

WHY I WROTE WAR ON VIRTUE

[William A. Donohue](#)

War on Virtue: How the Ruling Class is Killing the American Dream is a book I had to get off my chest. To be blunt, I am seething mad at the smug, arrogant, patronizing, condescending and frankly racist white ruling class who are working overtime to undermine the prospects of realizing the American dream for millions of Americans, especially African Americans.

I was born in New York City and raised on Long Island, largely by my grandparents who moved from Ireland to the Bronx. As a boy, I was never interested in anything but sports and clowning around. I was always in trouble in elementary school and high school, and I got thrown out of college. I finally grew up when I enlisted in the Air Force.

My years at Beale Air Force base in northern California, during the late 1960s, were spent reading voraciously about the civil rights movement. This was a new experience.

What drew me to the civil rights movement was jazz. At a young age, I fell in love with Billy Holiday, Louis Armstrong, Dave Brubeck, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, and many others. The only magazine I read with any regularity was Downbeat, the premier jazz magazine. No one can read about jazz without learning about black history.

In the course of my readings, I learned much about the racism and discrimination that blacks had to endure. This really struck home during the civil rights movement. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. captured my attention. So did Robert Kennedy, whom I shook hands with about a week before he was assassinated.

Prior to this time, I had no political preference. But that soon changed, and, like so many other young people at that

time, I became a liberal.

While in the Air Force, I had taken courses at the nearby community college, and for the first time in my life, I excelled in school. When I was discharged, I completed three years of college in two years at New York University. It was then that my flirtation with liberalism ended.

At NYU, I wrote satirical articles for the student newspaper, taking turns lampooning conservatives one day, and liberals the next; I was finding myself politically. After a while, I noticed that my pieces satirizing liberals were no longer published. When I confronted the editors, they acted as though no politics were involved. They were lying, and I told them to their face. I quit.

I soon began to read a lot of articles and books on subjects that I was studying, but were written from a conservative perspective; they challenged the assigned readings in my sociology and political science courses.

Next I found myself debating liberal students in the classroom; I realized they couldn't mount a credible defense. Then I started questioning my professors, and when I realized that they would either explode at me, or failed to persuade, I realized I was happy being a conservative.

After graduating, I went to the New School for Social Research, another Greenwich Village institution. It was even more radical than NYU. Upon receiving my Masters, I went back to NYU for my Ph.D.; I worked during the day at a Catholic school in Spanish Harlem and took classes at night.

My left-wing professors, and mostly left-wing classmates, proved to be unconvincing. But that alone did not push me to the right—it was their unabiding hypocrisy that pushed me over the edge. For example, they spoke endlessly about oppression, yet they defended the genocidal maniac, Mao Zedong. They expressed solidarity with blacks, but when I asked my Ph.D.

classmates to go to Spanish Harlem on weekends to tutor my black and Puerto Rican students, none volunteered.

After working with blacks in Spanish Harlem, and again as a professor in Pittsburgh—I was the faculty advisor to the basketball team, working closely with black students—I came to know that if teachers *made it their priority to see to it that they learned*, and had high expectations of them, most did well. I also identified with these students; I, too, came from a fatherless family.

Today, it is the white ruling class that has given up on them. These elites don't treat African Americans as equals. If they did they would encourage the inculcation of the vital virtues—self-control, personal responsibility and perseverance. Instead, they are undermining them.

We will never have racial equality until more blacks earn their way to the middle class. It can't be forced top down.

To do that the ruling class has to stop undermining the black family with hand-out programs and promises of reparations. They need to stop dumbing down standards and start helping blacks to succeed; they also need to support school choice. They need to stop declaring war on the police—blacks don't want it. They need to stop telling all white people they are racists (this does nothing but create division and does not improve the life of one black person).

In short, the white ruling class is the problem.