

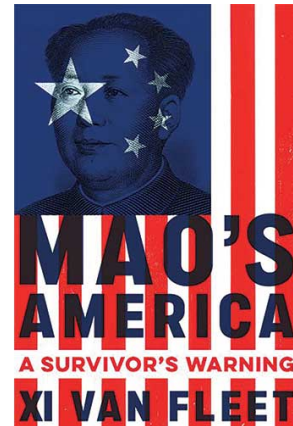


Written by [William P. Hoar](#) on December 26, 2023

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Two Cultural Revolutions, Many Scary Similarities

Division abounds — as do indoctrination, coercion, cancelation, and violence. Traditional culture is under fire, threatened with being replaced by Marxist ideology. Young people have been weaponized as enforcers. Statues are being toppled and defaced by mobs, with history being rewritten. Ultimate goals include achieving absolute power for the central government and the loss of freedom for individuals.



What era, you might wonder, is being described?

That is the point, and it is a serious matter that is at hand. There are two main periods involved, with incisive looks at what has been going on in this country of late as well as personal memories of the evil times of Mao Zedong's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) by a woman who has lived through both periods.

She describes herself as "Chinese by birth; American by choice, survivor of Mao's Cultural Revolution, defender of liberty." What alarms the author, and should also chill us, are the similarities between the Cultural Revolution and what is taking place today in America.

Many of the recent accounts covered in *Mao's America: A Survivor's Warning* come in the riotous aftermath of the death of George Floyd in 2020. The author — Xi Van Fleet — is now an American citizen (who has lived in this country since 1986). She was a schoolgirl when the Red Guards in Communist China were deployed by Mao, resulting in the persecution, torture, and killings of millions of Chinese.

It was the author's 2021 presentation before the school board in Loudoun County, Virginia, that raised her profile, leading to interviews, speeches, and eventually this book. Xi's remarks at the time lasted but one minute (cut in half from what was initially promised by an unfriendly local official). What she primarily did then — and expands upon masterfully in this volume — was draw parallels between critical race theory (CRT) and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, stressing that CRT is Marxist.

Here's an excerpt from those remarks, explaining why many events in our public schools seemed so familiar to her. The communist regime, as she recounted,

used the same critical theory to divide the people. The only difference is that they used class instead of race. During the Cultural Revolution, I witnessed students and teachers turn against each other. We changed school names to be politically correct. We were taught to denounce our heritage.

The Red Guards destroyed anything that was not Communist — old statues, books, and anything else. We were also encouraged to report on each other just like the student equity ambassador program and the bias reporting system [in Loudoun schools]. This is indeed the American version of the Chinese Cultural Revolution.



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Critical race theory has its roots in cultural Marxism. It should have no place in our schools.

People are now listening to her words of warning well beyond the walls of that school board meeting.

Struggle Sessions; Red Guards Unleashed

The author's accounts are both personal and political, with her first-hand chronicles of what she experienced in China — she was in the first grade in the spring of 1966 when the Cultural Revolution began — and what she learned second-hand through research. The results were ugly. Young Xi was bewildered at first, such as when students attacked one of the teachers in her school, covering her completely with spittle, apparently because the teacher dressed nicely and was “bourgeois.” Before long, the schools were closed; children were roaming; and the Cultural Revolution was taking to the streets. It got deadly.

Xi recalls, for instance, many “struggle sessions,” calling this

a form of public trials that intended to brutally shame and denounce the targeted individuals, and parades of trucks full of people who were deemed enemies of the people, with their sins and crimes written on a big sign they had to wear over their chests and a tall paper cone hat on the heads. The signs included their names written in large characters with lines crossing them out, as if to symbolize the very existence of the men had been canceled. All I knew was that they must have been really bad people. Why else were the Red Guards calling them out to see and denounce?

The short answer is that Mao ordered it so.

As she subsequently learned, what Xi was witnessing in her home city of Chengdu “was happening all over the country. The Red Guards would run down whole streets.” Hardly anyone, she writes, was off-limits from the persecution of the Red Guards. Even “Li Jingquan, the governor of the Sichuan province [where Xi lived], was subjected to a struggle session, which I witnessed.” Li had supported all of Mao's policies, thought that was to no avail when he was labeled a “counterrevolutionary revisionist” and “capitalist roader.”

Who were the Red Guards? The author sets aside a full chapter for them, and we meet them throughout the book. We are not talking about what used to be called around here “juvenile delinquents” (wrongdoers who seemingly could qualify to go to reform school on a scholarship). If anything, the Red Guards were given their brutish “scholarship” by the state, or more exactly, by Mao's CCP (Chinese Communist Party). Xi acknowledges that she was inordinately proud when she was a child and got to tag along with her 16-year-old cousin, who was a Red Guard, on a major propaganda trip.

In the book, the Guards are called the stormtroopers of the revolution. Xi explains that they were “mostly teenagers who transformed themselves from students into unruly yet deadly political activists.” The Guards were “an enforcement wing of Mao, in their minds answering to no one but Mao — and no one was empowered to stop them.” Knowing better now, the author comments that they were “without training, organization, or scruples — brainwashed. In other words, perfectly useful idiots” (borrowing the line widely attributed to Lenin).



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Xi Van Fleet (twitter.com/XVanFleet)

There are enough details provided to give readers a taste of the time, gruesome to be sure but short of being stomach-turning. The movement grew rapidly (until it was no longer needed). Massive rallies were held by the Guards and millions of youths poured into Beijing to link up in what some called “free Red Tourism.” Mao met with them in person, with the last of eight rallies being held in late November of 1968. “By then,” we read, “the number of mass rally participants had reached eleven million in total.”

The rationale for the Red Guards was over by the end of that year, and they were “hastily disarmed, and the group was dissolved.” The Red Guards, writes Xi, “had successfully seized all power from Mao’s enemies and had neutralized the old CCP bureaucrats.”

Destroying in China, America

Mao’s America has a good deal more about China, but it points out the similarities between Mao’s Cultural Revolution and the current cultural revolution, so to speak, in America. Both Xi Van Fleet and James Lindsay (the critical race theory expert who wrote this book’s Foreword) note that Mao was proud to say that his revolution was based on “Marxism-Leninism with Chinese characteristics.” And, as *Mao’s America* also demonstrates, the American cultural revolution is a “Maoist Cultural Revolution with American characteristics.”

There is a litany of resemblances listed between the two cultural revolutions — most strong cases, some a bit less so. Also keep in mind the role of education in transmitting culture into society that sparked the author’s public mission. That is why she stresses the vital role of Marxist ideologies. Mao Zedong, writes Xi,

had his revolutionaries, known as the Red Guards, tailor-made for him from his government schools. The American progressives have theirs from the same place: government schools. They are the social justice warriors, the American Red Guards.

The author also observes that some of the new “stormtroopers” — such as the leaders of Black Lives Matter and Antifa — “may think they will always possess power and influence.” So did the Red Guards



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— yet Mao “discarded them like garbage after their usefulness was over.”

Other tragic time periods are covered, including the Land Reform Movement (1950-1952) that followed Mao’s takeover of the Chinese mainland in 1949. The movement, among other points, divided the population by class. Estimates of how many “landlords” were killed vary, though some assessments reach up to five million. Our readers probably won’t be surprised by the fact, as the author relates, that most of the founders of the CCP, “including Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping, were from landowning and wealthy families.” Because of that, she goes on, “they could afford to have education as well as the time and perspective to entertain the idea of starting a revolution in China.”

In a solid chapter on “Cancel Culture,” Xi again draws from history, noting that Mao had carried out his own “cancel culture” even before the 1966 Great Cultural Revolution, albeit with another name: “Destroy the Four Olds, or *po si jiu*. The Four Olds stands for old ideas, old traditions, old customs, and old habits. In other words, the entire preexisting Chinese culture.”

In a single episode of the “Destroy the Four Olds,” almost 5,000 cultural relics and historical sites were destroyed in Beijing alone — more than 70 percent of those in the city. The Red Guards also targeted the Qufu Temple of Confucius in Shandong province, where Confucius was born and his descendants lived. Along with some local workers, they desecrated and lay waste to the family cemetery, “digging up more than two thousand graves, looting their contents, and hanging naked corpses from surrounding trees.”

Think such things can’t happen here? Think again.

Xi looks at events in this country in 2020 following the death of George Floyd, when “statues were pulled down left and right.”

As she writes, “Among those torn down or defaced were statues of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Frederick Douglass, Christopher Columbus, and the Virgin Mary.” Schools not far from where the author lives in Northern Virginia, previously named for Founding Fathers and Virginians Thomas Jefferson and George Mason, were renamed. “A section of 16th Street in front of the White House in Washington, DC, is now ceremonially named Black Lives Matter Plaza.” There are many more such instances.

Marxist Aims

In like fashion, the author has a chapter aimed at the destruction of the family both in China and in this country, with sections examining, among other things, how the government was transformed into the “family” through “Great Society” welfare and turning children against parents through ideological disputes. Another chapter shows how religion, especially Christianity, has been attacked in China and in America.

We do have a few issues that are beyond caviling. For instance, while citing (accurately) many of the Marxists who were involved in the civil rights movement in this country, Xi apparently is unaware of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s actual communist affiliations and links, and relationships with Soviet agents (matters that concerned even President John F. Kennedy, who unsuccessfully warned King to get rid of them).

Xi is sharp — to the point — when cataloguing what American Marxists are trying to destroy and what



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they aim to set up in its place, even providing a chart for this. For example, individualism becomes collectivism; equality of opportunity turns into equity of outcome; content of character gets replaced by identity (such as skin color, gender, etc.); nationalism is converted to globalism; the goal of justice for all is transformed into social or racial justice; and the longtime model of parenting is being altered into transforming offspring into children of the state.

As you can imagine, CRT gets dissected well in this volume, as does the division of Americans through “identities” such as class (poor vs. rich), sex (women vs. men), sexuality (“LGBTQQIP2SAA ad infinitum” vs. heterosexuals), religion, physical ability, age, body weight, citizenship, political affiliation, and even vaccination status.

Ideological indoctrination in American schools is not a new concern, but *Mao’s America* does help to put it into context — showing how so-called progressives are following Mao’s path to destroy meritocracy.



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