

DEI Cronyism and Woke Grifters



by Victor Davis Hanson

When ideology replaces meritocracy or provides immunity from the consequences of illegal behavior, systemic mediocrity follows.

Under toxic National Socialism, Stalinism, and Maoism, millions of cronies and grifters mouthed party lines in hopes that their approved ideology would allow them to advance their careers and excuse their lawbreaking.

The same thing has happened with the woke movement and the now-huge Diversity/Equity/Inclusion conglomerate.

Grifters and opportunists mask their selfish agendas under the cloak of neo-Marxist care for the underprivileged or victimized minorities. Meanwhile, they seek to profit illegally as if they were old-fashioned crony capitalists.

During the disastrous COVID-19 lockdown, California governor

Gavin Newsom pontificated about leveraging the quarantine to ensure greater equality: "There is opportunity for reimagining a [more] progressive era as it [relates] to capitalism...We see this as an opportunity to reshape the way we do business and how we govern."

Meanwhile, Newsom did not seem very "progressive" when he was caught in one of California's most expensive restaurants dining with sidekick lobbyists while violating the very mask and social distancing rules he had mandated for 40 million others.

Newsom also bragged about social equity when he signed a new California law mandating \$20 an hour for fast-food workers—while many of his own employees at his various company-controlled eateries made only \$16 an hour.

And he allegedly gave a unique exemption from his wage law to one particular bakery/restaurant chain, Panera, whose owner is an old friend and major campaign contributor.

Newsom apparently feels that the more progressively he postures, the less he'll be called out for his own hypocrisy and self-interested agendas.

In another egregious case, the now-imprisoned felon, Sam Bankman-Fried, may have been the greatest con artist in American history. He siphoned billions of dollars from his cryptocurrency company, destroying the fortunes of thousands when his multi-billion-dollar Ponzi empire collapsed.

How did Sam and his two Stanford law-professor parents manage to accumulate millions of dollars in resort properties and perks without getting caught until after their empire collapsed?

Answer: Sam showered millions of dollars on left-wing politicians to advance their progressive crusades. His parents justified this family giving as a form of "effective

altruism.”

That catchy phrase masked the reality that his crusade for social justice was just an incredibly effective get-rich-quick scheme.

The Bankman-Fried family apparently reasoned that their devotion to this woke form of “altruism” would translate into riches for themselves, albeit bankruptcies for investors.

Another example: in Georgia’s Fulton County, District Attorney Fani Willis ran for office, promising to indict supposed right-wing monster Donald Trump.

She raised campaign money on her woke credentials. Often, when challenged, she played the race victim card.

Meanwhile, Willis hired as a special prosecutor her secret paramour, the incompetent Nathan Wade, although he had never tried a single felony or even criminal case.

She and Wade then went on expensive junkets. She claimed that she reimbursed him with cash that was, of course, unverifiable.

Given their woke ideology, both assumed they were entitled to splurge at taxpayers’ expense, offer likely-false testimony under oath, and violate canons of professional behavior for lawyers.

She wasn’t alone in her corruption. After the death of George Floyd, the founders of the left-wing Black Lives Matter movement went on a house-buying rampage. The more corporations filled their coffers with millions, either from guilt or as protection money, the more new homes the directors purchased.

One co-founder, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, a self-described Marxist, splurged by spending \$3.2 million in BLM money to buy herself four upscale residences.

And the most radical Democratic members of Congress—the so-called Squad—apparently feel that the more they level accusations of racism, the more they can profit without fearing any consequences for their wrongdoing.

One squad member, Rep. Ilhan Omar, redirected \$2.8 million of her office's allotted government money to her husband's political consulting company.

Still another member, the radical leftist Rep. Cori Bush, often harangued the country to defund the police. Now the FBI is investigating her for stealthily paying tens of thousands of campaign dollars to her own husband for "security."

Woke and DEI activists may not necessarily be any more innately mediocre, corrupt, or conniving than other politicians and activists.

But they seem so, because they loudly broadcast that they are for "diversity," "equity," and "inclusion"—and thus assume themselves to be exempt from all scrutiny and free to profit in any way they please.

The woke/DEI project is enticing thousands of shysters, careerists, and mediocrities, all keen to enrich themselves on the premise that they are noble fighters for social justice who deserve immunity from any scrutiny.

How odd it is that America is wasting billions of dollars hiring DEI czars and electing woke politicians who so often accuse others of a multitude of sins, largely as a way of enriching themselves, hiding their own culpability, and making a mockery of the law.

First published in the [*American Thinker*](#).