



Mascot Politics

Dr. Victor Davis Hanson's quietly chilling article, "Two Californias," in National Review Online, ought to be read by every American who is concerned about where this country is headed. California is leading the way, but what is happening in California is happening elsewhere — and is a slow poison that is being largely ignored.

Professor Hanson grew up on a farm in California's predominantly agricultural Central Valley. Now, as he tours that area, many years later, he finds a world as foreign to the world he knew as it is from the rest of California today — and very different from the rest of America, either past or present.



In Hanson's own words: "Many of the rural trailer-house compounds I saw appear to the naked eye no different from what I have seen in the Third World. There is a Caribbean look to the junked cars, electric wires crossing between various outbuildings, plastic tarps substituting for replacement shingles, lean-tos cobbled together as auxiliary housing, pit bulls unleashed, and geese, goats, and chickens roaming around the yards."

This is a Third World culture, transplanted from Mexico, and living largely outside the scope of American law, state or federal.

Ironically, this is happening in a state notorious for its pervasive and intrusive regulation of the minute details of people's lives, homes, and businesses. But not out in the Third World enclaves in the Central Valley, where garbage is strewn with impunity and unlicensed swarms of peddlers come and go, selling for cash and with no sales tax.

While waiting in line at two supermarkets, Victor Davis Hanson realized in both places that he was the only one in line who was not paying with the plastic cards issued by welfare authorities to replace the old food stamps. He noted that these people living on the taxpayers were driving late-model cars and had iPhones, BlackBerries and other parts of what he calls "the technological veneer of the middle class."

Sadly — and, in the long run, tragically — this is not unique to California, or to illegal immigrants from Mexico, or even to the United States. It is a pattern to which the Western world has been slowly but steadily succumbing.

In France, for example, there are enclaves of Third World Muslims, living by their own rules and festering with resentments of the society that is content to let them vegetate on handouts from the welfare state.

The black ghettos of America, and especially their housing projects, are other enclaves of people largely abandoned to their own lawless and violent lives, their children warehoused in schools where they are allowed to run wild, with education being more or less optional.



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on January 6, 2011

What is going on? These and other groups, here and abroad, are treated as mascots of the self-congratulatory elites.

These elites are able to indulge themselves in non-judgmental permissiveness toward those selected as mascots, while cracking down with heavy-handed, nanny-state control on others.

The effect of all this on the mascots themselves is not a big concern of the elites. Mascots symbolize something for others. The actual fate of the mascots themselves seldom matters much to their supposed benefactors.

So long as the elites have control of the public purse, they can subsidize self-destructive behavior on the part of the mascots. And so long as the elites can send their own children to private schools, they needn't worry about what happens to the children of the mascots in the public schools.

Other people who cannot afford to send their children to private schools can simply be called "racists" for objecting to what the indulgence of the mascots is doing to the public schools or what the violence of the mascots is doing to other children trapped in the same schools with them.

A hundred years ago, groups who are now indulged as mascots were targets and scapegoats of Progressive era elites, treated like dirt and targeted for eradication in the name of "eugenics."

There are no permanent mascots. As fashions change, the mascots of today can become the scapegoats and targets of tomorrow. But who thinks ahead any more?

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