

The phenomenon this Thinksheet is irritated by--yes, is worried about--is **hypertrophied liberal guilt**, which appears as an eagerness, if not enthusiasm, to *mea culpa* ("I'm/we're guilty, & here & now repent!"). When accused, this type of liberal assumes (1) the righteousness of the accuser/cohort & (2) the sin & guilt of the accused. This **instant repentance**, especially when fully sincere, is, besides being pathological, bad news at both ends--demeaning oneself & one's group/cohort, & excusing the accuser (whose ego gets a false boost & who becomes less self-critical & more self-righteous). All those bad things, and more....At the risk of sounding merely defensive, I'll spell this out:

1 I'm in an advantageous position to spy on this sin, for it's most prevalent in my own cohort, the **white male liberal**. But it especially infests those of us who are egalitarians, who instead of being for fairness (as I am) are for equality. I am partisan to whoever's being treated unfairly, even when it's "us" (white males), even when it's "me." And when it's "us" or "me" I'm partisan to, in the name of truth & fairness, I'm regularly accused of "being defensive," which in the minds of the over-psychologized is pathological, if not also sinful. Indeed, I'm convinced that the fear of being called defensive is a factor in the phenomenon of instant repentance.

2 The phenomenon combines sincerity, phoniness, & patronism, a bitter brew. It may be that we are all so guilty so much of the time that it would pay us to be ashamed of ourselves all of the time. Anyway, we're seldom entirely guiltless of what we're accused of, & the actual guilt is the reality-component, the sincerity factor, in any instant repentance. But, like practiced humility, such repentance becomes habitual, & the habit admixes ego-factors with the sincerity: the phoniness of instant repentance is palpable. And the patronism! That's even harder for me to take when observing the eager repenter. The accuser is ostensibly in the superior position, but the instant repenter trumps by the very enthusiasm of the repentance.

3 "Give 'em enough rope & they'll hang themselves." That's an aspect of the sin of repenting eagerly, for it's always accompanied by the failure to defend truth & self/cohort, with the result that the accuser, feeling confirmed in the supposed truth of the accusation, (1) becomes arrogant & (2) next time boldly inflates the accusation, which finally becomes ludicrously exaggerated, decreasing the accuser's rhetorical power: the case against the accused flips & becomes a case against the accuser, who then cries "Backlash!" But the accusers, like flagellants, have lashed their own backs, & the accused are guilty of not trying to stop the accusers from making fools & impotents of themselves. The sin of repenting eagerly is a double sin. It is the sin of excessive self-love + the sin of defective other-love (consideration for the accusers as they wander away from truth, balance, fairness). And of course it is fundamentally a sin against the God of Truth: one who has a holy awe of truth both as facticity & as coherence must cry out, in God's name, against the abuse of truth, especially when the abuse occurs while one sees oneself as a servant of love & justice.

4 A current Smithsonian exhibit, instead of being content with describing the Native/White conflict in early America, is partisan to the Natives (Reds, Amerinds). The museum eagerly repents for all us white folks seeing the exhibit! The Smithsonian can get away with this in the current PC ("politically correct") academic atmosphere, which treats DWMs (dead white males) as history's prime culprits, "marginalizing" all others....Amerind countercelebrations are being planned against the celebration of the 500th ann. of Columbus' discovery of America, & I've nothing against it except that it's certain to draw flocks of white eager repenter....Why did the Amerinds have TWS (the wrong stuff, & whites TRS)? Why are they the least digestible population in the USA? Serious consideration of such questions deepens the sense that what we have to do with in Native/White relations yesterday & today is more tragedy than sin, more to be understood together than eagerly repented of from one side. Palefaces have gotten tired of being called guilty, & no progress in Native/White relations can derive from that accusation.

5 Scrupulosity is a traditional name for the category of which this Thinksheet's condemned sin is a subcategory. Compulsivity & obsession are psycho-terms under "scrupulosity." "Consciousness" (ie, awareness, sensitivity) has been raised so high that these sinners are the flipside of all the -isms (sexism, racism, ethicism, classism, nationalism, homophobia, ageism, et al). The two extremes are equally at war with reality--the former abusing self/cohort, the latter abusing others....My religion requires me to pray & study how I may be good news to my "fellows" (generic, not masc.) & the good earth & so to God. It does not require me--it forbids me--to hate self/cohort/ancestors: instant repentance is one form of self-hate & has been, since the 1960s, one form of hating America, especially "the American way of life" (scorned as "Eurocentrism," "Anglocentrism," "the Puritan work-ethic").

6 Grievance living sickens the self, one's community, & the general society. Yet it's being taught at all educational levels in our country today. It's the downside of "ethnic pride": it's negative self-definition. The game is historically turgid but emotionally simple, a we/they "consciousness." "They" are our oppressors, & "we" are the ones they're oppressing (or their ancestors did, & their repentance for their ancestors is nonexistent or at least insufficient)....When you're thus "they" to some group, do you weigh the accusation or mindlessly--instantly repent? Me, I weigh, I as an ORMWASP (old, rich [though catastrophic illness could wipe me out], male, white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant)....The Jewish exiles in Babylon, instead of living their grievances, learned to live their faith. I recommend it to all who have slight prospect of doing themselves any good by continuing to live their grievances. Eg, American blacks, "Palestinians" (ie, Arabs under Israeli military control), women, Jews, Muslims,.... Do I worship the status quo? No, I pray the Lord's Prayer against the status quo. But I'm against the reciprocal sicknesses of grievance living & "the sin of repenting eagerly."