

Camille Paglia

A Brunswickan Exclusive Interview
by Luke Peterson

Promiscuity

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Date Rape and Compensation

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The Distortion of Education

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What is the point of going to University if not to learn how to be disrespectful?

The thing that is inflammatory about what he [Yaqzan] said is the use of the word 'promiscuity'. Now you see that makes everyone crazy right now, the idea that a girl who has multiple sex partners is promiscuous, because it brings back a word that dates from the period before the sexual revolution that I belonged to of the sixties. I think his use of it is fine, because I myself in *Sexual Personae* was looking at this issue. I myself said... that the 'double standard' was simply a social convention that had been invented to enslave women and I was part of the 'free love' movement of my generation. We felt that we had to seize the sexual freedom that men had. The sexual adventurism that men had had over the centuries. So I would go out to bars when I was in college, I'd always considered myself a Lesbian, but I would go out to bars and try to pick up men. I have always liked to sleep with men, I mean I don't like to have relationships with them but, I liked to sleep with them, and I would pick them up. I soon discovered to my horror that no matter what I tried to do there was something in this promiscuity that I could not do as a woman. It had nothing to do with guilt... I was trying to break every rule that I had inherited as a woman and I complained to my gay male friends about this. I said, 'I'm trying to keep up with you. You guys are going out, you're picking up two strangers a night.' I said 'There's something in me that is telling me not to do this. And that's why its in the first chapter of *Sexual Personae* that in point of fact there is something coming from nature; that it is nature's interest for men to be promiscuous, 'to scatter their seeds hither and yon', but I felt that there was something in me as a woman, even though I had no intention of having children, and no desire whatever, there was something in me... in even the lesbian woman, that says 'keep the birth canal clean'. So I like the fact that he (Yaqzan) has brought the word 'promiscuous' back. We have to consider it and the point is, of course it's going to inflame everyone because they don't want to think they just want dogma.

"Okay, the idea is a person should be compensated for some loss. What's the problem with that? People go to court all the time in America. We go to court for anything and you can receive monetary compensation. His point [Yaqzan's] which I think probably outrages people is that a promiscuous girl who is raped has lost less than a woman who was a virgin and ethical and moral. That of course is going to set people off. In point of fact that is true. As unpalatable and as unpleasant as that statement may be, that is true and I am delighted that someone has the courage to state these things in public, because we're not going to get anywhere in the sex debate until there is total freedom for everyone to speak their minds. This happens to be a true fact what he said. But people don't want the truth. No, no, no. They want sugar-coated pleasantries; they want a return to the Victorian period of propriety and decorum. They have in their mind the way we all should feel good about ourselves, and this is the way we show that we treat women equally, is not to hear any nasty remarks about them. I mean, this is outrageous! I can only imagine what Oscar Wilde would say about this, what any satirist—George Shaw, a million satirists—would tear this to pieces. All voices which stand for intellectual freedom would find this preposterous.

When you have this guy here, Mr. MacNeil [UNB Student Union VP-External] here, saying, he [Yaqzan] is known for spreading dangerous fabrication. I just hate that. That's the voice of a commissar. It's the voice of the propaganda machine. He thinks of himself as very sympathetic to the cause of the women but he doesn't know what he's doing this is the way people behave in Soviet Russia. You know, take him to the Gulag. That's the next thing. What bullshit. That is just nonsense! To allow this man back into the classroom as a professor of Mathematics is to condone the statement he has made! What the fuck? Do they think they're in Nazi Germany? That for someone to be hired as a Mathematics teacher means that everyone approves of his positions on every issue under humanity? What are we talking about here? This just shows you the poisoning, the distortion of education in the modern age. This is unbelievable, the sanctimony with which this [Student Union Bulletin] is put out: that it will condone the statements. That is nonsense. This person, whoever is saying this, the student body president, [James van Raalte] obviously this person does not understand the history of education. Send that person back to the library and read about the history, of going all the way back through time... The history of humanity is nothing but a history of Censors trying to squash original ideas, it's just appalling. Not that Yaqzan is the great original thinker, but doesn't history tell us, the minute we have people talking like this? This is the tone of Inquisition. They care about dogma not about truth. And they lead the Student Union? Give me a break. I think the President of the University should be removed from office because I feel he's a totalitarian and he has no business running a university which should be about free inquiry; it should be about the freedom of the mind. He obviously has no sense whatever of the purpose of education. But he is consistent. His behaviour is consistent with this master class of administrators that rose up after World War II. The administrators in this post-war era are servile to the parents and cheque - books. They think of the faculty as merely their pawns.

(Laughing hysterically) "All objectionable and disrespectful conduct" [referring to Pres. Armstrong's Opinion in last week's Bruns]. Oh, I love it, 'objectionable and disrespectful', I mean, is that Victorian? Disrespectful? Oh, I didn't know education was about that. That we all have to be respectful to each other, I didn't know that! Gee, we're back in the 1950's aren't we? In fact, 'the father knows best world'. My generation of the 1960's was all about being disrespectful. That's what the free speech movement was about at Berkeley. What is the point of going to University if not to learn how to be disrespectful, to break free of the authority figures that raised you? My God, this is absolutely pabulum, pabulum! But here's my point, that rape is a crime, that must be investigated by the police. So what we have now, it seems to me, is this terrible infringement upon due process that's going on in the North American Universities where the mere charge, the mere whiff, of some incident causes this 'Kangaroo Court' to be thrown together of a grievance committee, where there's some students and some faculty and there's some administrators; people not trained in legal inquiry. It is an utter suspension of the civil rights of the accused. It's outrageous. I'm saying the universities have to get out of this 'date-rape' business entirely.



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The point that he [Yaqzan] makes, its so right. This is true. This is why, over time, women have withheld their sexual favors, because they require a commitment by men. In the period before the industrial revolution, when women couldn't support themselves, they required a husband to make a life time commitment to her and to his children. It is an exchange for sexual favors. Now I know that people feel that they just hate that idea: that women exchange security for sexual favors but this is true. It is true. The reason that a younger woman (in her 20's) finds an older man (in his 60's) attractive is because he provides for her. The money that he has, the economic security. A woman who is pregnant needs protection. A woman in late pregnancy cannot survive on her own. In the months following childbirth, both the mother and the infant are extraordinary vulnerable. The point is that feminism in the last twenty years has been stuck in Social Constructionism. It believes that everything we are comes from society and even when you have some feminist who talks about nature, it's always 'nature as being very benevolent' and of 'women being morally superior'... It's all what I call Betty Crocker feminism. It's all so sentimental so people don't want to think about this. There are natural differences, there are biological differences between the sexes that in fact do produce differences in sexual behavior.

The way he [Yaqzan] puts it is rather coarse, he's not deeply read so he puts it in ways that are destined to inflame, but he is right, here's another one of the refusals of current feminism. They refuse to consider there are any hormonal differences, this is ridiculous. It is a well known fact that men especially young men, have anywhere from 8 to 20 times the level of testosterone of women. Now it does not mean that men are necessarily out of control of their sexuality, but it certainly does mean that men do in general, have a higher level of libido and sexual desire than women do. Now most feminists won't hear that, they will refuse to listen to that. Why? Because they're totally ignorant, because they're not given any science. Science is completely dropped out of the whole women's studies agenda. They never hear a word of science. Its been an established fact for decades, for heavens sakes, about the effects of hormones. Most transsexuals still go from men to woman. Any transsexual who has to take female hormones will report, They've reported it on T.V. shows, I've heard it myself from people, they will say 'AMAZING', the minute they start taking the female hormones, they felt they were released from their 'driving' sex thing that has been forcing them, the compulsion, for so many years. They say they have now understood that women are happier, they're more stable. It's not that women are not sexual, of course women are sexual, some women are more sexual than others, some men are more sexual than others, but on the whole there is no doubt. Now here again, because of that missing term, that missing theme, in current feminist discourse, naturally this piece is designed to inflame and it leads to him [Yaqzan] getting suspended. Why? Because it's so completely off, going against the grain of current ideology, of current dogma. Every single thing that he has said here [Yaqzan's opinion piece], it seems to me, there is room to debate. Certainly, again, it is occasionally coarsely phrased but one does not punish someone in a democracy for coarse phrasing. My God, that is ridiculous!

He's [Yaqzan] so right! I love the way he says condoms are being distributed in schools. We have an entire culture now, I mean the Gay - Activist wing is talking about sex education, trying to force education about gay life-styles down into the second grade and third grade. So he's right to say, this is really true, that there has been a falling of the age of initial sexual contact. There's no doubt about it, one sees it in this country. You have sexually active teens who used to start having sex at age 15, then it was 14, then it was 13, now it's like 11. We're returning to the pre-modern age because Romeo and Juliet were 13 and 14. That was an age to get married. When your body is ripe, when puberty says it's time, it is natural to have sex. People lament that we are prematurely sexualizing children by all this inundation of movies and television and so on, I would say no, it's actually that we are returning to the natural norm that you would have in, say, a tribal society, where as soon as you're sexually ready, you start having sex. I think he means by that, that in this society... young men have the expectation of sex. For women we are in a confusing time. Some women will go to bed on the first date, other women are very moral, they have a religious code, therefore, I have continually said it is up to women to signal in a clear and unambiguous way, to men, what kind of woman they are, what their desires are, and to negotiate this question from the start. But no, the white middle class girls are in a total state of confusion, they don't know what they want, but they basically want a boyfriend. So even now I think there is this mismatched kind of a desire on both sides. The first year college, fraternity guy... he's out from under his mother's influence... he wants to 'score'. She wants a boyfriend, she doesn't just want sex. I rarely find in young women the kind of appetite for pure carnal, anonymous sex that I see in men. I see it not only in straight men but in gay men. So yes, I think there are sexual differences... and I think that a piece like this forces people to re open the debate. Now here's the point. This is what is so valuable about his perspective: Look at the total, the absolute insulting condescension of the white middle class liberal establishment here, with all their oh we've got to protect our poor young girls. Here is a voice from outside of the culture, in certain ways, in other words, his assumptions might be non- Eurocentric. Instead of listening to this, everyone goes crazy, 'he must be suppressed', 'he must be silenced'. It is very clear that there is a conflict between multiculturalism, as it's called in America, and feminist ideology. Feminism pretends to be on the side of multiculturalism, here is an example of it, but no! They want to roll the 'Soviet tanks' right over it. They want to squash it! They want to retrain the whole world to think in these puritanical, anglo - saxon, prudish feminist terms.

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Sexuality, Feminism and Youth

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