

September 9, 2013

We missed an article on the 50th of MLK's "I have a dream" speech. [Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom](#), American race relations scholars, try to understand why leaders of the African American community are so negative on the prospects for racial harmony in our country. Their classic volume, *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible*, can be [purchased here](#).

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One amusing anecdote in the Thernstroms' book was the story of a rural Georgia county who at the advent of the auto, considered having two road systems - one for whites and one for blacks. A good illustration of the actual hardships visited on blacks was the *Negro Motorist Green Book* published by a Harlem letter carrier on what establishments would accommodate blacks. [WaPo](#) had the story.

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### **Forbes OpEd** on the California opportunities in fracking.

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*Why has oil production halved? The same reason that our economy has become a nightmare—political policies that make it practically impossible to do business in California. When I asked Dr. Andrew Kleit, professor of Energy and Environmental Economics at Penn State University, about California’s woes on a recent podcast, he responded, “California has very challenging environmental regulations . . . you simply can’t build new things.”*

*Thus, we find ourselves in desperate but well-deserved straits. If it weren’t for our weather, who knows how many more productive businesses would have fled?*

*California urgently needs what it has lost all right to ask for: some breakthrough industry to set up shop here and somehow create trillions in wealth and millions of jobs.*

*And yet the oil industry is proposing to do exactly that—through revolutionary shale oil technology. ...*

### **Mark Steyn** on the failure of Muslim culture and the neverland where we cannot speak of that failure.

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*Richard Dawkins off and then on again. Something's gone weird." The Daily Telegraph's Tom Chivers beseeched him, "Please be quiet, Richard Dawkins, I'm begging."*

*None of the above is Muslim. Indeed, they are, to one degree or another, members of the same secular liberal media elite as Professor Dawkins. Yet all felt that, unlike Dawkins's routine jeers at Christians, his Tweet had gone too far. It's factually unarguable: Trinity graduates have amassed 32 Nobel prizes, the entire Muslim world a mere 10. If you remove Yasser Arafat, Mohamed ElBaradei, and the other winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, Islam can claim just four laureates against Trinity's 31 (the college's only peace-prize recipient was Austen Chamberlain, brother of Neville). Yet simply to make the observation was enough to have the Guardian compare him to the loonier imams and conclude that "we must consign Dawkins to this very same pile of the irrational and the dishonest." ...*

Along comes **Breitbart** with an illustration of Muslim backwardness.

*A stork once detained by Egyptian authorities on suspicion of being a winged spy has been found dead.*

*Mahmoud Hassib, the head of Egypt's southern protected areas, said Saturday that local residents found the dead bird on an island in the Nile, south of the ancient city of Aswan.*

*In August, a local resident found the stork in Egypt's Qena governorate, some 450 kilometers (280 miles) southeast of Cairo. Both he and police were suspicious of the European wildlife tracker found on it. Authorities later let the bird go.*

*However, controversy trails the bird into death. An Egyptian wildlife organization claimed on its Facebook page the bird was "eaten by local villagers." Hassib denied that the bird had been eaten, though he didn't know an exact cause of death.*

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## **National Review**

### **The Status of the Dream**

#### ***Racial integration 50 years after MLK's speech***

by Stephan Thernstrom & Abigail Thernstrom

Black voices of gloom are a staple in reporting on race. "Dreams unfulfilled" is how the Washington Post describes the racial landscape as the nation approaches the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s electrifying address delivered from the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. The reporter found blacks who had witnessed the speech half a century ago. "I had hoped when I was a young man that we'd see a lot of progress by now," said Donald Cash, a D.C. resident who is now 68. "But I think we're going backwards," he declared.

There will be commemorative weeklong events, as there should be. A march on Saturday, August 31, is billed as "National Action to Reclaim the Dream." In retrospect, was Dr. King's dream just wishful thinking, bound to disappoint? "We cannot walk alone," he said. The destiny of blacks and whites is inextricably intertwined. But how to walk together? Sobering numbers from a recent Pew Research Center survey suggest an enduring racial chasm. Seventy percent of blacks believe they are treated less fairly than whites in dealings with the police. Almost as

many (68 percent) distrust courts. Fifty-four percent perceive inequality in places of work, and 51 percent in the public schools. Forty-eight percent doubt the fairness of the electoral system, and 44 percent think the stores and restaurants they patronize are unfair to them because of their race.

Racial optimists that we have long been, we find these numbers staggering. Evidently, blacks believe they don't get a fair break anywhere — a conviction hard to understand for those of us old enough to remember the days of brutal subjugation of blacks in the South and of a North where de facto segregation was everywhere apparent.

Actually, the claim that harmful segregation is still pervasive today is the conventional civil-rights wisdom and has been strongly endorsed by the Obama administration. In July, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced a new plan to monitor the racial composition of every American community and to make more strenuous efforts to engineer neighborhood "integration." A newly issued rule commits HUD to a program of "affirmatively furthering fair housing." Affirmative action has now become an obligation not only in employment, education, and contracting but also when local governments design housing policies.

Northern segregation 50 years ago was the product of a massive influx of blacks into northern cities. But over the past half-century, millions of African Americans have moved out of central-city ghettos into more racially mixed suburban neighborhoods, where today a majority of blacks reside. The famous 1968 Kerner Commission report, which aimed to explain the black riots that had begun in Watts in 1965, described the United States as "moving toward two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal." This ominous division, the commission wrote, was rooted in a growing gulf between "white" suburbs and "black" inner cities.

It was not a prescient prediction. The urban areas that were once overwhelmingly black now include significant numbers of whites, Asians, and Hispanics. They have become what one sociologist has called "global neighborhoods," and the booming cities of the South are now much less residentially segregated than the urban areas of the North and Midwest.

Ongoing residential segregation is an important charge in the indictment of today's America as a deeply racist society. But, as one scholar has noted, most adults spend much of their waking life not in their neighborhoods but at their places of employment, where members of all racial and ethnic groups are working together. That contact surely affects interracial friendship patterns. Surveys asking people to name their close friends reveal that a high proportion of friendships in general were initially formed through contact on the job.

Friendships are also formed in churches. Dr. King famously said that "the most segregated hour of Christian America is 11 a.m. on Sunday morning." Separate churches for African Americans had been the norm for most of American history, and the black church continues to play a central role in the black community. But today more than 60 percent of blacks worship in racially mixed congregations, a remarkable development that has attracted virtually no comment.

It is, of course, true that whites might have substantial numbers of black neighbors, work alongside black people, even belong to congregations that have black members, and still keep their distance in more intimate settings. Tolerating the presence of people habitually regarded as different is not the same thing as forming close personal connections.

The earliest available direct evidence about the relationship between friendship patterns and race is from a survey taken in 1964, the year that the first of the two great Civil Rights Acts dealt a fatal blow to legally mandated segregation. At that time, a mere 18 percent of whites reported having any black friends. By now, 95 percent of whites tell the pollsters that they have black “close friends,” and 91 percent of blacks say they have close friends who are white. This is another stunning change, and one that calls into question facile claims that the American people are still deeply divided into mutually hostile racial camps.

If we narrow the definition of a “friend,” the numbers are lower but perhaps even more impressive. A 2006 survey asked about “people that you trust, for example, good friends, people you discuss important matters with, or trust for advice, or trust with money.” It found that a slight majority of whites (52 percent) did have at least one “trusted” friend who was black, and that over two-thirds of blacks considered at least one white person to fall into the “trusted” category.

In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of a future America in which it would no longer be taboo for people of different races to sit down “together at the table of brotherhood.” We don’t know precisely how common interracial dining was in 1963, but the figure was surely close to zero in the South and very low elsewhere. Today, 63 percent of blacks report having entertained whites in their home for dinner. The corresponding figure for whites is 48 percent. What was unthinkable in the southern states half a century ago, and relatively uncommon even in the North, is now perfectly commonplace.

But entertaining guests of a different race in one’s home does not necessarily mean that parents will be comfortable when their son or daughter chooses to date someone of another race or even marry across racial lines. The March on Washington 50 years ago coincided with the first public-opinion survey of attitudes about dating someone of another race. The question had never been asked before because pollsters assumed that it was not an issue about which opinion was divided. They were apparently right, because in 1963 a mere 10 percent of Americans found it acceptable. Today, 83 percent of whites and 92 percent of blacks have no problem with it. A remarkable 97 percent of people of prime dating age (18–29) approve of it.

Giving an approving answer when surveyed, of course, need not correspond closely with actual behavior. But recent surveys show that dating across racial lines is very common. A 2011 study found that 68 percent of black males had dated someone who was not black, and 50 percent of black females. For white males, the crossover figure was 51 percent; for white females, 40 percent. (These figures, it should be noted, are not confined to black-white pairings.)

Dating is one thing, of course, marriage quite another. Fifty years ago, “Would you want your daughter to marry one?” was not a sick joke. But attitudes about interracial marriage have changed just as dramatically as those about interracial dating. When the first question about this matter was included in a poll in 1958, just 4 percent of the public approved. A decade later, a small majority of blacks (56 percent) but barely a sixth of whites had come to find it acceptable. By 2011, 84 percent of whites and 96 percent of blacks approved.

This transformation in racial attitudes has been accompanied by profound changes in behavior. The number of blacks and whites who actually marry outside their respective racial groups has risen spectacularly. When Barack Obama was born to a black-and-white couple in 1961, interracial marriages were the rarest of exceptions. A mere 0.3 percent of all married couples counted in the 1960 census involved people of different races. By contrast, 15 percent of the Americans who married in 2008 wed across racial lines. (These numbers are not exactly

comparable to the 1960 figures, which refer to all married persons, whatever their age. Marriages within a recent, brief time period are more illuminating of current marital patterns.)

The surge in marriages across racial lines has produced even more social mixing than might be thought — a lot more. That is because marriages link two individuals and also two sets of relatives — parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, even cousins. A recent survey asked Americans a broad question: Was “an immediate family member or close relative” married to someone of a different race? More than a third (35 percent) of all respondents reported that they belonged to racially mixed kin networks. Half of all nonwhites and 29 percent of whites were in such networks.

Precisely how much of a departure this is from the pattern of decades earlier cannot be determined; questions about this matter were not included in any earlier surveys. But an ingenious estimate by a demographer for the period 1960–2000 suggests striking change. The fraction of whites belonging to mixed-race kinship networks, it estimates, rose from a mere 2 percent in 1960 to 22 percent four decades later. The figures were remarkably high for Asian Americans and American Indians as early as 1960 — 81 and 90 percent, respectively. These groups were not profoundly isolated from white America even before the civil-rights revolution. By 2000, the extent of mixing with kin of another race was even higher — 84 percent for Asians, and a figure that rounds off to 100 percent for American Indians. The vast majority of blacks in 1960 had few such kinship connections. By 2000, the figure had risen from just 9.2 percent to 49.8 percent, and it is undoubtedly higher today, although still below the levels for Asians or American Indians.

These “mixed-race kinship” estimates do not include marriages in which one partner was Hispanic and one was not. Official federal statistics classify Hispanics not as a nonwhite race but as a quasi-racial “ethnic group,” the only ethnic group considered to be “race-like.” When Hispanics were considered as a separate group, a further study by the same demographer found that in 2000 nearly half of all non-Hispanic whites had kinship bonds with someone who was either Hispanic or nonwhite. Since the rate of interracial marriage has continued to climb in the 21st century, it is highly probable that we have by now reached a remarkable point in our social development: A substantial majority of non-Hispanic white family networks include nonwhites, Hispanics, or both.

Mixed-race kinship networks, of course, are not surefire solvents of long-held prejudices. It is certainly possible to feel racial aversion toward someone who has just become your relative through a marriage that you opposed. But interracial marriage has surely done more to reduce skin-color prejudices than to inflame them. If it had produced powerful backlash sentiments and a heightened desire to guard the boundaries dividing one race from another, the recent trend toward interracial marriages could be expected to grind to a halt or even reverse. So far, at least, there are no signs of backlash.

Despite these powerful trends suggesting the declining significance of race in social interactions, we can see plenty of what many call “segregation” in the national landscape. But defining segregation as any deviation from the norm of random distribution, as is common in social science, is deeply misguided. Some racial and ethnic clustering is a normal feature of any healthy multicultural society. How can those who celebrate “diversity” call for a nation in which every identifiable ethnic group is proportionally represented in every neighborhood, every occupation, every church? Or in which all groups have spent an equal number of years in

school, and in which people show no tendency to have more than a statistically correct proportion of close friends of the same cultural background? That naïve expectation is what prompts some writers to raise such foolish questions as why very few black athletes are professional hockey players or why, as a Washington Post reporter asked, black ballerinas are rare. “Diversity” is an empty platitude if it is not embodied in distinctive subcultures, with functioning institutions and social patterns.

Although we are unaccustomed to cite the views of Malcolm X in support of any conclusions we draw, we think he was on the mark when he distinguished segregation from separation. “Segregation,” he said, “is when your life and liberty are controlled, regulated by someone else.” Segregation is forced on people, but separation is the result of choices made by free and equal individuals.

Is the clustering of African Americans that is still evident in many spheres of life a sign that they are being “excluded” from full membership in our society? It once was, and could then properly be called “segregation.” But today, such clustering is largely the result of black people’s choices, driven by the same impulses that lead Koreans, Jews, Dominicans, and dozens of other groups to choose to concentrate in certain social niches and avoid others. The last thing we need is more social engineering to eradicate every racial disparity.

*Stephan Thernstrom, the Winthrop Research Professor of History at Harvard University, and Abigail Thernstrom, vice chairwoman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, are the authors of America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible.*

## Washington Post

### [Travel guide for African Americans, civil rights activists pointed way to 1963 march](#)

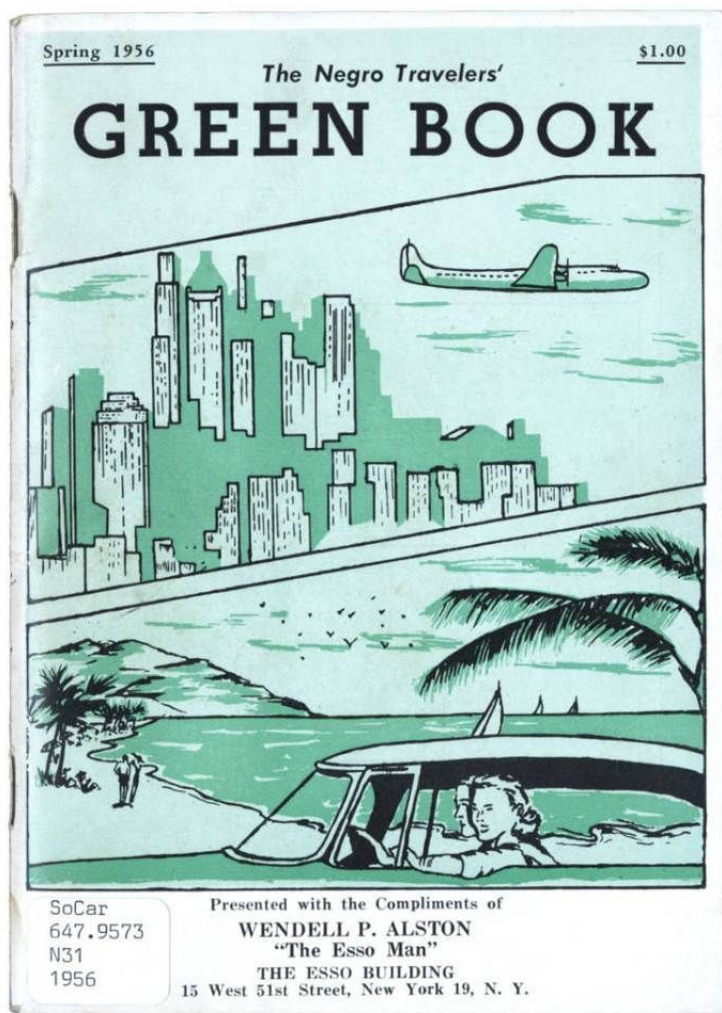
by Ruth Tam

African Americans traveling to the nation’s capital on the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington will need little more than a GPS device to find their way. But 50 years ago, they might have needed a book to navigate through the racial prejudice of the times.

During the Jim Crow era, laws restricted black Americans from patronizing gas stations, restaurants and hotels.

So Harlem-based letter carrier Victor Green published the “Negro Motorist Green Book: An International Travel Guide” in 1936, when travel was not only inconvenient but embarrassing and potentially deadly.

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"It was like the African American AAA Travel Guide," said writer Calvin Ramsey, who wrote a play and a children's book about the publication.

"To most people, Washington, D.C., is technically a Southern city," Ramsey said. "But for people in the South, going to the march was 'going north.' People going by car or bus relied on the Green Book."

The spring 1956 edition of the Green Book listed D.C. hotels, restaurants and "tourist homes," many of them on U Street NW.

Though the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spent the days before the march writing his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Willard Hotel, black-friendly hotels were not common and could not accommodate the swell of visitors. Black- and white-run "tourist homes" operated like bed-and-breakfasts and provided safe, affordable lodging.

At tourist homes, "everyone was treated like a relative," Ramsey said.

"The Green Book" became an establishment. Green, its enterprising author and namesake, collaborated with Esso Standard Oil Co., which began carrying the booklet at its gas stations.



Ernest Green — no relation — was one of nine African American students to first attend Little Rock Central High School in a desegregation of Southern schools. He used the book with his mother and aunt to travel from Little Rock to Hampton, Va., for his sister's graduation.

"This was before the accommodation laws were passed," he said. "It was a survival tool."

To Ramsey, the mission of the book was tied directly to the mission of the 1963 march.

"Martin Luther King said the greatest thing you can do is to serve mankind," Ramsey said. "That's what Victor Green was doing."

Victor Green, a letter carrier for 44 years and a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers, sought to capitalize on his work experience for the black community.

"That's where the strength of the mailmen came in," Ramsey said. "They knew which homes were safe, which neighborhoods were agreeable. Letter carriers knew these communities better than anybody else throughout the entire year, not just for the March on Washington."

At the time, the Postal Service was one of the nation's largest employers of African Americans, a fact that's still true, said Phil Rubio, an associate professor of history at North Carolina A&T State University and former letter carrier.

African Americans did not just work for the post office, said Rubio, but were also activists.

"They brought the labor movement into the civil rights movement and the civil rights movement into the workplace," he said.

The Postal Service did not necessarily pull out a welcome mat for African Americans, said Rubio, but it was an "easier struggle" than entering the private sector.

"It was a secure job," said Rubio. "Once you got in, you could have status. You were a government employee and you could save money, buy a home, send your kids to college."

The Postal Service became a vehicle for many African Americans into the middle class.

Massachusetts state Rep. Benjamin Swan (D) used the Postal Service for this purpose.

"When I got out of the Army in 1956, I didn't have a college education. I had the full intention to go back to school so I needed employment," Swan said. "It wasn't great, but the compensation at the Postal Service was better than most places."

As a postal worker for 10 years, Swan was able to support his wife and two children, take graduate-level classes at Howard University and chair the Springfield, Mass., chapter of the NAACP.

In 1963, he chartered a train and three buses to take New England chapters down to the March on Washington. Because the group contracted the transportation and did not stay the night in the District, Swan said he did not have to worry about Jim Crow laws as much during travel to Washington.

“I did know of [the book], but I didn’t know it was called ‘The Green Book,’” he said. “It was kind of understood there were certain places you could not stay.”

“There will be a day sometime in the near future when this guide will not have to be published,” Victor Green wrote in a 1949 edition of his work. “That is when we as a race will have equal opportunities and privileges in the United States. It will be a great day for us to suspend this publication for then we can go wherever we please.”

Green died in 1960, three years before the march, but lived to see the power of Jim Crow laws begin to fade.

A year after the march, following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Green’s wish was fulfilled and “The Green Book” ceased publication.

## Forbes

### [If California Gets Its 'Fracking' Act Together, A Boom Awaits](#)

by Alex Epstein



I live in California, a state where our government is practically bankrupt, businesses are fleeing, and [1.6 million](#) citizens are unemployed. To say the least, our state needs an economic breakthrough.

Fortunately, we are on the verge of one. The state that gave birth to Silicon Valley has the opportunity to become [Energy](#) Valley, thanks to a miraculous technology that turns stone into oil.

That technology is called shale oil technology. Governor Brown calls it “an opportunity we can’t miss” because it can single-handedly turn our economy around.

Our state’s greatness has long been tied to oil. For the last 100 years, Californians have been masters at the art of finding crude oil and transforming it into everything from gasoline and jet fuel to artificial hearts and bulletproof vests. Southern California has produced more oil per acre than any place in the world—including Saudi Arabia.

In the 1960s, when our oil production was at its height, the California economy was the envy of the nation. While production now is half what it once was, the state's well-being still benefits greatly from oil, whether in Bakersfield, Long Beach, or even Beverly Hills, where oil pumps hidden inside large buildings create prosperity by the barrel.

Why has oil production halved? The same reason that our economy has become a nightmare—political policies that make it practically impossible to do business in California. When I asked Dr. Andrew Kleit, professor of Energy and Environmental [Economics](#) at Penn State University, about California's woes on [a recent podcast](#), he responded, "California has very challenging environmental regulations . . . you simply can't build new things."

Thus, we find ourselves in desperate but well-deserved straits. If it weren't for our weather, who knows how many more productive businesses would have fled?

California urgently needs what it has lost all right to ask for: some breakthrough industry to set up shop here and somehow create trillions in wealth and millions of jobs.

And yet the oil industry is proposing to do exactly that—through revolutionary *shale oil technology*.

For decades, geologists have known that thousands of feet below California oil fields lay perhaps the biggest prize of all—a 1,750 square mile layer of oil-based shale rock called the [Monterey Shale](#). Unfortunately, there was no technology that could get the oil out of that rock.

But now there is, thanks to state-of-the-art shale oil technology, including the technology known as "fracking" (hydraulic fracturing). Fracking technology uses water and sand to fracture shale rock, creating pores that oil can flow through. It has been used (safely) for 30 years in California on conventional oil formations. Now, it is being applied to shale around the country, with incredible results. In North Dakota, the once unknown Bakken shale formation has become the foundation of America's greatest economic boom today, which drove the state's unemployment rate down to [3.2%](#) (California's is 8.6%).

California may be able to do even better. The Monterey Shale is [four times larger](#) than the Bakken. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that it contains [15 billion barrels](#) of recoverable oil, or 630 billion gallons. That's an almost unimaginable amount of oil for getting to work, for family vacations, for life-saving medical devices. And, according to [a new USC study](#), up to 2.8 million jobs will be created if we seize this opportunity.

Those of us who have jobs can easily forget what a new, well-paying job means to a family. It means saving for college instead of falling deeper into debt. It means enjoying a comfortable life, not anxiously living on the edge. It means optimism, not despair.

Unfortunately, our fellow citizens may be deprived of this opportunity thanks to widespread misinformation about shale oil technology—particularly the lie that "fracking" threatens us [with poisoned water](#). Numerous studies, including three by President Obama's EPA, have confirmed what a basic study of fracking makes obvious; because fracking occurs thousands of feet away from the groundwater, it simply cannot contaminate it.

What California desperately needs right now is for citizens and politicians to embrace shale oil

technology and recognize its fundamental safety. Instead, the leading policy proposal on shale, called [SB4](#), would place so many unscientific and unnecessary restrictions so as to make affordable shale oil practically impossible.

Worse, the leading alternative to SB4 is a call to ban shale oil completely. Last week, a group of environmentalists called on Governor Brown “to impose an immediate moratorium on fracking in California”—and got massive publicity and praise, even though [the letter](#) contained not one single fact. In the past month, environmentalists have also started blindly demonizing another shale oil technology “[acidizing](#),” an amazing practice that safely dissolves rock to get the oil out of it.

This kind of anti-industry scaremongering is what has held California back. Fortunately, Californians are starting to fight back—including some celebrities.

Adam Carolla, host of the world’s most popular podcast, says “[we’ve got to start fracking](#)” and [complains](#) that “big business is considered the devil here in California. We drive them out and we replace them with more federal jobs and more unions, and that’s why we’re bankrupt.”

We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to change course. When we look 10 or 20 years down the road, will we be the state that embraced technology and brought prosperity to all, or the state that rejected technology and deprived millions of our fellow citizens the opportunity for a better life? It’s time for Californians, [including our celebrities](#), to get behind shale oil technology. It’s time for the California Stone Rush.

## **National Post - Canada**

### **Blunt words about Muslim backwardness**

by Mark Steyn

In 2010, the bestselling atheist Richard Dawkins, in the “On Faith” section of the *Washington Post*, called the pope “a leering old villain in a frock” perfectly suited to “the evil corrupt organization” and “child-raping institution” that is the Catholic Church. Nobody seemed to mind very much.

Three years later, in a throwaway Tweet, Professor Dawkins observed that “all the world’s Muslims have fewer Nobel Prizes than Trinity College, Cambridge. They did great things in the Middle Ages, though.” This time round, the old provocateur managed to get a rise out of folks. Almost every London paper ran at least one story on the “controversy.” The *Independent’s* Owen Jones fumed, “How dare you dress your bigotry up as atheism. You are now beyond an embarrassment.” The best-selling author Caitlin Moran sneered, “It’s time someone turned Richard Dawkins off and then on again. Something’s gone weird.” The *Daily Telegraph’s* Tom Chivers beseeched him, “Please be quiet, Richard Dawkins, I’m begging.”

None of the above is Muslim. Indeed, they are, to one degree or another, members of the same secular liberal media elite as Professor Dawkins. Yet all felt that, unlike Dawkins’s routine jeers at Christians, his Tweet had gone too far. It’s factually unarguable: Trinity graduates have amassed 32 Nobel prizes, the entire Muslim world a mere 10. If you remove Yasser Arafat, Mohamed ElBaradei, and the other winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, Islam can claim just four

laureates against Trinity's 31 (the college's only peace-prize recipient was Austen Chamberlain, brother of Neville). Yet simply to make the observation was enough to have the *Guardian* compare him to the loonier imams and conclude that "we must consign Dawkins to this very same pile of the irrational and the dishonest."

Full disclosure: Five years ago, when I was battling Canada's "human rights" commissions to restore free speech to my native land, Richard Dawkins was one of the few prominent figures in Her Majesty's dominions to lend unequivocal support. He put it this way: "I have over the years developed a dislike for Mark Steyn, although I've always admired his forceful writing. On this issue, however, he is clearly 1000% in the right and should receive all the support anybody can give him."

Let me return the compliment: I have over the years developed a dislike for Richard Dawkins's forceful writing (the God of the Torah is "the most unpleasant character in all fiction," etc.), but I am coming round rather to admire him personally. It's creepy and unnerving how swiftly the West's chattering classes have accepted that the peculiar sensitivities of Islam require a deference extended to no other identity group. I doubt *The Satanic Verses* would be accepted for publication today, but, if it were, I'm certain no major author would come out swinging on Salman Rushdie's behalf the way his fellow novelist Fay Weldon did: The Koran, she declared, "is food for no-thought ... It gives weapons and strength to the thought-police."

That was a remarkably prescient observation in the London of 1989. Even a decade ago, it would have been left to the usual fire-breathing imams to denounce remarks like Dawkins's. In those days, Islam was still, like Christianity, insultable. Fleet Street cartoonists offered variations on the ladies' changing-room line "Does my bum look big in this?" One burqa-clad woman to another: "Does my bomb look big in this?" Not anymore. "There are no jokes in Islam," pronounced the Ayatollah Khomeini, and so, in a bawdy Hogarthian society endlessly hooting at everyone from the Queen down, Islam uniquely is no laughing matter. Ten years back, even the United Nations Human Development Program was happy to sound off like an incendiary Dawkins Tweet: Its famous 2002 report blandly noted that more books are translated by Spain in a single year than have been translated into Arabic in the last thousand years.

What Dawkins is getting at is more fundamental than bombs or burqas. Whatever its virtues, Islam is not a culture of inquiry, of innovation. You can coast for a while on the accumulated inheritance of a pre-Muslim past — as, indeed, much of the Dar al-Islam did in those Middle Ages Dawkins so admires — but it's not unreasonable to posit that the more Muslim a society becomes the smaller a role Nobel prizes and translated books will play in its future. According to a new report from Britain's Office of National Statistics, "Mohammed," in its various spellings, is now the second most popular baby boy's name in England and Wales, and Number One in the capital. It seems likely that an ever more Islamic London will, for a while, still have a West End theater scene for tourists, but it will have ever less need not just for Oscar Wilde and Noël Coward and eventually Shakespeare but for drama of any kind. Maybe I'm wrong, maybe Dawkins is wrong, maybe the U.N. Human Development chaps are wrong. But the ferocious objections even to raising the subject suggest we're not.

A quarter-century on, Fay Weldon's "thought police" are everywhere. Notice the general line on Dawkins: Please be quiet. Turn him off. *You can't say that*. What was once the London Left's principal objection to the ayatollah's Rushdie fatwa is now its reflexive response to even the mildest poke at Islam. Their reasoning seems to be that, if you can just insulate this one corner of the multicultural scene from criticism, elsewhere rude, raucous life — with free speech and all

the other ancient liberties — will go on. Miss Weldon's craven successors seem intent on making her point: In London, Islam is food for no thought.

## **Breitbart**

### **[Stork Detained as Spy in Egypt Found Dead](#)**



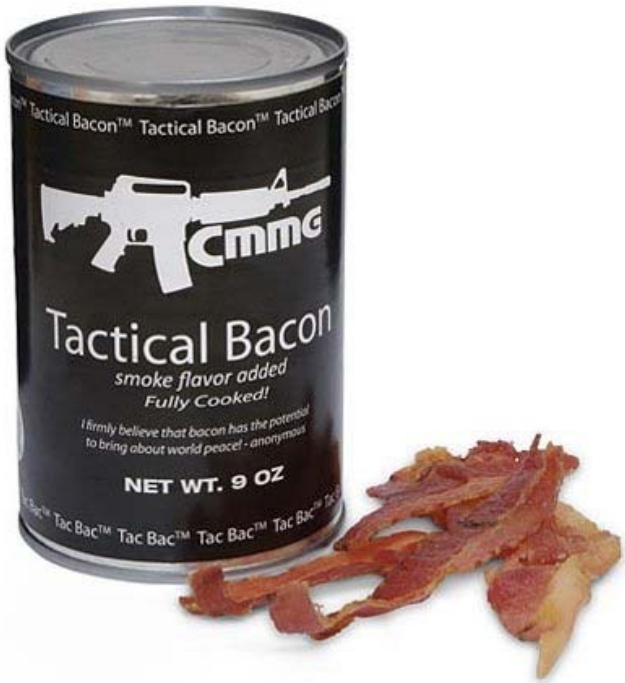
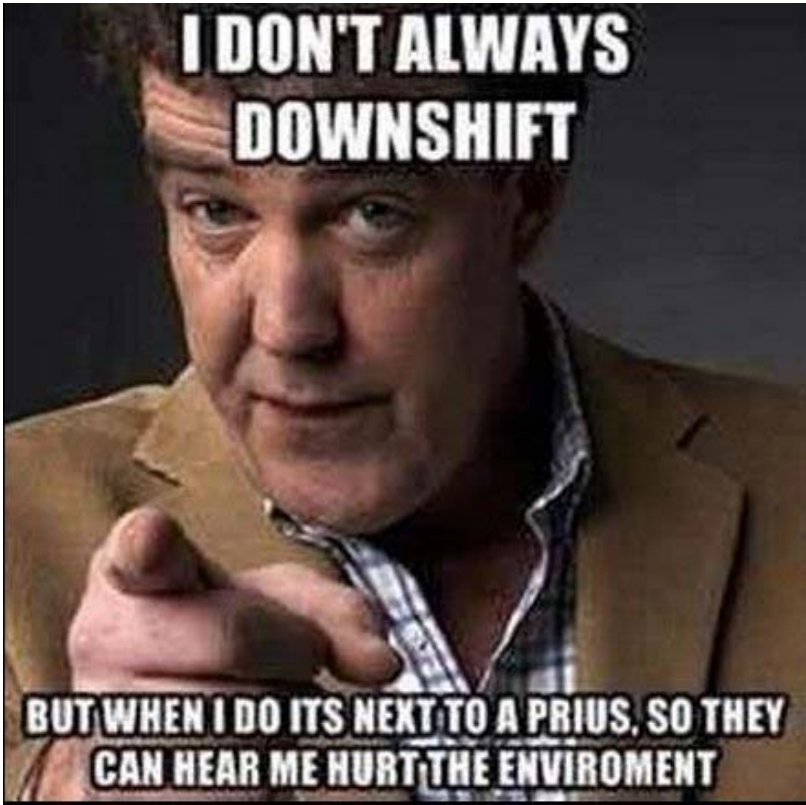
CAIRO A stork once detained by Egyptian authorities on suspicion of being a winged spy has been found dead.

Mahmoud Hassib, the head of Egypt's southern protected areas, said Saturday that local residents found the dead bird on an island in the Nile, south of the ancient city of Aswan.

In August, a local resident found the stork in Egypt's Qena governorate, some 450 kilometers (280 miles) southeast of Cairo. Both he and police were suspicious of the European wildlife tracker found on it. Authorities later let the bird go.

However, controversy trails the bird into death. An Egyptian wildlife organization claimed on its Facebook page the bird was "eaten by local villagers." Hassib denied that the bird had been eaten, though he didn't know an exact cause of death.









**Fight Islamification!  
Eat Some Tasty Pig!!!**