

Revolution at the LA Times

By Bruce Bawer

It started last month with the decision of Patrick Soon-Shiong, owner of the *Los Angeles Times*, not to endorse a candidate in the race for U.S. president. This move not only surprised many longtime readers of the reliably far-left daily, but led several *Times* staffers – who'd expected the paper to support Kamala Harris – to quit in outrage.



But that was only the beginning. On November 10, three days after the Trump landslide, Soon-Shiong, a South Africa-born businessman and medical researcher who is the richest man in L.A., announced that he was firing his entire editorial board and would be replacing it with one that was more “fair and balanced.”

This news was, of course, even more stunning than the paper's failure to endorse Kamala – because the *Los Angeles Times* editorial board has, for some time now, been ground zero for wokeness on the West Coast, having devolved, like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, into a wellspring of left-wing propaganda. Indeed, at times it can feel as if the *Los Angeles Times* is even loonier than its East Coast counterparts.

For one thing, it's all in – predictably enough – on climate hysteria. On August 27, it ran a piece by one of its editorial interns who recalled growing up in India, where “it wasn't uncommon for my friends to faint due to heatstroke in the scorching 110-degree heat.” Moving to northern California, she'd enjoyed the temperate weather, which made going for a run feel like an act of “liberation.”

But climate change, she said, threatens to ruin that: “California is barreling toward a future where the outdoors might become inhospitable for children to play because of wildfire smoke, heat waves, storms and flooding.” And don't forget earthquakes – surely they're caused by climate change, too?

The *Times* has also celebrated defunding the police and leniency toward felons by Soros-backed prosecutors. A November 12, 2023, article praised Norway's Halden Prison, where inmates “choose their own clothing,” “buy fresh produce from their well-stocked grocery store,” “play in bands,” and “walk in the woods.”

The prison, which also provides a compass that “shows the direction of Mecca,” was being studied by California officials who wanted to copy it. No mention that, as a consequence of this policy, foreign felons in Norway are treated far better than many law-abiding Norwegian natives, including homeless veterans. But then, Gavin Newsom's policies have already made California more hospitable to criminal illegal aliens than to its own highly taxed citizens.

Times writers are also enamored of academic identity studies, which have turned universities into settings for vapid navel-gazing and the transformation of individuals into members of identity groups that are identified as either oppressing or oppressed.

On November 27, 2023, the *Times* ran a piece by Sonja Sharp

celebrating UCLA's "new disability studies major – the first of its kind at any public university in the state." Disability studies, it should be noted, is a discipline that rejects the so-called "medical model" of disability in favor of the notion of disabled people as one more group of oppressed people; the group-identity mentality is so powerful that diversity-studies "scholars" condemn parents and doctors for making use of wonderful new technologies and surgical procedures that free disabled children from their disabilities.

Then there's the paper's stubborn enthusiasm – even now – for each and every COVID lockdown measure. A September 1, 2023 article had nothing but criticism for a forthcoming Stanford symposium at which scientists "associated with discredited approaches to the COVID pandemic" – among them the impeccable Jay Bhattacharya – would participate.

Even at this late date, the paper treated the lab-leak hypothesis as heresy and the wet-market theory as gospel and approvingly quoted Peter Hotez's rejection of the Stanford event as "anti-science." Hotez, of course, is the shamelessly self-promoting virologist who during the pandemic promoted school mask mandates and other excessive measures – and who even called for those who disagreed with him to be silenced and arrested. (READ MORE from Bruce Bawer: [Remembering Greer Garson](#))

In the light of day, it's clear that Hotez is a dangerous fanatic with no respect for Americans' freedom while Bhattacharya is a pillar of reason and restraint. But for the *Times's* reporter Hotez is a "vaccine expert and disinformation debunker" and Bhattacharya a fount of conspiracy theories.

On the issue of race, the *Times* goes exactly where you'd expect. It loves Critical Race Theory and the 1619 Project. Last year it posted photos of its 28 summer interns. All but five were girls; all but two or three were non-white. Typical

of its approach to race was a purported news story on July 25, 2023, that painted a rosy picture of a black history class at a south L.A. high school.

One of the authors on the syllabus was Frantz Fanon, whose work the *Times* reporter described as exploring “the racism and violence inherent in colonialism.” In fact, Fanon – who saw all whites as colonizers and therefore evil and all non-whites as colonized and therefore virtuous – preached violence, admired Castro, despised capitalism, and called for the crushing of the bourgeoisie. To indoctrinate teenagers into Fanon’s hateful ideology is despicable – and dangerous.

An extremely long piece on race ran in the *Times* on October 23, 2023. It profiled a number of black American expatriates, among them Jameelah Nuriddin, an L.A. filmmaker who, we were told, “always tried to work twice as hard as those around her, thinking: ‘If I’m smart enough, pretty enough, successful enough ... then finally people will treat me as a human being.’” During the George Floyd protests, however, Nuriddin “had an epiphany: ‘America does not deserve me.’” So she moved to Puerto Viejo, “an idyllic beach town” in Costa Rica “that has become a hub for hundreds of Black expatriates fed up with life in the United States.”

This attitude was treated by the *Times* as entirely justified, given that “the U.S. is still grappling with racism, with Black people twice as likely as white people to be killed by police and Black workers earning less on the dollar than their white counterparts. In Florida, a new law forces teachers to downplay the impact of slavery, and across the country, far-right activists are seeking bans on books touching on Black history.” All these assertions, of course, range from hysterical exaggeration to outright lies.

But forget climate, [COVID](#), and [CRT](#). In recent times, no issue has seemed to animate the *Times* more than transgenderism. During the last year or so, several alleged news reporters

have written about gender ideology as if it were a matter of settled science. On June 11, 2023, for example, a *Times* story described a bill in the Texas House that would ban transgender girls from girls' sports as a denial of their "rights" and as a victory for "misinformation about gender identity and healthcare."

And March 10, 2024, brought a story about a new Kansas law declaring that there are only two sexes and thereby ending "legal recognition of transgender identities." The article cited unnamed "critics" who accused the law of "erasing transgender and nonbinary people's existences" and unnamed "medical experts" who said that the law is based on "the outdated idea that gender is binary rather than a spectrum."

On October 29, 2023, came a piece by an 18-year-old trans female – that is, a boy who thinks he's a girl – who complained that state laws restricting "gender-affirming care" and trans participation in women's sports threaten trans people's "happiness." There was, needless to say, no mention of the biological females who are losing scholarships and getting concussions because biological males are joining women's teams. "I recall the joy I felt as a little kid expressing my femininity," wrote the author, who claimed that treatment with puberty blockers and estrogen at age 14 replaced his "distress" with "elation." America, he contended, owes trans people that happiness. In short: shut up about biological facts and parrot trans ideology.

Last March, the *Times* ran a piece by Judith Butler, the feminist professor who helped shape gender ideology. The "anti-gender ideology movement," charged Butler, is rooted in a "fear of 'gender'" and desire to restore "a patriarchal dream order" on the part of people who "oppose ... thought itself."

And on June 2, a *Times* editorial cheered the fact that a group called Protect Kids California had failed to collect enough

signatures for a ballot proposition that would've required teachers to tell parents "about their child's gender identity at school" and would've kept boys out of girls' spaces and girls' sports. The measure, stated the *Times*, "would have restricted medical care for transgender youth." Translation: surgeons would've been prohibited from mutilating minors' sex organs. (READ MORE: ['Pogrom' in Amsterdam](#))

So it's about time that the owner of the *Times* gave his editorial board the heave-ho. Like their colleagues at many other big-time legacy media, these weasels have been pushing divisive, America-hating, and reality-defying ideologies on their readers for far too long. Yes, many of their readers (surely people like Cher, Bette Midler, and Rob Reiner must be loyal *Times* subscribers) have welcomed the paper's consistent reinforcement of their own insipid views. But if America's second city is going to have a dead-tree major newspaper, it deserves better than this Pacific coast *Pravda*.

Kudos, then, to Patrick Soon-Shiong. May his effort to drag his paper back to the center prove profitable – and may his counterparts at the failing *New York Times* and *Washington Post* take note.

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