



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 19, 2010

Saul Alinsky Meets Dr. Seuss: Obama Pens Children's Book

When discussing a new study about liberals' and conservatives' favorite television shows recently, pundit Bill O'Reilly and his guests mentioned that liberals like works about "flawed people." If this is so, they will certainly appreciate Barack Obama's just published children's book, *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*.

Much like Rudyard Kipling's poem "If" (which the author wrote for his 12-year-old son), Obama's book was penned for his children Malia and Sasha — hence the subtitle *A Letter to My Daughters*. Unlike Kipling's poem, however, I very much doubt his kids will be the better for reading it.



The book features 13 American "heroes" whose traits the president sees in his daughters. And it does include traditional figures such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein (I guess a bone had to be thrown to the dead-white-male set) and Neil Armstrong. Yet it also includes the troubled jazz great Billie Holiday; artist Georgia O'Keefe, who sometimes posed nude for photographs; and socialist Jane Addams, who, quite fittingly, was a community organizer.

If Obama sees the above individuals' traits in his daughters, we should hope for the girls' sake that they don't include the tendency toward vice that caused Holiday's addiction to heroin and alcohol and led to her untimely death or whatever dark impulse inspired O'Keefe to create erotic art. Wondering if such individuals belong in *Of Thee I Sing*, writer Andrea Stone points out that no one has asked "whether artist Georgia O'Keeffe, whose paintings evoke female genitalia, should be part of a book for children as young as 3 years old." Well, don't ask Obama, because he's a man who allowed his daughter Sasha to listen to rap when she was 3 years old. (In [this](#) 2004 video he talks about how she was listening to the Snoop Dogg "song" "Drop it Like It's Hot," which contains lyrics such as "See I specialize in making all the girls get naked," "When my niggaz fill ya vest they ain't gon pass me s***," and a lot of profanity. Here are the lyrics.) Hey, maybe Sasha and Malia will soon be talkin' 'bout pumpin' a cap into John Boehner's butt, yo.

Obama's book also features labor leader and civil rights activist Cesar Chavez, who some claim had communist sympathies. Whatever the truth, though, it shouldn't bother Obama much. After all, he once hired a communications director, Anita Dunn, who cited Mao Tse-tung as one of her two favorite philosophers. What might bother Obama, however, is a staunch opponent of illegal immigration — which is precisely what Chavez was. I wonder, did that little fact make it into his book?

Of course, since Obama's work is not supposed to be a history textbook but a letter to his daughters, defenders can say that he was not constrained by academic imperatives. Fair enough. Nevertheless, the book reflects his conception of virtue. I'll also note that letters are generally private; once you make



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them public, it's implied that you want to influence the public. Thus, I believe the following, just like the preceding, criticism is justified.

Just as bad as some figures whom Obama chose is why he chose them. He assembled his heroes in the same way he — and, lamentably, all modern American presidents — choose their appointees: by quota. Without a doubt, merit wasn't the only, or even primary, consideration; rather, he used cultural affirmative action and chose his "heroes" by race and sex (which is much how the electorate chose him in 2008). Of course, many today, if not outright condoning this practice, have at least been inured to it. Writing at [DeathandTaxesMag.com](#), one Carmel Lobello approvingly writes:

Of all the terrible accusations thrown at Obama, nobody has yet accused him of being stupid. This list of American historical figures was clearly thought through, and just like a good beer commercial, "Of Thee I Sing" covers a smorgasbord of demographics, which had to include a famous American Indian.

Not only do I guess you can call me "nobody," but the goal was not to try to sell beer here. Rather, the aim of a history-oriented book should be the radical one of actually teaching history. And, owing to the very bias Obama exhibits, our civilization has failed miserably in this regard. When I worked with children years ago and asked one of them the question, "Who is considered the father of America?" his scratching-the-head answer was Martin Luther King. Now, what does this tell you about the bias in education?

What it tells you is that, in a certain way, *Of Thee I Sing* is up to the standards of history textbooks — we find the quota system in them today as well. Nevertheless, it would have been preferable if Obama had titled this letter to his daughters *Dreams from Your Father*. After all, it has little acquaintance with reality.

And it reflects why America's children don't, either. Today we have made history history, and it's a sad portent of civilizational decline. And it reminds me of a story related by someone close to me. She mentioned that she was talking to a 12-year-old girl her family had hired to babysit, and the conversation turned to history (or "social studies" as they now call it. Unfortunately, there's too much of the *social* and not enough authentic *study*). My friend related some facts about the subject and mentioned some male historical figures. The girl's quite innocent response was, "I didn't know there were men in history."

Well, when Sasha and Malia read their father's book, at least they'll know that. But I'm not sure they'll know that there's a man in the house.



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