that will cause the harassment to cease.

In these methods, euphemistically labeled "community organizing," Obama had a four-year education, which he often says was the best education he ever got anywhere.

Is it any wonder, then, that Obama's Alinsky jujitsu is making mincemeat of the woman who merely interviewed Alinsky, wrote about him, and spent the next 30 years in corporate law and in the lap of taxpayer-funded luxury in government mansions?

Obama Not Starry-Eyed Like His Followers

Alinsky considered himself a realist above all, the ultimate pragmatist. As a confirmed atheist, Alinsky believed that the here and now is all there is, and therefore had no qualms about assorted versions of morality in the pursuit of worldly power. He didn't coddle his radical acolytes or encourage their bourgeois distinctions between good and evil when it came to transferring power from the Haves to the Have Nots. Alinsky saw the already formed church communities as being the perfect springboards for agitation and creating bonds for demanding goods and services.

When Obama first undertook his agitating work in Chicago's South Side poor neighborhoods, he was un-churched. Yet his office was in a Church and most of the folks he needed to agitate and organize were Church people—pastors and congregants—who took their churches and their church-going very seriously. So, this became a problem for the young agnostic, who had been exposed to very little religion in his life. Again and again, he was asked by pastors and church ladies, "Where do you go to church, young man?" It was a question he dodged for a while, but finally he relented and joined a church. Not just any church, but a huge black nationalist church with a pastor, Rev. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr., who unabashedly preaches a "black" gospel.

Much has been made of Obama's membership in Rev. Wright's church located on Chicago's West 95th Street. The fact is that Wright turned in his notice to Trinity United Church of Christ in 2007 effective in May of this year. He delivered his final sermon there last month.

What this man taught from his pulpit was his business. He has a long pedigree of impressive degrees from leading universities and seminaries, earning his doctorate from United Theological Seminary under Dr. Samuel DeWitt Proctor. He was pastor at Trinity for 35 years leaving to his successor a congregation of over six thousand people.

I have no ax to grind with Dr. Wright. The problem is with one of his parishioners. Senator Barack Obama learned quite a bit from the man. Dr. Wright is accomplished in the art of black homiletics, verbal and physical techniques of sermon delivery that dynamically presents "black liberation theology."

Senator Obama acquired techniques of black homiletics from observing Dr. Wright and transformed it into a political presentation minus the theology. The theology however has at its core a homiletic that utilizes propaganda to promote a political agenda.

Not to leave this stone unturned I go directly to an essay on black liberation theology for elaboration, The Reverend A. Carl Prince's sesquipedalian treatise on cultural revisionism through theological heterodoxy and homiletic grandiloquence:

Prince, A. Carl. "Preaching and the Distinctive of Black Preaching." In *Black Preaching Articles*. Prince George, Va.: Mount Hope Baptist Church, July 10, 2006, <http://www.mounthopebaptist.org/carl.prince.sermons.html>:

In his book, *The Certain Sound of the Trumpet*, the late ... Dr. Samuel Dewitt Proctor posited a dialectical method of preaching: an antithesis, thesis, synthesis methodology.

"Liberation preaching encourages blacks and the poor to participate in the system, to get an education, to get involved in the political process and to do those things that will gradually help to change and transform society."

In terms of preaching in the black church tradition the thesis of Dr. Cleophas J. LaRue, homiletics professor at the Princeton University Divinity School provides instructive clarity for the homiletic exercise.

In short, LaRue's thesis is that the distinctiveness of black preaching lies in African Americans' conception of God and their way of interpreting scripture. Moreover the social experiences of African Americans have provided the matrix ["Something from which something else originates, develops, or takes form" (M-WCD/11).] for both the theological conception [of God] and the biblical hermeneutic [the principles used for interpretation of Scripture].

James Cone, celebrated as the Godfather of Black Liberation preaching, contends a black theology of liberation is indispensable in altering systemic societal arrangements that run afoul of ethics and integrity. Cone identifies his conceptualization and biblical hermeneutic as antithetical to Eurocentric theologians indicating, "God is on the side of the oppressed."

For the black theologian James Cone, black preaching is definitive preaching. It not only centers on sin and the ethical imperative to love one another and honor God in our actions but it prophetically pivots on the systemic ills of society and calls both humanity and systems of evil to account.

The salient normative in black preaching is its healing anthropological hermeneutic [man-centered biblical analysis] and a hopeful ontological homiletic [a style of preaching that relies on the Holy Spirit to provide impromptu revelations to the speaker]. Black preaching affirms our ethnic identity [But, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus" Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 12:13] and pays homage to both the hope of our existential arrangement as well as our eschatological aspirations.

Black preaching then is the preaching of an atonement theology that seeks to set things right cosmologically [promotes radical approaches to the political status quo by means of activism]. It is participatory communication that calls humanity to participate in God's cosmic call to be spiritually, socially and ecotheologically reconciled to Him [reconciliation is through faith in Christ; all else is human good; neither Jesus nor any of the biblical writers advocated political activism].

Black preaching speaks truth to systemic structures of power from a unique theological, anthropological and historical vantage point. It lifts a prophetic word to its oppressor through personalities that have been personally pierced by the pain and paralysis of poverty and prejudice.

Let me clarify the goal of preaching in the church and society. The goal of preaching is not to pander to the preconceptions of the pew, politicians or the mainstream media. Neither is the goal of black preaching to prove the preacher's perspicuity, i.e., their prophetic grandiloquence.

The goal of black preaching is redemptive communication through divine revelation for the purpose of holistic liberation through the dual venues of social and spiritual transformation [i.e., society must be transformed, by force if necessary, to conform to the "unique theological, anthropological, and historical vantage point" that, by definition, cannot be understood except by blacks].

In its most uncontaminated configuration, black preaching is not counterfeit commentary but authentic utterance that comes undiluted from the oval office of eternity. Black preaching is divine revelation for the purpose of spiritual education and empowerment. Black preaching is celestial communication with an eye to social and spiritual transformation with the ultimate end of human salvation [liberation theology, which pretends to have direct access to "the oval office of eternity" while merchandising a soteriology that requires human works, is demonstrably a fraud].

Black preaching lifts the light and love of God's Word for the dual purposes of spiritual emancipation and social empowerment [the Bible is used to foment activism for political and social change]. Black preaching sets free that we might engage in socially redemptive service for the one who has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light [If "black preaching sets free" then why the need for emancipation?].

Through the ages black preaching has been iconoclastic [opposition to established beliefs, traditions, rituals, and customs of society] organizing and mobilizing the masses to take a stand against oppression to change the world [the objective of liberation theology].

The Reverend Prince's magniloquent verbosity reeks of pseudo-intellectual arrogance and his conclusions betray anthropocentric academic speculation. The essay is ripe with the terminology of Progressive ideology, some of which are indicated in bracketed commentaries.