

This was written December 28th, 1991, but I think it is even more appropriate today.

Sleight of Tongue

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Listening in a crowded room of intelligent and educated people to reverbalizations of events surrounding circumstances of society, the reactions and responses of every individual all reflect a distinctive lack of substance. Whether the result of fear, of ignorance, of indecision, or of programmed mental submission, a certain slippery sleight of tongue seems the present, prevalent disease of American society.

Sleight of Tongue: a disease characterized by the answering of direct inquiry with ambiguities; a disease characterized by conversational change of subject, ineptly achieved with feigned nonchalance and averted eyes to some statement or rhetorical question; a disease characterized by a response of complete and utter silence, then a skulking, shamed-dog retreat, hastily and quietly beaten when faced with an assertion.

Sleight of Tongue—it is the disease of the "trying-to-be-politically-correct" who do not know the present fad of "political correctness" for the subject at hand. It is the disease of the febrile and flaccid minds of the artificially intelligent professionals of a generation of weak-minded, vacillating American followers...followers who mouth the ideals of liberty, freedom, high moral character, and human rights like platitudes, and who admire those like Martin Luther King, Jr., and Thomas Jefferson who spoke with firm resolution their beliefs even when those beliefs differed from the general consensus or their peers. And it is these same followers, these same admirers, who strive (when directed to do so by their peer-group leader) to silence all those of strong voice and opinion, all those who think for themselves—voices who speak with conviction and, sometimes, controversy, much like those who founded all things great upon which our country is based.

Sleight of Tongue—it is the disease of Americans afraid to, and, now, perhaps because of atrophy, unable to voice their own sentiments or even to know their own minds and develop their own informed opinion without prompting from the presently empowered "politically correct" within their own circle of hierarchs. This is a disease that is undermining some of the most important advancements in human rights ever made: rights of individual thought, belief, and freedom of expression without fear of retribution. More threatening, however, is the tendency for this disease to destroy the most important evolutionary advancement ever to characterize us "human": the ability to think.