

HONOR, RESPECT, SUBMISSION: THE CONTEMPORARY MORAL CONFUSION

by Howard Rotberg



The Macmillan Dictionary defines the verb to “honor” (spelled “honour” in Britain and Canada) as “to show your [respect](#) or [admiration](#) for someone, [especially](#) by giving them a [prize](#) or [title](#), or by [praising](#) them publicly.”

And so, George Floyd, whose adult life was spent in years of crime and jail sentences and in impregnating and then abandoning 5 different women, and participating in an armed home invasion where he held a gun to the pregnant belly of a woman victim, has been *honored* in the United States.

Important people came to his funeral, young people have his photo on t-shirts. The most bizarre tribute was the launching of an anti-American, Marxist, anti-Semitic movement calling itself “Black Lives Matter”. However, some analysis shows that

the movement was not to indicate that Black lives matter as *much* as all other lives, but that Black lives and Black grievances and Black rights, matter *more* than other lives. And so an American academic was disciplined for writing a sympathetic email in which she stated that "all lives matter". Then, a 27 year old mother was shot dead for saying "all lives matter" as some Black Lives Matter violent radicals passed by who refused to submit to the supposed indignity of being thereby placed *equal* to other people. It seems the goal of equality is now less than the goal of getting whites to submit to this enhanced form of Black Power based on submission to any of their demands.

An estimate of the crowds at the protests and the violent riots that have gone on for many weeks, show that whites compose the majority of protesters, both peaceful and violent. The sad death of Mr. Floyd by an out-of-control cop (who apparently knew Mr. Floyd as they were once co-workers in security for a bar), must surely be condemned but does Floyd deserve to be "honored" which implies, as noted above, "respect" and "admiration?"

The more that whites are induced to acknowledge historical or current systemic racism in America, the greater the amount of power that accrues to Blacks. In his 2006 book, *White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of Civil Rights*, [Shelby Steele](#), a conservative black academic, criticizes "white guilt" saying that it is nothing more than an alternative interpretation of the concept of "black power":

"Whites (and American institutions) must acknowledge historical racism to show themselves redeemed by it, but once they acknowledge it, they lose moral authority over everything having to do with race, equality, social justice, poverty and so on. [...] The authority they lose transfers to the 'victims' of historical racism and becomes their great power in society. This is why white guilt is quite literally the same thing as Black power."

The columnist George Will wrote: “[White guilt is] a form of self-congratulation, where whites initiate ‘compassionate policies’ toward people of color, to showcase their innocence to racism.”

This white guilt is, then, often related to what is called “virtue signalling”: This is the term meaning, according to Dictionary.com, “the sharing of one’s point of view on a social or political issue, often on social media, in order to garner praise or acknowledgment of one’s righteousness from others who share that point of view, or to passively rebuke those who do not”. It also is said to mean the act of accusing someone of “trying to win praise for showing support for a social cause without actually doing anything meaningful to advance it. This charge is often used against people for being [woke](#)” on social media.” *The Oxford Dictionary* terms it a “pejorative neologism for the conspicuous expression of moral values”, suggesting that it is most often used pejoratively outside of academia.

And so American culture, which gave up so many civil war military deaths to free black slaves, which attempted a Reconstruction, that underwent a Civil Rights Movement (where Jews, now subject to anti-Semitism from Black Lives Matter, marched alongside Martin Luther King Jr., and other black leaders) and a long term affirmative action movement in universities and in corporation, seems receptive to being told it is fundamentally racist and that there is systemic racism. Moreover there seems some consensus among the Left that American athletes and entertainers and politicians should kneel before every event to acknowledge the supposed systemic racism. Moreover, at a recent Women’s NBA game, the players got up and walked around during the playing of the national anthem to emphasize their contempt for the country that allows them to be so richly compensated for playing a game.

It becomes clear, upon a review of the figures, that poor Blacks have more to fear from other blacks than they do

policemen. But the video of Floyd's slow death under the policeman's knee, that has been seen millions of times, is now a symbol. A symbol doesn't have to be logical or based on facts, and that is often its strength and utility: Symbolism, said Alfred North Whitehead "is no mere idle fancy or corrupt degeneration; it is inherent in the very texture of human life."

Symbols are sometimes chosen by the inarticulate, because what articulate person with a confidence that his well-articulated arguments will be heard, would instead choose symbolism? Antifa adopts black clothing and masks and obscene graffiti as its symbols of choice. And the burning of American flags and the shunning of the American anthem are meant to be a symbols of disgust and absolute rejection of traditional America at the hands of those seeking its fundamental transformation.

And, given the acute cultural chaos, the choice of who we honor or respect is very telling. Our cultural chaos is in part based on cultural and moral relativism, so that we are prevented from making expressions of judgment on any group, no matter how immoral that group might be according to traditional standards of the Judeo-Christian ethics. "Respect", according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, is defined as "a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities or achievements."

This points to the foundation of our problem. We are told to respect all people. Hillary Clinton once infamously advocated that America should adopt what she termed "Smart Power" – "showing respect even for one's enemies, trying to understand, and insofar as psychologically possible, empathize with their perspective and point of view."

Black Lives Matter or George Floyd should not be honored or respected. Nor should the Muslim Brotherhood or any Islamist organization. Their *conduct* is more important than their words or the symbolic uses to which they are put. The bottom line is

we should not have a feeling of “deep admiration” for “their abilities, qualities or achievements.”

It seems that the West has learned little from the genocidal, racist, homophobic, anti-woman, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, anti-freedom Islamists. In a bizarre form of the Stockholm Syndrome, our culture has been giving respect to the worst of the Islamists. Black Lives Matter can be said to have learned that the more violent one becomes the more “respect” one gets: Barack Obama shall forever be known for his “apology tour” to the Muslim world, right after his inauguration where he said: “I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and the Muslims around the world; one based upon mutual interest and mutual respect (my emphasis)... “shar(ing) common principles – principles of justice and progress, tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.”

And so, Obama gave respect to the Islamists and the Democratic Party gives respect to the Black Lives Matters radicals; in both cases American media, academia, and Democratic Party leaders, all give respect to bad people with bad values. Once you make a habit of that cultural relativism, it is all too easy to lose your bearings and think that your enemy, whether domestic or international, shares the same view of acceptable qualities and achievements. And if that is so, how can you refuse to *submit* to those groups, when allegations of racism are in the air?

America saw nothing wrong with its Secretary of State Hillary Clinton having as her principal assistant, Huma Abedin, a Saudi operative of the Muslim Brotherhood. And if that is the case, we should not be surprised that more Blacks than ever are giving an ear to the anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam, Louis Farrakhan.

Major Doctor Hassan the terrorist murderer at Fort Hood, was said by Obama to be an example of “workplace violence” not terrorism. And so Islamists seeking to impose a world-wide

caliphate by violent jihad and the adoption of Sharia Law), are welcomed into Congress, even onto the foreign affairs committee (as was Ilhan Omar) and into our universities that have now submitted to the Palestinian obsession with destroying Israel as part of paving the way for eventual Islamist rule.

Submission is made inevitable when the education system has been captured by the Islamists and the Black Lives Matter crowd. As to the latter, one element of submission is to the demand that Black students be exempted from the grammar used in traditional white, educated circles. Educational administrators are seriously discussing whether the rules of grammar are part of the systemic racism against Blacks.

In addition to the sad mis-use of honor and respect, I have written about the way that tolerance has been hi-jacked into the arsenal of the cultural relativists. I have termed excessive tolerance of the intolerant and illiberal the ideology of *Tolerism*. (see *Tolerism: The Ideology Revealed*, Mantua Books) and I discuss in depth the ways in which this Tolerism, and undeserved honor and respect have encouraged our submission to the enemy in *The ideological Path to Submission ... and what we can do about it* (Mantua Books).

Howard Rotberg writes on political culture, values and ideologies. He has written for *Frontpage Magazine*, *New English Review*, *Israel National News*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Hamilton Spectator*, *Israpundit*, *Waterloo Region Record* and others. He has authored four books – *Tolerism: The Ideology Revealed*, *The Ideological Path to Submission... and what we can do about it*, *Exploring Vancouverism: The Political Culture of Canada's Lotus Land*, and *The Second Catastrophe: A Novel About a Book and its Author*. He is founding publisher of Canada's sole conservative values and pro-Israel publishing house – www.mantuabooks.com. He resides in Hamilton Canada.